

33 Rippon Ave.,
Hillsdale, Mich.,
March 1, 1934.

Dear Dick;-

I just got the most terrific shock of my life---Desmond Hall, of Astounding, likes this new "Skylark of Valeron" so well that he grabbed the rough draft of it---the yellow, typed draft, you know---wouldn't send it back, and is going to publish it directly from that draft, without waiting for a final copy or letting me change a word in it! What do you think of that? I was absolutely flabbergasted--haven't come down to Earth yet.

The way it came about was this. As you may remember, when I got the second rough draft done I didn't think it was so hot; and rather than waste a lot of time copying something that would have to be all butchered up afterward, I suggested to Hall that he should read the rough draft---with all due apologies for its messy condition---and do his green-penciling right on the page; as a guide to revision for the final draft. He agreed that that would be a keen idea; so I sent it to him, with a long letter telling him just what I thought was the matter with it, pointing out the rough spots and what I intended to do about them, and suggesting that he mark heavily anything that I had missed---that is, of course, if he thought it was good enough to pass muster.

Then for a week I had about the prettiest case of the jitters you ever saw---the yarn got rottener and rottener every time I studied it---until when I saw the envelope of his letter I was practically certain that it contained a flat rejection slip. And the best I even hoped for was a chance to revise the whole thing from one end to the other. Jean did have the temerity to ask once; "Just suppose that he keeps that draft and publishes it from that?" but I quelled her with a scornful glance. "Nobody ever would have the crust to submit such a mess as a manuscript," says I, "and, if they did, any publisher would just bodaciously throw him and it out on their ears. Don't be a sap, guy!"

Well, Jeannie was right. That letter was a perfect rave---it sounded like fan mail. Actually, I never supposed that any editor ever wrote letters like that, to anybody! He wouldn't send it back unless I absolutely insisted, because changing a word anywhere in it would be a crime. It wasn't messy at all---compared to most of the MSS he received, it was a clean page. (Knowing what the yellow typed draft of my yarns looks like when I get done with it, don't you amazed that anybody who calls himself an author could have the intestinal fortitude to send in that kind of a mess for PUBLICATION?) If he sent it back I would probably change it here and there, and it **MUST NOT BE CHANGED**---etc., etc. Do you wonder that I haven't recovered my equilibrium yet? My head is swelling by inches, right now; and, after about one more such letter as that, I won't speak to anybody, at any time, about anything.

He promised me fast action; and certainly d'd deliver the goods---fast and favorable.

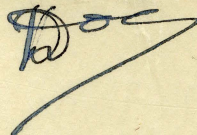
Thanks alot for your letter of the 18th Feb. I am doubly glad now that I wrote two rough drafts, of which you have the first. Both because you think so much of having it, and because I will not have any typed draft to dispose of.

As for a criticism of the literary style of "Triplanetary", of course I would like to read anything that you have to say about it. I cannot promise to mend my ways, however; as a literary style is a peculiarly individual thing, you know, and I could not very well change mine, even if I wanted to.

And speaking of style, after I sent you that book I remembered that I did some commenting, practising, and so on, in the back pages of it, that I forgot completely to tear out. Not that I am particularly ashamed of them; but they are nothing for general consumption. For your own eyes I don't care, but I hope that you will keep those pages from the public gaze. I don't remember exactly what the notes were; except that they had to do with the floridity and redundancy of my literary style, and various attempts to develop a punch monosyllabically instead of with my customary polysyllabic profundity.

If this letter seems unduly hysterical, I trust that you will ascribe same to its true cause and not to inebriety.

Very cordially yours,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'D. G.' with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.