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peregrination, n., *L.*, A traveling, roaming, or wandering about; a journey. (The New Webster Encyclopedic Dictionary of the English Language, Avenel Books, New York: 1980).

I dedicate this to all those folk, fannish or otherwise, who have left us since last October. Wherever they are, if they are indeed anywhere at all, may they be at peace (and laughing up their sleeves at us).

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Contributions are welcome in the form of LoCs, articles, reviews, art, etc. in two methods: e-mail to me at tropicsf@earthlink.net (please use Peregrine Nations in the subject) or via regular mail. **No attachments unless previously arranged.** Clearly scanned artwork is also welcome. Main articles should be around 800-1,200 words, reviews 200-500 words. Exceptions can be made. Queries welcome.

Next editorial deadline: Dec. 20, 2003.



Silent eLOCutions

Letters of Comment

[Yes, I know I forgot the addresses lastish, so where they were included in the relevant LOC, they appear here...]

Don Fitch (with his own rules for Capitalization...)
Sept. 15, 2003

It might be a while before I get the new printer hooked up, but of course I couldn't resist reading parts of *Peregrine Nations* 3.2 onscreen, and might as well do the first installment of a loc right now.

Naturally, my eye caught your account of participating in a Veterans' Dance at an Indian powwow (the California Indian Hobbyist Association has been my "major other fandom" for about forty years). Local customs vary, of course, especially when the Plains-style event is adopted as an overlay by a basically-Woodlands tribe such as the Odawa, but as far as I can figure out you did everything just about right. (Perhaps you should've worn or carried a shawl [or blanket as a substitute] in the Dance Arena, but this would've been a trivial matter under the circumstances — being a Veteran trumps just about everything except being an Indian Grandmother.) [*Does that have anything to do with the value placed on warriors? Just curious. —Ed.*] I like the idea of all the participants announcing their names & service details — an old tradition that's not generally observed in the pan-Indian powwows out here in California, or at most of them (I'm told) in Oklahoma, and apparently it's only rarely done in Lakota country.

This brought back memories of the first time I danced out on the Veterans' Songs, at a Memorial Day Powwow here, almost 40 years ago. I was young and /e/v/e/n/ more ignorant then, uncertain as to just what was meant when the M.C. asked "all Veterans" to dance — after all, it's customary for him to say "Everybody dance!" on the regular Songs when what's actually meant is "Everyone wearing proper dance clothes..." — so I went down to one of the gaps between the dancers' benches (not the big one on the East side, of course) and started dancing in place, on the edge of the arena (not something that's commonly done, but not really unusual, either).

Two **big** guys in old-time Lakota outfits approached me, and one said, quietly, "You are....?"; I gave him my name, subtly informed him — by not mentioning any Tribal affiliation — that I wasn't Indian, and added "40th Division, U.S. Army, 160th Infantry, Medical Corps, Korea, 1951-2, about eight months On The Line". (Maybe I should've added "first to touch three of the enemy in battle", or maybe not, but in any case I didn't [much less add that, as a Medic, I was trying to give them first-aid — though that would've been acceptable]... and it wasn't necessary.) They positioned themselves on either side of me, motioned me out into the Arena with their eagle-wing fans (a request/invitation one does not decline), and accompanied me until the next set of Honoring Beats.

Actually, when the set of four Veterans' songs was over, I also put some money on the Drum, because making a Gift tends to validate (or even consecrate) any activity, and by participating in the Dance I not only Honored all Veterans (living & dead) but also was Honored by the other Dancers and by those onlookers clueful enough to stand during the ceremony. Merely being a Veteran means you've paid your dues, but a little more never hurts.

Maybe I wouldn't have done that if I hadn't heard, from Oklahoma people, the story about the American Legion Post, composed almost entirely of Indian Veterans, that had admitted, and elected to high office, a White naturalized citizen who had served in WWII ... in the German army. When that news hit the

fan in Legion HQ, & the results bounced back, the members of the post protested that the guy had served his native country, bravely enough to acquire a number of Decorations, and had been cleared of any implication in War Crimes, so they were going to continue to allow him to participate in Post activities, as an ex-officio Honorary Member because he was, in fact, a Brave Warrior. Mind you, I have no idea how true this story might be (it sounds suspiciously like an Urban Legend) but I've heard it recounted several times in Indian camps at powwows, always with approval and an implication that the National organization should allow such people to be official members. What the people are doing at Veterans' Dances is Honoring Bravery, Fortitude, Courage, and Service to one's people/nation; what nation it was (and what the warrior's race is) is immaterial. [*I guess that answers my question, then. -Ed .*]

Most "ordinary" (i.e., every non-holiday Saturday night except during the summer, somewhere in the Los Angeles area) powwows/Dances will have at least one Veterans' Song, low-key & sometimes not even announced (you have to know the Songs to recognize it), and at least one set of four such Songs will be featured at Powwows on/around the 4th of July, Memorial/Veterans' Day (this one featuring an empty, usually flag-draped [or blanket-draped if the people running the event are highly-aculturated] chair symbolizing all deceased Veterans), Armed Forces Day, and sometimes Flag Day. Most Indian cultures still place a high value on patriotism (despite some dissension about the definition of it) and make it, like religion, an integral part of their everyday life. As, indeed, it is for many people — at some of these Veterans' Dances you'll see at least one older woman, wearing a black shawl, bearing in her arms a triangularly-folded American Flag, on which rests a photograph of a young man in military uniform, and perhaps a few medals. You know that this Flag covered his coffin when his body was sent home, and that no one present is going to even mention that this is, technically, a violation of the Flag Code.

I was delighted to see Lynn McConchie's coverage of Nancy Atherton's "Aunt Dimity" series of mysteries. Mind you, I don't think this series is great literature, or even especially good mysteries; the stories are, I think, what Mystery Fans categorize as "Cozies" — which apparently refers to entertaining light fiction that has some kind of mystery (and its solution) embedded, but not really central to the reading of it. Atherton's first in this series was a great Wish Fulfillment story — near-poverty-level young working woman inherits vast fortune (from someone she'd never met) & is fallen in love with by Prince Charming — and the rest are (more-or-less) British Ethnic Culture stories. I enjoy them mostly for the latter aspect, being fond of various Ethnic mysteries (British, Welsh, American Indian, Australian, Jewish, Bostonian, Canadian, &etc.), although my prime interest seems to be Historical mysteries. [*Have you read the Merlin books by Mary Stewart? I liked those so well that they're still in my permanent collection, and I still re-read them. -Ed .*]



This is, I suppose, a logical outgrowth of my early fascination for Alien Cultures in Science Fiction. Of course the fact that Nancy Atherton is a delightful person and One of Us (responsible for the arrangement and text of the display of fanzines [from the Pavlat Collection] up to the end of the 1950s that was featured at several WorldCons up through MagiCon) has something to do with why I started reading the series, but sheer enjoyment of the works themselves accounts for continuing to read them (and to buy them in hardcover as soon as I discover that a new one is out).

Don Fitch [who's looking forward to picking up [Aunt Dimity Takes A Holiday](#) at his friendly neighborhood bookseller (who special-ordered it) next week.]

Joseph Major

1409 Christy Avenue, Louisville, Kentucky 40206-2040 jtmajor@iglou.com

Sept. 10, 2003

And I only got the issue after coming back from Torcon — on September 7. Deadlines, deadlines.

The mourning fairy leading off the letter column . . . [*Yeah ... -Ed .*]

Poul Anderson wrote a humorous essay on modern saints that included the comments on "Saint Dwitch". So yes, Poul. I got the SFBC Fiftieth Anniversary edition of The Space Merchants by Pohl and Kornbluth with its back-cover pictures of Poul and Kornbluth. Worse yet, the same picture of Anderson was used on the next one in the series, Three Hearts and Three Lions. I would like to think heads rolled in the SFBC art department, but certainly not.

Why did an online fanzine get nominated ahead of *SF Commentary*? Because it was online! [*There has to be more of a reason than that. Frequency probably had more to do with it than online presence. If Bruce Gillespie could afford to pub SFC more often, it might get noticed more. Cheryl Morgan has the easier publication scheme because she pays no printing or postage costs when she pubs each ish of EC, and this allows more ishes to appear per calendar year. Time to talk to Bruce about setting up a password-protected Web download thingie, maybe ... -Ed .*] Easier to send out to thousands of readers, hundreds of whom might be Worldcon members, and dozens nominate whatever they read. It's like Nigerian 417 spam — all these emails in your mailbox from widows of African leaders, African bank managers, junior African government ministers, etc. all saying they were referred to you by a reliable source and asking you in strictest confidence to help transfer money illegally out of the country. If even one person falls for the scam that's enough.

Believe me, that oversized rounders' bat will do you no good when G.E.C. shows up.

The use of the Herc (C-130) as a special operations vehicle goes back a ways. 1976, as a matter of fact, as anyone who knows about Operation YONATAN knows. That, as you know, was the raid by Sayeret Matkal to rescue the Jewish hostages in Uganda. They flew down in C-130s.

Well, Varley has a new Heinleinesque novel out, Red Thunder. Barnes seems to be doing adequately but not great. David Palmer wrote one good novel, and followed it up by a spectacularly bad one that was the first of a series, and when the second one was even worse the publisher bounced it, at which point he gave up. Some people have one good work in them. As for Robinson, the less said the better.

The Soviet saying was "Impressionism is painting what you see. Socialist Realism is painting what you hear."

Xanadu will be April 23-25 in Nashville, Tennessee. Info to XanaduSFCon@yahoo.com

The Pennsylvania Turnpike was built on a railroad right-of-way. By a coincidence, Lisa and I stayed in Erie on our first night after Worldcon. I had been in Erie thirty-five years before that, on a trip with my family up to see my aunt (father's sister) in Maine. May stay there again next year, on the way to see my first cousin (father's sister's daughter — that makes her a "cross-cousin") in Massachusetts, on the way to Worldcon.

Namarie,

Joseph T. Major

[*After watching the first two Lord of the Rings movies recently, I now know what the heck "Namarie" means. Thus the inclusion of Joe's signature line here. Huzzah! -Ed .*]

Lloyd Penney // 1706-24 Eva Rd., Etobicoke, ON CANADA M9C 2B2
Sept. 18, 2003

The massive catch-up continues, and next on the zine stack is *Peregrine Nations*, whole number 10. Rollin', rollin', rollin', keep those fanzines goin'...

Another marvelous Alan White cover. If I ever get another fanzine on the go, Ah gotta git me one o' those thangs!

I hear what you and Lyn McConchie are saying about marriage. We had our 20th wedding anniversary in May, and my parents are coming up on their 45th. The big fuss up here is about same-sex marriages, and frankly, I don't see the problem. Too many hetero couples have abused the institution of marriage; I expect homo couples will treat the institution a lot better. We attended the wedding of four same-sex couples at Worldcon, and eight men are now four happy couples, all legally married under Ontario law. We all look for someone to be with so we won't be alone and lonely. The gender of that person shouldn't matter; happiness is tough enough to find without narrow definitions making it tougher.

I'm not sure if Guy Lillian ever had that big fanzine fan dinner he wanted to have. If he did, I'm sure we would have been too busy to go. We did a lot of work with the LA in 2006 people, and they won. We did wear our Joe Mayhew ribbons on our Torcon badges. The most common remark? "Cool." Did copies of PN make it to Torcon's fanzine lounge? I was in that room twice, and found it frankly unwelcoming and disorganized.

I've been through Erie, PA ...dunno if there are any cons in this place about midway between Buffalo and Cleveland. We'd been to cons twice in Cleveland, but a Worldcon bid (Cleveland in '94) decimated literary SF fandom there. Now, it's a mediafan's city, and I think there is a small Trekcon held there most years.

We missed you at Torcon, but it was far from being the best Worldcon. [*I've heard similar from more than one person who attended, so perhaps it's best I didn't go. -Ed.*] Shall we say see you in Boston? That's probably better. [*Let's hope so! -Ed.*] For me, it was like a family reunion, seeing people I hadn't seen in as much as 15 years. Organization was lacking, but the Hugos were great, and a grand triumph for Rob Sawyer, winning his long-coveted Best Novel Hugo in front of the hometown crowd. [*For which I hear he campaigned mightily; still a big debate going on about that style of "running" for a Hugo. One might look at it as a smart marketing move, and another might view it as a smarmy business for a writer to get into since Quality Will Out. I haven't read Sawyer's book yet, so I won't say whether I think it deserved to win. -Ed.*]

Jack Calvert
Sept. 29, 2003

It is wise of you to include a submission deadline in your zine. Deadlines are great things — if it weren't for them, I'd probably get nothing done at all. I do usually try not to come this close to the wire, though.

I printed the cover on good quality Ilford paper intended for photo proofing, and it came out looking really good. I used to go around muttering in my (figurative) beard that *real* fanzines come in the mail, but Bill Burns' efanzines has changed my mind. With that and Acrobat Reader, it is possible to obtain well printed zines without unduly straining the faned's postal budget.

Anyway, I thought it was an all round good issue. The letters were interesting, and I enjoyed your fanzine reviews. One thing that I have found about a good letter column is that it leads me to wonder about what has gone before. I don't usually go back to previous issues, because it can become an endless

branching, but I did take a look at PN 3.1, and I got a grin out of the Crudzine cover (and an "ohwow" out of the other one). And I read your memoir of Kenn — it was a picture of a fine man. There are no good words for this, but I offer my condolences.

In PN 3.2, E.B. Frohvet's tale of his road trip was a good read, witty and erudite. And Lyn McConchie's review of the Aunt Dimity books led me to put them on the ever-growing list of things I want to read. [*Nice words for PN, much appreciated — stick around, there's more in the works. —Ed.*]

You mention that you still have some boxes unpacked. Uh, so do we, and we've been in this house nearly twenty years now.

Alan White

September 2003

It was rough getting through; I was forced to stand for a digital cavity search! On the fourth try I got a message about filling out a form, OY! It was easier for my ancestors to get into Ellis Island. Oh well, we Mac people learn to tolerate PCs (Pestilent Computers). Isn't that Blaster Worm the very same that kid got busted for replicating and sending around the US? Bill Maher did the funniest bit about him!

Ahh, the wonders of technology — just like being married but I get more sex; I can't imagine what I'd do without it (technology; I already know what I'd do without sex). [*I feel a Cantorization happening ... no, I won't say it! —Ed.*] I've been in a constant state of digital brain freeze since 1984. I guess technology is like living in New York — no matter how hellish it gets, you just can't pack up and leave.

Oh well, at least I've never had a job counting screws or getting (gulp) dirty. Hell, if I didn't have any manuals to read I wouldn't know what to do with myself. Even toasters have manuals. When I was a kid, you took a piece of bread, laid it against this coil device and let smoke tell you when it was done. There was something natural about that as long as you kept in mind the ratio of desire for that perfect piece of toast is directly proportionate to the amount of attention you paid to the smoke. I think it was Hobbs (of "Calvin and. . .") that said "Technology entering your brain is like a fire hose pointing at a tea cup".

[*Perhaps that should be refined to "Information technology," since that fire-hose metaphor describes exactly the reactions I've gotten when explaining IT stuff to people who have no experiences with it. I have a friend in the Keys whose only use for her computer is to make her business paperwork easier, and to stay in touch with family; she has absolutely no interest in anything else a computer can offer, including the Web. She and her husband also raised two children while living on a sailboat, they're all quite well and mentally stable, and she, unlike many others I've met, knows who she is. There is something to be said for not having all the latest bells and whistles, namely, that it's a lot quieter inside one's head. —Ed.*]

I don't know how many fans are stuck in the same technological Caucus Race — never finishing a software manual because the update comes out as you're finally getting the hang of the old version, but I've such a stack of manuals, you could bury a pharaoh under [them]. I dropped by efanzines the other day and saw your latest effort waving proud and free! Good Stuff. But see there — efanzines is technology at its most compassionate. You go, you get, you enjoy. [*Boy Howdy! -Ed.*]

You always get a jolly assortment of LoCs, too. Wish I had some writing skills; my letter hacking has been a sorry affair. I'm lucky I get my "Black Cat" out once a year. That's why I started with issue #0. If it doesn't pan out, it didn't happen. [*Phooey. Your LOCs are fine, they just need to be more abundant. —Ed.*]

Meet The Typing Demons!

Art by Trinlay Khadro / Text by J.G. Stinson



“Zenz, you blue boobie, you hit the wrong key again!”



“**This** is the key we need to hit!” [punches F for Fen]



“So, Klard, tell me again why there are no function keys on this thing..”
“No what?”

Paul DiFilippo // 2 Poplar St., Providence, RI 02906 USA
Sept. 3, 2003

A gorgeous cover, stimulating LOCs, a fine Frohvet piece & an enjoyable editorial — all in PN 3.2! What more could anyone ask for? Really now! [*Um, a pizza to go with no anchovies? Thanks for the kind words, and the ever-enthraling mail art.* –Ed.]

Sheryl “take an armadillo to lunch” Birkhead // 25509 Jonnie Ct., Gaithersburg, MD 20882 USA
[Cool return address label, Sheryl.]
Sept. 5, 2003

I’ve been carrying a PN around and now a new ish has popped in — **really** revving up the guilt quotient! [*Just for you — mwahahaha!* –Ed.]

I “know” there are a lot of ezines out there, but I just have not looked at them — even if I chose to print — I bet they just wouldn’t have the same feel as a “real” fanzine (well — I hope you know what I mean). [*In point of actual fact, printed-out ezines are much the same as mailed paper ones to me. They both can be on paper, after all. If a faned was particularly adventurous, a wraparound cover for an ezine might also be possible to create and then print out. Perhaps complicated, but possible, I’d think. Apart from that, there are some ezines that have some fine writing in them which one would miss by not reading them, much less printing them out. Earl Kemp’s eI isn’t intended to be printed out, and at sometimes 60 pages it’d be a chore to do so, not to mention the color art he uses. But it’s certainly worth reading. Just my two cents.* –Ed.]

I’m not sure if I missed an issue somewhere — this one says Oct. ’02 ... so I **think** I lost one somewhere. [*More than one — you’ve missed the January and April 2003 ishes, it seems. Hmmm. I got a new tower and guts for my computer system about two months ago, so I don’t know if I sent you either of those. Let me know if you want them.* –Ed.] I sincerely hope Frohvet keeps up fanac — such locs are always interesting to read. The next ish I have also has a spiffy Alan White cover — gotta bow down to talent! Always a pleasure to read Lyn McConchie — great stuff. My condolences on your loss. [*Much appreciated.* –Ed.] Uh — yup — I must have missed an ish — since I **do** know TANSTAAFL — and hey — a crudzine cover — nope, no way, I did miss an issue. [*That settles it — I’ll send copies soon .* –Ed.] A move back home — I hope it eases the readjustment time. You have a fannish family rooting for you.

Yes, we do have to apply in each state [for a license to practice veterinary medicine], and that usually means a passing score on the national boards within a specified time (i.e., usually 3-10 years depending on the state) **and** an individual state's own separate exam. Malpractice [insurance] is not "required" — but we all have it.

Ah yes — Breezewood — I remember it well! [*Me, too — it was a regular stop on our treks north from Maryland to Michigan for summer vacation. —Ed.*] My M.S. is from Penn State and that's the route I always took up to state college.

I went to college at Dickinson College; one of the several ways to get there involved passing by Pennsylvania Dutch Candy (I think that was the name) — and almost always involved a short side trip to go through the plant. Of course, there were free samples — that was my first exposure to chocolate covered pretzels — and always a selection of discontinued specials. Given these attractions, the trip was always one to enjoy. When I went to veterinary school, I purchased a mobile home out on a mountainside — seven minutes away from campus (via high-speed interstate) and I always just left everything there each summer.

Wow, I'm not familiar with 8 of the zines you "crawl" about — goodly number. [*I'd be happy to send you any which pique your interest. —Ed.*]

The dance companionship sounds welcoming and warming. It's nice to have had the experience. I'm sorry Torcon 3 was out of the budget for you — but it sounds as if you made the right choice. May things go ever smoother and easily for you.

I'm a needle phobe, but I did try — twice — trigger point injections, but they were not a lot of help. The second go-round was more helpful than the first, but the pain specialist did not believe in long-term therapy — so it was 8 weeks to teach exercises and then you were cut loose. But I found out what I needed to know — there was no way to stop the pain, short of narcotics, and I needed to know that. So, I live with it — [garble] [*Sorry, Sheryl, I couldn't make out the last word in that sentence; seems my crypto skills are atrophying <g>. If you're referring to some style of acupuncture in your comments, it's not one with which I'm familiar, and if the person administering it wasn't a state-board-certified acupuncturist, you might consider investigating same in your area. If you'd like info on how to find one, I'll ask my acupuncturist for it; I'm sure she'd be willing to help out. —Ed.*]



Trinlay Khadro // PO Box 240934, Brown Deer, WI 53224
Sept. 3, 2003

Thanks for another great ish .

I've been struggling with fibromyalgia. I tire very quickly (even with fun stuff) and generally ache all over. [*Check the Prevention Magazine Website for a good article on ways to reduce pain resulting from fibromyalgia; I've read there that certain types of exercise can help reduce the aches. —Ed.*] My doctor is great, but I'm taking a lot of pills every day and I'm concerned about keeping my job. I would

certainly appreciate everyone's prayers! [*You have mine — be well soon. —Ed.*]

Did you see my article in *Challenger* 18? Wow ! I've also got an outline in progress for an article for *Burstzine*. Whoo hoo! [*Whoo hoo, indeed — you go! —Ed.*]

The school year started yesterday and KT is thrilled. We managed to get her out of suburban-school-from-hell to one that's highly rated academically and has a high rate for graduation and continuing to college. She's really excited about taking Latin. Last night she was picking out a Latin name. I liked

Celeste but she was pondering Lucretia (aiiiiee! Says me and the fannish friends) and Drusilla (which gets giggles from the “Buffy” fans).

Lyn McConchie: I’m working on a letter to you. Just your “sheep tales” would be a nifty book — maybe even a kids’ book.

Some parts of the U.S. are pondering legislation against declawing cats. I have never liked the idea and always managed to have trained my kittens quite well. [*Does that mean it’s actually possible to herd them? –Ed .*] Megumi has a cardboard “scratch pad” and a carpet “mouse pad” with a bell and now she’s got the hang of it; those are the only things she scratches on.

In my limited experience, a friend years ago had a Doberman whose ears had never been cut. She was a big sweet baby! People would stop and ask what kind of dog she was. I imagine the New Zealand Dobermans also are nicer, having been raised with love and compassion rather than being subjected to cosmetic surgery as pups.

As for the state of marriage ... well, it’s currently often very difficult to actually collect child support on shared kids .. even when the parents **were** married, especially after the non-custodial parent moves away and/or remarries. Jurisdiction once someone moves can become a can of worms.

OK **Joe Major!** So how does “St. Josaphat” qualify for sainthood? Was his story in Lives of the Saints?

I’ve seen Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix (with a side of Chocolate Frog) and would recommend anyone with back problems to lift it carefully or with assistance. I’ll wait for the paperback . Local fans describe it as “bug smasher” — gee, that’s some bug! You could almost whack Mothra with it!

Saturday we’ll be going to a fannish friend’s fannish birthday party. Sunday we *may* go to “Indian Summer” (the Native American festival at Milwaukee’s Summerfest grounds). It kind of depends on if I’m up to it. The fibromyalgia is really limiting some of my activities. [*What is it with fandom — you’re the second fannish person I’ve known to have fibromyalgia, Teresa Nielsen Hayden has to deal with narcolepsy (or a form of it, from what I recall), and I’ve got Meniere’s disease (and those are just the “weird” medical problems — several other fen had or have cancer of one type or another, among other illnesses). Must be the air.... –Ed .*]

Yep, Elric is a great ferret. He got his treat, which he shared with “Lil Sis” (Megumi). [*Scratches all round , then . –Ed .*]

Lyn McConchie // Farside Farm, R.D. Norsewood, New Zealand
6th September 2003

PN flapped in last night and I’m sitting down at once to do a small LoC.

Re: **Joseph Major**’s comment to me on Charisma. Well, I’d have very much liked to make it to Kentucky on one of my three trips to America. However there’s a limit any time of how long I can be gone (someone has to look after my farm), and thus how many places I can visit there. It wasn’t only that Charisma was a ‘two gold Olympic medals’ horse, it was his personality. And that he should never have BEEN a winner by equestrian standards. He was always a fraction overweight, he was smaller than a top show-jumper is usually, and he had a mind of his own in a big way. It wasn’t until Mark began riding him that he showed how good he really was. Until then other riders had fought to try to make him do what they wanted. With Todd, there was a partnership and it was always so funny to watch Charisma appear in the arena, and pause, looking about. You could pretty much see him evaluating the numbers watching and then showing off.

And I have Eyes of Amber in the UK hardcover (SF Book Club) edition from 1981. There is both an epilog and an afterword in this edition for the story “The Crystal Ship.” In the afterword, Joan notes the original story may have been too subtle in its ending and that many readers made it clear to her that they failed to understand. She included the epilog in this edition to make the ending plainer for readers. She also says in the afterword that ‘ “The Crystal Ship” is a story that grew out of a song, in this case the haunting Doors song of the same name.’ I’m not familiar with the song, but the story is excellent if somewhat dark as is much of her short work.

And I’m stunned and delighted to have won in the book competition. I look forward to receiving the encyclopedia. [*Let me know when it arrives, please. –Ed.*] The sequel [to Moon of Three Rings] is Exiles of the Stars, followed a number of years later by Dare to Go A-Hunting. [*I never knew that! And I suppose neither of them are in print and finding copies would be difficult ... still, there’s the used dealers online. Thanks for the information . –Ed .*]

Talking of hunting though — There must be something about this year. It’s produced far more mice than usual. I don’t mind that so much, as finding them in odd corners of the house. One of the oddest came the other morning. Late the previous night I’d sorted washing, dumped it on the library floor as I made the bed, and forgotten it when I crawled into said bed. I remembered it in the morning when I emerged. I wandered into the library, started picking up the washing, and was surprised when I lifted my bra, to have a mouse fall out of it. Mice aren’t something I usually keep in a bra but apparently Dancer — or the mouse — does. I’m unsure if it was there as stowage or refuge. For whatever reason, there it was, then it wasn’t. Tiger levitated from the windowsill, landed by the mouse and promptly sat on it. The mouse, at the end of its tether, did something which made Tiger rise vertically. The mouse hastily decamped again at speed to be halted by Dancer who doesn’t waste time sitting on prey. The mouse, spear-carrying extra in this drama, was carried out upon his shield, and I was left to consider if there isn’t some way I can persuade my cats NOT to bring their prey inside for the better sport. I came to the conclusion it’d be like talking to a brick wall and just as productive of results. Oh well... {editorial giggles}

Then the phones went odd. Instead of ringing until either I answered one or the caller rang off, they’d give a hiccup and go silent. If I grabbed the nearest fast, the caller was still on the line, but the phone wouldn’t ring more than the one initial beep. Sometimes if you leave things alone, they right themselves. The phones didn’t, so I rang faults. What I got was a lady who went on for ages telling me I must unplug all my items at both plug and jack alternately one by one, have someone ring me each time and see if the phones now worked properly. Fine, but if you count three phones, a fax, my computer, and miles of wiring, the permutations go on for hours while I grovel along the floor constraining some unfortunate friend to ring me every 5-10 minutes until we all go nuts. Apparently this system is now policy since if it turns out to be your own gear at fault it costs an \$81 call out fee. I said I wanted a repairer and that was that. I got one around 5.30 that evening. A very pleasant chap who’d been here before last year when I briefly had phone troubles. He’s a cat lover and he and Tiger had got on fine. They did more than that this time. In order to ascertain the problem the engineer had to crawl along all the wiring, checking joins, jacks, plugs, plugging and unplugging, ringing the phone internally on his gear each time. Tiger couldn’t believe his eyes. It was great having a visitor, but one who got down and crawled, apparently hunting prey with Tiger, wasn’t quite the usual visitor. Tiger crept along beside him, eyes alert for whatever prey this new friend was seeking. And every time the chap turned to speak to me he found himself nose to nose with Tiger asking if he’d seen it yet. The really amusing thing was that while the chap and his family have three cherished cats of their own, he was quite oblivious to just WHY Tiger was creeping along beside him so carefully the entire time. The engineer found the fault after an hour of crawling about (corroded terminals in the original old phone in my bedroom), replaced that bit, checked it now worked, and rose to

go. Tiger was philosophical, a hunt was often like that. You stalked for ages and caught nothing, but it had been fun. Perhaps this nice man would come again and they might have better luck.. I farewelled the phone chap and went to the bedroom to giggle quietly. The picture of the two of them solemnly crawling along the edge of the rooms, apparently hunting mice together is one Tiger and I cherish. For rather different reasons... {more editorial giggles }

And the latest *Peregrine Nations* is great. Lovely cover, interesting items within, and neat easily-read layout. It goes from strength to strength. Incidentally I too was very sorry indeed to see *Twink* close recently. I was sent an early copy by **Rodney Leighton**, took one look at the zine and joined membership on the spot. It may be interesting to note that I found *Peregrine Nations* through Rodney Leighton as well. I suspect Rodney has had a lot more influence in fandom that he really recognises. [*Hear that, Rodney? – Ed.*]

But I must go do my ‘donkey on a treadmill’ impersonation. Hauling firewood inside and hay out around the paddocks to cows and sheep. After that I can reel back in to start dinner. Tiger is fixing me with a meaningful look and I’ve known him long enough to translate. Hope you’re settling happily in Michigan and that there is a friendly convivial fan group there somewhere you can find and join. Come to that there should be. They have Wiscon there each year, don’t they? They won’t be run by out-of-staters, surely? [*Sorry, next state over westwards (Wisconsin) is Wiscon’s home; if one is speaking regionally, however, I would allow “there” to include Wisconsin. Perhaps we should ask Henry Welch to rule on this one? <giggling> I haven’t gone seeking Michifandom yet, but there are fen here. Howard Devore is already bugging me to come visit him near Detroit, as I once promised to do. Sigh . So much socializing to do! –Ed .*]

E.B. Frohvet // 4716 Dorsey Hall Dr., #506, Ellicott City, MD 21042 USA
Sept. 5, 2003

Timing counts for something. I just sent you a note the other day, and here comes another *Peregrine Nations*. Right now I’m gearing up for watching the conclusion of the U.S. Open tennis this weekend. Not the same since Pete Sampras retired, but still, if one is a tennis fan, one will stay up to watch a late match between two Croatian dirtballers. Umm: “dirtballer” = a tennis player, usually European or South American, who learned the game on slow clay courts and plays a game adapted to that surface, generally with big loopy swings and lots of topspin ; e.g., Gustavo Kuerten. Most American and Australian players learned on hard courts and play a flatter and more aggressive game designed to end points quickly; e.g. Andy Roddick. There are only a handful of players whose games are best suited to grass; e.g. Tim Henman, who has been to the semifinals of Wimbledon four times, losing each time to the eventual champion, but had never had similar results on hard courts. [*So what does this mean for Andre Agassi, whom I’ve seen use both “big loopy swings and lots of topspin” and “a flatter and more aggressive game designed to end points quickly”? Not to mention that Agassi is still competing and Sampras isn’t. I miss the days of “Rocket” Rod Laver and Stan Smith; those two and their contemporaries played some gorgeous matches. And let’s not forget Guillermo Vilas. Those guys had **arms**. Which all makes me think I should watch more tennis, to find out if there are any modern Lavers or Smiths out there. I do like watching the Williams sisters [Venus and Serena, for the non-tennis buffs] separately and together — their instincts are honed to a razor’s edge and their mental games are among the finest I’ve ever witnessed. –Ed .*]

(Incidentally ... missing much of the Open is one factor that has discouraged me from attending [this year’s] Worldcon. Not the only factor or the most important, but a factor.)

Cover, and page 3, by Alan White: This artist remains overdue for a Hugo nomination (hint, hint). I wonder that no one has observed before that angels would find skimpy tank-tops more comfortable than stuffy robes.

Lyn McConchie: Not to diminish the success of Janine's marriage, but marriage is now and has been for many centuries a business contract. The notion that a couple should care personally for each other before marriage, is a fairly recent (c. 15th Century) invention, and not universal even now. The European/American obsession with "love" is something imposed on the custom after the fact. (So speaks a cynical bachelor.) [*Who happens to be a correct bachelor, too — romance as the reason for marriage is indeed a European creation, for the most part. It's not that romantic love wasn't known in other parts of the world, it was, but it often happened with someone other than one's spouse. This tended to create certain, um, problems. The Greeks myths must have reflected this, I think, since Zeus was always running off with someone other than Hera and she got pissed at him for it. —Ed .]*

Joseph Major: "Which Las Vegas Corflu?" indeed. Oh, next year (2004)? Sorry, no one bothered to tell me. [*What, you couldn't ask? —Ed .]* Not that I would go anyway. ("Ooh, Las Vegas/Ain't no place for a poor boy like me/Every time I hit your crystal city/Know you're gonna make a wreck out of me." -- Gram Parsons.) [*Heh heh. Nice quote. —Ed .]* Professor Challenger sequel, see Greg Bear, Dinosaur Summer, which I suppose you've read, Joseph.

Heinlein is Heinlein, indeed, accept no substitutes; but you should all run out and find a copy of Emergence, the best Heinlein novel after 1980, as I told David Palmer (he laughed and thanked me)... [*So where's the review, eh? —Ed .]*

Trinlay Khadro: The neighbor's cat likes me; the other day I was on the patio watering the orange tree and the cat came over and rubbed against my leg for a while, then calmly strolled into my place and wandered around for a while. Maybe she expected tuna, or something. Didn't do me any harm, I opened the door for her when she chose to leave...

"Collegiate Zen": Nothing much has changed. Lani is a senior this year. Lynn traded in the minivan for a Jeep SUV with more power (and less space). My [previous] dentist (who went to Gannon) sold his practice and went to Wisconsin — family reasons. My new dentist has a daughter who goes to Cornell; I chanced to mention Mercyhurst and he knew it, he had taken his daughter there for a lacrosse camp in high school! What is it with dentists and Erie, Pennsylvania. Incidentally, there are a surprising number of wineries in the Erie area, and while their product is not spectacular, some of it is drinkable. Lynn and I bought a mixed case for less than \$100 and divvied it up.

"The Pub Crawl": Umm, just a detail here, Jan, but addresses? [*See beginning of this section for mea culpa. —ed .]* The chief way I built my mailing list was by cribbing names and addresses from other fanzines. [*In keeping with fanzine tradition, yes. —Ed .]* My notes show that *Challenger* did two issues in 1997, '98, '99, 2000, and three in 2001, and has already done two in 2003. So it's not exactly an annual (e.g. *Trap Door*). Interesting observation on your part, Jan, that I've withdrawn from doing fanzines "for the nonce". What led you to that theory? For the record, *Twink* is over, history; however I'm still doing LOCs and occasional other pieces for selected faneds (those who ask). [*Perhaps my wording was too vague; I was referring to your editing and pubbing your own fanzine, not your participation in fanzine fandom overall. —Ed .]*

Editorial: If acupuncture helps you, fine. I don't believe in it, the theory does not appear to correspond with reality as I understand it. (But the same is true of chiropractic and psychoanalysis.) [*I don't know if I "believe" in it either, all I know is that something about my disease has changed, and the only difference was the acupuncture. I was getting worse after moving up to Michigan. —Ed .]* ... I have never had an experience like the one you describe, of being publicly identified and welcomed as a veteran [*There may be some powwows near your city, perhaps within a few hours' drive, if you're interested in attending a*

July 4th celebration which includes a powwow. I can check around online for you if you wish. –Ed.] ... Well, there's always Boston. Or some other year. Anyone know whether by some fluke Kansas City won for 2006? [Nope, the nod went to LA again. How droll. I will attempt Boston, but whether I actually get there is anyone's guess. –Ed.]

William Breiding
Sept. 7, 2003

Thanks for PN V. 3 N. 2. You had actually cut me off of your mailing list due to lack of response! When you reworked your list you tacked me on again. I've been primarily gaffiated these last years. Not that I don't enjoy fanzines any more, just that I usually feel RAEBNC [Eh? –Ed.] about it, so I'm slowly getting dropped from various lists. So it goes! I enjoyed E.B.'s piece about the Turnpike! [And with this potsacrd you have wormed your way back onto my list, good sir — many thanks. –Ed.]



Parting the Veil: Encounters with the Strange

One: A Neapolitan Ghost Story

by Jack Calvert

Some thirty years ago, just after the end of the Vietnam War, I was in the middle of a career in the U.S. Navy and stationed at a little radio-transmitter site located in the Campi Flegri, a volcanic plain a few miles west of Naples, and not far from a hill said to be the home of the Cumaean Sibyl. The area had been a resort in Roman times; wealthy senators kept villas at Baia on the nearby coast. The site lay between Sibyl's grotto and the little coastal village of Licola de la Mare, a working-class resort that might have been a dim and distant echo of the more luxurious Roman one. The road to Naples ran past Lago D'averno, where Virgil located the entrance to the underworld.

Licola bustled with happy beach-going crowds in the summer. The crowds reached a peak during August, when Italians traditionally took their vacation. For the rest of the year the town lapsed into quiet, almost to the point of desertion. Some Americans from the transmitter site, and some British people who were part of the NATO force had apartments there. They tended to band together, going to each other's parties for Guy Fawkes' Day, Fourth of July, or Christmas, rather than associating with the people assigned to the larger base near Naples itself.

Not long after I arrived in Italy, I hitched a ride to one of these parties, and on the way there, I noticed the Licola train station, a stop for a sort of Toonerville Trolley that went into Naples. I asked if anyone rode it. It turned out that no one had, because the Americans all had cars, and few spoke Italian. Then the young wife of a sailor told the following story.

It happened a few years ago, to a guy stationed at the main base. He wanted to see some of Italy, and he wanted to do it on his own, by train. He thought that he spoke enough Italian to get on, so he got a few guidebooks, took leave, and set out one morning. Naples has an excellent subway system but he popped up at the wrong station, took a wrong turn, and was soon lost in a tangle of streets. A couple of times, he tried asking directions, but the answers in rapid Neapolitan were no help. At one point, he passed a hearse and its entourage: a huge black coach adorned with black plumes, and pulled by four black horses, followed by a parade of wailing mourners. In Naples, the dead are given a proper send off. He turned

this way and that, following the cobblestone streets, trying to find another entrance to the subway that he was sure would get him to the train station.

Finally, one street gave onto an open boulevard. He crossed it and stood on the sidewalk, gazing over a low wall at the crowded tombs and monuments of a cemetery. Traffic on the wide street roared by, cars dodging and weaving, horns blaring. He hoped that a taxi might come by, but there was none to be seen.

"Hey! Where you going?" He turned toward the voice. A young woman on a Vespa motor scooter had pulled out of the stream of traffic. "You look lost," she said. She had long blond hair, wore dark, wraparound shades.

"I'm trying to get to the train station," he said.

"Get on, I take you there," she said. He hesitated. "Come on — it's okay." He got onto the back of the scooter, put his pack in front of him, and held her by the waist. Off they went, weaving through the traffic, then swerving and dodging into the back streets. Presently, she pulled to a stop in front of a run down cement apartment block.

"This is where I live," she said. "The train station's straight down the street — Piazza Cavour, you can't miss it." She ran toward the entrance of the building.

"Hey, wait, what's your name?" he called after her.

She paused and half turned. "Thallia Grazia," she said. Then she disappeared through the doorway.

He did get to the station without any further trouble. From time to time during his trip, he thought about the blonde on the scooter. He resolved to try to find her again when he got back. In Florence, he bought a cameo showing the three Graces as a gift.

When he arrived back in Naples, he set out across the plaza, and easily found the street and the dingy-looking apartment that he remembered. The scooter was not there, but he supposed that she was probably out. The list of names beside the buttons in the entranceway showed no name like the one she had given.

He pushed the button for the manager. After a time, a woman in a black dress opened the door and regarded him suspiciously.

"Scusi, Signora." He explained in halting Italian about the young blond woman with the scooter. He clutched the wrapped cameo in his pocket. The woman's eyes grew wide as he described how she had given him a ride.

"Oh, Signore — someone like that used to live here. But two years ago, she was killed in a traffic accident."

Later, I walked back to the transmitter site along the narrow roads that passed between the local farmer's field. Clouds covered the sky, hiding the moon and stars. The narrator seemed to believe the story, but I didn't: it was a variation of "The Phantom Hitchhiker." For all I knew, folklorists had a class and subclass for it. In the following months, I rode the trolley and met no ghosts, blond or otherwise.

On the other hand, with mist drifting across the road illuminated only by the lights of an occasional farm house, I could begin to believe that the shade of Virgil himself might be wandering the in the night. The rim of the Bay of Naples had been a home to mysteries since before the Romans. The nether world seemed a little closer here. It was easy to let my natural skepticism slip a bit and wonder how the story had gotten started.

Parting the Veil: Encounters with the Strange

Two: The Moving Finger Writes

by J.G. Stinson

[While I was in college at Western Michigan University in the late 1970s, I had a Canadian classmate in an Introduction to African Studies class with whom I struck up a conversation a short while after the semester started. By this point, I had been reading heavily in the area of so-called psychic events, and

while I wasn't a true-blue believer, I was willing to allow for the possibility of things happening that humans could not yet explain with logic or scientific evidence. One day, we began talking about Caroline's strange experiences and I found her stories fascinating. As it was getting close to Halloween that year, I asked her if she'd mind being interviewed for the university newspaper, for a feature article I'd write, and she agreed. The following is a transcript of what remains of the taped conversation; the beginning of it was taped over later by mistake. Where this transcript starts, she is describing someone she saw either in a dream or appearing before her while she was awake. The interview was never published in the university newspaper. I implore readers to excuse the exaggerated enthusiasm of some of my responses here; I was a lot younger and less circumspect when this took place.]

J: Do you remember anything about how he looked?

C: Alls I remember is he was really tall and I never did get a good look at his face, but his clothes I did. And my grandmother, I told her about it and she said "That's my husband," my granddad. And my granddad died two days before I was born. And so she always thought this was the way [garble] at least that's the ways he explained it.

J: That sounds pretty logical to me. Did you ever try to get in contact with him in a séance?

C: No. I've done séances, I've done it for other people trying to get in touch with their friends ... [garble]

J: Were you apprehensive of what might happen if you did?

C: (laughs) I would say yes. (changes to funny [amusing] voice tone) I don't want to have anything to do with it. He might come in and not go away. (laughs)

J: (laughs, imitating A) I don't need that kind of trouble!

C: Cause I didn't really want to cope with something like that, you have to have years of training and I was so open to things I didn't want anything to do with that.

J: Did you have something happen to you in a séance like, where there was always someone else acting as a medium and yet something came through you?

C: Um, no.

J: So when someone else acted as a medium you were never affected?

C: No. I could feel it starting ---

J: But you were able to push it down?

C: Yes.

J: So there was something trying to come through you but you didn't let it.

C: The only time I ever had anything really bizarre like that happen -- freshman year, I don't even remember it --

J: Freshman year of what, college?

C: Uh huh. I got up in the middle of the night and I started writing furiously. My roommate got up and watched me do the whole thing. And I wrote this verse that I don't -- everybody's tried to interpret it, but it was, a lot of people say it was someone else doing it through me.

J: Do you have a copy of it?

C: Yeah, I've got it around somewhere.

J: I'll click this off while we go see. (turns off tape recorder)

J (turns tape recorder back on): Well, it would have been interesting if you had kept it 'cause we could have compared it --

C: Because when I--

J: I was gonna say, you know, if you had the actual copy I could have compared the handwriting and seen how different it was.

C: Because when I did it I didn't write it in lines, I started out in a circle, and I did it in a circle –
J: You wrote it in a circle?
C: Yeah, I started in the center. Started real small and then got bigger.
J: (laughs) What did you do when you ran out of paper?
(garbled) [At this point there may have been a tape stop, but I can't recall and it isn't mentioned on the tape. Apparently another search was mounted for a copy of the writing and was successful, since the following strongly indicates it.]
J: I'll just read this out for the tape player. So this is an example of automatic writing. Is this the only time it's ever happened to you?
C: Yeah, the only time.
J: Okay. "Universe moves towards"—
C: I made up words.
J: Is that goodhood?
C: Uh huh.
J: "It started there and wishes to return there. It is driven around in the greatest circle toward there. Goodness lies dormant yet remembered in every thing, every smallest thing, in every puniest creature. Every living thing must, of needs, play at goodness. It is built in. In the basic fiber, in the racial memory ..." In memory, is that the way you wrote it?
C: Uh huh.
J: In the pulse of blood...(continues reading) ... Latent in the soul of what had been ...Bailey...(laughs) Was the force that had first created everything ... (reads faster but stumbles over some words) .. the force that was God awoke...
C: Do you know what it's from?
J: (laughs nervously) Were you conscious of writing this while you were doing it?
C: No.
J: You did not know you were doing this.
C: No.
J: You woke up in the middle of the night and wrote it down?
C: (laughs) Yes.
J: Have you ever heard of Harlan Ellison?
C: No.
J: Folks (claps hands loudly), this is a first for this intrepid reporter!
C: (laughs)
J: Oh no! I don't believe it! When I got down to about here I thought, "I have seen this before" -- I just got done reading it two days ago! When it mentioned the name, that's when I stopped, when I saw that name Bailey... When did you write that, what year, do you remember?
C: Freshman year...
J: So that would be five years ago which is '72...what time of year did you write it, spring, summer, fall?
C: It was the fall.
J: So the fall of '72, this happened. All right, let me explain this. Harlan Ellison is a writer. He was born in Ohio. He's about 32 years old. He writes a lot of SF, science fiction, speculative fiction is what he calls it. He's a well-known writer, he's won several awards for his work. You won't believe this! He, along with four other writers -- Poul Anderson, Keith Laumer, Gordon K. Dickson and Frank Herbert -- put together a book called Five Fates which was published ... that's why I asked you the date ..anyway it was published in the early 1970s. Um, the stories I think were copyrighted at different times ... The

reason there were five authors involved was that they were given a basic plot from which all five authors drew, and then each constructed a different story around that plot. The central character's name was William Bailey. Okay? This .. now you're not – *you'll* believe it because this kinda shit's happened to you before but I don't believe it now! I'm sitting here going, oh my god! This thing that you wrote -- while you were not conscious at the time, in the middle of the night in the fall of 1972 in *weird* handwriting, in a circle on a blank piece of art paper -- is almost word for word the exact same thing that Ellison wrote *in a circle in the story.*

C: (laughing quietly)

J: Now *that* is what flipped me out. When I saw that and you told me you wrote it in a F** circle. I mean you know when I read it in the book I thought "Hey, this is cute," you know, I'm sitting there spinning the book around and I remembered...(laughing)

C: My roommate must've stood and watched me do the whole goddamned thing and thought, "My God, this kid's a bloody lunatic!"

J: Yeah, yeah. This is no shit, I would not be getting weird like this if it wasn't! Um, he actually did write that, it's a nice book, published and copyrighted by a well-known author – listen, I have his agent's address, I'm gone write him and tell him listen I got this friend who f**in well knew this before you even wrote it! (laughs) It'll be interesting to find out exactly when he wrote that story.

C: Really.

J: And you're absolutely positive you've never read anything by him at all, never even heard of the guy?

A. (emphatically) Uh-uh.

J: There's no possibility whatsoever that you could have run across it anywhere, anytime at all? You're as sure as you could possible be? Oooh, Harlan, I got a hot one for ya!

C: Ooh this is my latest! (Laughs)

J: The latest in the long string of strange occurrence in the life of Caroline, our erstwhile interviewee –

C: Because when I wrote that, my roommate – I went right back to sleep, and she just started sitting down and read it and she went around to show it to everybody on the [dorm] floor. And everybody started having copies of it.

J: Oh shit, I hope nobody ever tries to publish that! (laughs loudly) Oh God!

C: An English professor here at campus wanted me to.

J: I'm glad you didn't, you would have gotten into the biggest copyright suit you've ever seen in your life!

C: She loved it, she loved it.

J: Okay. The only big difference here, the first sentence, "Universe moves toward goodhood." I'm not sure if that's exactly the same. Would you mind terribly if I borrowed this and took it home?

C: Uh uh.

J: I would (expletive) if it were the same. I don't believe it!

C: The only science fiction I've read are like the classics ... y'know, stuff like that, 1984, Utopia, stuff like that. The only person I've really – science fiction writer I can bring to mind is Isaac Asimov.

J: Have you ever read any anthologies edited by Asimov or is it just stuff that he wrote?

C: Just stuff that he wrote.

J: Ay yi yi! I don't believe this!

C: I just thought this was something nice, it was kinda neat (laughs).

J: Didn't know you were *doing* it at the time. (mock accusatory tone)

C: (Laughs) No.

J: You had no idea that this was something someone else had also thought of and written?

(Fake woeful voice) Oh no! This can't be happening to me! The reason, I'll tell you, the reason I recognized this is because I'm a Harlan Ellison fanatic, I love the guy, I'm in the process of reading everything he's ever written in his whole life, you know, I have stacks and stacks of books by him. And I happened to see this book in the library, up at Waldo [university library], that's where I got it. And I started reading it and went snatch right off the shelf and started to flip through – the story, by the way, is called "The Region Between."

C: (Amused) I'll have to read it, I guess, since I've already written part of it.

J: You'll flip when you see it, you'll flip right out of your brain.

(fangirl nonsense on my part ensues about the story, along with excessive nervous giggling over Caroline's comment that a certain WMU history professor – a self-professed "extreme skeptic when it comes to anything paranormal" -- would "absolutely love it")

J: Now that is the most bizarre thing that has ever happened to me –

C: Is it?

J: -- and I'm not even directly connected to this. Man, weird. That's why I kept going, oh my God.

*

Conversation continued on whether Ellison has the original copy of the story, which he most likely does, and whether it would be worth comparing it to Caroline's original writing. Of course, in hindsight and with research, I know now that the Ellison story, along with the other four in *Five Fates*, was copyrighted in 1970 (individual stories were copyrighted variously by the Mercury and Galaxy publishing companies) and published in that year in an all-original anthology by Doubleday & Co., and therefore Caroline didn't have her "automatic writing" session before the story was first published. Nevertheless, it was a weird experience for me, and for my very first interview, it was also a lot of fun. Caroline said she'd always believed it was something she herself had written, despite the odd circumstances.

Meeting Mother Nature: Isabel Visits Ted White

Sept. 23, 2003

I blame it all on Isabel.

I didn't go to work last Thursday [Sept. 18]; my boss decided to close at noon — an hour after Metro had stopped running all trains and buses, for reasons no one has yet figured out, since the first signs of the hurricane were still hours away. So I was home when my power went out. The first time was around 3:00 PM, but lasted less than five minutes — just enough time for me to shut down my computer before the power was back and I was rebooting. But at 5:00 the power went off and stayed off.

It stayed off for two days. I was sitting in a chair in my front yard, reading Walter Mosley's Big Bad Brawly Brown (taking a break from yard work), Saturday afternoon when I heard shouts from across the street — gleeful-children shouts — of "Power! We've got power!" Startled, I glanced at my porch and saw the porch light on. I immediately dropped my book and went into my house. I flushed all the toilets, reset all the clocks and VCRs, shaved, and cleaned my teeth. I felt suddenly great.

But all was not joy, however. My cable service was still out — and with it my internet service. The video service was restored late Sunday night, the internet service today, just before I left for work. As I left, hundreds of emails were downloading, and I will read them and deal appropriately with them. But not immediately.

I had no damage from the hurricane — nothing more than a few small branches in the yard — and not one tree in my neighborhood fell. No roads were blocked, no power lines fell. So why was my power out for two days? Blown transformers. All during the afternoon and night I heard dull booms and weird

bbbzzzaps — each signalling another transformer gone. Between midnight and 4:00 AM they averaged about one every 20 minutes. Each of my power failures were signalled by one of these sounds — but closer and louder.

We had squalls. Periods of rain and wind followed by calm periods. The winds never got *that* high (we've had higher winds in local thunderstorms) and were not sustained. A couple inches of rain. (Weirdly, yesterday's rainstorm — no thunder — gave us *more* rain than Isabel: over 2 inches, overnight.) And the geography of my neighborhood — sheltered by a ridge a block above me — keeps the winds in the treetops. None of my yard furniture was blown around.

I figure it had to be wind-driven *rain* which got to those transformers. And I'm wondering why they are so vulnerable.

Life hereabouts was difficult at first. I went to work Friday — the store never lost power and wasn't in the part of Alexandria (along the river) which flooded — and found the traffic a serious mess, due in part to closed roads and in part to non-functional traffic signals. It took me twice as long as usual to get there via alternative routes. After work, returning to a still-dark house, I decided I'd had enough bowls of cereal for meals. First I called the local pizza places. Dominos put me on a "hold" loop of music and commercials and after three commercials hung up on me. The third time this occurred I decided they were trying to tell me they weren't open. The message at Pizza Hut was simpler: "We're closed." So I called Anita's in Vienna (VA), a New Mexico Mexican restaurant (and long one of my favorites) and upon being told they were open I immediately departed for it. What should have been a fast and simple drive was slowed by all the dark signals, which had to be treated as 4-corner stop signs (by law) but were ignored by maybe half the drivers. Stop and get rear-ended, or proceed and get broadsided? Wotta choice!

Shortly after two parties were seated after me, Anita's locked its doors to new customers; the kitchen was overwhelmed. And it took more than an hour to get my food — extraordinary at Anita's where it rarely takes more than 15 minutes — but I used the time to read a book (much easier there than with a flashlight).

Friday night I heard trucks in the street all night — those beep-beep-beeps that signal they're backing up, the sounds of idling engines, the occasional clank of tools — and I kept waiting, in near-suspense, for the power to come back on. But it didn't — not for another half day. But Saturday morning and afternoon I saw and heard nothing more. When I wandered out to the street I saw a Honda generator padlocked via a Kryptonite cable to the phone pole, and realized it was what I'd heard putting along all night. A neighbor told me it was used by Cox Cable, not the power company. Saturday afternoon, less than an hour before the power came back on, a Virginia Power truck cruised slowly up the street, made a U-turn at the intersection, and cruised slowly back down the street. The generator was removed this morning.

I didn't do too badly. I left my refrigerator and freezer shut, and didn't lose or have to throw out any food. (But I got tired of warm Diet Pepsi.) I didn't spend hours in lines waiting for dry ice (or wet ice, for that matter).

Lynda, who lives less than two miles from me, *still* has no power, and my son, Aaron, says he hasn't slept well in the heat and humidity (but tonight is forecast to be drier and cooler). I didn't either, so I know what he's going through. No power means reverting to a sunrise-to-sunset schedule. I sometimes went out to my car and sat in it to listen to the news on the radio.

Now things are pretty much back to normal, for me. All I have to do is to deal with half a week's email.

The Pub Crawl

Fanzines du Jour



Anyone reading a fanzine for the very first time with their perusal of this of PN can contact me for the addresses of the items listed below; I'm still trying to conserve space. Fanzines received since the last mailing of PN:

ALEXIAD Vol.2 No. 4, August 2003 // The shocking news of famed racehorse Ferdinand's death leads off thish — shocking because such a death was undeserved for even the most sluggish of horses, not to mention a Derby winner. Fortunately, the items following are more optimistic — except for the death of Roy Tackett. Sigh. Lots of reviews: books (which reflect Joe Major's eclectic reading tastes); the movie "Seabiscuit" (by Lisa Major); even candy bars! Another jam-

packed lettercol, and I managed to get a LOC in this time. Fine reading.

ANSIBLE 193-195, August — October 2003 // Heads roll in publishing offices, writers' courses and awards get the chop financially (though not ended), writers who deny they write SF — just another day at the races for Dave Langford and *Ansible*. He includes a conrep-lite in 194, about all he could muster due to the death of his mother-in-law and ensuing estate matters needing to be dealt with; understandable, and perhaps later there'll be a longer report here or elsewhere. I'd like to say here, for the record, that I haven't read Oryx and Crake but must echo, for her, Neil Gaiman's assessment of Harold Bloom: Margaret Atwood is a twit.

ARGENTUS 3, Summer 2003 // Editor Steven Silver is doing this fanzine on an annual basis, just in case anyone else besides me was confused about that little item. The cover art by Bob Eggleton of the asteroid recently named after the artist is nifty — loks more like a hairy star than an asteroid, though, but let's not smash those little details into the hereafter, eh? One thing that is certainly unique is the article "Religion, Science Fiction, and the Real Universe" — for its author, Brother Guy Consolmagno SJ of the Vatican Observatory. How many of you even knew the Vatican had an observatory? I sure didn't. I'd be interested to learn how Silver got a Jesuit brother to write an article for a fanzine, some day at a con over drinks or whatever. This is adorned with art from Brad Foster, Bill Rotsler, Sheryl Birkhead (so **that's** where she's been sending all her art!), Ken Cheslin, Steve Stiles and Taral Wayne. Other article topics include acquiring books, the closing of a bookstore, filking, the Columbia's loss, and the mock section of travel pieces. This iteration is easy to read and worth a repeat visit.

DE PROFUNDIS 368-369, September and October 2003, from the LASFS. // These guys **still** look like they're having way too much fun. Considering how busy he is with other fanedac (gee, did I coin a word there?) these days, I imagine editor Marty Cantor is happy to have a regular format to work from for this clubzine. It should make putting *De Prof* together a little quicker, at least.

FANZINE FANATIQUÉ, Summer 2003 // Editors Keith and Rosemary Walker from across the pond are still reporting on more fanzines that I don't get, so I suppose I should start sending letters out to get copies of those in which I'm interested. The reviews here give a useful description of the fanzines in question, making selection easier. Always appreciated.

FLICKER, August 2002 // From Arnie Katz, 330 S. Decatur Blvd., PMB 152, Las Vegas, NV 89107. // Email: crossfire4@cox.net // The usual, or download at efanazines.com // Since it's a new zine, it gets the full address — even though most reading this will probably already know it from the editor's name. This "effusion" finds Katz in a reflective mood; due to a recent move from Toner Hall to smaller quarters, he's had to sell off the majority of his vinyl record collection. Ouch. Hurts even more when one realizes that the bottom of the vinyl market dropped out at least 2-3 years ago, if not earlier. Those wishing to see continued fanaz in verbal form from Katz are advised to write to him and say so, since he seems on the verge of gafiating from fanzines. I, for one, would count that as A Bad Thing.

THE KNARLEY KNEWS 100 and 101, June and August 2003 // As he predicted, no big splash with Ish 100 for Henry Welch — just the comfortingly regular appearance of his editorial, "Sue's Sites" and Rodney Leighton's "Reflecting On..." and a healthy lettercol, with an Alan White cover. I made the WAHF list this time (!). In 101, the regular columnists are joined by Todd and Nora Bushlow's "The Sydrian Perspective: 'It's All Harry's Fault'" and Gene Stewart's comparison of tattoos and fanzines. Brad Foster's artwork graces the cover. No go away and read it.

PRINKED MATTER, August 2003 // Ron Salomon, 1014 Concord St., Framingham, MA 01701 // Personalzine, "occasionally appears monthly," apparently (not directly stated) for The Usual. // This two-pager came with a request to be added to PN's mailing list. Both are much appreciated. Salomon reflects on a new job and new ride (an Audi), both of which seem to be agreeing with him. The Maine lobsters were cute, but the bugs in the Keys are cooler — ahem, make that spiny lobsters for those outside that particular culture loop. And bugs taste better, too. But that's me. (No! Really???)

VANAMONDE 508-517 // As ever, fascinating commentary and comments from the Left Coast.

THE ZINE DUMP #4, August 2003 // Guy Lillian's fanzine review column once again detaches itself from the main *Challenger* body, pulling a fux (anyone who's read Medea:Harlan's World should get that reference) in the process. Better to get this separately than late or not at all, say I. Lillian's always ebullient style shines on here, with 8.5 (or so) pages of commentary, including more nice words for PN.

Will the Real Swamp Thing Please Stand Up?

Editorial

The Free Book Deal

Last time, the Free Book Deal Contest #6 queried thus: "In Andre Norton's Moon of Three Rings, what is the name of the wolf-like alien animal which the visiting spacer-protagonist becomes? Correct spelling counts!" The correct answer was "barsk."

I didn't get many responses *this* time, either. Okay, so maybe most of my readers aren't reading SF any more. Sad, but perhaps true. But there must be more than three or four readers who know others who **do** still read SF, and this is an easy way to get a gift for those folks. Ennui is hard to budge, but give it a whack, eh? Thanks to all those who did enter this time round; I had enough to require a drawing for both categories. The entrants' names were written on Post-It Notes and folded up, then placed into a KWPD ballcap (in my late husband's honor) for the drawings.

The online winner is Joe Major (who gets Dimensions of Science Fiction by William Sims Bainbridge) and the regular-mail winner is E.B. Frohvet (who gets The Best of Writers of the Future, edited by Algis Budrys). Apologies for forgetting to announce the prizes in the lastish. Congratulations to you both, and your prizes will be mailed during the week of Oct. 20, 2003.

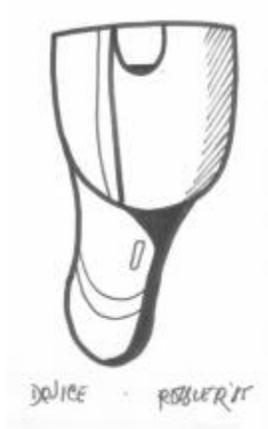
Contest #7 Is Announced: Here's one for all the fantasy fen. In Mervyn Peake's classic Gormenghast books, what is the name of the kitchen drudge who worms his way up to become a major power broker in the Groan household? Spelling, again, counts – consult any references available. Prizes: The online winner will receive A Wolf At the Door and Other Retold Fairy Tales (edited by Ellen Datlow and Terri Windling, featuring 12 winners of the World Fantasy Award) and the regular mail winner will receive Beyond World's End by Mercedes Lackey and Rosemary Edghill (from the jacket copy, Edghill may be a pseudonym for eluki bes shahar, for those interested – and this *is* a good book). **Contest deadline is Dec. 20, 2003.** Good luck to those who choose to enter.

It's about mid-October as I write this. Last Sunday, my dad took me on what the Chamber of Commerce here calls a color tour – to look at the trees changing hue, of course. This is something I really missed in the Keys, where everything dries up and then greens out twice in 12 months. The colors this year are predicted to be spectacular, given the timing of the rain and first frosts with the decrease in daylight. The predictions were close to their marks. I used Kenn's Canon AE1-P to take photos, and many of them turned out very nicely. Some may appear on my Web site, and others will become notecards and perhaps even potsacrd (as gift sets, among other things).

With autumn comes November, and memories of last November's events. I've decided that I can't face that onslaught alone, and have made an appointment for counseling. There is much I want to get off my chest, so to speak, and without close friends here that's not possible. My parents aren't counselors, and I'd rather not burden them with my woes. My acupuncturist has recommended that I find a grief support group or something similar, and I think she has a very good point. I've been holding in a lot, and I need very much to let it go. The stress of containing it is, I believe, a contributor to the worser periods of Meniere's disease that I've had in the last year.

But all is not gloomy. My son is doing well in school this year, much better than I expected given all that's happened, and I credit that mostly to his teacher, Mr. Phillips, whom he likes ("He doesn't yell," was the reason why). My son is at an age when having a male role model is very important, especially after six years of female teachers (who all yelled, apparently).

Time to wind up thish and get to those FAPA mailing comments. Til next ish ...



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