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THE ALCHEMIST

Volume 1 FEBRUARY 1941 Number 5

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THE ALCHEMIST, 1256 Race St. Denver, Colorado.
If you have read the editorial, you know that
this is the last issue, therefore there is no need
for subscription rates, ad rates, etc. We do have
some back issues of #4 for a dime apiece. Any pre-
vious issues are not available from us.

Now that you no longer have Al, we suggest some of
the following mags to waste your money on. However,
Al will be carried on in The Conventioneer, Comet,
Fantasite, Pluto, Le Zombie, Spaceways Fanfare, etc.
AS THE ALCHEMIST SEES IT

HAIL AND FAREWELL!

Charles Ford Hansen

Perhaps that is a bit trite, but under the circumstances perhaps we may be forgiven. Yep, this, the it hurts like hell to have to say it, is the last issue of The Alchemist. Or the last at least, until Fall. We like to think that we will resume publication in the late Autumn, but the chances are rather remote. So I will try to say everything necessary on these two pages and bid our adieus to all you fans who have supported us so loyally. With more work piling up all the time on the Devotion, Lew will have no time to devote to Al, Roy is now very busy, and in a few days I will be back at work on the coast again. Therefore, Al must close the books at least temporarily. We had some grand plans for a January issue, followed by a big, gala, anniversary this month, but you no doubt remember what Robert Burns said about "The best laid plans of mice and men." Well Bobbie was right and ours did just that. Sickness on the part of the editors, and likewise with the typewriter spiked our guns very effectively.

Those of you who have balances on your subscriptions, and there are many of you, will receive your money in a few days. To you fellows we all want to say: Thanks a lot for your support, it helped us over the rough spots. Had it not been for you Al might have folded earlier and less gracefully. To you other fan editors, our exchanges we say: We will be missing you - some of you that is - and it will seem strange not having you coming in as of yore. We will subscribe to as many of you as possible, but, alas, we cannot subscribe to all. Some we must do without and you will be missed. We hope
that you will miss us too. To all of you a fond adieu.

That should be enough for the obituaries. There is still a bit of business to settle. Of the Hunt original drawings advertised last issue two are now sold, but three remain to anyone interested. Elder Gods, and Star Spawn went to Ferry and to Walt Daugherty, but Kraken, Ghouls Feeding, and Witch Finder remain. The first two at $2 each and the last at $1. If you are interested write Roy and he will send you photostats to aid your choice. His address is 1245 Ogden Street, Denver.

In a very recent letter from Derleth he says that there are only 87 more copies of the Outsider And Others need be sold to break even. Then work will begin on volume two. Come on you fans, this is one book well worth supporting. Don't let Derleth down. I know that $5 is a lot of dough to most of us fans, but if you have ever seen the book you know it's a hulluva lot of book. Now is the time to give your full support. Send your $5 to August Derleth, Sauk City, Wisconsin. Do it today!!

I think that a bit of apology is due to a few of you fellows who contributed material and have it appearing in this issue. To Art Widner for example. Everything was going nicely and we heckled the life out of Art to hurry his column along and then came the upset. Consequently some of his stuff is dated. It isn't his fault it is our own. This is also true to a lesser degree of one or two others. Be it on our heads.

I guess that about winds things up. Thanks again to all of you who supported us and contributed much needed material etc. We fervently hope we will be with you again in the fall. Meanwhile write us once in a while. We'll be seeing you at the Denvention!
Descriptions of the Black Ass have often featured in various weird tales, notably among the Jules de Grandin stories of Seabury Quinn. However none can compare, either in force or accuracy, to the descriptions contained in "La Bas", the classic work of Joris Karl Huysmans. It is told from the viewpoint of one Durtal, who has been induced by his mistress, Madame Chantelouve (Hyacinthe) to attend a gathering.

They go by carriage and by foot to a secluded house where a small man, his features concealed, salutes them in a sing-song accent. She salutes him and they are admitted; Durtal notices the fly-blown face, liquid, sunken eyes, cheeks plastered with cosmetics, and gaudily painted lips of their sentry.

They open a door, enter a chapel whose low ceiling is crossed by painted beams. The windows are heavily curtained; walls are cracked and filthy. The place reeks of alkali, resin, burn t
herbs. He gropes his way along, trying to see in the half-darkness, through the veils of acrid smoke which near his eyes. The chapel is dimly lit by sanctuary lamps suspended from gilded chandeliers; pink glass pendants ornament them. Hyacinthe motions him to be seated while she goes over to a group already assembled; Durtal notes, ere she returns, that the women present far outnumbered the men. He cannot make out their faces as they are hooded, and the accursed smoke draws out what feeble light emanates from the lamps. The conversation is in whispers, and seems to be grave in tone.

At length a choir boy, garbed in red, proceeds to the end of the chapel, lighting a stand of candles. The altar is now visible; it is an ordinary Catholic Church altar on a tabernacle, above which stands a Christ. But this Christ is altered; the head has been raised, the neck lengthened, and wrinkles worked into the face so that it's expression is bestial. The chalice, covered with a pall, is placed in front of the tabernacle: now the choir boy folds the altar cloth, wriggles his hunches, stands tiptoe on one foot, flipping his arms as if to fly away like a cherub, as he lights the black tapers. The scent of coal tar and pitch is now added to the stench in this stuffy room.

Durtal recognizes this choir boy as the fairy who guarded the chapel entrance; he understands at once the role reserved for this man, whose sacrilegious nastiness is substituted for the purity of childhood, acceptable to the church. Then another choir boy, hollow-chested and withered, similarly made up with grease paint and cosmetics, hobbles about, joining the first. Hyacinthe tells Durtal that the incense is as salt from the street, leaves of henbane, daâûra, dried nightshade, and myrrh. These are the perfumes delightful to Satan,
At once all kneel as the red priest enters, preceded by the two choir boys. He wears a scarlet bonnet ornamented with two protruding buffalo horns of red cloth. As he kneels before the altar, beginning to say mass, Durtal observes that he wears nothing beneath the robe. The chasuble has the shape of an ordinary chasuble, but is the color of dried blood, and, in the middle, in a triangle around which is embroidered a border of colchicum, savin, sorrel, and spurge, is the figure of a black billy-goat presenting his horns.

It sounds like a simple low mass. Then the choir boys pass behind the altar and one brings back copper chafing dishes, while the other brings forth censers which they pass out among the congregation. All the women envelope themselves in smoke, inhaling until they are faint. They lean back, unlace their gowns, sigh ecstatically. Now the priest descends the steps backward, kneeling on the last one as he cries in a sharp voice:

"Master of Slanders, Dispenser of the benefits of crime, Administrator of sumptuous sins and great vices, Satan, thee we adore, reasonable God, just God.

"Superadmirable legate of false trances, thou receivest our beseeching tears; thou savest the honor of great families by aborting wombs impregnated in the forgetfulness of good orgasm; thou dost suggest to the mother the hastening of untimely birth, and thine obstetrics spares the stillborn child and anguish of maturity, the contamination of original sin.

"Mainstay of the despairing poor, Cordial of the Vanquished, it is thou who endowest them with
hypocrisy, ingratitude, and stiff-neckedness, that they may defend themselves against the children of God, the Rich.

"Suzerain of Resentment, Accountant of Humiliations, Treasurer of old Hatreds, thou alone dost fertilize the brain of man whom injustice has crushed; thou breakest into him the idea of premeditated vengeance, sure misdeeds; thou incitest him to murder; thou givest him the abundant joy of accomplished reprisals and permittest him to taste the intoxicating draught of tears of which he is cause.

"Hope of virility, Anguish of the Empty Womb, thou dost not demand the bootless offering of chaste loins, thou dost not sing praises of Lenten follies; thou alone receivest the carnal supplications and petitions of poor and avaricious families. Thou determinest the mother to sell her daughter, to give her son; thou aidest sterile and repulsive loves; Guardian of strident Neurceses, Leaden Tower of Hysteria, bloody vase of Rape!"

"Master, thy faithful servants, on their knees, implore thee and supplicate thee to satisfy them when they wish the torture of all those who love and aid them; they supplicate thee to assure them the joy of delectable misdeeds unknown to justice, spells whose unknown origin baffles the reason of man; they ask, finally, glory, riches, power, of thee, King of the Disinherited, Son who art to overthrow the inexorable Father!"

The priest then rises, stands erect, outstretches his arms, and, in a voice trembling with hate, spews forth blasphemies and maledicions and vituperations upon the figure of the altered Christ. As he finishes, the choir boys trill; amen. Now the priest turns toward the congregat-
ion, blesses them in a gesture with his left hand; the choir boys tinkle prayer-bells;

As if, on a signal, the women fall, writhing, to the carpet. One throws herself prone, waving her legs in the air as if transformed into a mechanical toy; another clucks relentlessly; another lolls her head backward and from side to side, tearing open her bodice and clawing her breasts. Clothing and skirts are rent, hair torn, women drool blood from chewed lips and tongues.

The priest contemplates the bestialized Christ surmounting the tabernacle and, with arms spread before him, renews his vituperations with obscene taunts and insults. One of the boys kneels before him with his back toward the altar. A shudder runs along the priest’s spine; in a solemn voice he declares; hoc est enim corpus meum, and performs the befouling ritual, then turns, appearing tuneified before the congregation, swimming in perspiration. The two choir boys now raise the chauble, exposing the canon’s belly as the congregation howls in sensate glee.

Now the boys sprinkle holy water on the pontiff’s nakedness, and the women rush forward, falling upon the desecrated Eucharist, groveling before the altar as they claw particles from the humid bread and eat. A girl near the wall is in a fit of convulsions; she frothes at the mouth, weeping, and spitting out blasphemies. The priest chews up sacramental wafers, spitting them out upon the floor as the women grind them underfoot, howling and trampling over each other in their eagerness to seize upon a remnant and pollute it.

The place becomes a madhouse of prostitutes and maniacs. The choir boys seize upon the men and fall to the floor, while the women shred the remn-
ants of their clothing and fall upon each other, writhing, shrieking, howling, biting, tearing flesh and spitting forth obscenities and new blasphemies.

This is a brief summary of Huysmans description. In the introduction to the book, "La Bas", he declares that he has not told the worst, having withheld the really frightful portions of his accounts from publication. It will, however, serve, I trust to take the illusion of glamor away from the concepts of the Black Mass in the imaginations of readers. For this thing is not weird, not imaginative, and not even erotic. It is sheer degradation, the embracing of foulness, nauseating to contemplate. That the participants receive no pleasure from the frenzies goes without saying; it lies on the thin borderline of total insanity, a borderline which many worshippers soon cross permanently.

It is interesting, I think, to note that worshippers of the Devil are not the rebels they seem to consider themselves. By the very fury of their intricate system of repeated denials they confess their very real belief. The militant atheist is merely a believer turned inside out. Moreover, despite their professed adoration of evil, they cannot escape from concepts of justice and sin, which one logically devoted to the powers of darkness would not consider at all. One can only pity then when confronted with such.

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CLAUDY TALKS ABOUT HIMSELF

(All Authors love it, you know)

by Carl H. Claudy

Suppose if I were a young thing, just getting started, instead of an old thing, just getting finished, I'd look with joy at the opportunity afforded me by the Editors of The Alchemist, to contribute the yarn of my days, the titles of my spasms and what have you.

But it looks like one more job for a busy day.

I can't begin to tell you (the Editor says you are interested, the high gods alone know why!) the titles and places of publication of all my almost science and near-fiction cat-fits. But here are a few;

IN THE AMERICAN BOY

Land of No Shadow, February 1931
X Mystery (Basis for Blue Grotto Terror, book,) October, 1934.
Million Years Hence, December, 1934.
Swift Beast, May, 1935.
Blind Eyes of Magic, January 1936.
Infra Red Destroyers, Feb, March, April, May, 1936.
No Man's Space, November, 1936.
Creeping Danger, June, 1937
Holes, Holes, Holes, January 1939
Tongue of Beast, May 1939
Return to Mars, Sept, Oct, Nov, & Dec. 1939

Land of No Shadow, of course, was basis for the book of that name.
There have been others, both in the American Boy and other places but I forget just when and where.

Now as to the writer -- of course, all authors are supposed to love to talk about themselves, wear long hair, burn incense, write to slow music, and wear a halo. I can't qualify. My hair is short, (and thin, alas, also grey!) My incense is a cigarette, K can write in a boiler factory if I have to (old newspaper training?) and I've been married far too long to have any halo; I have two boys of my own -- both grown, married, one a doctor, the other an official of the telephone company -- I even have a grandson.

I'm supposed to be Executive Secretary of a large national organization in my spare time; I bore people to tears by frequent platform appearances; when I have spare time on my hands I dive head first into a woodworking hobby shop and a sea of sawdust and come up covered with dust and grime with some useless gadget or other I have made; when I do (say once a year?) sit in front of an open fire, a cat on my knee, and listen to slow music and think that a helluva guy I used to be when I played football, rowed in a crew, boxed, etc. I comfort myself by thinking I'm not yet too old to climb mountains (as long as a horse under me does all the work!) or camp out, or rough it. I can still build a fire in the rain and sleep on the ground and cook my own meals, and that is not near-fiction!

Continued on page 27
BEHOLD: LAGURAT BRUNDAGE

Forrest J Ackerman

No interview, to my knowledge, ever has appeared with fantasy fiction's foremost exponent of the unclothed feminine form divine in cover art. Learning she lived in Chi, I resolved to meet this mysterious Madame during "Chicon '36", & accordingly called her on the phone one morning.

On my first call I explained I was an admirer of her work from the West Coast & would it be possible to see her sometime during the day? She replied she had certain things to do but it was probable they could be put off & would I check back with her within an hr? Which I did, to learn she would be free & glad to see me--& here I introduced the names of Erle Korshak & Walt Leibsohn, who were guiding me around the city that day--she would be free & glad to see me & my stfriends anytime after 6:30. So I made a date for 7 o'clock & a short time after the hr we 3--plus Ross Rocklynne, who stayed over specifically to be in on Brundage--we 4 found ourselves on the 2d flr of an apt. bldg., northside Chicago. We were admitted to her rm. by Mrs. Brundage.

Margaret B., creator of those come-hither, getcha-all-adither, Ether-of-Garcy, Finga-maid-like pastel pretties, is a woman in her mid-30s, tall, blond, affable. Has a teen-age son who reads sci-fi, Amazing being his pick for firstplace. Brundage, conceive it or not, is an authority on Hitler! having read every line available on the would-be world dictator during the last yr.
Margaret B. got started in fantasy with her Oriental lady on an early cover of Oriental (one-time companion to 'Eerio Tales). Simply walkt in the office & shold a sample of her work. Soon Oriental became logiCarpet, & Brundage also began to draw for 'T, where her work was greeted with wild acclaim.

Used to get 90 for a cover; now, 350. Cannot draw a cover in under a wk, & the materials that go into its making cost about 10, with packing & mailing taking a good part of 5 more. For such a price as this she cannot afford models &, like Finlay (who is a 2d cousin of Mrs 'right, we learrnd), frankly copy from fotos. The fantom lover on the Nov 'T was Robt Taylor; the dancer, Lorretta Young.

I have come to be far less critical of artists since learning some of their trials & tribulations. For instance, Margaret pointed out to us, on a proof of one of her covers, that the hands were over-large. That is sue, no doubt, many fans said "What the heck's the matter with Brundage, she ought to be able to draw better hands than that; why, they're all out of proportion." Pastel is a hell of a difficult & delicate medium in which to work. Then she was about 7/8ths thru with that particular pic, the publisher ordered a change in it necessitating enlarging one hand. & when she increast the size of one hand, naturally she had to make the 2d bigger. & so they were out of proportion, thru no ignorance or intention of hers. Oftimes, too, the plate-maker does not reproduce her colors correctly. She says, as in the case of the current cover of 'T, where the green was black.

Brundage also has done col'ordt under the seudonym of Bron, & is developing a new black-&-white technique for 'propagand' work under her maidenname, Johnson. Considered by fans a natural
Behold: Margaret Brundage

for the late South Sea Stories, tho Palmer was all
to her work, unfortunately she never was able to
click with Cliff-Davis (the dope).

We were privileged to see 2 of her original
unpublish calendar subjects, the most delicately
done & delectable of damozels. Hey--Marie, Walt,
Rose--your mouths still watering? Mine is!

---

REGENERATION

Say not those generations past are dead
And gone beyond recall or interview,
Count them as part of all that lies ahead
Disintegrated now in me and you.
Those who lived once, live now and never die -
They are renewed in each new birth to find
More opportunity to gain and multiply,
To integrate again in faster kind.

Seek then your source, Oh little striving soul,
Return your share, full measure, to the Whole.

---Bess Foster Smith---

---

NEWS FLASHES FROM THE SIXTH WORLD WAR!!

We have it straight from Berlin that the 7th
Reich under Heydoff Fitler that they are naming
their 1998 model spaceships after jokes -- so the
English won't get them.

---Rare Corn

Goon "Did 'ya hear about the fan that fell off
the Empire State Building?"

Loon "Yes, they say he's a broken man."

Goon "That's him all over!"

---Rarer Corn
I'm afraid a short article on HOW TO WRITE AND SELL SCIENCE-FICTION, as suggested by Ray Hunt, would be rather a difficult order—like trying to paint a panorama on a collar button. However, briefly, I'll tell how I happened to write science-fiction and fantasy.

When I was still quite small, my father, who took considerable interest in all science, and who had quite a large, well-chosen library, used to take me out in the evenings when the sky was clear, and point out to me the planets and constellations, evoking eager questions which he answered to the best of his ability according to the astronomical knowledge of those days—the middle nineties. We frequently discussed the possibility that planets, other than our earth, might be inhabited, and I read and re-read Proctor's OTHER WORLDS THAN OURS first published in England in 1870, and later reprinted here. It was a great day for us when Wells' WAR OF THE WORLDS came out in 1898. I was seven years old at the time, curious about the planets, and highly imaginative. We both read this excellent novel, Dad and I, and had many talks about it. The science-fiction of Jules Verne also intrigued me mightily in those days.

An incident which whetted my interest in the history of the earth itself is still fresh in my
memory. I was playing a game with other lads which we called "Buck Off" and which consisted in trying to knock a small rock off a large one at a distance of fifty feet or so. One day I missed the "duck" and hit the heavy rock beneath it, whereupon, my favorite "shooter", a rock that was nearly round and somewhat larger than a baseball, broke in two. Inside it, exactly at the plane of fracture, I saw the fossil remains of a small creature unknown to me. I took it to Dad, and he identified it as a trilobite, a small marine animal of the early Paleozoic era. This evoked more questions, and I learned that the Mississippi valley, in which we lived, had once been the bottom of an ocean. I hunted for fossils after that, and found quite a few, most of them corals of various kinds, as well as more trilobites.

Perhaps the greatest thrill of all was when Dad and I went together to look through the big telescope at Northwestern University. We had splendid views of Jupiter and Saturn, but Mars, which we had wanted chiefly to see, was too low in the mists to be clear.

Another science which greatly intrigued me was psychology. One of the old philosophers had said there were but three things in the universe, mind, force and matter. Mind controls force and force moves matter. Which, then, was the most important of the three? I felt that mind, which was in control, was the most important, and so began a study of psychology and psychic phenomena. I read everything I could find on the subject, conducted numerous experiments, and eventually felt the urge to write. At first, I tried to write fact material and to present hypotheses based on these facts. However, this placed too much restraint on my imagination. My first fantastic novelette, THE THING OF A THOUSAND SHAPES, was based on the material-
ization manifestations of a substance which has since been named "ectoplasm", but which at that time, by one German writer was called "teleplasm". I didn't like his word for it, and so coined my own. I called it "psychoplasm". The story was sold to "Weird Tales" in 1922, and published as a two-parter beginning in the first issue of that magazine in 1923. My coined word has since been used by many writers, and has found its way into the latest dictionaries, though not with precisely the definition which originally caused me to coin it.

Other stories followed, based on psychology, or on other sciences, chiefly astronomy and physics, sometimes in combination with psychology. THE PLANET OF PERIL, which combined all three, after being serialized in Argosy was the first to achieve book publication. I also wrote some poetry and articles, and many other types of fiction, and in addition to selling almost all types of stories to a wide variety of U. S. Publications, and having some of them syndicated in more than four hundred newspapers and a novel made into a motion picture by Universal, I sold many of them in Canada, England, Australia, Sweden, Denmark, Norway, Finland, Holland, Poland, Austria, Czechoslovakia and France. In 1923, I helped another writer, an old timer who had quit for eight years and with whom I had previously collaborated on songs and movie scenarios, and one musical comedy, to come back. He quickly told others of the help I had given him, and they told others, so presently, I had an agency, international in its scope. Soon I was selling the work of other writers as well as my own, in foreign countries as well as the U. S. Presently, also, I was representing foreign publishers, authors and syndicates in foreign countries. The war has played havoc with much of this international business, but the domestic business, par-
particularly in science-fiction, not only goes on, but is increasing.

I have enjoyed helping many beginning writers to achieve success, and am proud of the "name" writers I have so helped, who are entertaining millions of readers today.

Briefly, I judge from my own experience that the "how" of writing science-fiction is based on an intense scientific curiosity, with resultant studies, discussions and investigations, plus imagination. But that is only the base. There are numerous other elements with many ramifications, which can't be gone into in the space of a short article—which would, in fact, fill many large volumes without ever exhausting the subject.

* * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * *

Continued From Page 38

strange torpedo ship blinked into sight like a ghost, as silently as a ghost floated into the hill and the rocks closed behind it.

Narodny and the others stood before the gigantic television screen, shifting upon it images of city after city, country after country, all over the Earth's surface. Lao the Chinese said: "Many men died but many are left. And the Ruler of the Robots is no more. They may not understand—but to them it was worth it."

Narodny mused: "It drives home the lesson—what man does not pay for he values little."

And Narodny shook his head, doubtfully. But soon harmonies were swelling through the great cavern of the orchards, and nymphs and fauns dancing under the fragrant blossoming trees—and the world again forgotten by Narodny.

* * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * *

While in Denver you will hear,
The loud outburst of fan's good cheer,
And there'll be Blondes and plenty of beer,
To greet the fans from far and near.

---The Denvention
I AM POSITIVELY NOT BOB BLOCH!

Ray Douglas Bradbury

Introduction

Born in the small town of Waukegan, no relation to Jack Benny, little has been known, up to now, about that effervescent author and sadistic sapperoo who grew up in the wilderness of a haunted bookstall. Now two hundred and fifty years old, Bradbury is no more fool but his own. We give you Bradbury and his twin, a double interview about a triple profiled monstrosity who is two faced. Part your beard and speak Brad . . . . . . . . . . Editor

An evil rumor has been permeating the atmosphere recently as to whether I am Bob Bloch or just plain me! I don't know whether to feel flattered or go off to the South Pole and try to erase the memory from my thouhts. I've been mistaken for G. C. Fields, Baby Leroy, Flash Gordon and a few other celebrities in my time, but never an author (until recently). Perhaps it is our initials that has caused confusion. Both of the letters of our names are R. B. (so what?)

Upon hearing this news about me and my dear Holler-Bloch-en I crept up to a mirror and interviewed myself.

"Hey there, kid!" I exclaimed. "Are you Robert Bloch, the science-fiction joker and weirdest?"

I remained sullenly silent. I could have killed me for that!

"So you won't talk, eh?" I began. "Well, you
certainly don't look like Bob."

At this, my reflection gnashed its teeth and made as if to bite me. Gad! That a face! That yellow hair tousling down in ruffled reams, those scarlet lips like pomegranate seeds (thanx to Seabury Quinn) that slavering row of bicuspids, interspersed with pop-corn and chewing gum. It sickened me.

"BRADBURY," I cried. "You're not looking any too well. What's wrong?"

My reflection belched, murmured something about last night's blood being a little too sweet. "Editor Campbell sent back my latest story yesterday," he grinned. "It was all about one lone little man at a bargain counter in a basement with five hundred women revolving about him. I called it: 'One Against The Legion.'"

Not contented with this, Bradbury drooled into his chin trough and laughed. "But I fooled old Campbell. I sent him back a note reading, 'Dear Mr. C., I have read your rejection slip and am deeply sorry that my stock is complete for the next five years, and that I must reject your masterfully written rejection. Keep up the good work, John, and don't forget --- YOUR LIP IS SHOING!!"

I looked Bradbury straight in the eye. Evidently this guy was a nut. He had the kind of face that encouraged Ripley.

"You know what Himes thinks of you, don't you?" I taunted.

"Yes. I sent him back his ring," sobbed the demon face in the mirror. "He was cruel to me. Ever since my dear little Hollerbochens was born it's been nothing but misery for me. It's getting
so I can't write under my own name without being riddled with ink wads every time I walk down Main Street."

"And just think," I leered, "how Mr. Bloch must feel, being mentioned in the same breath with you!"

"Oh, that Bloch guy don't fool me none," Bradbury admitted in a soft bellow. "He does the same as me. He's got a big Roget's Thesaurus on his desk and when he writes he just reaches in and steals a word here and there. I'll rise to him." Bradbury smiled. "Say, did you see my name in Astounding? I finally broke Campbell down and he had to print my letter. I've been sending him the same one now for the past year, every day, and I'll keep sending 'em too."

"No body loves you," I told myself.

I nodded in agreement.

"What you need, Ray," I said, "is to sell a story. Got any on hand?"

Bradbury turned and pointed to the dining room. He opened the door and a towering holocaustic wave of typewritten sheets hurtled out and for a few minutes we both had trouble breathing.

"I keep the rejection slips in this other room over here," he said. He opened another door and a sickly-blue torrent crashed out of the gaping orifice. Bradbury was thrown for a loss. He leaned over and picked up a small box. "This," he said, "came in the mail this morning. It's from the entire Science Fiction League just for me. As a token of their undying disgust. Listen. Hear it ticking? Must be a clock.

He sat down; his plumpish, tall body settling to
rest on the tide of manuscripts. "No. I'm not Bob Bloch," he mourned. "And I'm not even Hank Kuttner. Hank, you know, is really Shirley Temple. He looks rather cute with his blonde wig, but when he forgets to shave he just cuts his little dolls all to he—"

He pushed a decapitated body aside none too gently and rummaged around, finally extracting a bloody arm and knife from under his pants. "I knew I dressed too hurriedly this morning," he clicked. "Now, as to Bob Bloch. He used to write some pretty good stuff, see? But lately, what's he doin'? Giving us da high hat! He won't write humor no more since this guy Bradbury blew in from the river Styx. I'd like to get my hands on that Bradbury's neck -- I'd --- I'd."

"You'd what?" I asked, edging toward the door.

"I'd strangle him for not being as good as Bloch" growled Bradbury.

I opened the door and got ready to dash out. I turned to him and smiled gravely, profoundly. "You my son, are Bradbury," I told him, and then slammed the door as I ran.

The last thing I saw, Bradbury was groveling on the floor with one foot holding down his head and his jaws clamped on his toes, frothing. He vanished under all the rejection slips.

Just then the present from the S.F.L. went off!! Hallelujah! Bradbury's a bomb!

Pardon me reader, my valet has just come in. What is it James?

"There's a gentleman outside named Campbell, sir, and he has a gun."
If the "Ramblings" this time seem more on the order of a hurried trip thru a boiler factory, rather than the leisurely stroll I had anticipated, please forgive your old workhorse, as those two annoying puppies, Chuck and Lew, the alleged "editors" of this mag have been yapping around my feet in red type for the last day or so, vainly attempting to rush the bovine Widner, which is quite useless. Widner has only two speeds: slow, and stop. (Runs in second speed only)

Before we go any further, we would like to kill one of those vicious rumors, that the regular rumor killer, Hoy Ping Pong, has somehow let get by. We know for a fact that Trudy "usian is not a vampire. Just because she ate practically nothing at the Chicon, certain alarmists and timid souls among fandom have tried to make this grounds for claiming that Kassie is a lady Dracula. She is entirely visible in a mirror, and betrays no unusual antipathy for garlic or onions.

Speaking of the Ku-slan girl, here is a fact from which you can draw your own conclusions: (I say nothing, for I like both of them too well to incur their enmity) Neither Il Singleton nor La Kuslan had a date for over a month after the Chicon . . . ! ES plans to visit West Haven this coming Friday, Dec. 27. Hmmm. . . . .

No, Trudy is not a vampire, but I'm not so sure about Shroyer. During the Chicon week he lived on coffee, cigarettes, and whiskey. I didn't get a chance to apply the garlic test, but every time I
tried to glimpse him in a mirror he had moved hurriedly out of range. Very suspicious.

One of the better fantastic comics now extant in the daily papers is the story of our old friends Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn. They are really having some adventures that make Brick Bradford and Don Winslow, etc., look like pikers. But the best part is that there is an attempt at scientific explanation of phenomena encountered, or else it switches to deliberate tongue-in-cheek burlesque of some of the "science" comix. I think I like the latter phrase better. 'Tis drawn by Dwig, who drew them of old, and also one of my favorites, "Footprints In The Sands Of Time". Remember? It is distributed thru the Ledger Syndicate, and I advise youse fans to cop a yander. YOU'LL like it.

Right now the boys are in the middle of a partially active volcano in the Pacific somewhere, and have just finished cleaning up a gang of cannibals who had the highly dishonorable intentions of serving up Huck en casseroles as the piece de resistance at their annual Chamber of Commerce banquet...With the aid of the Wonderful Duck, a marvelous mechanism that walks, flies, swims, submarines it beneath the briny and shoots size AAA lightning bolts at malefactors, and Yawhoo, a friendly gorilla, only slightly smaller than King Kong, the cannibals were soon hors de combat. It is evident the next blood-curdler will concern two villainous looking sailors now being washed ashore from a shipwreck. Goody!

Beardmutterings: MULTIPLE FETING! DIDN'T PRACTICALLY ALLOTTED! AG STORE PRETTYSoonILLBE FAMOUSFAN WANT THAT TWICE?

I'm going to be at the Convention -- Ilyhicon -- if I have to sell my entire s-f collection, and push a peanut with my nose all the way. How about you??
In the second anniversary issue of Spaceways, Mort Weisinger, editor of the alleged science fiction magazine THRILLING WONDER STORIES, tell us why we (the dayed-in-the-wool fans) get so many rejection slips. He is very nice about it, and is undoubtedly very right as far as he goes. It's very kind of him to give us the correct dope on how to write and sell stories to the pulps.

I betcha the fan field shows exactly no percentage of increase in the number of selling authors recruited from its ranks in times to come. Why? Because fans are fans first, and authors, or something else, second.

Mort quotes Margulies: "The trouble with these amateurs is—they're too sophisticated! That's why their stories are dull, unconvincing, and un-enterprising."

Unenterprising to whom? The average reader? Ah yes, gate. That's what I keep telling them down at the office! Fans are sophisticated as far as stuff itself is concerned, and they try to write the type of stuff they would like to read. Reader is reader and fan is fan, and never the two shall meet, except when a reader undergoes the Great Metamorphosis and becomes a Fan.

Mort says: "There are plenty of good science-fiction stories to be written around Earth and its eight neighboring planets. Good entertaining, warm human interest stories."

"Don't tell us you guys are space struck.... Stop yearning for new worlds to conquer."

"...Take a tip from the movies. You've seen scientific films like DR. CYCLOPS, SHAPE OF THINGS TO COME, and DR. X. They all begin today, familiarizing their audiences with situations that ring true and dramatic because they are about things and people close to us. Stories that begin..."
on other planets, stories told from the point of view of robots, filterable viruses, corpuscles, etc aren't."

Well, I am a fan, and I think most of those who are fans will agree with me. I'm sick and tired of these "down to earth" and "human interest" stories. Who cares if they ring "true and dramatic"? If one likes "true and dramatic" stuff, he can go thru any number of "slicks" and find dozens of the same kind of stories, and much better written too........

Of course we're space-struck. Of course we yearn for new worlds, systems, galaxies, universes, and more -- to conquer with our imaginations. The imaginations that started us reading stf. Stf is letting us down by stilling those imaginations with honey, unimaginative, "down to earth" hogwash and bilgewater. Poopy: Stories told from the points of view of robots, filterable viruses, corpuscles, maniacs, and ten legged glps from Gazaza are just what I like. Stf has gone flat with flat-minded editors like Mort. That's why I don't read it any more.................. Yhos...

(Continued from page 12)

The Editor says he wishes the American Boy would print more of my stories. So do I wish it. The way for both of us to get our wishes is for all you fellows who like my yarns to write to Franklin Reck, Editor, or George Perriot, Publisher (or both) The American Boy, Detroit, Michigan, and tell 'em so!

I still have one or two crazy ideas of things that never happened but might.....

Which is all except wishing you all a good New Year and plenty of your favorite nonscientific dope -- Oh, I just remembered. I also wrote Helmet of Pluto, February 1934 and Wings of Lucifer, Arch, 1932 in the American Boy, and several yarns for Classmate of wild and wooly character!

Thanks for listening while I yelp about Cludy!
RHYTHM OF THE SPHERES

Concluding Installment

But deep down in earth, within the caverns, there were music and song and mirth and beauty. Gossamer nymphs circled under the little moons. Pan piped. There was revelry of antique harvesters under the small suns. Grapes grew and ripened, were pressed, and red and purple wines were drunk by Bacchantes who fell at last asleep in the arms of fauns and satyrs. Grecians danced under the pale moon-bows, and sometimes Centaurs wheeled and trod archaic measures beneath them to the drums of their hoofs upon the mossy floor. The old Earth lived again.

Narodny listed to drunken Alexander raving to Thais among the splendors of conquered Persepolis; and he heard the crackling of the flames that at the whim of the courtesan destroyed it. He watched the siege of Troy and counted with Homer the Achaean ships drawn up on the strand before Troy's walls; or saw with Herodotus the tribes that marched behind Xerxes—the Caspians in their cloaks of skin with their bows of cane; the Ethiopians in their skins of leopards with spears of antelope horns; the Libyans in their dress of leather with javelins made hard by fire; the Thracians with the heads of foxes upon their heads; the Moschians who wore helmets made of wood and the Cabalians who wore the skulls of men.

For him the Eleusinian and the Osirian mysteries were re-enacted, and he watched the women of Thrace tear to fragments Orpheus, the first great musician. At his will, he could see rise and fall the Empire of the Aztecs, the Empire of the Incas; or beloved Caesar slain in Rome’s Senate; or the archers at Agincourt; or the Americans in Belleau Wood. Whatever man had written—whether poets, historians,
philosophers or scientists his strangely shaped mechanisms could bring before him, changing the words into phantoms real as though living.

He was the last and greatest of the poets—but also he was the last and greatest of the musicians. He could bring back the songs of ancient Egypt, or the chants of more ancient Ur. The songs that came from Loussourgsky’s soul of Mother Earth, the harmonies of Beethoven’s deaf brain or the chants and rhapsodies from the heart of Chopin. He could do more than restore the music of the past. He was the master of sound.

To him the music of the spheres was real. He could take the rays of the stars and planets and weave them into symphonies. Or convert the sun’s rays into golden tones no earthly orchestra had ever expressed. And the silver music of the moon—the sweet music of the moon in Spring, the full throated music of the harvest moon, the brittle crystalline music of the winter moon with its arpeggios of meteors—he could weave into strains such as no human ear had ever heard.

So Harodny, the last and greatest of poets, the last and greatest of musicians, the last and greatest artists—and in his unhewn way, the greatest of scientists—lived with the ten of his choosing in his caverns. And, with them, he consigned the surface of the earth and all who dwelt upon it to a negative Hell—

Unless something happening there might imperil his Paradise!

Aware of the possibility of that danger, among his mechanisms were those which brought to eyes and ears news of what was happening on earth’s surface. Now and then, they amused themselves with these.
It so happened that on that night when the Ruler of Robots had experimented with a new variety of ray a space warper—Narodny had been weaving the rays of Moon, Jupiter and Saturn into Beethoven's Moonlight Symphony. The moon was a four day crescent. Jupiter was at the crescent and Saturn hung like a pendant below the bow. Shortly Orion would stride across the Heavens and bring Regulus and red Aldebaran, the Eye of the Bull, would furnish him with other chords of st rlight remoulded into sounds.

Suddenlly the raven rhythms were ripped—hideously, a devastating indescribable dissonance invaded the cavern. Beneath it, the nymphs who had been dancing languorously to the strains quivered like mist wraiths in a sudden blast and were gone; the little moons flared, then ceased to glow. The tonal instruments were dead and Narodny was felled as though by a blow.

After a time the little moons began to glow again, but dimly; and from the tonal mechanisms came broken crippled music. Narodny stirred and sat up, his lean, high cheeked face more Satanic than ever; every nerve was numb; then as they revived, agony crept along them. He sat, fighting the agony, until he could summon help. He was answered by one of the Chinese.

Narodny said: "It was a spatial disturbance, Leo, and it was like nothing I have ever known. The Ruler of Robots is perfecting a ray with which to annihilate mankind."

Narodny smiled: "I care nothing for mankind—yet I would not harm them, willingly. And it has occurred to me that I owe them a great debt. Except for them I would not be. Also, it occurs to me that the robots have never produced a poet, a musician, an artist—" He laughed. "But it is in my mind that
they are capable of one great art at least: we shall see."

Down in the chamber of screens, Marcny laughed again.

He said: "Lao, is it that we have advanced so in these few years? Or that man has retrogressed? No, it is the curse of mechanization that destroys imagination. For look you, how easy is the problem of the robots. They began as man-made machines. Mathematical, soulless, insensitive to any emotion. So was primal matter of which all on earth are made, rock and water, tree and grass, metal, animal, fish, worm, and men. But somewhere, somehow, something was added to this primal matter, combined with it—used it. It was that we call life. And life is consciousness. And therefore largely emotion. Life establishes its rhythm and its rhythm being different in rock and crystal, metal, fish, and men—we have these varying things.

"Well, it seems that life has begun to establish its rhythm in the robots. Consciousness has touched them. The proof? They have established the idea of common identity—group consciousness. That in itself involves emotion. But they have gone further. They have attained the instinct of self-preservation. They are afraid mankind will revolt against them. And that, my wise friend, connotes fear—fear of extinction. And fear connotes anger, hatred, arrogance—and many other things. The robots, in short, have become emotional to a degree. And therefore vulnerable to whatever may amplify and control their emotions. They are no longer mechanisms.

"So Lao, I have in mind an experiment that will provide me study and amusement through many years. Originally, the robots are the children of mathe-
matics. I ask to what is mathematics most closely related? I answer—to rhythm—to sound—to sounds which raise to the nth degree the rhythms for which they will respond. Both mathematically and emotionally."

Lao said: "The sonic sequences?"

Harodny answered: "Exactly. But we must have a few robots with which to experiment. To do that means to dissolve the upper gate. But that is nothing. Tell Tharingy and Diphrynshe to do it. Get a ship and bring it here. Bring it down gently. You will have to kill the men in it, of course, but do it mercifully. Then let them bring me the robots. Use the green flame on one or two—the rest will follow, I'll warrant you.

The hill behind where the old house had stood trembled. A circle of pale green light gleamed on its breast. It dimmed and where it had been was the black mouth of a tunnel. An airship, half rocket, half winged, making its way to New York, abruptly drooped, circled, fell gently, like a moth, close to the yawning mouth of the tunnel.

Its door opened, and out came two men, pilots, cursing. There was a little sigh from the tunnel's mouth and a silver cloud sped from it, over the pilots and straight through the opened door. The pilots crumpled to the ground. In the airship half a dozen other men, slaves of the robots, slumped to the floor, smiled, and died.

There were a full score robots in the ship. They stood looking at the dead men and at each other. Out of the tunnel came two figures swathed in metallic glimmering robes. They entered the ship. One said: "Robots, assemble."
The metal men stood motionless. Then one sent out a shrill call. From all parts of the ship the metal men moved. They gathered behind the one who had sent the call. They stood behind him, waiting.

In the hand of one of those who had come from the tunnel was what might have been an antique flashlight. From it sped a thin green flame. It struck the foremost robot on the head, sliced down from the head to the base of the trunk. Another flash, and the green flame cut him from side to side. He fell, sliced by that flame into four parts. The four parts lay, inert as their metal, upon the floor of the compartment.

One of the shrouded figures said: "Do you want any further demonstration—or will you follow us?"

The robots put their heads together, whispered. Then one said: "We will follow."

They marched into the tunnel, the robots making no resistance nor effort to escape. They came to a place whose floor sank with them until it had reached the caverns. The machines, men still went docilely, as it because of curiosity mixed with disdain for these men whose bodies could be broken so easily, by one blow of the metal appendages that served them for arms? Perhaps.

They came to the cavern where Narodny and the others awaited them. Karinoff led them in the halted them. These were robots used in the flying ships—their heads cylindrical, four arm appendages, legs triple-jointed, torsos slender. The robots, it should be understood, were differentiated in shape according to their occupations. Narodny said: "Welcome, robots! Who is your leader?"

One answered: "We have no leaders. We act as
Narodny laughed; "Yet by speaking for them you have shown yourself the leader. Step closer. Do not fear--yet."

The robot said: "We feel no fear. Why should we? Even if you should destroy us who are here, you cannot destroy the billions of us outside. Nor can you breed fast enough, become men soon enough, to cope with us who enter into life strong and complete from the beginning."

He flicked an appendage toward Narodny and there was contempt in the gesture. But before he could draw it back a bracelet of green flame circled it at the shoulder. It had darted like a thrown loop from something in Narodny’s hand. The robot’s arm dropped clanging to the floor, cleanly severed. The robot stared at it unbelievingly, threw forward his other three arms to pick it up. Again the green flame encircled also his legs above the second joints. The robot crumpled and pitched forward, crying in high pitched shrill tones to the others.

Swiftly the green flame played among them. Legless, armless, some decapitated, all the robots fell except two.

"Two will be enough," Said Narodny. "But they will not need arms--only feet."

The flashing green bracelets encircled the appendages and excised them. The pair were marched away. The bodies of the others were taken apart, studied, and under Narodny’s direction curious experiments were made. Music filled the cavern, strange chords, unfamiliar progressions, shattering arpeggios and immense vibrations of sound that could be felt but not heard by the human ear.
Rhythm Of The Spheres

And finally this last deep vibration burst into hearing as a vast drone, hummed up and down into swift tingling tempest of crystalline, brittle notes, and still ascending passed into shrill high pipings, and continued again unheard, as had the prelude to the droning. And thence it rushed back, the piping and the crystalline storm reversed, into the drone and silence—then back and up.

And the bodies of the broken robots began to quiver, to tremble, as though every atom within them were dancing in over increasing, rhythmic motion. Up rushed the music and down—again and again. It ended abruptly in midflight with one crashing note.

The broken bodies ceased their quivering. Tiny-star-shaped cracks appeared in their metal. Once more the note sounded and the cracks widened. The metal splintered.

Parodny said: "Well, there is the frequency for the rhythm of our robots. The destructive unison. I hope for the sake of the world outside it is not also the rhythm of many of their buildings and bridges. But after all, in any war there must be casualties on both sides."

Lac said: "Earth will be an extraordinary spectacle—a plaintive phenomenon, for a few days."

Parodny said: "It is going to be an extraordinary uncomfortable Earth for a few days, and without doubt many will die and more go mad. But is there any other way?"

There was no answer. He said: "Bring in the two robots."

They brought them in.
Narodny said: "Robots—were there ever any of you who could poetize?"

They answered: "What is poetize?"

Narodny laughed: "Never mind. Have you ever sung—made music—painted? Have you ever dreamed?"

One robot said with cold irony: "Dreamed? No— For we do not sleep. We leave all that to men. It is why we have conquered them."

Narodny said, most gently: "Not yet, robot. Have you ever—danced? No? It is an art you are about to learn."

The unheard note began, droned up and through the tempest and away and back again. And up and down—and up and down, though not so loudly as before. And suddenly the feet of the robots began to move, to shuffle. Their leg joints bent, their bodies swayed. The note seemed to move now here and now there about the chamber, and always following it, grotesquely. Like huge metal marionettes they followed it. The music ended in a crashing note. And it was as though every vibrating atom of the robot bodies had met with some irresistible obstruction. Their bodies quivered and from their voice mechanisms came a shriek that was a hideous blend of machine and life. Once more the drone, and once more and then, again, the abrupt stop.

There was a brittle crackling all over the bodies. The star shaped splinterings appeared. Once again the drone—but the two robots stood unresponsive. For through the complicated mechanisms which under their carapaces animated them were similar splinterings.

The robots were dead.
Rhythm of the Spheres—**Herritt**

Narodny said: "By tomorrow we can amplify the sonor to make it effective in a 3000 mile circle. We will use the upper cavern of course. It means we must take the ship out again. In three days, Larinoff, you would be able to cover the other continents. See to it that the ship is completely proof against the vibrations. To work. We must act quickly—before the robots can discover how to neutralize them."

It was exactly at noon the next day that over all North America a deep inexplicable droning was heard. It seemed to come not only from deep within earth, but from every side. It mounted rapidly thru a tempest of tingling crystalline notes into a shrill piping and was gone. Then back it rushed from piping to drone; then up and out and down. Again and again, and over all North America the hordes of robots stopped in whatever they were doing. Stopped—and then began to dance—to the throbbing notes of that weirdly fascinating music—that hypnotic rhythm which seemed to flow from the bowels of the earth.

They danced in the airships and scores of those ships crashed before the human crew could gain control. They danced by the thousands in the streets of the cities—in grotesque rigadoons, in bizarre sarabands; with shuffle and hop and jig the robots danced while the people fled in panic and hundreds of them were crushed and died in those panics. In the great factories and in the tunnels of the lower cities, and in the mines—everywhere the sound was heard—and it was heard everywhere—the robots danced...to the piping of Narodny, the last great poet...the last great musician.

And then came the crashing note—and over all the country the dance halted. And began again...and ceased...and began again..........
Until at last the streets, the lower tunnels of the lower levels, the mines, the factories, the homes, were littered with metal bodies shot through and through with star shaped splinterings.

In the cities the people cowered, not knowing what blow was to fall upon them...or milled about in fear-maddened crowds, and many more died......

Then suddenly the dreadful droning, the shattering tempest, the intolerable high piping ended. And everywhere the people fell, sleeping among the dead robots, as though they had been strung to the point of breaking, sapped of strength and then absolutely relaxed.

And as though it had vanished from Earth, America was deaf to cables, to all communication beyond the gigantic circle of sound. But that midnight over all Europe the drone sounded and Europe's robots began their dance of death...and when it ended a strange and silent rocket ship that had hovered high above the stratosphere sped almost with the speed of light and hovered over Asia—and next day Africa heard the drone while the black ans morded it with his tom-toms—then South America heard it and last of all far off Australia...and everywhere trapped the peoples and panic and madness took their grim toll.

Until of all that animate metal hordes that had fettered Earth and humanity there were a few scant hundreds left—escaped from the death dance through some variant in their constitution. And, awakening from that swift, all over Earth those who had feared and hated the robots and their slavery rose against those who had fostered the metal domination and blasted the robot factories to dust.

Again the hill above the caverns opened, the

(Contd On Pg 19)
HOT RETORTS FROM THE READERS

((After a month's absence, The Retort Bubbles is back. We are convinced that it will be a regular feature regardless how crowded we are for space. This is a promise.))

((And first from our grab bag comes an atrocious letter that would do Miske credit. We will only print a little since enough is enough. In fact the great Tucker had his secretary write it for him. It goes like this:))

Mr. Tucker wishes me to inform you that:

(1) He is very
disappointed in your not mentioning his remarkable treatise on werewolves in a recent issue of Spaceways, to wit: ((Just half)) "The Bk of Werewolves." Mr. Tucker fells that this important paper should have been included in your list of outstanding outré articles appearing on p.3 of the current magazine.

(2) Mr. Tucker wishes me to inform you that the latest issue of your magazine stinks, and furthermore wishes to know how the hell you do it considering the small price and brains behind the project? ((There's more but that's enough))

signed: Prunella Twitchet

((And from an obscure corner of our country comes the little demon who drew last month's cover --yep, devilish damon the demon.))

Al #4 received, & thanx for the Xmas greeting. Perrr ditto to you guys too. & as to Al itself -- cover 7, contents page 4, editorial 5, Lomnades 5 (readable, but incoherent in places, illogical thru-out), Perritt reprint 4 (because /a/ I don't like reprinted pro stories in fandom & /b/ I don't like serialized short stories); 'Star Dawn' 10 at least, Derleth 8, Xmas card 10, Fischer 7, Rothmund 6, Irps plant 10, 'Clamors' 10, Mannor 8, Takeda 7, Vollheim 7, back cover 5. 0 yes, & the various Hunt illustrations -- say a 9 average. Hunt is far & away the best artist in fandom. The pic for Dead End, minus gun and inscription would have been
nice for Heinlein's 'Requiem'. C U N Denver, by
golly if I have to ride the rods. . . . . damon

{(And then here comes one that does Tucker credit,
We give you (to keep) one inamically LRChauvenet})

Alchemist #4 is here. You'll never speak to me
again -- I didn't like it. What a drop from the
third issue! And Merritt's piece -- The chapter
out of Cosmos -- not only appeared there, but also
somewhat revised) in T.W.S. The Old Fanmag
reprint was a good idea -- but a poor selection; Maxson's
Scoops listings were-- well dull! -- and Takacs is
far over my head & bank account. Fischer's thing
best in issue, even tho I disagree with it entirely
but have no time to write a counter article. Don't
suppose you could use it anyway. ((We can always
use material, and I hope you don't take the intro-
duction seriously Lou))

((And from a nice chap named Dunmire comes this
sweet smelling Orchid. No deny he's any relation
to us, or Tucker)) {{Nor on our payroll either}}

Carloads of thanks for THE ALCHEMIST!! It's sure
one swell mag. If I can make STELLAR TALES half as
interesting I'll be more than satisfied. I am par-
ticularly awed by the quiet weird beauty of the
black and white drawing by Hunt in the current num-
ber. Roy has a beautiful sense of strangeness
equalled only by Hannes Bock, and the famous Finley.
Long may he wave his brush!

{(Here we have the Fan-Atic himself, CAB Beling})

The latest issue of Al was better than the pre-
vious one with the single exception of Lowndes' Communists'} propaganda. I disagree with Fischer
about Astounding, but he wrote a very interesting
article. MORE VERSE! and then still more. Also
more Retorts Bubbling with readers letters. Keep Hunt if you have to chain him, he's the best fantasy artist that I've ever seen. Can't understand why he hasn't a job with the pros. (He has) STAR STAIN is superb. If, by the time Xmas has gone, nobody else has bought the original of that then I will.

{(Then there's one from the "Gallup of Fandom" who Rambles on pointlessly both here and in his column, but we love him)}

Alky just landed here this morning and Yhos is much impressed. You now have Pluto beat, as you have just as good, in fact better -- it's neat instead of gaudy -- appearance, and better material to boot. The artwork is superb, and you no doubt have the best illustrated fanmag on the market. The Irps Plant is a gem of all gems in wacky art. ((Art has much more to say about it, but quite unprintable)) *

Along with Alky came my first view of the ITA Review. Well, when I spied the artwork in that, on top of Knight, Bok, and Hunt, I just decided that I'll do one more pic that Tom Wright has asked me for, and then give up. I once thought I had the possibilities of an artist, but I'm just a baboon scratching in the sand with a stick. ((Why art, don't let it toss you, we like your art. Perhaps not up to some, but much better than most. In fact we want a front and back cover from you soon!))

gad, and that pic of Hunt's. He positively out-Finlays Finlay himself. Rave, rave, rave, r a v e!

And now you snivelling rat, if I had you here I'd take that loud shirt of yours and stuff it down your throat. Or better still, I could just plain old-fashioned beat our brains out against the wall. After all your blarney about it, and this and that, where the hell is my column? Oh, wait a minute, I just had a bright idea and read the editorial. Well, as long as you mentioned it, I suppose it's
OK, but if I had you here I'd beat your brains out anyway. There's nothing like a little exorcise to keep a guy feeling fit. In tune with the times, too... And don't give me this alternating crap. I'm in every ish or not at all. I'd rather have 1 page monthly than ten pages bi-monthly. Stoopid, (very) I suppose, but that's the way I feel about it. (Alright, Art, if that's the way you feel about it, we'll give youse four or more each issue. You also hogged the major part of the Alchemist Denventioneer) C U N Denver at the Mylhicon.

((And now I don't think a bit from the luminary of the Sun Spots Mob, Gerry de la Ree would be would))

The Al arrived yesterday, and I'd like to compliment you on the fine job done on this issue. I missed readers letters, and would like to sec either this or a fan magazine review, if you can spare the space.

((Rajocz, the Sage from Scranton, speaks -- Harken))

I received the latest Al last Thursday and was glad to hear that you intend to issue it monthly, but I don't think you can do it. The Hunt insert drawing was superb. I envy the person who purchases that one. The second best picture was the one for Lowndes' "Dead End". I cannot understand why the editors of the pros do not give some of the fan artist a chance. Some fans are better than some pros. All other pixes good. In "Dead End" Lowndes has chosen a subject of interest to me, I like it though as a rule I do not care for Lowndes. One of the best articles in the issue, if not the best was Fischer's on Astounding. Collector's Cr. and Realm of Fantasy Lit tie for second. I missed Art's Random Ramblings this issue. ((See, Art, you have one follower!)) Curiosity prompts me to ask who wrote that poem on the back cover. It was OK.
(Damn wrote it, had anyone else we would have given them credit) Merry Christmas to you, too.

(And here is the original Sage, the dead Sage of Salt Creek -- you guessed it, Don B. Thompson)

Received latest Al. The issue as a whole is quite up to my highest expectations. Illustrations are excellent, and the verse is all from good to excellent. In fact, there is only one portion of mag I don't like. That is Lowndes' "Dead End" ((D. B. Thompson wrote quite a reply of a extra long paragraph to the article, and we will publish it as a short comeback to Dead End, Chauvenet will have a reply to Fischer's Astounding article)) Fischer's article on ASTOUNDING is very interesting, highly debateable as to content, and, in every respect, the best thing of the sort I have seen. Personally, I liked the Tremaine ASTOUNDING very much. I also like the Campbell ASTOUNDING very much, and think it has greater literary worth, but not a large margin. ** As a fan who does not like weird or horror stories, and who has, nevertheless, read THE OUTSIDER & OTHERS from cover to cover, I heartily endorse the statement that $5.00 is not too much for the book. You are to be commended for giving publicity to the statement.

(And now from a jerke named Yerke, we present this short and sweet comment. Incidentally he edits a Damn Thing better not mentioned here)

Received the Alchemist today and was quite delighted with it. 'Tis one of the truly good serious magazines that doesn't border on the point of boredom. Denventionally yours,

(Oh with that, the Alchemist turns off his fire and the retort stops bubbling. I ore bubbles the next time I pull out the cork...)
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