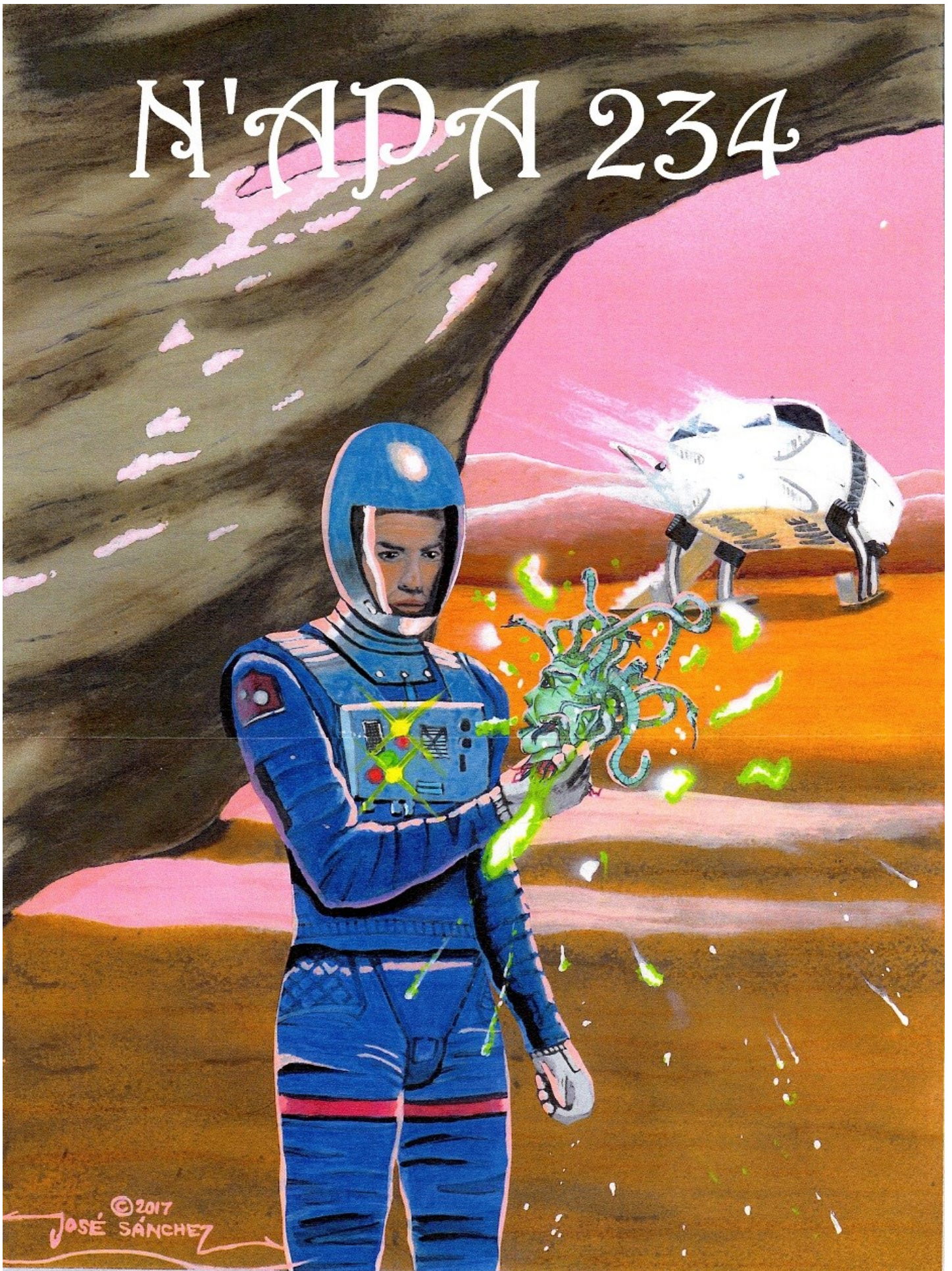


N'ADA 234



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The Official Organ

#234

Next deadline: July 15, 2017

The official collator is George Phillies phillies@4liberty.net.

N'APA is the Amateur Press Alliance for members of the National Fantasy Fan Federation (N3F). As it is distributed in PDF format, there are no dues or postage fees. It is open to all members of the N3F. If there are members interested in joining who have no computer access, special arrangements may be possible. People who only want to read are welcome to ask to be added to the email list. Check with the official collator, who is George Phillies, 48 Hancock Hill Drive, Worcester MA 01609; phillies@4liberty.net; 508 754 1859; and on facebook.

To join this APA, contact the Editor, George Phillies, phillies@4liberty.net Members are expected to submit their zines electronically in .doc or some similar format (*not* PDF); I as your collator will take things from there.

I occasionally send a copy of N'APA to the accessible (email address needed) N3F membership, in the hope that some of you will join N'APA. Please join now!

Currently the frequency is every other month, with the deadline being on the fifteenth day of odd-numbered months. The mailing will normally be collated in due time, as the collator is retired. Publication is always totally regular, though some readers question my interpretations of "is", "always", "totally", and "regular". N'APA has been in existence since 1959, but has transitioned from being a paper APA to an electronic one.

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Synergy 12



National Amateur Press Association, 234th Mailing

May 2018

**A publication of the National Fantasy Fan Federation's
amateur press group, oft-times known as N'APA**

A fanzine backed by uncorrupted files

as is required of a faned by Ghu

Synergy is the editorial workmanship of John Thiel, 30 N. 19th Street, Lafayette, Indiana 47904, email kinethiel@comcast.net .

This issue is dedicated to the continuance of fannish dreams

EDITORIAL



Fannish Knowhow Is What Gets You There. But Where Is “There”? Can’t Say Nohow

Well, I’d certainly like to be somewhere rather than nowhere. I’d like to find a place for myself in existence. But will fandom do that for anyone? It’s hard to say. It might. Other things have been known to happen. I’d say that fandom could be a place in existence, if we look at it just right. Then it’s no longer a blankety-blank hobby. A way of life? Why not? There you have it.

There is, when you weigh everything together, some good in fanac. But here we run into an objection, perhaps. Is fanac truly possible? There seems to be a lot of obstructions to it in our present day and age, regardless of its

being the future. Rather than ignoring them, I think I'll go into certain matters which appear to me to be besetting our N3F. To wit, as I write this the N3F zines—TNFF, Tightbeam, and Ionisphere, not to mention Origin, which nobody seems to be doing—are over a month behind in being posted on efanazines, which is where the general public gets to see them. The only reason I can see for this is that one of the Neffers objected so violently to Origin that he threatened to complain at efanazines if Origin was posted there. Considering that all of the NFFF zines weren't posted, it may be that this complaint was lodged and escalated into further difficulties. I have been surprised by some hidden hostilities I have come across in the NFFF. One of the NFFF officeholders has an ongoing feud, as it seems, with one of the new members, who has gotten involved in two activities and so has established a place for himself in the NFFF, but the conflict has been continuing. I don't think there should be that in the NFFF. Why fight? I've been getting some pms saying that people in the NFFF have been talking behind my back, and in fact in some of the pms I've been getting people are talking behind the backs of other people; I could tell them the same thing where they don't already know it. Also a lot of obstruction to good fanac comes from malware; a whole lot of fans on facebook have been complaining about problems with malware, which are, for example, a great obstruction to communication. Sometimes you can't tell who you're talking to if a person has had his identity phished. We've got to find out a way to clean up our ways and means before we can do a whole lot with what we have. And distribution keeps running into problems of one sort or another. This makes things bad for all of us, even for the people who are using unethical means, which are sometimes causing things we work with to collapse. I see sf sites go down, often before they have really gotten going. That isn't progress.

I'd like to add that I don't find anything very controversial in either of my

NFFF fanzines, Ionisphere and Origin; most of the conflict apparently is about me and whether I should be editing a zine. I have a pacifistic attitude and am not trying to start any disputes—I'm doing my best to be agreeable and write in a way that would be beneficial to the organization. I can see people thinking my zines aren't any good, but what are they finding to be harmful in them? If they see harm in them, they are at any rate seeing harm and damages where neither is intended, and I am trying to be easy in making any complaints about things such as I have been describing above.

I get a lockdown on some subjects, which seems to go all the way around; there's my question of why our NFFF advertisement has not appeared in F&SF as was intended—the ad was even described as having been sent, but it has not yet appeared there after the passage of a year. That's taking over a year to place an ad and still not doing so. I have not been able to find out about this by inquiring here in the NFFF, and I inquired both at the F&SF site and on the F&SF Facebook page (at both of which Gordon Van Gelder and Charles Coleman Finlay are present) and got no answer whatever to the simple question I posed about it. Why are there not even answers to this question? Other means of advertising are being undertaken, but what's with F&SF? Their marketplace section apparently is an open market.

Well, I don't like raising problems by way of an editorial, but as I say some of these problems seem as if they should be looked into so that it is possible to get something going about something other than problems. A lot of the NFFF seems to be considerably stalled in terms of there being any related activity. What's causing that? Saying fans aren't really being active these days doesn't fully answer it, because why aren't they being active? Are we not presenting them with things that lead to interest and activity? If this is the problem, hopefully we can make it otherwise.

I am waiting to hear "do it."

THOSE BACK ISSUES OF N'APA

I still have back issues of my 1980s N'APA fanzine ROCKET FUEL to look over, now in our present day. I was up to issue four in the last mailing, and will commence this with the issue following that one.

Rocket Fuel #5, January 1983. Has it been that long? I recall reading the 30th Anniversary Issue of Amazing Stories in 1956, when I was just starting to read science fiction, with my background material being chiefly THE ROLLING STONES by Heinlein, a juvenile. I mean his book was a juvenile, which I'd seen in the juvenile section of the library, displayed brand new in an interesting dust jacket. I didn't know I'd be in any fandom when I was reading that. The prior history of science fiction and of Amazing Stories was unknown to me, although that issue helped me discover what there had been, as did anthologies I was able to find, which had many stories from the forties, is the era the anthologists seemed to like best. Much of sf's history predated my appearance on this Earth, and thirty years of science fiction seemed an awesomely long time when I considered it. But thirty years and more have elapsed since the fifth issue of Rocket Fuel, and yet it does not seem like a very long period of time.

The cover of this issue of RF is by Jeff Wilcox, and there's haikus by Steve Sneyd on the cover. (Sneyd has stopped writing to me just recently, evidence that he is not still among us.) There are two stories in the issue, one by Robert Newsom and one by Joe Napolitano. Newsom had just joined N'APA. There are fanzine reviews of Chuck Connors' IDOMO (Interstellar Doxies on Majestic Orion), Johannes Berg's THE SOCIETY OF EDITORS NEWSLETTER, Jim Woosley's ALMOST REALITY, Neil Kaden's DOPPELGANGERS (which had in it a biographical note about William Hope Hodgson saying that he and his whole platoon were blown up by land mines just before he was about to be promoted to assistant platoon sergeant) (during World War One). In the letter column Jeff Wilcox says

"Thanks for Rocket Fuel 4. It'll help me slide into N'APA easier. Hopefully I'll be joining in on the fun with the 95th Mailing." (We look at our own 234th Mailing and calculate "That was one hundred and thirty-nine issues ago, as a bi-monthly that would be twenty-three years ago." Instead it's been thirty-five years ago, so we can get a rough estimate of the number of years N'APA was not in existence as twelve years.)

Joe Napolitano says, "I think you mentioned somewhere that you've sent material to Tightbeam and TNFF and never got a response, let alone seen it published. Well you're not alone. I too have had the same experience. Although it was quite some time ago, I wrote a number of things and never heard a whisper from them."

Issue number six. Much of the talk in the apa was about putting fanzines together, as reflected in my mailing comments. The letter column, though, discusses space travel. Robert Newsom says he won first prize in the N3F story contest and received a check for \$25.00. There's an article on the world's fair also in the issue.

Issue number seven. A cover by Larry Nadolski shows future medievalists doing a sword fight on another world. The issue opens with another article on the world's fair, and a drawing of Ra, the Egyptian god, by Jeff Wilcox. Fiction by Napolitano. What the RRs have to say is back (the bureau had been closed because the person running it said she had other things to do). *Anent* this, I'm recalling a lady in Tightbeam complaining that the only bureau she knew about was one where clothing was kept. There are codified complaints about hoaxes (back to RF). The letters discuss the N3F elections of that year. Jim Allen discusses Tightbeam's noncommunicative policy further, suggesting SASEs.

Next issue I'll go over issues eight and nine, the last two issues of Rocket Fuel.

Now on to

MAILING COMMENTS



THE CONTENTS OF A GOOD LIFE, Will Mayo. Great to see you in there, Will! And congratulations on your appearances in Eldritch Science.

ARCHIVE MIDWINTER, Jefferson Swycaffer—Referencing your comment to Kevin Trainor about his car situation, it's one of the many situations that confront modern man. Some of our common social situations seem like traps. Recently I had a water bill of five hundred dollars. If I didn't pay it they'd shut off the water. In the social bind in which we dwell, that would be death. A fatal water bill. The upping of my water bill was finally traced to a malfunction in a toilet plug in the basement toilet. What would that be like if the water was shut off? And neighbors are in similar binds and can't be much help. There was a lot of commotion about such problems as this on the local net. It's like we were living in an extermination camp and that's the way a lot of the locals put it when they become vocal. But mostly this is all attributed to being "the way things are".

THE SILVER STATE AGE, Kevin Trainor—Noticing you're part of Vegas Fandom, my "ground adjutant" in the Fan-Pro Bureau lives near there and says he can see a Vegas skyline from his window. As he's in the N3F, wouldn't you like to contact him and help acquaint him with Vegas fandom? (I've already gotten him two issues of SKYLINER.) His address is in

Ionisphere.

Your laptop has a name, eh? My mimeograph was named "Hal" back when I still had one. What Hal's fate was, after several years of disuse with a broken ball bearing I threw it in the trash.

NOTES FROM A GALAXY FAR, FAR AWAY, Lorien Rivendell. You're still in the NFFF and N'APA? I had heard otherwise somewhere, but hope this mailing finds you still with us. If not, maybe the disty this mailing has will bring my comment to you. (I'm accused of snooping when I wonder about things like this, for instance, I've been inquiring, or trying to inquire, about why Mike Lowery is no longer active with us. I wondered about it because I met and talked with him at one of the Windycons, and we were both in the NFFF at that time. In fact, that's what we discussed, along with Fred Jacobcic, who now, however, says he's lost interest in fandom and is mostly interested in political things. He was in the NFFF at that time too.)

There's no way of finding out what criterion the emails have on what constitutes junk email.

It's rather insulting to the N3F to have correspondence from them filed as junk email and I wish it would stop. Sometimes a regularly arriving piece of email will be classified as junk and I don't know what causes that particular email to be so classed, reading out the forms doesn't tell me anything. Sometimes the same correspondent, all in good order and the same order as usual, will be landing in junk email too. It doesn't happen that often, but it shouldn't at all.

THE MURDERED MASTER MAGE, George Phillies. Looks like AGAINST THREE LANDS is a deluxe buy from the cover shown. I hope it has a good run.

I'm trying to get George Wells into N'APA, perhaps you could further stimulate him by asking him about it. He's done zines; I'm willing to help.

Books

I haven't many books I'd recommend to others in N'APA, but I did have one I think members should have a look at, mainly or namely because it's by an NFFF member and also a fellow N'APAn, and that is Jefferson Swycaffer's REVOLT AND REBIRTH, one part of a three book series and of course readable individually. It's a book I had purchased a long while back, from the New Concepts Bookstore here in Lafayette, and then mostly did not read, as it was about war and that was not one of my interests in science fiction or out of it, but I did have it in mind that if the mood struck me I would read it sometime. I did not have the acquaintance with Swycaffer then that I presently have. In fact I had not seen his name anywhere back then and the title was what sold it to me, along with the back cover comments on the edition. It seemed somewhat set aside from standard mainstream SF like DAW books or Del Reys, and was apparently a soft cover only edition as the printing history did not list any hard cover editions. (I think it may be found presently on Amazon.) When it seemed like most science fiction was going to be about war, an impression especially given to me by the Science Fiction Book Club catalog selections, which were evermore about war as the years advanced (also they did not seem to have most of the books they'd previously sold, and wouldn't answer questions about it; they had an Indianapolis address at one time and when I checked the location out I found nothing there and no parking possibilities for going into the buildings and seeing if there was a cranny for finding them, and the area was as hot as the Battery), I decided to read it and find out what that form of science fiction was all about, and the book was indeed a good place to start. After having read it, or indeed, while reading it, as I spent months reading it, having numerous other things to do, and I was reviewing it as I went along, I reviewed it in several places—in my fanzine Pablo Lennis, in Tightbeam, in my netzine Surprising Stories, and I was mentioning it here, and am now giving it something of a review here also, albeit a brief one, as far as sticking to writing about the book itself is concerned.

The book has within it the vast elementals of conflict and disaster, which alone make it a highly individualized look at warfare which is well worth reading for its attitude, its take on warfare, as you might say. The author's outlook on

these elemental forces is a contribution to the consideration of war. Also the action takes place in the amphitheater of eternity, a rare outlook but one that might be well respected in the same way that Shakespeare's works have achieved such currency. We are reminded of the Renaissance and are here given consideration of that epoch which is conceptualized literally in our known history. I think this is confluent with our own modern experiences, even of note here in the NFFF in the current state of affairs here, where the idea of a Renaissance might well be a consideration and resemble our present efforts. So REVOLT AND REBIRTH has a great readability here and might be worthy of consideration by N'APA members, who would undoubtedly find a lot to think about in its text. Certainly it could be discussed here, but only for the fact that the book might not be easily available to the N'APA members. I'd hesitate to send my own copy around; it might be lost in the mail and then *I* would have difficulty in getting another copy. So, if nobody comes through on discussing this book here, I will understand, though I have undertaken this project to get it read and discussed here. You will at any rate know that such a book exists, and seeing it mentioned will be an item in your history of your membership in this apa. The Swycaffera will know that you have Heard. And thus I have contributed some doings to the doings in N'APA and can sit back with a feeling of satisfaction.

Perhaps I'll have something more to say about the book at a later time, and perhaps I will not get back to it, but I think I have had a pretty good say about the book.

What think you, people?

"So say we all!"

Well, then, that's just fine.

Fanzines

Don't need to mention any of the zines that George sends around, as you've all seen them, but I'd like to call attention to Alan White's SKYLINER, available at <http://efanzines.com> , as a big bonus zine that's one of a kind, but there should be more like it. A very interesting and scenic put-together; try it out. It has what other zines of its kind lack, action.



De Ende

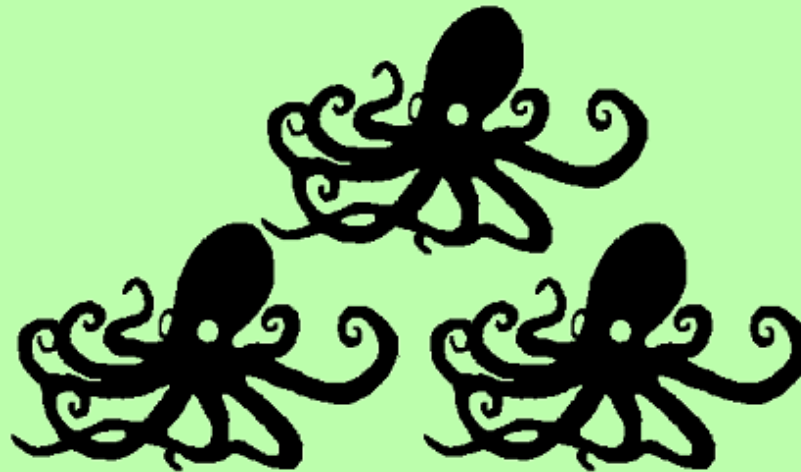
Use the rest of this back cover as a notebook
at your discretion.

Archive Midwinter
a zine for N'APA 234

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14 May 2018



Comments:

Will S. Mayo: re dust inside a computer, at least, in the information age, it's "smart" dust. At my old work-place, I once opened up an electronics device, and there was a mass of dust completely filling the inside, so that it looked like a big sponge of dust, the same shape as the inside of the cabinet. When I blew air on it, it was as if a heavy fog had rolled in! (I took it outside to do this!)

re the worth and worthiness and beauty and virtue of the human body -- huzzah! I'm with you there! It hurts to live in a culture where movies can show people getting shot, beheaded, tortured, hitting each other with fists, etc., but the showing of the nude body is verboten. Our culture has its values completely backward in this regard!

I enjoyed the poem, Plato the Lover, but would respectfully disagree that the past has no meaning. To me, the past contains all meaning! The past is the only thing we can ever learn from! I also, totally on a personal level, disagree with Sheryl Sandberg: if I got offered a seat on the rocket, I'd just hand it over to someone else. I am the moden Antaeus, and prefer to keep my feet on the ground.

(Actually, I'm really hankering for a ride in a small airplane some day, so maybe there's hope for me after all!)

John Thiel: re art for publications, one comfort is the "significant differences" clause. When I was creating cover art for my e-books, I found some copyrighted stuff that was just perfect...so I "counterfeited it" with major variations, enough to "make it my own," in a legal sense if not entirely a moral one. There are people out there who try to claim that just flipping a piece of art right-and-left is enough, but they're full of beans. Differences must be real and significant. But that is not too tough a hurdle to go over.

Total agreement re "The Great Gatsby." The only interesting character was the narrator! Hemingway, too, does nothing for me. I think both of these writers emphasized style over content -- and, sure, style is a great thing! But the writers I love best -- for example, Jack Vance, Poul Anderson, and Fritz Leiber -- are masters of style and substance.

(Yeah, my examples are, all three, from the 70s and 80s. What can I say? I'm getting old!)

Lovely selection of quotes!

Kevin Trainor Jr.: Yay for the new computer! Also glad that your economics are getting settled. Bummer on the insulin, but, oh, how much better to have to deal with that today, as opposed to fifty years ago...or five hundred. In a lot of ways, these really are the best times ever.

re inspection, good luck! I hope it all went well. I remember surprise inspections at my old workplace: it was actually kinda fun. (My department had its duck properly in a row!)

Lauren Clough: re electronics not charging, my phone decided not to hold a charge -- it would drain in two hours -- so I got a new one. Nice little Samsung Galaxy. I'm happy with it. (Charge lasts about four days. Yay!)

George Phillis: I'll go out and get a copy of Against Three Lands. Yay! Truly lovely cover painting!

re modern electronics -- you mentioned having trouble finding the light-switch for a Chevy -- agreement! I once rented a car, and somehow tripped the emergency blinkers, and couldn't turn them off. I actually had to drive back to the rental agency and ask someone for help! I'm also having some stress configuring my new phone. Many of the settings are painfully non-intuitive.

fun chapter of The Girl Who Saved the World. I have to say, though, that I'm getting a bit lost in this book, most likely because I'm reading it in small chunks over long periods of time. I don't really have a sense of the "big picture" here. So one question is: do you? Have you outlined it, and do you know the story's path, either in detail, or at least in a large-scale sense? Are you a "plotter" or a "pantser," i.e., do you plot your stories out ahead of time, or do you just "fly by the seat of your pants," making it up as you go?

(I am very much a pantser!)

Anyway, being an old math major, I really enjoyed the mathematical asides in this chapter. I certainly remember old Liouville from my college days!

Is This a Good Time to Talk About Comic Books?

I'm a drooling comics fan, and these are pretty good days for comics. I tend to prefer Marvel to D.C., but they're both darned good, just about at the apex of the art form. Yet my very favorite stuff is coming from Antarctic Press. They've published 250 issues of Fred Perry's Gold Digger, which is a truly titanic affair of hyper-cosmic dimensions. Perry's villains juggle galaxies the way Superman juggles jumbo jets. Perry can do time-travel paradoxes that make Back to the Future look quite straightforward.

AP also publish Adventure Finders, drawn and written by Rod Espinosa. (Rod and Fred are my two very favorite comics creators!) Adventure Finders is a fairly standard "Dungeons and Dragons" magic quest, with absolute top-notch art, and wickedly clever writing. I'm sorry to say the story is a bit too "politically correct" for my tastes, but "social justice fiction" is a bit of a thing these days. (It's also very visible in Marvel's The Unbeatable Squirrel Girl. I keep waiting for them to apologize and re-name her "Squirrel Woman.")

(I'm an old-fashioned Hubert Humphrey liberal, and I'm on the same side as the "politically correct" movement. I just find it dull, contrived, and unrealistic, as far as a style of literature goes.)

The recent Dark Horse/D.C. crossover limited series, Wonder Woman/Conan the Barbarian was magnificent. It sounds awful, doesn't it? It sounds completely foolish and absurd and exploitive and dumb. But it was extremely well written, and quite well drawn. Rather than just infantile fan-service, it really had a story to tell, and told it superbly!

The Silver State Age #10
May 12, 2018
an apazine for N'APA 234

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OBLIGATORY NATTER

“Well, it wasn’t supposed to go down that way...”

-Neil Young, “Tired Eyes”

Calling this spring semester at UNLV a disaster would be entirely too kind. Am looking at failing three of the four courses I signed up for, the only exception being English 101; it is nobody’s fault but my own, since I failed to manage my time properly and got too far behind in the other three classes. It didn’t help that I underestimated the difficulty of learning Office 2016 after using Office XP for almost twenty years, nor did it help that I came to hate Communications 102 (the Interpersonal Communications class) for tearing the bandages off a number of emotional wounds I thought were safely healed. Well, since all of these classes are prerequisites for my accounting major, there is nothing for it but to retake them and hope for the best.

Anime Detour should have been a pleasant break in the routine, but instead there was drama on staff that led to my son (who has worked in the Gaming department for a decade) being unceremoniously fired via e-mail because his department head wanted to signal how virtuous and non-racist he was. (Somebody should point out to him that Islam isn’t a religion, and jokes are not hate.) Nobody in the chain of authority all the way up to the convention chairman bothered to respond to e-mails about it, so after this year I have severed connections with the convention I helped found. I posted an announcement that I was leaving staff and the convention to Facebook, along with the reasons why, and this sparked more drama. At last report, somebody complained to the parent non-profit’s board that I was saying mean things about staff members on social media, to which I replied that I stood by everything I posted and the complainant was welcome to kiss my shiny Black Irish ass. As my son asked when he got the e-mail about the complaint, “What are they going to do, fire me again?”

There’s another anime convention in Minneapolis, which is serendipitously on the same weekend as my son’s birthday, and it’s run by people who have left or been run off by the people currently running Detour. I suspect I’ll be happier there.

Tax season is over. Despite missing three weeks at the beginning of the season and having to fight for hours for most of it, I managed to handle about the same number of clients I did last year, and thanks to the increased hourly draw for being a military tax pro, I made a decent amount of cash along the way. Won’t get a post-season bonus check for extra commission, but I’m getting used to that. Now to work on continuing education and increasing my certification level. This is not going to be a lazy summer by any stretch of the imagination.

I am probably going to be stuck doing Uber again this summer and fall. I have several applications for various accounting clerk jobs out, but I’m not counting on any of them coming through. Things do seem to have changed, though – there seem to be fewer drivers out there, because I’m seeing more surges than I remember from last year, and Uber raised the bounty for recruiting new drivers by \$100. Now if I just knew someone that wanted to start driving...anyway, it looks like I am going to be making more money this summer, so that’s good. The Electric Daisy Carnival (EDC), which is a major rave/concert event, is going on next weekend, and between bonuses and surges I expect to make a sizable pile of cash.

Which is good, because Balticon is happening a week from next Thursday – well, the convention actually doesn't start until Friday afternoon, but I'm going out a day early to see friends and visit my favorite wing place near Dulles – and I expect the whole weekend to be kind of spendy. The airline tickets and hotel rooms have been paid for, but I have to eat while I'm there. Also, this year there's the additional expense of renting cars on the front and back end of the convention, and Ubering to and from BWI to the Renaissance Harborplace. Anyone else going?

Aside from school, I managed to squeeze in Robert Kroese's The Dream of The Iron Dragon, an odd combination of far-future war against an implacable alien race and time travel to 9th century Europe, where a team of stranded spacemen has to find a way to bootstrap the Vikings' technology into something that will allow them to get home. Kroese has done his homework on the Norsemen, and it shows. I am looking forward to the sequels.

Also, I picked up a used copy of Gordon R. Dickon's The Outposter, which I remember fondly from my youth. Despite the overpopulation crisis having sputtered out, which almost kicks the underpinnings out from under the plot, this tale of revenge against marauding aliens is still a good read. I do miss the original Kelly Freas cover from *Analog*, though.

I don't buy a lot of comic books, but I did splurge on *My Hero MAGAdemia*, a parodic satirical political comic book by the same artist who did Thump: The First Hundred Days. I also picked up the electronic version of the original manga, *My Hero Academia*, mainly so I'd get (all) the jokes. The plots run somewhat in parallel – an ordinary boy with no supernatural power (or “quirk” per the manga) is chosen by his idol, All-Might, to inherit his power and attend the special high school that trains kids with quirks to become superheroes. The parody differs only in that it's set in America, our protagonist Maiku is rather obviously Vice President Mike Pence playing understudy to Wall-Might, who America's deplorables have entrusted with the power of E Pluribus Unum so that he can clean up the Swamp and, of course, Make America Great Again. I enjoyed it tremendously, but then I am a rather reactionary sort of fellow, and your mileage may vary. As with Kroese's book, I am looking forward to the sequel, which should be out by this time next year.

Speaking of comics, apparently Vox Day's Alt*Hero comics are going to have company in that niche of the market. After having raised several hundred thousand dollars to produce the *Jambreakers* comic book, Richard Meyer (of the Diversity & Comics YouTube channel) is facing a boycott by comic book store owners, and the pressure was apparently enough to get Antarctic Press, which normally ignores this sort of protests, to back out of an agreement to publish the book. So, Meyer has decided to go independent. He's not the first, and I suspect he won't be the last. What I wonder is what's going to happen to all these comic book stores that have decided not to carry works by “politically incorrect” creators. I think they're going to discover (like the NFL, CNN, and other businesses of late) the truth of the #GetWokeGoBroke hashtag.

I bought the soundtrack to *John Wick* in digital format from Amazon, which is odd because I have yet to see the whole movie. There are several pieces of music that don't sound quite right to me because they lack the gunfire and close combat noises of the movie scenes they accompany. I also bought The Dictators' “Search and Destroy” (which sounds nothing like the song of the same name by Metallica) and a greatest hits collection of Linda Ronstadt songs. Clearly, I have eclectic tastes.

TODAY'S SPECIAL AT THE SILVER AGE DINER: LEFTOVER COMMENTS, 99¢

Herewith, the comments to N'APA #232...

The Murdered Master Mage

(natter) And as we saw in #233, it's a very nice cover.

(RYCTo Lorien) It was a surprise to me that Chris Nuttall wrote fantasy, as I had become familiar with his writing through Ark Royal and its sequels. ☒☒ Kudos to John and Jeffrey for their recruiting efforts. I myself have been talking to people in ones and twos, to what effect I'm not entirely sure since I don't get any feedback. Regardless, if we are all doing a little bit, then over time it adds up to a fair bit, and the N3F continues to grow. ☒☒ Everybody likes to volunteer for things until the time comes to do volunteer stuff, it seems.

(RYCTo John) I remember that chart, and it wasn't until I read Methuselah's Children that the unbroken line (and Lazarus Long's even longer line) made sense to me.

(RYCTo Jefferson) It will be interesting to see what the fallout from Jon's banning from Worldcon will be, especially since WSFS has refused to say exactly why they gave him the boot in the first place. If one were inclined to think the worst of WSFS, it looks an awful lot as if they're not content with blocking "offensive" works from the Hugo Awards, but they wish to move on to blocking the authors and fans of such works from Worldcon. Personally, I'm content to sit back, open a bag of biltong, and watch the feathers fly.

(RYCTo me) If we were going to gather for a celebration of the 60th anniversary of N3F, perhaps a good choice would be Baltimore or Las Vegas, both of which are major airline hubs which can be reached inexpensively. Perhaps we could consider meeting at Balticon in 2020? Unfortunately, there's no local SF convention here in Las Vegas, but I suppose our 60th anniversary would be a good reason to have at least a relaxicon in town. ☒☒ Thank you for your comments on Campbell. I was joking about the manuscripts, of course. The "Pink Wave" is a label that's been applied to a lot of recent SF that resembles the old "New Wave" SF in its rebellion against "old fashioned" SF that seeks to entertain instead of lecture; the sort of stuff that wins Hugo and Nebula awards but for some reason doesn't do all that well in the marketplace. ☒☒ I hadn't been aware of the new translations of Verne, but I enjoyed the old one well enough - perhaps I read the novelization of the Disney movie? It's been a long time, and by now it's mixed up in my head with the Alan Moore version of Captain Nemo as presented in *The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen*. The graphic novel, not the movie, though the movie was passable entertainment as well. ☒☒ Bringing things full circle: Jerry Pournelle was apparently quite fond of the Heyer Regency novels, and I wouldn't even have been aware of them without a reference in something he'd written. At the time I was none too interested, but now that I've read Bernard Cornwell's Sharpe novels, I might wander over to the library and see if they're my cup of tea.

Synergy

(re: Rocket Fuel) When is all the activity you describe going on? I infer that it was some time ago, but are you talking about things 20, 30, or 40 years ago? ☒☒ I briefly belonged to MinneAPA, and for a while in the 2000s, disties included issues of APA-L, which was confusing because the two APA had different collation schedules. It was a short-lived experiment since the crossover in comments between the two was minimal. When I left Minnesota for good in 2007, MinneAPA had died off, but StippleAPA - which had originally started as the waitlist for MinneAPA - was still trundling along with a dozen or so contributors, and it continues to do so today.

(RYCTo Jefferson) Laumer was an American author, definitely not part of the *New Worlds* crowd, and the Retief stories, while formulaic, retained their popularity until Laumer died in 1993, though like the rest of his writing, they suffered a drop in quality after his 1971 stroke.

(RYCTo me) As I mentioned to George, *supra*, I've received no feedback regarding people signing up for the N3F. I've had about half a dozen people tell me they were going to join, but I don't know if they actually have. I usually scan the TNFF's listing of new members to see if I recognize anyone. As for an incentive, nope, didn't even know there was such a thing. ☒☒ Perhaps I'm stretching a point when I call Arkham House "obscure". Before I started attending conventions, I never saw any of their books in libraries or bookstores, and after I started attending conventions, the impression that I got was that they were producing books more for collectors than anything else. I was happy to learn otherwise.

Archive Midwinter

(RYCTo me) I haven't officially declared my major yet (I have to finish a number of prerequisite courses first) but I intend to major in Accounting. It's where the money is, and I already have a useless B.A. in Liberal Arts. ☒☒ There are a number of major authors, in and out of SF, who suffer from Stephen King syndrome. Unfortunately. ☒☒ I haven't hauled out any of my wargames since moving out here. Nobody to play against, unfortunately. ☒☒ Kipling, ah, Kipling. My father gave me his copy of Plain Tales From The Hills, which much to my surprise wasn't a poetry collection. It was an eye-opener for me, since I knew very little about the Raj.

Notes From A Galaxy Far, Far Away

(natter) I have several friends online who are pretty excited about the Instant Pots. As I have enough gadgetry cluttering my counter space already, I'm ~~waiting until the prices come down~~ not all that interested.

(RYCTo George) When people balk at e-filing in the office, I point out that it's going to take the IRS longer to process their return if they mail it in, and worse yet, we'll have to do more paperwork explaining why we're filing on paper. Of course, some returns have to be filed that way, but we're still stuck doing the extra paperwork.

(RYCTo me) I am majoring in accounting. It's a family tradition. 😊☒☒ I had to upgrade to a Note 8 since the Sprint store I was at was sold out of the regular Galaxy S8, and I needed a phone in a hurry.

FRESH COMMENTS! GET YER FRESH COMMENTS RIGHT HERE!

Comments on N'APA #233

The Contents Of A Good Life

Hello, Will. Welcome to the APA. I suspect we have some fannish friends in common from the D.C. area.

Synergy

It's possible that free-for-use art may be copyrighted; in such a case, I suspect the artist wants some acknowledgement that it's their art and copyrighted. A useful analogy might be the free books given out by Baen: you don't have to pay for them, but you do have to respect the copyright and not represent them as your own work.

(RYCto George) The red marks looked to me like change marks, as if George had converted the file from review mode.

(RYCTo me) As with all efforts to boost the organization, I wish you well and hope it works. Every little bit helps.

Archive Midwinter

(RYCTo me) I don't remember seeing the story about the banker, but it's true that Drake writes about violent people quite a bit, and their reactions are not always what we might like them to be. The man himself is quiet and polite, verging on being a Southern gentleman of the old school despite having grown up in Iowa. ☒☒ Unfortunately, a lot of people in fandom these days seem to be using The Jack Acid Society Black Book as a how-to guide.

Notes From A Galaxy...

(natter) Don't think I've seen anything labeled as a TV dinner in decades. I'm not even sure they're called microwave dinners.

(RYCTo me) You know, I never even thought of "thin client" in that connection, despite being a man of bulk, if not definition. ☺

Ye Murthered Master Mage

(RYCTo Lorien) I had no idea Drake had expanded "The Last Battalion" into a full pseudoscience book. Now I'm going to have to look for it.

(RYCTo me) Not having ever read Marx myself (there is a limit to what I will force myself to read, and I am familiar enough with the praxis of Marxism to be disinterested in the theory) I couldn't say whether Heinlein's characters are attacking straw men or not. ☒☒ Of course, 25¢ U.S. when converted into local Elbonian mudmarks is a decent income for a day's work. ☒☒ I think the real-world politics leaking into fandom is becoming more noticeable because people are tired of being snubbed. There are entirely too many fans out there who are living proof of William F. Buckley's aphorism about liberals being shocked to find that there are actually people who hold different opinions. See also the Pauline Kael effect. ☒☒ Even an unofficial history would be nice to have; it would be better than no history at all.

SO MUCH FOR BALTICON

Apparently the copy of this zine that I sent to George last weekend fell out of the Intertubes somewhere along the way, which is good news because I get to tack on some additional natter at the end. Actually, it's bad news because most of what I get to tack on is depressing and unhappy stuff. No, actually...let's just leave the joke there, as it appears to have come up lame.

In the family tradition of delivering the bad news first, for no apparent reason that I can see, Uber decided this week to run a background check on me, which restricts me to doing food deliveries but no people deliveries for the next 6-14 business days. It's bad enough that this reduces my income from (for example) \$60-\$150 a night this weekend -including Thursday - to about \$35 a night, but it also keeps me from profiting from EDC, since I can't accept rides to it or from it. I'll just be puttering around from one McDonald's to another (no joke, all but two of my fares last night were picking up McFood for people) and in some cases, driving halfway across Clark County to do so. I'll be going over to the local Uber "greenlighting hub" shortly, but I doubt they'll be able or willing to do anything for me.

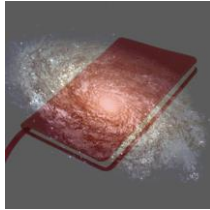
This sudden drop in income means I'm not going to be able to afford to go to Balticon this next weekend, which is going to be a major disappointment to several friends of mine who I was hoping to meet there. At least Southwest will let me exchange the tickets for credit against future flights, so I might be able to go east and see my paternal relatives for the holidays.

As if all this weren't enough, apparently one of my diabetic leg ulcers (venostasis ulcers, for those of you scoring at home) has become infected, which killed another night of driving this week since I spent several hours at the VA emergency room. They prescribed Clindamycin for me, which appears to be helping, but it is doing its job by draining me of energy so that all I am doing is sleeping and driving.

So this is going to be a dull and unprofitable weekend.

One bright spot in this otherwise bleak & depressing outlook is that the proprietress of the S1E1 anime review website, Jessica Silver, who has been a very active part of Anime Detour's programming for most of the convention's 15 years, has joined our brave little N3F band. Even more exciting, she's agreed to edit the revised MANGAVERSE, which takes a load off my mind. So that's good.

NOTES FROM A GALAXY FAR, FAR AWAY #13



May 2018
For N'APA 234
Lorien Rivendell
(Lauren Clough)

Lorienrivendell99@gmail.com

Email Part 3

Soooo...for those of you trying to follow along....

In early 2017, Verizon told me it was getting out of the email business and giving us over to AOL, because AOL did email so much better. And also in 2017, Verizon bought Yahoo, because Verizon does email so much better than Yahoo.

So the other day, I found out that both Yahoo and Verizon are actually part of Oath, which is really just Verizon under another name, according to the Oath Terms of Service. Apparently this has been the case since June 2017, but they are just getting around to telling me this now.

Confused yet? I sure am!



Shadows

COMMENTS ON N'APA #233

Will Mayo, The Contents of a Good Life #1: Welcome!

My laptops tend to get crumbs and dust under the keys, making the keys stick. You'd think I'd have learned over the years not to eat while using my laptop - or anything electronic, for that matter - but old habits die hard. Okay ... old habits live forever.

Traditional Christianity does have a certain ... prudence doesn't it?

John Thiel, Synergy 11: I use my own artwork, for the most part. I figure I can't get into too much trouble using my own stuff. In my last contribution (Notes #12), I used my own photos, but the basis of the photos were projections of other people's photos. Those projected photos were used at a public event with the explicit purpose of photographing them in a creative manner (we were invited to hook up our own phones to a projector, but I was shy and just let others play with the projector). However, this does create a gray area when one posts their own work based on the work of others. For my new logo (under my zine name), I snagged a couple of images off the Web and used an app to blend them together. I figure that in order to get into trouble, someone will have to recognize their own rather generic photo and complain. The chances of anyone seeing it here are rather slim.

RYCT George re. a tape bureau: I recall, at one time, that there was a bureau that recorded N3F publications so that blind members could enjoy them. Perhaps it was once called a tape bureau and/or perhaps that was the purpose of the tape bureau? These days, a human speaking into a recorder might not be completely necessary to assist the blind, as there is text-to-speech software. On the other hand, TTS software sounds mechanical, so a human recording sounds much more ... human.

RYCT me: Yeah ... I had some problems remembering to update headers, etc. Each bi-month I make a copy of the most recent issue and then update, delete, shift around, etc., as needed. I'm also usually multitasking by watching something on Netflix or Hulu, so mistakes can happen. (Today's background is local talk radio. I don't even know why. I'm not paying attention to it.)

Jefferson Swycaffer, Archive Midwinter: RYCT George: I don't think I've ever read anything by Jules Verne. I will have to fix that. I read a few of H. G. Wells' work a few years ago. It all seems rather silly by today's standards, but I do forgive him, as he was a pioneer of sorts. He had no standard to live up to.

RYCT me: My *real* name is Lauren, but it's so *boring*. I told my mother once that I was going to change the spelling of my name to Lorien, and she went, "huh?" I have encountered a woman in one of my favorite Facebook groups whose given name is Lorien (and I forget her brother's name, but it's also from LOTR - her mother was a huge fan). According to FB, she even lives in San Diego, so maybe you know her? (JK ... I know SD is a kind of big place.)

RYCT me: The microwave is definitely faster than the Instant Pot. Instant Pot isn't really instant. It takes a good 10 minutes to get up to pressure and then you have to cook the food, usually from 10-30 minutes, depending on the food. I do find it heats food much more evenly than the microwave. And because you need some kind of liquid to get the IP up to pressure, foods don't dry out the way they tend to do in the microwave Practically raw rice and mushy sticky rice (if it's not supposed to be sticky rice) is not very appetizing. I have a hard time making rice well, and the brown rice that you have to cook for 45 minutes is supposed to be so much healthier than the white rice that cooks in 5 minutes. I don't make rice very often, as pasta is much more foolproof.

Kevin Trainor, The Silver State Age #9: I use Google Docs, Sheets, etc., because I refuse to pay for Microsoft Office. I have used Open Office in the past, but Google Docs rules (for me, anyway), because everything is automatically saved in Google Drive, so I can access it anywhere. It gives me a false sense of security, though, because I swear I have a certain document saved in my Drive, but I can't find it even with their search function. If it's eating my documents on a regular basis, I may have to find something else to use.

George Phillis, Ye Murthered Master Mage: Congrats on the publication of your latest novel!

I'm continuing to enjoy the chapters of *The Girl Who Saved the World*.

Ye Murdered Master Mage
George Phillies
48 Hancock Hill Drive
Worcester MA 01609

Once upon a time, N'APA was used by Neffers to discuss what the N3F could do to make us a better club. The inverse of that was a letter I recently received from a fine fan whose name I will omit, suggesting that it was not clear what the rationale was for the existence of the N3F.

As President of the club, I have been following the traditional approach of finding projects that people could usefully carry out and that fit their interests. We can all be grateful to the many fen who are serving as BuHeads or club officers. We have now gone from an occasionally-published TNFF and Tightbeam, published at all thanks to the Heroes of the Federation of the N3F Publisher's Cabal, to seven zines, namely The National Fantasy Fan, N'APA, Tightbeam, Ionisphere, Origin, Eldritch Science (coming out once or twice a year) and now Mangaverse. For these, we can be grateful to all the fen editors. The project in the works is to revive Mangaverse, our manga/comics/anime zine which has not been published in a few years. I am pleased to report that Jessi Silver of S1E1.com has just volunteered to become our Mangaverse Editor.

I think it would really be good if contributors tried to come up with ideas that would make us a better club, a club that more people would find interesting to join.

So what am I doing?

I had meant to retire from real politics two years ago. I instead found myself becoming Chair of the Libertarian State Leadership Alliance, the moribund association of Libertarian Party state chairs. It's one of the three major national Libertarian Party groups. I revived it a bit. We had a conference, on video on the George Phillies channel on youtube. We have a not-quite-monthly zine. We have a web site. And, in less than two months, we have a new set of officers not including me, and I am done with politics, in which I invested 20 years.

I have a short-term physics project which should have been simple, except that the matrix inversion step approaches being unstable. After several months working on a Fortran program that would not quite work, even with more and more elaborate inversion procedures, I rewrote the thing in Mathematica, which took a week. There are also some longer-term physics research projects.

Current fiction writing projects include a bunch of novels:

Invasion Tibet 30,166 words on hand (so to speak the Buck Rogers prequel) -- 350 words this week

The Eddorian Lensman 15,662 words so far (serial numbers to be filed off) -- 6500 words this week

The Girl Who Saved the World 129,342 words on hand (Prequel to This Shining Sea, about 1/2 done) --550 words this week.

Hold High The Banner 5459 words on hand (Chi Comm depleted platoon of 1940 enters not-D&D world, launches liberation struggle for the exploited small giant class species) -- 1100 words this week

DisUnion 15,800 words on hand (after partition of US; NH/VT capture a flying saucer)

Merchant Adventurers 13,000 words on hand (very vaguely inspired by Manticore in 1700)

Harmony 2800 words on hand Imminent war at the 1700 level. The plain folk are behind, but an academic arrives on a wrecked spaceship to save them. Her specialty--The history of theology.

Comments on Lastish:

Front: John, as always we are grateful for finding covers for us.

Will Mayo: Thank you for joining N'APA with your beautiful perzine. That is a fine bit of philosophy you provide us with. I still have things I want to do, though the current physics project has turned out to be incredibly refractory for annoying rather than profound reasons. Just get on is a fine philosophy for rockets, though I prefer to let someone else get on instead.

Synergy. John, Good point on artwork. I paid for the cover of Against Three Lands. After 75 years, in the absence of a headquarters building, it is really not that surprising that we have limited

memories of earlier times. In one recent case, the difficulty was that the owner of the files died, and for some reason the relative who was the executor of the estate did not like us.

Your author interviews for Ionisphere are indeed interesting. Under modern conditions, there are vast numbers of authors I have never heard of, and I find I read many books by people that no one else has heard of. You broaden my horizons. I can go to book stores, though I find that the SF section of the local book store is largely filled with swords& sorcery, and with tales featuring a young lady in modern dress and locale waving a sword. I hope the young ladies in question all have the superpower "Resistant to Frostbite of the Navel".

You commented to another NAPAn on weather. Here we went from snow to 80+degrees in three weeks. Your literary quotes were certainly an interesting and eclectic collection.

Archive Midwinter: Jefferson, thank you for the kind words on my taking over being OE of N'APA. With modern electronics, it is far less work than was once the case. My largest time investment is in preparing my own zine.

I much appreciate your offer to be a beta reader. *Against Three Lands* is already out on Kindle and Smashwords. I will take you up on the next novel. I paid for a back cover to run *Against Three Lands* through as a paper book as well as an ebook on Amazon Kindle. Realistically speaking, that was advertising in order to make the ebook look more serious, as paperback sales to date have been very limited.

"Fatal dose of radiation". There were a series of those in iirc Texas a few years ago. There was a software error in radiation therapy machine programming, and the person who should have done certain things did not. I gather it took a while to solve.

Howard-Mitra. The God in question sounds like a very slight rewrite of the actual Roman one-god Mithra, who for some time was competitive with the Christian God. IIRC the Christians accepted female worshippers and slaves. The Mithrans did not, a losing decision.

Fannish tolerance is under attack. The latest gem is that Origins, one of the country's really large gaming conventions, disinvited Larry Correia as a guest of honor, after inviting him. Apparently someone – there are reports as to who it was – saw the announcement and launched into a series of electronic message attacks claiming that Correia was one sort of a bigot or another, or something like that. The fellow running the convention reportedly disinvited Correia without bothering to ask him if there was any merit to the attacks, and matters are now going downhill from there.

Alas, this has happened before, recently. John Ringo was disinvited by ConCarolinas. A similar thing has happened to another Neffer, but I will let him tell his own story.

It is really sad that fandom is sinking to these sorts of things. I hope that they do not continue.

Thank you for the book reviews. I read the LeGuin novels when they came out, and then the fourth novel that came out much later, which was not entirely consistent with the first three novels.

Silver State Age: I am happy that things appear to be looking up for you, at least as of lastish. I shall confess that I do my own taxes. Last year I had to submit on paper. The computer software refused to let me file electronically unless I supplied an EIN for the publisher of one of my books. The publisher is in a foreign country, and does not care about our tax people. They deal with their tax people. This year I found a workaround. I have for a long time been without a laptop...I have two under-desk computers...but I find that this summer I will be travelling, spending a few days here or there with little to do, so I bought an el cheapo refurbished machine that will let me sit and type on my current novels.

Your account of the English class is sad. You have my sympathies.

Notes from a Galaxy (Lorien Rivendell) I heartily endorse the notion that if you do things right to begin with you will be under less time pressure in the long run. The phone issue is sad. I am occasionally asked about phones, because I have several. Most of them have push buttons, but one

has a rotary dial, as God doubtless intended. I do take pictures. I have a real camera. Thank you for contacting Jon Swartz, even if you are now busy. I have also started writing a bit more, just as you are planning to do, as described above.

Interesting photographs. That corridor image is surely much cheaper than building a set. I am reminded of the Jodie Foster SF film, in which there was some video available someplace of her walking through this complicated gadget. All the instrument panels were green screen, to be replaced with computer images.

Chapter Eight

Secure Chamber Alpha
The Palace of Peace
Geneva, Switzerland
Early Evening
January 14, 2018

Holmgren stood at the head of the table, waiting for the ambassadors of the Great Powers to be seated. They had arrived; now all they had to do was to take their places. He leaned into his chair and tapped his gavel once. "Our recess is over. We are again in session. I hope you all had pleasant lunches and dinners. The ambassadors who had placed objection markers at the last meeting have all indicated to me that they insist on raising their objections before we advance to Brigade Leader Valkyria and her report on the events at the Maze. I therefore recognize Ambassador Buncombe."

"Mr. Chancellor," Buncombe said, "during the earlier part of the meeting this morning several ambassadors indicated that it was the intent or position of their government that in the hypothetical case that the Bearer was found, within a country other than their own, that their governments would be entitled to send persona teams or even military units to the location of the Bearer to seize the Namestone. For example, if the bearer were to be found in scenic Buffalo, North York, Buffalonians might find themselves visited by the persona teams and armed hosts of a series of countries I will not embarrass by naming." Buncombe had not incidentally named one of America's wealthiest and most significant industrial cities.

"The President and Speaker of the American Republic are in complete agreement that

such a visitation, made without the invitation of the American Republic, which assuredly will not be forthcoming, would be viewed as a declaration of war. The American Elite Persona Team would be ordered to the scene to dispose of the invaders. Furthermore, Speaker Ming has called upon the Governors of the seventy states to place in readiness their Persona State Guards to advance to the assistance of the American Elite Persona Team. The American team is under direct and explicit orders from the President that such an invasion is to be put down without quarter being offered, unless the invaders immediately and without offering resistance surrender themselves.

"In addition, the American Republic would view it to be an act of war for any foreign power to insert their persona teams into the territory of any of the Canadian Dominions, unless Her Majesty's government had invited them, in which case the situation would be taken under advisement. As an exception, any effort of the IncoAztec government to insert its persona teams or armed hordes into the territory of any other country in the Americas will be taken to be a declaration of war on the American Republic, a declaration against which the American Republic will respond in full. I believe that Ambassador Featherstonehaugh is the next to speak, and I yield to him." Buncombe wondered how long would be needed for other powers to deduce that the Republic had discussed his anticipated remarks with Her Britannic Majesty and her Ministers. Some ambassadors, he considered would doubtless need to have it explained to them.

"On behalf of Her Majesty's government," Featherstonehaugh responded, "I will say that we are grateful for the offer of the American government to support the independence and liberty of each of Her Majesty's Canadian Dominions against foreign invasion, with the clear understanding that has already been negotiated between our Minister of State and Speaker Ming that at such time as we request our American friends to depart that they will do so as expeditiously as possible, given the potential need to assist the sick and injured, extinguish fires, and support the detention of foreign prisoners of war pending their fair trials and prompt executions. Potential needs were in fact discussed at some length; we are quite sure that the British Empire and

the American Republic are in complete agreement on the notion of potential needs and expeditious withdrawal. Also, Her Majesty's government views the independence and security of other nations in the Americas to be a critical matter for the security of the British Empire. There is no possibility that Her Majesty's government would consider being responsible for the consequences if the independence or security of any of these nations were to be infringed upon. The longstanding alliance between her Majesty's Realm and the Empire of the Brazilians is viewed as particularly sacrosanct. Having said that, I believe that Ambassador Davout had signaled a desire to speak, perhaps even before I did, but he graciously offered to allow me to speak first." Featherstonehaugh passed the Speaking Stone to Davout.

"On behalf of his Most Placid and Serene Majesty, the Sixth Napoleon, may His House endure forever, I must most emphatically indicate that the French Empire categorically and completely rejects the suggestion that foreign powers are entitled to besmirch the name of the Empire and the honor of the Legion of Glory by claiming a right to enter our territory and attack our citizens, as though we were unable to protect ourselves." Davout closed the case from which he had been reading his remarks. The Legion of Glory, Buncombe, thought, was the French Military Persona Host. That covered a lot of terrain. Davout's country, including its not-protectorates from the Caribbean to the Eastern Mediterranean was nonetheless an eminently civilized place, in which an American could consider living. Napoleon might style himself *Emperor*, but its local governments including the Greek and Spanish Kingdoms and Venetian Republic had an independence that only Frenchmen and Americans found entirely reasonable.

Holmgren, fearing what was about to happen, nonetheless was obliged to recognize Ambassador Smoking Frog. "The Living Sun, The First Speaker," Smoking Frog said, "has anticipated the outrageous statements of the American Ambassador and his foreign toadies." Featherstonehaugh and Davout looked at each other and rolled their eyes. "The right of the League of Nations to take possession of the Namestone is beyond question or doubt. It is totally forbidden and contrary to the League Charter, the votes of this body, and the votes of the World Council for any

nation to take any other stand. Furthermore, it is the privilege and duty of the persona leagues and military forces of every nation of the world to enforce these votes anywhere on the planet without begging leave of the local governments, including the local government that charters and funds the persona league in question, all of which are entirely subordinate to the League of Nations and therefore must be brought to heel if they fail to obey the League's righteous edicts. The people of the world may be assured that so soon as the Bearer is located, the Jaguar Knights and the Eagle Legion will descend upon her, strip her of the Namestone, and prepare her to be food for the Gods, or such other form of extended dying as this body may choose to specify."

Holmgren steeled himself for what would undoubtedly be the extended remarks of most of the remaining ambassadors, some saying that their countries were entitled to pursue the Namestone wherever it was found, and others saying that there was no such entitlement. On one hand, he considered, only a minority of Great Powers would claim their right of intervention. On the other hand, China and the IncoAztec Empire would both claim that alleged right. Alas, they were probably the two most populous nations in the world, and both of them were vigorous about seeking out and training persona talents wherever found. Holmgren told himself that he had wisely packed several large flasks in his vest and suitcoat pockets, and suspected that very soon he would be managing to drain them of their fine beverages, all of which had begun their lives as grain, variously American, Scots, and Russian in extraction.

At long last, the argument over foreign intervention ran out of steam. "What do we tell our citizens?" Lars Holmgren finally responded prayerfully after finishing another sip at his American flask.

"Perhaps," Buncombe said, "you could tell the people of the world that you eventually reached this meeting's agenda." It wasn't always necessary to lead Holmgren by the nose, he thought, but it seemed to be necessary more and more often. Perhaps that reflected Holmgren's need to fortify himself, more and more often.

“Ah, yes, the original agenda. Eclipse and how she escaped. Is there an issue here?” The Ambassadors glowered. “Valkyria,” Holmgren said, “Can you add anything to what happened afterward?”

“Rolf,” she answered, her use of the first name reminding her audience of the ill-kept secret that she was also Lindgren’s mistress, or perhaps the other way around, “there is a written report with video support, which hopefully all of you have had time to study.” Buncombe nodded in agreement. Nonetheless, he knew, Valkyria would insist on giving her report, or at least a precis of it, rather than asking for questions. “Let me,” she continued, “note that the broadcast video of my conversation with the Bearer does not completely agree with what I remember her saying. The actual events appeared to be a scenario that we’d examined very thoroughly, namely the ‘politely declines to cooperate’ option. The plan was not perfect. I believe one of Markgraf Moeller’s excellent volumes on tactics treats plan failure.” She smiled in Moeller’s direction. He glowered. “The first failure was that the Bearer does not look like all the drawings we are distributing. She’s considerably shorter than I am, enough that at first I thought she was not the Bearer, and could not imagine who she was. It did not help that the Maze was doing time distortion, so that my teleport to St. Brendan’s Isle took some hours to complete. Based on Eclipse’s actions in the Maze, we thought we had a good estimate of her gifts, namely close to none. We appeared on Atlanticea with what should have been overwhelming strength. The ancient American aphorism is ‘If a company seems enough, send in a division. That way no one gets hurt.’ We’ve had time to do a complete reconstruction. Eclipse was a solid target, not an illusion. Most attacks on Eclipse found their target. All six of my team drains were drawing at full capacity. Lady Sylph is emphatically certain: The Screaming Skull hit Eclipse with his death command. I hit her with the Katana of Justice. All that, and Eclipse’s defenses did not go down.” Buncombe stared at one of the walls in seeming boredom. Part of Valkyria’s remarks had not been in the written report, namely that Eclipse did not resemble her wanted posters. That was going to raise certain challenges for anyone trying to capture her.

“She used the Namestone?” Elizaveta Romanoff asked. The Russian Ambassador’s interruption was only almost a question.

“The *Copper Book of Harvest Stars* is completely clear,” Valkyria answered calmly. “The Wizard of Mars agreed, a very expensive question to have had answered. The Bearer needs several days to mesh with Namestone’s powers. Until then, Namestone supplies a few cosmetic tricks, no more. Observe that Eclipse’s garb was immaculate, and her face was unmarred. That was all the Namestone did for her. No, Eclipse stood up to us using her own shields. If she had a team backing her, they did a darn fine job of remaining invisible the whole time, not to mention fooling six Drains and a Seer. I am less bothered that we didn’t take her down, and more bothered that the Screaming Skull didn’t appear to have discomfited her. Perhaps I should also be bothered that she did not give the Martyr her private persona name. The *Copper Book* says that that is a requirement for being given the Namestone. Somehow she managed to dodge answering the Martyr’s question.”

“Someone who stands up to the Skull? Is there such a person?” Legate Hong asked. “But which appearance is false? Which image was falsified? The one you saw or the one the world saw? Or both?”

Valkyria rested her chin on her fingertips. “Other Lords of Eternity. A few personas from ancient history. Ambassador Featherstonehaugh’s illustrious ancestor, Morgan La Fey. The Goetic Knights wore enchanted armor, armor superior to mine. The Marik Master of Parades supposedly wore the Invincible Sigil of the Eternal Procession. This Eclipse person is none of the above. However, manifestly, there is such a person, because I hit her square on with the Katana of Justice, and during the explosion her force field did not waver. Having said that, while her mindscreens were also quite solid, her thoughts leaked very slightly out to where they could be read. She was clearly operating a Medico rules engine. When the Katana of Justice struck her, she was at the edge of taking lethal damage. We also got the slightest impression of her emotions. She was utterly focused on something, too focused to consider that she ought to be scared out of her wits. I infer she was focused on summoning power levels. Or gifts. Though if you told me she is a

descendant of the legendary Girl Without Fear, I could believe you.”

“If I may?” Prince Wang, ambassador of the Celestial Republic of the Han, rarely spoke. “We are not, Valkyria excepted, masters of the art of battle strategy. We should give those who are masters of battle our thoughts, and let them tell us the answers, not spend time chatting about tactics as the amateurs we are. However, I believe I see why we missed the range of her gifts. She neglected to use them. She did not quite attain the ultimate feat of brilliancy ‘defeat your enemy without doing anything’, but she was parsimonious in her choice of methods. While in the Maze, she never teleported, mostly showed human resistance to heat and cold, played City of Steel well but not brilliantly. Except for that one move, of course. Until we attempted to kill her, she could have been a very well-trained ungifted woman. Twenties perhaps sounds young. She might have a touch of the gift of agelessness. Perhaps Valkyria can explain what I am missing.”

“The *Copper Book* explains this,” Valkyria answered. “The Lesser Maze tests determination, purity of thought, cleverness, strength of mind, and physical and mental training, not enormity of power.” Unless, Valkyria thought, you cheat by presenting the Maze with an artificial construct that has no mental weaknesses. Alas, the construct had not been quite ready to enter the Maze before this Eclipse showed up. “Thus Cortez and Fisher, the latter’s fleet being infinitely more powerful than the former’s, could come equally close to victory. Your description may explain how Eclipse escaped. The capture strategy, in the few hours tactical support teams in Europe had to insert fine detail, inferred her gifts from her acts in the Maze. We hit her vastly harder than should have been needed, given the gifts she had shown. After all, everyone who has ever tried to walk the Maze, whether those two chess grandmasters or any of the World-Class personas, has while in the Maze used all of their talents to their uttermost limits. She didn’t.”

“She cheated!” Lord Featherstonehaugh interjected.

“A different answer.” Saigo Shigetoshi, Buncombe considered, was Legate of the Satsuma Daimyo, so he did not officially represent his

country. The Shogun’s Court could deny responsibility for what he said. The legal fiction that Shigetoshi only represented the Satsuma Daimyo rather than speaking for the Emperor and the Shogun was one of the quaint aspects of doing business with the Japanese. It was almost as quaint as the fiction that Shigetoshi’s wife merely liked a bit of gossip, rather than being the Imperial spymaster for Europe. “Do not fear. At the end, as foretold by the *Harvest Stars*, Eclipse had a choice. She could reach out and take the Namestone. Or she could ask, and be given it if she was worthy. I am totally confident. She asked. She received the Namestone freely.”

“Asked? When she could have taken it? She shows she is weak!” Markgraf Moeller grumbled.

“Then I must humbly pray that we never have to contend with a strong persona bearing the Namestone,” Legate Hong whispered. It was a shame, Buncombe considered, that the Manjukoan Empire could never forgive America for buying Alaska for a few mills on the dollar. Hong was a remarkably sensible conversationalist, but if he ever chatted with Buncombe Hong would likely be ordered to commit suicide, probably after being ordered to murder all his descendants.

“Thus,” Saigo continued, “she is as worthy as the Martyr, who read her soul before granting her the stone, she is no danger to anyone. However, she may defend herself. Such acts might have less than ideal consequences to nearby places, for example neighboring continents. Accordingly, the Satsuma Domain will not find it entirely convenient at this time to participate in attempting her capture.”

“We must mobilize the people of the world,” Holmgren said, “to turn their united talents to capturing this person. Wherever she is – yes, I agree the very limited evidence suggests somewhere in Europe – we must find her. In particular, we must capture this Eclipse person and free the Namestone before it falls into truly wrong hands. Can you imagine what the League of Terran Justice would do with it?” The League of Terror and Injustice was a permanent thorn in Holmgren’s side. Buncombe perched his chin on his hands. The League of Terran Justice clearly had secret objectives, objectives that no one had yet divined.

Those were the objectives that drove its disciplined yet incomprehensible behavior.

“All the power of all the world’s investigatory agencies, from the Okhrana to the fabled Pinkertons, are hot in her pursuit,” Elizaveta Romanoff said. “There can be no doubt. We shall find her. Of course, what we do when we find her is another question.”

“Should you not have some plan for dealing with her before you find her?” American Ambassador Buncombe allowed that it was time to remind foreigners of the practical nature of all Americans. “Lest you find yourself like the miniature poodle that treed the pride of lions? How do you plan to match the Namestone’s power? Not to mention, of course, that a person who can stand up to that range of attacks without flinching is no mere milquetoast, no little girl pretending to be her older brother. This Eclipse is a persona of no slight power. The most obvious demonstration of this is the dog that did not bark.” Hopefully, Buncombe thought, these people or their political masters will recognize that attacking the Bearer may prove to be less than safe.

“Ahh, the Great English Detective Helmesham,” Legate Saigo said.

“Precisely,” Buncombe said. “This person is being attacked by our League’s most powerful Strike Team, not to mention a Lord of Eternity. What does she do? Nothing. Not a thing. Most people, seeing what was about to happen to them, would at least try shooting back, piously hoping that they might possibly fire a silver arrow. Eclipse just stood there. Of course, you could claim that she has no combat gifts, just a sharp knife, but having no combat gifts is an exceedingly odd match to at least twelfth-level screens, not to mention effective second-order defenses. You could also propose she was so slow-witted that she did not recognize what was about to happen to her, but someone so dull could never have solved the Maze. No, this Eclipse person was confident that her gifts would shield her from the League and the Skull. A list of known personae who are that confident in their gifts is very short.” Indeed, he considered, he should ask the State Department to generate that list for him.

“Yes,” Singh said, “As she is clearly not a Lord of Eternity, there is one obvious possibility. While she is shorter than history books report, it is possible that the Namestone is now in the hands of the Silver General.” Looks of horror criss-crossed the room. “Some would feel surprise that the Supreme Mistress of Terror and Treachery was found worthy.”

“Mercifully,” Featherstonehaugh responded, “I can rule out that inspired and sensible inference. The Silver General appeared regularly in London in Queen Victoria’s declining years. My great-grandfather, who was something of a lady’s man, became, how shall I put it, her very close friend, and noted in his diary that they were of a height, that height being five feet, ten inches, much taller than the Bearer who Valkyria encountered.”

“Perhaps we should ask those who have so far remained silent if they had anything useful to add?” Elizaveta Romanoff made her grandmotherly smile, knowing the Special Peace Executive would hear effusive promises of support, promises that she knew to be of dubious reliability. It was possible, she thought, that some of the Great Powers did not plan to keep secret their capture of the Namestone, at least until they had used the Namestone to conquer the world. She hoped that no one would press her to name a Great Power that was so strangely run. It seemed far less plausible that any Power would voluntarily hand the Namestone over to dear Lars. Nonetheless, the promises would be extensive, time-consuming, pointless, and last until an appropriate hour for recess had been reached.

The Contents of a Good Life #2



AND ANGELS AMONG US

Once, upon a day dark with amber,
I prayed to St. Fillian to give me grace
and the return of a sound mind.
As they oyster had long ago left its shell
and the pearl which remained
reflected a light no man could see.
I tossed and turned upon my bed,

as the flames danced on the ocean
and all manner of demons
filled my early evening dreams.
My body quivered with despair,
my lips spoke a thousand forked tongues,
and I prayed again for silence from the cold.
Finally, in my mind's ear
I heard the saint speak,
surprising me with the warmth of his understanding.
“Be still,” he said. “The shadow you keep
is my own gift.”

From there, I walked forth proud,
a child of the night, seeing my reflection in every sleep.

-Will Mayo

painting, “Jacob Wrestling with the Angel” by Rembrandt

For N'APA, May 2018

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Maryland 21701. Email wsmayo@yahoo.com .

“a drunk, a lover, and a fool”

IT'S THE TIMES

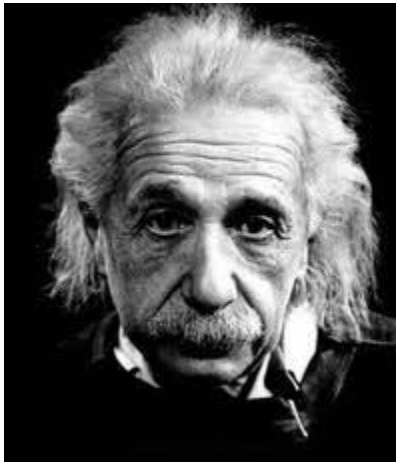
Preachers come and go.

Shouting, calling.

Lovers remain.

Loving.

*



HOW ALBERT MADE HIS WAY

By the early 1920s, Albert Einstein was convinced that his best years were behind him. All the equations had been devised. All the tales had been told. He knew this and confided his fears in his private letters to his sister. Nevertheless, he continued on, all through the lonesome years, through the burning of his books, through his escape from Hitler's Germany, through his settling into a new land and beginning a professorship at Princeton University with

the bright young minds of tomorrow. Along the way, he became known as a man of peace. A statesman, one might say. Yet he could not escape the feeling that his time was past. No matter. He ruffled his long gray hair, scribbled again on the blackboard, and smiled. Home. He was at home.

KEEPER OF DEBTS

“Who are you?” I asked the stranger in the shadows of the evening.

“I am Death,” he said. “Keeper of old debts.”

“Come then,” I said. “Won’t you warm yourself by the fire?” For the stranger seemed awfully cold.

“No,” he said, “I cannot stay. I have miles to go.”

“Take these, then,” I said. And I removed two silver dollars from the globes of my eyes. Good for the ferryman, good for the ride.

“Yes, that’ll do it just fine,” he said. And a cold wind then carried us away. It’s been miles since then and eternity and he was good on his word. Oblivion never beckoned better than then.

THE OLD DAYS

When I run into somebody I know they'll invariably speak of the old days.

"Oh, Will!" they'll say. "I knew you in the old days when you were but a boy in Alabama."

Or maybe, "I knew you in the old days when we were in college."

Perhaps even, "I knew you when in the old days you were writing stories and passing them around for all to see."

And now surely not so many years hence somebody will come up to me and say, "I knew you in the old days when we were still alive."

You just never know.

WAITING FOR THE FINAL GUEST

And so the reaper asked me:

"What do you want before you're done?"

I said,

"A few good laughs, a few good loves, a few good screws and I'll be ready to hang it up for all eternity."

"Very well," he said.

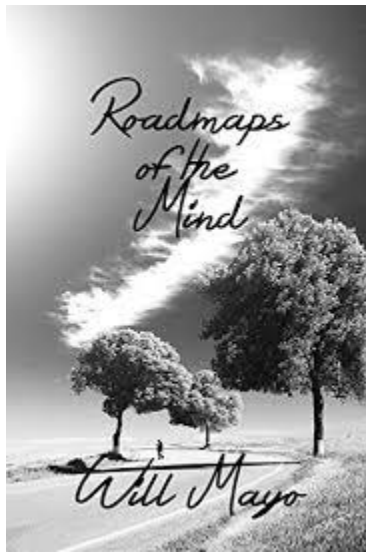
And I've been laughing and I've been loving and I've been screwing ever since. But I tell you, the waiting never ends...

Mailing comments. I hardly know what to say. I'm on my third computer in just so many months which has crashed at one time or another and few of those zines that has been sent to me remain.

And little really sticks in my head these days but a few lines of centuries old poetry which will eventually fade away as well. As for that silver disc that George Phillies snailmailed me from the National Fantasy Fan Federation, I've yet to figure out how to slide it into my computer let alone bring up its contents on the screen (maybe if I was to fetch my Captain Marvel ring from the cereal box and whisper SHAZAM that would do the trick. Who knows?) But I consider it an honor, simply an honor to be aboard. Now, let's hope and pray that I don't hit that self-destruct button again....

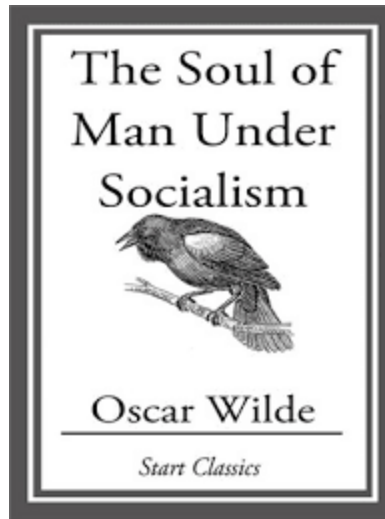
Mostly what I like about the zines is that they take me to other worlds. Yes, other worlds. You see, I lead a rather humdrum existence between the walls of my apartment. Most days I don't see a soul. But between it all, the bookcases crammed with books, I can just glimpse the stars. Those faraway worlds mean everything to me. Everything in existence.

Books I would recommend to members of N'APA—what can I say but those books which have haunted me since my earliest days, namely, Heinlein's STRANGER IN A STRANGE LAND, Bradbury's FAHRENHEIT 451, and THE MARTIAN CHRONICLES, Asimov's THE GODS THEMSELVES and do I dare recommend my own book of tales and poems, ROAD MAPS OF THE MIND? Yes, I think I do dare. If only because I had so much fun writing it. Magnificent, says one reviewer. 5 stars, says another.



Here's a review:

THE SOUL OF MAN UNDER SOCIALISM by Oscar Wilde.



Here in this slim volume Oscar Wilde gives the virtues of socialism...by which he apparently means more an anarchist-socialist form of government than the communist model with the abolition of private property, an income guaranteed to everyone, and a government limited to that of trade unions creating by machines the necessary things of life, leaving each man, woman and child free to create beautiful things. And what are those beautiful things? Why, art is the most beautiful thing of all and the artist is the very soul of the nation. From there, Oscar goes on to list the forms of art that would benefit under such a regime, including the novel, the poem, the play, the painting and the statuary and all the decorative arts, proclaiming "Selfishness is not living as one wishes to live. Selfishness is asking others to live as one wishes to live." And he

may well have been right. He does all this in a very simple, plainspoken language and, in large part, succeeds. Oscar Wilde, who often said that his favorite lecture was on the decorative arts given in an American coal mine upon the threat of being shot if he did not succeed and who succeeded exceedingly well, is one of my favorite authors. I would have liked to have had a beer or two with him and discussed the pros and cons of his argument regarding socialism but, sadly, he died over a century ago in Paris in a state of disrepair. His argument, however, lives on and I suspect it will for a while longer.

THAT OLD MAD ART

And what was it Paul Gauguin said after Van Gogh cut off his ear? “It seems wherever I go I drive men mad and so I must go forever from the sight of them.” And so he left Van Gogh there in the asylum, left his native France, left Europe altogether forever and retreated to the tropics of the South Pacific where he painted his best works of art. “My God, I am complete in mind and spirit,” he remarked to the women who attended him there. There he breathed his last. And now all come to stand and wonder. Here was one who escaped it all, society and its trappings, and succeeded. And not a one of them is mad.



THAT OLD BLOOMING FLOWER

*Heaven in a flower and infinity in a gaze—with due thanks
to William Blake*

And then that man lay in his bed seeing planets upon
planets around him and universes within universes, all of
which made up the leafy bud of that plant over yonder.
And the man by that plant in the old-fashioned suit with
the looking glass he saw too, carefully watering that plant
that it might live. And then without further thought the man
in the bed died. No consideration at all for the god that
imagined him. No matter the old-fashioned gentleman picks
up his looking glass and eyes the plant once more. Another
will come along in turn. They always do.

DIALOGUE

Of course, the idea that words have any inherent meaning is a
ridiculous one. Whether it's my magazine or John Thiel's or Eva

Joanne Tolson's or that of another the meaning will always vary. What's liberal to one is conservative to another. What's happy to one is sad to another. What's life itself is death to another. No, I tell you, the rhythm's the thing. Whether it's the shifting of old stories or the wind over the Sahara or the electronic background of the galaxy that old be-bop beat rhythm's the key. Words these are, the blood pulse of the universe.

John Thiel: It's a hard thing to decide when a communication has been successful. Perhaps not to keep too stiff a criterion.

Will: Words have whatever meaning we give them. The meaning may well vary from person to person. But that doesn't take away from the value of the story. How people see Huckleberry Finn now may be different from how they see it a century ago...

Thiel: One must see the ambiguousness in things to relate to words as they should be related to. Words aren't mathematics. You know that as a written piece goes out, its reception varies from individual to individual, from society to society, and from country to country. And in that knowledge is fulfillment.

Will: Yes, as long as the basic tale stays intact. The old German folk tales were a lot different from how the Brothers Grimm told them, but something central to the tales remained. Enough to pass on to whole new generations of readers.

Thiel: Here we communicate successfully, there are no losses, only gains.

Will: Yes, I've long since given up on trying to get across some great poetical or societal agenda. Just to get across the basic tale and tell it straight. If different people see it differently that's fine. The basic tale remains.

Thiel: "The Moving Hand has writ, and having writ moves on, not all assembled wit can cancel or take back a word of it."—Omar Khayyam

Will: Yes, it cannot be taken back. That's true. But since ancient times people have gathered around their campfires listening to tales being told; it mattered not how true or great the tale was or what meaning lay within. No, the truth of the evening lay in the tale itself. And remains there still.

Thiel: You know, Will, a long time ago you said you could get a profitable and meaningful dialog going on the net, or words to that effect, and here we are. Intentions fulfilled, and going some. I see where you're at, the story's the thing, not any preordained meaning. People will wonder where we went from this, when we continue at other times and places.

Will: Yes, for years I was too haunted by the analysis of my literature classes and not nearly enough by the fun of my boyhood reading. Today, I return to my childhood fun of make pretend and more.

Thiel: That's the imagination, very significant in worldly and personal affairs.

Will: Yes, that's the gist of it. The key is not whether we can live outside of our heads but where we can live inside of them. Our minds can take us all kinds of places.

Thiel: Time, the jackrabbit of continuity, leaps in apace; it's noon and I feel hungry. Going to go and EAT RIGHT NOW. But I'll be back when I find notifications for this topic. I'll say before leaving, let's not deny otherness—that touch of an unknown self.

Will: *Ciao*. Enjoy. And yes, I do not deny that other self. But though others are often out to cypher a deeper meaning to my tales, my mission remains the same, simply to tell the tale and tell it true. *Bon appetit*.

Joanne Tolson: Just woke up from an unintended nap. Hungry too.

Will: I could use an unintended nap...

Joanne: Glad you two went on without me.

Thiel: Glad to see you show up on the topic. The more the merrier.

Will: It's hard to say. In a world without meaning with words with no sound we go on anyway, casting symbols into the darkness.

Joanne: Yeah, always late, better than never.

Will: Uncle Walt was some kind of salesman. He even taught Oscar Wilde the tricks of the trade.

Thiel: One thing he taught him, everything is meaningful in its place and interesting elsewhere. Therefore a salesman is engaged in a worthwhile enterprise.

Will: A salesman of words, gotta love it.

Thiel: They say a good wordman really makes it.



