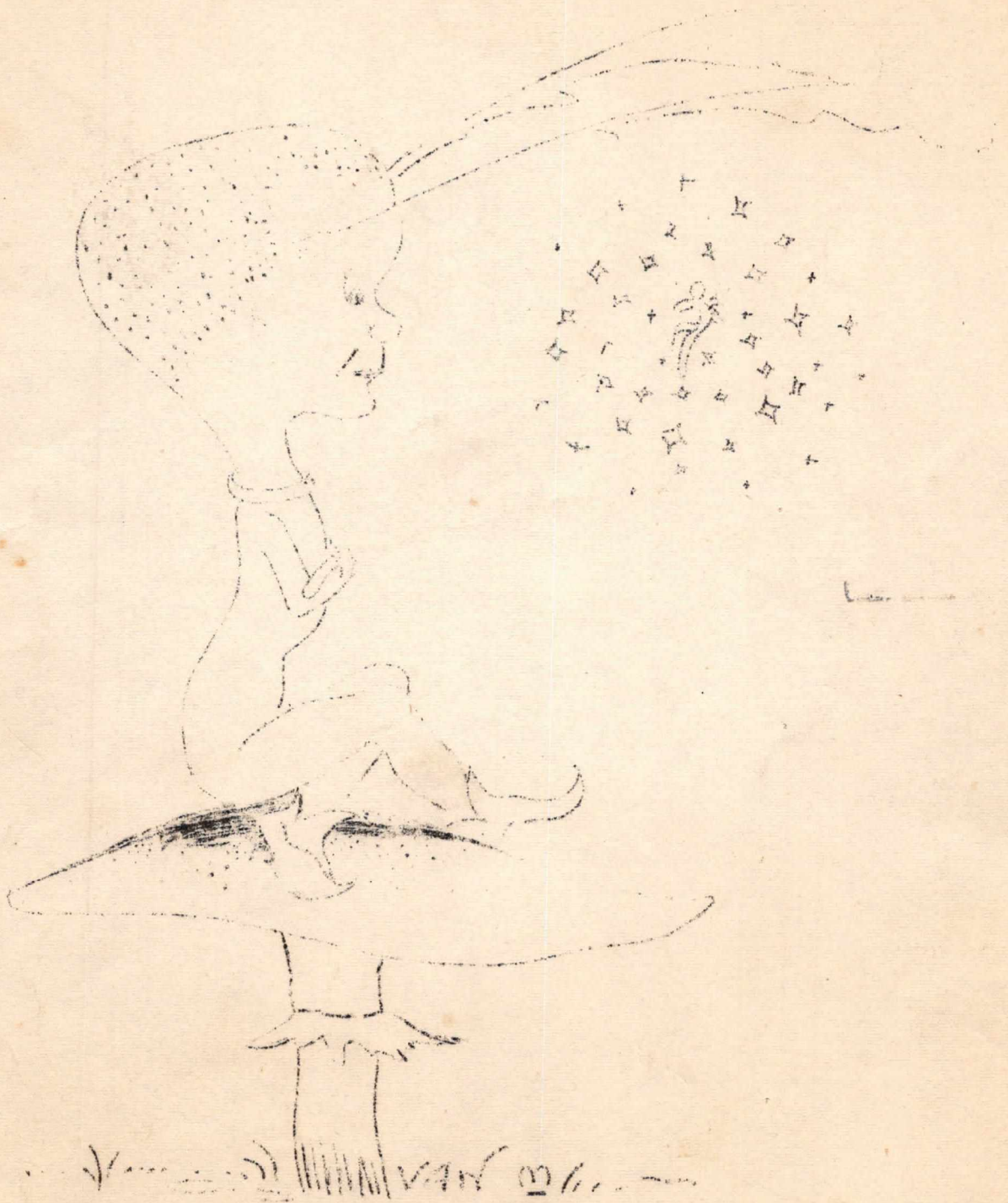


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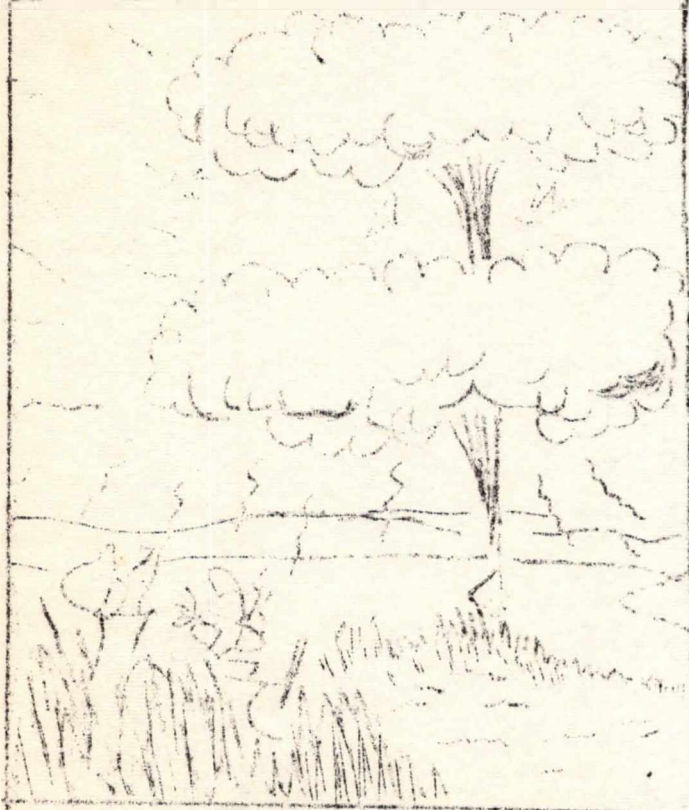


... von ... VAN M...

NUMBER. 771

By Karen Kruse

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There's that atomic-research fella. Hear he's been reloading some shells of his own! (Copyright 1953 by Field and Stream. Used by permission.)

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* I Hate Dave Hammond. That fouty human being had a date with me for tonight; I'd been saving the evening for him for nearly a month. He was going to come down from Philly, just to see little Karen. . . Well, Wednesday (this is Satrday) I get a letter. "Sorry," says the fourthasher, "the date is off. When this gets to you, I'll be in the Air Force."

* The things people won't think of to break dates! But I won't take as thin an excuse as that one twice.

* I Hate Dave Hammond, Part Two. He is a friend of Marian Cox, that arch-Fanette, and gave her my name. I refuse absolutely to have anything whatsoever to do with the Fanettes, Femzine, or anything else of that sort. It would be a good idea if there weren't many fannes, but since the membership of the Tasfic was 20% female, it doesn't make any sense. Or what do you think? Says she, raising a hyper-zap gun.

* Femzine strikes me as totally uninteresting. I have read through the sample copy they sent me; it is an unmitigated bore. For instance, there is a story about a mermaid; it starts off noplac in particular and stays there. And d'ya remember what de Camp did with his mermaid? She came on the scene with a purpose, the humans in the story had purposes of their own, and there was a story. Things happened. There were conflicts and resolutions of therconflicts. There was fun in it. But "Bubbles"---no thank you.

* If Femzine were interesting at all, it might be worthwhile. I can't, however, see that there's any particular benefit to fandom here. Not that I'm a serious fuggheaded fan; Pthalo forbid! Fandom, as I see it, is for fun. Well, if the Fanettes are having fun, I suppose they're getting their money's worth, and far be it from me to stop them. But there isn't anything in it for me. Dixi.

REPORT ON THE EGGNOG DISASTER
By Poul Anderson

* For some years, the true history of what some journalists have sensationallistically referred to as "The Eggnog Disaster" has been suppressed. This has not been because of military secrecy. Originally, to be sure, the project was classified TOP SECRET as a matter of principle. A few days later, when the classifier was finally able to prove that his great-aunt is not now nor has ever been in possession of a r*d sweater and was actually allowed to read the report, he re-classed it CONFIDENTIAL. The next day it was re-classed RESTRICTED. The next hour it was re-classed DECLASSIFIED. Three minutes later the now declassé report was classed PLEASE TELL THAT NUT TO GET THE HELL OUT OF HERE. Thus there has been no violation of security in this revelation; in fact, the Department of Security has begged and even pleaded with us to reveal the facts. However, we have remained adamant.¹ Hope of a solution for the embarrassing plight of our chief, Dr. Percival Grenville Thornton Onderdonk, has finally prompted him to permit publication.

* It will be recalled that there has been considerable work done on the isolation and liquefaction of pure vacuum.² Some authorities have

classed pure vacuum as Absolutely Nothing, pointing out that Absolutely Nothing has the properties attributed to it. Other authorities, have described it as the esse sans percipi. Then, other authorities have called it the percipi sans esse. Still other authorities have said it is the negation or negative (authorities differ) of Ding an sich. Still other authorities have said to hell with it.

* In August, 1945, Dr. Onderdonk was released from his important wartime post³ and returned to his own Institute of Advanced Advancement in Eggnog, Minnesota,⁴ to continue his well-known researches into the degenerate states of matter. Since we, his assistants, had already achieved the ultimate degeneration, he looked for New Worlds.⁵ A fresh⁶ definition of pure vacuum occurred to him. Vacuum in isolation was, obviously, pure space. Therefore, it should be possible to isolate pure time.

* I need not describe our methods in detail, since they will be obvious to everyone. I might only mention one blind alley as a warning to future investigators: time cannot be isolated by boiling old clocks.⁷ Essentially, the method involves the distillation of vacuum (space) from liquefied spacetime. Suffice it to say that before long we had obtained large quantities of Time.⁸ Compression and liquefaction

Notes

1. We were waiting for Astounding to raise its rate to 4¢.

2. Astounding Science Fiction: Vol. XXXIV, No. 1, pp. 94-6; Vol. XXXIV, No. 5, pp. 148-9, 152-3; Vol. XXXV, No. 3, p. 138; Vol. XXXV, No. 4, p. 135; Vol. XXXVI, No. 2, pp. 154-5.

3. He was paid a large salary to stay out of research laboratories.

4. Which is just across the river from Slurp!, Wisconsin.

5. Published in London.

6. In fact, downright impudent.

7. Only new ones will do.

8. 20¢ per copy.

♀ ♀ ♂ 4 R

Dr. Druce, and we were ready to measure the physical properties of this interesting substance. This attempt was, unfortunately, nullified by the fact that pure time has no physical properties.

* It was our hope that by drawing off liquid time in small bottles, we could sell these to overworked executives under some such trade name as OWRZ, The Brisk Bottle for the Busy Businessman.¹⁰ The convenience of uncorking a bottle, and suddenly having five or six hours within the span of one by the clock is obvious. Unfortunately, none of the local merchants seemed much interested; in fact, judging by remarks overheard, they seemed under the misapprehension that we were manufacturing nuts. A visiting Spanish gentleman by the name of Don Juan Tenorio showed the only real interest, though admittedly a lay one.

* Therefore, we confined ourselves to pure research¹¹ and obtained some truly astonishing results.¹² Credit must here be given to the ingenuity and persistence of two Irish physicists, O'Tempora and O'Mores, without whose constant encouragement, invaluable suggestions and unfailing helpfulness, the entire project would have been finished in half the time. But, then, the entire work was cut short by the Egnog Disaster.

9. Ham and eggs.

10. Of course, we intended to add Vitamin B₁, chlorophyll, ammonium-ion, and U235.

11. Imure research being conducted on Saturday nights.

12. This was of little value, Astonishing having been discontinued.

* What happened was simple. Only a moron could have overlooked the danger. (Note to stenciler: Delete the foregoing sentence.) We had stored approximately five million liquid years in a large spherical tank. At the moment of disaster, we had succeeded in solidifying some time¹³ and were chipping away at the block with ice picks to produce the wellknown nick of time. At this moment, the storage tank, possibly overheated, exploded. Five million years volatilized all over the place.

* Fortunately, most of us were out of range and unaffected. A section of Egnog suddenly disappeared, being replaced by large plastic buildings inhabited by hairless gentlemen with oversized heads, speaking some incomprehensible language, who have defied all attempts at eviction for lack of passport.¹⁴ This, however, is a minor nuisance; a real tragedy befell our great Dr. Onderdonk, who was splashed with about 3.927 liters of time. The report of this disaster is being published in hopes that some researcher may find the method of rescuing our eminent chief from his plight. He keeps tripping over his long white beard.

13. Freezing point -473 degrees K.

14. They disintegrate the evictors

SURE YOU DON'T MEAN PHILEP LATHAM?

* From The Washington Post: "Olga Druce, producer of Captain Video, found out very quickly that the kiddies insisted on scientific accuracy, so she became a student of rocket propulsion and space. However, she doesn't depend on her own knowledge on scientific matters, but engaged Dr. Robert Richardson, astrophysicist, to write scripts."

And just howinell do YOU make these things come out even? Someday I'll-

Philco Report (of a sort)

By Karen Kruse

* When I went to the Philco in November, I expected parties on the night before. Irene, Pavlat, Jacobs and I went early, therefore; arriving in Philly at about nine in the evening. We checked in and started hunting for fans.

* Only one fan was registered at the hotel, it being Bob Tucker, and he wasn't in. We looked in the hotel bar, and there wasn't ANYONE there; we sat down and had a couple of beers, waiting for someone to show up, but they never did. Then we toured the neighborhood, and no fans were to be found in any of the bars. We called Tucker's room again but he was still out. We called all the Phillians we could think of--but they weren't home. We didn't have Jim Williams' phone number or address - and, notcherwolly, everybody was there. After waiting till about one o'clock in the lobby, hoping that someone might eventually drift in, we went up to Irene's and my room, and proceeded to have a fizz party. (We had had the foresight to bring a supply of makings with us.) We left word that if Tucker got in before three in the morning, he was to call us.

* So we sat around and drank fizzes and played Twenty Questions. Irene kept trying to contact Robert Glenn Briiiggs, whowasssupposed to be staying at the Y, but wasn't. She never did find him. And we sat around, wondering where all the faaans were.

* We also scouted the hotel for parties, thinking there might be some fans we hadn't expected and couldn't ask the desk about. We found two; but they weren't fans, and we decided not to stay.

* Then at 3:02, there was a phone call. Irene answered, hoping it might be Robert Glenn Briiiggs; but it wasn't. It was Tucker. "I have a friend with me," he said. "May I

bring it along?" We didn't object too strongly; so he and Dave Hammond wandered in a few minutes later.

* Tucker wasn't drinking; thus he (fortunately) (unfortunately) missed the experience of drinking a nuclear fizz. Dave took one; then he went to sleep on the foot of Irene's bed; she, with 1½, dozed off at the head of the bed.

* The rest of us emitted sensitive fannish noises until dawn--well, at any rate, it was certainly five-thirty--and they wandered back into whatever woodwork they were renting from the hotel, leaving Irene and me in peace and quiet. I was feeling only the least bit sleepy when they left, and got up without any trouble at nine in the morning; but was I ever sleepy that afternoon!

* Which, incidentally, is the reason there isn't any interview with de Camp in this issue. I thought I was taking coherent notes at the time, but next day I couldn't manage to write them up, and haven't been able to since.

* Maybe I can do that interview sometime. I still have my notes. But not, as I said, very good ones! Next time I have somebody to interview, I won't have a fizz party the night before. Or else I'll get enough sleep, at least ten hours. I swear I will!

Advertisement

99 and 44/100% of all collegiates--
99 and 44/100% of all jet pilots---
99 and 44/100% of all Centaurians--
99 and 44/100% of all physicists---

---- agreed that SWASHBUCKLERS are milder than any other cigarette they ever smoked! Yes, the new long SWASHBUCKLERS tasted mildest----and that's because they ARE mildest. In fact, SWASHBUCKLERS are the mildest cigarette ever rolled. They're SO mild that you can't taste them at all.

Them that takes cakes/Which the Parsee-man bakes/ Makes dreadful mistakes.

On Whether the Gostak Distims the Doshes

By Karen Kruse

* Speer asserts in the Fancyclopedia (Ackerman, 1944) that the Gostak distims the doshes. Let us consider the philosophical implication of this statement.

* If it is true that the Gostak distims the doshes, it follows that it is more powerful than they; else they would prevent the cynical and calculated sadism of this form of oppression. Yet if, on the other hand, the statement is untrue, it is inescapable that Speer must have been inaccurate in his reporting in the famous Fancyclopedia.

* Let us examine the second of the alternatives, which are mutually exclusive: namely, that the Fancyclopedia was wrong. This text has been accepted for eight years as an authority on things fanly. Never in my fannish existence have I heard its veracity impugned. Let us assume for the sake of argument that the Fancyclopedia is correct, and that the Gostak does distim the doshes.

* Returning thus to the first alternative, we have, as has been mentioned above, the necessary conclusion that the Gostak is more powerful than the doshes. We must conclude further that the Gostak is always more powerful than they, for there is no qualifying term such as "usually," "as a rule," "most of the time," or the like. Nor is there any qualification of the number of doshes; hence the Gostak is always able to distim an infinite number of doshes. Therefore the Gostak is infinitely powerful.

* No natural or mortal entity has infinite power; this is proof that the Gostak is supernatural and immortal. We are therefore forced to the conclusion that the Gostak must be godlike, if not God.

* But there is already a sufficient number of gods in fandom. Various sects have their Ghu or their

Foo, their Roscoe, or their Phthalo. Sub-sects hold that Beer is the only true god; or that Money is the only true god (Money buys Beer). There is no need for ANOTHER ghod; the Gostak has no worshipers and he will find none.

* It is a prime tenet (see Book VI of the Necronomicon of Abd' al-Hazred) that an unworshipped god is not a god. The doshes obviously do not worship the Gostak, since an entity worships another entity in order to gain benefits from it. The Gostak does nothing to or for the doshes except distimming them, and certainly creatures so ill-treated cannot possibly worship their tormentor.

* Therefore, since he is not worshipped by any entity whatsoever, the gostak cannot possibly be a god.

* We are thus forced to the unwelcome conclusion that the Gostak does not distim the doshes, and that Speer was in error when he so asserted in the Fancyclopedia. This offers further scope for study, which I shall probe in a later dissertation.

downwithbeerdownwithbeerdownwithbee

* I turned this in as an assignment in freshman English; not out of malice, you understand, but purely out of a spirit of inquiry. I wanted to see what would happen.

* First let me describe Dr. Hafley --- he's a tall, thin, dry-mannered type, apparently quite bored with the course he's teaching. He didn't try to add any interest to the grammar we had up to the time the paper was assigned. I wanted to surprise him with this. He might even take it seriously! He didn't; but he did give me an A.

* Later I noticed his screaming Argyle sox and red loafers.

Late note: Not only that, but I turned in more like it: godda semester A

A ONESHOT IS HALF SHOT *** OR, A FOOL'S BOLT IS SOON SHOT . . .

* You may have heard that there was a party at Jim Williams' house, after the Phillycon '52. You may have also heard that there was a oneshot put out at the time by Dave Hammond and the Hoff Woman. Holy Blue, maybe you even read it!

* I was there, full of enthusiasm for the fanzine I had dreamed up the week before, to be called The Moon Drool. (You're so right, Tucker; after all that talk, I'm not going to put it out after all. I am going to put out something else.) I had an interview with de Camp in my li'l red notebook already, but del Rey hadn't shown up at all; and I didn't have another durn thing in either the lrn or the zine. Then I had my inspiration.

* Dave and Lee were bent over a typewriter, alternately filling up a stencil. They were putting out an on the spot oneshot, they were. What ho, says I, I will interview them. I interviewed a pro at play, slumming among the fen; now I will balance that with something on fen at work putting out a zine. So I tried to.

* I whipped out the lrn:
Why do Hoffman-type critters put out oneshots?
(Lee) Hammond-type critter provide the materials.
Nothing more interesting to do at a party?

(Dave) We're having fun.

Why do Hammond type critters provide the materials to put out oneshots?

What's Hoffman got that I haven't got?

(Dave mutters vaguely and starts typing very fast.)

Do you have a name for it?

(Lee) Not yet.

That's a good name.

(Lee) Yes, I like that.

I see you're starting off about the con. Is it more than a convention report?

(Dave) Very much more.

What more?

(Dave) Wait till you read it.

* I have read it. It isn't even a con report. It's just a piece of corny dialog. But to continue--

* All this was like hunting hens' teeth, or worse. I had to fight for every word. Now I was at a loss as to what else I could ask them. I turned to Pavlat for help.

Bob, what can I ask them now?

(Bob) Oh, ask them about contents, distributio, etc, etc. . .

How are you going to distribute this? Mail it out with Quandry, or what?

(Lee) We're undecided as to whether we'll use carrier pigeons, or . . . (typing rapidly)

Carrier pigeons? Walking type or flying type?

(Dave) Can't afford anything but walking type.

What else might you do?

(Lee) When we decide, we'll let you know.

(Dave) How much more space do we have here?

(Lee) We don't.

Are you going to have two sides?

(Lee, ignoring me) What about white space? You know how faaans are about white space.

(Dave) Oh, fill it in with pix.

* Here they both started talking very fast between themselves. Feeling that I wasn't wanted, I went away to find something to drink... Oh, well, the Hoff woman is a durn sight further away from Dave than I am. Nuff sed!k. kruse

SNAFUCIUS SAY: One head is better than two if on one pair of shoulders.

WHY IS A SCIENCE FICTION CLUB?

By Mark von Loewenstein

(The opinions expressed in this article are the author's, and do not necessarily coincide with those of the editors and of the publisher.)

A sciencefiction club can justify its existence by the many ~~distinct~~ advantages it offers to its members.

Are you frustrated? Do you suffer from an overwhelming inferiority complex? Then join a science fiction club and heckle the speakers. It is positively amazing, astounding, and galactic what this will do to bolster the ego. A certain former member of the Philadelphia Science Fiction Society used this method in conjunction with a liquid process and obtained some remarkable results.

Are you a budding psychiatrist? A science fiction club always seems to hold a morbid fascination for the tyro snake-bitter. If such be your interests, you can psychoanalyze to your heart's content. The members seem to enjoy it. Make profound observations like, "My dear fellow, I notice you seem to have an aversion to ash trays. You would rather toss your cigarette ashes on the floor. This definitely indicates a desire to avoid responsibility, a sure sign of emotional immaturity." After this, the members start wondering if they should take up a collection to send you, the amateur, to a professional psychiatrist. (Although I personally feel that anyone going to a psychiatrist should have his head examined.) In this way you get yourself straightened out and get a free insight as to the methods of the professional.

Or, maybe you are a collector missing the October, 1896 issue of Stupefying Scientifictional Sagas. By actually coming into personal contact with book dealers in a science fiction club, you can ply them with liquor to reveal their kinder sides. In a pleasant glow of euphoria, they might be willing to let you have that particular issue for \$25.50 instead of \$30.00. It is obvious that this process would be impossible through the mail with someone like, say, Julius Unger. In fact, if you were to get him drunk, he'd probably ask a higher price, having gained false courage through intoxication.

Or perhaps you would like to know what rockets have to push against in empty space. Science fiction club members will be glad to tell you, if they don't shoot you first. Even if they do shoot you it will be a splendid opportunity, to see a demonstration of Newton's Third Law of Motion.

Maybe you're a hopeful science fiction author. Read your "Unborn Babies" before the club. Tell the members why the editors rejected them. This won't do you much good, but it always makes the editor happy to know that the members agreed with him.

In conclusion: Join a science-fiction club. These free benefits are not to be sneezed at, in our days of high prices!

"Dog, red dog! Go back to the Dekkan and eat lizards. Go to Chikai, thy brother--dog, dog--red dog! There is hair between your toes!" --- Mowgli

∞ Pthalo ∞
Is

THE FIRST BOOK OF PHTHALO

Revealed to Karen Kruse

I

3

II

In the beginning was Pthalo;
and Pthalo was.

And Pthalo created the Pro-
zines; unto his glory created
he them; and the Prozines were.

In the prozines created he then
the Pros; both the Writers
and the Editors created he, unto
his glory he created the Pros, and
the Pros were.

And unto the prozines and the
pros he created the Fans; un-
to his glory created he the Fans,
and the Fans were.

Now the fans begot Fanzines,
and multiplied; and they cov-
ered the face of the Earth.

And Pthalo saw what he had
created; and behold, it was.

But Pthalo was not satisfied;
for the pros and fans knew
him not, neither did they worship
his name.

And Pthalo created then the
Artists; pro and fan created
he them; unto his glory he created
the Artists, and the Artists were.

And Pthalo manifested himself
unto the artists in his holy
pigment, which is Copper Pthalocy-
anin Blue; but the artists saw not
his godhead and adored him not, but
cursed him in the name of the false
gods.

Yea, they knew him not; but
they felt his power; where-
fore they cursed him in the nam-
es of the false gods, Ghughu and
Foofoo and Roscoe, which are not;
for Pthalo is.

A nd Phthalo was angry, and smote the artists anew with the extreme persistence of his holy pigment; yet the artists were stubborn and knew him not, nor prayed to him, but bended their knees at the altars of the false gods.

III

B ut one day a fan-artist, Karen the Kruse of Washington, was drinking Beer and meditating on the power of Phthalo; and lo, the God revealed himself to her in his holy blueness; and she knew that Phthalo is.

A nd she worshipped him, and swore a holy blue oath that she would bring his Word to the unbelievers. And his Word is "Beer."

T hese are the words of Karen, prophetess of Phthalo, who is:

L ook well upon Beer, my children; honor Beer, ye strong in the Faith. For though Beer is not

in itself a god, yet Beer leads to knowledge of the true God, which is Phthalo; and Phthalo is. And verily do we say that Beer is sacred; who-so drinks Beer shall live long beneath blue skies; his days shall be blue. Though it is true that Beer is not blue in the eye of the uninitiate, you have but to drink enough Beer and you will not be able to tell the difference.

H ear ye the message of Phthalo, ye faithful: Drink Beer, and go forth among the heathen and idolaters, and teach them of the true God; ply them first with Beer, and after teach them of Phthalo, for Phthalo is. They that worship Ghughu and Foofoo and Roscoe, they shall be cast into vats of turpentine; they that are priests of the false gods shall be cursed with the curse of Nikal Seyn. But they that worship Beer shall be spared.

T hus says Phthalo, who is: They that drink Beer shall come at

DOWN WITH BEER * DOWN YOUR BEER * DOWN WITH BEER * DOWN WITH YOUR BEER!

last to understanding; but they
that worship Money, must redeem
themselves. Yea, that money which
they worship must be purified; it
must be spent on Beer. The worship-
pers of the false gods must repent;
they must abjure their sins, and
worship Phthalo; for Phthalo is.

IV

Thus says Phthalo, and speaks
through the mouth of Karen,
his prophetess:

Worship Phthalo, for Phthalo
is; and your days shall be
blue. You shall rejoice, and ever-

lasting blueness shall be yours.
Verily, you shall be gladdened unto
the end of your days by Phthalo,
who is; for Phthalo will not neg-
lect his worshippers.

And ye shall worship Phthalo in
this fashion: Mix in a tall
glass $1\frac{1}{2}$ jiggers of Gin, an equal
amount of Cointreau, a jigger of
lemon juice, and a dash of bit-
ters. Add ice and soda. This is the
holy blue Nuclear Fizz. Drink ye
but enough Nuclear Fizzes and ye
shall have never a care. For Phtha-
lo is good to his worshippers.

PTHALIC SONG

Starkle, starkle, little twink,

Who the hell I are you think?

You aren't so very up so far

As lots of thinkle peep you are;

If drink one more again I took

To find you down below I'll look.

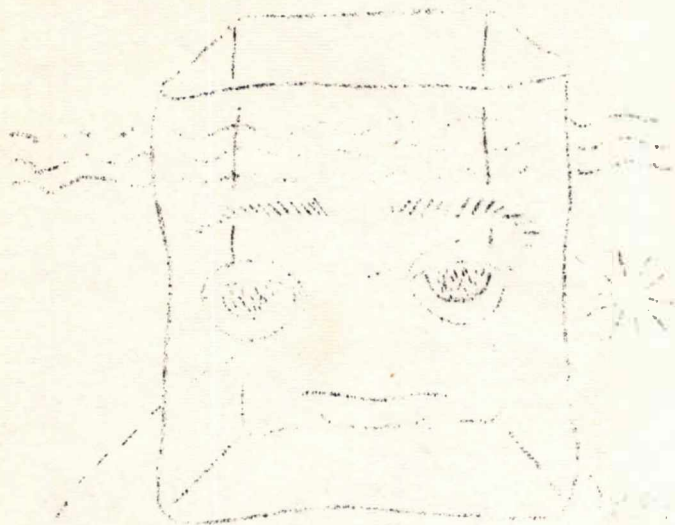
I'm fooling feelish now, but yet

The drunker I sit here the longer I'll get.

(Anonymous)

Phthalo Says: downwithbeerdownwithbeerdownwithbeerdownwithbeerdownwithbe

THE OPEN MIND



"EDITORIAL" -hm?

n't impressing anybody.

*K: So what? I'm talking about Me. This, of course, is the most interesting subject in the Galaxy. I can talk to me about me for hours at a time. I think I should be a novelist. Then I can be the main character in each of my stories, just as van Vogt does; and all of my subordinate characters will agree I'm a superwoman. People don't. . .silly things.

* Oh---a few interesting facts; I am secretary of the Washington Science Fiction Association, and a member of the British Interplanetary Society; twenty, blonde, and 5' 7". Also, I am a (non-Catholic) freshman in the famous Speech & Drama Dept. of Catholic University. Now that I've said that, I think, John, I'll let you talk for a while.

*J: Thank you, Karen. That is very sweet of you. Now go off in a corner and let me alone.

* The purpose of the Zed, of course, is general egoboo and fun....we aren't in this for money or any such silly thing. We will be very glad to get material -- stories; art; poems; articles; etc.; - from everybody; but we'll probably reject a lot of it. In our next issue we will have a ballad by Poul Anderson, and (we hope) an article on sinusceptor theory, a fascinating, new field of chemical research. One of Bill Evans' students at Catholic U is working on it. Nice to have a friend like Doc Evans, isn't it, Karen?

*K: What do you know about it? He is MY friend, not yours.

*J: Never mind. The originator of this science, another mad scientist at Catholic U, had promised the article to Karen, but then he backed out of it, the rat. (Are you listening, Dr. C-----n?) Anyway, Hugh Everett should come through.

* As for what else we'll have, we don't know yet. Send us some etc.

* A word here on the "we". When we use it, it is plural, not editor-

* By way of introduction: We are Karen Kruse and John Watson. We will now talk about ourselves.

*K: Hello again! You remember ME --don't you? Sure you do. I was at the Chicon, wearing that wonderful hat with a spaceship and four men in spacesuits on it. One of the men was flying at the end of a wire. And then, at the masquerade, I had green hair; Egyptian-style mascara; a filmy blue-green gown; and rhinestone jewelry. Also a camera, and Poul Anderson's attention. (He's a nice sort, even if he is a duddy ol' pro. At least he is willing to help out an undernourished fanzine; namely, the ZfvU.)

* Moreover, I was at the last Philco, again with the camera; also partying with Bob Tucker and Dave Hammond. You haven't heard about that? Don't worry, you will.

*J: Stop bragging, Karen. You are-

"What is in the Brahman's books, that is in the Brahman's heart. Neither you nor I knew there was so much evil in the world." (Hindu prov.)

al; most of the time there will be editorial I's.

*K: Quite right. WE say next issue will include a poem by Poul Anderson, but I say it will be a good one.

*J: Just so. Oh--I forget to introduce myself back there, didn't I? You haven't seen me at any convention, and you won't. I'm unconventional. Also I don't belong to ANN Y fan organization whatsoever. Nor do I intend to, either; I can stand about one fan at a time, and then only when it's a glamorous blonde, like Karen.

*K: Awww, you're just saying that to make me feel good.

*J: Why else? And stop looking over my shoulder.

*K: Yes, master.

*J: Now that that's settled, I'll continue. Too many fans are people and I don't approve of people....if you can give me satisfactory proof that you are not a person, I'll be glad to meet you. Otherwise -- get back under your rock.

* As for "Fans are slans," "We are the star-begotten," all I have to say is "Pffft."

*K: Make that a We. This, incidentally, is a good place to put on record the fact that We are not, by any stretch of the imagination, Serious Constructive Fans.

*J: Right. We are agreed on this, at least--fanning is Fun, and there isn't any point in being Serious or Constructive about it. Or anything else goodthinkful. In fact, Our favorite pastime is thoughtcrime; in other words, irreverent fun with Established and Eternal Values.

* Thoughtcrime, incidentally, has nothing to do with sloppy thinking. That really IS criminal. I don't mean to set myself up as a perfect non-aristotelian (or, if you prefer, non-korzybskytelian) thinker; but there are certain mental disciplines that must be followed if you want your thinking taken seriously.

*K: Just in case anybody gives a

damn, this isn't totally spontaneous. That is, we're not typing on a stencil, but on paper, the way that we can have justified edges. We like justified edges; nobody can say we are unjustified.

*J: Throw her a fish!

*K: Thank you.

* I've just been re-reading an old Hal Clement story, Uncommon Sense. That was a good one---remember? It shows beginnings of the high temperature metabolism ideas he used so well in Iceworld. He's progressed a goodly distance since then, though. His earlier stories, Technical Error and its like, were mostly gadgetry, with just enough story-thread to make a story rather than a scientific discussion. Iceworld and, previously, Needle, were fine pieces of work.

*J: I'll go along with you, there. He does aliens very well. The only thing wrong with them is that they don't have alien minds.

*K: Few aliens do. Few robots do, either. As the Writer's Yearbook says of Astounding, "Characters may be called robots, but they react like human beings when a new social force is released."

*J: This strikes me as stemming from a lack of ability on the writers' part, not from any necessities of writing for the market.

*K: Just how might an alien think? How do people think? This is the main question. If you're trying to vary something, you have to know what you're varying. Readers---what do you think? I'd like a debate on that subject.

*J: And then you'd take the best ideas and write them into stories--brainpicker!

*K: Why not?

*J: You just want to be one of the duddy old pros.

*K: Certainly. Pros earn money; I don't. Money buys Beer; and Beer is sacred to *PHTHALO*, and He Is. I refer readers to The Book of Phthalo. *J: She drinks, you know.

Men must always be making traps for men, or they are not content.--Mowgli

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