

N'APA 240

May 2019



The Official Organ

#240

Next deadline: July 15, 2019

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

The official preparer is Jefferson P. Swycaffer - abontides@gmail.com

Procedure: Please Read:

George Phillies will collate and mail, but submissions should be sent to the preparer, Jefferson Swycaffer. No harm is done if submissions get sent to George, but the process should be to send them to Jefferson.

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

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

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

In this issue:

Front Cover: Klingon Commander L'Rell - Jose Sanchez

The Official Organ #240

Contents of a Good Life 6, by Will Mayo – 9 pages

The Silver State Age #13, by Kevin Trainor Jr - 2 pages

Archive Midwinter, by Jefferson P. Swycaffer – 3 pages

Synergy 16, by John Thiel – 6 pages

Ye Murthered Master Mage, by George Phillies – 4 pages

Super thanks to Jose Sanchez, who sent four works of art for use as covers, some really spiffing material!

THE CONTENTS OF A GOOD LIFE 6



NAPA MAILING 240

MAY 2019

**WILL S. MAYO, 750 CARROLL PARKWAY,
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I write...

THE FAITH WITHIN AND WITHOUT

If you ask some of the Mercury and Apollo astronauts who flew to space and orbited the earth back in the 1960s and 1970s they'll be sure to tell you that they saw evidence of aliens while they were out there and some of them will even tell you that some of those aliens have saved the earth from nuclear warfare in the past. Cross your heart and hope to God, that's what they'll say. But to tell you the truth, if I had to make a choice, I'd sooner believe those crazed astronauts than the god lovers. Even if it all comes down to faith either way.

THE DREAM BACK

So I walked there among the rocks and flowers in the park at the end of the street where we then lived, just a kid really, and I was surprised by my mother suddenly driving beside me in her long white Oldsmobile.

"How did you know that I was here?" I asked.

"I just knew," she said.

"Can I hop a ride with you?" I asked.

"Oh, sure," she said. "Hop in."

I hopped in the car and we drove down the street toward our house and it was then that I woke and realized that I hadn't actually seen my mother in several years. She was still down at that nursing home and likely still picturing me as the young boy that I was then wandering among the rocks and flowers down south, just as I had been then myself.

Funny how dreams are. They take you back.

STRANGE THAT OUR WORLD MAY BE

In the fabled East, there are many strange wonders to behold. Yogis there can go into a trance for days on end with no need of food or water. Many wonders abound there in the land of the lotus flower. Oh, and in the West too there are many strange things, from a rocket ship that circles the earth with multibillionaires on board to solitary scientists that figure out the nature of the universe. And in the North and South as well there are many strange sights to be seen, from penguins that waddle about on the polar wastes to the naked flesh found in Rio. But I tell you, I would shove all these strange things aside just to see your face one more time before me....

ALIVE WITH NO REGRETS

When my family departed here earlier this evening my brother's wife remarked in passing, "I'm so glad you're not dead."

I could only reply, "Me too. It does free up the senses, doesn't it?"

She looked at me and smiled and then they closed the door and it was another day here, just me alone with my cat. Still not dead yet.

IN THE FACES OF ALL THE HAUNTED

Where will you find me? You'll find me among the lawless, the troubled and the damned. No sanctimonious sons of bitches reign here. Rather, all's quiet, all is serene. Smoke rises everywhere. And salvation is seen in the man who has no name.

MY WORLD

A visitor came by yesterday and I bragged to him about this marvelous machine.

"With this computer," I bragged, "I can communicate with people all over the world, from Kathmandu to Beijing to London to the Arctic wastes

to the Pacific islands."

"That's not the same as being there," said the man who had been all over the world.

"I can[t handle all that," I said. "I can only handle this room and my machine."

He looked at me, then looked away for a moment, then looked at me again. I think he got my point.

For better or worse, this room is my world.



Frederick, Maryland

Mailing Comments

Sorry, Jefferson, but my book THE GREAT TRAIN ROBBERY AND OTHER TALES OF THE IMAGINATION is now out of print. My first book, ROADMAPS OF THE MIND, however, is available as is my latest one, DREAMS OF MONGOLIA AND OTHER STORIES AND POEMS FROM ONE MAN'S MIND. I think you would have some fun with those. As for missing those mailings, I wouldn't worry so much about it. This technology is a wonder to me and I don't think I'll ever make sense of it. In fact, I still do all my typing on this keyboard with just one finger. I could just never figure out any other way to get the job done. But then I think that I read that the science fiction writers Isaac Asimov and Ray Bradbury were both deadly afraid of flying in an airplane for all their tales of rocket ships, so perhaps this trouble with technology is not peculiar to the two of us.

It's good to know, Lorien, that you've put this and other issues of NAPA on the cloud. Maybe that way they will be more available to you and others in the future. As for Heinlein's novel STRANGER IN A STRANGE LAND, I do hope that you will read it. It is more than a fantastical tale. It is kind of an allegory for where a lot of us were back in the early 70s, when that book came out. An anthem for the times, you might say.

Oh, and, George, I'm just now getting my feet wet after all these years with this wonderful field of fantasy literature. With you and others to lead the way, I trust that the outcome will be good for all of us. Thanks to you also for your entertaining words.



DREAMING WHERE A MAN MIGHT FIND HIMSELF

I close my eyes and I am in a distant woodland where naked lovers, male and female, old and young, cavort by a sea that foams against its sands. I watch these lovers. They dance. They make love in all positions possible. They bathe themselves in that faraway sea. Then I wake again to the room where I am lord of all I surmise, a cat, a good many books, many stories besides. Then close my eyes once more and I am again where lovers reside. Such dreams are. They take us all kinds of places.

HEAVEN'S ALL

In cloudy air, in oceans below, naked nymphs play havoc upon the waves, equally naked young boys ride them for all they are worth. As garlands of seaweed and cherubs adorn their all. Rubens would be astonished, as would Raphael. No artist can equal the sight. As a thousand heavenly gates pour forth more.

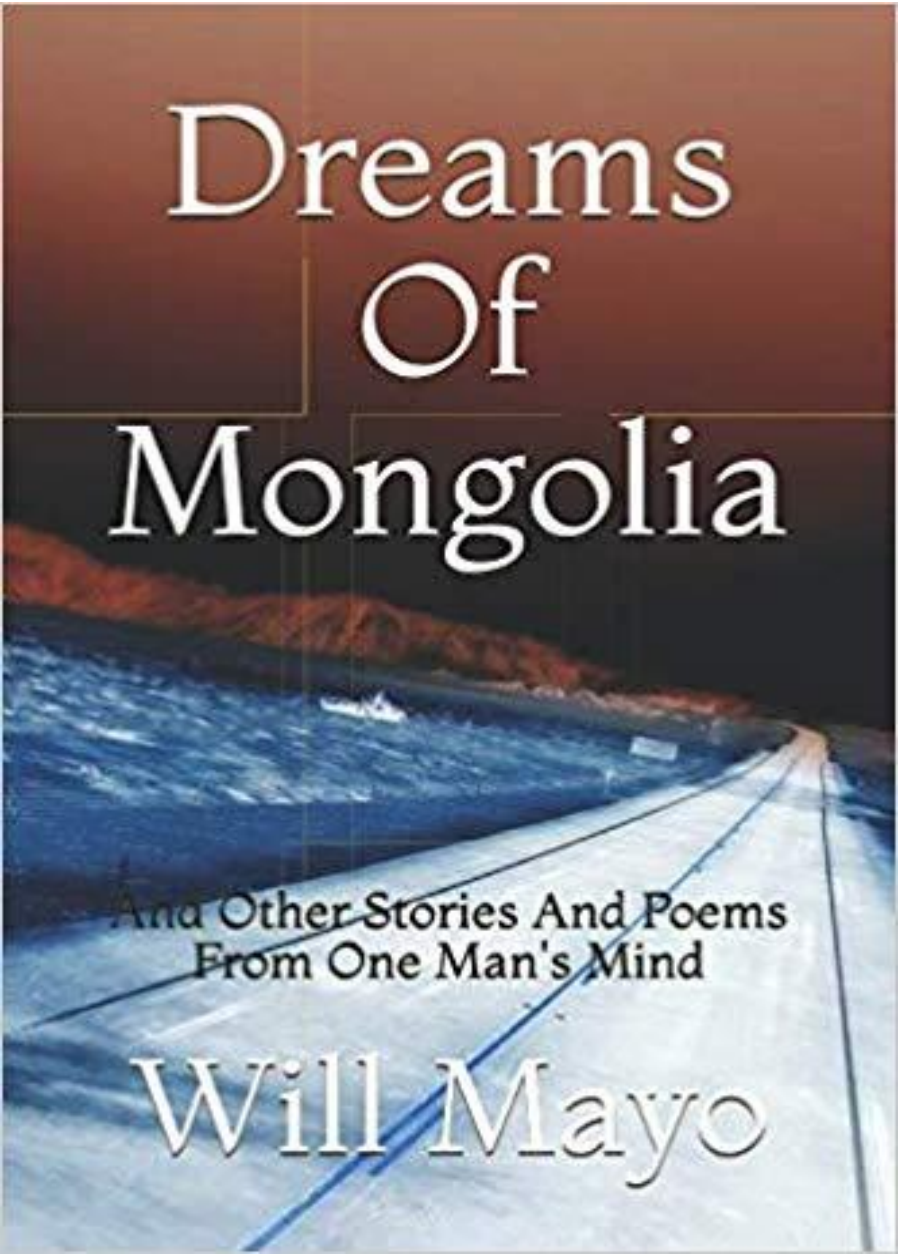
IN WORDS, A DREAM OR TWO

There is another part of me that is young and muscular and naked and free and in my dreams I live it. There, I swim from shore to shore and make love to all the lovely young ladies of the day. But that is, of course, in my dreams. In the meantime, I sit here alive in my study and send you a tale or two. And I live again in these words as I would otherwise live in those dreams. It is the life, I tell you.

ALL WE HAVE

Don't try to change me.
I can't possibly change you.
Just walk with me a while.
Accept me and the difference.
All we have is each other.
All we have is today.

-and so I dream-

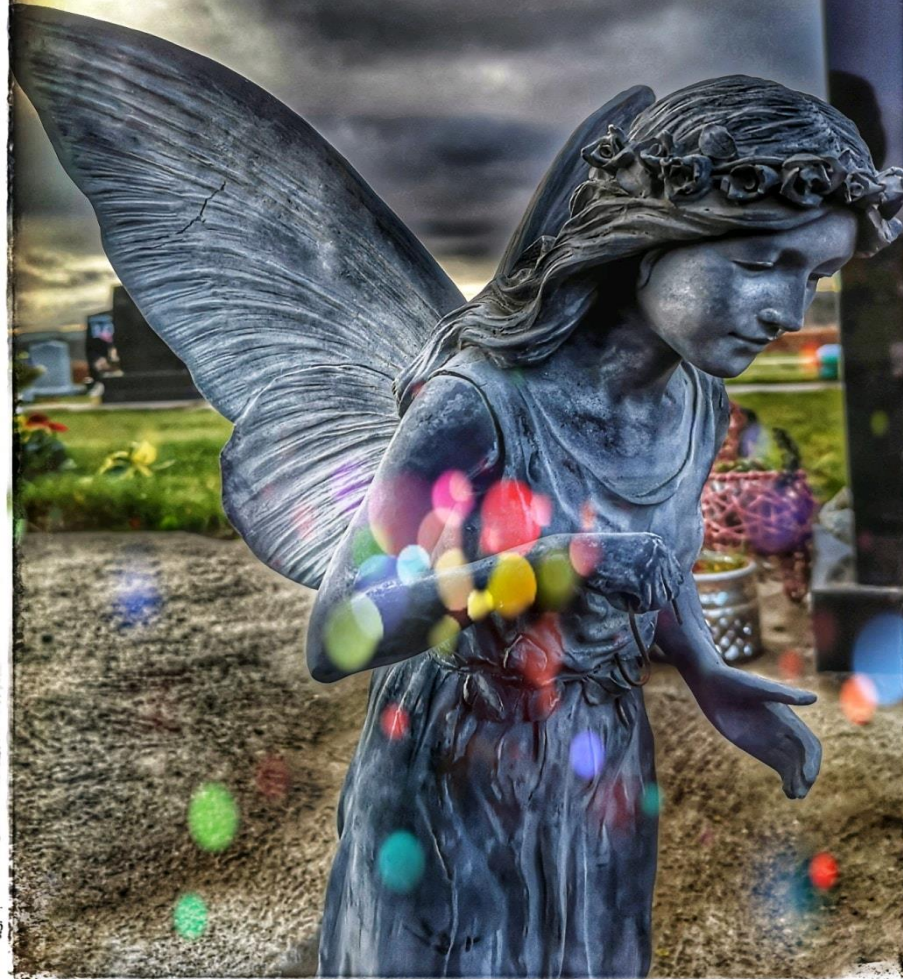


Dreams Of Mongolia

And Other Stories And Poems
From One Man's Mind

Will Mayo

The Tombstone Tourist



The Silver State Age #13
an apazine for N'APA 240
May 15, 2019

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OBLIGATORY NATTER

Sorry it took a while. I did finally find an apartment, which is actually located in the City of Las Vegas, and despite various appliances not working and having to be replaced, I am reasonably happy, because I have all my stuff and am slowly sorting it into stuff I want to have hauled to the house I intend to buy Real Soon Now, and stuff I can either toss in the dumpster or donate to local worthy causes.

Going back a bit to last October, I finally managed to get all my stuff out of the old apartment on Kishner Drive and continued looking for a new apartment. Apparently I pushed myself too hard, because a week before Halloween, I wound up being hauled off by the paramedics to Sunrise Hospital with a serious systemic infection, and spending a long weekend there with intravenous antibiotics until I was deemed well enough to be sent to rehab, where I spent another week (mostly) in bed and taking oral antibiotics until ~~the Medicare ran out~~ I was deemed well enough to go back to apartment searching and hotel-hopping. Unfortunately, I was too weak after all that to resume driving for Uber, so I filed my paperwork to go back on disability and did the things I needed to do to get ready for tax season. I am enormously grateful to my friends, family, and the people who know me through my linkmongling & moderating at The Other McCain, because they came through and gave me enough money so that I was able to survive two and a half months of bouncing between various hotels. I'm also grateful for Priceline, which found me affordable rooms until I finally got a place of my own again. I'm feeling better now, but the infection really took it out of me, and even now, I am spending a lot more time resting and sleeping.

Tax season went fairly well. I worked a lot more hours than I had intended, because we were short on tax pros to start with and then a couple of them got full-time jobs, so I wound up with a bunch of extra hours. Still, since I had managed to test up to Senior Tax Advisor (the last rank before Master Tax Advisor, which is mostly CPAs and Enrolled Agents) I actually made \$600 in commission over what Block paid me, and that's partially what's funding this year's trip to Balticon.

I did not manage to get to Life, The Universe, and Everything, because Social Security managed to send my money for December & January to the wrong bank account despite having been told the right one well in advance. Just to make things more fun, the second time it bounced, the Treasury Department grabbed it and applied it to what I allegedly owe Social Security for some overpayments in 2015. I guess I can't complain too much; I'm not living in my car or having to line up for shelter space.

The other part of what's funding my Balticon excursion is Southwest; I went off to Florida the weekend after April 15 to visit a sister-in-arms who's living down in Naples, using the last of my leftover miles from last year's abortive Balticon trip, and lo, I got bumped off the Las Vegas – Atlanta leg of the trip because they overbooked it. This worked out well for me, because I volunteered for the bump, and because I was patient and polite to the gate agent, she not only refunded that leg of the flight, she threw in an extra \$100 of flight vouchers on top of the \$500 reward for getting bumped, so I wound up with almost \$1000 in flight vouchers – plus they put me up overnight at a La Quinta near BWI so I could catch the first flight out to Fort Myers the next morning. It all worked out quite nicely.

BOOKS

I picked up the new C.J. Cherryh Alliance-Union book, Alliance Rising, which she co-wrote with her partner Jane Fancher, and on the whole, I can't tell which of them wrote what. I think the language is a little coarser, which may be Fancher's doing, but having been in the Army, it's not like I find that shocking. The book is set in between Hellburner and Downbelow Station, before Mazian's Fleet begins its long and ultimately doomed campaign against Union, before the FTL link between Alpha Station and Earth has been found. Once again, Cherryh does a good job keeping all the various plot balls in the air, keeping all her characters busy, and all the while tying various cultural and historical threads together to provide the background for the later novels in the Alliance-Union 'verse. I also picked up an electronic copy of Downbelow Station because I couldn't find my paperback copy. I really need to finish unpacking these books.

Former Protector Ashok Vadal doesn't have it so bad – ah, who am I kidding? The protagonist of Larry Correia's House of Assassins is really in the shit, with practically every man's hand against him – including his former brother Protectors – the nearly impossible task of retrieving the prophet Thera from her shapeshifting captors, and worst of all, he's got to do it without his mighty Ancestor Blade, Angruvadal. But Ashok is a Larry Correia hero, which means he doesn't die easy, and he doesn't quit. Excellent follow-on to the first book.

Nick Cole finally came out with the sequel to Soda Pop Soldier, Pop Kult Warlord, and –wow. Most sequels aren't as good as the original, but Cole manages to stick the landing quite nicely with this one. PerfectQuestion, megastar gamer for ColaCorp, has just won the equivalent of the Super Bowl, so of course he's going to Disneyland...but Disneyland isn't what it used to be, because the LA area is now Calistan, an Islamic Caliphate where the game of thrones is underway, and PQ's been hired to lead the forces of one potential heir in a game where everyone's fighting over Mars, in a very different game than what he's used to playing. Meanwhile, in his dreams, he's back in the Black, on the trail of another villain...yeah. It's good.

OTHER MEDIA

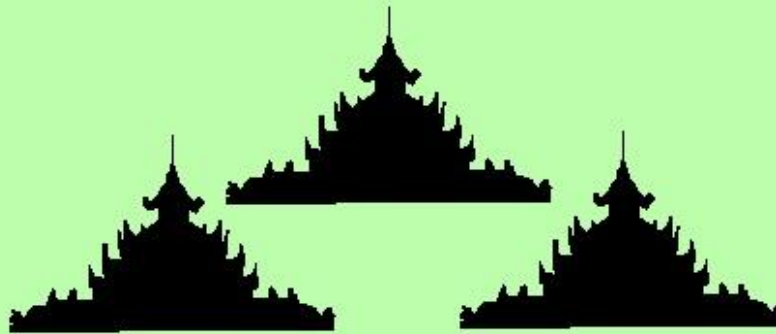
I saw *Alita: Battle Angel* the weekend after it came out, and it was pretty good. I would go so far as to say that it was a better story than the anime it was based on. Definitely more of a story to it. Looking forward to the sequel.

Archive Midwinter
a zine for N'APA 239

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20 Jan 2019



Comments:

Jose Sanchez: Cover: Fun! A good old-fashioned Blast Off! I recently saw video of the new Space-X rockets landing vertically, and was mighty impressed. As some wag says, they land the way God and Robert Heinlein intended!

Will S Mayo: Lovely photos of funerary statues. I've always had a fond spot for cemetery angels, and, in fact, for the whole angel motif in depictive art. R.A. Lafferty had a cute quote about angels:

"He made them grotesque, like chicken men, like bird men, with an impossible duplication of humeral function. And the children laughed at the carved jokes. But he had sudden inspiration. He touched his creations up and added an element of nobility. So an iconography was born."

(From "Among the Hairy Earthmen," one of the finest and most haunting fantasy stories ever written.)

Nice picture of the bridge. There's an old bridge here in San Diego of very much the same engineering style, although it isn't used

any more. They haven't yet gotten around to tearing it down, so it sits, kind of a ghostly relict.

Intriguing prose-poetry. The death of the stars? My gosh, you seem to be in a grim mood today! Cemeteries and the end of the stars. I'm reminded of something a very dear friend of mine once said: "I'd rather be writing feminist poetry about death."

Tell me more about "The Great Red Horse Robbery!" I looked on the internet and couldn't find anything. Lovely title and cover, but where's the meat-and-potatoes? I want to read it!

Your concluding poem is more upbeat and life-affirming, and, aye, I too would adore to warm and indoors while it's cold and October outdoors, and to have a hundred books on the shelf all waiting me to read them.

I know what you mean about computer problems! No fun at all, and you can't fix them by whapping them hard with your hand, the way you used to be able to fix household appliances when they went screwball! Good luck to you in finding solutions!

John Thiel: Nice photo of the starfield! And "Claus Barenhart" is a perfectly cool name!

"Science fiction is always coming up with *outré* concepts that have to them an aesthetic delight." True, and a superb point. Science Fiction, when done well, is a bit cockeyed and even ungainly, like an elephant tap-dancing. It isn't something we'd really want to live with, but it's something that really makes us stop and think. Science Fiction is truly and well named "The Literature of Ideas." Ideas can be challenging, even scary -- and a lot of SF is damned scary! But SF has always had the courage to stare directly at what's scary, and not to turn away from it in fear (or repugnance.) SF is honest. It doesn't put a comforting sugar-coating on its ideas, but goes right for the kernel of truth in any given idea.

Fantasy is more personal, more individual. "The Boy who Could Fly," for instance, is a fantasy idea. But SF is more universal. "What if someone inventing a flight pill?" You swallow the pill, and for an hour, you can fly like Superman. Cool! SF follows the implications: mid-air collisions, and people losing track of time and falling to their deaths, and peeping toms looking down into other people's back yards, and people breaking in to houses by opening 2nd floor windows.

rct George Phillies, alas, no, I haven't really examined the feasibility of writing more for Eldritch Science. I don't have anything suitable in my boneyard, either. I'll try to make the time to create something Eldritch-worthy!

(I hope E.S. can recruit some of the stories from the N3F Short Story Contest. There were some brilliant stories among the entries, and they deserve to be read more widely!)

The letters aren't wearing off from my keyboard...but...ew... I'm sure building up a nasty plaque of keyboard grime. I really need

to wash my keyboard a bit more often! It's an ugly reminder how dirty human hands really are!

As for pajamas, I have the sovereign remedy: sleep nude! But, yeah, shoes can be a problem. The nationwide chain "Payless Shoe Source" has had financial problems and has closed down most of its outlet branches. Bummer! Fortunately for me, the brand I like is available online on Amazon. (Heck, everything is available on Amazon! If you need a left-handed AAA guage atom-powered Veeblefetzer, they've likely got it!)

Lovely photo of Halloween punkin's and of the moon over the rooftop!

Nice closing poems and cartoon!

George Phillies: The N3F has definitely been improving over the past few years, and I think you are owed the greatest share of the credit. You've worked hard -- mighty hard! -- for the club. Your publicity and marketing efforts certainly have brought in a lot more Short Story Contest entries. I'm sorry that the Presidency of the club is such a "One Man Band" performance, but you've certainly been a very good man in the position!

re shoes, I'd never heard of Nunn-Bush, but will look 'em up. Thanks!

re Elizabethan theater, Marlowe (in our world) was pretty good, to be sure. I recently read Ben Jonson's Volpone, and have to say that, while it was cute, I didn't really enjoy it. Perhaps I'd have liked it more if I'd seen it performed, but reading the text, it struck me as too contrived. Shakespeare's comedies were contrived also, most certainly, but more deftly. He was better at concealing the contrivance. I've also read a little Kyd (The Spanish Tragedy) and Gammer Gurton's Needle, the authorship of which is uncertain. Of

all I've read, my favorite was Knight of the Burning Pestle by Beaumont and Fletcher.

Fascinating segment of your next book; I like the symbol (?) metaphor (?) image (!) at the end of a rock wall, in space, extending forever. Your characters have a very high level of super-powers, but, wow, that's kicking up way up!

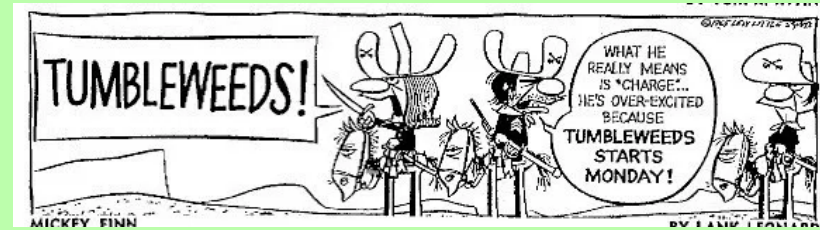
Lorien Rivendell: re writing, speech-to-text wouldn't do me any good, because I don't think "out loud" at all well. When writing, I spend a lot of time just sitting and looking blankly at the screen, and I spend a lot of type back-spacing and deleting. (I started the last sentence three different times!) How would that even work when speaking out loud? Not for me, I'm afraid, but if it works for others, then hooray! Whatever turns the pages! As Kipling said, "...Every single one of them is right!"

re coconuts, very true. They probably don't harbor malice, but they might...they just might. (As opposed to the smallpox virus, which was definitely malicious, and rejoiced in every death it caused. The only species humankind has ever deliberately extinguished, and rightly so.)

Fun digital painting. What program did you use? I can see how it might be done in Microsoft Paint, but I'm curious how you did it?

Tom K. Ryan

I was saddened to learn of the passing of Tom K. Ryan, the creator of the Tumbleweeds comic strip, which certainly had a long and hilarious run of success. I was a fan of the strip before it even began, having taken note of the introductory strips that newspapers ran, alerting the public of the soon-to-appear strip. (Below is one example.)



The strip is of some interest for its quality-arc; it started out great, and stayed great for a long time, until it took a long, ugly dip in quality. Frankly, it got tired, boring, and stupid. But the strip recovered! It got good again! It regained its freshness, and never lost it again. The credit might go to Ryan's creative assistants. Among the people who worked on the strip with Ryan was Jim Davis, who later would create the who later would create the Garfield comic strip.

(Trivia: one of the Tumbleweeds characters, the grizzled old guy in the Civil War kepi who greeted the stage-coach when it thundered into tow, was named "Garfield.")

Tumbleweeds had, I believe, the largest cast of named and regular characters in the history of comic strips. There were hundreds! Only Pogo even comes close!

One character who was a regular in the early days, but who disappeared and has not returned, was Green Gills, one of the Poohawk Indians. He was presented as a loser, who kept on striving. He courted Little Pigeon, the Chief's daughter, with little success. His sidekick, Limpid Lizard, is still a mainstay of the strip, but Green Gills is seen no more. I wrote to Ryan to ask what had happened, but he didn't write back. I suppose now I'll never know.

Ryan was 92. He lived a full life, and brought laughter to uncounted millions. RIP, up on old Boot Hill.

Synergy #16



May 2019

N'APA Mailing #240

“We are miles ahead in the space race.” (us fans)

“So wot’r miles, Klau?”—the Grinch

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cover: Skylab Photo

EDITORIAL



Just Off the Top of My Head

Here we are in the 21st Century, almost a fifth of the way into it, in fact, and that is something we were wont to dream of from our stolid position near the center of the last one, a century that was considered very modern and ahead in its time, but for us visionaries it was not yet the Future, and that was what we looked forward to, looking back with condescension on the centuries that had preceded us, in which history reports such stupid things being done, and ridiculous clothing being worn. So we looked for the next one, and as it slowly came to pass, and at last arrived in the year 2000, I think we all had a rather mixed reaction to it; there were some of the things we expected and had anticipated, and other things we had thought would be there waiting for us were not there, and some things arrived that we didn't look forward to, like warfare in excess of that which had been

happening in the 20th Century. Some predicted the Apocalypse for the 2000th year, but, although that may not have arrived, we do have something that looks a lot like the apocalypse, that's the Arab-Israeli conflict and all the other action going on in the Eastern lands, which is where 'twas said the apocalypse might start. Well, you can call me a pudden if I'm worried about it, but it is interesting and partakes very much of what I have read in "inspired" (or as it's sometimes called, "fanatic") literature as being descriptive of what an apocalypse would be like. Okay, apocalypse. So what else is new?

But I was thinking, what should be our reaction to living in such advanced times? Should we partake of things we didn't have before and use them to their fullest? They are apparently available, with the computer system accessible to anyone and through it much that is new being accessible all over the world, a global civilization with information about things elsewhere coming across in a torrent (much like what was predicted for the Age of Aquarius, by the way). Yes, we've paid the price in global conflict, but whether it is a blessing or a curse to live in interesting times, we do live in such times. I would venture that although we should take all the advantage we can of such things, we should not lose contact with our past while thus engaged, for it leaves us groundless to have left behind our heritage, as it is called. If science fiction is escape literature, we must be careful of trying to escape from what we have been. CHILDHOOD'S END speaks of maturity. It is mature to have good contact with our past, to be well aware of our present, and to have interest in what the future will hold. Without enough of any one of these, we lack the full development we strive to gain as individuals. This lack is felt in plenty of places, but when considering how we should be, this is what we should take into consideration. That's one more step into the future.

MAILING COMMENTS

As you all know, I was not in the November and January mailings, along with Will Mayo, and I want now to take up where I left off, with comments on the mailings heretofore uncommented upon.

237th Mailing

NOTES FROM A GALAXY FAR, FAR AWAY: The Round Robins are a correspondence group. Probably there should be more correspondence among NFFF members.

THE MURDERED MASTER MAGE: I see the lack of Will's fanzine and mine in those mailings was due to the transference of NAPA's preparation position over to Jefferson Swycaffer (there is in print also reference to him as a collator). Further confusion caused them to be left out of the next mailing as well. But now that is solved and both of us are back. Probably it would be pretty difficult to evoke any further answers to my mailing comments in that outdated issue in the mailing just prior to this one by reacting to mailing comments made responsively by those present in this one.

ARCHIVE MIDWINTER: Well, I think concord would be something that might be called for where it's lacking, and the interchange in NAPA seems a bit different from concord. Diversity we surely have already, but similitude seems to be lacking, except for being in the same apa.

You seem to favor the view, when we are looking about among the philosophers, of the thesis, the antithesis, and the synthesis, in your description of the benefits of conflicting viewpoints.

238th Mailing

NOTES FROM A GALAXY: I could wonder about the authorship of "The Handmaid's Tale". The premises seem familiar to me.

Frying eggs may be just suited to a frying pan, but another form of cooking eggs might well be suited more for a pot.

ARCHIVE MIDWINTER: Klingons don't appear to have souls—but the answer to that could be that no one has them.

What date was the issue of Weird Tales with your story in it?

239th Mailing

MURDERED MASTER MAGE: I was pleased to read the optimistic comments on the N3F. Why fans would choose to remain inactive is still a mystery to me.

I got two pairs of laced shoes for seventy dollars for both pairs recently after a search resembling a big game hunt. Now I have three pairs of shoes, which should last until the Changeover, if such a thing is coming.

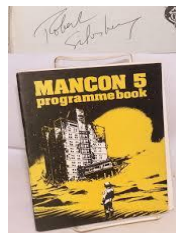
ARCHIVE MIDWINTER: Well, here it is spring, which leaves your title open to curiosity as it is maintained through all seasons, though I suppose a poet might do the same with the season of spring (or autumn if a fantasy poet). I liked the piping satyrs on the heading, very eye-catching.

I read a short story on the theme of top secrecy where the people all were keeping secrets from one another as well as the public, until nobody knew what anyone else was doing on their project. Then came the part where they had to know.

NOTES FROM A GALAXY: It always occurs to me when Boskone is mentioned to consider not only its part in the American Revolution, but how interesting it would be to go through Boston asking questions about the Boston portrayed in Lovecraft's "Pictman's Model", and also discuss the story with them. It'd probably be about as good as walking around New Orleans talking about jazz. Your description of walking around Boston reminded me of this.

Digital painting: When you've got the right equipment to do digital paintings, it's good to see you making use of it.

CONTENTS OF A GOOD LIFE: Really an expressive zine, and I think it looks real good in a mailing. I wish you weren't having all those equipment and other problems, but you're kind of a silent man anyway, as you point out, and I wonder if you'd be doing mailing comments without those problems. Anyway, this zine gives you some exercise in being sociable, and I hope this is profitable to you.



What e'er else? Jefferson Swycaffer's comments to Will Mayo in the 237th mailing about an afterlife: Aren't you trying to rule or rule out an afterlife? You see everything as being under control, any possible spirit world as well as the mundane one.



Ye Murthered
Master Mage
for N'APA 240

George Phillies
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May 6, 2019

Comments

A fine José Sanchez cover, with wonderful use of black and white and shading and the transparent-nosed (or so I see it) rocket ship.

The Contents of a Good Life - Will Mayo: an interesting perspective on what the future may hold and what the past has held. Very interesting photographic bits. The giant eye looking back is certainly an interesting image.

Synergy 15: That's an interesting view out of the office. We have indeed had a bunch of contributions, as witness the length of the latest Eldritch Science. With respect to ads, I'm afraid I'm not being clear enough on what the issue is. If I want to take an advertisement in a magazine I need to know the physical dimensions of the ad, the file format in which it's to be sent, restrictions on typefaces, cost depending on the area, and so forth. "Send them the ad" has the minor omission that there's no indication as to what needs to be sent.

With respect to typewriter keys: Once upon a time, typewriter companies made their keys with injection molding, so the white area or black area showing the letter went all the way through the key to the bottom. When I was a little boy, I had inherited an Underwood typewriter in which the E key instead of being flat had a deep dome-shaped hole into which my finger would sink because over the decades the bakelite or whatever was had eroded. However, the E was still clearly visible.

With respect to the clothing items you listed, I call your attention to Land's End and Nunn-Bush, both on the Internet at prices vastly below the ones you quote for quality material. The Nunn-Bush shoes, some of them, have elastic soles so in fact they are as good as sneakers for taking impact off your feet.

Thank you also for the poetry.

Ye Murthered Master Mage: My most immediate writing project is reading the galleys for the Third Millennium edition of the e-book and paperback for Eclipse-the Girl Who Saved the World. They are about five hundred forty pages so proofreading takes a while. My novels tend to run around a hundred seventy thousand or a hundred eighty thousand words, so the resulting books are a bit thick. When I am done with that, it is back to the physics review article I am writing. A review article collects large amounts of literature from different sources, mostly scientific journals, generates all the footnotes, discusses all of the papers, and attempts to put things into coherent whole that explains what is going on. My current estimate is that the article will have around five hundred footnotes, runaround eighty thousand or a hundred thousand words, and perhaps end up getting turned into a book. When I am done with that, it is back to Airy Castles All Ablaze. And how they are advancing. Many of them are not advancing very much.

I do have a list of writing projects

Projects as of May 2019

Writing review article in my technical area 44044 words, a gain of 1600 hundred words. The stack of technical papers yet to be analyzed may have become thinner.

Against Three lands is now on sale at Third Millennium 3mpub.com

Novels: Airy Castles All Ablaze and Stand Against the Light were divided, and are now at 136,276 words and 32,272 words, respectively, a loss of 100 words. I am mostly editing parts of Airy Castles All Ablaze that are largely written, so there is little change in the word count even if the writing is much changed.

Invasion Tibet (so to speak Buck Rogers prequel) Now at 38,424 words, a gain of 70 words.

sequel to Against Three Lands 10775 words, not previously reported but partly not new.

In other news, all my Amazon books put together are up to four reviews for this year, a gain of one review from last report and one more review than

my total for all of last year. I announced in multiple places that I was offering free review copies but had no takers.

There are also projects on which no progress is being made.

Of Breaking Waves is at 26,669 words, a gain of 530 words

Two new technical books, 'Theory of Polymer Solution Dynamics' and 'Modern Phenomenology of Polymer Solution Dynamics', are under way, as are a stack of research projects.

Novels not advancing:

Merchant Adventurers: Now at 38,000 words.

The Eddorian Lensman (serial numbers to be filed off) space opera

DisUnion (after partition of US; NH/VT capture a flying saucer)

Hold High The Banner total (ChiComm platoon of 1940 enters not-D&D world, launches liberation struggle for the exploited small giant class species)

Adara's Tale total 33,475 words magical university studies

No Tears for a Princess total 88, 647 words classic fantasy with swords and magicians

sequel to Minutegirls
sequel to Mistress of the Waves
sequel to The One World

Airy Castles All Ablaze has been split into Airy Castles All Ablaze and Stand Against the Light.

Archive Midwinter: thank you for your comments on The Handmaid's Tale, since I expect it will be nominated for a Neffy this year, assuming it is eligible, which I still have to check. I am not surprised by your evaluation. It appears to be one of many things these days that has become political, so that people on one side of the issues have one opinion and people on the other side of the issues have the opposite. I am reminded of an entry in the Science Fiction group on Facebook, the group run

so superbly by Jeffrey Redmond so that it now has well over 60,000 members. In any event, this guiding genius showed up, claimed that the founders of Science Fiction were all progressive, radical, or leftist, (one wonders if he is ever heard of Jon Campbell or Robert Heinlein?) and asked if we should therefore be de-plat forming everyone who disagreed with this alleged set of opinions. Of course, as some of you will recall, Jack Williamson was a card-carrying communist, and Eric Flint, who is an excellent writer, was in the same general vicinity. If you have paid attention to the continuing biographies of N3F founding members, you may recall references to the Futurians, which were indeed a far left fan group of the 1930s, complete with a General Secretary instead of a President or Chair.

To clarify what is going on, the first novel is Eclipse, Airy Castles All Ablaze is a rewrite of my very early novel This Shining Sea, Stand against the Light includes part of This Shining Sea and follows Airy Castles All Ablaze, and Of Breaking Waves is mostly new. So you are getting This Shining Sea, but so far you have mostly seen new stuff rather than stuff that is mostly being transferred with minor editing from the older novel. I hope that made the situation is clear as mud.

Board wargaming is going strong, though it is harder to see. Several hundred board wargames are published each year. Finding someone who plays the same game that you do can, however, be challenging.

As an alternative to reading, there is a writing equivalent of making brush-stroke copies of paintings. Take a well-written book, say Patricia McKillip's The Forgotten Beasts of Eld, and copy it. Handwriting or typing are both suitable, though if you are a good typist, so that you are not thinking about what you are typing, then you don't want to type. You want to do handwritten copy.

Are the other folks in your reading group somewhat into science fiction and fantasy?

As a final note, I would not consider buying an e-book for more than four or five dollars.

Notes from a Galaxy Far Far Away: Lorien, thank you for your notes on Boskone and how expensive

it was to attend. Thirty-five dollars a day for parking is remarkable. I have not been in Boston in many years and have no idea whether or not the subway system is safe after dark. I haven't heard any references to there being issues at reasonable evening hours. I also have no idea when it stops running.

I was sorry to read that your writing effort didn't make it, at least to the scheduled target, but a thousand words a day is pretty good. When I wrote Mistress of the Waves using voice-to-text, I averaged around 1500 words a day, though that included one day when everything clicked perfectly and I wrote 9000 words, but the novel still took close to four months to finish.

Chapter Eclipse vs Solara the Obliterator

Eclipse

The Tunnels of the Void

This is just wonderful, I thought. I may be Eclipse, bearer of the Namestone, recently got back from the core of the Sun, but buying Comet the time she needs is going to be a bear. It couldn't be just Solara by herself. No, there's a whole pile of her friends with her. They even pulled poor Corinne out of hibernation and insisted she wear the Ambihelicon. At least we've reached the Tunnel entrance. That makes things lots simpler.

Child! The voice echoed across the cosmic void.

I'm an adult, Comet answered. *Heinlein Act. You have a complaint, me being here, take it up with the Wizard of Mars.*

Little girl, I am Solara, the Eternal Supreme. The voice rose to a roar. *Return to Earth! Return to Earth until you learn how to use your gifts. Return to Earth or be destroyed. This is your only warning.*

"What do we do?" a panic-stricken Comet asked her friends.

"There's only one way in," I said. "You three get inside, find the Guardian, and haggle. I buy you the time you need."

"What about you, Eclipse?" Star asked. "Should I stay to help?"

"No." I shook my head. "Later on, your sisters may need someone with firepower to deal with the Wizard's dooms."

You cannot outrun us, Solara warned. *You cannot escape us. Turn around, or before you can cross the Tunnels, we will catch you, and then you will surely die.*

"You three head down the Tunnel!" I ordered. "I stay here, bar the way until the thirty minutes are up."

"You're going to fight Solara by yourself?" an unbelieving Star asked. I could say 'nothing like having confidence in your friends', but realistically speaking my odds left something to be desired.

"No, I'm going to stomp her into the ground," I answered.

"There has to be another way," a desperate Star insisted.

"Star, the Wizard warned us. Some of us may die on this trip." I tried to smile. "This may be where I get to die. But I will bar this entrance, as long as I can. Get moving! The longer I have to hold, the more likely I get killed."

Comet hesitated.

"Go!" I shouted. My three travelling companions faded into the Tunnels. Grimly, I dropped through level after level, powering my gifts as rapidly as I could. I'd flown to the core of the Sun, and held on while the Timeless Ones were doing their best to blow up the Sun and me with it. If I have to, I told herself, I can hold here for thirty minutes.

Being realistic, there is no single persona in the world who would like these odds. Mum has a certain weakness that they know. She stays away from fights with them. Morgan Le Fay by repute is not fond of high-power combat, no matter what she did to the Imperial Manjukuoan Grand Fleet and its persona host. However, if you're a grown-up, you play the cards you were dealt. The odds were only

close to impossible. My iron determination damped out waves of fear. I summoned the strongest force wall I could muster, blocking the entire tunnel from side to side.

Solara landed on the portico outside the tunnel. Her garb today was a loose-fitting mix of white and lemon-yellow panels. The bejeweled Mask of the Sun, a golden plate wider and taller than her head, hid her face. Her body screens burned sun bright.

I am Solara, the one and only. You are ordered to lower your defenses and return to Earth.

You and which army? I said. *I've been here before. Last time it was the Peace Police, the Screaming Skull, and one of your people, all demanding I hand over the Namestone. You may have heard what happened?*

That time, Eclipse Solara said, *you fled as soon as you could, going where you were not followed. This time, you cannot flee. You must stand until you yield or die.*

I must stand until you quit, I countered. *You know, I did destroy the Namestone, as promised. Or maybe you didn't know that. I saved Starsmasher's life. Doesn't that count for anything?*

That's why I'm giving you a chance to run away, rather than killing you on the spot, Solara answered. *You should take advantage of my generosity.*

What's the issue, anyhow? I asked. *The Wizard of Mars, himself, asked us to do this.*

You are disrupting the Great Plan, the Plan that has lasted far longer than you would believe possible, Solara answered. *You do not have a need to know what the Plan is. You only need to know you must remove yourself from my path, or you will surely perish. Your whole life is ahead of you. Please don't throw it away.*

The longer we talk, I thought, the less time she has to pound on my force wall. *You get to quit,* I answered. *Or you get to die. I don't care which. You shall not pass.* I was inside the Tunnel, so the

Guardian's teleport block kept them from going around me.

You cannot win, Solara announced. *Yield now, or I'll beat down your every defense, and paddle your backside raw.*

That, I thought, was at least a unique threat. Stupid, but unique. *Solara, I didn't know you were a child molester. I thought you preferred guys. Of course, you're stuck with the second-raters the Silver General leaves you, but they are guys. Well, sort of. I guess. Being generous.*