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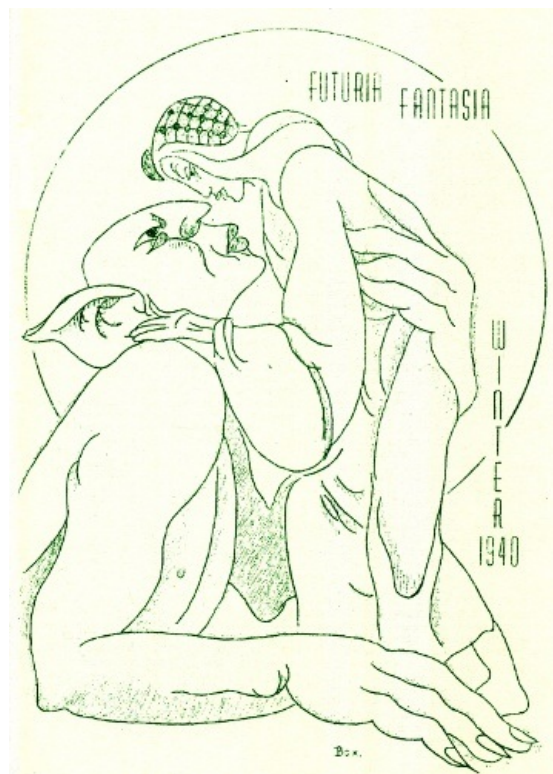
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*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK FUTURIA FANTASIA, WINTER 1940 ***



FUTURIA FANTASIA

Winter 1940

By Ray Bradbury



LAST ISSUE: We made a mistake that we will try not to repeat again very soon. We printed the editorial page three weeks ahead of the remainder of Futuria Fantasia, thereby creating no end of humorous confusion. We babbled glibly, in the editorial, about two or three yarns that we later decided were unprintable, and, at the same time, threw in some horrible mistakes in grammar that must have left Shakespeare doing nip-ups in his shroud.

THIS ISSUE; J. Harvey Haggard bows into what we hope will be a regular spotlight in Futuria Fantasia.... Emil Petaja, whose verses have appeared in Weird Tales, makes his self known with a neat little weird yarn and a poem.... Again H.V.B. comes to the fore with a sequel to THE

GALAPURRED FORSENDYKE—THE VOICE OF SCARILIOF ... and, in case you have wondered about or will wonder about these two unusual yarns, we are printing them for no other reason than that we like their description, they tickle our mental palate, they are word pictures of surrealistic dreams ... and anyone who guesses who H.V.B is will get the next edition of Futuria Fantasia gratis.... Henry Hasse blows in and blows up with a rebuttle against Foo E. Onya and does himself right proud by science-fiction.... Ross Rocklynne, prominent Eastern schlameel, offers us a pitiful excuse for an article, HOW TO GET ABOUT.... Ron Reynolds, we have no doubt, will manage to get into the magazine somehow with his horrendous FIGHT OF THE GOOD SHIP CLARISSA, but if we can do anything at all we'll print it on invisible paper.... Anthony Corvais, if you start guessing who did it, wrote the short story in the rear by the title of THE SYMPHONIC ABDUCTION.... Hannes Bok, who has another cover on Weird Tales for March, has drawn our cover again and many inside illustrations, including a large advertisement for Hell, under which you will find a descriptive poem written by Guy Amory. Unlike Finlay, who draws pictures from poems, we procure pictures from Bok and write poems about them. In fact, I blushingly admit, I even wrote a ten thousand word novelette around that little creature on the cover of the first Futuria Fantasia ... which, no doubt, will have its share of rejections very soon, in which case I will foist on my poor unsuspecting public, both of them, this story now titled LORELEI. I would have included it in this issue, but Russell J. Hodgkins threatened me so venomously that I gave in told him to put down his gun. It might be a good idea, by the way, if more of you readers wrote us letters criticizing FuFa. So far we have heard nothing from Madle, Baltadonis, E.E. Smith, Kuslan, Marconette, Taurasi, Dikty, Wilson, or Speer. How in hell, we ask you guys, can we improve if you won't write in and tell us if and why we stink? Co-operation, please....

NEXT ISSUE: Robert A Heinlein, of the LA SFL, whose *novel* is now current in Astounding, will begin the first of a series of short stories written on order for Futuria Fantasia. Ross Rocklynne, also, takes an encore with a thot-provoking, accent on provoking, story or article. Henry Hasse will be here in company with Ross Hodgkins. Hodgkins possibly writing on Technocracy. And, if schedules go through, an article to end all articles, by Charlie Hornig, fresh and sassay from New Yawk. Other possible bets are Fred Shroyer, Guy Amory, Anthony Corvais, Emil Petaja, Willy Ley, Doug Rogers, August Derleth, Ackerman and T. Bruce Yerke. Send your dime for the Spring Edition now—or a quarter for the Spring, Summer and Fall issues. Introduce FuFa to your friends and help us grow.

THE VOICE OF SCARILIOF

H. V. B.

Four pillars, arising out of the stone like strange growing things of demoniac shape—these Redforth saw and comprehended, knowing full well that Tarath had always abounded in monstrosities. "But what," he asked himself, "will knowing of such as this, be of use to me, as I search for Ghiltharmie?" For he had at last come to realise, to admit even to himself, that he was a lost thing. The Yulphog had taken his soul. They had exiled him to this lost land of dread. But they'd hinted of escape, if he could find it. "Si Yamlon," he had told him, pointing to a writhing belt of suns, lifting and lowering at the horizon like the yellow crest of a flaming wave. And he had nodded his head. They had vanished, disintegrating, it seemed. He didn't then know that they were related to Topper's friends and the jeep in one thing: that their Typonisif and Tregoifer was applicable to the atmosphere.

The four pillars were bending from their own weight. Strange colors—like an idiot's conception of a spectrum, spectrally rippled like irid waves across the columns. Like music in color. Assailed by their complex harmonies, Redforth could only stand speechless, hands thrust defensively forward. IT WAS THEN THAT HE SAW EIRY.

The pillars split. From each of them drifted a whiff of steam. They united into a wavering cloud which shimmered an instant in mid-air, then settled to the ground. And as it touched the metallic grass blades which stretched on and on like the upraised swords of a midget army, the vapor-cloud condensed into a woman's body. EIRY. Queen of Scariliop!

He recognized her at once, tho he had only read of her. She was not human. Her body was like a snake's, and she had bat wings. From a cluster of writhing worm-tentacles leered her face, like a mask in the heart of a seething flower. It was oval, and the scarlet mouth was like a velvet cushion—disproportionate—waiting for some priceless burden. Her nose was negligible, but her lone eye was vast and blue; like a doorway opening upon a sky too blue to belong to our world. Like blue incarnate: and blue is the color of MYSTERY.

She opened her mouth, and her tongue unrolled, uncoiled toward Redforth. Three feet long, the tongue was filamental, like a strand of red cobweb, tipped by a touch of fluff like a dandelion's seed. This member wandered lightly over Redforth's cheek, and for the first time EIRY spoke: "It comes to me that here is the man for whom we have been seeking, Yasgorphitove." Her voice was soft as clouds. Redforth in vain peered to behold her companion. "Now shall we enlighten him as

to the ways of escape? In return for a favor, of course."

The air about her, for a fleeting instant, had turned blue. Then she nodded. She leaned forward, to whisper, but suddenly there was a crackling. "The rock!" she cried. "The rock! I must return before it is too late and I too am trapped!" She writhed, became coiling wreathes of smoke, and the smoke flowed back to the rocks, hovered over it. The four pillars quivered and joined into one and then, in a twinkling, had crumbled to powder.

But there was an uncanny blueness in the air about Redforth. And that night he had a dreadful dream.

For he had become—Yrthicaol! And EIRY had been merely—THE BAIT!

AW G'WAN!

HENRY HASSE

THERE! If "Foo E. Onya", in the last issue, could use a pseudonym so can I. I read his article, I'M THROUGH, with varying degrees of interest. If an answer were really necessary, it could be found more appropriately in the two words of my title above, than in any words that might follow. And that brings up my first point in my rebuttal—

Why is it that people, including the lowly science-fiction fan, (to paraphrase Mr. Onya) always feel it necessary to hide behind a pseudonym when they have something to say which they think will displease someone? I've seen this happen so many times! And, coincidentally, why SHOULD Mr. Onya take such pains to be unpleasant in print? Why should he feel it necessary to make one final, grand broadcast to the effect that he will no longer read paltry science-fiction? Does he think that any real lover of sci-fic gives a damn whether there is one less reader, especially a reader who crawls behind such a silly pseudonym as "Onya"? I've seen other broadcasts such as Mr. Onya's, and they always puzzled me. It surely can be nothing else but the egotistical urge.

But I'm convinced that Onya isn't half so bitter really against sci-fiction as he tries to pretend. He's not really through. Because anyone really bitter against and through with sci-fic would simply stop reading it, not start deriding it! And I doubt if any person, once a fan, has ever completely broken away from sci-fic, THEY ALWAYS COME BACK.

And right here I'd like to say that a good deal of my doubt as to Onya's sincerity is because I'm fairly certain of the fellow's real identity. The general tone of his article, and several clues he divulged, convince me I'm right. And if I AM right, I can assure you, Brad, and any other readers who may have been picqued at Onya's tone, that he shouldn't be taken seriously, and the less attention paid to his rantings, the better. I'm sure Onya would feel flattered if he thought someone took his article so seriously as to answer it. Yet here I am answering it, and damned if I know why, except that I think I took some of Mr. Onya's phrasing personally, almost. I don't think he should have gone to the extent of calling names and using words such as "moronic", "arrogant", etc.

Aside from this his piece seemed to me a conglomeration of contradictions, inconsistencies, praises here, derisions there, pats on the back, exaggerations, sneers and scorn, and, oh yes, a book review. Yes, I liked and appreciated and mostly agreed with Onya's comments on BRAVE NEW WORLD. It's a book which I'm sure many of the *moronic* sci-fic fans appreciated as well as Mr. Onya. But here's where Mr. Onya's and my tastes differ slightly, for I *also* liked PLANET OF THE KNOB HEADS in the Dec. issue of SCIENCE FICTION, whereas Mr. Onya probably wouldn't deign to read it because it's in one of the pulp mags. that he so deprecates; thereby Mr. Onya would be missing a really entertaining and meaningful piece of writing, but that's all right, since Mr. Onya's own words said: "There is so much else of importance that has been written—".

You know, somehow I cannot bring myself to be as vitriolic against Mr. Onya as he was against sf at moments. He tried hard to work up a case against sf, poor fellow, and became (to me at least) amusing instead of convincing. Do you know what I saw? I saw a person who is temporarily *satiated*, as he said, with sf,—but more than that, a person who is merely trying to persuade *himself*, more than other people, that sf is as bad as he painted it! Naturally every fan has his likes and dislikes of the various stories, authors and magazines. Some have more *dislikes* than likes. I think even I do. But it must be admitted that every once in a while, usually unexpectedly, there pops up a story which is a delectable gem and a masterpiece, either of ingenuity or writing or both. Then one is exultant, and one continues reading sf, even some trite and bad sf, knowing that regularly he will encounter one of the gems which he wouldn't have missed reading for the world! Meanwhile we have with us Clark Ashton Smith, C. L. Moore, Stanton Coblenz (delightful sometimes, not always), A. Merritt, and an occasional few others, whose work I doubt if even Mr. Onya could glibly pronounce as ordinary pulp. And we did have Lovecraft, Weinbaum, Howard, and others of whom the same thing can be said.

Naturally, too, a lot of criticism can be directed against sf and sf readers. A lot of criticism can be directed against *everything*, and usually is, by certain people who take an unholy delight in it. I myself have sometimes snorted in wrath at the gross egotism and, yes, stupidity and

childishness, of certain fans. I would have taken great delight in kicking their blooming teeth down their bloody well bally throats. But did I do this? Did I succumb to this desire? No, I did not. I never got close enough. A more important reason is that I had the patience to realize this type of fan is a minority (*not* a majority, Mr. Onya, by any means!). But what I did *not* do was write bitter articles about it.

Here is only one of Mr. Onya's inconsistencies: he makes such statements as "fans are arrogant, blind, critically moronic", etc.—and "editors and writers as well cannot see anything beyond their own perverted models." In virtually the next breath he admires P. Schuyler Miller's intellectuality. Yet P. Schuyler Miller continues to write *sf*n, reads it, and is one of the active fans.

Furthermore, I disagree outright and violently with Onya's statement, "When literature becomes possessed of *ideas as such*, it is no longer literature." And I'd like to challenge Onya to a further debate on this, if he *dares*. Also his statement about Wells' early stories. It so happens (what a coincidence!) that I also read Wells' EXPERIMENT IN AUTOBIOGRAPHY—and yes, while Wells did admit his early *sf*n stories were a preparation for his later and more serious writing, he did *not* disclaim them as not being literature of their own type. The trouble with Mr. Onya, I'm afraid, is that he has (deliberately?) lost sight of the fact that there is literature *and* literature. Instead, he wants everything to conform precisely to his own rather peculiar conception of literature. I'll make a statement right here that will undoubtedly shock Mr. Onya: I'll go so far as to say that pulp fiction, even the pulpiest of pulp fiction, is really and truly LITERATURE, insofar as it has its own special niche, its own certain purpose for being. There, I've said it! I'll admit, Mr. Onya, that it took a little courage to say it. But I ask all who read this, isn't it true when you come to think of it?

I have not dealt with Onya's article nearly to the extent that I might, but I don't think it's really necessary, mainly because, as I said, I have a very strong idea who Foo E. Onya is. I wish I could hazard my suspicion right here, but I'm so sure I'm right, and both the editor and Onya seem so determined to keep it secret, that I cannot be otherwise than silent. I will merely conclude by reiterating my doubt that you, "Foo E. Onya", are really disclaiming *sf*n. At least I hope you will continue both reading and writing it. But I swear, if I ever hear of you doing so, I shall feel sorely tempted to broadcast what a hypocrite you were with that article!

THE FIGHT OF THE GOOD SHIP CLARISSA

by one who should know better

The space rocket Clarissa was nine days out from Venus. The members of the crew were also out for nine days. They were hunters, fearless expeditionists who bagged game in Venusian jungles. At the start of our story they are busy bagging their pants, not to forget their eyes. A sort of lull has fallen over the ship (Note: a lull is a time warp that frequently attacks rockets and seduces its members into a siesta). It was during this lull that Anthony Quelch sat sprawled at his typewriter looking as baggy as a bag of unripe grapefruit. ANTHONY QUELCH, the Cosmic Clamor Boy, with a face like turned linoleum on the third term, busy writing a book: "Fascism is Communism with a shave" for which he would receive 367 rubles, 10 pazinkas and incarceration in a cinema showing *Gone With The Wind*.

The boys upstairs were throwing a party in the control room. They had been throwing the same party so long the party looked like a worn out first edition of a trapeze artist. There is doubt in our mind as to whether they were trying to break the party up or just do the morning mopping and break the lease simultaneously. Arms, legs and heads littered the deck. The boys, it seems, threw a party at the drop of a chin. Sort of a space cataclysm with rules and little regulation—kind of an atomic convulsion in the front parlor. The neighbors never complained. The neighbors were 450 million miles away. And the boys were tighter than a catsup bottle at lunch-time. The last time the captain had looked up the hatch and called to his kiddies in a gentle voice, "HELL!" the kiddies had thrown snowballs at him. The captain had vanished. Clever way they make these space bombs nowadays. A few minutes previous the boys had been tearing up old Amazings and throwing them at one another, but now they contented themselves with tearing up just the editors. Palmer was torn in half and he sat in a corner arguing with himself about rejecting a story for an hour before someone put him through an orange juice machine killing him. (Orange juice sorry, now?)

And then they landed on Venus. How in heck they got back there so quick is a wonder of science, but there they were. "Come on, girls!" cried Quelch, "put on your shin guards, get out there and dig ditches for good old W.P.A. and the Rover Boys Academy, earth branch 27!"

Out into the staggering rain they dashed. Five minutes later they came back in, gasping, reeling. They had forgotten their corsets! The Venusians closed in like a million land-lords. "Charge, men!" cried Quelch, running the other way. And then—BATTLE! "What a fight; folks," cried Quelch. "Twenty thousand earth men against two Venusians! We're outnumbered, but we'll fight!" BLOOSH! "Correction—ten thousand men fighting!" KERBLOM! "One hundred men from earth left!" BOOM! "This is the last man speaking, folks! What a fight. I ain't had so much fun since—Help, someone just clipped my corset strings!" BWOM! "Someone just clipped me!"

The field was silent. The ship lay gleaming in the pink light of dawn that was just blooming over the mountains like a pale flower. The two Venusians stood weeping over the bodies of the Earthlings like onion peelers or two women in a bargain basement. One Venusian looked at the other Venusian, and in a high-pitched, hoarse, sad voice said: "Aye, aye, aye—THIS—HIT SHOODEN HEPPEN TO A DOG—NOT A DOIDY LEEDLE DOG!" And dawn came peacefully, like beer barrels, rolling.

The Intruder

emil petaja

It was in San Francisco, on the walk above the sand and surf that pounded like the heart of the earth. There was wind, the sky and sea blended in a grey mist.

I was sitting on a stone bench watching a faint hint of distant smoke, wondering what ship it was and from what far port.

Mine was a pleasant wind—loneliness. So when he came, wrapped in his great overcoat and muffler, hat pulled down, and sat on my bench I was about to rise and leave him. There were other benches, and I was not in the mood for idle gossip about Hitler and taxes.

"Don't go. Please." His plea was authentic.

"I must get back to my shop," I said.

"Surely you can spare a moment." I could not even to begin to place the accent in his voice. Low as a whisper, tense. His deep-set eyes held me ... his face was pale and had a serenity born of suffering. A placid face, not given to emotional betrayals, yet mystical. I sat down again. Here was someone bewilderingly strange. Someone I wouldn't soon forget. He moved a hand toward me, as tho to hold me from going, and I saw with mild curiosity that he wore heavy gloves, like mittens.

"I am not well. I ... I must not be out in the damp air," I said. "But today I just had to go out and walk. I had to."

"I can understand." I warmed to the wave of aloneness that lay in his words. "I too have been ill. I know you, Otis Marlin. I have visited your shop off Market Street. You are not rich, but the feel of the covers on a fine book between your hands suffices. Am I right?"

I nodded, "But how...."

"You have tried writing, but have had no success. Alone in the world, your loneliness has much a family man, harassed might envy."

"That's true," I admitted, wondering if he could be a seer, a fake mystic bent on arousing in me an interest in spiritism favorable to his pocket-book. His next words were a little amused, but he didn't smile.

"No, I'm not a psychic—in the ordinary sense, I've visited your shop. I was there only yesterday," he said. And I remembered him. In returning from my lunch I had met him coming out of my humble place of business. One glimpse into those brooding eyes was not a thing to soon forget, and I recalled pausing to watch his stiff-legged progress down the street and around the corner.

There was now a pause, while I watched leaves scuttling along the oiled walk in the growling wind. Then a sound like a sigh came from my companion. It seemed to me that the wind and the sea spoke loudly of a sudden, as tho approaching some dire climax. The sea wind chilled me as it had not before, I wanted to leave.

"Dare I tell you? DARE I!" His white face turned upward. It was as though he questioned some spirit in the winds.

I was silent; curious, yet fearful of what it might be he might not be allowed to tell me. The winds were portentously still.

"Were you ever told, as a child, that you must not attempt to count the stars in the sky at night—that if you did you might *lose your mind*?"

"Why, yes. I believe I've heard that old superstition. Very reasonable, I believe; based on the assumption that the task would be too great for one brain. I...."

"I suppose it never occurred to you," he interrupted, "that this superstition might hold even more truth than that, truth as malignant as it is vast. Perhaps the cosmos hold secrets beyond comprehension of man; and what is your assurance that these secrets are beneficent and kind? Is nature rather not terrible, than kind? In the stars are patterns—designs which if read, might lure the intrepid miserable one who reads them out of earth and beyond ... beyond, to immeasurable evil.... Do you understand what I am saying?" His voice quivered metallically, was vibrant with emotion.

I tried to smile, but managed only a sickly grin. "I understand you, sir, but I am not in the habit of accepting nebulous theories such as that without any shred of evidence."

"There is, sad to say, only too much evidence. But do you believe that men have *lost their minds* from incessant study of the stars?"

"Perhaps some have, I don't know," I returned. "But in the South of this state in one of the country's leading observatories, I have a friend who is famous as an astronomer. He is as sane as you or I. If not saner." I tacked the last sentence on with significant emphasis.

The fellow was muttering something into his muffler, and I fancied I caught the words "danger ..." and "fools ..." We were silent again. Low dark clouds fled over the roaring sea and the gloom intensified.

Presently, in his clipped speech, the stranger said, "Do you believe that life exists on other planets, other stars? Have you ever wondered what kind of life might inhabit the other stars in this solar system, and those beyond it?" His eyes were near mine as he spoke, and they bewitched me. There was something in them, something intangible and awful. I sensed that he was questioning me idly, as an outlander might be questioned about things with which the asker is familiar, as I might ask a New Yorker, "What do you think of the Golden Gate Bridge?"

"I wouldn't attempt to guess, to describe, for instance, a Martian man," I said. "Yet I read with interest various guesses by writers of fiction." I was striving to maintain a mood of lightness and ease, but inwardly I felt a bitter cold, as one on the rim of a nightmare. I suddenly realized, with childish fear, that night was falling.

"Writers of fiction! And what if they were to *guess too well*? What then? Is it safe for them to have full rein over their imaginations? Like the star-gazers...." I said nothing, but smiled.

"Perhaps, man, there have been those whose minds were acute beyond most earthly minds—those who have guessed too closely to truth. Perhaps *those who are Beyond* are not yet ready to make themselves known to Earthlings? And maybe THEY, are annoyed with the puny publicity they receive from imaginative writers.... Ask yourself, *what is imagination*? Are earth-minds capable of conceiving that which is not and has never been; or is this imagination merely a deeper insight into worlds you know not of, worlds glimpsed dimly in the throes of dream? And whence come these dreams? Tell me, have you ever awakened from a dream with the sinister feeling that all was not well inside your mind?—that while you, the real you, were away in Limbo—*someone—something* was probing in your mind, invading it and reading it. Might not THEY leave behind them in departure shadowy trailings of *their own minds*?"

Now I was indeed speechless. For a strange nothing had started my neck-hairs to prickling. Authors who might have guessed too well.... Two, no three, writers whose stories had hinted at inconceivable yet inevitable dooms; writers I had known; had recently died, by accident.

"What of old legends? Of the serpent who shall one day devour the sun. That legend dates back to Mu and Atlantis. Who, man, was and is Satan? Christ? And Jehovah? benevolent and all-saving, were but a monstrous jest fostered by THEY to keep man blindly content, and keep him divided among himself so that he strove not to unravel the stars?"

"Man, in my foolish youth I studied by candleflame secrets that would scorch your very soul. Of women who with their own bare hands have strangled the children they bore so that the world might not know.... Disease and sickness at which physicians throw up their hands in helpless bafflement. When strong men tear at their limbs and heads and agony—seeking to drive forth alien forces that have netted themselves into their bodies. I need scarcely recount them all, each with its own abominable significance. It is THEM. Who are eternal and nameless, who send their scouts down to test earth-man. Don't you realize that they have watched man creep out of primal slimes, take limbs and shamble, and finally walk? And that they are waiting, biding their time...." I shivered with a fear beyond name. I tried to laugh and could not. Then, bold with stark horror, I shouted quite loudly: "How do you know this? Are you one of THEM?" He shook his head violently. "No, no!" I made as to go, feeling an aching horror within me.

"Stay only a moment more, man. I will have pity on you and will not tell you all. I will not describe *them*. And I will not assay that which, when upon first seeing you here by the sea, *I first intended*...." I listened. Not daring to look at him; as in the grip of daemoniac dream. My fingers clutched at the edges of the bench so tightly that I have been unable to write with them until now. He concluded thus:

"So you see that I am everywhere a worldless alien. Sometimes this secret is too great for one mind to contain, and I must talk. I must feel the presence of someone human near me, else I shall attempt to commit suicide and again fail. It is without end—my horror. Have pity on me, man of earth, as I have had pity on you."

It was then that I gripped him by the shoulders and looked with pleading desperation into his staring eyes. "Why have you told me? What—" My voice broke. My hands fell to my sides. I shuddered.

He understood. Shrieked one word: "PITY!" into my insensible ear, and was gone.

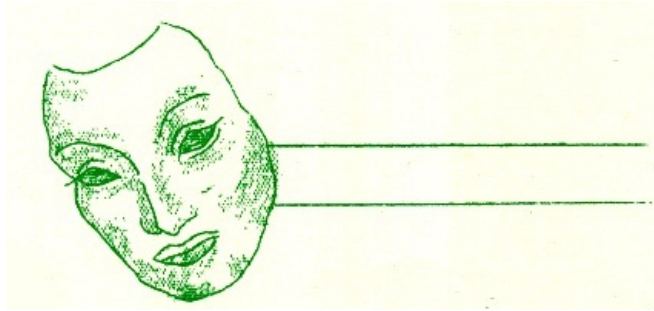
That was 3 nites ago and each nite since has been hell. I cannot remember how long it was after the STRANGER left that I found myself able to move, to rise, hobble home, suddenly ancient with

knowledge. And I cannot—WILL NOT—reveal to you all that I heard.

I thot myself insane, but after an examination, a physician pronounced me that I had been strained mentally. I am competent. But I wonder if he is wrong.

I view the silken stars tonight with loathing. HE sought to master their inscrutable secret meaning, and succeeded. He imagined, he dreamed; and he fed his sleep with potions, so that he might learn where his mind might be during sleep, and himself probe into the mind that wandered from space into his resting body-shell. I am no scientist, no bio-chemist, so I learned little of his methods. Only that he did succeed in removing his mind from Earth, and soaring to some remote world over and beyond this universe—where THEY dwell. And THEY knew him to be a mind of Earth, he told me. He but hinted of the evil he beheld, so potent with dread that it shattered his mind. And THEY cured him, and sent him back to earth.... "They are waiting!" he shrieked, in his grating skeleton of a voice. "They are contemptuous of man and his feeble colonies. But they fear that some day, like an overgrown idiot child, he may do them harm. But before this time—when Man has progressed into a ripeness—THEY will descend! Then they will come in hordes to exploit the world as THEY did before!"

Of his return, and his assuming the role of a man, the Alien spoke evasively. It was to be assured that this talk of his was not some repulsive caprice; to know that all of it was true, that I gripped him and beheld him. To my everlasting horror, I must know. Little in itself, what I saw, but sufficient to cause me to sink down on the stone bench in a convulsive huddle of fear. Never again in life can I tear this clutching terror from my soul. Only this: That when I looked into his staring eyes in the dimness of murky twilight, and before he understood and quickly avaulted, I glimpsed with astoundment and repugnance that between the muffling of his coat and black scarf *the INTRUDER wore a meticulously painted metal mask—to hide what I must not see....*



ASPHODEL:

by E. T. PINE

Down where skies are always dark,
Where is ever heard the bark
Of monstrous ebon hounds of hell,
In a dreadful fearsome knell,
Never fading, ever bright,
With a weird and spectral light,
Blooms a flower of ancient days,
Shining in a crimson maze;
When the black bat shrilly screams
Asphodel, you haunt my dreams—

From the lands of distant death
Steals the perfume of your breath:

Some night soon the wind will blow
Saffron seeds to fall and grow
By my casement window, where,
Sleeps my loved one, still and fair;
Then, the night you are to bloom
I shall creep from out my room,
From your blossom by the wall
Shall I hear her dear voice call:
Mournfully the wind will cry,
And shadows cover all the sky—
My lips will touch the loved dead
When where you nod I lay my head....

MARMOK

by Emil Pataja

Sleep that doth harbour a dream of dread,
Whence come the fingers that beckoned and led
My dream-stung soul from my canopied bed—
Whither dost take me, ere I am dead?
Beyond the skull-grinning mid-March moon
Over the phosphorous-lit lagoon
Out past the darkest pits of the night,
Fast thru the stars in this evil flight;
Lead thee me out past the rim of space,
Show me that ravenous, pain-black face,
Marmok, whose myrmidons ever are questing
For souls who wander at nite, unresting.
Then shall I know an ultimate bliss
Tasting the fury of that cosmic kiss,
Whilst my earth-cloak lies limply on the floor
To waken and gibber forevermore.

What is the dim monstrosity that shimmers across the stars, what hand is that to cradle planets, earth and mars. What misshapen gargantuan of nebulous formed flesh, hurls out its flood of darkness, the systems to enmesh. What is it walks across the universes chanting cosmic choruses with endless verses—what thing unutterable has visited our Earth long years ago, and now, tonite, returns, in the shadows lurking glow. What ancient fear is with me, cold and terrible? Is that the shape of man upon the constellations, blotting out the light—or something gasping in hideous delight, plucking at the planets in insanity, at play, causing suns to boil like cauldrons, meteors to sing upon their way with mournful voices, lost ghosts upon lonely trails—wailing—wailing. Is tonight our rendezvous with the Cosmos Thing, the Colossus bigger than Andromeda that sits upon the throne of space—or are these fantasies upon my aged eyes?

HADES



Upon the shores of molten seas stand men, stand men alone,
And down below, in the molten flow, in the waves that cry and moan
Are women bare with flaming hair, whose passions have no surcease.
And in the air, midst the scarlet glare, are more who will never know

THE BEST WAYS TO GET AROUND

I don't mean socially; I mean off the Earth and between the planets. There are a few really good ways, as invented by perspiring authors in science-fiction magazines. And if I miss any, which is extremely doubtful, remember that I'm writting from memory, that I hadn't read *all* the scientifiction magazines from 1926 and on, and that I am not going to go researching through the tremendous stacks of old scientifiction magazines that I now have in my possession.

Now, what DO I mean by THE BEST WAYS TO GET AROUND? Briefly, by the word BEST, I mean so pseudo-logical that you could almost leave off the "pseudo". See? (No)

For instance, Jack Williamson's geodesic machinery, wherein he warps space around, appeals to me as being pure fairy tale stuff. He just gives a lot of verbal hocus-pocus, and runs off reams of litterary fertilizer until we throw up our hands in disgust and say; "O.K., O.K., Jack, to hell with that, let's get on with the 'story'. We'll grant you that you *can* get around."—And we're willing to grant E.E. Smith the same privilege. He *DOES* get around—anybody disagree? The question is; how? Oh, by using "X", and the inertialess drive. The same with brother Burroughs. What do we care if dear old John Carter "yearns" himself to Mars? He gets there, and we are happy, or were happy.

So, we exclude all those from THE BEST WAYS TO GET AROUND. They are very nice and convenient to get people places; but, when we run across one of the "BEST WAYS" we often wonder if it REALLY WOULDN'T be possible, provided—-. Of course, that word "provided" is the catch—the reason why we really aren't going around that way.

Again—So, way back there, Edmond Hamilton, and a hundred others, have used the idea of *light-pressure* in an attempt to get away from rockets. But he didn't tell us how, scientifictionally. In direct contrast to vague statements made regarding the use of *light-pressure* as propulsion, I remember the MOON CONQUORS, by R.H. Romans, in a 1931 (I think) (You're right, 4SJ) quarterly. You've seen radiometers. The things with black and white vanes placed in a vacuum. The theory is that the opposite shades cause unbalanced light pressure, so that the vanes go around and around. Romans invented a pseudo-scientifically logical way to use *light-pressure*, once he got his ship in space. His scientist invented a compound of *absolute black*. (Which is also obtainable in a darkroom—or, I mean, absolute black painted on the posterior of the ship, and regulated at will, gave the same ship quite respectable speeds. Certainly it won't work outside of a story—but, I'm talking scientifictionally. Romans used his imagination, and we all had fun.

In the same story, Romans used a swell device to get the ship off the earth. He used a mile-long tube, composed of circular magnets. It was a *magnetic gun*. Each magnet pulled the ship towards it, and then, as the ship passed it, the magnet's poles were reversed, and made to repel the ship. With each magnet at maximum charge, either pulling or pushing the ship, according to whether it was in front or behind the latter, the same erupted from the tube with the necessary 7 M.P.S. velocity of escape, and so was off on the way to the moon. What's wrong with the idea? I dunno.

John W. Campell (Jr.) used to have brainstorms: in fact, he invented *two* of THE BEST WAYS TO GET AROUND. One, in the first of the ARCOT, MOREY, and WADE stories, "PIRACY PREFERRED", was that of molecular motion. All the little molecules in a bar of metal go madly around in every possible direction. If you could invent, as Campbell did in the story, an electromagnetic vibration that would force all the mollecules to go in the same direction, then the bar of metals would go in that direction, since it would be them. So Mr. Campbell hooked the thing up to his ship, and off he went to Venus, or some other planet. Well, it *would* work, wouldn't it, *provided* (ah yes!) you could make all the mollecules go into one directional flow.

And the other brainstorm was when Aarn Munro, in the MIGHTIEST MACHINE, decided that momentum and velocity were wave formations, and therefore, one should be able to *tune into them!* (Anyone should be able to think up a simple theory like that.) Not a bad WAY TO GET AROUND—in a science fiction story.

Back in 1930, or some such year, Charles R. Tanner wrote THE FLIGHT OF THE MERCURY, in the old WONDER STORIES. In that story he told you just how to go ahead and make an ETHERPROPELLER, provided there is such a thing as ether, and Osmium B. The theory is: you use water screws, air propellers, and so why not an ether propeller? Put a cork in motionless water. Start a wave motion in the water with your hand. If the length of the wave is greater than the diameter of the cork, the cork just bobs up and down and stays where it is. If the lengths of the waves are shorter than the diameter of the cork, the waves go around it, and the cork still stays right where it is. If the length of the wave is exactly the diameter of the cork, tho cork rides right off, in the trough of the wave, at the same speed as that of the wave formation. Now invent an electro-magnetic vibration—by using the metal Osmium B—exactly the length of a Copper atom. Make your ship of copper, putting the ether propeller, that which causes vibration in the ether, at the end of the ship, and presto! all the copper atoms move along in the trough of the ether waves, at the same speed as the other waves, which is the speed of light. And, Mr. Tanner

is off for Mars, in a super-plausibly scientific way.

HELL SHIP, in last year's ASTOUNDING, Arthur J. Burks put forth an idea which had been discussed by engineers before he had ever used it. They just didn't know how to do it. Mr. Burks did—didn't he write the story. At least, the idea gave him more earthly benefit than it gave the engineers. Maybe he thinks he invented it—I don't know, nor does it matter: He used it, the idea of gravatic lines of force, forming a spider web throughout the solar system. With the proper machinery, which he ascribed with good attention to detail, you could crawl up those lines of force like a spider. This idea is so plausible that it might be placed in the same category as rocket propulsion, which is fact.

THE MOTH, in this year's ASTOUNDING, contains another of those ideas of interplanetary locomotion which I call one of THE BEST WAYS TO GET AROUND. Don't worry, I'm not pointing to myself with pride. I just wrote the story, Charles R. Tanner conceived the idea. He tossed it off parenthetically one night, and promptly forgot about it. The idea—If all objects are in motion, according to the Lorentz-Fitzgerald contraction theory, lose length in the direction of motion, why couldn't an artificially produced cause instantaneous motion, why couldn't an artificially produced contraction cause instantaneous motion, proportional to length-loss? Not a thing in the world against it, my friends, all you have to do is to find a way to cause the artificial contraction of the ship in question. Of course, in my story, I invented a force-field—very handy when you're in a tight spot!—which caused the electrons to flatten out. This force acted on the ship and everything within. Therefore, any speed up to a little below that of light could be obtained, and that bogey man so often ignored in scientific fiction, acceleration, was disposed of at the start, since there was nothing that had a tendency to stay behind. There is the real inertialess drive, which E.E. Smith talked of, but never used.

(Parenthetically: When Charles R. Tanner saw the story containing his idea in print, he became enthused, and promptly invented and named all machines used in the process, discovered a new and ultimate particle called the "graviton", that which makes the proton 1846 times heavier than the electron, and practically drew plans for the force field which caused the contraction. When he finished we knew exactly *how* to obtain speeds far exceeding both those of Smith and Campbell. Our inventions were plausible, and they'd work, provided—)

I've just about reached the end of the list, though there are one or two others that might be mentioned right here at the tail end of the article. Jules Verne, I suppose, has to be credited with the first ship fired from a canon, in ONCE AROUND THE MOON. Wells takes the bow for gravity plates, which Willy Ley so neatly disposed of, only he called it "cavorite" in THE FIRST MEN IN THE MOON., and Roy Cummings used it effectively in AROUND THE UNIVERSE (and a hundred others). In a story in the old WONDER Donald Wolheim put his rocket ship on a huge wheel, rotated the wheel and flung it off into space. Fair, except that the acceleration would be killing.

AND THAT'S ABSOLUTELY ALL THE BEST WAYS TO GET AROUND. Unless there are some of those which I haven't heard of. If you know of some, I would like to be enlightened.

—ROSS ROCKYLYN

—THE SYMPHONIC ABDUCTION—

"I suppose you've heard about what happened to my brother Jerry?" Ray Spencer asked me; I shook my head. "The whole family was worried about him for a while: couldn't tell whether he had sleeping-sickness, or what. All we knew was that he'd gone coma listening to some phonograph records when he was alone in the house. Perhaps the intense emotional effect of the music, plus its stentor, was the cause.

"When I returned home, he lay cold on the floor in front of the radio-phonograph. The automatic release had shut off the record, but the current was still on, and the volume dial was turned full strength. Nothing I could do would rouse my brother, so—scared—I put him to bed and called a doctor, who had him taken to a hospital for observation. No one could determine what was the trouble, and since we couldn't afford to keep him at the hospital indefinitely, we brought Jerry back home. And although it wasn't exactly appropriate, I couldn't help remembering the story of the Sleeping Beauty whenever I looked into his room and saw him, apparently only napping.

"Then one day I heard him—still in his trance—whisperingly singing. The indistinct notes were reminiscent of one of Chaikovsky's ballet pieces. I tried vainly to wake him. He sighed on and on until the faint breath of a voice softened into silence....

"When at last he did awake, I had been listening to some continental communiques in the adjoining room, with the door open so that I could look in on him in case of emergency. The program ended and was followed by concert music. I don't care much for symphony, so I arose and went to the radio to switch it off. At the same time, Jerry stirred: I heard his bed creak. Turning to look his way, I twisted the wrong dial, and the music thundered: my brother began to toss on his bed. Disregarding the racket for a moment in excitement at seeing him move, I ran in to him, shouting, shaking him a little. His hands groped, found mine, and clung to them. Painfully he endeavored to raise himself, dropped back perspiring and panting. Then he screamed—horribly!—as if all Hell's devils were shovelling all Hell's coals on him, and opened his eyes, his

face taut with dread. He recognized me. In a moment I had soothed him back to normalcy. He was perfectly all right from then on.

"Or at least we thought so. But since you're so interested in metaphysics, get him to tell you about the vision he had during his catalepsy. He won't feel embarrassed; he's told it to others. Just say that I mentioned it to you." Ray had finished. Later, when I chanced upon Jerry Spencer, I brot him up to my apartment for dinner. The meal over, he smiled at my query concerning his comatose dream, and related:

"None in my family are as interested in music as I: my belief is that to realize its full magic you must leave off talking—better still, listen to it alone—and, closing your eyes, open your mind to it. Relax—forget yourself. All of my folks poke fun at me when I sit on the floor by the radio during the concert broadcasts, my ears close to the speaker. But that is the only way by which I can really enjoy music. The very loudness, blasting at my hearing, emphasizes the tone-magic, overwhelming everything else. And sometimes, if my eyes are shut, I can see fantastic dream worlds, fiery pageants inspired by thundrous harmonies.

"I had never dared to turn on the amplifier as loud as I'd have wished. My family said that it would annoy the neighbors. So that day when I was alone at home, I thot that then was my chance, if ever, and proceeded to play my favorite record; the first scene of Chaikovsky's SWAN LAKE ballet, as loudly as possible. The sound was not so deafening as—maddening, or better still, intoxicating. How I Loved it! I sat cross-legged, eyes shut, dreaming, at last absolutely happy. More: ecstatic.

"The first notes were like an invitation emanating from a lost dimension, calling me, wheedling. Promising haven, peace. The call of the unknown: not the lure of dashing adventure but of mystery, mournful sorcery, epic splendors....

"Deep in my heart there's a sort of innate Slavic sadness which responded to the music's plaint, and my thought traveled with the melody effortlessly on and on. The warm darkness of my closed eyes lightened to infinities of cold, deep-blue emptiness, through which I felt myself gliding as the theme progressed.

"Each harmonic burst, every wailing echo, dominated me. My thought was borne farther and farther like a leaf in a tempest.... There were base chords which made my throat quiver, and tears burned under my lowered eyelids. I felt a tingling at my shoulders, and with eyes still closed but discerning by a sort of dream-vision, I half-consciously turned, beheld luminous yellow—draperies?—fluttering behind me, bouying me: like scarf-wings, whipping comet-tails.

"An instinctive transient fright gripped me, admonishing me to withdraw from this blue region into the calid darkness from which I had come—but the melody's urge was stronger than my feeble urge to retreat. The azure became flecked with diamond points of light which augmented into great white moons, and from one to another in a vast network rayed pulsing filaments, vascular channels of fluid light.

"A stupendous chorus of clear unhuman voices, as from diamond throats, emanated from these linked moons, of which the music which had conveyed me was only a distorted, ghostly echo.... In tangible waves this greater music rippled around the webbed moons, beating against me as though to force me away on its tides I know not whither.

"Beneath me was a limitless tract of grey slime which rose and fell torpidly as with the breathing of a somnolent subterranean thing. The moonlight burned brightly on it, and crawling across it from some remote place came—trees?—snaky-rooted things whose prehensile branches bore, instead of leaves, flexible lenses.... They left behind them red trails on the slime, and excrementory ribbons of thin blue vapor streamed from their topmost appendages. Occasionally they paused to feed, focussing their lenses upon the gelatinous ground, which became luminously white under the concentrated light. The sucking mouths of the serpentine roots absorbed this matter, and red viscosity seeped into the eaten places, greying rapidly under the moon's effulgence, chemically affected by it.

"And the trees mated. Gynandrous, they converged in pairs or groups, pressing close together, thrusting their limbs into one enormous cluster, aggregating their lenses into a series of complex, compact forms ... shuddering with a violent ardor.... From erectile protuberances rimming the lenses ruby liquid spurted, bursting with incandescence under the condensed moonlight.

"Spent, drooping, the trees separated, and the radiant orgasmic matter drifted lightly down to the slime, burning fitfully as the trees moved away indifferently.

"Apparently these flickering radiances fed, for gradually they grew, dulling, becoming opaque, substantial—thrusting out probing roots, developing limbs, wandering like their parents. They snailed onward out of sight, all of them.

"Silently, a phosphorescent green river raced like a bolt of furcate lightning over the green wastes. It was composed not of water but of myriad tiny luminous crawling insects. A conscious river, altering its tortuous course at will, small streams deviating from the main body and meandering erratically, then rejoining the general current. This river's end drew into sight, flashed under me and into the distance, leaving fast-greying red paths on the slime.

"The moon's music assailed me; simultaneously I felt those man-measures, which had carried me so long, cease, leaving me without a link to my own world—helpless against the inexorable tide of

the lunar melody, which, bursting more loudly, swept me higher, through an interstice of the circulatory web, into blue infinity. And there it left me; fading ripples of it would lap me, but were too dissipated then to sweep me farther.

"I floated aimlessly in the void, it seemed for ages, less a body than a mind, aware of neither hunger nor thirst nor ill of any sort other than a dreadful sapping weariness.

"There was no way of reckoning time, but after an eternity of loneliness and self-boredom, I heard a glissando of mellow tintinabulations. A troop of small stars flashed toward me like a scattered handful of sparkling white gems, whirling in interweaving dance of enchantment, tinkling glad clear tunes like the babbling of crystal brooks. The joyous, youthful essence of their song so charmed me that I forgot my weariness and vocally ventured to imitate it.

"At last they broke their circle and swept away, single-file, out of sight, diminishing with distance.

"For awhile I hummed their song, but with every repetition it lost some of its starry quality and gained a human-ness, earthiness, animalism—until it impressed me no longer beautiful, and I was silent.... Wearily the sluggish ages passed ... in the illimitable blue solitudes....

"Eventually I heard the man-music, again like a summons—its vibrations piercing the moon-net, receding, drawing me with it. Its power increased with every unit of retrogression, dragging me with it. Over the wastes of slime it dragged me, all in a fraction of seconds. Wind tore at me, racketing in my ears, drowning music of both moons and man.

"In a flash of cataclysm, of cosmic pandemonium, the moons, jostled out of their places by my abrupt passage through the web, strained apart, snapping their pulsant filamental arteries. White, searing drops of blood of light oozed from the severed ducts, hissing as they fell, and splashed on the slime, which heaved torturedly. The crawling trees reared upon their writhing roots, flailing their lensed limbs, and the phosphorescent rivers halted suddenly, piling into swiftly disintegrating mounds.

"The rain of light blood thinned and ceased: the moons dimmed and plunged earthward, lusterless. As they touched the tempestuously tossing slime, it shrieked stridently, deafeningly—*cosmically!* An outcry voicing all life's inherent dread of the horror of pain and death, which arose from all sides, like an auditory vise, tightening upon and crushing me. The blue chaos was wiped away by utter blackness; the shriek weakened, ceased.

"I opened my eyes, shut them—dazzled by daylight, and opened them again, but cautiously. My brother Ray was standing over me, shaking me, calling my name ... AND IT WAS I WHO HAD SCREAMED!"

as i remember—



As I remember, August Derleth wrote, a time back: "My personal favorite of the Lovecraft stories is THE RATS IN THE WALL, followed by DUNWICH HORROR, COLOUR OUT OF SPACE, THE OUTSIDER, WHISPERER IN DARKNESS." H.P.L. liked MUSIC OF ERICH ZANN as well as anything he did, COLOUR next. Donald Wandrei is busy in St. Paul writing plays and shorts. "My average day brings me anywhere from ten to fifty letters that must be answered."

As I remember one night in Coney Island found seven strange looking fellows, fans and authors, crowded into a car for a posed picture. Ross Rocklynne, freshly freckled by a New Yawk sun, at the steering wheel, Jack Agnew at his side with Mark (I'm makin' my mark in pulps) Reinsburg and immediately in back of Rocklynne a fellow with too much hair, a tan that would make an Ethiopian blush, and teeth, Bradbury, augmented by the humorously verbose Erle Korshak, the professorly nice Bob Madle and one V. Kidwell. I recall also a night at Mort Weisinger's home during July with Rocklynne, Ackerman, Morojo, Hornig, Binder, Schwartz, Darrow and again Bradbury. A picture was taken that night and the only ones with decent smiles were Ackerman and the under-done personality who edits this magazine. Hornig looked strangely thoughtful with his hand to his chin, Mort had a cigarette drooping from his lip and Darrow, Schwartz and Binder all were lost in profound contemplation of the little birdie which Mort's brother held. I remember also a night on Central Park, a stag night, when it was raining convulsively and Binder, Bradbury, Hornig, Rocklynne and Darrow all clambered into a rocking boat and swished out onto the glittering water, yodeling popular tunes at the way-way top of their corny contraltos. Binder has a pleasing bath-tub baritone, while Hornig can imitate a frog at the drop of a body. Darrow was strangely silent, but that man Bradbury and Rocklynne set up such a howl that the Park authorities came out in a submarine, thinking that the Loch Ness monster had turned up again. This was all settled when someone pulled the plug and everyone drowned peacefully.

Going way back in the cobwebs I seem to recall a letter arriving at an Eastern post-office addressed to Mars. It was returned marked: Insufficient Postage.

As I remember Charlie Hornig wrote, on January 9th: "On Tuesday, February 20th, 1940, I'll be in Los Angeles. I will write for Futuria Fantasia, but my rates are 12 cents a word, before acceptance. I haven't seen GONE WITH THE WIND yet, but if I stop off to see it on the road, expect me two days later than heretofore planned. If I walk it, expect me at the city limits on the R car-line, Whittier, the same time of the morning, only about 18 months later. I'll bring my overcoat and shovel along for the annual sun showers and orange blizzards." And later, from Hornig: "I liked the latest issue of Futuria Fantasia very much, especially the page of conventional descriptions over which I laughed myself sick and silly. The note about Bradbury and the mask and the blonde in the Paramount is the funniest thing I've ever read in a fan-mag."

I seem to remember being at someone's house not so long ago and glancing thru a thick manuscript under submission to John W. Campbell. I seem to remember that the author was Robert A. Heinlein, member of our LaSfl. And the other day that story popped up in Astounding as a Nova, "IF THIS GOES ON—" And it seems to me that here and now Bob should take a bow for a swell story. And thanks to Campbell for providing it with a Rogers cover and Rogers interiors. OMEGA—



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FINLAY

*** END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK FUTURIA FANTASIA, WINTER 1940 ***

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