

So It Goes 17



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SO IT GOES

THE FANZINE THAT BECAME UNSTUCK IN TIME

is a non-profit, amateur general interest science fiction fan magazine with an intense personal emphasis; is published on rare occasion (last issue appeared January 2005) and is edited, written (with credited exceptions), typed, published, collated, stapled and mailed by Tim Marion, address below.

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Verba-TiM:

De Mad Editor's Ravings

"But really, I find it hard to believe that anyone who has been reading science fiction for 20 years, and writes columns for fanzines...can really have failed to hear my name mentioned. I've been semi-gafia for a number of years, but yet, all I did can't have been forgotten that soon...or can it?"

—Rick Sneary, *Trumpet* 7, May 1968

Previously, in *SO IT GOES*...

If you are receiving **SO IT GOES** for the first time, perhaps a bit of explanation is in order.

Originally, **SO IT GOES** belonged to a subgenre of science fiction fan magazines ("fanzines") called a "personalzine," which meant that the contents almost exclusively consisted of editor-written material, be it anecdotal convention reports, book reviews or whatever. At this time (the mid-1970s), I owned a "dittograph" and would print these personalzines on that, usually getting crisp, dark purple print on white paper. Despite the crudity of the reproduction, I achieved a moderate amount of recognition and success with this.

Originally, I lived in Newport News, Virginia. I stopped **SO IT GOES** for a few years and then picked it up again after I started working at the local shipyard, thus allowing me more money for postage, ink and mimeo paper. At this point I was using an actual mimeograph, a Rex Rotary M4, to reproduce my zines, and the resultant dark black ink on soft, textured twiltex was, in my opinion, very aesthetically appealing as well as very "fannish" (cool and appropriate for science fiction fandom). This was 1978, and at this time, I was very much influenced by Terry Hughes' fanzine *Mota* (which was *not* named after a "sacred green cat") and decided that **SO IT GOES** would metamorph into a "faanish genzine" (humorous, anecdotal material, primarily written by others — a "*general interest fanzine*"). Thus was born what I came to term my "personalzine-cum-genzine," where the majority of the contents would be editor-written, but I would also accept outside contributions. The readership responded in kind by sending me humorous, anecdotal contributions, but...

But I gafiated, or got away from it all. I dropped out of fandom, somewhat coincidental with my move to New York and my subsequent discouragement with so many fannish feuds surrounding me; feuds engaged in and between those whom I had previously respected. The years passed, the money was short, and I had less and less interest in producing fanzines.

Only in recent years, after acquiring a regular job in a large law firm, have I actually considered sticking my neck out like this again. After a break of 27 years, I finally published **SO IT GOES 16** in January of 2005. Although a bit of a moderate success, I also encountered more discouragement in fandom after that, to the point where I began to consider **SO IT GOES 16** my swan song.

Last year, however, I ended up writing two pieces for fandom which I considered, in my humble opinion, to be fairly important. One was a long article about my efforts to organize my burgeoning fanzine collection. Another was a story which was the brainchild of my roommate, Jeff Kleinbard. I felt I needed a place to print these pieces, so here I am.

Corrections on the Last Issue

Despite having at least two different people proofread the last issue, some errors still crept in. I don't mean to blame the proofreaders, however, because it's perfectly possible that, in my haste to get the issue out, I didn't let them see all the pages.

- In my description of the movie THE FORBIDDEN ZONE, I said it was by Danny Elfman. Actually, it was the creation of Richard Elfman, his elder brother, and it was Danny Elfman "and the Mystic Knights of the Oingo Boingo" who did the music for this movie.
- Likewise, when I wrote about THE NIGHTMARE BEFORE CHRISTMAS, I said it was done by Danny Elfman. Although this is billed as "Tim Burton's NIGHTMARE BEFORE CHRISTMAS," Robert Whitaker Sirignano, in the lettercolumn, points out that someone else actually directed it.
- When I presented the insert of the "Rocky Horror" *Mota* cover by Rob Hansen, I forgot to mention that the drawing was supposed to depict Terry Hughes and Mike Glicksohn during younger, happier days.
- When I said it was Tom Jackson who wrote the best letter last issue, I actually meant Jim Meadows. Tom Jackson didn't even have a letter in the issue. (Tom Jackson *did* write a grateful acknowledgment this time, however.) Why do I keep confusing those two?
- Despite the fact that I thought the lettercolumn was proofread, I seem to have described myself as the "Hunger S. Thompson" of fandom. Perhaps I was looking forward to dinner at the time I wrote that.

"News from Darrell Schweitzer that's of importance to humanity in general — 'On November 13th it was discovered that Tim Marion has an asymmetrically located navel, slightly right of center, which clearly indicates he is a mutant of as yet unknown powers. It was also discovered that Darrell Schweitzer's index fingers curved 30° inward, revealing him to be a reject from the old Invaders TV series.'"

—Peter Roberts, *Checkpoint 92*, December 1978

Obituaries

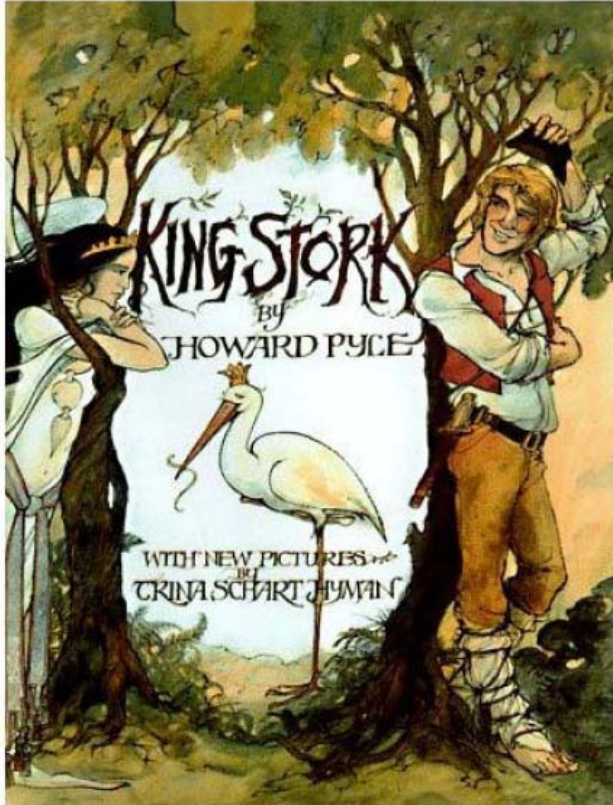
When I first became involved in fandom, as a tender lad of 12, everyone around me was So Much Older. Now that I'm edging eerily toward the half-century mark, so many of the fans who Made Fandom for me as a child are now gone. Therefore, it's possible that obituaries are destined to become an integral part of **So It Goes**, unfortunately. Not all of the deaths that I intend to mention here are that of fans and/or friends, however.

One of the most notable deaths was that of **Kurt Vonnegut, Jr.** Although it's almost certainly true that he was not the first to say "so it goes" (a phrase used repeatedly in his novel about Billy Pilgrim, "the man who became unstuck in time," in his novel SLAUGHTERHOUSE FIVE), but part of the idea behind naming this zine, when it originally started back in 1973, was as a homage to this great writer. If I may be allowed to make a fatuous comparison with the past, Kurt Vonnegut was almost certainly the Mark Twain of our time. I can't say I agreed with everything he said, but his writing certainly had a profound influence on me. (Although this title comes from SLAUGHTERHOUSE FIVE, it is probably CAT'S CRADLE which is my favorite.)

Only a few days after the release of the last issue of **So It Goes**, **Frank Kelly Freas** passed away. Kelly was a famous science fiction artist whom I visited several times in my youth, and he and his family were always gracious hosts. When I caught up with him again at ChiCon in 2000, he actually seemed to remember me. I had published his photo on the back cover of the last issue and didn't realize that he would very soon no longer be with us.

—*tim marion*

"You weren't at the wake for **Brian Burley!**" Steve Antell said to me both indignantly and accusatorily. He didn't realize I had never been told, making yet another wake for a beloved NYC fan that I've missed. I was told later that "someone tried to get in touch with you." Since both my phone and email were working, I can only assume they didn't try very hard. No doubt this was some person who has received many expensive fanzines that I have produced and yet never bothered to write me even one letter. My understanding is that Brian Burley's wake brought in many fans from out of town, including Fred Lerner from Connecticut and Alexis and Lee Gilliland from Virginia. I'm sure I would have gone if I had known about it.



The death of Brian Burley came as a complete surprise to me, and no doubt many others as well. I hadn't attended any of his "Beaker Libation Front" meetings (a drinking meeting held in a bar) in many months, due to the preponderance of cigarette smoke and one certain friend of Brian's whom I found insufferably obnoxious. Nevertheless, I guess I always figured that I might attend again someday in the future. With Brian's death, the meetings seems to have dissolved into nothingness.

Brian had been a fan since the early 1960s, making him quite a veteran. I was very surprised when, in the midst of archiving all my fanzines, some computer-generated labels fell off of the old, mimeographed issues of **Locus**. The person credited in the colophon for these wonderful, computer-generated labels was... Brian Burley! That's right, folks, Brian Burley was a computerized fanzine pioneer. He was almost certainly the first person to put a fanzine's mailing list in a computer for the purpose of generating pre-printed labels. Our hats off to you, Brian!

I was totally devastated by, and unprepared for, the death of **Trina Schart Hyman**, who apparently died of lung cancer shortly before I even started the previous issue of **So It Goes**. To say that Trina Schart Hyman was an illustrator of children's books is like saying Frank Frazetta painted paperback covers. I first discovered Trina in the mid-70s, while a member of the children's fantasy apa, **Apanage**. Even unto late adolescence and early adulthood, I retained an interest in children's fantasy, and would visit the local libraries and "check out" children's books. I noted that frequently the best of these books would be illustrated by Trina. Then she totally blew my mind by illustrating fairy tales such as **KING STORK** and **SNOW WHITE** — these were turned into the most beautiful picture books ever, with great, sweeping, panoramic scenes spread across two pages with the minor amount of text presented at the bottom in white, square boxes. These books were more lavish than comic books!

After moving to New York, I noted that the local Books of Wonder, from whom I bought many books illustrated by Trina, was occasionally holding autograph sessions with her. Obviously my interest here was very strong, but I had a day job, as well as a disastrous experience during the Kate Bush autograph session, which I mentioned last issue. I felt jaded, and did not think of myself as an "autograph hound." Consequently, due to procrastination, laziness, business and jadedness, I missed every opportunity to meet this wonderful, creative woman whose beautiful, colorful art had been such an influence on my adolescence and young adulthood.

Just looking at my mailing list, I see that I am destined to have three extra copies of **So It Goes** this time. **Rich Brown**, **Bill Bowers** and **Dick Eney** have all passed, and all of them friends, in the order listed. I was especially close to Rich, at one point, through correspondence. In many ways I identified with his love/hate relationship with fandom. My association with Bill Bowers went back a long time:

to 1973. Dick Eney was always kind enough to send me his SCA newsletter when I had pretensions of getting involved in that direction.

Aside from Kurt Vonnegut, mentioned before, two other of my favorite authors died this past year. **Sterling Lanier** was the writer of the Brigadier Ffellowes stories which used to appear in **F&SF** as well as the two novels about Hiero Desteen, a warrior-priest of the far future in a post-apocalyptic society (these books are reviewed later on under "Retrospection," since I originally read the first of the two books in 1976). Besides his literary creations, Lanier is known as the editor at Chilton who first accepted Frank Herbert's **DUNE**, which, at that point, had already been rejected by a variety of publishers. He was also a friend of and correspondent with J.R.R. Tolkien, and even designed figurines for the characters in **THE LORD OF THE RINGS**. Tolkien's agent (!) informed Lanier that these could not be mass-produced, so they were more-or-less forgotten. However at least one reviewer on the web notes that the characters in the L.O.T.R. movies looked very similar to Lanier's figurines.

Also departed from our realm is the great novelist and screenwriter **George MacDonald Fraser**. Amongst other things, Fraser wrote a series of 12 books chronicling the misadventures of the grown-up child villain from **TOM BROWN'S SCHOOL DAYS** — Harry Flashman. Flashman, despite being a self-admitted cad, scoundrel and coward, finds himself blazing across the pages of history in hysterical and ribald first-person narrative adventures which have somehow succeeded in being an influence on my own (and perhaps other fans') writing. These adventures have become very popular with science fiction fans (who frequently love good historicals, as well as good humor) and Guy Lillian has even announced that he will make the next issue of **Challenger** a dedication to Fraser and Flashman.

Two fans passed on who were also professional authors: **Lee Hoffman** and **Wilson ("Bob") Tucker**. Lee, or "LeeH" as she was sometimes referred to, I considered the Elder Ghoddess of Fandom due to all her different talents; not just writing and editing fanzines. It was an honor knowing her, and occasionally receiving fanzines and/or a note from her. Bob Tucker may have sent me a couple of his fanzines in the 1970s, but nothing this time around (he may have been doing only electronic zines in the last few years). I must confess I have not read fiction by either of these fine writers.

Too many other fans have passed for me to be able to list all the names. Many of them I didn't even know, such as **Ron Bennett**, a British fan, but I admired his writing nonetheless. The lauded, fannish humorist **Calvin Demmon** is someone else who has passed. Sadly, I hardly knew him.

"The best one can hope is to be alive when the next issue arrives."

—John Baxter, *Trap Door* 25, February 2008

And of course, my own household is not immune to death. My longest-time cat-girlfriend, **Janice**, I had to put to sleep in August 2006. In many ways, I didn't treat her with the respect that she was due, I realize. She was the first cat we got after Rikki and Tavi died, and she was a great comfort to me. Soon, I got a cat that reminded me so much of Rikki, who was named Wickie, and I literally pushed Janice aside for him. Then Wickie died too young, only a few years later, and there Janice was to comfort me again. Janice, a plump, loving, jealous calico cat, saw them come and saw them go, and was my steady Comfort Cat through it all. And was definitely better to me than I deserved.

I put **Casper**, a fluffy, white, Turkish Angora cat, to sleep only a few months later, in January of 2007. I have already written much about him elsewhere, so I won't do so here. Suffice it to say, I sincerely feel I miss his sweet, gentle presence and company more than I have any other cat! Somehow I still wish I could have him back.



Illustration by Trina Schart Hyman for SNOW WHITE.

And speaking (very often) of Apanage, Elinor Busby just wrote me and told me that long-time Apanage member **Beverly Clark** was ill and died in the hospital. Before she left us, she was typing her last Apanagezine on her hospital bed. That's real trufannishness! I can only hope my story will have as good an ending.

It was only a couple of years before this that Elinor's husband, **F.M. Busby**, passed on. I admit I didn't know him as well as I did Elinor, but I was a member of SAPS with him and also read a novel he wrote (the title of which escapes me) while I was living with Hope. Another connection with an older fandom lost.

Contents of This Issue

Although originally scheduled for this issue, the article I wrote about attempting to organize my fanzine and apa mailing collection, "Fannish Archiving Blues," appeared both in Bruce Gillespie's ANZAPazine (**brg**) and in Mike Glycer's *File 770*, so I see little point in printing it again. Perhaps you may have seen it there. (Here's a good website: <http://efanzines.com/SFC/ScratchPad/scrat068.pdf>.) The point of my mentioning it here is that the Rotsler portfolio that I am presenting this issue is mentioned in that article. The other art, such as the APA-Q, APA-F and TAPS covers by Stu Shiffman and Steve Stiles, as well as the TAPS membership photo cover, have already been presented elsewhere, but as far as I know, the Rotsler portfolio has only previously been distributed in FAPA, many years ago.

I can only hope those who don't understand, or don't catch the clues in, "A Worldcon in Brownsville" will either read this first or else read the sidebar notes by Jeff and me. Basically, this story is Jeff's brainchild. He came up with the idea of writing a Worldcon report inspired by the Isaac Bashevis Singer story, "A Wedding in Brownsville." (You will not need to read that story in order to appreciate this faanish fiction, however.) I had previously told Jeff about how there had been a "pie-kill" at the LunaCon in 1975 and how Lou Stathis had chased the guy down and let him go. Jeff incorporated this and many other plot details into this report by "Jonny Fantom." Almost the entire exposition, dialogue and character development are my own.

Taral Wayne answers the age-old question, "*Whatever happened to Victoria Vayne?*"

My roommate, Jeff Kleinbard, finally begins his thesis on folklore and folk rock, two subjects near and dear to our hearts; an interest only partially inspired by the rock group Steeleye Span.

And I guess the rest of the contents speak for themselves.

The Flour Child Makes Dough

Last time when I wrote that I couldn't really write about my job in the legal profession due to potential legal complications, I was really being melodramatic. Unfortunately, I have come to find out just how true those words can be. I have also found out just how badly a supervisor can screw up a job for both herself, her employees and everyone who comes behind her. I will even go farther and say that if it is possible that the legal word processing industry is slowly fading, my erstwhile supervisor has practically pounded a stake in its heart.

To say the very least, the aforementioned Sheba (also referred to as "She Who Must Be Obeyed," in the "Fannish Archiving Blues" article) is out of the picture now. As I have never indicated any interest in doing "front desk" work, I was left with a temp in charge who didn't appreciate or care to recognize the fact that I was his most experienced and fastest operator. He would have talent-less temps come in to perform the work, and all too frequently, they were unable to finish the jobs and I would have to "save the day." There was never one word of recognition or thanks for this, and instead I was blamed as incompetent for every technical problem that came up. After a ridiculous scene in the office where he blew up at me like a baby, I made up my mind never to work with him again. Now, instead of working the third shift hours I chose so long ago, I am working nine hours a day, Thursday-Sunday, and am working with various experienced people with whom I have worked before (some of whom changed their hours in order to get away from Sheba).

Everyone asks me how I could have worked with Sheba for eight years. I tell them that I lived with my parents for 19 years, and that was almost infinitely worse. But with the advent of the temp supervisor mentioned above, I came to appreciate just how well I had it with Sheba. Although this Queen of Africa

frequently worked me like a slave, when work was slow, she very sympathetically let me go; indeed, even asked me if I wanted to leave! (With my pay for the day intact, of course.) JonArthur, who transferred to the second shift several years ago, told me that Sheba would pick out the worst, nastiest jobs for me — the jobs full of input of words and numbers and tables. “No one will want to do this,” she would say. “I’ll give it to TiM.” I would spend much of the night zipping right through the job with few errors, and, before it was time to go home, I would even thank her. “Thank you, Sheba, for giving me something I could really sink my teeth into!” I would say, and I would be sincere. I would be grateful to her for the intellectual stimulation, and she would be grateful to me for my fast, good work. I suppose it’s possible we developed some sort of symbiotic relationship based on mutual gratitude.

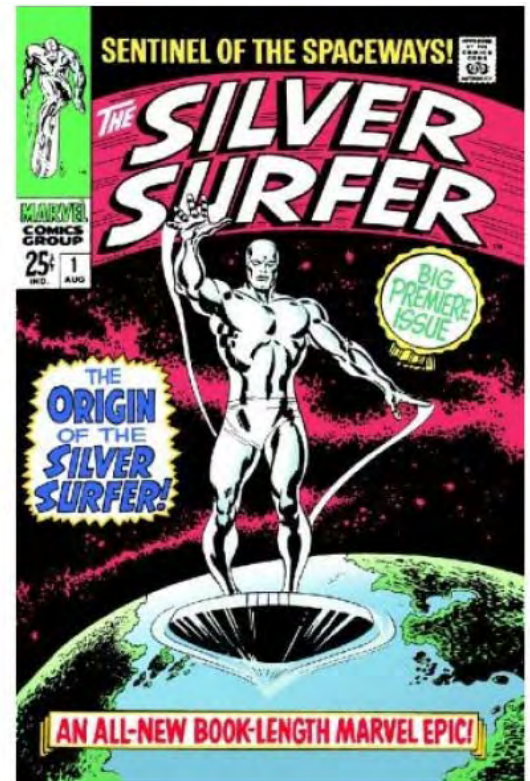
After several months with the temp in charge of the front desk, someone who resented me so much that he couldn’t recognize or see the good work I was capable of doing, I started having dreams of working for Sheba again. Despite her perfidies, she is, in reality, working as a supervisor at another law firm now! I dreamed I came into her center to work, having lost this job. She didn’t recognize me. It wasn’t an act. She was either that disassociated with her (extremely sordid) past, or else I had somehow stepped into a parallel reality. In another dream, I had come into this center and the resentful temp was gone; Sheba was back in charge of the center. Of course, I didn’t fully realize this until after I had already been sitting down for five minutes!

But, hopefully, with the new hours and more familiar crew, these dreams will fade and I will find some sort of contentment and satisfaction. For as long as the job may last...

Retrospection

When Marvel Comics came out with the SILVER SURFER OMNIBUS, I must confess that I didn’t see much point in getting it. After all, I already have the first two Marvel Masterworks featuring those same stories — reprints from Marvel Comics’ *Silver Surfer* comics from the late 1960s. However, these stories are printed in a slightly larger format and, I must admit, I was actually wanting to read these stories all over again; stories that had dazzled me at various points, due to the art (by John Buscema), color, wonder and spectacle, as well as the dazzling scripting by Stan Lee. Lo and behold (stilted Surfer speak), when I started reading this volume, I discovered that they had retained the letters pages as well. Normally, I would think, “big deal,” but then I looked at these letter pages. At the time I may have first read these comics, 1968, I didn’t know any of these people. But from a perspective of nearly reaching the half-century mark, these letters are a treasure-trove of nostalgia. Who had letters there? In chronological order, how ‘bout:

- **Bruce Coville**, whom I first encountered in Apanage. He was attempting to become a professional author, and he indeed became very successful at just that. His wife, Katherine, is a fabulous illustrator and has illustrated his books, as well as doing one of the best covers **So It Goes** has ever had (on #14)! Bruce has even had a loc in each of the past two issues of this.
- **Tony Isabella**, Big Name Comics Fan who may eventually become an editor at both Marvel and DC.
- **Doug Fratz**, who may have then been the editor of a fanzine called **Comicology**, but who went on to become the editor/publisher of a semi-pro SF magazine, **Thrust**.
- **Wendy Fletcher**, who was a popular fan artist in the late 60s, who married Richard Pini, formed WARP (Wendy And Richard Pini) Graphics and became the artist/creator of the popular **Elfquest** series.



-
- **Loren MacGregor**, a popular fanzine fan in the mid-70s who did the fanzine ***Talking Stock***, which I was never sent, despite the fact that I sent him several of this. (I now have back issues of his zines in my archive of fanzine collections.) [Late March post-scriptum — I just received a nice email from Loren MacGregor! He is living in Seattle with his wife, Laurn.]
 - **Douglas Moench**, or Doug Moench, went on to become one of the very best comic book scripters ever, beginning with his work on ***Master of Kung Fu*** with Paul Gulacy. I regret I see very little writing by him nowadays.
-

“Now let’s get back to Campbell before these parentheses spawn a litter of baby theses.”

—Tom Perry, fr/ “Cardshark Campbell Meets Sex & the Common Man,” *Trumpet* 4, April 1966

One of my resolutions for this new year, 2008, is that I will once again make an effort to read those books in the house that I never got around to reading — speaking mainly of paperback and hardback novels and collections of stories.

One of the books that has been sitting around for almost 20 years with my occasional drooling, then immediate relapse into realizing how many comic books and collected volumes of comics I had to read, is *HIERO DESTEEEN*, which is a Science Fiction Book Club combined edition of the novels by Sterling Lanier, *HIERO’S JOURNEY* and *THE UNFORSAKEN HIERO*.

I first read *HIERO’S JOURNEY* in 1976 and was considerably impressed with this after-the-cataclysm story set 5000 years in the future, which features a warrior-priest who is the descendant of Canadian French and Native American peoples traveling across the wilds of western Canada with a larger-than-normal mutated moose and a smaller-than-normal mutated bear, all of whom are in almost constant telepathic communication with each other. On their travels, they encounter the enemy, whom they call The Unclean — bald-headed, robed, telepathic, homogenous-looking men who intend to use the forbidden power of nuclear energy to enslave the world of humans and anthropomorphic mutated animals (“Leemutes,” or lethal mutations) to their will.

Before re-beginning this book, I read what others had to say on the web. One fellow thought that the writing and grammar were almost ineluctably crude, something that he didn’t remember from when his father read it to him as a child! He also disliked the author’s digressions and asides to the reader, which I consider to be a standard literary device for any novel which is narrated in the third person. This writer/reader seemed, to me, to be too critical. Another fellow wrote about what an outstanding book it was and how he had read it 10-20 times! So, on the web, the reactions go to both extremes.

I was very satisfied with my experience of re-reading *HIERO’S JOURNEY*, but I *did* note numerous flaws. Primarily, the typos were a bit distracting. I must have noticed over a dozen typos in *HIERO’S JOURNEY* alone. The book is almost ruined at the climax when Hiero descends into a 5000-year-old military complex and is very fortunate to find that the electric lights are still working (must be a forbidden nuclear generator is still in operation somewhere). Not only that, but the lift (elevator) works as well... at least one way. At the end, they blow up their discoveries and two different sets of bad guys by detonating the self-destruct sequence. We are told in the subsequent book, *THE UNFORSAKEN HIERO* (read now for the first time), that it was *not* a nuclear explosion. So all that amount of TNT and/or nitroglycerin stayed stable all that time (5000 years, remember) waiting for the self-destruct sequence to be activated?

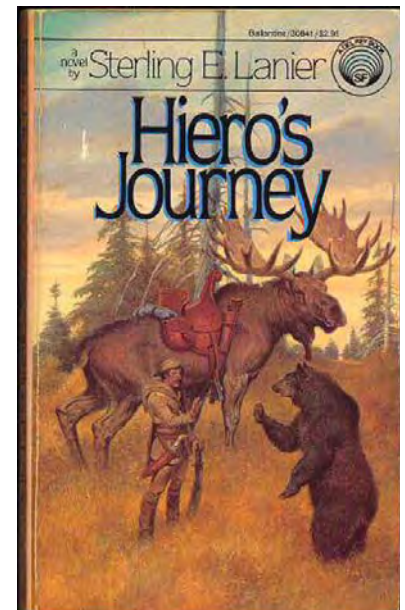
THE UNFORSAKEN HIERO begins very differently than *HIERO’S JOURNEY*. In *HIERO’S JOURNEY*, Hiero, at one point, rescues a princess, a cliché which is even acknowledged by the author through the voice of Hiero, who indicates skepticism when the princess tells Hiero her story. As *THE UNFORSAKEN HIERO* begins, he is now married to the princess of “D’alwah” and is the official ruling prince (under the king, of course) and sets about cleaning out the kingdom of the hidden presence of The Unclean. He is consequently kidnapped at a party, dosed with a drug that ruins his brain’s ability to communicate telepathically, and taken far away. Hiero duly escapes, but afterwards, does he attempt to make his way back to D’alwah, albeit in a circumspect manner, in order to rescue his princess from the obvious coup? I should say not! He promptly starts heading back northwest to his beloved Abbey from whence he came. Along the way, he comes across a great war strike-force of the Abbey’s army, who are attacking the town of Neeyana, long held under the secret sway of The Unclean. After the battle,

does he take his friends and head back to D'alwah to rescue his dusky princess then? Still not; he returns all the way home, then goes on a foray to scout out the enemy with both old and new friends. All of this behavior is both disappointing and mystifying, since at one point he tells his superior in the Abbey that he is far more than just a priest now, he is a *prince*. So why doesn't he act like the prince and return to D'alwah? Only after he has been made the general of all the Abbey's armies and has won the day against invading hordes of The Unclean does he seem to suddenly remember Lucharne (who, fortunately, was just barely okay). Lots of new, interesting characters (such as the charismatic cat people, proving to me that Lanier didn't dislike cats after all) made this second volume worth reading, but it was still, as I said, very disappointing and mystifying in some ways. And yes, I'm aware that there was supposed to be a third book which the author became too ill to write. I still think the hero's (Hiero's) priorities seemed a little askew here.

My re-reading of *HIERO'S JOURNEY* reminds me that I first read this book in July 1976 when I was in the hospital to have the "deviated septum" in my nose fixed. For the most part, that was a good time to be away from my parents, although my father was off on a submarine trip for the local shipyard. I got some books read and friends came to visit me, most notably Laine Buckwalter and Jim Bodie (on separate occasions).

On the morning after the operation, I was innocently eating my breakfast when I accidentally started swallowing the post-operative packing from one nostril. I began vomiting spasmodically and frantically buzzed for the nurse. A nurse came in and managed to calm me enough for her to reach into my mouth and pull out the packing. I thanked her profusely, but then told her, still in a state of panic, that I would need to see the doctor so he could replace the packing. I was afraid that, without the packing, his work on my nose might be jeopardized. Apparently my panic was interpreted as imperiousness, as the nurse gave me a weird look and said in a low tone that she would indeed tell the doctor. The entire day passed and I didn't hear from the doctor. I had already been there several days without a shower, and my long, straight hair, normally clean, began to look as though it was plastered to my face. I took the time to wash my hair in the sink. Suddenly my room was full of nurses.

"You shouldn't have done that! You're not supposed to wash your hair after you've had an operation above the neck!" one nurse told me both angrily and indignantly.



I ignored her obnoxious tone and merely told her politely that I hadn't really broken any rules because I didn't know that was a rule, and my hair had been very dirty.

"But you're not supposed to wash your hair when you've had an operation above the neck!" she repeated to me, a bit more shrilly.

I merely reiterated that my hair had been very dirty and that I didn't know that was a rule.

"But you're not supposed to wash your hair when you've had an operation above the neck!!" she repeated again, more shrilly still.

At this point I completely gave up saying anything, seeing they were all, apparently, totally irrational — all three of them were standing in the room glaring at me like they wanted to kill me. I didn't see any point in saying anything to obviously mad people.

I didn't realize that, by not saying anything, I was making another mistake. I was, apparently, letting these sick little bitches believe that they had achieved the last word, and were, therefore, completely correct to continually excoriate me.

The next thing I knew, a nurse had brought a wheelchair around and I was going to be taken to the doctor. "I don't need a wheelchair," I told the nurse somewhat indignantly, but cooperatively got into it nonetheless.

Once in front of the doctor, a fat old white-haired man named Murrelstein, he frantically and roughly pulled the packing out of the nostril where there was still packing. My head bobbed back and forth

during his rough work. Then he produced new packing, and, using his upper arm muscles, pounded the packing into each of my nostrils as hard as he could; so hard and painfully that tears began running down my face.

"Couldn't you have done that a little more gently?" I asked him between gasps when he was through.

"I take great pride in my work, and I don't appreciate anyone trying to mess it up," he said to me angrily, indicating that he had been deliberately brutal with his repeated penetration of my nostrils as a punitive measure. Pretty ironic words, too, considering the harm that he had just dealt me.

I was, frankly, shocked speechless. I couldn't believe the ignorant pronouncement that I was hearing. He hadn't bothered to repack one nostril when the packing accidentally fell out, but if I break a non-existent (i.e., unwritten and never stated) rule, he practically has a spaz-attack and has to teach this long-haired kid a "lesson." What a sick fuck. I can only hope he's dead now. If I had picked up an instrument and started carving on him with it, I would probably be incarcerated to this day.

"Aren't you glad now you came down in a wheelchair?" the nurse asked me both snidely and obnoxiously, obviously very pleased with my pain and discomfort.

The aftermath of this brutal event wasn't much better. I called my foolish mother and told her of the attack, and rather than coming to get me out of there, she refused to believe me, and told me instead about how good the hospital staff had been to me by letting me have visitors and my own room! I had to stay there in that wacky hospital with the crazy bitch nurses and the sick fuck doctor.

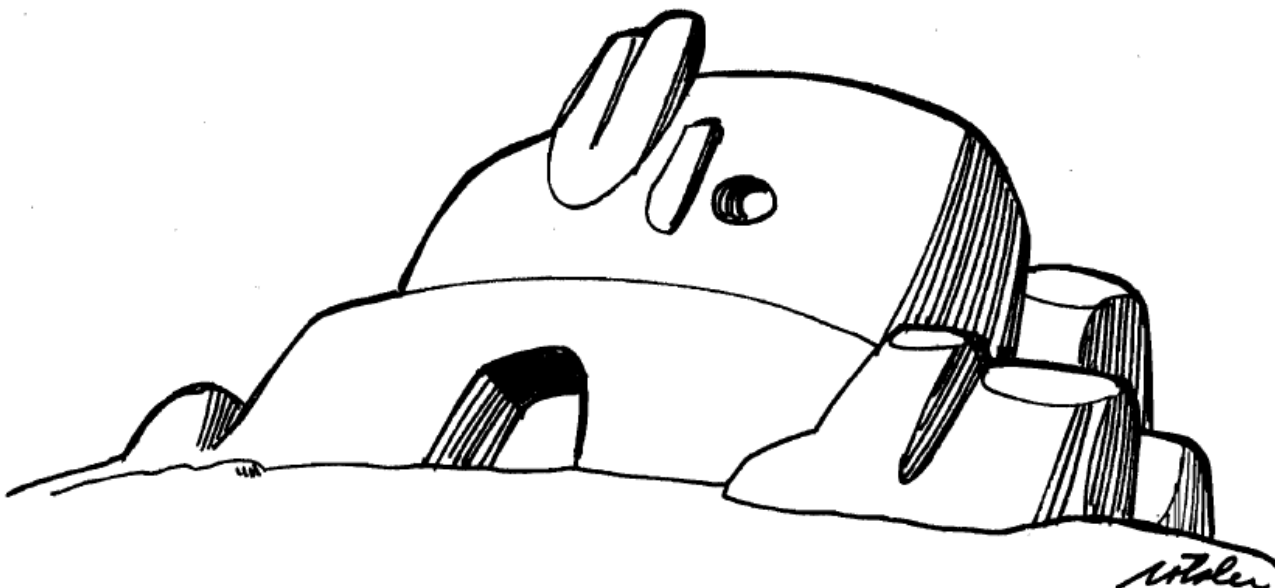
As soon as I was discharged, I hopped on my electric typewriter and wrote down everything that had just occurred in my Apanagezine. The response I got? Everyone ignored it. Well, one person wrote, "Whew, that certainly was an ordeal you went through in the hospital, wasn't it?" Jim Crutchfield, the younger brother of my best friend whom I had gotten involved in Apanage, merely insensitively and inanely wrote, "Oh come on, Tim, the stay in the hospital wasn't *that* bad."

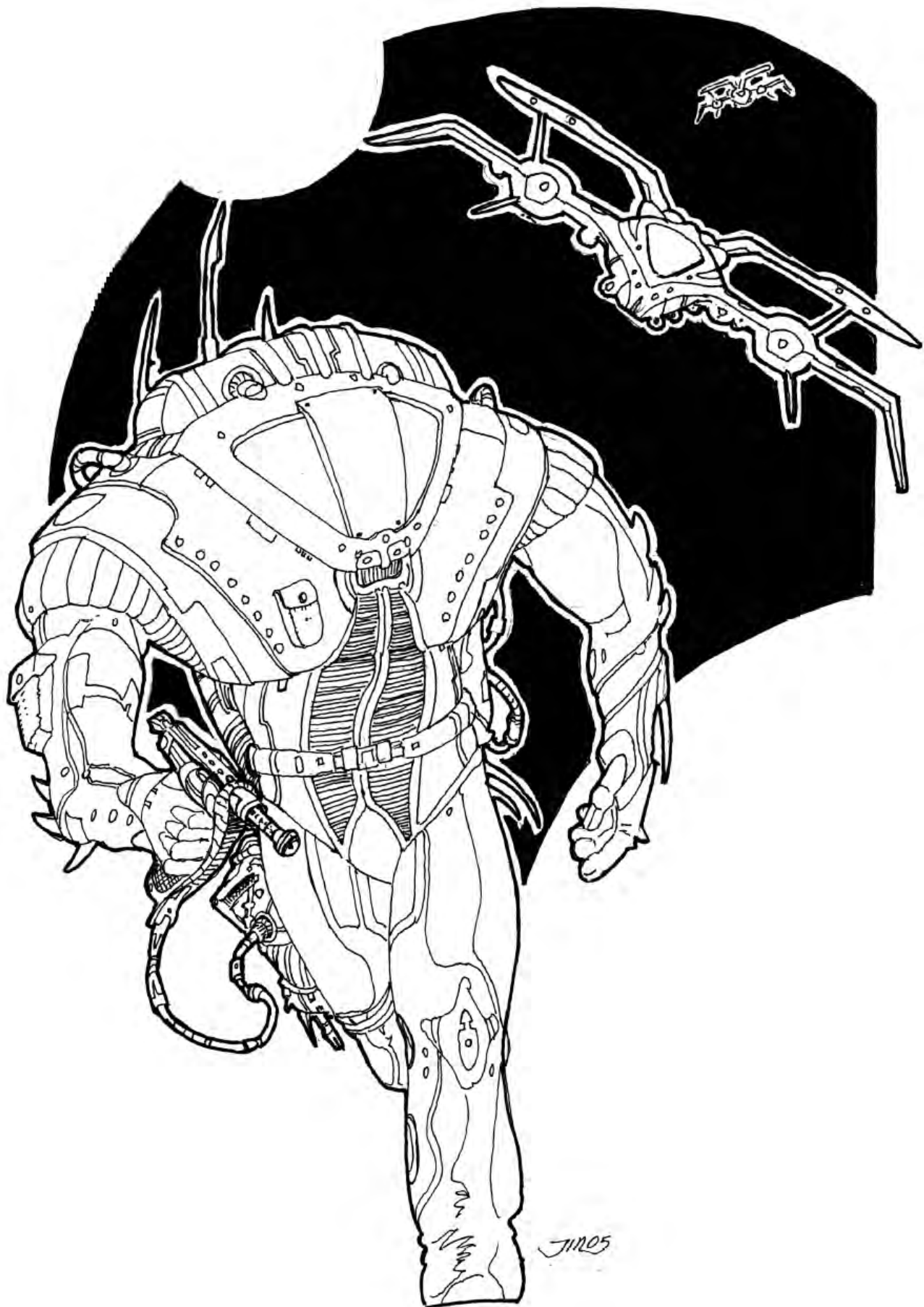
I sincerely wish I was making all this up. But at least it gives me a real insight into why many women don't want to say when they are attacked by a man — who is going to believe them? Or even care? I can understand all too well...

Acknowledgments

This issue would not have been possible without the contributions and encouragement of **Taral Wayne**. Likewise I should thank **Robert Lichtman** for saving my ass on a couple of occasions. And also **Bruce Gillespie**, for his encouragement, influence and inspiration. Also **Jim Bodie** for the APA-50 roster and **Ned Brooks** for the SLANAPA roster. And **Elinor Busby** and **Mike Glycer** for mucho other addresses!

—Tim Marion





full page art by JIM MCLEOD

a **WORLDCON** *in* **BROWNSVILLE**

reported on by Jonny Fantom
illustrated by Taral Wayne

L. Sprague & Catherine de Camp, Pro Guests of Honor
Terry Carr, Fan Guest of Honor
Bob Tucker, Toastmaster
Kelly Freas, Artist Guest of Honor

Held at the Hotel California in Brownsville, New York
February 29-31, 2007

The Worldcon got off to a rather tumultuous start for me this year when I realized that I hadn't even started on my zine for WOOF, the annual Worldcon apa. I planned to have a sizable contribution this year and I was just barely able to put it to stencil before time to leave.

When it was almost finished, I had a moment to reflect. The smell of fresh mimeo ink was in the air. I just love the absorbent, textured mimeo paper. It feels so much richer than flat copy paper. The artwork also takes on a depth which is lent to it by the paper texture that photocopy and computer inkjet and laser copies lack. I certainly hope the other contributors to WOOF appreciate the trouble I'm going to using mimeo, rather than photocopying, which seems standard for apazines these days.

Everything reproduced fine but the last page jammed in the electric mimeo. When I opened the damn thing to try to pull it free —

YOW!

Reached in a little too far and got the jolt of my life. It sent me reeling into a giant pyramid of mimeo paper my roommate had built. Both the pyramid and I tumbled to the floor in a state of disarray. I felt a bit groggy but there was no time to clean up — had to get finished and get to the con.

I'm glad the con is in New York this year but whoever heard of a convention in Brownsville? Rather far out from midtown but I guess with current hotel rates there are not going to be any more major conventions any closer.

Didn't know if the cab driver would be willing to drive all the way out to Brownsville, but he heard the destination and clicked on the meter without comment. The drive along the Brooklyn-Queens Expressway seemed lengthy while passing neighborhoods covered with snow. When we got off the interstate, we started passing through areas that seemed quite unfamiliar to me. Were we even still in Brooklyn? It almost seemed as though we were driving on a dark desert highway. The cab seemed warm so I lowered the window a crack. A cool breeze blew through my hair. Then, in the distance, I saw the Hotel California. For a moment, the image of the hotel seemed to shimmer in the breeze, and it almost resembled a castle. Then my vision cleared and I noted the large marquee, "Welcome World Science Fiction Fans," it said. "Well at least they spelled out 'science fiction,'" I thought to myself. That was almost unheard of in the "mundane" world, who prefer to use the ghetto term "sci-fi."

After getting settled in my room, the first place I hit in a convention is usually the Dealer's Room. Howard deVore had done a wonderful job, as usual, at setting it up. He had a large table where he sold many hard-to-find hardbacks at reasonable prices, and next to him, Gerry de la Ree had a table where he was selling **Weird Tales** and various other pulps. I don't collect the pulps myself, but had to admire



the pristine (almost mint-like!) condition of all the pulps Gerry had on display, as well as drool over some of those Margaret Brundage paintings. Further down, Bob Madle had a table where he sold rare paperbacks at somewhat exorbitant prices.

I also saw that Jack Chalker had a table selling Mirage Press books as well as mint condition copies of the **Mirage** fanzine. I saw Dick Eney was in front of his table and was going to speak to them both, but then noticed they seemed to be arguing heatedly, so decided not to disturb them.

Wandering around, I encountered Jon White, who, even though he is a good twenty years older than me, always looks like he is only a tiny bit older. He sold me some rare magazines I had asked him to bring to the con for me.

Donald M. Grant, small press publisher of beautiful, elaborate fantasy collections, had a table. He had two brand new books for sale — one was a brand new, \$250 collection of Conan stories by Robert E. Howard, collected together in one huge, omnibus volume with a brand new wraparound color painting cover by Virgil Finlay, as well as hundreds of new, finished sketches inside by Roy Krenkel. This is sure to be the definitive Conan volume. I started to get it, but realized that was just about all the money I had left for the rest of the convention. "Go ahead and take it," Don told me. "I trust you to pay me back later." Very kind of him, but of course this generosity is based on many years of dealing with me. He has offered me extensions in the past and I always paid him back within a few weeks.

The other book Don was offering was a new collection of Robert Sheckley stories. Sheckley was there behind the table with Don, making one of his rare convention appearances, and signing copies of his book for customers. The book was remarkably beautiful for the wraparound color painting cover collaboration between Hannes Bok and Vaughn Bodé. In addition, Bodé did headings for each story inside. What a treasure! This book was so irresistible that since it was a "mere" \$50 I went ahead and shelled out the dough.

This was my first opportunity to meet Sam Moskowitz, famous historian of the science fiction and fantasy field, who was there with his wife, Cristine. Sam made a point of telling me that he was the editor of these latest two books from Grant.

Shouldn't forget Buck Coulson, who had a table selling some books. Good to catch up with him again. Talking to Buck (and then to me when I arrived) was Swampy (a.k.a. Bill Marsh). Good to finally meet Swampy after exchanging letters for so many years.

TiM's Notes

The adventures of Jonny Fantom (so named both because he is a child of fandom and, unbeknownst to him, a phantom) are obviously, for the most part, autobiographical, with the following exceptions. It was Ted White, not L. Sprague de Camp, who was pied at the 1975 LunaCon. Lou Stathis was indeed working security at the time and chased down the pie-thrower. However, Lou didn't know what to do with the fellow so he just let him go with an admonition. I was not there.

I really did play a hellacious bout of frisbee with Mike Wood at some convention, and my high-jumping and stairway running all weekend long really did throw out my back. I never met Lee Pelton, but knew him through fanzines. Susan Wood was not at that convention, but a couple of other women, notably Sarah Prince, helped massage my twisted back muscles until the pain was at least tolerable (but not nonexistent).

The basic idea and plot of this was Jeff's, who wanted to write a fannish story inspired by "A Wedding in Brownsville" by Isaac Bashevis Singer and the movie JACOB'S LADDER. Many of the elements in this story were Jeff's idea, including the addition of Casper, which is meant to mirror Jacob's fleeting glimpses of his lost son. The "Hotel California" inspiration and the recurring Valhalla motif were added by me, as are the characterizations and almost the entire exposition.

In writing this, I intended it to be a gentle satire on my own con reports in particular and fandom in general. Thus, some characterizations and circumstances are exaggerated to a ludicrous and farcical degree. No offense or disrespect toward anyone is intended, only bittersweet regret.

The convention had even given a table to the N3F (National Fantasy Fan Federation) for recruitment of neofans. Stan Woolston and Janie Lamb were there enticing people to join. They were friendly, but taciturn compared to Irvin Koch, who was actually actively trying to recruit from the table...sometimes to the point of following neos for a few feet away from the table while continuing his sales pitch. I have actually considered rejoining the N3F in recent years but somehow have never found the time. As L. Sprague de Camp once said (about himself, that is), I'm a member of too many things already.

But by far the most interesting item in the hucksters' room was the display that Jack Kirby and Wally Wood had set up advertising the new *Star Trek* newspaper strip for which they're going to be doing the art together, which Archie Goodwin and Gardner Fox (who were not there) will be taking turns scripting. They had done a promotional, one-shot comic book which they were giving away only at that convention (which was scripted by Otto Binder, who was also not there). What an exclusive treat! I can hardly wait until the strip appears, or better yet, a collection of the strip! Their spokesman and publicity agent was Mark Gruenwald, previously an editor at Marvel, who was also there chatting up the fans and pushing the product (which needed very little pushing, judging by the attention that table received).

The con suite was really jumping the first evening. Both Doris Beetem (the Elder Ghoddess of Denver fandom) and Doll Gilliland had done a great job of setting up things. As busy as these ladies were, both of them took the time to speak with me and ask how I was doing.

I also got to renew my acquaintance with "HORT," or "Horrible Old Roy Tackett," as someone once jokingly nicknamed him, who was there with his wife Crystal. So very good to see them again.

In a corner at a table, I saw Plato Jones (alias Lynn Hickman) giving calligraphy instruction to Adrienne Fein. Both of them looked so engrossed in what they were doing, with their heads down so close to the paper, that I didn't care to disturb them with my presence. I merely watched and observed, then became distracted when someone spoke to me.

Karl Edward Wagner and Manly Wade Wellman came up to me and introduced E. Hoffman Price, with whom I had corresponded in my youth about Robert E. Howard and other pulp writers (such as himself). Price was making his last traveling rounds of the country, with New York as his final stop. It was a pleasure to get to meet this man after so many years.

While I didn't have time to attend the masquerade, later that night I passed the room where the costume fans were preparing their outfits and the short routines they would present on stage for the judge's review.

I noticed that there was a Seventh Seal Marching Band which used many ornate and obscure medieval instruments, some of which were cleverly amplified electronically to produce spooky, reverberating effects without any noticeable wiring.

As I passed an alcove by a stairway I noticed two fans rehearsing a routine which (if I'm not mistaken) came from R.W. Chambers' THE KING IN YELLOW, which went something like — "You, Sir, should remove your mask."

"But I wear no mask."

"No mask? NO **MASK?!**"

There were also folk singers who had decided to go folk and were doing a very beautiful rendition of a song I heard Pentangle perform called "The Lyke Wake Dirge." As I left the floor, I noticed Vaughn Bodé helping to adjust the costume of a child who had chosen to come as Cheech Wizard.

The next evening Bob Tucker gave a good speech as Toastmaster, which everyone expected, including himself, which is why he made it brief (he said). First he introduced Kelly Freas, who gave quite an amusing speech about his days of selling cover paintings to **Analog**. He mentioned he had a great deal of trouble submitting one particular painting — the editor(s) kept continually wanting revisions. After about the fifth time Kelly had revised it, he told them angrily, "You can print it upside down and backwards for all I care!" When they sent him the sample copy with the painting on the cover, it was indeed...upside down and backwards! I saw John Campbell getting a good laugh from that.

Bob Tucker then introduced L. Sprague de Camp, who mounted the podium. He had barely opened his mouth when some miscreant, who had remained unnoticed until that point, suddenly jumped up and threw a pie straight into Sprague's face. It was a professional job; the pie hit him dead on. Sprague stood still for a moment in shock and surprise as the cherry filling began dribbling down onto his almost angelically-white dress jacket. Meanwhile, the fellow who had pied him dashed off toward the exit. As fast as he was, Lou Stathis, who was in charge of security, dashed right after him. I got up, and, as fast as they were, I was right behind them.

As we ran for the exit, I, for the first time, clearly saw that magnificent white cat that I had tried to meet before. Now that I saw him clearly, albeit briefly, I noted that he wasn't pure white; he had a black pattern on his forehead. He was just standing by the door, casually watching us, one by one, as we ran past. I suppose I could have taken the opportunity to introduce myself then, but I was too intent on helping Lou catch the pie-hitter.

Lou was a little lighter on his feet than I was, so he was closing on the fellow as they entered the stairwell. At that point, Lou started losing him, as he was running up the stairs faster than Lou could follow. I quickly caught a breath, and although I had been slower than Lou at running across straight terrain, I could run up the stairs three-at-a-time with ease. I must immodestly admit I made both Lou and the fellow look like they were moving in slow motion. In fact, it felt almost as though I flew up those stairs like I had wings. I quickly passed Lou and caught the fellow. I was holding him by the back of the shirt when Lou caught up to me, panting to catch his breath.

Jeff's Notes

"A Worldcon in Brownsville" is loosely based on Isaac Bashevis Singer's literally haunting and poignant story — "A Wedding in Brownsville." The protagonist is an Eastern European immigrant Jew who is living in New York and hurrying to arrive at a wedding. He travels by cab and views a "near" accident of another cab en route. The accident is, of course, closer than "near" and was a glimpse of his own death. Having departed from this world he unknowingly continues on his errand, however the wedding has certain extraordinary features. He believes he glimpses many long dead people and in the climax rejoins a long lost love as the ceremony commences. The realization dawns on him that he too has joined the dead. "A Worldcon in Brownsville" is meant to be a tribute to many fans now gone to that great Worldcon in the sky and a meditation on our own transience — a fannish *memento more* or reminder of our own impending deaths — not in a morbid fashion but to renew our appreciation of life.

There is a genre of such stories. The car being pulled from the waters glimpsed on the way to the wedding references both CARNIVAL OF SOULS and BEETLEJUICE (both of which are on the film program of the Worldcon). In both films there is a "near" accident (which is closer than near) and the protagonist who believes he has survived but is actually lost midway between here and the hereafter.

CARNIVAL OF SOULS, made in the 1950s, is low budget but has such a wonderful aura of strangeness. I suspect BEETLEJUICE paid tribute to the film's drowning death. The dead who are not aware they are dead pop up more recently in JACOB'S LADDER where the protagonist is lost in a purgatorial, hallucinatory New York City which is a death hallucination. His rescue from the film's Horror Hospital by his chiropractor who "straightens" Jacob out and is called an "angel" by Jacob is the inspiration for Jonny Fantom's experience with back pain and the subsequent relief provided by Susan Wood.

JACOB'S LADDER also influences Jonny Fantom's repeated glimpses and pursuit of the beautiful white cat (our gorgeous and extremely lovable Casper died recently). There is a resonance to Alice chasing her white rabbit and also Jacob's periodic meetings with his dead son. At the end of the film, after he has passed through his purgation, he meets his son somewhere on the upper west side of the city. They pass through the doors of a stately building and his son leads him up a stairway into a place drenched with light. Likewise the protagonist here is reunited with Casper. I would like to think that when I go to the big convention in the sky, I too might be reunited with Casper and all of my other great cats who have passed.



The fellow looked worried and tried to squirm out of my grasp, so I found it simpler to throw him onto the floor. At that point, to my great surprise, I saw Lou pull a small baretta out of his pocket. He shot the pie-killer right in the middle of the forehead! The fellow immediately collapsed, his blond curls obscuring his face.

"Only one way to deal with scum like this," Lou said grimly.

I was appalled. Shocked. I didn't know what to say. So I stood there saying nothing.

Lou opened a door. "C'mon, help me drag him into this box," he said.

Sure enough, there was a footlocker in a utility closet, as I found as I numbly followed Lou's direction and helped him dispose of the body.

"We can't tell anyone about this," I said.

"Of course we're going to tell them — don't you think the deCamps want satisfaction?"

"What do you want to do, give them his head?" I asked ironically.

"Do you have a real sharp knife?" Lou asked me.

Seeing my look of astonishment and disbelief, he then added, "Nevermind, I'll ask one of the anachronists."

Then he said: "Just put it out of your head; I'll deal with it."

I made up my mind to do exactly that.

I went down to the bar where I saw Brian Burley and Meade Frierson were having a drink. I felt I needed to join them. Although they were ahead of me in drinking, I quickly caught up with them. And then passed them. This, of course, was obviously *not* a Very Good Thing, as these gentlemen each weigh twice as much as me. Somewhere along the way Charles Burbee and Elmer Perdue joined us (right at the point when I started falling apart). When the bar started to spin around and around like I was in the middle of a centrifuge, I started to lose my memory. Therefore, all of the following was described to me later by Burbee.

Brian, Meade and I and a few others (including Burbee, Perdue, and a couple of lady friends of Brian's whose names I never got, but whose faces looked hauntingly familiar) went to Brian's room to do some more drinking. However, upon seeing the spare bed, apparently both my drunkenness and emotional and physical exhaustion all overwhelmed me, as I suddenly threw myself upon the bed, face-first, spread-eagled, and subsequently did not move for several hours, aside from my breathing. As I said, I was unaware of all of this.

Brian looked down at my comatose body and farted long and thoughtfully. After Meade and the others had left, Brian went back to cavorting on the other bed with his two plump women-friends. They weren't aware that I was there, nor did they care anyway.

I awoke several hours later to see Brian and his women-friends sprawled across the other bed in various positions, all fast asleep, all snoring loudly. It was probably that noise that woke me up; with my hangover it seemed as though the entire room was vibrating. One of his friends changed position and consequently one of her breasts flopped over and pointed at me in a seemingly accusatory fashion. I suddenly flashed on the events of the previous night and wondered if it had all been a dream. At that memory I felt a sudden inspiration to move as quickly as I could to the bathroom to do some sincere commode-hugging.

I felt so much better a few minutes later, and went to my room. I showered, shaved, and went down to the hotel restaurant where I had a nice big "power" breakfast. Afterwards, I indeed felt powerful, and like a warrior from Valhalla, I felt reconstituted on the day after a battle.

Terry Hughes had done an excellent job with the fan room. Not only the top fanzines of the day, but many of the fanzines of yesterday (all of them in surprisingly mint condition) were on display. In locked glass cases. Terry, however, had the key, and would take out only one at a time for examination — as long as you wore a special type of gloves (and promised not to breathe on the zine too hard). There were strangely few takers for this; mostly people just oohed and ahed over the display.

Lee Hoffman was there and was displaying how to use hectograph machines, as well as a manual mimeo made by Geha. She seemed glad to see me and gave me a copy of **Science Fiction 5-Yearly**.

I caught up with Bill Bowers there, and rejoiced to see him back in such good health. When I had seen him recently, he was bent over, practically crippled, from osteoporosis. Here he once more looked tall and upright, and had a long, leonine mane of golden red hair and beard. His eyes shined brightly as he told me his plans for the next issue of **Outworlds**, which will be, according to him, "A self-actuating, interactive hologram."



Bill is also to be congratulated for the beautiful convention book that he and Tom Reamy put together. It was a gorgeous hardback with a brand new color wraparound painting by Virgil Finlay which was embossed directly on to the hard covers, so that there would be no worries of a fragile dust jacket tearing (since few fans would think to be there with their supply of "brodarts" to cover such dust jackets). The book was a work of art unto itself.

I was pleased to see such a foreign contingent of fanzine fans in the Fan Room. John Brosnan and Ron Bennett from England, and John Foyster and John Bangsund from Australia. It was good to finally meet these gentlemen who have been so widely separated from me geographically, but not in terms of interest.

And I should mention the ubiquitous Gil Gaier, who was madly snapping photos everywhere he went. He took a couple of candid photos of me when I didn't want him to, but he said they looked great. I look forward to seeing him publish the best of the lot in a new fanzine he said he was coming out with, one devoted to fans.

Adjacent to the fan room was a real, convention function-room where fan and fanzine related panels were to be held. One of which was called "Caricature Wars" and had Bill Rotsler and Vaughn Bodé each caricaturing various famous people as well as famous fans and members of the audience, with the audience "voting" (by clapping and cheering) on who won each "war." The resulting art was mainly given to TAFF, but I'm not ashamed to admit that I walked away with the caricatures of myself from both these gentlemen (which they gave me freely for publication in my zine).

To my surprise, I thought I saw the curly-haired fellow who had pied Sprague deCamp the night before. He saw me staring at him and waved hi with a smile. I noticed that he even had a band-aid on his forehead which would have covered a bullet-hole. At that point, Rich Brown, who had entered the room, spoke to me quietly and I turned to listen to him. Later when I looked for the fellow again, I didn't see him.

Who else should I mention meeting in the fan room? I met Terry Carr and Redd Boggs for the first time, which was a pleasure. I have enjoyed writing from these gentlemen both before and after I became involved in two different apas with them.

Adjacent to the fan room, the convention had set up an "Apa Room" where WOOF, the World Organization of Fanzine Editors, the annual Worldcon apa, as going to be collated. Bruce Pelz was busy managing the masquerade, so this year Richard Small and Larry Nielsen were officially in charge of the collation. Mike Wood was there, who also had a contribution, but he seemed upset about something. I offered to take his mind off of what was bothering him by tossing some frisbee with him. He agreed to this and said that he knew of a good park where we could play. Along the way we grabbed Lee Pelton who was emerging from the dealers' room.

We left the exhibition hall and went down another hallway where we passed the film room. I heard a snippet of dialogue as we were approaching and then passed. "Igor dead, monster dead, master dead — this is a place of Dead People! HA ha ha ha!" I remembered that was a quote from SON OF FRANKENSTEIN, with Bela Lugosi speaking in what was almost certainly his best performance. The curious thing was that I didn't recall this movie being in the film program, which I had bothered to check out in advance. I knew that they were going to be showing CARNIVAL OF SOULS, BEETLEJUICE and JACOB'S LADDER, but I didn't recall SON OF FRANKENSTEIN being on the list. I'm sure I would have noticed, too, considering that movie is one of my very favorites.

Mike, Lee and I tossed the frisbee around for almost an hour straight, and per request, both Mike and Lee tossed it numerous times well over my head, so that I would have to jump up high and make a miraculous catch each time. In fact, at certain times, it almost seemed as though I was hovering in the air before I caught the frisbee and came back down. However, all that stairwell running the previous day, as well as all this jumping, took its toll on my muscles. I'm not as young as I was when I first entered fandom, after all. I must have pulled a muscle in my back. It hurt so badly that it was painful just walking or sitting up straight.

I mentioned this awful pain to Susan Wood, who was kind enough to offer me a massage. She had been taught how to treat backs by both a chiropractor and by a yogic instructor, and used a combination of their techniques. Her ministrations eased the pain considerably, and the next day, when she repeated the procedure, removed the pain entirely. That second time really did the trick. I remember in particular

the moment the awesome agony finally ceased. I looked up at Susan, who was outlined against the hotel room window. The afternoon sun shone through and made her hair glow with an almost ethereally golden sheen. "Susan, you look like an angel," I said. Thanks, Susan, so much, for your kindness and time!

Back in the fan room, in the early evening we took advantage of the cell phone attached to a speaker that some technical wiz on the committee had prepared and used it to call first Harry Warner and then Donn Brazier, both of whom were securely ensconced in their abodes. As usual, they preferred to remain at home with their loved ones (Donn with his family, Harry with his books and DVDs of Julie Andrews movies) than go to the effort of traveling to the convention, but they wished us well and told us they were with us in spirit.

That night the Dead Dog Party had a very special atmosphere. I walked in to see Fred Kuhn in a dimly-lit corner, surrounded by friends and admirers, while he was performing "Hotel California" (in honor of the convention hotel) on an acoustic guitar. He then started singing some of his own songs from the album A SONG OF GODS GONE MAD. I have practiced considerably (in other words, sang along a lot with) the songs on that album, so was able to join him in the same key. Afterwards, I received a generous dose of egoboo when both Fred and others told me that we had sounded good together.

Much partying that night that I can't recall. In addition to the traditional bid parties (Minneapolis in '73, Montreal in '77, Flushing in '80, etc.), there were private parties where several of us would get considerably inebriated. I remember hanging around this time with Lou Stathis (who told me that his official duties for the con were now over and so he was ready to seriously party), Mike Hinge, Ross Pavlac, Walter Breen, Larry Nielson, Terry Hughes, Barry Smotroff, Rich Brown and apologies to the others whom I have no doubt temporarily forgotten.

The next day, I finally caught up with that magnificent white cat I had kept seeing. I was waiting for an elevator when I saw him out of the edge of my eye, going around a corner. The last I saw of him was his big, fluffy white tail held up proudly. I turned down that hall and glimpsed him running into the con suite. Entering, I saw the cat jump into Catherine deCamp's lap, who was sitting, surrounded by friends.



"Here's the cat you've been looking for," Catherine told me. The cat regarded me intelligently with brilliant green eyes. "Ehrrr," he said to me, careful to roll his Rs.

At first I thought Catherine knew I had been looking for this cat throughout the convention, but then I remembered that I had told her husband, in the midst of our "poet sacred" correspondence, that my cat had died and that I was looking for a new one.

Catherine then told me that his name was Casper the Friendly Ghost. At the mention of his name, he stood up on her lap, still looking at me, and said, "Ehr reh," in a very cordial and friendly way.

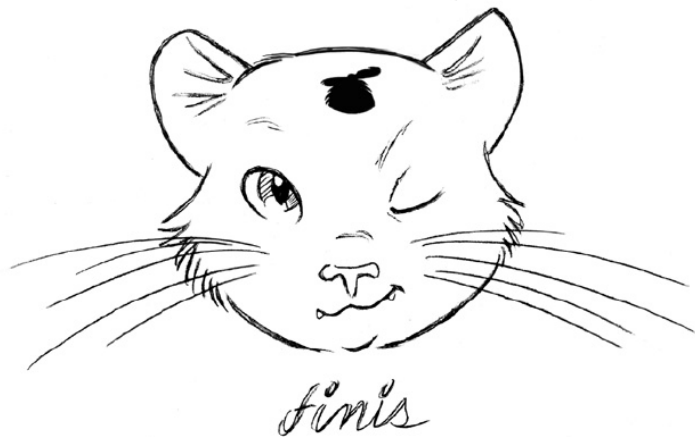
Looking at Casper closely for the first time, I noticed that the black spot on his head was actually a set of three small spots right next to each other. The lowest of the three was shaped like a half-circle, and the two other dots were elliptical in shape with narrow, tapered ends that joined at the apex of the 90 degree mark of the half-circle. In other words, if viewed correctly, it could be interpreted as a pictogram of a propeller beanie!

I also noticed there was a big, empty comfy chair near where Catherine was sitting, so I plopped myself down in it. Casper lost no time jumping in my lap. He leaped so gracefully and effortlessly that for a moment he seemed to almost levitate into my lap. As he lay there I scratched hard through his long, thick fur and he opened his mouth and purred loudly in ecstasy; such a loud purr it almost sounded like a roar. It felt so good to hold him. It felt just like having my cat back. How could I have lived without him for so many weeks? it was almost too good to be true. I suddenly flashed back to the memory of the shock I had received from my electric mimeo just before the convention. Had this actually been my own demise? Was I really in a dream, or an hallucination? But then I thought, "Who cares?" As if in answer to my thoughts, Casper looked at me and again said, "Ehrrr," through his purrs.

I had been preparing to leave, but with Casper in my lap, I felt too contented to do so. I looked around me. Although it was the day after the Dead Dog Party, everyone was still there. I saw Brian Burley and Meade Frierson at the bar. At the other end of the bar, Charles Burbee and Elmer Perdue were talking animatedly. And those two guys in the middle, was that Bob Shaw and Walt Willis? I hadn't known they were here. I had never met them, but of course had enjoyed their writings. With Casper in my lap, I didn't feel inclined to get up and finally introduce myself to them. Somehow I realized there would always be time later.

A few feet from the bar, Lou Stathis also had a drink in hand while speaking with the curly-haired fellow whom he had shockingly shot in the head only two evenings before. There was an anachronist next them with a *huge* axe; was that Poul Anderson? He took out a Sharpie magic marker and began drawing a dashed line around the neck of the curly-haired fellow (whose name I never got), who was bending his head and pulling his shirt collar obligingly to help with the demarcation.

Ross Pavlac came up and spoke to me. Then George Laskowski and Adrienne Fein joined the two of us and we all started talking about something; maybe cats. Bruce Pelz appeared and saw Casper and expressed his admiration. Then Anna Vargo and Leslie Bloom came by and did the same. Gil Gaier seemed to materialize and took a picture of all of us. In the background I heard Fred Kuhn singing again but couldn't tell if he was performing or if someone was playing a CD of his music. Somehow I felt too comfortable to leave. I settled down and enjoyed the warm feeling of Casper in my lap and the good company of him and my fellow fans.



—Jeff Kleinbard & Tim Marion

Tara's illo clues



Death clues

1) old fanzines 2) Old con badges

Death Clues 1) Guy in Betelgeuse suit, 2) Guy in Caspar the Friendly Ghost t-shirt, 3) More old zines and badges, 4) ATom artwork on wall (stretching a point,) 5) box of books by dead authors.



GHOST WRITING

FROM THE

GLADES OF GAFIA

"In putting together the successor to my recently-folded genzine, *Simulacrum*, I had hopes that the new zine, *Excentric*, would be more fannish, more informal, more fun for both me and the readers. It would be closer to the spirit of fandom as it was twenty years ago than fandom today. One of *Excentric*'s mainstays will be reprints of fannish classics, bringing them back for newer readers who never read them in their original form. To this end I have access to Taral's collection of old fanzines, a smaller collection of my own, and any amount of (unwanted) advice.

"For my first issue I spotted John Berry's 'Bob and the Typewriter,' originally printed in *Hyphen 12*, and then reprinted in *Oops! 22* in 1957. The companion piece, 'Aversion to Type' is in the same issue and both appear by permission of the author and editors. For the new presentation of these articles I obtained art from Jim Barker and added work by Marc Schirmeister, and Taral's cover. The art for the *Oops!* reprint was all hand-stenciled, but tracing is a skill I lack completely. Also, I'm more interested in the idea of reviving the fannish classics with new art and a modern format, giving it the look of life, rather than presenting it as a museum piece.

"This first issue of *Excentric*, 'Son of Sim,' should be out late October 1979. Possibly I'll put copies of it through my membership in FAPA, for mailing 169, or at least send copies to a good number of the FAPA roster who might be interested.

"The second issue ought to appear next year, with more fannish classics, new material, hopefully by your favorite British fanwriters, and a folio of artists' collaborations by Stu Shiffman, Phil Foglio and Taral. Hopefully contributions will provide other material at a self-supporting pace now that this is a fannish zine, and not as sercon as *Sim* became. Next year should also see the long delayed publication of 'The Joy of Duplicating,' a complete guide to mimeography and fanzine production. Don't forget — Wouldn't You Rather Be Reading *DNQ*?"

—Victoria Vayne, August 1979

That editorial for *Excentric* is *not* a hoax. Those were the words of Victoria Vayne, speaking to you more or less from beyond this vale of tears. The editorial (and postscript below) were based on two letters written to secure permission for material, on her very last apazine, and on knowledge of Victoria's character and opinions gained through years of our friendship. Occasionally I am speaking for her; other times you're reading her own words as she put them on paper.

The editorial came about while scouting around for a short article from my files that I could pass on to worthy causes. As it happened, there wasn't anything left. Everything had long since been distributed to the four winds, to Brian Earl Brown for *Sticky Quarters*, to Marty Cantor for *Holier Than Thou*, and other, less speakable, vehicles for the fannishly undead. But there were two articles by John Berry, complete with layouts and illos, left over from a zine Victoria had planned to publish and then completely abandoned.

I remember the long night-time walks in which Victoria spoke her anguish over *Simulacrum*. It was hailed before its time, then ignored in its prime, she said. It didn't live up to its reputation — didn't people know shit when they saw it? But the good writers only write for each other, and won't send me material. What can I do?

I dunno, I said in my wisdom, having the longer experience with publishing fanzines by all of just over two years. This made me an old fan and tired, imbued with comforting formulae for all occasions, including Victoria's dark hour of the soul. I dunno, but maybe if you just start and keep going, and people like what you do, they'll send you the fabulous fannish writing you want to publish. It's kinda a



zen thing, like patting your head while rubbing your stomach. You get to publish what you want by publishing what you want, and woe to linear thinkers. You know, you have resources among your friends here that you've never fully exploited either.

But Victoria never wanted to publish a "local" zine as she called it. It was minor league, a sideshow, an admission that you didn't rate in the pecking order she perceived, rightly or wrong, to exist in fandom. The ambition to rise to the top that drove Victoria to be the first fan in Toronto who purchased a top-of-the-line Gestetner (and still the only one), that transformed her suburban styled apartment into a trufannish Xanadu, that motivated her to publish four-color 84-page behemoths that used up six sheets of lettraset every issue...had changed. It wasn't ambition any longer, but merely pride, incapable of urging her to effort, only of shaming her. The intangible that makes the difference between pride and ambition had disappeared sometime between 1975 and 1979. The difference was, of course, faith in herself.

Many things went toward undermining Victoria's faith. When she first arrived at the doors of the local club in 1974, she had been a university graduate and a chemist. She considered herself part of the technological elite and imagined some day writing professional science fiction. She had won prizes in the science fair at school and read Einstein on relativity. And she walked totally unprepared into as precocious a gang of intellectual rowdies, frustrated radicals, and unschooled geniuses as has ever been suffered in fandom. It was a blow to her self-esteem. Victoria not only didn't have prior place in the soon-to-be New Derelicts, she was initially given rather low status in the pecking order. *Sim*, in some ways, was overcompensation for that experience, and in part may explain her aversion to publishing a "local" zine.

Toronto fandom in the 1970s was volatile, egocentric, and turned upon itself like piranhas to devour weakness in its members. It wasn't fertile ground for someone who was increasingly unsure of herself. Victoria's opinions, ambitions, habits, and moment-to-moment derangements were scrutinized, dissected, and dismissed: when abruptly the Derelicts became so intense that they vanished up their

—*Taral Wayne & Victoria Vayne*

own collective asshole and imploded. The debris was scattered all over Toronto, Vancouver, Chicago, Michigan state, parts of the American Southwest, the Canadian Maritimes and California. The city came within a hair of being emptied. A few survivors crawled out of the rubble, somewhat wary of fandom after that. Victoria was shaken, but was one of the survivors because (like me) she hadn't been on ground zero when the blast occurred.

Rebuilding the world by co-editing **DNQ** with me, Victoria at first shared my enthusiasm. But we were getting what seemed like an unusually harsh press during that first year, and more than our share of bad breaks. The criticism wore on Victoria, took the fun out of the typing, mimeo, addressing, CoAs, subs and other inescapable drudgery that comes with fanac like the bill after dinner. She began letting more and more of the creative control go, as belief in the ultimate purposefulness of the zine waned.

Her last issue of **Simulacrum**, a back-breaking labor, was being held up by some self-appointed arbiters as a model of exactly what a fanzine shouldn't be. She herself, far from disagreeing, had felt control of **Sim** slipping from her hands and gaining unstoppable momentum toward becoming a sercon zine. Instead of the fun fannish fancies she read in **Mota** or **Spanish Inquisition**, and wanted for her own zine, she was getting increasingly dreary articles about science fiction with ecological themes and feminist subtexts. When she wrote to her favorite fanwriters, they politely regretted that her requests did not suit the requirements of their manuscripts at the present time... If she couldn't keep **Sim** from turning into even more of a monster, Victoria decided, at least she could kill it. And she drove home the stake with a will.

She joined FAPA and did two highly praised issues of a FAPazine. But praise comes easy in laid-back, minac-haunted FAPA, and Victoria was wary of easy egoboo for good reasons. It invites nemesis. Never a brave soul, she observed the better part of valor and dropped out.

She was also a founding member of the Women's APA, envisioned by her as a gathering of fannish-minded femmes. Then she watched in horror as it politicized and purged itself of the male voice. If anything, Victoria was one more obstacle to raised consciousness, and gladly left this apa too.

At about the same time she began talking to me about a new start, unencumbered with **Simulacrum's** double-edged reputation. She talked about it for months, night after night, street after dark lonely street, but was too cowed to blemish a stencil with her self-conscious writing. At last she did nerve herself to write to John Berry and Gregg Calkins for permission for two articles. They were old articles that she only wanted to reprint, and wouldn't trouble them to write anything new for her. They replied that they were delighted she even remembered them, and of course she could reprint the material she wanted. **Excentric** had completed the first charm.

Next she wrote to Jim Barker, who had always been generous or foolish enough with his time to contribute his cartoons to **DNQ**. Jim, profligate with his talent as ever, provided Victoria the title illustration, and the second charm was done.

She found other suitable art, and expressed interest in a drawing of mine just finished as the cover. Ever willing to expose myself to the world, I eagerly added a logo to it. Victoria even had letters from **Simulacrum** and **Non Sequitur** to start the letter column off right. The three charms were done. The spell that materializes a fanzine from thin air began to work, but then...

But then, (if I may be allowed the device of artificially sustained suspense), a Person from Porlock¹ decided to make an example of some remarks Victoria made in **Twil Ddu** about the lack of humorous fanwriting. He wrote:

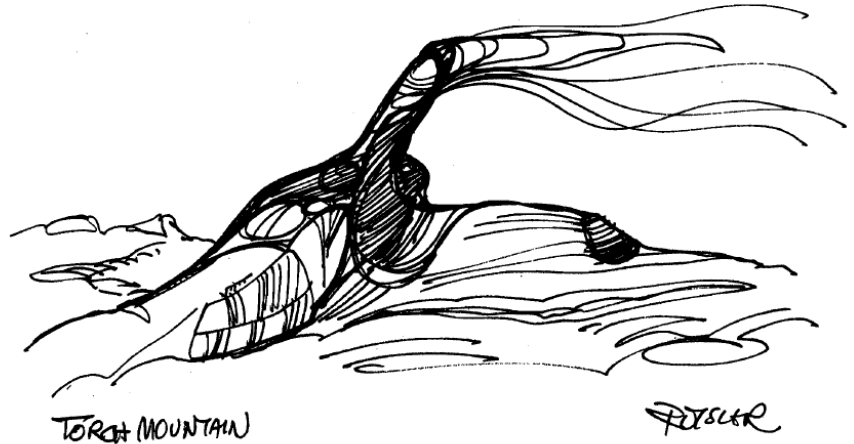
"While I'm amused at Victoria Vayne when she expends generous wordage about the lack of 'funny writing,' we're all thankful over here that she hasn't tried more than once or twice to help rectify the situation." And then the spell that was to have created **Excentric** dissolved.

In dull point of fact, he wrote those words a few months *before* Victoria planned and then abandoned **Excentric**. She talked hysterics about it, though, dwelled upon it, and despaired over it like the victim of intellectual assault and battery she felt herself to be.

There's no point in trying to pretend Victoria was hurt because her writing was criticized. The opposite was true, that she was hurt precisely because she knew her writing wasn't as good as she wanted it to be. Few in fandom were very much better, need I say? The question in my mind is: why was Victoria held up to ridicule? Was it merely an attack at the soft underbelly of Victoria's confidence? Or was the

contradiction between her words and actions too tempting to Cruel Wit? Far be it for me to answer; I've been guilty on both counts myself.

The final straw was probably nothing as specific as a gratuitous insult to her writing. Likely as not there was no final decision to kill **Excentric**, as there had been to kill **Simulacrum**. The executioner was, in Victoria's words, "Sheer unmitigated laziness." But beyond doubt delayed sentence was passed by the author of those remarks in **Twll Ddu**. We have Wit to thank for stopping Victoria's fresh start. But then, perhaps we are all thankful of that too?



Reconstructing **Excentric** was little work, and fascinating in a morbid way. Like finding lost tapes of Beatles songs never recorded and putting together an album that might have been. I found I had already-typed stencils, the letters, and most of the art. I drew new illos to fill a couple of holes, and had only to type up the few pages not stenciled. Years after the first wax was cut, I'd run **Excentric** off in some small number of copies to mail to people with long memories. Then somehow the will failed. The material lay interred in a box among other boxes, until discovered a second time. Once more I toyed with the idea of publishing the first issue of a fanzine that never existed. Once more I put it off. Time and money (and after all, it wasn't my zine) were factors in setting the stencils aside each time, then eventually in using the art for other things. In 1990 it looks certain **Excentric 1** will never be.²

In her last words, Victoria gives advice you can safely take:

"A small breeze blows from the glades of gafia which is in no way to be taken as a signal of an imminent return. (Collective sigh of relief from the peanut gallery.) The last thing I did was a single sheet way back in 1980 for an apa that had only one mailing. The 17th and last issue of **Non Sequitur** was little more than a letter substitute that I let myself be persuaded into after a lot of water had gone under the bridge. Never again...

"*What happened to me?* ...Essentially, I gafiated. There were many reasons for that, having to do with disenchantment with fan politicking and fan king-making and fan icons and other such bullshit; having to do with changing interests on my part and lack of desire to be involved in fanzines any longer; and having to do with sheer unmitigated laziness.

"*What have i been doing these past several years?* ...I got interested in computers, my old car died and I went without wheels for a while, and together with Simon Claughton I bought a house in the 'burbs. (You get quiet there, and no crowding, and more and better house for the bucks than in Toronto proper, and no asshole with a stereo living above you.) Finally, I got fed up with the job I'd held for some years as an office moron, and decided to go back to school for a certificate in computer technology, so as to have a chance at getting a good job.

"*And what lies ahead?* ...As I said, a good job. After a shitty few months in a temporary position I've found a permanent job as junior software engineer in the research and development section of a company that has never heard of 'Victoria Vayne.' I don't even have to be in Toronto; Vestronix is an hour's drive in the opposite direction from the line of honking bumper-to-bumper suckers who clog up the city every morning.

"People who still know me will assure you that I've become pretty mundane lately, and they're not too far wrong. I still read SF, but no fanzines. I watch TV with Simon, choosing from our video cassette library. I listen to music in the rec room with the fireplace. I write programs in my spare time for inventory at Simon's electronics company. And I putter around the house: Simon and I are putting up prefabricated wood panel and brick, planting trees in the backyard, and papering whatever walls we missed before.

Our basement has been completely finished, and filled with our collection of dismantled antique radios and phonographs. According to plan we will add a solarium to the back of the house next.

"These days I come into the city only to stop for chocolate sprinkles at a particular Dutch delicatessen. Even when I see old friends over dinner and a movie, I prefer to leave as soon as possible and never ever go downtown. Traffic and crowding are already beginning to make our distant corner of Mississauga unlivable. The house is beginning to be too small for the interests Simon and I have. In a few years we will sell this house and buy a larger one, even further from the creeping horror of Toronto than now.

"*Anything more to say?* ...For those of you who I knew in fandom, my old P.O. box is no more. It was the last relic of my fan past swept away with my mimeos and fanzine collection. Thus we close the books on the fannish life of Victoria Vayne. You may safely get your **Non Sequiturs** and **Simulacrum**s bound and sleep serenely, knowing that for this ghost there's no return from gafia."

—Victoria Vayne, 20 May 1985

AFTERWORD

I was sorely tempted to add *Requiescat in Pace*, "Victoria Vayne," but in point of fact Victoria is alive as you and me. Only the name has been interred. Don't search for it in the phonebook or the Internet, you'll find nothing but old history.

Looking back on this article from 2007 its rather incredible how little has changed about Victoria otherwise. She and Simon continue to live in the same two story suburban barn built in the 80's, one of those on the too narrow lots so that the garage sticks out in front like Pinocchio's nose. She doesn't work for Vestronix anymore, but does freelance jobs at home. In fact, she rarely budes from the house, finding it more congenial to plop herself in front of the computer, de-bug some code, add a chapter to one of her interminable Jane Austinesque novels, or play a grueling round of Solitaire. She overstates the case when she says she's relieved when old friends finally go home. I actually don't think she sees any old friends other than myself, and I doubt if I manage to drop in more than twice a year. The fabulous Gestetner 466 never went out in the trash, at least, but it's in rental storage. Her fanzine collection was swallowed up by mine, and mine was decimated when I sold the larger part of it a few years ago. She is a big fan of Robert Charles Wilson's, who we knew from Derelict and OSFIC days as plain Bob Wilson. But not such a big fan she has gone to see him at a reading or book signing. She still doesn't like kids or cheese, and is impatient when you talk about anything that she doesn't take an interest in. (Which sometimes seems to be damn near everything – from any movie she hasn't seen to a political development she doesn't care about.) She does take an interest in science, especially those that preach the relative unimportance of and immanent extinction of humankind. She still hates to cook, burns water, and freezes dinners a month in advance. She wears brown, in shades of greater or lesser neutrality. She looks forward to moving to a larger house before the exponentially increasing number of computers, books, CD's and DVD's bursts the present one. As well, it must be further from the overbearing influence of the big city, only a mere several miles away. She has one further goal — to live only until the personal inconvenience of the collapse of civilization becomes acute.

She has, in other words, thrown off most of the painful compromises I think she made to ingratiate herself with fandom, and become even more herself than ever before possible. Is she happy? Yes, I think Victoria is about as happy as mere mortals ever are. Every bit as happy as a clam or a hairbrush. I'm not convinced her happiness is the sort that enlarges the soul or broadens experience mind you, but then its her life to live, and living it as Victoria Vayne, Con Traveling Jiant and Publishing Legend seems to have been something of a disillusionment for her. Maybe it is a happy clam that knows its place. So R.I.P. Victoria Vayne, and *vaya con Dios*.

—Taral Wayne, 2007

¹ "Person from Porlock" – Dave Locke, see letter, *Twll Ddu* 16, page 12.

² As you might infer from this, I wrote this piece originally in 1990. I meant it as an introduction to my edition of **Excentric**. Some years later I decided to find another publisher, but damned if anyone would touch it. After a while it was put away and forgotten about until another few years went by, and it was taken out again. Still no takers. Now, seventeen years have passed and it seems someone has finally taken an interest. Plaudits to the gutsy Tim Marion, who cares not whom he offends in his fanzine! **[Editor's note: Not true, I care; I want to offend everyone!]**

MAID ON THE MOON

*a review of Nicola Cuti's MOONCHILD & OTHERS
(rare early comics collected by Walt Wentz)
reviewed by TARAL WAYNE*

Editor & Publisher, Walter J. Wentz, 1817 17th Avenue, Forest Grove OR 97116.
\$6 Spring 2007. Limited First Edition. 32 pages, 8 x 10 ½, saddle-stapled.

Back in the Age of Aquarius, when Wally Wood, Vaughn Bodé and other Giants walked the fanzine scene, there was a lesser known mythological figure. Most of his art appeared in professional venues — he worked for years with Charlton Comics and wrote for Warren horror magazines. He was an editor at DC and later worked in animation, doing backgrounds. But what Nicola Cuti will be remembered for in fandom, perhaps, is a creation that appeared in a small number of eponymous undergrounds, scattered fanzine illos, and the program books of comics conventions. Science fiction fans with long memories will remember Cuti's elfin invention — Moonchild.

Cuti (pronounced Cut-ee), seemed to like 'em cute and busty. This was well before Lolita was politically incorrect and the Flowerchild was a perfectly acceptable part of hippy counterculture. And part of fanzine culture.

The editor and publisher, Walt Wentz, is my old boss from the years I was doing illustrations for a magazine on the West Coast. Now that he's retired (and I'm out of work), it seems Walt still has publishing in his DNA. He's long been a fan of cute and busty elfin-like babes, and that makes him a natural fan of Nicola Cuti. Walt undertook the difficult task of creating a complete bibliography of Cuti's work — from *E-Man* for Charlton, to serious paintings, to Moonchild — with the ultimate ambition of publishing the whole magilla. But first on his agenda, are a couple of smaller collections of early and very rare cartoons.

This, the first, includes mainly Nicola Cuti's self-published cartoons and short stories that appeared in the three issues of *Moonchild Comics*. Also in the collection is "Pussywillow" a similar "Starbabe" that Cuti intended for more adult comics, as well as items from various convention pubs and fanzines. One from *Outworlds 26* in fact. The cover is full color and glossy. Introduction and credits by Walt.

The material is, by Walt's admission, early and therefore somewhat naïve. He plans at least a second and perhaps a third collection for more professional looking Moonchild material from a later date. Assuming, of course, that there is an audience. Apparently the first printing of fifty is going fast enough that Walt intends a second run.

I'd have to say that the main value of this collection is atmospheric. The style is purposefully simplistic and big-eyed, the stories equally simple for the most part. Moonchild is very much a child of her times. Later collections may better repay the more sophisticated and jaded buyer of the early years of the 21st century, but who would forgive himself for having volumes two and three, but not volume one?

Moonchild and Others is a fairly handsome publication, especially considering the modest price. (What independent comic doesn't cost five or six bucks these days?). It has a couple of problems. Walt's files were deliberately large, so that the original Ben Day toning would print properly. Unfortunately, the printer, like an idiot, re-screened the screens, creating unintended moiré effects on a few pages. It doesn't flatter the collection, but I didn't find it to be a spoiler either. (In many cases the original publication in the 60's underground press was no better, and often much worse.)

Moonchild and Others may not perhaps be a "must" acquisition for everyone. But any fan whose roots go back to the early days of *Odd*, *Trumpet*, *Outworlds* and other zines of the 60's — especially if that fan had one foot in comics fandom of the time — would likely find this a kindly reminder of the bellbottoms era. And those who are merely curious about the ambiance of fandom forty years ago will also find this worth a leisurely look.

—Taral Wayne

TiM's Note: This review first appeared in Joe Major's fanzine Alexiad v6#4, August 2007.

STUCK IN LA BREA TARPITS

Back in late May I spent a pleasant if hectic week in California, visiting friends and family and realizing just how much i needed the break.

I had decided to take the train, partly for the old "flashback to the 1940s movies" feeling, and also because it was considerably cheaper and less obnoxious than flying. Also, it's a lot of fun to see close-up what you cannot see from the air or the main highways — remote mountains and forests, unspoiled little streams, old Spanish missions off the tourist path, working oil fields, as well as the "track side" of all the little towns that grew up along the line back in the 1800s.

The glory days of the passenger lines are obviously long over. Despite the space and comfort of modern passenger cars, the fact that Amtrak leases track space from Union Pacific creates some little inconveniences — the UP's freight trains take precedence, so the Coast Starlighter, the last interstate passenger train left on the West Coast, spends lots of time on various backwoods sidings, waiting for loads of cattle, lumber or scrap iron to go by. If you are into the unstressed leisure of the journey (and have a good book along), this is just another of the charms of the trip.

Still, this trip was different from my last train ride down, which arrived in LA four hours late, long after the station was closed and the last connector to San Diego had departed. This time, the train actually arrived on time, and I broke the journey for a day to visit with Joshua Quagmire (creator of Cutey Bunny and a host of other cute anthropomorphic cartoon characters, see www.cuteybunny.com) and a correspondent of 25 years (but whom I had never actually met), and to get the tour around what has to be the most glitzy, grimy, wealthy, impoverished and generally gaudy, overspread and overdone city in the country.

Fortunately we limited ourselves to 22 miles of travel in the core area. It is impossible to get anywhere in LA without wasting an inordinate amount of gas.

Stuck in the Tar Pits

One of the things I most wanted to see was the La Brea Tar Pits. We were wandering around outside the ornate iron fence of the park about 9:30 at night, gawking wistfully in at the rolling, spacious lawns, dotted with trees and winding paths. The pits give off a distinct whiff of evaporating volatiles, like the smell of an asphalt roof being installed, and detectable a block away. The only tar pit visible from the sidewalk is a broad pond with oily bubbles breaking on the surface and a gigantic concrete Mama Mammoth slowly sinking into the abyss, while Papa and Baby Mammoth stand pathetically on the bank.

It seemed too late for any public park to be open, but Josh noticed that one of the gates was standing ajar, while I spotted two women walking a dog through the lamplight along one of the winding trails, so we strolled trustingly in and spent a pleasant half-hour gawking at the fenced, bubbling pools of tar, sprinkled with leaves and candy wrappers, the statues of the various odd beasts that had checked in but didn't check out, and the vast and imposing buildings housing the millions of fossils — from insects to mastodons — recovered from the pits.

About 10 o'clock we strolled back through the dusk to the gate — to find it securely chained and locked. It seemed the women and dog we had spotted were the custodians.

Strolling a bit more rapidly now, we checked the other gates — and found them locked also.

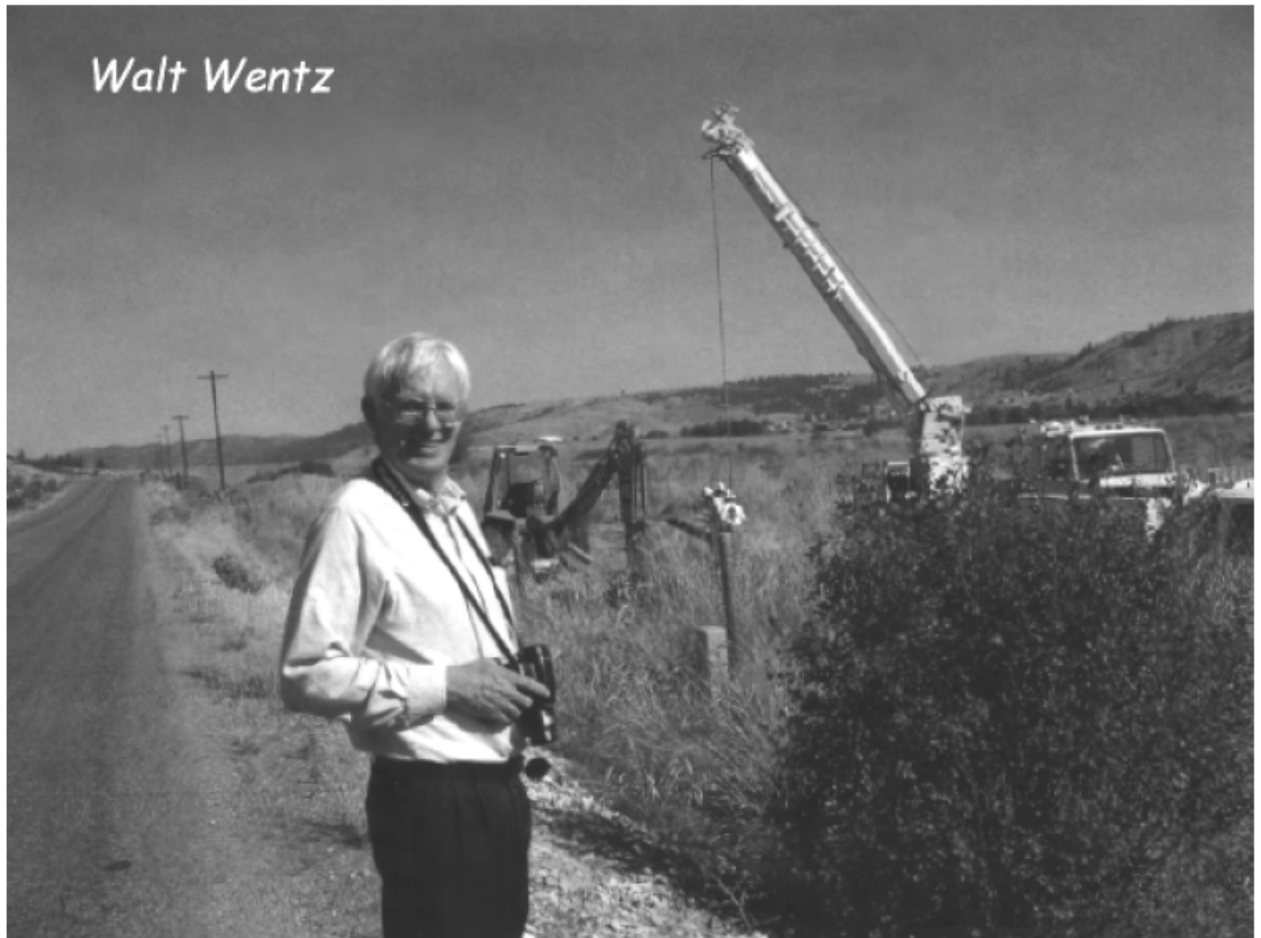
We were trapped. I began to feel akin to the Short-Faced Bear, the Dire Wolf, the Obnoxious Buzzard and the other derisively-named denizens of the tar pits.

This left us with an interesting choice. We could camp out in the park and try to sleep on the grass, trusting not to get engulfed by an undiscovered tar pit, to emerge centuries later labeled "Gullible Tourist"; or we could call a posted emergency number and trust the annoyed employee we summoned wouldn't have us arrested for trespassing; or we could cling pathetically to the iron bars of the fence and call out to passersby for help (but in paranoid, nighttime LA, that approach seemed unlikely to produce trust and benevolence in strangers, and besides there wasn't a human being in sight); or we could just keep wandering around in the dark in hopes of finding some unlocked bolt-hole. We didn't — but again, in LA, any unlocked exit seemed unlikely.

Eventually we did see an actual human being — a security guard sitting in the vestibule of the adjacent Museum of Fine Arts, which could be approached by pushing through some shrubbery and stumbling down an landscaped slope. Calling out to avoid surprising him — he was probably armed — we finally came puffing up a concrete ramp to reach him.

He was a lean and weathered Oriental, and seemed singularly unimpressed at seeing an aged Andy Warhol and a decrepit Michael Moore shambling out of the dark toward him. With a tart comment about closing hours (and an unspoken footnote about stupid tourists), he waved us toward an unlocked gate, and we hurried gratefully back into the jungle of LA sidewalks.

After a quick tour of cheap motels (which were not cheap), I ended up in a Comfort Inn, where I was graciously assigned the "Sucker Suite," immediately adjacent to the main street and its roaring truck traffic, but slept soundly nonetheless.



Next morning Quag and I got together to tour the Tar Pits again — in daylight this time — also the impressive museum of fossils, the incredible collection of the adjacent art museum, and — a pilgrimage of deepest significance — the Rocky and Bullwinkle statue on Sunset Boulevard, located at the old Jay Ward cartoon studio.

We entered a fenced courtyard and were meandering around the towering Fiberglas icon to American culture when a lady popped out of the old cartoon studio — nowadays a posh hotel for the pampered dogs of Beverly Hills — and told us that our uncouth presence was disturbing her aristocratic canine guests, who were apparently barking their fool heads off, just like the uncultured and plebeian mutts of mere ordinary Americans. So, with a final glance at the object of our pilgrimage — somebody had kept it freshly painted, anyway — we departed, traveling on to Little Tokyo to poke around the shops and malls, where I found a Japanese comic I wanted, and so back to LA's magnificent Union Station, where I caught the commuter link to San Diego.

But that's another story.

The Moonchild/Cuti Project

In early June, Nicola Cuti came to Portland to visit his daughter, Jaymee, and an old cohort/publisher, William DuBay, so I got together with them to tour the sights of downtown Portland. We strolled and gawked and ate in what has to be Oregon's nicest cities for those activities.

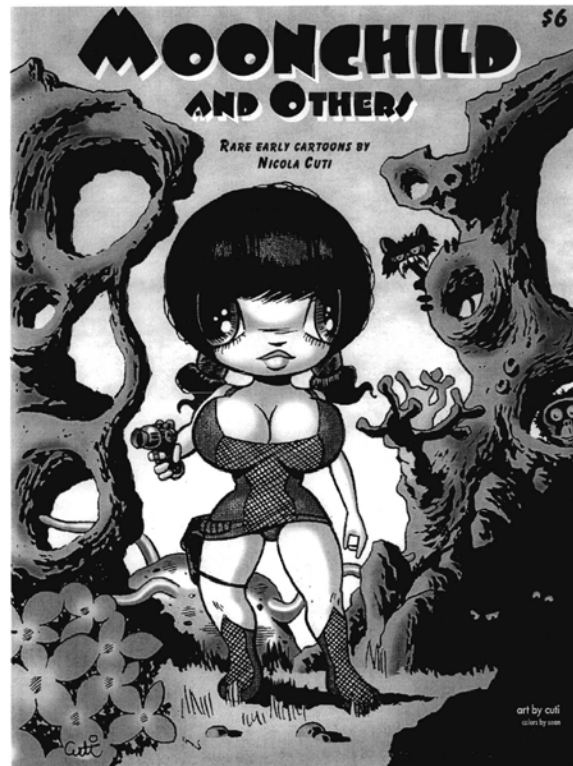
I had long been a devotee to Cuti's early creation, Moonchild, a buxom space pixie who first appeared way back in the golden age of the Underground Comix, the late 1960s. I had sent Nick a copy of my anthology of his rarest early comics, **Moonchild and Others**. He had heartily approved of it, but had fought shy of the idea of finishing up three unpublished Moonie stories for a sequel. I kept at him, however, until finally, sitting in a little restaurant on the east side of the river, he agreed to finish drawing those three stories, and to let me print them.

Whoopie!

I planned a series of three books — an improved and corrected second printing of **Moonchild and Others** (only a few numbered copies of the limited first printing remain unsold); a second book containing previously unpublished art and three very rare stories from a 1990 comic that sank without a trace due to the collapse of the Underground market; and a third Moonchild book containing those previously-unfinished stories and some late Moonchild art that will require an R- or perhaps an X-rating.

Those projects are progressing slowly, but progressing — along with another separate project that has occupied me the past six years, a mammoth compendium of all Cuti's published work, in comics, comic story scripts, TV and movie and radio shows, editing and now moviemaking — Nick has remained a very busy guy, an indexer's nightmare. That giant project is now complete, except for the ordeals of making a layout, inserting illustrations and creating an index.

Small wonder I rush off to build things, rather than hunching over the computer to all hours.



—Walter Wentz

TiM's Note: I think anyone who goes wandering around in the dark at night near LaBrea Tarpits with someone who insists on calling himself "Quagmire" is asking for trouble. I'm glad Walt survived the experience to write about it so entertainingly!

THE CELTIC KABALIST

Note to the Reader

The unorthodox esoteric lore in this essay of apparently questionable provenance was communicated to the author by Cohen the Cabalist (née Barbarian), the fabled Jewish hero who was converted to peaceful ways by Reb Hymie Mendoza, an itinerant Sephardic mystic with a mail order rabbinical degree known to perform marriages of convenience and cut-rate circumcisions (ouch!). Reb Hymie convinced Cohen to hang up his sword (actually he conned him into trading it for a stack of musty *zohars*). (Italics indicate reference to the Celtic Kabalistic glossary at the end of the article.) Anyhow, Reb Hymie is reputed to be one of the *lahmed vovniks* or one of the 36 hidden righteous ones on whom the continued existence of the world depends. (By the way, another one of the hidden ones is Moshe Platznik, a gefilte fisherman who lives at 138 *Lochenkop* Blvd. in beautiful, downtown Brownsville.) While Cohen the Cabalist no longer hews his foes, he refused to give up his *magel* (a mace made with rock-hard day old bagels) and will occasionally *klop* annoying *schnorrers* who disturb his *puppik* gazing.

First Steeleye

I can still remember the first time I heard Steeleye Span. It was on Jim Freund's WBAI science fiction extravaganza, *Hour of the Wolf*, and the song was "Allison Gross." (Jim still plays Steeleye Span some 30 years later using their "Sails of Silver" for his outro.) My attention was immediately riveted. The electrified, jangly guitar, the rock arrangement, the virtuoso musicianship, Maddy Prior's gorgeous voice and the fantasy element (a cautionary tale about unwanted romantic attention from a less than pretty but powerful witch) — all of these elements were irresistible to a fantasy and rock enthusiast. It was like an ice cream sundae, with chocolate syrup and an elfin cherry on top.

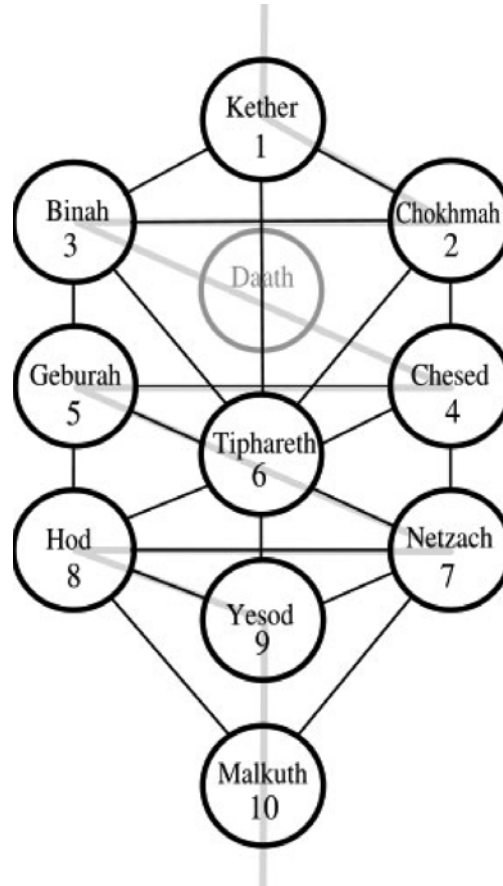
A Celtic Kabala – Sounds Crazy Doesn't it?

I remember back in yeshiva when some student uncovered a scrap of paper with arcane Hebrew writing. The paper first went to the rabbi conducting the class. He mused over it and then passed it to a gnomish little man who was the "Rosh" or head of the yeshiva. The Rosh ha Yeshiva pronounced the scrap "Kabala" and said it should be ritually buried. (Since Hebrew writing is the living logos, it possesses the power to confer life and like the golem of Prague, who was animated by the holy tetragrammaton or name of god — no lightning storm necessary — the books were considered living beings. When they outlived their use they were to be given a proper burial.) That was the first time I heard the word Kabala.

The Tree of Life is probably the best known symbol associated with kabala. It is reminiscent of the Norse Yggdrasil or world tree (a tip of the hat to TiM for suggesting this association). Hanging from the tree of life are 10 sephiroth or spheres or worlds (the Yggdrasil has 9) and 22 paths which are sometimes associated with the 22 major trumps of the tarot and the 22 letters of the Hebrew alphabet. The image is of a cosmic tree on which many worlds hang (like fruit) and between which there are trunks or interconnecting paths.

—JEFF KLEINBAARD

Almost twenty years ago I discovered a book by R.J. Stewart called *THE UNDERWORLD INITIATION*. Stewart claimed that many of the old ballads — such as Thomas the Rhymer and Tam Lin — were actually remnants of a Celtic wisdom tradition. Furthermore, he claimed that the Kabbalistic Tree of Life (and a number of variants) could be used to interpret them. He wasn't alone. Some ten years later I discovered a collection of booklets called "Esoteric Irish Folk Tales" in which J.A. Johnson was using the same Tree of Life to interpret tales with titles like "Baranor, Son of a King in Erin, and the Daughter of King Under the Wave."



Stewart's and Johnson's use of the Tree of Life intrigued me. I later learned to distinguish between traditional Jewish kabala and hermetic kabala. The hermetic kabala was (I believe) disseminated by the turn-of-the-century English occult society, the Golden Dawn, whose members included William Butler Yeats, Aleister Crowley, and Arthur Machen among others. It influences western occult societies and pagan groups to this day. While the rabbis may differ with this newer version of the Kabala over certain points, I suspect it was this hermetic version that reached the mid-70's Celtic revival and influenced these two authors.

I personally found Stewart difficult to follow. I often wished that he would explain his explanations. (I am still laboring over them.) Johnson's books — after a preliminary introduction to the Tree of Life — often do little to connect it to the Irish folk tales that followed. Johnson used a set of four interlocking tree diagrams (called Jacob's Ladder) which corresponds to a journey-like ascent through different planes of existence. The incidents in the folk tales (involving revolving castles, magically locked doorways, and other obstacles — resembling nothing so much as an archaic, Irish super-Mario-world adventure) often seem weakly related to the Kabbalistic spheres and paths. My initial excitement petered out into befuddlement. Is there anything we can really learn from this *farschluggenna* diagram? (No fair asking Madonna or the Cabala Center.)

Well, I think that we must get over the idea that it means anything and look at it as a thought-jogger or idea generator. We must instill in ourselves the idea that this diagram can be interpreted and reveal secrets (whether true or not) and proceed accordingly. It is an experiment in credulity ("suspension of disbelief" to you scientifiction fans) and the only criterion for success is whether it generates amusing and/or interesting ideas — i.e., Ye shall know them by their works.

1. If our mundane world corresponds to "malkuth" (the sphere on the very bottom of the diagram), we notice that there are nine other such worlds. So the first idea is that there are other worlds and/or spheres and/or planes of consciousness.
2. There are a bunch of interconnecting paths by which we can get from one world to another.
3. There are three vertical paths: a left, a right, and a middle. If the paths correspond to choices in life, then this is already an improvement over morality-based religions and gives us a third option beyond good and evil. In Thomas the Rhymer, they are called the braid road and the narrow road. The tree of life calls them the pillar of mercy (the vertical column created by Sephiroth 2, 4 and 7) and the pillar of severity (the column created by Sephiroth 3, 5 and 8). In between is the middle pillar of balance or equilibrium (1, 6, 9, and 10). In the ballad it is called "the road to fair Elfland."

In addition to the Tree of Life I will also examine the ballads in the light of Joseph Campbell's monomyth diagram (more on this later).

Rivendell in the East Village

A good source book for UFO-like encounters with "the gentry" or "good people" as the elder Irish called them is *THE FAERIE FAITH IN CELTIC COUNTRIES*, written in 1911 by a young Evans-Wentz, some 15 years before he released his epochal translation of *THE TIBETAN BOOK OF THE DEAD*. The book was recommended by Eileen Campbell Gordon, the proprietress of "Rivendell," an East Village shop of Celtiana around which a little coterie of elf-lovers gathered in the East Village of 20 years ago. Among them was Hrana Janto, a talented artist, who later went on to illustrate the Gawain and the Green Knight and Isis/Osiris portions of Joseph Campbell's PBS interviews with Bill Moyers — "The Power of Myth."

Another great book is Lowry C. Wimberly's *FOLKLORE IN THE ENGLISH AND SCOTTISH BALLADS*, which I discovered while working at the Strand. The Strand is billed as 8 Miles of Used Books and is a real Dickensian workhouse of labyrinthine dimensions with Gormenghastly, in-grown, supervisors who have been sitting on their moss-covered stools for the past 40 years and now have toad-stools growing up from between their toes.

Thomas the Rhymer

Thomas the Rhymer became one of Steeleye Span's signature songs and opens their sixth album called, appropriately enough, *NOW WE ARE SIX*. Thomas, also called "True Thomas" because he possessed a tongue that could not lie, was a historical character who lived in the 13th century at Erceldoune and renowned as a soothsayer. He was purportedly gifted with his powers of prophecy by the Queen of Faerie.

The song opens with Thomas laying on Huntlie (actually we "lay" objects down but we ourselves "lie down" — but how could True Thomas lie?) where he "beheld a lady gay, a lady that was brisk and bold come riding across the fernie brae." In other versions of the song she comes riding down the Eildon tree. Of course, it makes no sense that one can ride a horse down a tree unless the tree is a magical or cosmic tree. The Yggdrasil comes to mind as well as the Tree of Life both of which have channels for passage between worlds. Michael Harner, who was both trained as an anthropologist and a shaman mentions in his book *THE WAY OF THE SHAMAN* that portals into the shamanic realm are sometimes natural places such as caves or lakes. Mircea Eliade in his book *SHAMANISM* also discusses the world tree in Siberian Shamanism which "connects the three cosmic regions...its branches touch the sky and its roots go down to the underworld" (270).

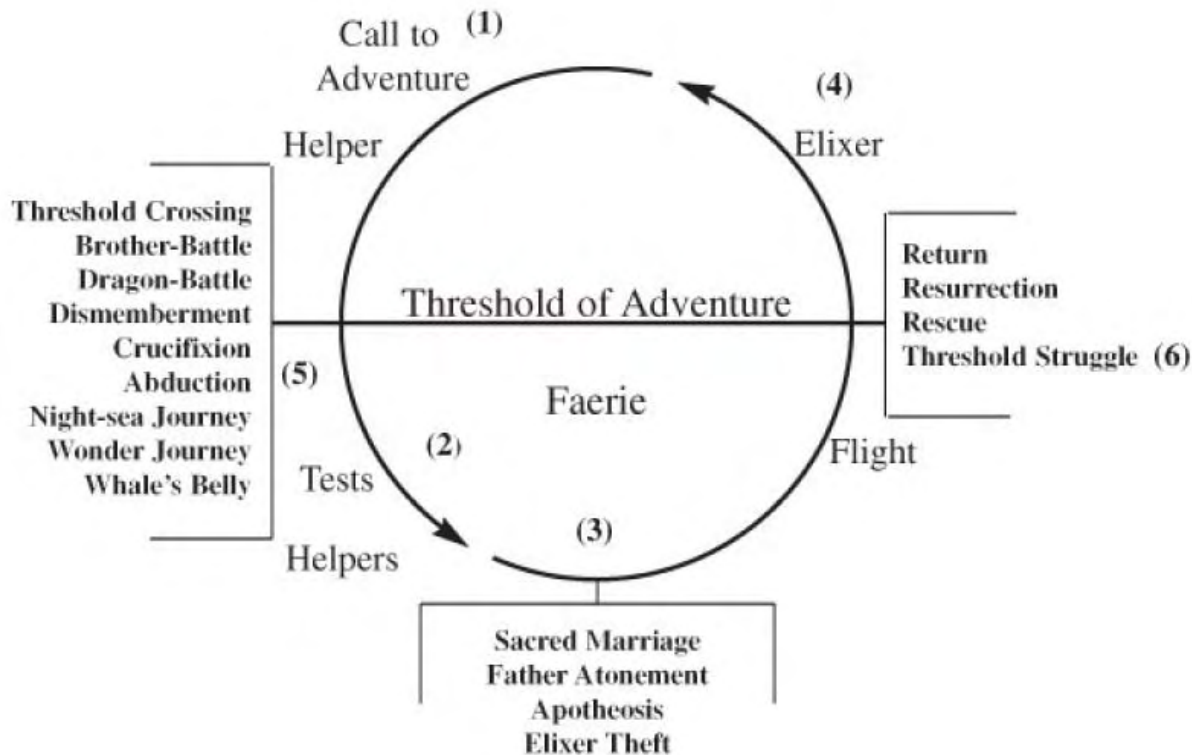
Yoni Seeks Lingam or 59 to you

"Her skirt was of the grass green silk, her mantle of the Velvet Fine. At every lock of her horse's mane hung fifty silver bells and nine."

I couldn't resist looking up the Hebrew numerological equivalent to the number 59 in Aleister Crowley's kabalistic concordance 777 (Hebrew letters also serve a numbers, so a number will often translate into a word.) 777 does not give the Hebrew word for 59 but does say that it signifies the *yoní* seeking the *lingam*. "Yoni" and "Lingam" are sanskrit for vagina and phallus, respectively. The connotations are not just sexual but religious as well. (Unlike their Judeo-Christian-Moslem counterparts, Hindu gods and goddesses can enjoy cosmic copulation which can birth universes.) From the numerological view it would appear that the Queen of Faerie had designs on Thomas. (Using a number to denote a relational idea is also illustrated by the better known "69.")

Threshold Crossing into Faerie and Night-Sea Journey

At this point we are at what Joseph Campbell in his *HERO WITH A 1,000 FACES* calls the "Call to Adventure" (1 – numbers refer to monomyth diagram). It is Alice chasing rabbits or Luke Skywalker getting Princess Leia's distress call from C3P0. According to Campbell, after the hero accepts the call, he travels a road of trials. Campbell introduces the idea of the monomyth (a term derived from *FINNEGANS WAKE*) — a single mythic form with recurring features with which we can map all world myths past and present. The idea was widely appealing and has been used to interpret *STAR WARS* (Lucas admitted to Campbell's influence), *THE MATRIX*, the *Odyssey* and more (see *MonoMyth.org*).



To reduce the monomyth pattern to a few simple events:

(1) Somebody comes along or something happens to knock you out of your rut. (2) They lead you to someplace weird or cool (or weird *and* cool). (3) It's rough getting there but finally (sometimes with special help) you triumph over various obstacles and experience the most far-out thing imaginable. (4) You have an easy passage back or if you stole something (like fire) you run as fast as you can and after out-racing all the fiends of hell you get home with your really cool thing which you (if you're nice about it and not damned by the gods) share with all your friends and acquire the reputation of being an especially cool dude.

(See Note 5, at the end, for the monomyth as applied to "My Trip to Orlando Disney World.")

On accepting the Faerie Queen's invitation she and Thomas begin their Night Sea Journey (2).

*For forty days and forty nights, they rode through red blood to the knee;
And they saw neither sun nor moon, but heard the roaring of the sea.
And they rode on and further on, further and swifter than the wind;
Until they came to a desert wide, and living land was left behind.*

Middle Pillar, Sacred Marriage and Boon

Thomas is then granted a vision of the road to Elfland which prefigures the Sacred Marriage (3):

*"Don't you see yon narrow, narrow road, so thick beset with thorns and briars?
That is the road to righteousness, though after it but few inquire."
"Don't you see yon broad, broad road, lying lies across the lily leaven?
That is the road to wickedness, though some call it the road to heaven."
"Don't you see yon bonnie, bonnie road, lying across the ferny brae?
That is the road to fair Elfland, where you and I this night must go."*

I am taking some liberties here. The third road corresponds to the middle pillar of the Tree of life which is poised between the Pillar of Mercy (the broad road) and the Pillar of Severity (the narrow road). It is the path of balance. On the tree of life the path from the highest human sphere (Tiphereth) to the Crown of Creation (Kether) runs across a trackless abyss (you might call it faerie) and is governed by the tarot card called "The High Priestess" (read, the Queen of Elfland as initiatrix).

I am told that in Alan Moore's *Promethea*, which was influenced by the Tree of Life, a female version of Aleister Crowley crosses the abyss riding a camel. This makes sense if you note that the Hebrew letter

attribution for this path is the third in alphabet (alef bais) and is "gimmel" which also stands for "camel." The sephiroths also appear as stops on the London underground, with the trains representing the "paths." Someday I've got to read this comic.

Since the middle pillar can be viewed as a union of the two opposites, I am suggesting that it also leads to the bridal chamber of faerie where Thomas consummates the promise of 59 with the Queen of Elfland. (Well, I told you I was going to take some liberties here). Thomas is sworn to silence during his seven years in faerie but rearrives (a wake word) in Middle Earth (our world) with a boon — his golden tongue and power of vision (4).

First Fairport and Tam Lin

While Thomas the Rhymer is about going out to faerie under benevolent patronage, Tam Lin concerns the problems of getting back with your ass intact. I was living in Palo Alto (circa 1976) and making an abortive attempt at my psychology master's degree when I first heard Fairport Convention's "Tam Lin." Having spent a year or so listening to Steeleye Span's electrified balladry, my inner compass immediately aligned to Sandy Denny's haunting and powerful voice.

LEIGE AND LIEF was released in 1969 to great acclaim. Until then the band had turned to the American West coast for inspiration and had been dubbed the "British Jefferson Airplane." Following a van accident in which one member died and many were injured, they retired to a house in the country where they incubated the new album. It was almost as if this close encounter with the reaper caused them to reexamine their own roots and give birth to something both timely and original. The album set the pattern for electrified balladry for many bands to follow. It was a veritable Sgt. Pepper of folk rock.

Along with Sandy Denny on vocals, it also featured Richard Thompson on guitar and Ashley Hutchings on bass guitar. After the flower bloomed and dispersed its sonic seeds these three principals scattered. Sandy Denny was not only a great singer, but also a talented songwriter, and later penned such memorable tunes as "John the Gun" and "Late November" before dying a few years later from a head injury after falling down a staircase. Richard Thompson's virtuoso guitar work can still be heard today. Ashley Hutchings went on to found (along with Tim Hart and Maddy Prior) Steeleye Span.

Abduction (5)

Tam Lin and Thomas the Rhymer compliment each other nicely. While Thomas the Rhymer plies us with details about the trip out (40 days and 40 nights they rode through red blood up to their knees — considering they were on horseback that blood river must have been pretty high — followed by the vision of the three roads) — the song says little about return. All we know is that at the end of 7 years, Thomas pops back into our world with a magical tongue and the powers of prophecy.

Tam Lin is equally sparing about the trip out — i.e. "the queen of faeries caught me when from my horse I fell" (threshold crossing via Abduction in Campbell's scheme) — but chiefly concerns the trials of return. (Horse can also mean the body or the physical vehicle that transports our consciousness so perhaps Tam Lin had fallen out of his body into a kind of swoon.) Tam Lin is in a decaying orbit and at the end of 7 years (seven once again) — "the faeries pay a tithe to hell and me so fair and full of flesh, I fear it be myself."

Janet must intercept Tam Lin during Halloween or the Celtic new year Samhain, which is when the veil between the realms of the living and dead is thinnest. She must do so at a special place — Miles Cross. The crossroad is also a place where two realms intersect.

Threshold Struggle (6)

*But tonight is Hallowe'en and the faery folk ride.
Those that would their true love win at Miles Cross they must bide.
So first let past the horses black and then let past the brown.
Quickly run to the white steed and pull the rider down
For I'll ride on the white steed, the nearest to the town.
For I was an earthly knight, they give me that renown*

Then she must endure Tam Lin's transformations in order to guide his consciousness back to earth. Tam Lin's transformations are reminiscent of the changes that the human embryo undergoes in the



art by FRANK MIKLIS — "Galacto-Celtic Queen"

womb while it repeats a condensed version of the human evolutionary journey. We all have gills and a tail at some point while in the womb and Tam Lin is amphibian, reptile, and non-human mammal during his transformations. If Janet loses her courage, Tam Lin might be caught in one of these pre-human forms and be lost to her and perhaps even destroy her. (Note 4)

*Oh, they will turn me in your arms to a newt or a snake
But hold me tight and fear not, I am your baby's father
And they will turn me in your arms into a lion bold
But hold me tight and fear not and you will love your child
And they will turn me in your arms into a naked knight
But cloak me in your mantle and keep me out of sight"*

In the middle of the night, at a cross-roads, during Samhain, the two world's are so close they are practically *nudging* each other. The bridle ring at midnight announces an event, a passing though the veil and a rebirth.

*In the middle of the night she heard the bridle ring
She heeded what he did say and young Tam Lin did win.*

The faerie queen is pissed but accepts her loss:

*"Oh, had I known, Tam Lin," she said, "what this night I did see
I have looked him in the eyes and turned him to a tree."*

Who is being born?

The following interesting interpretation comes from a website devoted to Tam Lin — <http://www.tamlin.org/oddities2.html#born>. The Tibetans say their teachings have an outer, an inner, and a secret aspect. I would suggest that outer interpretation of Tam Lin is the mundane one. Janet was impregnated by one of her father's knights and is protecting his identity by the *mishagas bubbe meisa* that she got *shtupped* by an elf. The inner level is taking the song at it's word. Tam Lin was abducted and Janet (a kind of superwoman who defies her father, Tam Lin, and the queen of faeries) rescues her man by pulling him through a gateway (like the little girl in the movie *POLTERGEIST* or the *Twilight Zone* which may have inspired it "Little Girl Lost" (Season 3, Episode 91). The inner teaching is that Tam Lin is the child who is born. From the website:

In almost every version of Tam Lin, Janet is explicitly stated as being pregnant at the time of her rescue of Tam Lin. It does not appear to be enough that she is brave, or that she loves him, but that she must also be with child. The transformation he goes through are varied and strange, but most end with Tam Lin in her arms, naked, perhaps after a baptism, at least symbolically reborn. Most versions also instruct her to cover him in her mantle, and while this is traditionally a sign of protection, it can also be seen as a swaddling of sorts. At least one version has Tam Lin completing his transformations by passing through Janet's dress and coming out at the lower hem. One visitor to this site has compared the last transformation into a burning object to the sensation experienced by a woman when a baby's head passes through the vagina. A few authors have suggested that Tam Lin is not so much being rescued by Janet as being born to her. Is the impregnation of Janet by Tam Lin the creation of a new body for him to inhabit? Is she possibly struggling through a birth as much as a trial? Is his rebirth more than simply symbolic?

The Unseen World

According to Evans-Wentz:

....there seems never to have been an uncivilized tribe or race, or nation of civilized men who have not had some form of belief in an unseen world, peopled by unseen beings. In religions, mythologies, and the Fairy-Faith, too, we behold the attempts which have been made by different peoples in different ages to explain in terms of human experience this unseen world, its inhabitants, its laws, and man's relation to it. The Ancients called its inhabitants gods, genii, daemons, and shades; Christianity knows them as angels, saints, demons, and souls of the dead; to uncivilized tribes they are gods, demons, and spirits of ancestors; and the Celts think of them as gods, and as fairies of many kinds.

Or as Woody Allen says:

"There is no question there is an unseen world; the question is, how far is it from Midtown, and how late is it open?"

Glossary

Bubbe Meise — grandmother story — as in "old wives tale."

Farschluggenna or *farshlugginer* — crazy and mixed up.

glatt (kosher) — Signifies that a food has been approved under the strictest Jewish dietary laws.

kosher — those foods that conform to Jewish dietary law. The word can also signify that a non-food item is genuine — i.e., "the real thing."

Klop — to hit — as in to "klop en kop."

Kop — head.

Lamed Vovnik — "Lamed" and "vov" are Hebrew letters which correspond, respectively, to the numbers 30 and 6. Together they make 36. The suffix "nik" signifies one who is or is associated with e.g. beatnik or kibbutznik. A lamed vovnik is one of the 36 hidden righteous ones on whom the continued existence of the world depends. They are the secret pillars. Typically they pursue



JEFF KLEINBARD as *Cohen the Barbarian* at the 1974 Discon masquerade — the original and only glatt kosher, Jewish barbarian (approved by the rabbinical council of Hypergalacia). All other versions are patently treif.

humble livelihoods and could, for instance, be a shoe maker or a tailor; like a SMOF without the arrogance. You never know whom you might be dealing with so part of the idea is to treat everyone with respect.



Lingam/Yoni — Sanskrit for phallus and vagina. Multileveled symbol with both sexual and mystical connotations.

Lochenkop — hole in the head.

Shtup — euphemism for sexual intercourse — as in "screw."

Magel — A mace made with rock-hard bagels. The weapon of choice for Cohen the Barbarian. Also has sexual/mystical significance (see Lingam/Yoni).

Mishegas — craziness — as in bothersome nuttiness — "stop with the mishegas already!"

Nudging — ("u" is pronounced like the vowel sound in "wood.") Not only to push against but to be bothersome and pushy — e.g. "stop nudging me already!"

Puppik — belly button.

Schnorrer — moocher or freeloader; Groucho in Animal Crackers sings: "My name is Captain Spaulding, the African Explorer. Did someone call me schnorrer?"

treif (pronounced "trayf") — Any food not kosher is treif. The equivalent of putting a minus sign in front of the word kosher or "un-kosher".

Zohar — (a.k.a. "The Book of Splendor") — A 13th century work, written by Moses de Leon, which has become the canonical text of Kabala.

Notes:

1. Thumpermonkey's Tam Lin — wonderful version of Tam Lin. Reminiscent of Fairport Convention's version but with just enough changes to make this timeless ballad exciting again:

http://www.thumpermonkey.com/mp3/Tam_Lin.mp3

2. Tam Lin Web: One-stop shopping for all things Tam Lin — www.tam-lin.org/.

No corresponding website for Thomas the Rhymer but there is Wikipedia:

en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thomas_the_Rhymer

3. The location of Tam Lin is Carterhaugh which, according to Wikipedia (you can trust Wikipedia, can't you?), "is a wood near Selkirk in the border region of Scotland." It is also the site for "The Wee Wee Man" (Childe Ballad: 36, sung by Steeleye Span on PARCEL OF ROGUES). This ballad describes a close encounter of the faerie kind with a diminutive but atomically strong fellow who invites the hapless (or perhaps lucky) wanderer to a wild party in which, "There were pipers playing on every stair, and ladies dancing in the glistening green", that takes place in the Hall of the Mountain King (or perhaps inside a hollow acorn shell).

4. Like Janet, the drummer in KING STORK must endure a similarly horrific transformation ordeal as he clutches the evil princess, his bride to be, who becomes in turn a giant cat, a ravening wolf, and a writhing serpent before returning to a newly purified human form.

5. Let's try the monomyth on for size with "My Trip to Orlando Disney World" —

While shopping for cheap, imitation, made-in-China, Mickey Mouse watches on Main Street U.S.A., you notice a worker dressed as Goofy succumbs to the prostrating Florida heat, panics, pull off his

dog head, and throws up all over you. (Stage 1 — The Call to Adventure.) The surveillance cameras above the Main Street sign record the incident and a team of Disney security people intercept you and (to avoid any embarrassing damage to the trademarked Disney image of "wholesome family fun"), you are whisked down a secret elevator hidden in a gazebo (Stage 2 — Threshold Crossing). Goofy is taken to the Epcot Soylent Recycling Center and quietly disposed of.

You are cleaned up, offered profuse apologies, and asked to sign a statement releasing the Disney Corporation from any damage claims. The statement also includes biometric thumbprint identification and an iris scan (DNA sample is optional). While you are reading the release form your guide is distracted by the announcement that a child is being mauled by a mechanical alligator on the Jungle Cruise. You are left alone.

The door opens and a rogue simulacra of Annette Funicello, who has escaped from the robot lab, signals for you to be silent and follow her through a dizzying maze of underground corridors (Stage 3 — Night Sea Journey and Helper). You finally reach a corkscrew stairway which leads up to the highest parapet of the Enchanted Castle. You open the tower door and find a room which is bathed in a cool, blue light. There you see a transparent casket with smoke-like condensation pouring off the sides. It contains Walt Disney's cryogenically preserved body. Beneath Walt's head is a box which contains rare Disney pornography that includes a nude Tinkerbell centerfold and photos of Captain Hook's pirates buggering the Lost Boys. (Stage 4 — Transcendental Vision).

You hear heavy boot-steps coming up the spiral staircase. To your left you notice a rocket-pack left casually laying on a table. You strap it on and make your escape. You are pursued by a fleet of GPS-guided, laser equipped Tinkerbell drones but you pass over the Monkey Jungle (where secret, recombinant DNA experiments have produced a tribe of flying monkeys). The monkeys rise up from the jungle like a swarm of angry hornets and do fierce and bloody battle with the Tinkerbell drones.

During the mêlée you escape with your rare collection of Disney pornography but never tell anybody about it for fear of the Disney people. You do, however, allow yourself to indulge in soft chuckles, quiet smirks, knowing looks, and a mysterious air of superiority. People think you are weird. (Stage 5 — Return with the Boon).



Actual photo!

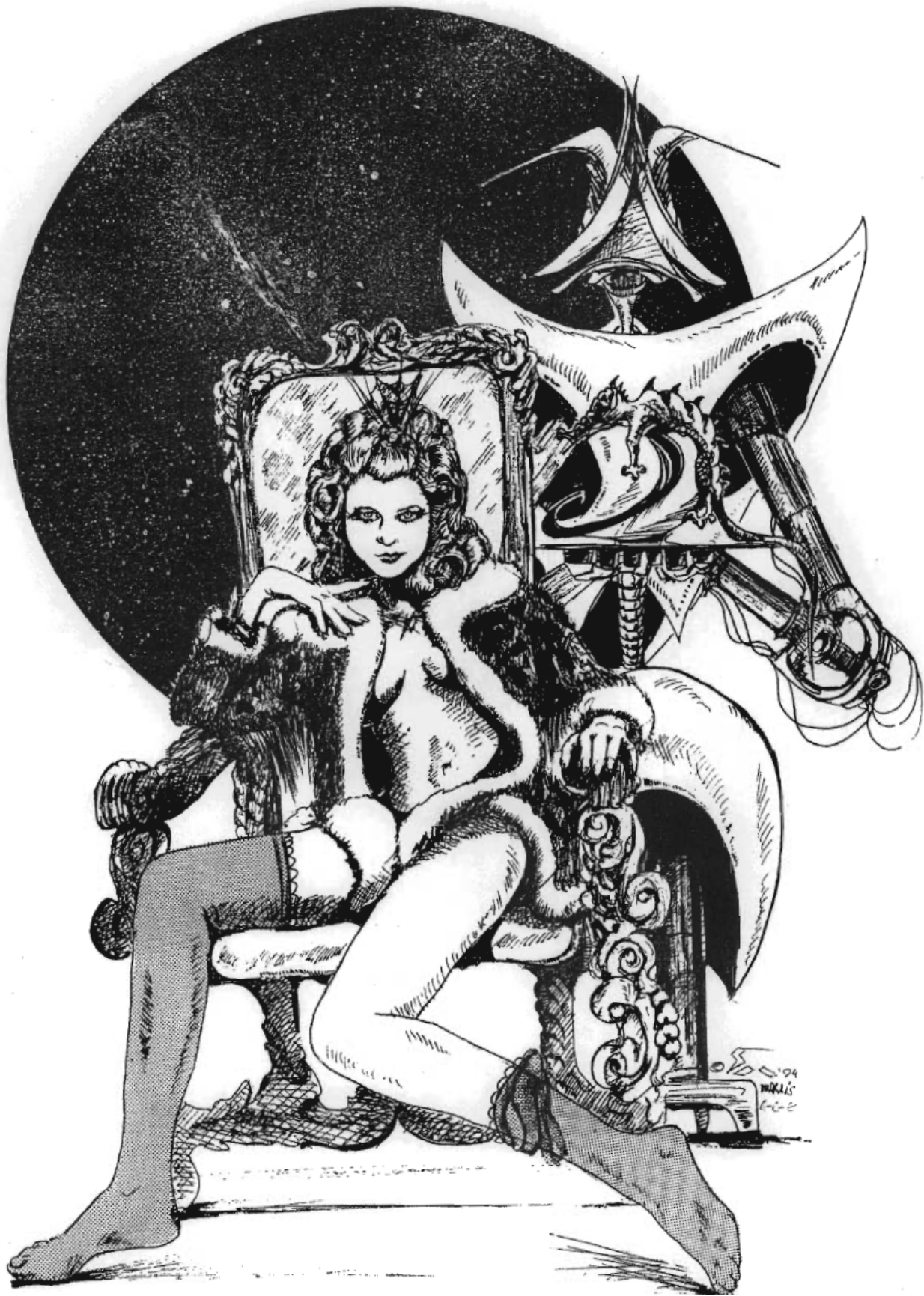
6. Actual source of jetpack photo is on Paleofuture website:

<http://www.paleofuture.com/2008/02/disneyland-jetpack-1966.html>

"The shot from a Disneyland TV program aired as "Disneyland Around the Seasons" on December 18, 1966. The episode contained this great clip of a man wearing a jetpack (or rocketbelt), flying around Disneyland. The entire program can be found on the DVD, DISNEYLAND: SECRETS, STORIES & MAGIC." (Also the exact date of my 15th birthday.)

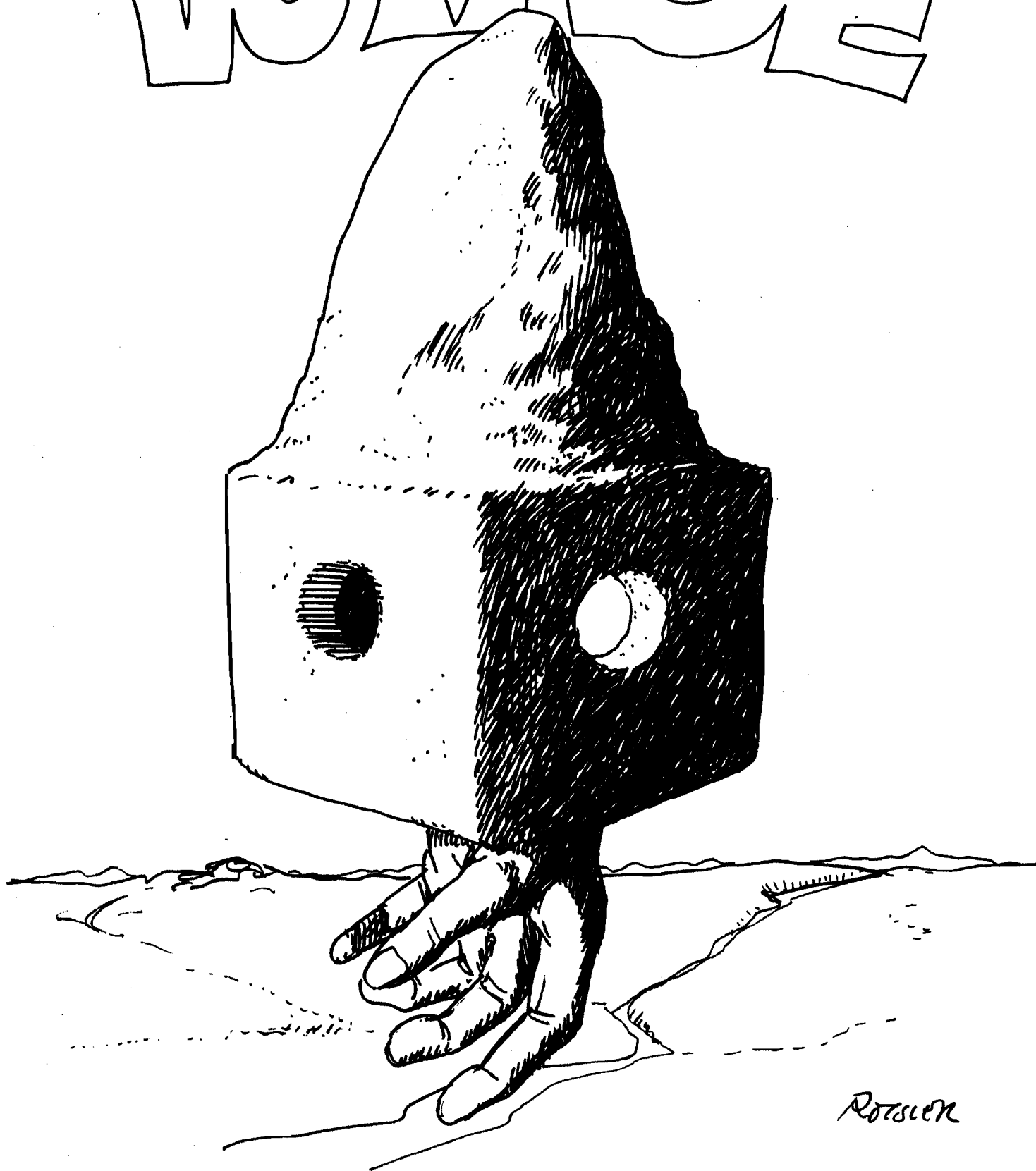
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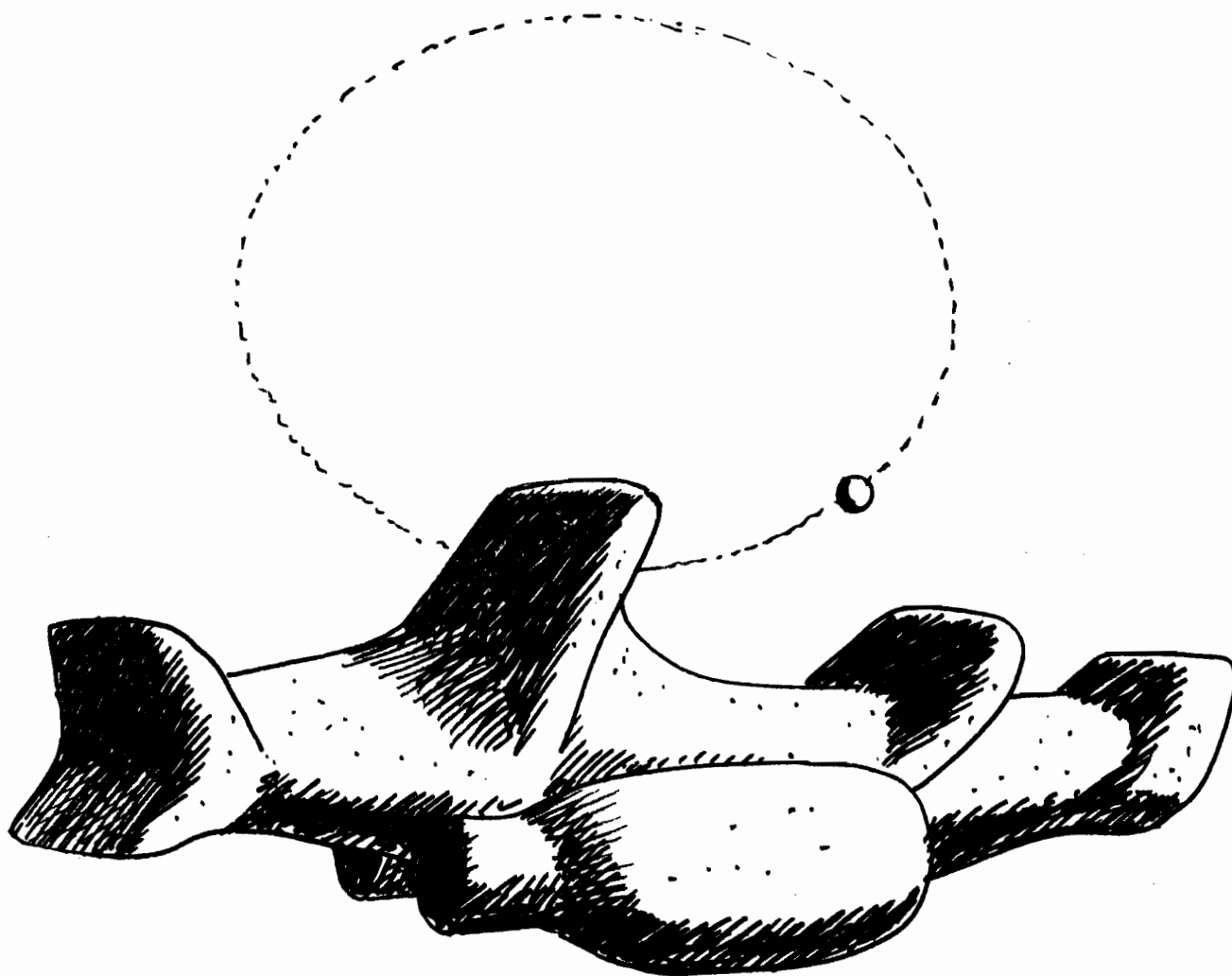


full page art by FRANZ MIKLIS — "Galacto-Celtic Empress"

VOYAGE



Rossen



ANCIENT SHIP

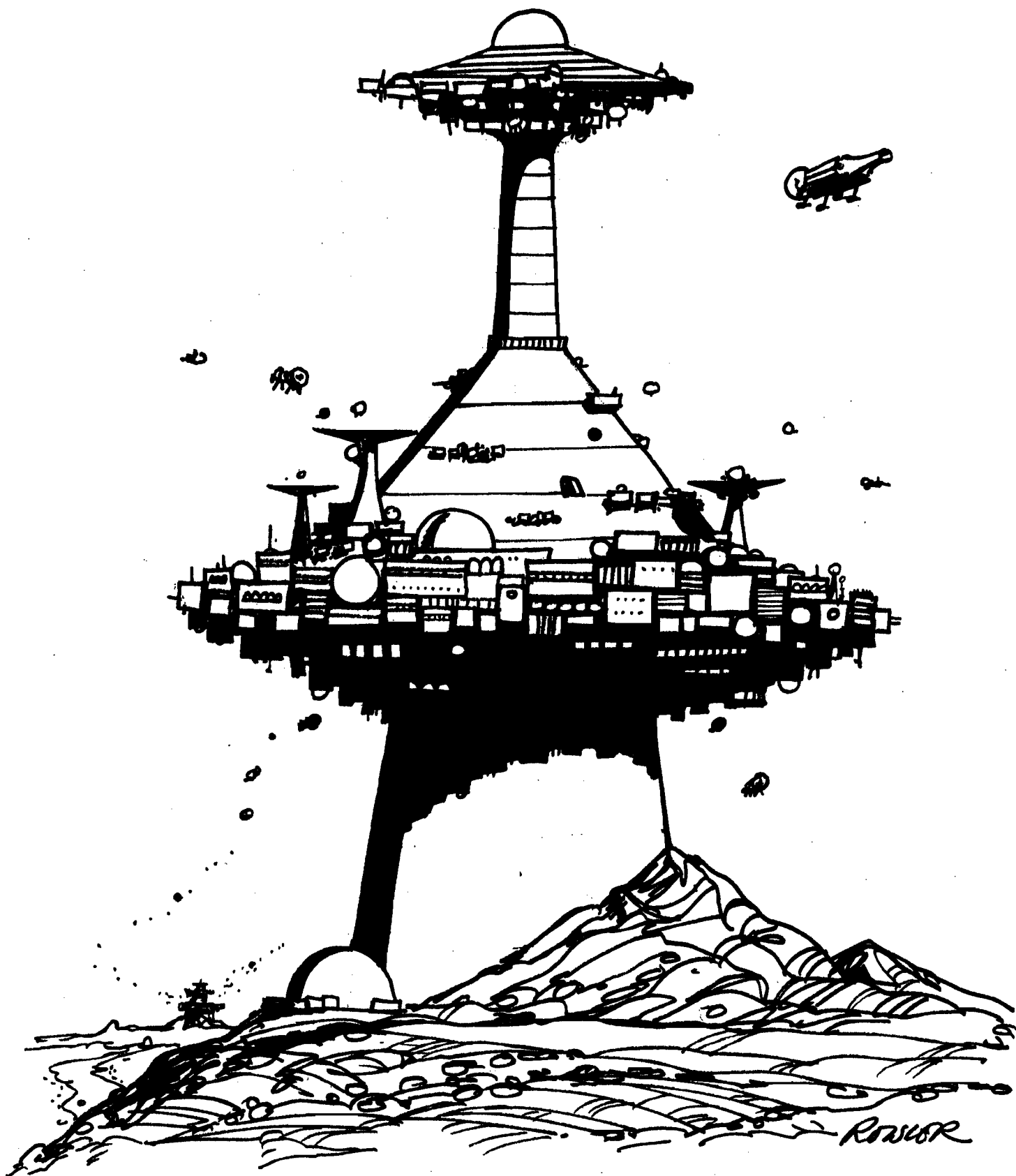
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VOYAGE 3

by William Rotsler

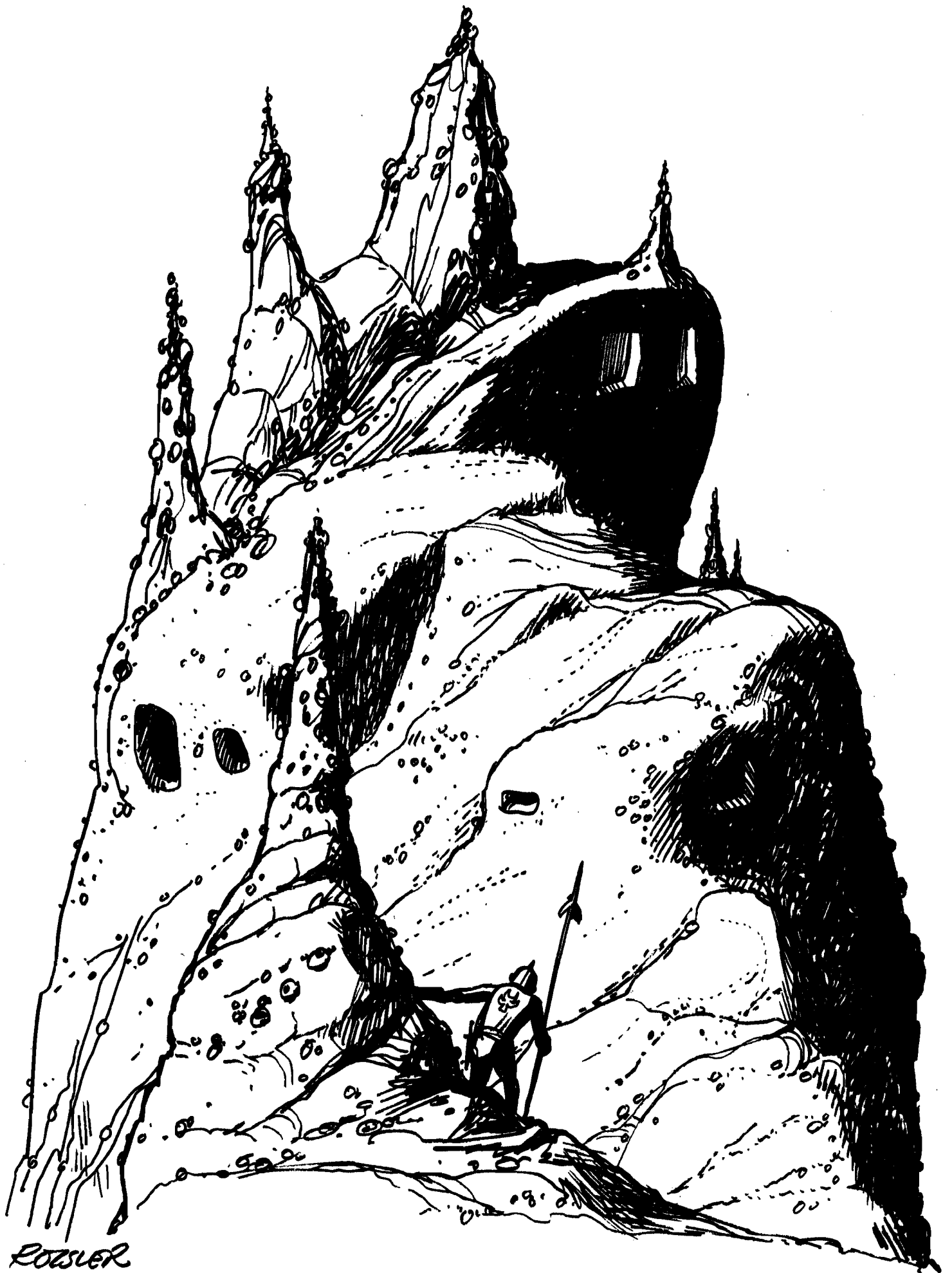
for Sharman Demman, fellow voyager

copyright © 1974 by William Rotsler

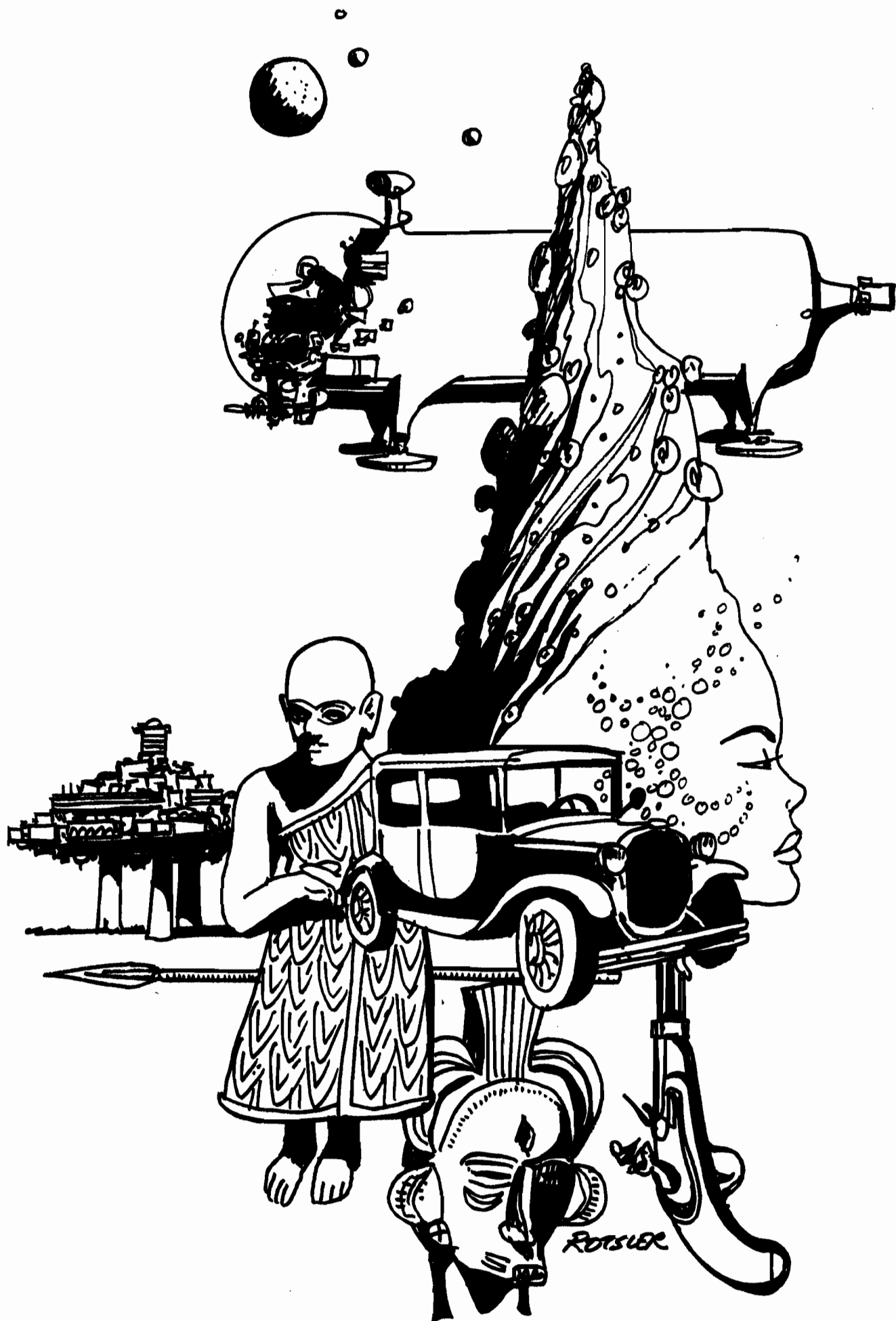




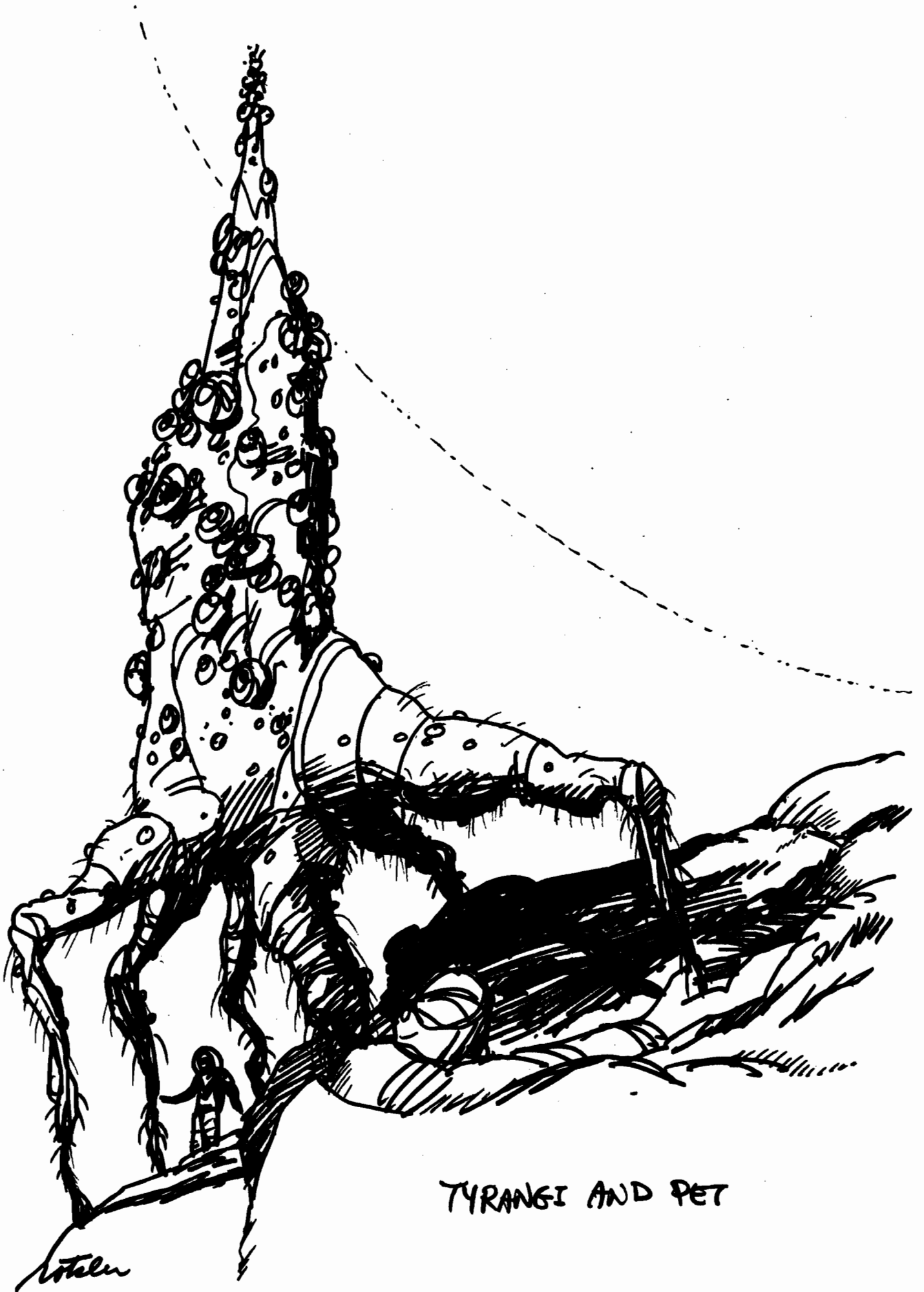
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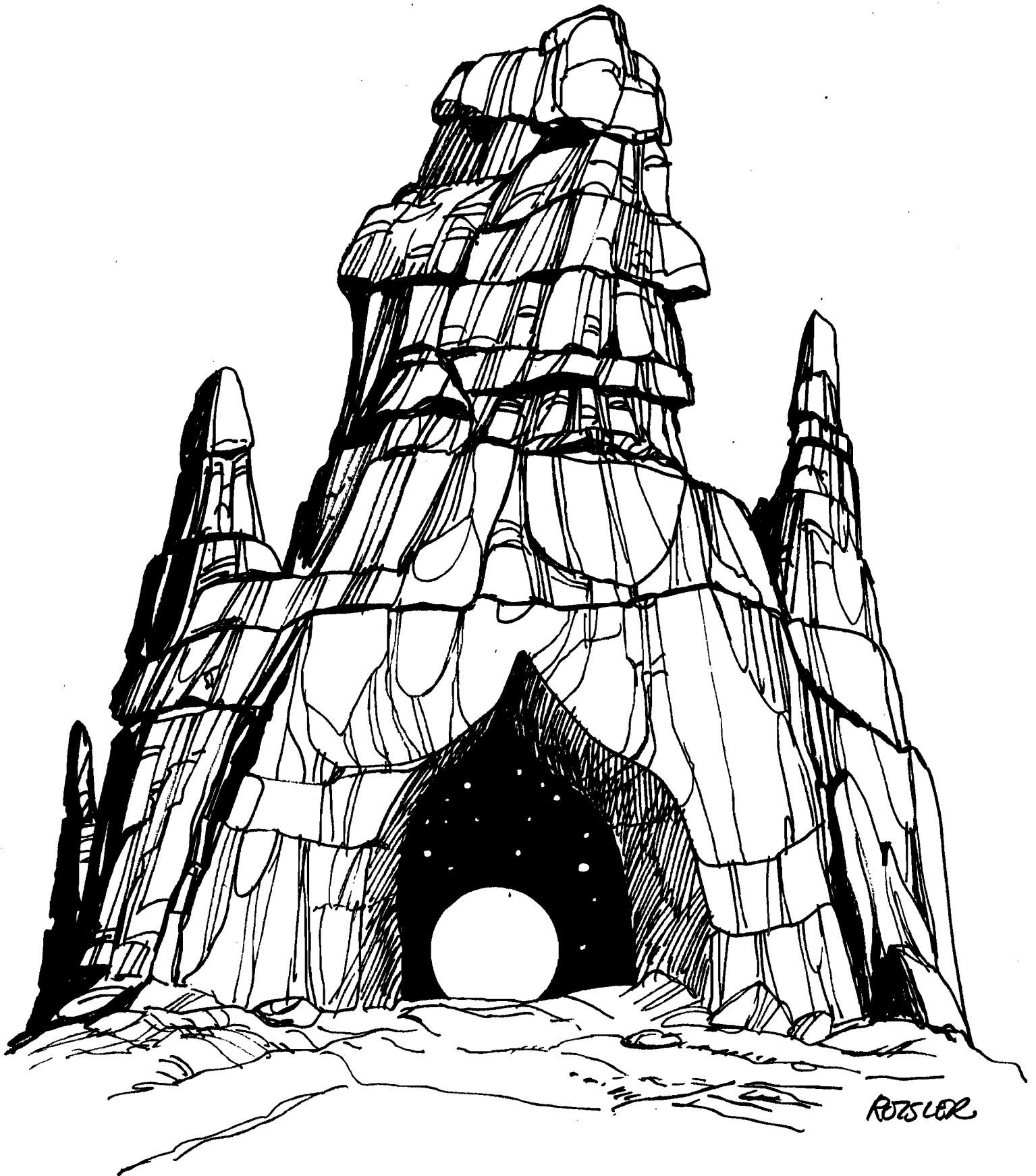
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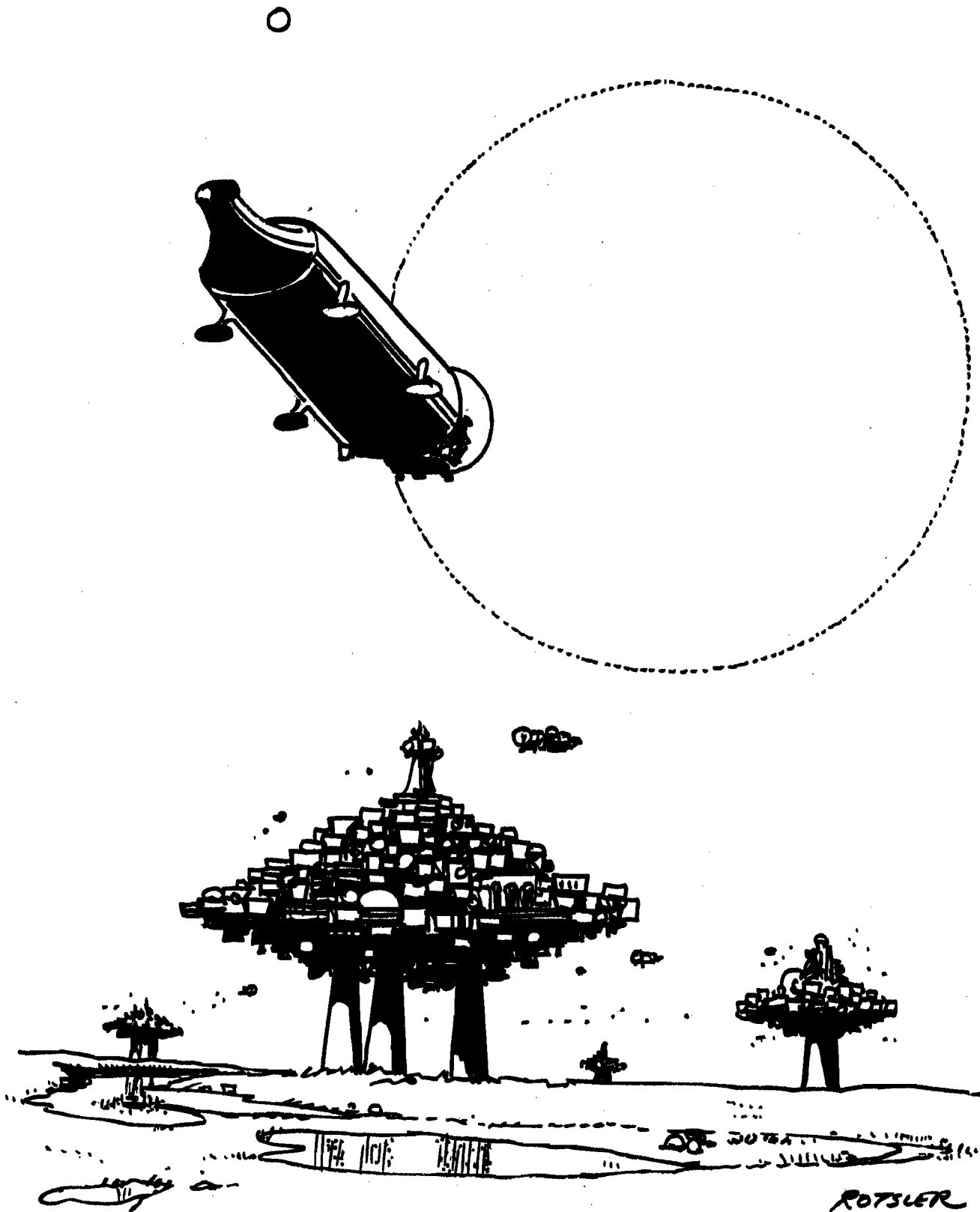






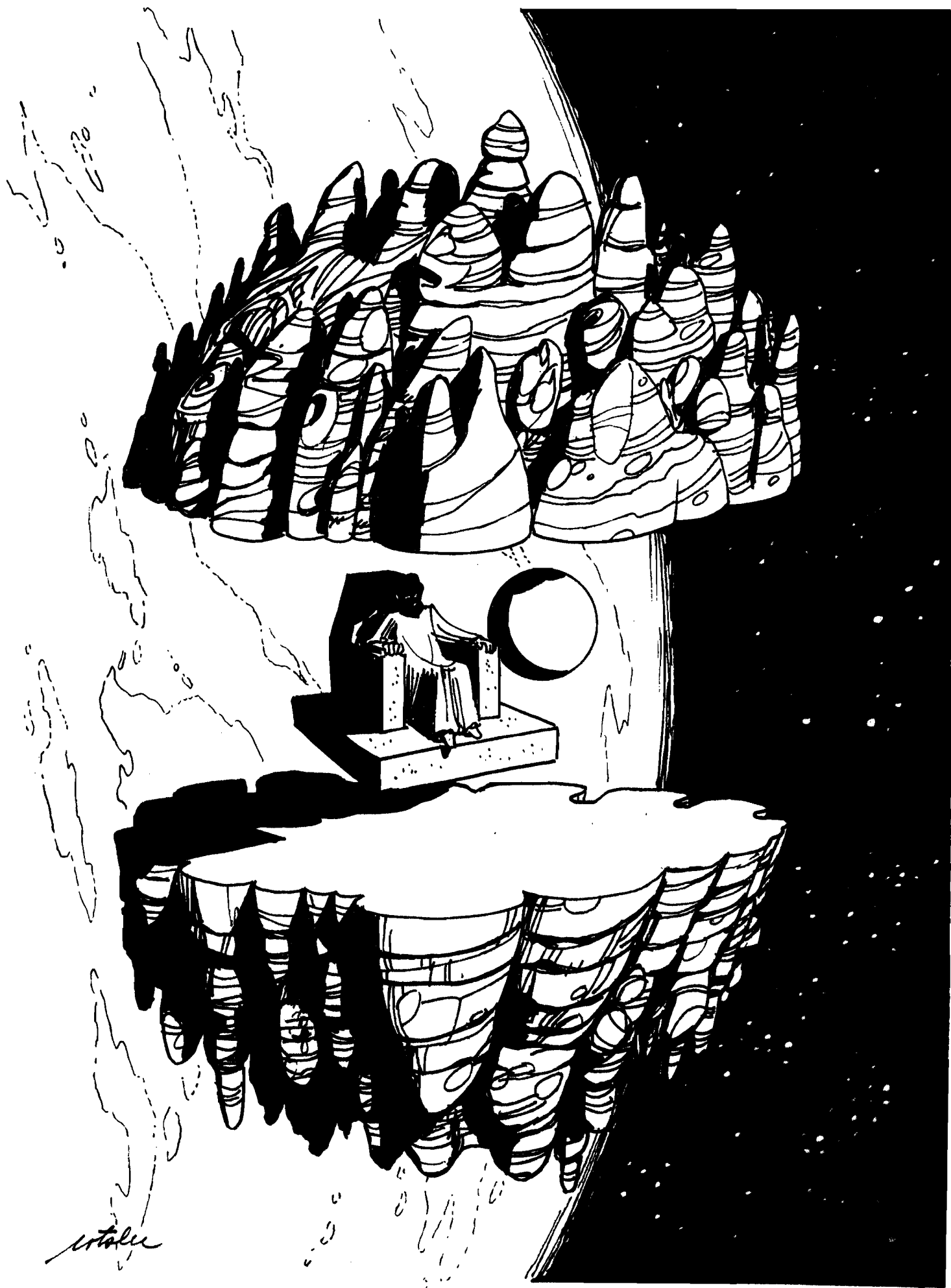
TYRANGI AND PET







ROZLER





A Letters Gollum

[As always, letters written to the editor are to be considered printable material unless requested otherwise, and may be judiciously edited to fit both the space and topics. Such letters to be considered for publication should be typed with preferably both first and last names and address included (the date is also good). Comments by the editor are in this format — bold, italic and in brackets. The winner of the Best Letter Award this time is BEN INDICK, for his perspicacious remarks, insights and understanding into what I was trying to do.]

ALAN HUNTER

1186 Christchurch Road
Boscombe East
Bournemouth, Dorset BH7 6DY, England
29 June 2005

Very many thanks for the "Thinking of You" card which is a considerate substitute for a "Get Well" card. At 82 I do not think my back trouble is likely to improve. Many years of crouching over a drawing board at work as a draftsman, and also at home with my drawings, have taken their toll. This does not mean I have been forced to give up drawing entirely, but I do have to limit myself to short periods, otherwise I suffer the following day. But this is not the reason for my delay in responding to the bumper bundle of fanzines you sent me early this year.

Mid-January I developed shingles on the left side of my scalp. They responded well to a prescription from the doctor and after a few weeks disappeared entirely. Unfortunately, they left nerve damage and I have been suffering head and neck pains ever since. The doctor said, at my age, they take some time to repair and there is the possibility the damage may be permanent. The pains are not severe, being occasional pulsing in my head and a tingling like a mild electric shock in my neck, but they are unpleasant and distracting when trying to concentrate on a drawing or writing a letter.

Shingles is believed to be the result of a virus left behind after an attack of chicken pox. I have had chicken pox as a schoolboy, but that was 68 years ago. Surely the virus cannot lie undisturbed for all that time before deciding to pounce!

So It Goes 16 was well up to your usual lavish standards of production. It was most impressive!

Although I have still not seen THE ROCKY HORROR PICTURE SHOW and consequently not really in a position to judge, from the comments and descriptions in SIG 16 I get the distinct impression that I would not enjoy it at all. There is a regular comedy show on television here called *The League of Gentlemen* and it has won several awards. It is not a musical but it does have an all-male cast with two of the regular characters being female. My son enjoys it but I do not like it at all, so obviously my opinion is not that of the majority. I do not enjoy zany or camp humor. *[I must interject and say that I seriously feel THE ROCKY HORROR PICTURE SHOW has something for everyone; but acknowledge, of course, that not everyone will enjoy it. Your description of the TV show is a little confusing, as it is unclear as to whether or not the "females" in the story are drag queens or just*

being played by men. If the latter, surely it's not much worse than Mary Martin playing Peter Pan?]

Contrary to any impression my drawings may give, I am really a rather practical person with my feet firmly on the ground. I prefer reading the older style science fiction to most of the modern stuff around and pure fantasy or sword and sorcery do not interest me. This does not apply to films, where the sheer brilliance of the special effects have me entranced. Perhaps my drawings are an attempt to escape from my rather staid and stiff outer character.

MARGARET CUBBERLY

115 Marine Circle
Grafton VA 23692
29 June 2005

Sorry it's taken me so long to get back to you. I read through all the material you sent and was impressed by the maturity of your writing since our earlier encounter so many years ago. I have to keep in mind how young you were back in the 70s. When I read with considerable amusement the letter I wrote in 1978, it dawned on me that you are now the age I was then.

Your fanzines look quite professional: nice layout, good illustrations and intelligent letters from what is obviously a loyal fanbase. You must be doing something right to attract that kind of response. I don't mind the semi-nude cuties, though I would have enjoyed a few well-endowed males, too. Amazonian types are great, since I have been studying tai chi sword for the past four years and believe there is nothing more empowering than a woman with a sword in her hand. (See enclosed photo.)

Since I am primarily a reader, your focus on the media is not exactly my bag. However, I love both *Alias* and *Lost* and enjoyed renewing my fondness for Diana Rigg. She is still sassy as Mrs. Bradley. *Alias* is my favorite show, which I began watching after *La Femme Nikita* got cancelled. It's an obvious ripoff, but a good one and gives lots of opportunities for foreign actors like Lena Olin and Sonia Braga. *[I should mention here that in the above 2 paragraphs Margaret is actually loccing my now-defunct FAPazine, TERMINAL EYES.]*

I *loved* the ROCKY HORROR issue! Delicious stuff. Nice to know you were (are?) a Kate Bush fan. I have most of her albums and am happy to hear she's back at work. ROCKY HORROR holds one special memory for me. I went to a midnight show on Halloween at the Naro and, as a virgin, when I went on stage I mentioned that it was my birthday. The entire audience sang Happy Birthday. What a thrill!

[Reminds me of how on my 49th birthday The Gang called me from the Point Option convention — a meeting of friends from the alternative high school we all attended — and sang Happy Birthday to me.]

We share two other things in common — fondness for cats (we have two) and our political convictions. The older I get, the more radical I become. I despise the current administration, which is wrecking our country. I've been voting since 1952 and have never seen anything so bad. Even Nixon looks good next to this bunch.

To be honest, I don't read much SF anymore, though I hesitate to ramble on about the "golden age." My life has gone in a different direction in the last 20 years. I'm still writing an opinion column for the *York Town Crier* (anti-war which brings me insulting letters) and deep in both yoga and tai chi. I study sword with a kung fu master and enjoy the martial arts atmosphere. Since I began reading SF in the early 50s, I've done my share, including nice feedback from Asimov, Ellison (I provoked him), Leiber and Spider Robinson.

Thanks again for sending me your fanzines. I admire people who have a passion for something in life. You are fortunate to have found yours.

P.S. — I just bought the DVD of SILENT RUNNING (my favorite SF movie) and it's probably the fifth time I've seen it. This film always make me cry, an incredible elegy for the fate of the earth. The DVD has a fascinating interview with Bruce Dern. *[I'm just sorry that the music from that movie is not available on a CD. Joan Baez singing that introductory song was quite chilling, and may have been my first introduction to Joan Baez herself at the young age I was then.]*



Margaret Cubberly: " ...there is nothing more empowering than a woman with a sword in her hand."

Pennywhistle

By Margaret Cubberly

Rage has its place, and it has surfaced once again recently

I have felt rage very seldom in my life, at least since the violent tantrums of my childhood. The last two times it happened date back to a couple of assaults. I was attacked by a would-be rapist in Golden Gate Park in the '60s and two teenage muggers in the '70s.

I fought off the rapist with a sky-high adrenaline rush and samurai screams. The kids dragged me across a gravel parking lot, as I cursed them and clutched my handbag with a death grip.

In both cases the attackers fled, leaving me with a bad case of the shakes, but my virtue and purse intact. Rage has its place. It can clear your head, and even save your life. Last week my capacity for rage resurfaced.

When I picked up the daily paper and read that President George W. Bush had wept over the lives lost in Iraq, my stomach turned over and my blood pressure rose.

Does this man ever accept responsibility for anything? Is he so delusional that he can't comprehend what he has done? Do the 1700 American dead, the hundreds of wounded and the thousands of Iraqi lives lost exist in some alternate universe?

Yes, I felt rage over the wasted lives, the ruined lives and the lives that would never be lived because this administration thrust us into a disastrous war based on manipulated intelligence about WMDs and Saddam's threat to our country.

If an authenticated British memo is to be believed (Bush and Blair deny everything), war was considered inevitable long before the invasion. The pragmatic Brits not only questioned the wisdom of invading Iraq, they realized that Bush and his cohorts were criminally unprepared for the aftermath.

Not only were roses not strewn in our path, but the liberated Iraqis proceeded the liberation of their own as they looted libraries and museums. This was followed by a vicious insurgence which murders soldiers, marines and civilians on a daily basis (the carnage rate has doubled in the past year), sectarian violence and kidnapping opportunities for homegrown criminals.

This is the Pandora's box that the Bush regime has opened in the Middle East. Historians will likely take a dim view of the Bush legacy, which gives a whole new meaning to the end justifies the means, and raises the art of lying to a new high.

Meanwhile, Iraqis are afraid to be on the streets after dark in Baghdad, electricity is on only a few hours a day, reconstruction lags (what ever happened to all that money?), jobs are in short supply, the new police force gets blown away by suicide bombers, and the fledgling government struggles with tribal warfare and overwhelming domestic problems.

Margaret Cubberly's column for the *York Town Crier* concludes on the following page

Since the infamous weapons of mass destruction were never found, and no link was ever established between 9/11 and Saddam, we are now to understand that we invaded a country that was no threat to us out of our deep compassion for the poor, oppressed people of Iraq laboring under the yoke of the evil Saddam. "Tell it to the Marines," as the old saying goes.

As support for Bush's war erodes at home (his approval rating is down to 58 percent), recruitment is down, and young Army officers are leaving the military for Wall Street and law school. One senior officer is quoted as saying the (unwinnable) war could last for decades.

Howard Zinn, author of "A People's History of the United States," recently wrote that "we are fighting a dishonorable war, for which the dishonor belongs on high... we have disgraced our country before the world."

I'm told that Bush has been voted one of the top 25 "greatest Americans" in a TV poll, along with Lincoln, Jefferson, Washington and Martin Luther King Jr. If these men were alive today, they would surely view this President as one of the worst in our history. It's a harsh judgement, but one they would not hesitate to make.

They were, after all, honorable men.

—Margaret Cubberly

WILLIAM BREIDING

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Tucson AZ 85702

2 February 2005

So It Goes 16 was a mighty odd experience, 27 years later. Everyone in the lettercol was so... I don't know what, so 1978, I suppose. I'm certainly glad I did not loc #15, because I appear to have gotten myself into enough trouble with that loc on #14. From the context of Jim Meadows' letter it looks like I was tackling the ethics of stealing and personal honesty. And while I understand what I was probably getting at in that letter from my 22-year-old self (I couldn't say for sure without reading the letter itself), I am more in line with Jim's response at the ripe old age of 48. Though I do find it interesting that the two people who knew me personally (i.e., in person) during that period (Denys Howard and Ann Weiser) knew exactly what I was trying to get at, from the sounds of their responses. I'd be interested in getting a photocopy of that letter to see what I was saying. I had strong convictions, but may not have been right. More surprising to me than anything was that I was writing long, thought-out locs at that time. When I think back on the Seventies I don't remember being a loc-hack, because I think of my younger self as being fairly inarticulate, only having found my voice much later in life. *[I too feel more articulate now, although some may argue that I was always rather articulate. With everything going on in my life, including the fanzine organizing project and the death of at least two cats, it took me a couple of years to make the photocopy for Bill. Never heard back from him about it.]*

MILT STEVENS

6325 Keystone Street

Simi Valley CA 93063

13 March 2005

When So It Goes 16 arrived, the title did ring a bell, even if not a very loud one. It's been a fair number of years,

and a lot of fanzines have passed by. I can't claim to have a clear recollection of all of them. However, checked my files and found I had copies of issues 9-15. Most of them were in "ditto." These days my mind wouldn't associate you with ditto. You do gaudy and ostentatious. In those days, I wasn't letterhacking the way I do today, so I must have been trading you for either *Passing Parade* or *Prehensile*.

I wondered what happened to you when you dropped FAPA. You were near the top in page count *[and, perhaps not so strangely enough, near the top of the egoboo poll as well]* and then...POOF! I could have understood that the expense might have been getting too much for you, but there is such a thing as cutting back a little. *[There is?!*

Poppycock, I say!] Or even quite a bit. Heck, if you had just paid your dues, you could have stayed a member for another year without publishing anything at all. In any case, I'm glad to see you didn't drop out of fanzines altogether.

I like THE ROCKY HORROR PICTURE SHOW. It's upbeat and amusing. I've never seen it in a theater. I didn't honestly notice it when it first appeared, and I'm almost absolutely sure I wouldn't like the cult showings. The last time I heard, the cult showings in the Los Angeles area were at the Gilbert Theater in Hollywood. I worked in Hollywood for over ten years, but I don't like being in Hollywood after sundown. The place always makes me feel like I want to sprout an extra pair of eyes in the back of my head. There is one advantage to the place for the Rocky Horror fans. Most of the rest of the population look stranger than they do.

My favorite part of the issue was the letter column. I've heard of some of the contributors but not very recently, and some I may never have heard of at all. It contained reminders of a number of fannish issues long gone. Jessica Salmonson was almost an issue all by herself. For one Westercon, she was writing a serial letter to the entire committee describing her sex life. The other committee members and I started comparing notes (so to speak) and decided it read like pretty good porn. I started suspecting she might be a hoax. I met her later. This led to the suspicion that she might be real. *[When Jessica first went through The Change, she started writing fascinating letters to fanzines about her love life, where she described herself somewhat melodramatically as the poorly paid mistress of a wealthy man. Later she seems to have gone through some sort of orientation change and her letters took a turn to telling the editors what "chauvinistic little piggies" they all were. When I originally sent Jessica So It Goes, I was obviously hoping for one of the former. I strenuously object to having So It Goes described as "such a sexist little zine" merely because I am a man who is not ashamed of being heterosexual, or because I printed a piece of artwork (by a woman!) that depicts a scantily-clad warrior woman. As stated before, the late 70s were a time when there was way too much invalid criticism against male fans from the so-called "feminist fans." It was a bandwagon, on which Jessica was almost certainly the worst offender.]*

While Jessica was extreme to the point of self-parody, some of the other feminists of the period were pretty extreme too. Equal pay for equal work and equal promotional opportunities are reasonable issues. Demanding that the language be changed to include "person holes" and herstory

was just plain silly. Thankfully, they went away after a few years.

I'd forgotten there ever had been a controversy about Phil Foglio winning the Hugo. It wasn't the first, and it certainly hasn't been the last controversy regarding the Hugos. Styles may come and go, but controversies about the Hugos are something we will have always.

LLOYD PENNEY

1706-24 Eva Road
Etobicoke, Ontario, Canada M9C 2B2
22 February 2005

ROCKY HORROR used to have quite a following here. Second-run theatres would run it continuously, some of them for years, and the usual band of Riff Raffs and Franks would assemble outside to preen in front of the cameras, and go inside to toss rice and toast. Another coincidence for the files... just west of Toronto is Mississauga, and the StageWest Hotel and Theatre. From mid-July to mid-September, they will be staging a play version of ROCKY HORROR. (I seem to remember both Tim Curry and Susan Sarandon refusing to discuss RHPS because they felt it has changed and dominated their early careers. RHPS is behind them, and let's get on to other things.)

You swore off Worldcons in 1980, and I've just done so myself. For me, it was a long story. I helped a diverse group win the 2003 Worldcon for Toronto, but was kicked off the committee soon afterwards. The chairman of the BoD took a great dislike to my wife Yvonne as the bid continued, and once the con was won, he got back at her through me. I would like to think that Torcon would have been a better con if we'd been involved. (That chairman was kicked off the BoD himself later on, for acting in his own selfish interests in the guise of working in the con's interests.) *[That sounds like a Good Thing — glad he was Found Out.]* We worked for LA to help them win 2006, and Torcon 3 was a shadow of what it could have been. The people who wound up in charge had no convention-running experience, and they got rid of those who did, namely Yvonne and me. Also, lack of funds and the escalating costs of Worldcons have forced us away.

I keep hearing that fans don't write letters of comment any more. I try my best, and I do write a lot of them. However, I sometimes get some flack for my letters... I guess they aren't the most interesting correspondence I could write. However, for every faned that complains about a writing, I get a dozen who will print my letters and say that locs are the lifeblood of a fanzine. I sure hope they're right.

I know that in the 890s and 90s, there were a lot of Kate Bush fans in Toronto. None of them got into anything organized, as organized as fandom can be, but fans of both genders were lusting after Ms. Bush.

King Abdullah had a guest shot on a *Star Trek* episode? Which one was that? The *Mota* cover has a cartoon of Mike Glicksohn in it. Mike is doing well, and he and his lovely Susan Manchester were at a wedding and reception last weekend, as were Yvonne and I. The four of us had a fine time with other friends, seeing two good friends of ours, Fred and Gail, tie the knot. And, of course, Schirm adds in his busy creatures. (Mike gets zines from you, doesn't he?) *[Of course — didn't you see his loc in the last issue?]*

You're the Hunter S. Thompson of fandom? Well, you and Gonzo no longer have one thing in common — you're still alive. Damn shame he offed himself. Maybe after all his experiences, death was the only thing he hadn't tried yet. *[If he did indeed try it deliberately; I seem to recall there is some doubt on this subject.]*

So, you were at Chicon 2000! So were we. *[I know... As I keep having to tell you, it was there we met, introduced by Hope; not at the MidWestCon following.]*

I hope you made it to the Toronto in 2003 parties at the Chicago Hyatt Regency... Yvonne and I were in charge. If you saw a little plump redhead, about 4'8", racing around, and someone a little taller, usually histing a freshly-delivered case of beer or two, that was me. *[How does one "hist"? I'm not familiar with that verb.]* If I recall, we were both wearing handmade Hawaiian shirts. We were so busy running three gigantic Worldcon bid-style parties, we didn't see much of the con. And, after all that hard work, six months later, I was dismissed from the committee, details above.

[Lloyd, you and Yvonne have my sympathy more than you know, or maybe you do know, if you have read "The Flour Child Makes Dough" in this issue's editorial. It's the job of any good manager to make use of the people he has for the abilities they have, and not let personal prejudices and old grudges get in the way. Personal likes or dislikes have no place in this sort of thing. Under these circumstances, the only excuse a manager has for not liking someone under him or her is if that person or persons seems to be totally incapable of doing absolutely anything that is asked of them. Somehow, with the positive, thoughtful attitude you have expressed in your letters, I can't imagine the latter could describe you or Yvonne.]

DAVE SZUREK

505 North F #829
Aberdeen WA 98520

Thanks for sending me *So It Goes 16*. Sorry for having taken so long to respond. My big plea is, "Oh, where does the time go?" *[You and Sandy Denny...]* I "think" I briefly met you at AutoClave decades ago. Am I right or am I familiar with you only from your writing? *[I suspect the latter. I was only ever at one AutoClave, the one in 1978.]*

I was never able to get into ROCKY HORROR fandom. Limited appeal and the hulabaloo actually has a way of turning me off. The film strikes me as okay but nothing to howl at the moon about. I've long preferred the kind of "audience participation" that one ran into at the old-time grindhouses. Sorry about that, Tim. It seems that our tastes fail to jibe in other departments, too.

As for the "other" movies you recommend: CITY OF LOST CHILDREN and NIGHTMARE BEFORE CHRISTMAS are favorites and I like LAST DAYS OF MAN ON EARTH to a lesser extent, but mostly because of Finch's strangely "charismatic" performance. *[See? We do agree on some things...]*

FLASHDANCE struck me as less unwatchable than the critics of the time made it out to be, but still not much, and I don't see the ROCKY HORROR connection that you seem to allude to. *[The highly choreographed, dramatically-*

staged, single performer dance numbers were what reminded me of the latter.]

Haven't seen STARSTRUCK, but am a non-conformist on FORBIDDEN ZONE. I know it was a "cult film" and all and I like Elfman's later work, but the "humor" struck me as more silly than funny; it's deliberate "cult" aspirations were almost abrasive in their self-conscious nature — hey guys, "cult films" are "discovered"; not methodically turned out on an assembly line. Maybe I was just already too old when it, and even ROCKY, first came out? And the whole affair did not strike me as particularly interesting or/and attention grabbing. I'd gone a number of years hearing all the raves about it, so I was extra disappointed when I finally saw it on video some time since— well, sometime since the century turned.

Not being a ROCKY fan, the loccol and some of your writing was more the scope of my interest. You managed to get some downright killer artwork, too. Alan Hunter's work *especially* struck a personal chord, but I can't think of any of it that didn't turn me on. Still, I have no photographic memory, let alone one that extends back to 1977, so I wasn't always positive what people, including myself, were commenting on. Seems droll to me now that I was talking about aging before I was even thirty. Probably looks that way when I talk aging to 84-year-olds, now. Hey, I'm only in my fifties; that's still a babe in diapers to some.

Talk of being in prison was a typo on my part. Prison is where felons go for a year or more. It was just jail for me.

Wentz and myself sound like kindred souls, at least in the political arena. I did some Kerry campaigning last year too, but my spirit was chiefly that I was campaigning against Bush. *[You and everyone else...]* Kerry may have been no Great Ideal, either, but when it came down to him or George W., there's no greater reminder that most elections are choices between the lesser and the uglier evil. This time, I think that not being Bush and having a *chance* at unseating him was enough! Sorry, Tim, but I agree with Wentz on the running off to Canada issue and for the same reason, but I can see reversing my opinion a couple years down the road.

ROBERT WHITAKER SIRIGNANO

P O Box 11246
Wilmington DE 19850
9 February 2005

Well, you got this zine out after 27 years? It's out before LAST DANGEROUS VISIONS, so you can pat yourself solidly on the back. I'd dreamed of putting out a t-shirt that says, "I contributed to LAST DANGEROUS VISIONS and got a t-shirt and a crappy excuse."

Richard Onley shows up on line in a comic book forum, according to a Google search. It doesn't give you an address, but it's a contact point. He used to live in Delaware, living near Nancy Lebovitz for a bit. He moved out quite a while back, taking his large collection of comics with him. *[I know this is confusing, but I suspect you're actually thinking of Richard Olney here. I did eventually track down Richard Onley but he didn't respond to this zine that he paid for 27 years previously...]*

Jon Estrin has long vanished, last seen two decades back after a cocaine addition binge, crash and rehab. (It was a NYSFS meeting; no one talked to him.) Hope he's okay.

Elena ([my] sister in law) said [Jon] mentioned wanting to live in Alaska. *[So somebody did talk to him after all.]*

Have not heard from Patia von Sternberg in years. She sought out my company during Suncon because she found me harmless enough, talked about the previous year's "exotic" dance done before Heinlein and throwing him her bra. (Heinlein tried to give it back the next day.) *[Just looked her up on the internet. There's a story that Heinlein was wearing her bra as an epaulet.]* We got heavily stoned at one point and wound up walking the beach, staring out to the Atlantic, where a storm has passed a few days previous. I was told she lives in New York City. *[Someone else said he thinks she has passed on.]*

Dan Joy I had located as living in San Francisco a few years back with an artist named Jason Keene. *[Hey, who can forget Jason Keene? Drive miles out of my way to pick him up for a meeting, and he thanks me by leaving peanut shells all over the back seat floorboard of my (previously) clean car. Rather than ever apologizing when it's pointed out to him, instead he churlishly teases me about it the next time he sees me. They sure don't make winners like that every day!]* They were pseudonymously contributing to places like *High Times* and the like, to keep out of trouble. Dan also edited books for a New Age line and contributed editorial duties to write Shasha Shulgin (TIHKAL book). *[Which I seem to recall my roommate has, as well as the sequel.]*

And Danny Elfman was in the film FORBIDDEN ZONE, but he didn't direct it (someone named Richard Elfman did). And while he sang, wrote the music, contributed voice to NIGHTMARE BEFORE CHRISTMAS, it was directed by Henry Selick from Tim Burton's outline. *[That's disturbing, and perhaps only slightly misleading, since isn't it billed as "Tim Burton's NIGHTMARE BEFORE CHRISTMAS"?]* Burton said he was burned out doing puppet animation from a short he did called VINCENT (a bit before FRANKENWEENIE). It is stop motion puppet animation, not computers.

I've only seen ROCKY HORROR about three times; while some of it is funny, I never saw much point in the audience theatrics. A movie house in Delaware began showing it on Saturday nights, and Fridays the place would show off the wall pictures. A few ROCKY fans attempted to turn other pictures into audience participation epics. On one showing of a nice print of PLAN 9, an annoyed viewer called out, "This movie is a whole hell of a lot funnier than you are."

Phil Foglio...find his work a little too quickly done. And Vaughn Bodé's style was developed from Warner Brothers cartoons. *[That I can't see at all. I can see how the old cartoons influenced Robert Crumb's style, but certainly not Bodé's. The only possible influence on Bodé that I've ever seen was a fan artist named Cynthia Goldstone, who did fanart in the late 1960s. Searching the web for her name, if she is who I am thinking of, she has also collaborated on fiction with Avram Davidson.]*

"I suppose the best way to describe Tim Marion is New York fandom's hermit prince."

—Bill Wright, *Interstellar Ramjet Scoop*, Feb. 2008

KEN GAMMAGE

1234 Upas Street
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8 February 2005

Thanks so much for sending **So It Goes 16**. That was quite a hiatus, but that's part of the fun reading it. It's like a time machine back to our shared youth. I don't think we've ever met *[we met briefly at DisCon II in 1974]* but I've heard your name a lot and we have lots of friends in common, including Tony Cvetko and Tom Jackson. Brett Cox and I briefly co-edited a zine together back in the early/mid 70s, so our letter column was populated by the same good folks who wrote to you...and now here they are again, delivered through the decades to my mailbox.

My deal was, I was involved with fandom mostly when I was in high school, but when I went off to college (U.C. Berkeley) in the Fall of '75 and lived in a fraternity house, suddenly I had more friends than I knew what to do with, and I pretty much drifted away from it all.

Then in the early 80s my friend Tony got me involved with APA-50 (which at the time was dominated by that whole Wayne State Third Foundation crowd from around Detroit) and I got back into fandom that way.

Your zine is great! Having those plastic sheets over the color [photocopy] really makes your covers "pop," like they were printed in Japan or something. It's great to have a ROCKY HORROR theme — I saw the stage musical in S.F. many years ago, and it's definitely time to grab a DVD.

Tom Jackson calls you a Luddite for not having an email address in your zine...

JERRY KAUFMAN

3522 NE 123rd Street
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5 February 2005

Thanks for sending **So It Goes 16**, as well as your various Slanapazines. We've found them interesting, surprising, sometimes titillating. There are lots of comment hooks in this issue, but I won't grab them all. I hope that this letter and another issue of *Littlebrook*, soon to go into the mail, will make up for that.

Uppermost in my mind are your comments about letterhacking in this modern fan world. I find that we never get as many letters as we would like, either. I will agree with you that fans don't seem to write letters like they used to. There are a bunch of reasons I can think of. For us, one of the reasons is that we don't send **Lb** to the "right" people, that is, the people we see letters from in the zines we receive. We're still sending it to people we know, and they definitely don't write much. *[The impression I had from sending out TERMINAL EYES, my FAPazine, was that most people were reluctant to comment on it because it was primarily a zine for an apa — it was like people didn't know what to make of the mailing comments, which would frequently comprise most of the issue, and which would be deemed to be inaccessible to most.]*

As for ROCKY HORROR, I've seen it a few times, but the last time I watched it all the way through must have been prior to 1978, the date of most of your letters. I saw it for the first time at the Waverly, well before the ritual interactions of

the audience started. I enjoyed it, but I think at the time I was disappointed that it wasn't even more transgressive. (That word's a recent addition to my vocabulary.) I saw it at a convention the second time, and at one midnight showing here in Seattle the third time. By then the audience participation had fully developed.

Several of your contributors refer to the music in RHPS as "punk rock." I laugh. No way does the music resemble punk; it's Broadway crossed with 50s rockabilly and doo-wop. *[Which could be said were the original influences on punk rock. RHPS, however, actually pre-dates punk rock. Richard O'Brien, the writer, creator and actor who played Riff Raff, described his baby as a combination of Marvel Comics, old Universal monster horror films and classic rock-and-roll.]*

I was surprised by Jeff Frane's letter, as he refers to an event I have absolutely no memory of: going to court to support Aljo Svoboda. It must have happened very soon after I moved here. I was living in Loren MacGregor's house, which Jeff shared. I arrived in November 1977, and Jeff's letter is from mid-January 1978.

BEN INDICK

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So It Goes is not a fanzine. It is an autobiography of the lost and missing of the last quarter to a third of a century. People flit through it who are dead or like-dead. Others can give thanks that is proof, if they needed it, that they are alive. It is good to have proof. Some of us are in the middle or tending toward one or the other pole. Those thirty-year-old locs are certainly the most unique appearance ever of the genre. And your presence, unbecomingly urbane in that photo on the bacover, is behind all of the zine, guiding it along irresolute paths. Not badly, either. It absolutely does you justice. For better or worse.

Was Susie Sarandon ever in the fan movement or is she just a Tribecan neighbor? *[I seem to recall something about Susan Sarandon living within a mile of me, but I don't recall ever seeing her. My roommate, Jeff Kleinbard, on rare occasion would run into Debbie Harry in the elevator of the building where he worked on 14th Street. I seem to recall from interviews that Harry liked to read science fiction, but I don't think she was ever involved in fandom.]*

Appearance-wise, although there are no interior photographs, the issue is as handsome as your FAPA stuff.

ALEXIS GILLILAND

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5 February 2005

Thank you for the belated **So It Goes**, seeing daylight a mere 27 years after the previous issue, but retaining the excellent production values for which you are justly famous.

Interesting about THE ROCKY HORROR PICTURE SHOW. I had seen it before all the fannish interaction evolved — and had never gone back — but last Halloween we went to a party at Mike Pederson's house, and it was shown in his home theater, and there were all these people doing the time

warp again, and reciting the responses appropriate to the litany on the screen so I got some sense of what had been happening.

Looking at the con pictures I recognized quite a few people, but nowadays the crowd seems to be older and fatter and quite a lot less fun. Still, the 1980 DisClave was indeed held at the old Sheraton Park, shortly before it was torn down. I remember the construction going on outside the con suite, with rebar reaching out from the raw concrete floors, and a few weeks after that, the old building was demolished and replaced. Before leaving, I took the number — C640 — off the con suite door and it has been on the door in my basement for good luck ever since.

Your time-bound 1978 letter column also touches on the issue of Phil Foglio's Fan Artist Hugos, which he won in 1977 and 1978, and for which he had actively campaigned. A youthful indiscretion which he regrets to this day, I might add.

WOLFGANG DANCER

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23 January 2005

Thanks for *So It Goes 16*. I thought that overall it was a lucid and entertaining snapshot of a time in fandom past. Good effect.

The letter section was filled with interesting material, but it is seriously marred by beginning with the needless diatribe on pages 32/33. In commentary, you may disagree. When you become disagreeable, that is personal, not journalistic. Your personal quarrels have no business in my mailbox or anyone's. *[Please see response to Milt Stevens. I'm sorry that the letter you referred to, and my response, offended you, but you're right — I do disagree. Both because So It Goes is supposed to be a very personal reflection of myself (and I certainly can't promise to always be agreeable) and because I personally was tired of letters, which appeared frequently in other fanzines, where Jessica seemed to be victimizing and belittling male fans as "sexist." In my case, she really flew off the handle because I dared to admit that a daringly-dressed young lady had inspired an erection, which she considered to be a politically incorrect thing to say, and to an egregious degree. I was merely trying to respond in kind to her, rather than meekly rolling over like I have seen many other fans do.]*

[However, taking your advice, I will not print your previous paragraph, where your description of a piece of the previous issue's content was so unnecessarily insulting that it took me quite a while to even figure out what you were talking about — there was no "biker fiction" in So It Goes; that was a true account and one I found fascinating, hence its appearance.]

[You may find my inclusion of, and response to, Lester Boutillier's letter (following) to be unnecessary as well. All I can say in my defense of including such an outré set of opinions is that all sides of an issue should be presented, no matter how unpopular. So It Goes would soon become a boring place without the presence of dissenting opinions...in my opinion.]

That being said, I thought the rest was a real success. The spirit and tone were consistent with the themes of

ROCKY HORROR and Fan History. Even the content which might have seemed dated, wasn't. What made the difference was the presentation. It was all done very well; a time-capsule look at fandom 1978 in all its indubitable glory.

And yes, thank you for the vintage letters. I continue to get such a kick out of mine. Oh, to be young, cocky and have nothing better to do. Those were the days! Of course, I did nothing I said I was going to do, and everything I swore I wouldn't. Although, the remark about never going to ROCKY HORROR was intended to maybe stop you bugging me so much about it then. And yes, shortly after I saw it for the first time, with you and some others *[high school friends from Point Option]* at the Naro. The crowd that night were fairly well losers, weren't they? What I didn't know was that you were *supposed* to yell at the film. Until you told me, I was going to ask for a refund.

What you don't know is that I probably saw it another dozen times later. They built a theatre by my house, I knew the manager, and I knew the ROCKY crowd. So about every month, after ROCKY HORROR became the regular weekend late show, these friends would stop by and I would go over with them. I would like to think it was because I was so popular, but I suspect the reason often was they needed a sacrificial cow. We always sat on the front row. When the crowd started to lose enthusiasm, I had the choice of getting elbowed in the ribs for the rest of the show, or et up and do my bit. Which was, to appear as if spontaneously seized by the moment, to jump up and do the most awful, gawky "Time Warp" ever done. Then one of the girls would jump up and address the audience with, "Ladies and Gentlemen, we have a virgin in the audience." Then I would sit down and try to look red-faced. *[Couldn't have been too difficult, at that point...]* Well, it never failed to jump-start the party again, and of course it was great fun.

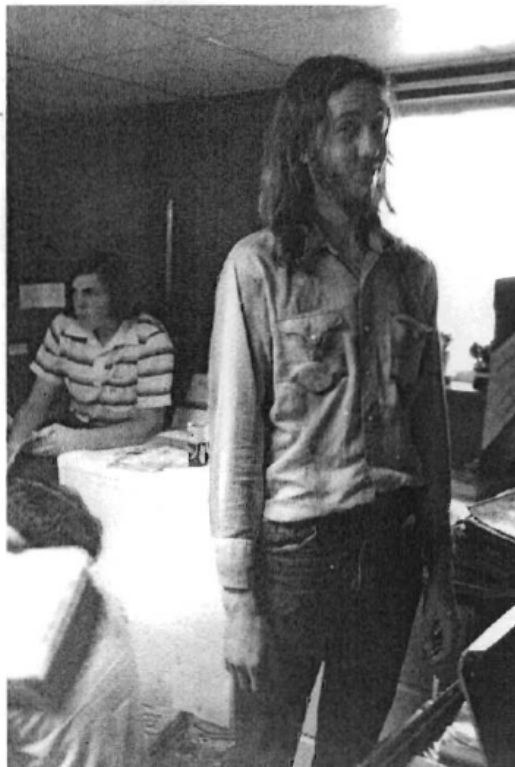


photo of WOLFGANG DANCER, 1977; photo by Terry Murray

The look back at the nature of fandom in 1978, and the prevailing attitudes, was priceless. How high-handed we were. In fact, in Plutarch's HISTORY OF FANDOM, I believe the late 70s were referred to as "The high-handed era." That may be a bit of an indirect step to many of us leaving. Originally, it was a rallying point against those who did not live up to our ideals. You know, cool fan type people vs. fat cats, warhawks, the establishment. But when we turned this attention inward, fandom fell short of our ideals. Of course, other responsibilities can increasingly take up time.

Again, thank you for the copy. I have re-read a few things several times over, and that is a sign of success. Where to go from here? You are correct, the fanzine is not the forum of choice for things like before. The loc has moved to the net chat room. But much is still best when in print. Notably, fan art, original fiction, humor and newsworthy items which may become historical. So keep to it. *[Thanks, Wolf, for the kind words and interesting letter. I may disagree with you on occasion, but I always appreciate hearing what you have to say.]*

LESTER BOUTILLIER

2723 Catiglion Street
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28 January 2005

Great Scott! was my reaction when I came home yesterday and found a package from Tim C. Marion in my mailbox. Holy 70s Nostalgia!

Thanks for the kudos on *South of the Moon!* I'd never do it again, though. Would you? So much work!

When I read your political ravings on page 19, I thought I'd fallen through a space warp into an alternate universe, the Bizarro World maybe. Do you *really* believe that the United States "has been taken over by a radical, right-wing fringe element...determined to take back...humanitarian advances"? *[Well, gosh, Lester, I surely wouldn't have written it if I didn't believe it! And I certainly was not the first person to say so, either. Indeed, so many people have objected to this new regime ruling our country that your letter seems to me, and almost certainly no doubt to most other readers, as a letter posted from the Bizarro World, not to it.]* The right-wing fringe element (Jerry Falwell, Pat and Babe Buchanan, David Duke, et al) hate President Bush just as much as the left does. *[I suppose there are degrees of right-wing fringeness...]* They strongly oppose him on immigration reform, free trade, affirmative action, etc. By any objective standards, W is a moderate conservative. *[Few-wee, you really got stones to say that!]* He wants to reform Social Security in order to save it, while the left opposes any change to the troubled program. *[The "change" he wants is to abolish the program and to steal away with the money, either for the war or for other benefits to either himself or the particular rich people he serves.]* Reform is progressive. Clinging to the status quo is regressive. *[Those are wide, sweeping generalizations which crumble with hardly any effort. In Nazi Germany, it was considered progressive to stick Jewish people into ovens...the status quo would have been to let them live in freedom. You may think that is an extreme example, but there have been many parallels drawn between Nazi*

Germany and what is happening now in our country. Not all reforms are progressive. To take away from people something they have worked for all their lives is not "progress"; it's arrant thievery. I suspect you're only 7-10 years older than me, Lester; I wonder how you're going to feel about W's "reforms" when your time to draw Social Security comes near.] George W. Bush is the most forceful, important, and positive force for progressive politics in this country, if not in the entire world. It's the Democrats who are the reactionaries, in that they want to return to the failed policies of welfare-statism and government-nannyism of the past. As for ignoring or revoking the Constitution, that has been done — and repeatedly so — by leftist judges who continuously "reinterpret" the document and its amendments to be more "relevant" (i.e., politically correct). *[Thank you for this, um, alternative viewpoint. The Democrats, as I see it, have been little more than deliberate fall guys for the Republicans, at least in the last presidential election. And there is certainly a difference between a ruling a judge makes to reinforce someone's freedom, or reduce someone's oppression, and simply throwing rights and privileges out of the Constitution.]*

And the allegation that the last two presidential elections were stolen is patently false. No votes in *any* state, from any kind of district — white, black, or purple — wound up "on the floor" and not counted. This charge is factually untrue and has been proven to be so. *[This has never been proven at all. The exit polls at the last presidential election were the big giveaway — in the past they have reflected the results of the election proper, but not this time. This time they varied radically in many different districts and states. The government's answer to this discrepancy? To discredit exit polls and attempt to abolish them.]* The 2000 Florida vote was recounted and investigated dozens of times by dozens of groups, notably the leading liberal newspapers and liberal interest groups, and *no* evidence of "disenfranchisement" was ever found. In fact, the ultimate arbiter and authority on this, the United States Civil Rights Commission, in its final report on Florida, said that not a single black person was disenfranchised.

Tim, here's a piece of advice, probably the best advice of any kind you'll ever get all year. Don't believe everything you hear on NPR or everything you read in *The Nation* or *Mother Jones*. In fact, you'd be best off if you didn't believe *anything* you read there. *[You sound a bit like you're working yourself into a lather. I don't believe everything I hear from any source, but the information I've been getting comes from so many different sources, and not just what you've named, that these comments, and all you just made before, make me think you're living in an Information Vacuum.]*

Day by day our freedoms are being steadily eroded? Oh, *really?* Name one. I dare you. Just go on and name one. *[I'm tempted to tell you that this isn't worthy of a response, and all you would have to do is read the newspaper, but OK... How about how American citizens are now being spied on more than ever before? There are now vast libraries being compiled on many Americans by the government, which, needless to say, is an incredible infringement on our freedom.]*

[You probably don't even know about this, due to its being played down in the media, but how about our right to protest being seriously threatened? At the time I wrote the last SO IT GOES, every single major protest against Bush and his War was attempted to be declared illegal, with heavy fines and legal action threatened. When one, major outdoor protest (outside the White House) was finally approved by a last-minute judicial decree, so many of the protestors ended up sick afterwards that there was a serious suspicion of some sour-grapes dumping of infectious powders on the unsuspecting, lawfully-gathered protestors. Remember, Lester, the right to meet together and protest what is perceived as unfair government is part of the very basis of this country and how it was founded. When we lose that right, we lose the democracy.]

[What about the fact that torture is now seemingly legal? Torture is forbidden by the Geneva Convention, yet our military is apparently engaged in such. Anyone, even a U.S. citizen, can be declared an "enemy combatant" or a "terrorist" and thus be subject to torture. Moreover, anything you say under torture can be held against you in a court of law — that's several amendments being broken right there.]

[What about the fact that it's now illegal for an individual to declare bankruptcy? Big corporations can still do so, of course. But sorry, you did say "just one," didn't you?]

You also say, "New York itself is becoming an increasingly fascistic place in which to live." Uh *huh!* What are they doing up there? Burning books every day? Banning free speech? Forcing everybody to give the fascist fist salute a la Mussolini? *[Well, as you admit, you didn't know what was happening up here at the time I wrote that. This was around the time of the Republican Convention, and there was considerable oppression of both bicyclists and those opposing Bush (and especially of bicyclists who opposed Bush!). The police were so high-handed that they were confiscating bikes and arresting and attacking people. One Critical Mass, the mass bike ride through the city, was scheduled to protest the Republican Convention. The police went wild confiscating bikes (even when bicyclists would withdraw from the ride and lock up their bikes!) and attacking people, even beating on one pregnant woman from out-of-state (who, of course, thought she was attending a peaceable, lawfully-organized protest...which it was!). When I lived in Virginia, we would have called this a Police Riot. In New York City during that time, it was just Standard Police Behavior; indeed, the behavior the police had exhibited when closing down Tompkins Square Park just a few years earlier (when they went berzerk and started attacking people outside and around the park, dragging people out of their cars and beating them, etc.). The police during the time I was writing about acted like they didn't care who they victimized as long as they had a victim; it didn't even have to be a protester.]* And why do you feel Bush's re-election threatens your job? Does the word "paranoid" mean anything to you? *[Does the word "lather" mean anything to you? I was proposing a logical syllogism — Bush continues to screw up the country,*

wanting or starting more phony wars, naturally the economy goes down and my job therefore becomes less secure.] And speaking of paranoia leads me on to Walter James Wentz' column, wherein he talks of a "strengthened far right" being "a danger...to Canada." What does he think the U.S. is going to do, attack Canada with nuclear weapons? *[I think you would be surprised at just how many Canadians, even Canadians in government, worry about just that. You do know this country has been to war with Canada in the past, don't you? It's not impossible, unfortunately. Unlikely, we would hope, but with such a man in the White House, who knows?]*

[To the relief of probably everyone, I'm going to stop Lester's ravings here. His last few remarks read even more excessive, if that can be believed. I can't help but wonder if Lester is still the staunch Bush-supporter, after the federal aid requested to New Orleans by the governor was refused just before Katrina blew into, and blew away, the town.]

CHESTER D. CUTHBERT

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27 January 2005

SO IT GOES 16 certainly reminded me of earlier days in fandom although the letters did not hint of the splendid production in which they appeared. How you can be so accurate and expert for so many pages baffles me, but I suppose that modern technology helps. *[Well, that and the fact that I'm a good typist. And, of course, I have good poofeaters.]*

Although your letter is dated 3 January, I have not heard from Michael Waite, nor have I seen references to him in fanzines. *[Join "The Club," as they say.]* He and you appear to be kindred spirits, living for today without any regard for possible future needs. I understand why this is because my own mindset was the same until I accepted family responsibilities and had to do things for others whose needs were greater than my own.

I've always acknowledged that everything I've done for others has always benefited me. I've always been happy with a simple life, but the necessity to provide for a family enabled me to plan well enough to enable me to live comfortably in retirement for 38 years after having worked in the insurance business for exactly the same length of time. Now, with people living longer, planning for retirement is essential. The world changes so quickly that I know it would be impossible for me to cope with any modern job; if such rate of change accelerates even more, how can old people survive?

H.G. Wells dreamed of a world state which would make wars impossible, but violence is now almost universal; even bullying in schools is almost out of control. Muriel and I live now in a world so different from that of our early years that we can only survey it with amazement.

We have refrained from interfering with our children's lives because they must cope with such a different world. *[If only my parents had adopted that philosophy...]* They do well and help us with transportation and other things since I have not ever owned or driven a car. But we do not envy them.

JERRY LAPIDUS
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27 January 2005

Without hype, this really is a unique piece of fan history, and you've done the arena a service by putting it out, no less in such a classy fashion. While I wasn't really involved with fandom, at the time, except for a couple of apas — I pretty much gafiated around 1975 — I knew or was familiar with most of the people writing or mentioned here, so the nostalgia is heavy on the page. I certainly can't do it justice, now, but:

I'm not quite the ROCKY HORROR fan you are, but I do enjoy both the film and the original stage version immensely. For those who may tend to dismiss the film as a "glam rock" or "punk" movie (as at least one correspondent does here), let me point out the later credentials of the leads. Tim Curry did one of the two leads (Mozart) in the acclaimed, award-winning play AMADEUS in London and New York, and has done multiple major roles in the West End on Broadway and on film and television. Barry Bostwick was the original Danny Zuko in GREASE on Broadway, won the Tony for Best Actor in a Musical for his wonderful performance in THE ROBBER BRIDEGROOM and later starred for years in TV's *Spin City*. Susan Sarandon has become one of our most honored and admired actresses, winning an Oscar for DEAD MAN WALKING, and has also been a leading activist for many humanitarian causes. And, of course, Meat Loaf became a multi-platinum rock star; his work with composer/writer Jim Steinman represents one of my favorite guilty pleasures.

In your praise of NIGHTMARE BEFORE CHRISTMAS, I'm surprised you didn't mention director Tim Burton, whose vision the film clearly represents (Burton also did the first modern BATMAN *[don't remind me...]*, EDWARD SCISSORHANDS, ED WOOD, etc.).

I really appreciated Ted White's praise of Dan Steffan, who I knew he became friendly with after Dan left Syracuse. Dan did a lot of excellent work in the last couple issue of *Tomorrow And...*, most notably a really great tribute to other fan artists, but received very little notice for it.

I wasn't at SunCon; the last WorldCon I attended was DC in [74]. However, based on my experiences in Boston in [71] and DC, I would guess that Mike Glicksohn is right in saying that problems with the Suncon Masquerade presentations stemmed more from incompetence and lack of preparation than malice. I ended up putting together impromptu Masquerade presentations both years, in Boston with the late Mike Wood and Michael Dobson (a *Sesame Street* sketch), in DC with Anita and several friends (a cutting from THE WIZARD OF OZ). In both cases, the committee was totally unprepared for anything except a visual presentation; I don't recall being able to get microphones at either event, although fortunately, most of us had enough stage training to be able to project, and we won Best Presentation both times.

You and I have talked politics in SLANAPA, and while as you know I share your depression over recent events, I again urge you to keep up the fight. After all, John Kerry received (even in the official election stats) more votes than

almost anyone in history, and at least half the country didn't vote for Dubya. *[If we can trust election results.]* Current polls show even more are now opposed to our activities in Iraq. *[And yet, strangely enough, our troops are still over there...]* George Bush is not the United States. *[A lot of people don't understand that when you criticize him...]* I still believe there is great value here, but if all the good people leave...

WALTER JAMES WENTZ
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11 January 2005

SO IT GOES arrived Saturday... And although I have never been a ROCKY HORROR cultist or con attendee or even a fan follower of any kind (except for those artists and writers whose fan following consisted of one member I knew of, namely me), I found it an interesting and rather mind-bending experience.

Who'd of thunk any movie would have created such an obsessive following, would have affected so many minds, or would still be showing on a regular schedule so many years later?

And who'd of thunk that Sci-Fi conventions — which one would imagine were populated by pencil-necked geeks wearing funny costumes and quoting character catchphrases at each other — would be such a pressure-cooker of personality clashes, hot babes throwing themselves at you, hi-jinks and general angst?

At any rate, the magazine is a real curiosity, not least because of the interval between issues (27 years — whew, I wonder if that's a record?) *[our mutual friend Taral says no]* and it opened these myopic old eyes to a couple of new worlds.

This weekend I finally got around to watching one of [Tezuka's] children's movies, UNICO IN THE ISLAND OF MAGIC, and although the story is predictable children's fantasy, once all the obligatory gooey-cutesey animals are accommodated, what is left is a mind-blowing concept and spectacle, and some of the characters and settings are simply beyond the hackneyed imaginations of Disney artists. No child, they would think, would be able to follow this complex and disturbing a plot, or tolerate a villain such as the magician Kuruku — a little, glowing, globular being with hands like a lemur, paddle-like feet and a face like that of a praying mantis. He is terrifyingly inhuman, and he lives in a vast, cyclopean, crag-like castle that might have been drawn by Gustave Dore, and is built of the interlocked, Lego-like bodies of countless human beings who have been converted into living wooden puppets. Whew! *[That's one of my favorites too, although I must confess I have forgotten all the details.]*

TARAL WAYNE
245 Dunn Avenue #2111
Toronto, Ontario, Canada m6k 1s6
12 & 15 January 2005

Still on the subject of it being a small world, I am the "sensible Canadian friend" Walt mentions who suggested a bright side to John Kerry's November defeat. The idea that Kerry would only be the fall guy for Bush's mistakes occurred

to me while listening to his plans for Iraq. It seemed there was no difference. Kerry's only plan was that as a nicer guy than George Bush, the nations that wouldn't cooperate in the invasion of Iraq would change their minds and help occupy Iraq. I thought, no fucking way! How stupid did he think we "other" nations were? We thought it was a bad idea to invade Iraq because it was a bad idea, not because it was George Bush doing it, and John Kerry wouldn't change anything. If he became president, he'd get up a press conference and ask for help, then fall flat on his face. Then he'd go on doing what Bush was doing, occupying Iraq unilaterally. but now he and Americans would be bitter all over because the world had rebuffed them. Would good could come of this? Better to let Bush and the Republican white house fail and Americans be pissed off at them, than at the Democrats.

I scanned the locs, and the Phil Foglio mater. After all these years I tend to look back as it as you do — I still don't think it was a deserved Hugo, but it was only symptomatic of what was to come. Was it worth getting that upset over? Perhaps Ted is right too. What was infuriating about Phil wasn't so much that he was a crappy artist — while not a draftsman, he was unfailingly funny — was that he took it all as his due. Even though his subsequent career has been less than stellar, I gather he still has a pretty confident and sunny disposition. Maybe us grumpy pessimists just envy him, I dunno. But over the years, I never noticed Phil's draftsmanship to get much better. Being too satisfied with yourself may not give you the sort of drive you need to improve. Maybe the real reason people got bent so far out of shape was that the fanzine community has been struggling to get Tim Kirk off the ballot for several years, and when he was finally beaten it wasn't by one of the long-deserving fanartists in line for the Hugo, it was this relative newcomer and less than polished pick of a special interest group (the dreaded Trekkies). I think frustration was the main reason Foglio was given such a hard time.

R-LAURRAINE TUTIHASI

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17 May 2005

We apparently both found Noreascon 2 disappointing. I enjoyed this worldcon least of all the worldcons I've attended. My report says that I thought I had overdosed on cons and was planning to take a break for about six months.

I first met Phil Foglio at some small *Trek* cons in Michigan, I think, unless it was an AutoClave. We used to kid him about his head becoming too big to fit inside his bowler hat. He's a really nice guy, though.

STEVEN BLACK

41 Sutter Street #1651
San Francisco CA 94104
5 February – 2 August 2005

What an absolute trip it is reading this time capsule issue of *So It Goes*. Some callow words worrying about Alva Svoboda's encounters with authority when he risked arrest for protesting nuclear weapons.

I was so impressed by the courageous stand he took for his beliefs. When I arrived in California in 1983, he was

one of the first people I looked up. I found him in dingy student housing off Telegraph Avenue. It surprised me that he was embarrassed by his past as a peace warrior. Every so often, I'd hear of him winning a contest for Talking Heads tickets, or we'd run into each other at a film or poetry event. Since he quit APA-50 a few years ago, the connection has languished. *[Alva, or "Aljo," as I used to know him, hasn't seemed very interested in keeping the connection going with me, either.]*

GALEN PEOPLES

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9 March 2008

Hey, Tim. Thanks for the magazines. I don't know where you find the time, energy, and money to do them, and to make them look as good as they do.

Thanks also for soliciting my comments (which of their nature will be the kind of thing that causes most people to find excuses for ending conversations with me prematurely), but I'm afraid there isn't much I can comment on, since 95% of what you write about is fan activity and THE ROCKY HORROR PICTURE SHOW. I know I have nothing to say about the former, and I doubt that I have much to say about the latter; but we'll see.

Regarding "Rocky Horror," I do have something to say, but it will be something impolite, since I know you loved the movie and I didn't. I can't even discuss it in the same terms you do; you called it wild, outrageous, beautiful, fabulous (the music), shocking, surprising, amusing, inspiring, and thought-provoking (this is a paraphrase: you wrote that it made people thoughtful), but I saw nothing in it, even from a reverse perspective, that seemed to correlate with most of these claims. It appears to have amused a number of people, but I doubt that it has done those other things for them (shocked, surprised, etc.); I can state with confidence that it didn't for me. With one exception: the central scene (which I believe you didn't discuss) in which the mad doctor seduces the husband. Unlike most of the movie, which now looks old-hat, this scene is still startling, and surprisingly erotic—especially considering how sterile the movie is in general, despite its drag-queen trappings—and also carries the message of the movie, such as it is: a plea on behalf of sexuality—and not homosexuality, as I would have expected, but bisexuality, or pan-sexuality. Maybe the proselytizing quality was what made it seem slightly offensive to me; or maybe I was responding to it by the standards of its period. *[It's not impolite for you to disagree with me, of course. But how can you say Frankfurter seducing Brad constitutes the "central scene"? My opinion on that is that the scene is meant to be humorous, not erotic. I think the most pivotal, and most shocking, scene(s), is either Eddie's sudden thawing, singing and dancing from "The Vault" and subsequent horrendous murder by axe, or else the dinner scene, where the tablecloth is whipped away to reveal (an obviously plastic model so as to not be too disgusting) Eddie's body underneath.]*

Wild and outrageous, I would say, the movie is not; it tries to present itself as if it were, but it's about as far-out as The Munsters. The music is obviously a pastiche: it sounded

to me like Kurt Weill by way of The Who, with borrowings from Credence or the Stones. But this is a guess; I'm not a music person; someone who would surely be able to pinpoint the sources exactly. Still, the music seemed to me the strongest element of the work, and what it seemed to have been built around; the form, to the extent it had a form, was that of a cabaret show, but one swollen up out of all proportion, like The Amazing Colossal Man.

Now I'm going to be old-fogeyish and point out that for people in certain circles in L.A. in the early 70s the true cult item isn't the film but the stage play, which some people went to see repeatedly, as some later did the film. I never saw it myself, feeling sure I wouldn't like it, but people I knew did, and they said the movie didn't measure up. That I can easily believe, because it looks like a play rather amateurishly filmed.

It's not just that the staging is cluttered, it's that the story doesn't make sense. I can easily imagine that on stage the production itself gave the script a sort of subtext, or a semblance of one; the theatre can do that, but a movie can't. The *form* of it makes no sense: it isn't an accurate parody of the type of movie it appears to be parodying; even the logo in one of the dance numbers is from a studio that didn't make mad-scientist movies. But the movie paraphernalia is really a red herring; the atmosphere isn't Hollywood but Underground; not faux Whale but faux—*very* faux—Warhol.

And as for Tim Curry: did he create the role on the stage? He seems like an understudy filling in for Lou Reed or somebody; and he's not very camp, very gay, or very tranny. The two members of the cast who stand out were Susan Sarandon, who's funny, and Meat Loaf, whose one number brings the thing to life, as Queen Latifah's did "Chicago" in analogous circumstances: finally, here's a person who lives and breathes music. Meat Loaf may not be very graceful, but he's *musical*: he's plainly getting a charge from the music, and channeling it through himself, and it informs everything he does. By comparison, the rest of the movie is just people clomping around on a sound stage. *[My opinion is that Tim Curry is a genius who defined the role. He definitely out-performed and out-sang Lou Reed and/or anyone else with his almost invincible charisma and style. I don't know if he was trying to be campy or gay or "tranny" — I just know that he was incredibly, powerfully effective, in the same way that Freddie Mercury or Pete Burns have been powerful lead male singers.]*

And is it supposed to have influenced the culture somehow? The only influence I can think of is in the "Buffy" series, in the two Cockney vampires; otherwise it just seems like a freak artifact of the 70s—or of the 60s, except that the writer was too stoned then to do it. *[I think it had a tremendous influence on both "Goth" culture and "punk rock."]*

However, I can say one thing for "Rocky Horror": I didn't hate it. I'd expected to, since I dislike camp and female impersonation and generally the whole woman-demeaning side of gay culture; but apparently I don't dislike it as much as I think, since I liked "Hedwig and the Angry Inch" very much and that's what it's all about. In any case, I could easily tell I didn't hate "Rocky Horror" because the DVD contained something I *did* hate, or a simulation of it: the audience response, on an alternate track.

Listening to it on a DVD is obviously not the same as being there, but it enabled me to imagine with no trouble what the experience would be like in a theatre; and it would be my idea of Hell. I expected the comebacks would make the viewing pass faster, but instead they were just fucking annoying. I'd never before grasped how uber-fannish the whole ritual is, and it's fannishness at its most adolescent, dork-assed, and conformist. The audience gives the movie backtalk, but not clever backtalk, not even stupid backtalk that's original with them, but a set of obvious and unfunny lines made up by other people—obvious and unfunny people—and *saying it the same way every time*. To me this is the epitome of dweebdom. Not only does it set my teeth on edge by its teenagish ritual inanity, it makes me cringe for the similar dweeby-dorky things I did as a fan, and gets me embarrassed for my past life all over again. *[The lines were probably funnier when they were a new phenomenon. When they first started, most of the lines were funny and were frequently unexpected.]*

I ALSO HEARD FROM:

Allan Beatty — "Thanks for your fanzine. Vacation finally provided the time to finish reading it. I'll write you a proper loc one of these years."

Sheryl Birkhead — "Nice Alan Hunter fillos. A lot of the names from '78 are now of fans gone on. The Foglio issue rings subtly of the Frank Wu war. The more things change..."

Jeff Hecht — "Thanks for So It Goes 16. It's been years since I've been sent a fanzine — I pretty much gafiated after morphing into a science writer."

Ditmar (Dick Janssen) — "I gather that #16 is the first issue since 1978??? With so many locs from so long ago, I suspect that — try as I might — I shall have nothing to say..."

William Breiding and Tom Jackson send some more addresses. **Hope Leibowitz** says she also sent me some addresses.

Ned Brooks says I should have mentioned that Kelly Freas had just passed, but he actually passed a day or two after I had finished writing the last issue.

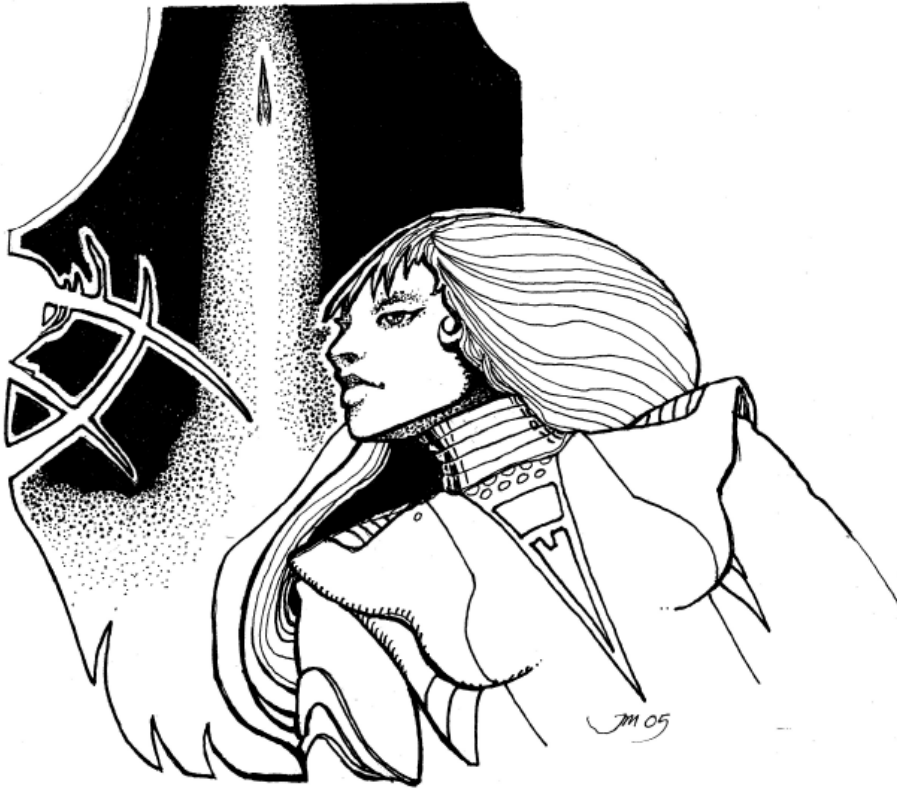
Jim Bodie says he wasn't offended by anything I wrote about him in the last issue. Thanks, Jim!

If **Victoria Vayne, D Potter, Carol Kennedy, Laine Buckwalter and Delphine Woods** all wrote me, as I seem to recall, I sure can't find their letters — sorry! It's possible their acknowledgments were on email and I didn't print them out before they were deleted. Or maybe it was all just a dream...

NOTE ON TYPEFACES:

This issue of So It Goes was prepared in Microsoft Word 2003 using the following typefaces:

- Arial & Arial Narrow
- Times New Roman
- Garamond
- Comic
- **SHOWCARD GOTHIC**
- **Broadway**
- **Cooper Black**
- Old English



art by JIM MCLEOD

So Where Do We Go From Here?

Yes, Virginia (and New York), there *will* be another issue of So It Goes. Obviously one way I have come to deal with the rising costs of paper and postage is to publish only when I absolutely have Something To Say.

Like most other fanzine editors, I am forced to accept the fact that the printed fanzine is passé. Indeed, considering dwindling world resources, it's almost unconscionable to cause the death of more trees in order to sustain one's ego and to communicate with others of kindred spirits. Nevertheless, I somehow stubbornly insist on printing out my zines because those are the type of zines I like to receive — those I can hold in my hands and read, as opposed to having to open a computer screen and then access a file. (Despite the fact that he hasn't been involved in fanzine fandom for a number of years, it was actually Jeff who wrote the lines at the beginning of "A Worldcon in Brownsville" about the joy and glory of mimeographed fanzines.)

Even so, there have been so many fan editors who have decided to "go electronic" that my moniker for **SO IT GOES** may someday soon have to change from "The fanzines that became unstuck in time" to simply "The Last Fanzine."

For **SO IT GOES** to continue, it needs support — I can't just publish and send out into a void, especially considering each copy costs me several dollars. Although the \$10 asking fee (paid for by only one fellow, I might add) may seem steep, that is very little more than what each copy costs me. However, it's not my coffers but my ego which must be fed in this case. I have been carrying quite a few people on my mailing list without ever having heard from them. If you received the last issue and didn't respond to it, and don't respond to this one as well, chances are you'll never get another. The best way to ensure another issue in your mailbox, some (hopefully not too far) distant day from now, is to write me a letter. Considering the aforementioned expense I go to with each issue, I don't think I'm expecting too much by asking for readers to send me a *hard copy* letter of comment, mailed by the post office to my home. I also regard that as a more secure form of communication.

Quite a few people will be receiving **SO IT GOES** for the first time with this issue: names and addresses taken from the rosters of SLANAPA, Apanage, and FAPA, as well as people whom Taral wanted to have see this. Although I am glad to have almost 200 people to whom to send **SO IT GOES**, if not enough people respond (including those who are receiving it "out of the blue" for the first time), I am perfectly prepared to cut my mailing list completely in half.

So if you have any interest at all in what I'm doing, this is time to show it. Not just for my sake, but maybe even for your own as well.