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ADVENTURES INTO THE UNKNOWN

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THIS IS A STORY ABOUT ONE OF THE TIMID PEOPLE OF THE WORLD. ALL HIS LIFE, HE WAS AFRAID, NOW READ WHAT HAPPENS WHEN HE'S CONFRONTED WITH THE KNOWLEDGE THAT A WORLD-WIDE TRAGEDY IS IMMINENT—THAT HE'S THE ONLY ONE WITH A CHANCE OF PREVENTING IT. AND WORST OF ALL—

IT'S GOING TO HAPPEN TOMORROW!

STORY: ZEV ZIMMER
ART: ODGEN WHITNEY

THERE WAS SOMETHING STRANGE ABOUT ALONZO EGG FROM THE BEGINNING. HE WAS SHUNNED—

UH... COULD I PLAY, PLEASE?

THIS ISN'T A GAME FOR CREEPS. GET LOST, WILLYA?

MAYBE YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE TALKED TO HIM LIKE THAT.

WHY NOT? THAT GUY GIVES ME THE WILLIES!

THAT'S WHY ALONZO WAS LONELY... AND HAD TO FIND DIVERSION IN BOOKS...

YOU'D THINK HE'D PLAY WITH THE OTHER BOYS...
He found his sole adventures in science. At college, he showed an independence of thought...

But...uh...why do you regard the atom as indivisible? I...I feel ways will be found...er...to smash it, releasing untold quantities of energy...

You're here to study what the accepted authorities have learned about science, not waste our time with nonsensical science fiction theories!

He specialized in advanced electronics...

After I'm graduated, I hope to do a lot of good for the world, but first I'll have to get myself a good scientific job, then work my way up...

But it wasn't as easy as all that. He was shy, retiring...he made a bad impression on prospective employers...

I...I specialized in science...and...er...I think that...uh...I could...

Sorry, but you're not the type we're looking for.

Arvon Laboratories Personnel Dept.

Month followed month, and he just couldn't get a job. Now let's look in on a shady research laboratory, the John L. Marleno Foundation, in Washington, D.C. I can't understand why you haven't made a fortune, Marleno. You hire inventors and scientists at low pay and clean up on their inventions...

They're all third-raters...that's the only kind I can afford.

Either they come up with flops or piddling little devices you can't make any money on. I'm getting discouraged. I've just put an ad in the paper for scientists, and if this one doesn't pan out, I'm gonna fold this business!

The ad brought Alonzo Egg...by this time in sore need of a job...any job...

I...I haven't had any actual experience in science...but I've got a very good background...uh...and I'm sure I could do the work.

Yeah, yeah, I've heard all that before. Some successful scientist, beat it, will you?

Look, I...I need the job! And I'll make good at it! I swear! I've got a proposition...I've got just enough money left to support me for a month. I'll work for you free for that month, just to prove myself!

Hmmm...what can I lose? Okay, I'll give you a trial...but just for that month. Remember!
As the weeks passed...
He hasn't come up with a thing as yet, lucky he isn't costing me anything... and I'll let him go before he does.

But on the last day of his "trial period"...
Sorry it took me so long... to develop. It's a rubber-like plastic which will make completely blow-out-proof tires.

He soon found out... it was true! Some months later...

You ought to see the new home I've bought. My ship's finally come in... I'm making millions out of that new blow-out-proof tire!

What are you giving me, anyway? I'll soon know if you're telling the truth.

How about the guy who invented the stuff? What did you give him?

A steady job... that was enough. I wouldn't want to spoil him, you know.

You're crazy! You'll lose him... a great asset like that...

Not this creep! He hasn't got guts enough to speak up for himself. He only came here because his personality wouldn't let him get a job elsewhere. I'll give him a few bucks a week extra, and that'll keep him happy...

But he was very wrong if he thought Alonzo Egg was a fool...

A pitiful few dollars, while he makes fortunes. But what can I do? The rubber plastic formula had to go to him by our agreement, and he holds the patent rights. I can't even get a good job on the strength of it because nobody will ever believe that I invented anything. I'll stay here because I HAVE TO!

And as time passed...
Thanks for the story you've given my paper, Mr. Marleno. The entire scientific world is amazed by your recent discoveries. A motor capable of unheard-of power... a new heating fuel made of air and water... a flying submarine...

Yes... you've got to have a genius for these things...
When the reporter had left... Yes—a genius named Alonzo Egg!

But there was something he didn't know—He didn't have Alonzo Egg any longer! He had saved his every penny, and now—he was going into business for himself!

I know I'm no leader of men—nobody's ever heard of me—but now they're going to! Science has never known anything like what I'm working on now!

This invention didn't come quickly—it was far too complex. Slowly it took shape—A device that will allow the viewer to look into the past, to see and hear history as it actually happened! It works out in theory—it's just got to work out in practice!

Finally—it was finished, ready for try-out. Would it work?

I'm scared... Suppose it's a failure? I won't go back too far for the first try... just to my childhood...

1900 1800 1700 1600

EEEeee RRRRRR

IT D-DOESN'T WORK... IT'S NO GOOD...

Then, suddenly, the patterns disappeared—and a well-remembered picture took form...

Uh... could I play please?

This isn't a game for creeps... get lost, Willya?

Gulp! It does work! Hurrah!

Eagerly, he turned the controls back. Now he was in the late 18th century...

We've got to make this action a complete surprise...

I'll turn it way back now—a few thousand years...
YOU ARE A WISE QUEEN CLEOPATRA ... AND A BEAUTIFUL WOMAN...

IT'S JULIUS CAESAR AND CLEO...

ALL THE WAY BACK TO THE DAWN OF HISTORY ... AND IT WORKS LIKE A CHARM!

A MACHINE THAT CAN MAKE HISTORY LIVE AGAIN... I'VE GOT TO BRING IT TO THE ATTENTION OF SCIENTIFIC LEADERS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. THERE'S A MEETING OF THE NATIONAL ACADEMY NEXT WEEK... I'LL ASK PERMISSION TO ANNOUNCE IT THERE.

BY SOME MIRACLE, HE MANAGED TO SECURE PERMISSION. WHEN THE FATEFUL NIGHT CAME...

---AND NOW I BRING YOU ALONZO EGG, WHO HAS AN ANNOUNCEMENT WHICH HE FEELS IS OF GREAT IMPORTANCE TO THE MEMBERSHIP OF THIS AUGUST BODY.

ALONZO FACED THE BIG ASSEMBLAGE... AND HIS HEART FAILED HIM...

--UH... I CAME HERE TO TELL YOU...

I MEAN... ER... I WANT TO... TO ANNOUNCE... UH... WHAT'S WRONG WITH HIM?

WELL, GO AHEAD! MAKE YOUR ANNOUNCEMENT!

BUT I DIDN'T HAVE A CHANCE TO TELL THEM...

SORRY, BUT YOU CAN'T WASTE OUR TIME. YOU'LL HAVE TO LEAVE!

HA-HA-HA!
ALONZO WAS DESPERATE WITH SHAME AND GRIEF. HE WAITED OUTSIDE UNTIL THE MEETING WAS OVER.

PLEASE... LET ME TELL YOU ABOUT MY INVENTION. IT... IT'S A GREAT DISCOVERY... PLEASE LISTEN...

AND SO THEY ACCOMPANIED HIM BACK... I... I'M TELLING YOU, IT'S TRUE! THIS DEVICE CAN SHOW YOU THE P-PAST! IT CAN GO BACK TO ANY PERIOD IN HISTORY, AND YOU CAN SEE AND HEAR WHAT HAPPENED! WAIT, I'LL SHOW YOU... I'LL TURN THE MACHINE... UH... TO MEDIEVAL ENGLAND... CRAZY!

WHAT SORT OF FARCE IS THIS, ANYWAY?

A FIRE FLARED UP, DESTROYING THE MACHINE AND ALL THE SPECIFICATIONS AND BLUEPRINTS THAT HAD GONE INTO ITS MAKING...

ALL MY WORK, ALL MY DREAMS -- GOING UP IN SMOKE!

(CONTINUED ON PAGE AFTER NEXT)
Now the painful rebuilding process commenced...with money so short that Alonzo was near starvation. With the plans destroyed, he had to rely largely on memory...

'I may not be constructing it exactly right...the shock of it all...it's made me forget so much...'

But at last the duplicate machine was finished. Fear in his heart, he turned it on...

EEEE-OOOO
YEE-EEEEE

'I've turned it to all the divisions of the past...and that's all I can get!'

I've moved the indicator all the way up to the present...to today...and I still get nothing. The machine's no good...

Did you notice something of which Alonzo was completely unaware? The indicator had moved off the time scale...to an unmarked section! And suddenly the pattern on the screen and the noises changed...

'That's odd...the whole screen's misting over!'

It...won't work...

Then the mists parted...to reveal...

True, Earth could beat back our invasion if it had any warning of it. But there's nothing to warn them...there's no way they can find out!

First, we're going to see that their defenses are paralyzed. The world's leaders plan to gather in Geneva for a parley...and our spies, well disguised, will be there and will strike, wiping them out. Leaderless, Earth will perish beneath our attack!
Amazed and shocked, Alonzo Egg moved the time indicator slightly further into the unmarked section of the dial...and saw...

Wreckage, destruction everywhere! Whatever I did in rebuilding that machine, it's allowed me to look into the future!

But when he tried to get into the White House...

What are you, a crank or something? Stop making trouble, or we'll throw you in jail.

If you've got a beef about something, take it somewhere else!

I'll take it somewhere else, all right. Congress is in session...I'll go there!

Tomorrow, the eyes of the world will be fastened on Geneva, where the big parley is to take place. The leaders of the world will open the proceedings with a grand banquet...

That parley of the world's leaders...it's going to happen tomorrow! But if I can guard against the future, maybe I can change the future! If only I can warn the authorities in time, perhaps I can save the world!
AND UP IN THE VISITORS’ GALLERY...
DON'T... DON'T HOLD THAT BANQUET... GET THEM ALL OUT OF GENEVA FAST! THERE'S A PLOT... TO CONQUER THE EARTH...

LET ME... GO! I... I'VE GOT TO TELL THE PEOPLE ABOUT THE PLOT...
YOU'VE TOLD US ENOUGH, BUDDY, WE'RE SENDING YOU SOMEPLACE WHERE YOU CAN TAKE IT EASY!
LET ME OUT! POOR GUY...

WOODCREST MENTAL INSTITUTE

NEXT MORNING... AS THE SEDATIVE WORE OFF...
DON'T YOU KNOW? IT'S APRIL 16TH AND IT'S A BIG DAY, THE WORLD PARLEY IS STARTING...
WHERE... AM I? QUICK, WHAT DAY IS THIS?

THE PARLEY—NO! NO! IT... IT MUSTN'T START! I'VE GOT TO STOP IT!
CALM YOURSELF! GET BACK IN BED!

BUT HOW COULD HE BE CALM AS THE MEMORIES THRONGED IN ON HIM... MEMORIES OF WHAT HE HAD SEEN AND HEARD THROUGH THE MACHINE HE HAD INVENTED... AND OUR SPIES, WELL DISGUISED, WILL BE THERE AND WILL STRIKE, WIPE THEM OUT. LEADERLESS, EARTH WILL PERISH BENEATH OUR ATTACK!

SCENES WHICH HE KNEW WERE PART OF THE FUTURE—UNLESS HE COULD PREVENT THEM FROM COMING TO PASS...
They're going to perish, all of them! Disguised spacemen... Orderlies! This way, quick!

Get this straitjacket on him... He's really violent!

Don't you understand I'm sane? I'm trying to save the world...

And so it happened that... never have the greatest rulers of our planet met in one place to consider our problems...

Sure, sure. You're tryin' to save the world, boy. What these nuts will think of!

Along the wall stood the waiters... listening to the address...

Kings, regents, prime ministers... not one leader has stayed away. All are here...

As the speaker's address continued, all attention was riveted upon him. Nobody thought to glance at the waiters... nobody observed the amazing change which was taking place...

Nobody saw the faces that seemed to disappear, to be replaced by strange countenances from another planet!

Across the chamber came the confident voice of the orator... speaking of the future of planet Earth. It was a future to be decided sooner than he thought... in fact...

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(Please print)
HERE'S AN ODD AND BEWILDERING STORY OF A STRANGE TIME LAPSE--A STORY THAT MYSTIFIES AS IT THRILLS. EXPLAIN IT IF YOU CAN... THIS TALE CALLED...

"I'VE got to PROTECT NETTIE!"

1861... SOUTH CAROLINA. IT WAS STILL EARLY ENOUGH IN THE CIVIL WAR FOR A WEDDING TO BE A GAY SOCIAL OCCASION... PARTICULARLY THE WEDDING OF MAJOR RICHARD TRUESPALE TO LOVELY NETTIE FULLIS...

AND DO YOU, NETTIE, TAKE RICHARD TO BE YOUR LAWFUL WEDDED HUSBAND?

I DO.

LEAVETAKING WAS HARD...

OH, RICHARD...

I... I WORRY SO MUCH ABOUT YOU... AND WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN IN THIS AWFUL WAR...

NOTHING'S GOING TO HAPPEN... TO EITHER OF US. COME WHAT MAY, I'LL PROTECT YOU, NETTIE... I SWEAR IT!

STORY: KURATO OSAKI
ART: PAUL REINMAN
AND SO HE RODE AWAY FROM GREENLAWNS, HIS WEALTHY PLANTATION HOME... LEAVING BEHIND THE WOMAN HE LOVED...

1861--1862--1863... MAJOR TRUESDALE FOUGHT BRAVELY AS THE WAR TURNED AGAINST THE CONFEDERACY...

1861--1862--1863... MAJOR TRUESDALE FOUGHT BRAVELY AS THE WAR TURNED AGAINST THE CONFEDERACY...

WE JUST GOT WORD THAT A YANK COLUMN IS PUSHING DOWN TOWARDS BEAUFORT.

THAT MEANS THEY'LL BE PASSING NEAR MY HOME, GREENLAWNS! MY WIFE NETTIE'S THERE WITH MY LITTLE DAUGHTER. I--I'VE GOT TO PROTECT HER!

HOPE I CAN GET THERE BEFORE THE YANKEES...

HE MADE IT JUST IN TIME...

TRY FOR AUNT LAVINIA'S PLACE... IT'S OFF THE BEATEN TRACK AND IT'LL BE SAFE!

IF ONLY YOU WERE COMING WITH US...!

I'VE GOT TO STAY BEHIND TO BURY OUR MONEY AND SILVER SO IT WILL BE SAFE. I FEEL THAT IF I'M PROTECTING IT... I'M PROTECTING YOU, NETTIE!

THOSE YANKS ARE VERY NEAR... I'VE GOT TO GET THIS STUFF HIDDEN BEFORE THEY CAN GET HERE.
He had hardly started back to rejoin his troops when... confound it... I've run right into them!

It's a Reb officer!

Got to get away before... arch!

Bam! Bam! Bam!

I'm hit... bad...

Wham!

Have to... get away...

Got to... keep on. They'll catch me... if I don't...
DIZZY...
EVERYTHING...
TURNING BLACK...

AND THEN,
SUDDENLY,
EVERYTHING
SEEMED TO
CHANGE.
WHAT
HAD BEEN
AN
EMPTY
COUNTRY
ROAD
WAS
DIFFERENT
NOW...HE
WAS
IN A
STRANGE
CROWDED
PLACE...

WHERE...
AM I?

HEY, WHAT IS THIS, ANYWAY?
SOMEBODY SHOOTING A
CIVIL WAR PICTURE AROUND
HERE--OR IS IT A MASQUE
RADA?

KEEP...
KEEP BACK, OR...

WHAT THE--
HE'S BLEEDING,
HURT!

FORTUNATELY, THERE WAS A
HOSPITAL NEARBY...

SOLDIERS---UNION
SOLDIERS---THEY'RE
AFTER ME...

NETTIE...
I'VE GOT TO
PROTECT NETTIE...

OF COURSE,
WONDER WHERE
HE GOT SUCH
AUTHENTIC
CIVIL WAR
EQUIPMENT

AND WHO
COULD HAVE
SHOT HIM?

NETTIE

BETTER
GIVE HIM A
SEDATIVE.
HE HASN'T
GOT MUCH
LONGER,
POOR
CHAP...

I KNOW IT
SOUNDS
RIDICULOUS,
BUT THE
IDENTIFICATION
HE WAS CARRY-
ING...IT'S MADE
OUT TO MAJOR
RICHARD TRUE
DALE OF THE
CONFEDERATE
ARMY, AND IT
LOOKS
AUTHENTIC!

IT JUST
SHOWS YOU
THE LENGTHS
AN INSANE
MAN WILL
GO TO, TO
ESTABLISH
AN IMAGI-
NARY
IDENTITY.

TRUE DALE,
EH?
There was just one left—Mrs. Nettie Fernow, an impoverished widow. At first I thought you were here to serve eviction papers on me—we're being put out, the children and me—we can't pay the rent... Nothing like that, ma'am. They just want you up at the hospital... thought maybe you could identify some fella who was brought in.

No—I never saw him in my life. What made you think I might know him? He was brought in here out of his head, claiming Richard Truestale was the Confederate Army and since you're the only Truestale family member left in these parts, we thought you might know who he really is.

He sure must be crazy. Major Richard Truestale was my great-great-grandfather—he was killed by the Yankees in the Civil War near here. That was when the family was wealthy—but times have changed, Lord help me!

The patient was in the deep coma which precedes death—nothing could have gotten him out of it. Doctors would swear, but there was something about this woman's voice that seemed to penetrate.

Nettie, darling—I heard you. Thank heavens you're here. Come closer...

Can't seem to... see or hear so well now... but I couldn't be fooled on... your voice, your face. Something—I've got to tell you...
ALL OUR VALUABLES... OUR FORTUNE... BURIED... TEN FEET SOUTH OF THE OLD DRY WELL. SO HAPPY I COULD TELL YOU IN TIME... GOT TO... PROTECT YOU, NETTIE. CAN'T SEE YOU... SO WELL ANYMORE. KISS ME... DARLING...

HE'S GOING, POOR MAN. GO AHEAD... KISS HIM!

POOR, POOR MAN... THINKING HE WAS SOMEONE WHO DIED A CENTURY AGO...

NO PULSE... HE'S DEAD.

THESE DELUSIONS ARE COMMON ENOUGH. BUT HE WAS A STRANGE ONE... GOING BACK INTO HISTORY...

DOCTOR... I LOOK! HIS FACE... HIS BODY...

GOOD HEAVENS! THERE'S NO BODY THERE... JUST... JUST AN ANCIENT SKELETON!

THERE WAS JUST ONE THING LEFT TO DO... CHECK ON HIS INCREDIBLE STORY, AND SO MRS. NETTIE FERNOW, GREAT-GREAT-GRAND DAUGHTER OF MAJOR RICHARD TRUESTONE, WENT BACK TO THE SITE OF THE OLD PLANTATION HOME--TO A SPOT TEN FEET SOUTH OF THE OLD DRY WELL...

I THINK WE'VE HIT SOMETHING...

YOU'RE A RICH WOMAN NOW! WHY ARE YOU CRYING?

JUST TEARS OF JOY, I GUESS... AND... AND I KEEP REMEMBERING WHAT HE SAID. HE SAID HE HAD TO PROTECT NETTIE, AND HE HAS... FOR THE REST OF MY LIFE!
Here it is—a well-balanced issue of "Adventures Into The Unknown", complete with the announcement you've been waiting for. The one and only Herbie Popnecker, that great (we mean fat) super-hero who has graced (or disgraced) the pages of our companion magazine, "Forbidden Worlds", is now scheduled for his very own book. "Herbie", the kookiest thriller of all time, will commence with the April-May issue, due on the stands during February. Better buy him, or he'll beat you to a frazzle with his super-lollipops! That's all—but remember we're waiting to hear from you. Send your letter to The Editor, "Adventures Into The Unknown", 331 Madison Ave., New York 17, N.Y.

"Dear Editor:"

A few years ago, I was an ardent fan of "A.I.T.U." and "Forbidden Worlds", but due to various reasons, I broke away from your magazines. Recently, however, I had the good fortune to obtain a copy of "Adventures Into The Unknown" No. 141 from a friend. I was really surprised to note that your high-grade quality is still the same as always. Kurato Osaki was my favorite author, and Paul Reinman, whose best effort I believe to be "Calling Dr. Wimble", was my favorite artist. I am happy to see that Reinman's artwork is still in the best in the business for showing emotional expressions on the faces of characters and I also hope that the stories themselves left something to be desired. I think that you could really have done without "The Lion's Share", but you let it slip into a merely average story. "I'll Find Another World" was an utter disaster. The first half of it was excellent, but the second half was a complete anti-climax. "Courage Out Of The Past" was merely a mediocre effort, but still the singular magnetism of your magazine shone through despite a slightly sub-par effort. To ensure that I won't slip away from your book again, I'd like to subscribe to it. Please let me know how I can do this. One more note: I am a co-editor of a science-fiction magazine written by the members of our organization. Please print my address so that any readers interested in joining our organization (no price at all!) can write to me for details.

"Dear Editor:"

I am an avid fan of "Adventures Into The Unknown". You have had very many good stories, but you have never come up with one like "You'll Sleep As If You Were Dead". I know that two readers submitted the idea, and their part in it was excellent. But the details in it were what got me. The Editor taking part in it and having the dream that changed the ending to the story made it the most original, I ever published. I thoroughly agree that stories like this should appear in every other issue. My appreciation to Terry Shultz and Lorraine Marx for submitting the idea for this story. The last story in the issue, "16th Century Space Probe", wasn't very good. I wasn't satisfied with it. I wanted a little more to it, but I guess you had to make a short 2-page out of it. I'd rather you had added the pages it took.
to 'You'll Sleep As If You Were Dead'. A devoted fan—
-Skipper Lee,
35 Davis Circle, Austell, Ga."

Thanks for the nice things you've had to say about the story in question, Skipper. It was a pretty fair and interesting yarn, we feel, but nowhere as good as you think. We've had many, many stories in "Adventures Into The Unknown" that leave that one far behind.

"Dear Editor:"

This letter isn't going to be about the stories that have appeared in your recent issues, but rather about some that were seen in your magazines of ten or more years ago. As you know, this was the era when the zombies, werewolves and other fiendish creatures stalked through the pages of most, if not all, of the fantasy comics then being published. ACG'S weird comics, of course, went along with this trend and carried their share of the 'Ghoules and ghosts and long-leggedly beasties, and things that went bump in the night'. To me, your stories then were just as good and in some cases better than those you publish today. The artwork, though, was not always of the high quality that is found in the present ACG comics. You did, however, have some very good artists and perhaps you can give me the names of those who illustrated the following stories in the comics listed. The first one is found in 'Adventures Into The Unknown' No. 23. The story was entitled 'The Flight Of The Dead', and this artist's stories always seemed to be the most colorful. The second one is also from AITU and it was labeled 'The Lost Lives Of Laura Hastings'. It was in issue No. 27 and I consider this artist's work to be the best ever seen in your magazines. These last two artists whom I'm now going to inquire about might be the same person, as their styles seem to be the same. The stories are 'Vampires Of The Deep' in 'Forbidden Worlds' No. 18 and 'The Real McCoy' in 'Clutching Hand' No. 1. Before I close, there are two last things I would like to know about. Is it or is it not a true likeness of Ye Editor in the story 'Assault From The Unknown' in AITU No. 25? My final question concerns the 3-D process TruVision which was used in issue No. 52 of AITU. What was the reader response to this when you used it, and what are the chances of trying it again in some future issue?

-Herb Dolphi,
6043 Knoll Krest, San Antonio 42, Tex."

"Flight Of The Dead", we believe, was drawn by George Carl Wilhelms, although we're not entirely certain of this after all these years. 'The Lost Lives Of Laura Hastings' was done by Al Williamson. 'Vampire Of The Deep' was illustrated by Lin Streeter.

About "The Real McCoy" we have no information—the secret is buried in the past. It's not a true likeness of the Editor in "Assault From The Unknown"—outside of the fact that both men wear glasses. The response to TruVision wasn't any too hot and there's no possibility of its ever being brought back. Lastly, the stories carried in our old magazines were infinitely inferior to the present-day crop. Like all stories of the time, the oldies depended more on scare-quality than on good and imaginative plot, which is what we strive to attain now.

"Dear Editor:"

I've just finished reading No. 138 of 'Adventures Into The Unknown' and I can definitely say that the story 'The Machine Named Spotty' will rank with such great ones as 'Heavenly Heavyweight' and 'My Friend Jinks'. I think you had this in mind because you used your crackerjack writer-artist team of Shan O'Shea and Ogden Whitney. The ending was the best kind...sad. A happy ending isn't half as effective as a sad one. 'The Flame Girl' didn't offer much in either story content or artwork. I think instead of this being the cover story, 'The Machine Named Spotty' should have been; John Forte's art for the third story, 'Mysterious Leader', was very good, but the story wasn't too hot. 'Take Your Picture, Lady!' was just plain bad, both in art and plot. Again and again, you have been asked to publish an annual, re-printing some of your classic stories, such as 'Three Eyes Look Earthward', 'My Friend Jinks', 'Heavenly Heavyweight', 'A Highly Localized Snowfall', 'The Bravest Man In The World', 'Herbie's Quiet Saturday Afternoon', and 'Welcome To Xenon'. Every time you have dismissed it by saying an annual like this wouldn't sell because most of your readers have but to look up these stories in their files if they want to read them. Who are you trying to kid? Most of your readers would give their right arm for an annual like this. A competitor of yours who puts out these annals for 25¢ apiece makes a mint of money and so could you, besides satisfying your readers. Couldn't you at least try this? I hope you print my letter because I would like to hear the readers' reactions. If this is printed, I hope your readers realize this is their chance to see the ACG's classic stories, and will write in and tell the editor so.

-John Page,
5933 E. Elkoport St., Lakewood, Calif."

You sure were critical about No. 138, John—outside of the lead story, you practically bombarded us into rubble. But you're entitled to have your say. About that annual...don't you think we've looked into it from every angle? The hero books can sell well in annuals, but our type of story—who knows? That doesn't rule it out, however—we may still come through with one!
HAUNTED CANYON

ANSON, HENNING AND JARVIS, GEOLOGISTS, FOUND THEMSELVES IN A REMOTE CANYON AT THE END OF A DAY SPENT PROSPECTING FOR URANIUM.

TOUGH DAY... I CAN'T WAIT TO HIT THAT BLANKET.

ME TOO. THIS SURE IS A WILD, LONELY SPOT... AND THERE'S SOMETHING SPOOKY ABOUT IT!

THEY FELL INTO A DEEP SLEEP. ANSON HAD A STRANGE DREAM. HE WAS A 49ER PASSING THROUGH THIS VERY CANYON...

THIS SURE IS A WILD, SCARY SPOT. I'VE GOT A FUNNY FEELING... AS IF WE'RE NOT ALONE HERE. I'D BETTER SPEAK TO BLENKO...

HENNING, TOO, WAS DREAMING. HE WAS A HUNTER, SHOOTING MEAT FOR A WAGON TRAIN...

ANOTHER DEER... BLENKO'LL BE PLEASED. BUT I WISH I COULD GET OVER THE FEELING THAT SOMETHING'S WRONG...

AND JARVIS DREAMED THAT HE WAS THE DRIVER OF A COVERED WAGON...

I WANT TO GET OUT OF THIS CANYON AS FAST AS POSSIBLE... I DON'T LIKE IT! WONDER IF BLENKO FEELS THE SAME WAY?
At the identical moment, all three awoke in sheer terror...

HELP! LOOK OUT!

Next morning, they were still shaken by their strange experience...

It's got to be more than a coincidence, I mean, all of us dreaming the same kind of dream in the same spot...about a wagon train, and the name Blenko...

Maybe it was what's called a psychic phenomenon. Nobody knows more about things like that than Professor Marsh of State University back at Salt Lake City...let's put it to him.

Professor Marsh was also an expert on western history. He greeted their story with excitement...

That's the story, professor. Got any possible explanation?

Those dreams couldn't be a coincidence. Blenko was the man in charge of a covered wagon train that headed through the area you describe in 1850...and vanished mysteriously. Take me to the spot!

The find was soon made...

Human bones, professor...there's no doubt about it.

That doesn't surprise me. Look what I've dug up...

We've found all that remains of the wagon train that was never heard of again. The reason's plain...an Indian ambush!

As for your strange dreams, gentlemen, the explanation is clear. You went to sleep in the most haunted spot in all the West!
ALL MY LIFE I'VE BEEN DIFFERENT FROM OTHER PEOPLE! FOR SOME STRANGE REASON, I WASN'T LIKED—even though I TRIED HARD TO MAKE FRIENDS!
WORST OF ALL, I NEVER FELT ANYTHING—NEITHER HAPPINESS NOR SORROW! BUT THERE WERE OTHER PECULIAR THINGS ABOUT ME—INEXPLICABLE THINGS—QUALITIES NO OTHER HUMAN BEING HAD EVER POSSESSED!

I WAS AT THE END OF MY ROPE WHEN I CONSULTED A PSYCHIATRIST—
I KNOW YOU WON'T BELIEVE MY STORY—but EVERY WORD IS TRUE!
CALM YOURSELF, MR. HOLLIS! HOW'S ABOUT STARTING AT THE BEGINNING?

THE BEGINNING? THAT'S ONE THING I CAN'T TELL YOU—BECAUSE MY FIRST MEMORY STARTS WHEN I WAS ALREADY TEN YEARS OLD!
How was it possible that everything before that age was a blank? My first memory... it was outstanding before the brilliant scientist, Dr. Neilsen...

Well, my boy, how do you feel? Don't understand a word I'm saying, eh? Don't worry, everything is going to be all right!

In time, as I acquired the language, I learned of my past! Dr. Neilsen had adopted me from an institution...

You were so terrified you'd never learned to speak! But you're making excellent progress now, Arthur...

Perhaps unpleasant memories had made me black out my past! In Dr. Neilsen's huge mansion, I had my first home...

Funny, I've never even seen another person besides the doc—at least I don't remember any!

Before long I was sent to a public school! My marks were good, I tried to be nice, but the other kids seemed to avoid me... They never want to play with me... I haven't got a single friend!

I'll never forget the day I took sick... that strange illness! It had been the coldest day in years, and as I plodded home from school, suddenly...

I... I can't move! Fellas... help me!

Then my vocal chords froze—I was utterly helpless...

Golly! We... we better call a doctor!

What's the matter, Artie? Say something!

It's amazing! The boys as rigid as stone!

Never saw this kind of paralysis before! He's actually petrified!
As they examined him frantically, Dr. Nelesen suddenly burst into the room, having just heard what had happened.

"Don't touch him, you idiots! He's my son, I know what's wrong with him! I want him taken home immediately!"

Behind the locked doors of the mansion's fantastic laboratory...

"It's all my fault, Arthur! But don't worry--an injection of this stuff will fix you up in a jiffy!"

---

And the funny thing was, the next morning I was perfect. Really? Any other peculiar happenings like that?

I realized then that the psychiatrist doubted my sanity, but I'd come to tell the whole story! I recalled the time in high school I had my first swimming lesson...

Okay, boys, everybody jump in and hold on to the edge of the pool!

They'd shown us how to tread water, but the moment I jumped in, I started going straight to the bottom like lead...

"Holy cow! He's gone under!"

---

I lay inert in the depths like a stone! The first instructor to reach me was incapable of budging me from the bottom...

"Great Scott... I'll need help!

It took all three of them to bring me to the surface--"

"He'll be okay--just swallowed some water, that's all!"

Boy, that kid felt like he weighed a ton!
FOR THE FIRST TIME, IT OCCURRED TO ME
THAT I'D NEVER WEIGHED MYSELF! THAT
AFTERNOON I STEPPED ON A SCALE--
221 POUNDS! BUT THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE!

I HASTENED TO SPEAK TO DR. NEILSEN--
HA-HA! THE SCALE WAS OBVIOUSLY WRONG, MY BOY!
HOWEVER, IT'S POSSIBLE YOU'RE A BIT OVERWEIGHT. PERHAPS
SOME OF MY OWN REDUCING PILLS WOULD HELP!

BUT THE SCALE WASN'T WRONG! IN THE FOLLOWING MONTHS, I LOST
WEIGHT SLOWLY--BRINGING ME DOWN TO NORMAL!

I SEE! SO YOU CAN'T PROVE THE STORY! GO ON!

Perhaps the worst thing was my loneliness! Once when I tried to
make a date--

I'M SORRY, ARTHUR, BUT I JUST WOULDN'T HAVE A GOOD TIME.
WHAT IS IT WITH YOU? I'VE NEVER SEEN YOU SMILE OR LAUGH!

I NEVER LAUGHED OR CRIED--NEVER FELT ANY EMOTION! ONCE, ACCIDENTALLY, MY HAND TOUCHED
A FLAME--BUT I FELT NO PAIN!

BY RIGHTS I SHOULD BE HOWLING--BUT THE FIRE
HAD NO EFFECT! IS THERE SOMETHING WRONG WITH
MY NERVOUS SYSTEM?

Dr. Nielsen was keenly interested in my observation...

Nothing to worry about! However, there may be a
block in your motor functions!

I'LL LOOK INTO IT!

A FEW DAYS LATER HE GAVE ME A CERTAIN INJECTION, AND AFTER THAT
I COULD FEEL PAIN! WHEN I WAS 19, THE MOST AMAZING THING
OF ALL HAPPENED--

But I feel fine, Dr. Nielsen! You're high-strung, I tell you! This
sleeping potion will calm you!

(continued on page after next)
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Almost every community offers you a chance to go in business. Your own shop will pay more and give you greater security. Many CTI students start on a spare-time basis, then go full time when business is good enough. Start in your back yard—end up on Main Street!
I blacked out and remember nothing of the following three years! It's as if I didn't exist during that time--

I'm afraid you have a few psychotic symptoms! I'd like to give you a truth drug--to get those locked memories!

Now then, let's get down to business! Start telling me things that happened before the age of ten!

What did I have to lose? Within moments, the drug took effect. What happened then was impossible--

Despite the truth drug, everything before ten and between the ages of 19 and 22 was a total blank--as if I had not been alive! When the interview was over--

Never even heard of a case like this before! I'm extremely anxious to continue with our--

No! I see now that you can't help me! I should never have come!

I fled the psychiatrist's office, leaving no address! Back at the mansion my existence continued as usual--

More pills, Dr. Nielsen! What are these for?

More pills? Just a general tonic! Don't ask so many questions, my boy!

I suspected that all those pills and drugs he fed me were intended to unlock my emotional life--but nothing helped! Every once in a while I'd overhear him muttering to himself, after looking at me strangely--

Ah, that is a problem that can't be licked! I should have known it was hopeless!

Not long after that, the doctor dropped a bombshell--

My niece is going to be living with us from now on! The poor girl's a foreigner--her parents are dead--I want you to be nice to her, Arthur!

I couldn't help being somewhat suspicious--I never heard him mention having any family! Mary turned out to be a lovely girl--

She doesn't speak a word of English, my boy--but we'll soon teach her, eh?

How do you do, Mary?
ALL RIGHT! SHE WAS A FOREIGNER—

BUT WHY DIDN'T SHE EVER SAY

ANYTHING? I FELT SOMETHING

STRANGE ABOUT HER FROM THE

START, HER PECULIAR STARES...

C-A-T... CAT!

D-O-G... DOG!

VERY GOOD! YOU'LL GET THE

HANG OF IT IN NO TIME!

HER PROGRESS WAS GRATIFYINGLY

SWIFT! SIX MONTHS LATER—

HOW COME YOU NEVER

TALK ABOUT EUROPE,

MARY? BY THE WAY,

WHAT IS YOUR

NATIVE LANGUAGE?

EUROPE? WHAT'S...

EUROPE? I SPEAK ONLY...

ENGLISH!

WAS IT POSSIBLE SHE REMEMBERED

NOTHING OF HER PREVIOUS LIFE?

I KNOW ONLY...

YOU... DR. NEILSEN

AND THIS HOUSE!

THINK BACK HARD!

HER MIND PROVED BLANK! STAGGERED, I DETERMINED

TO WIRE THE TRUTH OUT OF DR. NEILSEN WITHOUT

DELAY! I MARCHED INTO HIS STUDY, ONLY TO FIND--

GOOD GRIEF, HE... HE'S

UNCONSCIOUS!

I SUMMONED A PHYSICIAN

IMMEDIATELY...

IT'S A STROKE! I'M

AFRAID HE WON'T

COME OUT OF THAT

COMA—THE END

SHOULD COME WITHIN A FEW

HOURS! I'M SORRY!

EVEN NOW, AS I

KEPT THE

FINAL VIGIL

WITH THE

MAN WHO

HAD BEEN

A SORT OF

FATHER;

I FELT

NOTHING!

JUST

BEFORE THE

END, HIS

LIPS BEGAN TO

TWITCH--

WHAT'S THAT, DR. NEILSEN?

WHAT ARE YOU TRYING

TO SAY?

WHAT ABOUT THE FILES?

DOCTOR! DR. NEILSEN!

HE... HE'S GONE!
I SLOWLY WENT TO THE LAB, OPENED THE FILES WITH THE DOCTOR'S KEY, AND BEGAN RIFLING THROUGH THE R FILE—MIGHTY THICK BUNDLE OF NOTEBOOKS AND PAPERS HERE! GREAT SCOTT—IT'S ALL FILED UNDER "ROBOT!"

THE PAPERS TOLD THE WHOLE FANTASTIC STORY—

I... I'M A ROBOT -- CREATED BY NEILSEN'S MAD GENIUS! HE... HE SENT ME INTO THE WORLD AT THE AGE OF TEN, CAPABLE OF GROWTH AND AGING! BUT THERE'S A LOT HERE ABOUT THE FAULTS IN MY CONSTRUCTION...

THAT DAY OF INTENSE COLD LONG BEFORE HAD FROZEN MY MECHANISMS, MY TISSUES HAD PROVEN HEAVIER THAN WATER, MUCH HEAVIER THAN HUMAN FLESH, AND ALL THOSE PROBLEMS HAD TO BE CORRECTED!

HE... HE PUT ME INTO A COMA BETWEEN 19 AND 22 TO CLEAR UP THE FINAL PROBLEMS! AND MARY—SHE WAS CREATED AS A COMPANION FOR ME, BECAUSE HUMANS DETECTED BY INTUITION THAT THERE WAS SOMETHING DIFFERENT ABOUT ME... AND COULD NEVER BECOME FRIENDLY!

THE ONE THING HE HAD NOT BEEN ABLE TO DO WAS GIVE ME REAL FEELINGS, EXCEPT FOR DIRECT REACTIONS TO SUCH STIMULI AS FIRE! I STARED AT THE PAPERS DULLY—

FORLORNLY, I Sought HER OUT IN THE LIBRARY! FOR A MOMENT, I DIDN'T REALIZE ANYTHING WAS WRONG— ARE YOU LISTENING, MARY? --- MARY! WHY DON'T YOU LOOK AT ME?

SHE WAS RIGID AS A STATUE—HER EYES GLASSY! I REMEMBERED THE SYMPTOMS WELL—

IT'S A PARALYTIC TRANCE—THE SAME KIND I EXPERIENCED! I... I'VE GOT TO DO SOMETHING! SO I'M NOTHING BUT A ROBOT! AND SO IS SHE! AND WE'RE THE ONLY TWO OF OUR KIND IN THE WORLD! I... I'VE GOT TO TELL HER!
I streaked back to the lab, shuffled frantically through Nielsen's notebooks in search of the correct formula... This is the paralytic antitoxin he used on me! But can I mix the chemicals in exactly the right amounts? One slip and she's a goner!

I wasn't aware of how my tension was-mounting as I filled the hypodermic syringe...

If... if this doesn't work, I'll be alone—all alone!

I gave her the shot... and waited!

If she doesn't come to, what'll happen to me? Where will I turn?...

I... felt so funny! What happened?

At that instant her eyes fluttered—she was snapping out of it!

Oh, Mary, Mary... you're all right!

Come, stand up! I was so afraid I'd lost you... and I'd be condemned to loneliness...

But I'm here, Arthur—I'll always be here!

What the doc overlooked is that feelings can go out to one's own kind only, Mary!

The years have passed and we're still together in close friendship—working as scientists, with the knowledge that Dr. Nielsen built into us! Yes, it's a fine congenially relationship! Feelings, emotions? Perhaps not like you humans, but they're still present...

Like they say, Arthur—birds of a feather flock together!
Which piano keys should you strike to play this tune?

\[ \text{Mer-ri-ly we roll a-long, roll a-long,} \]

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[ ] Steel Guitar  [ ] Cornet  [ ] Trombone
[ ] Violin  [ ] Banjo, Ukulele, etc.  [ ] Mandolin
[ ] Accordion  [ ] Tenor Banjo

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City...

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Zip...

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