

MARVEL

STORIES

ALL STORIES BRAND NEW WRITTEN ESPECIALLY FOR THIS MAGAZINE

Vol. 2, No. 3

☆☆ CONTENTS ☆☆

April, 1941

★ ★ THRILLING BOOK-LENGTH NOVEL ★ ★

THE LAST SECRET WEAPON

Page

by Polton Cross

8

The simplest and yet the most brilliant invention of all time, the secret weapon to end all secret weapons—this was the diabolic device that Val Turner knew foreign dictators would finally use to wipe out his beloved America, this was the fiendish instrument that only a new super-science could smash!

★ ★ 2 UNUSUAL NOVELETTES ★ ★

Girl from Venus.....by D. D. Sharp 53

The girl from Venus was the only girl in the world for me, and atomic disintegration and argonite would give us health, wealth and complete happiness—until that inevitable day, alas, when Leatha must no longer be distinguishable from any other girl on the planet!

The Iron God.....by Jack Williamson 70

A dive-bomber weighing sixty tons, ten of them the highest explosives known, hurtling four hundred miles an hour at the giant's head! . . . Lundoon knew that if this attack did not stop the 2,000-foot-tall mad colossus, nothing ever would!

★ ★ 2 GRIPPING SHORT STORIES ★ ★

The Thought Machine.....by Ray Cummings 46

To Dr. Jenks the Thought-Machine was the transmutation of human body atoms into matter with the same vibration-rate—to Butch and Red and Willie it was a way to make a million-bucks!

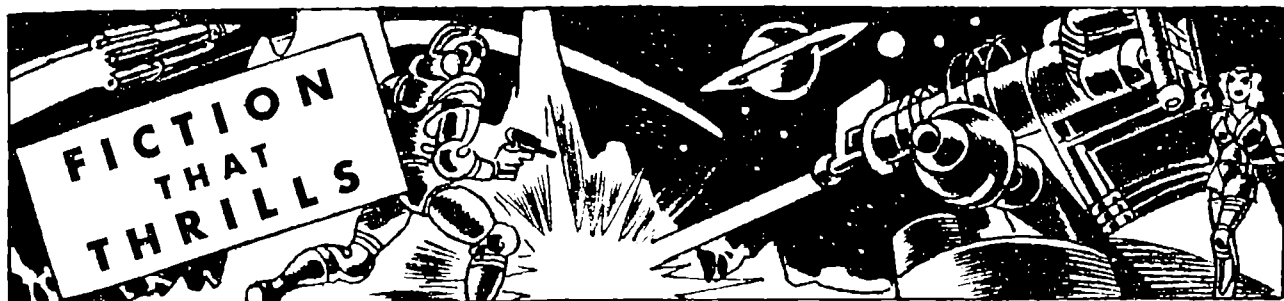
We—The Other People.....by Bruce Manchester 96

You remember how those creatures looked, and the way they acted, the crew of the first spaceship to reach the Earth, and how you called them the Other-People . . . I wonder, though, if you guessed then that they'd turn out as they have. . . .

★ ★ MARVEL'S SPECIAL FEATURE ★ ★

The World of Tomorrow.....by Ray Cummings 106

Proof that the basic ultimate substance is—**nothing!** . . . Mechanical invisibility is coming. . . . Have you tried to kill yourself recently? . . . Do you see things as they really are?



Marvel Stories published every other month by Western Fiction Publishing Co., Inc., at 4600 Diversey Ave., Chicago, Ill. Entered as second class matter May 4th, 1940, at the Post Office at Chicago, Ill., under act of March 3, 1879. Editorial and executive offices, 339 West 42nd St., N. Y. Contents copyright, 1941, by Western Fiction Publishing Co., Inc. Yearly subscription, 20 cents. Single copies, 15c. Not responsible for unsolicited scripts. Printed in U. S. A. Vol. 2. No. 3.

WE, THE OTHER-PEOPLE

By **BRUCE MANCHESTER**

Author of "Invasion from Mars," etc.

Other-People, you remember they called them, those creatures that made up the crew of the first spaceship to reach the Earth. . . . It was no wonder you didn't dream them, judging from the way they looked and acted, that they'd turn out as they have. . . .



Those machine-driven monsters would come then, so loathsome, so cruel, so blundering!

A SECOND thought explains why the paramount attitude toward the first ship from beyond space was one of relief.

Telescopes had picked up that egg-shaped invader far away—it was, as most readers will remember, a good mile long and rather more than half as thick. First it was called a meteor, then, as its

size became computable, a fugitive from the asteroid. Wonder deepened into concern, for it was point-blanked at Earth, or rather at the position on Earth's orbit which both bodies would occupy on April 24 of that year.

Astronomers made some rather faulty estimates of weight, mass and speed, and announced that the collision would

be most serious. Even if it struck the solid center of a continent, there would be a great rent in Earth's crust, cities and fields obliterated, thousands slain, perhaps volcanic eruptions and earthquakes. If it plunged, as seemed more likely, into the more spacious ocean, every coast would be swept by some sort of tidal waves, every ship would be smashed or sunk, and . . . the papers shuddered over it. So did the stock markets.

But by April 20 a new wonder rose, complicated, as has been mentioned, by deep relief. The headlong rush of the great ovoid was slackening, nobody knew why. It continued to slacken, to an ethereal canter, then to a trot. By noon of April 24 it entered the atmospheric envelope so gently that it gained little or no frictional heat, did not even glow. By seven-forty that spring evening it had settled, gently as a plume of down, at the northern edge of the municipal airport of Wichita, Kansas, almost in the geographical center of the United States.

The attendants and aviation weather-observers were first to reach it, and they first startled the world by the truth they shouted back to others—the immense egg was artificial. And not metal, either, or not Earth metal. It was tougher than any alloy known to engineering, but quite elastic. As a matter of fact, it had settled and squashed down, like a half-inflated bladder, so that it looked now as if the grandfather of all mushrooms was pushing its cap through the Kansas prairie grass.

Police Chief O. W. Watson very properly sent a detail of police in radio cars, and these made a close and fairly accurate survey. The port attendants were right, the thing was as tough as metal and as elastic as rubber, and it was certainly artificial—the straight lines of joined integument and rivet-like studs assured them of that. The

only openings were little cylindrical protuberances, pierced like gun-muzzles, each gleaming within as though set with transparent material. They might be either weapons or observation points. The police stood by for further observation or possible trouble, as did later two hastily mobilized companies of the 137th Infantry, Kansas National Guard, and an armed volunteer party of R. O. T. C. students from Wichita Municipal University. Before midnight a special plane had landed across the field, bearing Governor Simon Carnot from Topeka, several military observers, and two professors from the science department of Kansas University.

But the first scientist on the scene had already threaded the line of police and militia pickets and was tapping, with careful courage, at a great sealed-down patch that might or might not be a doorway.

DANTON CAREWE GROUND optical lenses for a living but his passion was astronomy. In the back yard of his little cottage on North Saint Francis Avenue he had assembled, painfully but accurately, a very good telescope. He had watched the approaching mass for days, and had wondered—for he read, and to a great extent believed, the science-fiction magazines—if it were not a ship from some world afar. When, on the night of April 24, the first extra edition of the *Wichita Eagle* shouted its banner of STRANGE SKY CRAFT LANDS HERE, Danton Carewe got into his little old car and went to the airport. He was a slim, swarthy man of forty or perhaps fifty, and somewhere he had learned to lurk and scout. He gained the side of the huge visitor unchallenged. At once he knocked for admittance or, at least, recognition.

And the thing opened under his inquisitive knuckles, opened not by a swinging panel, but by the whisking

away of a door-sized portion of the hull. The action was of snapping abruptness, like the violent upflight of a faulty window blind. Carewe, whose eyes were notably good for an optical supply man, had no trouble in making out the details of a human figure confronting him.

Carewe's first cry was, "You're a man!"

"You . . . 're a man," replied the stranger softly.

"Of course," said Carewe.

"Of course?" It was a question; and a hand, firm but not unfriendly, took Carewe by the elbow. He let himself be drawn into the darkness of the shell, along a corridor with a tinny-sounding floor, and into a chamber beyond, where, on cylindrical stools, sat many beings.

IT is hardly necessary to remind the readers of how those creatures, the crew of the space-vessel, appeared to this first Terrestrial observer. But it noted once more that they were human, in appearance and according to later biological tests. They stood erect on two straight legs, though they were as lean as Egyptian mummies and the tallest of them was no taller than Carewe, who was five feet nine. Their clothing, tight and gay-colored, was no more bizarre to Carewe than might have been the costume of the Italian Renaissance. Their skin was banana-yellow with a green glow to it, their hands had each six fingers and a long, delicate thumb. Above interesting faces that suggested big, shrewd bull-frogs, their craniums were as pointed and shallow as those of the veriest apathetic idiot.

"Of course?" said his guide again, very expectantly.

Carewe saw that he was expected to say on. He therefore assumed the responsibility of welcoming the strangers, in the name of his country, his race and his planet. We know that it was a very

fine speech, for it exists today as exactly memorized by those who heard it. After he finished, there was a little buzz of applauding comment, in a liquid, multi-pitched language. Then one or two addressed him in English.

Their first words were few and stiff, but, as Carewe made reply, they seemed to command a greater vocabulary. Nobody asked him to sit down, and so he found a seat for himself. At the end of an hour, one of the more richly dressed of the shallow-pates was able to clear up a seeming paradox.

"Yes, we are from far off—from a galaxy beyond yours. And we have come past many worlds and many systems, looking for a race like ourselves."

He went on to say that, in a universe so infinite of size and variety, two of everything were possible—even races of men. Carewe was inclined to agree, for he had read once (was it in Huxley?) that an office-full of monkeys, strumming on typewriters long enough, would by aimless trial and error produce the entire text of the Encyclopedia Britannica.

"We have come here," the speaker was continuing, "to find a race not only similar, but helpful. An—an ally, I think, is your word." He paused to gaze at Danton Carewe. "Tell me, are there other skulls as large as yours? And are there brains in those skulls?"

When Carewe said that there were, the strangers prattled together. Then his interviewer, whose name, it appeared, was Huil, addressed him once more:

"I am about to give you, to teach you—no, I cannot say, but I shall show. Carewe, look at me."

Carewe did so, and the vertical-pupilled eyes he met grew instantly jewel-brilliant, penetrating. There was a moment of radiant warmth and bright, blinding color, then normalcy again. "No," Huil was saying. "No. My associates tell me to wait. Carewe, we

must talk to other people of yours. To your rulers, your teachers; is that possible?"

It was possible, in the early dawn, when Governor Carnot and the university men arrived at the door of the vessel and spoke with Huil. Peace and friendship were pledged on both sides, in English which was spoken as ably by Huil, twelve hours on Earth, as by the governor or, for that matter, by the professors.

ANXIOUS themselves to gain acquaintance and information, the strangers yet found time to tell their own story. They came, said Huil, their chief and spokesman, from a world in a far galaxy, so far that its position made very little difference. Attacked by a race from a neighboring planet of their system, they were hard pressed to defend themselves, and in desperation had fitted out this expedition to seek help. Out-travelling light by a cutting of space-arcs—"You will understand how, some day," said Huil paranthetically to Governor Carnot, who grew more puzzled at the promise—and examining world after world, through their television devices, for possible friends. Earth, as they had said to Carewe, had filled them with hope.

A reporter from the Kansas City *Star* dubbed the strangers Other-People, and the name stuck to them.

There were twenty-one Other-People—they counted by sevens—and they gladly accepted an invitation to stay in Wichita's best hotel. After the passage of days, they were able to walk the streets without attracting crowds too great. Scientists they admitted to their ship, and books have been written about their space-flying engines, their rigid living quarters suspended within the great elastic rind, their machines for re-forming all waste products again into food, fuel, water and air, their modes of

living and their tastes and reactions. But meanwhile, Governor Carnot and his aides had sent for a new sort of expert—the psychologist. To a body of brain surgeons, alienists and psycho-analytic researchers, Huil had something to say. They met in the drawing room of his hotel suite.

"It is about your minds and ours," began Huil. "You have been surprised that our brain-pans are so small. We have been astounded that yours are so large. My brain tissue would be no more than one-twelfth, in weight and volume, of your average; yet we match you mentally in a variety of ways, and here and there we surpass you. And I am sure that you would like an explanation."

"We would," said Dr. Gondor of New York, and he spoke for the group.

"I have here," resumed Huil, "the proper parable." He took from a center-table a pair of small iron bars. "Two magnets, gentlemen. One is considerably larger than the other, as you observe. Now, then: this third bit of metal, an unmagnetized piece of iron, I touch with the larger magnet."

There was a little snap as contact was made, and for a moment the lump seemed to adhere strongly. But, as Huil elevated his magnet, the weight of the attached piece asserted itself. Slowly, almost regretfully, it dragged itself loose and thudded back on the table.

"You have all observed?" inquired Huil. "Now, let us try with the smaller magnet."

He did not have to touch the lump. It seemed to spring upward and meet the approaching bar. Huil's six-fingered hands tugged hard before he separated the two pieces of iron.

"Well, then," he said, in a manner almost pedagogical, "the explanation, Dr. Gondor?"

Dr. Gondor was a heavy-set, white-haired man, without too much patience

in such matters. "It doesn't need a great deal of rationalization," he growled. "The smaller magnet had a higher power."

"Yes, but how is that higher power achieved?" pursued Huil. "Wait, I have asked my earliest Terrestrial friend, Mr. Danton Carewe, to be present. There you sit, Carewe; why is the smaller magnet the most powerful?"

"I'm no magnetic engineer," replied Carewe simply, "but I remember hearing, in school, that the crystals of iron take up a certain pattern or relationship—"

"Exactly, exactly. And the more strict that relationship, the more universal that disciplined activity in the particles"—Huil broke off. "Let me clarify my example. For 'particles' of iron, substitute 'cells' of brain tissue. We Other-People have magnetized brains, so to speak. Our equipment is smaller, but every cell is at work in it."

"I can see that," put in Gondor suddenly. "It's a recognized fact that only part of the human brain functions at a time."

"Among us Other-People, every cell functions every moment," Huil told him. "Witness the swift learning of your language. Witness our rapid approach toward appreciation of your attitudes and learnings. Not only can we learn, but we can transmit."

He drew himself up and spoke impressively:

"If we desired, we could awaken and whip every cell of your brains into action."

"You could?" almost roared Dr. Gondor. "Make us think—like you?"

HUIL grinned like a frog in a cartoon and shook his head. "No, Doctor. Not like us. Your twelvefold brain-masses would be twelve times our betters. The process is a simple one, a mental rousing to sympathy—again let

me cite the parallel of the magnet which, rubbing the ordinary metal, gives it a like power." He gazed around, to make sure that all understood. "But now I shall shift the simile. The power would not go from my mind to one mind alone; no, it would be like the broadcast of one of your radio stations. Each human brain of all your Earth has a certain basic attunement to other brains—"

"True, true," mumbled a psychiatrist near the door. "Those experiments in thought-transference at Duke University prove it."

"So that," continued Huil, "to waken one brain to power would be to waken all."

"It would?" cried Gonder, rising excitedly. "Look here, let's do it at once. I'll be the subject, and you—"

"No," said Huil again. "Once, with my friend Danton Carewe, I was ready to attempt it. Something made my companions withhold me. That something was prescience. Look at this object which you call a newspaper."

He took it from the table and unfolded it.

"War," he read aloud from the headlines. "Conquest. Oppression of the weak by the strong. Robbery by violence. Dishonesty among those in places of power, where only the honest and the kind should sit." He dropped the paper. "I shall not perform the experiment just now, Dr. Gondor. Perhaps I shall never perform it."

He rose from his seat in a manner almost regal, and asked Carewe to remain for lunch. The doctors rightly took this as a courteous dismissal, and made their farewells. Huil took up the telephone and ordered plenty of food for two; he had become fond of Terrestrial cooking as he found it.

"Huil," said Carewe, "you fear too much."

It was an accusation, but Huil did not

take offense. "I doubt, Carewe, if one can fear too much," he said, looking at his new friend with wise, bright eyes, vertical-pupilled like a cats. "What shall I do for you as a favor? What has been the greatest search of all your world's scientists?"

Carewe thought of Roger Bacon and Albertus Magnus. "The universal alkahest, I suppose," he replied. "For health, long life, and most of all for the transmutation of base metals into gold."

"Gold?" repeated Huil. "Oh, yes, that element is your highest standard of value. Carewe, I like you. If I gave my attention to it, this alkahest would be easy to discover."

"But I don't want it," protested Carewe. "I don't think that rich men are happy. Not even all wise men are happy, though I'd take my chance."

Huil's enormous mouth curled into a delightful caricature of a grin. "I find you a good man, Carewe. If only all human beings were like you, helpful and kind and to be trusted."

He talked then, more than heretofore, about his home planet. His words were magic; Carewe was able to see a world rich and fair, with blue-green skies and a sun hooped about like Saturn, and large but healthy cities, fields and parks and the best of good people. Upon this world had descended a plague of invaders, and at this point Huil's descriptive powers failed.

"Your language will not call the things properly," he said. "I can speak of machines with many-jointed legs, each ridden by a jellylike entity that is as much part of the device as the bowels are part of one of your spiders." He gestured with many-fingered hands that trembled. "This sounds only grotesque. I cannot say how horrible the creatures are, how greedy they are to kill us and to take our lands and towns. We shudder." He suited the action to the word. "It is torture to know that they come

in their ships only from the next planet—as near to us as Venus is to you."

"Surely you will conquer them," protested Carewe, but Huil shook his head.

"For a man's lifetime we have held them in cheek; for a lifetime, or a little more, we shall continue to do so. Eventually they must triumph. We are fewer than they, and not fierce. But you—you men of this world—are fiercer even than they."

Carewe was shaken with the story of the machine-monsters and their subreptilian, greedy-cruel operators. "We'd be fierce enough to make hash of those invaders. Why don't you give us the new power of thought, Huil? Then we can build ships like yours, and an army of us sail back to help you."

"After the victory, what?" Huil demanded. "So much our superiors in size and power of brain, you would turn upon us. From our allies you would become our persecutors, worse than the machine-riding monsters."

"No!" Carewe cried, shocked at the idea. "Huil, we would never do that to you."

"It is right that you think well of your own race," said Huil kindly, "and I have already wished that every man of Earth was as good as yourself. But here, look."

A GAIN he picked up the paper and held it out to his friend. From the front page glared the pictured face of a dictator, arrogant, iron-mouthed, glitter-eyed.

"He knows too much already," said Huil drily.

"You are certain," Carewe recapitulated, "that the full power of the brain cannot be given to one Terrestrial or a few—but to all?"

"I am certain," Huil assured it. "So it was long ago on my world, when a great and inspired leader evolved the secret. In communicating it to his dis-

ciples, he found that all his people, and those beyond his nation, knew immediately the awakening and the knowledge. I say again, it would be like a broadcasting of a radio message by one of your Terrestrial stations. Every brain would be a receiving set, tuned to the proper wave-length; each would be touched to music, to eloquence—or to sinister menace.”

He spoke sadly, and Carewe put out a hand to touch the Other-Man's tight sleeve. “I'm sorry,” he said honestly. “Sorry that you find no profit in your search for friends and allies.”

Huil then smiled again with his great gash of a mouth. “Perhaps, Carewe, we shall find what we are looking for in some other system,” he said. “We must depart soon. Once more, Carewe, I do not include you in my condemnation of your race as a selfish, dangerous breed.”

“If one of us is worth friendship, we all are,” pleaded Carewe. “I say that man is kind, normally. If the sleeping brain awoke, the new cells would know greater kindness still.”

Huil's eyes strayed toward the newspaper, with the harsh, proud face still staring from it. Carewe made one last attempt.

“He seems selfish, I grant; but his selfishness is so small a part of himself, faultily developed. Were he made wise and powerful by you, that evil would be weak and small beside the great new kindness.”

“If you could prove that!” cried Huil wistfully.

“Prove it yourself—with your superior wisdom—”

But they were interrupted by the arrival of the lunch. Both ate heartily but thoughtfully. Some time later in the afternoon, Huil asked for a taxi and went to the airport, where he and his associates conferred for some hours inside their ship.

RETURNING to Wichita, in the evening, Huil asked to see Dr. Gondor and the other scientists, also a representative of the governor. Eight persons gathered in his drawing room. Carewe attended the meeting, by Huil's special invitation.

“My companions and I must leave Earth tomorrow at midnight,” Huil addressed the group. “Perhaps the day afterward—no later.”

Gondor, as self-appointed spokesman, expressed rather gruffly his regret that Huil had not found the sort of thing he had hoped for upon Earth.

“There are other planets and systems,” replied Huil, “and, I dare say, at least one other race similar to yours and to mine. You, gentlemen, have also been disappointed. I refer to the fact that I am departing without having given you and your race the new mental powers we discussed.”

The scientists and professors nodded dolefully in admission of this statement.

“Perhaps I can modify that disappointment a little,” Huil went on, “by telling you the small part of the truth which I have so far withheld.”

“Withheld?” repeated Dr. Gondor sharply, and there was a general upward toss of heads as interest captured every attention there. Huil bowed slightly, as if in gratitude, and continued:

“When first I considered waking the race of this world to full brain power, I refrained from discussing one aspect of the process.” He cleared his throat with a deep rumble, rather like Dr. Gondor. “Gentlemen, if I should transfer this new ability and wakefulness to you, a single mind would serve as vehicle. That single mind would bear the entire impact of my hypnotic will-transference, spreading it to others. That mind would crack. Its owner would die.” He shut up his great mouth with a snap.

There was silence, for several moments. Then Dr. Gondor volunteered the information that he had guessed as much.

"You can see for yourselves why I did not tell you this before," Huil wound up. "None of you would want to die for something he will never profit by."

Carewe rose to his feet. "If you will reconsider," he said between dry lips, "I'll volunteer as the subject—I'll die for this gift to humanity."

Huil's eyes smiled. "You have become my good friend, Carewe. If I am to shock anyone to death, I would prefer that it be someone for whom I have less affection."

"Well, I'm not exactly your close friend," spoke up Dr. Gondor gruffly. "Why not take me as the subject? I was never afraid to die for science, or for humanity."

Huil lifted his many-fingered hand in protest. "Wait, wait. I did not say that I would do this thing. On the contrary, I only explained this necessity for death because I had definitely decided against performing the experiment."

With that, he concluded the meeting, and Carewe went home alone.

In the early morning he read the *Wichita Eagle*. There was more than Huil's statement to make news:

GOVERNOR OFFERS LIFE FOR HUMANITY

Thus the eight-column banner, in big, black type. Underneath was an interview with Governor Carnot at Topeka.

"I am the principal public servant of this state," Carnot had said. "If the chief of the Other-People is considering a gift of new mental powers to the world, to be achieved through the sacrifice of a single person, I would cheerfully be that person."

Under this was published a formal statement by Dr. Gondor's colleagues. They strongly urged Huil to agree to wakening Earth's brains, and offered themselves as possible subjects.

HURRYING downtown in the forenoon, Carewe found Huil alone in his suite at the hotel. The sojourner from a far world was opening envelope after envelope from a stack of special delivery letters and telegrams on his table.

"Help me with this deluge of correspondence," Huil greeted Carewe. "Look here, what do you think of this?"

It was a special delivery from Lansing, where the Kansas State Penitentiary is located. Scribbled crudely on coarse, blue-ruled paper, it read:

Dere mr Huil if you nede a Man to dye for yor esprement wil state that am glad to oblidge. I am up hear at the big house duing a life stretch but guess i wood welcome a chanst to pay my dett to socity by dyeing for this caus pleas advice when you want me

sincerely yours

HARRY VEDDER

"Well?" said Carewe. "He's a convict, a law-breaker. Probably he's committed murder, if he's serving a life sentence. Yet, is this the selfishness which you say rules all men?"

"He is sick of life in a prison," replied Huil. "He is glad to lay it down."

"I do not grant that it is so," demurred Carewe, "but, even if it were—look at what I have just opened."

It was from one Paul Sheppley, a student at the Municipal University of Wichita:

In case you need a subject to receive the brain-awakening wave,

and die in the receiving, I freely volunteer. I do not seek for any reward, except the obvious betterment that will come to the human race. This note may be taken as a pledge that no responsibility will be charged to anyone but myself.

"I happen to know that young man," said Carewe. "All this town knows him. He's a football star, an honor student, admired, healthy, with a fine future awaiting him. Not much chance that he is looking for death. Yet he will face it, as a service to his fellowmen."

Huil fiddled absent-mindedly with a great sheaf of envelopes. Carewe had never before seen him so detached and dreamy. When he spoke, it was with an almost sly persuasiveness:

"This does not mean that every man in the world is offering to die for his people."

"No, but many are offering," returned Carewe at once. "This, mind you, is a single morning's mail—from only a few miles around, where people have read the late editions of the papers last night. What will you receive tomorrow, Huil? And the next day? And the following week, if you extend your stay so far?"

Huil gazed at him long and searchingly, and no expression modified that broad, shallow-browed countenance. Carewe continued:

"It's high time, my friend, that I took the strongest exception to your arbitrary condemnation of my race. We men of Earth have advanced because we help each other; we shall advance to greater things still because we shall continue to help each other. We shall discover for ourselves the boon you withhold, or get along without it. Meanwhile, I am sorry for you and your mistrust."

Huil smiled, and set his hand on Carewe's shoulder. "Don't quarrel," he

pleaded. "Have you your car at hand? Because I'd like to drive somewhere, some pleasant spot where we can relax for a few moments."

"Of course, if you like," said Carewe, his heat departing from him at once. "My car's parked near the entrance of the hotel." He started for the door. "We can go to Riverside Park."

They went.

Riverside Park, located almost at the center of the city of Wichita, is tucked into a great bend of the Little Arkansas River, a carefully tended tract of sward and green trees. At this time in the morning it was almost deserted. Leaving the car on Nims Avenue, near the little zoological garden, the two friends walked a short distance along a graveled path. Huil called a halt, and they faced each other on a grass-covered level between a pair of Civil War cannon and a little clump of cedars.

"You offered to die as the martyr to this shocking of all Terrestrial humanity's brains into full waking," he reminded Carewe weightily.

Carewe's face lighted up. "Then you are relenting?" he almost shouted. "You will waken our minds?"

"Yes," said Huil. "Today, at once. You will be the subject?"

"Of course I will," nodded Carewe, then looked sober for a moment. "I don't quite know how to break the news to my wife, but—"

"There will be no time for that," broke in Huil hastily. "I shall put the psychical machinery into action this moment."

"Can I do not have an hour?" asked Carewe, but the frog-head shook emphatically.

"Not a minute, Carewe. See, your desire to take leave of your wife, to set your affairs in order, is but a refinement of selfishness. It cannot be. If you intend to accept, do so at once, be-

fore I change my mind again."

Carewe swallowed hard, but his voice was absolutely steady as he replied: "Very good. Begin. I am ready now."

He drew himself up and met Huil's penetrating gaze.

"I need not ask you to banish fear from your heart," said Huil gently. "Only look into my eyes. Do not blink." He lifted a hand and drew it slowly across Carewe's line of vision. The lemon-colored palm and its fringe of narrow fingers seemed to float there of itself, with no supporting wrist or arm. It blurred, became a spot of light. "Relax your brain," Huil was saying, from farther off. "Relax, at this same time let the atoms of it waken . . . let each atom attune itself to mine—"

Carewe wondered, most serenely, if he should die before his mind was touched to full activity. Then he wondered how the power would be transferred throughout the world to other men . . . then, suddenly he knew; Huil had been right, and Carewe saw how he had been right . . . yes, it was like a master broadcast to every brain-radio.

THOUGHTS were real, as real and powerful as rays of light, as waves of sound. Being able to marshal and direct those thoughts was like seeing endlessly, hearing infinitely. Problems were no longer problems. That baffling thing Huil had said, about outdistancing light by cutting arcs of space—why, it was simple, elemental. He, Carewe, knew how it could be improved upon. Yes, and how to build a space-ship to effect it. As for the world, and the world's peoples at large. . . .

He seemed to hold the world between his hands. He could see it all, and at the same time no single tiny item was shrunk away from his vision. He was aware of cities, nations, rulers, and

they were no longer as they had been. They knew the truth, and the truth made them free. They were kind, understanding. They were happy.

But what was happening to him? Where was he?

He realized that he still stood on the little patch of sward in Riverside Park, before the mute muzzles of the two old cannon. Huil faced him, and his frog-mouth was smiling.

"I'm not dead," said Carewe, perplexed.

"You were never even in danger," Huil told him. "Did I not try to prove your race selfish? . . . and have I not failed?"

"I see now," Carewe smiled back. "You tried to frighten us."

"Instead of which you almost frightened me, with your desire to die helpfully. And you know all wonderful things now. Perhaps they are no longer wonders."

"They are the more wonderful for the knowledge of them," Carewe said. He spread his arms, as a child might, in pure joy. "See how green the grass is, how blue the sky! And the sunlight—and the cedar trees yonder—"

"Do not forget," put in Huil, "that you are to help my people against their enemies."

"I have not forgotten," Carewe assured him.

The back of Carewe's awakened mind had been full of the problem. As in a drama he saw the rush upon Huil's world of those machine-driving monsters, so loathsome, so cruel—and so blundering. He knew, already, their mistakes, and how those mistakes could be built into their downfall.

"We shall start building a space-fleet this very morning," he said to Huil. "Your enemies shall be swept out of the universe."

The End