

LUCHA

**THE DRINK TANK
ISSUE 88**



CHRIS FOR TAFF

This is a special issue as we'll be talking about Mexicans and Mexico. Judith, who hasn't written poetry in years, sent me a piece she did recently based on the life of one of my cousins. as a contributor with a piece that really moved me. So here we go, South of the Border, down Mexico Way.



That Mexican Girl
by
Judith Morel

I am that Mexican girl who got herself knocked up at fourteen and decided to have the baby.

I am that Mexican girl who fought the bitch who touched my boyfriend's crotch six nights after she had her own abortion.

I am that Mexican girl who smoked shitty weed before she turned ten.

I am that Mexican girl. The one you see when you close your eyes and try and conjure up the image of the young Latina you want to throw down hard over the edge of your bed.

When I walk into stores, carrying the baby, the Korean bitch behind the counter looks at me and steps closer to the cash register. When I pay in cash, she always holds it up to the light.

I am that Mexican girl with the tattoo that stretches across her back spelling out the name of my baby-girl.

D-I-A-N-A

I am that Mexican girl who dropped out of high school when I still had a 3.5 GPA.

I am that Mexican girl whose mother lit up in the house before I should have known what she was doing.

One night, when Diana was crying and I couldn't sleep through all that little brat's screaming, I thought I could feel the air being pulled out of my chest, the blood out of my heart, the thoughts out of my brain. I couldn't get out of bed: there was an Old Hag on top of me.

I am that Mexican girl whose cousins never made it anywhere but jail, the only one who went anywhere being the one smart enough to get the hell away from the rest.

I am that Mexican girl who wrote stories to tell her daughter from the day I turned thirteen.

I'm the Mexican girl who has read them all to her.

I am the Mexican girl who got a job with the County of Santa Clara on my first try.

And on my first day, they all looked at me and asked how old I really was. "I'm 19." I told them. "I knew you weren't 23." my manager said.

I am the Mexican girl whose daughter will be spoiled by Uncles and Cousins and Mothers and anyone else who feels the need.

I am also the mother who won't let her daughter fuck things up like her Mother did. She'll hate me but she'll never have to go through the shit I went through.

I am the Mexican girl who should be calling herself a Mexican woman, but I want these last few days of my youth, these last hours before I pass.

My connection with my Mexican side has always been through wrestling. That should explain all of the art in this issue. Unlike my connection with my Jewish side (which is entirely through comedy), I'm only a Mexican when I turn on Lucha Libre.

The question *What is Lucha?* is the toughest to answer. You may as well ask me which is my favourite kidney...oh, who am I kidding? it's the right. Lucha is a sport. Lucha is a spectacle. Lucha is a lifestyle. It's all of those things, often at once to the same people.

With the possible exception of Japanese Pro Wrestling (which is another article waiting to happen) Lucha Libre is the most exceptional type of wrestling in the world. There is little nuance in Lucha, it's a brash and brassy world that gets created from the moment you enter the arena/pop in the tape. There are traditions both in the ring and in the audience. There are chants and there are signs and there are ways of signifying loss and victory.

And of course, there are masks.

The word Luchador in American circles has come to mean masked wrestler. There are more masked wrestlers in Mexico than anywhere else, but they neither invented it (that would be the French in the late 1800s) nor popularized it (in the US around 1910, a masked wrestler participated in the most successful tournament ever in the

US, held over several days at Madison Square Garden). Lucha took the idea of the masked wrestler and incorporated it into a long tradition dating back to the Aztecs. Warriors would put on masks and become gods. That tradition continued on even after the Catholicization of Mexico. Still, almost every festival included the donning of masks and the playing of roles. The over-sized papier mache heads that are often seen in festivals are the natural outgrowth and are recognisable around the world.

The one who started Mexican



wrestling was a fellow named Salvador Lutteroth. He was a promoter of Boxeo and he had gone to Liberty Hall, Texas, and saw some wrestling in 1929. Texas was a hotbed of wrestling at the time (and would be again in the 1960s and certainly in the 1980s) and Lutteroth convinced some people to fund him starting a federation. He called Empresa Mexicana de Lucha Libre, EMLL or the Empresa as all the wrestlers called it. Nowadays it's called CMLL (Consejo Mundial de Lucha Libre) but folks still call it La Empresa. That's seventy plus years that a single

promotion has been in existence. There's nothing that comes close to that number (the McMahon promotion would go back almost 50 years).

At first, it was much like American wrestling: a sport of stereotypes. They would have wrestlers billed as being The Mackay Cylone (from Ireland), the American Brute, Yacui Joe. They'd all fill roles and wherever Mexico stood with a country would determine whether the wrestler was a good guy (Technico) or a villain (Rudo). That was the way all wrestling was even as late as the 1980s (or the 1990s, when an Iraqi sympathizer character was given to the formerly patriotic Sgt. Slaughter). Some would argue it's still the same today.

During the 1930s, it was typical to see Americans and Spaniards to be in the main events, but on the undercards, there were more and more masked wrestlers. Rudy Guzman was one of them. He worked under his real name for a while and then ended up changing his gimmick to wearing a silver mask (well, at first it was leather, but it became Silver soon) and then he gained fame for his name: El Santo- El Enmascarado del Plata!

He was quickly a major star, but he was never really a great worker. I mean, back in those days, you had to have a much bigger repertoire than most wrestlers have today, but he was a slight bit lower than most. The best

workers of that period were almost always foreigners or guys like Gori Guerrero (father of Eddie Guerrero), but the best Mexican worker was a fellow named Demon Azul - The Blue Demon.

Blue Demon was a great worker and a good shooter. He was a big star and when he was paired up with El Santo, it was almost always Demon that got the win. He was always second star to Santo though. Even though he got more wins over Santo, it never really launched him over Santo.

One of the reasons that Santo was so much bigger than Blue Demon was the fact that Santo did movies. Starting in the late 1940s, Santo starred in a bunch of movies, cheaply made action films with Santo as the James Bond/Sherlock Holmes/Sly Stallone/Superman character. He was really bigger than life. He made dozens of movies and they almost all had the same thing - wrestling.

There was no wide-spread television in Mexico at that point. By the 1960s, even with some television (including the Spanish International Network which was HQed in Southern California), movies were still the biggest mass market for wrestling. Any of the footage we have of 1940s, 50s and 60s Lucha Libre is either directly from the films of El Santo or from the matches that were shot

for movies that either didn't get made or were deemed unusable. In addition, there were a lot of El Santo comic books, released at a rate of roughly one a week for nearly twenty years.

In the 1980s, Americans started getting interested in the movies of El Santo. I saw some of the films he made in the 1970s at the Mexico theatre in

San Jose when I was very young. Several El Santo movies were released on video tape, often due to the efforts of K. Gordon Murray and Johnny Legend. They introduced the movies and even started showing them on the big screen. I first saw *Campeones de Justicia*, starring El Santo, Blue Demon and Mil Mascaras (more on him later) at a

screening set up by Johnny in San Francisco.

Now, television didn't stay away forever. There was TV by the late 1960s, but wrestling was only featured on special occasions, such as the EMLL anniversary shows. By the 1970s, there were challengers to the supremacy of The Empressa. UWA came around with a giant new star: El Canek. He was a giant star, and while most of the big stars of EMLL over the years had been light heavyweights, Canek was a heavyweight. He was also far from the only major star. Mil Mascaras was there along with his brother, Dos Caras. UWA used the old theory. They brought in foreigners to meet Canek for his title. Andre the Giant headlined losing to Canek in 1984 before twenty-five thousand fans. One of Japan's biggest stars, Tatsumi Fujinami, also came in and traded the UWA title with Canek. It was a big deal and it outdrew EMLL for a few years. Of course, Canek got old and Mil and





his friends moved back to EMLL, which had also been actively producing new wrestlers. In the 1980s, a new wrestler named Konnan came about and that was about to change things in even bigger ways.

Television was still spotty in the late 1980s, but the new booker (the guy who writes the stories) was a guy named Paco Alonso. He was a big thinker and after butting heads with the second generation of the Lutheroth family, he left in the early 1990s and started AAA.

AAA became the biggest thing in the history of Mexican wrestling. While there were periods where guys like Santo would sell out arenas every week for years on end, AAA managed

to sell out Bullrings and Soccer stadiums. They were built around Konnan as well as other younger, faster, higher flying stars like Rey Misterio Jr. Konnan became a hugely popular attraction because he was feuding with guys like Jake The Snake Roberts. The two of them had a long feud that drew huge crowds and the crowds were so crazy that Jake often had to sneak out of the arenas in the trunk of a car.

Southern California had always brought in Mexican wrestlers, many of whom became big stars in places like the Olympic Auditorium in LA. With AAA, they started running the LA Sports Arena and were selling out. The big attractions were Roberts, Konnan and the son of El Santo: Hijo del Santo. That was a big deal and they had great shows. Of course, in-fighting, Konnan's ego and American wrestling federations bringing a lot of guys in to the States all helped slow AAA, though it's still around today and has managed to draw a few very good crowds for its traditional TripleMania.

EMLL, now CMLL, had a huge year in 2005. They own their major arenas, including one of the four most famous arenas in the world: Arena Mexico. I should mention that the four other arenas, Madison Square Garden, Korakuen Hall in Tokyo and The Tokyo Dome, all had a serious role in the history of Lucha. The biggest star of 2005 wasn't for his wrestling, though he did

well drawing weekly sell-outs to Arena Mexico, but for winning Dancing with the Stars, the Mexican edition. His name is Latin Lover and sadly he had to retire because of injuries in February.

So, that's Lucha. Why do I identify with it so much? There's a huge question. Maybe it's that it's an American sport (and Pro Wrestling is the most American of sports, it even has good writers!) that has been adapted by my other people. That would make sense, but I think it's just the Masks.





MexiSex
by
M Lloyd

Note: This was supposed to be in Issue 1 of Crass Dandy

It's a fact that there are people that think the unknown is the sexiest thing possible. The scene in Clerks where Kaitlin Brae goes into the darkened bathroom and has accidental sex with a corpse, though not shown, makes the hairs on the back of my neck stand up. She was going into a place of mystery and she had her way. What's hotter than that? Well, I'd guess if the guy hadn't been a stiff, but still.

There's a community that worships masks. Not just the Mexican wrestling masks, but all masks. Think of those subs who don the full latex or leather gear. The ultimate sign of submission is to allow your face to be covered, your identity to be replaced by black material that is hot and uncomfortable.

But let me also say this - wrestling masks are hot too. A man in a mask coming at you with stiff intent is likely the most intoxicating thing I could imagine. Most masks leave you only the eyes and mouth of the man behind them. There's little to suggest any humanity except for those two small areas. That's a lot of mystery. The fabric itself, when pressed against you, has an erotic feel that no human skin can emulate. When I first heard of masked sex in the pages of Chris' all-time favorite magazine From Parts Unknown, I had to try it. My boyfriend of the time loved it, and as I was at the edge, I reached up and grabbed the eyeholes, pulling it off as he...well, let's say he enjoyed a rare privilege that evening. We did it a few more times, the last being where I did not merely remove it, but I ripped it like a Rudo at Arena Mexico. I tore a piece of skin too, blood staining the white lycra. I had to yell at him like a Drill Sergeant to keep fucking me. That was a night neither of us will ever forget: me for the orgasms, him for the scar I left just about his

ear.

The woman who first wrote widely about masked sex was Reina Arana. She wrote the article I read in From Parts Unknown and she is one of the most beautiful women who ever lived. Her character, the Queen of Spiders, she wrote an article where she talked to the various Mexican wrestlers about whether or not they'd had sex with their masks on. Almost all had, and one said that he'd done it only once, but the mask stayed on all night. FPU, as the mag was better known, did all sorts of sexy photo shoots, including one where Dita Von Teese, now Mrs. Marilyn Manson, was a mummy and Miss Arana undid her after wres-



tling here for several pages using the Twelve-Inch Tap Out, a dildo that glowed pink in the pages. After that, the Mummy purred like a kitten at her feet.

I bought several wrestling masks over the years. My ex-husband would wear one once in a while, mostly when we'd had a fight and he wanted the hot stuff before we actually dealt with the issue. But Arana's concept made me understand that women in masks were bigger deals.

I've never managed to have a woman who would put on the mask for me. I've put it on for a couple (in fact, a long-time pair who were out to find a third for play shortly after my divorce) and I hated it. I wanted to be the one who was taking the identity away, who was waiting until the right moment to reveal the face of my freshest conquest. They treated me well, made me feel secure as they had me serve them, let me top them, had me play different roles to their amusement. It was entertainment switchplay at best: I was more or less their dancing bear and at times it pleased them to let the bear have its way.

I've still got a few masks, two that Chris gave me as a gift one Christmas, another that Jay bought when he came out to Oz to see me and bring me home. A mask of Ciclope that was given to me by the man himself when I managed to get backstage in TJ. Have

I used them lately? No, sadly, but they're there. I will lay in bed at night and see them, on their little stands that Chris got for me, and I'll let me hand slide low as the image of Reina Arana, that SpiderQueen, holds me in her rule. I'm powerless against her, far more powerless than the Mummy was, but I fight her harder than any that she has faced.

It's no fun unless you give doubtless winner a little bit of a battle before you service them...right?



A Bit of Sexiness from Mike Swan

Primero Caida

She walks up to me, halter-topped and fuck-me pumped. She whispers in my ear in Spanish.

"No habla." I say, but she

takes me by the tie in a cliché I never thought to encounter South of the Border. She led me to a corner and wrapped her lips around mine, a technique calling for supreme submission.

Secundo Caida

I win this one. She pulls me to a part of the house where the party is long forgotten. Just two rooms over a series of arguments over the price of trade will turn ugly in less than five minutes. I let her have first small victories, but this fall belongs to me, the drama is built that way. I pin her against a wall and force her breasts out of her top. She presses against me harder, jobbing for me, giving me my victory.

Tercero Caida

She can only squirm between the force I exert on her and the wall. She wraps a leg around mine, but I push into her harder, the wall making a groan of weight misplaced. I break back and run my hands up either thigh. Her skirt lifts, but she puts her hands on mine and pushes them down.

"No." she says, plainly, heavily.

She stares into my eyes and pulls away, replaces her shirt and walks into the hallway.

Tercero Caida belongs to her. They tell you never to use No as your safety word, but she made it work.

Letter-Graded Mail
Emailed Words of Comment
Sent to garcia@computerhistory.org
From my Gentle Readers

Let's start off with Mr. Ted White who drops us a line due to the holiday!

Dear Chris,

It's the 4th of July, and I'm at my home computer, and I just read TDT #87.

I did a few LoCs because I had the day off too. It's an American tradition!

A line of thundershowers just blew through in the last hour. I had just gone out in my car to do a short errand when the first drops began falling. I ended up driving through sheets of rain and saw a gorgeous lightning flash across the sky on my way back. Now the sun is out.

One of the best nights I ever had was playing mini-golf while there was a thunderstorm some miles away (so there was no rain or even clouds overhead) and we saw and even managed to photograph a few gorgeous streaks. I hear the weather out there has been a challenge. Having grown up in NorCal, I never understand that other places get rain during the summer.

But when I walked in the door of my house upon my return, I



heard music. I hadn't left anything playing, which was a tipoff. My CD player, when the power is interrupted, immediately goes into "play" mode when power is restored. So I knew the power had been off in my absence at least momentarily. I wandered around my house checking things. The Very Old analog electric clock always stops when there's a power interruption, and has to be started again by hand -- a little knob sticking out its back which is actually the end

of the shaft on which the motor spins, which you have to start spinning again. From the clock I could see the interruption had occurred only three minutes earlier. The VCR in my bedroom recording the 4,5, and 6 o'clock news on Channel 4 was still going. The others showed the correct time and weren't flashing "auto".

I thought I'd check the progress of the storm on the Channel 9 weather radar loop, which was running on my computer. But it wasn't there -- just an error message -- and a glance at my cable modem showed *all* its lights were out. Worse yet, the little red light was on for "diag" on my router. Fortunately, unplugging and restoring the power for each unit restored both and I was back on line.

You're lucky. During our wet season this year, our Cable went out and we had to actually get new units installed because of some flaw that rendered them useless if they lose power for 24 hours.

And reading TDT #87. But before I get to it, I do want to thank you for giving my LoC pride of place in #86. I wasn't expecting that. **'twas nothing. I usually put my LoCs wherever I am in the process of writing the zine (except for Claims Department where they go in the end since it's one continuous piece). This issue, they're stuck in the middle, so I thought I'd give**

them a couple of illustrations to draw the eye a bit more.

I'm glad to see you running for TAFF, and I offer you my support (and vote). I think of all those currently active in fandom, you're the best choice right now. You're obviously riding a wave of fanac, and I have no idea whether that wave has crested yet, but you are riding high these days. Inevitably your fanac will slow at some point, or your interests will shift away from fanac, but right now you're hot. So, to quote Charlie Parker, now's the time.

Wow, thanks for the endorsement. It's been quite thrilling to hear folks 'Good for you. You've got my vote'. Even the sceptics have all been at least somewhat positive. As for my level of FANAC, yeah, It'll peak at some point and slow down. I'm thinking I've got another year or so of TDT being weekly. SF/SF's been a well-oiled machine of late, so that's easy. My LoCing and doing articles hasn't really gotten tough yet, but I can tell when I start something new (like another movie or a new relationship) I'll probably start to grind a bit. That's one of the reasons I wanted to run, hit while there's still a lot in the tank.

Frank Wu's piece was fascinating, mostly for its behind-the-scenes look at a corner pocket of the film industry -- the promotion.

I've never gotten that far, but a few years ago -- around five, by now -- I got hooked into a movie project of sorts. I was introduced to a man I'll call Jay. Jay had a story of sorts. He was one of a group of hippies just out of college who started refurbishing VW bugs for resale and graduated to "gray market" imported autos. This was a '70s thing which climaxed in the '80s with NEWSWEEK featuring his company on its cover. Jay wanted his "story" turned into a real story, a movie treatment, and he was willing to pay for it. So I came up with a real story, wrote the treatment, and turned it over to Jay for him to sell it. As far as



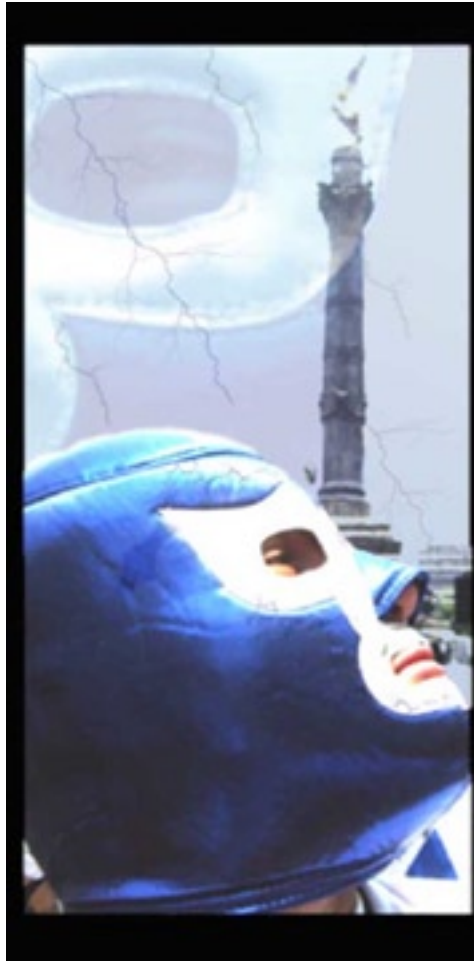
I know, that hasn't happened, and in the interim my nifty title, *Cars*, has been used on another movie (which I saw a couple of weeks ago; I'm a sucker for any movie which features a '51 Hudson Hornet).

I still haven't seen Cars, but we're getting a DVD and a 35mm print for the museum's collections. Pixar always takes care of us. As for the movie, it sounds interesting. I've made a couple of movies, all for the Fest circuit though I worked on one that had Euro distribution, and it's a beast. Frank's a brave man, I could never go into that world. I'm just not strong enough.

Moving on to John Purcell's letter, you say you "never got into the bheer." Neither did I. *I tried.* I really did. As a teenager I'd get a bottle of beer with my peers, sitting out on the end of a pier in Colonial Beach, Virginia, in the summer evening. The waterline was the division between the states of Virginia and Maryland, and the pier, although anchored to Virginia, was itself in Maryland, in a county which allowed slot machines. So people came to play the slots, drink beer, and punch up favorites on the jukebox. (Decades later Maryland outlawed slots and I guess the pier lost its popularity, but I haven't been back there since the mid-'50s.) I was underage -- we all were -- but no one seemed to care. And I struggled with

that bottle of beer. ***That pier sounds like my kind of place. Of course, having grown up when I did, all of those little things were gone. When I was studying the history of the Amusement Park industry, I mapped the types of rides available to the notable lawsuits against parks. By 1974, the rides that sounds like the most fun were all gone, including the awesome Horse Race ride.***

My problem was the *taste* of beer. I never got into it (although I will cook with beer). I think it's the hops. In any event, I suffered a Deprived Childhood because I couldn't enjoy beer. These days I listen to my friends discussing different beers - - some of them homebrew their own -- and it's all academic to me. To me it all tastes like horse piss. But I *can* discuss hops. Did you know hops are the closest botanical relative to marijuana? Or that it's the hops' *buds* which are used in beer-making? ***I didn't know they were related***



at all. It does make sense though. There is one beer that I can get into. It's a Belgian Lambic which is so heavily bitter that it requires fruiting, so that add banana and it's fairly good insomuch as I can drink it. When I go with my beer-drinker friends, I usually have one forced on me.

Still with John's letter, I must say that I don't find Ann Coulter physically attractive. Too skinny, with a too-prominent adam's apple. And her mind/personality is poisonous. She's one of those sociopaths who's learned how to channel

it profitably. But in the '30s she'd have been a devoted member of the Hitler Youth movement. Most of the NeoCons would have been.

She wasn't as skinny as she looked on the recent cover of Time when I saw her. She's just plain evil, that's true. I've been called a NeoCon by many over the years. I usually refer to myself as a Fiscal Conservative. NeoCon to me implies that you give a damn about what people do with

their private life and are a member of the Religious Right, neither of which I can be accused of. But I must admit, I do like the current tax plans...

I don't know "M" but I'm sorry to hear about her medical problems and I hope things improve for her. No new mother should have to deal with medical problems on top of new twins -- who will be a handful all by themselves.

Yeah, she was very broken up. Judith and SaBean went to stay with her and are helping with the babies. Chris, the bigger one, is doing really well, while Guy isn't nearly as big, but he's doing OK. M made it through the surgery to remove the growth, and another smaller one as well, but they only had to remove one of her ovaries too.

All best,

Ted

Thanks Much, Ted! and now SaBean MoreL talks a little about Mexico and M and The Twins and Sex and Drugs and The Drink Tank and Everything Else. It's kind of an LoC, so I'll put it here

You're doing an issue about Mexico. Good for you. I'm sitting in M's house watching Little Chris sleep. M's in bed. Jay's in the kitchen eating soup. Judith and I were sitting in the nursery talking, but she got tired

and went over to the daybed and is napping. Mike and Kath left for the store an hour ago. The nurse is working on preparations in the other room. I just got off the phone with Manny. He's worried about everything and he should be, but I convinced him that everything will be fine. This is the closest I've been to alone in ten days. I'm enjoying it. I finally get a chance to check my email and there's your call for stories about Mexico.

Mexico. Mexico. I've been to Mexico, a few times. Really, lots of times. Used to have a connection that could score me whatever I wanted with no notice. A phone call and it was at my hotel room ten minutes later. It's getting hard to talk about that shit now. I'm sitting in a room with two babies under constant care, there are nurses here twenty-four hours a day and I can't rally enough of that old numbness to talk about those days again. That's been happening a lot lately. My life's changed. M says I'm becoming Auntie SaBean. I probably am.

Jay and M were in bed together last night. M was crying, loud enough to hear at my rocking chair in the nursery. She's been doing that a lot lately and no one blames her in the least. I've been crying too. And Judith. And Jay. And the two adorable little kids in their trays. And Jay's Mom. And My Mom. And Kath. And Mike. And Chris, from what I understand. So



much for us being the hardest of the hard core.

I'm scared. When was the last time I admitted that? Maybe the days leading up to the accident which led to me kicking. Maybe the day my Dad told us he knew he wouldn't make it another week. Maybe the time I went in for an AIDS test and it was inconclusive (and turned out negative). There's no question that things are insane right now, with M's surgery and the twins, it's not easy to keep from falling into something stupid. I'm over the H phase, when any little bump would

send me to my works, but it's hard to not want something to make the worry go away. I moved all the booze to one of the safes. I gave the key to one of the nurses. That'll keep us out of there.

And why am I writing all of this here? Because The Drink Tank is like home to us now. It's the place where we talk about all the little crap we've been through, all the big crap we're going through and all the things we want to find in the future. It's hard to figure, but we never see Chris or Manny, and when M and Jay are in Finland we never hear from them either. This is our place, our home.

Little Chris just woke up. He likes it when you put your finger behind his knee. He does this leg thing where he's trying to close it around your finger. It's one of those things that babies do. He likes me, I can tell. He never cries as loud when it's just me as he does when Judith or Jay are around.

I'm hoping that M will get better soon. She doesn't get to spend much time with the twins, mostly just when she's feeding them. She walks over once in a while and will sit in the rocking chair for a while, stare at Chris and Guy, talks to them. Jay's been so busy taking care of M's medical stuff that he usually only spends the overnight shift with the kids. He'll walk in a little later and I'll give him the chair

and he'll stay in it until he falls asleep.

M and I were talking this morning. She said she missed the days when the worst that happened was a misplaced fuck leading to one of us not talking to the other for a month. I miss those days, though I'm glad were not that stupid anymore. We talked about the times we used to fuck around. It wasn't that long ago, I can still remember the times the two of us would get back from class or work and she'd be naked and I'd be hers all afternoon. M was looking better than she had since she had the twins. I kissed her for a minute or so and she smiled. I hadn't kissed her like that in a long time. Jay came in a few minutes later.

"You missed it, we were just making out." M said.

Jay looked pleased for the first time in a week.

"Good, just make sure you save a little for me once this thing's over." and he came over and gave M and me a big wet kiss each. It had been an even longer time since we'd kissed. Jay's always been so good about M's sexual needs. After the first couple of times he blew up about it, he started to understand. I'm glad.

Later, around noon, I took M to bed, made sure she got her nurse to give the meds and I held her until she fell asleep, got up and sat in the chair across the room. listened to her breathing while she slept and then



dropped off myself for an hour or two. Mexico.

I remember my dad had a book of Mexican folk tales and there was the one about the Ghost woman whose children were drowned and she wept forever. That story scared the shit out of me as a child. So did the one about the ghost highway bandits. Dad tried to convince me that they were just like the ones from the Haunted Mansion ride at Disneyland. it didn't work.

M and I used to talk about going off to Ixapa and playing on the beach. Jay would go off and catch a Marlin or something else and M and I would be on the beach, drunk and lazy, waiting for him to return and take us to dinner and then back to the room for the Good Old Days. Those were the kinds of things I used to wish for.

That and a fast fix.

I want M to get better. Judith's quit her job, and since M's said she's gonna stay in New York for at least a year, we're all going to be living here. Mike and Kath'll stay off and on, but they'll come up on weekends. It'll be a crowded house, but there are six bedrooms, three studies, a library, two dining rooms, two kitchens, a living room, three floors and the Nursery. We've got plenty of sleeping room, even if the Nurses and techs were live-in. You could come, Chris, wouldn't even need to get a motel room.

If Judith and I hadn't patched

things up, there'd be no way this would work. I spent a couple of hours just sitting with her while she let out everything right when she first got here. It was harder on her than anyone. She can't have kids herself anymore, or so they tell her, so M's were sort of her last chance. That's a rough diagnosis, but it's probably true. She spends more time with Guy and Chris than I do, and that's even with her new guy around.

Judith's been writing. I always know when things are tough for her because she starts writing and can't seem to stop. She kept me up until almost two am the other night with her scribbling. She's filled a full notebook. This time, I'm not reading them. I can't bring myself to invade her privacy like I did when we were young. I used to be such a bitch.

I was reading the latest issues of The Drink Tank. They're fun. A lot lighter than the one about our Dads dying. I'm not sure why, but I think that there's going to be a time when you can't do it anymore. You'll run out of art, you'll run out of writers, you'll run out of time. I really don't want that to happen.

I printed out a couple of issues for M and Jay. They both appreciated it and M was laughing just about an hour after they brought her into the bedroom. I guess that's the best reaction you could get from a woman who



was still partially sedated.

This house is amazing. M's got a medical staff of five: a doctor and four nurses, one which looks after her and three for the kids. The doctor is a private-practice guy who gets hired out for six and eight months at a time.

I think he's cute too.

The third floor, where M and the kids are, are all medicalled out. There are hospital beds and incubators and monitors and a drug cart. I've kept

clear of the drug cart. They've spent a lot of money to make it happen (the doctor alone set her back several hundred grand) but she's got the money, is comfortable and she can be surrounded by her family.

That's what we all are now: family. You're family too. You should come out and visit more. We all miss you, Chris. M asked me what it would take to get you out here. I said she'd need to build a bullet train from San Francisco to New York. I think she started pricing out ways to make it happen.

I want to be able to tell you some Mexico stories, but I don't know if I feel up to them. I could tell the one about how I crossed the border and helped three people who really wanted in to the US bad get through the desert. I could spend an hour writing about the time I went down on a dealer for his good personal stuff, not the shit that I was shooting at that point. I could tell you the story of my last trip in to Nuevo Laredo, when Lisa and I slept naked on the roof of some guy's house until we woke up to find three guys staring at us, ready to have their way. There are all sorts of stories but I just can't tell them now.

I'm looking at a baby who's less than six pounds and I'm wondering if he'll have some deep memory of the words that I type here encoded into that darkest part of his brain. I wonder if he'll end up a junky because his

'Aunt' wrote stories about shooting up and having sex and trading one for the other. I wonder if they'll be into edge-play because I wrote about the times that I went over the edge. I'll never be sure, so I just won't write it. I don't want to be that long-time family friend who is sweet as sugar and you never suspect of having done anything in their life until your parents let it slip one afternoon. That's the worst thing I could imagine.

M's up. The nurse is walking her into the nursery. She's been crying. Quietly crying for once. She still looks good. Bless M for that. She even put on make-up this morning. The only reason I know that is the mascara that's running down her face.

I'm tired. I'm scared. I wish you were here, Chris. I'd love to have the rock who is far more emotional than



any of us to make us realize that we'll make it through all of this. You'd make all those inappropriate comments and we'd hit you but still laugh. That's what we need right now.

Judith just woke up. I think she managed to get two hours sleep. I think that's how long I've been typing. She's sitting with Guy and M's with Chris. I'm going to get some sleep soon. My official bedroom is on the second floor. It's next to Judith's. I've only slept in there one night, that first night, before M even came home from the hospital. I've slept in stints on the daybed in the nursery mostly. Judith slept in her bed once too. She slept cuddled up next to M the other night and one night in Jay's bed while he held M in her bed all night. There's lots of bed-hopping going on, but oh-so-little sex. I think that kiss was the most

action this house has seen. I'm in my bedroom, the laptop's plugged in and I'm ready to get my sleep. I'm gonna call Mom in the morning. Then I'll order some Chinese food from Yun-Sang. God, it's almost five. I need some sleep. By the time I wake up, it'll be time for M's series again. She gets grumpy right after that.

Sorry I couldn't write more about Mexico, but you can use this, I'm sure. You'll chop it up like you do all our

articles, but that's OK. You usually manage to make things better.

SaBean, this is the longest LoC I've ever printed. I wish I could have been out there, but you know how things go. I was so glad I got to talk to you and M and Judith last night. I swear I could hear Jay snoring in the background.

I'll be going with Manny to a game night in a couple of weeks, so we'll probably talk about how we're going to get all of you out to WorldCon. It's six weeks away and you know you wanna go.

And it's OK that you don't want to share more of those kinds of stories. There does come a point where it all kinda has to shuffle away for a while. It looks like it's kicked in.

I'm still tickled that Little Chris is named after me! And I love the fact that he's Little Chris, meaning that I'm big Chris. LC and BC. I hope y'all know I'm going to marry him off to my cousin's kid Diana. That'll cement everything.

Take care of everything, yourself most of all. I'll keep close, and who knows, maybe later this year I'm come out and see the place. It sounds like a secret government headquarters. And with all that bed-hopping, who knows what hilarious misunderstandings could happen. Who's Judith's new guy?

Though I am writing a lot about Mexico, I haven't been there in years and I've never stayed long. I went to a few wrestling shows, I went to TJ, and when I was a kid I got separated from my parents and my Dad had to bribe a cop to get me back. That's how things go. Mexico is far from the most corrupt country on Earth, several African nations have that honor, and Guatemala and Honduras both have a stake, but in Mexico it's done very differently.

There are levels of bribes that are required to make anything happen. If you want the police to help you, think of it as a tip, and usually they'll help you out before they make you pay. The way my folks got me back is a perfect example. The amount can usually be tiny, something like two bucks can often work. Sometimes it's more. You get your car stolen and you decide to go the police route (and there are stories that they will regularly steal cars) you'll probably have to pony up about a hundred bucks, and that guarantees almost nothing.

The next step is Governmental. For locals, there are tiny bribes all the time to the various commissions. If you're a store owner, expect several hundred dollars a month to go to the police, zoning and competition agencies and various other groups that require a hand out from each and every establishment. There are some areas where it doesn't happen much, but



Mexico City is well-known for that, as are most of the big areas.

If you're an international group, expect bigger payments. I remember hearing an NPR story about a guy who opened up a Best Western in one of the beach resort towns. It was doing good business and he was supporting a small army in the bribes he knew he had to pay to the police and to the commissions. They kept raising his rates, saying that there were new things that came to light and he had to reimburse them for not letting them get to him. He refused to pay after a

while and nothing happened for almost a year. At that point, a much nicer hotel owned by another Gringo opened up. He was happily paying bribes left and right and they were over-looking violations and standards left and right. They eventually closed down the guy's Best Western because they claimed the food the coffee shoppe was serving had given three people food poisoning and that was enough to close a hotel...if they didn't pay up the proper amounts.

Even in my beloved Lucha there is graft. They regulate things tightly. You have to provide a photo of yourself unmasked to get a licence. If you are a masked wrestler, you must register. Then, if you ever lost your mask, you're required to register that you lost it and may never compete under a mask again...unless you pay the proper bribe. The Commission is theoretically unpaid, though they all live like Kings.

Movies may pay more than any other group. There are bribes required for everything from hiring technicians (much like in the US where they call it Union-Use fees) to paying actors (SAG), to getting beyond the censors (much like trying to get a favourable rating from the MPAA) to getting on screens. It all takes cash, and they require goodly sums for each step.

If you want to make a living off of Mexico, get the right people in your pocket fast. It'll not only make your life easier, you'll also be helping supplement the local economy.

The Legendary El Santo...Sort of

When I was a kid, and I'm talking seven or eight here, I wanted to be a wrestler more than anything. I grew out of it: by 12 I wanted to be a ring announcer and by 14 I wanted to be a promoter, but that dream of wanting to be a wrestler stuck with me.

I did a few shows with my Emerson friends when I was living in Boston. I played Mr. Fabulous, a guy wrestling in a suit who would dance after his matches. I wasn't very good, but I did invent a wrestling move that would go on to be made famous by Bill Goldberg.

But as a kid, I wanted to be El Santo. I wanted to become Enmascarado del Plata. I really wanted to be the man who was worshipped in Mexico as Hulk Hogan meets Arnold Schwarzenegger. I had the idea in my mind from the minute I saw his movies. I never understood a word they were saying, but I loved them no matter.

So, when I was a kid, thinking on the swing at the little park in the middle of my complex, I would think of all the pageantry and magic that would happen when I came to the ring. My opponent would enter first, whistles, and people throwing beer bottles at him. He'd almost start a riot by merely showing his face to take me on. Then he'd get in the ring and taunt the fans some more.

Then, my music would play.

It would nearly be as much of a riot. There'd be people throwing flowers (everyone threw flowers at El Santo) and streamers, kids would run up to try and touch my hands. People would be chanting. 'San-to! San-to' and the old ladies who always sit in the front row would be clapping and smiling.

Then the match would start and everything would take off. I'd win the first fall with La Majistral, the rolling



The great Santo

cradle, and then I'd give him the second fall fast, simply to build the drama. The third fall would be me getting beat around, maybe even bloodied and then I'd reverse his attempt at La Martinette, the most dangerous move in Lucha Libre, and end up with my own Camel Clutch for the win. The place would go nuts, with horns and bells and cheering. I'd have the belt handed to me and I'd show it off to each corner of the arena.

When I wrestled during college, I loved my gimmick, but I wanted to do more. I drew up my plan on a napkin, like all good ideas, and showed it around. It was simple, I'd go down to Mexico, live like Ultimo Dragon and Jushin Liger for a year learning, going to shows and trying to get backstage. I'd finally meet the right person and end up on a show. After a while, I'd debut my new character-

El Santo Nuevo: The New Saint.

You see, I'd pretend like I was a face, but in Mexico there is no bigger face than Hijo del Santo. He'd challenge me and there'd be talk of lawsuits, but we'd have a match, at TripleMania, the Mexican WresleMania, and it would be Mascara contra Mascara, his mask vs. mine, and I'd lose and be forced to take it off and declare my real name. Then I'd rip the Santo tradition and that'd lead to a Hair vs. Mask match. That was my dream.

If only I'd learned how to wrestle.

There are serious things about being a half-breed that a lot of folks don't talk about. There's a lot of hand-waving that we're "A Powerful block" of people. I know a few dozen half-Mexicans. Most of us are half-Anglo and Half-Mexican and all of us identify ourselves as Mexican and not Hispanic nor Chicano (though I sometimes will say Chicano because my Pops always said Chicano). It's strange that no one has really come courting us yet as a possible influence.

I wrote an article ages back about how Classy Freddie Blassie was the dividing point. One generation of Mexicans reacted one way to Freddie and the next reacted another way. I did a lot of research and there was a strange statistic that didn't make it into the article. The percentage of full-blooded Chicano births steadily declined between 1945 and 1980. Supposedly, and UCLA could easily have gotten all of this wrong, before 1940, 85% of all marriages with at least one Chicano involved were between a pair of Chicanos. By 1980, that number had dropped to less than 40%. In fact, the only two races that still maintain 50% plus are Whites and Asians, though those numbers are quite old and it's likely that both have changed.

From my personal experience, I can say that my family on both sides married the opposite direction. My Dad's side all married white girls, ex-



cept for my aunt Naomi. She married a Puerto Rican guy, but her first two baby daddies were both white guys. Of my cousins, only one would qualify as all-Hispanic, and she's got a kid who is half!

On my Mom's side, there's a lot of bitterness. My Mom married my Dad, and that didn't go well (producing one Halfling). Her sister, Susie, she married a guy named Val and they ended up getting divorced too. Two of my cousins both have failed marriages to Mexican guys. The only lasting marriages in my family have been between

white folks. My Aunt Sherry and Uncle Carl and My Aunt Gwen and her husband (until he died) lasted a good long while each. In fact, Carl and Sherry are still together.

Is this endemic of mixed marriages? I don't think so. There are certain truths about Hispanic men that most folks laugh at but are certainly true (at least in the limited sample set of all the Hispanic men I know). That does not seem to have been passed down though. All of my half-Mexican friends are from divorced families (or in one case, extremely long-term separated) and that sort of shows in the way they approach relationships. None of them have married, none of them have had kids, all of them are 30+.

So, does this mean that we should only marry our own races? Well, who knows? There are probably tons of examples that contradict my experiences, I'm betting you could probably name a couple off the top of your head, but there's certainly truth to some of the things I say.

The thing is there's no unified reason why these things have happened. While adultery is certainly one reason, there've also been money issues, marital difficulties, jail time, and a full range of things. The same reasons that all marriages break-up.

So I don't have any idea if there'll ever be a Half-Mexican revolution, but if there ever is, I want to be the leader.



RICH BROWN AKA DR. GAFIA

I never got to meet him. That's what saddens me the most. A lot of the good folks I've met over the last few years knew him well and I'm certain they're all seriously broken right now with rich's passing. Sadly, from the emails that've been going around, his condition was much like my father's the last couple of weeks of his life. That's a shame.

Though I never met him, I did exchange a few emails with the man. The first stemmed from an article I did in one of the very first Drink Tanks where I criticized him for an article that appeared in eI about his feud with Cheryl Morgan. He sent a response which I thought was quite fair and I ran in a following issue. He sent me a couple of more emails a while later, very friendly they were, and he even said that if we

should ever cross paths, he'd give me the story of him and Arnie winning a mini-golf tournament back in the day. The last time I heard from him was after a post I made somewhere about looking for articles. He said he couldn't help me out, but pointed me in a couple of different directions.

I believe rich had two LoCs in The Drink Tank, including on about Hecto that actually got me thinking about starting a HectoZine. I can remember a number of posts on a number of lists from rich and I'll miss those. His were usually some of the most interesting.

I wish I'd got to meet him. My sympathies to his family and to his



friends. I'd love to hear any rich brown stories anyone might have. The only one I have he wasn't even present for. I was working on a zine with a friend

and rich's name came up. I spelt it with no caps, as he preferred, and they had fixed it.

"Why did you Cap those?" I asked.

"It's a name isn't it? All names are capitalized."

I thought for a moment.

"Well, in this case, just think of a description of good gravy and let it slide. I mentioned that to rich in one of the last emails we exchanged and his response was 'Well, at least I'm good gravy.'"

The Drink Tank Issue 88 was written by Christopher J. Garcia, Ted White, Judith Morel, SaBean MoreL, and others. It's on eFanzines.com thanks to the goodness of Bill Burns. Garcia@computerhistory.org for LoCs and article submissions.

Issue 100 will be the 100 writers issue, so if you've got an inkling, even if it's just to say Congrats, drop it my way!