



WORLDS OF SCIENCE FICTION

MAY 1960

All Stories New and Complete

Editor: H. L. GOLD

Feature Editor: FREDERIK POHL

SHORT NOVEL

A TOURIST NAMED DEATH by Christopher Anvil 6

NOVELETTES

A PRIDE OF ISLANDS by C. C. MacApp 56

MATCHMAKER by Charles L. Fontenay 106

SHORT STORIES

THIRTY DEGREES CATTYWONKUS by James Bell 37

WHEN DAY IS DONE by Arnold Castle 48

HEEL by Philip Jose Farmer 74

A GREAT DAY FOR THE IRISH by A. M. Lightner 94

FEATURE

WORLDS OF IF by Frederik Pohl 88

COVER by Finlay: "Pin-ups in Space"

Illustrations by Wood and Finlay

IF is published bi-monthly by Digest Productions Corporation, Vol. 10, No. 2. Main Office: 421 Hudson Street, New York 14, New York. 35¢ per copy. Subscriptions 12 issues \$3.00 in the United States, Canada, Mexico, South and Central America and U. S. possessions, elsewhere \$4.00. Entered as second-class matter at the Post Office, New York, New York. Copyright New York 1959 by Digest Productions Corporation. All rights including translations reserved. All material submitted must be accompanied by self-addressed, stamped envelopes. The publisher assumes no responsibility for unsolicited material. All stories printed in this magazine are fiction, and any similarity between characters and actual persons is coincidental. Printed in the U. S. A. by the Guinn Company, Inc., New York.

Next Issue (July) on Sale May 1st.

Thirty Degrees

Cattywonkus

By JAMES BELL

*It doesn't take a heap
of leaving to make any
house a nightmare. One
vanishing door will do
nastily.*

IT WAS a tremendous house. And they were newlyweds. And were still a mite flighty. And for a while that accounted for the whole thing.

At the moment, it seemed to Ernie Lane that in a house which even the real estate agent said had "either" eleven or twelve rooms, it was quite conceivable that he and Melinee had overlooked that extra room.

After all, they had only been

living at 1312 Cedar Lane for four days and had hardly had time to make a complete survey of the place.

Now it was quite different. For Ernie Lane had stopped walking hurriedly past that extra door, had stopped giving it only casual curiosity, had even stopped wondering afterward.

This night he had come home a bit tired, gone directly to greet his loving wife, and

then decided to put a stop to the gnawing question.

While Melinee fried the chicken, Ernie walked carefully and wordlessly to the dim hallway. He went past the staircase, past the telephone, to the darkest spot between the living room and the study. He stood for a strange moment—there was no extra door.

He felt the refinished wall, his fingertips searching for hidden panels. There was none.

"Supper's ready," Melinee called. "Ernie?"

But it had been there last night, the night before, the night before that, and the very first night the real estate agent brought them over. In fact, he recalled, that was the reason the agent had been uncertain about the number of rooms. And why had he passed it off as a joke, simply turning from the extra door without opening it?

Ernie felt again.

It was ceasing to be a joke. He was not a man of hallucinations. He was not a victim of superstition, fear or nearsightedness. He only wanted to know why he saw a door one day and didn't see it the next.

He called a comforting word to his wife, then reached for the telephone book. He found the name of Hartley and Hartley, Real Estate. PLaza 0-6633. Without any undue commotion, he dialed. In a moment, a woman's voice

at the other end seemed to barge into his life.

"Special operator. Number, please?"

"PLaza 0-6633."

"Sorry, sir, we have no such number—"

Ernie let a disgruntled voice thunder into the phone: "Then what the heck is Hartley and Hartley Realty doing with it?"

A pause. Then she replied, "Sir, we have no Hartley and Hartley—"

"Don't be silly," he said. "I just found it in the phone book."

She answered, "We have a Hartfield and Hatley, Realtors, Inc., sir, but no Hartley and Hartley. Their number is in the directory."

Melinee was standing behind him. "Who are you calling?"

He was shaken, but he managed to appear calm as he hung up. He even relaxed against the wall. "I was trying to get the real estate agent on the phone—these lights ought to be brighter—and I thought he could refer us to his electrician."

"His what?" Melinee asked.

"Elec—" He halted. "Never mind, honey. I'm beat—rough day. I need fried chicken." He hugged his trim, prim wife and they walked toward the kitchen arm in arm. But it was not until they settled at the table that he saw, under the bright electric light, that

her hair was red, not blonde, and he immediately felt he'd been gypped.

Her smirky little voice added to the shock. "Darling, don't call me Melinee when my name is Marsha. It just isn't done."

ON PURPOSE, Ernie spent an uneventful evening, arose the next morning, ignored his wife's red hair, conveniently forgot her name, avoided even checking to see if the door was there, and saved up a sneer for the telephone.

During the day, his business life was perfect. He got the Jenkins account, lunched with the boss, and was asked to serve on the membership committee in the Chamber of Commerce drive. However, during the afternoon he developed a terrific headache and excused himself from the office long enough to see the company physician.

The thin, foxy doctor handed him a pill and a glass of water. After Ernie had swallowed the pill politely, the physician leaned forward and gazed at his eyes and forehead. "Tell me, Lane—you're a newlywed, aren't you?"

Ernie nodded.

"Then why the worried frown? You seem to be carrying the Rock of Gibraltar on your shoulders. Is your job too much for you?"

"Of course not," Ernie said,

smiling. "I told you I had a headache."

"Perhaps," the doctor said, smiling back. "You seemed to have been in something of a prepossessed state when you came in. I was just curious."

Ernie laughed it off and at the doctor's request lay on a cot for a period of ten minutes. When he returned to the office, there was a request that he call a "Marsha."

The sudden venomous thoughts of the evening before spun before his eyes. What the devil was going on with the woman? The new name, the new hair-do, the new smirk in her voice—that wasn't the woman he married. He grabbed the phone and called home.

Twenty rings. No answer.

It was a quarter of four when the switchboard notified him that his wife was on the line. "Hello, Ernie? This is Melinee. I'm at the Lee Hat Shop. Can you meet me in half an hour? I want to do some shopping and I thought we'd have supper and maybe see a movie."

Melinee? It was all like a breath of spring. Away from that house, she was a different person. Happily, he agreed to buying her a new hat, supper and a ticket to Loew's State. For Melinee, anything. For Marsha, nothing.

And when they met, surely enough her hair was blonde again and the smirk in her

voice was gone. She was his bride, and he forgot whatever the past, present or future might hold.

The future, however, was not long coming. After the movie, they returned home and were about to settle down when, passing along the hallway, Ernie looked over his shoulder and saw the extra door. Quickly, he reached past Melinee and grasped the knob with his hand.

"Ernie, what on *Earth!*"

She startled him. He laughed, and they went in to bed.

It was around one A.M. when Ernie decided he would not be able to put off any longer the chore of exploring that hall door. It plainly had not been there the night before; it plainly was there tonight.

He tiptoed softly from bed and left the room. Melinee did not even stir. He closed the door lightly and cat-footed his way through the darkness to the wall switch at the foot of the stairs.

Stealthily looking all about him, as if someone or something might suddenly try to stop him, Ernie sneaked up on the door. He grabbed the knob with both hands, turned it briskly and the door swung open.

The pale green wall of the hallway confronted him. It was as if the door were merely hinged onto the wall. No opening whatever.

HE TAPPED it with his knuckles. Then he examined the door. It was a French style thing extending from floor to ceiling with contrasting green slats. Identical with those appearing all along the hallways, most of them closet doors.

Just for the heck of it, he thought he would drag out a hammer and uncork the screws holding the false door—carry it to some conspicuous place and observe as it went through its next disappearing act. But as he turned to head for the tool cabinet, Ernie heard the din of distant shouting—as if a room-full of men were playing cards.

And yet not so distant. For a moment the world became silent. Ernie pressed an ear against the wall behind the false doorway. It seemed to be coming from inside, and there were only a few words of any audible clarity. "Maximum—not much longer—and logarithms—"

Ernie tried the adjacent door. It opened into a small storage room, unlighted. He felt around the wall paneling, but no switch. Gauging the dimensions, it seemed to him that the storage room practically accounted for all the space behind the hall. If the fake door opened onto a room, it could only be this room, and there was nothing here.

He listened. No sound inside the confines of the room.

But the moment he returned, pressed his ear against the outer wall, Ernie heard them shouting again. It was as if the wall were twelve inches thick—as if he were not hearing anything at all—and yet hearing.

The thought struck him—there was a laundry chute opening from the second floor to the storage room. Provided they wanted to install a chute. Meanwhile, the agent had told him, it would remain just a hole in the floor.

He and Melinee had not made any plans for developing the second floor. It was evident that his mother would one day have to live with them, and her own invalid sister, in time. And then whatever children there might be. But so far he and Melinee had actually made only one trip up there with the agent.

In fact, there was no electrical connection to the upstairs whatever. Ernie remembered the layout, however, and made his way up the stairs that creaked in defiance of the agent's compliments. When he reached the top in the pitch blackness, he felt for the wall.

A strange coldness not at all common to the summer season moved out along the hallway. It seemed to hover around him, curious of the intruder.

Imagination.

He walked on, an inch at a time, for he remembered a small table about half way along. But he never felt the table. Ernie reached the end of the hall before he was sure—and where had the table gone?

He returned along the opposite wall until he felt the small square paneling. Then a brass knob. He pulled it open, half expecting the end of the world. And at that point, a bluish haze filled with gaseous, luminous smoke rose out and blinded him.

When the obnoxious odor of the smoke was gone, he took a deep breath and stuck his head in again. Directly below him sat three men, fat and jovial, shaking their pipes at one another. There was a row of red and white lighted tubes, not unlike fluorescents, a mahoganylike counter that might pass for a bar, and a row of bottles against a mirror.

THE dimensions immediately struck Ernie as all wrong. It was far bigger than the hall closet where it was supposed to be. In fact, the portion he saw seemed to be the focal point of a large dance hall or bar room. But the most obvious quality of the scene was the tilted floor. The whole thing seemed to be about thirty degrees lopsided.

Ernie could go immediately back to bed and tell of his

dream tomorrow, or he could make things worse by yelling at the men below.

IT WASN'T necessary to yell. As if they had seen him through the tops of their balding heads, they motioned to the bartender, then pointed squarely at his vantage point. Ernie felt the quavering impulse to run, and yet even in a nightmare you try desperately to learn the ending.

The man in the white coat set the ladder firmly against the floor so that the top ended in the slightest kind of tilt near the chute door. It was not Ernie's intention to crawl through the door, but the way the man motioned, and the way the men turned briefly and waved, simply as if they might be old acquaintances waiting for him in a hotel lobby—it was, to say the very least, overwhelming.

There was a fragrance, an allure about the room. It smelled of apples and tobacco and brought nostalgic thoughts of college days and—and faint wisps of the past that were not nostalgic. He thought of Melinee. He really ought to tell her about this.

The chalky finger motioning at him, the unconcerned old men on the sofa—and the table. It was the antique table, missing from the upstairs hall, that lured him in. There it sat against the far wall. He grabbed a jutting two-by-four

and twisted his body through the opening.

The ladder must have been shoved to one side, or perhaps it was the claustrophobic effect of going through the small opening—anyway, something. It turned his mind, his body, wrong-side out. Like the squeezing out of a wet mop by a steamroller.

At the foot of the ladder, the man in the bartender's jacket led him to the three men. One of them, exceptionally fat, jovial, excused himself politely and took Ernie aside.

"You look pale, Ernie," he said. "Having trouble?"

Groggily, Ernie looked about him. "It's this room. It's lopsided. I think a good thirty degrees cattywonkus."

The man doused a cigar and a quick frown crossed his brow. "Good point. Very good point. Come with me, Ernie."

Ernie looked; the other men paid him no mind. The little man waddled through a maze of foundation columns, as if the whole world were suspended above them. He walked behind the bar to a small glass-encased desk, U-shaped and covered with dials all reading A-B-C-D.

"Kronkite!" the man called. A whirring inside the room shut off. A man with goggles and a metal halo stuck his head out the door. "Kronkite, Ernie here says we are thirty degrees off. Can you shift the

equilibrium? Frankly, I hadn't noticed it."

WITH a silent nod, the man named Kronkite shut the transparent door, turned three knobs, a bell clanged and the floor of the whole affair sank some thirty degrees on one side, rose thirty on the other. Then the whirring in the chamber resumed and Ernie was led back to the bar.

"Have yourself a drink, man," his host coaxed.

"I don't need one," Ernie said. "Listen, before we go on, just one question—"

The man smiled pleasantly.

"Where the heck am I? And what is this going on in my basement?"

The smile continued. It was maddening.

"Well?" said Ernie.

"You are here," the man finally said. "And don't be silly, Ernie. Your house has no basement."

Ernie turned to the bartender. "I think I *will* have a drink."

"Make it a triple," the little man called, and the bartender smiled as if his face hurt.

There was a pained expression on Ernie. He sank his head into his arms.

"Cheer up," the man said. "It isn't worth all that."

"What isn't?"

"Be happy, man."

"I'll be happy when I get out of here, but I'll be hilari-

ous when I find out the score—and I plan to be hilarious before I get happy. Is that clear?"

"You talk as if you had been drinking already, man. Snap out of it. I like men with clear heads."

It was not only a delaying tactic, Ernie thought; it was plainly a case of nerve-busting. They were going to force it out of him. He had already conceded they were not a gang of thieves using his basement for a hideaway; they were not digging a secret tunnel for the Defense Department.

"You like men with clear heads? What am I, some sort of recruit?"

"Now!" the man exclaimed, suddenly thrust into a new frame of mind. "We are now on the same plane. You *are* a recruit and we can understand each other now."

"So where is this?"

"This is your house, of course, but we're not quite there yet. We're in what you would call—oh, another dimension."

Ernie reached for the drink and sniffed it. Its smell fitted the situation. "And what does that mean?"

"Oh, you and I have lived in the same vicinity all our lives, even crossed each other's paths, but we are in different dimensions—different worlds in the same place."

"You mean like Mars and Earth?"

"I mean like Mars *in* Earth, or vice versa," the man answered.

Ernie jumped up and started for the ladder. "I'm getting out of here—"

"Don't be a fool! Climb that ladder and you'll butt your skull in!"

"I came through the hatch. I'll leave through the hatch."

"But we've shifted thirty degrees. You told us to. Now the top of the ladder is thirty degrees away from the door of the laundry chute, which is quite impossible to reach, my friend, because there is perhaps dirt and a foundation and everything else in the way. We'd have to tear out our own structure and gouge into yours. This we cannot do. Too expensive."

ERNIE had heard enough. He climbed the ladder to the top, butted his head and climbed down. "Okay. You win. What's the score?"

"You and Marsha," the man said.

"Melinee," Ernie corrected.

"Melinee in your dimension, Marsha in ours. You and she exist in our dimension as well. Same types, same characteristics inwardly. But not the same outwardly. Different hair, different name—your own features were to be slightly different here."

Ernie sat down on the sofa beside the two old men. He buried his head. "This is the

other dimension? Then where is the other me?"

"Oh, no," his host said. "This is not 'the other' dimension. This is the *experimental* dimension. *You* are from the second. What we are both in is a third realm sponsored by the government—the federal government of The Unison States. Congrice sponsored this scientific investigation, provided we could accomplish it before the session ends."

The first desire to laugh at the stupidity of the nightmare grappled with Ernie. But when he looked at that ladder and remembered the bump on his head, he knew this was not the time or place for a nightmare.

The man went on, "So we talked Senatore Jumphies into wielding his might in committee, the committee on extra-dimensional perception talked to the President Eisenhower, he addressed the Congrice, and by the single vote of Demorep Martini, this thing was financed for short duration."

Ernie opened his eyes and looked beyond the bar and the experimental lab. It was like the inside of a giant ship in space or a vessel plowing the Pacific. It spread into distant chasms of darkness.

"Our object, of course, is to start out the new dimension with an Adam and Eve," the host said.

Ernie sneered. "You think

you can start a new world!"

"Oh, we've begun it. And we chose your home because here you are two young newlyweds just starting out in life, not too concerned that the future holds nothing more for you than junior assistant to the vice president—ever! Here you have more chance for development, advancement and enjoyment. We have effected changes—your Melinee, for example. You and Marsha will run this dimension. You and she will—"

"We will not, and I'm going to Melinee now. Let me out of here."

The man politely hid a laugh. "Dear sir, I assure you there is no way out of the dimension. You are trapped. You must remain now, regardless, and conduct our experiment for us."

"You got through to our world to find out about us," Ernie said. "How can you keep me here?"

"But we entered your world from our own dimension. Our people pass back and forth all the time, unknown to your people. But from this special contraption which Congrice has rigged up for us, there is no immediate escape."

Ernie got mad. "Then what the devil are these people doing here?"

"Sh," the man said, "those are our Congrice observers." He seemed extremely disturbed. "Don't let them know

how you feel. They get angry at people who take them on wild-goose chases."

THERE was a sudden feeling of hope that Ernie held a monkey wrench in his hand. First, he would find out all about the thing, then he would raise hail Columbia to the two Congrice observers and get them to thumbs-down the experiment. Then, if there was an ounce of humaneness in them, they would free him.

"Okay, I'll calm down. But let me know the rest. When will I see Melinee?"

"Marsha," the man said firmly, "will be along shortly. We must first lift the initial dimension prototype to the exact level of your house. Every coordinate must match each stick of furniture in your own dimension. Then we can begin working outward—"

"Working outward?"

"From your house. It is to be the beginning of this—er—civilization you and Marsha are to create. You will observe in each direction there is still darkness? When we have manipulated the realm into the exact position of the ground floor of your house, we will install a series of transitional burnouts. These will break down molecular resistance which our more powerful equipment creates on solid portions of your house. Everything will fit in-

to place, and you and Marsha will report to us regularly."

Ernie was fuming. "Then we are your prisoners?"

"Oh, but you'll enjoy every minute of it! We created the origin, the nucleus, in the home of some newlywed in your dimension for the mere purpose of convenience of adaptability. We will bring in teams who will plant ersatz crops, trees, cut streams, create weather—put life into the whole place. With your dimension's home and our dimension's scientific advantages, you can have full reign of populating a wonderful new world."

Ernie was madder than he had ever remembered. "And if I refuse?"

"You can't refuse. Marsha will be here momentarily; we have been experimenting with her changes in hair, mood, expression—we hypnotized her on occasions. The extra door in the hallways? Sooner or later she will see it, wonder as you did and open it. This time we will have the magnetic field force turned on. You see, Ernie, you came in the wrong way and—" and here he paused abruptly—"quite a problem has been posed."

"I'll say it has!"

"Yes. You see, you were supposed to come through the door, and you still will, for there was a technical miscalculation in our instruments which, while allowing you to

enter this new dimension, also did not allow you to enter. You yourself suggested we correct by thirty whole degrees. Well, we are not set up for more than one field force entrance per person. The Congrice didn't allot us that much money."

Ernie's eyes grew wild and bright. "So, technically, I'm not even here?"

"Technically, your other self is still up by the laundry chute looking in or going back to bed, or whatever." He scratched his balding head. "Really an unfortunate event. For when the other you enters our hallway door, we shall have to do away with one of you. It would not only frighten Marsha, but the federal government would accuse us of waste, corruption and heaven knows what else."

The wildness in Ernie's eyes turned into a gleam. "You mean your government just wouldn't understand?"

"Right," the man said unhappily. "There's more politics in science than you'd ever believe possible."

"Mister, I think I have a solution."

"You *have*?"

ERNIE walked to the bar, grabbed an armful of magnums, then walked to the plastic experimental table, flung open the door, slung bottle after bottle at the instruments, caused three small ex-

plosions, a sputtering red fire, a terrible burst of black smoke and a sudden explosion that turned the whole new dimension—such as it was—into a white blinding sun.

When the nausea left, he saw the bodies lying on a green grassy area in what seemed to be Washington, D. C. He made his way in torn pajamas to Unison Station, paid a man to go out and buy him a second-hand suit by giving up his gold wedding band, then found the Senatoreale Office Building, located the office of the Senatore of Iowaki, as he had planned to do, and asked for permission to enter the “other” dimension to take home movies. The senatore asked him the name of his home town, accused him of lisping it, handed him a year’s free pass to Other World and a two-year pass to the Senatoreale in session.

Ernie, following instructions on the card, walked to a little white building near the Washingable Monument, stepped inside, handed a man his Other World card, then walked through a door, felt sick at his stomach, came out to the streetcar line to Melinee and home.

When he got there, it was almost daylight, and the front

door was locked. He climbed through an upstairs window, looked through the laundry chute, saw nothing and returned to his bed. Melinee was still sleeping soundly.

He wrestled with his pillow a while. Then the alarm went off.

The rest was simple. At breakfast he told her he was taking the day off.

“Darling, why on Earth?”

“We’re moving,” he said.

“But *why?*”

“There was an explosion in the night. I think it was gas escaping.”

“We might have died!” she cried.

Ernie closed his eyes. “Go look in the hall, dear, and tell me what you see.”

When she returned, she was in a quandry.

“Well?” he asked. “Did you see that crazy extra door blown off the wall?”

“No, Ernie, but there’s a man at the door in pajamas like yours who claims he’s been following you.”

Ernie squinted. “Who is he?”

“He says his name is Irvin—”

“Irvin?” Ernie barked.

“—and, dear, he’s the spitting image of you.”

END