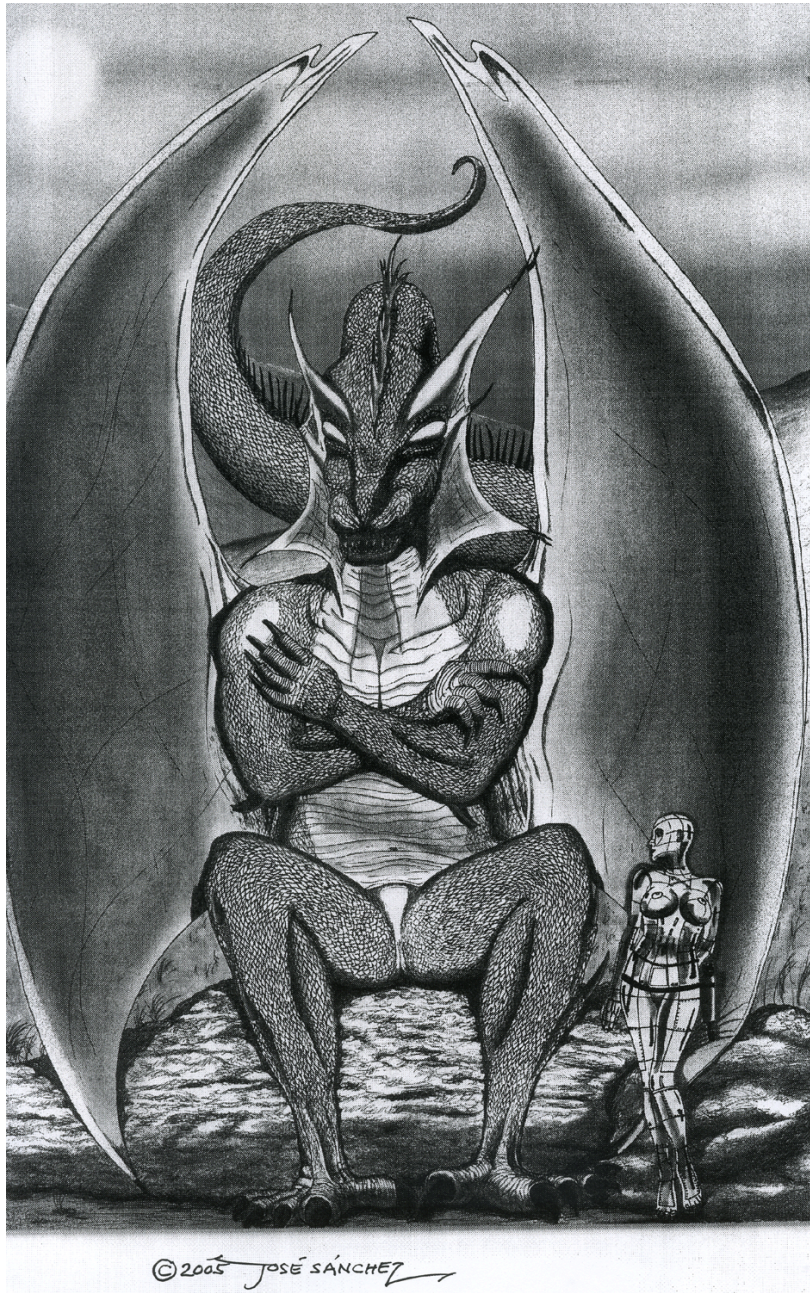


Visions of Paradise

#117: *The Passing Scene*



Visions of Paradise

#117: *the Passing Scene*

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Out of the Depths

Here's a description of a Chinese movie I stumbled upon recently. Longtime readers of VoP might find it interesting:

White Horse Fei Fei

1996, Color, 90 mins / in Mandarin with English subtitles

At a time when China was fighting for its life against Japan, a young soldier's fortunes are changed after encountering and capturing a white horse running wild in the Northern hills. Through training the horse, he and Fei Fei become heroes of the Eighth Army. Through a series of misfortunes and misunderstandings, Fei Fei loses favor and is sent to live a dirty, harsh and humiliating life as a transport horse. Fate again throws them together as prisoners of the Japanese. White Horse Fei Fei resists the enemy and earns an enduring position as a hero in the hearts of the Chinese people. To this day, the legend of Fei Fei lives on in the hills of China. Many believe he still lives and in times of strife, they claim the wind behind his speed can still be felt.

*

On his blog post, George R. R. Martin recently discussed science fiction movies:

Unlike *Star Wars*, *Forbidden Planet* is a film that only grows richer every time you watch it. A monster that makes sense, characters with a little psychological depth, science that isn't just empty technobabble, a sexy heroine, a tragic hero, the awesome caverns of the Krel.

Winner and still champion. The best science fiction film of all time.

Martin then goes on list 8 movies which he claims are superior to *Star Wars*:

Forbidden Planet / *Charly* / *The Time Machine* (1960) / *War of the Worlds* (1953)
Alien / *Aliens* / *The Day the Earth Stood Still* / *2001: A Space Odyssey*

With the possible exception of *Aliens* (which I have not seen), I definitely agree those movies are superior to *Star Wars*, which is perhaps the most overrated sf movie ever. I would also include on the list *Blade Runner* and *Dark City*, the latter one of the most underrated sf movies.

*

The phrase *space opera* has undergone considerable change the past 60 years after being invented by Bob Tucker as a derogatory term for the lowest form of hack science fiction which were no better than hack westerns transported into space. By the 1970s it was being used to describe any science fiction adventures set between worlds in spaceships. But with the advent of *new space opera*, the term seems to have broadened again. **Look to Windward**, one of the seminal works of the "new" space opera by Iain M. Banks, is almost entirely a planetary romance, as was the first story I read in the new collection **The New Space Opera**, edited by

Gardner Dozois and Jonathan Strahan, "Saving Tiamaat", by Gwennyth Jones.

Not that I am complaining, since I prefer planetary romances to other forms of space opera. But there are considerable differences between the two forms both in theory and in execution.

Jonathan Strahan, one of the editors of **The New Space Opera** mused over those differences on his blog *Notes from Coode Street* <http://www.jonathanstrahan.com.au/wp/> as follows:

"On space opera: space opera happens in space. If it's not in space, it's not space opera. Also, no, planetary romances are not space opera. They come out of a different tradition—as Charles [M. Brown, editor of **Locus**] completely correctly pointed out to me today. A planetary romance comes from the lost civilisation tradition, while space opera grows out of both the western and the naval action adventure. The new space opera—a group to which [Scott] Westerfeld's novel clearly belongs—is "new" because it's darker, it doesn't necessarily involve the triumph of man or humanity, it has nifty new technology, and it has actual characterisation."

In execution, *planetary romances* tend to involve anthropology and sociology, the exploration of alien races and societies. C.J. Cherryh is probably the master of such stories (her recent 9-volume *Foreigner* series being a prime example), while *space opera* tends to be more concerned with politics and warfare (such as Alastair Reynolds' *Revelation* series). While I prefer the former to the latter, if including *planetary romances* under the *space opera* umbrella causes more of it to be published, I'm all for it, even if they are basically different types of animals.

*

I don't usually write letters to the media, since they are pretty much a close-minded, opinionated bunch uncaring about the opinions of the public. But after the **Newark Star-Ledger** spent an entire week heralding the "greatness" of *The Sopranos* in anticipation of their last episode, I reach my boiling point and sent this letter to their only columnist who seemed to echo my opinion of the show. The letter was intended to support his column; I was very surprised when it ended up being printed in the paper itself:

Dear Mark,

Thank you for your column on Sunday, June 10, regarding **The Sopranos**. I feel the same way that you do about **The Sopranos** and **The Godfather** and **Raging Bull**. I have never understood why Italian-Americans such as Pacino, Brando, Coppola, DeNiro, and Scorsese have perpetrated the stereotype of all Italian-Americans as anti-intellectual *goombas* and *stoons*. Surely there are other Italian qualities they might have portrayed. Any of them ever heard of the Renaissance or all the great artists and scientists of Italian descent?

I have been very displeased recently as well with the **Star-Ledger's** heralding **The Sopranos** every day on the front page of their entertainment section as if it is great art, and perhaps the greatest tv series ever. Racist stereotypes cannot be great, no matter what other values the series might have.

Robert Sabella

*

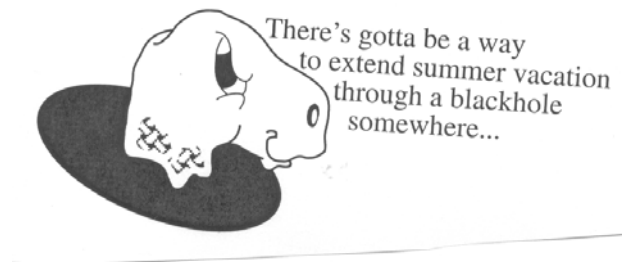
Book-buying is definitely a disease! I know my faithful readers have heard this before, but I was determined to buy no more than 12 books this entire year, finally making a dent in my huge pile of books waiting to be read. However, in less than six months of 2007 I have already bought 17 books but have only read 12 books. *sigh* Granted, this is a pittance compared to the buying (and reading) of Joseph Major and Don D’Ammassa, but continuing to buy more books than I read each year will never decrease that Books-to-be-Read pile. Here is the tally of my total books bought the past half-dozen years:

Year	Fiction	Nonfiction	Total
2001	13	5	18
2002	19	2	21
2003	21	1	22
2004	20	0	20
2005	23	6	29
2006	25	3	28
2007	13	4	17 (by June 30)

As a result of this out-of-control buying, my Books-To-Read list has grown larger too:

SF Novels (including series)	34
SF Short Fiction	16
Historical Fiction	37
Nonfiction	25
Total	112

At my current rate of reading about 25 books per year, if I do not buy another book for the next 5 years, I might get caught up on all my reading. But if I continue buying more books each year than I can possibly read—as I have done the past 3 years—the list will grow and grow and grow...



The Passing Scene

March 2007

Friday, March 2: Andy has been training for his new job at Embassy Suites, but because they are remodeling some rooms all trainees have been given two weeks' unpaid vacation. Andy is spending one of those weeks with Mark and Kate at Myrtle Beach. Since our nephew Gabe is home temporarily from Japan—where he has taught the past few years and is currently preparing to attend grad school there—the boys invited him to join them at Myrtle Beach.

Sunday, March 4: Fei Fei is currently staying in Princeton faculty housing until she and Silvio sell their house in Illinois. This morning Jean, Mark, Kate and I arrived at her apartment at 10:00am and spent an hour opening her boxes which were delivered from Illinois, as well as re-arranging her apartment from a storage depot to a living space. ☺ Afterwards the four of us went to brunch at Forbes College. Fei Fei lived in that dorm as an undergraduate, so when she was hired as a faculty member they immediately offered her 5 free meals a week, which we used for brunch this morning. It was a very good brunch, and an overall enjoyable day.

Wednesday, March 7: One of my sophomores Padma has been hanging around the Math Lab a lot lately, sharing her feelings with me. She is a nice kid who does not have a good relationship with her immigrant parents. She is very self-motivated and enjoys excelling in school, but finds it frustrating that her friends do not share similar motivations. She has been accepted at a private school next year, and plans to attend it, which is too bad since I don't want to lose her.

Saturday, March 10: After school yesterday I drove to the Sheraton Hotel for a two-day NJEA Winter Leadership Conference. I picked the topic "Legal Regulations." Since our president is retiring this year, somebody in the association needs to know the legal aspects affecting the membership. Between last night and this morning I spent 6 hours listening to two NJEA reps discuss statute and laws, but they were very interesting and I learned a lot. They also fed us very well: last night's dinner (butternut squash soup, caesar salad, stuffed chicken marsala and carrot cake); buffet breakfast this morning (scrambled eggs, turkey sausage, pan-fried potatoes, fruit and pastry and orange juice); and a deli lunch (turkey on a whole wheat role, vegetable wrap, potato salad, cole slaw and bowties in tomato sauce). I met another district teacher who recognized me from Rep Council meetings although I did not know him. As vice-president I am fairly well-known among the building reps from the district's 14 schools. He was very interesting to sit and chat with and kept me from being bored eating alone.

Tuesday, March 13: Things are a bit crazy at school. I am involved in a feud between one supervisor and her lead teacher, which is getting messy and has reached the ass't superintendent's level. Trying to be unbiased—which is not easy since that lead teacher is one of my closest friends at school—I think this supervisor is not only incompetent but vindictive, blaming everybody around her for her own mistakes, and retaliating whenever they question her. If the assistant superintendent does not take any action, we will file a grievance against the supervisor.

Saturday, March 17: We had an unexpected snow day yesterday after two days of temperatures in the 60s. This three day weekend lets me to catch up on some schoolwork. My back has been bothering me lately, undoubtedly due to stress, so this chance to relax a bit is very welcome.

Yesterday's storm was so bad that when Andy, Mark and Kate were driving back from Myrtle Beach Friday night they only got as far as Baltimore before the roads and traffic got so bad they stayed at a hotel overnight. They drove back to TCNJ this morning—where Mark and Kate both live in off-campus housing—and Andy arrived home about noon. Jean and I spent 90 minutes snow-blowing the driveway and walk. The snow was so deep and so packed that the old snow-blower would definitely have been unable to do it, so the new one has paid off already.

Fei Fei had trouble due to the storm as well. She phoned me from Philadelphia Airport this morning where she was waiting to fly to Illinois to visit Silvio and her parents during her Spring Break. Her flight was cancelled Friday, and she had a 90-minute delay today, which made her miss her connecting flight in Chicago. She arranged a later flight, but it gave her a three-hour wait in Chicago, not fun. She was understandably grumpy and is definitely ready for Silvio to get a job in NJ, sell the house, and move here with her.

Jean and I spent this afternoon tutoring Janel and Michelle. Janel is doing Differential Equations, which I have not done in 40 years, but I was able to figure it out with the help of her textbook. Michelle and Jean did Euler's Method, an AP Calculus BC topic.

Wednesday, March 21: I am now teaching material in AP Calculus BC which I have not taught in several decades, so I am doing a lot more preparation than previously. Because of this, I have fallen behind several days in grading tests, which almost never happens to me. I need to tighten up my time-management somehow before I fall even further behind. A large part of the problem is that I am still spending so much time at school running around at everybody's beck and call, which forces me to do all my preparation and grading at home.

Saturday, March 24: Yesterday was our first demonstration lesson by a prospective math teacher. We currently have 5 math openings for next year, with another possible opening. Filling math positions is very difficult nowadays. We had one math special ed position which we never filled this entire year. It was taken by a special ed English teacher for half the year until she took an English teaching position. Since then we have had 5 low-level classes with 9 or more special ed students (and as many as 20 students total) which are supposed to have a special ed co-teacher but do not have one.

I was soooo stressed yesterday that my chiropractor noticed how much stiffer my back is than usual. This morning the weather was finally nice—41°—so I returned to my routine of taking a 30 minute walk immediately after breakfast. My exercise routine could be better too. I do stretching in the morning and abdomen/back strengthening exercises every evening, but I rarely get to the YMCA or use the Nordik Track even twice a week. I need to get to the YMCA more often, take more walks, and do some yoga with Jean. Andy is the only one of us currently doing yoga on a semi-regular basis.

April 2007

Friday, April 6: Yesterday was my last day of school before Spring Break. The Asian-American Club had a dance, so I got home at 11pm with a bunch of work to do: 4 tests and 2 projects to grade, and Calculus and Statistics to prepare for the final push before the AP test in early May. But that work does not seem so tedious with an entire week's vacation ahead.

Yesterday Jean picked up Ceil at the airport, so she will be here the next two weeks.

Monday, April 9: Saturday was our traditional Easter Saturday family get-together at Stephen & Doreen's new townhouse. It is fairly nice, with two master bedrooms and a finished basement which would be ideal as a library/office. Jean and I have not considered buying a townhouse when we retire—which is tentatively three years away—rather than a free-standing house because of Jean's desire to garden and mine to have space for all my books. But we'll be in no rush to sell our huge house until the boys are settled and we find something suitable.

Friday, April 13: One math teacher is going on medical leave for the rest of the year, and another math teacher fell down her basement stairs two months ago and is also out for the year. Her substitute is finally settled, so now I am spending time with a second substitute, whose only teaching experience is adjuncting at Rutgers. The teacher left me a huge pile of ungraded tests and unfinished marking period grades. Just what I need, more work to do!

Monday, April 16: Yesterday a Noreaster left nearly 8" of rain in Jean's rain gauge and water in our basement, so Jean and Andy used the water-vac several times last night. This morning much of the state was flooded, with 30 state roads reported as closed, and a state of emergency declared by acting governor Richard Codey (our real governor Corzine is in the hospital following a car accident on the Parkway in which the car was traveling 90mph, the state trooper driving was using his cell phone, and the governor was not wearing a seat belt!). I had driven two miles towards school this morning when Jean called my cell phone and told me the principal had phoned to tell her school was closed. I phoned my car-pool partner Nancy who had just gotten a call from her husband while she was driving to meet me. The principal called us as soon as he got the message himself since he knew we leave too early to get the computerized message.

This day off is bad for my AP Calculus class since we only have 3 weeks left until the test itself, and I am behind the point where I would like to be with them. Switching to the BC curriculum this year has been more stressful than I anticipated. ☹

Sunday, April 22: Jean and I attended a luncheon at TCNJ where Mark was inducted into the National Finance Hall of Fame. Of the 187 seniors graduating in business, 44 qualified for the three honor societies: 25 in general business, 11 in finance, and 9 in economics. It is good to know Mark is near the top of his class in college as he was in high school.

Friday night Jean and I went to Red Lobster for dinner, using Discover Card bonus money. We both had jumbo shrimp with stuffed flounder, plus Red Lobster has absolutely delicious cheese biscuits (two of which I brought home for lunch yesterday). Afterwards I went to Barnes &

Noble where I bought Richard Paul Russo's book **The Rosetta Codex**.

Tuesday, April 24: I've gone on a bit of an online shopping spree. **The Intellectual Devotional** from QPBC is a daily reader with articles from seven fields (such as Literature, Science, History, etc.). I ordered the 8th volume in Alexander McCall Smith's *Ladies 1st Detective Agency* for Jean for Mother's Day, and Chris de Burgh's new import cd **The Storyman** from Amazon.com.

Thursday, April 26: Another crazy day at school. The principal consulted me twice, and two teachers came to see me with problems. One has been told he is traveling to another school part-time next year, and the other has been called to a meeting with the district personnel director who might withhold his stipend next year. Meanwhile, I went crazy trying to finish next year's supply order on time since I was having a lot of trouble with the website.

Saturday, April 28: a1.com is an online bookstore which sells remaindered books at cheap prices, and this weekend they are having their first-ever warehouse sale, which happens to be right in town. I do not need to buy any new books, but how can I resist a remaindered book warehouse sale? ☺ Anyway, I bought two books on my *Recommended Reading* list for a total of \$7.00: Gordon Van Gelder's collection of **F&SF** stories about Mars **Fourth Planet From the Sun**, and Arturo Perez-Reverte's novel **Queen of the South**.

Mark has been going to a specialist for about 6 months getting allergy medicine which the nurse at TCNJ injects every week. This is supposedly a long-term cure for his terrible allergies which Jean feared could lead to worse conditions if left untreated. Mark said his allergies have been much better recently, so presumably the treatment is working.



May 2007

Wednesday, May 2: This morning my supervisor and I worked on next year's math schedule, and one of the entries was 2 Calculus and 3 Sequential Trig classes for Jean. Pam and the principal went to see the Personnel Director who had proclaimed that Jean could not work for me. But they convinced him otherwise, since when Jean and I got home from a wake this afternoon, there was a job offer on the answering machine. It will be good having Jean at PHS next year, not to mention how nice it will be financially finally having two fulltime salaries. ☺

The wake was for our friend Rick's father who was 89-years old, a ripe old age. He had a stroke last September and went downhill both mentally and physically from there. I first met him in the 70s when Rick, Jean and I worked at Paul VI High School. Several times I visited Rick and Barb during their summer vacations down the shore, and his parents were always there as well. He was a very active man, working fulltime until he was 75, active in his church, as well as a Board of Education member, and a member of a masonic lodge. Even in retirement he was active, which is the best way to be, and might account for his living so long relatively healthy.

Sunday, May 6: This has been a very busy weekend. I've been writing an Honors Algebra 2 test, preparing my *Morris Area Math Alliance* talk on "Writing in the Math Curriculum" for next Thursday, grading my mock 4-day AP Calculus test, writing a *PTHEA Newsletter*, and writing/submitting two AP Audits. Pam actually asked the other AP Statistics teacher to do one of the audits, but she dumped it onto my desk, refusing to do it herself. Since she is retiring, what could I do? I am not an administrator, so I feel awkward complaining about one of my teachers. I had no choice but to do the job myself, like it or not.

There are only 5 weeks left of teaching this year, including 2 AP tests, the senior prom, and Algebra 2 and Honors Algebra 2 projects, so basically the worst of the endless work is over. I am starting to think about what I will do this summer, which is always a pleasant thing to do. ☺

Saturday, May 12: Next year's math schedule at PHS has gotten more confused. Originally we had 7 openings for next year, but one former student to whom we offered a job has decided not to return to Parsippany, but teach out-of-state away from her family, while a current teacher is wavering over whether she actually wants to go to out west or stay at PHS. Right now only 2 new teachers are confirmed for next year, although Pam has made offers to 2 others. That still leaves us 2 or 3 openings.

This afternoon is Kate's graduation party, followed by my nephew Jeff's Confirmation party. Because of the parties, Andy is working 7am-3:00pm instead of his usual 3-11pm schedule.

Tuesday, May 15: The orthopedic doctor told Jean yesterday that she has a small tear in her knee as well as loose cartilage. She told him it is intolerable when she is on her feet teaching. Since Jean rarely complains, it must be pretty bad for her to say that. She made an appointment with a surgeon to see what he can do about it.

Today Jean drove to Oriskany, NY, to pick up Ceil for Mark's graduation. She will stay there

overnight and they will both return to Budd Lake tomorrow.

Thursday, May 17: We had a violent rainstorm yesterday. Traffic was so bad it took me an hour to get home from the chiropractor, and there was no power when I got here. Jean and Ceil drove through rain most of their way home from Oriskany, but fortunately they did not have too much trouble. I had a delayed school opening today due to power outages in the district.

Sunday, May 20: This was Mark's graduation weekend, but the weather forecast rain both days. We arrived at TCNJ Friday morning at 8:20am. Kate's family arrived at 6:30am because of fear of traffic congestion, then they slept in their van for an hour. The main ceremony was outdoors where we had 8 people attending: Jean, me, Ceil, Janel, Michelle, Peter, Susan, and Jesse. While it did not rain, it was cool and threatening, so the Business ceremony was moved indoors, which meant only 3 of us could attend. Peter, Susan, Jesse, Janel and Michelle went shopping after the main ceremony, then met us and Kate's family afterwards at Superstar East Chinese buffet, which was an excellent place. Its menu was much more varied and authentic than most buffets.

Yesterday it rained most of the day, so Mark's graduation party was in the house. Fortunately our house is big enough that even with 50 people it was not crowded. Besides family, many of our friends were there, including Alan and Denise, Rick and Barb, Drew, and Fei Fei. The food was excellent, consisting of baked ziti, sausage & pepper, and chicken parmigiana, as well as salad and two 5' subs (which were Mark's choice). We have tons of leftovers, including drinks and cake, so we will not be cooking much this entire week. ☺

Today Mark borrowed Kate's father's trailer and got two couches, a wall unit, a rug, a coffee table, 2 end tables and 2 lamps from neighbors who are redecorating their house. It cost him \$285, but it was worth it.

Wednesday, May 23: Last night Alan & Denise came to eat some delicious leftovers with us. I got home at 6:30pm because of a Rep Council meeting (which might not sound late to you business types, but I reach school at 6:50am each morning). At the end of the meeting, I discussed with the new president what Alan told me about the NJEA believing all lead teacher stipends are pensionable, and that they are willing to fight for it. Since our chief negotiator ignored me when I told him about it last fall, the new president gave me permission to pursue it myself, and Alan, who is an NJEA pension consultant, will help me do so.

Jean visited the orthopedic surgeon yesterday—on her birthday—who scheduled her for arthroscopic knee surgery next Thursday. Depending on the extent of the damage he finds, she will either be on crutches for 4 days or 4 weeks. Ouch!

Thursday, May 24: The start of Memorial Day weekend was a day early thanks to a leftover snow day. Tonight Jean, Ceil, Alan, Denise and I went to our traditional Chinese Buffet dinner whenever Ceil visits, the end of a solid week of eating bookended by two Chinese buffets. The next two days Jean and I are taking Ceil home. That will leave me two days to do school work and other chores.

Saturday, May 26: We're back from a two-day trip to Oriskany. It was a pleasant ride through

rural New York State. Ceil took us to dinner at a family restaurant called Kirby's. While we were at her house we did a few chores, as usual. We rearranged Ceil's living room to give her more space and enable her to use the front door (rather than only having one exit from the house onto the breezeway), and cut some tree branches. Jean did some gardening as well.

After supper tonight we did a bit of shopping. Jean dropped me off at Barnes & Noble where I bought Eric Brown's **Helix**. I am currently reading Ross King's **Michelangelo and the Pope's Ceiling**, a fascinating historical nonfiction which reads as easily as fiction.

Tuesday, May 29: I have an absolutely horrendous head cold which apparently is traveling through the school. I had a regular appointment this afternoon with Dr. Valeri, and he ended up prescribing an antibiotic and cough medicine for me as well.

Thursday, May 31: This morning was Jean's knee surgery. We arrived at the out-patient clinic at 8:30am and left at 11:30am. Jean has crutches and is supposed to put no more than 50% of her weight on her right foot for the next 4 weeks. Since she expected not to be able to put any weight on it, walking with the crutches is actually easier than she expected it to be. Jean plans to sleep on the pullout bed in the living room while she is on crutches.

Cast of Characters

Alan & Denise	our closest friends who were our neighbors when we lived in Hopatcong
Andy	our older son who recently graduated from East Stroudsburg University
Ceil	Jean's 86-year old aunt who is the spryest senior I know!
David	The third Sabella brother who teaches math at PHS; his wife Karen, daughter Jillian
Drew	Andy and Mark's best friend from high school, now a family friend
Fei Fei	former student of mine, now a close family friend I refer to as my "daughter"
Jean	my wife
Mark	our younger son who recently graduated from The College of NJ; his girlfriend Kate
Michael	youngest Sabella brother, wife Johna, children Janel, Michelle and Jeffrey
Peter & Susan	Jean's brother and sister-in-law, their sons Jesse and Gabe
Rick & Barb	our friends from when Jean and I taught at Paul VI High School; their son Chris
Silvio	Fei Fei's husband
Stephen	second Sabella brother, his wife Doreen, sons Chris, Kyle and Ryan



On the Lighter Side

1st Affair: A married man was having an affair with his secretary. One day they went to her place and made love all afternoon. Exhausted, they fell asleep and didn't wake up until 8pm. The man hurriedly dressed and told his lover to take his shoes outside & rub them in the grass & dirt. He put them on and drove home. "Where have you been?" demanded his wife as soon as he walked in the door.

"I'm having an affair with my secretary. We were in bed all afternoon."

"Liar," she screamed, looking down at his shoes. "You've been playing golf!"

2nd Affair: A couple had two beautiful daughters, but they always talked about having a son. They decided one last time to try for a baby. Sure enough, the woman became pregnant and had a baby boy. The husband is looking at his son and realizes it is the ugliest baby he has ever seen.

He tells his wife: "There is no way this can be my son. Look at our two lovely daughters. This child is so ugly. Have you been fooling around behind my back?"

The wife smiles sweetly at him: "Not this time."

3rd Affair: A mortician is working on the body of Schwartz who is about to be cremated. As he prepares the body, he observes that Schwartz has the largest privates he has ever seen. He says, "I can't destroy this. I must save it for posterity." So he removes it, and takes it home with him. He gets home & pulls it out.

"Look," he tells his wife. "It's the biggest one I have ever seen!"

She pales and sits down. "My god," she gasps, "Schwartz is dead."

4th Affair: A woman is in bed with her lover when she hears the front door open downstairs.

"Hurry, stand in the corner," she commands him.

She rubs him all over with baby oil and then shakes talcum powder all over him.

"Don't move until I tell you to. Pretend you are a statue." Her husband comes into the bedroom and glances at the corner. "What's this?" he inquires.

"Oh, I was at the Smith's and they had one. I liked it so much, I went and got one for us." No more was said and they went about their evening, and got into bed. About 2am. the husband gets up, goes down to the kitchen and prepares a sandwich. He grabs a beer from the fridge and

heads back upstairs with his food and beer.

"Here," he says to the statue. "Have this. I stood like that at the Smith's for two days and no one there offered me a darn thing."

5th Affair: A man walked into a bar & ordered a beer.

"Certainly sir, that will be 1 cent."

"One cent!" the man exclaimed. He glanced down at the menu in front of him. "How much for juicy steak and a bottle of wine?"

"A nickel" was the reply.

"A NICKEL? Where is the owner of this place?"

The barman responded, " He's upstairs with my wife."

"What is he doing upstairs with your wife?"

"The same thing I am doing to his business down here."

6th Affair: Jake was dying. His wife sat beside him on the bed. He looked up at her and said weakly, "I have something I need to confess to you."

She smiled and said, "There's no need to."

"No," he insisted. "I want to die at peace. I slept with your sister, your best friend, her best friend and your mother!"

"I know," said his wife. "Now just rest and let the poison work."

*

As a young man who was also an avid golfer was about to tee off, an old gentleman shuffled onto the tee and asked if he could accompany the young man as he was golfing alone. Not being able to say no, he allowed the old gent to join him.

To his surprise the old man played fairly quickly. He didn't hit the ball far, but plodded along consistently and didn't waste much time. Finally they reached the 9th fairway and the young man found himself with a tough shot. There was a large pine tree directly between his ball and the green.

After he spent several minutes debating how to hit the shot, the old man said, "You know, when I

was your age I'd hit the ball right over that tree."

With that challenge placed before him, the youngster swung hard, hit the ball up, right smack into the top of the tree trunk and it thudded back on the ground not a foot from where it had originally lay.

The old man offered one more comment, "Of course, when I was your age that pine tree was only three feet tall."

*

Lawyer: Was that the same nose you broke as a child?

Witness: I only have one, you know.

Accused, Defending His Own Case: Did you get a good look at my face when I took your purse?
(The defendant was found guilty and sentenced to ten years in jail.)

Lawyer: What is your date of birth?

Witness: July 15th.

Lawyer: What year?

Witness: Every year.

Lawyer: Can you describe what the person who attacked you looked like?

Witness: No. He was wearing a mask.

Lawyer: What was he wearing under the mask?

Witness: Er...his face.

Lawyer: This myasthenia gravis — does it affect your memory at all?

Witness: Yes.

Lawyer: And in what ways does it affect your memory?

Witness: I forget.

Lawyer: You forget. Can you give us an example of something that you've forgotten?

Lawyer: How old is your son, the one living with you?

Witness: Thirty-eight or thirty-five, I can't remember which.

Lawyer: How long has he lived with you?

Witness: Forty-five years.

Lawyer: What happened then?

Witness: He told me, "I have to kill you because you can identify me."

Lawyer: Did he kill you?

Witness: No.

Lawyer: How far apart were the vehicles at the time of the collision?

Lawyer: You were there until the time you left, is that true?