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WARP 38



THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE MONTREAL SCIENCE FICTION
AND FANTASY ASSOCIATION (MonSFFA)

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COVER UP: Our cover this issue welcomes Terry Pratchett to Montreal. The Con•Cept '96 Guest of Honour rides into town with Death, atop Binky, in a pencil rendering by MonSFFA's Kevin Holden. Kevin counts himself among the many enthusiastic fans of the British author's Discworld series.

1996 MonSFFA EVENTS SCHEDULE

ALL MonSFFA MEETINGS HELD SUNDAY AFTERNOONS, 1:00PM TO 4:00PM (SOME MEETINGS INCLUDE MORNING ACTIVITIES, WHICH BEGIN AT 11:00AM) IN THE ARTIMON I ROOM OF THE MARITIME HOTEL, 1155 GUY STREET (CORNER RENÉ LÉVESQUE), DOWNTOWN MONTREAL

EVENT PROGRAMMING (APRIL-SEPTEMBER)
Programming subject to rescheduling and/or change

APRIL 21 MonSFFA MEETING

1:00PM—We'll look at the SF/F movies coming our way this summer and try to pick out the probable best-bets.

MAY 12 MonSFFA MEETING

1:00PM—With our Ed Wood Video Project fresh in mind, and with Sylvain St-Pierre set to premiere a computer-animated short (featuring digitized images of MonSFFA members!), we offer a how-to course on amateur video production. Also on the agenda: future club video-projects.

JUNE 16 MonSFFA MEETING
(Programming to be announced)

SUMMER BREAK

AUGUST 18 MonSFFA MEETING
(Programming to be announced)

SEPTEMBER 15 MonSFFA MEETING

1:00PM—We celebrate the 30th anniversary of *Star Trek!* Programming details are currently being worked out; stay tuned.

NOTE: MonSFFA is considering a field trip to the space camp in Laval; feedback from the membership on this proposal is requested. Should sufficient interest be demonstrated, your BoA will get to work organizing the outing.

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Warp is published five or six times a year by the Montreal Science Fiction and Fantasy Association (MonSFFA). Address all correspondence to: *Warp*, c/o MonSFFA, P.O. Box 1186, Place du Parc, Montreal, Quebec, Canada, H2W 2P4. A subscription to *Warp* is a benefit of membership in MonSFFA. MonSFFA is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to the enjoyment and promotion of science fiction and fantasy literature, film and television, comics, fanzines, art, music, costuming, model-making, gaming, etc. The opinions expressed in *Warp* are solely those of the individual writers and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of *Warp* or MonSFFA. The use of copyrighted material in this newsletter is—yes, we know—verboten, but is not intended to infringe on any of the rights of the copyright holders. Come on, people...lighten up! This is an amateur publication intended for enjoyment only. "That cabbage is plotting to take over the world!" Special Agent Mordle at the New York Outer Space

ATTENTION
MonSFFA MEMBERS!



THIS NOTE IS TO CORRECT AN ERROR IN THE CLUB'S EVENTS SCHEDULE WHICH APPEARED IN THE MOST RECENT ISSUE OF WARP (NUMBER 38). OUR LOOK AT AMATEUR VIDEO-MAKING, LISTED FOR THE MAY 12 MEETING, SHOULD HAVE BEEN LISTED FOR THE APRIL 21 MEETING. THIS TRACK OF PROGRAMMING TOOK PLACE AT THE APRIL MEETING AND WE REGRET AND APOLOGIZE FOR THE MISINFORMATION WHICH MAY HAVE CAUSED MEMBERS TO MISS OUT. HERE IS THE CORRECT SCHEDULE FOR MAY, ALONG WITH JUNE'S PROGRAMMING.

MAY 12: 1:00PM—A DISCUSSION OF HEROES AND VILLAINS IN SF/F. WHAT MAKES FOR A GREAT HERO OR VILLAIN, AND WHO ARE THE GENRES' MOST MEMORABLE EXAMPLES? **3:00PM**—FANDOM AS A SOURCE OF INCOME! SOME SF/F FANS END UP MAKING A LIVING OUT OF THEIR HOBBY. OTHERS SET UP PROFITABLE, WEEKEND SIDE-LINES. MonSFFA EXPLORES THE POSSIBILITIES, AND THE PITFALLS, AS WE LOOK AT MAKING A BUCK WITH BUCK ROGERS!

JUNE 16: 1:00PM—A LOOK AT ROLE-PLAYING GAMES. ARE THEY MAKING A COMEBACK, AND HAVE THEY TAKEN ON A MORE DISTURBINGLY DARK TONE THAN EVER BEFORE? **3:00PM**—VIOLENCE IN SCI-FI FILMS AND TELEVISION SERIES.

JULY: SUMMER BREAK; NO MEETINGS SCHEDULED

ALSO FIND ENCLOSED THE 1996 AURORA AWARDS VOTING BALLOT. SEVERAL MONTREALERS HAVE BEEN NOMINATED FOR AWARDS THIS YEAR, INCLUDING MonSFFA'S OWN LINDA PELLEY, KEITH BRAITHWAITE AND JEAN-PIERRE NORMAND. WE ENCOURAGE ALL MonSFFA MEMBERS TO VOTE (WE HOPE FOR THEIR FELLOW MEMBERS!). THE BALLOT IS DESIGNED TO RECORD 1ST, 2ND, 3RD, ETC. CHOICES; ONE NEED NOT VOTE IN EVERY CATEGORY. INCLUDE YOUR NAME AND SIGNATURE ON THE BALLOT, ENCLOSE THE \$4.00 VOTING FEE, AND MAIL IT IN BEFORE JUNE 30, 1996.



FROM THE CENTER SEAT

Greetings MonSFFA members.

First, let me apologize for the poor printing quality of the last issue. I don't know how many of you noticed the very dark, heavily contrasted photos, as well as the spacing variations in the upper and lower margins.

I, however, noticed *quite* a bit, particularly the photos since I am the one who is responsible for *Warp's* photoscans. I give *every* photo my attention, adjusting each one in Adobe Photoshop to achieve the best possible quality. So I was very disappointed upon viewing the final printed result. In some of the costume photos, I couldn't tell the difference between the Federation people and the Klingons!

But such is the hazard of changing printers after the demise of Club Biz, which had received all of MonSFFA's business for the past couple of years. Apparently there was a misunderstanding with regards to our printing instructions. The good news is that we did get a substantial discount on the printing job! We will be *more* specific with our instructions in future. I hope that the issue you are now holding in your hands is up to our

usual standards of quality.

The release of this issue has been timed to correspond with Con•Cept '96. If you picked up your issue at MonSFFA's club table, congratulate yourself for both saving your club valuable postage, and for supporting a convention that in return supports fandom.

Con•Cept began as the only show in town, and is now, once again, alone. All of the other conventions that arose in recent years have been disbanded by greed or poor financial planning or a contemptuous attitude towards the local clubs and fandom. Con•Cept's secret to success, if there is one, has been in recognizing that the primary attendees that conventions attract are we, the local fans. Fandom and its organizations, if treated well, form a core group of repeat members who provide volunteers, panelists, displays, and free advertising through word-of-mouth and fanzines. It is not surprising that conventions which pass over fandom and instead cater to pseudo-fans (in an attempt to draw higher numbers of attendees) *fail*. To attend a convention, a pseudo-fan buys a ticket, while a true fan buys a *membership*. It's the difference between being a spectator and being a participant. The latter is mutually beneficial.

MonSFFA appreciates that Con•Cept provides free club tables and a free membership for the person responsible for those tables. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Wayne Glover for volunteering to be in charge of the MonSFFA tables this year. For the rest of you attending Con•Cept, please stop by our tables and help out for a little while.

Enjoy the convention everyone!



Lynda Pelley
President, MonSFFA

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MonSFFA Membership Benefits

The Montreal Science Fiction and Fantasy Association (MonSFFA) is a Montreal-based non-profit organization dedicated to the enjoyment and promotion of all activities which engage and support the interests of science fiction and fantasy fans. The benefits of membership in MonSFFA include:

Membership Card

Your MonSFFA membership card identifies you as a MonSFFA member, allows you free admittance to the club's monthly events and entitles you to certain discounts at SF/F-oriented retailers participating in MonSFFA's discount program!

Monthly Events

Attend MonSFFA's regularly scheduled events, held about every month (except during the summer), and meet other SF/F fans! Share interests, exchange ideas, view current and classic SF/F movies and TV shows, enjoy guest speakers and special presentations, participate in workshops and discussion panels, get involved in various club projects, and more!

Discount Program

As a member of MonSFFA, you are in a position to save on your SF/F purchases, and your membership pays for itself within the year! If you buy an average of only \$4.00 worth of SF/F books, comics, collectibles, gaming and hobby items, etc. per week, your yearly MonSFFA membership will pay for itself in discount savings within the year! Full details of the discount program are printed in each issue of MonSFFA's newsletter.

Newsletter

You will receive a one-year subscription (six issues) to MonSFFA's newsletter, *Warp!* Produced by our

members for our members, *Warp* keeps you up to date on club activities and brings you general news from around the greater SF/F community! *Warp* is also a forum for you, the members—we want your book and movie reviews, opinion columns, short fiction and humour, artwork, etc! And, as a MonSFFA member, you are entitled to place (non-commercial) ads in Warp at no charge—sell your old SF book collection, announce that you're looking for gaming partners, or whatever!

As a MonSFFA member, you'll enjoy these benefits *and more!*

MonSFFA is administered, on behalf of all of its members, by an executive committee, who are empowered to appoint officers and advisors to assist them with the operation of the club. Executive committee members are elected annually by vote of the general membership; any member in good standing may run for office.

The fee for a one-year membership in MonSFFA is currently \$20.00.

Please address all correspondence to: MonSFFA, P.O. Box 1186, Place du Parc, Montreal, Quebec, Canada, H2W 2P4.

MonSFFA Discount Program

Listed on this and the next page are the SF/F-oriented retailers/dealers participating in the MonSFFA Discount Program. *We encourage members to frequent these establishments.* A valid MonSFFA membership card must be presented in order to take advantage of the discounts offered under this program. (Note: Certain exceptions with regard to the MonSFFA Discount Program may exist at some of these establishments. Conditions subject to change.)

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15% off on SF/F merchandise and on back issues of comics; U.S. cover price on new comic books.

10% off on all orders (include your name, MonSFFA membership number and expiration date when ordering).

10% off (5% if paying by credit card) on models and role-playing games, \$10.00 minimum purchase.

MonSFFA Discount Program

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Fax: 416-774-8495

10% off on most items (include your name, MonSFFA membership number and expiration date when ordering).

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OAS Recovery Division
Suite 606 110 Albert Street
Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5G3
(613) 233-1159 Fax (613) 830-5811

10% off on all orders (include your name, MonSFFA membership number and expiration date when ordering).

COMPUCENTRE

Fairview Shopping Centre
6815 Trans Canada Highway G-19
Pointe Claire, Quebec H9R 5V1
Telephone: (514) 895 3620

10% off on computer game and video game software not otherwise on special. Fairview store only, see Mike Masella.

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MonSFFAAndom

"ALL THE CLUB NEWS THAT FITS, WE'LL PRINT!"

ELECTION '96

The first MonSFFA meeting of 1996 opened with the club's 1995 Executive returned to office for '96, by acclamation. MonSFFA's Executive remains: Lynda Pelley (president), Cathy Palmer-Lister (vice-president) and Sylvain St-Pierre (treasurer). The club congratulates this long-serving Executive on again winning the confidence of the membership for another term of office.

JANUARY 21 MonSFFA MEETING

MonSFFA kicked off its 1996 programming with a debate on the space program. The questions: Should we be spending *billions* of dollars in space while we're closing down hospitals? Has the space program *really* been worth the money we've invested in it, and has the average Joe benefited in any appreciable way?

Kevin Holden quarreled with conventional wisdom, suggesting that much (*though not all*) of the space program has little, if any, positive impact on our lives. How has the moon shot improved anyone's life? he asked rhetorically. Kevin argued that the space program has been driven not so much by any high-minded, noble quest for scientific knowledge, but by crass politics. The space industry, like the military industry, stands to *lose* a great deal if governments cut back on the program, or get out entirely. The space industry, therefore, has a vested interest in keeping man in space and lobbies politicians accordingly. Kevin agreed that near-Earth space projects—communications satellites, RADARSAT, and such—have their useful applications. He targeted mostly the kinds of programs which study things like distant stars and galaxies. How will knowing whether or not some far-off star system might be able to support

life matter much to us here on Earth? While the scientific elites may be excited by this stuff, most of us are just trying to pay our bills on time. In these days of fiscal restraint, wondered Kevin, should we really be spending the kind of money we're spending to find out about things which, while interesting, have no practical value?

Countering Kevin's arguments were guest speakers Daniel Biron and David Shuman, visiting from the Montreal Centre of the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada. Both agreed that, yes, political considerations have polluted the space program. But so what? Political considerations pollute just about everything. Daniel and David stressed that a great many of the smaller, lesser-known space projects not only benefit us, but in fact, *pay for themselves*. The space program, in general, must be viewed as an investment which delivers dividends in the *long* run. The early going in any new field of endeavour tends to cost more than it returns, but viable, profitable applications *will* come. What may, today, seem an impractical exercise will, tomorrow, yield *plenty* in way of benefits. We are investing in our future! Not to do so would be folly. And, of course, it's always worthwhile to expand our knowledge of the universe around us.

Tongue-in-cheek, the debate was dubbed "Kevin vs. the Scientists," and was *quite* spirited, with both sides scoring points while the 35 or so MonSFFen in attendance interjected regularly to challenge/support one or the other position.

The afternoon's raffle prizes included several space program-related posters and a scale-model kit of the Hubble Space Telescope.

The latter part of the meeting saw the Ed Wood Video Project get underway in earnest. Spearheading the project, Keith Braithwaite outlined a production plan and the

group drew up a schedule which would have the project completed in time for Con•Cept '96. (See also "Ed Wood Video Project," this column.)

MonSFFA thanks guest speakers Daniel Biron and David Shuman, as well as club member Kevin Holden, for their participation this meeting. Thanks, also, to club V.P. Cathy Palmer-Lister for setting up the debate. A nod to Keith Braithwaite, too, and to those members who took care of the raffle and snack table.

FEBRUARY MonSFFA MEETING

MonSFFan John Dupuis took center stage for the first half of the club's February 18 meeting. He expanded upon his recent *Warp* article, "SF is in Great Shape" (*Warp* 36, December '95), dealing with SF's best new writers and how to find them.

John contends that probably the best SF ever written has been written in recent years! He considers the genre to be in the middle of a Golden Age, one far more deserving of the monicker than the Golden Age of yesteryear. Crack open many of SF's "classics" again, says John, and you'll find that they aren't as good a read as you remember them being. Today's writers, he insists, are generally better at their craft than were Asimov, Heinlein, etc. But finding these better writers in the contemporary market, amongst all the 10-book fantasy series and movie novelizations, is the difficulty. John offered a few helpful hints that included using the book reviews in SF magazines as a guide to what's good and asking your local book dealer for a suggestion or two. He also figures that you won't often go wrong reading Hugo- and Nebula-nominated stories.

Novels by some of the writers John highlighted in his talk were handed out over the course of the presentation to audience members who correctly answered a skill-

testing question.

During the mid-meeting break, folks benefited from a four-for-a-buck sale of paperback SF/F titles. The meeting's raffle prizes included a U.S.S. *Reliant* model kit.

During the second half of the meeting, Keith Braithwaite moderated a discussion panel which looked at a recent British sociological study that found 10 percent of *Star Trek* fans to be "maladjusted." Joining Keith on the dais were Lynda Pelley and Cathy Palmer-Lister.

While the methodology of the study was called into question by some audience members, everyone in the room agreed that *Trek* fandom—indeed, SF/F fandom as a whole—*does* have its share of maladjusted individuals, but differed on whether the 10 percent figure was a fair reckoning. Whatever the figure, though, all were in agreement that fandom's percentage of maladjusteds was likely no more or less than any other hobby/interest group's. Among sports fans, Elvis fans, model railroaders, etc. would also be found

those who take it that one step *too far*. It was noted that SF/F fans tend to be a rather tolerant lot and this led to the question of just exactly what kind of behavior might be considered *too much*? Consensus was that anyone behaving in a manner inconsiderate of those around him/her, or behaving disruptively or, for sure, in a *dangerous* way has crossed the line. The normal rules of social decorum should apply; being a fan *does not* give one license to act like an asshole. A couple of people felt that a *little* leeway, here, could be given at conventions.

MonSFFA thanks John Dupuis, Keith Braithwaite, Lynda Pelley and Cathy Palmer-Lister for their participation in our February meeting. And thanks, as always, to those members who ran the raffle and snack table.

Members involved in the Ed Wood Video Project (see next item) held their final production meeting during the morning time slot made available to them.

ED WOOD VIDEO PROJECT

MonSFFA's Ed Wood Video Project has wrapped!

Project participants set out to produce a cheesy, low-rent sci-fi flick, not unlike those produced by Edward D. Wood, Jr., pegged by film buffs as the worst director ever! The

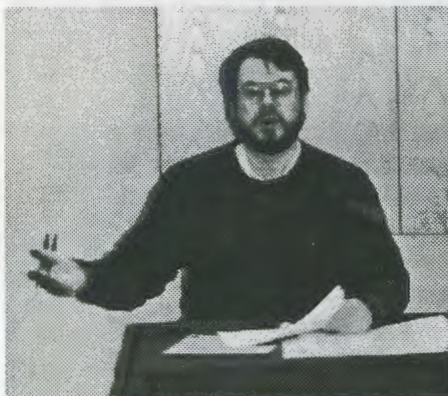
MonSFFA crew came up with *Plant 9 From Outer Space*, the tale of how a pair of "Special Agents" (spoofing Mulder and Scully of *The X-Files*) discover that an intelligent cabbage from outer space is plotting to take over the world using a legion of zombified SF fans!

A final-draft script was distributed at the February 18 MonSFFA meeting, casting firmed up and last-minute details worked out. On Saturday, February 24th, cast and crew descended on the Maritime Hotel and, in a marathon session, shot the film. Editing and post-production work was done about two weeks later.

The good folks at Con•Cept '96 were kind enough to provide MonSFFA with a programming slot in which to premiere the film. (See also "The Complete *Plant 9 From Outer Space* Script," page 13, and "*Plant 9* Memories," page 23.)

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

The cost of running MonSFFA rises from year to year and your membership renewals are *vitaly important* in seeing that this club continues to operate; please be sure to renew *on time*. Note: MonSFFA has not raised its yearly membership fee in over six years! We remain one the *best bargains* in town for the discriminating SF/F fan.



Above: Kevin (arguing against space program spending) vs....

Below: ...the Scientists (David Shuman, left, listening while Daniel Biron makes a point).

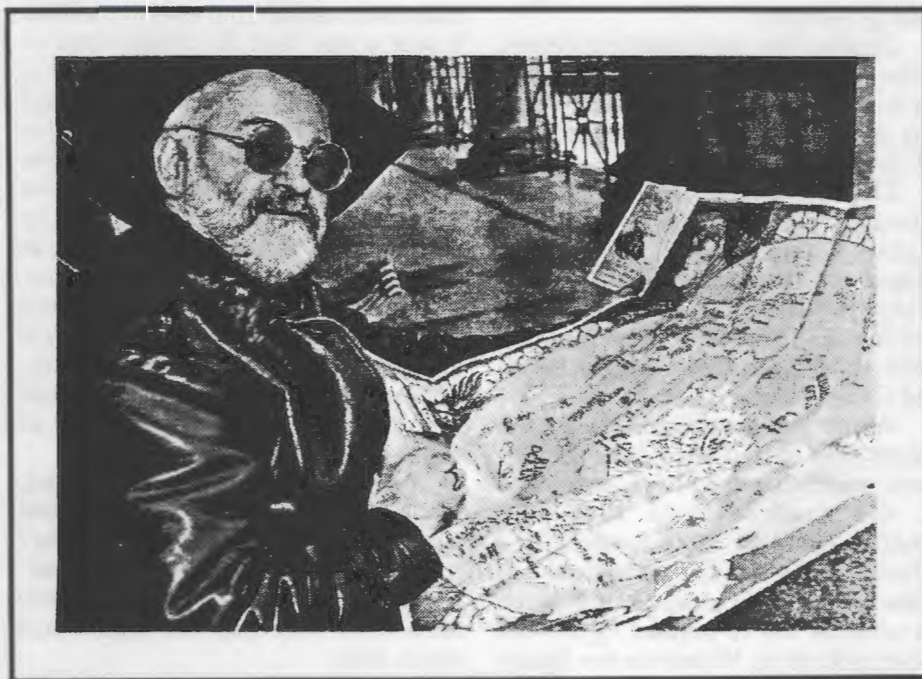
Right: Display table, January meeting (Photos by Daniel P. Kenney)



An Introduction to

TERRY PRATCHETT

BY KEVIN HOLDEN



Author Terry Pratchett with a map of his Discworld.

Terry Pratchett may not be a household name in America, but he is the top-selling author in England, and rapidly on the rise in the rest of Europe and Canada. And he's guesting at a convention near you!

Pratchett's spectacular success—specifically with his Discworld series—is a genuine phenomenon. He has written about 25 books in all, many of which have been turned into graphic novels, radio dramas, a very popular line of porcelain figurines and miniatures, a few stage plays, a new video game (recently released) and soon, at least one major motion picture.

Trying to explain the appeal of Terry Pratchett to someone who has never read him can be very taxing. He is a fantasy writer whose following includes many people, like me, who *despise* fantasy. He is a humorist, but just try quoting a line that you found particularly funny and you'll draw only blank stares. It is often in the subtleties and ironic twists that the humour lies. Pratchett's books, especially his Discworld novels, require firsthand experience, and patience enough to become familiar with them. But he's worth the effort! Very few people who I've introduced to Pratchett were able to resist becoming addicts, even those not normally inclined to reading science fiction or fantasy. Some compare Pratchett's work to Douglas Adams' *Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*. The comparison is superficial, but it is safe to say that if you enjoy one you will enjoy the other. Not everyone likes fantasy, but everyone loves to laugh!

Pratchett began work on his first book when he was just 17! *The Carpet People* was the story of a tribe who lived in the frayed fabric of a carpet and their attempts to survive, if I recall, destruction from a great vacuum cleaner. It was popular enough, and years later, when Pratchett became a writer of some repute, he decided to

rewrite the book and publish it again.

After a number of SF books, he wrote *The Colour of Magic* in 1983. This was the novel that first introduced us to the Discworld, a giant, flat world large enough to hold several continents, which is carried through space on the back of a giant turtle.

Compared to all this, a large turtle with a world on its back is practically mundane. At least it doesn't pretend it doesn't exist, and no one on the Discworld ever tried to prove it didn't exist in case they turned out to be right and found themselves suddenly floating in empty space. This is because the Discworld exists right on the edge of reality. The least little things can break through to the other side. So on the Discworld, people take things seriously.

—from *Witches Abroad*

Colour of Magic tells the story of an incompetent wizard, Rincewind, who gets stuck acting as tour guide for an inquisitive visitor from the other side of the Disc. It was tremendously successful. Since then the Discworld series has grown to almost 20 books. The latest, *Maskerade* (a spoof of *The Phantom of the Opera*), is another bestseller and will soon be joined by *Words in the Head*.

Many of the Discworld books center on certain established characters—Rincewind, Death, the octogenarian Cohen the Barbarian, the slovenly wizards of Unseen University. Other books, such as *Small Gods* or *Pyramids*, take place on the Discworld but far from the

established regions, branching off into entirely new stories. On the Discworld, you'll find the usual, stock fantasy characters—witches, elves, trolls, dragons, etc.—but all of them are treated with an earnestness that you just don't find in the fantasy literature they're taken from.

Desiderata was a kindly soul. Fairy godmothers develop a very deep understanding about human nature, which makes the good ones kind and the bad ones powerful. She was not someone to use extreme language, but it was possible to be sure that when she deployed a mild term like "a bee in her bonnet" she was using it to define someone whom she believed to be several miles over the madness horizon and accelerating.

—from *Witches Abroad*

In addition, Pratchett inserts a multiverse of characters from popular mythology, movies, television shows, Shakespeare, music and so on. Even characters from the extreme edges of believability are given depth

and treated as if they were real people trying to cope with being so unreal. Like the Dead Rights movement (Undead but not Unperson), a lobby of werewolves, vampires, an agoraphobic bogeyman, etc.

And Death, who is not merely an abstract concept but a personality, complete with cloak, scythe and flying horse (Binky). Death, who always speaks in capital letters, is one of the most popular characters and is the only one to recur through each and every book, sometimes with his pet, the Death of Rats.

Picture a tall, dark figure, surrounded by cornfields...

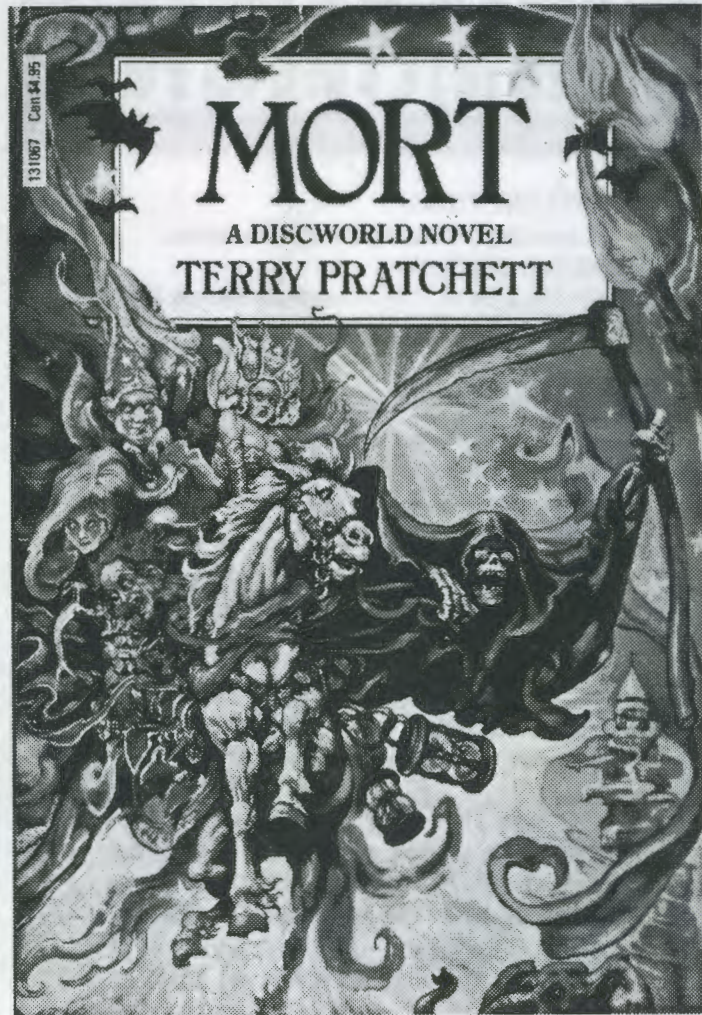
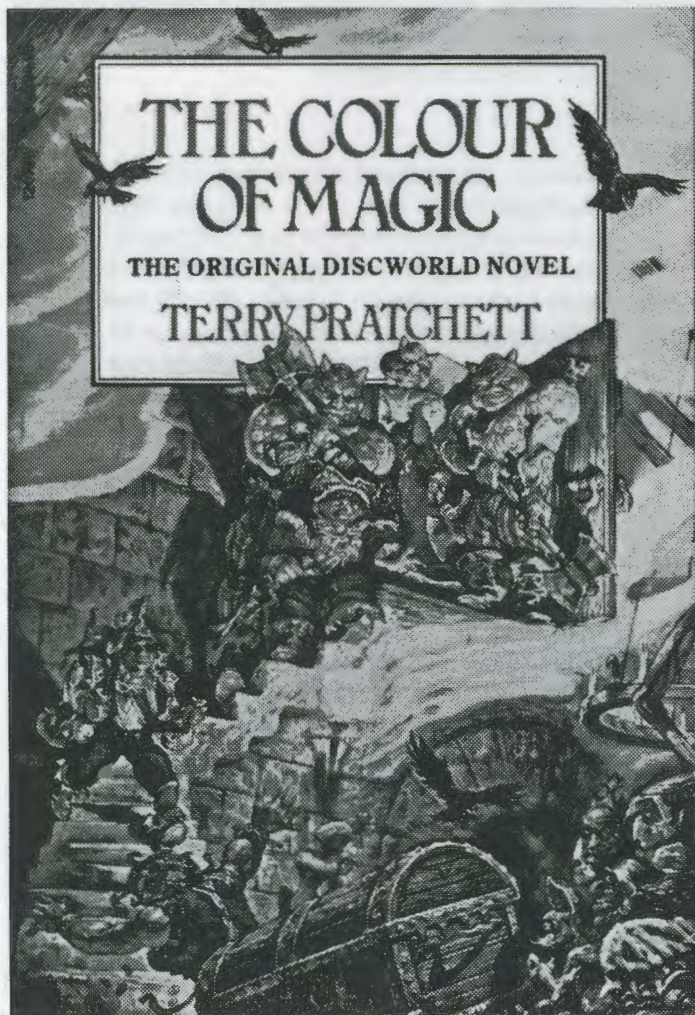
NO, YOU CAN'T RIDE A CAT. WHO EVER HEARD OF THE DEATH OF RATS RIDING A CAT? THE DEATH OF RATS WOULD RIDE SOME KIND OF DOG.

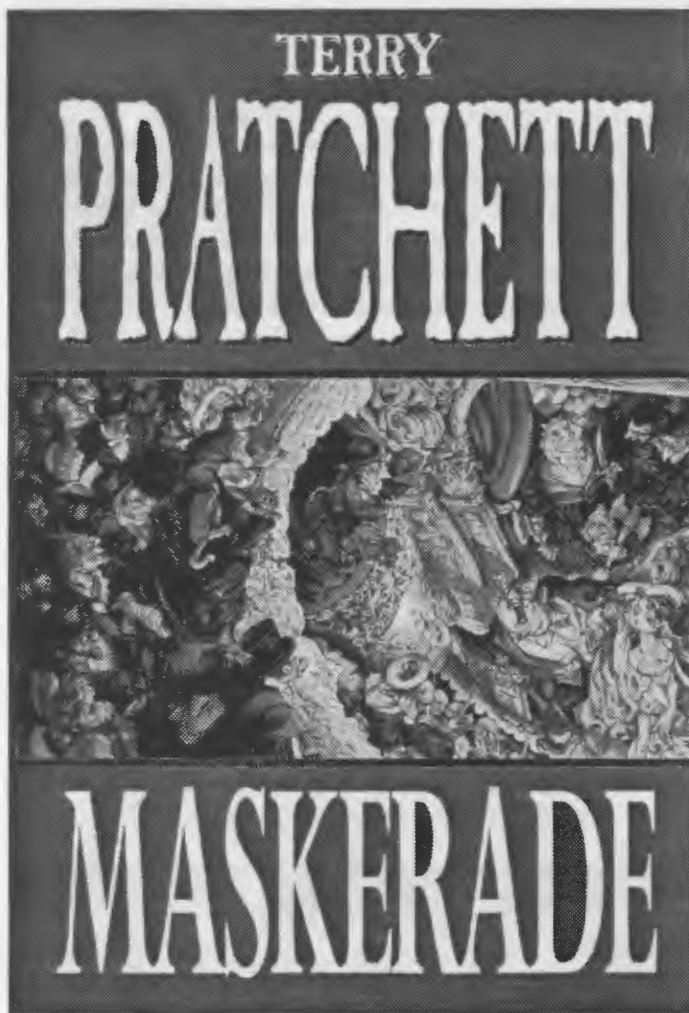
Picture more fields, a great horizon-spanning network of fields, rolling in gentle waves...

DON'T ASK ME, I DON'T KNOW. SOME KIND OF TERRIER, MAYBE.

...fields of corn, alive, whispering in the breeze...

RIGHT, AND THE DEATH OF FLEAS CAN RIDE IT TOO. THAT WAY YOU KILL TWO BIRDS





WITH ONE STONE.
 ...awaiting the clockwork of the seasons.
 METAPHORICALLY.

—From *Reaper Man*

My personal favourites are those books which deal with the adventures of a coven of witches, Granny Weatherwax—who is the single most engaging character I've read about in years—her partner, Nanny Ogg, and the hapless Magrat.

Magrat would be the first to admit she had an open mind. It was as open as a field, as open as the sky. No mind could be more open without special surgical implements. And she was always waiting for something to fill it up....

...It was all due to her mothers lack of attention to spelling, she speculated. A caring parent would have spelled Margaret correctly. And then she could have been a Peggy or a Maggie—big robust names full of reliability. There wasn't much you could do

with a Magrat. It sounded like something that lived in a hole by the riverbank and was always getting flooded out.

—from *Witches Abroad*

If you're looking to get started on Pratchett, *Mort* is one of his most popular books. The tale of a bumbling, sincere boy who gets hired as apprentice to Death (it's the busy season), *Mort* is currently being prepared for transition to the big screen, and has been presented on stage and adapted as a graphic novel. It's as good a place as any to begin. Personally, I started with *Wyrd Sisters* and got hooked. Most of the Discworld books work independently and you need not read one to understand another. Some, however, like *Witches Abroad* and *Lords and Ladies*, are really two parts of the same story.

But if the fantasy realm is just not your thing, Pratchett has written a number of non-Discworld novels. These include the SF adventures *Strata* and *Dark Side of the Sun*; the juveniles *Johnny and the Dead*, *Only You Can Save Mankind* and the Truckers series; and the aforementioned *Carpet People*. One of my favourite Pratchett books is a collaboration with comics writer Neil Gaiman, entitled *Good Omens*. It's the story of a demon (Crowley) and an angel (Aziphrale), both under deep cover on Earth, who conspire like a couple of John LeCarre spies to thwart Armageddon and save the human race from final judgment.

Crowley glanced at his watch, which was designed for the kind of rich deep-sea diver who likes to know what the time is in twenty-one world capitals while he's down there. It was custom made for Crowley. Getting just one chip made is incredibly expensive but he could afford it. This watch gave him the time in twenty world capitals and in a capital city in *another place*, where there is always one time, and it is always Too Late.

—from *Good Omens*

The merchandising empire is in full swing around Pratchett, offering a plethora of T-shirts; porcelain figurines (from the British company Clarecraft); at least three graphic novels, with more to come; two best-selling maps of the Discworld and it's capital city (in local stores); computer games; music CDs; etc.

So grab a Pratchett book and settle in. Don't miss out on an opportunity to experience one of the most deservedly popular writers in the world. Then go chat with him at a convention (he's Guest of Honour, March 22-24, at Con•Cept '96). You'll be glad you did. Buy him a drink. He'll be glad you did.

CONVENTION REVIEW

Cathy Palmer-Lister and Yolande Rufiange introduced me to Visions in 1994 and I have joined them on their annual pilgrimage to Chicago ever since. This convention usually takes place over the American Thanksgiving weekend and is centered around "unusual television," and in particular British sci-fi.

Visions '95 was a big, three-day convention (November 24-26) with lots of guests. The line-up included Sylvester McCoy and Sophie Aldred from *Doctor Who*; Mira Furlan and Michael O'Hare from *Babylon 5*; Gareth Thomas and Paul Darrow from *Blake's Seven*; Brian Blessed, a guest star from *Blake's Seven*, *Doctor Who* and other series; Hattie Hayridge and Norman Lovett from *Red Dwarf*; and a few others I'm not familiar with.

The guests did their question-and-answer sessions in groups of two, three or four, which acted as a catalyst for plenty of joking around and interplay between questions. Imagine Gareth Thomas (Blake) and Paul Darrow (Avon) continually trying to upstage each other. And then there was Brian Blessed, a character actor who was completely wild! The Mira Furlan/Michael O'Hare panels were dubbed the

VISIONS '95

Reviewed by
Lynda Pelley

(Photos courtesy the author)



Award-winning B-5 costumes

"*Babylon 5 Sex and Chocolate*" panels; the former because of all the discussion about the potential love triangle between Sinclair (O'Hare), Delenn (Furlan) and Sheridan in an upcoming two-part episode, and the latter because Michael O'Hare started each panel by throwing chocolate coins, wrapped in gold foil and stamped with the B-5 logo, into the audience! The panels at Visions were definitely fun.

The guests were fan-friendly and accessible. They did autograph sessions, photo sessions and a luncheon. All of these activities allowed nicely for personal contact with the celebrities. These photo sessions, unique to Visions, give attendees the opportunity to be photographed with their favourite stars. You line up as you would for autographs, however, instead of receiving an autograph, the guests pose for photographs with you. A worthwhile experience, and the lines move faster than for autographs. I wish more conventions did this.

This year the Visions Dealers' Room was great. I spent all of my money; so did Yolande and Cathy. There were all types of items from a variety of television shows and movies, including *Doctor Who*,



Blake's Six: Left to right, Paul Darrow, Yolande Rufiange, Brian Blessed, Lynda Pelley, Gareth Thomas and Cathy Palmer-Lister



Lynda, in costume as Princess Leia, poses with other Star Wars fans at Visions '95.

Babylon 5, Blake's Seven, Red Dwarf, The X-Files, Star Wars and, for a change, there wasn't so much *Star Trek* merchandise. Some of the dealers came all the way from England and sold certain variations of merchandise not generally available in North America. Some of the choice videos I purchased: a *Red Dwarf* bloopers reel, the American *Red Dwarf* pilot, the long-lost 1978 *Star Wars Holiday Special* and some unedited footage taken directly from the set of *Star Trek: The Next Generation*. I also found *Babylon 5* blueprints, photos, trading cards and Micro Machines at a reasonable price, as well as interesting T-shirts and rare CD soundtracks. The large Dealers' Room also contained an extensive costume display, courtesy of Brian Bero. He had authentic costumes and props from *Battlestar: Galactica, Buck Rogers, Doctor Who, Logan's Run, Back to the Future, Aliens, Star Wars, the Star Trek movies* and *Star Trek: The Next Generation*. With this collection and the variety of merchandise available, this was a superior Dealers' Room. I even saw a man I wanted, but I couldn't afford him! Of course, getting that large block of carbonite through customs and the airport baggage check might have been a problem anyway.

Being a three-day convention, Visions was able to schedule the Masquerade and Dance for the Friday night and a cabaret, performed by the guests, for the Saturday night.

I entered the Masquerade as Princess Leia, wearing my recently reworked version of a costume that I had only presented once before, at Toronto Trek in August '95. I was very pleased to win an award for it at Visions. The big award, Best in Show, went to a couple from Toronto who were dressed as Ambassadors Kosh and Delenn. Kosh's encounter suit was made with some of the best papier maché work that I have ever seen!

The Dance, which followed the Masquerade, was not well attended, probably because of the poor choice of music and the abundance of good room parties.

I attended an excellent B-5 party which was catered with all sorts of mini-desserts. "Kosh" couldn't fit through the door with his encounter

suit, so people took turns feeding him chocolate out in the hall.

The following evening Cathy, Yolande and I all attended Visions' spectacular Cabaret. I've seen other conventions attempt to do a cabaret with the stars, but none can compare to the show at Visions. The performances included readings, poetry, singing, comedy, and Shakespeare. These British actors have such an incredible stage presence! Most, if not all, of the guests participated. The Cabaret played to an enthusiastic audience and we were fortunate to have such good seats.

Visions was well organized and fun. However, as with all good conventions, the weekend passed *too* quickly. We left on Sunday with our memories, a few rolls of film to

develop and our over-stuffed luggage, knowing that we hadn't seen it all, and knowing that we will be returning again next year.



The stars come out at Visions '95...

Top: Seventh Doctor Sylvester McCoy

Above: Holly²—Norman Lovett, Hattie Hayridge

Below: Sex and chocolate—Babylon 5's Michael O'Hare and Mira Furlan



Warp proudly presents:

PLANT 9 FROM OUTER SPACE

The Complete Script!

Story by Edouard Dubois, Jr.

Script by Keith Braithwaite

P9FOS was recently shot, over a 16-hour stretch, on location at the Maritime Hotel. Some 20 MonSFFA members and friends of the club participated. Editing and post-production work was completed about two weeks after the shoot. A world premiere is scheduled for the Con•Cept '96 weekend (March 22-24). *Warp* editor Keith Braithwaite penned the script from his own story outline, which was augmented by André Poliquin, Bryan Ekers, Krikor Ajemian and others (the pseudonym Edouard Dubois is used to represent all those who contributed story ideas or lines of dialogue). *P9FOS* is the result of MonSFFA's Ed Wood Video Project, which aimed to produce, in two or three days, a cheap and cheesy sci-fi flick along the lines of those classically *bad* examples made by 1950s writer/producer/director Edward D. Wood, Jr. (*Plant 9 From Outer Space*; copyright February 18, 1996, Keith Braithwaite.)

OPENING TITLES

FADE IN:

SCENE 01

EXT. - AFTERNOON; ACROSS THE STREET FROM A DOWNTOWN HOTEL

As pedestrian and motor traffic pass by in the foreground, a scroll appears across the screen, bottom left, as on *The X-Files*. It reads: Friday, 2:15PM, Montreal, Quebec. Camera slowly zooms in, centering on hotel's main entrance.

SCENE 02

EXT. - AFTERNOON; THE HOTEL, JUST OUTSIDE MAIN ENTRANCE

People are entering the hotel, some dressed in odd costumes. They are science fiction fans arriving for an SF convention taking place at the hotel this weekend. Camera zooms in to follow them as they enter. In voice-over, Leonard Nimoy begins reading from the opening of H.G. Wells' *War of the Worlds*.

VOICE-OVER, NIMOY

No one would have believed...that this world was being watched keenly and closely by intelligences greater than man's and yet as mortal as his own...

SCENE 03

INT. - HOTEL'S LOBBY

Camera moves through the bustle of activity in the lobby. People are checking in, gathered in small groups conversing, etc. A handmade sign welcomes attendees to the "Annual ConQuest Science Fiction Convention." Another sign directs folks to the convention's registration desk.

VOICE-OVER, NIMOY

(Continuing)

...that as men busied themselves about their various concerns they were scrutinized and studied, perhaps almost as narrowly as a man with a microscope might scrutinize the transient creatures that swarm and multiply in a drop of water.

Camera zooms in to follow several fans as they enter an elevator.

SCENE 04

INT. - AN UPPER FLOOR CORRIDOR

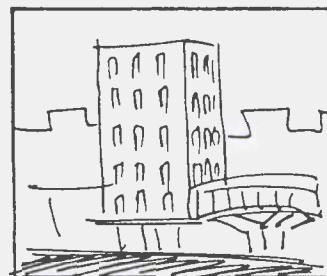
NEAR ELEVATORS

These fans exit the elevator, joining the flow of others as they head off to their hotel rooms, or to one of the convention's panels or parties.

VOICE-OVER, NIMOY

(Continuing)

With infinite complacency men went to and fro over this globe about their little affairs, serene in their assurance of



SCENE: 1 DESCRIPTION:
SHOT: 1 HOTEL FROM STREET



SCENE: 3 DESCRIPTION:
SHOT: 5 FANS PASS CONQUEST SIGN ---

their empire over matter. It is possible that the infusoria under the microscope do the same. No one gave a thought to the older worlds of space as sources of human danger, or thought of them only to dismiss the idea of life upon them as impossible or improbable....

OUTSIDE ROOM 2001, OCCUPIED BY LYLE TALBOT

Camera picks up a couple of fans coming down this corridor, abandoning them as they pass Talbot's room and slowly zooming in on the room's door.

VOICE-OVER, NIMOY

(Continuing)

Yet across the gulf of space, minds that are to our minds as ours are to those of the beasts that perish, intellects vast and cool and unsympathetic, regarded this Earth with envious eyes, and slowly and surely drew their plans against us.

SCENE 05

INT. - LYLE TALBOT'S HOTEL ROOM

Talbot, a salesman, is seated on the bed and speaking on the phone.

TALBOT

Johnson? It's Lyle. I'm in Montreal.

(A beat as Johnson replies)

Yeah... Okay, listen... I think they're ready to give us a big order—I mean really big!—but they need delivery fast, and they want us to make a few modifications—

(Two beats as Johnson interrupts with a question)

No, no... Won't be a problem. But I'm going to need to revise our pricing, and I'll need a new sample to show them.

(Shuffling through papers)

I'm meeting with Breckinridge Monday morning, so I'm going to work out the new pricing here, over the weekend. Tell Tom that he's putting in some overtime tonight; get him working on the new sample. He's got to have it ready by tomorrow afternoon, the latest. As soon as it's ready, ship it to me here—Federal Express, same day delivery. I'm in room 2001.

(A beat as Johnson acknowledges these instructions)

Okay... I'll fax you the changes they want right away. Call you later.

He hangs up then sorts through his papers. Selecting the sheet to be faxed, he heads for the door.

SCENE 06

INT. - THE CORRIDOR

JUST OUTSIDE TALBOT'S ROOM

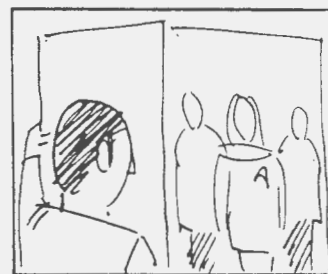
Talbot comes out of his room. Walking towards the elevators, he passes a group of Star Trek and Babylon 5 fans (some in costume) engaged in a heated debate. The Trekkies are defending the merits of their favourite show while the B-5ers are pointing out its failings and singing the praises of their own obsession. We catch just a snippet of their discussion, as one of the B-5ers opines:



SCENE: 5 DESCRIPTION:

SHOT: 1 TALBOT ON

PHONE



SCENE: 8 DESCRIPTION:

SHOT: 2 ANSWERS DOOR,

FANS LOOKING FOR CON

SUITE

B-5 FAN

You Trekkies are stupid! Stupid, stupid, stupid!

SCENE 07

EXT. - AFTERNOON; HOTEL, AS SEEN FROM ACROSS STREET

SCENE 08

INT. - TALBOT'S ROOM

Talbot is on the phone to his office again.

TALBOT

Did you get my fax?... Okay, does Tom foresee any problem with the modifications they want made? Good... I'm gonna get going on the revised pricing; I'll need Tom's parts and labour costs as soon as he's got 'em figured. Have him call me.... Okay, bye.

He hangs up. There is a knock on the door. Talbot answers it, finding several fans standing outside. One of them holds a map of the convention layout.

FAN WITH MAP

Umm... We're looking for the con suite. This isn't the con suite, is it?

TALBOT

No, it isn't.

FAN WITH MAP

Okay. Sorry.

(Flashing the Vulcan hand-salute)

Live long and prosper!

They depart and Talbot shuts the door.

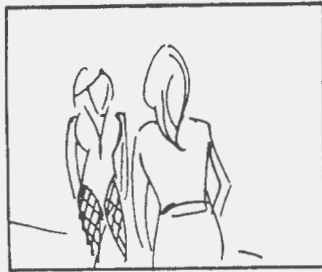
SCENE 09

EXT. - LATE AFTERNOON; HOTEL, AS SEEN FROM ACROSS STREET

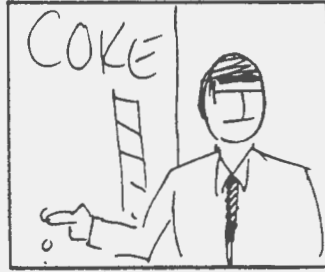
SCENE 10

INT. - TALBOT'S ROOM

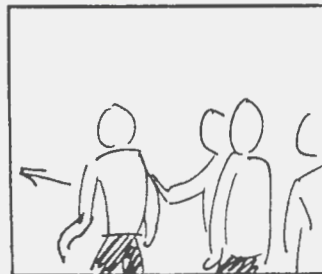
Talbot is seated at the small table in his room, busy working on his pricing revisions. He shuffles papers, scribbles notes, and after a moment, puts his pen down



SCENE: 11 DESCRIPTION:
SHOT: 4 GIRLS



SCENE: 11 DESCRIPTION:
SHOT: 5 SELECTS
DRINK, WATCHING
GEEKS



SCENE: 11 DESCRIPTION:
SHOT: 6 GEEKS MOVE
TOWARDS GIRLS



SCENE: 11 DESCRIPTION:
SHOT: 8 FIRST
CONTACT, GIRLS WALK
AWAY

and rubs his eyes, leaning back in his chair. He is tired. A can of Coca-Cola sits on the table and he reaches for it. It is empty.

TALBOT
(To himself)

Time for a refill.

He gets up out of his chair and heads for the door.

SCENE 11
INT. - CORRIDOR

JUST OUTSIDE TALBOT'S ROOM

Talbot comes out of his room and heads off to get himself a drink from the Coke machine at the end of the hall. A couple of costumed fans walk towards him. He turns to look at these strangely attired folk as they pass.

NEAR THE COKE MACHINE

A trio of male fans (really geeky looking types) are working up the courage to approach two attractive, provocatively-dressed female fans. Talbot walks up to the machine, pops his change in and selects a Coke, observing as the scene unfolds. Prodded on by his buddies, one of the geeks makes first contact. The girls give the three a quick, disdainful look—as if to say “only in your dreams”—before walking away. The rejected lads hang their heads and start to exit the scene. Another male fan suddenly enters our field of view. He seems panicked. He glances behind him, wild-eyed, and then runs up to the geeks, positioning himself to intercept them.

PANICKED FAN

Stop and listen! Stop and listen to me!

The geeks, wanting none of this, try to ignore him and continue on their way.

PANICKED FAN

(Continuing)

Listen... Listen...

He grabs one of the geeks.

PANICKED FAN

Listen to me! They're not human!

The geeks shake him loose and accelerate their gait.

PANICKED FAN

(Calling after the geeks)

Can't you see?

(Then to anyone who happens to be in the corridor)

Everyone...

The panicked fan turns and, seeing Talbot by the drink machine, runs up to him. Talbot has failed to slip away unnoticed and the panicked fan accosts him.

PANICKED FAN

They're here already! You're next!

The panicked fan suddenly spies something at the far end of the corridor. Staring, terror-stricken, he backs away from Talbot, who turns to see what has so upset the fan.

FAR END OF THE CORRIDOR

A group of militaristically-clad fans have just rounded a corner. Their leader spots the panicked fan and, raising his arm and pointing at their quarry, lets out a strange, guttural screech. The group strides forward in pursuit of the panicked fan.

NEAR COKE MACHINE

The panicked fan turns and runs like hell in the opposite direction. Talbot watches, stunned by all this, as the pursuing fans march past him after the panicked fan. Stone-faced, eyes fixed straight ahead, they move robot-like. Talbot notices that one of them is carrying a cabbage. These fans do not seem to be of the harmless-loon variety that Talbot has encountered thus far; they are darker in nature, unsettling and a bit scary. Talbot hurries back to his room.

SCENE 12

EXT. - EVENING; HOTEL, AS SEEN FROM ACROSS STREET

SCENE 13

INT. - TALBOT'S ROOM

Talbot returns to his room with his drink. He sits down

and continues with his pricing, sipping from the Coke as he works. After a moment, the phone rings. It's Tom.

TALBOT

Hello... Tom! How's the sample coming?... By tomorrow afternoon. Good. You got the costings for me? Yeah, just a second.

(Reaching for pen and paper)

Okay, shoot.... Uh-huh...

(Scribbling down the information)

Uh-huh... Yeah... Uh-huh... Good work, Tom. Thanks.... Bye.

There is a knock on the door. Talbot gets up to answer it. He opens the door and is met with a trio of fans—a Klingon, a Cardassian and a Romulan.

KLINGON FAN

(In a bombastic, aggressive tone)

I am Klaatu. This is Barada...and Nikto.

(Indicating his companions)

We are mercenary warriors in need of food and drink. We have been told that this is the con suite.

TALBOT

Well it isn't.

KLINGON FAN

We have been misled! We shall wreak vengeance upon the filthy targ who has deceived us. His blood will flow like Ex-Lax through a pigeon! Qapla'!

They salute from the chest in unison, turn and march away.

TALBOT

(After the departing mercenaries)

Gesundheit.

Talbot closes the door. Returning to his table-full of paperwork, he hesitates, checking his watch. Tired as he is, he decides that he'll finish the pricing tomorrow. He opts to watch a little TV, then hit the sack. He clicks on the TV using the remote, but nothing happens. He tries again, then gets up and tries the knob on the set itself. Still nothing. He is not pleased. He picks up the phone and dials the front desk.

TALBOT

This is Lyle Talbot in room 2001. My TV isn't working. Could you send someone up to fix it?... Thanks.

He hangs up.

SCENE 14

INT. - CORRIDOR

A few fans walk by.

SCENE 15

INT. - TALBOT'S ROOM

Talbot is sitting on the bed flipping through the TV

program listings, killing time while waiting for the hotel staffer to come up and fix the TV. There's a knock on the door. Talbot leaps up to answer it. He opens the door expecting the hotel staffer but is faced, instead, with an Animé fan.

ANIMÉ FAN

(Badly dubbed)

Hello. I'm taking a break from the Mecha marathon running in the Animé video room. I wonder if you might be able to direct me to the con suite so I can get a drink, and maybe a hot-dog?

Talbot has, thus far, quietly abided these interruptions by con-suite-seeking fans; now his exasperation surfaces. But while, at the sight of him, we can see that he is ticked and is letting the Animé fan have it, the overdubbed voice speaking for him is calmly polite, belying Talbot's true emotional state.

TALBOT

(Badly dubbed)

I'm sorry. I wish I could help you, but I do not know where the con suite is located. Perhaps someone at the front desk can help you. Goodbye. Have a nice day.

Talbot ends the conversation by slamming the door on the fan. He returns to his TV listings only to be interrupted by another knock on the door. This time he stays put, instead yelling at the door:

TALBOT

This isn't the con suite! I don't know where the con suite is!

(Quietly, to himself)

I don't even know what the con suite is.

A voice comes back from the other side of the door:

HOTEL STAFFER

You called about your TV, sir?

Realizing that it's not another annoying fan, but the hotel staffer come to see about his TV, Talbot jumps up to answer the door.

TALBOT

Yes, yes... Just a second.



SCENE: 13 DESCRIPTION:

SHOT: 3 ANSWERS 4

KLAAU, BARADA AND
NIKTO



SCENE: 13 DESCRIPTION:

SHOT: 5 VIEW

VENGEANCE, SALUTE,
MARCH AWAY

Talbot opens the door and lets the hotel staffer in. The man begins checking on the TV. Talbot remains standing at the open door.

TALBOT

It won't turn on. I thought it might just be the remote, but the switch on the set doesn't work either.

Just then, a bearded fan wearing a propeller beanie and holding a fanzine appears at the open door.

BEARDED FAN

Hi! We're selling this special-edition fanzine...

(Holding it up)

...as a fund-raiser for CUFF, the Canadian Unity Fan Fund—

Talbot cuts him off in mid-pitch by shutting the door.

TALBOT

(To the hotel staffer)

Who are these people?

HOTEL STAFFER

They're science fiction fans.

TALBOT

They're wingnuts is what they are.

HOTEL STAFFER

Yeah, they are a bit weird...

TALBOT

A bit weird? Like Michael Jackson is a bit weird!

HOTEL STAFFER

(Chuckling)

They're mostly harmless. They're here for their big, annual weekend convention. They've been coming to this hotel for years.

(Returning to the business at hand)

Don't seem to be getting any power. I can't fix it here; I'll see about replacing it with a set from another room, but, uh...the hotel is full this weekend—the science fiction convention—and I can't say for sure we'll be able to find you another set.

TALBOT

(Sighing resignedly)

Never mind. I'm bushed anyway. Think I'll just call it a night.

HOTEL STAFFER

All right, sir. Good night.

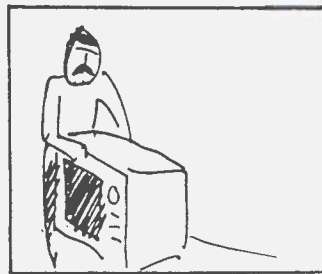
He moves to leave.

TALBOT

Thanks.

SCENE 16

EXT. - NIGHT; HOTEL, AS SEEN FROM ACROSS STREET



SCENE: 15 DESCRIPTION:

SHOT: 9 TV GUY



SCENE: 15 DESCRIPTION:

SHOT: 13 EXITS

Again, an X-Files-like scroll appears across the screen. It reads: Saturday, 3:00AM

SCENE 17

INT. - TALBOT'S ROOM

Talbot is in bed, trying to sleep over the muffled sound of music (the Time Warp) coming through the walls. His expression is one of great displeasure. He covers his head with his pillow in an attempt to shut out the music.

SCENE 18

EXT. - LATE AFTERNOON; HOTEL, AS SEEN FROM ACROSS STREET

A scroll: Saturday, 5:24PM

SCENE 19

INT. - TALBOT'S ROOM

Talbot is on the phone. He is angry.

TALBOT

Look, all I know is that the package was supposed to be here by now. This is a very important package. Where the hell is it?

(A couple of beats while the person at the other end responds)

Yes, I checked with my office. They sent the package out first thing this morning.... Yes, Federal Express, same-day delivery.... I saw your truck pull up an hour ago from my window. Then I saw it leave—no package!... If you've lost this package you better find it. I've got a major sales contract riding on what's in that package, so get your people on this right away!

SCENE 20

INT. - HOTEL'S LOBBY

NEAR MAIN ENTRANCE

As she enters the lobby, Special Agent Scurry, red-haired and sporting a long overcoat, scans the room for her partner, Agent Meddler. She and Meddler work for Federal Express. They are assigned the task of investigating the conventionally-unexplainable circumstances surrounding damaged/misdirected/lost packages. Scroll: Saturday, 5:25PM

NEAR ELEVATORS

Meddler, also wearing an overcoat, spots Scurry coming in and motions to her.

NEAR MAIN ENTRANCE

Scurry sees him and moves to join him.

NEAR THE ELEVATORS

Meddler is holding an elevator as Scurry approaches.

SCURRY

I got your message, Meddler. What's up?

MEDDLER

Salesman by the name of Lyle Talbot reported a package missing.

They enter the elevator.

SCENE 21

INT. - THE ELEVATOR

SCURRY

So how is this a FedEx File?

MEDDLER

There's a science fiction convention going on here this weekend. I've come across reports of unusual package tampering in the past few months, always at a hotel where there's a science fiction convention going on.

SCURRY

Something unusual going on at a science fiction convention.

(Sarcastically)

Gee, Meddler, don't see that too often.

SCENE 22

INT. - CORRIDOR

NEAR ELEVATORS

They exit the elevator and head towards Talbot's room.

SCURRY

You don't think aliens are involved, here, do you Meddler?

ROUNDING A CORNER

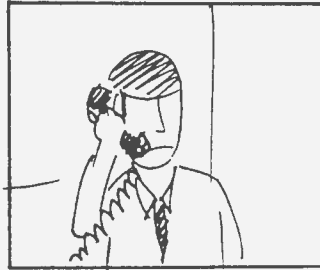
MEDDLER

I don't know. But what better place for them to blend in than at a science fiction convention?

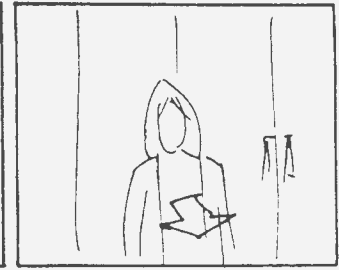
SCURRY

Meddler, not every lost package or shipping anomaly has to involve extraterrestrials.

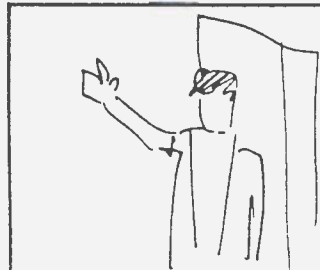
OUTSIDE TALBOT'S ROOM



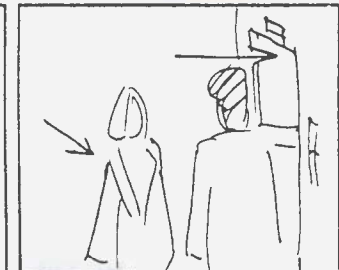
SCENE: 19 DESCRIPTION:
SHOT: 1 TALBOT ON
PHONE TO FED EX



SCENE: 20 DESCRIPTION:
SHOT: 1 SCURRY
ENTERS LOBBY...



SCENE: 20 DESCRIPTION:
SHOT: 2 MEDDLER
WAVES HER OVER



SCENE: 20 DESCRIPTION:
SHOT: 4 AT ELEVATOR -
WHAT'S UP?

They arrive at Talbot's door. A note has been taped to the door, covering the room number. The note reads: This is Not the Con Suite! Go Away! Meddler checks under the note for the room number.

MEDDLER

2001. This is it.

He knocks.

SCENE 23

INT. - TALBOT'S ROOM

Talbot answers the door.

MEDDLER

Mr. Talbot?

TALBOT

Yes. You from Federal Express?

MEDDLER

Yes. I'm Special Agent Meddler.

(Pulling out and flashing his I.D. as Scurry does the same)

This is Special Agent Scurry.

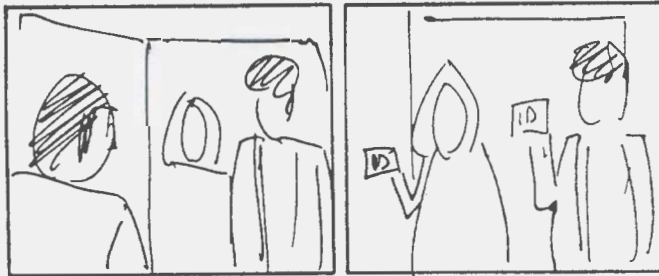
TALBOT

Have you found my package?

MEDDLER

Not yet, sir. Can we come in?

Talbot motions them in.



SCENE: 23	DESCRIPTION:	SCENE: 23	DESCRIPTION:
SHOT: 1	TALBOT	SHOT: 3	FLASHING
ANSWERS		I.D.'S	

MEDDLER

We're investigating the disappearance of your package, Mr. Talbot.

SCURRY

Where did the package originate, sir? And when were you told to expect it?

TALBOT

My office sent it out this morning. It was supposed to be here by 5:00PM. There's a product sample in that package that I need for a very important sales meeting Monday morning.

MEDDLER

Have you noticed any unusual activity in the hotel sir?

TALBOT

Unusual activity! Have you seen some of the loony-tunes around here this weekend? Yeah, I've noticed some unusual activity—people dressed up in funny costumes, making strange hand gestures, playing music 'til all hours, walking around carrying cabbages—

MEDDLER

(Interrupting him)

Did you say cabbages?

TALBOT

Yeah. A gang of these yo-yo's were chasing a guy, and one of them was carrying a cabbage.

MEDDLER

Thank you, Mr. Talbot. We'll be in touch.

He gets up to leave. Scurry, unsure why Meddler has cut the interview short, moves to follow him.

TALBOT

What about my package? When am I going to get my package?

Meddler doesn't answer as he quickly exits the room, Scurry on his heels.

SCENE 24
INT. - CORRIDOR

Meddler strides down the hallway, Scurry calling after him:

SCURRY

Meddler?

(As she catches up to him)

Meddler, what—

MEDDLER

(Interrupting her)

Scurry, listen. Those reports I told you about. In each case witnesses reported seeing science fiction fans carrying cabbages.

SCURRY

So? Maybe they were making a salad for lunch. Or maybe they were acting out a scenario from one of those weird role-playing games.

MEDDLER

Kinky.

SCURRY

Weird, kinky... Use whatever adjective you want.

MEDDLER

No. I mean it's kinky that you can imagine that there'd be a role-playing game involving cabbage.

He turns and heads for the elevators; she pauses a moment in reaction to the Meddlerism, then follows.

NEAR ELEVATORS

Their conversation continues as they wait for an elevator.

SCURRY

Meddler, how does any of this tie in to an alien presence?

MEDDLER

It's just a theory, but I believe we may be dealing with sentient plant life from outer space.

Her expression is one of disbelief.

MEDDLER

(Continuing)

In 1951 a UFO was discovered buried beneath the ice near an Arctic outpost. An alien was removed from it, perfectly preserved, frozen in the ice. The alien was revived and scientists described it as "an intellectual carrot." In 1956, Santa Mira, California, was overrun by plant-like, alien-pod creatures who took human form. And a meteor shower in 1963 caused people to go blind and brought with it seeds which grew into man-eating plants capable of uprooting themselves and walking.

SCURRY

But there's no evidence to support any of these stories, Meddler. The intellectual carrot was conveniently fried to a crisp. The citizens of Santa Mira were simply paranoid, imagining communists under their beds and extra-

polating that into the belief that a few unusually large eggplants in someone's greenhouse were space invaders. And if people were blinded by that meteor shower, how could they have been witness to any walking, man-eating plants? Besides, the existence of intelligent, extraterrestrial plant life contradicts Cole's Law.

MEDDLER

What's Cole's Law?

SCURRY

A salad of finely chopped raw cabbage.

It's her turn to get one in, and she enjoys his reaction to her Scurryism.

MEDDLER

(Back to business)

These incidents have been explained away as part of a cover-up, Scurry. But the evidence is there to support the existence of intelligent, extraterrestrial vegetation. The question is, why are they here?

SCENE 25

INT. - TALBOT'S ROOM

Talbot is just finishing up a little room service meal, which included a salad. He answers a knock on his door. It's a group of fans.

TALBOT

Can't you people read?

(Indicating the sign he'd posted on the door)

This isn't the con suite and I don't know where the con suite is.

Talbot begins to close the door in their faces when the lead fan suddenly juts an arm out, preventing the door from being closed. Talbot is taken aback by this. The group of fans, their expressions blank, advance into the room. Talbot backs away.

TALBOT

(Angrily)

Hey! What are you doing? This is my room! Who do you think you are?

As they push further into the room—Talbot retreating, starting to be scared now—we see that one of them is carrying Talbot's missing package.

TALBOT

Is that...? That's my package! What's this all about?

The fans form a semi-circle, cutting Talbot off from escape.

TALBOT

(A hint of panic in his voice)

Who are you!

LEAD FAN

We are the future of humanity.

The fan standing next to the fan holding the package opens it and takes out a cabbage. He hands it to the lead fan.

LEAD FAN

(Continuing)

Our master...

(Indicating the cabbage)

...came to this world from a dying planet. He was the ninth chosen for a mission to seek out a new world for all of plantkind.

TALBOT

You mean he's—

LEAD FAN

(Completing Talbot's sentence)

Yes...Plant Nine from Outer Space... He is the only one who made it to Earth. The others were destroyed, sucked into the gravity well of this solar system's giant gas planets, shredded on the sharp rocks of the asteroid belt, or burned up entering Earth's atmosphere.

Scenes of the cabbage's fellow space-faring plants meeting their doom as described are intercut with this scene.

TALBOT

But if space plants want to take over Earth, why are you helping them?

LEAD FAN

(Continuing)

We have become one with the botanical. We were human, like you; harmless science fiction fans. One of us found the master after he fell to Earth. He was joined with the master...

Inserted here is a scene of this joining.

...now, we have all been joined with the master. We have been spreading our seed from city to city, assimilating more and more fans at conventions like this one. In the end, our seed will be spread across this whole planet. Earth will be ours.

TALBOT

No! No, it can't be!

LEAD FAN

(Continuing)

But we have discovered that science fiction fans are the underbrush of your society; they hold no real importance, exercise no influence. As such, it is necessary for us to branch out, assimilate those humans who can best allow us to carry out our conquest of Earth—politicians, policemen...businessmen.

TALBOT

(Panicked, realizing what they have in mind for him)

I'm a businessman.

LEAD FAN

You will be assimilated. You will then assimilate two of

your peers, and they will assimilate two of their peers, and so on, and so on...

Talbot grabs a salad fork from off of his tray.

TALBOT

Stand back! I've got a salad fork and I'm not afraid to use it!

LEAD FAN

Resistance is futile.

They advance on him. The lead fan raises the cabbage before him. The room is suddenly awash in a green light, emanating from all around the cabbage. A jagged bolt of green energy leaps from the cabbage and strikes Talbot, who collapses on the bed. The lead fan tears a leaf off of the cabbage and places it on Talbot's face.

FADE TO BLACK

FADE IN:

SCENE 26

EXT. - HOTEL, AS SEEN FROM ACROSS STREET

Scroll: Monday, 9:35AM

SCENE 27

INT. - CORRIDOR

OUTSIDE TALBOT'S ROOM

Meddler and Scurry are about to knock on the door.

SCURRY

No theories about space vegetables, Meddler. Stick to the plausible.

She knocks.

SCENE 28

INT. - TALBOT'S ROOM

Talbot is packing, readying to check out, when he hears the knock. He answers it.

MEDDLER

Good morning, Mr. Talbot.... I'm afraid we've got bad news.

SCURRY

We worked on the case all through yesterday, sir, but we haven't been able to track down your package. The trail goes cold after the package arrived here at the hotel.

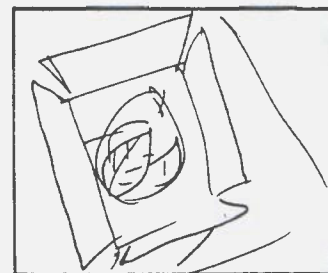
MEDDLER

Agent Scurry thinks a rogue FedEx employee may have stolen it, maybe with plans to sell your sample to the competition. Of course, that's just one theory—

Scurry shoots him a look, a warning not to pursue his space-plant hypothesis with Talbot. Meddler takes her



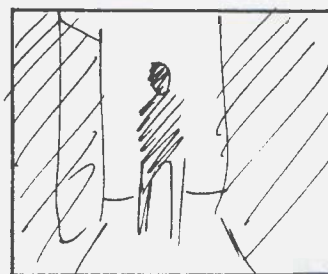
SCENE: 28 DESCRIPTION:
SHOT: 11 MEDDLER
OPENS BOX, CABBAGE
INSIDE



SCENE: 28 DESCRIPTION:
SHOT: 12 CLOSE-UP



SCENE: 28 DESCRIPTION:
SHOT: 15 MEDDLER
DRAWS GUN



SCENE: 28 DESCRIPTION:
SHOT: 18 GUM-CHEWING
MAN IN DOORWAY

meaning and says nothing further.

SCURRY

We're sorry, Mr. Talbot.

TALBOT

That's all right. I've got my package right over there.
(Pointing to it)

Thank you.

He begins closing the door. Meddler and Scurry look at each other, puzzled that the package seems to have been returned to Talbot, yet they know nothing of it. Meddler reaches out and stops Talbot from closing the door.

MEDDLER

Mind if we take a look?

He quickly pushes past Talbot, into the room and over to where the package rests. Scurry enters after him, but stays with Talbot just inside the door.

SCURRY

We'd just like to...
(Searching for a reason)
...check the shipping paperwork.

Meddler examines the package.

SCURRY

(Continuing)

Standard procedure.

Meddler opens the package, finding a cabbage inside.

MEDDLER

Where do you intend on taking this package, Mr. Talbot?

TALBOT

I've told you; I'm going to see an important client this morning.

MEDDLER

(As he draws his gun and points it at Talbot)

Just the kind of person whose mind an alien vegetable from outer space would want to control; a respected businessman like yourself, an influential person who could facilitate the alien take-over of the whole planet?

SCURRY

(Astounded)

Meddler!

MEDDLER

Look in the box, Scurry.

She does. Suddenly, a voice is heard from the doorway. It is that of the mysterious Gum-Chewing Man, a man whom Meddler and Scurry know to be at the very top of Federal Express' management. He is silhouetted in the doorway.

GUM-CHEWING MAN

Put the gun down, Agent Meddler.

(Pulling out a stick of gum and bringing it to his mouth)

Mr. Talbot, and that package, will be coming with me.

MEDDLER

That cabbage is plotting to take over the world! Talbot is under its control! He could be FedExing the seeds of humanity's destruction to cities all over the globe!

GUM-CHEWING MAN

Put the gun down.

MEDDLER

You're part of this, aren't you? You're in collusion with them! You know about the existence of these aliens, but you're hiding the truth.

GUM-CHEWING MAN

Nothing is as it seems, Agent Meddler.

MEDDLER

I want the truth!

GUM-CHEWING MAN

(Growing impatient)

You can't handle the truth!

(Threateningly)

Now put that gun down or you'll be out of a job! I can and will order the FedEx files shut down!

SCURRY

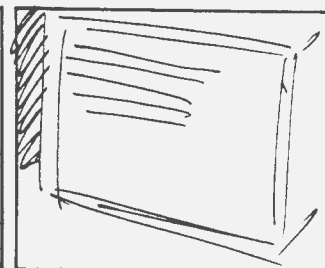
Meddler, he means it.

MEDDLER

I don't care, Scurry. The truth must be revealed.



SCENE: 29 DESCRIPTION:
SHOT: 1 SCURRY IN
HER OFFICE TYPING
(VOICE OVER)



SCENE: 29 DESCRIPTION:
SHOT: 2 PC SCREEN
OF WHAT SHE'S TYPING
(VOICE OVER, CONT.)

SCURRY

But how will you do that if the FedEx files are shut down, Meddler? The search for the truth is part of your work, the thing that keeps you going. If Talbot and his package don't leave with him now...

(Indicating Gum-Chewing Man)

...you'll regret it; maybe not today, maybe not tomorrow, but soon, and for the rest of your life.

Tense moments pass as Meddler considers his partner's words, then, slowly, he brings his gun down, picks up the package and tosses it to Gum-Chewing Man, who exits immediately with Talbot. Meddler is silent; after a moment, he, too, exits. Scurry is about to follow when she notices something on the floor. She stoops to pick it up. It is a small piece of cabbage leaf.

SCENE 29

INT. - SCURRY'S OFFICE

It's late; the office is dark. Scurry is at her PC, typing an entry into her journal. We hear in voice-over what she is writing:

VOICE-OVER, SCURRY

Mr. Talbot has been reunited with his lost package and the office has officially closed the case. I can't help but feel, however, that there's more to all this than meets the eye. The piece of cabbage leaf that I found on the floor of Talbot's hotel room likely came from the salad that Talbot had been eating. But I wanted to be sure. Using my employee discount card, I FedExed it to a lab in Vancouver for analysis. If it proved to be of extraterrestrial origin, Agent Meddler would have proof of his theories.

(Long beat)

The lab never received my package.

FADE TO BLACK

ROLL END CREDITS

PLANT 9 MEMORIES

by Keith Braithwaite

Plant 9 From Outer Space, born of MonSFFA's Ed Wood Video Project, was scripted and directed by *Warp* editor Keith Braithwaite. The film was shot on location at the Maritime Hotel in a grueling, 16-hour session. In this first part of a two-part feature for *Warp*, Keith recalls the experience.

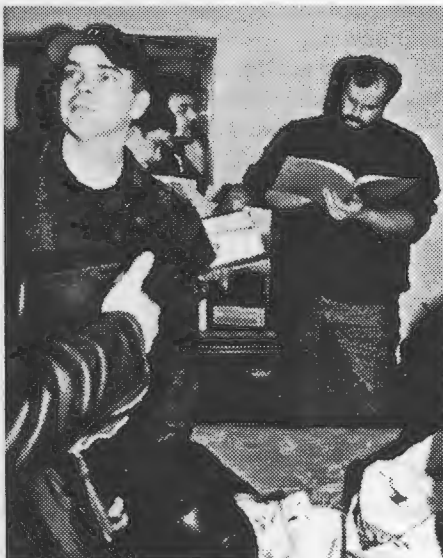
Shortly before 11:00AM, on Saturday, February 24th, I walk into the lobby of the Maritime Hotel, still not completely sure that we'll be able to see our project through this, its most difficult phase. Have we bitten off more than we can chew?

Several months before, I'd put forth the idea that MonSFFA make an amateur sci-fi video-film. We'd do it all in a *single* weekend, have some fun with it, taking our inspiration from the Z-grade, 1950s movies of Edward D. Wood, Jr., considered by critics to be the worst director of all time! I'd originally proposed that we'd write us a script Friday night, shoot it Saturday, using whatever we'd brought with us in terms of costumes and props, and edit the thing on Sunday. Cooler heads prevailed, however, pointing out that such a project would almost *certainly*

fall apart from lack of even the slightest bit of advance planning. It was suggested that we, *at the very least*, have a script in hand when the time came to shoot the film, and that we show up with the costumes and

props demanded by our script. Consensus was that if we came so prepared, the project had a fair chance of success.

I'd had a story percolating in my mind for a few weeks and I pitched it



Above, Left: Our hotel room is a bustle of activity the morning of the shoot.

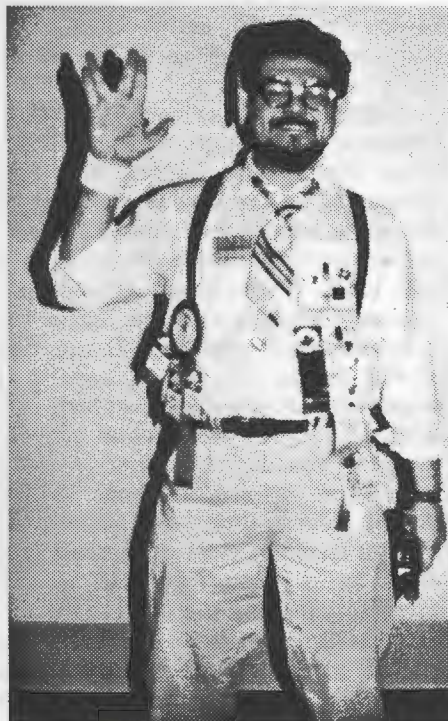
Above, Right: Graham Darling (Lyle Talbot) goes over his script while the crew sets up.

Below, Left: Nicola Stoeckert (left) and Eramelinda Boquer, in costume as con babes, vamp it up for photographers during a break in shooting.

Below, Center: Nerdy Berny—Berny Reischl in costume for his role as a geek.

Below, Right: André Poliquin (Agent Meddler) and JJ Reischl (Agent Scurry), scripts in hand, pose holding their FedEx I.D. badges while awaiting their call to the set.

(Photos this article by Daniel P. Kenney and Bill Strople)



to the group, who then weighed in with a few of their own story ideas. The concocted end result was *Plant 9 From Outer Space*, a botanical take on alien-invasion flicks, seasoned with an *X-Files* spoof and set at a science fiction convention! Following our story-idea session, I went home and wrote the script.

Now, the day of the shoot has arrived and I stand for a moment in the hotel lobby, wondering if I'm up to the task of directing this movie within the time we've allotted ourselves. I've made a few amateur video-films before—solo, or with one or two other people—but never under these kinds of time constraints, and never with a cast and crew of some two dozen.

I see only a few of the project's people waiting in the lobby. Everyone had been instructed to meet here at 11:00AM! People are late—not uncommon in fandom—and I experience a touch of panic, fearing that this tardiness will throw off our day's schedule. Worse, I fear that maybe *not enough* people will show and we'll have to cancel. But then Berny Reischl spots me and walks over to tell me that most of the crew are here *already* (relief!), unpacking gear upstairs in the hotel room I'd booked for the occasion. A few of the guys come with me out to my car and help me unload my gear and carry it up to this room, which will serve as our principle set.

The room is a bustle of activity, and it's small—smaller than I'd anticipated. I'm instantly thinking about how we can work around the size of the room. Everyone is commenting on the episode of *The X-Files* which aired last night. The opening shot was of a grocery-shelf full of cabbages. We interpret this as a good omen. Questions come, now, from several people: Where do you want this equipment? Do we have a production schedule? What costume do you want me in first? I oversee proceedings as best I can while I unpack the camera and begin setting up. Dave Legault and Yolande Rufiange are the project's co-producers; he starts to get people organized into something resembling a film crew while she arranges her production clipboard. Yolande will be keeping track of the order in which scenes/shots are committed to

tape. I hand her my storyboards, which will serve as a guide. Copies of the script are handed out and I scan the room looking for our principle actors. Two of them are absent! We can't proceed without them and, again, I fear that we'll have to cancel. Within half an hour, though, they have arrived and are rehearsing their lines.

I call for everyone's attention and outline the day's schedule. I explain that we're shooting a 20- to 30-minute script, and that if all goes well, we should be done by supper time. I caution, however, that we'll probably run into a few (inevitable) snags, and that we could find ourselves working into the evening. At four o'clock in the morning, some 17 hours later, I'll be driving home, exhausted, thinking about just how far off my completion-time estimate was!

The room is full of gear and it has to be cleared out before we can set up the first shot. We stack some of the stuff in a corner of the room, out of range of the camera. But we end up carting the bulk of it out into the corridor. We are able to do this because the hotel has arranged to isolate us on an empty floor so that we can work without disturbing other guests. 20 minutes later, the room has been cleared and we're rolling tape on the first shot of the day.

Lighting is a problem; the room's lamps provide only very dim illumination. We remove the shade from one of them and, in addition, position a small utility light that someone has thought to bring along over the scene. Better, but not enough of an improvement. Some of the shots remain too poorly lit, and consequently unusable. We do have a 500-watt photographer's light, courtesy Berny, but not the fixture for it. We decide to pop the bulb into one of the lamps and try it, hoping it won't blow a fuse. *And then there was light!* The poorly lit scenes are reshot.

Over the next hour or so we get a half-dozen shots in the can. Things are proceeding well, if not quickly. At any given time, most of the cast and crew are killing time out in the corridor, awaiting their call to the set. They will prove to be *phenomenally* patient over the course of the shoot, and I take this opportunity to thank

them *all* for that patience. We run into minor difficulties as we work, and always conscious of our ticking clock, we keep retakes to no more than three.

At about 2:30PM we break for lunch. While most of the group go out to grab a bite at a nearby restaurant, I and three or four others view our first series of rushes on the hotel room's TV. Everything looks pretty good! Checking our work by periodically playing back the footage we've shot proves to be a wise practise. A viewing later in the day will reveal that the camera was, in a few instances, mistakenly left in standby mode—we *thought* we were filming, but in fact, *we were not!* While we can manage without *minor* missing shots, the part of a *vital* scene which has been lost because of this error must be *restaged* 10 hours after it was originally shot.

With everyone back from lunch, we tackle the script's most complex scenes, those most difficult to block. We're filming in the corridor, now, and for about an hour, downstairs in the lobby of the hotel. For one of the lobby shots, Berny quickly slaps up a prop sign which welcomes people to the story's fictional convention, ConQuest. We film costumed extras walking past this sign. Hotel guests are witness to this and some of them ask us where the science fiction convention is.

While in the lobby, we *burn out* our 500-watt light—or so it would seem. It takes us about half an hour to discover that the light is fine, the lamp fixture is not. We switch fixtures and continue. Our lighting systems (not to mention a *very* finicky power bar!) will continue to plague us until the end of the shoot. Indeed, in the waning hours, Stephane Marcotte will find himself called upon to save the day by rewiring a faulty plug!

By mid-evening or thereabouts, all but a couple of those scenes requiring multiple actors and extras have been completed, and some of the group are free to go home. About 10 of us—roughly half the group—will finish up. I've been on my feet almost non-stop, now, for nearly 12 hours. I am *very* tired. The rest of the remaining cast/crew are beginning to sag, as well. At this point, we begin to cut corners,

combining three or four shots into one and generally trimming as much as we can get away with.

Cindy Hodge has brought along her dad's camcorder and throughout the shoot, she's been documenting our work. I look forward to seeing her "Making of..." footage. A few of our bloopers come to mind:

Tape is rolling, the hotel-room door opens and David James, in full Klingon regalia, delivers not his line, but the question "Shouldn't I knock first?" Laughter, then take two! Dominique Durocher, playing an Animé fan whose lines are to be "badly dubbed," silently mouths words while Bryan Ekers, off camera, provides the dubbed voice. Dominique suddenly stops in mid-shot, waving off the camera and calling for another take. Sorry, he says, I screwed up my lines. But you're not *actually* saying anything (!), I retort, as the crew cracks up. André Poliquin, playing Agent Meddler, is directed to motion to Agent Scurry (JJ Reischl), calling her over to the elevators where he is waiting. He raises an arm and waves in a gesture that looks for all the world like he's flipping her the bird! Krikor Ajemian plays the leader of a group of SF fans controlled by an intelligent cabbage from outer space bent on conquering Earth. We're shooting the scene in which Krikor's character explains this plot to the Lyle Talbot character (Graham

Darling). The shot calls for our space cabbage to be removed from a FedEx envelope and handed to Krikor. I direct the actors to move slowly, in a zombie-like fashion. The shot unfolds beautifully, until Krikor receives the cabbage, turns to face the camera and says "I've completely forgotten my line!" As we ready for another take, Krikor explains that he'd gone blank *the moment* I'd called "action," but let the shot proceed nevertheless, hoping that he'd remember his line by the time he was handed the cabbage.

While watching the rushes we notice bloopers of another kind. In some of the shots, we've inadvertently caught site of power cables strung across the floor, boxes of equipment piled up in corners, etc. In one shot, we see, reflected in a mirror, our chief gaffer! But we're okay with these mistakes, which, in fact, we expected would surface. It all works in favour of the concept: the production of an Ed Woodsianly *bad* movie.

Our few, short special effects shots require the rigging of a black backdrop, representing outer space. We'd then string various vegetables and other plants (our space invaders) from the ends of poles and fly these against the backdrop. The plan is to set all this up in the hotel room after we're finished with everything else. I check the time and, with a number of scenes still left to complete, I know

we'll be here *quite* late. I decide that Berny and I can do the effects shots the next day in his basement, where we are scheduled to shoot the script's last scene, one requiring an office setting not available to us at the hotel. It'll take Berny and I a couple of hours Sunday afternoon to set up and film the effects shots, and then the office scene with Berny's wife, JJ, calling up her Agent Scurry persona one last time.

With the effects shots scratched off of the day's production list, we gather up the energy to finish what's got to be finished. The final hours pass quickly (at least, that was *my* impression) as we focus on the job at hand.

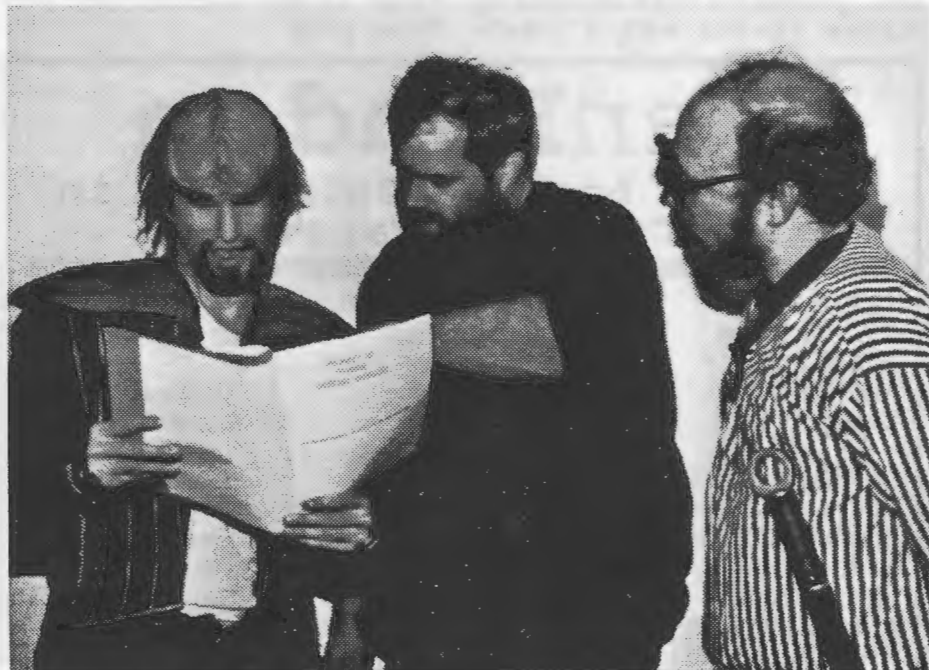
We wrap at about 3:30AM.

Those of us who've worked through until the very end have been running mostly on adrenaline for the past couple of hours. A few have been grabbing cat-naps here and there, whenever they could, and as we pack up, we're all looking forward to a good, *long* sleep. Graham ends up crashing in the hotel room for the rest of the night; the room *is*, after all, ours until 11:00AM check-out.

We had planned to do our editing during the day Sunday, but under the circumstances, I've opted to put that off until another time.

Jump ahead a couple of weeks: that time has come. As I finish writing this, I am preparing to drive out to Sylvain St-Pierre's home in Laval, where we'll be doing the editing, and where Sylvain will add opening titles/closing credits and a few computer-generated effects.

All about that next issue...



I (center) go over a scene with actors Krikor Ajemian (left) and Mark Burakoff.



Gaffers/grips Cathy Palmer-Lister and Bryan Ekers with the object of much frustration during the shoot: our lighting system.



FACT, RUMOUR AND SPECULATION FROM AROUND SF/F-DOM

Many Bothan spies died to bring us the information for this column.

DOCTOR WHO

Looks like we picked the *wrong* Internet rumour to go with last issue! All that stuff about the Doctor's first black companion, a TV reporter named Spice Lincoln, to be played, perhaps, by Cosby kid Lisa Bonet, is out the window.

Recent, more reliable reports list actress Daphne Ashbrook as the Doctor's latest companion, Dr. Grace Holloway, a heart surgeon who is, of course, amazed to find that the Doctor has two hearts.

Paul McGann is cast as Doctor number eight, he is up against the Master, this new *Who* adventure is set in San Francisco, seventh Doctor Sylvester McCoy will cameo in a regeneration scene, passing the torch on to McGann, and the Fox network will air all of this happiness in May—we got all that right. We can add that Eric Roberts (*Runaway Train*) has been cast as the Master, and Sophie Aldred will reprise her role as Ace, joining McCoy for the regeneration sequence. The production's budget is about \$5 million U.S.

Should the Doctor's new adventures prove popular enough, more of these TV movies (as we've reported previously) are in the offing, or, as we're now hearing, perhaps a *weekly TV series*, which could premiere as early as the fall of this year.

Ashbrook is signed only for this first outing, however (as is Roberts), so another companion might have to be brought in to replace her. Might we suggest to producers that they consider a *black* companion. She could be a *TV reporter* with a funky name, say something like *Spice Lincoln*. And maybe Cosby kid *Lisa Bonet* could play her!

BATNEWS

Val "Batman" Kilmer has walked! Apparently unhappy with the producers' choice of Arnold Schwarzenegger as villain Mr. Freeze (TNG's Patrick Stewart was expected to get the role but proved unavailable), the *Batman Forever* star up and quit. *ER*'s George Clooney will replace him.

RED DWARF

Red Dwarf star Chris Barrie, reportedly disappointed with the way his Rimmer character was developing of late, recently walked off the show. His departure comes two episodes into the filming of the show's seventh (and probably final) season. Rimmer is becoming "Mr. Completely, Utterly Sad Person," said Barrie, who vows that he'll not return to the popular British sci-fi/comedy series.

In response to comments that *Red Dwarf* has become too "blokish," producers have decided to replace Rimmer with a female

character, but have left the door open for Rimmer's return, should Barrie have a change of heart.

North American audiences won't likely see *Red Dwarf*'s seventh season until sometime in early '97.

MARS ATTACKS ID4

The folks putting together *Mars Attacks*, an alien-invasion flick based on a bubble-gum card series and starring Michael J. Fox (the *Back to the Future* movies), are said to be ticked at the people who've made *Independence Day*, or *ID4*. Seems that some of the action scenes we'll see this summer in *ID4* are *very* similar to scenes planned for *Mars Attacks*, which won't be out until fall, the earliest.

APOLLO 13: BEST PICTURE?

With the Academy Awards soon upon us, Hollywood insiders are saying that director Ron Howard's *Apollo 13* has clinched the Best Picture Oscar.

CanFandom

A Quick Look at Goings On in Canadian Fandom

GOOD NEWS: WARP 9 CLUB FINDS NEW MEETING HALL

We are pleased to update our coverage, in this column last issue, of Warp 9's search for a new meeting hall. They are searching no more!

The Montreal-based SF club has found itself an *affordable* meeting hall—they had abandoned their spot at the Days Inn after that hotel hiked prices beyond the club's budgetary capabilities—and now resumes meeting on a regular schedule.

BAD NEWS: CONS CANCELLED

Word comes out of the Toronto area that two *Trek* cons scheduled for this year have been cancelled (poor pre-reg, we believe). Fleet Academy North and Starbase Endeavour are dead, Jim.

If you would like to join, please fill in the membership application and mail it to **MonSFFA**, along with a cheque or money order made out to **MonSFFA** for the amount of \$20.00. Feel free to write us for more information.

MonSFFA

P.O. Box 1186, Place du Parc
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Si vous voulez vous joindre au club, veuillez remplir le formulaire d'adhésion et nous le faire parvenir à l'adresse si-dessous avec un chèque ou un mandat-poste, payable à l'ordre de l'**AMonSFF**, au montant de 20,00\$. N'hésitez pas à nous écrire si vous avez besoin de plus amples renseignements.

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