

SUPER-SCIENCE FICTION

Vol. 3 — No. 6

October, 1959

CONTENTS

NOVELETTES

- THE LOATHSOME BEASTS *by Dan Malcolm* 2
They came from the sea, huge, hideous and hungry
- THE MAN WHO COULD LEVITATE *by Abraham Stern* ... 104
Jan had an extraordinary power. He had to be careful

SHORT STORIES

- THE MONSTERS CAME BY NIGHT *by Charles D. Hammer* 34
They came to torment. They came in revenge!
- ASTEROID OF HORROR *by James Rosenquest* 46
It was the feeding ground of an abominable THING
- FLYING SAUCERS IN THE SEA *by F. X. Fallon* 66
Skin-divers in an amazing underwater adventure
- THE GREAT SECRET *by George H. Smith* 85
What is it that a man doesn't wish to know?
- THE INSIDIOUS INVADERS *by Eric Rodman* 88
Can a more inclusive form of life swallow up man?

FEATURES

- IS RUSSIA AHEAD ON ANTI-GRAVITY? *by Scott Nevets* . 45
- SCIENCE SHORTS *by Edgar P. Straus* 65

COVER by Emsb

ILLUSTRATION by Emsb and Orban

W. W. Scott — Editor

SUPER-SCIENCE FICTION is published bi-monthly by Headline Publications Inc., at 1 Appleton Street, Holyoke, Mass. Editorial office at 32 West 22nd Street, New York 10, N. Y. Second class postage paid at the post office at Holyoke, Mass. Single copy 35c. Subscription rates, \$4.00 for 12 issues. Not responsible for unsolicited manuscripts, and all such materials must be accompanied by self-addressed, stamped envelopes. All stories printed in the magazine are fiction, and any similarity between the characters and actual persons is coincidental. Copyright 1959 by Headline Publications Inc. All rights, including translation, reserved under International Copyright Convention and Pan American Copyright Convention. Printed in the U.S.A.

THE GREAT SECRET

by GEORGE H. SMITH

Maraat had some secret power over people. But what was it? There seemed to be one inescapable fact in the life of every man that couldn't bear the clear light of day

"WE can't seem to put a finger on this guy at all, sir," Detective Lieutenant Bolasky said to the District Attorney. "We know that he's blackmailing these people, but we can't figure how or what about."

District Attorney Waters ran a neatly manicured hand through his silvery hair and frowned at the report on his desk. "These are big people, Bolasky. We can't let this phony crystal gazer get away with this. What can he have on them anyway? What can they possibly have in their pasts that they're willing to pay him to keep quiet about?"

"That's the strangest part of the whole thing, sir. We've checked into the past of every one of the people Maraات has

been working on and so far we haven't been able to find a thing they could be blackmailed for."

"I see. Then why...?"

"We don't know. All we do know is that nearly all of the people he has approached have paid him off."

"Nearly all? You mean some of them haven't?"

"Approximately twenty-five of them have kicked in with very large sums of money. Doctors, lawyers, politicians and prominent business executives. Maraات is so sure of himself that he even takes checks and we can't touch him because no one will make a complaint. They won't tell how he's doing it, in fact, they won't even admit they are being blackmailed.

Whatever it is, they're scared to death of him."

"But what about the ones who don't pay off?"

"There were five of them. They had Maraat kicked out of their offices, but within a week of his visit they all committed suicide."

"I don't get it," the D.A. said angrily. "There must be something you and your men are missing."

"I just wish that were true," Bolasky said sadly. "Well, I guess we'll have to turn him loose."

"If you people can't get any evidence against him, we have no other choice."

"I hate like hell to do it but we can't hold him on suspicion any longer."

"Tell you what," the D.A. said as the other man turned to leave. "Before you do that, bring him up here. I'd like to see him and maybe *I* can get something out of him."

The detective looked worried. "He's awfully funny, Mr. Waters. Are you sure you want to do this? Most of the men at headquarters prefer to stay as far away from him as possible."

"Well, no wonder you've been unable to get anything on him. Bring him up here and I'll question him myself. I guarantee I'll find out how he's blackmailing these people."

A short time later, two police officers escorted a small, dark man into the District Attorney's office. He seemed insignificant enough except for his eyes which glowed and sparkled strangely. These seemingly bottomless pools of mystery made the D.A. uneasy as Maraat took a seat opposite him. To hide his disquiet, Waters spoke loudly and brusquely.

"I'll come straight to the point with you, Maraat. We *know* you've been practicing blackmail, but we don't know how you're doing it. We'll find out sooner or later, of course, and you'll make it easier on yourself if you tell us all about it now."

The man's thin lips curved in a smile. "I'll be glad to tell you all about it, Mr. Waters."

"What? You mean you'll confess?"

"I'll tell *you* about it, Mr. Waters. We won't need your stenographer."

"What is all this? If you're so willing to confess, why didn't you tell them down at headquarters?" Determined not to let the man see how nervous he was becoming, Waters nodded to the stenographer to leave. He wished suddenly that he had never sent for Maraat.

"It would hardly have been worth my while, Mr. District Attorney, to confess to those non-entities. I knew that if I waited long enough you would send for me."

"How could you possibly know that?"

"I knew, Mr. Waters, I knew."

The man must be lying, but his eyes said he wasn't. Those eyes! They were enough to drive a man mad. "Then suppose you tell me what it was you knew about the pasts of those persons who paid you such huge sums of money."

"I know nothing of their pasts, nothing. What I know about them, Edmond Waters, is in the future."

"What?" Waters felt suffocated, as though he were

about to choke. It was those eyes, those unblinking, unwavering, somehow truthful eyes. Could they see into the future? Into his future?

Maraat leaned back in his chair with a smile of satisfaction and dropped his eyes from the D.A.'s face.

"So you see, Mr. Waters, it was really very simple. I just went to these persons and told them that I could see into the future and that I wanted money."

"You mean that they paid you for keeping something secret that they were going to do in the future? For not telling others?"

"No, not secret from others, Mr. Waters. For keeping it a secret from *them*. You see, I know when you are going to die. The year, the day and the hour. But for a rather large sum of money *and* your protection....I won't tell you."

The District Attorney's hand had already reached for his check book. "How much?" he asked.

THE END