

# AMAZING STORIES

REG. U. S. PAT. OFF.

MAY 1954  
VOLUME 28 NUMBER 2

ZIFF-DAVIS PUBLISHING COMPANY  
Editorial and Executives Offices  
366 Madison Avenue  
New York 17, New York

---

Chairman of the Board  
and Publisher

WILLIAM B. ZIFF

President  
B. G. DAVIS

Vice Presidents —

H. J. MORGANROTH

MICHAEL H. FROELICH

---

Circulation Manager  
MICHAEL MICHAELSON

Secretary-Treasurer  
G. E. CARNEY

Art Director  
ALBERT GRUEN



## CONTENTS

|  |    |
|--|----|
| <b>SMALL TOWN</b><br>By Phillip K. Dick.....           | 6  |
| <b>HAVE IT YOUR OWN WAY</b><br>By Richard Wilson.....  | 24 |
| <b>WINDOW TO THE WEST</b><br>By Vern Fearing .....     | 36 |
| <b>LITTLE TIN SOLDIER</b><br>By Bill Peters.....       | 63 |
| <b>COMPLETE NOVEL</b>                                  |    |
| <b>FUGITIVE FROM SPACE</b><br>By Murray Leinster ..... | 73 |

●  
Cover: Mel Hunter

---

Editor  
HOWARD BROWNE

Managing Editor  
PAUL W. FAIRMAN

Art Editor  
HERBERT W. ROGOFF

●



# Have it your own way

BY RICHARD WILSON

*Step right up, folks! Anything your heart desires is yours for the asking. Cream on your strawberries? A chauffeur for your Rolls-Royce? Two swimming pools for your country place? That was how things seemed to shape up for our friend Benton. Pie in the sky and a blonde with a 44-inch bust.*

**B**ENTON was a pretty blasé fellow but he didn't know what to make of the girl with the forty-four-inch bust.

It made her look top-heavy because she was only about five-feet-six and she had no hips to speak of.

She had been standing in the vestibule when he opened his mailbox on his way home from work. He'd never seen her before. In fact, he'd never

seen anything like her before.

She was smiling at him as he took out his mail and so he smiled back. Why not? He approved of her eyes, which were blue, and her hair, which was long and yellow.

"Hello," he said tentatively. "You must be the new tenant in 4A."

"Yes," she said, smiling radiantly. "Do you live here too?" Her blue eyes invited.

"Well, I'm not the mail-



man," Benton grinned. "I'm in 3B," he added calculatingly. "Just a little bachelor apartment. Would you like to see it?"

Benton expected a polite demur. Instead she said, "Yes, I would."

There was a *Temporarily Out of Order* sign on the elevator which had been there for a week and as the girl preceded him up the narrow stairs he admired the long hair, the tight blue sweater, the black skirt, nylon stockings and tiny black shoes.

But he wished she hadn't accepted the invitation with such alacrity. A man will make an advance, sure, but he's thrown off balance if it's taken up immediately. There should be an interval of cat and mouse play, he thought. A decent interval. And then he thought, who is the cat and who the mouse?

He didn't know what her

game was. It might even be the badger game, with a shakedown in prospect if he misbehaved. Well, he would try not to misbehave. His estimate that the girl measured forty-four inches at the chest was a matter of wonder to him but not necessarily attraction. Sometimes there can be a great deal too much of a good thing.

She walked in when he unlocked the door, still smiling, and sat down in an armchair. Her skirt hiked up to give him a half-view of her perfect knees.

"My name is Benton," he said, closing the door. "Ed Benton. Excuse the mess. I didn't have a chance to clean up after breakfast."

He took the dirty dishes to the sink and pulled the plastic curtain that shut off the kitchenette from the living room.

She had said nothing, so he asked:

"Can I get you a drink?"

She nodded, smiling more widely. Her teeth were very white and even and her lips were rose red. She was a remarkably pretty girl, if out of proportion.

He made two drinks and handed her one.

"Here you are, uh—Miss," he said. "What is your name?"

"My name?" she said. "What would you like it to be?"

"What would *I* like it to be?" he echoed. "I don't know. Marilyn, maybe, or Jane, though they're not really in your class." He took a long drink. He felt baffled.

"I will be Marilyn," she said. She stopped smiling long enough to take a drink, then beamed at him again.

Benton began to feel a little high. He tried to shake it off. He'd only had part of one drink and it usually took him at least three stiff ones to begin to soar. He wondered briefly if she'd slipped something into his glass, but that wasn't possible. It had never left his hand.

He had been standing next to her chair and now he leaned over and kissed her on the mouth. It was an impulse

he had been unable to control.

She kissed him back, not aggressively, leaving her lips soft under his. It was a very satisfactory kiss.

He straightened up, said "Well!" and looked into his glass. There was a bit left. He drained it and made himself a new drink. She still had most of hers.

"Look," he said, forcing himself to keep his eyes on his glass and stirring vigorously, "what is this? Who are you? It's nice of you to drop in, and all that, but why?"

"I am Marilyn. I am a—a neighbor. I have come to call. Have I done the wrong thing?"

"No, no," he said hastily. "Not at all. I just . . ."

Marilyn stood up and he thought she was about to leave. Instead she went to him, took his glass and set it down, put her arms around him, bent her head to one side and closed her eyes.

So he kissed her again. A long, long kiss, interspersed with nuzzlings and little groans.

When they stepped apart he tried to figure out what had been different. Then he had it. There was no taste. Her lipstick had no perfume,

no flavor. Nor did her hair. And now he saw that her lips were as perfect as before—as rose red and unsmearred. He wiped his own lips with his hand, but no color came off.

Of course there were supposedly kissproof lipsticks, but none of them stood up under such a kiss as they'd exchanged. It was as if her lips were permanently, indelibly red.

She took another step backward and he warned:

"Look out for the rug!"

But it was too late. It slipped out from under her and she went down, sliding along the floor. As she slid, her skirt was pushed up to her waist.

He looked with interest, then fascination. A scientific fascination. Because her nylon stockings did not end. There were no tops to them. The entire lower half of her body, from her feet to her waist, was nylon, with the stocking seams gradually disappearing into the backs of her thighs. It was not a garment she wore. She was *made* of a molded nylon plastic.

And, at the juncture of her legs with her body, she was no more anatomically defined than a doll.

Marilyn, the girl with the

forty-four-inch bust and the nylon body, looked into a full-length mirror in her bedroom in 4A.

The image was perfect, she thought, comparing it with a color photograph of a movie star after whom she'd been modeled. Better than perfect.

But Benton, after a promising beginning, hadn't been friendly at all. The way he'd looked at his watch and frowned and hurried her out of his apartment after she'd slipped on his rug. (It was tricky, this Earth gravity.) She didn't think he had an appointment at all. He was just trying to get rid of her.

She couldn't understand it. She'd been prepared to give him whatever he wanted.

She flicked a button in the center of the chest they had so carefully constructed for maximum effect, and reported:

"Scout R23 messaging. Mission unsuccessful. Details follow."

Joe Hennessy should have remembered. He'd gone bowling with the fellows from the office after work and they'd had a few drinks. He'd been careful to put aside a dime for carfare. He had more money at home, so a dime was enough.

But now, at the subway entrance, he realized it wasn't enough. They'd just raised the fare to fifteen cents and he was a nickel short. He knew that, of course, but he'd forgotten.

Any of the fellows would have been glad to lend him a nickel, or even a dollar, if he'd thought of it in time. But they were scattered now.

Joe Hennessy supposed he could get a nickel from almost any one of the dozens of people flowing past him in the street. It'd be embarrassing, though, and he couldn't bring himself to ask. He'd also heard that a cop would be glad to help somebody out in such a fix. A cop would be better than a stranger—it'd be less like panhandling. But still he didn't like to do it. He'd always paid his own way and he didn't like to be beholden to anybody.

He was standing near the subway kiosk in indecision when the tall stranger in the pearl-gray hat approached.

"Hello," the stranger said. He was in his mid-twenties, apparently—Hennessy's age. "Can I help you, friend?"

"Oh, hello." Hennessy didn't like being approached by strangers. He was always afraid they would be panhandlers, or worse, instead of

direction-seekers. "Well, maybe you can," he said. "I need a nickel for the subway."

He began to tell how he usually had more than enough money, and about the bowling with the fellows from the office, but the stranger stopped him with a smile and a gesture of his hand.

"No need to explain. I understand. I am very glad to be of assistance. Here."

The stranger thrust a hand into his side coat pocket and brought out a sheaf of bills. They were fresh and bright and clung together as if they'd just come from the mint. The stranger took one off the top and offered it to Hennessy.

"Oh, I don't need a dollar," Hennessy said. "Just a nickel. You see, I—"

That was when he saw what the bill was. It had a neat "500" in each of the corners visible to him and an unfamiliar picture in the middle.

Hennessy felt his mouth drop open. The stranger was standing patiently, smiling, a five-hundred-dollar bill in one hand and an inch-thick stack of them in the other, waiting for Hennessy to accept the bill.

"Look" Hennessy said, his voice rising to a treble, "I don't know what this is all about. I only want a nickel for

the subway. That's all. Just a nickel. I don't—"

Suddenly he couldn't stand it any more. The stranger's smile and the fortune he held so casually in his hands seemed evil.

Hennessy fled. Away from the stranger, away from the subway kiosk, half running, clutching his lone dime in his sweating hand.

The man in the pearl-gray hat sat at the desk in his room and regarded the bills piled in front of him. He took more bills out of various pockets and stacked them up with the others.

"Why did he run?" he asked himself. "I was only trying to help him. He wanted money and that is what I offered to him."

He took a bill in his fingers and examined it, comparing it with another one he took from his vest pocket.

"I thought they were perfect," he said. "But there must be something wrong with them.

He sighed, scooped together the five hundred million dollars and shoved it into the fireplace. He touched a match to it here and there. It burned very well.

He stood up and touched a button on his chest.

"Scout R67 reporting. Mission unsuccessful. Details follow."

The Politician prided himself on being accessible. He was especially accessible when he was out of office.

So he said he would be very glad to see Mr. Bang.

"Have I got the name right?" he asked his receptionist over the interoffice phone. "Bang?"

"Yes, sir," she said. "Mr. Bang. He didn't give a first name."

"Well, send him in."

The Politician got up and leaned across his big oak desk to shake hands.

"Very glad to see you, Mr. Bang. Very glad indeed."

Mr. Bang sat his thick, prosperous-looking bulk in the visitor's chair.

"I understand," he said without preamble, "that you would like to be Governor."

"Well, now, ha, ha," the Politician said, thrown off balance. "You might say rather, my dear Mr. Bang, that it is my desire to serve the people of this great State to the best of my poor talents, in whatever capacity they choose to install me."

"Yes, of course," said Mr. Bang. "But you should not be unhappy if they were to in-

stall you as Governor. At least, that is my information."

"Mr. Bang," the Politician said, dropping his voice and leaning across the desk, "I don't know who you are, but I can tell this much—you are a man of political acuity. Have a cigar—and a drink, perhaps?—while we discuss this matter." He picked up the phone. "Miss Grant, I don't wish to be disturbed for the next half hour."

Mr. Bang accepted the cigar and the liquor and then, dropping his voice to the conspiratorial level the Politician had adopted, said.

"I can make you Governor."

"You are aware, I suppose, that the other party is in power, that the present Governor has no intention of stepping down, and that the election is better than two years away?"

"Petty details," said Mr. Bang, waving them away with the pudgy hand that held the cigar. "If his Excellency the Governor were to die tomorrow, who would succeed him?"

"The Lieutenant Governor, of course."

"Precisely. And is it not true that the Lieutenant Governor is an aging man who is happy to have the prestige of his subsidiary office but

who would be dismayed by the responsibility and hard work of the Governorship? Would he not step down?"

"Well, yes, I have heard that said."

"I can guarantee it," Mr. Bang said. "And does not the State constitution provide that if the Governorship is vacated by death and if the Lieutenant Governor is not available to succeed him, there must be a special election?"

"Ah!" said the Politician. "That is true. And I could win a special election hands down. The other party doesn't have anybody but a bunch of hacks available at this time." He smiled to himself. But then he frowned.

"We overlook one item in this little game of supposition, Mr. Bang. The Governor happens to be a young man of forty-three, in the best of health. He is not going to die tomorrow, and probably not for the next quarter century."

"He will die tomorrow," said Mr. Bang positively, "if you wish me to arrange it for you."

"My dear sir!" said the Politician. He seemed genuinely shocked.

"It will look like a heart attack and no suspicion will attach itself to anyone—least of all to you."



The Politician stood up, quivering with outraged dignity. "Get out, sir!" he boomed. "Leave my office at once before I call the police! Of all the underhanded tricks! I knew the Governor was a shrewd operator, but I didn't believe he would stoop to such means to discredit me. Out, sir!"

Mr. Bang stood up in confusion.

"This is no trick," he said. "I can make you Governor. It is your great desire. And from the Governorship it is but a step to the Presidency, as you know."

The Politician snapped on the interoffice phone. "Miss Grant, I want you to hear this, too. . . . Leave my office immediately, Mr. Bang, or whatever your name is. And tell your friend the Governor that I refused to fall for his outrageous trap. And that if he ever dares even to allude to it, I shall ruin him by spreading the truth from one end of the State to the other!"

Mr. Bang opened his mouth, then closed it again. He put down the cigar, then turned and left, a very puzzled man.

The heavy-set Mr. Bang reasoned later than his failure to interest the Politician in the Governorship must be

traced to insufficient information. Years had been spent in gathering facts but somewhere they had overlooked something. These people who on the surface seemed to have no scruples whatever apparently had a strongly-developed moral sense deep inside them which caused them to react entirely unpredictably.

Mr. Bang snapped on his communicator:

"Scout R9 reporting. Mission unsuccessful. Details follow."

They had met in a fancy cocktail lounge—the sultry girl in the gold lamé gown and the distinguished gentleman with the touch of gray at his temples—and now they were in his penthouse apartment drinking twenty-five-year-old Scotch.

"I've never met a man like you," the girl said, looking at him invitingly under her long, curving eyelashes. "So distinguished—so witty—so *je ne sais quoi*."

"You embarrass me, my dear," he said. "It is I who should pay you the compliments. But compliments are such empty things. Unlike this, for instance."

And he handed her a string of perfectly-matched pearls.

Then he went to a closet and returned with a coat of exquisite fur.

"Or this," he said. "Sable—what mink only pretends to be."

She exclaimed delightedly and hugged the gifts to her. Then she threw them aside and said:

"Though I value them because they are from you, they are only material things. There are more important things." She stepped close to him, her arms at her sides, her chest high, her head back. "There is you—and me. I cannot resist you. Take me. I am yours."

His arm went to circle her waist. But then he stopped. A quizzical look crept across his face.

"Something is wrong," he said. "Haven't we met before?"

She had begun to lean toward him, but now she hesitated.

"I have that feeling, too." She smiled and looked at him closely. She touched his chest over the gleaming white starched shirt.

"That's right," he said. "We have met—in the maintenance depot. And you've found my communication switch. I see yours, too—" he touched it, midway down the deep v of

her gown—"cleverly disguised as a fetching little mole. You're . . ."

"Scout R84," she laughed. "Reporting another failure. And you?"

"R206," he said. "Humiliating, isn't it?"

The Coordinator on duty looked disgustedly at the compilation, especially at the last entry which showed that robot scouts 84 and 206 not only failed in their mission among the III Solians but had ended up trying to give things away to each other.

Project Friendship, it had been called euphemistically. Among themselves the Coordinators referred to it as the Giveaway Program, or Give and Then Take.

But so far—and III Sol was the fifth planet in as many solar systems where they'd tried out the project—they hadn't even been able to give.

The Chief would not be pleased. The Chief had devoted a lifetime to the study of beings such as those on the green planet—"human" beings whose numbers were such that they could not be conquered from without but had to be subverted from within.

The Chief's study had

shown that the beings had three main drives — sex, money and power. So it had seemed perfectly clear that the way to gain their friendship was to exploit these factors to the fullest. Then, having won their friendship, it would be a simple matter to take over the planet.

But it hadn't worked. There were other intangibles ticking away in these tall bipeds of III Sol. Suspicion was one and he imagined that honor was another.

It hadn't worked, the Coordinator knew from having watched five projects fail, because the Chief hadn't learned from experience. The Coordinators had, but the Chief wouldn't listen to them. Nobody could tell him anything. He'd worked out his plan a century ago, he'd got the Masters' approval, and he'd followed it blindly ever since.

The III Solians had a slogan for people like his Chief, the Coordinator remembered from one of the robots' reports—You can't teach an old dog new spots. Something like that. The Chief hadn't even modified the robots where the Coordinators had showed him they were imperfect.

The Coordinator sighed. He looked again at the panel with its thousand lights—each

ruby glow representing a scout that had failed, and not a single amber one to show even a partial success.

With what he knew now, if given the chance, he might be able to accomplish something where the Chief's obstinacy had made it impossible. He was sure he could. Why not take the chance? Why not experiment?

The Coordinator stopped sighing and straightened up purposefully.

Then, when the Chief came in to have a look at the panel, the Coordinator decorporeated him with a neat blast from the hip.

He exulted, and recalled another phrase from III Sol.

"The Chief is dead, long live the Chief!" he cried as the old Chief vanished into molecules.

The new Chief flicked on all circuits and announced his accession to leadership.

Then he set the communicator to III Sol humming.

"Attention all scouts!" he commanded. "Attention all scouts! Stand by for modification instructions.

"Feminoids will immediately reduce circumferential chest measurements by eight inches. Object realism. Further modifications will be

made at your next visit to the maintenance depot.

“Masculoids will. . . .”

Marilyn, known also as Scout R23, now an attractive but unspectacular size 36, came out of the maintenance depot feeling like a new woman. In fact, she felt like a woman for the first time.

She flushed enjoyably when two sailors whistled at her as they passed. She didn't turn to look, much less go after them, as she would have before modification.

She walked on along the busy street. She had no trouble with the gravity now, having been rearranged internally, and was able to step nimbly aside when a fat woman came unexpectedly out of a department store entrance.

There was a waft of perfume as the woman swept by. Marilyn stopped, then went into the store on impulse, to buy a flagon of perfume for herself.

On the way in she picked a last name off the door.

She was Marilyn Macy now.

Within six months she had a husband and a different last name. Occasionally, during the early part of their marriage, she heard vague murmurings just outside her ear. The murmurings seemed to

have a desperation to them and if she paid close attention she could pretty easily make out the words:

“Attention all scouts! Imperative, repeat imperative, that you report activities. Non-reporting is a violation punishable under Robot Code A. . . .”

But in time the murmurings became vaguer and more distant. Then, one day, they had ceased altogether.

For some years many of the other nine hundred and ninety-nine ex-robots held on annual get-together, traveling to it from the cities and towns to which they had been assigned. They called themselves the Robot Society and at first there were two factions, the Fundamentalists and the Integrationists. The Fundamentalists were always getting up resolutions and manifestoes and having grim debates about duty and conscience, while the Integrationists had parties in each other's rooms. It wasn't long before the Fundamentalists realized what they were missing and, in one last resolution, shortened their name to the first syllable, then voted to Integrate.

Gradually attendance at the get-togethers declined and one

year nobody showed up at all. . . .

The ex-robot with the pearl gray hat bought himself a more fashionable homburg and other clothing to go with it. He drew another five hundred million dollars from the maintenance depot but this time he didn't attempt to give it away.

He chose a good solid name, Van Renssalaer Whitney, told the yacht salesman he was distantly related to *the* Whitneys, hired a crew for the yacht and sailed off for Mexico by way of the Horn.

Mr. V. R. Whitney now lives extremely well at Acapulco. He still hears voices occasionally but he's forgotten what they mean. Twice a month he visits a good analyst who frankly admits he doesn't know what they mean either but who feels that Mr. Whitney is making a good adjustment to them.

In a penthouse apartment with a seemingly inexhaustible supply of twenty-five-year-old Scotch a distinguished gentleman and a ravishingly beautiful girl are living happy, completely useless lives. When they hear the voices begin they put a jazz record on the custom-built phonograph with the hi-fi and

binaural sound, turn up the volume and have a drink.

Mr. Bang evolved by rapid stages into Congressman Banghart J. Carew. He represents a safe district and with reasonable luck he expects to be a Senator before too many years have passed. He doesn't want to be Governor himself, but there's an honest, hard-working Assistant District Attorney he considers his protégé, who is beginning to make a name for himself as a racket-buster and is fine gubernatorial timber.

Congressman B. J. Carew once ran into a prominent politician at a testimonial dinner and the politician looked at him quite sharply for a moment, but then shook his head and turned away.

The Congressman is well-liked in Washington. But occasionally, as he sits in the House of Representatives, he will hear a whispering near his ear and then he will ask leave to make a one-minute speech, and this drowns out the whisperings.

He almost always speaks against immigration, denouncing bigger quotas for aliens, and the liberal groups who support him can't understand this one blot on an otherwise brilliant and distinguished record.