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Noting **Issur Danielovich Demsky**, the Spartacus of the movie – and the comic book – and so much more. We knew him better as **Kirk Douglas**, and as the lead in *Ace in the Hole*, *Gunfight at the O.K. Corral*, *Seven Days in May* and a dozen dozen more. He starred in one of the best antiwar movies ever made, *Paths of Glory*, and *The Vikings* and *The Bad and the Beautiful*. But when he died in February, 2020, 103 years young, it was as Spartacus that he was remembered, the slave who would not remain a slave. He *was* Spartacus. *He* was Spartacus. He was *Spartacus*.



Kirk Douglas lends this *Spartacus* a Hollywood sheen, so at once I should segue into



What I loved about the OSCARS!

First of all, I must applaud the victory of *Parasite*, the South Korean dramedy which broke every barrier known to man and won the ultimate Oscar honor: Best Picture of the Year. *Parasite* is a strange, hilarious, horrifying film, with a compelling comic story and a sinister, searing dramatic underpinning: class warfare. It's superb. That it's also the first foreign language film to cop Best Picture – although *Slumdog Millionaire* all but qualified, being rooted in India's Bollywood – is icing.

The world fell in love with its director as he stared in wide-eyed awe at his first Oscar (of three). He knew what that trophy meant. So did Hollywood. I found it classy that the assembled gods and goddesses of the movies, assembled in the auditorium's front seats, insisted by gesture and shout that the lights stay up and the show stay on so the *Parasite* cast and crew could fully enjoy their moment in the *Spotlight*. (A terrific film that itself won the Big Oscar three years ago. Then *All the King's Men* went *Going My Way* into the *Moonlight*, waving a *Green Book*.)

The whole show had excellent moments. Someone spoke wise praise for Charlize Theron in inspiring *Bombshell* and left the celestial beauty in tears. Elton John and Bernie Taupin won Best Song – Elton's voice breaking (it'd give out completely a few weeks later). Best hoot was when the *Cats* performers – in costume -- presented the FX award, flashing their *hands*. Though I liked the film, and loved the star, incomplete Special Effects left human fingers and tennis shoes on many of the kitties; offended critics left the Lloyd Webber musical dripping from the walls.

The winning performers gave good speeches. I loved Laura Dern's shout-out to her actor parents. Brad Pitt's speech showed utter confidence and deep appreciation for Quentin Tarantino and their quirky film, *Once Upon a Time in Hollywood*. Cleverly he closed his thanks with those very words, and "Ain't it the truth!" Joaquin Phoenix's rambling but heart-piercing gratitude drew blood when he mentioned his late brother. Poor Renee Zellweger seemed completely upstaged, but now she's won two Academy Awards – more than 15 years apart. This one was the best deserved. *Judy* was a terrific film – managing to move us while avoiding schmaltz

The final aspect of this year's Oscars I particularly enjoyed will likely never come again. *La belle* and I had to catch the last few presentations on DVR. Just before the Academy got to the Big awards, we were interrupted by a beautiful night launch from Cape Canaveral. Given a choice between the Academy Awards and a rocket takeoff, this fan-family wouldn't know which to choose. Fortunately, thanks to 21st Century technology, we didn't have to.

+++ Films having been brought to the forefront of this *Spar*, I'll review *The Invisible Man* – the new one. Original story, well told (which for me means excellent pacing), good SFnal premise, great suspense, effective shocks, an excellent lead in *Handmaid's Tale*'s Elizabeth Moss. *Righteous*. Soon to break here: *A Quiet Place, Part II*. Try to keep me from it!

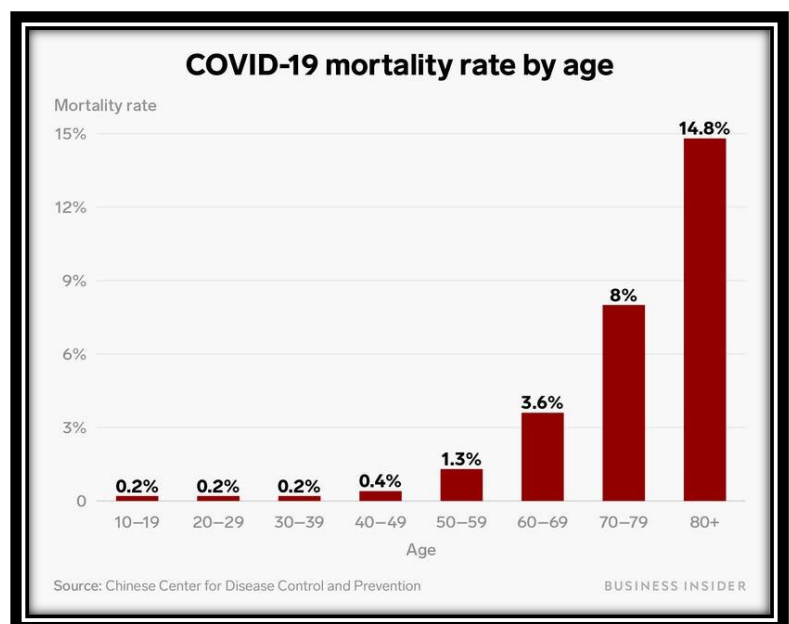
+++ These are the days of the **Coronavirus**. In horror we watch Chinese goon squads carry people bodily from their homes and tourists late of China disgorge directly from windowless 747s and mammoth cruise ships into velvet quarantine. A Seattle nursing home becomes a nexus of death. The numbers of infected and dead here, there and everywhere are broadcast nightly. Broadway shuts down. The NBA, NHA and NCAA ban crowds from their games. Smart politicians cancel rallies. Disney closes its parks. Tom Hanks and his wife are infected. The tone is terror. I have some questions.

What the hell are we talking about? How deadly is this COVID-19? Is it closer to a bad flu or Captain Trips? What's its ratio of fatality to infection? We're told that, like just about any flu one can name, it's most likely to kill the old, the ill, the poor, yet the fatalities keep increasing. Anything distinctive about those luckless people – age, overall health, social status? Most people recover – as the Hankses will, almost undoubtedly. But when? How long are they contagious?

Most of us don't know these things, and we need to. Right now we're experiencing panic, and I have to wonder if it's panic for panic's sake. What, sensibly, should we *do*, as individuals and as a government?

The initial answer is obvious:
learn more.

Some info gleaned from the Net:
Overall “men have a fatality rate of 2.8% versus 1.7% for women. No deaths [have] occurred in those aged 9 years and younger, but cases in those aged 70 to 79 years [have] had an 8% fatality rate and those aged 80 years and older [have] had a fatality rate of 14.8%. No deaths were reported among mild and severe cases. The fatality rate was 49% among **critical cases**, and elevated among those with **preexisting conditions**.”



Here's a steal from *Business Insider* which tells us about as much as we know, as of the end February: “A [recent study](#) from the Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention showed that **the virus most seriously affected older people with preexisting health problems**. About 80% of coronavirus cases are mild, the research showed. “The study collected data from more than 44,000 confirmed patients in China through February 11. chances of dying from the disease increase with age.” Above see the mortality rate for each age bracket, according to the study.

So: at 70, a man, with hypertension and a thyroid (both controlled), I'm at an 8% chance of kicking from this virus if I'm unlucky enough to catch it. So individuals should avoid crowds and wash their hands. But that last question remains unanswered. What should *our society* do to fight this pandemic?

We can't rely on our government. Trump's robotic speech of 3-11 announcing his administration's actions was so insipid and ill-informed that even conservative commentators – the bright ones, anyway – disparaged it as pathetic. Trump has shown much more concern for the hyper-anxious stock market and his own glory than the people – *his* rallies continue – and his stooges have polluted the public discourse with slanders: *The media talks of COVID-19 just to badmouth the President*. Mike Pence's group has come up with no more sensible actions than fervent prayer.

Restricting travel is no solution, as the virus is already rife in America, and the stated restrictions are full of holes. I refer all to Peter Wehmer's fine column on *The Atlantic* website on 3-13-2020.

As citizens, we should and would accept much in the way of prevention – but only within reason. China's totalitarian measures – roadblocks for temperature testing, dragging suspected sick from their homes – seem fear-driven and reckless, but hey, it's legit fear. So rational travel restrictions – mandatory testing, and more tests available – compensated quarantines – cautious cancellations – all transparent and above board – these we can handle, and would. Corona is a nasty disease, but if we meet it with sanity, understanding, and a sense of *community*, it won't be the end of the world. Wash your hands. Hold off on handshaking and lap-dances. Stop picking your nose.

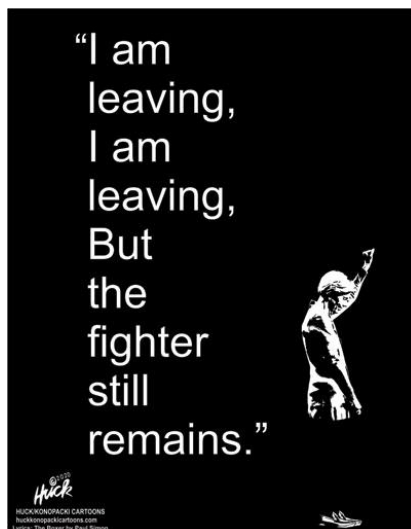
In the meantime, fannish worries, and they're serious: *how did COVID-19 affect Corflu? And what about Worldcon?*

+++ One unfortunate prophylactic measure against coronavirus that we've heard is to stop shaking hands. I regret the loss of this personal manner on greeting another. Shaking hands allowed you to size up a person through *touch* and *instinct*. Personal instance, I learned the difference between Lyndon Johnson and Hubert Humphrey by shaking hands with them in 1968. Hubert's paw was like a fistful of cold spaghetti, whereas LBJ had a grip like a bull's sphincter. (Never mind how I know that.) I also remember the story of Teddy Roosevelt shaking hands one day with thousands of Americans – heartily, firmly, one by one. Which brings politics back to mind, not that the subject is ever far away.

Who remembers the Trump **impeachment**? I see one or two hands. As a lawyer and a citizen, I want to heap praise on those who prosecuted the country's case against its feckless, lawless President. Particularly impressive was **Adam Schiff**, who exemplifies the focus, skill, passion, articulation and knowledge of the best trial lawyers. I watched him work in awe. His potential as a public servant is limitless.

Since the GOP power elite engineered Trump's acquittal – not that the damning testimony sure to come from John Bolton would have made a difference to the Republican stooges in the Senate – Trump has sought revenge against those who testified for the prosecution and shown unfettered contempt for the rule of law which, in a fair trial, would have brought him down. His pardons for white-collar criminals and overt interference in Roger Stone case, including slanders against its jury members, are an attack on judicial independence unacceptable from a private citizen, let alone a President. And it's been months since the immigrant kids in the refugee camps have been mentioned by *anyone*. What sort of Christmas do you think *they* had?

I just might vote Democratic this year ...



+++ And on that topic ... After the first binge of presidential primaries, the **White House race** begs attention. The Democratic nomination looks solid for Joe Biden as of this writing, and I am reluctantly down with that. Bernie Sanders' proposals are revolutionary and may well portend a great American change – but far in the future. Bernie himself is easy to caricature and label and is therefore *scary*: our Goldwater, forever twaddling about “Da billionaire class...” Joe Biden, on the other hand, is *rejuvenated* – he's tromped through the primaries and even *seems* younger.

So a clear choice is upon Democrats: revolution or rejuvenation, and I'll just bet they'll go for the comfort. Either alternative, of course, is infinitely preferable to the nightmare America is currently enduring. *Voting blue no matter who.*

But I can't help regrets. It's no secret that I wanted Elizabeth Warren nominated and elected. Tough, passionate,

approachable, energetic, brilliant, creative, she has Bernie's progressivism, an unmatched human touch and the best brains and background of any candidate. She's also an ardent but fair feminist, unafraid to let her anger show, *viz* her evisceration of Michael Bloomberg in the debates. Fanning the flaming fury feminists foster at serious sexist insult, she tore the former NYC mayor several new orifices over repulsive comments he'd made in the past.

Did this inspire the electorate or turn voters off? Matters not now. Liz's withdrawal makes it very unlikely that I'll see a female President in my lifetime. That's unfortunate. It also looks certain that the best possible President won't be inaugurated in 2021 to repeal the madness of the Trump obscenity. That's tragic. But *voting blue no matter who* remains the only moral choice. We've never had a President named Joseph. Maybe it's about time.

+++ Returning to this issue's *de facto* motion picture theme, the first set of verdicts in the Harvey Weinstein rape-and-coercion scandal came down in late February. The porky producer was convicted on two counts, acquitted on three. I'm not surprised by the split verdict. The witnesses against him in these cases seemed conflicted and weak. It's a strong Not Guilty signal when an accuser in a sex case maintains an intimate relationship with the accused. The defense lawyers were right to emphasize that fact, no matter how loathsome their client and how wide the public sentiment for his conviction.

However, Weinstein *was* convicted on two counts, which justifies the contempt visited on him. He used his position to solicit and even extort sexual favors. That's reprehensible whoever is involved. Feed him to the rats.

+++ The Nebula nominations have been announced, and I recognize *not one* of the nominees. My Hugo ballot may go to waste this year because I am so disconnected from our marvelous field. Oh yes – I'll name Greg Benford's *Rewrite* and my current reading, Ian McEwan's *Machines Like Me*, literary SF by a mainstream writer themed on the moral quandaries instigated by artificial intelligence. What attracts me to the book is not its theme – oft-explored in the genre, of course – but its *language*, its *depth of ideas*, so smooth and beautiful it flows like molten copper. Science fictioners are fine minds and well-suffused with lingual skills – so why doesn't SF feature more such quality?

letters from the Chorus **TRUTH AS ONLY YOU SEE IT**

*An explanation: A critique of my "zinezone" **The Zine Dump** by my big brother Rich Lynch – he looks suspiciously like Guy H. Lillian Jr. – that my fanzine reviews were often "superficial" led me to wonder if I should let the project slide. I called for opinions from my fellow fan-ed's, and since I won't publish **TZD** again till summer, I'm printing their responses here. Comments on **Spar** will follow.*

Cathy Palmer-Lister
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You wrote: "So the question is, should I keep going [with *The Zine Dump*]? Rich Lynch tells me that good Geri Sullivan mentioned *TZD* at some length in her slide show on fanzines at the last Worldcon. Fan-ed's I admire greatly have praised the pub. I get more response from *TZD* than from *Spartacus* or even *Challenger*, not that that's saying much. I've been doing *TZD* as a separate pub since 11-2-02. The zines I get in the post and by e-mail make my day. So help me make my decision. Do I retire this rag or not?"

Of course you should continue! In looking over *TZD* I saw *Journey Planet* has stuff that definitely would interest me, and I bookmarked it. I don't have time to be browsing through eFanzines, so I am grateful that somebody takes the time to do this for me.

Speaking of Christmas, avid thanks from the whole Greenhouse to Andy Hooper and Carrie Root for the magnificent Kelly Freas print of the cover to Joe Green's *Conscience Interplanetary!* A fabulous gift!

Ray Palm

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I was surprised to hear that Steve Stiles died. I had interviewed him a while ago, an interesting person, very helpful with my article. One of the good ones has passed on.

Proofreading your own writing is hard, you have the correct word and spelling in your head and end up reading over the typo. I appreciate your two mentions of me but my online moniker is *Ray Palm*, not *Ray Palmer*. Sorry, I neither

have published a flying saucer magazine nor I have hauled a piece of a white dwarf star back to my lab.

There was a rumor that someone was going to revive the classic zine review publication *Factsheet 5*. That was over a decade ago. I hope you can continue *The Zine Dump* for all the zinesters out there.

William Breiding

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To Dump Or Not To Dump ... that is the question.

You ask in the latest *Zine Dump* if you ought to cease publication of your curt listings and ask what we think. A little navel gazing is always a grand thing. Ultimately my opinion means nothing. You as the zine editor can answer this question only. By weighing the task's onerous qualities against the pleasure you must receive doing it (why else would you do it?) and the responses you receive, which are always primary to why we publish (along with the basic creative drive).

Only you can ask yourself *is it worth it?* Since it is strictly digital there is no financial waste, nor moldering paper in a pile somewhere in someone's home. You have to ask yourself *what are my motives and what purpose does this serve?* If you receive more feedback from *Zine Dump* than either *Challenger* or *Spartacus* then there is obviously a hook. (Sad, though, considering the history and heft of *Challenger* and the issues-orientation of *Spartacus*. But then that is the nature of digital foraging.)

Zine Dump is in good historical company with the likes of Keith Walker, Donn Brazier, and others, who did listings such as yours, never anything of depth, that were sometimes criticized or ridiculed, but for the most part embraced as an expression of fannishness and of *caring*.

Meanwhile, we are finding out that it takes only one president to destroy a democracy and rip apart a constitution of a nation, and barrel full steam ahead into a new dark age.

John Purcell

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Many thanks for posting another thoughtful, idea-filled issue, Guy.

Yes, please! Put out another freaking *Zine Dump!* It's a great source for getting names and addresses of people we can share our fanzines with. Do it, Guy.

I barely knew Mike Resnick personally - I think the conversation I had with him at LoneStarCon III lasted all of ten minutes, max - but he was interested in our conversation about steampunk literature, if you can believe that. Just a complete good person. Opinionated? Sure. We all are, but I certainly can respect a person who can share ideas intelligently. I will miss him, too.

The loss of Steve Stiles hurts like hell. He and Elaine were coming to Corflu 37 in a mere 7 weeks, and now I'm in the middle of planning out a proper tribute to Steve as part of the program. Cancer sucks.

I know you support Senator Elizabeth Warren and you know I support Senator Bernie Sanders for the Democratic nomination, but at the moment Vice President Biden is still atop the ever-changing polls while Pete Buttigieg continues to gather strength. As long as their supporters pull together no matter who gets the nod and get out in larger than ever numbers come November, that orange-maned hellbeast can be

removed, then hopefully locked way in jail. The main concern is the preservation of our democracy. I hate demagoguery. [Vote blue no matter who!]

Taral Wayne

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I just wanted to drop you a line to say that you probably don't get enough credit for reviewing fanzines. It's a dirty job, and nobody has to do it ... so we ought to be grateful that you're willing. I used to enjoy reviewing fanzines, but years ago I soured on the subject. I like the fanzines I like and don't have time or inclination to read the rest. I have stated in fact that I lost a fundamental empathy for zines as a whole that a reviewer should have. Otherwise, he has no business doing it. Now that we are here in The Future – and not at all the one I expected or wanted – the art of fanzine reviewing has virtually disappeared. I don't know of any regular columns other than yours.

So keep up the good work for as long as you are able, then you will be able to retire with dignity ... or at least with a sense of humor.

Rich Lynch

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I'll reluctantly pass by your excellent remembrance of my friend Mike Resnick to instead give you a short comment about something you bring up on the very last page: your internal debate on whether or not to continue your meta-fanzine *The Zine Dump*. I know I've previously written that the large number of fanzines you review often results in essentially three-line descriptions of each fanzine that sometimes seem superficial, and I'm glad to see you're not taking that personally. [Of course not.] And I do realize you cannot go into very much depth because of the sheer number of fanzines you review. You mention that preparing an issue of *TZD* takes "an obscene amount of time" to do, and I understand that – available time is a zero sum game, so to say, and time spent working on *TZD* is time you don't have for other stuff. So I'll give you some encouragement by saying that *TZD* is an essential fanzine. It absolutely is. Even a three-line review lets the world know that a fanzine exists, and that's worth a lot. There's nobody else doing what you're doing in that regard, so I hope you'll decide to continue.

Okay, the judgment is in. The response to my informal poll has been uniformly encouraging, and The Zine Dump abides. I'll do another TZD before Worldcon and run it alongside my natterzine in this year's WOOF. After that, we'll see.

Dale Speirs

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You discussed what some call superficial reviews. It depends what is the purpose of reviewing is supposed to be. One can wax on at great length about a zine or a book, or the review can just be a notice to others that the item exists.

I divide reviews into the book report type, which you and I do, and the lit-crit theory type academics favor even though such reviews are useless. In a lit-crit review, the author uses a book or zine as a springboard to go on about their literary or political theories and why they are right while everyone else is a philistine.

I titled my fanzine column as "Zine Listings", viewing them as a networking aid. I now do a lot of reviews of books and radio, again as a notice to people that the items are out there.

In particular, I review many old-time radio shows, now available as free mp3s from www.otrrlibrary.org or www.archive.org. These are far better listening than audiobooks with a narrator droning on. Science fiction and fantasy are well represented, as are mystery and horror.

Pulp magazines are available at www.archive.org, and all kinds of rare books at www.gutenberg.org, all as free downloads. There is a lifetime supply of old fanzines at www.fanac.org, available as free pdfs.

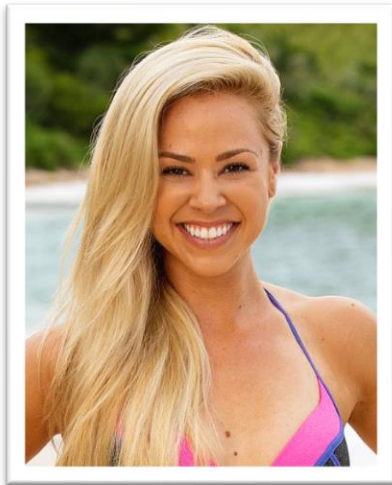
I've reviewed hundreds of old-time radio episodes and pulp fiction in my zine *Opuntia* (available as free pdfs from www.efanzines.com and www.fanac.org). [And highly recommended – beautiful photos

of Canadian scenery and incredibly eclectic content.] When it comes to historical research, we live better than ever before. There is a lot of garbage online but there are also immense treasure troves.

Rich Dengrove
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RE: Jack Holmes article [in *Spartacus* no. 36:] At last, some liberal who recognizes that Trump has a very violent base and they rubberstamp everything he does. I don't care that Jack Holmes is more than unsympathetic to them. I do care that, because of that, he doesn't really tell us what pro-Trumpers tick.

Ad Astra is one of those movies exploiting the ignorance of the audience. The problem isn't that the movie isn't factual. No SF film is, not totally. The problem is that the movie makers have told the audience that you are stupid.



That I am stupid? Not a chance!

Survivor. One thing I find that people forget is that the "reality" shows are actually scripted. If the fellow was voted off the island as a ploy, it adds to the feeling things are not as they seem. Which is what the producers want the audience to think.

It is suspicious that Tribal Councils look like they're shot on a soundstage, unlike the ridiculous contests. And I totally refuse to believe that Kara Kay ← from Season 37 did not win not only Survivor, but Miss America, the Heisman trophy, and the New Hampshire primary. Wow.

LOC Down. Ander Bellis. John W. Campbell, Jr. a fascist? I remember a Bloom County in which Milo complains that the "fishes" are after him. His teacher tells him, "That's 'fascists,' dear!" I imagine John W. Campbell, Jr. is one of the "fishes." It is true the person who called him a fascist, Jeanette Ng, may have known what

the word meant. However, she chose to blur that distinction.

Ng should publicly defend her statement. It's not just because Campbell once slept in this very room where I type that I find what she said ugly, and SFdom's capitulation to its slander all but reprehensible.

In memory of a street performer: I imagine there must be a lot of those in Los Angeles. However, nowhere near as many as in New Orleans. Anyway, that's the way it seemed when I was there.

Only if it's Mardi Gras! Then laissez les bons temps roulez!

Rich Lynch (see above)

I'm going to forego politics and instead comment on something *really* interesting: your mini-essay

We note with sadness the passing of Earl Kemp, a titan of our genre. I never met him, but we did exchange views, a great boon for this neophyte fan editor.

Also, Rosy and I send our deepest condolences to our friend Fred Lerner, whose wife Sheryl left us on March 8th. May she rest in peace and beloved memory.

about Martin Scorsese and his belief that Marvel movies are trivial artless diversions and not "cinema: at all. You seem to come down on the side that they *do* in fact have cinematic worth. But I guess that depends on his you define "worth." I've seen most of them and I pretty much look on them as guilty pleasures – entertaining as long as you don't have your brain in gear. I grant you that they're cinema – by definition, what movie isn't? – but it's hard to disagree with Scorsese about them being nothing more than trivial diversions.

All that said, when's the next one coming out?

WAHF: Lloyd Penney again, too late for this issue. Next time!

+++ In noting the passage from our planet of the great Swedish actor **Max von Sydow**, I hope to be pardoned for ignoring most of his English language work. Certainly he was outstanding in *The Exorcist* and *The Six Days of the Condor* and the over-pious *Greatest Story Ever Told* and even as Ming, but it's in the films he made with Ingmar Bergman, in their native Swedish, that he broke through into immortality. (No other director/actor pairing has achieved such power, with the exception of Akira Kurosawa and Toshiro Mifune. In English, only Martin Scorsese/Robert de Niro and John Ford/John Wayne come close.)



There are several such movies, and many are masterpieces – *Wild Strawberries*, *Through a Glass Darkly*, *The Seventh Seal* – but for me *The Virgin Spring* stands out as a classic among classics. Taken from a Swedish folk myth, and – by Bergman's own admission made *in homage* to Kurosawa's equally incandescent *Rashomon*, it tells the story of a 14th Century knight avenging the rape and murder of his daughter. Von Sydow is powerful, restrained – except when he literally uproots a sapling before slaughtering the killers – and his final speech, an anguished protest to God (“*I don't understand you!*”) is one of those rare cinematic moments that freezes the viewer and changes one's life.

Von Sydow was 90, well-stricken in years, well-respected and honored. We should not mourn, but salute him. Indeed, he wrote his name in the book of the world.

+++ The handsome boy with the pink bow here is **Pepper**, seated upon his alleged master, in truth his devoted servant. Pepper came into our lives some 12 years ago. My boss raised yorkies, and asked us to care for Pepper after Rosy's previous pooch went on to her reward. (Peps was fighting with another yorkster over a sweet little lady yorkie named Ginger. They'd had 2½ litters together and our boy was territorial.) It wasn't 60 days before I was begging my boss to name his price. (Later, Ginger joined him, and us. She remains a zip-a-dee-doo-dah scamperer.)

Pepper's many adventures as a Lillian include a jaunt through Canada, culminating at Green Gables, a trip with Ginger (and us) to the west coast, a midnight excursion through our apartment complex *sans* master which left the latter terrified, a romantic adventure at Gettysburg that saw us both flee the kennel at top speed and, of recent, medical terrors – a bladder stone wedged in his urethra, chemical poisoning, and an ongoing arthritis that has severely hampered his ability to walk. Twice his survival has left veterinarians wide-jawed in awe. For He Who Peps perseveres. True, the boy is 14, and sleeps a lot, and his mobility is limited. But his appetite remains voracious. Heaven help the poor soul who gets between Pepper and a dollop of peanut butter.

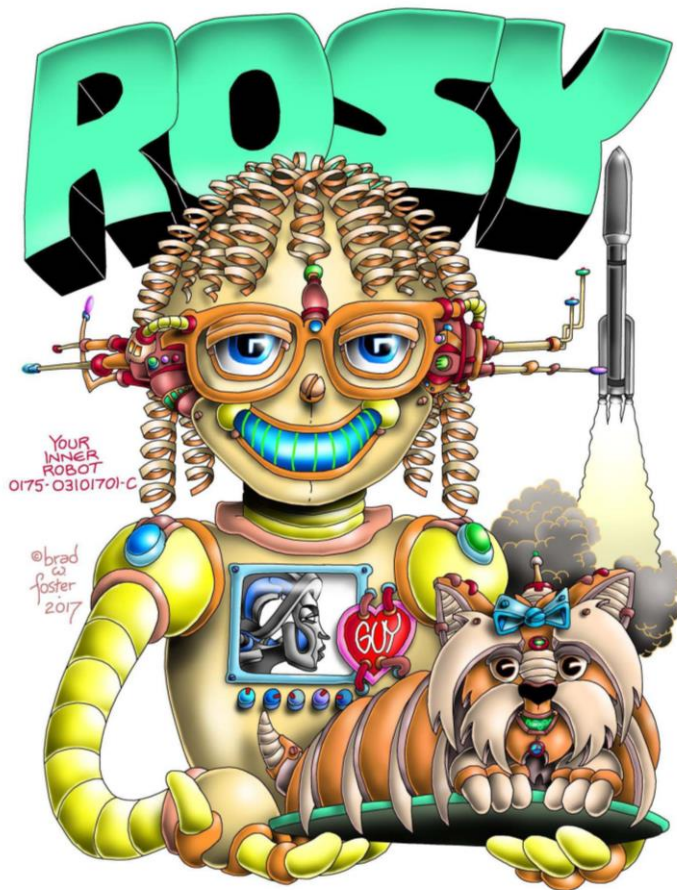
Mean as nails and tough as a snake, and yeah, we love the dude. But you never know, so I just wanted to mention him here.



+++ *I am a wreck*. After our New Year's storage-to-storage move from Shreveport, **aches and pains** *still* grip my bod. My right knee, especially, is *killing* me, so much so that I've consulted medics. X-rays scanned my protesting patella. No arthritis or fractures were found, but I *can still barely move*. I've been prescribed steroids, which frightens me, face an MRI, physical therapy and possible *shots*. For joy, for joy. And have I mentioned losing the first premolar on my right side? In five months they'll screw in an implant, but till then, call me "Gap-toothed Guy."

Happier news around the Greenhouse revolves around father-in-law Joe Green's purchase of an **82-inch Q-LED TV**. "Complete immersion" is Joe's stated goal, so when we watch *Keeping Up with the Kardashians* nowadays, it's like we're lost in Kim Kardashian's nose. The delivery guy there's a *200-incher* to come! Obviously made for arenas, sports bars, schools, other huge public venues, that's not a television. That's a *wall*.

+++ I am currently up to my earwax making preliminary plans for a **London/Edinburgh/Paris trip** this September – virus permitting. My notes slop over with stuff Rosy and I want to see and do – the usual: the British Museum, Westminster Abbey, Stonehenge and the Louvre, Normandy and Versailles and Loch Ness and ... so on. We have a set of guidebooks but need advice on tourism matters and advice on housing. And yes, we want to see The People, *fans*, while we're there. Anyone willing to join us for a feed? C'mon, Rosy's a charmer and I promise to keep quiet!



+++ Before finishing this *Spartacus*, I sprayed my keyboard and mouse with Lysol. I don't know whether **steroid effects** or **Coronavirus paranoia** was to blame. I should be about the projects Rosy has assigned me during this fallow spring semester – selling books on Amazon, critiquing Joe Green's latest novel and planning our aforementioned European trip. But I'm too distracted by my knee and the current plague, which has me terrified over every sneeze ... even though no cases of Coronavirus have been reported in our county. Yet.

I will attend to those matters in due course. In the meantime, I am sending this *Spartacus* off on the 14th of March, Rosy's birthday. The need to celebrate her is vastly more important.

Stay clean –

GHLIII