

SUPER SCIENCE STORIES

25¢

THE BIG BOOK OF SCIENCE FICTION

VOL. 6

MARCH, 1950

NO. 3

A TRAIL-BREAKING NOVEL

ROGUE SHIP.....*A. E. van Vogt* 10
 What cosmic irony had brought the Hope of Man back to Earth, scant hours before the planet's utter destruction? What forces had twisted its crew into nightmare caricatures of men? For the answers, Hewitt risked not only his life—but the future of the race, millenia distant and beyond the farthest star!

TWO POWERFUL NOVELETTES

A STEP FARTHER OUT.....*Raymond Z. Gallun* 48
 Knowing himself eternally lost, Harvey Vallis set out alone on man's most dangerous journey—not to Venus or Mars, but—a step farther out!

WORLD WITHOUT DARKNESS.....*Nell R. Jones* 100
 The terrible Killings of the twilight world told Professor Jameson, "There is no escape in death—for as long as the stars shall last, your life is ours!"

SHORT STORIES

OUTCAST OF THE STARS.....*Ray Bradbury* 41
 "You can deny a man everything but his heritage—the stars!"

THE ULTIMATE ONE.....*John D. MacDonald* 72
 It was the strangest bedtime story ever told—told when all Earth's children were asleep—in a night that held no dawn!

THE WHEEL OF TIME.....*Robert Arthur* 75
 Master of time, Jeremiah Jupiter found a moment he could live over again—to his timeless regret!

EXILE OF THE EONS.....*Arthur C. Clarke* 86
 Banished to an utterly remote future, Trevindor thought he suffered the ultimate punishment—until he met the second exile—and learned that the Universe holds things more fearful even than loneliness!

DEPARTMENTS AND FEATURES

FANDOM'S CORNER.....*Conducted by James V. Taurasi* 6

A MARTIAN ODDITY.....*E. E. Stuck* 37

THE SCIENCE FICTIONEER.....*Conducted by Frederik Pohl* 97

MISSIVES AND MISSILES.....*The Readers* 119

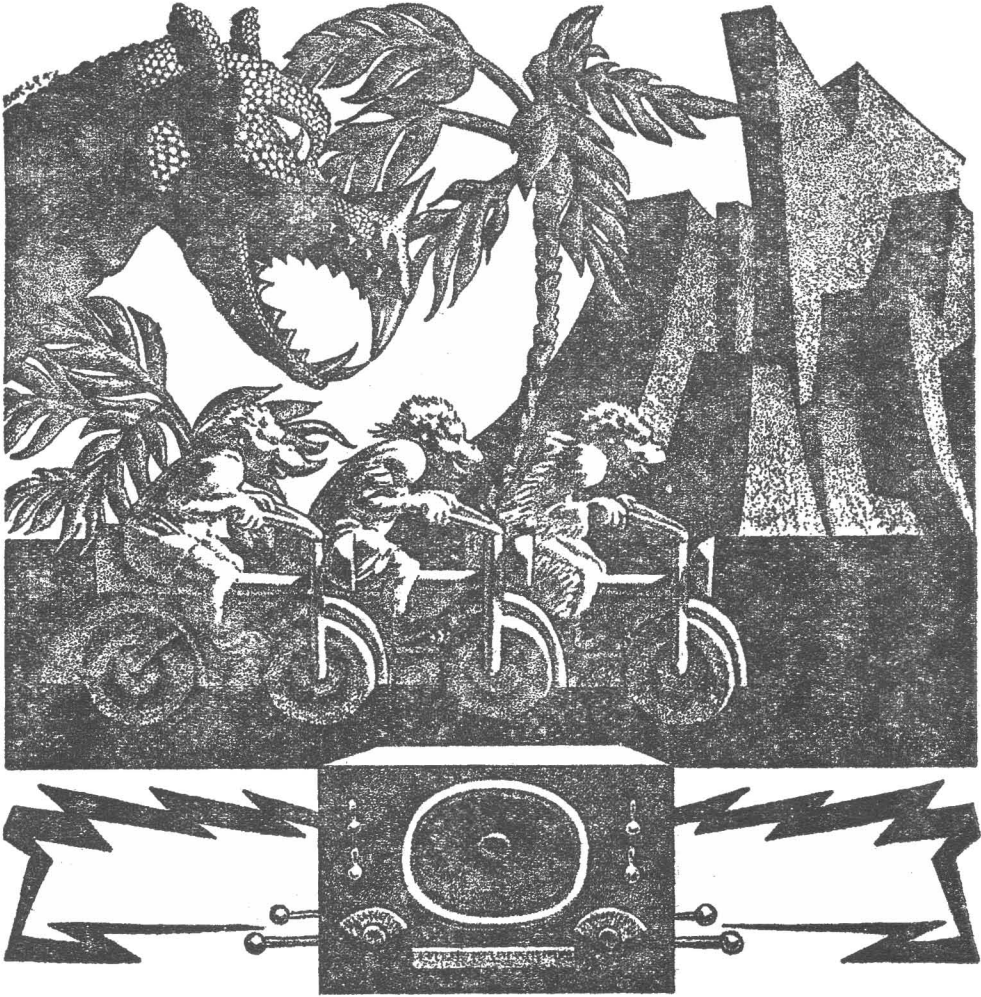
Cover by Saunders

Illustrations by Bok, Collé, Lawrence, Leydenfrost and Van Dongen

Any resemblance between any character appearing in fictional matter, and any person, living or dead, is entirely coincidental and unintentional.

Published 4-monthly by Fictioneers, Inc., a subsidiary of Popular Publications, Inc., at 1145 E. Valle Ave., Kokomo, Indiana, Editorial and Executive Offices, 205 East 42nd Street, New York 17, N. Y. Henry Blosser, President and Secretary, Harold S. Goldsmith, Vice-President and Treasurer. Entered as second-class matter at the Post Office at Kokomo, Indiana, Copyright, 1950, by Fictioneers, Inc. This issue is published simultaneously in the Dominion of Canada. Copyright under International Copyright Convention and Pan-American Copyright Conventions. All rights reserved, including the right of reproduction, in whole or in part, in any form. Single copy, 25c. Annual subscription for U. S. A., its possessions and Canada, \$1.50; other countries, 38c additional. All correspondence relating to this publication should be addressed to 1225 E. Valle Ave., Kokomo, Indiana, or 205 East 42nd Street, New York 17, N. Y. When submitting manuscripts, enclose stamped, self-addressed envelope for their return if found unavailable. The publishers will exercise care in the handling of manuscripts, but assume no responsibility for their return. Printed in U. S. A.

Pausing not, they turned and came right back. . . .



The WHEEL of TIME

By ROBERT ARTHUR

IT WAS a lovely Sunday morning in July when Jeremiah Jupiter called me to suggest a picnic. I must have been feeling slightly suicidal that day, because I accepted.

Jeremiah Jupiter has a mint of money and a yen for scientific experimenting—

on me, if he can. His mind and lightning work the same way—fast, in zig-zag streaks. He's either the greatest scientist who ever lived, or the worst screwball who ever trod this mundane sphere.

But I had an excuse this time for not realizing he was up to something. I

Master of the eons, Jeremiah Jupiter found a moment he could live over again—to his timeless regret!

thought he meant a real picnic—the kind with lots of cold chicken and lobster salad. If there's anything Jupiter loves besides science, it's eating, especially on picnics. The lunch basket his Javanese boy packs up would lure Oscar of the Waldorf away from his skillet.

I stipulated, however, that I absolutely must be back in New York by evening, for I had an important dinner engagement with an out-of-town editor. He was returning to Chicago Monday morning, so at dinner we were going to settle on terms for a serial of mine he wanted to buy, provided he could take it with him and rush it to the press the minute he got back to Chicago. Since I figured on getting at least two thousand for the story, I was anticipating that dinner with considerable interest.

Jupiter promised we would be back in time, said he'd call for me in an hour and rang off. I dressed, in some lightweight flannels, one of the new Pandanus grass hats decorated with a bright-colored band, and an appetite. Promptly in an hour I heard Jupiter's honk, and went out.

When I got outside, though, I stopped in amazement. Jupiter wasn't driving his usual V-16 touring car. Instead, he was at the wheel of a Jeremiah Jupiter lab truck, with an enclosed body. My suspicions were instantly aroused.

"Lucius!" Jupiter caroled. His bright blue eyes in his chubby pink face sparkled behind their powerful horn-rimmed spectacles. "I'm so glad you can make it. What a day for a picnic, eh? We'll have the time of our lives!"

He put a queer emphasis on the word time, and chuckled. I looked at him darkly as I clambered in beside him.

"Jupiter," I demanded, "since when have you been a truck driver?"

"Er—" Jupiter coughed—"I have some guests. I thought it best to bring them in a truck. Avoid the stares of the Sunday crowds."

"Guests?" I whirled around, and peered into the body of the truck through a panel opening. The inside was quite light. I could see perfectly. I realized that after I had rubbed my eyes twice, and what I saw still stayed the same.

And what I saw were three large chimpanzees, wearing clothes and horn-rimmed spectacles, hanging from support rods in the top of the truck while they read volumes of the Encyclopedia Britannica!

"Jupiter!" I said. Jeremiah Jupiter flinched.

"Don't scream, Lucius," he reproved. "If you make a habit of it, you'll get cancer of the vocal cords. Anyway, they aren't really reading the encyclopedia. It's part of the act. There are thin candy wafers between the pages, and they turn the pages looking for them. When they pop the wafers into their mouths, they seem to be licking their thumbs. That gives them the appearance of studying. Really, they never actually read anything but the comic sheets."

"Jupiter!" This time the word came out in a strangled voice, as I kept control of myself by an effort. "I won't ask you why you're bringing three trained chimpanzees along on a picnic. I won't ask you what that very sinister-looking apparatus under the tarpaulin is. I won't ask you what madness your sly, serpentine, Machiavellian mind is bent upon. But one thing I do want to know.

"What are those three motorcycles in the back of the truck for?"

"Lucius," Jeremiah complained, dashing at a space between a bridge abutment and a ten-ton truck that would not have accommodated a stout bicyclist, "you will really get cancer of the vocal cords. I detected a distinct crack in your voice then."

"Hah!" I breathed. "Hah! What a chance for a *mot juste* on my part. But I'll restrain myself—if you'll explain

why we are going on a picnic with three chimpanzees who read the Britannica while hanging by their heels, and three undersized motorcycles, painted vermilion, gold, and silver!"

"They're part of the act, too," Jeremiah chirped, finding the bridge clear and roaring the truck down it at break-neck speed. "The chimpanzees ride the motorcycles around and around while they study the encyclopedia."

"Jupiter—" now I was just whispering—"I do not say that makes sense, but I'll accept it. On looking closer, however, I see that beside the motorcycles are three bass drums. *What the devil are the drums for?*"

"You will have to let me X-ray your throat when we return, Lucius," Jupiter said, with a worried expression. "You sounded so strange then . . . Why, the drums are—"

"Part of the act!"

"Yes, indeed," he agreed brightly. "The drums fasten to the handlebars of the motorcycles. Then the chimps ride the motorcycles around on the stage—I bought them from a vaudeville animal act—beating the drums, reading the encyclopedia, and throwing out oranges to the audience."

I WAS reduced to speechlessness for a good half hour as we drove up the Jersey shore of the Hudson. At last I made an effort and blinked the glassy feeling from my eyes.

"You," I said, "brought along three chimpanzees who ride motorcycles, beat bass drums, study the encyclopedia, and throw oranges at people, all at one and the same time—you brought along these intelligent, educated, amiable, sociable, versatile creatures to keep us entertained while we picnic? You did all this just to while away the time and amuse us as we eat? Is that it, Jeremiah?"

My chubby companion shook his head.

"Not at all, Lucius," he piped. "They will play an important part in the epochal scientific achievement you are going to witness. Although I have food with me, this is really going to be a picnic of science, Lucius, a feast of knowledge rather than a mere gorging of the corporeal body. Aren't you excited at the thought?"

I gurgled slowly and collapsed.

"No," I murmured hollowly. "No, I won't help you."

"Help me do what, Lucius?"

"Whatever it is you're planning. I won't help you."

"I was afraid of that," my small friend sighed sadly. "That's why I brought the chimpanzees. They're highly trained, very intelligent, and they shall be my only assistants in the precedent-shattering feat I am about to perform. You need do nothing but look on. And applaud, of course."

"What——" I hardly dared ask it—"what is the experiment, Jeremiah?"

Jeremiah Jupiter's face took on the rapt, dreamy look I knew too well.

"I am going," he said, "I am going, Lucius, to upset the time rhythm of the universe!"

THERE is nothing small about Jupiter. When he takes a notion to investigate space and distance, he short-circuits infinity. Now that it had occurred to him that time would make a fascinating scientific plaything, he was preparing to upset the universe's time rhythm, whatever that was.

"Jupiter," I said in the merest whisper, "Jupiter, let me out right here. I'm going to walk back."

"I really am worried about you, Lucius," Jupiter told me, swinging the truck off the road into a muddy lane leading through a wood. "I'm positive there's something wrong with . . . But anyway, here we are. Here's where we're going to have our picnic."

He pulled the truck to a stop in the middle of a grassy meadow, dominated by a large oak tree. A hundred yards away was a section of the Palisades, dropping sheer to the blue of the Hudson River. In the other direction, the field sloped gently.

There were, however, several large grassy mounds in the middle of the meadow, and one of these showed signs of having been dug into recently. The spot where Jupiter chose to stop was between the tree and the mounds, and he immediately jumped down and ran around to open up the back of the truck.

"Come, Lucius!" he called. "I need your help. That's a boy, King. Good girl, Queenie. Come on now, Joker. Give me the books. Get down and romp in the grass. This is going to be a picnic."

The three chimpanzees hopped lightly down and began doing somersaults in the grass at the word picnic, which they seemed to recognize. Little did they know!

The largest of the chimps had a broad, apish face, fringed by graying hair. He was tastefully costumed in an Indian suit, with plenty of bright beadwork around the cuffs and pockets. From time to time he paused to pick a bead off and eat it, chewing reflectively. Then he went back to turning somersaults.

The chimp Jupiter had called Queenie had on a skirt and blouse, also Indian, but the smallest and youngest of the three—my companion informed me that King and Queenie were his parents, which was why he was called Joker, or in full, Jack Joker—was gaily decked out in an acrobat's silk shorts and jersey, with an American eagle across his chest.

He did flipflops around his parents, while Jupiter and I sweated to unload the truck.

We ran the motorcycles, one crimson, one gold, one silver, and smaller than standard models, down an extensible ramp

onto the grass. Each had a small sidecar attached, and in these I saw some glittering objects like gargantuan liver pills, but I had no chance to investigate them.

Jupiter handed me down the three small bass drums, each with a portrait of its owner painted on the head, and I placed these beside the motorcycles. King, Queenie, and Joker recognized their property and made sounds of anticipation, but Jupiter shooed them away.

"Go on, play," he told them. "First we're going to eat. The drums come later."

Either recognizing the voice of a master before whom Nature herself quailed, or because he was now unloading the large vacuum lunch hamper, the chimps scampered around in circles, playing tag and chattering. Jupiter handed me the hamper and jumped down. I tottered with it to the shade of the oak, and he trotted at my side, rubbing his hands and exuding enthusiasm.

"*Hmm*," he said, peering into the hamper. "No reason why we shouldn't eat now. Put you in a better mood perhaps, Lucius. Now let's see, what have we here? Breast of Hungarian pheasant? Ah!"

Munching, he flung himself down on the grass. He tossed a bag of peanuts to each of the chimps, and they swung happily up into the lower branches of the oak, where they squatted, eating peanuts and tossing the shells at me. Moodily I chewed on squab in jelly, and blasphemed the base appetites that had lured me into this expedition.

"Now, Lucius," Jeremiah said brightly, licking his fingers, "I dare say I'll have to outline for you what it is I'm going to do. In the first place, time is nothing but rhythmic forces—"

"How do you know?" I asked rudely.

"I deduced it logically," he informed me, sinking his teeth into a turkey leg. "It came to me in a flash one night when

I was setting my alarm clock. Everything else in Nature, I realized, is rhythmic. The seasons, the progressions of the stars, birth, life, light waves, radio waves, electrical impulses, the motions of molecules—everything. All move according to fixed and definite rhythms. Obviously, I deduced, since the Universe is constructed upon a pattern of rhythm, time must be rhythmic too. It's just that nobody ever thought of it before."

"And now that you've thought of it," I asked, opening a bottle of Moselle from the cooling compartment, "what has it gotten you?"

"Just this, Lucius!" Jupiter bubbled with excitement. "*Any rhythm can be interrupted by a properly applied counter-rhythm!*"

I OPENED my mouth and forgot to put anything in it. "Now surely," Jeremiah said patiently, "even though you do spend all your time swinging golf clubs, waving tennis racquets, or whirling polo mallets, when you're not writing the puny little pieces of fiction you compose as an excuse for not working, you must know some elementary physics.

"I am positive you must have read of experiments in which two light waves of the proper lengths, being made to interfere with each other, produce darkness? And the fact that two sounds, properly chosen for pitch, can get in each other's way, with complete silence as the result?"

I nodded.

"Yes," I admitted. "I know about that. What's that got to do with time?"

"The time rhythm," he corrected me. "Or, the Jeremiah Jupiter Time-Rhythm Effect, as succeeding generations will call it. Why, it's quite obvious. If you can interfere with light and produce darkness, if you can interfere with sound and produce silence, then obviously you can interfere with present time and produce past time."

It was not obvious to me, and I said so.

My companion sighed.

"Very well, Lucius," he remarked. "I've made it as plain as I can, and if you don't understand I'm sorry. Your attitude is no surprise to me. In fact it accurately reflects what my professional colleagues would say, and that is the reason we are here today. To provide irrefutable proof which, upon being presented to certain contemporaries calling themselves scientists, will force them to respect the monograph on the subject I'm now writing."

His eyes glittered. Jeremiah Jupiter has had notable encounters with his fellow scientists in the past, but he has never yet emerged the loser.

"A demonstration, Lucius," he explained, "they would claim was faked. Consequently I am going to prove I can interrupt the time rhythm of the present and produce the past so that even the most skeptical dolt cannot doubt."

He poured himself a tall glass of Moselle and drank it with great appreciation. Perceiving that the chimps in the tree overhead had finished their peanuts, he tossed each of them a bottle of soda pop, which they drank with avid gurglings.

"That is where King, Queenie and Joker come in," he informed me. "I knew that you, Lucius, would balk. They, however, are equally competent to do what is necessary, and much less skeptical. You see, I have prepared a number of time capsules—"

"Time capsules!"

"To use a layman's terminology. I have one here."

He produced from one of his bulging pockets an article shaped like a gelatine capsule, about as big as his fist, and made apparently of platinum, for it was very heavy.

It seemed solid; at least there was no way of opening it. On the polished surface was deeply engraved, in bold script, *Jeremiah Jupiter Time Capsule. A.D.*

1965. Melt at left-hand tip to open.

"In it," Jupiter told me, "there is a microfilm of the New York Times, another microfilm containing my autobiography and listing some of my more noteworthy discoveries, a third microfilm announcing that I shall presently publish my findings concerning the Jupiter Time-Rhythm Effect, and a small compartment containing the merest pinch of radium."

"But—"

"Those mounds—" he gestured—"are recently discovered barrows containing ruins of an ancient barbaric civilization on this spot. In digging, the archeologists have also discovered that beneath this meadow is a clay stratum, once part of a swampy coastline, containing tremendous numbers of fossils. The digging has only begun. In a short time it will be undertaken more extensively, and this whole area sifted for fossils and other finds.

"And among the objects found, Lucius, will be one or more Jeremiah Jupiter Time Capsules! Clever, eh?"

He gazed at me brightly, but I could only scowl.

"You mean," I demanded, "you're going to dig down in this meadow and plant your time capsules for the archeologists to find next week, or next month? But I don't see—"

The pink, cherubic face clouded over.

"Lucius, sometimes I despair of you," he sighed. "Of course not. I am going to set up an interference in the time rhythm at this particular spot. Then the chimpanzees will enter it with my time capsules—since I know you won't—and they will deposit the capsules here a million years ago!"

He gazed at me anxiously.

"Are you sure you're well, Lucius? Your throat isn't bothering you again? You seem to be choking. Now you understand, of course. My time capsules, de-

posited here a million years ago, will have been resting beneath this meadow all that time. The archeologists, digging down into strata they know were laid down before the dawn of history, will find at least one time capsule.

"There will be only one possible explanation—that it was actually placed there in the past. By measuring the disintegration of the radium inside, they will know the exact number of years it has been lying there, waiting to be found by—"

"Here, Lucius, drink this wine, please!"

I drank it. I felt stronger then, but not strong enough to argue with him.

"I do not understand, Jupiter," I told him. "But let that pass. I will take your word for it. You are going to set up an interference in the time rhythm, making today yesterday, a million years removed. But why yesterday? Why not tomorrow too? Why not have a peep into the future as well?"

He placed his plump fingers together and pursed his lips.

"I can excuse you for asking that question," he chirped, "because I asked it myself when first the idea came to me. But it is impossible. I logically established its impossibility and dismissed the thought from my mind.

"I think I can make it plain why, though I can reduce the present to the past, I cannot resolve it into the future. Let us assume that you have a grandchild someday."

"But I'm not even married," I told him.

"Please don't be irrelevant. In the course of events your grandchild grows up and develops an inflamed appendix that must be operated upon."

"More likely peptic ulcers from traveling around too much via the Jupiter Spatial By-pass," I suggested wickedly.

He remained unruffled. "Let us say I

am a doctor. In the course of time, your grandchild comes to me and I cut into him, remove his appendix. I do it *then*. But obviously I could never do it now, because neither grandchild nor appendix has yet occurred. So it is with the future. As it hasn't occurred, I can't penetrate into it. Now to the business at hand."

He rose and strode briskly over to the truck. I followed. Together we slid the heavy apparatus under the tarpaulin down the ramp and set it up on the grass.

WHILE we were doing this I noticed that the three chimps had dropped out of the tree and were chattering excitedly about something, but I was too busy to see what.

The object that my companion was now handling with such loving care was large and square, something like one of the old cabinet television sets of my boyhood. It had similar dials on the front, and when he lifted the top, I saw bank after bank of tubes inside, as well as a large drum that apparently revolved.

The middle of the front was given over to a speaker-like opening, and a long insulated wire depended from the rear. This wire was attached to a steel prong, which Jupiter drove into the earth several feet behind the unwholesome apparatus.

"That forms a ground connection," he remarked. "Now we're ready to make a preliminary test of my Time Rhythm Resonator. Where are the chimps?"

I looked up.

"They're drinking the Moselle!" I yelled. "They're getting tight!"

Jupiter, in the midst of adjusting something, jerked upright. The chimps certainly were getting intoxicated, and in a hurry. Having finished off their soda pop, they'd dropped down out of the oak as soon as we'd left and picked up the Moselle. Now they were guzzling it as fast as they could get it down, giving guttural calls and cries of enjoyment.

"They can't get drunk!" Jupiter cried. "That might spoil the experiment! Lucius, we must take the wine away from them!"

We rushed across the grass. As soon as they saw us coming, King, Queenie and Joker took to their heels, scampering away with knuckles touching the ground to give them extra speed. They dashed for their motorcycles, leaped into the seats, and got under way.

The motorcycles were electric, and could be started, stopped, or steered with one hand—or foot. King took off first. He grabbed the handlebar control with his foot, the machine hummed, and then shot toward us. With a tipsy whoop Queenie followed. Joker paused long enough to grab up his drum. Then, steering with one foot, holding on with the other, grasping the drum with one paw and banging it with the other fist, he charged after his parents.

"Jump, Lucius!" Jupiter shrieked. He leaped one way and I the other. King and Queenie whizzed between us, and Joker, banging lustily on the drum and emitting a kind of simian war-whoop, zipped past behind them.

Jeremiah Jupiter fell on his face. I banged against the tree trunk. The three chimpanzee Barney Oldfields went whooping around the tree, turned and started back.

"Look out!" I yelled. Jupiter got dazedly to his feet just as the chimps came around the second lap. Then I leaped, and King and Queenie and Joker, all abreast, rocking and swaying, roared by underneath me and were gone again.

I was in the lower branches of the oak by then. Turning, I discovered Jupiter on the next limb.

"You and your discoveries!" I grated.

But he wasn't listening. He was staring at his apparatus, and he looked worried.

"Er—Lucius," he remarked. "I think

my Time Rhythm Resonator is working."

I looked. I could see the tubes glowing, right enough.

"Well?" I asked. "Nothing's happening."

"Um—I think I'd better go turn it off anyway. The revolving drum was not working properly and I was about to adjust it—"

He dropped to the ground and started toward the thing. I dropped behind him and started that way too, just as the three tipsy chimps on their gaudy motorcycles came past a third time, still rocking and swaying, whooping, Joker beating the drum.

"Look out!" I yelled, and leaped. They went past underneath, dust spurting, and back in the tree again I turned, to discover Jupiter on the next branch.

"You and your discoveries!" I grated between my teeth.

But he wasn't listening. He was staring at his apparatus, and he looked worried.

"Er—Lucius," he said. "I think my Time Rhythm Resonator is working."

I could see the tubes glowing, right enough.

"Well?" I asked. "Nothing's happening."

"Um—I think I'd better go turn it off anyway. The revolving drum was not working properly and I was about to adjust it—"

He dropped to the ground, and I after him. Just as we did so, I saw the three chimpanzees on their vaudeville-act cycles roaring around the oak at us again, and it flashed through my mind that all this was very familiar. That we had, in

fact, just done it all a moment before—

Then, leaping, I was in the tree again, the chimps were zooming by underneath, and Jupiter was clinging to the next branch.

And I knew! Jupiter's machine was stuck, like a phonograph with a cracked record! It wasn't changing the present to the past, but *repeating the present over and over again!*

Bitter horror overwhelmed me. We were doomed to keep leaping up into that oak while three drunken chimpanzees tried to run us down until—until—My brain reeled.

"You and your discoveries!" I screamed.

Jupiter did not answer. He was staring at his machine—

It was after the little act had been repeated for the tenth time—I think it was the tenth, though it seemed as if we spent days hopping up and down out of that tree—that King and Queenie and Joker, instead of trying to run us down, swerved and brought their motorcycles to a stop. They leaped off and began turning somersaults, as if waiting for the applause. Jupiter rushed across to his machine and clicked a switch. Then he mopped his brow.

"Goodness," he said mildly. "I'm certainly glad I put in that automatic cut-off switch. The drum was caught in one position, and—"

"—and time kept repeating itself around here!" I yelled hoarsely. "We were stuck in time! Talk about being in a rut! If that machine hadn't stopped we'd have spent eternity dodging intoxicated chimpanzees on motorcycles!"

"Any apparatus may have a bug or two in it at first," Jeremiah Jupiter said, but I could see he was slightly shaken. It had been hot work, jumping up and down out of that oak, and Jeremiah does not like exercise. His pink face was bedewed with perspiration.

"However," he went on briskly, "I have that fixed now. Now to turn the resonator around, so its field of operation will be directed toward the mounds, and we're all ready."

HE MOVED the square box about, did a few things to it, and turned toward the chimps. Sobered and abashed now, they crouched beside their cycles as if expecting to be punished. Jupiter patted them on the shoulders reassuringly, and got them back onto their motorcycles. Then he fastened King and Queenie's drums to the handlebars, retrieved Joker's drum and fastened that in place too, and lined them up facing toward the mounds.

From the truck he brought out three volumes of the encyclopedia, and gave one to each. The chimps immediately brightened up.

"Now they feel at home," Jupiter informed me. "They have all the trappings of their act. Nothing is missing, so they're reassured. Like children. Everything's all right now. They won't lose control of themselves this time. You'll see."

He pointed into the small sidecars attached to the machines. I saw now that the glittery objects in the sidecars were platinum time capsules.

"Oranges," Jeremiah Jupiter said, drawing the chimps' attention to them. "Oranges," and he made a throwing motion.

"As they ride around throwing out oranges in their act," he told me, "they will throw out my time capsules. Perhaps you understand at last, Lucius.

"In a moment I am going to create a

temporal rhythm interference which will reduce the present over these mounds to the past of a million years ago.

"The chimps will ride into that area of the past on their cycles—if only you were more cooperative, Lucius, none of this rather elaborate scheme would be necessary—and as they ride around they will throw the time capsules broadcast over the whole area. One or more is bound to sink into the ground, be covered over, and remain there until the present, to be dug up by the archeologists.

"When I whistle, the chimps will ride back to us, in the present. I will turn off the resonator. In due time one of my capsules will be found. Then I will explain how it came to be there, and no one will be able to doubt my time-rhythm effect thereafter. It is a little complicated, but remember, that is your fault."

"You could run in there and plant a capsule for yourself, Jupiter," I suggested, but he only shook his head.

"It wouldn't be feasible," he retorted. "Now—"

He clicked a switch on his apparatus.

This time nothing went wrong. In an instant a large area of haze formed over the old mounds. This haze thickened at first, but Jupiter fiddled with a dial, and gradually it thinned down until it was just a shimmery area.

Within that space, a great change in the meadow had taken place.

Now great broad fronds grew up from the ground, long tentacles of unhealthy-looking moss drooping from them. In the background were tall spiky trees distantly resembling palms. In the foreground, a hard, sandy beach, covered with curious shells. It was rather like a stage setting seen through a gauze curtain.

Jeremiah Jupiter took a deep breath.

"Lucius," he said, "this is a solemn moment. We are standing here today, and there is yesterday . . . All right, King, Queenie, Joker. Start!"

Unhesitatingly the three chimps started their motorcycles bouncing across the meadow toward the shimmering area of the past that Jupiter's resonator was producing. Steering with one foot, banging their drums with one hand, holding out their encyclopedias as if reading in the other, they charged bravely back into the remote past of their distant forefathers.

Jupiter watched them go, entranced. But I tapped his shoulder and pointed to a spot behind us.

"And there," I said, "is tomorrow!"

Jeremiah Jupiter turned, and his eyes bugged in disbelief.

Behind us was a second hazy area, as large as the first and the same distance away. But within this one there was a glitter of glass and crystal. We saw a wide street, along which low-roofed buildings stretched into the distance. Jewel-like façades shone in the sunshine, and over the roofs of the buildings airships were swooping so rapidly we could not make out what they looked like.

"G-good heavens!" Jupiter stuttered. "My resonator is giving out a harmonic!"

Calling what we were looking at a harmonic seemed to me an understatement.

"Now," I asked, with malicious amusement, "how do you explain that?"

"I—" Jupiter muttered, struggling to collect himself. "I—"

But before he could get his thoughts in order, a shriek of terror sounded behind us. We wheeled.

The three chimps had plunged into the past area, banging bravely on their drums, and for an instant their motorcycles spurned the primordial sands. Then, beyond the trees, a great, toothed head arose, and red eyes stared at them. Above them a shadow swooped down, and King, Queenie, and Joker, pausing not, turned and came right back.

They threw away their books. They threw away their drums. They threw away everything but the time capsules,

and crouching low, yelling in horror, they swept straight back at us.

The head of the brontosaurus that had reared up disappeared, and the pterodactyl that had swooped down on them flapped its bat-like wings and zoomed back up into the sky, out of our sight. Jupiter yelled, but the chimps had only one thought now. They wanted to get back to nice, peaceful today.

They came bounding at us, eyes rolling, teeth chattering, and I made one wild leap.

"Duck, Jupiter!" I shouted. "They're going to run us down! They're scared silly!"

Jupiter tumbled after me, just in time. The chimps bounded over the spot where we had been standing and kept on going . . . straight for that future which had appeared where it shouldn't!

"Oh, goodness!" Jupiter squeaked in dismay. "No, they mustn't!"

He scrambled up and dashed for his apparatus. By now King and Queenie and Joker, still howling, were at the very edge of the second hazy space, and still accelerating. Directly before them, broad and smooth, lay the street we could see running into the heart of that crystal and silver city of the future.

As they reached it, Joker, in an automatic response to his training, I dare say, reached down into the sidecar, seized one of the time capsules, and tossed it high into the air. Then—

Then Jupiter, rushing for his resonator, tripped over the ground wire, plunged into the apparatus, and sent it crashing to the earth beneath him.

The silver city, into whose street King and Queenie and Joker had just ridden in their headlong flight, vanished.

So did the chimps.

We were surrounded by nothing but peaceful Jersey meadow.

(Continued on page 129)

THE WHEEL OF TIME

(Continued from page 84)

I PICKED up Jupiter and then the resonator. The resonator was just a tangle of broken tubes and loose wires; but I opened the bottle of Moselle that remained and restored Jupiter to normalcy.

He drank the wine, but his look remained thoughtful. After he had wiped his lips, he said, "Naturally, my resonator gave off a harmonic. Almost any resonating apparatus, from a flute to a radio, will. What happened, Lucius, is that the harmonic, instead of interfering with the time rhythm, *amplified it.*"

He got up, straightened his clothes, and carried the hamper to the truck.

"You understand, Lucius," he said then, his voice reflective, "that two vibrations don't *have* to interfere with each other. Two light waves may combine to make one stronger light. Two sound waves may combine to produce one louder sound. Obviously what the overtone from my resonator did was to strengthen the time rhythm, thereby driving the present into the future.

"Thus the main vibratory wave was working in one direction, and the harmonic directly opposite, producing equal but opposite reactions. So the future we saw was just as far ahead of us as the past I created was behind us. A million years, I'd say, offhand, though as unfortunately none of the time capsules were deposited, we'll never know."

He started to climb into the driver's seat of his truck. At that moment something glittered down out of nowhere and fell on his toe. Yelling, he hopped around holding his foot, while I picked the object up.

It was a Jeremiah Jupiter time capsule. It was, in fact, the one Jack Joker had tossed out at the instant he started into the future.

We had just caught up to the moment

in which the chimp had thrown it away.

Preserving a stony silence after that, Jupiter drove us back to New York through the pleasant summer twilight. The time capsule he tossed into the Hudson as we crossed the bridge. From time to time he glanced at me in irritation.

"I can't for the life of me imagine what you're chuckling about," he muttered, as he drew up before my apartment building.

"I was just thinking of King and Queenie and Joker charging down the streets of New York a million years from now on motorcycles, throwing time capsules at the startled inhabitants," I told him. "It will give them a very queer impression of what their ancestors in the twentieth century were like. And you know something, Jupiter?"

"What?" he grumbled.

"They all wore silver discs around their neck with their initials on them," I said. "Of course Joker's initials are J.J., the same as yours. They're bound to think they stand for Jeremiah Jupiter, and that he's you, and King and Queenie are your parents. They'll put your name under his picture in their history books, I expect . . . Are you going to build another resonator?"

Jupiter shifted gears with a clash.

"No," he snapped. "I have too many other things to do. I haven't time enough."

And he hurried off. It was the first time I'd ever had the laugh on him, and I made the most of it. I went inside laughing, and was still laughing after I'd bathed and dressed for my dinner engagement with the editor who was so anxious to have my serial to take back with him to Chicago on the Monday morning plane.

I didn't really stop laughing, in fact, until I got downtown and discovered that it was Tuesday night . . .