

Dark Horizons

issue 12 • autumn/winter '75



DH12 autumn/ winter 1975

Produced and Edited for the BFS by Stephen Jones.

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Front Cover, Pages 2, 12, 16, 36 by Alan Hunter.
Pages 3, 11, 32, 35 by Jim Pitts.
Pages 10, 22, 28, 29, 31 by Russell Nicholson.
Page 26 by Stephen F. Fabian.
Back Cover by David L. Fletcher.

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Special Thanks to Dominic Roncoroni for his help in preparing Mike Ashley's article.

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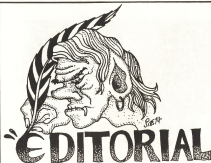
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By
stephen
jones

Welcome to DHI2 - a special issue for me for two reasons; firstly, I'm very proud to present a new story, The Shadows in the Barn, by Ramsey Campbell; in fact, it's the first draft of another story but as Ramsey says, "the two versions differ so markedly that I think this one might survive in its own right." If you're interested to see how the final draft turned out, it will appear under the title In the Shadows in THE 3RD MAYFLOWER BOOK OF HORROR STORIES (edited by Hugh Lamb) and Ramsey's forthcoming collection from Arkham House, THE HEIGHT OF THE SCREAM. Secondly, undoubtedly one of the finest living fantasy artists is Stephen Fabian, and I'm very pleased to announce that from this number forward I'll be reprinting some of Steve's best work within the pages of DARK HORIZONS.

Reaction to Mike Ashley's previous article about FANTASY FICTION in DHI0, was so good that he has returned with his usual in-depth look at FORGOTTEN FANTASY magazine, again with a complete checklist; Mike's second volume of THE HISTORY OF THE SCIENCE FICTION MAGAZINE was recently published by NEL, and forthcoming from Star Books is an anthology called WEIRD LEGACIES, a tribute to WEIRD TALES which Mike tells me if it sells well might start a series. Adrian Cole's first novel, THE DREAMLORDS 1, A PLAGUE OF NIGHTMARES, is currently available from Zebra Books with the second volume, LORD OF NIGHTMARES due out very soon; this issue, part two of Adrian's general look at the Heroic Fantasy field concentrates on The Lesser Heroes such as Howard's Solomon Kane, Moorcock's Champion Eternal, and Carter's Callisto series among others. Someone else with a book out at the moment is Dave Sutton, and when I interviewed him at Seacon 75 in Coventry at Easter the discussion ranged from the early days of SHADOW through to his recently edited anthology, THE SATYR'S HEAD AND OTHER TALES OF TERROR, as you can read in The Writer in Fandom on page 17. In the final article in this issue, Eddy Bertin begins an occasional series, European Terror, with a look at the work of horror writer Oswald Kielemess - written in 1972, this article was originally intended to appear in SHADOW before it folded, and was previously published in the American fanzine AMEROSTIA.

Part two of Mike Chinn's The Second Dragons takes the History of the Death-Days a step closer to the final confrontation in the third and final part, while Alan Sames presents a subtly different science fantasy story that explores the fear locked in a man's mind.

Almost everyone appeared to like the black border on last issue's cover, and I've used it once again to set off Alan Hunter's beautiful cover illo, while Dave Fletcher's very impressive back cover was originally meant for The Artist in Fandom feature in DARK HORIZONS 11, but was squeezed out due to lack of space in that issue. Russell Nicholson appears in these pages for the first time, his work having previously graced THE BPS BULLETIN and Rosemary Pardoe's superb little fanzine about fanzines, WARK - my sincere thanks are due to Russ along with Jim Pitts, Alan Hunter and Steve Fabian for all their work producing the interior illustrations.

As usual, poetry is fairly well covered with the fine work of Marion Pitman and Andrew Darlington represented this time, and there's a slightly longer letters column than usual to round this issue off.

Finally, a couple of reminders: Please, whenever you are writing to DARK HORIZONS include an s.s.a.e. if you expect a reply, and don't forget the BPS' Fantasycon II in Birmingham on the 28th and 29th of February 1976 - I'll see you there!

FORGOTTEN Fantasy

THE GODDESSES
OF ATVATABAR
A FANTASY NOVEL
REPRINTED FOR THE
FIRST TIME
by William M. Bradshaw

ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE / F. MARION CRAWFORD



The Forgotten Forgotten Fantasy

A Mirror of the Past

an article By Mike ashley

It never seems to fail that whenever lovers of good fantasy literature make an effort to produce a quality magazine it turns out to be a financial flop. There just are not enough readers around to buy such a publication, when the majority readership seem satisfied with any old tatty book. Since the major baluster of magazines is their distributor, if he feels the publication has no readership he just will not distribute it. And thereby many a superb publication has met its doom.

One of the most recent to meet such a fate is also, to my mind, one of the best produced and most professional of all magazines, FORGOTTEN FANTASY.

FORGOTTEN FANTASY emanated from Hollywood and was edited by designer and publisher Douglas Menville, who acquired as an associate editor bibliophile Robert Reginald. Between them they possess a vast library of science fiction and fantasy classics and thereby an almost bottomless well upon which to draw for material. The magazine was all reprint, with the policy of resurrecting overlooked fantasy from forgotten books. In his editorial to the first issue, which was dated October 1970, Menville bemoaned the passing of what he thought of as the greatest of all pulp magazines, FAMOUS FANTASTIC MYSTERIES, and stated that FORGOTTEN FANTASY would try, to some measure, to fill that gap. Consequently the first issue was dedicated to FFM's editor, Mary Gnaedinger.

FORGOTTEN FANTASY was a quality production from the word go. With his first ever cover appearance, Bill Hughes supplied a superb piece to illustrate a scene from William R. Bradshaw's rare 1892 novel, *The Goddess of Atvatabar*. The magazine was replete with reproductions of the original artwork from the period, and where such was missing Bill Hughes splendidly filled in the gaps. Printing was masterfully executed by World Colour Inc. of Sparta, Illinois, whose reproduction of the artwork was second to none. The layout was spread across the page as in a book, rather than columnised as is the usual magazine practice. Any possible blank gaps were filled in by fascinating early sketches, often of the most intriguing design; and the inside front and back covers of the early issues supplied beautiful portfolios of early artwork - until the inevitable Resurrection advert took prior place. Overall the magazine production was faultless, and at a mere sixty cents was a giveaway to the public.

Yet it lasted just five issues.

Its failure almost certainly was linked with the fiction, and perhaps to some extent the title. In a recent FANTASTIC, Ted White pointed out that titles like FORGOTTEN FANTASY give the wrong impression to most general readers, who feel that if it's been forgotten, then it's probably best left that way. But that aside, let's look again at the fiction and see why this should have contributed to its downfall.

As I mentioned, the first issue included the first instalment of William Bradshaw's *The Goddess of Atvatabar*. Bradshaw, Irish by birth, lived from 1851 - 1927. He moved to the U.S.A. in 1883 where he remained for the rest of his life, and it was in New York that this novel was published in 1892. It belongs in the category of the 'hollow Earth' story, and Bradshaw follows writers like Paltock and Poe by having his adventurers carried into the Earth by sea through an entrance at the North Pole. Inside is an entire new world, complete with a central sun. The early parts of the novel carry you along at a fascinating and exciting pace, up to the first contact with the Atvatabarians and the exploration of their civilisation, and the meeting with Lyone, the goddess of the title. Thereafter however Bradshaw begins to slip into the common Victorian snare of over-philosophising, and action takes second place to Atvatabar with its customs and people. Since the novel is some 90,000 words long it consequently soon begins to tire the reader as Bradshaw treacle his fiction amongst a quagmire of politics. As the novel also took up the major part of each of FORGO-

TEN FANTASY's first four issues, which the accompanying checklist will show, it was inevitable that general readers would soon tire of its presence.

Obviously then Menville's best policy to capture other readers would be to reprint overlooked fantasy by well known writers, and to this end he succeeded moderately well, remembering that the magazine was primarily intended for American rather than British audiences. The first issue included a long story by Conan Doyle, The Parasite. Written in diary format it tells of the gradual hold of a psychic vampire over his prey. Dating as it does from Doyle's pre-occult period, 1895, when he was writing at his most productive best, this story is something of a weird classic and one of Doyle's best. Also resurrected was Francis Marion Crawford's The Dead Smile, from his 1911 collection UNCANNY TALES. Sam Moskowitz would later honour this story by including it in the Summer 1974 WEIRD TALES, where he reveals it first appeared in the August 1899 issue of AINSLIE'S magazine. The Dead Smile is a perfect example of Crawford's ability at creating an atmosphere of horror, in a story complete with tombs, ghostly wailings, rising skeletons and the mystery of a family secret. Although all is not explained at the end, the revelation of the family secret and all it implies comes at such a crescendo of horror that one has no time to consider what else had happened.

From the fiction side then, not forgetting the superb artwork, FORGOTTEN FANTASY's first issue is a masterpiece, since it included the most enjoyable part of Bradshaw's novel. Issue two, which arrived on time two months later, had a tremendous George Barr cover illustrating Lord Dunsany's When The Gods Slept, one of his Pegasus vignettes. It was a wise choice. Ballantine's paperback editions of Dunsany's work were selling well, and this brief tale had yet to be reprinted. It was later included in the 1972 selection BEYOND THE FIELDS WE KNOW. The next story was Mary Wilkins Freeman's The Shadows on the Wall - a first class story, but why in FORGOTTEN FANTASY? This story is far from forgotten. In fact Robert Lowndes had included it in the January 1965 MAGAZINE OF HORROR which many potential buyers of FORGOTTEN FANTASY would doubtless have seen. The story comes from her collection THE WIND IN THE ROSE-BUSH, and has frequently been reprinted. The only other story included is a brief museum piece by Voltaire: Mennon.

A book review column called "Calibrations" was instituted with the second issue, and the editorial talked about the newly formed Mythopoeic Society, established to study the works of Tolkien, Lewis and Williams.

The third issue carried another Bill Hughes cover, not quite the standard of his first, illustrating Wells' The Valley of the Spiders. Whilst that story is fairly well known to British readers, being readily available in most standard Wells collections, notably the Fontana edition, it is less well known to American readers. However by one of those strange vagaries of editing, concurrent with its publication in the February 1971 FORGOTTEN FANTASY, on the bookstalls in January, L. Sprague de Camp included it in his fourth heroic fantasy anthology WARLOCKS AND WARRIORS, which with better distribution and general public preference to books over magazines would naturally have pulled the seat from under FF's feet.

Apart from a hefty chunk of Bradshaw, the other two stories were Nathaniel Hawthorne's tale of a scientist, The Birthmark, and Edith Nesbit's highly readable Man-Size in Marble, again readily available in Britain, in the Montague Summers anthology.

The cover of the April 1971 issue is to my mind the best of the bunch, and one of the best magazine covers ever. It marked the first professional cover appearance of Tim Kirk, and illustrated William Morris's The Hollow Land. Alas its lack of contrasting colours will probably mean its reproduction in this issue will be lacking in detail, so I shall describe it. It depicts a knight toppling back over a cliff-edge to which he has been forced by swords and spears, and looking down into the green depths, where in the background we can see fir trees, spires, set against towering cliffs, and interspersed with glowing lights. The logo-type and headings, all in green and yellow, with the knight in blue, match perfectly, and it is one of the finest examples of Kirk's work.

William Morris' The Hollow Land is probably his most enjoyable work, for whilst his later novels capture the imagination with their depth of vision and adventure, one nevertheless becomes bogged down in Morris' antiquated style and phraseology. Most of this is absent from this earlier work, which rattles along like a cyclone. Here Menville got in first, as the story subsequently appeared in Lin Carter's Ballantine anthology GREAT SHORT NOVELS OF ADULT FANTASY I, but without the superb Tim Kirk cover, and without the equally beautiful Charles Robinson frontpiece of Swanhilde. The only other fiction was the conclusion of Bradshaw's novel, which belatedly began to pick up pace again as the adventurers are joined by further surface explorers.

The final issue, dated June 1971, began serializing E. Douglas Fawcett's Hartmann the Anarchist, which is a typical Victorian blend of super-inventions and mad scientists. It shows the obvious inspiration of Jules Verne's Clipper of the Clouds, but actually reads

FORGOTTEN FANTASY

February 1971



THE VALLEY OF SPIDERS by H G WELLS

better than Verne's original. Fawcett has a far better style than Bradshaw, and thus one feels cheated that the cessation of FORGOTTEN FANTASY has left this novel incomplete. Fawcett apparently died in 1960, at the remarkable age of 94. Accompanying fiction was Algernon Blackwood's Smith: An Episode in a Lodging-house, which contains all the elements of horror that one comes to expect from this master story-teller, and a novelty piece, A Lost Opportunity by Tudor Jenks, concerning the discovery of a little man, just three inches high. This truly was a forgotten fantasy.

Fiction and artwork aside, FORGOTTEN FANTASY did a great service in not forgetting poetry, and in the final issue Menville resurrected two short poems by Richard Le Gallienne from HARPER'S MONTHLY magazine for February 1903, together with the insepable illustrations by Sarah S. Stilwell.

FORGOTTEN FANTASY had also carried a letter column, which was perhaps overlong for the general readership, though always of interest to the fan. The first column in the third issue included a letter from Ray Bradbury,

and the lead letter was from Al Gerneshausen, a Hollywood book collector who later helped save FORGOTTEN FANTASY by supplying them with a copy of Bradshaw's Goddess of Atavahar when Douglas Menville's own personal copy was stolen. The letter column was called "Articulations", a nice title which fitted in well with the other three regular columns: "Excavations", the editorial, "Calibrations", the book reviews, and "Prognostications", which looked forward to the next issue. A next issue was definitely planned after the fifth, as "Prognostications" pointed to the action-packed conclusion of Hartmann the Anarchist, as well as a short tale by Jules Verne, and a forgotten fantasy by C. J. Cutcliffe-Byne. But alas, such was not to be.

An autopsy on a dead magazine is never satisfying because it inevitably points to the lack of support fantasy has from magazine distributors. But in FORGOTTEN FANTASY's case one can learn a valuable lesson. FORGOTTEN FANTASY was a beautiful magazine which I shall forever cherish, but it was a collector's magazine, and not one for general readers or bookstall browsers. In trying to please both, which Menville obviously was by the inclusion of better known items, the magazine missed both markets. By concentrating on the collectors, a thereby increasing the cover price to, say, \$1.50, FORGOTTEN FANTASY might well have sold for far longer. The entire layout, particularly the reprinting of original artwork, plus Menville's ever-informative editorials and story introductions, the book reviews and letter column, all were aimed at the collector, since the general reader couldn't care less. But such collectors would already have many of the short stories reprinted, and their appeal was obviously not enough to the other readers to keep the magazine going, even though early reports were promising.

In its passing therefore FORGOTTEN FANTASY was a martyr to its cause from which editors and publishers alike can learn. I am pleased to say that the Forgotten Fantasy imprint is not altogether lost. The Nectar Press Inc. which published the magazine has now metamorphosed into the Newcastle Publishing Company to produce "The Newcastle Forgotten Fantasy Library" which began with William Morris' THE GLITTERING PLAIN in a quality paperback format, including original artwork. I would readily advocate the support of this venture, and it is entirely possible sets of FORGOTTEN FANTASY can be obtained from the publishing address: 1521 North Vine Street, Hollywood, California 90028. If this article has not convinced you that FORGOTTEN FANTASY should not be forgotten, then I hope the accompanying checklist and cover reproductions do. Who knows, one day FORGOTTEN FANTASY might live again.

a checklist of Forgotten Fantasy

<u>Title (Date of first publication).</u>	<u>Author.</u>	<u>Length.</u>	<u>Artist.</u>
<u>Volume 1. Number 1. October 1970.</u>			
Cover by Bill Hughes.			
Excavations.....	Douglas Menville.....	Ed.	
The Goddess of Atvatabar* (sr4/1) (1892)...	William R. Bradshaw.....	16.80	C. D. Chapman
The Parasite (1895).....	Arthur Conan Doyle.....	16.00	B. Hughes.
The Phantom-Wooer (?).....	Thomas Lovell Beddoes.....	v	
The Dead Saile (1899).....	F. Marion Crawford.....	8.00	B. Hughes.
<u>Volume 1. Number 2. December 1970.</u>			
Cover by George Barr.			
Excavations.....	Douglas Menville.....	Ed.	
When the Gods Slept* (1906).....	Lord Dunsany.....	2.00	G. Barr.
The Shadows on the Wall (1903).....	Mary E. Wilkins Freeman...	5.80	P. Newell.
Calibrations.....	Douglas Menville.....	br.	
The Goddess of Atvatabar (sr4/2) (1892)...	William R. Bradshaw.....	27.00	C. D. Chapman & P. de Longpre.
The Fisherman (?).....	Matthew Gregory Lewis.....	v	
Manon, or Human Wisdom (1747).....	Voltaire.	1.90	
<u>Volume 1. Number 3. February 1971.</u>			
Cover by Bill Hughes.			
Excavations.....	Douglas Menville.....	Ed.	
The Valley of Spiders* (1903).....	H. G. Wells.....	4.00	C. Hart.
The Birthmark (1843).....	Nathaniel Hawthorne.....	6.40	E. Keen.
Calibrations.....	Douglas Menville.....	br.	
Man-Size in Marble (1893).....	E. Nesbit.....	4.30	B. Hughes.
The Goddess of Atvatabar (sr4/3) (1892)...	William R. Bradshaw.....	23.00	C. D. Chapman.
Articulations (Letters from: A. Gernsheim, R. Stoker, D. McAllister, D. Roberts, C. Sadler, J. M. Johnson, J. H. Dennis, T. Breen, C. W. Wolfe, R. Bradbury, R. Cook).			
<u>Volume 1. Number 4. April 1971.</u>			
Cover by Tim Kirk.			
Excavations.....	Douglas Menville.....	Ed.	
The Hollow Land* (1856).....	William Morris.....	13.60	C. Robinson & T. Kirk.
Calibrations.....	Douglas Menville.....	br.	
The Goddess of Atvatabar (sr4/4) (1892)...	William R. Bradshaw.....	23.00	C. D. Chapman.
Articulations (Letters from: P. T. Bailey, M. Reece, H. Cooper, M. C. Roberts, M. R. Model, G. A. Kraft, E. S. Lauterbach, D. Schweitzer, J. Bergquist, Mrs. B. Simmons, I. Marks).			
<u>Volume 1. Number 5. June 1971.</u>			
Cover by Bill Hughes.			
Excavations.....	Douglas Menville.....	Ed.	
Hartmann the Anarchist* (sr2/1) (1893)....	E. Douglas Fawcett.....	20.00	F. T. Jane.
Calibrations.....	Robert Reginald & Douglas Menville.....	br.	
Smith: an Episode in a Lodging House (1906)...	Algernon Blackwood.....	6.10	C. Hart.
The Mer-Mother (1903).....	Richard Le Gallienne	v	S. Stilwell
The Pine Lady			

(Continued on page 10).

FORGOTTEN Fantasy

CLASSICS OF SCIENCE FICTION AND FANTASY

APRIL 1977

A FANTASTIC TALE OF LOVE AND DEATH

THE H

THE LAST

FORGOTTEN Fantasy

CLASSICS OF SCIENCE FICTION AND FANTASY

JUNE 1977

40 PAGES

HARTMANN THE ANARCHIST

A SCIENCE FICTION
CLASSIC IN THE
TRADITION OF
JULIUS VERNE

By E. Douglas Fennell

GERBON BLACK

DR. JENKS

A Lost Opportunity (1894)..... Tudor Jenks..... 4.20 Birch.
Articulations (Letters from: Mrs. H. B. Wentworth, R. Johnson, D. Maloney, J. Leavitt,
K. W. Paig, E. Vessell, D. V. Craig, A. Heeter, J. Logan).

Notes: Ed. = Editorial; br. = book reviews; v = verse.

* denotes story illustrated on cover.

All issues contained 128 pages and cost sixty cents.

Story lengths in thousands of words.

sr = serial (sr4/1 = 4 part serial, first instalment).

a quest-song, which the dragon of ghaishan improvised for the amusement of the cavalier amaris

The city-men of Mahkra,
A blistered place and blasphemous,
Are subject unto Tfarcevolph
The melancholy-mad.

They fear the demon Uhlutho,
The sightless and unseeable,
A vision of whom Tfarcevolph
In darklong-dressing had.

These city-men of Mahkra,
Their deathless doom is dear to them,
They know no word of Imasaz
That jugglers sing to see.

But my heart is for Imasaz,
The garnet city Imasaz,
Oh fair, far-fabled Imasaz,
Where I belong to be.

(And Amaris laughed low, and said in his soft, melodious voice, "Juggler, thou mockest us all," by which the Dragon knew, that Amaris feared him, perhaps alone of all men. And the Dragon of Ghaishan was well pleased, for he feared Amaris of Sfranc as a wise man should.)



marion pitman

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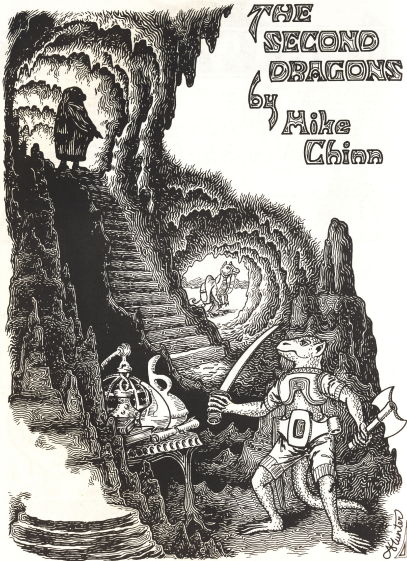
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BRITISH FANTASY SOCIETY

THE SECOND DRAGONS

by Mike
Chinn



Part Two: Shadows of the Weaver

Aubeq-Senn rode his equar slowly for two reasons: the cold air was not proving comfortable for either himself or his reptilian mount; and secondly, he was not as young as he had been when he had led the victorious lizard boards against the True-men: almost one hundred years had passed since his birth.

His mouth formed the closest it could to a smile; an entire century, a good age, even by lizard's standards, and in that time he had penned the surviving True-men in one of their own cities: Wemilas. Now even the most adventurous human could not find the will to continue the war against the lizards.

Yet Aubeq-Senn was well aware that his was a hollow victory; just before the True-men had been crushed, the enigmatic Salin Thur, lizard sorcerer, has disappeared. Of all intelligent beings on the earth, he was the one Aubeq-Senn truly feared. The sorcerer was a solitary creature, obeying his lord, but always with a certain sardonic humour: as one following the dictates of the condemned prisoner. Many was the time Aubeq-Senn had considered having the wizard executed, but his fear that Salin Thur could escape the axe even as it fell held him back.

In truth, Salin Thur was the living deity of a godless race.

And now Aubeq-Senn followed his trail into the cold regions of the north. The giant lizard was uneasy: for one of such cunning Salin Thur had been seen by many wandering lizards, and all had said his trail pointed to this area of desolate tall rock and frost. Did Salin Thur wish to be found?

As though to answer the unasked query a sudden blast of warm air swept over him, and his equar tittered its pleasure. Looking around, Aubeq-Senn saw a cave-mouth around which heat shimmered and the desert sand had lost its coating of sugary frost.

"A pointer, if ever I saw one," muttered the lizard suspiciously. Nevertheless, he turned his mount and rode warily into the luxurious warmth.

When he reached the cave-mouth he dismounted and, drawing sword and axe from the saddle panniers, carefully picked his way through fallen rubble until he was staring into the cave's pit-blackness.

"Welcome, Aubeq-Senn," hissed a sardonic voice in his ear. He spun about, but there was no one to be seen. He turned back to the cave.

"Salin Thur!" he roared. "Where are you, traitor? Show yourself!"

"Traitor?" mocked the voice. "There are no traitors among wizards; we have loyalties only to ourselves."

"Mayhap, sorcerer; but the reckoning is here. Where are you?"

A light, like some will-o'-the-wisp, appeared at the cave-mouth. "Follow that," continued the quiet voice. "It will lead you hither."

The light began to drift into the cave, illuminating the rocky walls but faintly. Reluctantly, Aubeq-Senn followed it.

Presently, a glow from somewhere deeper in the cave began to swamp the dimmer floating light, therefore Aubeq-Senn headed towards the greater source. He entered a vast chamber that faded into dusky obscurity at the far end, so large was it. Massive stalagmites and stalagmites formed broad pillars of stone and menacing teeth. Witch-lights hung from the roof or nestled in hollows in the floor, while continuous whispers seemed to echo from the glistening walls and shadows that should not have existed mocked him from seemingly well-lit corners.

In the centre of the chamber stood a long wooden table upon which lay papers, thick dusty books and strange apparatus. Aubeq-Senn walked over to it, conscious of his every echoing step, and gazed at the manuscripts and books; but all were written in obscure curling characters that he could make no sense of. The apparatus, likewise, were completely mystifying. He muttered to himself and turned his attention back to the cave. A thin rustle hissed from near the ceiling.

"And what do you think of my workshop?"

Aubeq-Senn looked up and saw the figure of Salin Thur slowly descending carved steps he had not previously noticed.

"Doubtless it is very effective; but as a layman, I cannot comment." The giant lizard straightened, tail swishing slowly, and held his weapons to make them more obvious.

"That is probably the nearest to a compliment I will ever receive from you, my lord. Can I offer you refreshment?"

"Aye; a flagon of ale would be welcome."

"Of course." The wizard snapped his fingers and a large pewter flagon appeared at Aubeq-

Senn's elbow. He stared at it for a moment before taking a careful sip. Salin Thur's hissl-laughter echoed eerily about the cavern for long moments.

"Will you never learn to trust me, my lord?"

"I have spent ten years in careful research and another five in false trails to be here this day," replied the other, replacing the flagon on the table. "Would a trustworthy lizard be so hard to find?"

"True I have made no efforts to contact you," spoke the wizard as he sat, "but neither have I attempted to hide myself from the eyes of others, as you have seen."

"Indeed? Then why has no one seen you for the past three decades? Only lately have reports on you reached me."

"I have been in retreat, these past years; and, in fact, for some time, as you see it, I have not even been upon this planet."

"Hah!" Aubeq-Senn's scorn showed in his eyes. "In the land of human myths, no doubt!"

"Perhaps." A trace of some undefinable emotion seemed to flit through his eyes for a second. The wind rose suddenly outside the cave, and moaned across the entrance in an almost sentient cry.

"And what did this retreat teach you?"

"I spoke with intelligent things: gods the humans would call them; and they gave me some of their knowledge."

"What form does this knowledge take?" Aubeq-Senn picked up his drink and drained it.

"Understanding of future events...how to control some of nature...insights into existence: such facts."

"Then you know my eventual fate?" Aubeq-Senn slammed his flagon down.

"Aye, but I cannot tell you..." His voice trailed off as the other waved his broadsword under his throat.

"But you must," insisted Aubeq-Senn.

"You cannot kill me, my lord: you have one of my charms to ward blows, think you I would not have one myself?" He pulled a small pendant from amongst his robes; the other dropped his blade.

"This I will say, however," continued the sorcerer. He snapped his fingers and the empty flagon was once more full. Aubeq-Senn stirred uneasily. "Have you heard of the roving bands of True-men?"

"You support one fantasy with yet another!" growled the lizard leader. "Aye, I've heard of them: at the same time as I've heard of gods and piskies! They are likewise mythical!"

Salin Thur shook his head. "Not so. They exist; and more: they are instrument in your downfall."

"How?" cried the other. "I have never seen one!"

"Their desert sojourn has toughened them: they do not fear the lizard race. If you wish to succeed, Aubeq-Senn, you must seek out and destroy these tribes of man."

Aubeq-Senn was thoughtful. "If you speak truly, this is predestined. I cannot change it."

Salin Thur shrugged. "Perhaps."

The lizard ruler stood up. "I begin to believe your tales, wizard, and would know more."

The other slowly shook his head. "I have already told more than I should; yet, perhaps, no more than you could have discovered yourself, in time."

Aubeq-Senn glanced shrewdly at the wizard's unreadable eyes. "You are unable to tell aught that you know!" he cried in sudden realisation. Salin Thur's eyes revealed the truth in a sudden flash of unprecedented anger. Aubeq-Senn laughed mockingly.

"Then I pity you, wizard; indeed, 'tis a jest worthy of your own humour: to have all this knowledge, and be afraid to use it lest those who gave it jealously take back the gift!" His laughter was deafening for a moment; the leering shadows seemed to retreat momentarily in fear.

"You have doomed yourself more successfully than could any of your enemies!"

"Even more than you could guess," said the wizard quietly as Aubeq-Senn turned to leave. His black eyes were sad and enigmatic.

The Nomad slid quickly from the back of his panting equar and ran into the wide tent before him. He pulled the cloth scarf from around his mouth and nose as he bowed sweepingly to the imperious figure that half-lay on cushions in the centre of the tent.

"My lord Thalim," gasped the rider. "I have found the city dwellers: they are imprisoned in Wemilas, not thirty leagues south-east of the rocks yonder."

The other slowly rose to a cross-legged sitting position, only his voice betrayed his great age.

"That is interesting news, Einyrr. Sit, refresh yourself."

As the young rider squatted on the cushions, Thulin thought deeply. As he did so, he made small passes in the air with his strangely un-aged hands. At length he spoke.

"How many lizards were there?"

"Very few, considering: about two-score on guard throughout the city and another score on domestic duties."

"Sixty against two hundred. Why do the city dwellers not escape?"

"They have as much will as so many sheets," scoffed the other. "The lizard-men have broken them completely."

"If they do not have the will to fight for themselves, they do not deserve our help. On the morrow we shall move on."

"Very well, my lord." The young nomad stood and bowed impressively again, before leaving the tent. Thulin continued to sit and think.

A great fire blazed in the nomad camp and shadowy figures staggered through the hypnotising flicker of light. Laughter and singing floated on the cold night air; and the occasional pulse of a drum and flute rose above the din.

Thulin sat within the warmth of the bonfire with a paternal smile on his unwithered lips. The Mojal race was naturally a happy one, and to the nomad the greatest joy was the caravan wandering over the sterile dunes in search of the next oasis; thus they celebrated the coming journey. And Thulin, although he could not even recall his birth-time, shared all the emotions of the younger members of the tribe.

Yet, even though he outwardly rejoiced with the others, a troubled feeling persisted in gnawing at his mind. It was something to do with the lizard-men, but it was not the scarce number of guards at Wenzilas alone that bothered him. There was a threat in the wind, brooding menace in the stars.

Thulin decided there was only one way to quell his fears, as much as it made him weak.

He closed his eyes and murmured softly to himself, making the tense motions with his hands once again. The music and shouting seemed to fade into the ether as Thulin's whispers alone echoed in the scarcely physical void.

Abruptly the old man's eyes opened and the earthly sounds returned. He leapt to his feet with incredible agility, yelling hoarsely. The noises of celebration ceased; when Thulin spoke, all listened.

"The lizard hordes come!" he cried. "They approach yond rocks even now!"

"How many?" called someone.

"Two hundred, all armed and lusty for the death of the Mojal." Thulin collapsed suddenly. Several ran forward to help, but he waved them back. "May, look to yourselves," he croaked. "Be armed and ready when they come."

A great cry rose from the nomads as the women and children ran for bows and shafts while their men grabbed great curved sabres and scimitars. No one asked how Thulin knew, for all respected his powers.

The tribe formed themselves into a wide two-deep circle: the men on the outside and the women and children with nocked arrows in the inner row. In the centre stood Thulin; he muttered loudly and stretched out imploring arms. The short astral journey had tired him, and he doubted he had sufficient energy to complete the ritual. The tribe was in grave danger of extinction.

Aubeq-Senn stiffened, his tall tail snapping about in agitation.

"They have quietened," he growled. "They suspect, think you?"

A thin lizard just behind him spoke in a quiet hissing voice.

"Perchance, my lord. But they cannot have heard our approach, nor yet espy us. There is something amiss in yonder camp."

"You speak truly, Kanis-Rann," growled the giant lizard. "Could Salin Thur be behind this?"

"If he is my lord, you will have final proof of his treason, and no grounds to fear ordering his execution."

"Very well; we have come too far to retreat now. Order rapid advance, but in silence."

The order passed back down the ranks and the long train of reptilian bodies started to advance speedily upon the Mojal camp at a pace that was virtually a run. Heavy broadswords were drawn from sheaths and round embossed shields were pulled from almost shoulderless backs.

The army passed the solitary clump of rocks and silently clambered up tall dunes to the nearing glow of the giant campfire. Half-way up the dunes, Aubeq-Senn suddenly realised that a single voice was chanting in an obscure tongue. Even as he listened, the voice rose in

volume then stopped, abruptly. Not pausing in his rapid stride, he turned to Xanis-Ramm.

"Did you hear that voice?"

Xanis-Ramm nodded grimly. "Aye. 'Twas the voice of a sorcerer, my lord."

Aubeq-Senn turned back to the front. "Methinks I see a certain plan here," he muttered. Then he raised his voice: "They know our presence; break ranks, charge, and wipe them from the earth that has rejected them!"

A bestial roar rose from the lizard ranks as they broke formation in a wild rush to the top of the dunes, weapons flashing in the firelight. They topped the dunes and spilled in scaly streams upon the waiting Mojal. Arrows flew accurately into scaled throats, but the remaining lizards ignored their dead, stepping over the bodies, regardless.

Men and lizards met with a clash of steel, sparks flashed blue in the night as the sounds of splintering wood, screams, curses and tortured metal split the calm night. Humans fell like dead wood before the knife that was the lizard hoard; men, women and children piled one upon another.

Thulin, standing now upon a dune's crest, stared in horror at the carnage. He drew a deep breath and cried out a name. Instantly, there was quiet.

The two sides were held aside by some invisible wall, one impervious to even the most enraged lizard's crashing blows. Aubeq-Senn beat futilely against the unseen blockade.

"Wizard!" he screamed in frustrated rage, "you are not Salin Thur! Who be you?"

"I am Thulin the Mojal, lizard." His voice was calm and had tremendous carrying power.

"Then you know you cannot hold us forever with mummery. Your wall will vanish eventually!"

"I do not intend to rely on a little paltry conjuring, Aubeq-Senn. Observe."

Thulin began to make motions in the air and chant in a strong voice that held some of his weariness.

"Xanine, Xanine, Xanine, Xanine, Xanine, Xanine, Xanine, Xanine, Xanine, Xanine, Xanine!"

Then there was complete silence for some seconds as though every living thing feared to make its presence known. Thulin suddenly stared upwards at the stars with a queer sideways tilt of his head and cried out:

"Eheich, Yod, Tetragrammaton Elohim, El, Elohim Gibor, Eloah Va-Death, El Adonai Tzabaoth, Elci Tzabaoth, Shaddai!"

A sudden deafening wind blew every lizard to the ground, yet did not touch the Mojal. As Aubeq-Senn strove to rise, he thought he heard a deep echoing voice boom in question, and a thin reedy creak that was Thulin's voice answering. Then an inky blackness descended and he knew no more.

Eager hands helped Thulin to his tent. He lay down on the soft cushions and remained motionless and breathless for a while. But after long anxious minutes the nomads saw the colour return to his cheeks, and he rose painfully onto one elbow and spoke in a hoarse voice.

"The lizard hoards have attacked us with our destruction as their aim. For centuries we have avoided the quarrels between lizard-men and the city dwellers, but now the choice has been made for us.

"We must unite. For the first time in our history the Mojal tribes must group as one and carry the fight to Aubeq-Senn before he can organise reprisals.

"Messengers must leave at once, no time can be lost. And may the gods send us victory."

Aubeq-Senn picked himself up and stared about him. Somehow his entire army had been lifted into the deserted city of Steff. A distant wind blotted the stars in the west for a second before disappearing over the horizon. The lizard ruler began to curse loudly, shaking his balled claw at the stars.

"They shall die! Thulin the Mojal! Salin Thur! The entire human race! Too long have they crossed me; it shall not happen again!

"The final battle is nigh!"



The Writer in Fandom:

David Sutton

interviewed By Steve Jones

SJ: I suppose that really this article should be titled The Editor in Fandom rather than The Writer in Fandom, as you're probably best known as an editor...

DS: Yes.

SJ: I know you've been over it quite a few times recently for other magazines, but can you briefly outline why SHADOW appeared and how it appeared?

DS: Well, in 1968 I'd been into fanzines for about four or five years and at that time there were all film magazines - horror film magazines - and since at the time I decided to

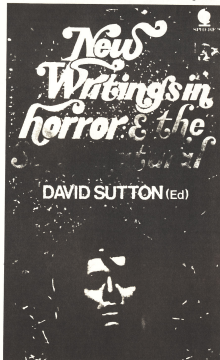
do a fanzine, I decided to do a literary fanzine rather than a film fanzine. I suppose SHADOW achieved the reputation it did eventually because of the number of fine contributors that built up over the years, and many big names - big names now - first started off in SHADOW.

SJ: Was this an intencional idea when you first started the magazine?

DS: No, in fact when I started it I did the first issue which was so bad I really didn't think it would get beyond that, and it was in fact only through Eddy Bertin, from Belgium, contributing - most of the second issue was Eddy Bertin material - he more or less started the ball rolling from the first issue, but it wasn't intentional because I didn't really know whether a literature magazine would work anyway, so I hadn't really planned out to get all these different people 'cause in fact I didn't know all the people then: it was only through producing the magazine and advertising in other fanzines that these contributors came forward and made SHADOW what it is.

SJ: You killed SHADOW with the twenty-first issue; some people said it was litho that killed it, would you agree with this?

DS: No. No, I entirely disagree with that; I probably would have upped the print run with successive issues...actually I'll tell you what I was thinking about at the time, it wasn't litho at all that killed it, I was getting a little bit tired of doing it; it wasn't litho - litho is in some respects easier than duplicating,



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COVER OF SHADOW 7, SEPTEMBER 1969.

and the finished product looked a lot nicer, so it was nicer to do - at about SHADOW 20 I thought well, I'll do up to SHADOW 25, and finish on issue 25, that's a nice round figure; but there was such a gap in between 20 and 21, I was thinking about doing 21 and thought "this is going to be it", because part of the thing about SHADOW was that it should review material, and I still feel strongly that fanzines should review the material they deal with, and because SHADOW had this big gap I felt that now, seeing I couldn't keep up the process, I thought I'd finish it now.

SJ: Best to pull out while you're on top still.

DS: Yes.

SJ: Why do you think after SHADOW finished it almost marked the end of an era? It seemed to me that when SHADOW finished nothing came up to replace it; there now seems a complete lack of fantasy fanzines around today.

DS: Yes, well I think SHADOW superceded a lot of other fanzines - they died before SHADOW; I think it's as simple as that really.

SJ: Except for BALTHUS, and occasionally ANDURIL, and DARK HORIZONS...

DS: Yes, this was it; when I did the last issue of SHADOW there were few fanzines anyway, and I suppose it was just simply that.

SJ: The whole cycle has died down again, probably to re-emerge in another few years I would think.

DS: I think it was just the fact that there were so few fanzines, and SHADOW had become so important that when that was finished people felt that this was the end of a period that ran from perhaps the early '60s to '74, and although SHADOW started half-way through that, it finished it, in a sense.

SJ: You've also edited several other magazines, the one-shot BIBLIOTHECA: H. P. LOVECRAFT, the FANTASYCON booklet for The British Fantasy Society, and you did the BPS NEWSLETTER for quite some time; do you plan to ever produce any more fanzines or edit any other specials?

DS: No, not at the moment. I'm quite interested in perhaps doing programme booklets for BPS conventions, but that's as far as it goes at the moment - no fanzines.

SJ: A couple of years ago you edited two original anthologies for Sphere books entitled NEW WRITINGS IN HORROR & THE SUPERNATURAL; is this something you always wanted to do and did you find it rewarding?

DS: Very rewarding! Through editing SHADOW, through becoming really interested in horror literature and seeing other fans who were writing fiction but the markets weren't there, that when Sphere gave me the opportunity I was delighted. They were really knocked out with SHADOW, and Sphere went to Brian Frost later...

SJ: For BOOK OF THE WEREWOLF...

DS: They more or less gave me free reign; they said was the idea feasible, I said yes, I know lots of people, just give me a few months to see what I can get through and I started writing 'round to various authors and agents and I got overwhelmed with material and I provided them with two anthologies in a short period of time; they never commissioned another one after that. ((I'd like to take this opportunity to mention and thank both Richard Davis and Roger Peyton (of Androseda Book Co.), who helped enormously with NEW WRITINGS by supplying a number of author's addresses that I didn't have. DS)).

SJ: Why do you think that was?

DS: Well, by that time they were obviously finding that their horror line wasn't going very well, I don't mean NEW WRITINGS particularly, I imagine the whole wasn't going very well, some of the stuff they were doing wasn't very good; I'm sure when they axed NEW WRITINGS they had this DENNIS WHATELY LIBRARY OF THE OCCULT lined up, this was big name business.

SJ: But you've in fact got a new anthology coming out this year haven't you?

DS: Yes, this is for Corgi books and it's called THE SATYR'S HEAD AND OTHER TALES OF TERROR ((published by Corgi, Summer 1975. SJ)).

SJ: Did you get the job from Corgi from the two books you'd done at Sphere, had they seen those before they commissioned you to produce an original anthology or did you go to them?

DS: I went to them. I'd got NEW WRITINGS 3 in fact lined up just waiting for Sphere to send some money for it, and I sent it with more or less the same contents to Corgi and told them Sphere had finished the series and would they be interested in either a series or just a one-shot, and Diane Lloyd at Corgi read the stuff that I sent her and she was very pleased and commissioned just a one-shot.

SJ: Do you think the original anthology is a largely untapped market at the moment which publishing companies are not taking advantage of?

DS: Oh yes, definitely.

Bibliotheca: H. P. Lovecraft.



COVER OF BIBLIOTHECA: H. P. LOVECRAFT, JULY 1971.



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SJ: You'd much rather see them than so many reprint volumes?

DS: Absolutely, absolutely. The ideal thing would be a magazine; two or three publishers publishing one new anthology a year could be completely out done by one magazine a month; twelve issues a year with all new stuff would really provide a market.

SJ: Besides editing, you now want to get into writing stories; is this short stories or novels?

DS: Short stories; I've always been interested in writing but I never really had the time doing SHADOW...

SJ: Now SHADOW's gone you feel you've got the time...

DS: Yes. At the moment it's just short stories.

SJ: What subjects do you prefer to write about: science fantasy, or horror...?

DS: Well, supernatural horror and sword & sorcery.

SJ: Have you any particularly favourite authors who have influenced you to any great extent, or have you been generally influenced by the whole genre?

DS: I think probably generally influenced in a certain respect; obviously some writers... Lovecraft would probably have a very powerful effect, but you resist a lot of that because it can be too Lovecraftian in a sense, not many people can really do that and get away with it; people like Brian Lumley can, and Ramsey Campbell did. Fritz Leiber's horror stories and his sword & sorcery stories influenced me as well.

SJ: Have you any stories due to appear in the near future?

DS: Yes; there's one in the Corgi book, and two have been bought by Hugh Leish for Star books, and there's one in WORLD OF HORROR ((The Bestwick Papers, in WORLD OF HORROR, issue 8..SJ)). That's it at the moment.

SJ: So really it's a new career as a writer; you hope people will say "David Sutton, yes, he writes stories", and not "David Sutton, he edited SHADOW"?

DS: Yes, perhaps eventually.

SJ: David, thank you very much.



The Shadows In The Barn



by Ramsey Campbell

That's decent of you, son. I'll have a pint of bitter, if I may. Just one thing, though - could you ask them not to give me a tankard? I have my reasons. A pint glass will be fine.

I hope you didn't mind me sitting here listening to you. Some people would think if you sit with your hands in your pockets you're a layabout. Well, I didn't think you would. I used to work, you know. Believe me, I wish I still could.

You can't guess? Didn't you see me watching that trick you did with the coins on the tankard? That was a good trick, and I know what I'm talking about. Yes, you're right. I was a magician. I could show you some tricks. But I'd rather not, if you don't mind. These days I don't like to use my hands.

I suppose you think I'm being mysterious, not wanting a tankard and so on. It's not something I care to talk about generally. But I don't think you'd laugh. It might upset your girl friend, though. God knows it upset me.

All right, I'll tell you. You notice how I'm drinking, putting my hand back in my pocket as soon as it leaves the glass? It's not my hand I don't want to see, it's - well, listen.

It all happened many years ago. You'd think I'd have forgotten, wouldn't you? I was on holiday, or as much of a holiday as I ever used to take. My father was a magician before me, you see, and he taught me most of what I had to know. He always used to wear a black top hat covered with symbols, and I can remember him sitting with his feet on the stove in our caravan, telling me that the most important thing was to get the measure of your audience. And that you should never leave your work entirely, even when you were on holiday, in case someone else should learn new tricks and force you out. He was always there to help me when I was rehearsing in the caravan, even after he died.

So as I say, I wasn't entirely on holiday. I'd promised myself a couple of weeks to drive through the Cotswolds. Yes, I had a van then. Now I walk, or slouch as they say. But I'd

advertised ahead in some of the local papers of the Cotswolds, in case anyone could use me. I only had one answer, asking me to perform for a Sunday school party somewhere outside Berkeley. It was to be on the second day of my holiday, but of course I accepted. I didn't know that it would be the end of my holiday, and of everything else as well.

I started out early in the morning from Birmingham, where I'd had to spend the night. Birmingham wasn't as bad then as it is now, but those dead buildings were already beginning to rob the place of all its colour. I can still remember driving into the Cotswolds. As I left Birmingham I seemed to see nothing but grey and gouged earth, lopped trees - and then as I got nearer the Cotswolds grass began to spring up, the stumps grew into trees, hills rose: it was a kind of resurrection. Yet now I think about it there was something primitive as well, as if time were turning back: all the deserted barns, the stabled ploughshares, the stone walls that seemed to follow the hills for ever, had been abandoned by man because they didn't need him, only the earth and its forces.

Anyway, I reached the village about mid-afternoon; Camside, I think it was called. I know there was a river, because people were leaning on the parapets and watching the sunlight. The first thing I did was to find a little hotel. The vicar had said I could stay at his house, but I decided not. I'm not much for religion; there's something more than us, I know that, but I don't think it's friendly. It's up to us to make what we can of life. The woman who ran the hotel - a huge woman with an apron like a postage-stamp stuck on her belly and a great mellow smile - wanted to see some magic, of course, so I showed her a few tricks with cards. If I'd known, I'd have left it at that.

Well, I had a meal and went across to the Tithe Barn about half-an-hour before the show was due to start. I hadn't been able to get in touch with the vicar in the meantime. I felt happy, I remember: passing all the red stone houses which didn't jangle as cars drove past, strolling along the main street where stall-holders were unpacking their stalls, looking up at a village clock whose hands were clasped together at noon or maybe at midnight, walking through the churchyard where sparrows were singing among the headstones. I felt I'd have an easy night.

The Tithe Barn had one of the steepest roofs I've ever seen. There wasn't much else to notice, just an entrance with a few church posters pasted on it. So I went straight in, and I was nearly blinded. God knows where they'd got their spotlights from. They'd built a stage at one end of the barn - for plays and so on, I suppose, because there were a couple of makeshift dressing-rooms behind it - but all I could see at first was a blaze of light with two shadows fluttering above it under the roof, and I told you how steep the roof was. Eventually I made out the vicar and his wife fussing about on stage, and realised that theirs were the shadows which looked like a pair of hands grappling under the roof.

Of course I told them I wouldn't need all that light. But apparently the local rep put up with it, and the vicar's wife was quite upset. "We had an appeal to buy them," she said. She had pale skin and a pale dress that was supposed to be pretty, she was one of those fragile women whose weaknesses you mustn't notice, the same way people would be afraid to say anything about a cup of tea at the vicarage. "All the villagers contributed," she said. "My husband bought them." Well, he was a long black pole with a head like a shelled egg stuck in a white cup, and I could understand the spotlights, but I wasn't going to put up with them. Eventually, I persuaded them that I could make do with one. That must have been when I lost my chance to stop what happened.

Then the vicar said to me: "Thank you very much for offering your services." He had some knack of suggesting more than he said; I felt that he was telling his wife off for being unchristian and trying to remind me of my place. So when he said "I hope the children will enjoy it," it sounded as if he was saying that they might be difficult and that he didn't know whether I had the talent to win them over. I didn't quite tell him that I'd show him, but that was what I felt.

I had a look around the barn. They'd brought in rows of hard wooden chairs, which weren't going to help. Then I went into one of the dressing-rooms, which was more like a packing-case. I took my time over setting out my props, because I was determined not to go out again until the show was due to start. Well, I knew when that was easily enough, because all of a sudden I heard a chorus from Handel's *Messiah* coming from out front, which they'd put on a gramophone for the children. Follow that, as you'd say these days. So I gathered everything up, went out and told the vicar's wife to take it off - for which she glared at me as if I'd dared to hurt her - and strode straight onto the stage.

For a moment I thought I'd come out early, because even when the music stopped there wasn't a sound from the audience. And with the spotlight almost in my eyes I couldn't see whether anyone was there. So I arranged my props on the table which they'd given me,

to let my eyes adjust a little. Then I turned 'round and had another look.

At first all I could see was eyes glinting at me. After a while I made out that there were four rows or so of them, but it took me longer to work out what was wrong: they weren't talking, they weren't scuffling, they were simply watching me.

You know, this unnerved me so much that I almost muffed my first trick, a simple thing with coloured streamers. While I performed half of me was trying to get the feel of those children. I gave them half-a-dozen tricks and there still wasn't a sound, not a laugh, not a mutter. Not a head turned. There's a bad audience that every magician knows, where half of them shout out how it's done and you have to find a trick that'll bring them up on stage and dazzle them. This wasn't that kind of audience. They were soaking me up and giving nothing back. Do you know, I found myself changing style halfway and turning it into a comedy act in the hope that they'd respond. But they didn't even twitch.

Well, my eyes were getting used to the light by now, and I was just about ready to give up when I saw two boys whispering on the back row. Now, they weren't like the rest; they were from some country house outside the village - their clothes were crisp as a fiver. And beyond them I could see the vicar and his wife just slipping out. When I think about it I suppose they were going out for a word with some of the parents, but at the time all I could see was that they and those two brats on the back row simply weren't interested. So I thought: I'll show you. The wall behind the stage was painted white and perfect for a shadow-show. But it wasn't going to be like any shadow-show they'd seen before.

Of course I've thought about the whole thing since. You would too. I've hardly thought about anything else. And over the years I've worked out what was going on. I think those children were scared; I think those two boys had told them I was a real magician, in league with the devil or something like that. Remember, they wouldn't applaud me when I came on stage - looking angry, I suppose - in the middle of the record, because it was church music. They may have thought I was the devil, in my father's hat and cloak; you see, they would have been more terrified not to believe if they'd been told it was so. Not that I knew this then. I was simply out to get through to them somehow. But all I'm saying is that what happened wasn't entirely my fault. God knows I wouldn't have wanted it to happen.

So I turned to the children and said something like: "Watch very carefully now, I'm going to show you some ghosts."

Well, the silence somehow grew sharper. I told you I didn't know they were scared. But I must have destroyed my last hope when I said "If they frighten you, scream and I'll make them go away."

The first thing I showed them was a kind of skull with a big silly Mickey Mouse grin. There were some little girls, you see, so I thought I'd better ease into it. I could move my fingers a little and make the eyes peer round the audience. I was standing side on to them and watching for any reaction, but there wasn't one that I could see. I broadened the grin on the skull and crossed its eyes, but they didn't make a sound except for the two whispering at the back. All right, I thought, you've had your chance. Now we'll break the rules.

I glanced at the entrance to make sure the vicar hadn't come back, and then I sent a spider with unequal legs hobbling up the wall and into the roof. You don't know how pleased I was when I saw all their eyes turn up to watch it. Some of them even moved in their seats. So when I'd got the spider over their heads I clapped my hands. And they all jumped and stared at me. I was nearly clapping for excitement; I was completely carried away. I produced another spider, an even bigger one, and it crawled up painfully, falling back every now and then, to where I'd left the other one. I don't know how many I sent up to the roof - a dozen or so. It was only when I paused for a moment that I stopped. Because the two boys on the back row hadn't made a sound since I'd started the spiders.

I was just congratulating myself when I thought of how the children might feel. Well, I'm not completely stupid. After all, think of them, sitting there waiting for all those spiders to fall, not daring to move. So I said: "Well, did you like that?" Let's remember, now, that I hadn't reason to think they'd all been won over, since I didn't know they'd been scared all along. "Tell me what you'd like to see now and I'll see what I can do," I said to them. And then I noticed that the boys at the back were staring - not at the place where I'd left the spiders, not at me, but at the wall behind me.

I looked 'round and saw a face on the wall. I'll be honest with you; my heart jumped. It wasn't a pleasant face. There was grass sticking out of it, more like grass than hair, at any rate; one eye looked as if it had slipped down the cheek, and there was grass growing between its open lips. In fact, it looked like my father must have looked after he was dead. Well, I saw in a second that it was the shadow of the streamers that I'd crumpled on the table after my first trick. So I said something like "Well, that's an extra one," and knocked the streamers off the table.

And the face stayed there on the wall.

Now you can't think in a situation like that; you act. I threw myself in front of it and, even though it cost me a year or two, turned my back on it. I looked at the children, and I could see they knew. I could see something else, above my head, but even though inside I was one long deafening scream I stood sideways again and let them see my hands in front of the face. "There," I said. "That's how it's done," and before they could see that my hands had nothing to do with the face I stood over and blocked it for good.

But then I had to watch them and feel their fear coming up in a silent wave, and see what was above my head and out there in the barn.

I didn't dare to look up in case they might look up too. It didn't seem as if that would matter, though; because I knew that any minute someone was going to see the humped shapes that were hobbling down the walls and clawing themselves across the floor toward the children. They'd be lost then. But I could see that my own shadow, which had been up under the roof all the time like a three-fingered claw, was moving and spreading like a stain until it reached above the rows of seats and began to close. I knew what was drawing it: it was their fear.

So I said: "Well, that's all for now. You'd better go out to your parents, they'll be waiting," and I was shaking so much they must have noticed. But the claw didn't quiver, and the children didn't move. I looked straight at them, willing them to look straight at me, and I saw that the claw was almost closing, the other things had almost reached the seats.

And then the vicar appeared in the doorway. I shouted to him "We've finished now. Will you turn the lights on?" and my breath came out almost in a cry as they all turned to him, away from the shadows.

I couldn't believe it when he called back: "If you could give them a few more minutes while their parents arrive I should be grateful."

Well, what would you have done? I screamed at him "God blast you, turn on the lights!"

There isn't much more to tell. Just too much. The vicar gave me my fee in the entrance as if it were a Christian gesture to help me redeem myself. I left my props in the barn; I intended to go back for them in daylight. Then I followed the children and their parents, who kept trying to lose me, back to the village street and the hotel. I wasn't much of a drinker; I asked the woman at the hotel for the strongest cup of tea she could make.

She brought it and when she saw I wanted to be quiet, she went away. But she must have heard me scream, for she came running back. I think she took me for a drunkard; I know she wasn't pleased when I kept the light on in my room all night. But she didn't see what I saw when I picked up the cup of tea. She didn't see a huge black insect with an odd number of legs scuttle from beneath my hand and into a corner of the room.

Well, I lived with them. I had to. After a long time, when I hadn't used my hands, I saw them less often. But once in a while, when I least expected it, something would move at the corner of my eye, and it wouldn't be something I'd want to see. I could show you what I mean, but it mightn't end there. The claw might come back. I know I wouldn't see what would happen if it ever closed. And do you know, I don't think I should want to.

FRAGMENT

My people of the white mountains say,
That the moon danced at my birth;
And my death shall come,
Caught in the burst of a dying sun.

Marion Pitman



THEY WHO OPPOSE CHAOS

BY Adrian Cole

A survey of the Heroic Fantasy field.
PART TWO: The Lesser Heroes.

Although Conan the Cimmerian is Robert E. Howard's most prominent and illustrious creation, it is arguable that his other characters are no less inspired, exciting and enduring, and I undoubtedly run the risk of annoying Howard's aficionados by classing the latter as 'Lesser Heroes'. However, Howard was at least more prolific in his output of Conan tales and he felt personally that the Hyborian barbarian was his *tour de force*. In fact, it is not necessary to search too assiduously to see that all Howard's leading protagonists are merely extensions of Conan (and indeed of the huge Howard himself). King Kull of Valusia is perhaps most readily compared to Conan, dwelling in the world that precedes the Hyborian Age, and dealing as he does with similar sorcerers, demons and diverse monsters; he is huge, savage, governed by primitive, almost bestial instincts, and carves a bloody kingdom for himself in much the same way that Conan usurps the Aquilonian throne. Kull's prediluvian world is replete with reptilian beings from the dawn of time - and reading The Shadow Kingdom one sees the springboard from which Lin Carter has taken some of his groundwork for Thorngor's Lemuria. The entire Kull stories are to be found in KING KULL (Lancer recent reprint and forthcoming from Futura) with the exception of two stories. One of these sees Kull make a fleeting appearance - The Curse of the Golden Skull (in HOWARD COLLECTOR, Spring '67), while the other, Kings of the Night, is basically part of the Bran Mak Morn saga (in both BRAN MAK MORR from Dell, '69, and also WORMS OF THE EARTH from Grant, '74). The Bran Mak Morn stories are different in setting to the Conan and Kull stories (being set for the most part in Britain circa 210 A.D.) but are no less savage and thrilling. Bran is a Pict, a race that fascinated Howard and one about which he did much conjecturing, and the struggles against the Romans on the wild coasts and Highland regions are superbly handled - no Howard collector should be without the Bran saga. (Kull, who is faithfully served by Brule the Spearslayer - a fierce Pict - is brought forward in time to aid the Picts in Kings of the Night). The Dell paperback mentioned above contains the complete Bran, while one story is missing from the Grant hardback - this is Night of the Wolf, which is in TIGERS OF THE SEA (Grant '75 and Zebra paperback '75), a beautiful book which deals with Cornac Mac Art and Viking reivers no less barbaric and belligerent than Howard's traditional heroes.

Also included in the stock mould of Howard brawler, swordsman and Herculean fighting man is Solomon Kane, a Puritan adventurer, whose escapades take him for the most part into the darkest corners of the Africa of legend, where he persistently entangles himself with remnants of Atlantean races and other lost civilizations (far more primalval than those of Tarzan's jungles), all of which smack of Hyborian ancestry and endemic savagery. Kane uses his strength and ferocious swordsmanship and his faith in God to best his malefic adversaries, and although there are a number of fine yarns in the three book saga (Centaur Press), particularly Moon of Skulls and Hills of the Dead, Kane is not as compelling reading as those worthies already mentioned. (Grant collected the complete Kane in RED SHADOWS, out of print but due for re-issue soon.)

As a writer of pastiche, Lin Carter is rapidly gaining for himself an uncoverted crown and is certainly earning a degree of notoriety amongst the fantasy purists at the very least. Jundar of Callistiro is a monumental example of cashing in on another writer's ideas, plots, characters, etc., and it would be a hard task for any other writer to produce such a towering rip-off. Possibly I do Lin Carter an injustice - he is, after all, continuing the trad-

ition of heroic fantasy, and the Jandar series is a big seller - but I feel that there are limits to this sort of steal. For the handful of fantasy readers who are unfamiliar with Burroughs' Barsoomian novels (and the series is unquestionably one of the major foundation stones and touchstones of fantastic adventure), Jandar may well seem refreshing and imaginative. He gets enmeshed with Darleena, the most beautiful princess on the planet, Thanator (and doubtless on any other planet in fantasy) and is the best swordsman on the planet. Jandar fights with Sky Pirates that could easily have been flown over from Barsoom and with Black Legions - there are the usual carbon copy Tharks (Barsoomian Green Men), and wandering nomads. There is plenty of action, though, and if readers can ignore the melodrama and the fact that there is not one single original idea, grit their teeth and gloss over the continual wash of plagiarism, Jandar will be at worst a mundane stereotype. If this is the best selling series fantasy can produce, we have lowered our standards I fear.

Much better than the Jandar series, though still very far removed from the labyrinths of Erbenian pastiche, are the Green Star books, which have their inspiration rooted in the Venus or Antor visited by Burroughs' Carson Napier. Gigantic forests, high as mountains, with entire cities built into them - titanic spider webs, insects all bigger than elephants, mad scientists, flying boats, all are here in profusion. But Carter allows his own imagination much freer reign, notably in the more recent books, though his style can at times be trite and on occasion even puerile. He has definitely gone beyond Burroughs in that he has introduced ideas of his own, though the Antorian layout is a very noticable blueprint - how long before the hero is cast into a room of seven doors?? Perhaps the most irritating aspect of the series is the automatic 'cliff-hanger' ending, reminiscent of kiddies' Saturday film matinees; I would allow this in say, a trilogy (having employed the device myself) but to go on indefinitely without resolving anything leads to exasperation and probably indifference.

However, there is much in the series to recommend it and some of the situations and plot twists are reasonably refreshing, far more so than Jandar.



In the first part of this article I beseeched the fate of Elric, in that he was doomed to being resurrected by Michael Moorcock to the detriment of his saga - Moorcock now finds himself in a position identical to that of Howard in that his fantasy heroes are all the same character, albeit in varying incarnations. Yet the theme of the Champion Eternal is probably the most stimulating and thought-provoking creation in heroic fantasy. Dorian Hawkmoon and the first four Runestaff books are beautifully done, vividly planned and executed, set in a future Earth (or possibly an Earth on a different plane) in which Great Britain has become Grembretan, the Dark Empire, scourge of the world. Hawkmoon's rise to power and his eventual overthrow and destruction of King Haem's evil empire is fabulous stuff. The later three Hawkmoon books, the Chronicles of Castle Brass, fall well short of the first, for Moorcock has fallen into the same trap as he did with Elric, namely returning to characters already 'dead', although in fairness, it has been done skillfully and with the colourful panache that brightens most of Moorcock's work. The books take on an even more lustrous hue when seen as fragments of the complete, interlocking saga. THE ETERNAL CHAMPION was the first book to begin the linking up and the inter-

RWS

planing of the heroes, and remains one of Moorcock's best and most captivating offerings. THE QUEST FOR TARELOWN ties together the last of the threads and 'solves' all the mysteries inherent in the saga, though I found it lacking in the cosmic magnitude of its forerunners. Recently there have been the six Corus books, and in these, despite flashes of the 'mercurial Moorcock' it can be seen that the cycle has run dangerously close to being overworked as a lode of wealthy ideas.

There has been, during the course of the last year or so, a certain amount of conjecture as to the identity of 'Alan Burt Akers'; in spite of fast-flying suggestions and denials, I remain sceptical. However, one thing is certain about the prolonged Scorpio/Antares saga, and that is that it has borrowed a good deal from the Gor books (which statement will no doubt cause a rash of forthcoming comment to the effect that Akers has never even read a Gor book - which may at least flush out this mysterious figure). Gor has its Priest Kings, snatching people from Earth to serve them on Gor, while Scorpio/Antares has its Star Lords. Dray Prescott rattles through an amazing sequence of adventures, hardly before the typewriter has cooled, some of which have marked similarity to chunks of Earl Cabot's exploits - nomads, pirates, tarsnemen (well near as damn it!) and so forth. Delia of Delphond, or Delia of the Blue Mountains, is the wisome lass that Dray follows faithfully to the multiple ends of Kregen and back, and, unlike the lusty Cabot who loves his way through a list of wantons that would better an oil-sheik's harem, Dray sticks to his beloved Delia with nary a hint of unbridled concupiscence. Dray is all too often fond of speaking his lover's name: "Delia, my Delia!" he exclaims with frightening regularity in a style reminiscent of Merrit's SHIP OF ISHTAR in which the delectable Charane! is found many, many times ad nauseam. I can't help feeling somehow that somewhere in the shadows, Mr. Akers is blowing something of a raspberry.

The series could be much better, but it moves so fast that the reader is often victim to indifference - it becomes quickly apparent that good old Dray is going to give the baddies a severe battering and right the political and corrupt systems in the space of a chapter or two. As a servant to the Star Lords (and the ubiquitous Savanti) Dray is called upon to warp all sorts of societies. Ironically he does it so easily (in spite of hot action and multiple bloody baths) and without once causing the reader any concern for his safety, that Akers achieves a distinct antithesis to the Gor saga, which at its worst is far too drawn out! Nevertheless, the action is fast and the plot is never still and the books are fun to read. If they were 45 rpm records, though, I'd be tempted to play them at 33!

One thing must be said in favour of the books and that is with regard to some of the artwork. DAM's original covers were passable, up until PRINCE OF SCORPIO, and the first four volumes have some very good interior illos by Tim Kirk. These are now out in favour of the dreary Jack Gaughan's. Orbit's covers are superb - probably the equal of any fantasy covers in Britain.



Lumbering along in the deep footstaps of Conan and Brak the Barbarians comes - wait for

it - Kothar, Barbarian swordsman. Kothar, inhabitant of an enigmatic world called Yarth (which appears to be a parallel world rather than a future one), is cloaked in skins, armaments and rich S&S clichés. His creator, Gardner Fox, has admittedly gone on to better things, but there are a goodly few episodes in the five-book saga of his barbarian (four from Belmont, '69/'70 and one, oddly, from Tower in '69). Early in the series, Kothar involves himself with a long-dead but still-very-much-with-us sorcerer called Algorkon, who gives him a magic sword, Frostfire. With this, Kothar is able to chop up sorcerers, ghouls, demons, witches and Ebyrian-type nasties with unrestrained vigour, but while he possesses the sword he can own no wealth, which presents interesting problems. In the first book, KOTHAR - BARBARIAN SWORDSMAN, the rugged man from the northlands (all the big lads come from the north), gets the better of a sorceress called Red Lori, a delicious temptress intent on creating evil and general havoc on Yarth. She swears to get even, and although Kothar successfully interns her in a rotting mausoleum, her voice and face haunt him throughout the series, and occasionally she helps him out of hot water, because she is determined to be the one to finish him. In the last of the books published this far, KOTHAR AND THE WIZARD SLAYER, the two meet and actually team up to fight the mysterious wizard who is killing off all the other sorcerers and wizards. And Kothar's burning passion and big potential win Red Lori's heart over in the end, striking a ferocious blow for male chauvinism.

The first and second books (2nd being KOTHAR OF THE MAGIC SWORD) are both split into shorter stories and are much the better of the series - the latter three, KOTHAR AND THE DEMON QUEEN, KOTHAR AND THE CONJURER'S CURSE and WIZARD SLAYER are all novels that might have been better condensed into novellas, being rather repetitive and padded, lacking in fresh ideas. At times the writing is exciting, driving along admirably, and Fox is very able to describe swordplay and general derring-do, but occasionally his script reads a little like something more in keeping with SAVAGE TALES - in fact, Kothar would adapt to comic format very readily.

Andre Norton has written scores of novels, ranging from straight SF through to ordinary children's adventures, and her standard varies from the mundane to the excellent. The Witch World is conceivably her best work to date. Simon Tregarth enters the Witch World through the well known device of a 'gate' and is at once plunged into a series of gripping adventures, which are gratifying variations away from the run of the mill heroic fantasy themes.

Witches rule the lands of Estcarp and Simon aids them in their struggle against the alien Kelder, beings who have entered the Witch World from their own world. WITCH WORLD and WEB OF THE WITCH WORLD are concerned with this confrontation and resolve, and also of Simon's winning of Jaelithe the witch, who becomes his wife and renounces many of her powers. The two books are well written and are profuse with beautiful names and intriguing 'medieval' cultures - the atmosphere is convincing.

East of Estcarp lies an unknown land where magic and sorcery hold sway. It is into these mysterious lands that Kyllan, Kenoce and Kathnea, the children of Simon and Jaelithe, venture in search of their destiny. THREE AGAINST THE WITCH WORLD and WARLOCK OF THE WITCH WORLD deal with their adventures and are even more exciting and atmospheric than their predecessors (with more a flavouring of Tolkien). This feel of brooding menace (notably in the latter title) is excellent and the old struggle between light and dark is compelling reading. Greatest enemy of the three children is Dinsil of the Heights, who is secreted in a lost tower not unlike Sauron in Barad-Dur, and the conflict between his agents and the three is beautifully done, making WARLOCK the finest of the Witch World books.

SORCERESS OF THE WITCH WORLD is another thrilling episode in the saga, and this time Kathnea, in search of powers to heal her battle-acara, unveils the last of the mysteries surrounding the 'gates' between the worlds, and also rescues her parents, who have been trapped by other evil forces for some time. All great stuff and high on the list of top fantasy.

Apart from these five connected books, there are a number of other works set in the Witch World. There is YEAR OF THE UNICORN, set on the western continent of the world (the others were on the eastern) which lacks the power of the five connected books, but introduces new material and lands. Several short stories have appeared, mostly set in this western area - DAW released SPELL OF THE WITCH WORLD, three unconnected tales ('72) and there are two Witch World stories in GARGAN THE ETERNAL (DAW '72), namely One Spell Wizard and Legacy from Born Fen. There has also been from DAW TALES OF HIGH HALLS, Witch World tales, and THE CRYSTAL GRIFTHON, much better, being a novel dealing with Kerovan and his quest to subdue the Old Ones who are again tainting the world. Toads of Grimmerdale in the recent FLASHING SWORDS is another Witch World short. Apparently there are to be more Witch World works - THE JARGOON PARD has already been released in US hardback - if Andre Norton can keep up the standard of CRYSTAL GRIFTHON, the series will retain its consistency and originality.



Strongly recommended for those as yet unfamiliar with them are the two marvellous Christopher Stasheff novels, *THE WARLOCK IN SPIRITS OF HIMSELF* and its sequel *KING KOBOLD*. At once exciting, hilarious and riveting, they contain plenty of plot twists and racing action. The hero, Rod Callowglass, is really a bungling 'space agent' set down on the medieval emigre-noble world of Granarye, rife with sorcery and magical disturbances, and his companion is an epileptic robot-horse with computer-feedback. Rod's adventures are something special in fantasy, with a touch of De Camp humour - he thwarts the villains in the first of the books, having battled against psychic powers, ghosts and a remarkable succession of opponents, while in *KING KOBOLD* he needs all his wits to defeat the Beastmen who are intent on plundering and raping their way across Granarye. And his beautiful red-haired lady love, Owen the Witch, is very much different from the usual buxom beauties that throng epic fantasy!

I hope that Ursula LeGuin's superb Earthsea trilogy does not go too much unnoticed by dint of the fact that British publishers (Puffin) have tagged

it is a junior work - it should not be missed by any fantasy buff, being of the first water. A WIZARD OF EARTHSEA is the gripping story of a young man who learns the first stages of wizardry, Ged, called Sparrowhawk. Amongst the hundredfold islands of Earthsea's Archipelago lies Ravmar, where the young man trains to become great mages. Ged unwittingly performs a sinister ceremony and releases an awful Shadow that relentlessly pursues him until he finally overcomes it in a remote and dismal part of his world. The plot sounds simple enough, but Ursula LeGuin's style and control of eerie atmosphere is unparalleled, and the book has that elusive touch of magic about it that so few writers master. In the second book, *THE TOWNS OF ATUAN*, Ged is a young man and growing in confidence. On the island of Atuan he meets Tehar, a girl who has been condemned by the cult of the Nameless Ones; and he eventually rescues her together with a sacred ring that enhances his magical powers. In the final volume, *THE FARTHEST SHORE*, Ged has become an Archmage and he embarks on a quest that pits him against his greatest enemies.

The trilogy certainly makes excellent reading for younger fans, but it's immaculate style and compulsive flow give it a deserved place amongst the best of contemporary heroic fantasy. And how pleasing a change from the musclebound boyos of the 'Barbarian' breeding pens!

Addenda: Since Part 1 of this article in *DELL*, I have unearthed a little more information pertinent to the 'Super Heroes' which I append here for completion's sake. Firstly - Ray Capella, whose *Turritia* I said was the only Arquel story in print, since the Edward Collector editions, has had two others published: *The Lion's Bridge* was published in *THE CONAN GRIMOIRE* (Mirage '72) while *SAVAGE TALES* No. 3 carried *The Crimson Bell* (Feb., '74).

SAVAGE TALES No. 6 (Sept., '74) carried *The Sword and the Road*, which is a very fine biography of Brak the Barbarian and his exploits to date by Fred Blosser, and bears a zap of Brak's world. The article mentions two stories that I neglected - namely *The Girl in the Gem* from *FANTASTIC* ('65) and *When the Idols Walked*, which saw book form in *THE FANTASTIC SWEDENSMAN* anthology of Sprague De Camp (Pyramid '69).

Fritz Leiber, as I suggested, is still producing Fafhrd and the Grey Mouser stories, though usually only short pieces. The latest of these was in *FANTASTIC* for April 1975, called *Under the Thumbs of the Gods*, and contained an illo by Steve Fabian, who also did the beautiful cover for the magazine (red-haired Fafhrd underwater), both illos underlining Fabian's superlative quality.



PARASITES

BY
ALAN EAMES

PTB 75

Since leaving the wreckage of the re-entry vehicle, he had been troubled by a persistent and unsettling illusion, most pronounced whilst walking, of a presence immediately behind or to one side, whose step was perfectly in phase with his own. It resembled closely the complete unison of stride achieved by infantrymen in an exhibition of military drill. When it was behind, so exact was the motion of the presence that it was possible to imagine that its head was but a fraction of an inch behind his, as was the rest of its body, duplicating every step with mathematic accuracy. The rigorous repetition of the cheerful and forward-looking existential philosophy of Trin (of which his brain contained detailed, easily accessible and highly expensive amino chain recordings), had so far failed to eliminate the phantom. He supposed that there was a millisecond proprioceptive feedback loop in the cerebellar cortex, which had been engendered by the concussion recieved in the crash-impact, and that this repeated to his conscious mind his own physical movement of the instant before.

Or so his education told him.

But then, his education told him many other things. It told him that this planet was Aldebaran 4, which it was not. Aldebaran 4 was an industrialist's dream, an ecologist's nightmare; a complete factory world devoted to iron and steel, weapons and machines, Lords and slaves. Every part of its land surface was covered by installation and city. Its atmosphere was full of fume, its seas were loaded with ash. But this was a world of dull grey forest, of soft smoky drizzle and small humpy hills. True, on occasion the angry red sun would break the cloud cover and illuminate him in a clearing, like a demon-king in pantomime. The sun was Aldebaran for certain, for his instruments had told him so. But so far he had seen no building, nor any living creature.

The paradox could not be explained by the supposition that he had landed on other planets of that great star, for they were all either frozen worlds or shimmering cinders.

Quickly he whirled around and faced behind. But only the gloomy cypresses and tall grasses moved there. He decided to halt for a while and rest. The sense of the presence was as strong as ever. He erected the protective shell, and prepared for sleep as evening drew in.

At times in the course of ones life, there are moments when one pauses to consider. They are moments of added consciousness - moments when you try to look from outside and judge. It may be a particularly happy or sad time that you wish to record, or it may be that you suddenly assess yourself. You ask: "Am I a good or an evil man?" But Belmont in his shell had never considered such a question, and all he did was to review his immediate actions to date, and query their validity.

He was horrified to find that nothing that he had done made any sense at all. Why had he left the safety of the space shuttle and its piping radio beacon? And where the hell did he think he was heading for? Why had he brought no weapons - only the plasti-tent? And why so little food?

He peered out into the gloom. There was no moon, only a few luminescent streamers in the mist. On the horizon were a few very tall trees. They were spiky at the top. The nearer vegetation was dark and thick. He remembered that during the day he had seen no flowers, nor any colour at all except the drab trees and sky. Belmont lay down on the cold ground and shivered.

Belmont was the controlling investment manager of the Mining Trust's major shareholder, Nicol Mallon, who lived on Aldebaran 4 for intermittent periods, and who had summoned him there from earth for reasons best known to himself. The approach to the planet had been normal enough, and with the shuttle in close orbit, the great industrial complex had visibly turned beneath him. Then the confusion of landing and the failure of the infallible machinery.

He had chosen his interstellar transport with particular care and foresight. Because he had wished to be entertained on what promised to be a rather dull trip he had not grudged the extra expense of hiring the ship "Delphic Oracle". This was not her true designation but she had become called by this nickname since the shipboard computer was programmed more fully than most, and was reputed not to dissemble. It also possessed a rudimentary wit. So, only six hours out of Plutobase, he demanded, after several Green Chartreuses -

"Is there a God and where do we go when we die, and is there any punishment?"

"I have been asked those questions before," said the SEC, "and I find them excessively dull. What a coarse man you must be, and how restricted your taste and sensibility to ask them."

Belmont was annoyed as he was not accustomed to being addressed in this fashion. A human who had replied in this way would have suffered several financial and physical inconveniences during what would have remained of his spiritual and temporal career.

"Look here," he said, "just live up to your reputation."

SEC was silent for a remarkable number of nanoseconds, then entertained the following reply, couched in an uneasy alliance of proverb and beatitude that in its turn displayed some deficiency of taste.

"As the merciful are shown mercy, so shall the parasite -". But SEC did not quite finish as Belmont cut off the centre of optional consciousness in great disgust, until the journey ended.

Now he thought back over this short exchange as he observed the countryside around. Those spiky trees on the horizon - the branches at the top appeared to move. He could almost imagine that a man was waving there, but it would have to be a very large man for the trees were a long way off. Belmont was reminded strongly of some other thing - something from childhood he thought - but what? Confused, worried and exhausted, at last he slept.

In the morning he awoke stiff with crisp and cold. It was as if his brief moment of lucidity had never been, and he resumed his pointless journey to no-place. The mimicking presence at his back followed behind like some dragging burden. He noticed that the far trees had lost their spiky appearance and simultaneously remembered with revulsion what they had reminded him of.

As a boy in South Australia, he recalled the daily ritual when, with a pair of forceps and a bottle of spirit, he would set about the grisly business of tick removal from the family pet. The old dog would sit there stoically while Belmont dabbed each tick with spirit, then plucked it off. Each tick was like a small black bean; a tiny head with sucking mouth parts, and a grossly distended abdomen, black and bursting with the blood that it had removed from the host. They would remain on an animal for weeks until they had removed their fill. Some of them produced a toxic saliva that could paralyse the animal to which they attached themselves. Occasionally Belmont would come across one in the fields where it had crawled to the top of a stem of grass, and would hold on with four legs whilst waving the others slowly in the air, waiting for a passing dog or other animal. The moving, spiky tree-tops had reminded Belmont of this.

A fine drizzle was falling when he came to evidence of human life. A stumpy tower of red brick, its upper parts in ruins, stood over a small clearing. The top of the tower projected slightly above the surrounding treetops. Deciding to climb up and examine the country ahead seemed sensible, and Belmont entered the broken-down door. A short flight of steps led him to the first floor of rough wooden planks, then a wooden ladder to a second similar floor. Here the planks were soft and rotten, and covered in green slime, rising into lumps and ridges in places. The walls also ran with wet, and curious streamers of slime-mould wriggled

over the crushy mortar. He picked at it with a fingernail; it clung to him greasily. The top level of the tower was of grey flagstones, and surrounded by a broken parapet. It afforded a good view, for what it was worth. Low hills, trees and more trees. Many of the trees were of the tall variety seen previously, but all were conventional at their tops.

The realisation that the presence had left him came quickly and joyfully - at the same time his brain took a leap into clarity once more. He saw with horror his precarious position by the parapet, and as he started, a portion fell away from him to crash below. The noise of its falling was muffled and somehow unreal. But men had been here! There were bricks - they must have been fired in kilns - and here was mortar, laid by human hands. Maybe he was on some fenced off part of the planet, a park or a cemetery, or some private estate. Yet he had never heard of such a place.

Then a true fear washed over him, a tight whitening of his unsteady hands and a crawling of skin in a most classic fashion. Helmont knew that the phantom had not left but had only moved. It was under him in the bottom compartment of the tower. Now he sensed it he did not know, but he could feel it ascending to the first floor, up the rounded steps. Slowly it came up, and as it came it assumed in his mind the form of a stooping man-like creature, horribly emaciated and with a colossal tick hanging from its belly. The tick's legs were slowly pawing at running sores on the host's filthy scaly skin. Helmont backed to the parapet, his eyes bulging and staring as the being came up to the next floor of slimy walls. There it halted and stared at the opening above, beyond which Helmont cowered, his eyes fixed on the dark stairwell. If it had remained there, Helmont would surely have leapt to his death below, but the presence suddenly vanished utterly, this time clearly and finally.

Two hours passed before Helmont could descend.

That evening, the movement on the tall trees was more pronounced than ever, and the wretched wanderer gazed at them for the whole restless night.

The next dull day, Helmont stumbled on through the forest, his mind as grey as the slow-moving cloud above. Somewhere along the way, he had lost his tent and pathetic belongings, but this fact did not register in his brain. Late in the afternoon he came across a second tower, in slightly better repair than the last. He halted a few feet from the low entrance, and a horrid curiosity vying with his instinctive fear. But he was drawn to go in as before, and also as before to ascend the slimy stairway and rotting ladder to the flagged summit. This time there was no follower, and it seemed that he could detect buildings on the horizon. He averted stupidly out at them as they wavered as if in a great heat. There were shimmering towers and high chimneys, discharging solid smoke, the running pus of mass creation. Heartened by what to most men would have been a distressing sight, he descended the tower only to trip on a spar of wood on the floor below. As he got up, he realised that it was no wooden stick, but instead the bony limb of yesterday's monster. Giving a yelling shriek of fear, he blundered and crashed down the ladder to the room below. In his terror, the way to the outside seemed impossible to find, and he circled the narrow chamber moaning, and tearing at the walls with fingernails that quickly peeled away onto the backs of his hands even as the thing above deliberately rose to descend in its turn.

Helmont found himself in the forest, having no notion of how he had arrived there. The small reasoning power left to him assumed that he must have fled blindly for hours, but he endeavoured to head towards the hilly country that raised itself between the tower sites and the insubstantial chimneys. His stomach itched and ached although he was not hungry at all. Helmont scratched at the pimples on his belly but his damaged hands could not determine their extent. Looking under his shirt, he discovered that the whole of the front of his body was covered with ticks - a purple sowing mass of dangling grape-like globes. They had fixed themselves to him when the monster had pulled their bodies into contact.

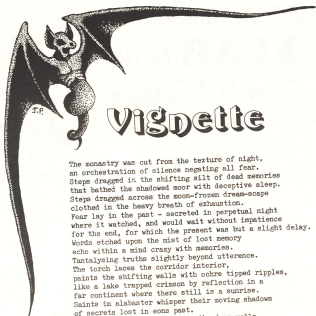
A walking man appeared who seemed very distressed, but Helmont could not quite catch him, or attract his attention, although he thought he might do so later.

Back on the ship, the SBC watched the ambulance crew from Aldebaren 4 remove the body of Helmont. If it had been asked, SBC would have informed its questioner of the approaching aneurysm that killed him, before his other enquiry was quite answered. Why the body had become so horribly bloated, even though SBC (who was a little fastidious), had reduced the temperature to near freezing point, could not be explained.

Nevertheless, the shipboard computer repeated its answer, which had been dictated to it earlier by its employer, Mallon, and which had so excessively stimulated Helmont's blood pressure regulating centre via an addition to his artificially implanted philosophy.

"As the merciful are shown mercy, so shall the parasite be shown parasitism."

Which was far too retrospective for the cheerful, forward-looking existential theory of Trin.



Vignette

The sonastry was cut from the texture of night,
an orchestration of silence negating all fear.
Steps dragged in the shifting silt of dead memories
that bathed the shadowed moor with deceptive sleep.
Steps dragged across the moon-frozen dream-scape
clothed in the heavy breath of exhaustion.
Fear lay in the past - secreted in perpetual night
where it watched, and would wait without impatience
for the end, for which the present was but a slight delay.
Words etched upon the mist of lost memory
echo within a mind crazy with memories.
Tantalysing truths slightly beyond utterance.
The torch laces the corridor interior,
paints the shifting walls with ochre tipped ripples,
like a lake trapped crimson by reflection in a
far continent where there still is a sunrise.
Saints in alabaster whisper their moving shadows
of secrets lost in eons past.
Music inlaid by celibacy upon the damp walls
still echo the last requiem before parting.
The moon is lost, the fear momentarily eclipsed.
Long benches carved from prayer have long since
gone, tarrying only a while after the final pilgrim.
So the cold plaques of stone floor provide fleeting rest.
While questions wash with tides of fatigue.
Shelter - perhaps sleep until daybreak,
but there will be no dawn. Night is within.
The whisperer of antiquity intimates words.
The fugitive dwells within his visions.
'Thought, perhaps, like a half-tone photograph,
is made up of so much light,' he breathes,
'and so many points of blackness. Perhaps,
only by standing back from the immediate
and glimpsing the whole is it all made clear.'
The fugitive turns at the sudden startle of noise.
Somewhere - dawn is breaking.

Andrew Darlington

EUROPEAN TERROR:

the **FEAR** dimensions of *Oswald Kielemoes*

By **EDDY C. BERTIN**

One would be frightened to death, if in the middle of the night, in an obscuring cloud of fog, walking through the older and more deserted streets of Gent, our beautiful ancient city in the center of Flanders, one would suddenly turn a dark corner and be confronted with policeman Kielemoes. Heavy-build with forceful shoulders, and a bit of a tummy, middle-thirties, slightly balding but with a beard and moustache which would be the envy of Ivan the Terrible, and sinister sparkling eyes behind his glasses. A figure which could have been created for one of Sherlock Holmes' adventures, and who could as well be the friendly bobby as the sinister murderer.

Yet he turns out to be a very kind and gentle-spoken man, as he is filling our glasses with good whisky, discussing as well Shakespeare (who remains his favourite author) as sex and pornography, playing acting as well as horror stories and black magic. The walls of his small study are filled with book-racks towering up towards the high ceiling, books and magazines are lying around in stacks everywhere. A miniature Dracula and a small werewolf are glowering down on the visitor. On the walls - or what is to be seen of the walls among the books - are old engravings, among them, of course, a skull. From the light above, an authentic noose is dangling, with which someone suicided. Specimens of Kielemoes' hobby are to be found everywhere, not in the least among his books, from Stoker, Machen and LeFanu, to Lovecraft and Bloch, fat volumes in several languages on sorcery, witchcraft and the occult, but also plays, mainstream literature, poetry, works of criticism. Kielemoes has been studying before I come in, in the coming months there are four examinations in criminology, but he is kind enough to spend this evening just chatting about horror, SF, wizardry, the occult, eroticism, and just whatever comes around.

He has been writing for years, lots of weird yarns, some of them based on real places or happenings in his career as policeman. His special interests go to ghosts and madness. Especially the last which he has encountered often enough. After several years of 'just writing because I felt like it', he finally cut the cord, and published his collected stories in one volume, titled **FEAR, AND OTHER HORROR STORIES**, a hardbound volume with plastic-cover, and illustrated with drawings by Cesar de Crop. The title story deals with a man, hiding from the Gestapo in an abbey, where the dead return and the damned feast at night. His adventures frighten him into madness. The classic ghost pops up in several other tales: in Condemned to Death, the spirit of a hanged man revenges himself by making the two men who condemned him destroy each other; in Slipping a young man kills his grand-mother 'by accident' for her money, but his subconscious guilt calls up her ghost, driving him to his own death in exactly the same way; while two atmospheric but otherwise routine ghosts appear in Redly Counted and The Tower. The psychological implications of fear and the occult - is what happens really supernatural, or is it a hallucination called up by the towering fear of the protagonist? - are chief centre of The Deserted House, where the spirit(?) of an evil old woman still haunts, and in Ranka, where a man murders and buries his wife, but the plants around his house come into alien life and destroy him...but when he is found, there is only one small plant, feeding on the body of his wife. Vampirism is treated in two tales, in very different ways: The Vampire is classic in theme and treatment, with the ancient tomb and the undead witch-vampire. But in Blood, we have a young woman, who desperately wants to become a vampire, beginning to exhibit all the symptoms, which her deranged mind calls up for herself, until she finally succumbs completely



in madness believing herself to be one of the undead, and resulting in a bloody slaughter. Psycho-horror, of another kind, turns up in Red Luck, where a real nobody, a 'loser' wants to prove himself, as well for his own peace of mind as to the world. He will do this by executing a gruesome murder, and then give himself up to the police with the assassination weapon in his bloodied hands. Even this goes wrong at a crucial moment. In The Cheapest One, we are treated with a very special kind of sadist: a man who picks up old folks, a literally drives them so far that they drink themselves to death. Cold-blooded revenge, approaching mental sadism, appears in many stories, including Settling the Account, where a young doctor drives an old enemy to suicide by 'helping him', and in the pastoral little story Visit Cancelled, which has severe touches of a cynical black humour.

In all there are 16 horror yarns in FEAR. Kierkegaard stated that he will not have time to write any more for the time being, the coming examinations, and so many other things to attend to. But this first collection has convinced us that whenever Oswald "The Ox" Kierkegaard will return to horror, we will be waiting for him. Maybe better armed with a copy of THE NECRONOMICON to feel on the safe side.

(ECB, June, 1972).

Letters of Comment~

From, JAMES PARKER, Swindon:

Many thanks for the new issue of DARK HORIZONS. To my mind this is just about the best issue yet in terms of presentation and content. The articles particularly were concise and knowledgeable. Adrian Cole's They Who Oppose Chaos was very enjoyable, and I would concur with most of his critical comments on the Heroic Fantasy sub-genre. I shall look forward to reading the next part of his survey. It's a rich field of literary invention, although I personally cannot help but feel that its importance within the whole fantasy literature context is over-stressed. I would dare to suggest actually that interest in it is largely based on a certain nostalgia... I certainly enjoy reading it - Moorcock and Howard being among my favourites - but this does not render me blind to the shortcomings of a very ritualised tradition.

The interview with David L. Fletcher was extremely interesting and the samples of his fine work illustrated just what a superb artist he is. The Artist in Pandom is an excellent series and acts as a reappraisal guide to some of the best fantasy artists, both past and present.

The Erection of Fantasy by Michael Sims was also very interesting but in a different way. I found myself disagreeing with many of his opinions about the nature of fantasy. A lot of what he wrote was fair in a generalized kind of way. But certain of his assumptions I could not go along with.

For as the strange power that the best Fantasy in books and films conveys is largely derived from its source material, mainly: the archetypes of the collective sub-conscious. Our old friend Jung was a very clear thinker and his concepts endure. Fantasy is most effective when dealing with the symbolism of the unknown. The most potent Fantasy is invariably stark, morbid, elemental, seemingly haunted with undefined, undisclosed menace. Plus the inevitable suggestion of abominable physical horrors and sexual deviance. We haven't forgotten Poe, I hope.

Anyway, congratulations to Michael Sims for writing a fine article and for making it sufficiently thoughtful enough to merit a response...

These items were the highlights of issue 11 but should not detract from the mainly excellent fiction and the always entertaining letters section. The poetry was good too, particularly The End by Julian A. Le Saux which was greatly aided in its effect by Alan Baxter's thoughtful artwork. A finely presented idea and quite hauntingly memorable.

From, RAMSEY CAMPBELL, Liverpool:

Many thanks for DELL. Oh that I had more time to read... I do think DH improves visually; this one is very fine. The contents must wait to be read, but I do want to reply to Philip Payne. Hell, I don't want to discourage your contributors, quite the reverse. And I hadn't realised he might be reviewing YEAR'S BEST HORROR from a sense of critical duty, rather than from perverse choice. So I apologise; I'm sorry. But -

He says I "insist" he "knows nothing" about publishing; I said he seemed ignorant of the business. He wondered in his review whether there was a public for the YEAR'S BEST HORROR fiction, I and others at the Fantasy Fayre said we understood all too well the appeal and the public of van Thal's books; yet he seems to think we said the same thing. The Beast With Five Fingers is about a blind man's hand which begins to exhibit a will of its own and, severed after his death, pursues the protagonist and eventually takes its revenge for his mutilation of it; Eddy Bertin's tale is of a man who cannot prevent his own hands from committing atrocities, and who eventually severs them to prevent a final crime - which, severed, they still manage to perpetrate before expiring. I don't accept that they are the same story. And my fundamental objection to his review was that it was inaccurate.

Alas, I don't find it odd that I was the only one to reply. The BPS membership isn't very reactive, I'm afraid.

From, JON HARVEY, Cardiff:

You have done very well with DH over your period as editor. One point with this latest issue is that you seem to be concentrating the artwork in certain portions of the magazine, while other portions go unadorned. I realise that you could do nothing other with Dave Fletcher's interview, but you could have got Symonds' story illustrated, removed the poem from page 6 to page 13 and taken out one illustration and the BPS design from Mike Sims' article. Never mind, though, it is a minor point.

Dave's cover is a very strong piece and much better than some of Dave's other pieces of late. However, Alan Hunter is the artist of the issue, with a number of nice small designs and an excellent tour de force piece on page 14! The other pieces of artwork in the issue, apart from Jim's back cover which I still say is one of his best illustrations to date, are rather mediocre.

The fiction, I'm afraid, was poor, apart from two pieces, and both of these I have read before, they being Dave Riley's story from WHISPERS and Gordon Larkin's The Final Passion. Therefore, I felt a bit cheated. Dave Drake's story, I suppose, is well written, but it was obvious what would happen from the end of the fifth paragraph. For Dave it is only a minor piece.

That which took my interest this issue were the two articles, both for adverse reasons. Mike Sims' article was a very intelligent piece in its construction and writing, however, I cannot say that I agree with his basic ideas, so that his conclusions are not mine. I will not go too much into his article as I'm certain that his article will cause controversy elsewhere, but he confuses the term of 'fantasy' and 'the fantastic' a number of times. Their effect can cause great diversions of meaning in certain situations. For example, fantasy can be found in virtually any music because the fantasy of the music lies in the listener. Conversely, the fantastic in music refers to that created within the music by the writer, performer and producer.

Another criticism is that Mike completely ignores the medium of the comic-strip which is a combination of art, literature and the cinema. In form, it combines advantages of all three, but also creates its own disadvantages. I would be very interested in hearing Mike's opinions of this medium of Fantasy.

The other article was very, very disappointing, indeed! I expected a deed and interesting article from such a one who aspires to be a writer of fiction and an anthologist. However, Adrian Cole presents us with another mere list of heroes and stories. Oh yes, lists of heroes and stories are very good for those interested in obtaining all the stories, but such lists can also be entertaining. Such lists as Adrian presents us with result from two possible reasons: an inability to write or a lack of time and/or interest to do a good job. I admit that I have resorted to such lists twice myself, through extreme lack of time, hating to do them, but having to do so to fulfill a commitment. As a first article in a series, I cannot see Adrian starting the series at all, if he were rushed for time. I hope we can expect something more entertaining in the remainder of the series.

Oh, one point, Adrian. One of the Magicians of Za did survive his city and fellow magicians and it is no rumour. Actually, he didn't secret himself in an underground city - he was already there. I read all Carter's sordid Thongor stories twice, in writing that article in BALTHUS 1. If you read the book in question carefully, it states clearly that one magician

was absent, having recently taken over work with a race of winged men from one of the other magicians. Carter has already written the novel about the fate of this last magician and it is rumoured that there are three more Thangor novels completed. Where are they? I can only guess that nobody will buy them. Considering how bad some of his published books are, I would hate to even think what these Thangor novels are like.

From, GLEN E. SYMONDS, Fakenham:

Another extremely good and very interesting issue, featuring a fine balance of contents. The illustrated poem was an unusual and thought-provoking idea, showing a very forward-looking approach, which I like. I am somewhat intrigued by the name Julian A. Le Saux though, it's so unlikely I smell a pen-name of someone perhaps better known. Certainly not one easily forgotten anyway!

My favourite illos this time were the back cover, that book makes you itch to turn the page and read on; and your own The Shadow Over Innesmouth on page 12. Strangely, for me it's the stars that give the atmosphere more than the shadow/monster, they give the impression of the universe, with all its possible horrors crowding in, ever-ready to invade. Perhaps with a whole battery of creatures? (ho-hum). The front cover is also extremely effective, and is, if anything added to by the black surround.

I find rather extraordinary two remarks by Marion Pittam ((Letters of Comment, last issue. SJ)): firstly, "I'd rather read bad poetry than bad prose". Personally I'd prefer not to read bad anything! Secondly, when discussing Of the Ring of Jarcoon she says "It doesn't really matter that I don't know what he's talking about." That is one of the most incredible statements I've ever read! I'm uncertain if it's intended as a compliment, but if it is it's sure a most unusual one. Perhaps Steve Walker gave one or two minutes thought to it as well.

Obviously poetry works different to prose, okay, but words are still words. Let's be basic: a written word is a visual symbol of a sound, a sound has meaning, even if it's only a pain in the arse; words have music but the main thing is that they do also mean something. Marion's view of poetry as expressed here is one of the main reasons the poem is regarded as having minority interest, when it could be so different.

Her criticisms regarding my story Children Singing are valid, and I thank her for reading the tale and taking the time to criticise. Though I do have one reservation. I wish she wouldn't come out with things such as "those who like this sort of thing will doubtless find this the sort of thing they like" (er... how's that again..?) and then accuse me of being repetitive! I hereby award her the Outright Entwhistle Plaque for ambiguity!

Prosewise I like Adrian's article (glad to see he's had a novel published, by the way, couldn't happen to a nicer friend), Gordon Larkin's story The Final Passion also merits a mention I feel; his work has both a fine imagination and style. I love that sub-heading Of his ejaculation. Reminds me of the passage in fiction that goes something like "I'm sorry Alice, forgive me," he ejaculated. The mind does veritably boggle! But 'tis a fine tale, one I much appreciated.

From, STUART SCHIFF, Fayetteville, N. C., U.S.A.:

It was with great pleasure that I viewed my copy of DARK HORIZONS, Issue 11. The Dave Fletcher cover was most attractive. He's a fine artist, and it is my luck to have him as a contributor to WHISPERS.

Speaking of WHISPERS (as I seem to always be doing), I and the magazine were privileged to be so well-represented in number 11. Dave Fletcher, Alan Hunter, Jim Pitts, Glen Symonds, Dave Riley, and, of course, Dave Drake all have appeared in WHISPERS which means we both are possessed of fine tastes. I owe a great deal to my British compatriots whose talents help me very much in making a success of a most difficult venture. Again, thanks for the many mentions of WHISPERS.

With regard to specifics in number 11, my favourite piece was Dave Riley's The Urn, a rather chauvinistic choice since it was the first story I bought for WHISPERS and remains one of my favourites. Unless Dave changed my version, though, there was what I feel a confusing typo which took away a bit from the impact of the story. I'll quote the line in question (3rd paragraph from the end) with what's missing from yours underlined: "Idols can take on many forms - and the gods so worshipped can inhabit any temple." Your version says the idols are attacking where it's more likely the terrible beings being worshipped were the culprits in removing poor Mr. Steeples. The Hunter art for Urn was excellent, a pity I didn't know Alan at that time. My other favourites in the issue were the Pitts interview of Dave Fletcher (plus Jim's fantastic EPS ad-back cover) and the Stephen Jones illo on page 12.

All in all, number 11 was a fine job and my thanks for putting out an interesting and well-produced journal.

