

Mr. Quachri,

In the May/June issue, the story about the French-Canadians mining Venus was well thought out, but I felt it was too much of a soap opera. I kept expecting the protagonists to travel to another dimension or across the universe, but that never happened. In addition to its soap opera aspects, the story was clearly a lead-in to a book series. Frankly, I felt it was rather like a bait and switch where a story is read but with an insufficient conclusion forcing the reader to buy the subsequent books.

On the other hand, "Long Day Lake" was an excellent story. I appreciated how Mr. McDermott absented other characters down to two, both of whom had limitations. Also, I thought the less than totally happy ending was appropriate. The portrayal of the child was close to how I would expect a seven-year-old to behave.

Although I would appreciate a magazine comprised of only stories I like, I sincerely doubt Dell would find much profit in that approach. That being said I read all of the magazine and value all of the articles and stories.

Finally, let me say I agree with your editorial back in the November/December issue. Possibly you received some pushback from corporate interests. I support your decision to go ahead and publish your view.

Robert Wilson
Phoenix, AZ

Dear Trevor,

Once again, we read that "Entertaining fiction comes out of conflict" (Ken Gilbert in the July/August 2021 *Analog*). I have trouble believing that it is conflict, not the "people," what they do and say, their environment, and those (subtle) info dumps, that make a

story interesting.

Out of curiosity, I looked up "story" on a Merriam-Webster webpage and in my 2011 edition of *The American Heritage Dictionary*. Neither included the word "conflict" in their definitions.

I do realize that not every conflict has to be a harrowing exercise in stress-tolerance. My daily walk down to the mailbox and back might not seem interesting, but I'll bet it could be described in an interesting way. (I saw a pileated woodpecker in the neighbor's tree, and somebody had flattened another copperhead in the drive that I share with that neighbor.)

Analog publishes not only "stories," but poetry, nonfiction, editorials, letters to the editor, and illustrations. I think these can be said to be "interesting" even when they contain no conflict. I hope that in the future we will be able to read some stories in which things other than conflict provide the interest. Thanks for keeping *Analog* an "interesting" magazine.

Jack Ryan

Dear Editors,

I first encountered *The Dragon in the Sea* [published as *Under Pressure, Astounding Science Fiction*, November 1955-January 1956] around 1960-63, at the Naval Station Library, while living as a military dependent in Rota, Spain. You can imagine how delighted I was to reencounter the slugs and sub tugs again, fifty plus years later, and learn how they fared as a real-world application.

Thank you and Mr. Wysocki for the article, and thanks also to Frank Herbert for writing the fiction story. And of course to Mr. Hawthorne for putting in the blood, sweat, and tears that changed the slugs from fiction to fact.

Dan Villani ■

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