

**MonSFFA's Executive:**

Bernard Reischl  
President

Keith Braithwaite  
Vice-President

Sylvain St-Pierre  
Treasurer

**Appointed Positions:**

PR, Membership, editor of *Impulse*  
Keith Braithwaite

Web Master  
Bernard Reischl

Audio/Video  
Wayne Glover

Editor of WARP  
Cathy Palmer-Lister

**Board of Advisors (BoA)**

All members in good standing! Please  
help us plan our activities!

**On the Cover**

***Easter Egg Hunt: Colonial Marine Style***

Based on premises seen the *Aliens* film by  
James Cameron, but I have gone a little but  
further. I figured the Marines need to have some  
downtime and enjoy a peaceful Easter Egg hunt...  
Marine style! – Bernard Reischl

**Write to us:**

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**MonSFFA CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

Except where noted, all MonSFFA meetings are held  
Sundays at 1:00 PM to 5:00 PM  
at the Days Inn, St-François Room,  
1005 Guy Street, corner René Lévesque.

**Programming is subject to change.**

April 22



**April 22, 2007**

Guards, Ghouls & Stargate

Stargate: A 10-Year Retrospective

**May 27, 2007**

Win, Lose, or Draw

Sci-Fi Advertising

**June 10, 2007**

Fan Audio / Radio Drama

**July 29, 2007**

MonSFFA BBQ

Parc Angrigon

(August 5, 2007 rain date)

**August 19, 2007**

MonSFFA Member Workshops

**September 23, 2007**

MonSFFA Garage Sale & Auction

**October 21, 2007**

Myths, Gods, and Legends of Ancient Times

**November 18, 2007**

WorldCon In Nippon, Anticipation, and Local Con Roundup

Fan Films

**December 8, 2007**

MonSFFA's 20th Anniversary Dinner & Dance

Days Hotel, 6:00 P.M.

Tickets on sale now, 35\$

(40\$ at the door)

December 8

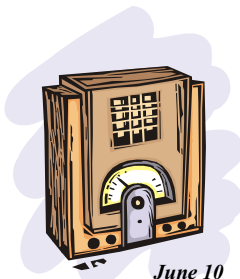
May 27



July 29



June 10



September 23



October 21



November 18



**The Real Fine Print:** WARP is published quarterly by the Montreal Science Fiction and Fantasy Association (MonSFFA), a non-profit organization of fans interested in sharing their love of science fiction and fantasy. The opinions expressed in WARP are those of the individual writers and do not necessarily reflect those of MonSFFA or the editor. To reprint any article, please contact the writer, or ask the editor to pass on your request. The use of copyrighted material is generally discouraged, but it's hard to talk about Star Wars without stepping on toes; our apologies to the copyright holders, no serious infringement is intended. This is an amateur production, your tolerance is appreciated by your fans.

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Dear MonSFFen:

I got my kicks by reading Warp 66! Many thanks for it. Volume 21...who'd have thought it would go so long? May it keep going for as long as someone wants to read it and enjoy, as I do. Here are some comments...

Great art on the cover. Jean-Pierre Normand, well, who else? This artwork named 'Polaris' might coincide with the re-naming of Toronto Trek to Polaris. An era ends, and let's see what begins.

My loc...my ophthalmologist gave me a relatively clean bill of ocular health on January 31st, so things look good, in more ways than one. Next job for me is to go and get new glasses so I can see clearly for the first time in months. Right now, I have spent this week, and will spend the rest of it, ensconced in the potential juror lounge

at the Toronto Court House on University Ave., on jury duty. Yawn... at least, I've been able to create lots of locs with my Palm Tungsten and keyboard. This boring wait has turned out to be very productive.

I hope those who wish to go to the Japanese Worldcon get their wish. Yvonne is going to the 2007 International Space Development Conference in Austin, Texas, and if we can save enough, I might be able to go, too.

Fanfic has changed greatly. The Web has allowed anyone to publish their fan fiction, no matter its quality. Lots of us must remember seeing huge reams of paper, full of fanfic, Cerlox bound. That kind of fanzine is a lot bigger than anything I might get today.

I'm sorry I haven't been able to work on a list of Canadian conventions...it's been a busy time, with the eye surgery, jury duty, work here and there...my time hasn't been my own since New Year's. I hope to change that soon.

An idea to raise funds for the club...MonSFFA has made lots of funny films over the years, so how about putting them all on one DVD, and selling them as MonSFFA Movies Vol. 1? Promotion can go around the world, and help you rake in money to keep the treasury filled.

All for now, time is short, and so am I. Take care, and perhaps see you at Ad Astra the beginning of next month? Sure hope so.

Yours,

Lloyd Penney

Hi, Lloyd!

So glad you enjoyed WARP 66! No, I'm sure no one expected us to be still around in the 21<sup>st</sup> century! How time flies – this year, MonSFFA celebrates its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary with a dinner and dance on December 8.

I hope you and Yvonne will let us know how the International space Development Conference goes. It sounds very interesting.

We have since received your Convention list. Many thanks! We rely on it to put together the MonSFFA list of events for our web page.

I never did make it to Ad Astra. There was a blinding snowstorm that weekend. I got as far as picking up Glenn Grant in Montreal, and then my windshield wipers gave up the ghost and I spent the rest of the day in a garage.

But maybe we'll meet up at the convention formerly known as TTrek!

Yours in Fandom,  
Cathy

E-mail from Guy H. Lillian III:

Forgive me if I'm wrong, but I don't \*think\* I've sent you a copy of THE ZINE DUMP #14 yet, but I must make sure, as your zine is mentioned in it, and I want to keep receiving it. Greatly appreciated, people.

Please note that CHALLENGER #25 will be on line RSN, and I mean it, at [www.challzine.net](http://www.challzine.net). LOCs not only appreciated but begged for....

See you in the pages -- GHLIII

### From TZD:

*Warp 65-66 / One of the best club/genzines, Warp's latest issues are filled with variety. #65 showcases lots of photos, illustrating a trip to Toronto Trek, a furry fandom convention – not as “interesting” as the one depicted on CSI – and a picnic in the park. The printed word is also well in evidence: an excellent (uncredited) article on Egyptian Apis bulls, further chapters of a 1913 fantasy, and more of Nikolai Krimp's The Last Mage. Carl Phillips' section of club news mentions a BBQ, cons, and club meetings. Warp 66 – cue theme music from the sixties – is even better, with another piece on Egyptian animal idolatry, Sylvain St-Pierre on preparing for the Japanese worldcon, the lucky lady. A set of very creative media fiction (Christmas-based!) is accompanied by Mireille Dion's guide to writing fan fiction (I shudder at the thought of “L/V” fiction), reviews of recent SF flicks (Children of Men – superb), more photos, more Last Mage, and a last page quiz: spot the Vulcan! What a merry group. I see no politicking for the 2009 worldcon bid from the city, which makes me wonder if some sort of intracity contretemps is in progress, a la the early infighting in Atlanta for 1986. If so, get over it! I'm anxious to go!*

Hi, Guy!

Thanks so much sending The Zine Dump. I do enjoy reading your reviews. Keith Braithwaite, MonSFFA's own 'zine reviewer, received Challenger in the mail, and tells me he plans to review it for WARP. Congratulations on

another Hugo nomination!

The article on the Apis bulls was written by Barbara Silverman, and it was my fault she was uncredited. She is very interested in mythology, and lately has been researching animal mythology in particular.

BTW, Sylvain is a man's name, but he is still a lucky guy! Subject of lots of envy! And on the subject of names, Carl Phillips is a pseudonym for a MonSFFan worried about seeing his name appear too often. (LOL)

I'm not sure why we don't have more articles pushing Anticipation, but it isn't due to any nefarious reason. The chair of the bid, René Walling, is a MonSFFan, and he has been invited to speak to the group on more than one occasion. Anticipation will be a topic for our November meeting, as well. Maybe it's because we are too close to it – we assume everybody knows all there is to know! Hey, René, how about an article for WARP??

Yours in Fandom,  
Cathy



Dear MonSFFEN,

I have just finished reading Warp # 66, and I have a few of comments for your attention.

First, I would really like to thank you for your efforts in keeping Warp going on in its current paper format. I really do enjoy holding the paper version of WARP, however, I do have a question. Having great cover art piece for Warp 66 (donated by Jean-Pierre Norman) is really nice, however, it would have been a great cover if it had been in colour. Does it really cost that much more to do just one page in colour? The rest of the magazine would remain in B/W. Anyway, I do appreciate the costs involved in producing WARP, so I understand the limitations imposed by economics concerns. SIGH!

Second, I would like to thank you for your personal efforts in finding and attaching a picture of a Red Tricycle with Blue Ribbons on the handlebars for my story The Perfect Gift! I was really touched when I realised that you had taken the time to have the word

Enterprise printed on the Tricycle. That was a really nice touch on your part – again, THANKS!

Third, here however I would like to point out a slight error of omission in the Last Words! # 6. Somehow, in the answer for the # 5 question the movie title was omitted by mistake. I grant you that this was a long answer since it involved three actors, and three character names plus the movie name. For the record, the movie's name was *Evolution*.

Thanks,

Fernando Novo

Still Non-President Member  
of MONSFFA

Dear Fern,

You can't escape forever! Sooner or later you *will* be President! Alice for vice? (Just joking, don't shoot!)

Colour covers are indeed very expensive, about \$1.25 a page more.

But I agree – that was a gorgeous cover!! It also appears on the cover of a new anthology, *Polaris*, edited by Julie E. Czerneda, so we are in good company. To see it in colour, go to [http://www.svbell.com/jpnormand/index\\_jpn.htm](http://www.svbell.com/jpnormand/index_jpn.htm)

and scroll to page 8.

About the tricycle, my pleasure!! There is of course an ulterior motive – I like to keep my contributors happy so they'll keep contributing. :-). Whoops, sorry about dropping the movie title!!

Yours in fandom,

Cathy



Cathy,

I would like to this occasion to thank the members of MonSFFA who contributed to the MonSFFA meeting this month by bringing and displaying their Gerry Anderson collectables. I really was happy to see a full table of models, books, displays, memorabilia about the universe of Gerry Anderson. I found that this definitely contributed greatly to the presentations that both Keith and myself presented at the March meeting. It generated a real interest from the members present, and sparked their interest in this subject matter. I would

strongly suggest that this continue for other presentations to come. This support from the MONSFFA members made the presentation so much easier to do! Again my thanks to Wayne (Moon Base Alpha, models, books, etc.) , Bernard (great award winning Sky-1 display), and any other members that I might have forgotten here.

Thanks!  
Fernando (Fernster) Novo

Hi, again, Fern!

Aren't the MonSFFen wonderful? I must add my thanks to yours, for the wonderful contributions made to the meetings and to WARP!

Yours in fandom,  
Cathy

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*From Dale Spiers (Opuntia), and Shelley Ann (In Spero ad Astra) more trouble with our post office:*

My attempts to send my zine OPUNTIA to your Place du Parc box number are still unsuccessful. I am still getting returns with "moved" or "no such" markings. Can you give me another Papernet address? Thanks.

Dale

I am the captain of the U.S.S. Bonaventure. The latest issue of our newsletter was returned to us as "address unknown". I double checked the address to your newsletter and it matches. Are you having trouble with the Post Office again? What would you like me to do about this newsletter?

Regarding the query in Warp 66, we do not have a website and the only way we distribute the In Spero Ad Astra is as hardcopy. We loved the review of our newsletter in Warp 65 and I was wondering if we could get permission to reprint it in In Spero Ad Astra so that all of our members could read it.

By the way, I have meant to pass on my kudos to the people who write some of the fiction that appears in Warp. I have really enjoyed the Doctor Who short stories and the selection of Christmas minis (particularly the Stargate one) were also great. Having read the review of our newsletter in Warp, one of our members is going to write a review of your newsletter for a future issue of In Spero ad Astra. It won't make it into the next issue, but could be in the July one.

Shelley Ann Jensen

First my apologies to you both, and many thanks for sending us the envelopes. I sent a question regarding our problem to the Post Office help line, and was asked to send in the returned envelopes. Let's hope the problem gets resolved soon!

If any of our readers experience similar difficulties, please save the returned envelope and contact us by e-mail <[president@monsffa.com](mailto:president@monsffa.com)>

Shelley, thanks also for your kind words regarding the fiction written by our members. They are a talented bunch!

You may certainly reprint the review of your newsletter in *In Spero ad Astra*, credit it to Keith Braithwaite.

And we look forward to reading your review of ours!

Yours in fandom,  
Cathy

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Hail Warriors!

I am currently putting together a second book of Klingon Poetry, *Visions of Victory 2*. This will include poems, pictures and filk. The book can be in both Klingon and English.

If anyone one has some Klingon poems, pictures or filk, that they would love to have published, send it all to me at <[LadyKtallia@yahoo.ca](mailto:LadyKtallia@yahoo.ca)>.

This would be the second most stellar opportunity for Klingon Fandom.

Qapla'

Lt. Col. K'tallia sutai-jechwI'  
(Lori Ajemian)  
Scarlet Shield Quadrant Commander  
Crimson Knight Fleet, KAG

Greetings, Lady K'tallia!

Many MonSFFen have been or still are Klingons, at least in heart, and surely some will answer the call to glory!

See you at Polaris!

Qapla'  
K'athee, formerly of IKV  
Destiny

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## MonSFFA Celebrates 20 years in Fandom!



On Saturday, December 8, 2007, MonSFFA will celebrate its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary with a dinner and dance at the Days Hotel, 1005 Guy Street, corner of René Lévesque. Tickets are being sold for 35\$, and will be available at meetings, or by mail order.

**All-you-can-eat buffet – raffles – door prizes – great music – Cash bar!**

***Friends, members, former members, friendly aliens, all are welcome to join in our celebration!***



*Written in response to Keith Braithwaite's challenge to write an original SF, fantasy, or horror story of no more than 500 words under one of the following titles:*

- *Remembrance of Things Past*
  - *Though This be Madness*
  - *The Instruments of Darkness*
  - *A Better World Than This*
- 

## Remembrance of Things Past - A Captain's Nightmare

### The Fernster

It came out of the woods late one evening. Out of the dark woods which surrounded the fort on top of the small hill. Six men died that night, before it disappeared, back into those woods. Captain Samuel Jervis had personally known those six men quite well; they had been together since the fort's construction three years ago. He could hardly recognize what was left of those bodies. Whatever "it" was, it had shredded those bodies beyond any hope of survival or recognition.

Their first warning was the dying scream of the first victim, up on the east wall. Samuel had jumped out of bed and rushed to his cloths and weapons belt. By the time he got out of his room, a second, and then a third scream was heard. The garrison was rushing out of their barracks when the fourth victim started to scream. Samuel had reached the fort's centre square when he heard the fifth scream on the west wall, and he rushed in that direction. The sixth scream was heard on top of the west wall just as Samuel arrived. Seeking danger, Samuel scanned the top of the wall, but only the mangled corpses of the guards were visible. Whatever, had attacked the fort was gone, leaving behind six bloody corpses in its passage through the fort.

Later that morning, Captain Samuel Jervis lead a strong patrol to find any signs of what had attacked the fort. For three days the patrol followed a trail through the dark woods without ever sighting the creature. The trackers could not identify the tracks left behind except to say that IT walked on two limbs. Soon the patrol lost the trail and after another day of searching the woods failed to find its

track again. The patrol, returned back to the fort at a slow weary pace. The failure to gain revenge for the deaths of their friends resulted in their depressive mood. Nothing more was seen of the creature and the massacre would remain a mystery to the forts garrison and its captain.

However, for the next two years, Samuel would continue to have nightmares. Always, the same nightmare – those few minutes of terror and bewilderment at what was happening to his men, while he rushed from his bed into the fort's square. The memory of those screams of fear and pain from his men. The feeling of dread at finding their mangled corpses, lying on the blood soaked ground. Travelling thought those dark woods, in a hopeless chase for revenge against a deadly creature. The nightmare included his own fear of having to face the creature in a battle to the death. Without warning or prediction, the nightmare would strike, just like the creature had done that night. He would awake in tremors, and in a deep sweat, his stomach tied in knots, the taste of bile in his throat, and after a few minutes of intense listening to the continued silence of the night, his body's reaction to the nightmare would ease off.

Captain Samuel Jervis's promotion and transfer to another post across the country would help relieve the memory of the deadly attack. The strange new lands and a new command and responsibilities helped ease the occurrences of the nightmares. Yet the remembrance of things past would still haunt him for years to come! ♣

*Interested in taking up Keith's challenge? Send your original fiction to WARP for publication!*

### La Fin Du Monde: Le Déluge de Glace

Victor Forbin, 1902, *Journal des Voyages* 2e série, 11: 130-131

Translation: Georges Dodds

*It isn't exactly a global warming story, actually I suppose it's a global cooling story, but in certain ways it parallels some of the current predictions made about large chunks of the Antarctic ice cap dropping off. The science behind the story is pretty shaky to say the least, but it's always amusing to see global disaster stories. – Georges Dodds*

This title will bring a smile to more than one sceptic, yet the matter I will present is so grave and complex that I would hesitate to present it in any other publication; but with the readers of *Journal des Voyages* so well informed regarding the two poles, I believe myself capable of dispensing with any framing information which might otherwise overly draw out this article.

**VICTOR FORBIN** was born in Paris, October 1, 1864. He is one of those writers who have sprung late in life into a sudden and brilliant popularity.

Literature is a distillation of the experiences of life: and rarely has a man lived a richer and more crowded life than M. Forbin. He was the fourth of a family of twelve children; "the only one," he tells, "that my dear father and mother could afford to send to college." His good fortune was short-lived, however; for though he was a brilliant student he was soon compelled to leave college and work for a living, giving his nights to writing poetry and stories. It is a curiously interesting fact that most of the successful modern novelists of France began their literary apprenticeship by writing poetry. Those great masters of fiction, Anatole France, Alphonse Daudet, Guy de Maupassant, Paul Bourget and many others first attempted to express themselves in verse. At twenty young Forbin became discouraged, and resolved to try his luck "in some dangerous country," in the hope of soon earning a competence and of returning to literature and to France. He passed several years in Colombia working with a gold mining company. He lived among wild Indians. He was successively a Colonel in a Latin-American army, a professor of chemistry and painting in a South American college, an editor-in-chief in another country – drifting ever.

Several times he believed himself on the point of getting sufficient capital to return to France and live his literary dream. Each time he was ruined by a revolution. The last time it was at Port-au-Prince, where he had a tremendous success starring in his own play; a drama in which he attempted to educate the Haytiens against the danger of too frequent civil wars - a bit of altruism foredoomed to failure, on the face of it. He passed two years in the United States, studying. He was living in New York at the outbreak of the Spanish war, and served in the American army. He then returned to Paris, where he married and was blessed with five children. "I had to work very hard to raise them decently," he says naïvely. Success now came rapidly, and he soon became "a kind of king in magazinedom." Then came the world-war; and again he was ruined financially. Finally; two years ago, his eldest sons being graduated from college, he allowed himself to write a little for his own pleasure, in addition to his staff work for the great Parisian periodical, *l'Illustration*. The result was his first novel, *Les Fiancées du Soleil* (1923).

M. Forbin is an accomplished linguist, speaking and writing a number of languages. He learned English by himself with the aid of old American magazines discovered in a deserted hut in the mountains of Ecuador; and the degree of his success may be appreciated from the beauty and accuracy of his correspondence in English. He writes to his friends each in his own tongue.

Mitchell, B.W. 1925. From his introduction to *Les Fiancées du Soleil* by Victor Forbin, New York: Henry Holt & Co. [Les

From the earliest human times — and by this I mean an array of organised societies — this expression: *the end of the world*, has more than once struck fear in a people. Without going back to the earliest times, one need only remind the reader of the widespread panic which history tells us occurred at the end of the first millennium. And more recently still, had not (in 1898, if I remember correctly) an Austrian scientist predicted that a comet would strike the Earth and send it careening through interstellar space? All through central Europe, thousands of peasants sold all their belongings to prepare themselves through good deeds for an imminent death, and I know more than one Parisian who wouldn't have dared step out into the street during the twenty-four hours of that memorable day. It is even said that from morning till night the capital's churches were overflowing with believers...and converts.

This time, however, it is not the empirical prediction of some pseudo-astronomer. The English scientist who had announced the end of the world has not been so rash as to set a specific date, but is content to state that may occur in the very near future. He does, however, outline with scientific precision its causes and effects.

But before we delve into Mr. Leon Lewis' complex theories, let us give reign to our readers natural curiosity, by summarizing as concisely as possible the prediction he presents in his latest work *The Great Glacial Deluge and its Impending Recurrence*.

It is a common popular belief that the temperature at the Earth's surface is steadily decreasing from year to year, and that, to use the common expression, "the seasons are all mixed up." Many of our most eminent scientists are also concerned about the gradual cooling of our planet. Some postulate it to be the result of the *central fire* slowly going out and of the Earth's slow evolution towards the final stage of existence as a completely dead planet. Others, based on the most recent geological data, estimate that the mysterious cycle of glacial, hot and temperate periods which periodically succeed one another on our planet are leading us into a new Ice Age, which, like its predecessors, will

desolate the greater part of the two hemispheres for some 25,000 years. Mr. Lewis is amongst these scientists. However, he believes he has discovered the mysterious laws which regulate these cycles, and the arguments with which he stakes out his theory are sufficiently convincing that a number of scientific societies on both continents have devoted long hours to their examination...

According to M. Lewis, the huge masses of ice accumulated at the South Pole, which serve, so to speak, as the world's coolant, are breaking up. If this slow process continues, and their break up becomes complete, these huge masses of ice will quickly drift towards the equator, raising sea levels in the Northern Hemisphere, and dropping the water temperature. This will lead to an almost complete submergence of Europe and North America. In reaction to this, the huge bulk of these frigid waters, having reached the Arctic circle, will flow back, and those regions which will have escaped the first of the flooding, will become victims to the second wave.

Let us reiterate that, as strange as it seems, this prediction is based on indisputable facts, which the reader will have no trouble convincing himself of if he surveys the topography and hydrography of both poles.



The magnificent explorations of Nordenskiöld, Nansen, and the Duke of Abruzzio have come to confirm the vague Eskimo legends of an open sea at the North Pole. Certainly, this does not represent a surface of clear waters, surrounded by vast Arctic lands. Our readers know that the area around the North Pole is surrounded by vast ice-fields, only *solid* in appearance, since it moves about in a kind of rotary motion, shifting it back and forth in a well determined direction.

In contrast, the South Pole, -- unless the two expeditions currently underway show different, which *a priori* is rather unlikely, is made up of a huge Antarctic continent, which English explorers, with their use of imagery have termed the *ice cap*, which is indeed like a huge "dome of ice" covering this pole of our globe.

Travellers' accounts, from that of Captain Cook who first described the appearance of the Antarctic lands, to the learned reports of Sir George Neron, an explorer who has penetrated these unknown regions, only to be forced back by those famous icy ramparts, which, more so than distance or cold, have preserved the mysteries of the South Pole's.

At the base of these ramparts the open sea comes to die, and, in a noteworthy phenomenon -- first described by Captain Cook, and confirmed by our illustrious countryman Admiral Dumont-Urville -- in their approach to the Antarctic Circle, the waters of the three great oceans, Atlantic, Indian and Pacific, drop to temperatures several degrees below the freezing point of water.

It follows that, by their constant to and fro, the waves never cease to deposit a certain quantity of water onto the

ice pack. This freezes almost instantly, and every hour contributes thousands of cubic metres of material to the "ice cap."

Another equally strange phenomenon is that of the almost continuous snowfall which occurs in these regions. Norwegian and Swedish whalers which venture in these waters state that snow falls twenty-eight days out of thirty. Noting that no evaporation occurs, and that the Polar regions receive neither rains nor dew, it behoves one to ask what has happened with the vast quantity of snow accumulated three hundred and forty days a year, for thousands of years.

What happens to it? It accumulates in deep layers, and the pressure this imposes on the lower layers is sufficient to transform them into compact ice. It is thus established that the mass of ice at the Antarctic Pole is already significant and continues to increase in volume and mass. Let us note in passing that, according to Mr. Leon Lewis, this observation explains our globe's general layout.

Even the least attentive of our readers will have no doubt noticed that the expanse of continental land masses is much greater in the Northern than the Southern Hemisphere. The former houses most of the Old World and the vast open spaces of North America. In the latter one only finds the narrow bands of South America, southern Africa, Australia and the scattered lands of Oceania, surrounded by or drowned in vast oceans.

This generally consistent layout of land and sea on the world map is explained by Mr. Lewis' theory. During the twenty-five thousand years over which it developed, the South Pole's huge glacier, the *ice cap*, has served as a sink for the waters of the Northern Hemisphere, where over the centuries new lands have emerged from the seas, while, in an inevitable compensation the Austral regions' continents were gradually submerged by the rising waters, until only their highest peaks and plateaus still remained above the watery plain, in the form of islands and archipelagos.



Now, I leave it to the reader to consider for a moment the frightfully grand vision of this mass of ice, rising above one of our world's poles, suspended so to speak over our heads, ready to break apart and drift off towards our ancient homes in an incredible push.

A few numbers will help him to inform his vision. The mean diameter of this colossal glacier is from 4000 to 5000 km; in its entirety it would cover the North American continent. Some 3000 to 4000 m thick at its edges, it reaches 15 to 20 km in thickness at its centre. Scientists have calculated that its volume is no less than SEVENTY MILLION CUBIC KILOMETRES, such a fantastic figure as to only convey a sense of the infinite.

That this mass of ice, *in its current state*, already has a significant influence over temperatures across the globe, on that of the seas, and consequently on the formation and

direction of currents, is a fact that doesn't bear discussion. A single example will suffice.

Recent deep sea soundings have shown that, even at the equator, the temperature is only 2-3°C above zero, while at the surface it may be anywhere from 25-30°C. Let us note that, theoretically, the deeper the water is the warmer it should be, since in being deeper it is also closer to the central core and matter under fusion. Know we not, that in the deepest shafts of Westphalian coalmines, the heat becomes so intense that their exploitation will soon have to be abandoned?

If this temperature inversion occurs at the bottom of the ocean, it is that the southern Polar *ice cap* is, as stated above, the oceans' coolant, the "seat of cold" which, by radiation, cools the nearby seas. If such is this mass of ice's present influence, *in the state it is in*; if it has been able, without moving, to regulate the distribution of seas and continents; if, in the watery depth, it has proven itself capable of overcoming the sun's torrid effluvia, how powerful and effective will this same influence be when the mountain passes from this stable state to one of collapse and forward progress?

Here again, the reader should resort to his imagination, for the pen would be inadequate to describing the cataclysm. Let us only state that, according to explorers' observations, the huge glacier's break up will occur at a point on the Antarctic Circle in the extreme south of the Atlantic Ocean, midway between Cape Horn and Cape of Good Hope.

From the deep gouges which *icebergs* have for centuries ploughed in the sea floor, we know exactly the path the fragments of the ice-mountain will take, and with them the great glacial deluge. The destructive wave, racing out through the Waddell Sea, between the lands of Graham and Enderby, will first skirt the shores of Brazil. Then, crossing the Equator, it will turn towards the coasts of Africa, reaching them at the latitude of the Cape Verde Islands. Thrust away from the West by the Gulf Stream, it will follow the northwest coast of Africa, and rush through the English Channel and by way of the North Sea race on to its collision with the barrier of the Arctic lands.

England, the Netherlands, Denmark, Finland, the southern portion of Sweden and northwest Russia will be devastated by this glacial flood, which will destroy every organism in these regions. France, with the possible exception of the Seine watershed will escape the calamity's first phase.

But, as we have previously indicated, it will only be a brief respite. Without an outlet to the north, given the high plateaus which ring the Arctic regions, the destructive wave draw back, which will impart renewed fury to the receding waters.

The plains of Hungary, Poland and Germany will almost instantly be submerged beneath the waters. Thrust

violently through the narrow Straits of Dover, the huge waves will leap into the Seine and Somme valleys. The two rivers, thrust back towards their sources, will constitute the devastation's vanguard. The glorious monuments which make our city great will be shaken to their very foundations. And, a few days later, at the liquid avalanche's first blow the proud 300 m tower will collapse like a house of cards.

France will have disappeared beneath the waters. Here and there, islands and archipelagos will emerge from the new ocean where formerly stood Auvergne and the peaks of the Cevennes, and vast, strangely contoured glaciers will float above a sea floor where Paris, the world's capital, once stood.



"As long as the cohesive forces of the South Pole's ice cap remain sufficient to resist the forces pressing towards its dislocation," states Mr. Leon Lewis, 'things will stay as they are. But the day the austral glacier breaks up, we are lost.

"And under its rising volume and mass, the fatal day will come when this ice mountain's cohesion is compromised by a force so powerful that it must yield.

"None can say when this will occur; but – and here I translate literally – *it is certain that it will occur in the near future as two plus two are four.*"



Cover for *Journal des Voyages 2e série Voyages* 1902.



## PREPARING FOR NIPPON

Part *ni* (two),  
Sylvain St-Pierre

For a while, I was a little worried about being actually able to attend Nippon. I lost my job last December, and was afraid I might not find a new one in time. Thank Goodness, I got a new position in early February and they were kind enough to let me take extra days at my own expense. Not enough to go on the lavish post-con nine day trip set up by Ken Smookler and Alice Colody, but I will still be able to enjoy the con, visit Tokyo and even tour the countryside to some extent.

My passport expires this coming May; so I will have plenty of time to get it renewed, even with the longer delays that are now the norm. Fortunately, there is very little hassle for Canadians to get into Japan, especially since I will be by-passing the United States entirely.

My airplane ticket cost me slightly more than I was expecting - \$1,700 instead of \$1,500, but the Air Canada flight I am booked on is faster and has more convenient hours than the cheaper American fares I was offered. It is interesting to note that this price is still lower than the one I would have gotten if I had made my reservation by taking advantage of the 15% discount offered by Air Canada to Nippon attendees, for that is calculated on the much higher so called “normal” price.

I will land at the Tokyo Narita Airport around 4:00 PM local time, so my chances of obtaining English-language information on how to get to my hotel will be much greater than if I was arriving late at night. A couple of hundred bucks is not too much for extra comfort and peace of mind.

After a bit of research – I am still doing a lot of that right now – I have found out that the best way to make the trip between the airport and Yokohama is to take the coach bus.



*Sakuragicho Washington*

It is cheaper, faster and more reliable than taking the train for that particular route. The cost will be less than \$35 and the trip should take about 90 minutes. With a bit of luck, I should be in my room before sunset. The Internet is really great for this kind of planning. I can remember preparing for my early trips, and having to wait several days for my letters to reach potential destinations and getting an answer.

By using Expedia.ca, I found a room at the Sakuragicho Washington, only one kilometre and a fifteen minutes walk away from the



*It's a good thing I am not claustrophobic!*

not claustrophobic! Still, it is larger than what you get in those infamous capsule hotels and I will have my own bathroom.

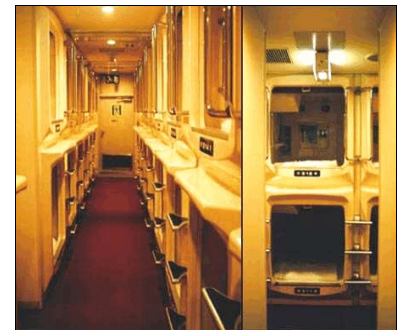
Since I do not intend to spend a lot of time awake in it, the fact that the hotel is located only a hundred metres from a convenient train station should more than make up for the small size of the facilities. This will greatly facilitate my planned day trips to Tokyo and there will probably be a number of affordable eateries in the vicinity. The price is also a factor; I had budgeted \$175 CAN a night for my stay in Yokohama and it turns out that this room will only cost me \$115, which is quite reasonable for Japan. This also may even include breakfast, although the information available is a bit contradictory about this topic. The only hotel with a lower rate that I could find is located much further away, so I think I did rather well, especially since my place will have English-speaking staff, something you do not find everywhere.

It might have been fun to stay in a traditional Japanese inn, a *ryokan*, but I doubt there are any in Yokohama. The city was destroyed twice in the 20th Century, first by an earthquake in the 1920's and by massive bombardments during WWII. Almost everything has been rebuilt in modern Western style, and even some of the Shinto temples have been redone in classical Greek fashion! I should get my dose of exotic architecture in Kyoto, where I plan to go after the con.

This may very well be the only time I will ever go to Japan, so I have decided early on that I will not be stingy on that trip. Nevertheless, everything I save on accommodations

Pacifico Convention Centre, where Nippon will be held. According to Progress Report Four, only three of the hotels listed are closer on foot, and some of them at the cost of being a bit more isolated from the rest of the city. Judging from the picture I found on the Web, I will get a clean modern room about twice the size of a not-too-large single bed.

It's a good thing I am



*A capsule hotel, definitely not for the claustrophobic!*

can be put on meals and souvenirs, so I certainly will not turn down a bargain when I come across one!

Shopping will probably be a mind boggling experience. I have already resigned myself to the fact that I will be able to afford only a fraction of what I'll want to buy, and will be able to pack only a fraction of what I can afford. Still, I do plan to bring my biggest suitcase and of couple of extra bags, just in case... Of course, I will follow my usual procedure and pack a stiff envelope for prints, a cardboard tube for posters and



Cover of Nippon 2007 PR 4

plenty of padding for fragile items.

The photo opportunities - both in and outside the con proper - will no doubt be enormous, so I will make sure I have plenty of blank tapes for video and a large capacity memory chip for my digital camera. If I run out, I know I can find both supports easily on site, for Japanese people are avid picture takers and they make most of the recording devices on the market.

Other Canadian fans I know are also planning to attend Nippon, so my next step will be to make sure that they have my itinerary and address, and I, theirs. Going out together in a group will make excursions a lot more pleasant, because we will be able to pool our knowledge - slight as it is likely to be - of the language and interesting sites.

Less than six months to go now (\*SIGH\*). ♣

For more information on Nippon 2007, go to <http://www.nippon2007.org/>

For more information on Anticipation, Montreal's own World Con bid, go to <http://www.anticipationsf.ca>

## 2007 HUGO AWARD NOMINEES

more information: [http://www.nippon2007.us/hugo\\_nominees.php](http://www.nippon2007.us/hugo_nominees.php)

### Best Novel

*Eifelheim* by Michael Flynn (Tor)  
*His Majesty's Dragon* by Naomi Novik  
*Glasshouse* by Charles Stross (Ace)  
*Rainbows End* by Vernor Vinge (Tor)  
*Blindsight* by Peter Watts (Tor)

### Best Novella

*The Walls of the Universe* by Paul Melko (Asimov's April/May 2006)  
*A Billion Eves* by Robert Reed (Asimov's October/November 2006)  
*Inclination* by William Shunn (Asimov's April/May 2006)  
*Lord Weary's Empire* by Michael Swanwick (Asimov's December 2006)  
*Julian: A Christmas Story* by Robert Charles Wilson (PS Publishing)

### Best Novelette

*Yellow Card Man* by Paolo Bacigalupi (Asimov's December 2006)  
*Dawn, and Sunset, and the Colours of the Earth* by Michael F. Flynn (Asimov's October/November 2006)  
*The Djinn's Wife* by Ian McDonald (Asimov's July 2006)  
*All the Things You Are* by Mike Resnick (Jim Baen's Universe October 2006)  
*Pol Pot's Beautiful Daughter (Fantasy)* by Geoff Ryman (Fantasy and Science Fiction October 2006)

### Best Short Story

*How to Talk to Girls at Parties* by Neil Gaiman (Fragile Things, William Morrow)  
*Kin* by Bruce McAllister (Asimov's February 2006)  
*Impossible Dreams* by Tim Pratt (Asimov's July 2006)  
*Eight Episodes* by Robert Reed (Asimov's June 2006)  
*The House Beyond Your Sky* by Benjamin Rosenbaum (Strange Horizons September 2006)

### Best Related Book

*About Writing: Seven Essays, Four Letters, and Five Interviews* by Samuel R. Delany  
*Heinlein's Children: The Juveniles* by Joseph T. Major  
*James Tiptree, Jr.: The Double Life of Alice Sheldon* by Julie Phillips  
*Cover Story: The Art of John Picacio* by John Picacio  
*Worldcon Guest of Honor Speeches* by Mike Resnick and Joe Siclari, eds.

### Best Dramatic Long Form

*Children of Men*  
*Pan's Labyrinth\**  
*The Prestige*  
*A Scanner*  
*V for Vendetta*

\*The earlier announcement incorrectly listed *Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest*.

### Best Dramatic Short Form

*Battlestar Galactica Downloaded*  
*Doctor Who Army of Ghosts and Doomsday*  
*Doctor Who Girl in the Fireplace*  
*Doctor Who School Reunion*  
*Stargate SG-1 200*

### Best Editor, Long Form

Lou Anders (Pyr)  
 James Patrick Baen (Baen Books)  
 Ginjer Buchanan (Ace Books / Roc)  
 David G. Hartwell (Tor Books)  
 Patrick Nielsen Hayden (Tor Books)

### Best Editor, Short Form

Gardner Dozois *The Year's Best Science Fiction*  
 David G. Hartwell *Year's Best SF, New York Review of Science Fiction*  
 Stanley Schmidt *Analog*  
 Gordon Van Gelder *Fantasy and Science Fiction*  
 Sheila Williams *Asimov's*

### Best Pro Artist

Bob Eggleton  
 Donato Giancola  
 Stephan Martiniere  
 John Jude Palencar  
 John Picacio

### Best Fan Writer

Chris Garcia  
 John Hertz  
 Dave Langford  
 John Scalzi  
 Steven H Silver

### Semi Prozone

*Ansible* edited by Dave Langford  
*Interzone* edited by Andy Cox  
*Lady Churchill's Rosebud Wristlet* edited by Gavin Grant and Kelly Link  
*Locus* edited by Charles N. Brown, Kirsten Gong-Wong and Liza Groen Trombi  
*The New York Review of Science Fiction* edited by Kathryn Cramer, David G. Hartwell and Kevin J. Maroney

### Fanzine

*Banana Wings* edited by Claire Briale and Mark Plummer  
*Challenger* edited by Guy H. Lillian III  
*The Drink Tank* edited by Chris Garcia  
*Plotka* edited by Alison Scott, Steve Davies and Mike Scott  
*Science-Fiction Five-Yearly* edited by Lee Hoffman, Geri Sullivan and Randy Byers

### Fan Artist

Brad W. Foster  
 Teddy Harvia  
 Sue Mason  
 Steve Stiles  
 Frank Wu

### John W Campbell Best New Writer Award

Scott Lynch (1st Year)  
 Sarah Monette (2nd Year)  
 Naomi Novik (1st Year)  
 Brandon Sanderson (2nd Year)  
 Lawrence M Schoen (2nd Year)

# ***The Last Mage: The Dragon's Mouth***

**Nikolai Krimp**

***The story so far:** Jennifer Wells works for a bio-hazard lab located deep inside a mountain just south of Seattle, Washington. Following a car accident during a mysterious storm, she awoke in the body of a young elf called Shannon. In the company of Shannon's friend, Roma, and a hobbit, Treymane, she finds herself caught up in events resulting from the finding of a box in the ruins of the "Cave of the Ancients" – Jenny's former laboratory. While trekking through the forests that now grow where highways once ran, Jenny was attacked and nearly killed by a marsh cat. When the companions reached the safety of Shannon's home, they learned that they must now journey on to find Teagan, Shannon's aunt, and the only one likely to be able to explain what's been going on. Encounters with slavers and Blood Imps, and bad news from Water's Edge force, a change of plans. The journey through the Shadow Forest results in their being captured by elves. Jenny convinces the council that she is indeed Shannon, but Kirin who has volunteered to be their escort demands the truth, and Jenny tells him who she really is and what she suspects is in the Demon Box – a biological weapon....*

## **Chapter 5**

Malodor waited for three days, but none of his other ships arrived. He then ordered the captain of the Midnight to ready her to sail on the next high tide. The small lifeboats began to ferry the remaining orcs and their animals back to the ship. Meanwhile he and two of his henchmen paid one last and final visit to Timothy Harlan. Malodor sat down at Timothy's table and raised a glass to toast their success.

"And no one will ever know," Timothy said, "that it was you behind it all."

"That is correct," the druid agreed. "No one will ever know." And the smile vanished from his face.

Timothy never had a chance. He never saw the flash of the steel blade as it entered his back between his ribs, cutting his heart in two. He slumped over, his head hitting the pine table with a thud.

"You are correct," the wizard repeated. "No one will ever know. Burn the house and barn," he said to one of the orcs. "Leave nothing standing, then return to the ship."

The flames shot high into the night sky, lighting the way for them to sail out of the bay. Once clear of the rocky shoals, the druid gave the order to sail for the dragon's mouth.

"I know now where they're heading," he said to the captain, "and I will be there waiting for them when they arrive."

Shortly before dawn, Jennifer awoke from the loud shouting outside her window. She jumped up from her cot and peered out. There were people running everywhere with bows in their hands and shouting orders to those who seemed not to know where they should go. Dressing quickly she opened the door and entered the kitchen. There, seated at the table, were Roma and the hobbit. Alicia had forgone her loose dresses and was attired in the traditional forest clothing of the Home Guard. It looked a bit snug in some areas and tight in others, but it didn't seem to hinder her movements in the least. She was too busy stuffing their packs to notice that Jen had sat down. Only when Alicia turned around did Roma speak to Jenny.

"We were going to let you sleep," she said, "until Kirin

returns. Misty Falls is under attack and he is gone to find out if we can still leave the city."

"Wouldn't we be safer here than out there?" Jenny pointed in the direction of the west wall.

"Under normal circumstances I would say yes," Alicia cut in, "but with what you are carrying, it would be best to make haste and get that box to Teagan. Delaying you here would not be the wisest thing to do."

Just then Kirin entered. His grim look told them what they had suspected. An army of orcs surrounded the city. Although some elf riders were dispatched, there was no telling if any of them got through. Even if some managed to escape the orcs, it still would be days before a relief army could be dispatched and marched north.

"We will leave the city without our escort," Kirin stated. "There is a hidden passage and door that will lead us past the orcs, but we must move in absolute silence and with the greatest of speed. For if we're caught..." he broke off letting everyone create their own picture.

Alicia left the room and returned with a couple of bows, with two quivers of arrows and a small sack. She handed to each of the girls a bow and a quiver. Jenny noted the fine workmanship and the tiny ornate silver markings inlaid into the wood. It was about the same length as her old one, but needed a much stronger arm to draw back the gut string and fire an arrow. Upon inspection of the arrows she found that some of them were silver tipped.

"They are special arrows," Alicia explained. "They only to be used if you run into any of Malodor's demons. They contain a special spell that will kill them when magic cannot be used."

Then she turned to the hobbit and said. "And for you, my little friend, I have something special." Reaching into the bag she pulled out a beautifully hand carved slingshot. "This is for you," she continued. "It is very strong and accurate up to the same distance of a short bow. The smoother and more round the stones you use, the more accuracy you will achieve." Reaching back into the sack she pulled out yet another small bag. Opening it, she spilled out some round balls into her

hand. "These are very special magical stones. They were carved by a wizard who placed a spell on them, so that all the user of the sling has to do is aim at his target and shoot. Even if the target moves away behind a tree or into a cave, the stone will follow and hit the intended target. But be careful, like any magical object, there is a price to pay. Every time you use one of the magical stones against any type of life form, your life cycle decreases by five years." Then her face became somber and she warned him. "There are ten stones in this bag; use them carefully and only when there is no other way."

Thanking Alicia for her gifts the three turned their attention to Kirin who sat quietly while his mother spoke. When she was finished, he called them together in front of the fireplace. He reached in on the cooler side and pulled out a handful of soot, which he smeared over his face and hands. "This will protect us from prying eyes in the forest," he said. "Especially when the moon is full and your face lights up like a candle."

When all had blackened their exposed skin, they grabbed their belongings, thanked Alicia and set out after Kirin. They marched in single file, silently wondering what the next few hours would bring. Along the way, Treymane picked up a handful of good-sized pebbles for his new weapon. They then passed the barracks in which they had been held upon their arrival at the city. They hurried past the training grounds where the new recruits had been sparring and right up to the wall of the cliff to begin the search for the secret door. Minutes seemed an eternity, but it didn't take long before Kirin found the latch that opened the door. The heavy stone door opened without a sound.

Quickly they pushed through and, keeping within the shadow that the cliff provided, they ran for the cover of the forest some hundred yards away. The door silently closed behind them. There was no turning back now, for no one would come and open it for them, no matter what.

It soon became apparent that the invading orcs had not reached the west side of the city. So this part of the forest was relatively safe. Still they pressed on until Kirin felt it was safe enough to stop and rest a while. The moon was full and illuminated the forest. The trees shimmered in the moonlight as its rays bounced off the leafy branches, illuminating the forest floor. There was no new growth around, making Jenny believe that this was either an old forest, or that the elves cut away any new trees, giving no advantage, for any enemy to sneak up on the walls of the city. Even Roma could see well past the trees. Then the noise of battle reached their ears. It seemed that the orcs had finally arrived at the west wall. Silently they pressed on.

Over the next seven days the four dodged orc patrols that were killing everyone and everything in sight. It was clear that the orcs were looking for them and on the eighth day, the party came across an orc patrol that was just bedding down for the night. They had just eaten, for a carcass of a deer was lying beside their campfire.

Kirin signaled the three to move back deeper into the forest, while he moved in closer to hear of any news about Misty Falls. A short time later he returned with the news that

an army from Ashland had arrived and driven the orcs back across the river. It had been a bloody battle with heavy losses on both sides. "This party of orcs are heading in the same direction as we are," Kirin said. "We must get ahead of them and warn the border guards at the bridge or they will all be killed."

The forest here was not as clear cut as the one next to the west wall of Kirin's home city. Here the walking over fallen trees and branches made stealth much harder. At one point the hobbit stepped on a dry twig snapping it in half. Immediately the party froze hoping that the sentries hadn't heard the noise. But this was not to be. Two huge orcs began moving cautiously towards them. Crouching, the four readied their bows and a sling to silence the two approaching brutes before they could shout an alarm and bring the whole camp down upon them. Jenny could see the beads of sweat glistening on Roma's forehead as some of the rays of light filtered its way through the forest canopy. Though her face stilled black from the soot she put on in Kirin's house signs of whit skin were beginning to show. The two guards were almost upon them when a small rabbit suddenly jumped up from its place of hiding and cut across the orcs' path. Roaring with laughter the two creatures turned around and made their way back to their posts.

Giving the guards a wide berth, they skirted the camp and made their way towards the river keeping off the main trail. By the time the party reached the bridge, the sun was just coming up. Here the dwarf border guards confronted them.

"HALT!" ordered one of the guards. "STEP FORWARD AND BE RECOGNIZED!"

The party moved slowly onto the bridge and halted in the middle. Kirin stepped forward and asked to speak to the officer in charge and a young burly looking dwarf with a round shield almost as big as he himself stepped forward and said, "I am in charge here."

Kirin looked at the dwarf and tried to see his face, which was mostly hidden behind his bushy orange, reddish beard and under a large horned iron helm. "I am called Kirin Foxhunter of Misty Falls. Who am I addressing?"

A smile appeared on the dwarf's face as he lowered his shield. "You do not recognize your old friend Brundabar?" said the smaller man as he lowered his shield.

After the salutations were over and introductions made, Kirin informed the dwarf about the orcs patrol just a few hours behind them.

"Do not worry, my friend," Brundabar said, laying a comforting hand on the elf's shoulder. "We will lay a trap for them. None will cross here." Turning to his men he ordered to prepare for their unwanted guests still a ways away. He then turned back to Kirin and said. "First you will all dine with me, then you shall go in peace and finish what you have started."

Knowing that the dwarfs couldn't spare a man for protection, the four sat down and ate with their new friend and chatted for a while. Then they took to the road towards Sweet Water. They kept on all day and by early evening the lights of the city came into view. Although it was mid summer, a



breeze blowing off the inland sea cooled them after a hot day of walking. Jenny thought of a nice cold beer and a warm meal, but it was the hobbit that spoke of eating first.

"I can't wait to get to the Red Dragon Inn," he said. "They make the best tasting spiced stew in this part of the land."

"What is spiced stew?" asked Jenny.

"It is ... it's made of ... well, just wait till you taste it," he stammered unable to say what it's made from.

They passed a farmhouse and the smell of dinner cooking made them break into a jog. They were getting hungrier by the minute. As they approached the Sweet Water city wall, Treymane pulled out his dagger and with the hilt pounded on the great ironwood gates. A small window opened up and part of a face peered out to demand, "Who goes there?"

Kirin stepped forward and spoke to the guard, who after a moment closed the tiny portal and left them standing there.

"What's happening?" asked Jenny.

"He is going to the Captain of the Guard to gain permission to open the gates," Kirin replied.

They waited a long time before the huge wooden door swung open, letting them inside. Once again Kirin thanked the guard and gave him a piece of silver. "For your kindness," he said as he placed the coin in his hand. Smiling, the guard quickly pocketed the money and returned to his post beside the wall next to the gate.

"And now," the elf warrior said, "to find the Red Dragon Inn."

"There I might be of some service," the hobbit cut in, "for I have been in this city on a few occasions."

Smiles appeared on all their faces as they let Treymane take the lead. He marched them down the main street and over to the docks where a vessel was being loaded with sweet candy and syrup for Rogalandt. The hobbit explained that this treat was one of Sweet Water's main exports. The trees were tapped in the spring when the days were warm and the nights were still frosty. The sap was then boiled down and made into syrup. Some of it was formed into candy and sold all over Aan.

Jenny noticed that the buildings here were different than those of Misty Falls. Here they towered up to five or six stories, unlike the single story dwellings of the elf village. Roofs were made from different materials, from weed and wood to clay for shingles. The walls were built from timber and a white mortar. It reminded her of pictures she saw in European travel magazines. She had always wanted to vacation there, but never got around to it.

It was also Roma's first visit here. She too was fascinated by the tall buildings and their many different structures. She also noticed the many people mulling about although it was nearly dark. Back home people would be indoors for fear of wild animals roaming about in the night. Here, she told herself, the guards probably protect them if an animal entered the city.

The dock was a busy place with sailors going about their assigned duties, readying vessels for the morning's departures. The whole area was well lit by many torches so that one could

easily negotiate the crowded port. They marched past the busy docks and left the port area. The hobbit led them up one street and down another until Roma and Jenny were hopelessly confused. Just as Roma was about to ask the hobbit how much further, they stood in front of the inn. Adjusting what was left of his robe, he entered the building with the others in tow. It was a busy evening. The bar was full and all but one of the tables was occupied. The four sat down and waited for the serving girl to take their order.

"One piece of advice," the hobbit offered to Jenny, "don't order the ale. They serve only dwarven ale here and not the good stuff. Have wine with your meal instead."

"Thanks," the smiling girl, remembering the last glass of beer said. "I think I'll do just that."

Looking around, Jen could see that this place was an old establishment. The tables were no longer even with some of the boards warping from too many spills from drunken patriots. The corners were well rounded and even a leg here and there replaced probably from more than one bar fight. Even the floorboards showed signs of being well worn. Off to one of the far walls stood a huge fireplace. Most likely, the only source of heat, during the cold times of the year. The ceiling could barely be seen, because of all the smoke from the many lit pipes that were being smoked in the room.

A few minutes later a young girl, probably not more than eighteen years of age, came and took their orders. While waiting for the food to arrive Jenny sat and watched the others in the tavern. It was filled with all sorts of people; some sailors, merchants, dwarfs, soldiers and probably some mercenaries as well. Some were boasting of battles that they had won in the past and some explaining how they were going to defeat the orcs, should they have the audacity to come anywhere close to the tavern. Yes there were heroes of all sorts here tonight.

Off to one side, near the huge fireplace, Jenny noticed a lone gruff looking dwarf with a shoddy looking red beard, sitting at a table, drinking from a flagon and watching them. On his head sat a rather large black looking helmet with a half-curved horn jutting out from each side. He kept on staring even as he drank from his flagon. His eyes never left the party. She leaned towards Kirin and whispered to him. He nodded, telling her that he had already noticed him. A feeling of uneasiness and a cold shiver ran up and down her spine. She sneaked another look and he was still there, staring. When the food came, the hunger took over her fear. The stew tasted good. It burned her tongue, but it hit the spot. The wine helped wash some of the dryness from her mouth and oh yes, it also eased the burning of the stew.

When they had finished, Jenny glanced over to see if the dwarf was still there, but he was gone. She was about to mention it, when from the opposite side of the table, the stranger grabbed a chair and sat down. For a moment no one spoke. Kirin's hand was on the hilt of his sword. Treymane had his sling and ball in hand under the table, ready to lose five years of his life. The two girls just stared at the boldness of the dwarf.

"Allow me to introduce myself," he started. "My name

is Duncan Stonehelm, and I was sent here by a friend to find you.”

“Does this friend have a name?” Kirin asked, keeping a watchful eye on the stranger.

The dwarf looked around to make sure that no one was listening in and leaned forward. “Teagan Twostars. Does that mean anything to you?”

Four people sighed in relief at the sound of the old woman’s name.

Moments later another two dwarfs approached and one whispered something in Duncan’s ear.

“It seems that the four of you have been followed,” the dwarf said in a low voice, “and as we speak, members of the palace guard are on their way here. We must leave as quickly as we can. My friends, Othelo and Blick,” who just nodded their heads to them, “will take you to a safe place while I scout around and find out what I can.”

“How do we know that we can trust you?” Kirin asked.

Duncan looked more hurt than angry as his eyes and Kirin’s met. “You don’t!” he said sharply, “but I can’t do anything about that now. Hear me elf, we will continue this at a better time. For now, please follow my men as they are very good at what they do and do not have my patience. Worry not, I will see you soon.”

There was something in what he said that made Jenny believe him, so she grabbed Kirin’s arm and they slowly made their way from the inn without attracting anyone’s attention. Once outside, Duncan turned one way, while the others, another. The two dwarfs led them back to the docks and then up a dark street. It was a guild avenue. Thieves’ guild to be exact. So dark that not one house nor entrance was discernible.

Seeing the puzzled look on their faces, Othelo spoke. “The soldiers won’t come into this area unless there is trouble and then they’ll come in force, but as long as we don’t disturb anyone here we’ll be safe. I can assure you of that.”

They were led deeper into the thieves’ quarter until the four were completely lost. Then, to their right a door opened and Blick beckoned them in. It had been so dark outside that no one had noticed that he had left the party and gone on ahead. They descended down a narrow staircase and into a room of some sort, filled with all sorts of barrels of liquid and baskets of vegetables. They were in the basement of some sort of shop or inn. Moments later Othelo lit a torch and led them down a narrow passage, deeper underground. This led to another room, much bigger than the last. It contained some chairs, a table with some goblets set upon it and a large flagon of wine.

“What is this place?” asked Roma.

“It belongs to a friend of ours,” Blick answered. “He lets us use it when we need to. Duncan will soon return and when the gates open in the morning, we’ll slip out of the city. So for now, get as much rest as you can. There is some drink on the table. It will help keep you warm, but be careful, it’s strong.”

The night dragged on for there was little to do but wait. Othelo and Blick sat down at the table and began to play cards. They filled themselves a goblet of wine each and amused

themselves the whole night. Just as dawn arrived so did Duncan. Over his shoulder he had a sack, which was filled with old ragged clothing.

“Here, put these on,” he said. “They will not be looking for us in these outfits.” As he passed out the clothing, he watched Roma’s nose crinkle, as she smelled the cloth. “It’s better that it smells a bit. This way they won’t come too close. There’s a caravan leaving the city this morning heading for Buckthorn. I have bought passage for all of us, but we won’t attend. Let them look for us while we slip away. We will break up into two groups. That way if one gets caught the other can still make it to Teagan’s”

“Not a very good idea,” said Roma. “If Shannon gets caught, we can all go home, for she is the one that must make it to her aunt.”

“OK,” Duncan said. “But we still go in separate groups. Only we stick closer together. Blick and I will go with Shannon and the rest go with Othelo.”

Each drew on one of the robes over their own clothing. A few adjustments were made here and there before they were ready to leave their underground hideaway. The morning light stung their eyes as they ventured into the open. It was still early so there weren’t too many people about. Those that were didn’t give them a second look.

Duncan was the first to leave followed by the others. He led them past the docks and then turned north to the North Gate. Only a couple of wealthy merchants took notice of them and grabbed on to their money purses as they passed.

When they were out of sight, Jenny asked what that was all about.

“We’re dressed as thieves,” Duncan whispered. “As far as they’re concerned, we’re here to steal their gold and silver.”

At the North Gate there was a long lineup. Everyone was being searched. The dwarf took them aside and brought them to a row of public toilets. “I hope no one has cleaned here this morning,” he said as he disappeared around the back. He returned with two handfuls of human waste and smeared some onto everyone’s clothing. The two girls almost passed out from the smell. “This should help,” he said and continued towards the gate.

As they entered the line, people began to give way to them. Some even turned and heaved their morning’s breakfast when the aroma of the new arrivals hit them. Every time someone moved, Duncan and his group stepped closer to the city’s gate. Just before they came upon it, the dwarf turned and said, “Let me do the talking.”

One of the guards began to smile while another pinched his nostrils as they stepped up to be searched.

“And where might you three be heading?” he managed to ask.

“We, my good man,” answered the dwarf, “are heading to Caven, where we have procured some employment.”

Almost choking on the stench, the guard answered, “I hope they have a large bath there that’ll fit all of you. Be gone!”

Once they were away from the port city, they waited for the others and when they were reunited they found the nearest

stream of water and washed the life saving smell from their bodies. Even their clothes were washed.

Treymane, who had kept mostly to himself, looked at the old dwarf and asked, "Do you remember Ruffus the Mighty?"

The old man looked into his eyes and smiled. "Yes I remember him," he said. "He was a brave one alright. Saved my life at the Tower of Tophet, when we fought the hordes of demons with Teagan. He died not long ago, didn't he?"

"Yes, my uncle told me everything about you before he died," the hobbit answered. "He liked you and Teagan."

"I had a lot of respect for him, because, while saving my skin, he almost forfeited his and I'd like to shake the hand of his nephew," said Duncan as he extended his hand.

"What was that all about?" asked Roma.

"I think our friend was checking out the old dwarf's story," answered Kirin.

When the two finished shaking hands and embracing each other, Duncan ordered Othelo to go back to his men, wait in the woods and protect their rear against any Sweet Water's men at arms. "Wait there for two days and if none follow, come to Teagan's. There we'll probably have need of you and your men."

The younger dwarf nodded and disappeared down a forest trail. Now the remaining six set out for Shannon's aunt.

It was a hot midsummer's evening when they stopped for the night. The old dwarf said that by midday tomorrow they would arrive at Teagan's. They camped near a tiny stream that was as cold as ice water. The two girls, each took turns bathing in the frigid waters and when they returned to camp, the hobbit and Kirin took their turn. It seemed that dwarfs didn't bathe.

Jenny and her friends bade the two dwarfs goodnight and lay down to sleep. Duncan and Blick stood watch that night for the girls and Treymane didn't get much sleep the night before. Kirin took the last watch and woke everyone when daylight broke. It was going to be another hot one so before leaving everyone refilled his or her water bags with fresh cold water.

Out of the corner of Jenny's eye she saw something move. It was high in a tree. Looking up she saw another large raven perched atop of a tall pine tree. She touched Roma's arm and pointed, but it was gone. Shrugging her shoulders, Roma told her not to worry and that she might have been seeing things. Agreeing with her friend, she put the thought out of her mind.

By midday, it became so hot that their waterbags were almost empty from their constant drinking. Luckily they had arrived at the home of the old woman called Teagan. They crossed an old wooden bridge that spanned a slow meandering narrow river. On the other side stood a quaint but not too small house. It sported three chimneys and a rather large woodshed. Off to one side there was a good-sized garden with a scarecrow smack in the middle. The tomatoes, some ripe, some yellow and most still green, stood some five feet tall. The corn still had a few weeks of growing to do before the sweet ears could be harvested. In the front, the old woman had her herb garden and a beautiful mixture of different flowers.

On the woodshed side stood a large tree stump with a rather heavy double bladed ax wedged in its rings. Someone was preparing for winter. Even though it was the middle of summer.

Hearing the noise the troop made arriving, the old woman peered out of her front door. Smiling and wiping her hands on her apron, she rushed out to greet her visitors. She greeted them all with a smile and an embrace, but when she turned to Jenny, her smile disappeared. Something was wrong, Jenny felt it, but then the smile returned and all were invited in for tea and fresh baked cookies.

They entered a large room with three or four comfortable chairs standing in front of one of the fireplaces. Teagan disappeared through a doorway and returned with a tray of still hot cookies. "Tea will be ready soon," she said, as she lay the tray down on the only table in the room. Despite Teagan's baking, the room she was in felt rather cool.

"I would like to thank you all in helping to bring my niece to me under such difficult circumstances. Treymane, you have been a great help, just like your uncle. I thank you. Kirin, thank you for helping out at the Council of Elders. And you, my old friend," she said as she took both of Duncan's hands in hers, "I want to thank you for risking your life for me again after all these times." Then she turned to Blick. "You too, my friend I thank."

Both dwarfs' faces turned beet red and shyly turned away. Duncan slapped Blick's shoulder and the two left to go and chop some firewood for the old woman. She asked Kirin and Treymane to go on a hunting trip, for she had seen some deer in the back woods just the other day and it would nice to have a roast or two for tonight's supper. Sensing that Teagan wanted to be alone with Jenny, Roma got up to leave when a gentle hand stopped her.

"Please sit down," Teagan said. "This concerns you too." Roma sat back down. "I'm afraid I have some bad news for both of you," the old one continued. "Roma, I'm afraid your father was killed when Malodor attacked and burned Storr. Many more were killed along with my friend Annabelle. She shouldn't have tried to take on the dark one all by herself. He was only after information and may not have razed the village if she hadn't attacked him. I must now ask you to put your sorrow aside and help us finish what we've started. After that, I will do what I can to help rebuild your village." Then her attention turned to Jenny. "And for you there is even more bad news. A few weeks ago I stopped hearing from Shannon. This can only mean that she is dead."

The news hit Jenny like a freight train. For a moment she couldn't say anything, but just stared at the old one. "Are you telling me that I can't go back to my time when I've finished here?" she asked. Teagan's eyes turned to the floor, answering her question.

"You see," the old one continued, "we need a contact from your time in order to make the switch, but there isn't anyone like you that we can contact. You were one of a very few and we were lucky to find you. If we can find a way to get you home, we will. So for now, we have a lot of work to do. You may recall that you have some special powers hidden

deep within you. This is because Shannon was a mage like myself. Her magic still exists within you, but it has been repressed, because of your ideas about magic. I know that you don't believe in it. Your world doesn't allow your mind to expand to such a degree that one can move objects with the mind or create illusions by just using the power in your mind. That power is within you and I will help bring it out over the next few weeks. You must learn to use your power or all will be lost and Malodor will have his box."

Teagan was talking so fast, for Jenny's mind was still back in her own century. She suddenly realized that she would never see her brother and sister-in-law again. They all must think she's dead. Now she was stuck in this world with little hope of ever returning to her home. Tears began to well up in her eyes as she thought of all her friends that went to her funeral thinking that the accident on that mountain road caused her death. And what of her parents? What are they going through? She stood and walked outside passing the two dwarfs who were busily chopping wood and softly cried.

Roma wanted to go after her, but Teagan stopped her. "She has to face this by herself," the old elf woman said. "It's the only way she'll get over it. She has to let it out of her system so I can teach her to become Shannon."

Jenny found an old bench just outside the garden. Sitting down she began to think where she was. With her family dead for centuries, things just couldn't get worse. Or could they? Her new friends were nice and seemed to want to help her fit in, but was she up to it? Could she really fit in? Then her thoughts returned to her family and the tears began to flow again.

Inside the cabin Roma was helping Teagan set the table for the evening meal, when Duncan and Blick came in, each with an armload of wood.

"I hope the others will return soon," Duncan said as he dropped the firewood into the woodbin.

"They will be here soon enough," answered the old woman, "and with plenty to eat. I do know your appetite."

The sun was beginning to set when a shouting voice from the forest sent the two dwarfs running with sword and shield in hand to see what was the matter. Both stopped in their tracks when they saw the halfling and elf struggling to drag an eight pointed buck out from the tightly woven net of the young forest growth. After the two composed themselves and put aside their weapons, they went and helped their two friends.

"A fine specimen you have here," Duncan joked as he held the head of the buck up by its crown. "We'll eat hearty

tonight."

They dragged the deer into the woodshed and hung it by its hind legs. They then began to skin it and cut it into roasts and sausage meat. Most of the meat would be turned into jerky by salting and smoking it over the next ten to twelve days. Blick cut off a nice large piece from the rump and delivered it to Teagan who put it into a large pot and added some vegetables to the already boiling water. She then put the lid on it and let it stew over the next couple of hours.

It was well after dark when Jenny entered the house. She had cried herself out. Teagan took her to another room so that she could freshen up. She also gave her a small bottle and instructed her to put a drop of the liquid into each eye. This would clear away the redness caused from so many tears.

"Isn't there anything you can do?" Jenny asked. "I miss them so."

"Believe me," countered Teagan, "when Shannon stopped sending me visions, I tried to help her through my magic, but I was too weak and by the time anyone would have arrived to help, it would have been too late. Then I thought of ways to send you back, but back to what? With no body to enter, where would you go? Also Shannon's body would have died without you and I could not bear the thought of losing the both of you."

"But she was your niece," said Jenny almost breaking out in tears again.

"She knew what the dangers were," Teagan said fighting back her own tears. "She did it to save this world and died for it. That is why you now must take her place and become Shannon. You must finish what she has started. Our world, your family's future world must be protected." Teagan's face turned soft as she asked Jenny, "Will you become my niece?"

Jenny felt the tears well up in her eyes once more as she embraced the old woman and said. "All of you are my family now."

With Teagan's arm resting gently on her niece's shoulder, the two walked out into the kitchen. Roma was stirring the pot, trying hard not to set herself on fire in the large hearth. The four others were toasting each other with some of the old woman's finest wine. Escorting the girl to the table, Teagan announced that from this day forward, Jenny would be addressed as Shannon, until the Demon Box was destroyed. After that, it would be left up to Jenny; if she wanted to keep the name, or revert back to her real one. Everyone agreed.

"Now with all that out of the way," declared Duncan, "let's eat!"

## Chapter 6

The next morning proved to be the dawning of another hot, sunny, summer's day, when Jenny awoke. She had a fitful night, dreaming of her family and friends. They were standing over her casket and peering down at her. She was trying to tell them that she was all right and not dead, but all she kept seeing was one tearful face after another. In another dream she kept reliving the accident over and over again. She was glad when dawn came.

Stooping over the wash basin, Jenny stared at herself in the mirror. She could see the bags under her eyes from the lack of sleep. Her eyes were still red from the crying she had done after she went to bed. Putting some more of the drops which Teagan had given her into her eyes and splashing cold water in her face, Jenny dressed and prepared to meet the rest of her friends.

To her surprise, most were still asleep. Only Teagan was



up and preparing for the morning's breakfast.

"Good morning," she said turning to her niece. "And what a fine day it is."

Seeing Jenny standing there looking depressed, she added. "I know it's hard right now, but if you give it a chance you just might grow to like our world. It isn't much different from yours except for the machines. You will have to learn to do without them."

"What do you know about the machines in my world?" Jenny asked.

"When I was small," answered Teagan, "I went with my parents to Sanctum, in Rogalandt. There I read some pages that were copied from one of the ancient scripts. It spoke of machines propelling people along a hardened road; people flying through the air without the help of feathered wings; machines cooling homes and the most fascinating of all, people being able to communicate with others over long distances through a device called a telephone. These are things that I've read and can only dream about, but you, my sweet girl, you have experienced all these things. Things that others can not even imagine. You are living your life in two different worlds. So cheer up and begin to enjoy your life."

Jenny knew that Teagan was right. She had to accept her new life, for the old one was gone forever. She was about to say something, when the door from another room opened and Duncan walked out.

"Can't a man sleep around here without all this talking going on?" he said in a gruff voice. Then he sniffed the air and continued. "Smells good. What's for breakfast?"

"I'm starving."

"Oh hush up!" said Teagan, showing a smile to Jennifer. "This isn't the Red Dragon Inn."

The dwarf smiled as he looked over at Jenny and gave her a wink. "You're right, the food's much better here, than at the Inn."

Soon everyone was sitting at the large kitchen table waiting to be served. Teagan had made roasted potatoes and fried pork. These combined with fresh baked rolls and hot tea, were a meal fit for royalty. The dwarfs helped themselves to three platefuls while the elves and Roma were content with only one. Everyone ate heartily and left the table full.

After the meal, Duncan and Blick went out and continued chopping wood, for Teagan had asked them to chop and stack enough for the coming winter. Kirin and Roma she sent out hunting, because later when Othelo and the rest of the dwarfs would arrive, she would need plenty of meat. Treymane she sent to the river to try his luck at fishing. She gave him her best fishing rod along with a basket and told him to return when the basket was full. When all but Jenny were gone, she turned her attention to her niece.

"Come and help me wash up the dishes," she said. "Then after that we'll go outside and find us a nice spot where we can talk without being disturbed. But tell me what I should call you; Jennifer, or Shannon."

Jenny thought for a moment and then answered. "From this moment on I will be known as Shannon and will do my best to live up to your expectations. The only thing I ask is

that you and everyone else be patient with me. It's not easy for me at this time."

When they were finished and all the dishes were back in the cupboard, they left the house, walked to a small meadow and sat under a gnarly old oak tree. Here in the cool shade they began to talk. "Tell me," Jenny asked, "how did whoever found the vial recognize it as something dangerous?"

Teagan thought for a moment trying to recall the last time she and the old man, Leopold Merryweather, sat in the great halls of the inner library in Sanctum. There he showed her the ancient scripts, which spoke about the history of ancient mankind. The old woman tried to explain as best as she could, for it was such a long time ago. She did remember the part about the vial and how it could be used to defeat and destroy all of humanity. Leopold had found the vial and knowing what it was, enclosed it in a box made from Ironwood. He then placed a spell of binding so that no one could open it and release its contents without the counter-spell. Then the old man hid the box where he had found it and let it be known that the box was buried somewhere in the Northern Divide. "Malodor has been searching for it for decades, but always in the wrong spot," Teagan said. "But not too long ago, he began to suspect that the old wizard had led him on a wild goose chase and started looking in other directions such as the Coastal range. Fearing that he would find it, Annabelle, an old cleric, called Carthilius and we sent for you. We all knew the risks we were taking, but the consequences were too high not to. This is how you found your way here. The combined magic from the three of us enabled the spell to work. I am just so sorry that we will not be able to reverse it and send you back."

Teagan told Jenny that she should rest for the next few days. In three days her training would begin. The old woman continued to question her about what her world was truly like and if the books that she had read were in fact correct. Teagan seemed fascinated by her answers and kept on with question after question, until late afternoon when Othelo with another six dwarfs appeared.

Duncan and Blick dropped what they were doing and ran to greet their friends. It seemed that the new arrivals had brought a keg of ale with them and soon the dwarfs were seated on the ground toasting each other.

Soon the hobbit arrived with a basket full of fresh fish that he caught. He too joined the dwarfs in a toast or two.

Roma arrived with news that Kirin was waiting for help back up in the hills. It seems that the deer he killed was too heavy for the two of them to carry out of the forest. So all the men got up and followed the girl to retrieve tonight's dinner, leaving the old woman and Jenny alone.

Over the next three days everyone was in a festive mood. The food and drink were plentiful and everyone snored happily as they reached their limit and fell asleep.

The morning of the third day was different. Duncan and his band left for places unknown, promising to return before Shannon and the rest left for the Dragon's Mouth.

Treymane amused himself by going fishing nearly every day, while Roma and Kirin practised their hunting and fighting

skills. Jenny and Teagan now would go off to some secluded spot, where they wouldn't be disturbed and worked on the young elf's magical abilities.

The first lesson was to be able to concentrate without getting distracted. This proved to be quite a stepping stone, for Jenny's eyes caught every movement of branches in the trees or a couple of squirrels collecting nuts and chasing each other around the trunk of a large oak tree. She worked all day on this and by the time the sun went down, she was no farther ahead than when she started. The next day Jenny found concentrating a little easier and Teagan began a simple test of levitation. First the old woman lifted a tiny pebble into the air and then a boulder almost as large as a wagon. When Jenny tried, all Teagan heard were some loud grunts, but nothing happened. Concerned, the old woman took a stone in her hand and said. "Stare at it and command it to rise."

Jenny stared and stared until her eyes began to water before she gave up. "I don't think I'll ever be able to do this."

"But you did it in the forest with your cape," Teagan said. "And you did have that tingly sensation when you came near the box. Did you think the cape was a magical one? No my dear, it has no more magic than the hobbit possesses. You did it because you wished it to happen and the sensation you felt was the magic within you. Now you must do the same with this stone."

Again Jenny tried, but the results were the same. "I see that we have a lot of work ahead of us, my dear," Teagan stated.

Jenny was tired from the constant pressure of concentration, so when the two returned to the house, she was pleased to find Roma had brewed some tea and was waiting for them. The two men were off in a corner playing a game of cards and drinking some of the dwarven ale left behind by Duncan and his men. Clutching the hot cup in her hands Jenny walked over to where the two men were playing and sat down next to Kirin.

"So how did it go today?" he asked.

"The same as yesterday, I'm afraid," Jenny answered. "I'm not sure if I'll ever have command over the magic."

After the supper meal, the five sat around in front of the fireplace and enjoyed a little conversation and a hot alcoholic beverage before turning in for the night. Teagan assured Jenny that tomorrow things would look better and brighter.

A week and a half passed and nothing was happening. No magic was coming from Jenny. Even Teagan was beginning to think that she had made a mistake about Shannon's magic existing within the body in front of her now. So when they stopped for a cup of tea, Teagan quietly whispered a spell as Jenny drank her tea. When Jenny tried again the stone in Teagan's hand moved slightly.

"You see," said Teagan, "you can do the magic."

Jenny smiled. After all this time she had finally done it. She had moved the stone. The young girl never realized that Teagan had given her a little push. For the rest of the day Jenny worked on moving other small objects around. She needed no more help from the old woman. The magic was there for her to command. And command she did. Even after

Teagan left for the house, Jenny stayed behind and practised until the sun was down and it was nearly dark.

Early the next morning Jenny was out practising even before Teagan rose from her sleep. Jenny had mastered the art of levitating small objects and by the time the old woman joined her, she had graduated from tiny pebbles to some of the smaller chopped logs.

"Good, my dear," Teagan complimented. "Today we shall go and levitate some larger objects. Like yourself for example."

Jenny was excited and eager to get started, so she was off and running to their private place of work. This time they did not sit together, but rather facing each other. Teagan closed her eyes and spoke in a language that Jenny didn't understand. Suddenly the old woman began to rise. Higher and higher she rose until she was even with the top of the tree they were sitting under. Jenny watched with surprise, as she had never seen this before. If only she could learn that, then she would never have to climb another staircase again. But then she thought here in this world there weren't too many of those around. When Teagan resettled on the ground she told Jenny to try it.

"How can I?" she said. "I don't know what you said before you lifted up off the ground."

"Listen to me carefully," Teagan started. "Magic isn't based on a set of rules. It comes from the heart. Whatever I said may not work for you, but you're welcome to try. And if it doesn't work that way, then you must find a way that will. You must will yourself to rise."

Jenny tried, but nothing happened. Just like before she would have to work at it over and over until she mastered that too. Gee, she thought, this magic is hard. If I have to learn every spell, I'll be here forever. She kept this up into the late afternoon when a small success came to her. She tried again, but as her concentration began to wander, small objects such as twigs, small branches and rocks began to rise. Teagan, seeing this laughed out loud, breaking the young girl's inner attention. The flying objects landed with a thud back on the ground.

"You're supposed to raise yourself up off the ground," Teagan said with a laugh. "Not raise the ground."

The surprised girl joined the old woman and they chuckled all the way back to the house where the rest were waiting for Teagan.

Grabbing his belly, Duncan said. "You are slowing down, old woman. It is nearing the time to eat and nothing has been started."

Giving her friend a sly smile Teagan said. "And you, my friend, are getting rounder by the day. If you want to eat, then chop some wood for the fire, or you will have to eat your roast raw."

Looking around, the old dwarf saw everyone with a smile on their faces. Huffing, he turned and went to the woodshed and picked up the ax. The hobbit returned to his fish cleaning, while Kirin showed Roma how to tan the hide of the deer that they had downed that day. Jenny followed Teagan into the house to help her prepare the evening meal.

"Tomorrow," began the old woman, handing Jen some plates for the table, "we shall try something new. Something you will need to protect yourself with. Maybe a change of pace might help your concentration better."

"What sort of protection?" asked Jenny.

"Something that your bow or your sword cannot match," said Teagan. "Something you have never seen. It's called Blue Fire and you wield it at will, if you know how. Once you can project this flame you will be ready to face the dangers that await you on the rest of your journey."

"Is that the same blue light that brought me here?" asked Jenny.

"Something similar, but not quite the same," answered the old woman. "The blue light that brought you here was a magical transfer beam. It could not kill, but the Blue Fire will kill. So it is not to be used unless your life or your friends' lives are at stake."

While Jen was in training, the others kept themselves busy. Treymane spent most of his time fishing and just lazing around. His thoughts always went back to his beloved home in Haggleville. Although he was born in Hooter's Hollow, he spent most of his growing up time in Haggleville where his father built sailing boats for a local merchant. Many a day the old hobbit took his son along and let him watch as he steam heated board after board and then shaped it so that both sides of the bow met. Treymane wanted to become a boat maker just like his father, but when he got older, he listened to his uncle's tales of adventure and so building boats landed farther down on his list of things to accomplish. On one of his trips to Rogalandt, he met Teagan at the Apple Festival. There he saw her perform some of her magic. At first he thought it was slight of hand, but later while talking to his uncle he realized that the elf woman was a mage. A very powerful one. He followed her around watching every spell she performed, trying to learn and repeat the words. He even wrote down the words as she spoke, but later when he tried the magic himself, he failed. For days he tried until he was sure that there was no magic within him. His disappointment led him to a shop that sold books on magic, but the slight of hand type. He studied and practised until he could perform these tricks without a flaw. He bought special flash paper, which ignited when it came in contact with air. He burned himself several times before he caught on to how to handle it safely. It was a trick that saved his neck a few times when he was caught cheating at a card game or being chased down an alley by a group of thugs. The flash allowed him enough time to escape. Those were good times, he thought to himself, when his main goal was to ensure a few pieces of silver with a trick or two.

Kirin, on the other hand, was always in the Home Guard, protecting Maitland from invading parties, whether they were orcs or human raiders. He never spent much time adventuring around the country. The only quest he was on was when it was his turn to be on the hunting party. These were memorable trips when sitting around the campfire at night singing and dancing, especially when the hunt was a success. Lying on the grass in a meadow and staring at the clouds passing by, he and Roma took a break. They had hunted all

morning and were dragging a dozen rabbits back to Teagan's place. He thought of Jenny and her training. He hoped that she would be doing better now that Teagan showed her that the magic was within her. The two had something in common. This was the first quest either one had been on. Kirin turned his head and saw Roma deep in thought.

Roma was thinking about the first day when she and Shannon started looking for the box. It was supposed to be a fun treasure hunt, and Roma never expected to find it. She also didn't expect to lose her friend either. She recalled the first morning when the two left Storr and headed for the high forests of the coastal range. It was a warm day and when they reached the lake, they stripped bare and went swimming at their favorite beach. After their refreshing swim they dressed, ate and continued until sundown. It was fun, for Shannon was a leader who knew just about every twist and turn in the road and every tree in the forest. Roma was never afraid of getting lost when her friend was around. Now it was different, Jennifer didn't know the forests or any of the trails. It was Roma's turn to become leader and help her newfound friend complete the task she had been brought here for. She liked Jenny and knew that in time the two would become good friends. She closed her eyes for a moment and soon felt a gentle hand touch her shoulder.

"We'd better get these hares back in time for supper," said Kirin. "Or there's going to be war between us and the dwarfs. They do eat a lot."

"I suppose you're right," answered Roma. "I wouldn't want to hear them complaining about all that chopped wood and nothing to cook with it."

Laughing, the two picked up their cache and headed down the trail towards the house. It was almost dark when they arrived and as they had expected the first thing they heard was Duncan crying about how empty his stomach was.

"How's a man supposed to exist when he works so hard and his supper is late," he said in his usual gruff voice.

"I seem to recall," Teagan cut in, "a certain young dwarf going off on his own to hunt and not coming home for days on end. Many a time I heard that you got stuck in some tavern or inn where you couldn't keep yourself away from the card table."

A red-faced Duncan turned and with a smile on his face marched towards the house. How did she know about the card games? "I bet Blick told her," he told himself. "When I get my hands on him I'll..."

"You'll do what?" came the thought in his mind. Teagan had been listening, for she could hear a leaf drop in the middle of a forest, while he would only hear a mountain fall over.

He began to whistle as he entered the kitchen. There was Jen, spooning a fresh batch of stew into the bowls on the table. Slowly everyone entered the house and sat down at the table to eat. There was venison stew and baked fish, with spiced potatoes and for desert, four blackberry pies. All this was washed down with your choice of wine, tea and some strong dwarf ale.

When everyone's hunger was satisfied, they all gathered near the fireplace in the front room. Duncan and Blick lit their

favorite corn pipes and began talking about the day each had. After chopping wood early that morning, the two decided to venture to the great inland sea about a good half a morning's walk away and see if there were any signs of coastal raiders. Finding none they returned later that afternoon only to find that no one had noticed that they had gone. Shrugging their shoulders, they helped themselves to a flagon of ale and then continued to chop until everybody returned to the house.

Everyone had their chance to talk and they all had a good laugh when Teagan told them how Jenny levitated just about everything around her, but herself. Soon the fire burned down to embers and everyone turned in, eager to wake to a new day.

Jenny was the last one to go to bed for she kept on thinking about her lessons of that day. She still couldn't figure out what she did wrong. Seeing that she was quite alone and no one was left to talk to, Jenny decided to pack away her thoughts and try again in the morning.

She slept restless all night with dreams ranging from her family back in the other world to someone dark and unseen laughing at her. Once she awoke drenched in sweat. Getting up and wiping herself down with a wet cloth of cool water from a bowl that stood on the dresser, she returned and lay back down. Staring up at the ceiling, Jennifer began to think. Could she really do this? With that thought in her mind she slowly drifted off into another uneasy sleep. For the first time, Jenny was glad to see the sun come up. Hopefully today would be a better day than the last.

After breakfast Teagan took Jenny and left the house. She took her to a very secluded place known only to herself. The old woman came here whenever she needed to be alone. It was a peaceful place; a meadow that ran right up to a tall cliff. Here she turned to Jenny and said. "Here today you will learn how to defend yourself with the use of magic."

Turning away from the young girl, Teagan raised both of her hands to the height of her shoulders and with her finger pointing away from her she uttered the spell and a blue flame shot forth from her fingertips and blasted away some of the rocks embedded in the cliff. Jenny cringed as some of the smaller particles blew high into the air and came to rest near her feet.

"You see what I mean?" asked the old woman. "This you must learn before you can go on any further with the box. There are forces more powerful out there and if you haven't got this power you will die. Malodor's minions are out there just waiting for you to make a mistake so they can kill you and whoever is with you."

Seeing the worried look on Jenny's face, Teagan quickly added, "but don't worry, I will give you the spell. It will work because you have the magic within you. The only catch is that if you use it, you must really want to or it won't work."

All morning the two worked, but all Jenny could get from

her fingertips was cold air. She was afraid that if the flame shot out, she would burn her fingers. Only after a lot of coaxing and plenty of assurances from Teagan did Jen finally manage a weak flame. It hardly made it to the wall let alone burn a hole into it. Still she was proud of her accomplishment. The two worked until the late afternoon before getting back to cook the evening meal.

Once again everybody sat down to eat. Tonight's meal consisted of meat pies with stuffed goose. Kirin and Roma had been lucky when they came upon a field of geese and downed three before the rest took to the air. The two cleaned and plucked all the feathers. Then Roma made the stuffing from some leftover bread and spices. She then began roasting the bird while waiting for all to return.

When Teagan arrived she prepared the meat and rolled the dough to make the pies, while Jenny cleaned and boiled the potatoes.

At the table everyone ate as if it were their last meal. Compliments were tossed to all involved in the preparation of the meal. After the last morsel was eaten, Teagan stood and filled her glass and said. "In four days from now you, my friends, will continue your journey to help Shannon rid the world of the Demon Box. Duncan, you will send for Othelo and his men so that they will arrive on time?"

"I will send Blick at first light," he answered.

"Good," she said. "Then let us go into the other room by the fireplace and finish our drinks."

The next three days flew by with Jennifer's magic growing stronger every day and by the morning of the fourth it was time to leave. Othelo and his band had arrived on the previous evening and were geared up to leave. Everyone had polished their weapons the night before, which now glistened in the bright sun's rays. With backpacks full they were ready to go when Teagan stepped in front of them.

"Before you go," she started, "I have something for you, Shannon."

From behind her back she produced a short staff. Duncan's eyes grew, for he knew what the staff was.

"This is for you," she said, handing the walking stick to Jennifer. "It is called the Staff of the Sun. You will need it to strengthen your Blue Fire. Just ram this stick into the ground at the time you cast the spell and it will strengthen your power a hundred fold. But remember it will drain you if you use it, so be careful and use it only when you have to."

"It looks broken," Jenny said after examining the staff. "Was it longer than this before?"

"Yes it was," answered Teagan, "but that is another story, which I will tell you another time. For now it is time to leave. Go quickly and return safely."

After all the goodbyes were said, Duncan took the lead and led the party out of Teagan's realm. ♣

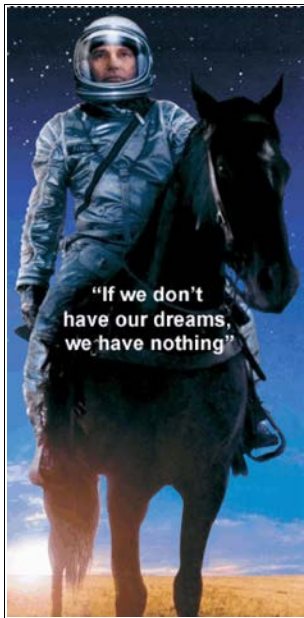
## *The Last Mage continues in WARP 68*





## MOVIES

### The Astronaut Farmer Reviewed by Sébastien Mineau



To my disappointment, I couldn't attend the *Ghost Rider* premiere this Thursday, so a friend went and told me it was good.

But instead of the fiery cyclist, I had the chance to attend a screening of *The Astronaut Farmer*.

The movie starring Billy Bob Thorton and Virginia Madsen is a definite must see.

The simple story of Charlie Farmer living his life and trying to make his dream happen at the same time might seem familiar (because yes there is indeed a guy in the States building a rocket in his own backyard) but it's also a

portrait of all of our dreams which we most of the time put

aside to live our lives.

Charlie Farmer decided instead to fully live his life and share his dream with his entire family. The entire family comes to a point where they all live around this Rocket that Charlie is building in the barn.

With the high and lows of life crossing his path many times, will Charlie launch his rocket? I'll let you find that out when you go see the movie.

I really appreciated all of the little subtle things in the movie, for instance Charlie's internet callsign is Apollo\_13, his son is named Shepard (no doubt after Alan B. Shepard Jr. first American in space). I did have some scientific issues with the movie, but all in all it's a really fun movie to watch even for us Rocket Boys.

That's a Theatrical recommendation from my part. A definite must see on the big screen.

For those of you interested, Café FX did the special FX on the movie.

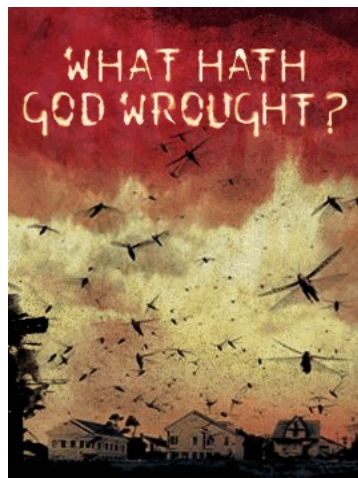
<http://theastronautfarmermovie.warnerbros.com/>



### The Reaping Reviewed by Fernster

I attended the premier of *The Reaping* at the AMC Forum this week, and I had no real expectations about this movie. I was delighted and surprised by this movie. Hilary Swank plays the part of Katherine Winter a one time missionary in the Sudan, whose family was murdered. These days she teaches at a university, and also denounces religious miracles using science to explain the event. However, nothing can prepare her for what happens in a small town in Louisiana.

The Biblical plagues are occurring in this town for unknown reasons. The director Stephane Hopkins is skilful in building up the tension in this movie. Plague after plague hit the town folks and the special effects were real good. Raining frogs, dead fish, blood red water,



locusts, and a spectacular rain of fire kept people on the edge of their seats. The final plague (the dead of the 1st born!) was amazing at the end of the movie. The movie's ending was however, a bit of a disappointment since it was obviously written as a lead-in for a sequel.

Catch this movie in the theatre if you can, the big screen adds a lot to the special effects. As for your DVD collection, if you like Hilary Swank or *The End of the World* Biblical types of movies then buy it. Otherwise, it's still an excellent movie for a rental weekend.

Acting: XXX	3/5	Nudity: X	1/5
Action: XXXx	3.5/5	Plot: XXXX	4/5
Effects: XXXx	3.5/5	Sex: X	1/5
Laugh: X	1/5	Violence: XXX	3/5
Music: XX	2/5	Wow: XXXXXx	4.5/5

**Total: 26/50**

<http://thereapingmovie.warnerbros.com/>



## A Night at the Museum

Reviewed by Sylvain St-Pierre

The teaser was definitely attention-grabbing: how can you resist seeing a movie in which a man is being chased by the skeleton of a T-Rex? The idea that the exhibits in a museum might come to life is not a new one – I have seen it before in books, cartoons and movies – but this particular rendering is



quite well made and fun to watch. Without giving away the plot, I can say that I especially liked the fact that there are many unexpected turns in it, and I always find surprises enjoyable in a movie. Be warned that you'll need to suspend disbelief a bit in a couple of places. The effects are excellent and the IMAX version, which I saw, is quite worth the few extra bucks. A very pleasant way to spend an evening and I recommend this movie if you are in the mood for light comedy.

<http://www.apple.com/trailers/fox/nightatthemuseum/>

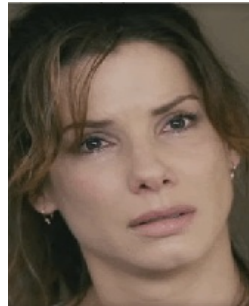


## Premonition

Reviewed by Fernster

I attended the premier of *Premonition* in Montreal, and I was disappointed by this movie. Sandra Bullock was as cute as ever, but the storyline of this movie stunk.

This movie reminded me a lot of the movie *Lake House* in which Sandra Bullock also starred. Failing marriage, her premonitions about the future, her husband is dead, not dead, and than dead again. This all leads to a confused series of twists



and turns with a predictable ending.

Wait for the DVD and rent it – don't bother buying it for your collection.

Acting: XX	2/5	Nudity: X	1/5
Action: XX	2/5	Plot: XX	2/5
Effects: XX	2/5	Sex: X	1/5
Laugh: X	1/5	Violence: XX	2/5
Music: X	1/5	Wow: X	1/5

**Total: 15/50**

<http://www.sonypictures.com/movies/premonition/>



## 300

Reviewed by Fernster

I was privileged to attend the premier for this movie in Montreal, and I must say I was flabbergasted. I had been checking out this movie's website on a regular basis since last October and my expectations were high. I was not disappointed! Don't wait for the DVD to come out; this movie is a must be viewed on a big screen. Then buy the DVD for your collection.



Acting: XXXX	4/5	Nudity: XX	2/5
Action: XXXXx	4.5/5	Plot: XXXX	4/5
Effects: XXXXX	5/5	Sex: XX	2/5
Laugh: X	1/5	Violence: XXXXX	5/5
Music: XX	2/5	Wow: XXXXX	5/5

**Total: 34.5/5**

<http://300themovie.warnerbros.com/>

The photos accompanying the movie reviews are from the official websites

## BOOKS

Reviewed by Cathy Palmer-Lister

### **The Sharing Knife: Beguilement**

**Lois McMaster Bujold**

Fantasy, Eos, 2006



Cover art by Julie Bell

With this book, Lois McMaster Bujold introduces us to yet another universe, one in which wandering Lakewalkers are rumoured to practice black magic to rid the land of “malices”— creatures that survive and grow by sucking life out of everything around them. Fawn Bluefield runs away from home, and straight into the arms of ruffians. Her

rescue by Dag, one of the Lakewalkers, proves to be a mixed blessing.

Readers familiar with the Miles stories will find this book has harder edges – sex, violence, even rape. This might be one of her best books ever, and I am eagerly awaiting the second volume, *The Sharing Knife: Legacy*, due to be released in June.

### **Book One of Virga: Sun of Suns**

**Karl Schroeder**

Science Fiction, Tor, 2006

This universe has got to be one of the most interesting I’ve seen in a very long time! What fun discovering how humans adapt to life in an enormous, 3000 km in diameter, fullerene balloon. Consider the opening sentence: “*Hayden Griffin was plucking a fish when the gravity bell rang.*” You know it’s not Kansas, but it’s not Oz either – everything makes perfect sense, even feathered fish!



Cover art by Stephane Martiniere

The balloon is filled with breathable air, but every little town or city has to provide its own gravity with contraptions of wheels and ropes. And as for suns: “*To make your own sun! That was how nations were founded. To light your own sun was to be remembered forever.*” That’s what Hayden’s parents were attempting but the Slipstreamers put an end to Aerie’s dreams of nationhood. Hayden was orphaned, and sent spinning off into winter. When we meet him next, he is a bitter young man driven by his need for revenge on Admiral Chaison Fanning head

of the Slipstream fleet.

Book Two of Virga, *The Queen of Candesce*, is due for release in August.

### **Renfield: Slave of Dracula**

**Barbara Hambly**

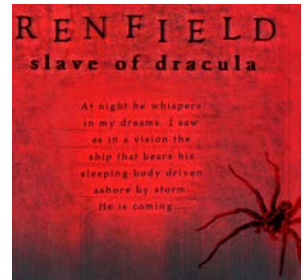
Horror, sort of, Berkley Books, 2006

*7 flies, 3 spiders....Yuck.* There are several good reasons why Renfield is an inmate of Dr. Seward’s asylum!

He spends his days eating bugs and the occasional sparrow, and hoping for cats. He writes obsessively in his journal – a tally of the critters he’s swallowed, and letters to his wife and daughter.

Dracula, and later Dracula’s three wives, haunt his visions. He sees their arrival in England, and at first believes Dracula to be Wotan. He is enslaved by “the Master” but is not a willing slave. His repugnance grows with each murder. When Dracula orders him to eliminate Van Helsing and his companions, he hatches a few mad schemes of his own.

It really helps to have read the original *Dracula* by Bram Stoker, if only to better appreciate the little twists in the plot, especially the ending. I suppose it fits in the horror category, if one must categorize, but don’t expect it to keep you awake at night.



Boring cover design by Rita Frangle

### **Ysabel**

**Guy Gavriel Kay**

Fantasy, Penguin, 2007

*Ysabel* takes place in Provence in the sunny south of France, renowned for the clarity of its light which has drawn artists for years, and now draws Ned’s father, a photographer illustrating a coffee-table book, and his team of assistants.

Ned, 15, expects to be bored and comes armed with his iPod, but in the Cathedral of Aix, history comes alive for him – literally. Those who will not let go of the past are doomed to repeat it, over and over again, and through the millennia a Roman and a Celt have been



Cover art by Greg Banning



warring for the love of a woman – Ysabel. Now the story is starting again, and Ned is warned to stay out of it, but how can he stand aside when their story threatens the lives of his friends and family?

There is a thread from *The Fionavar Tapestry* running through this book, though it's not immediately obvious. It added to my enjoyment of the story, but not having read *The Tapestry* is not a handicap. Even more fun is learning that Ned is from Montreal!

There were references to archaeological sites that I just had to Google. That was fun, because Ned was doing the same! Since then, Penguin has put up a gallery of photos showing all the wonderful places described in the book, and you can find them at <http://www.ysabel.ca/> Life imitates art? Reality and fantasy are so intertwined in Ysabel, I half expected to see the photos credited to Ned's father! ♣

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## *Convention Listings for MonSFFen with thanks to Lloyd Penny for laying the ground work*

### *Montreal events*

#### **BORÉAL 2007, April 27-29**

Concordia University, Montreal, QC.  
Francophone SF convention, hosting this year's **34e Convention nationale française de science-fiction**. Guests include Alain Bergeron, Éric Henriot, Xavier Mauméjean, Geoff Ryman, Élisabeth Vonarburg.  
[www.congresboreal.ca](http://www.congresboreal.ca)

#### **ANTHROFEST 2007, July 27-29 -**

DoubleTree Plaza Hotel, Montreal QC.  
Furry/anthropomorphic convention.  
Guest: PalladinThug.  
[www.anthrofest.org](http://www.anthrofest.org)

#### **OTAKUTHON 2007, August 4-5 -**

Anime convention. Concordia University, Henry F. Hall building, 1455 de Maisonneuve Blvd.  
<http://www.otakuthon.com>

**ROYALCON 2007, SEPTEMBER 14-16**, Gaming convention. Days Hotel, Montreal, QC. <http://www.royalcon.ca>

#### **CON\*CEPT 2007, October 12-14,**

Days Hotel, Montreal, QC. SFF convention. Guests: David Weber, Tanya Huff, more TBA.  
[www.conceptsf.ca](http://www.conceptsf.ca)

#### **ANTICIPATION (The Montreal Worldcon Bid)**

<http://www.anticipationsf.ca/>  
e-mail <[info@anticipationsf.ca](mailto:info@anticipationsf.ca)>  
By mail at the following address:

#### **Anticipation**

C.P. 505, Succursale NDG  
Montréal, Québec  
Canada  
H4A 3P8

### *Other events*

**TORONTO COMICON, April 13-15**, Metro Toronto Convention Centre, Toronto, ON. Guests: Keith Giffen, Ron Garney, Carmine Infantino, Billy Tan, Alex Maleev, Chris Sprouse, Dale Eaglesham, Ivan Reis, Marx Teixeira, Michael Choi, Wilse Portacio, Kevin Nowlan, Aaron Lopresti, many more. [www.hobbystar.com](http://www.hobbystar.com)

**LORE CON 3, APRIL 13-15**, Holiday Inn, S. Burlington, VT. Gaming convention. Guests: Hugh H. Browne Jr., Gordon Dritschilo, Steve Kenson. [www.lorecon.com](http://www.lorecon.com)

**TRANSFORMERSCON, April 28**, Doubletree International Plaza Hotel Airport, Toronto, ON. Transformers toy convention. Guest: Alex Milne, more TBA.  
[www.transformerscon.com](http://www.transformerscon.com)

**TORA-CON 2007, April 28**, Rochester Institute of Technology, Rochester, NY. Anime convention. Guests: Steve Bennett, Sonny Strait, Cosplay Crack Crew, Geek Comedy Tour 3000, Stephanie Yanez.  
[www.toracon.rit.edu](http://www.toracon.rit.edu)

**THE GREAT CANADIAN BAYCON**, May 4-6 - Ramada Hotel, Hamilton, ON. Gaming convention.  
[www.greatcanadianbaycon.com](http://www.greatcanadianbaycon.com)

**11TH ANNUAL FANTASTIC PULPS SHOW & SALE, May 12** - Lillian H. Smith Branch, Toronto Public Library, Toronto, ON  
[www.girasolcollectibles.com](http://www.girasolcollectibles.com) click on Shows & Events.

**ANIME North, May 25-27**, Toronto Congress Centre, Doubletree International Plaza Hotel and Renaissance Toronto Airport Hotel, Toronto, ON. Anime convention. Guests: Steve Bennett, Johnny Yong Bosch, Derek Stephen Prince, Patrick Seitz, Michelle Ruff, Wendee Lee, Ben Dunn, & more. <http://www.animenorth.com/>

**5TH ANNUAL PARADISE TORONTO COMICON, June 8-10**, Direct Energy Centre, Exhibition Place, Toronto, ON. Guests: Michael Golden, Terry Moore, Matt Wagner, Marv Wolfman, many more.  
[www.torontocomicon.com](http://www.torontocomicon.com)

**C-ACE 2007, June 8-10**, Best Western Victoria Park Suite Hotel, Ottawa, ON. SF art convention (**final year**) Guests: Andrew "Loopy" Pidcock, more TBA.  
[www.c-ace.org](http://www.c-ace.org)

**WIZARD FEST 2007 June 29-30**, Sheraton Fallsview Hotel & Conference Centre, Niagara Falls, ON. Card game tournament.  
[www.wizardcards.net](http://www.wizardcards.net)

**POLARIS 21, July 6-8**, Doubletree International Plaza Hotel, Toronto, ON. Media SF Guests: Torri Higginson, Katee Sackhoff, Marina Sirtis, Teryl Rothery, more. [www.tcon.ca](http://www.tcon.ca)

**Archon 31, the Ninth Nasfic, Aug 2-5**, Collinsville IL GoH: Barbara Hambly. AGoH: Darrell K. Sweet. Media GoH: Mira Furlan. Gaming GoH: James Ernest.  
[www.archonstl.org/31](http://www.archonstl.org/31)

**TORONTO COMIC ARTS FESTIVAL, August 18 & 19**, Old Victoria College, University of Toronto, Toronto, ON. For more information,  
[www.torontocomics.com/tcaf/](http://www.torontocomics.com/tcaf/)

**FAN eXpo CANADA 2007, August 24-26** Metro Toronto Convention Centre, Toronto, ON. Comics, gaming, horror, anime and SF exposition. [www.hobbystar.com](http://www.hobbystar.com)

**FERAL! X, August 27-31**, Camp Arowhon, Algonquin Park, ON. Furry/anthropomorphic camp. [www.campferal.org](http://www.campferal.org)

**ASTRONOMICON 11, November 9-11**, Clarion Riverside Hotel, Rochester, NY. SF lit/media convention. Guests: Stephanie Pui-Mun Law, S.J. Tucker, Holly Black, Phil Brucato, Patrick Sweeney.  
[www.astronomicon.com](http://www.astronomicon.com)

*For more complete listings, see our website: [www.monsffa.com](http://www.monsffa.com)*



Keith missed his deadline; we can do what we like with his space!!

**The Grudge Match**  
**Alice Novo and Herself**

Yup ! Tis the Annual Christmas Party Pool Grudge Match (ACPPGM) between Barbara Silverman and Alice Novo.

(Okay Fern, explain to me again, how can this be a grudge match, when I have never played a game of pool before ?)

Here we were surrounded with well meaning but slightly inebriated Monsffa members. There was Auntie Bernice waiting for his kisses from all the girls. There was Lindsay sneaking illegal hooch into the bar. There was great music by Keith, who tended to sway with the music. (Or was that the beer swaying?)



Dan, the Pool Master

Barbara and I were looking at the our faithful coaches Dan and Marc with desperation at the thought of all these experts watching us play. (Hey wait a minute, I've never seen some of them at the pool table, so how do we know they are experts, Barb ?) I think I remember that it was Barbara that broke the triangle of balls on the table.

Aha! She aims towards the left ball and suddenly people would push to the right. Were they trying to let us know that we could smack the ball hard enough to hit them? (Humm maybe we should just make the watchers targets, that way we would of had chances of getting those darn pesky balls into the darn pockets..)

Barbara was on a roll, she rolled those balls to the left and then she rolled them to the right, lots of ahhs and ooohs were heard around the room. Barbara was doing great, shooting balls into the side and corner pockets, allowing me a few balls to play with. (Somehow, that didn't sound right.)

Just as Barbara was two balls away, she let me win! She was so nice to do that. Imagine that, letting

little ole me to win.  
Thanks Barbara.

(Huh... Alice, I hate to be a bearer of bad news, but she sank the 8 ball before finishing her other ball. So technically you won by default.)

Default ? You mean I didn't win properly,? I was gypped. I want a rematch. She's not going to get away with that. I want a grudge match and I want it by Christmas. Do you hear me Barbara ....I want a rematch !



P.S. These are a few of FERN'S LAWS on POOL that he sent me with the pool terminology (Which I did not use!).

**FERN'S LAW # 1** You will always miss the easy shots and on unexpected occasions make the hard ones perfectly.

**FERN'S LAW # 2** The ball will always end up where you least expect it to, and usually to the benefit of your opponent!

**FERN'S LAW # 3** You will always sink the black ball when you least expect to and never when you need it to win the game.

**FERN'S LAW # 4** Always choose a crooked pool cue, it will provide a good excuse as why you missed that shot!

**FERN'S LAW # 5** Always listen to the advice given from a drunken person, never from a sober person as they think too straight

**FERN'S LAW # 6** Eventually, all the balls will be cleared from the table by someone, somehow!



The cat's away....

## MonSFFA Milestones

MonSFFA congratulates:

**Debra Aubin and Tim Murphy** on the birth of their daughter, Ainsley.



**Mark Shainblum and Andrea**, on their birth of their daughter, Maya Gabriella.

## Condolences

Our heartfelt condolences to **Joe Aspler** on the passing of his mother, Estelle Ruth Aspler.

During World War II, she volunteered for overseas service with the Royal Canadian Army Medical Corps. Commissioned as a Lieutenant Nursing Sister, she saw active service in North-West Europe. She was particularly proud to have participated in the liberation of the Netherlands during 1944-1945



## The Old and the New (Reflections on the passing of another year) By Fernster

Tic toc  
The old man came round the corner at a steady pace,  
a gleam in his eye he had.  
Tic, toc  
His white beard moved back and forth  
with the gentle breeze of the night.  
Tic toc  
Onwards he went, in his steady pace, for a given destination  
he must soon be.  
Tic toc  
He glanced at the stars above, and read their secrets  
and murmured to himself.  
Tic toc.  
“Soon it will be that mystical moment yet still I have far to travel!”  
Tic toc  
With the last of his remaining strength, he soon reached his destination,  
Tic toc  
Of mighty stones in a circle, more ancient than the memory  
of man, he soon beheld.  
Tic toc  
In the centre he soon stood, and with a last look of the stars,  
he smiled to himself.  
Tic toc.  
“Yes, I am in the right place and time. Soon the rebirth will happen!”  
Tic toc.  
“Strange that people forget how precious each second of time is,  
until near their end.”  
Tic toc  
Slowly, the old man lay down on Mother Earth,  
and faced the stars above,  
Tic toc  
Memories of what had been flashed across his eyes, the good, the bad.  
Tic toc  
It was all the same to him, he had no control on what happened.  
Tic toc  
And in an instant between a Tic and a Toc in a sudden gleam of light.  
Tic toc  
The old man on the ground, was replaced  
with a younger version of himself.  
Tic toc  
He glanced at the stars above and said,  
“Well I got another year to live again.”  
Tic toc

*Use your MonSFFA membership card and save at these fine stores!*

**LEGENDS ACTION FIGURES:** 10% off all merchandise (7104 St-Hubert) <http://www.legendsactionfigures.com>

**MÉLANGE MAGIQUE:** 15% off all merchandise (1928 St-Catherine West)  
<http://www.themagicalblend.com>

**MILLENNIUM COMICS:** 15% off all merchandise (451 Marriane-est)  
<http://libmillenium.com>

**The Face Behind the Mask # 2**

Hi! In this issue we take the time to view some of the most deadly females of any species - Klingon women! In my humble opinion, those foreheads are deadly to soccer balls. So go ahead and accept the challenge – Guess who are the actresses behind the masks!



**A                      B                      C                      D                      1                      2                      3                      4**

A - B'tor Duras  
B - Ba'el  
C - Grika  
D- Chancellor Azetbur

1 – Jennifer Gatti  
2 – Mary Kay Adams  
3 – Rosanna DeSoto  
4 - Gwynyth Walsh

***Answers***

A=4, B=1, C=2, D=3

**The Last Words! #7**

This is the 7<sup>th</sup> – and last! – edition of the Last Words. By now most of you know how this works. Yes, these are famous (or in this case mostly unremembered and easily forgettable) last words found in a movie. We start this issue with a really easy Last Word but end with a really tough one. Email your comments and ideas to: fernster23@hotmail.com

- 1) “God, look at the time... Gotta Run!” (2pts)
- 2) “Gort Berenga!” (3 pts)
- 3) “This is an adventure....” (5 pts)
- 4) 1<sup>st</sup> person: “Goodbye old chap.” (2 pts)  
2<sup>nd</sup> person: “Goodbye Allan” (nice little hint) (2 pts)  
3<sup>rd</sup> person: “Goodbye” (2 pts)  
4<sup>th</sup> person: “Thanks” (2 pts)
- Name the “5<sup>th</sup> dead person” & the movie’s name (2 pts)

1) The Looney – Mooseman  
 2) Klatu – The Day the Earth Stood Still  
 3) Steve Zissou – Bill Murray – The Life Aquatic with Steve Zissou.  
 4) 1st) Rodney Skinner – Tony Curran  
 2nd) Dr. Henry Jekyll/Mr. Edward Hyde – Jason Flemyng  
 3rd) Mina Harker – Peta Wilson  
 4th) Tom Sawyer – Shane West  
 5<sup>th</sup>) Allan Quatermain – The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen.

***Score Card:***

- 0-2 You’re in trouble...go back to bed...
- 3-5 You’re still not ready for the big time...
- 6-10 You’d better start going to the movies...
- 11-15 Average movie-goer...
- 16-20 Top notch movie freak! You scare me...
- 21+ Hey, you cheated

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