

Now if all of you have had your
your baths and brushed your teeth
and have put on clean pajamas, you
are welcome to

THE VINEGAR WORM

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FAPA 125 and that little group
of sophisticated people over there.

PERILOUS HALLUCINATIONS

Edited by

H*rl*n *ll*s*n

Introduction

I had a mighty hard time of it when I decided to become a writer. I was just eight years old, but tough, you know, not ready to give an inch to anybody. I had drive, plenty of drive, and plenty of cool, too, and I knew where it was at. I sometimes thought ZOW! and sometimes ZURGH! and I admit I was cocky. I remember Asimov once said to me, "Get out of here, you rotten little kid!" I had it coming, but I make a lot of money now and have brawls with famous crooners. I'm not as short as my measurements indicate.

I have created out of the sweat and pain and struggle of a ferociously difficult apprenticeship some stories that will shake you up when you realize how much sweat and pain and struggle went into them. I was married to the worst female seen since the Harpies disappeared, but I drove relentlessly ahead to produce stories embodying struggle and pain and sweat. I felt that these things were real, and should be said. I found that editors wouldn't buy them, but later they came round, and after I made it in Hollywood they bought the stories and thereby helped their magazines.

I think other writers have sometimes had ideas as outrageous as some of mine who couldn't get their stories published either, so I thought, Why not give them a chance to publish all these absolutely

great stories that shook up, shocked and staggered the editors? I wrote letters to a lot of writers and agents asking for stories that craven editors refused to publish because they contained perilous hallucinations. I found that the agents sent me tired old stories that were first refused in 1933, but after I began to really bug the writers they came through in grand shape. I remember that one writer wrote me: "O.K. H*rl*n, I give up, dammit. Here's a story." I have printed this story here among the others, a really new departure about a scientist who built a spaceship in his back yard and discovered Mars with it. You will be shaken.

I now present the perilous hallucinations.

Introduction to THEIR FLOCKS BY NIGHT

I was living in New York in 1962, having trouble with Campbell, Pohl, Davidson, Ferman and some people named Kirby who you probably never heard of: I knew that a few people sometimes thought that I sometimes behaved with less than aristocratic manners, and I decided to show them that I was a gentleman even if I had to slice them up with my switchblade to do it. I went up to Campbell's office. I know that Campbell did not have gout at the time, but he still hollered like crazy when I stomped on his toe. I have never resented, however, the fact that he never published one of my stories.

I was picked up off the floor outside Campbell's office by an enormous clean-shaven man with a pushy manner who said his name was Th**d*r* St*rg**n. I sneered at him and stomped on his toe, but when I began to put together this volume I remembered him and asked him for a story. I learned when he replied to my letter that he was the janitor in the building and had never written a story, but in the end he sent a story that will most certainly shake you up. I print it below.

THEIR FLOCKS BY NIGHT

By Th**d*r* St*rg**n

Aspinrode had arrived on Gahk by an anfractuouse route. On Altair XIII, in a low dive, he had vomited over the bar, and in trying to catch his breath he made a noise that sounded like "gahk!" Immediately a huge stevedore standing on his left took on an expression of distaste and anger and punched and pummelled him so that several bones were broken.

Later, Aspinrode told the story to his friend Turpinwall, a gentle professor of meadology. "All I said," Aspinrode said, "was 'Gahk!'"

Turpinwall thereupon flayed great strips off Aspinrode's skin with a sjambok, all the while reviling him in terms of total disgust and revulsion.

Aspinrode, puzzled, went down to the public library and looked up Gahk. The encyclopaedia said: "The third planet of such a star, lying in such a galaxy, at such coördinates. Ugh." That was all.

Aspinrode went there. He had to go. It took him thirty-four years, but the day came when his flitter set down on Gahk. No sooner had he set foot upon the soft greensward than he felt love enfolding and enveloping him, great curds and gobbets of love that elevated his spirits and made him feel a little short of breath. "Gosh, love," he said.

Pfleem came gently to the flitter and led Aspinrode to his house. Like everything on Gahk, the house seemed to be a part of the lovable landscape, perfectly blended with the rolling greenery, and indeed invisible unless you knew that it was a hole in the ground.

Pfleem gave him sirk to eat and gint to drink, and discoursed upon philosophy and told jokes that were funny but incredibly subtle and full of love. Love seemed to come seeping through the root-ends that festooned the ceiling.

"This is my wife," Pfleem said.

Aspinrode rose to acknowledge the introduction and froze in the act. He unfroze, retched, and burrowed his way to the surface. There he lay in a catatonic state on the gentle grass.

After an immeasur able time he was aware that Pfleem was beside him. Pfleem said, "Now you know."

"But a sheep!" Aspinrode cried. "Your wife!"

"Why not?" Pfleem said. There was love all over, and Aspinrode was aware of it. "Why not a sheep?" Pfleem said. "We know that at the great periods of human history this was thought to be a superior kind of love. Only look at the art produced in Periclean Greece, in the Egypt of the Pharaohs. Whence, do you think, came the idea of the centaur and the faun? Whence the sphinx and the bird-headed gods of the pyramid-builders? Was not the Minotaur the mightiest symbol of power? Think about love, Aspinrode. Just get used to the idea."

"I see what you mean," Aspinrode said. "It's hard to get around your logic. I'd like to stay here with you."

"You shall," Pfleem said. "You may stay with us. And you shall have a home and a love. We must find you one."

He rose, gracefully and powerfully. He gave a piercing whistle. "Rover!" he cried. "Rover! Herd the flock over here!"

-The End-

Introduction to VESPERS

I was having trouble with my wife, a terrible woman, when L*st*r d*1 R*y first met me. I don't know what he thought of me (I admit I was ~~vain~~ at the time) but he must have had a pretty good opinion of me because I've liked him ever since. I must explain that he wrote this ~~story~~ in twenty-two minutes specifically at my request for this volume. I had admired his story "The Last of God", and I wanted an equally perilous hallucination for this volume. I couldn't get just what I wanted until I made it clear that I thought that the idea that Man could kick God around was pretty perilous, and would make a story. I listened to d*1 R*y's reply with amazement: he contended that he'd already written that story. I told him No Such Thing; he could change it around. I'm glad to say he saw the light. I know you'll be shaken by this new and perilous idea.

VESPERS

By L*st*r d*1 R*y

Poor little God sat in his small cairn in a corner of the room. Alice, Lurlene, Tom and Lester were making fun of him.

"We're tired of you, God," Lester said. "You just keep your nose

out of our affairs."

"You just don't understand things, God," Lurlene said.

"But I created all this!" God said indignantly. "You wouldn't be here if it hadn't been for me."

Lester used his kind voice. "That was a long time ago, God," he said, "and things have changed. You're only God, but I'm a boy. You've got to get over the idea that you have something to say about what I do."

God felt something very like despair. It had seemed to be such a good idea to say, "Let there be light." And now look what it had resulted in.

Lurlene reached out and pinched Him. "Ouch!" God shouted. The children all laughed.

God waxed exceeding wrath. "Never do that again!" he cried. They all laughed again. They were human children, and He was only God.

Lester said, "We're going to play now, and we don't want you to mess around. We're going to play space exploration, or maybe politics-and-war, and You don't know anything about those games. All You know are old junky games, like fiery chariots and loaves and fishes. So You keep out of our games."

God was a patient God, but He had been driven beyond endurance. "Lester," He said in a great voice. "Lester, I tire of your arrogance."

"Nyah, nyah, nyah," Lester said.

God waved his hand.

Everything disappeared, including Lester.

And the earth was without form and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep.

-The End-

Introduction to RAIDERS OF THE PUERPERAL CAGE

I often think that Ph*1*p J*s* F*rm*r is a saint. I don't claim to be particularly clairvoyant, but I think I was the first to point out that a man who wears a halo has something going for him, and I know I was the first to spot F*rm*r's halo.

I don't believe that Ph*1 has been sufficiently appreciated. I know that even I have sometimes been shaken and astonished by the tortuous subtlety with which he pursues and develops to its last delicate ramification an intricate structure of symbolism that mounts Pelion on Ossa until the most absolute depths of the subconscious are probed: mushrooms, arrows, baseball bats, the Washington Monument; ashtrays, doughnuts, bathtubs, sopranos; with these faultless symbols does he probe the evil that lurks in the hearts of men.

I have no doubt that the following story is the finest in the volume. I shouldn't say that, because I don't like to take sides, and there's a story of my own in this volume, but there are so many puns in this story and classical references and all that it makes James Joyce look like Mickey Spillane. I advise you to prepare yourself for a shock.

RAIDERS OF THE PUERPERAL CAGE

or

Jake Gatz

By Ph*ll*p J*s* F*rm*r

How They Brought the Good Booze From Eggs to Grant

Merb wriggles out of bed, a slim slip of slider, snakeslender. Pullon paints, herringborne woove. Blush trooth, go to bark feast. Ah! Beacon and aches! Like grub, man.

Like Dropping it Into a Warm Room

Merb's mother lives up, under and around; tunnels of the apartment building squirm from whore to there, deep and silent in the soft viscera of the structure. Merb's feet drag to a cornucopia corner, flesh-pink. He thumbs a door-plate.

Door sucks open, voice says, "Merb!"

"Mother."

Mother. Vastly pregnant, almost filling the room. Gravid, as she has been for the past one hundred twenty years. What foetus (feed us, O Lord) does she carry here, has she carried for a century and a score of years?

One Mede's Persian is Another Man's Fish

"How's brother Jake?" Merb says.

Mother says, "He's Pynchon me alla time. Whoop! How's that for a Heller?" She laughs like a swamp, and turns on the rover. They watch a quease show.

"When are you going to let brother Jake out of there?" Merb asks.

"Can't," Mother says. "The U.N. will guillotine him if ever he's born. Mine was the last of the pregnancies, you know, Merb, and it was illegal, of course, but I don't intend that the Oons guillotine poor Jake. But I got to admit that after a hundred and twenty years it's getting a little tiresome, having fatso there in my womb."

"A womb is a room."

"Or a tomb."

"Or a cage."

They watch a grope opera on the rover. It is a standard performance with no innovations in position or technique.

Brother Jake in his cage wants to hear. He beats on the wall.

"Louder, lewder!" he shouts.

Merb is vexed (Johnson's Hard Kote). "What you need, little brother, is a poem," he says. He dials a poem on the rover.

Merde d'Arthur

"I have read Melville and Greek tragedy;
You can't tell me anything about Ahab or Orestes I don't know;
But there's not enough scatological matter there.
I intend to get a good bit of it in here:
References to excrement are always good."

The Thrill of Battle

Handsome in leather unframes, the U.N. agents burst through the door. "Hände hoch!" they neigh horsely. Mother screams.

"We have come for the illegal foetus!" they shout.

"O.K., O.K., I'm coming," emerges the muffled, diving voice of Brother Jake. "I'll be out. Induce labor."

Hyperdynamic syrinxes are flourished, plunged home. "Howzzat, Mamma? Like classical music?"

Merb ignores the heaving and howling. Time passes. It has a red border.

Brother Jake is born. He wears a striped uniform and has snow-white hair and a beard. He bears a placard that says, "Joyce's Brother is a psychiatrist".

Jake moves slowly rhythmically, to drummy music. Piece by piece his clothes are removed. He plucks off shirt, trousers, underwear. At last he stands there in the buff.

Jake the Stripper!

Merb laughs and laughs and laughs. Brother Jake has made the last, the sublime joke. The Oons all blush.

-The End-

Introduction to THE MARAUDER LURKING NEAR THE CHASM LYING AT THE END OF TIME

I have sometimes been really amazed by the way my mind works, and there is no better example than my reactions to Ph*1's story about Jake the Stripper. I gave Ph*1 the idea, of course, but he didn't hallucinate the way I would have, and that bothered me. I had in mind a somewhat subtler idea: a more fully realized stripper, done with--I say this in all modesty--more finesse and more odd typography and more dirty words.

I was fascinated by The Stripper from the time I first heard of him, back in 1964, and at that time I did some pretty careful research on him in Bloch and Burks and Schachner and learned a lot. I'm not unaware that we have our share of oddballs here in L.A. (where I write for the movies) but we haven't ever had an oddie as peculiar as the stripper, who terrorized the London of Victoria by divesting himself of his clothes in the presence of gently nurtured maidens.

I believe I am safe in saying that the following story would not have been published by any magazine in the world; it is a Dangerous Hallucination that could have been published in this volume, of which I am editor, and nowhere else.

THE MARAUDER LURKING NEAR THE CHASM LYING AT THE END OF TIME

By H*rl*n *ll*s*n

He knew it wasn't London; London didn't look like the inside of an aluminium coffeepot. As a matter of fact, there wasn't such a thing as an aluminium coffeepot. It hadn't been invented yet. It was only 1888. But then perhaps it wasn't 1888, either. Where

were the hanson cabs, the gasogenes, the tantaluses? There seemed to be something wrong somewhere.

A girl came into view, climbing out of the percolator downspout socket. Fire moved, leaping through his veins, arteries, capillaries and nerves. A maid! A rotten filthy maiden. She would suffer. She would suffer, by God!

He had taken off no more than his jacket and tie before she began to shriek in ghastly embarrassment. She turned white as cheese, and fled gibbering.

Good, very good. Much better than those Whitechapel floozies-- Melina, Julie, Elizabeth, Barbra--who almost didn't notice him.

(Frogs wrote sonnets; vaseline chuckled merrily all over the city, as the sun rose and set several times.
(Over a million laser beams flashed around. A battleship tiptoed through the tulips, distributing alms to the poor.
(Two high-rise apartment buildings sweated, softened, melted, and became lobster Thermidor.)

He remembered Melina. She had remained cool as a cucumber, even when he was right down to his shorts. The slut! The vile drab!

=		I am the stripper. there is	*
	*	a cosmic importance in my dis-	
	*	robing. But will anyone under-	*
*	*	stand? We are together, my	
+		Melina. You clothed and uneasy;	+
=	*	me in my Arrow shorts. In unreason ⁺	=
	**	lies the final reason; this is	**
*		the ultimate confrontation, the	=
++		touchstone of reality. Ah!	*

There was the downspout socket again. Here she came, she came. Off tie! Off shirt! Off undershirt! Wow!

And now here's another. Strip for her. Fantastic. And another. And another.

A!M!A!Z!I!N!G!

More maiden than you can shake a stick at.

CLOTHES OFF^S

CLOTHES ON

CLOTHES OFF

CLOTHES ON

The maidens holl er ed.

They hollere@d loud.

They kept it up for a long time, a long, long time a time beyond measurement, an eternity. After a while it got tiresome.

"I want to stop," he said. "I'm tired of stripping."

They kept coming, neatly in rank and file. Each one had to be shocked and embarrassed.

Suddenly he saw his future: himself incarcerated in a modernistic coffeepot, stripping and stripping forever and ever, with no

rest, never any rest, while he became skinnier and skinnier, becoming at last mere skin and bones, as the people of future time marched their robots past him for their own amusement. And he would have to keep on stripping, because they were maidens. A robot was forever a maiden, forever inviolable, because of the steel-alloy hymen.

"All right, all right!" he screamed. "I deserve it. I should be damned. But in the name of pity, don't call me Jake! Call me Frank!"

The coffeepot gleamed pitilessly down upon him.

-The End-

-THE END OF PERILOUS HALLUCINATIONS-

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The review copies of the Gormenghast trilogy arrived last week from Ballantine, and after I had them out of the mailing bag and recognized them for what they were, I cuddled and fondled them as if they had been puppies. The appearance of these books in paperback was an event I'd hoped for for a good many years. About ten years ago I did a good deal of ineffective drum-beating to start a Titus Groan fad. It seemed to me then--as it does now--that Peake's book is much better than Tolkien's, and if The Lord of the Rings has a vogue, so should Titus Groan, Gormenghast and Titus Alone. Perhaps the wave of enthusiasm will begin now. A straw in the wind might be subway graffiti, which purportedly laid the foundations for the Tolkien club. Have any of you New Yorkers seen an inscription reading "Titus Lives"?

A large part of the second issue of this magazine was devoted to a panegyric on Titus Groan. That was in late 1957 or early 1958, although the book had been published in this country in 1946, by Reynal & Hitchcock. I found the book in a second-hand book store, and it cost me a dime. (In the review I said a quarter, because I didn't think I'd be believed if I told the truth.) I thought the book was fascinating (in the real meaning of the word) and I was unable to rest until I had urged it upon everybody who seemed likely to appreciate it.

Nothing consequential happened, except that Damon Knight advised me that there was a sequel, called Gormenghast, and he lent me his copy. I read that, and was even more enthusiastic than I had been about Titus Groan. I immediately set out to get my own copy, which wasn't too easy; it hadn't been published in this country, and getting an English book in Denver became a trifle complicated.

My copy of Titus Alone came from Norman Metcalf, who sent it to me for review in New Frontiers. I wrote the review (I was disappointed) but I don't think it was ever published. I still have a copy, though, and perhaps I'll publish it here sometime in the future, mostly in the hope of provoking some arguments.

The Ballantine paperbacks have a number of Peake's drawings of the characters, none of which were in the original editions, but which I assume were in the new Talley & Weybright hard-cover edition. On the whole it does not seem to me that they add anything.

I urge you to buy these books. It may revive the sense of wonder even in the grizzled oldsters of FAPA.