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Gary Winnick

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Carl Potts
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COVER COLOR
by
Steve Oliff
IGNORANT OF ITS TRUE VALUE, THE ORZIANS WORSHIPPED IT FOR ALL THE WRONG REASONS...

BUT ITS BEAUTY HELD NO INTEREST FOR THIS PIRATE. A PRICE HAD BEEN BID, AND THESE ROGUES HAD ASSURED THEIR EMPLOYER QUICK AND SAFE DELIVERY.

HOWEVER, AS THIS ONE COULD TELL YOU, THERE IS NO HONOR AMONG THIEVES. ONLY AN INSATIABLE HUNGER FOR POWER.

SOMEHOW IT FOUND ITS WAY TO THIS PAGAN WORLD LONG AGO.

...ITS SUPERFICIAL BEAUTY, PERHAPS.

THE ORB!!
With the first orb in their possession, the thieves slipped silently through filth-ridden streets and made their escape unhampere until...

Citizen, may I borrow a moment...

Out of the way, old man!

Sir, just a few coins for a poor...

Beggar, I said, out of the way!

Clout!!

Minutes later they reached the water's edge and chose the spot where their prize would be hidden.
As they waited for the ship, Jaiuna thought of the power they would soon wield with the legendary orbs, the power of a god...
Row quickly, Rohn. They will not wait but a few minutes.

Especially if they know the cargo we carry.

The brigands pull their small boat alongside the huge craft, and climbed aboard the wooden deck as the swarthy crew silently welcomed them.

As the new passengers made their way to an unoccupied corner of the pirate galleon, they did not go unobserved.
Only the creak of the oars could be heard as the night hours passed in miles of uneventful travel.

When the galleon made its first stop, the duo set out on foot, unaware of the Hunter that followed.

The dark forest closed around them as they retraced their footsteps of the previous day.

Deep into the forest Rohn clutched the bag closer, assured by the weight of its bogus contents. The trees thinned slightly, allowing blue moonlight to filter down and illuminate...

... their destination...
...AND ITS SOLE OPERATOR!

APPREHENSIVELY, THE ORZIAN SLIPPED ABOARD THE STRANGE CRAFT BEFORE ITS METALLIC DOORS CLICKED SHUT.

THE STREAMLINED SHIP ROSE SILENTLY THROUGH THE CLOUDS OF THE ORZIAN ATMOSPHERE...

...AND OUT INTO THE QUIET VOID OF SPACE.

VEILED BY SHADOWS, THE HUNTER WITNESSED A STRANGE ENCOUNTER...

BY THE GODS! THIS IS THE LAIR OF A ONE-EYED DEMON!

IT FEELS GOOD TO BE RID OF THOSE UNCOMFORTABLE GUISES. NOW LET'S GET DOWN TO BUSINESS, CHATTERBOX.

THE SILENT MACHINE GAZED AT THE ORB... TRANSFIXED.

IT HAD SEARCHED THE CORNERS OF THE UNIVERSE, JUST WAITING FOR THIS DAY.

HERE'S THE ORB.

THese PAWNS HAVE DONE THEIR JOB WELL... WITH THIS THIRD ORB IN MY POSSESSION...

IT IS TIME THEY READ THEIR DUE REWARD... THE SOLITUDE OF DEATH!

THIS DAY IT POSSESSED ALL THREE OF THE SACRED ORBS.
As the robot turned and left the chamber, the hunter took advantage of an opportune moment.

Stand away, thief, or I'll slit her throat!

I have come for the sacred jewel you stole from our temple!

Silence! You will get the jewel now, and we will return to the city.

Who?

You fool, don't you know where the hell you are?!

Take a look outside, savage!

Outside...?

"I must... find the jewel... escape... this demon's pit..."
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT, JAHNA?

YES, BUT HOW DID THAT BASTARD GET IN HERE?!

HE MUST HAVE GOTTEN BACK ON HIS PLANET.

SOMEHOW, HE FOUND OUT WE STOLE THE ORB, AND FOLLOWED US... BUT HOW?

LET'S NOT WORRY ABOUT HIM RIGHT NOW. HOW LONG HAS IT BEEN?

NOT QUITE THREE MINUTES, IT SHOULD GO OFF...

"...ANY SECOND NOW!"

IN ANOTHER CHAMBER OF THE SHIP, AS THE ROBOT SLOWLY SET THE THIRD COMPONENT INTO PLACE...

THOOM!

FOLLOWING THE ECHOES OF THE EXPLOSION, THE ORZIAN STUMBLED INTO THE ROOM...

...THAT CONTAINED THE MECHANICAL REMAINS...

...AND WHAT HIS MADNESS SOUGHT!
The orb of reason tucked safely under his arm, the crazed Orzian fled down the labyrinth of corridors...

...determined to find an exit, some sign of light.

All he found was the cold darkness of space.

Scavenging through the aftermath of the disaster, the pair began to search for the missing orb of reason.

Do you think he could have put the damn thing somewhere else on the ship?

Impossible, we saw them both in this room before we began our mission. So where the hell is it?

Here on the ship somewhere, but I wish I knew where. It's gotta be close by.

Their search continued as the orb they sought drifted, ironically, just outside...

...with its lifeless rescuer floating nearby.

He had taken the orb which contained the power of reason... an important function that failed him when he needed it most.
Within the confines of the orbiting ship...

Only one orb is here, and the second is hidden on the orbiting planet. The third one has got to be here...

—We're too close to lose it now!

We've come so far!

So far, in fact, that the un-piloted ship was being pulled directly into the planet below!

This danger went unnoticed by the preoccupied travelers...

...until the planet's face filled the ship's screen. But by then, it was too late...

Beep! Beep!

Crash!

...for although they possessed the orb of genius, all the power it contained was ultimately useless...

...to a ship of fools!
The early morning sun shone down on the shores of the Orzite land. As a twisted old man combed the trees at the water's edge.

Suddenly, a shining reflection caught his weary eyes.

He moved closer to inspect the strange sight and discovered a quite unique and much sought after bauble.

Perplexed, he lifted the orb to the sunlight.

As he held the jewel, he felt his back straighten and the wrinkles on his face begin to fade.

His life was not yet complete. In fact, it was just beginning... but he had yet to form a clear understanding.

This poor beggar had no way of realizing...

...that he would soon become a king!
Because human beings are considered to be the most savage, natural fighter's in the galaxy, when three close-knit vets are available, you hire them to help your cause. It's as simple as that.

Yeah, but what is our job in this fracas?

If ya didn't listen, blipp, then keep yer eyes on us and we'll cue you.

Com-link, check!

That's it! Keep it up and we won't live ta see tomorrow!

One?!

Man, them boys up top sure give us a lot of credit, don't they!

One lousy...

The prae... dr wants us ta shoot down these boogers! Clippin' honer-birds?!

Okay, if that's all he wants—how many today?

Just one... ta see how we do...

All right, I know, but that's the way it is! We're hired ta follow orders, so we follow 'em as best we can!
ALL SYSTEMS, CHECK! LET'S GO!

WE'RE ON PROBATION WIMPS, SO DON'T BLOW IT!

AW, WE AIN'T GONNA BLOW IT! HOW MANY YEARS AND HOW MANY WARS WE BEEN THRU, HUH?

WE AIN'T GONNA BLOW IT, I TELL YA!

TOO MANY...

HAVE YOU EVEN SEEN THE BLOODS THAT PILOT THEM BIRDS? NO, SPEED, YOU HAVEN'T.

WE NEVER GET TO SEE 'EM! ALL WE SEE ARE BLIP CO-ORDINATES. THAT'S THE DUBIOUS ADVANTAGE OF THESE CRUMMY TECHNOLOGICAL WARS: NO PHYSICAL CONTACT WITH THE ENEMY!

BUT THIS IS A WHOLE NEW WAR, SO WE'VE GOTTA BE CAREFUL!

BLIPP'S RIGHT, WE GOTTA TAKE THIS SERIOUSLY! KEEP YER EYES OPEN AND YER SAFETYS OFF!

HEY!! WE GOT COMPANY, GUYS!

WE'D BETTER HOOK!
BOOGIE @ 15 South-Southwest; acute hyp-angle compression at six vels!

I've got 'im traced, now just git this crate under 'im in some sort of clearing!

I don't wanna take out half this forest's canopy before I peg 'im.

Yassuh, boss!

GOT HIS ASS!

That's all you got; his ass!

The rest of it just set down two kilometers from here; possibly repairable!

Which means we still have a job to do!
FINDING A CRIPPLED CRAFT IS NO TRICK FOR A MACHINE THAT CAN TRACK A MICROBE THRU THE DENSE, WINDSWEPT ATMOSPHERE OF VENUS, SO IT WASN'T LONG BEFORE ---

GOD IS HE TORN UP!!

SPEED---

CALL THE BASE CO-ORDINATOR!
GET HIM UP HERE!

KNIGHTS- ERRANT ONE TO B.C. OVER!!

WHAT'S GOING ON HERE?!

WHY HAVEN'T YOU MEN MADE A DATA REPORT?!

AND WHAT THE HELL IS ALL THAT RACKET?!!

IT'S-- IT'S THE ALIEN, SIR-- IT'S WOUNDED!

WE WEREN'T SURE OF EXACT PROCEDURE---

'EXACT PROCEDURE'!!

WHAT A HELLOVA WAY TO MAKE A LIVING.

FIN
"How much longer must we wait before we are free to fulfill our ambitions? We have already waited a considerable time and my anticipation is becoming unbearable."

"It should not be long now. We must be patient. Our contact has already sent an embassy with a device to free us from this accursed prison."

"Being humanoid, it has a very limited life span. I trust that it's frail body can exist for the length of time it will take to reach us."

"Why must our destiny hang upon the thin thread of this humanoid's life? It is a pitiful state, indeed, when the fruition of our goal must depend upon such an inadequate being."

"This will be the first and last time such a situation shall ever arise. When we have been freed, it will be the humanoids' destinies that will hang upon the thread of our whim, with Travion dead and his infernal prison gone, nothing that remains is powerful enough to stop us!"
IT IS STRANGE THAT A VIALBLE SET OF CIRCUMSTANCES CAN THRUST TOGETHER TWO BEINGS FROM SUCH DIVERSE AND OPPOSING RACES.

Dalaen, an ambassador from the planet Korbun, has an unofficial appointment to keep on his homeworld.

Kyra, the daughter of a wealthy merchant, now travels aboard her father's fully automated cargo shuttle as its only other passenger.

Story: pencil
GARY WINNICK
Story: inks
BRENT ANDERSON
Lettering
TOM ORZECHOWSKI

© BY GARY WINNICK 1976
THEIR JOURNEY NOT HALF OVER, A SMALL CRAFT SLIPS OUT OF STASIS SPACE AND ATTACKS THEM FROM BEHIND.

DIRECT HIT!

Ohhh... WHAT HAPPENED...?

THE THREE OCCUPANTS OF THE ATTACKING SHIP GLIDE SILENTLY TOWARD THE CRIPPLED SHUTTLE...

...AND GAIN ACCESS THROUGH AN AIRLOCK.

PIRATES!
KYRA IS DRAGGED TO A
DARK CORNER WHERE
SKUL'S LIPS CUT INTO
HER IN A VIOLENT KISS.
AS HE THROWS HER TO
THE DECK, HE RIPS HER
GARMENT AND SAVAGELY
SATISFIES HIS APPETITE.

IT SEEMS LIKE AN ETERNITY
BEFORE KYRA HEARS
RECEDING FOOTSTEPS
FOLLOWED BY THE CLANG
OF THE AIRLOCK DOOR.
SHE KNOWS THE
PIRATES ARE GONE.

RETURNING TO DALAEN'S
INERT FIGURE, KYRA
DRAGS HIM THROUGH THE
CORRIDORS OF THE
CRIPPLED SHIP TO THE
HANGER DECK.

FINDING A LONE LIFEBOAT IN
ITS BERTH, THE ABASHED
GIRL PULLS THE WOUNDED
AMBASSADOR ABOARD.
NEITHER KNOWS THE FUNDAMENTALS OF NAVIGATION IN
SPACE, BUT TO REMAIN
ABoard THE SHUTTLE IS
SUICIDE.
SOMETIME LATER, WITH PROVISIONS AND FUEL RUNNING LOW, KYRA DETECTS A MASSIVE ENERGY SOURCE.

SENSORS ARE PICKING UP SOMETHING OUT THERE.

AS THEIR SMALL CRAFT GLIDES CLOSER, AN ALIEN WARSHIP LOOMS INTO VIEW.

THE DOCKING AIRLOCK SEAL IS A PERFECT FIT. AIR AND LIFE SUPPORT ARE FUNCTIONING. LET'S GO ACROSS.

WHEN THEIR SCANNERS REPORT HABITABLE LIFE-SUPPORT SYSTEMS WITHIN THE MYSTERIOUS VESSEL, KYRA AND DALAEN PREPARE TO BOARD.

KYRA, COME LOOK AT THIS. IT SEEMS TO HAVE A LIFE OF ITS OWN.

THIS MACHINERY LOOKS FAMILIAR TO ME SOMEHOW. I'D WAGER I COULD PILOT THIS CRAFT.
MORE THAN HALF AN EARTH-YEAR LATER, ON A LAWLESS REFUGE PLANET, BRIGANDS AND CUTTHROATS DESCRIESE AMID THE RUINS OF A FALLEN ALIEN CIVILIZATION... A CIVILIZATION SUPPOSEDLY RICH IN WEALTH, TREASURE- SEEKING HOPEFULS FROM ALL CORNERS OF THE GALAXY ARE TO SIFT THROUGH THE PLANET-WIDE RUINS. THESE ARE THE COLONISTS OF THE GALAXY AND THEY'VE CREATED A NEW AND DANGEROUS FRONTIER: THE PIRATE PLANET KNOWN AS ROGUE WORLD.

KYRA AND DALAEN HAVE GONE FROM ONE LAWLESS PLANET TO ANOTHER, IN AN ENDORVR TO FIND THEIR THREE ATTACKERS, USING MONIES OBTAINED THROUGH THE SALVAGE OF THE ALIEN STARSHIP THEY HAD ABANDONED THEIR FRANTIC SEARCH FOR REVENGE. BUT IN DOING SO, EACH HAD GIVEN UP AN IMPORTANT ELEMENT OF THEMSELVES. DALAEN HAD ABANDONED HIS AMBASSADORIAL DUTIES, AND KYRA HAD RELINQUISHED THE SAFETY AND COMFORT OF HOME AND FAMILY. THE ONLY COMMODITIES THEY HAD RETAINED WERE THE CRYSTALINE PYRAMID AND THEIR THIRST FOR REVENGE. THEIR SEARCH HAS LED THEM HERE.
THE TWO **PIRATE-HUNTERS** HAVE FREQUENTED THE DECADENT SPACEPORT CITY TAVERNS FOR SEVERAL WEEKS TO NO AVAIL, UNTIL ON ONE PARTICULAR DAY THEY FIND **SKUL**, THE LEADER OF THE PIRATE TRIO, HE SITS STEEDED AND SLOG IN THE SECURITY OF HIS NARCOTIC BEVERAGE, UNAWARE THAT TWO PAIRS OF BURNING EYES WATCH HIM FROM A DARK CORNER OF THE ROOM.

FOR SEVERAL DAYS THEY HAVE OBSERVED HIM, AND HAVING DISCERNED A PATTERN IN HIS DAILY ROUTINE, THEY PREPARE TO INITIATE THEIR PLAN.

**SKUL** RISES, DONS HIS CLOAK, AND EXITS INTO THE DECAYING STREETS, WHERE HE IS CONFRONTED BY KYRA IN HER SKIMPY LEATHER ATTIRE.

**WELL, WELL... I COULD...**

INTERESTED IN SOMETHING MORE THAN DRINK THIS DAY?

**SKUL** AWAKENS TO FIND HIMSELF CHAINED TO THE WALL OF A DINGY ROOM FACING THE GIRL WHO HAD CONFRONTED HIM EARLIER.

**WHO THE HELL ARE YOU?!** I HAVE DONE NOTHING...
DON'T YOU REMEMBER US? OBVIOUSLY YOUR MEMORY IS AS SMALL AS YOUR INTELLIGENCE. WHERE ARE YOUR TWO ACCOMPLICES?

SILENCE WILL GET YOU NOWHERE, DALAEN...

TALK, YOU MISCREAT!

ALRIGHT... DON'T HIT ME AGAIN. I'LL TELL YOU. THEY'RE ON A MINING RUN IN THE RUINS OF THE FIFTH TIER... I... UHHHHH...

DEAD.

Traces of dynide in skull's mouth revealed the cause of his death. Not wanting to face torture, he had taken the coward's way out. Kyra was only sorry that he had died without pain--but he had double-crossed his companions with his dying breath. The next day, Kyra and Dalaen trek to the ruins: a dangerous place, inhabited by scavengers and pirates, each seeking the treasure of a lost civilization.

We are nearly there.
It has to be their camp, but there's nobody here.

Logically, since they aren't here, they must be... down there.

Cautiously, the pair walk through the eerily lit shaft until it widens into an immense chamber, where they find...

Look at that! It's fantastic! What does the writing say, Dalaien?

It's hard to discern, but I think I can read it.

It says... "Travian".

The chamber narrows to another tunnel, which again rapidly widens out to reveal...
SENSING THE INTRUDERS, THE PIRATES CEASE PROVING THE ENERGY FIELD AND DRAW THEIR WEAPONS.

BEFORE FIRING HIS HAND WEAPON, DALAEN DROPS HIS BACK PACK, SPILLING ITS CONTENTS TO THE CAVERN'S ROCK FLOOR.

WITHOUT A THOUGHT, DALAEN FLICKS A THIN BEAM OF VIBRANT ENERGY FROM HIS PISTOL THAT MELTS THE MALE PIRATE'S CHEST.

AS THE FEMALE RETURNS FIRE, HER BLAST NEARLY DESTROYS THE GLOWING PYRAMID, WHICH THEN BEGINS TO WAVE AND PULSATE.

WITH THE ACID STENCH OF SMOULDERING FLESH FILLING THE CHAMBER, DALAEN AND KYRA APPROACH THE TWO CHARRED BODIES. SMILES OF INSANE SATISFACTION SPREAD ACROSS THEIR FACES.

INEXPICABLY, HER WEAPON CEASES TO FUNCTION...
LOOKING UP FROM HIS HANDIWORK, DALAEN NOTICES A STRANGE, GLOWING APERTURE IN THE CAVE WALL. RE-TRIEVING THE STILL-GLOWING CRYSTALINE PYRAMID, HE PLACES IT NEAR THE OPENING.

THE CRYSTAL FAIRLY LEAPS INTO THE ORIFICE AND THEY MATE PERFECTLY.

INSTANTANEOUSLY, THE ENERGY FIELD AND ITS 'KEY' BOTH DISSOLVE.

"AT LAST WE HAVE BEEN LIBERATED! THE CONVERSION OF THE GALAXY MAY NOW PROCEED..."

"...UNCONTESTED!"

"BUT WHAT OF THESE TWO?"

"FOR THE SERVICES THEY HAVE RENDERED, THEIR LIVES WILL BE SPARED.

"BESIDES, THE EVIL OF THEIR REVENGE HAS ALREADY EARNED THEM A NICHE IN THE 'NEW WAY.'"

THE EVIL PLANET CALLED ROGUE WORLD WOULD VERY SOON BECOME THE CAPITOL FOR THE NEW ORDER OF THINGS!
Dear Frank and Gary,

I got the copies of VENTURE 4 a week ago or so. I consider it your best produc-
tion, a delight to study and a welcome addi-
tion to my collection of better qual-
ity zines. I'm flattered that you felt
my support was worth mentioning.

I should probably pick a few things to
comment on at random, because I doubt
that right now, after mailing out Phan-
tasmagoria 4 subscriptions and getting
portfolio 7 printed, I could organize
my response all at once. First off, the
thing that caught my eye was the
Kaluta Ilo, which I think I have been
published before. (Some issue of Realm?)
The contents format, like the format of
your past issue, is really well-done; in
fact, I have got to say that the layout of
at least one of your stories (SYNAPSE), is
far and away superior to all but a few gra-
phic stories I've seen in the past decade.

Lovely stuff, and naturally the rendering of
it all makes me inspired to heights beyond
that of many professionals. I hope HORIZON
ZERO GRAPHIQUES becomes an institution.

All I can say critically is to confirm a
note in Don Newton's letter: the zip or
transfer texture is often bothersome, eith-
er for being too intrusive -
usually because of the size
of the screen, as in Gary's
BACKWORLD BRIGANDS - or
else for dots rotting
away in repro - for
instance, SYNAPSE's
last panel.

Also, I thought
you were over-re-
lying on solid blacks
in the magazine: many of
the pages - the covers, BRIGANDS,
the centerfold, etc. - have areas
of unrendered black that filled in
repro. This is a vice for two rea-
sons: one is that it's a kind of over-
kill, which causes black to lose it's
draftsmanship, because it
is overused; the other is for produc-
tion reasons: solids show up as imper-
factions in printing and they also show
through the back of a page rather dis-
tractingly. So now you know, and you
can get back to work. Best wishes and
regards to you all.

Best-
Kenneth Smith

What fun the whole thing must be; putting the
magazine together without the Code restric-
tions. I can't imagine it!

Keep at it Frank, Gary, and Gary. If I were
an editor, I'd find something for you to do
straight off!

Sincerely-
Frank Thorne

Howdy Frank, Gary, and Brent,

Much thanks for the copy of VENTURE #4.
You asked for a L.O.C., so here it is! First
off, I'll talk about Frank's work. The
cover was really nice. The inside front cover
was very fine, also. Your chicks are getting
a nice "Jonesiah" feel to them. I was not
particularly impressed with "Flasher". The
nicest thing in that was the city back-
ground in the first panel. Most of the
centerspread figures were good
but the castle or stockade was
weak. The general layout was
good, but you need to work on
perspective (as do II).

Your short text-panel story
"Synapse" was the highlight of
this ish. The story was nice and
some fine things were happening in
the artwork.

Gary's story was okay. There were
some narration problems, though.
His art has the same basic
problems as Frank's, plus he
needs to lay out better. For
Crom's sake, both of you
please keep working!

The "Grimmley" shorts were
pretty nice. The first one
might not have registered to
those who haven't seen Grimmley's
previous strips. They wouldn't know
how much he wants to leave. Brent's
Batman page showed again the same basic
problems.

The Kenneth Smith stuff was
great as was the
Larry Todd II0. All in all, a really nice
issue.

Carl Potts
Continuity Assoc.
New York, NY

Dear Frank,

I thoroughly enjoyed VENTURE #4. I especially
enjoyed "Synapse". And the layout - the layout
was a nice change from the continuous
side-by-side panels which are so common. The
front and back covers were great, as was the
centerspread. And how about more of Gukus and
Aara?

I could go on and on, but I don't really know
what to praise next. I'm looking forward to
the next issue, and I hope there will be many
more.

Best-
Kenneth May
Norfolk, Va.
Dear Frank and Gary,

Although "fanzine" has become almost an epithet of late, in all honesty, VENTURE is a fine example of what a fan-produced 'zine can and should be. The strength of VENTURE lies in your "staff" artists, Frank Cirocco and Gary Winnick. Frank's cover was a gem of orante work and Gary's back cover reminded me of early Jeff Jones. To comment on each illo is a great temptation, but in an effort to keep this letter down to a managable length, I'll resist that temptation. I will, however, mention the inside front cover (more illos of ERB's Mars are definitely indicated), the center spread (masterful), and the astronaut on page 2 (worthy of ANALOG).

"Backworld Brigands" was well-scripted given its length. The character of Gukus was handled with a fine light touch. The art, though a bit crude in spots, was good overall.

Of the three Batman vignettes, "Flasher" was the most successful. Somebody ought to tell the Commissioner about this droll sense of humor. The "Grimmley's Tales" continue to be a light touch.

"Synapse" worked fairly well, though the personalities of the youths and the interaction between them could have been explored better. This could have been fruitfully contrasted with the route (sic) reactions of the adults. The illos accompanying the tale were simply exquisite. Keep up the good work, fellas, the medium needs ya.

-Ed O'Keily
Ada, Ohio

Dear Franks, Gary, and Brent,

Well, it's 1 a.m., Carson's off, and I've just finished a bowl of Sugar Smacks, so I thought I'd better start the LOC you asked for.

Seriously, VENTURE is constantly fleshing out into a real high-quality 'zine. And it is still a fanzine. Just because it's done be enthusiastic fans with seemingly unlimited talent that produce a pro-level fanzine doesn't change that, and I'm glad.

Well, on to VENTURE #4: Frank Cirocco started the issue with a tremendous bang with his super fantastic cover. Also high on the list was the inside front cover of the Thark and the girl. I've always been an avid ERB fan, I just wish you'd do more of his stuff in VENTURE.

Gary Winnick's contribution to VENTURE 4, "Backworld Brigands", was superb--artwise. The script, however, barely kept me interested. I did like the main characters, especially Gukus. He has a demonic face that easily lends itself to a fanzine, and an excellent writer (or a more polished Winnick writing style), perhaps Frank Dorant, and these characters would make an extremely interesting series.

Ah yes, now to able (sic) Brent Anderson's cute "Grimmley's Tales". I've loved every one of these so far, but alas yes I'm a different writer (or a more polished Winnick writing style), perhaps Frank Dorant, and these characters would make an extremely interesting series.

Those little Batman vignettes scattered thru-out the issue were all good, but I think I liked "Flasher" the most. I love Frank's version of Batman. Anderson's was great, too, but I'm afraid I didn't like Pinkoski's satire. I never have liked his art.

Thanks for the con report. Since I can never get to any cons, I really eat up any photos I can get. Now I know what the omnipotent Frank Cirocco looks like! They never live up to your expectations, do they? (Heh, just kiddin' you there, Frank.) While we're on the subject of Frank Cirocco, his centerfold was really fantastic! I'm a freak for detail, and you really let loose. The Potts illo on page 20 was interesting. He reminds me of Ed Romero.

Now to the high point of the whole issue; "Synapse"! This was, by far, the best literary contribution yet in VENTURE. Frank Norant I really loved that story! I'm not much of a story commentator, but I will say I loved it. On yeah, and Frank C. did a great job of illustrating it, also.

A haunting inside back cover of Vampi by Todd and a striking back cover by Winnick rounded out a fanzine that will stand out in fandom. I really believe I have run out of adjectives (although my use of them has always been a little repetitive!)

Well, I apologize (as I always do) for being so long-winded, but you asked for it!

friends-
Ken Meyer Jr.
Hill aFB, Ut.

---

EDITORIAL

It may sound redundant, but we would again like to thank all the fans of fanzines and the comic media for making VENTURE the success it is. This success has enabled us to produce a much slicker magazine, complete with full processed color covers and a slightly altered format. Write to us and let us know what you think of this new format. Is it still a fanzine? Is it a prozine? Is it an underground? Or is something different? Let us know.

This time around we would like to thank Jerry Dundis for the back cover illustration by Alex Nino, and Brent Anderson for his co-editorial work. Unfortunately, along with the good news of VENTURE's success, there is a bit of bad news. This is the last issue of VENTURE, at least for a while. It has been an annual publication for the past five years, and we have enjoyed every year, but we really want to do a different genre in the medium. Kenneth Smith (PHANTASMAGORIA) expressed a hope that HORIZON ZERO GRAPHIQUES becomes an institution. Well, we hope he's right. Our intention is to produce an entire new series of comic magazines, but this is in the future. In the meantime, you have this issue and trust that you respond favorably to our response on projects such as this issue that will determine when our new projects get under way. We hope it is soon.

Thank you again -The Editors