

Fantastic

ADVENTURES

**VOLUME I
NUMBER I**

**MAY
1939**

C O N T E N T S

S T O R I E S

- REVOLT OF THE ROBOTS** by Arthur R. Tofte 6
Jol Herrick thought he had created only a superwoman, but Tarra had deeper plans.
- THE INVISIBLE ROBINHOOD** by Eando Binder 16
Criminals and warlords feared him, good people loved him—but his own love he denied.
- THE EMPRESS OF MARS** by Ross Rocklyne 26
Into Mars' most dangerous city went Darak, searching for a life-giving bracelet.
- THE SLEEPING GODDESS** by Maurice Duclos 44
Sealed from the world, the valley evolved its peoples, guarded by a lovely sleeper.
- ADVENTURE IN LEMURIA** by Frederic Arnold Kummer, Jr. 60
Khor the Wanderer finds the land of Mu a place of weird science and lusty adventure.
- THE MUMMY OF RET-SEH** by A. Hyatt Verrill 70
What strange secret of the ancient priests could cause hallucinations after centuries?
- THE DEVIL FLOWER** by Harl Vincent 80
Death's whisper haunted Gregory Pines, and the devilish flowers were somehow responsible.

F E A T U R E S

- | | |
|--|---|
| The Editor's Notebook 4 | Quiz Page 87 |
| Fantastic Inventions 25 | Ray Holmes, Scientific Detective .. 88 |
| Fantastic Hoaxes 58 | Readers' Page 96 |
| Introducing the Author 84 | The Man From Mars 97 |

Front cover by Robert Fuqua, depicting a scene in Revolt of the Robots

Back Cover by Frank R. Paul

Illustrations by Julian S. Krupa

Copyright, 1939, ZIFF-DAVIS PUBLISHING COMPANY
608 South Dearborn St., Chicago, Ill.

William B. Ziff, Publisher, B. G. Davis, Editor, Raymond A. Palmer, Managing Editor, Herman R. Bollin, Art Director

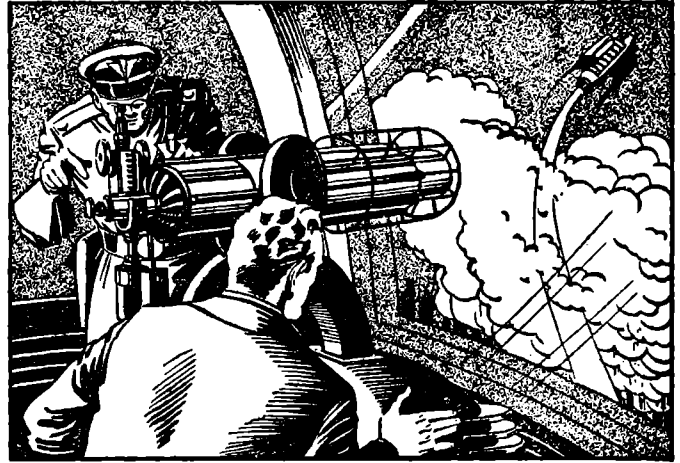
Contributors are advised to retain a copy of their manuscripts and illustrations. Unavailable manuscripts will be destroyed, unless accompanied by return postage. Contributions will be handled with reasonable care, but this magazine assumes no responsibility for their safety. Any copy accepted is subject to revision or changes to meet the requirements of this publication. 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 which is the same as that of any living person is accidental.

RAY HOLMES



1 "Major Ackley," said Ray Holmes, "I called you to my laboratory to demonstrate why silencers aren't needed on Venus. Sound waves are killed in carbon dioxide. Notice this gun cannot be heard in this carbon dioxide filled case."



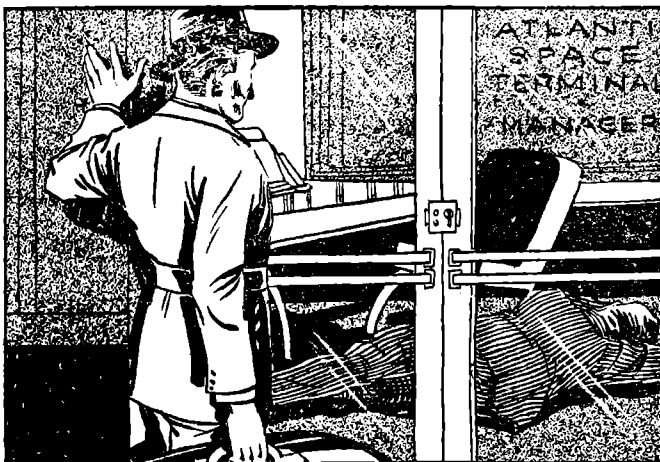
2 "Observe that Venus has a high carbon dioxide content in its atmosphere. This spectrograph reveals the characteristic lines. Venus is evening star, so you'll have to look quickly . . . bother that Express! It's ruined visibility!"



3 "One moment, a telecall for me. Major! That man is dying! And he's screaming something—what's wrong with this receiver? He isn't coming through. Observe, Major! We'll need to remember every detail of this."



4 "Behind that door—a man! Get that legend. *Manager* . . . *Atlantic Space Terminus*. The Express just took off from there! Why doesn't he enter? The door must be locked. Remember him, he'll be a very important witness!"



5 "What's that peculiar smudge on his cheek—looks like soot. He has a traveling bag. The man on the floor is nearly done for. Something virulent there! If that room is full of gas it's dangerous to enter."



6 "We've been cut off! How could that be? No one in the room to turn off the television. This *is* odd! Someone infinitely clever behind all this. Come on, Ackley, we've got work to do. That looks like brutal murder to me!"

SCIENTIFIC DETECTIVE



7 "Heart failure, Dr. Jensen? But it *might* be possible that a gas could cause death, and look like heart failure. I know there was no trace of gas when we entered, and the door was locked. But I saw him die, and he choked!"



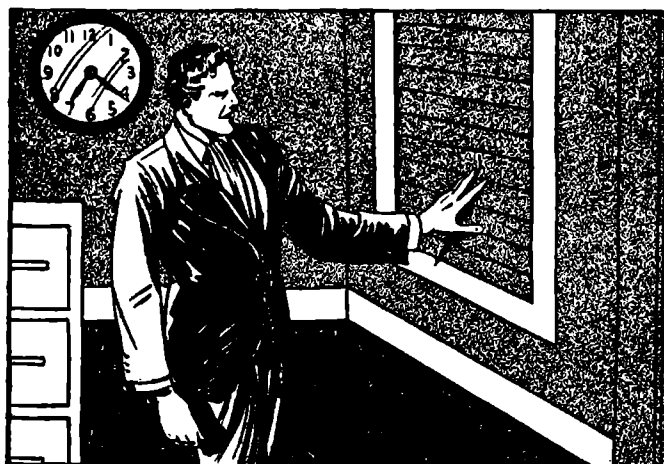
8 "This key I found on the floor. Identical with the key on the dead man. Both unlock the door. Both *inside* the room. The door has a night latch. Clue here somewhere. Ackley, bring your prisoner. I'll question him."



9 "You're Milton Berge? You came in last night on a freighter to ask Hammond, the dead man, for a job—oh, a *former partner*! Went to the Lunar penal colony for five years for theft! Came to beg for reinstatement!"



10 "Sounds logical. And you *were* locked out. But that television—somehow it went dead. It works perfectly now. Both sound and vision. But when Hammond died, he was screaming a message, and no sound came through."



11 "This ventilator. Closed tight. Supposed to remove carbon dioxide fumes from the take-off pit below. Should be open at all times! So that's where the gas came from! The Express took off at 5:30! Could a dead man close it?"



12 "Milton Berge, I arrest you for the murder of John Hammond! Even though Hammond failed in his attempt to accuse you, you have trapped yourself!" (If you haven't already solved this crime, see page 90 for solution.)

THE SCIENTIFIC DETECTIVE

(Solution)

MILTON BERGE, coming in last night on the freighter, must have remained in the building all night, because he still had his traveling bag, and his professed errand was not intended travel, but to plead for his old job. Thus, he lied. The smudge of dirt on his face also indicates he had not faced a mirror all day. Certainly a man seeking a job would be presentable. So, during the night, having concealed himself in the building, he had altered dampers in the ventilation pipes, so that fumes from the take-off of the Venus Express could ascend to the office of John Hammond. Since the odor of carbon dioxide is not noticeable, Hammond would be unaware that death was pouring into his room until it was too late.

When Hammond realized what was happening, he found himself locked in, with Berge staring vengefully in at him. Realizing he was doomed, he attempted to get revenge by turning on the television set and shouting an accusation of the murderer before he died. But since sound does not carry in an atmosphere of carbon dioxide, his voice did not register, and he died, his purpose unaccomplished.

Berge, knowing television demands bright lighting, knew all he had to do was to snap off the lights, from the switch outside the door, to conceal his movement into the room to shut off the deadly vent and the television set while holding his breath. Then, retreating, he could allow the room to clear by leaving the door open a moment. This would be rapid, due to the efficiency of the ventilation of the corridor. Then, closing the door, having set the lock and thrown his own key on the floor inside, he could remain, an apparently innocent spectator.

Only a man thoroughly familiar with the building could have planned the murder so efficiently and carried it out.