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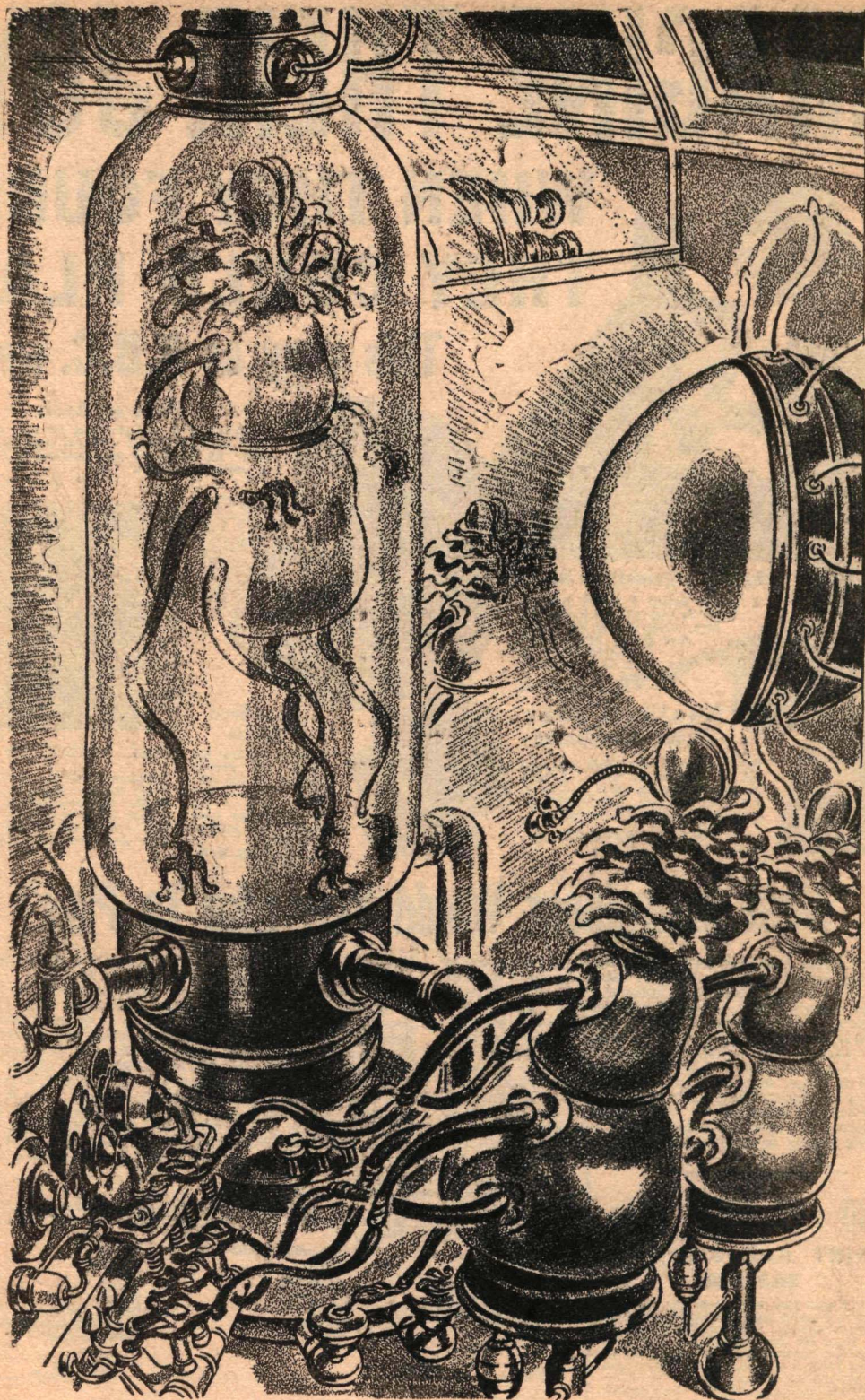
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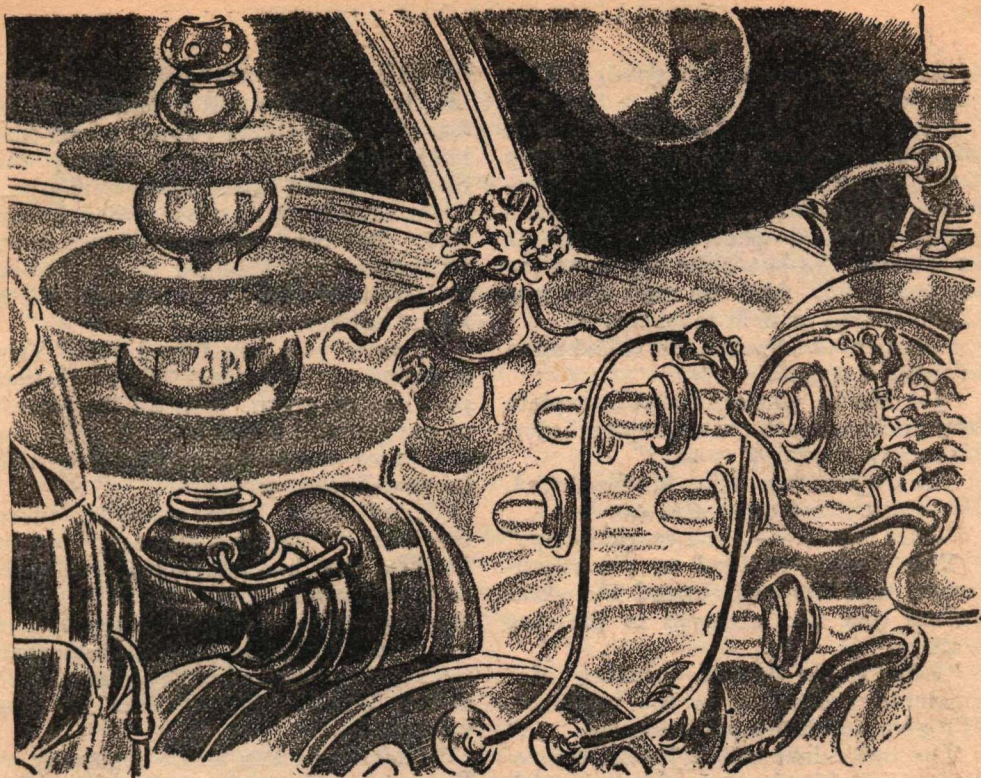
A Novel of the Last World

By EANDO BINDER

A THRILLING
PUBLICATION



"I am ready," Uoi said. "Seal the cylinder and turn on the transference rays"



THERE WAS NO PARADISE

By **MANLY WADE WELLMAN**

Author of "Twice in Time," "Battle in the Dawn," etc.

The Man From Mars Had the Midas Touch But Gold Couldn't Buy the Things He Wanted!

CHAPTER I

The Coming of Uoi

THE windowless gray room was overcrowded. Fifty men and more sat in rows of chairs. Rakish, watchful men, with pencils and pads of paper. They were reporters.

"Here he comes," whispered one.

And here he certainly came, between two uniformed guards, the warden ahead and a muttering priest behind. He was the tallest and handsomest man any of them had ever seen, even though he wore shapeless prison shoddy and his high skull was shaven. Though intent and alert, he had no appearance

A COMPLETE INTERPLANETARY NOVELET

of worry. His color was good, and his step firm.

He sat in the great chair of massive wood and allowed the guards to strap down his wrists and ankles, fit an electrode to his shin. The executioner's hands trembled—they always did—as he lowered the bowl-like cap upon the razored head. And the man who was to die smiled as if in mockery.

For once, the warden felt called upon to make a speech.

"Joe Marks, you are about to expiate by your own death the crime of murder. Have you anything to say?"

The shapely lips of Joe Marks moved. His voice came clear and careless.

"Only that I wish you would hurry."

The warden nodded to the executioner, who stepped toward the great switch that was clamped to the rear wall.

"What's Joe Marks thinking of?" muttered a reporter to his neighbor. "I'd give a month's pay to know. . . ."

The individual called Joe Marks remembered his last conference with his three colleagues in their distant home. He remembered the glass-roofed observo-laboratory. Its walls were a round curve of polished metal, its concrete floor crowded with the massed assortment of scientific equipment with which the four of them worked.

On that occasion he had placed himself in a metal-mounted cylinder of transparent material. Nerve-like wires and coils attached it to the great ray-machine that stood nearby. The octopoid figures helped him in with their six supple tentacles. Their bodies were bladderlike, their craniums tufted with petal-like tags of flesh that housed their senses.

"Uoi," said one. No Earth-born ear could have heard the voice, which was no more than a thought impulse. "You understand perfectly the adventure that will befall you?"

This was mere formality, and Uoi made reply in the same spirit.

"I will let myself be sealed herein, and you will employ the three transference rays in succession. My body will remain preserved in this cylinder. But my consciousness will be transferred far across space to the third world, which shines green in our sky—"

THE others fluttered exultantly. The thought was still a thrill to them. Living on the starved desert world that holds the fourth orbit around the Sun, the world called Mars by Terrestrials, they knew no other romance than this. But that romance stirred them whenever they thought of or studied the Green World which is called Earth by its natives.

"I envy you, my friend Uoi," said a second of the group. "To reach that paradise of green, with all its wealth of oxygen and water and life—To see and know and exchange thoughts with its magnificent dwellers!"

"They must have changed, those dwellers, during the last age," put in the first who had addressed Uoi. "Our remote-control pictures with their sound records, were made fully twelve hundred years ago. That is more than twenty-five hundred of the years of the Green World. What those far folk were then—"

"That was but a small beginning of the noble beings they must have become," broke in Uoi confidently.

It was logical, natural, the claim he made. For years he had studied the ancient films, taken by the lost mechanical and astronomical devices of his better equipped ancestors. He had observed the white temples and glittering palaces of a beautiful race of bipeds, who lived by a blue ocean in a city called Athens. Even the language on the sound records had at last been learned by the sheer prolonged rationalization of generations of Martian students.

He had watched the Olympic games, the glorious overthrow of foreign oppressors, had heard the philosophy of Socrates and Plato, the dramas of Euripides and Aristophanes. If this had been the Green World so long ago, into what unbelievable perfection had it since blossomed?

"I will be humble," he promised himself and his friends. "I will go softly among those great strangers. I will learn and bring back their lessons of courage, loyalty, their sense of beauty and laughter. We are a poverty-stricken people. We have slid back as they have gone forward. But I will show them that we can ad-

mire and appreciate. And because of their kindness and understanding, they will call us their brothers, their friends."

There were final instructions for him to attend. The third Martian scientist now addressed him.

"Uoi, my own work has just completed itself. I have focused my atom-controls on that far Green World and have searched out the proper organic substances, in right proportions and combinations. When your consciousness is reflected thither, I shall at the same moment bring together my vaporescent materials. They will merge into a body, with appearance, organic construction and metabolism such as we know those peoples to have. Thus you will seem similar to them, and your wits will teach you to act like them."

"How better could an intelligent being act than like them?" Uoi demanded earnestly. "I am ready."

"Getting your consciousness back into your own body will be harder," continued his colleague. "But that body, being artificial, can be disintegrated if powerfully attacked by disintegrating forces such as, doubtless, you can arrange. It will take a tremendous outpouring of power. When my cohesive currents are neutralized by a strong counter-current, the molecules of that synthetic body will scatter into nothing. You will return to us and report."

"I am ready," Uoi repeated. "Seal the cylinder and turn on the transference rays."

They did so.

Sitting in the electric chair where he was to die for murder, the Martian masquerading as Joe Marks remembered the ensuing moment of confusion. He recalled his seeming jerk down an immense dark tunnel, and then his wakening—into a universe of brilliance and commotion and dreadful noise. . . .

* * *

THE animal roar dominated all the rest of the confused racket of grinding machinery, shrill voices, footfalls, and scores of less identifiable sound-sources. Uoi glanced up at the moving pink blobs that must be faces.

He found that he sat or sprawled on hard, dry stone—concrete rather.

He drew himself erect. His body was bipedal—that is the new body that had been formed for him by the remotely controlled science of his colleagues. He was a fellow-creature to the beings that now pressed and jostled in a close circle around him. These were the beings he had learned to recognize from those ancient pictures—

But no, these were caricatures, grotesqueries! They had not the swelling muscles of the Athenian males, the gracious curves of the females he had studied. These specimens were all scrawny, or lopsided, or grossly corpulent.

He quickly saw such items as squint eyes, wry mouths, low craniums. The skins were coarse or pimply or pallid. In the case of the females, they were ruddied over with garish artificial colors. The flaccid bodies and feeble limbs were all covered with strangely fitted pieces of fabric, as though to hide their imperfections. Where was he, Uoi wondered—in a howling pen where all the mistakes of the race were herded?

"Hey!" The howl was repeated.

Uoi looked toward the source. A huge, powerfully built creature was pressing close to him. It was male, tallest and biggest of all the herd, almost as tall in fact as Uoi's new-found synthetic body. It wore dark blue, with a round visored cap and a great silvery tag of metal on its chest. Its heavy face was red and angry.

"Well, Mista Septemba Mawn," went on its bitter challenging voice. "What makes ya tink ya can come out on da public streets widout nothin' on?"

Uoi understood, somewhat. He had gazed around enough to learn that he was in no pen or cage. He stood on a pavement in the midst of a lofty-towered city, which glowed with many moving and blinking lights for all that it was night. A long rectangle of black metal, pegged up on a post, described the place as Broadway and Times Square. He understood that, too, being a Martian and geared mentally to grasp strange things. He ventured to address his harsh questioner.

"You mean, I should be covered with woven fabric, like you?" His strange vocal organs worked slowly but surely, as he divined and effected their use. "It is a custom I do not know. I have only arrived, you see."

"Oh, yeah?" spat the monster in blue. "Clo'es is sumpin new, is dey? I suppose ya come here from Mars or some place?" He roared with loud, mirthless laughter at the joke. "Tell it to da marines, but not to da cops!" Big, blue-clad arms waved the staring crowd back. "Gimme room, youse. Here's da wagon."

A great, black parallel epiped on wheels drew up, and a door clanked open. Another blue-dressed man emerged, with a drab blanket. This he flung around Uoi's naked torso.

"C'mon!" the first bluecoat ordered him, and gave him a shove toward the vehicle.

"Oh, you are taking me away—hospitality?" suggested Uoi. "Many thanks."

HE entered the patrol wagon. Its stuffy smell was a shock to his new nose. There was a rumble, a jouncing motion, for some moments. Then he was led out and into a building of filthy gray stone. Down a corridor he was herded, to where another bluecoat accosted him from behind a desk.

"Wot's ya name?"

"My name? Uoi." And he thought of the word that his first questioners had unthinkingly used. That was the name of the place whence he had come. "Mars—" he began, then broke off, wondering how to explain to so plainly limited an individual.

"Joey Marks," repeated the creature at the desk, and wrote it down. "Height? Mmmm. About six-two. Weight? I say, one hundred ninety. Blond hair, blue eyes. Well, Joey, what address? What occupation?"

Uoi still paused. Brief as his first experience had been, it was enough to show him that these strange, emphatic folk of the Green World might not understand. He had better wait for a scientist. One would surely come soon. Until then—

"I can't exactly say," he temporized.

"What's the idee parading 'round

naked?"

Uoi shook his head. "It happened suddenly. I just found myself there."

The desk sergeant looked at the big one who had arrested Uoi. He lifted a sausagelike finger and tapped his own narrow forehead.

"Lost his grapes," he pronounced. "Aneemya — amneszya — whachucall it. Better call the doc."

Uoi found himself waved into a room that was white-washed and smelled sharply of antiseptic. A barred door clicked shut behind him. Studying the lock, he saw that it was primitive. An infant Martian could open it without key or other tools. But he was content to wait, his blanket across his arm, until a new individual entered.

This one was lean and stooped, with gray bristly hair, brown rough clothing. His immense gleaming eyes on second examination proved to be big lenses fitting over organs that must be woe-fully weak.

"I'm Doctor Dumble," the newcomer introduced himself. "You remember your name, Joe Marks. But the rest is rather hazy, eh?"

The words told Uoi something.

"You are a doctor. That means a scientist?"

"Scientist? Yes, I guess so."

"Then, Doctor Dumble, you will understand," began Uoi gratefully. "It needs the scientific mind to grasp my story. Not many moments ago, my colleagues and I, situated on the planet you call Mars—"

"What's this, what's this?" shouted Dr. Dumble. He stared with wide eyes. Putting out his fingers, he touched Uoi's pulse, then twitched up Uoi's right eyelid. He stared again.

"Hard to diagnose," he mumbled. "You're a fine physical specimen, Mr. Marks. Must be a championship athlete. I can't find any pathological condition there. But to imagine you have been on Mars—Heavens, man, do you know what that means?"

"I ought to know," replied Uoi with even emphasis. "I have just made the journey. You seem not to believe me, Doctor Dumble." He took an ominous step forward. "It is not good for one to think that true stories are lies."

Dumble retreated shakily.

"Don't get violent!" he cried pitifully. "Help! Help!"

CHAPTER II

Earth's Nicest People

THE barred door burst open and three bluecoats rushed in. Among them was the big one who had arrested Uoi.

"Trouble, hey?" he growled with relish. "Gittin tough, is he Doc?"

Advancing on Uoi, he lifted a short club of some elastic material.

"Do not try to strike me," warned Uoi quickly.

Then, as the other charged, he ducked the blow with easy speed. He shot out his own hand and caught the arm that wielded the weapon. A jerk and a twist—The bluecoat howled with pain and Uoi felt the bone snap. His synthetic body was stronger by far than he had dreamed.

The other two were pointing metal devices that had tubular muzzles, much like the ancient weapons in Martian museums.

Again Uoi ducked. Swift as thought, not quite as swift as light, he bobbed too swiftly for the explosion-driven lumps of lead from those weapons to hit him. They thudded into the white-washed wall behind him.

He closed in, easily snatching the guns away. One of the men screamed and ran. The other tried to fight with his fists. Uoi slapped him down open-handed. Then he turned to the doctor.

"I thought you were a scientist," he said. "But I see that you are only a fool."

"D-don't hit me!" quavered Dr. Dumble.

"Why should I? You cannot hurt me." Uoi stepped to the man whose arm he had broken. He had fainted. Quickly, knowingly, Uoi stripped away the fellow's blue uniform and clumsy black shoes. He put them on himself. "Since this is customary," he commented, "I shall wear the things of Earth men. Good-by, fool who calls himself a scientist."

His flashing fingers, incredibly

swifter than normal human members, had done all these things within seconds. He was fully clad when other bluecoats jammed the door. But he charged through them unhesitatingly and almost effortlessly.

A moment later he was out of the building, around a corner and running down a dark side street. He heard noise behind him, shouting voices and heavy feet.

"Halt!" came a command.

The fierce creatures called cops still pursued him. Regretfully he turned, and the blue cloud closed around him. He felt a rain of blows, ineffectual against his superb synthetic body. Someone was trying to clamp a metal shackle on his wrist. With back-handed clouts and sudden shoves he sent his assailants sprawling in all directions.

One of them rose on an elbow, fired a weapon. Uoi felt the flick of fire that grazed his cheek and recognized that here was real danger.

A hole yawned in the dimness against a wall. He sprang into it, down a flight of stairs to a door. Other shots flashed above him. He raised a fist to smash the door. But another panel, brick-faced, slid away beside him.

"Dodge in here," said a quick, soft voice. "Cop-fighters are always welcome. Quick!"

Uoi obeyed. The panel closed behind him.

"It's part of the wall," announced his befriender. "They'll dash down, kick in the door to the next cellar—find nothing. Hey, you look like a cop yourself."

"I wear only the blue clothes," explained Uoi.

He found time to study his dimly-lighted surroundings and the owner of the soft voice.

SHE was a female, tall, with wavy black hair. She wore gay fabrics, a jacket of fur, and uncomfortable looking footgear with stiltlike pegs under the heels. But Uoi's scientific eye judged that under all this strange disguising garb would be a magnificently organized body, even such as the ancient films had depicted. So there were splendid creatures, after all! He had escaped from one faction, vicious and stupid, to another, handsome and un-

doubtedly enlightened.

"You are beautiful," he stated authoritatively.

Her pale, fine-featured face smiled.

"Go slow, chum," she warned in the soft voice he found increasingly pleasant. "You're not so rotten-looking yourself. But I'm spoken for, by a certain gent named Gil Scalotti. Know him? Well, he's a boss mobster, quick on the trigger. He hates competition in business or pleasure. Come along and meet him."

They went up a flight of wooden steps. The tall, handsome female introduced herself as Dulcey Van Tyl, late of an organization called the Vanities. Uoi was inspired to give for himself the name already garbled by the bluecoats into Joey Marks.

On the floor above, they came into a room with soft lights and highly cushioned furniture. Around a table sat five males in eccentrically tailored clothes. They were all pallid-faced, hard-eyed, nervous.

As Dulcey Van Tyl led in Uoi, they were at some game with pictured bits of cardboard, for a prize of crumpled green papers in the center. These cards they hastily laid down. Five right hands dived under coats. They snatched out the primitive fire-weapons that Uoi began to think were regulation equipment on this Green World. Professional and organized crime, outmoded for so many ages on Mars, did not even enter his mind as a possibility.

"Easy, boys," said Dulcey Van Tyl quietly. "We can use a cop-fighter like this guy. He stole that uniform. From our lookout in the cellar, I saw him lick a whole squad bare-handed. Meet Joey Marks."

The leading spirit of the gang, gaunt, swarthy and sharp-faced, rose and held out his slim, hard hand.

"Pleasure, Joey," he said, with a voice like the grate of defective gears. "I'm Gil Scalotti. If you're a real muscle guy like Dulcey says—"

"She whom you call Dulcey spoke truth," Uoi assured him. "It is surprising to find so much hesitation over honest statements. I do not admire the blue-dressed men you call cops, and you seem to feel the same way."

Loud applause greeted that senti-

ment. Uoi hoped he was among friends at last, but decided to proceed slowly with the truth about himself. First he would make his position solid.

"In what way can I help you?" he asked.

The five men and Dulcey stared at him.

"Well, Joey," said Gil Scalotti. "What's your talents besides rough-housing?"

"My science seems to be far ahead of most," offered Uoi.

"Maybe he knows how to make gold," suggested one of the group,

The others laughed. But Uoi nodded at once.

"Gold—you mean the heavy yellow metal?" He walked briskly across the floor to where hung a lamp bracket, a fake antique. "Ah," he went on, "this is of a leaden alloy. It will serve. And these other lights, they are electric?"

"Of course they're electric," Scalotti replied harshly. "You think we're living in the Gay Nineties? Making jokes, Joey?"

"I'm making gold," Uoi corrected him.

ALL gaped while he detached the connection from the leaden lamp bracket. He parted the two terminals, then brought them together and judiciously produced sparks. The current he found to be far weaker than anything the Martains used, but it was steady.

Finally he struck the delicate outpouring of power he wanted. He caught up a drinking-glass from the table and held it to his spark stream. The glass glowed, changed form. Dulcey was frightened, and one of the men swore wonderingly. Within less than a minute, Uoi had converted the glass into a thick, clear lens, in which danced light-points of many colors.

"Now to sort out the proper atom-shifting rays," he lectured, more to himself than the onlookers.

He held the lens near a ceiling bulb, concentrating a beam of green-blue upon the leaden fixture. The metal seemed to quiver and throw off vapors. Uoi skilfully shifted his strange light from one point to another. Presently he paused, lowering his lens.

"Gold," he said.

Scalotti had put a cigar in his mouth. Now he bit it almost in two. He crossed the room and stared at the fixture.

"What kind of hokus-pokus you been doing here?" he demanded.

"The proper atom-shifting rays," Uoi repeated. "Simple, with a proper lens and treatment. Had I adequate apparatus—But this metal is preponderantly gold."

Scalotti's bright eyes were baffled slits.

"If you're being funny—"

"I am not being funny. I stake my scientific reputation that this metal will assay more than three-fourths gold."

"Dave," Scalotti growled at one of his men. "Unscrew that thing and run out to Higginbotham. You know, the fence. If he says it's gold, okay. If he says it ain't, then—" And he glared at Uoi.

Dave obeyed. All the time he was gone there was no sound in the room, and very little motion. A long while later, Dave returned. He put something on the table—a packet of green-bordered bills, fastened with a rubber band.

"It was gold," he said breathlessly. "Higginbotham paid me!"

Scalotti almost sprang at Uoi, grinning like a welcoming father.

"Joey," he cried, "I had you wrong. You got something, kid. You call it science but I call it magic. You're going to be a big help to us."

It developed that Scalotti and his associates owned and occupied that particular building as home and headquarters. Uoi was given a bedroom on an upper floor. Dulcey was the last to bid him good night.

"If there's anything you want, Joey—" she said, and paused expectantly.

"I will decide later," he told her. He met the direct, searching impact of her deep black eyes with his blue ones.

"You said I was beautiful," she reminded.

"And so you are," he agreed casually.

Scalotti called up the stairs for Dulcey and she hurried away.

Alone, Uoi peeled off the uncomfortable blue clothing he had stolen. He arrayed himself carelessly in a sheet that fell into folds like the garb of the ancient Athenians. He had much to think about before resting.

THESE new creatures were friendly, though shallow of understanding. He hoped for better relationships to come. In any case, they had sheltered him from those riotous beings called cops. They had assured him that anyone who fought cops had their approval. Uoi extended the logic of that assurance. The cops, he had found, were violent and stubborn and brutal. If Scalotti, Dulcey, and the others hated cops, they must hate violence, stubbornness and brutality.

"There are two peoples, then," he decided. "I have found the good kind. Not all creatures of this world are ugly. Dulcey is magnificent physically, a splendid scientific study."

As if summoned by his thought of her, Dulcey slipped noiselessly into the room.

"I came back, Joey," she whispered. "You were telling me something when I left."

He smiled. "Only to repeat that you are beautiful."

Dulcey's smile answered his, and warmed the synthetic heart inside him.

"You say it like you mean it, Joey. Gosh, a girl don't often meet a guy like you."

He offered her a seat on the couch beside him, and she accepted almost timidly.

"Can you make gold like that, any time?" she asked.

"I can. Gold, and water, and proteins, and carbohydrates for synthetic food, and—"

"But gold!" she breathed, as if in ecstasy. "Maybe even diamonds!"

He had a slight difficulty in understanding that last word. When she had explained, he nodded once more.

"Get me a piece of carbon to transform," he bade her. "Then I can prepare diamonds, too. It is, in many ways, easier to do than the gold-atom process."

Dulcey's eyes were two dark stars in her radiant face.

"Joey," she breathed. "If I'd only met you before Scalotti showed up. Maybe it's not too late."

Uoi stretched.

"I feel tired," he said. "I will sleep, Dulcey. Shall we talk again tomorrow? About diamonds, for example?"

She rose quickly.

"Yes, Joey. We'll talk about diamonds—and us."

"And us," he repeated courteously.

CHAPTER III

Bewilderment

IN the parlor on the first floor, Scalotti and his aides held a council.

"We're in the money at last," Scalotti gloated. "Gold in big chunks, tons of it, thirty bucks and more an ounce. This Joey guy can make it like it was mud pies."

The others nodded. They were becoming used to the idea. Only the one called Dave had an objection.

"You know, we done all right because the G-boys never had anything on us," he reminded. "But any big load of gold pourin' out of here'll make old Uncle Sammy come pokin' his whiskers around. Those guys ain't no tonic."

Scalotti lighted a cigar.

"I wonder if Joey isn't the answer to that, too," he said. "I had a guy check up at the police station around the corner. You know what? Three big harness bulls have got broken arms or ribs! One's in the hospital with concussion. Five're hurt plenty other ways. A medical examiner dropped from being plain scared. All that's the work of this Joey of ours, bare-handed and alone. He's big, all right, and pure poison."

"Hope he don't get sore at us," put in another.

Dulcey entered just then, and Scalotti had an inspiration.

"I think we can keep him friendly," he told the gathering. "Joey seems to like Dulcey here. Dulcey, you keep him sweetened up, see? Smile him along, and we'll all be on velvet. Get me?"

"I get you," said Dulcey, but her eyes seemed to reflect other plans.

On the following day, Scalotti had Uoi's stolen uniform burned in the basement furnace. He had the boys shop for some clothes for him. All of Uoi's new friends were most cordial and anxious to help. Dulcey looked on with an uncharacteristically shy glitter,

as though to remind him that they shared some secret or other. At Scalotti's request, Uoi made more gold out of leaden lumps brought from a junkyard in Brooklyn.

The watchers almost cheered when Uoi achieved this. To him it was a simple and rather boresome phenomenon. They offered him some pungent-sweet liquid in a glass, which they called brandy. Uoi only sniffed it and declined with thanks. Then four of the men offered to teach him a pastime called poker. At the end of an hour he had won all the money they had, but gave it back.

"Say, you took every pot but one," pointed out Dave suspiciously. "Are these cards marked? No, not that I can see. Joey must be a mind reader."

"Exactly," agreed Uoi. "It does not always work, because your minds are not disciplined enough. But when you concentrate on anything—the markings of your cards, for instance—I know what you think. You see—"

But he broke off again. He could hardly hope to explain the thought-transference mode of communication which was common on Mars. Meanwhile, his erstwhile opponents in the game stared at him in half frightened amazement.

"Why did you give them back their money?" asked Dulcey, who came in after Scalotti went away with the transmuted pigs of lead. "You don't care much for cash, do you? But why should you, when you can make it out of thin air?"

"Not out of thin air, exactly," Uoi corrected her. "But out of lead. . . . What is this you have brought? A lump of carbon. Coal, you say it is called? And to make a diamond with, of course."

HE went into the kitchen on the first floor, choose a stone vase for a crucible. He quickly fashioned a heater from the wire terminals of another dismantled light connection.

While Dulcey watched in awe, he generated a tremendous heat in his crucible, popped in the egg-sized lump of coal. Then, with his lens, he selected a ray from the lamp overhead—a pressure beam. Minutes passed while

Uoi wrought skilfully. At last he turned off the electricity, hurried his crucible to the sink and cooled it with running water.

Plunging in his hand, he drew forth a great glittering crystal. White and many-faced, it bore a point of fire at its heart.

"A diamond," he announced. "Somewhat small, but—"

She snatched it from him, as though it were food and she were starving.

"Small?" she shrieked. "Why, it's marvelous— It's royal!"

She squeezed the jewel between her hands, then pressed it to her heart, as though she would draw warmth and life from it.

"But it is only large enough for coarse drilling or cutting work," he protested. "If I had enough carbon, I might have made one of fair size, roughly as large as your head. That would polish into a lens, or a prism to sort and diagnose rays of various fuel lights. But if this little creation makes you happy, Dulcey, you are welcome to it."

She flung her round arms about his neck with an almost hysterical strength. Dragging his face down to hers, she kissed him soundly. Then she ran out of the kitchen with the diamond clutched in her hands.

Uoi was more mystified than ever. He had not done anything that he considered remarkable. As he had said, the simple process of making gold from lead was more difficult than this manufacture of diamonds. But it had pleased Dulcey, and that strange action of hers had undoubtedly signified approval.

He wiped his mouth. Odd, these customs of the Green World, yet not

unpleasant. His lips still tingled, as from the application of some ray or current of power. Dulcey was rather like a dynamo, at that, but a very esthetic dynamo. He wished he could take her back to Mars with him, to show to his colleagues. But she would certainly die in that planet's thin, oxygen-hungry atmosphere.

Meanwhile, Scalotti came to find him. Scalotti was very pleased, for he had sold the lumps of gold for some thousands of dollars. He invited Uoi to go with him and Dulcey to a night club.

"Night club?" repeated Uoi. "That would be a new experience. Yes, I will go."

THE place reminded Uoi of his first strange moment on this planet, it was so crowded and noisy, so full of glaring lights. Waiters seated the trio at a table near a little rectangle of floor. There bored looking girls of much less attraction than Dulcey danced and postured, clad in brief costumes. There were also silly-faced men who made remarks at which all hearers laughed except Uoi. Waiters kept bringing food and drink. Uoi ate only sparingly, and did not taste the liquor at all.

In the midst of this activity, a bulbous man with gray hair and a ballooning white shirt-front came from a nearby table. He spoke boldly, introducing himself.

"Pardon me, folks, but my name's Jim Deckworth."

It meant nothing to Uoi, but Dulcey chattered in welcome, while Scalotti bowed and grinned hugely.

"Oh, the movie producer. Sit down

[Turn page]



Mr. Deckworth. Have a drink. Pleasure to meet you."

She leaned forward winningly as Deckworth seated himself, but the newcomer's interest was in Uoi.

"What name, please? Marks, you say? Mr. Marks, you have an extremely interesting face."

Uoi waited for the man to continue.

"You are—well, photogenic is the word these days. Are you in show business?"

"I am a very humble scientist," Uoi told him.

"Young, at the foot of the ladder, eh?" suggested Deckworth. "Not much money, I guess? Listen, Mr. Marks, I can put some real cash in your way. You're a picture possibility that isn't seen every day. I'd like to talk business with you. I want you to appear in my moving picture."

Uoi understood that. His mind went back to the films he had seen, of Athens and the men who had lived on this world millenia before.

"Why should I appear in your moving pictures, Mr. Deckworth?" he asked. "I have said that I am only a scientist—a simple and limited one, not worthy of my enlightened colleagues. Surely there are more interesting subjects than I."

"Great Scott, man!" bumbled Deckworth. "Are you playing hard to get? Don't you realize I can make a star of you—get you Hedy Lamar for a leading lady—give you a salary in the thousands?" He chattered wildly at Scalotti. "Are you his manager?" How about talking contract?"

Scalotti, remembering Uoi's gold-making powers, shook his head.

"Afraid it can't be done, Mr. Deckworth. He's pretty busy at some big scientific stuff. If Joey isn't interested, I won't try to force him."

"I've thought of doing some picture work, Mr. Deckworth—I was in the Vanities," Dulcey put in.

But the producer answered only by a vague nod. He excused himself and went away. Scalotti put out a hand and patted Uoi's sleeve.

"Thanks, for sticking with me, Joey," he said.

"Why should I appear in his moving pictures?" demanded Uoi. "He could

give me no reason for such a course. He spoke only of money. Is money everything in this world?"

"It's just about everything," Dulcey told him.

"I was beginning to wonder," said Uoi bewilderedly.

THE richest man on Earth sat in his country home, twenty miles north of Manhattan. He was frail, not old in years but bent and twisted and nervous. Lines of harsh determination crisscrossed above his nearsighted eyes, his predatory beak of a nose.

Alone in his little bed-sitting room, he lounged in bathrobe and slippers, in a cushioned chair that did not make him comfortable. He suffered from insomnia and longed to take a sleeping potion. But he dared not stir up his woe-fully weak stomach. One scrawny hand held a glass of milk, which he sipped without relish.

He was bored and disgusted. Would nothing happen to amuse him?

But then noise broke out, just beyond the door to the hallway. His secretary and bodyguard were quarreling. No, they were arguing with a third person, somebody with a deep young voice. The bodyguard shouted a deadly warning.

"What's the idea pushing in like this? Don't move, or I'll shoot!"

"Shoot, then," bade the strange voice.

A loud explosion rang out. After that came cries and struggles. The billionaire started shakily to his slippered feet. The door burst open, and a tall, purposeful figure strode in, dragging two others. The billionaire recognized his disarmed bodyguard and his half fainting secretary. They were in the grip of a towering young giant with intent, calm features.

"How dare you?" squeaked the man of money, shrinking out of his chair and against the wall.

The big stranger did not attack him, but thrust his two captors into a corner. Deftly he touched each of them in turn, with his thumb at the side of the neck. The two men fell limply across each other.

"Do not be alarmed," the invader said. "I have not hurt them—only temporarily paralyzed a nerve current. They are asleep. You, the world says,

have more money than anyone else in history."

"You want money?" stuttered the goggling billionaire. "Who are you? How did you come here?"

"They call me Joe Marks. I came in a stolen automobile. And I want no money, only a chance to tell you something."

Limply the other sat down again. The big man called Joe Marks began to speak, swiftly and persuasively, of the things that were in his heart. He came directly to the point, calling money the destroyer of civilization, the perverter of healthful impulses, the killer of kind hearts. He sketched, briefly and powerfully, an imaginary picture of a society where men were judged by personal worth rather than chance possessions. Finally he paused, and waited.

"Well?" he prompted at last.

"What am I supposed to do?" the billionaire asked puzzledly.

"You have the money that is considered evidence of power and virtue. You can arrange anything if you care to, simply by manipulation of trade and commerce. I demand that you decree a new order at once, honest and healthful. I will help you, and advise you."

"Are you completely mad?" burst out the billionaire. "Or are you an anarchist, or what? Clear out of here!"

"You won't listen to me?" asked Joe Marks, hurt.

He came close, extending a big hand. The little man shrank before it, but still shook his head in refusal.

"Even if I press the nerve—for long enough to kill you?" A finger touched the gaunt neck. Exquisite pain gushed through the frail body. "See? If you die, there will be no good in all your wealth."

"I'll make you rich—" jabbered the little billionaire. "Give you a quarter of my money—a third."

"I want none. I want to destroy all power of money."

"No, no!" the billionaire screamed, fluttered his hands, and fainted.

The man who had introduced himself as Joe Marks stood back, wiping his forefinger as if to cleanse it of some filth.

"He will not die," thought the big fellow. "But he thought he would. And

he faced it, rather than give over his hoard of money and what it stood for. The greed has become an instinct. I can do nothing. Or can I?"

He walked out and away.

CHAPTER IV

Utter Confusion

AT their apartment-fortress, Scalotti and Dulcey were squabbling so harshly that the rest of the gang had gone out hurriedly.

"I tell you, I couldn't have known he'd get away!" Dulcey said for the twentieth time. Her soft voice had become tinny with anger. "He was in the car with me. I got out to buy a paper, and I took the key along. How could I know he'd start the motor without a key and drive away? Joey's a magician!"

"Joey can do just about anything," grumbled Scalotti. "And you ought to have kept that in mind. Now he's gone, just when we were beginning to cash in on him—"

"But I have returned," said a deep voice they knew.

Uoi walked in. Scalotti sprang up, a hand snaking into the front of his coat.

"Listen here, Joey," he said. "What's the idea of running away from us?"

"I had an errand," replied Uoi. "I hope I did not inconvenience Dulcey by taking her vehicle. The errand was for nothing in any case. I thought to find a man of power, and found an insane fool."

"Never mind that high-flung talk. Joey, I'm head of my mob, and nobody does errands without I say so. Get me?"

Uoi gazed at him, as if comprehending for the first time.

"Surely," he said, in mild protest, "you do not think that I am here to take orders from you, and not to move otherwise?"

Scalotti's whole body grew tense as a guy-wire.

"Look out, Joey!" warned Dulcey.

Something in her voice made Scalotti grow pale, then turn reptile-fierce.

"Why should he look out, and why should you tell him to?" he gritted at the girl. "Say, maybe you two been cheating on me, huh?" His lips skinned viciously from his teeth. "So that's it! I'll—"

The pistol came out from under his arm. Uoi flipped it out of his grasp. With a wild curse, the disarmed gangster sprang full at Uoi, who struck out calmly with his fist. Scalotti spun around like a top and went down on his face with a thud. He did not so much as stir.

Dulcey gaped, clenched her hands to steady them, and took a shaky step toward the fallen mob leader.

"It's of no use," Uoi informed her. "He is dead. My blow broke his neck."

She lifted her eyes to Uoi. He saw that she was deeply moved, for the blood drained from her face, leaving it white.

"Well," she said slowly. "I guess this makes it you and me, Joey. We'll have to get away from here."

He nodded and led the way. Outside, it was late night. They got into the car that Uoi had purloined for his visit to the billionaire. He took the wheel and drove them northward, until they reached Central Park. He paused where the road skirted a parapet, and led Dulcey out of the car. They gazed over the stone railing and down a face of rock. Uoi marshaled words and ideas.

"Dulcey," he said at length. "I must first tell you that, though we are of different peoples, I find you to be my one chance for sympathetic understanding and help. You saved me from those creatures called cops. You have been kind and willing to learn and listen. You are beautiful."

HE paused, for she was simpering. She did not seem serious, though she paid close attention. After a moment, he went on.

"I did not intend to stay long here, but I have changed my mind. I barely touched the fringe of this world's scientific potentialities. Its advantages, which no native has yet begun to develop, are endless in quantity and variety. We shall see to them, you and I."

"Together?" she whispered, and came

close. Her reason was obvious.

She hung on his words. That decided him.

"First of all," he told her, "we must seek out one or two of the best men of science. They can learn and help. Gradually, we will develop a new, healthy viewpoint. Nobody on this Green World need fight or misunderstand."

"It sounds great, Joey," nodded Dulcey. "Look, I brought this along."

She produced the diamond, which glowed in the rays of the car's headlights.

He took it.

"Why did you bring it, Dulcey? Why bother with this inconsequential thing?"

"Because we'll need money," she began to say, but he cut her off with a gesture.

"Dulcey!" he cried, outraged. "Money, money, money! Is no other thought important? Have you not listened to what I was saying? Or did it not make you understand?"

She heard and answered only one of those questions.

"Well, Joey"—her soft voice hardened—"I always knew you were a screwball, but I figured you had some of the answers. What is important if money isn't?"

"Science is important," he replied at once. "Understanding is important. Well being, good will, mutual help. Beside such things, money is nothing—merely a stack of green paper or a jingling heap of shiny chips of metal."

"You sound like you don't want any of it."

His head wagged in furious denial of any such wish.

"I am going to turn the thoughts of this world away from money," he announced. "In a year, people will be aware of my scientific achievements and good works. Some will begin to listen. In two years, followers will come. In three—"

"You're as balmy as the Gilead chamber of commerce!" Dulcey snapped. "If you don't want money, I do."

"You cannot mean that."

She set her shapely arms akimbo, cocked her lovely head sideward.

"Listen this time, feather-brains. The

only reason I ever took to you was because of the dough you could make, gold and diamonds and all that. If you're turning preacher on me, we quit. Give me back that diamond, and we'll say good-by. I'll go look for somebody regular, who knows what a girl wants out of life."

He gazed at her as at a strangely reacting specimen under a microscope. He did not move to return the diamond, and she thrust out an insistent hand.

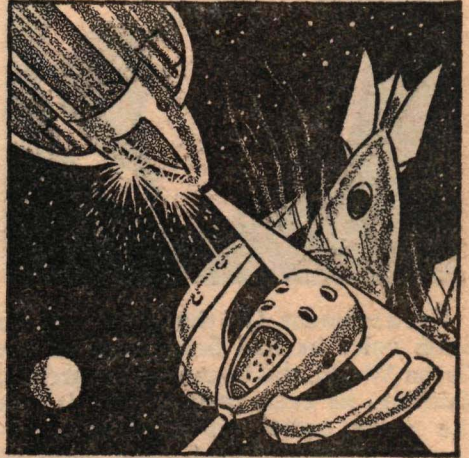
had first manufactured to make gold with. Stepping to the front of the parked car, he concentrated a ray from the headlight, full against the diamond. Dulcey tried to run in and snatch the jewel, but he kept her away with one outthrust elbow.

FINALLY he turned to her and held out his hand. Between finger and thumb he held a lump of black coal. "Here it is," he smiled mockingly.

Meet the Men Who Pilot the Space Armadas of the Centuries to Come!

WEST POINT OF TOMORROW

By
ARTHUR J. BURKS



A COMPLETE FULL-LENGTH NOVEL OF THE
PLANET PATROL—FEATURED IN NEXT MONTH'S
SPECIAL SCIENTIFCTION NOVEL SECTION

"Give it here, Joey."

He shook his head again.

"This diamond, I say is nothing. I take it back. It is a bad gift, I am afraid, and you will put it to a foolish and depraved use."

"Oh, so you're turning legal? Well, Mister Lawyer, I gave you the hunk of coal it was made out of."

"That is quite true," he agreed.

He put his other hand into his side pocket. From it he drew the lens he

"Carbon, returned to its previous form. See!"

He tossed it over the parapet. It shattered on the concrete curb yards below them.

Dulcey's face writhed into a fearsome mask of anger and horror.

"You—you—" she mouthed at him, half lifted her hands to strike.

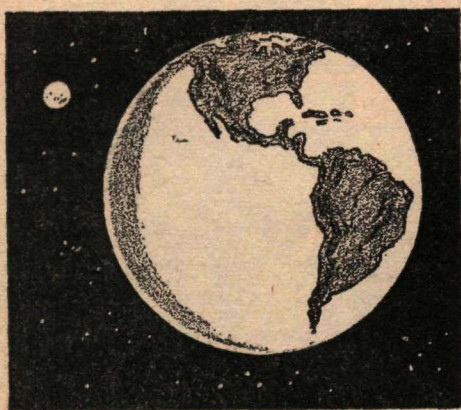
Then, forgetting all else but her desire to save the diamond that was no longer a diamond, she sprang from the

parapet. Uoi watched her fall, like a whirling billet of wood. Her head struck first, against the curb not far from where the bit of coal had shattered.

Uoi heard something like a flat crumpling sound. She sprawled over on her back. From below, her face stared up, tallow-pale in the dimness.

Uoi gazed down, knowing that she had died on the instant. Dulcey would never more know the impulsion of greed and deceit. Never again would she betray an ingenuous trust reposed in her. . . .

"So ya trun de goil down. Moider, huh?"



For a moment, Uoi thought it was the same voice he had first heard on the Green World, the instant of his arrival. Turning, he even thought that it was the same individual—thick-set, red-faced, blue-uniformed—who hurried from a tree-fringed side path. Then he remembered that that first cop had suffered a broken arm at his hands. This one was whole and sound, otherwise he barely differed.

"Moider," accused the cop, pointing down at the prone body of Dulcey. "Dat means de electric chair."

Uoi turned toward him, interested. "Electric chair? What is that?"

"Don't make jokes. Ya know de electric chair. T'ousan's of volts all troo ya body, boin ya tuh deat."

That was it, that was it! Uoi felt sunny inside. He was sick of this planet. The electric chair of which this cop spoke would release him. Such a great inpouring of electric waves would uncouple the artificially assembled molecules of this body he inhabited, re-

lease and allow his consciousness to return—

"And that happens to a murderer?" he asked. "All right, then. Take me with you to the electric chair."

He was something of a sensation during his trial. The prosecutor offered to get him off with a life sentence if he pleaded guilty. Uoi refused with disgust. His defense was no more than a formality, a misery to the poor young lawyer assigned him.

When Uoi was called to the stand, he perplexed and harried the prosecutor by asking some puzzling questions of his own. When a psychiatrist was summoned to judge Uoi's sanity, Uoi electrified the courtroom by pronouncing that psychiatrist insane.

And so, at last, he was found guilty and sentenced to die. Twice, in the death house, he juggled open the door of his cell and went for a stroll in the corridor. But each time he submitted cheerfully to being locked up again.

At length came the day, the hour, the moment of his death, the instant he had been longing for.

Sitting in the chair, he spun all the tale of his adventures through his memory.

Then, as once before, arrived a moment of confusion. He felt a sudden jerk into a tunnel of blackness—

"Hey!" He heard a diminishing shriek. "Look, he's *melting away!*"

* * *

IN the glass-roofed building on Mars that was office, laboratory and observatory all in one, Uoi's colleague's helped him out of the transparent cylinder. He palpitated his bladder-body, writhed his six tentacles, stirred the sensory petals upon his cranium. He had to assure himself again of their use after his experience in bipedal form.

"Uoi, Uoi," came the chorused impact of their thought waves. "Was the journey a success? Did you find a great civilization—a paradise where other Martians can exist and flourish?"

"There was no paradise," was his immediate and doleful reply.

"Then the Green World—"

"The Green World is no fit place to live. My impulse is to urge a concentration upon the world next beyond, the

mist-wrapped planet that revolves second from the Sun."

A mental flutter of surprise palpitated all around.

"But that second planet is a primitive place, Uoi! It has no intelligent life."

"I know it," he conceded.

"And the Green World you visited has intelligent life, has it not?"

"Of a sort, yes."

"Civilization?"

"Of a sort, yes," repeated Uoi.

"Then what danger, what horror, causes you to warn us away from it?"

"A grave one. It will take me long to explain it." Uoi stopped to consider.

"In the vocal-communication manner of the Green World people, it is designated as money."



Coming in the Next Issue
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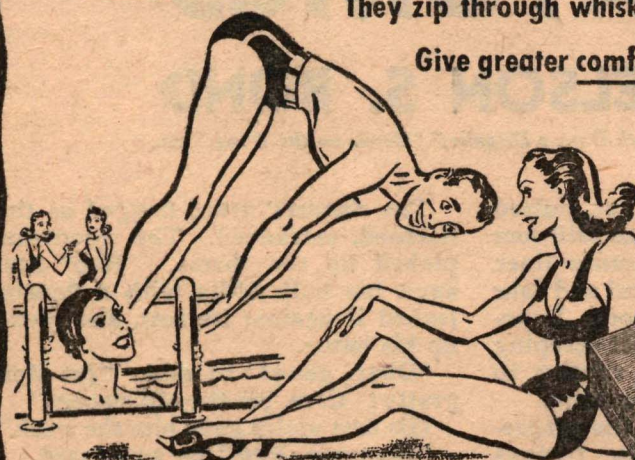
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