

The Drink Tank Issue Forty Three

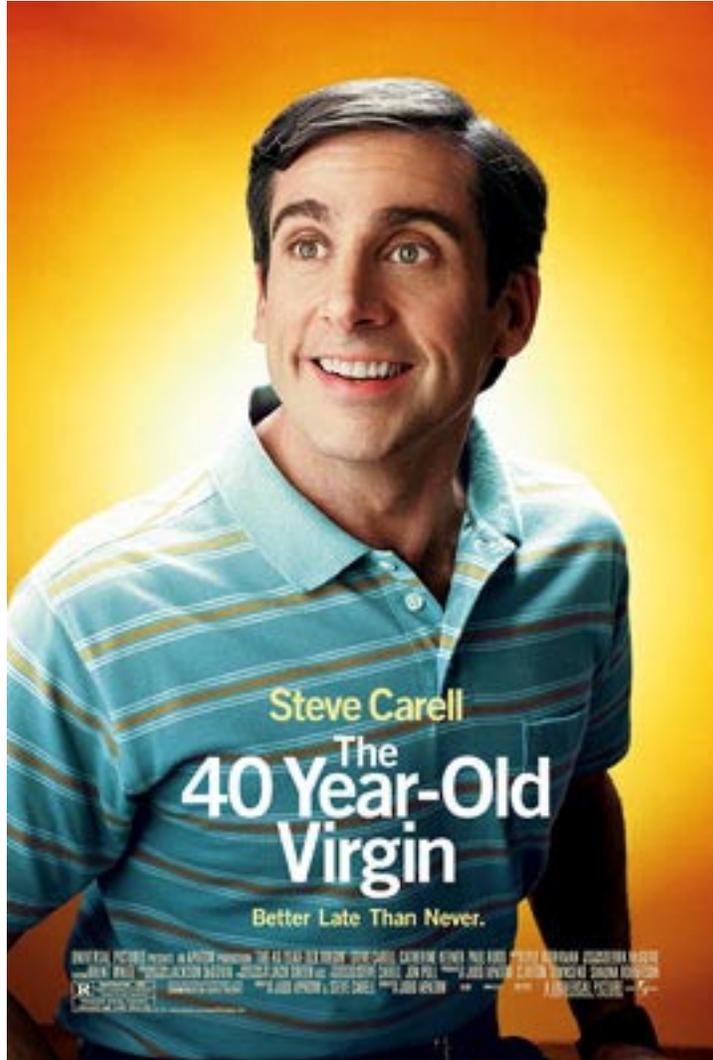
A Dark Look Into The Soul



THE 40 YEAR- OLD VIRGIN AND WHAT IT MEANS TO FANDOM

OK, I'll admit it: I read Ansible. I know, I know, and I'm sorry. I tried not to for so long, but it just happened. There are parts of every issue called As Others See Us. Basically, the stories there say things like authors saying things about SF writers and fans that are not flattering. It's a long-standing run that we're jokes in the mainstream, and it's never going to change, sadly, though individuals will continue to be respected parts of their mainstream communities and of fandom, even those of us who are out and proud about our fannish way. I went to a movie that was almost built on this entire premise. It was Steve Carrell's 40 Year-Old Virgin, and it's hilariously true and brilliant.

Here's the basic premise: Carrell, best known for his work on The Daily Show and in the films Anchorman and Jim Carrey's Bruce Almighty, plays Andy, an action figure collecting, miniatures painting, X-Box playing geek. You've met folks like this at cons and comic shoppes and on-line. He's never managed to have himself the nasty



because he's awkward with women and has made some brutal mistakes (one that had me rolling was kicking a girl squa' in the face when she was licking his toes). I've had this problem at various points in my life, where everything I would do around a lady would be completely wrong. Almost every guy goes through it at some point (or at least that's what I keep telling myself), but Andy has had a run of it for more than twenty-five years.

Andy's buddies at work decide to try and get him a little after they discover his dark secret during a poker game.

This was completely unbelievable because no one chats like this during a game where money is on the line. They devise all sorts of ways to get him out with the ladies and try to work him into situations where he can lose his virginity. This is where the comedy comes in, as the techniques they work on are brilliant and crazy and hit perfect marks for audience destroying laughter.

Andy ends up meeting a woman that he really likes. Played by Catherine Keener (Being John Malkovich), Andy falls for her and has to come up with ways to keep her from wanting to have sex. It's a funny bit

and eventually, it turns on him and he has a serious section of trouble.

The strange thing is that this guy exists. He's at cons and he's at comic shoppes and he works with us and he takes heat from his pals. Sometimes, the world of fandom or comics or collecting is there to distract him from the fact that he's scared of women or of the responsibility that relationships represent. And then there are those that just can't admit that they're gay. It happens. I know three of these guys personally. They're great guys, one of them being my dearest friend, but there's always that wall they've built to keep the ladies out.

To say that many folks in fandom are like Andy is completely false. For every guy who just can't manage, there's the Casanova who is swimming in women and there are probably two who fit the mold of sexually open and adventurous. Remember Margeret Cho's line: Why is it that all the BDS&M I've ever met are huge Star Trek fans? It's a strange phenomenon. There is also a large middle ground of well-adjusted types, married or dating or taking a break or whatever. It's probably 5 to 1 of all other types to the middle ground. I'm in that group, and I'm betting that you are too.

The film is a comedy, so it takes everything to extremes, but there are mo-



ments of truth in it. Think of the folks you know in fandom who have started seriously dating folks who are well-outside of fandom. Now, in the film, Andy's girlfriend convinces him to start selling off his collection of action figures so that he can quit his Smart-Tech job and start his own Stereo Store. I've seen this exact scenario play out more than once, and once it even scattered one of the most beautiful collections of B-Movie video tapes ever compiled. It hurt me, and when she left him a year or so later, he was super bummed. I've always maintained that I'd shift a bit to make my SigOth happier, but I'm never going to give up fandom nor completely dismantle my collections.

There is a great role played by Kat Dennings, an amazingly gorgeous lass who plays Andy's girlfriend's daughter. She kinda gets Andy's whole virginity thing, but doesn't understand his hobbies. It's the kids that usually give the Andy-types the hardest times when they start dating Moms who aren't in the same world. I didn't have that problem with The Little One because she was just 4 at the time and she likes SF now. I've seen some brutal issues come from it.

The 40 Year-Old Virgin might be a comedy, but there are elements that you'll see at every con.

REVIEWING FANZINES

I've started reviewing fanzines on my livejournal as a part of my writing for Matthew Appleton's Some Fantastic. I've done one big review of various fanzines (Banana Wings, Meta, Littlebrook, etc) and one of YHOS and one of eI. I'm hoping to get a lot more done, probably about two to three a week as time permits.

The biggest problem I have is the quality of most of the stuff I get is very high, so it seems as if I'm boosting. That's troublesome, since I do enjoy a good negative review once in a while, but I'm stumped to find a really bad fanzine. I must try harder

THE NEXT BIG MOVIE

So, it has begun that I'm making another movie (along with The Cactus Club Documentary that I'm working on with Lon Lopez) this coming October. It's called Traffic on the Hour and it's sick twisted and wrong...just like the rest of my work.

So far, we're featuring John Chapman, the lead of my first production The Chick Magnet, back as the lead. We're working on getting voices to play radio announcers. Marla Davies, a local Drive Time DJ, is one of our choices, but we're having trouble getting through to her. Slappy, another disk jockey and a friend, is also on our list.

Directing is Sean Becker. His previous movies were classics like Dude, Where's My Scooter and Parallel/Parallel. He's going to be an awesome SF director in short order and he's already a shameless self-promoter, just like me.

We're doing a one day shoot on October 16th. We're basically going to recreate a traffic jam in a parking lot. It'll be tough but should be a lot of fun.

LOVE THE BOOBS

I'm on a lot of the social networking sites. I've been a member of Friendster since 2003 and of Tribe.net since that same October. I recently got myself a MySpace.com account and I've used, at one time or another, all of the major SS sites. Heck, even Trufen.net could be considered a Social Networking site!

I've also found something that they all have in common: Boobs. That's right, the female breast, and especially the over-sized female breast.

You see, since most of them rely on photos and headlines to catch people's attention, those women with the largest bust sizes seem to get all the attention, so they'll naturally choose a shot that features massive amounts of cleavage, or on those that allow it, full boob shotage.

Friendster, the first major Social Networking site to get much notice, didn't have group options, so you'd find someone who had a lot of friends who were girls who happened to participate in the Boob concept. They gathered on each others lists. There were some (one girl called Lola, for example) where you could get a couple of hundred chicks with their goodies on display.

When Tribe came around and introduced interest groups called Tribes, some of the first (and largest) Tribes were dedicated to the Boobs. These grew, and the top ten of the Tribe, which they've stopped showing, were always the Burning Man groups and Sex groups, especially ****Big Titties Tribe****.

Note, I'm not complaining, I like a good boob as much as everyone else, but they are all over the place. Maybe I'm just a prude (42% prude is certainly possible) but it's just a little too dominant a thing on these sites.

Then again, I'll get over it once I start surfing the sites!



My Greatest Weakness by M Lloyd

I am powerless to resist Goth Chicks. Even more so than the publisher of this CrapShack, I'm a huge quivering mass of jelly for a beautiful pale white face and a lot of black lace. It's gotten me into trouble over the years, but it's still there.

And I think I've finally come down to the reason for it.

You see, I've come to understand that most men, and a fair number of women like me, have come to see Goths as being terrified and alone in the world. What else could be more attractive to a strong, standing man than protecting the weak. In a way, it's a bit of psychological blackmail. *I'm alone and cute and ever so scared of the world* is the vibe we pick up on and with many of them it's more like *I'm tiny and painted and pouty and strapped into this dress so I want you to come and fuck me*.

Yes, that's a sad fact. Ever since other women started to notice that Goth Babes were getting laid a lot, they've picked it up and ran with it and guys and I are still falling for it. I even did it during a period of my life I don't like to talk about.

I only say this as a prelude to this fol-

lowing story.

While out at one of the many clubs that Chicago boasts, I was sitting at the bar, drinking mint juleps at 14 dollars a pop and slowly calculating how many I could handle before I either passed out or had run through all of the Trust Fund. As I sat there, alone and wearing my suit that gave off a very Paula Poundstone vibe, I noticed a girl dancing on the edge of the dance floor. Almost my height, which I claim is 6'1 though some claim I'm closer to 6'3, and PalePause Pretty as they come. She was dancing with her eyes closed, but I could tell she was sneaking a peek of the ones who were watching her when the hair would drop in front of her eyes. She must have noticed me staring, because she came closer and kept dancing. She had a corset on, and that drives me crazy. And as if she were out to get just me, the runs in her fishnets were long and disappeared under her layered skirts.

Like a chump, I kept watching.

She ended up taking the chair next to mine and started chatting me up. I loved her voice, slightly squeaky, slightly smoker's chest deep. She had me on a rope and after a few minutes, she asked if I wanted to join her outside for a smoke.

And that was that.

We had a nice long snog session. She had her way, familiar from hours of this sort of thing in places called Nepenthe or Dungeon or Flail. Agressive, but yielding if I decided to go on attack. She played me in closer by dangling her asertion. Afterwards, she wanted to give me her number.

"Nah, I don't need your number."

"Why not?" in a voice that positively rang of desperate to avoid all rejection. "Afraid your boyfriend might find it?"

"No, because I know I'd call and I don't wanna have to be made a fool of more than once by the same pretty face."

She didn't take that well, but then again, neither did I when I headed back in, apologized and brought her back home with me for an evening I wish I could just pull out of my head and sell it on eBay.

Emailed Words of Comment sent to Garcia@Computerhistory.org By My Gentle Readers

My Pops Would Kill Me If I Didn't Start with His All-Time Favourite FanEd, Ed Meskys!

Peter Sullivan has been showing me how easy it is to convert PDF to TXT which I can read on my talking computer and has demonstrated this by converting 39 and 42 for me. I enjoyed them and have to spend time on E-fanzines to read future ish. I am on so many listservs that I rarely find the time to go on the web itself. I do have to have a life, after all.

Lists really take it out of you. I used to be on four or five, and it was a real drag. Even Timebinders alone can take a toll on an in-box.

I rarely experience movies other than those which were done voice over by "DVS" (Descriptive Video Service). Last night I watched Chicago. I get two or three a month from my talking book library. Several hundred are available and a half dozen new ones are done a month. I can also buy the videos direct from WGBH or Audio-Canada which makes them. I do not rewatch movies with very rare exceptions, so I do not buy them. I depend on which ones my library bought. The last one they sent was from the Canada group which does old movies from the 30s and 40s. Last one of those I got was Beat the Devil, a terrible movie I turned off after 40 minutes. It was about schemes to get ahold of uranium mines in Africa.

Beat the Devil wasn't great, that's for sure, but it had its charms. Same can be said of most movies from that era. WGBH is an awesome station that I once worked for briefly. That was in the go-go 90s!

Anyhow, Smart Card sounds interesting and I wonder whether it will come with DVS. One major problem in its premise. Our hero must not have been the

first person to lose his card. There must be a way to handle it. Look at how many people lose credit cards, or have them stolen. We cope, tho with some pain. Hmm, a stolen card would allow the thief to do far more damage than a stolen credit card.

True, they sorta made it out to be a giant conspiracy, so I was able to forgive it that minor...OK, major plot leak.

Found the writeup of Glasgow interesting. I was there and did enjoy it very much. I also spent a lot of time in the fanzine lounge, in the Moat house. Went to panels almost every hour. Most fun was a panel on technology gone wrong. Mostly due to stupid errors made by engineers or researchers. Such as an emergency venting of liquid hydrogen into a parking lot full of cars, and destroying all the tires. ***OK, that is funny. I really like doing the tech gone bad panel. MIT Hacks are the best Technology used for evil instead of good. When I was at school in Boston, you could always tell when MIT had just had a seriously good Hack done when security would be bumped up.***

I also went to the 50 anniversary celebration of LotR in Birmingham. Some interesting stuff, but very dry. All were papers READ by academics. Afterwards my wife and I went to Cardiff for 9 days and did side trips to Hay on Wye (many used book shops in a small village) and Shrewsbury, home of brother Cadfael.

I've heard a lot of folks headed out to the LotR event after WorldCon. I've never been a big fan of the books, I had to stop reading them because I got so confused.

Enjoyed your writeup of NASFiC. I have never been to one even tho I cannot afford to cross the Pacific. I also missed Loncon I in 1957, both Seacons, and Heidelberg. I think it is unfair to

overseas bids to hold a rumpcon. If I still have my health in 2017 I do plan to go to Moscow (I will be 81) as it would also allow me to visit Lithuania, where both parents were born.

I'd love for Russia to get the 2017 WorldCon, though I keep hearing that it's just a joke bid. I'm all for new places hosting WorldCons. In my order of preference, I'd say that I'd like to see Helsinki, Sun City or Johannesburg, Vegas and St. Petersburg host WorldCon over the next twenty years.

If Seattle had opted to bid for 07 I would have been tempted to go to NASFiC as my wife was never there, and I was there only in 1962 for the World's Fair. I had dinner at G M Carr's home, and Buz threw a party for me with Wally Weber, Wally Gonser, Burnett Toskey, and I do not remember who else.

One of the hotels they used for NASFiC, the Radisson where I stayed, was the site for SeaCon. Dave Kyle pointed out that one of the small rooms they used for programming was the only programme room for the 1962 WorldCon!

Potlatch is another con I would like to attend, but unfortunately in 07 it will be in the Bay Area. Well, since I lived there 62 to 65 I love to return and see friends, but I do want to go back to Seattle one day. Maybe Potlatch in 2010.

We'd love to have you back here sometime. Maybe I'll start a campaign to get you named Fan Guest of Honour at BayCon or some such.

This fall marks 50 years in fandom for me, and I am feeling old when I think about it.

Fifty Years. That's more than 20 years longer than I've been alive and roughly the same amount of time that my parents have been alive. Just mind-boggling!

best,

Edmund R. Meskys

Thanks Ed! And Now, Eric Mayer!

Hi,

Thought I'd just send a brief note. It's interesting to attend a convention vicariously since I don't have to actually meet strangers or appear on panels. It's more enjoyable to read about someone having fun than to fail miserably to have fun. However, I've exhausted all one of my own convention anecdotes.

It's OK. You can collect those of others and put them into use as your own (see my Yafa story that I've been using)

Too bad I don't have a fanzine. Sometimes I go to two day orienteering meets. I could foist an account off as a warped convention report. O meets suit me, you'll appreciate, since the main activity consists of being out in the woods alone.

The Woods are scary for a guy like me.

I get lost on well laid-out city streets.

How the hell am I supposed to deal with the Woods?

I will say, I'd loved to see a 1920 Gestetner in action.

It was tragically jammed, but I'm hoping that whoever took it will get it up and working. There's a lot to be said for old technologies (it keeps me in booze and convention memberships) and mimeo may make a small comeback shortly!

Also, yes, a blog index would be interesting. I know a lot of fans seem to gravitate to LiveJournal but they're hard to locate with the weird handles. I don't see the attraction of LiveJournal actually. The whole setup strikes me as kind of juvenile. I like the simplicity of JournalScape, although I would rather like to have trackback.

I myself have a LiveJournal with a weird name (johnnyeponymous), though all I'm going to be doing on it for the time being is reviewing fanzines. I might ask one of my Brit fanfriends to help me compile one. They're all on LJ.

The Drink Tank Issue 43 was written by Christopher J. Garcia and M Lloyd with friends writing in too! You can read my fanzine reviews on LJ at johnnyeponymous and I'm in the next other Magazine. Sic Semper Fannus!