

fantastic

ADVENTURES

VOLUME 2
NUMBER 3
MARCH
1940

Contents

STORIES



The Priestess Who Rebelled returns next month in another thrilling fantasy laid in the future when women rule the world and few men retain their self respect



Copyright, 1940
ZIFF-DAVIS PUBLISHING COMPANY
608 South Dearborn St., Chicago, Ill.
William B. Ziff, Publisher
B. O. Davis, Editor
Raymond A. Palmer, Managing Editor
David Vern, Associate Editor
Herman R. Bollin, Art Director

We do not accept responsibility for the return of unsolicited manuscripts or artwork. To facilitate handling, the author should inclose a self-addressed envelope with the requisite postage attached, and artists should inclose or forward return postage. Accepted material is subject to whatever revision is necessary to meet requirements. Payment for manuscripts and illustrations will be made at our current rates.

The names of all characters that are used in short stories, serials and semi-fiction articles that deal with types are fictitious. Use of a name that is the same as that of any living person is accidental.

FANTASTIC ADVENTURES
MARCH 1940
VOLUME 2, NUMBER 3

FANTASTIC ADVENTURES is published monthly by ZIFF-DAVIS PUBLISHING COMPANY at 608 South Dearborn Street, Chicago, Ill. Entry as second-class matter applied for at the Post Office, Chicago, Ill. under the act of March 3rd, 1879. Subscriptions \$2.40 a year (12 issues); Foreign, \$2.90.

THE LITTLE PEOPLE.....by Eando Binder 8

To one of the Little People, venturing into the domain of the Big People was the height of adventure. But brave little Atho became too bold . . . !

JALU OF RADIANT VALLEY.....by Orlin Tremaine 30

One lone woman against seven madmen isn't too great odds when that woman is Jalu The Golden fighting for the love and life of her Kalen.

THE MAN WHO WEIGHED MINUS TWELVE. by Nelson S. Bond 48

There are a lot of odd things connected with the phenomenon of weighing less than nothing, but Uncle Herman didn't suspect the danger facing him.

VOLCANO SLAVES OF MU.by Frederic Arnold Kummer, Jr. 54

"When a golden-haired stranger comes, then is the fall of the city of Cnef near." Such was the legend that spelled trouble to Kirk, The Wanderer.

LUNAR LOOT.....by Edwin Benson 64

How could the pirate know exactly when and where to intercept his victims in space, where ships are as hard to see as notes in the dark?

THE PRINCE OF MARS RETURNS (Part II—Conclusion) by Phil Nowlan 70

Dan Hanley brings back to Mars the glory and romance of the past as he plunges across the red world to battle for Lilrin of the Ta n'Ur.

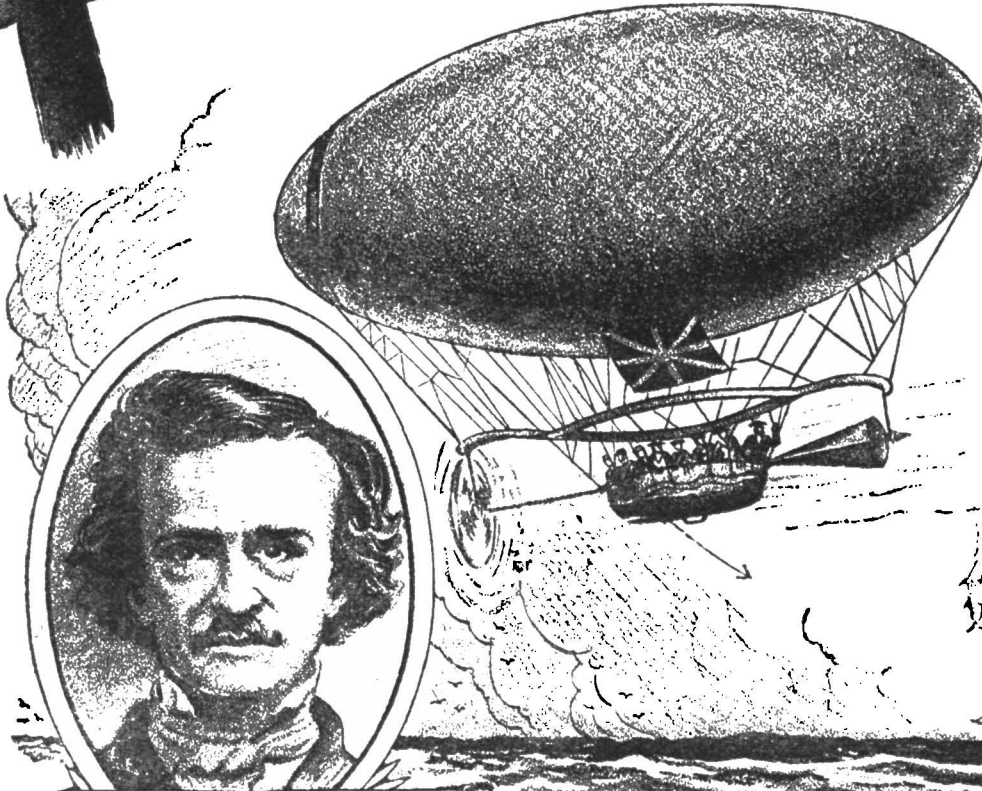
FEATURES

The Editor's Notebook.....	6
Fantastic Hoaxes.....	28
Romance of The Elements.....	83
Quiz Page.....	84
Reader's Page.....	85
Introducing The Author.....	92
Correspondence Corner.....	94
Life On Neptune.....	96
Contest Page.....	97

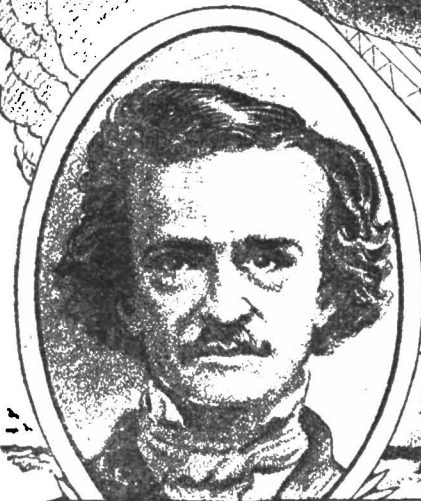
Front cover painting by Robert Fuqua depicting a scene from *The Little People*
Back cover painting by Frank R. Paul

Illustrations by Robert Fuqua, H.R. Hammond, Julian S. Krupa, Leo Morey, Jay Jackson, Joe Sewell.

Pantastic



ON APRIL 6, 1844, A PARTY OF "SIX GENTLEMEN AND TWO SAILORS" TOOK OFF FROM ENGLAND, WITH THE INTENTION OF CROSSING THE CHANNEL. HOWEVER, THEY TOOK VISAS WITH THEM FOR ALL COUNTRIES WHERE THEY MIGHT CONCEIVABLY LAND. CAUGHT BY A HIGH WIND, THEY CROSSED THE ATLANTIC TO SULLIVAN'S ISLAND IN THREE DAYS. THIS WAS THE STORY PUBLISHED BY THE NEW YORK SUN ON APRIL 13, 1844.



EDGAR ALLEN POE

AUTHOR OF THE STORY REGARDING THE FLIGHT ACROSS THE ATLANTIC,

AN ALARMING ACCIDENT THAT ALMOST ENDED IN DISASTER, HAPPENED JUST BEFORE DAYBREAK ON THE SECOND DAY OF THE CROSSING. NOISES OF CONCUSSIONS IN THE BALLOON AND A RAPID SUBSIDENCE OF THE WHOLE MACHINE CAUSED GREAT ALARM. HOWEVER, THIS CAUSED MERELY BY ICE FORMATIONS . . .



GREAT EXCITEMENT PREVAILED IN NEW YORK WHEN THE EXTRA APPEARED ON THE STREET COPIES WERE SOLD OUT IMMEDIATELY.



SIR EVERARD BRINGHURST, ONE OF THE EIGHT PERSONS TO CROSS THE ATLANTIC.

MR. MONCK MASON, SUPPOSED INVENTOR OF THE GIANT BALLOON



THE BALLOON HOAX

By WILLY LEY

THE readers of the *New York Sun* on April 13th, 1844 who were looking for European news in their paper were somewhat disappointed to find that the vessels bound for New York had not yet arrived. But then they saw an item that seemed much more important than all the missing news. It read:

"ASTONISHING INTELLIGENCE BY PRIVATE EXPRESS FROM CHARLESTON VIA NORFOLK—THE ATLANTIC OCEAN CROSSED IN THREE DAYS!!!

Arrival At Sullivan's Island Of A Steering Balloon Invented By Mr. Monck Mason.

We stop the press at a late hour to announce that by a private express from Charleston, South Carolina, we are just put in possession of full details of the most extraordinary adventure ever accomplished by man. *The Atlantic has actually been traversed by a balloon, and in the incredibly brief period of three days!* Eight persons have crossed in the machine, among others, Sir Everard Bringhurst and Mr. Monck Mason. We have barely time to announce this most novel and unexpected intelligence, but we hope by ten this morning to have ready an extra with a detailed account of the voyage."

Naturally every reader of this item was waiting eagerly for the announced extra that appeared in time just as predicted. It bore the title "*The Extra Sun*" and was a single sheet, 24 by 19 inches, printed on one side only.

The people who almost fought battles among themselves for the privilege of buying the *Sun*, found on that sheet a very vivid account of the history of the invention of the dirigible (then called a "steering balloon"), the journal of the flight and even a woodcut representing not the airship itself but the model of it that had been built and tested before the inventor had started construction of his actual airship.

While New Yorkers were reading the *Extra Sun* until only tatters were left—this has to be taken almost literally, there exists now only one known copy of the extra and even that is not in the files of the newspaper office or in the files of one of the large libraries—the other newspapers did not lose time in going after the news themselves. They soon discovered that it did not exist. Strangely enough they did not even pay much attention to the deception. Only the *New York Herald*, the paper that really printed the European news three hours ahead of the others on April 15th, 1844 made an editorial remark about the *Sun's* balloon story. They wrote that their news were of practical value to business men, not a hoax—a humbug that would make an old horse laugh and say "I'm satisfied, come, take my bridle and skin off, not forgetting the old iron shoes, I'm ready to die! Farewell, oats!" So far they were right, but the final remark did not hit the mark. They said that the *Sun*, if it delighted to publish such stuff, should continue to do so, but that they should engage a better writer for it.

That was a mistake, the author of the balloon story was: *Edgar Allan Poe*. Of course, it was not known then that the already famous E. A. Poe had written the story, because anonymity was kept until Lowell wrote on Poe's request an article about him and about the balloon hoax in the February Issue, 1845, of *Graham's Magazine*.

The reason why Poe wrote the article is easy to explain: he needed money, having just arrived in New York with his wife, Virginia, and possessing exactly \$4.50. I do not know whether Poe wrote the piece in question as a fiction story first and changed the names of the persons into those of actually living aeronauts (who

were known to the public) later. At any event the story was printed with these names and was therefore credited as being true by the reading public until the real truth became known.

After an introduction saying that "the air as well as the earth and the ocean has now been subdued by science and will become a common and convenient highway for mankind" Poe proceeded to describe preliminary experiments with a large model first. He told that Mr. Monck Mason—who, together with Mr. Robert Holland, who was also among the alleged passengers of the balloon, had actually made a remarkable balloon flight from England to Germany eight years earlier—had built an ellipsoid balloon, 13 feet 6 inches long, 6 feet 8 inches high and holding 320 cubic feet of hydrogen gas. The balloon model was equipped—said Poe—with a fan-shaped rudder that could also be turned flat (to work as an elevator fin) and a propeller of two feet diameter. A clockwork-like spring device in the gondola turned the propeller and imparted to the model a speed of more than five miles per hour! After the encouraging tests of the model Mr. Monck Mason then proceeded to have a large balloon of very similar appearance built. It was, following Poe's narrative: "composed of silk, varnished with the liquid gum caoutchouc. It is of vast dimensions, containing more than 40,000 cubic feet of gas; but, as coal gas was employed in place of the more expensive and inconvenient hydrogen, the supporting power of the machine, when fully inflated, and immediately after inflation, is not more than around 2,500 pounds. . . . The supporting power being estimated at 2,500 lbs. and the united weights of the party amounting to only 1,200, there was left a surplus of 1,300, of which again 1,200 was exhausted by ballast cordage . . . (follows a list of provisions, instruments, etc.) and various other indispensable articles including a coffee warmer contrived for warming coffee by means of slack lime. . . . All these articles with the exception of the ballast, were suspended from the hoop over head."

There were, however, Poe was careful to point out, a few differences between the model pictured in the Extra and the actual ship. The gondola of the actual balloon *Victoria* "is much smaller and lighter, in proportion, than the one appended to the model. The rudder is very much larger, in proportion, than that of the model and the screw is considerably smaller."

The party of "six gentlemen and two sailors" took off into the air in England on Saturday, 6th of April, 1844. The plan was to cross the English Channel and to reach France where the balloon was to land as near to Paris as possible. As a precaution the aeronauts had procured passports for themselves with visas from all the countries where the balloon might conceivably land.

At first everything worked beautifully.

But then a high wind came up and, quoting from the "journal" of the voyage, "the steel rod connecting the spring with the propeller was suddenly jerked out of place and in an instant hung dangling out of reach." When the machinery, which did not avail very much against the high wind, was finally repaired the *Victoria* was already over Atlantic waters. Then one of the travellers made the suggestion to take advantage of the strong and apparently steady wind blowing westward and to try an Atlantic crossing. Everybody agreed, with the exception of the two sailors who were, of course, overruled. And the *Victoria* set out on its voyage with a speed of more than 60 miles per hour.

The trip itself was described as being fairly uneventful. The next day, Sunday, the 7th of April, the gale had slowed down to about 30 miles per hour and had veered more northwards. But the spring-operated propeller enabled the rudder to keep course due West. The balloon finally landed at Sullivan's Island after being in the air for 75 hours, which is curiously enough the average time needed for a transatlantic crossing by the ill-fated *Hindenburg*.