

SIGMA OCTANTIS

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SIGMA OCTANTIS 6

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Boc-Mu E.U.

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the first annual fandom fiction contest:

The announcement in the last issue of this magazine plus those mentions and writeups in the various professional and fan fan publications have exhorted a fair showing of manuscripts for the fiction contest thus far, but the judging still hasn't been made, and won't be for a month or so. With such an impressive line-up of prize material offered, it was expected that a heavy turnout of scripts would appear; so far this hasn't been the case. We do have several good manuscripts on hand at this point (about midway), and a few more which have been returned for reworking are expected to be resubmitted, but all the prizes have by no means been claimed.

Dick Lupoff tells of a fan contest run some five or six years ago which also sported a lively list of prize material. Being a neo at the time, Dick didn't even seriously consider entering a manuscript, and was therefore somewhat jolted to find, a few issues later, that if he had entered just one item in each category (this contest had awards offered in each of several literary types) he would have picked up the entire prize list by default. It seems that the contest was announced, publicised and carried out as a far-fetched joke on some fannish personality. The donators of prize material were all willing to make good on their promises, but not a single entry was received.

Well, we have received entries to the fiction contest, so it doesn't look as if the prizes will go to any one person by default. But those neofans who hesitate to enter a ms for fear of being beaten out by some hard-bitten oldfan and/or bnf might take heart in the revelation that most entries in such contests as this come from the newer fans. Most of the Seasoned Patriarchs are either professionals or 'beyond fanfiction'. Being a professional, a person cannot enter a script under the rules of the contest; being 'beyond fanfiction', an old-timer will not enter a ms, deigning fan written fiction either because he cannot write salable material or because he's seen so much of it that he considers the whole kit and kaboodle not worthy of reading, much less writing.

Another fear which may be driving off a number of potential entrants is that their stories have too many shortcomings to win mentions. Having seen a few reworked scripts, mss which had been returned to contestants by the Story Editor Al Andrews with suggestions for improvement, I can state almost categorically that most plotting, writing and expository obstacles are eliminated through this aid. It seems that when mistakes and weak points are competently pointed out to its author and methods for their correction suggested, the author can usually work the script into an improvement.

If enough new manuscripts come in during the next month, we may extend the contest running time to give entrants leeway for corresponding with the story editor. Those new readers who may consider entering a script should write for information to the editor at his address.

A plug: a SCIENCE FICTION INDEX is being prepared by Donn N. Feliti and William C. McCain of 180 Walker Road, West Orange, New Jersey. This will be a comprehensive report of the American field for the year of 1956, and promises to be well worth the 50¢ tab.

thrashing about

BUBBLING

One of the traditional acts in show business, along with indian clubs and ventriloquism, is something known as the 'pockets routine.'

As currently practised on television (and it hasn't changed much since it was practised on the vaudeville stages) the pockets routine goes something like this: a fellow comes onto the stage wearing a huge, baggy coat. He is a little confused, very much weebegon, and obviously looking for something.

So he reaches into a pocket and comes up with any one of several unlikely objects: a string of sausages, a coconut, a bunch of bananas, a banjo, each time feigning surprise and exclaiming "Wow!"

He puts the object into a miniature railroad car and hunts in his pockets again, once more coming up with an object d' curiosite.

This goes on for some time; with each oddity he exclaims "Wow!" By the time the act is over the fellow has loaded a whole freight train with miscellanea from his numerous and voluminous pockets, has doffed several layers of clothing and a couple of masks, and emitted several dozen Wows.

He leaves, towing the train behind him, and the audience is left pondering what the act meant, whom the guy was trying to make himself out to be (if anyone), and just what he accomplished or was trying to accomplish.

Anyway, now that the act is over, it was vaguely amusing; in fact it seemed to grow on you; but in another way you're rather glad that it's over.

It leaves the audience with mixed reactions, but it's been going on for years, and who can argue with, if not success, survival?

There's a professional science fiction editor who reminds me very much of the fellow doing the pockets routine. Since he took over AMAZING STORIES nearly twenty years ago, Ray Palmer has been coming up with an endless variety of weird objects, has changed his face several times, and is still filling that freight car, still emitting 'Wow' after surprised 'Wow.'

frank carter key

OVER

The sprucing-up he gave AMAZING upon taking over, and the way he saved that magazine from almost certain death are a couple of things too often overlooked. But the numberless and bottomless pockets have continued to disgorge themselves of every imaginable science-fantasy-weird-mystical trick until just about the only one surprised any more is Ray 'Pockets' Palmer himself.

After FANTASTIC ADVENTURES and the Shaver Mystery at Ziff-Davis Ray has continued to delve into his pockets and emerge with something new and different every time: FATE, OTHER WORLDS, the replacement of OTHER WORLDS by the short-lived SCIENCE STORIES, MYSTIC, the taking-over and degradation of the superb UNIVERSE, the restoration of OTHER WORLDS and its conversion to pulp-size, Tarzan on Mars....

It's rather puzzling and vaguely amusing. I know I'll be sorry when it's all over -- but I suspect that I'll be relieved as well.

available, isn't there one -- not one fantasy mag?" Sad, sad situation! But I fear it will not soon be remedied.

The plaintive cry goes up, every so often, "Why, with the number of science fiction mags

For even before AMAZING STORIES made its debut there was a fantasy mag, WEIRD TALES, going strong. And on-and-off there have been between a dozen and two-dozen magazines that have been all or mostly fantasy, or that have played fantasy as a full equal of science fiction in their pages. And never has a fantasy magazine done well enough to keep it going. WT lasted thirty years, but was more of a weird-creepy magazine than fantasy in the usual sense.

Yet several of the greatest and most famous imaginative magazines, even discounting WT, have been fantasy magazines.

UNKNOWN, later UNKNOWN WORLDS, is considered by many to have been the greatest imaginative magazine ever published. And it, after starting as a science-fantasy magazine, went over to pure fantasy. The anthology FROM UNKNOWN WORLDS went from soft-covers to hard.

One of the finest magazines to come out with the great boom -- and to disappear with it, too -- was Lester del Rey's FANTASY FICTION. And of course there was Gold's BEYOND.

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Farther back was FAMOUS FANTASTIC MYSTERIES, and before that

STIRRING SCIENCE STORIES which consisted of two-magazines-in-one: STIRRING SCIENCE FICTION and STIRRING FANTASY FICTION. There was THRILLING WONDER's companion STRANGE STORIES, and way back in 1931 ASTOUNDING's short-lived companion STRANGE TALES.

All these, gone, and where? Dead, financial flops. It's not a matter of esthetic preference; it's pure dollars-and-cents. And fantasy just doesn't make money.

But let's look at four magazines currently appearing: F&SF, FANTASTIC and MADGE-IT.

THE MAGAZINE OF FANTASY AND SCIENCE FICTION started simply as THE MAGAZINE OF FANTASY. It added the 'F&SF' with its second edition, but for the years since then some issues have had fantasy covers and emphasized fantasy, while others have had stf covers and contained a bulk of science fiction.

And month after month the SF issues outsold the fantasy issues. What is Boucher expected to do, throw money away? Naturally, after enough issues to determine that it was not just coincidence, he put the emphasis permanently on sf, regardless of personal preference.

Howard Browne started FANTASTIC as a stfts magazine with the emphasis on fts. Everybody knows what happened to FANTASTIC.

And IMAGINATION, initially subtitled "Stories of Science and Fantasy" has dropped almost all fantasy content. Ditto its twin IMAGINATIVE TALES.

No, fellow fans, we're not being picked on. The stuff just doesn't sell.

Reading Tony Boucher's RECOMMENDED READING in F&SF lately has been more a matter of non-recommended reading. Speaking of F&SF, the return of Chesley Bonestell there, Bok to MYSTIC and Finlay and St. John to OTHER WORLDS make

my comments on artwork in stf mags (Sigma Octantis #3) look pretty silly. I can only say that all the works in question, with one possible exception (the Bok in MYSTIC) were either reprints or works not done specifically for magazine publication. Remember Calle' and Dave Stone in the early GALAXY's and Gsf NOVELS? Both have turned up in the slicks: David Stone Martin in the SatEvePost and Paul Calle' in THIS WEEK.

* *** ** *

Speaking of the EC group and their TERROR ILLUSTRATED in the last issue, I can't help dreaming of a true science-fantasy mag in TI format. The latter is actually the kind of weird-macabre-spook stuff that makes it just barely, if at all, under the wire. A magazine featuring the kind of material that made the old WEIRD FANTASY, WEIRD SCIENCE, WEIRD SCIENCE-FANTASY, and finally INCREDIBLE SCIENCE-FICTION such gems would really warm the heart of the true stf-lover.

I suppose it's strictly a matter of feasibility commercial-wise, and that sentiment must be overlooked, but just on the off-chance, please Mr. EC, please?

* *** ** *

Shades of the marching morons, from the way our culture is headed I wonder if it's just a matter of time before it will be gospel that 'different' and 'wrong' are synonymous. If you judge a people by their art, music, etc., look at the words of the A-B-C BOOGIE, so popular last year:

"The teacher's oh-so-happy
Cause she's done her bit
To educate the kiddies
And really make them fit."

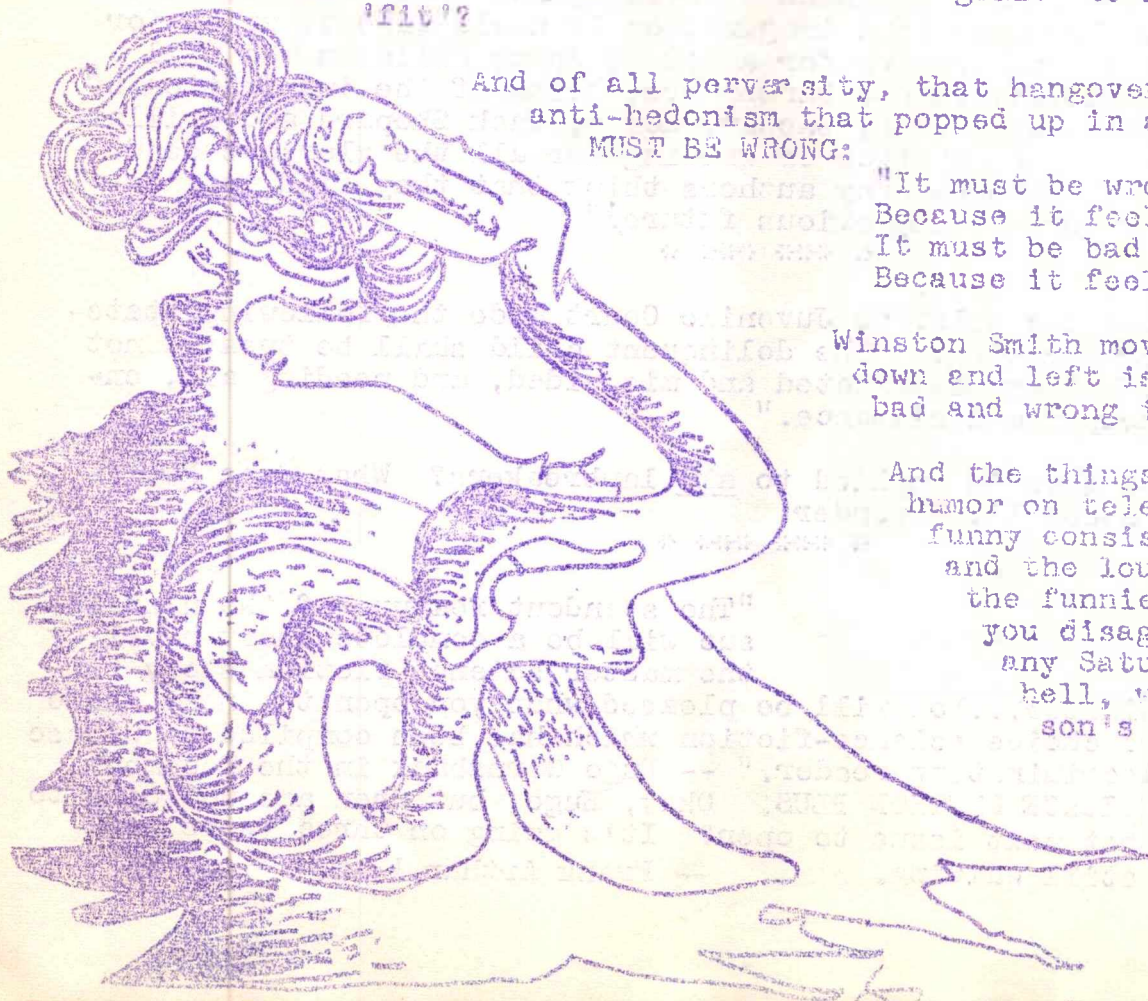
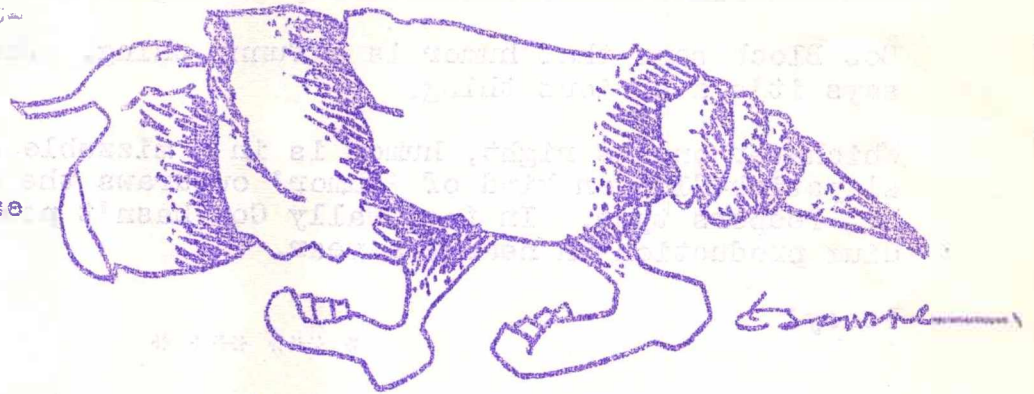
Is that what education has as its goal: to make the kiddies 'fit'?

And of all perversity, that hangover of puritanical anti-hedonism that popped up in a tune called IT MUST BE WRONG:

"It must be wrong
Because it feels so right;
It must be bad
Because it feels so good."

Winston Smith move over. Up is down and left is right; good is bad and wrong is right.

And the things that pass for humor on television! Being funny consists of shouting, and the louder you shout, the funnier you are. If you disagree, tune to CBS any Saturday at 8PM. Or hell, watch any of Gleason's myriad imitators.



And you can't blame them. The public goes for it.

Bob Bloch says that humor is a funny thing. James Thurber disagrees, says it's a serious thing.

Whichever one is right, humor is in a mizzuble state when the shouting-slapstick-Gleason kind of 'humor' outdraws the subtle-satirical-Gobel-Mr. Peepers type. In fact Wally Cox hasn't peered out of a mass-medium production in nearly a year.

Foocy!

* *** ** *

The following remarks, by one George Henry Payne, are reprinted without comment from THE BOOKMAN, a London review magazine, circa 1911.

"...the main thing about a book (is) that it meets the requirements of the people for whom it is intended -- only poets and philosophers have the vague idea that a book should be intended for, not the people who are living, not for the people who have lived and are dead, but for people who haven't even been born. Wild, foolish idea -- like lighting a fire in the grate to heat the North Pole. Curious sins committed under the mantle of what is so easily called imagination, one of the most flagrant of which is writing for what is called the future, whereas how much more imagination it would take to write for the past. Instead of writing for a lot of dumpy children who will grow up to be bricklayers and bartenders, think of the inspiration of writing for Athenaeus, Plato, Caesar, Homer, Jack Shepard and Brillat Savarin. With the inspiration of writing for all the glorious dead how strange it is that so many authors think that they find inspiration in writing for the inglorious future!"

* *** ** *

It was 1904 when the Colorado Juvenile Court made the following statement as part of a ruling: "The delinquent child shall be treated not as a criminal, but as misdirected and misguided, and needing aid, encouragement, help and assistance."

How long before this is applied to all lawbreakers? What does Mr. McComas think about it, I wonder.

* *** ** *

Famous Last Words Department

"The standout feature of the next issue will be a complete short novel by the master science fiction story teller, Murray Leinster...You will be pleased when you open the next issue ...and note the choice science-fiction which has been compiled to please the discriminating reader." -- Hugo Gernsback in the December 1953 SCIENCE FICTION PLUS. Okay, Hugo, but when are we going to have that next issue to open? It's going on three years and we're still waiting. -- Frank Arthur Kern.

The

Egg-

Roast

by

fred
macey

andrews

Dusk was shifting down from a sky lately given to Night, when the bus stopped at Cherry Lane. Harry Kimbel stepped from the vehicle and stood on the curb until it had moved on. He wondered faintly why it was that people always waited for a bus to drive off before they went on their own way; perhaps, some little oddness in the eye of Man that liked the sight of swift and powerful motion. He turned and started up the block toward his home.

Harry was a tired man; it had been a hard day at the office. It had been hard-days for months now at the office and everywhere. He knew the reason: everyone hated him.

Oh, it wasn't openly, but it was small, almost indefinable things; spiteful, malicious, churlish things. Little acts, looks, words: things intangible. You couldn't call one to point; it was like a woven thing that over-lay all. There were no definite threads one could discern, but he knew everyone hated him.

His steps fell into a silent counting of themselves in a mystic yet somehow pedantic way, and at the sum of two blocks he turned into his walkway. He keyed the door and went inside.

"I'm home, Grace." Why call out, he thought. I don't really care whether Grace knows I'm home or not. Actually, Grace doesn't care whether I'm home either. Oh, she goes through the motions of being a wife, but I know she hates me like everyone else. What does she care whether I'm home or not; she's probably off in the house somewhere plotting

An Ancient Greek Proverb:

"Thoughts are mightier than the strength of hands."

with George, her brother, to steal my job with the company.

George appeared from out of the dining-room. "Hi, Harry, how goes it?"

Smiling, always smiling; that's George. But I'm not fooled. I had finally had to get George a job as a salesman with the company several months ago. Grace had kept after me until I did. He's doing all right too, but that's just how it looks on the outside. There's evil underneath. Sure, George has gotten a lot of orders for the company, but they were all probably under-handed or crooked. I'm not fooled for a moment; George hates me too.

"Hello, George. Where's Grace?"

"She's lying down in her room. Said she didn't feel well enough to cook supper. I had to batch it for mine. That's the trouble with living with your in-laws: you can't depend on a square meal. Ha, ha, ha. Want me to fix you something, Harry?"

"No, I'll just eat a sandwich and drink some milk."

God, that inane laugh of his. You'd think he'd just made the biggest joke in the world. His face is a sickening blob of flesh, constantly rolling smoothly into the friendly convulsions of humor. He can laugh and smile, but I can see the tiny prints of Grace's scheming fingers that have moulded his face into that deceitful mask of guffaws. But I know you, George; you hate me too.

Well, at least I won't have to listen to Grace's harping tonight. 'Why can't we buy a new car? Why can't we buy this; why can't we buy that? Mr. So-And-So bought this, and Mrs. You-Know-Who has one; why can't we?' Always the same things. She doesn't really need any of those things. She doesn't really want them, but she keeps hacking and hacking and hacking away. Her every word is like an insidious sliver of sharp-pointed hate. Oh yes, Grace hates me too.

Harry Kimbel ate his food and the little morsels of hate until he was full. Then he went up to his room.

He lay in bed quietly, but sleep stood in the far shadows, waiting for Harry Kimbel's mind to still its thrashing hands of thought.

They all hate me. It's funny how a thing can spread. It started with Grace, I suppose --- although I'm not sure. I'm not quite sure where it started or how or when, but it started. Then there was George. A hearty chap everyone thinks, but then they are blind to him. He's trying to steal my job isn't he? Oh, it's nothing you can pin-point; it's like --- well, it's like rain. Now, you don't say it's
10 raining in just one little spot; it's millions of tiny drops, almost invisible, falling constantly to wet everything every-

where. You just have to know about George and Grace like I do.

Then there's the office. It was a slow stealthy hate there, like a creeping thing. And it will go on spreading; you can't stop it. It's like a thousand minute leaks in a dike; a few dribbles here and there, then comes the dreadful flood that no one can stop. But finally someshow, I don't care. Let the whole world grow around me like an ever-swelling cell, gross and rotting in its disease. The world is nothing but a foul and filthy piece of hell anyway. It's not composed of people, but little pieces of abomination, malice, gall; hate. And every stupid and damned piece would burn the world to roast their own eggs. Well, now I hate too. I hate all of it. I wish it were all swept away. The whole world.

Like in that dream.

"Dream", a whispering thought, and the spectre stirred in the shadows.

A strange dream it was. It had come night after night for weeks now, and it seemed to grow stronger and stronger in its realness each night. Like a whirling native dancer drawing closer through the weird gleams of firelight. A strange dream indeed.

The spectre came close and his dusky shroud spread over Harry Kimbel, shading him into sleep. And came the dream.

Rising higher and higher; not the form, not a psychical thing, but perhaps the disembodied mind. Up through the pale nothingness of clouds and the last trails of air. Space, black and clean, unfettered and unpolluted with the swiftness of life.

And down below hung a small sphere of mottled green --- Earth. Dream and thought or dream-thought wove its strange things in the vast blackness of the Limbo. Suddenly, on that little ball below, there flickered a tiny point of brightness. It grew larger and larger. A brightness of fiery flames. Part of the sphere was now covered with it: an orange and yellowry hell moving and spreading on nimble, flaming feet.

And Harry Kimbel wondered, "So real. Could it be true?"

But Harry Kimbel never knew. For he died with the millions of other little pieces of hate in the holocaust that consumed the Earth that night.

--- Alfred McCoy Andrews

You just have to know about George and Grace like I do.

There's a slow steady here there, like a creeping thing. And it will go on spreading; you can't stop it. It's like a thousand knives in a dish; a few dripples here and there, then comes the great flood that no one can stop. But that's tomorrow, I don't care. For the whole world grows around me like an even-swinging coil, grows and rolls in its disease. The world is nothing but a foul and filthy piece of hell anyway. It's not composed of people, but little pieces of domination, called, called, called every stupid and stupid piece would burn the world to cinders.

Man on the
moon
now
hush and hush
upon
the windless plain
to think
upward
in reverence to
the cosmic splendor
whirl
of milky
pinwheels
and the stellar
Bowl of ever
night, of
satin
splattered
with
multi-colored
paint
drops
unwinking
and
Day
in the fernace
Hell
of an empty world
Sun,
the eye
reflected from a
crystal
citadel

man

on a lunar plain

-- Alfred McCoy Andrew

-- George Spencer

Smart Remarks

ERIC CASHEN "Just a note I wanted to write before, but didn't have time. In reading over Sigma Octantis, and reading over your letters, and thinking, I

wondered if you had ever considered publishing or editing a science journal. It seems to me, in this day and age, that science fiction is a little outdated. With all the fact, the so hard to grasp, the so far-reaching fact that has come our way in the last 100, 50, 10 years, it seems to me the one thing lacking in the publishing field is a science journal, for the layman (informed), that would try to expose fact, explore fact, and indeed, to direct fact. . . We are in a world of speculation, but we are also in a world of realities; and the sooner those realities can be conveyed, the sooner that fact can supplant the creative writer's imagination as a springboard, the sooner we will have an intelligent people who can appreciate and understand the world in which they live.....Such a journal need not be unimaginative. It should be imaginative, but only from a factual, or at least quasi-factual, basis. There are scientists who could write on science, men in allied fields from a different perspective, and yes, even the writer, as essay on values. There is much to be lived in the world. Much to be experienced. And interplanetary travel is not as distant as it sometimes sounds. But it is better, don't you think, to approach interplanetary travel and the whole world of scientific fact, probability, possibility, from a sober and above all, an accurate standpoint? . . Such a journal could do that. It would have to be serious and highminded. But it could also be alive, and in the best interests of educating the readership."

(- (A word on the above letter in the way of explanation is perhaps in order. It was written by an individual who was a stranger to the amateur field of science-fiction prior to my mailing him a copy of the last issue of this magazine. The above, therefore, is an observation of the field 'from the outside looking in' so to speak. Personally, I think the idea he has outlined is an interesting as well as challenging one. In a return letter, I outlined the reasons why it would be virtually impossible for me to launch a magazine of this type now or in the near future. However, I would welcome sincerely any letters from readers on the subject, and would be willing to work with anyone who may want to attempt the issuance of such a journal. I believe such a project to be entirely feasiblewith the big condition that it follow closely the two sentences at the close of the above letter. jdm.)-

13 DICK LUPOFF: "'Crackup' was a real surprise. Moomaw has never written better. I keep wondering at the prozines when I read fanmateral of this quality. So many pro stories are --forgetting 'message,'

'characterization,' even 'plotting' -- simply not readable prose, that I am continually amazed to see things like this appearing in amateur publications. Orchids to Kent, and tell him that if he's not selling before he's voting, I'll be very surprised.

"'Bubbling Over' was, as usual, interesting light reading, but not particularly significant. Kerr has a nice style, although he seemed to be experimenting with something weird on that first page or two. 'The Litterbox' was something that I've seen done so often, and often so well, that I'm afraid it was simply wasted effort. However, I suspect that most of your readers are newer fans than I, and they will probably enjoy it. And after all, you aren't editing the magazine just for me. 'The Irresistible Farce' was more of the same as last issue's F&F. Fanciful and funny. How many installments are there to be?"

(-Four installments of the 'F&F' series are planned. In this issue is the third, and the concluding installment will appear in number seven. jdm.)-

JERRY PAGE: "'The Irresistible Farce' was somewhat better than its precursor, I'd say. But, is it logical that every officer in the service should be a crook? That I cannot say. One, yes. Two, Never! I like Adkins even if he does prefer AMAZING. He's pro grade. He and Jerry Burge are, in my humble opinion, the best futurists practicing today. They are both pros without the confidence to send into the prozines where they belong. Frankly, I'd prefer art by those guys to Llewellyn, Kotzky, Beecham, and even McCauley; and especially Rognan, Leary and the like."

(-Adkins is certainly one of the most promising future pros the fan field has produced to date. However, he is now in the Air Force, and has no plans for turning pro until his enlistment expires. jdm.)-



TOM MAYLONE: "I noticed that 'On the Threshold of Space' wasn't reviewed in SF on C. The film wasn't actually sf,

but it might be of interest to fans. Somehow the ads aren't appealing; as a matter of fact, I wasn't going to see it until a buddy of mine told me about it, recommending it highly. Loins girded, I plunked out the price of admission ...and was pleasantly surprised. Some of the best effects I've yet seen in this type of picture.

"The Litterbox' I enjoyed muchly, though the deGrunswald artwork I did not. Was the cover on #3 a picture of a Neo letting off a carbon dioxide capsule powered spaceship? How about a cover by Adkins and some of the other artists for a change. There is a number of them who do a semiprofessional job for duplicated magazines."

(-(A number of colored covers are scheduled for coming issues. The issue in hand is the first of this series and is covered by an Adkins which was originally planned for SATA #5, Dan's fanmagazine, which has of necessity been temporarily suspended. jdm.)-)

Announcing.....

THE MESSIAHS.. a short story
by Alfred McCoy Andrews...

appears in the current (Nov,
'56) issue of The Original
SCIENCE FICTION Stories.

JOHN BUTTERWORTH: "I have a comment to make on Frank Kerr's column, to wit: 'the excellent EC line of comics.'

"Better not let the Comics Magazine Association of America hear you say that, Frank. Personally, I agree with you, since most of my fantasy reading was done under the guiding of the Old Witch, The Crypt-Keeper, and The

Vault-Keeper although none of my magazines are left now. Of course, after the READER'S DIGEST started blasting comic books, it was natural for the newspapers to start in. You sell papers that way. People began awakening to the fact that there was something Wrong with horror comics (though I'll admit that the crime-love comics often approached disgusting material). Actually, T.E.Murphy never showed any harmful or actually wrong ideas that a horror comic had given, but they got lumped in with the others. During the investigation, most of the publishers put their collective feet in their mouths and it was decided that since these bad comics caused juvenile delinquency, they would be banned. Now we still have juvenile delinquency, but people are blaming it on that horrible, filthy, trashy rock-and-roll music. I wonder what happens when they run out of scapegoats. Maybe they'll actually put the blame where it belongs: on the parents.

"Or maybe they'll investigate sf. I can just see Estes Kefauver holding up a copy of the October issue of FANTASTIC and pointing toward the cover. Or maybe talking about the James Blish story in the July issue of GALAXY, and saying, 'Look at this story! It actually shows how to make a tear gas bomb out of an ammonia bottle!' The comics were blasted for less."

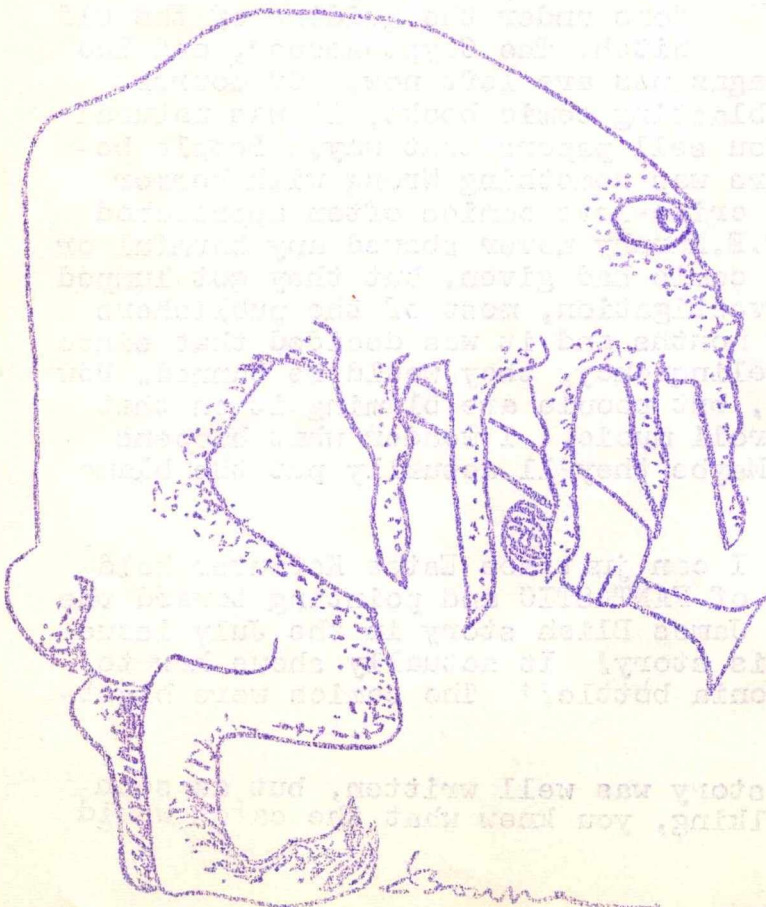
be. I wish he would have either ~~hid the twist better~~ or not had one at all. Because of this, his story was, in my opinion, the low point of the issue, being about average. Your letters were all excellent, and Moomaw's could easily have made a good article. And thank you, Lenny Brown for speaking up for RAP. Maybe I'm sentimental, but I think RAP should be encouraged instead of knocked just because of all he has done for it in close to twenty-five years. All those who have been calling him names without even reading a recent issue ought to pick up a copy. They might be surprised. Keep the movie reviews: I always enjoy them even though I've usually already seen the film and get there too late to heed the warnings. In THE INDESTRUCTIBLE MAN I wonder who got paid more -- Lon Chaney or his eyelids. Andrew's poem was also good. I wonder if he got the idea from the fantasy on the Ed Sullivan Show."

ALAN ELMS: "Didn't care for 'Crackup', although it might appeal to the space-cadet crowd. Gad, only 30 years and we already have a Space Force? That explains, I suppose, the sentence 'The whole universe was theirs to explore and conquer'...the last-named is, of course, the result of military domination of the program, because it certainly doesn't evidence any scientific altruism. Such little things as that, plus a general shallowness of thought, make the story pretty low in my estimation...but anyway, it's reassuring that psychiatric treatment hasn't changed in the thirty years before 1986...progress should be limited to astronautics anyway, I always say.

"'Bubbling Over' is also shallow, but I like it. Unaccountably.

"'Smaht Remahke' I like also; however, Lenny Brown sickens me. Have you read OTHER WORLDS? Have you read Palmer's horrible blurbs? 'This is science fiction so far ahead of today's puny efforts that it will stun you'... 'The most stupendous novel of science fiction you've ever read, bar none... Stories like these are dreams that never come true -- but now, with the advent of the NEW Ray Palmer OTHER WORLDS, they become real at last.' ...one of the finest stories Richard Shaver has ever written. Fascinating beyond all words, and a masterpiece of scientific foundation!' Now judge the man on what he's trying to do.

"Really, I don't think you should, though; he should be judged alone on what he does,



as you judge movies, fanzines, works of art...incidentally, who else is Ow fit for besides non-fans and idiots?

"'Chronicle of the Last Man' is good, good, good...the best verbal production in the issue. Lately, I find myself judging poetry by 'Could I do any better?' It is a credit to Mr. Andrews, considering that I am not noted for modesty, that I had a hard time making up my mind (although I finally decided I could.)

"The moviesreviews I like very well; keep them. Labowitz' reviews I did not; drop them and add to the other reviews, please."

KENT MOOMAW: "Neal Wilgus' second installment in the 'Flesh and Furry' quadripartite is much better than the first, but I may have been given this impression because I was already familiar with the characters and had a little background on them. Regardless, I still believe that the style of writing is about as close to that of Murray Leinster as anything I've ever read; and there is an excellent plot to boot. I don't think it would have sold professionally, but it's a darn good story, far above the average in fanfiction.

"Kerr's ramblings re comic books brought back some memories of those old WWII days when everyone and his/her brother/sister was busy battling the enemy on the pages of comic books. Yea, I too remember Captain Midnight, Hawkman, The Human Torch, Green Lantern, and the rest; once I had a fine collection of old comics with such unlikely characters as these, but it seems to have petered out as the years passed. Anybody remember the radio shows which used to feature many of these characters? Mutual had a Superman series (fifteen minutes per day, with CBS star Bud Collyer as Clark Kent), Captain Midnight (who gave secret messages through special decoders that I never failed to send for each year), Tom Mix (Curly Morrison portraying the then-dead western star), Hop Harrigan (pilot, natch), and Straight Arrow (heap-big Injun, who came along a little later). Mix, Harrigan, and the Injun have passed into limbo (altho Nabisco Shredded Wheat still uses Straight Arrow in their ads), but Capt'n Midnight and Superman have passed on to television. Unfortunately, they are near shadows of their former selves, with Superman being all too obvious as Clark Kent (George Reeves plays both Kent and Superman on tv, while the radio show had Collyer as Kent and another actor with a deeper voice for Superman), and Captain Midnight being only another scientific crime-fighter, instead of a skillful flyer and leader.

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der Woman and others, who each had either a magazine of their own, but also operated in a magazine known as 'All-Star Comics'. In this periodical, they banded together to form what was known as the Justice Society of America, and acted in a 48 page, full-length adventure, with each issue having a couple of guest members to liven things up. Once they had Superman, and other DC guests were Batman & Robin, Robotman and such. This, to my mind, was the best adventure-character comic book ever made, and I only wish I could get hold of somw back issues."

(- (Readers interested in back-issues of comic books might drop a line to The Kisch News Company, Dept. S 4873 Cochran St., Santa Susana 1, Calif. This company is a wholesale distributor, and therefore would be a likely aid in the quest for back issue magazines of this type. Mailing lists are send on request.) -)

LARRY S. BOURNE: "Your cover was a bit weak. I hope it will be better next issue; at least have it fill up more of the page. The Litter Box was, in my opinion, not too well done although it was mildly humorous. Smaht Remahks I still don't like because I still can't tell who is saying what when.

"Science Fiction on Celluloid is not bad, but the writer Marty Fleischman shouldn't say to take the movie in if its bad. I'd like to see SF on C continue, though: we have too few constructive movie columns.

"I want to commend Kent Moomaw on his story. I forgot where it came from, thinking it came from a prozine and not being able to remember which one. I am amazed at the story; it was a really good piece of fan fiction."

AL ANDREWS: "'Capsules' was good as always. And hooray for Al Andrews setting himself up as rather an authority. For twenty-nine years no one else would, so I took it upon myself to do so. Of course, I'm really a shy, tender flower of youthful bloom but I wouldn't for the world shatter Gary's illusion that I'm his arch antagonist bent solely on his downfall on the broad road of literary greatness. A satire, eh ---well, I sat and it did tire me.

18 If you say your recent piece was that, I'll go along."



I'm Going to Publish a Fanzine....

I'm going to publish a fanzine!
Whoo! Won't that be fun?
I'm going to have covers
In three different colors,
And features all cleverly done

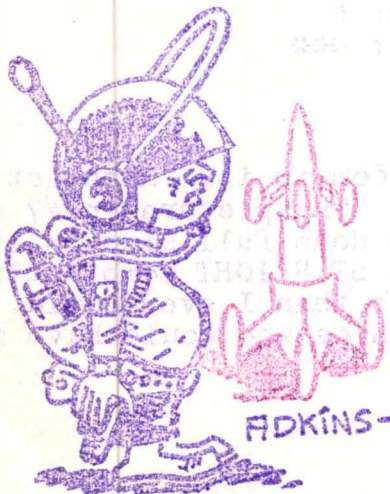
In my fanzine'll be stories by BNF's!
My! Won't that be nice?
To the authors I'll state
A modest paying rate.
Then I'll charge an exorbitant price.

I'll call my fanzine Stfableds!
Ah! Isn't that avant garde?
I'll run obscure poetry,
Sign it Robert E. Lee,
And issue a membership card.

In time I'll have to turn pro-
zine!
Humm! Isn't that a goal?
My readers will go wild.
They'll call my brainchild
The Magazine With A Soul.

Soon my prozine will have blank
covers!
Oh! Such an eyegetter.
With the pages empty, too.
Do it yourself: Egoboo!
Humm.
Manufacturing tablets is better.

By Irish Linen,
former fan gone gafia.



copy (addwitz)

TNFF
Janie Lamb
Route One
Heiskell
Tennessee

RATINGS --
Repro: *
Format: *
Material: NC
Artwork: O
General: **

This month's issue is published by Jim Caughran who by some stroke of luck used a dark ink with 16# paper. This all adds up to showthrough -- and how! How unfortunate his first effort has to be spoiled with such a triviality. However, with heavier paper his productions should be quite pleasant and easy to read.

JD
Lynn A. Hickman
710 Boulevard, N.E.
Orangeburg,
South Carolina

Repro: *
Format: O
Material: *
Artwork: *
General: **

I find this an enjoyable magazine. It is multilith and the art is very good although it is only the cover. (Issue #23) Lynn promises more art next issue. Lack of it is explained by his moving. Good issue though with a great deal of humor. Recommended.

VOID #16&7
Greg Benford
c/o Lt. Col. James A.
Benford 051676
Hq. 591st F.A. Bn.
APO 169
New York, N.Y.

Repro: *
Format: *
Material: **
Artwork: *
General: ***

This zine is quite good with much Gorfandom in it. Much art by WR., and someone named Eddie who is very good. The picture in #7 on page 4 is excellent. Wish it could have been done full size in litho. Has an explanation of the INSIDE, KT, SFA and STARLIGHT combinations in #7 which strangely enough does a better job than I ever could. I would recommend this zine to all but perhaps neos who would have a hard time finding out what it is all about.

CAPSULES

SMALLER FOR

SATA illustrated
A/2C Danny I. Adkins
AF 15540088
3636th CCRTRARON(SUPP)
Stead Air Force Base, Nevada.

Repro **
Format *
Material 0
Artwork ****
General ***

And SATA is that:
highly and colorfully
illustrated. Contain-
ing a large amount of
fiction, the publica-
tion also features a

lengthy and mature letter column. The illustrations, as may be expected, are the most outstanding of the material, with editor Adkins leading an impressive list of amateur artists.

UMBRA
John Hitchcock
300 E. University Pkwy
Baltimore 18, Md.
10¢; 3/25

Repro **
Format *
Material **
Artwork **
General ***

UMBRA is a goodly
mixture of the serious
and the fanciful, with
just enough of each
to give the whole mag-
azine good balance.

A lengthy letter column and a fanzine review section of comparable size will throw glee in the hearts of those who revel in that sort of thing. Also includes no small amount of news and views of the overseas set.

WHIMSY
Ron Voigt
3859 Sullivan
St. Louis 7, Mo.
50¢ (quarterly)

Repro **
Format **
Material ****
Artwork *
General ****

This particular effort
is not recommended
to the fan crowd. Be-
ing a poetry magazine
and one of high stan-
dards, it will hold

no interest for them. But for those who look for the best in serious work of near-professional quality, both of science-fictional and 'main-stream' theme, this publication is issued.

MC²
Roger Sebel
13 Carrington Ave.
Bellevue Hill NSW
Australia (20¢)

Repro *
Format 0
Material **
Artwork 0
General *

Sporting an excep-
tional cover, this
first issue is pre-
haps typical of such
numbers. With ab-
solutely editorial

balance and poor cartooning, it yet shows a promising amount of latent talent. As soon as the editors eradicate the large amount of self-conscious humor they labor under, and shape up a better all-over material balance, they should have a very readable magazine.

BRILLIG
Larry Bourne
2436 1/2 Portland St.
Eugene, Oregon.
10¢

Repro *
Format **
Material ***
Artwork ***
General ***

If variety is your
brew, Bourne's opus
will meet with your
immediate favor.
Richard Geis' col-
umn is reminiscent

of the now-defunct PSYCHOTIC, and Don Stufloten's short 'One Night a Gnome' points him out as a future short-story writer to be contended with.

21 For fanhistorians, there's a seven pager by Guy E. Terwilleger (of 1412 Albright St., Boise, Idaho, who, by the way, is issue-
ing TWIG at 10¢ the copy. You might try it.) which is of interest.

science fiction on celluloid

GODZILLA: King Every time I come out of the movies, feeling of the Monsters a little depressed because I've just had the misfortune of wasting good green on some lousy monster film, I console myself, saying "Well, one of these days there'll be a good monster film. One of these days...."

And finally, falling neatly in line with the old adage which promises that all good things will come to those who wait, sure enough, I've had my wish: they've finally made a good, if not excellent monster film. That film is Godzilla: King of the Monsters.

According to an ancient Japanese legend, Godzilla is a giant reptile living under the sea. Recent H-Bomb experiments have reinvigorated the beast and he sets out 'raging through the world on a rampage of destruction'. At first, he destroys steamships and fishing boats. But this soon becomes too trivial a matter for the giant reptile, so he goes to the great Japanese city of Tokyo, and ... well ... sort of burns it to the ground. Naturally, in the end, the miracles of modern science find a way to do away with our friend (could there possibly be a monster film where the monster or creature or what have you, doesn't die?).

Raymond Burr plays an American news correspondent who is in Japan when Godzilla strikes. To satisfy his curiosity, Burr stays to cover the story. Meanwhile, he becomes associated (no he didn't fall in love) with Momoko Kochi, who plays 'Emiko', daughter of a leading Japanese scientist. She discovers how to destroy Godzilla, but certain circumstances prevent her from telling it to the world. (But don't worry; she lets on in the end.)

Unlike most monster films, Godzilla contains reasonably good acting and dialogue. Burr plays the part of the reporter like he actually means it, and Miss Kochi makes a fairly good showing, herself. Maybe all this can be credited to the fact that the film was produced and directed entirely by Japanese. In fact, Godzilla's entire cast is Japanese, save Burr.

:Marty Fleischman

I will buy any back issues of fanzines, especially EISFA, before Nov. 1955. Please send lists: John W. Thiel, 14901 Hamlin Ave., Midlothian, Illinois.

I'll pay a whole 10¢ for any and all copies of Weird Science and Weird Fantasy. This includes postage, tho. I also need all the '54 issues of SFQuarterly, for which I'll pay 25¢, also including postage. Also the Aug '52 Startling, the Startling number

containing 'Against the Fall of Night', and the last five issues of TWS. :write to Marty Fleischman, 1247 Grant Ave., Bronx 56, N.Y.

1984 Unfortunately, this is a poor film of a good novel. Miss-casting, misdirection and missproduction have combined to render the adaptation heart-breakingly lacking in depth of any sort whatsoever. Any resemblance to the Orwell novel of the same title is purely coincidental.

Written by Orwell as a totalitarianistic prophecy, the novel is one of the most realistic and shocking extrapolations written by man -- so much so in fact, that most 'casual' readers shrug off the work as too fantastic for serious consideration. Here, the filming concern has done the same, watering down the script for the mass audience to a point where the original plot and theme are barely recognizable.

The main draw-back of the film is not so much that it is a simplified version but that the script editing did not go far enough. Attempts to combine superficial acting and dialogue with involved and startling special effects go continually awry and the resulting contrast makes the film appear a farce. It is a little difficult to imagine a group of well fed, prosperous appearing citizens sitting in a group before a television monitor, chanting, "Hate, Hate" into a crescendo of bellows and screeches. This for no other reason than that the content need not hate.

The love affair between Smith and Julia has been reduced to an inanity, the minor characters to nonentities and the theme to an obscurity. However, there are a few notable performances rendered, chief among which is that of Michael Redgrave, the legitimate theater actor of note. As Inner Party head and official of the Ministry of Peace, Redgrave renders one of the lone performances standing between a complete waste of film and a merely wretched picture.

:David Hannon

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marty fleishman and david hannon

THE FREE FALL

FREE FOR ALL

Well, the breaking up of the best tag team and manager in the free-fall wrestling business has finally come; and, as usual, I got the clame. But I've said before, and I'll say again, you can't blame me for trying to make a little extra money on the side. And how was I to know that a chick like Captain Gerns' daughter would fall for a guy like Sam Jensen? And just when things were going so good, too....

But I'll start at the beginning.

After defeating the Reptile's two fake wrestlers, the Immovable Object and Monkey Thompson, we found that Captain Haggard had gone into partnership with him and was trying to stop us from continuing in the game. The Reptile, Captain Harris of Earth Satellite One, is the joker who stole the free-fall wrestling idea from us in the first place, and this time I didn't think we'd ever get back at them. We did, but it ended in disaster.

After beating the Reptile's men at Juce Station, we had of course gone back to Pluto Station to train for further wrestling, but Captain Haggard took care of that. He posted a notice that wrestling in the station was prohibited and to emphasize his point gave us plenty of extra work. Flesh and Furry - Sam Jensen and Pete Johnson - were mad at me for awhile, but I'm not completely without friends, and soon we were transferred to Mercury Station, under the command of Captain Gerns.

Gern's abnormality - from being in free-fall - was more along the lines of Furry's than Flesh's. He hadn't grown hair all over his body like Furry, but he was always in need of a shave and a hair cut. It was strange to see the three of them together: Furry and Captain Gerns covered with thick hair and Flesh scratching his naked chin with his nailless finger, wishing he had a little of that fur... somewhere. Gerns was glad to have us, though, since he had long wanted to start a wrestling team under the Mercury Station banner. He gave us a mighty welcome and personally conducted us around the station.

24 "...and here," he said, as a final triumph to the tour, "is the recreational room where you can train your team."

neal wilgus

We all pushed into the large room and looked at the rope cube that made up the three dimensional ring of free-fall wrestling. TV equipment was set up nearby from where it could be wheeled into instant use. Gerns was ready for us to begin wrestling then and there. "Say, this is nice," muttered Sam.

"Yeah," I agreed. "You guys think you can train here?"

"Just give us a chance," said Pete.

"You'll get all the chance you need," said Captain Gerns, "if you can win the System Title for Mercury Station."

"We can," I said, confidently. But I didn't know at the time just what a brawl would come out of my confidence.

June Gerns, like myself and Captain Haggard of Pluto Station, was a normal. Free-fall had done nothing to change her: she had grown no tails, no beards and/or no scales; and she hadn't lost her hair, finger- or toenails or other normal characteristics. June was the adventurous sort, and would have followed her father to the farthest planet - in either direction. She was not pretty, but she wasn't hard to look at either... especially after five years in space.

But Furry and I had no chance when she met Flesh. And neither did he. He promptly fell like an elevator on Jupiter.

Now, what she saw in him I don't know. All I know is that after they met she was always near him and he could never train right.

At first I didn't pay much attention to the romance, since it was really none of my business. But when the announcement that the Reptile and Eddie Haggard were quitting the space service and becoming professional wrestlers burst, I tried to break it up...or at least slow it down. No one had gone in for wrestling to that extent before. Flesh and Furry, for instance, still worked for the government, and only wrestled in their spare time.

Harris was a little old for professional wrestling by Earth standards, but free-fall makes any man 10 years younger, and he was in good enough condition to make for substantial...very substantial...opposition. Haggard was a match for most men even on Earth without the added advantage (or disadvantage) of free-fall. Together, they just might take the System title, especially if they went in for it on a full time basis while everyone else was just an amateur.

I spoke to Captain Gerns about the love affair, and he promised to do something about it, at least until the training was over. He liked Sam, but couldn't see him as a son-in-law. In fact, none of us could see why the girl liked Sam so much, though I've always entertained the theory that she's always hated her father's beard and continuously growing hair, and fell in love with Sam because of his total absence of such paraphernalia.

It was soon after we heard the news of the new wrestling team that I got my big inspiration regarding the accumulation of a little added legal tender. At the time, I saw nothing wrong with the idea, and if it hadn't been for Monkey Thomas, all arrangements would have gone on schedule. All I wanted to do was earn some money setting up

all the matches for the coming title bout at Jupe Station. Of course, June Station already had their own promoter, but I figured that just for this one bout - or set of bouts - I would arrange everything and clean up in the process. The big TV outfit in wrestling is SBS-TV and they always like to have a couple of preliminary fights before the title one. So, when I challenged the Reptile and Haggard to meet Flesh and Furry at Jupe Station the end of that month, I also lined up some other wrestlers to do the preliminaries.

Since the main match was to be a tag bout, I planned the two preliminaries as singles. Therefore, I got the Red Terror to go against Rainbow Wolf and Fish Jones to take on Monkey Thomas. The last match was a mistake and nearly meant the downfall of my team.

It took us a week and a half to reach Jupe Station, and when we arrived the Reptile and Haggard were already there. The match was the most highly publicized one in the short history of free-fall wrestling, because everyone knew it was a grudge match. It was truly a system bout since we came from the innermost planet and the others had been training way out at Pluto. Reporters swarmed around us as we pushed through the airlock and shook hands with Harris and Haggard. Flash bulbs lighted up the crowded entrance-way, and then we all went to our dressing rooms. The wrestlers I had lined up for the preliminaries hadn't shown up yet, but they were due to arrive just a few hours before the fights that night.

"Well, how do you feel, boys?"

I asked when we got settled in the dressing room. "You think you can beat those bums?"

"Sure," said Pete. "We know every trick the Reptile can think of. We'll stop him at every turn. And that goes double for Haggard."

"How about you, Sam?" I asked.

"Huh?"

"Think you can beat the Reptile and Haggard?"

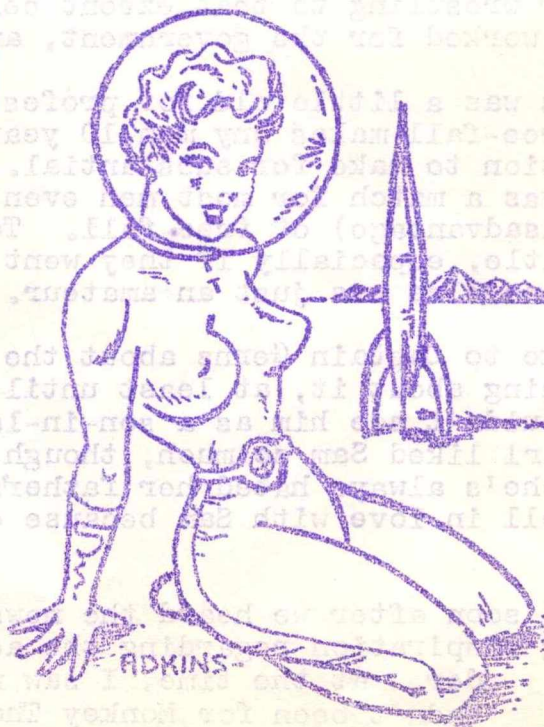
"Yeah...say, Vance, why did Captain Gerns tell me to stick to my training and leave June alone?"

"Why, he just wants you to win. You want to look good for June, don't you?"

"Sure." He had a sad look that made me wonder if it was wise to break them up after all.

"Well, then you get in there and tear them apart."

"I'll try," he mumbled. He didn't seem too sure of himself. I began to wonder, myself.



Flesh and Furry were warming up with the four or five trainers we'd brought along when I heard a knock on the door and opened it to see the Reptile. His scales sparkled beautifully in the electric lights of the hall. He beckoned me outside.

"What do you want?" I asked.

"Vance, I like you." I choked. "No," he went on hurriedly, "don't laugh. I really do. Now, we've been fighting each other for some time now, and I think it's about time we got together. Your boys are good, but Haggard and myself know a few things too. So I got to thinking: we could really clean up if we went in for free-falling like they did for mat wrestling fifty or sixty years ago back on Earth. Those guys knew what they were doing."

"What do you mean?" I said, not trusting him any more than he trusted me. "Well," he went on with added eagerness, "straight wrestling is great, but the way they worked it back then was to put on an act for everyone. They didn't really hurt each other, see; they just put it on. More like entertainment. They even fixed the outcome before the fight started. It wasn't illegal. It was just good business. Now..."

"Now you want us to throw the fight. I always knew you had a slimy belly, Harris, but I didn't think you'd stoop this low.

"Look, this isn't crooked. We're not fixing a sports event. We're giving planned entertainment to the people. Think of it this way..."

"You'd better beat it before my boys see you and start the fight early," I said. He stopped and looked up at me as if he were going to argue some more, opened his mouth as if groping for something to say, then turned and floated off with a violent kick against the wall. I wasn't so sure he'd given up. I didn't like the look he gave me. As it turned out, I had a good reason. I didn't know this, however, as I went in and warned they boys to look out for some crooked trick on the Reptiles behalf.

I left Flesh and Furry in care of the trainers when the preliminaries started, and went around to the recreation room. The Red Terror and Rainbow Wolf were fighting it out in the cube; I found Captain Gerns near the door. "Hi," I said. "Well, the boys are all ready. As soon as the prelims are over we can win the Title.

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"Great," he said, "great. We'll take that title to Mercury and never give it up."

"Right. Say, where's June? I think she ought to be nearby to spur Sam on. He's pretty sad 'cause we've been keeping them apart, and I think she'd be a good influence on him when he gets in there."

"She's in her room right now, but never fear, she'll be here for the fight. I can keep them apart at the station, but nothing could keep her away from this fight. She'll be here pretty soon."

"That's good," I said.

We watched the last of the Terror-Rainbow fight, and then they announced the Jones-Thomas match.

"What's that?" the Captain asked abruptly. "Monkey Thomas. Here?"

"That's right," I acknowledged. "I lined up the preliminaries and made a little money on the side. By the way, how about a little bet on this one. I know Thomas is a bum. We already beat him once."

"I know he's a bum, too," said the Captain, almost crying. "Before he went to work for the Reptile, he worked at Mercury Station. He's the guy who fixed up the recreation room at the Station. Oh, this is awful!"

"Why? So what if he did work for you?"

"June was in love with him. Or at least she thought she was. She didn't know what kind of a guy he was. And he strung her along. God knows what'll happen if they see each other. I just hope she doesn't see him. Or he doesn't see her!"

"Oh, brother," I said, "you're not kidding. Sam and Monkey have it in for each other since that Immoveable Object match two or three months ago. And if they both go for June..." I shrugged and shuddered. "Well, let's stop June from getting in here."

We hurried out of the recreation room toward her compartment.

We met her in the hall outside her quarters and tried to stop her.

"Hi," I began, lamely. "Where are you going?"

"To see the fight, of course," she said, trying to get past me.

"Hasn't started yet," I returned, blocking her way. "Let's go on to my room and have a drink to celebrate. How about it?"

"Sure," put in Gerns. "We can't let the bout go uncelebrated."

She backed away. "I know what you two are up to. You don't want me to be near Sam. Well, you're too late. We're in love and we're going to get married. That's that. Nothing you can do to stop it."

"Hey," I blurted, hardly knowing what I was saying, "that's great. Let us get you a drink to celebrate it. I always knew Sam was matrimonial timber. He can still go on wrestling, can't he?"

"I won't have a drink with you, and I'm not sure if I'll want him to wrestle after we're married or not. Now let me go and see the match." She pushed past us and floated on down the hall.

"Wait," I said. "Only the preliminaries going on now. Let's have that..." But it was too late. She was gone. "Nuts," I said. "She'll see Monkey."

"See Monkey!" burst out Gerns. "She's going to marry Sam. Who cares about Monkey? I'm losing my daughter!"

28 I started to say he was just gaining a wrestler, but considering the Captain's mental condition at the moment, I changed my mind. "Why don't you go on to my room and have that drink?"

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ings of a purge?"

Anthony Butcher: "Quick! Which
end do you light it on?"

Raymond Palmit: "Miserable,
base, disgusting, by all means
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ght to my attention. Will set
science fiction back another
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I said. "I'll see if I can't
head off June and trouble." He
nodded and went one way. I head-
ed the other - after June.

It didn't help much, though, to
follow June. She entered the
recreation room in spite of my
pleadings not to, and immediately
spotted Monkey. "So that's why
you didn't want me to come in here."

"That's why," I said. "Now don't
start anything between Sam and
Monkey. We can win the title to-
night, if you'll leave everything
alone."

"All right," she agreed. "But
I'm going to watch the fight any-
way. Regardless of Monkey." I
could see she meant it, so I didn't
say anything.

She went down near the ring and
took a 'seat'. I fervently hoped
Monkey wouldn't see her there,
though I knew he would.
I went back to my room to help the
Captain with the drinking.

"D'ya think we'll win?"

"I don't know," I replied, pouring
myself a drink.

"We oughta win," the Captain said
positively, peering into his glass.

"Flesh and Furry'll win, an' I'll
win Flesh." He giggled, then guz-
zled.

Gerns had already had too much,
but I didn't have the heart or in-
clination to stop him. I took a
swig myself and said, "Don't worry.
We'll win the title. I only hope
there's no trouble between Sam and
Monkey."

"Sure. Say, Dark, don't you thingsh
- think - we oughta see that they
don't go at each other's throats.
We oughta be there right now to
protect June." He rolled his eyes.

"She can take care of herself.

What could we do?" I took another

sip. Gerns looked up at me, nodded and slumped back into the bunk.
He drifted off into a slight sleep, and I just let him slouch
there. He was drunk and I was fast on the way; I didn't try to stop.

After a while, he popped his head up and said, "Monkey. He'll take her off in th' threes...He'll carry her away. We'd better go help." Feeling no pain, I asked, "Help carry 'er off?" He stopped to consider this. I waited, then, "What was the question?" I couldn't remember either. We drunk to it.

We somehow found the door to the recreational room, and on the second or third time around, we got it opened. "Who's got the bottle?" he asked a little too loud.

"You do," I hissed even louder.

The room full of wrestlers, fans and TV men didn't notice us, and went on down to the edge of the ring. "Which is our corner?" I asked.

"Mus' be that one," he said, pointing to the corner where Flesh and Furry were warming up. "See the funny animals..."

We moved over to them and I said, "Well, we're here. You can start the fight. But watch for that Reptile. He's crooked." Gerns and I had another drink.

"Say," said Furry, "are you two drunk?"

I breathed at him and confirmed his suspicion.

"Well I'll be damned. You really are. Get out of here before you throw the fight."

"We're O.K.," I said. "Where's June? Has Monkey made a pass at her yet?"

Gerns sobered up enough to whisper loudly, "Don't tell 'em about Monkey."

"What's that?" asked Sam. "What about Monkey and June?"

And it still would have been O.K. if Monkey hadn't come in just then and taken a seat next to June.

Sam was about to say something else when the bell rang and cut him short. The fight was on.

Everything went well for awhile, and it looked as if everything would end in fine shape. And then Monkey made his pass at June.

Sam was in the ring at the time, but he was keeping an eye on the crowd and June. Haggard was giving him a bad time, since Sam's attention was out of the ring.

June's clear voice proved well the magnificent acoustics of the room when Monkey made his move, and Sam, if he hadn't seen the move, certainly heard its result. He flipped Haggard across the ring and made for Monkey. Luckily for us, he tagged Furry before he left the ring, so we were still in the title running - although Pete would have to swing it all by his lonesome.

As Sam shot past us, Gerns grabbed his arm. "Have a drink, boy!" he suggested jovially. Sam paid no attention, but dragged Gerns after him. I followed.

No words were exchanged, but Sam and Monkey went at it, sparing each other, groping for holds. "Ah, fellows," I said mildly. "Cut it out?"

Flesh was pulling Monkey toward the ring and Gerns was still holding on to him. June also got into the act by launching a chair in the general direction of Monkey. The chair ended up barely missing me and ploughing into the ropes...

By now the whole crowd was watching the fight outside the ring and poor Furry had to handle both the opposing wrestlers. The referee was crawling out of the ropes and heading toward Flesh

and Monkey. "Stop," I yelled.

Flesh grabbed Monkey by the tail, and that was all. The fight was over. So was the camera, the technicians and the captain of the station that Monkey crashed into. June hurried to Flesh's side, saw he wasn't hurt, and slapped him on the face. Then she turned and left the room. Flesh's jaw dropped, he turned to me and yelled, "You dirty bum!" and went after her.

"Say," came Furry's voice, "what about the fight? I believe we won, didn't we?" He had the Reptile woven in the ropes and Haggard tied into a round ball. It was a beautiful sight to see. I almost wish I hadn't been drunk....

And above all the uproar came Gern's voice: "Buddy, have a drink!"

So now you see why the whole bunch of us is split up. Flesh and June are broken up for no known reason - or at least none known to men. Flesh hates me. June abhors me. And when Gerns gets sobered up he'll detest me. And even Furry loses no affection my way for breaking up the fight and for getting drunk. Then there's Haggard and Harris, who hate me just on general principles... I'm even thinking of hating me.

So, I don't know what I'm going to do. Everybody blames me when it's just as much their fault as it is mine. And if I don't find some way to get them all together again it may mean the end of legalized free-fall wrestling. I've got to do something!

.....

I know.....

I wonder what I did with that bottle.....?

-- Neal F. Wilgus, whose concluding installment of

Flesh and Furry will appear in the next issue.

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The monkey was over the top of the station and that was all. The light was over the monkey by the tail, and that was all. The light was over the monkey by the tail, and that was all. The light was over the monkey by the tail, and that was all.

"I believe we were right," said Jerry a voice, "what about the fight? I believe we were right." He had the hospital cover in the ropes and he had a sound. I was a beautiful sight to see. I almost wish I had been there.

"Buddy, have a drink!" Jerry said to me. "I'm even thinking of having one." Jerry said to me. "I'm even thinking of having one." Jerry said to me. "I'm even thinking of having one."

Everybody blamed me when it was over. I don't know what I'm going to do. I don't know what I'm going to do. I don't know what I'm going to do.

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