

THE MAGAZINE OF

Fantasy and Science Fiction

VOLUME 3, No. 1

FEBRUARY, 1952

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The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction, Volume 3, No. 1, February, 1952. Published bimonthly by Fantasy House, Inc., at 35¢ a copy. Annual subscription, \$2.00 in U. S. and possessions; \$2.50 in all other countries. Publication office, Concord, N. H. General offices, 570 Lexington Avenue, New York 22, N. Y. Editorial office, 2643 Dana St., Berkeley 4, Calif. Entered as second class matter at the Post Office at Concord, N. H. under Act of March 3, 1879. Printed in U. S. A. Copyright, 1951, by Fantasy House, Inc. All rights, including translation into other languages, reserved. Submissions must be accompanied by stamped, self-addressed envelopes: the Publisher assumes no responsibility for return of unsolicited manuscripts.

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Under any of his numerous names, John Wyndham is a writer as versatile as he is attractive. THE DAY OF THE TRIFFIDS, easily one of the best products of the current boom in hard-cover science fiction, is a logical and terrifying study in future history. Bargain from Brunswick (F&SF, June, 1951) is a tender and touching modern fairy tale. And Jizzle is purely unclassifiable. It belongs in the great tradition of off-beat, ironic English short stories, the tradition of "Saki" and John Collier. It's a delight to bring you this bright treatment of a new concept, which appeared in an abbreviated version in "Collier's" for January 8, 1949, as by John Beynon.

Jizzle

by JOHN WYNDHAM

THE FIRST THING that Ted Torby saw, when his reluctant eyelids had gathered enough strength to raise themselves, seemed to be a monkey, perched on the top of the cupboard, watching him. He sat bolt upright with a jerk that joggled Rosie awake and shook the whole trailer.

"Oh, God!" he said. It was a tone which held more of depressed realization than surprise.

He closed his eyes, and then looked again, hard. The monkey was still there, staring from round, dark eyes.

"What's the matter?" Rosie asked sleepily. Then she saw the direction of his gaze. "Oh, that! Serves you right."

"It's real?" said Ted.

"Of course it's real. And lie down. You've pulled all the bedclothes off me."

Ted leant back, keeping his eyes fixed warily on the monkey. Slowly, and hindered by a painful throbbing in his head, memories of the evening began to reassemble.

"I'd forgotten," he said.

"I don't wonder — seeing the way you came home," said Rosie, dispassionately. "I expect you've got a lovely head," she added, with a slightly sadistic shading.

Ted did not answer. He was remembering about the monkey.

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"How much did you give for that?" asked Rosie, nodding at it.

"Couple o' quid," said Ted.

"Two good pounds for *that*," she said with disgust. "And you call your customers mugs!"

Ted made no response. In point of fact, it had been ten pounds, but he did not feel equal to meeting the storm that the admission would arouse. And he'd beaten the man down from fifteen, so it was a bargain. A big Negro he was, speaking a nautical form of English heavily adulterated with some kind of French. He had made his brief entry into Ted's life while the latter was in *The Gate & Goat* soothing his hard-worked throat after the evening's work. Ted had not been greatly interested. He had, in his time, refused to buy all manner of things in bars from bootlaces to ferrets. But the Negro had been quietly persistent. Somehow he had got himself into the position of standing Ted a drink, and after that he had the advantage. Ted's protests that he had nothing to do with the circus proper, and that he was utterly indifferent to its fauna, save for such rats as occasionally ventured into the trailer, made no impression at all. The man's conviction that every person connected with the showground must have an encyclopedic knowledge of the whole brute creation was unshakable: all protestation was merely a form of sales resistance. He had then proceeded to talk with such animation across several relays of drinks of the attainments and charming qualities of something he referred to as *ma petite Giselle* that Ted had found it necessary to remind himself from time to time that the subject had not shifted beneath their tongues, and it was still a monkey that was under discussion.

In a way, it was hard luck on the Negro that he should have chosen Ted for his approach, since Ted himself had been spending the earlier part of the evening in persuading the reluctant to part with half-crowns of known qualities in exchange for bottles of merely hypothetical virtue. But Ted was not mean-minded. He followed the technique with the attention of a connoisseur, and was prepared to concede that the Negro wasn't doing too badly, for an amateur. Nevertheless, it was scarcely to be expected that even the utmost perfervour and intensity could win more than his detached, and unprofitable, professional approval. Rosie's crack about mugs had more spite than substance. The matter should have ended there, with the Negro butting at the immovable. Indeed, there it would have ended had not the Negro added a new accomplishment to the list of his Giselle's remarkable qualities.

Ted had smiled. Sooner or later, the amateur always over-reaches himself. It was safe enough to say that the creature was clean, attractive, intelligent, for these qualities are conveniently relative. It was not dangerous even to

say that it was "educated" — there being no public examination to set a standard of simian learning. But in making a definite claim which could be put to the test, the Negro's inexperience was laying him wide open to trouble. At that point Ted had agreed to go to see the prodigy. The concession was almost altruistic; he did not believe a word of it, but neither did he mean trouble. He was the man of experience showing the promising beginner the kind of trouble he *might* have landed himself in by a simple divergence from the debatable to the disprovable.

It had been quite a shock, therefore, to find that the monkey was fully up to specification.

Ted had watched it, first patronisingly, then incredulously, and finally with an excitement which it required all his skill in deadpanning to disguise. Casually he offered five pounds. The Negro asked the ludicrous sum of fifteen. Ted would willingly have given fifty had it been necessary. In the end they compromised on ten and a bottle of whisky that Ted had intended to take home. There had been one or two drinks from the bottle to clinch the deal. After that, nothing was very clear, but evidently he had got back somehow — and with the monkey.

"It's got fleas," said Rosie, wrinkling her nose.

"It's a female," said Ted. "And monkeys don't have fleas. They just do that."

"Well, if it isn't looking for fleas, what is it doing?"

"I read somewhere that it's something to do with perspiration — anyway, they all do it."

"I can't see that that's much better," said Rosie.

The monkey broke away from its interests for a moment, and looked seriously at both of them. Then it gave a kind of snickering noise.

"What's it do that for?" Rosie asked.

"How would I know? — They just do."

Ted lay and contemplated the monkey for a while. It was predominantly light brown, shot with occasional silver. Its limbs and tail seemed curiously long for its body. From a black wrinkled face in a round, low-browed head two large eyes, looking like black glass marbles with sorrowful depths, scrutinized first one and then the other with such directness that one almost expected it to produce some sign of opinion. However, it merely returned to its own interests with an indifference which was in itself vaguely offensive.

Rosie continued to regard it without favour.

"Where are you going to keep it? I'm not going to have it in here."

"Why not?" asked Ted. "She's quite clean."

"How do you know? You were tight when you bought it."

"I got tight *after* I'd bought her. And don't keep on calling her *it*. She's a

her. You get annoyed with me when I call a baby *it*, and it's probably a lot more important to monkeys than it is to babies. And her name's Jizzle."

"Jizzle?" repeated Rosie.

"A French name," Ted explained.

Rosie remained unimpressed. "All the same, I don't hold with keeping her here. It's not decent."

Jizzle was at the moment in a complicated and unornamental attitude. She had disposed her right foot round her neck, and was absorbed in an intense study of the back of her right knee.

"She's no ordinary monkey — she's educated," said Ted.

"Educated she may be, but she's not refined. Look at her now."

"What —? Oh, well, monkeys, you know —" Ted said vaguely. "But I'll show you how educated she is. Worth a fortune. You watch."

There could be no doubt whatever: one demonstration was enough to convince the most prejudiced that Jizzle was a gold mine.

"I wonder why he sold it — her?" said Rosie. "He could have made a fortune."

"I guess he just wasn't a showman — or a businessman," Ted added.

After breakfast he went out of the trailer and looked at his stand. It had an inscription across the front: —

DR. STEVEN'S
PSYCHOLOGICAL STIMULATOR

About the rostrum boldly lettered posters asked: —

IS HESITATION HINDERING YOUR CAREER?
IS YOUR MIND A FLIP-FLAP?

or stated: —

A STEADY MIND IS A READY MIND
PLANNED THINKING PAYS
SNAP BEATS FLAP

and advised: —

DIRECT YOUR OWN DESTINY
MOBILIZE MENTALLY AND MAKE MONEY
PLAN YOUR PROSPERITY

For the first time the array failed to please him. Also for the first time he was astonished to think of the number of half-crowns it had helped to draw

in exchange for the omnipotent Famous World-Unique Mental Tonic.

"May as well ditch this lot," he said. "We'll need a tent with benches and a stage."

Then he went back to the trailer, and turned Rosie out.

"I got to think," he explained. "I got to work out the patter and the publicity, and we'll get you a new dress for the act."

The tryout took place a couple of days later before a critical audience drawn from the profession. It included Joe Dindell, more widely known as El Magnifico of Magnifico and His Twenty Man-Eating Lions, Dolly Brag or Gipsy Clara, George Haythorpe from the Rifle-Range, Pearl Verity (nee Jedd), the Only Authentic Three-Legged Woman in the World, and a sprinkling of others from both the main and side shows.

The tent was not as large as Ted would have liked, and incapable of seating more than sixty persons, but better things would come. Meanwhile, he made his appearance before the curtain and delivered the build-up as though he addressed the rising tiers in a super-cinema. It was in the approved style of superlative, and when it ended with the phrase: "— and now, Ladies and Gentlemen, I present to you the greatest — the unbelievable — the supreme wonder of the animal world — JIZZLE!" the applause had a quality of discriminating appreciation.

As Ted concluded he had moved to the left. Now, as the curtains drew away, he turned, left hand extended towards the centre of the stage. Rosie, having hurriedly fixed the curtain, tripped a few steps on from the other side, stopped with her knees bent in a species of curtsy, projected charm at the audience, and extended her right hand to the centre of the stage. Between them stood an easel bearing a large pad of white paper and beside it, on a square table with a red fringed top, sat Jizzle. She was clad in a bright yellow dress, and a pill-box hat with a curled red feather: for the moment she had pulled the dress aside, and was searching beneath it with great application.

Both Ted's smile and Rosie's were property affairs which could have deceived no one. A few minutes earlier she had flatly and finally declined to wear the new dress he had designed for her.

"I don't care," she said. "I've told you I won't, and I won't. You can dress your beastly monkey how you like, but you won't make me dress like it. I'm surprised at you asking it. Whoever heard of a man dressing his wife like a monkey?"

It was in vain that Ted protested she had it the wrong way round. Rosie's mind was made up. She would appear in the costume in which she was accustomed to hand out bottles of the Psychological Stimulator, or not at all.

To Ted's mind it pettily ruined his whole carefully planned effect. It was unfortunate that her brown hair was of much the same shade as the dominant colour of Jizzle's fur, but merely a coincidence.

Ted, after a few more high commendations of his protégée, moved over to the easel and stood beside it, facing the house. Rosie advanced, shifted the table with Jizzle upon it in front of the easel, and handed something to the monkey. Almost before she was able to bob and beam and resume her place, Jizzle was on her feet with her left hand holding on to the side of the pad, her right hand drawing swiftly. An astonished muttering broke out among the spectators. Her technique would not have met with approval in art-schools, and it gave a certain simian flavour, hitherto unnoticed in her subject by others, but the final likeness to Ted was indisputable. Sheer amazement made the applause a trifle slow in starting, but when it came it was wholehearted.

Ted tore off the sheet and moved away, graciously waving Rosie into his place. She took it with a smile that was resolutely fixed. Ted pinned his picture to the back of the stage while Jizzle drew again. Once more the likeness was remarkable, though perhaps the simian quality was a shade more to the fore. Ted felt that from the domestic angle it was possibly just as well after all that Rosie had not worn the dress. Even so, the audience's laugh put Rosie's professional expression to a test which it only just survived.

"Now, if any lady or gentleman in the audience —?" suggested Ted.

Joe Dindell was the first to oblige. Powerful and massive, he stalked onto the stage to take up one of his best *El Magnifico* poses beside the easel.

Ted continued to try out his patter while Jizzle drew. She needed no persuasion. The moment one sheet was torn off she started on the next as if the plain paper were an irresistible invitation to doodle between clients. Once or twice Ted let her finish, making it clear that she was able to repeat from memory as well as draw from direct observation. By the end of the show the stage was decorated with portraits of the whole of the small audience who were clustered round, wringing Ted's hand, predicting overwhelming success, and inspecting Jizzle as if they were even yet not quite convinced of what they had seen. The only person who held a little aloof in the celebration which followed was Rosie. She sat sipping her drink and speaking little. From time to time she turned a gloomy, speculative look on the self-occupied Jizzle.

Rosie found it difficult to be clear in her own mind whether she disliked Jizzle because she was unnatural, or because she was too natural. Both were, in her view, sound bases for distaste. Jizzle was abnormal, a freak, and it was natural to feel that way about a freak — except, of course, those like Pearl

whom one knew well. On the other hand, certain franknesses which would have been unperturbing in a dog, became embarrassing when displayed by a creature, and particularly a female creature, which providence had privileged to be at least a kind of burlesque of the form divine. There was also Jizzle's attitude. It was true that monkeys often snickered: it was true that by the law of averages some of these snickers must be ill-timed — but still . . .

All the same, Jizzle became the third occupant of the trailer.

"She's going to be worth thousands of pounds to us — and that means she's worth thousands to others, too," Ted pointed out. "We can't risk having her pinched. And we can't risk her getting ill, either. Monkeys need warm places to live in." Which was all quite true; and so Jizzle stayed.

From the first performance of the act, there was not an instant's doubt of its success. Ted raised the admission from one shilling to one-and-six, and then to two shillings, and the price of a Jizzle "original" from half-a-crown to five shillings without any loss of patronage. He opened negotiations for a larger tent.

Rosie tolerated her position as handmaiden for just one week, and then struck. The audience laughed at each of Jizzle's drawings, but Rosie's sensitive ear detected a different note when they saw the portrait of her. It rankled.

"It — she makes me look more monkey-like every time. I believe she does it on purpose," she said. "I won't stand there and be made a fool of by a monkey."

"Darling, that's sheer imagination. All her drawing is a bit monkeyish — after all, it's only natural," Ted remonstrated.

"It's more so when it's me."

"Now, do be reasonable, darling. What would it matter anyway, even if it were so?"

"So you don't mind your wife being jeered at by a monkey?"

"But that's ridiculous, Rosie. You'll get used to her. She's a nice friendly little thing, really."

"She isn't, not to me. She keeps on watching and spying on me all the time."

"Come now, darling, hang it all —"

"I don't care what you say, she does. She just sits there watching and snickering. I suppose she's got to live in the trailer; I'll have to put up with that, but I've had enough of her in the act. You can do it without me. If you must have someone, get Ireen from the Hoop-La. *She* won't mind."

Ted was genuinely distressed, and more at the troubled state of the larger partnership than the breaking up of the act. It was indisputable that some-

thing had happened and kept on happening to it since Jizzle's arrival. It took the guilt off a lot of things. He and Rosie had always got along so well together. He had wanted her to have more pleasures and comforts than the returns from Dr. Steven's Stimulator could provide; and now that the big chance had come, discord had arrived with it. No one acquiring such a valuable property as Jizzle could afford not to exploit her properly. Rosie was perfectly well aware of that — but, well, women got such queer fixed ideas . . . Upon that, he had an idea himself. He made a discreet search to discover if Rosie had been sewing any small garments in secret — apparently she had not.

Business thrived. Ted's show was promoted to mention on the advance bills. Jizzle also thrived, and settled in. She took to Ted's left shoulder as her favourite perch, which was somehow slightly flattering, and also had publicity value, but domestically things went the other way. Little was to be seen of Rosie during the day. She seemed always to be helping or drinking cups of tea in some other caravan. If Ted had to go out on business he had to shut Jizzle up in the trailer alone when he felt that both her safety and well-being demanded someone to look after her. But his single suggestion that Rosie might act as guardian had met with so quiet yet determined a rebuff that he did not like to repeat it. At night Rosie did her best to ignore Jizzle altogether; the monkey responded with sulky moods which broke on occasion into snickers. At such times Rosie would relinquish indifference, and glare at her angrily. She gave it as her opinion that even the lions were more companionable creatures. But Rosie herself was far less companionable than before. Ted was aware of an uninterest and grudgingness in her that had never been there before, and he was puzzled: the money that now rolled in was by no means everything . . .

Had he not been a reasonable, clear-thinking man, he might have begun to feel some resentment against Jizzle, himself. . . .

The puzzle was to a great extent resolved on a night when Jizzle had already been an established success for six weeks. Ted came back to the trailer later than usual. He had had several drinks, but he was not drunk. He walked into the trailer with a sheet of paper rolled in his hand, and stood looking down at Rosie, who was already in bed.

"You —!" he said. He leaned over and smacked her face hard.

Rosie, startled out of a half-sleep, was as much bewildered as hurt. Ted glared down at her.

"Now I understand quite a lot. Spying on you, you said. God, what a mug I've been! No wonder you didn't want her around."

"What are you talking about?" Rosie demanded, tears in her eyes.

"You know. I expect everyone knows but me."

"But, Ted —"

"You can save your breath. Look at this!"

He unrolled the sheet of paper before her. Rosie stared at it. It was surprising how much obscene suggestion could reside in a few simple lines.

"While I was doing the patter," Ted said. "All sniggering their bloody heads off before I saw what was happening. Damn funny, isn't it?" He looked down at the drawing. There could not be a moment's doubt for any who knew them that the woman and man involved were Rosie and El Magnifico. . . .

Rosie flushed to her hair. She jumped from the bed and made a vicious grab at the top of the cupboard. Jizzle evaded her skilfully.

Ted caught her arm and jerked her back.

"It's too late for that now," he said.

The flush had gone, leaving her face white.

"Ted," she said. "You don't believe . . . ?"

"Spying on you!" he repeated.

"But, Ted, I didn't mean . . ."

He slapped her again across the face.

Rosie caught her breath; her eyes narrowed.

"Damn you! *Damn you!*" she said, and went for him like a fury.

Ted reached one hand behind him and unlatched the door. He turned round with her, and thrust her outside. She stumbled down the three steps, tripped on the hem of her nightdress, and fell to the ground.

He slammed the door shut, and snapped the bolt.

Up on the cupboard Jizzle snickered. Ted threw a saucepan at her. She dodged it, and snickered again.

The next morning an air of concern spread outwards from the office where the manager and the ringmaster were considering the problem of finding at short notice a man of presence and intrepid appearance to take charge of the lion act. Quite half the day passed before anyone but Ted knew that Rosie also was missing.

Ted went through the next few days with remorse putting increasing pressure on righteous anger. He had not realized what Rosie's absence would mean. He had done, as he saw it, the only thing a man could do in the circumstances — but very bitterly was he aware of the craven wish that he had never learnt the circumstances.

Jizzle's confident predilection for his shoulder as a perch became a source of irritation. He took to pushing her off impatiently. But for the damned monkey he never need have known about Rosie . . . He began to hate the sight of Jizzle. . . .

For a week he continued to give the show, mechanically, but with increasing distaste; then he approached George Haythorpe of the Rifle Range. George reckoned it could be done. Muriel, his wife, could easily manage the Range with a girl to help her; he himself was willing to take over Jizzle and run the act with Ted retaining a 20% interest in the gross.

"That is," George added, "if the monkey'll stand for it. She seems mighty attached to you."

For a day or two that appeared to be the most doubtful aspect of the arrangement. Jizzle continued to attach herself to Ted, and to watch him rather than George for instructions. But gradually, by patient and repeated removal, the change in mastery was made plain to her, whereupon she sulked for two days before deciding to accept it.

It was a relief to be free of Jizzle — but it did not bring back Rosie. The trailer seemed emptier than ever . . . After a few days of morbid inactivity Ted took himself in hand. He pulled out his old stock, unrolled some of the old bills for the Psychological Stimulator and lettered some new ones: —

MODERNIZE YOUR MENTALITY

CONFIDENCE CREATES CASH

A KEEN MIND IS A KEY MIND

In a short while he was back at the old stand and the mugs were putting up their half-crowns with a will — but it wasn't quite the same without Rosie handing out the bottles. . . .

Jizzle had now settled in well with George. The act was on its feet again and playing to capacity, but Ted felt no tinge of jealousy or regret as he watched the crowds going in. Even his share of the takings brought him little pleasure; they still linked him with Jizzle. He would have given them all up on the spot just to have Rosie beside him again as he shouted the merits of his elixir. He began to try to trace her, but without success. . . .

A month passed before a night on which Ted was awakened by a knock on the trailer door. His heart thumped. Even at that moment he had been dreaming of Rosie. He jumped out of bed to open the door.

But it was not Rosie. It was George, with Jizzle on his shoulder and one of the Range rifles in his hand.

"What —?" began Ted dazedly. He had been so sure it was Rosie.

"I'll show you what, you bastard," said George. "Just look at that!"

He brought forward his other hand with a sheet of paper in it.

Ted looked. Compromising would have been the severest understatement for the attitude in which George's wife, Muriel, was displayed with Ted.

He raised his horrified eyes. . . .

George was lifting the rifle. On his shoulder Jizzle snickered.