

Hillsdale, Mich.,
33 Rippon Ave.,
Feb. 4, 1932

Dear Dick;-

Have been waiting for a month, biting my fingernails in impatience, to hear from ASTOUNDING STORIES regarding Triplanetary. Finally I heard from them, today, and am writing to you immediately. Not to give you permission to broadcast about it, but merely to inform you of the status of things.

Bates (the editor) liked the story immensely, he said, but there were several things in it that do not square up with the policy of the magazine, and some other things that are poor writing and need revision. So he sends it back to me, to make said revision. Being purely a self-made author, it is not at all surprising that I should be guilty of certain lapses from good technique. I am going to start the revision tonight, working on the typed rough draft, but I don't want you to tell anybody anything about anything until the yarn is either accepted or rejected, finally and definitely. It will take two or three weeks to rewrite it, and then Bates may need a month more to make up his mind; so it will be about six weeks, probably, before you hear from me again. I had just about decided to send you the typed rough draft--and now that I am going to change the story, I think that you will have to have it.

I think that I covered most of the questions on the card I sent you. Yes, I was holding Triplanetary down to a definite number of words---that is the way magazines work. They print, and we write, by the word. Amazing Stories, for instance, like their serials to run about 85,000 words. That is a full book-length story, and is the length I myself like best, as it gives room for full development of a complex plot and room for character-drawing. Astounding Stories, however, like their serials only 55,000 words long; and I had to pinch words to beat the band to get the plot and characters I wanted into that few words. I ran over a little, at that--it runs about 56,500 as it is now---but I could have done a better job of character drawing, especially on Clio, if I could have gone to 60,000. And if I had been writing for either Amazing or Wonder Stories I would have put in enough science and additional character stuff to have brought the same plot up to about 85,000. See?

Cordially yours,

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