

This Here...

"Been there, done that, hated it." (K Trainor)

EGOTORIAL

DOGGONE

"She's gone", says the vet.

"Fuck me", I think, through tears. "That was quick".

I've been staring at those two sentences for what seems like fuckin' ages now, somewhat uncertain how to proceed, having my usual trouble of being crap at eulogy. But it's now (July 24th) two weeks since we agreed to send our Lulu on her final journey, and two days from deadline, so it's time to tuff this'un out. Readers with long memories might recall *This Here... #14* (February 2010) in which I related the acquisition of Lulu (and slightly later arrival Bailey) and her subsequent leg surgery for patellar luxation (slipped kneecap). I was told back then that she'd be subject to further leg dodginess as time went by.

Advanced mathematicians will have deduced that Lulu's been part of the family for close to 16 years - we've always estimated her age as that +1 since she was full-grown when I took her on from Aces & Ales bartender Lindsay who was forced to give her up when she and her husband lost their house and had to move to an apartment. During that time she successfully negotiated two address changes, the most recent having properly curtailed her talent for escapology. That, and her increasing age meant she got less mobile, and other than the occasional outbreak of the zoomies her preference for sleeping a lot jacked up.

She'd had problems the last several months, and before that really, with even getting around inside the house since her

back legs had an alarming tendency to give way, which left her rather stranded if she was on an uncarpeted floor eg kitchen. The other very DoBFO issue for the last couple of months has been incontinence - although she's *never* had a piss indoors, we were picking up poops on almost a daily basis. This wasn't something she was doing deliberately, it seemed to be more a case of not making it through the doggy door quite in time, and really being unaware of what was happening at the back end.

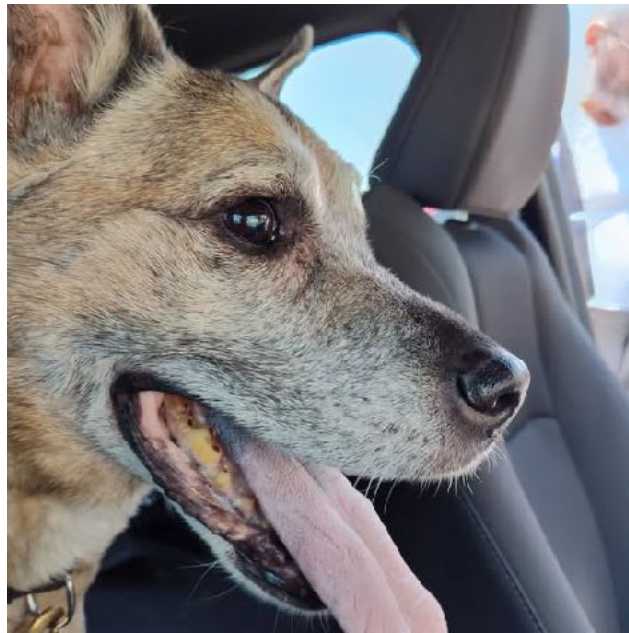
Two weeks ago she'd been laying in the hallway by the bedroom door (one of her favored spots requiring us to step over her frequently), but basically motionless for over five hours, and when she *did* eventually move there was quite a bit of excreta to deal with.

I looked at getting her in to Mountain Vista Animal Hospital, but the online appointment system showed the next availability as Monday. I had enough wit to give them a call to learn that we could bring her as a walk-in, which we did. The photo on this page was taken by **Jen** in the car when we got there.

Hobble-in for all of us was more like it, and the inevitably nice and

solicitous veterinary assistant straightforwardly answers my question "Do you think it's time?" with a sensible "In my opinion, better a little early than a little late."

We eventually get the vet herself, who diagnoses that, while not overtly exhibiting pain, Lulu's back legs are DoBFO pretty fucked and it's also likely that she has spinal problems. While they don't directly *tell* us we ought to conclude that it is indeed time's up, it helps a lot that we're gently and honestly guided that the decision already half-



made is the correct one, even with the selfish element of us not being able to deal with cleaning up shit every day.

Lulu, typically, is calm throughout - I guess that after spending almost all her life with us she knows that whatever we're doing is what we think best.

The procedure is explained: they'll take Lulu and put a catheter in her leg, then bring her back to us for a last few minutes together before the deed is done. We're given a call button to press when we're "ready", which isn't very long, as I tell **Jen** that I can't prolong the moment much because I'm losing it. We both are.

The vet comes back in with three syringes and explains each as she uses them. The first is just a saline to make sure the line is clear and clean; the second a sedative - Lulu twitches a bit as that goes in. The third is the bye-bye dose (we're blubbing profusely by now), the vet puts stethoscope to heart and, I swear, ten or fifteen seconds, tops, the verdict is in. Godspeed. We get up to go and **Jen** has to step over her one last time, managing to not entirely fall apart before asking me if I'm ok to drive home. "Yeah, I'll be all right babe. Just give me a minute."

Getting home, for a desperate distraction of terrible practicality, I engage a carpet cleaner to come out the next day and bag up the dog bed, food and water bowls and such to go in the bin. This doesn't and hasn't stopped us from both hearing her moving around and expecting her treat-craving head to pop around the hallway as we sit watching telly of a night. Most of the physical evidence of her presence is gone away, but we still have a big container of dog food and some treats which will be offered to next door neighbor Oscar when I see him next.

I post the news on FBF that evening to much sympathy, and I'm going to give the last succinct heartfelt words to **S&ra Bond**, who wrote: "She was the bestest of doggos."

Indeed.

She was a Good Girl.

July 2025

CORFLUX

PICKLED NEWS

As of mid-July, Corflu 43 has registered 36 members, 23 of whom are attending. I'll remind you all that hotel bookings are open - booking early helps the organizers work with the hotel. The info is all in PR1:

<https://corflu.org/Corflu43/CorfluPickledPR1.pdf>



One little twist is that 43 might resemble a British Corflu, since the hotel itself doesn't have suites. **Rich Coad** writes:

One thing [the hotel] doesn't have is suites so, in place of a Con Suite, we will offer hospitality in the Santa Rosa meeting room near our main function space. It will be stocked with coffee, tea, snacks of all kinds, and soft drinks but, due to the hotel's liquor license, any alcohol needs to be purchased at the bar. Think of it as a British convention, or perhaps a Mid-Atlantic one. Anyone for Corflu Rockall? If you have special requests or would like to volunteer to help out with keeping the Hospitality Room clean and stocked, please contact hospitality@corflu.org.

PR2 should be hitting the racks around September (it sez here)...

CORFLU VANDOO BID NEWS

A little inevitable perch-shuffling. **Alan Rosenthal** states his role as "Treasurer" (having both Canadian and US bank accounts - see WAHF) and **Jerry Kaufman** (locs) doesn't think **Suzle** is firm for hotel liaison. All good though, early days. Is anyone else habitually misreading the moniker as "Corflu Vindaloo", I wonder?...

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/corflu>

<https://corflu.org/>

WHITE SMOKE

I had intended to note and comment a bit more upon **M Strummer**'s response to **Joseph Nicholas** in the 'Roadrunner' column (*Banana Wings* 82), suggesting that Corflu might very well not make it to 50, though admitting that his previous doom-laden prognostications about the demise of ZZ9, the Hitchhikers' Guide fan group had failed to materialize thus far. I did note the old "ten year rule" on running a Corflu, which isn't really a "rule" as such, more an observation that it takes a decade to recover from doing one, at which point you're ready to organize another. Meself, I took twelve years "off" between Corflu Valentine (Annapolis 2002) and Cor31u (Richmond 2014), then the statutory ten until Cor41u here in Vegas last year.

Thus I would be wont to observe that if **Mark** is right, I'm presumably off the hook for a Cor51u in 2034, by which time I would be 76 years old, if I'm even still upright at that point...

WORLDTHINGWANK

FANZINE LOUNGE AND WOOF NEWS

Yes, an actual non-snarky news item, during which there will be a moment of respectful silence as **Mike Glycer** recovers from immediate chair plummeting...

Following up from the note in *TH... #87* from **Jerry Kaufman** on the Seattle Worldcon 2025 Fanzine Lounge, **Suzle** provides an update, summarized as follows:

They haven't yet received much in the way of contributions of actual fanzines to be scattered tastefully in the premises, and there isn't a lot of time left - less than two weeks by the time you read this. I should get off me own arse and send the **Killer** a package of dubious merit and encourage others to do the same. Probably best to initially contact **Jerry** direct by email for starters at jakaufman@aol.com ...

Suzle also writes: "A number of people have asked us about *WOOF*, but as of today [July 25th], there's no one to actually handle it. We are offering the collation space, but can't do much more."

As a very occasional contributor, I'm also interested in what's happening with *WOOF*, since I'm more likely to submit a pdf one-sheet if that's the road taken. The problem seems to be that no-one will admit to having direct responsibility for it this year. This is by no means a knock on **Jerry** and **Suzle**, whom I imagine have quite enough to do with sorting the Fanzine Lounge itself. He suggests: "Or someone planning to attend and who is interested could just appoint themselves OE and announce details.", something I suspect has happened before. **Heath Row** has contacted **John Hertz**, who for whatever reason seems to be the go-to, and reports back: "...[**Hertz**] says he hopes to track down answers (on the OC/OE and on the deadline) soon." Any late-breaking info will get tacked on to 'Indulge Me'.

In case **Glyer** or anyone else might be wondering about my apparent lack of the usual WorldThing derision here (apart from the egregious failure to organize *WOOF* until the last minute), the DoBFO intersection of interest is (1) Fanzines and (2) the involvement of two dear friends in organizing the Fanzine Lounge...

HEALTH DIARY

MERCIFULLY BRIEF BUT NOT UNSERIOUS

Not a lot to report except my semi-regular "wellness check" delayed visit with Dr. Park this week from which a couple *more* issues were addressed. First up, or down, depending on how you look at it, is me feet which are at best horrible to peruse (no photos!) and currently worse than that. I've got swelling, especially on the right which, to nice Dr. Park's evident dismay, is very red as well as being puffed up to the extent that I can only vaguely but wistfully recall when I used to have ankles. A long-overdue podiatrist referral is given, as well as a couple more scans and a scrip for the ugly condition of toenail fungus (no photos!).

I also mention the inevitable bumhole issues which cause all readers to scurry on to the next column. I attempt, only partially successfully I think, to explain the meaning of

"squirrely" to the Doc. More fiber, it seems, might prove an adequate battle plan against the squirrels' latest summer campaign of attack though I think that might cause worse shits...

RADIO WINSTON

HOTTER THAN JULY

It's a fair bet, I reckon, that the subtitle of this column will cause many readers to immediately think of Stevie Wonder's slice "Master Blaster (Jammin')" from 1980:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V4n27UjHxc>

Having subsequently tested this theory on a couple of people, turns out I was well wrong, but ey...

An aside: in the mid 1980s I was sort-of sitting in as the keyboard player for a cover band whose ambition was to get on the cruise ship circuit ("sort-of sitting in" meaning that I wasn't that likely to stay with them if they got the gig). I forget which Stevie Wonder song was on the setlist, although I suspect it was "I Just Called to Say I Love You", and the obscure key in which it was composed prompted us all to moan that the artist "writes like a fuckin' blind man" - more sharps than a medical supply store...

Back to the topic, I had suspected that "hotter than July" just *might* be a well- if not overused phrase, though not one I particularly detest like "time could not erase" (I've got no fuckin' clue as to why that is). The website lyrics.com serves up a total of 18,874 lyrics from 104 artists, about enough to engender a desire to abandon this column then and there - except that you could easily surmise that there's (DoBFO, shurely) many repeats of the same slice. I thought I'd plough on anyway because I'd already thought of the slice I was going to mention last, even though it's not "hotter than July" per se.

I'll also expect weary notes from **Leigh Edmonds** ranking these according to their soporific value...

So, lazily I expect, here's some examples across various musical genres, first up country icons Brooks & Dunn and "Boot Scootin' Boogie":

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d05tQrhNMkA>

Representing R&B/smooth funk, here's Tuxedo with 'July':

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QrwLf5WmYSg>

From the (hard) rock department, and possibly more to **Leigh's** liking (but who knows?), Mr. Big give us "Dancin' With My Devils":

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8BSna3mAJX4>

Now then, the band Creek Road are what, exactly? Country *inflected*, you might say, but Southern rock influenced, shurely? Here's their slice "Fly & Ride" from 2023:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9hEaHMrovII>

A rap track has to be in here somewhere, and there's several "hotter than July" examples, but let's feature classic west coast beat and dense lyrics from Ice Cube with "Ghetto Bird":

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PCSSnN438gc>

Finally on to the slice I wanted to mention, which is July-related. 100 years ago in *This Here... #4* (June 2000) I mentioned the previous year's release of 'Blue', the second studio album from Third Eye Blind. Apparently, (I learn from current research for this column) the recording process was fraught with tension between band members; lead guitarist Kevin Cadogan got the boot shortly thereafter. At that time I described this slice in particular as "what the Rolling Stones might sound like if they weren't so fuckin' old", which in retrospect is unfair to both bands, although possibly in different ways. I can only surmise that I was appreciating a thumping riff-based slice in comparison with the many Stones riff-based slices, but in reality it's apples and oranges innit, although I believe you can discern a bit of Keef influence. So for a good ole Play It Loud moment (and possible earworm for **Steve Jeffery?**) rock on to "1000 Julys":

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cSITiIdHycQ>

MOVIE NIGHT

HEADS OF STATE

Readers will be unsurprised that I immediately clocked this'un on Amazon Prime, expecting a jolly 113 minutes, and wasn't disappointed. A little surprised, perhaps, what with the trailers understandably playing up the cultural and personality differences of Cena as President Will Derringer, a former action movie star, and British PM Sam Clarke (Elba), an actual British Army vet. Which isn't, in turn, to say their adversarial posturing doesn't happen throughout, but the threat and the bad guys (as bog standard as both might be) are genuine and hardly trivial. Cena is well-known for playing up to (and making fun of) his WWE image, as anyone who's seen him guest host 'Saturday Night Live' will

attest, and Elba makes an admirable straight man for the getting-a-bit-less-cocky-as-we-go POTUS.

As usual, it's unfair to single out performances from the rest of the cast, but also as usual, I will anyway: Ingeborga Dapkunaite (whom observers of detail may recall as "Hannah" in the first 'Mission: Impossible movie) has a lovely little turn as a helpful Belarussian farmer, but the best effort comes from Jack Quaid as a goofy CIA agent. My action movie fans out there should be pleased...

SINNERS

Much goshwow abounds over this'un. Loads of review pull quotes are calling it the best movie of the year (well, so far, DoBFO) and I wouldn't say that they're far wrong. It says here (in a Wikipedia note) "Described as a genre-defying film, *Sinners* incorporates a hybrid of Southern Gothic, period supernatural horror, musical, and revisionist Western elements" and that's fairly accurate, for all that it sounds like it could be a godawful mess.

And there *are* a couple of odder scenes (oh all right, this'un is chokker with oddness) which didn't quite come across as they might, although I suspect a repeat viewing would treat them more kindly eg the aspiring bluesman Sammie Moore's playing conjuring up past and future spirits.

Writer/director Ryan Coogler has this as his first effort which isn't based on others' material, having made his rep with the 'Rocky' spinoff 'Creed' series and for Marvel's 'Black Panther' movies, and you could argue, if a bit uncharitably, that he's chucked everything at the wall. It does, though, all hang together in an exhibition of fuckin-A writing and directing skill.

Much has deservedly been made of Michael B. Jordan's performance(s) as the identical twins Elijah ("Smoke") and Elias ("Stack") Moore, but the real central character is their cousin Sammie, a fantastic performance by Miles Caton and (SPOILER ALERT) as an elderly and famous Sammie in a mid-credits sequence you *must* stay for by Buddy Guy!

Once again there's not a weak performance anywhere in the cast. If I have a mild criticism it's probably that the editing could have been a little tighter, even though at an expansive



137 minutes the movie doesn't really feel overlong, and definitely not bloated.

We can, realistically I reckon, expect to see a bunch of award nominations for this'un when 2026 comes around, and if cinematographer Autumn Durand Arkapaw doesn't cop one it'll be a fuckin' travesty...

TV GUIDE

THE ARSE

Having sung the praises of 'Duster' (HBO Max) and had some cooler goshwow over the season finale which sets up brilliantly for season 2, we have the major arse upon finding out that it hasn't been renewed, the reason given being lousy ratings. Sigh. Perhaps another network will pick it up, that's happened before. For *The Independent*, Neve Dawson wrote:

The show initially received a lukewarm response from critics since it premiered in the US on HBO Max in May.

At the time of writing [July 10], the show has a 92 per cent rating on the review site Rotten Tomatoes.

Despite many fans having praised *Duster*, the show failed to build a big enough fanbase to warrant a second season.

So despite fan praise and later good reviews, away it goes. I could guess that the producers (Warner Brothers) were expecting some kind of stellar water-cooler reaction from what's in part a 'Lost' reunion (JJ Abrams, LaToya Morgan, Josh Holloway), but despite those really good critical and audience scores (92% and 83% respectively) never cracked the Nielsen top ten. Given that there must be approx 32 squillion shows on offer, that seems a fuckin' stupidly high bar, don't it? You have to feel for Josh Holloway who's been waiting seven years or so for a leading role opportunity like this, one which he clearly deserved and nailed it...

COSY AND COMPACT

Although **Jen** tends to long for the days of 26-episode seasons of yore, she does also seem to appreciate the 6-episode British shows, because, in her words, "You can watch them in an afternoon". As we have done lately to fill in time waiting for 'Strange New Worlds'.

The "cosy mystery" is a very Brit thing really innit, although the level of "cosiness" will vary with whatever underlying story arc there might be as well as the location.

So we'll start with Cambridge and 'Ludwig' (Britbox). This'un comes across as being specifically written for David Mitchell, or someone very much like him (if such a creature exists). Yer basic premise is the disappearance of DCI James Taylor under mysterious circumstances, and his wife strong-arms his twin brother John into impersonating him to find out what the fuck's going on. Since James is described as a "successful DCI" and John is a reclusive puzzle-setter (who goes by the pseudonym of "Ludwig", hence the title), we've

got the first required suspension of disbelief in just about *nobody* noticing the substitution - although I suppose to be fair this is addressed within the narrative, in part by having James' police partner and best mate removed from the playing field, and later by the rest of the team of DoBFO crap detectives purporting amazement that they hadn't clocked it. If you can gloss over that bit, we're all good with the fish-out-of-water scenario of John solving murders with his puzzle skills while having to advance the story arc of finding out what happened to his brother. The performances (especially Mitchell's, as you might expect) are what carry the series. We enjoyed it, and apparently there will be a second series...



Seemingly mentioned in the same breath by some of the critics, 'Death Valley', set in a fictitious village in the Vale of Glamorgan (filmed around Penarth) stars the never less than brilliant Timothy Spall as retired luvvie and national treasure John Chapel - famous due to having played a quirky detective on an (implied) long-running tv series. Whereas 'Ludwig' is, as I said, more fish-out-of-water in its setup, 'Death Valley' has the oft-used trope of mismatched "partners" with a bit of difference in that where one of the main characters is often the "straight man/person/preferred pronoun" persona, here neither of them are, with the actual police officer Janie Mallowan (Gwyneth Keyworth) being a bit Tourettes-y in that she often makes wildly inappropriate comments, and is in a constant state of anxiousness over



Chapel helping her out, which, since he's a civilian, will incur the displeasure of her boss, DCI Barry Clarke (Steffan Rhodri), played, for a change, with nuance rather than the tuff 'n' gruff qualities often attached to such a character. A second series is reported to begin filming in September, good-o!...

Finally, a quick approving mention for 'Ballard' (Amazon Prime), a spinoff from 'Bosch' starring Maggie Q. This uses the underfunded and underappreciated "cold case team" setup, and I can confirm that, having never watched it myself, familiarity with the 'Bosch' series isn't a requirement to be into this'un, although the character does have a few cameos. There's all the LAPD shenanigans and corruption you'd expect, and a fuckin' massive cliffhanger ending. No official word on a season 2 yet, but given the ratings it does seem likely...

CASTING COUCH

Once again, *Banana Wings* and more fanboy gushing over **Claire**, whom I am really not trying to embarrass by all this, honest guv...

I had a bit of a tidy of the haphazard piles of reading material in the lav, granting eg issues of *Portable Storage* sort-of bookshelf space - with "sort-of" there merely describing the haphazard nature of the FanCave rather than trying to be any indicator of relative importance. This shuffle revealed where all those ishes of *Inca* ended up, but also turned up a slightly water-damaged *Banana Wings* #57 (November 2014) in which **Claire** (inspired by **Patrick Nielsen Hayden**) essays the perennial topic of fannishly recasting classics, in this case the denizens of the Hundred Acre Wood (here yclept the "Hundred Idea Wood") who become accurate versions of **Jim Mowatt** and "**Chris-teh-Garcia**" among others.

This kind of faanish exercise does do the rounds from time to time for the general amusement. In *This Here...* #10 (January 2009), I wrote:

The fannish recasting of popular culture icons such as [the Powerpuff Girls] is always a fun pastime ("and it's Traditional!" © Tobes). Fairly obviously Lilian Edwards is Blossom, and I'd suggest Max as Buttercup, but in thish's piece of loc whoring I'll invite suggestions for Bubbles...

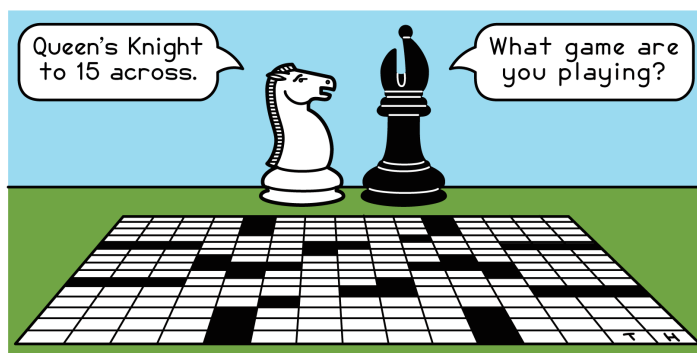
That hasn't aged well, has it? It's certainly clear enough that Lilian might have liked to *think* she's Blossom, when that role should DoBFO be attributed to **Claire**. **Alison Scott** may be the best contender for Buttercup, despite that character's extemporaneous nature and typical lack of planning. Back then I probably envisaged **Claire** as Bubbles but was too terrified to actually say so (ahem). If there's a Bubbles out there, maybe it's **Christina Lake**? Answers on a postcard...



I find that I referred back to this (and a faanish casting of the original 'CSI') in a loccol reply to **Kim Huett** not so long ago (*This Here...* #78, last August) - he had somewhat frighteningly suggested that he was imagining Netflix's 'The Decameron' as a Corflu, "and ponder[ing] who matches the various characters". As I suggested back then, a semi-regular column might be made of such drollery, but no-one really took me up on it - and who can blame them?

A number of shows that we clock have quite trifric ensemble casts which shurely lend themselves to faanish casting, although for the life of me the only one I can't seem to get out of me 'ead at the moment is **A Phineas Hooper** as Murderbot...

GIVE US A CLUE



Lastish:

"Absconded with BDSM leader by chance? (6)"

Definition: "by chance"

Wordplay: "Absconded" = RAN + "BDSM leader" = DOM ("leader" misdirects as it may suggest the first letter), yielding RANDOM

"Sounds like this Austrian composer might be difficult to find (5)"

Definition: "Austrian composer"

Wordplay: "sounds like" indicates a homonym for "difficult to find" = HAYDN

"June holiday commemorating a Hooper fanzine? (4,3)"

Definition: "June holiday"

Wordplay: "commemorating a Hooper fanzine?" = FLAG DAY

Jerry Kaufman : I've read just enough to get to the Crossword Clues, and wonder why you made them so easy this time? RANDOM, HAYDN, and FLAG DAY. (If I'm not mistaken.) Thanks!

Alan Rosenthal also gets 3/3, on the third clue pondering whether there was also a fanzine titled *Bastille*. I had the vague thought that there might have been...

Eli Cohen is also 3/3: "Once I stopped looking for a James "Bond" connection and focused on "by chance", RANDOM (as in absconded = ran and BDSM leader = dom) popped up.

"Obviously the composer is HAYDN out somewhere.

"June holiday commemorating a Hooper fanzine? (4,3)" This was easier than it might have been, due to the Hooper fanzine mention on page 1: FLAG DAY"

Thish's possibly more difficult efforts (all have fannish solutions which you could likely correctly guess at, so I suppose the test here is more to determine the wordplay than to arrive at the answer):

"Kipling enthusiast heartlessly fired by student without the winning card? (4,6)"

"Frequently featured lastish, her matrimonial tossed out an old penny, first entering Yale (7)"

"Recent Hugo winner confuses Hooper with Colorado bike race (10)"

ANORAK

ARE FRIENDS ELECTRIC?

I was spurred into this by the following photo which turned up on FBF of the class 76 26050 locomotive (named "Stentor") from the late 1960s which led me to consider that I haven't really featured any anoraking of the electrics so far.



I find much interesting stuff about BR electrification and the links between the 76s and the now partially closed Woodhead line (Sheffield - Penistone* - Manchester). And tunnels! Seriously, this column's got it all...

I was more surprised than I should have been to discover that the first electric railway in the UK opened in 1883 in Brighton, a narrow gauge effort running along the seafront to this day. Then of course there's the Oxo (rhyming slang alert: "Oxo Cube" = "Tube") which started electric services in 1890 on what's now a bit of the Northern line. Given that early start date, still only about 40% of the UK network is electrified, though.

Anyway, the original Woodhead line opened in 1845, a major infrastructure feature being the just over 3 mile long Woodhead Tunnel (Woodhead 1) between Woodhead and Dunford Bridge, at the time one of the world's longest and the first trans-Pennine tunnel going under the Peak District. Woodhead 2 opened in 1853. The line was heavily trafficked with something like 250 trains a day each way, passenger and freight. Train crews absolutely fuckin' *hated* the narrow and claustrophobic tunnels (and very sooty - all steam trains then, remember) which were also hard to maintain properly because of the sheer volume of traffic.

Woodhead 1 cost about 200 grand to build (about £25 million in today's money) and its construction (and that of Woodhead 2) became a bit of a scandal at the time due to the casualty rate among the navvies, not that the railway companies gave a toss. From railwaymuseum.org.uk :

In the 1840s there was no compensation for death or injury, and railway engineers like Brunel resisted all efforts to provide their workers with adequate housing and sanitation, or safe working conditions.

The Woodhead Tunnel scandal was sparked by the fact that the death rate among the navvies who built the tunnel (between 1839 and 1852) was higher than that of the soldiers who fought at the battle of Waterloo.

The scandal led to a parliamentary enquiry, but its findings were not acted upon for years.

Although railway work created a sense of pride and identity, hardship and danger were common. Even after the Woodhead Tunnel scandal, railway companies sometimes operated with a ruthlessness that cost the lives of thousands of workers, who were being killed at the rate of nearly 500 a year in the 1880s and 1890s.

Electrification of the line was first mooted by then owner LNER in 1936, and quite a few gantries were put in place before World War II screeched any progress to a halt. The existing tunnels couldn't be electrified (too narrow) so post-war plans included a new twin-tracked tunnel, Woodhead 3, completed in 1953. The next photo shows a train coming out of Woodhead 1, Woodhead 3 is under construction next to it.



Concurrently, the class 76 locomotives were being manufactured (over 50 of them from 1950-53), having been specifically designed for use on the Woodhead line (although the original prototype was built in 1941 and ultimately loaned to Dutch railways immediately post-war before being returned in 1952). The Woodhead 3 tunnel was completed in 1953 and officially opened in June the following year, costing a ton of dosh (£4.3 million, equivalent to £160m or so in today's money) in part because of a couple of roof collapses in 1951 during construction.

You'll have noticed that there's quite a few years in between the prototype manufacture and the main build of the 76s, which provided loads of time to work out the kinks, of which there weren't really that many - while designed with freight in mind, these locos also ran passenger services on the Woodhead line and proved highly reliable. One of their features was regenerative braking, which returned power to the overhead lines on the descents either side of Woodhead 3, thus providing an assist to ascending trains. You can judge the gradient a bit from this 1981 photo, a pair of 76s hauling freight, about to enter the tunnel.



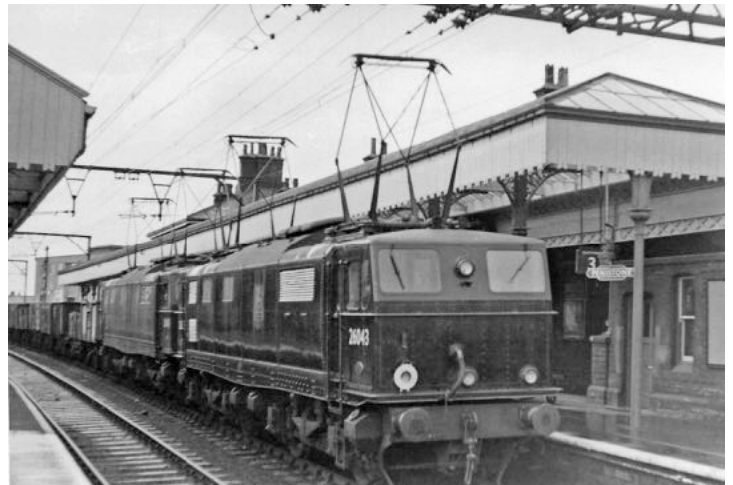
That Bastard Beeching inevitably cocks up the story of the line, which was closed to passenger traffic between Hadfield

and Penistone* in January 1970, *despite* the Beeching Axe having recommended closure (to passengers) of the Hope Valley Line (Manchester-Sheffield) instead. This precipitated the withdrawal of the 76s from service - even though they were some of the oldest locos working, they were still considered well reliable. The Dutch still liked them a lot and try to buy the locos off British Rail, but were rebuffed since their sale would have refuted the bollocks management claim of "expired working life", so they surreptitiously scrapped the fuckin' lot, except for one (76020) which is preserved at York's National Railway Museum.

Bits of the Woodhead line itself survive eg Manchester-Glossop and the Huddersfield platforms at Penistone* station (Huddersfield-Sheffield via Barnsley).

Various proposals to reopen Woodhead 3 to rail traffic have been going on since the late 1990s - the final passenger service ran in 1970, and the last train of all in 1981. Woodhead 1 and 2 have both deteriorated badly and are now sealed.

* You will have noticed that I have deliberately and uncharacteristically avoided any of the comedic possibilities of "Penistone" (station pictured below), but by all means knock yourselves out giggling...



THE OLD SOD

BY DAVID HODSON

For the last few weeks, I have been dealing with one of the most first world of first world problems: setting up a new PC to work exactly like the old PC did, despite both machines having different operating systems.

I am constantly astounded at my complete loss of brain plasticity when it comes to bloody computers, and it's not like the real "under the bonnet" changes are even that severe. Word still operates in exactly the same way it always has since I took out an Office 365 subscription rather than continue to chase the dragons of multiple Office upgrades

over the decades, and even the benefits of Age of Empires II and Age of Wonders fair racing along in comparison to the decade old previous machine can't seem to compensate for the confusing cosmetic changes on the desktop. The only really major pain in the arse of this upgrade is having to retrain Outlook about what emails go into junk and what emails go into my inbox, even though I was assured that all my settings would transfer over easily. *sigh*

Truth be told there are two other recent tech developments that are proving to be bigger problems than this machine upgrade. The first is the intrusion of more and increasingly more prompts to use A.I., be it within the operating system or on the internet (the first thing I see when I open Word these days is "Describe what you would like to write", rather than just letting me get on and write the fucking thing). I had a look at MIndjourney way back when it first appeared a few years ago but decided fairly quickly that I could ask Dave Carson to draw Lovecraftian horrors for me that were more convincing than anything it could conjure up at great expense to the environment.

In most instances, it's reasonably easy to avoid A.I.; you can either ignore the prompts or switch them off and, should you encounter people who use A.I. to do things like produce derivative illustrations, you can just avoid them and not ask them to do anything for you (I am aware that voting with your feet doesn't always work, as the increase in supermarket self-service check-outs demonstrates. Being in the minority that only used human check-outs did nothing to slow their withdrawal).

The other annoying development is the UK government deciding to introduce age verification for websites that might expose young people to pornography. Now, before anyone jumps down my throat outraged that I should be annoyed at our government for protecting our wee, innocent childlings from all that disgusting, corrupting smut, I do not advocate either for or against pornography. My attitude is pornography has existed throughout most of human history (we've found smutty prehistoric cave paintings) and, so long as no one is exploited in the making of it (and I'm not naïve, I know that people are exploited and that is wrong), it's probably futile to try and control its production. I do also believe that young people should be protected from pornography, especially from the most severe kinds. I just don't agree with the way the UK government is going about it.

It doesn't take a genius to realise that the real hardcore pornographers, who have servers based in countries that are outside anything remotely like UK jurisdiction, will just ignore the age verification requirements. Truth be told, the UK government wouldn't even know how to contact the owners of the servers to ask them to comply with their regulations, and that's before the likely two-fingered

response from same. That only leaves the likes of X, which is also not likely to comply with the UK government given the attitude of Elon Musk to governmental authority, and reddit, who has already implemented the verification requirements, with the expected unexpected consequences that always seem to accompany such changes.

I've been a reddit user for several years. Whilst it would be fair to say that the site doesn't have the best of reputations, it's also accurate that it has a huge population of geek, super-informed users if you're looking for information on anything to do with popular culture. The problem is if, for example and like me, you're a fan of the Marvel Superhero films, which have multiple sub-reddits serving your needs, with many of those sub-reddits being cross posted to by hundreds and thousands of users from, shall we say, less than clean cut other sub-reddits. The recent Thunderbolts* movie provides us with a perfect example; Florence Pugh, who plays Yelena Belova in the Marvel Cinematic Universe, has for many years been an advocate for the "Free The Nipple" movement, quite rightly saying women should be able to wear whatever they please whenever and wherever they please, and there are hundreds of photographs of her wearing sheer tops and dresses from various photoshoots and film premieres, and they are regularly posted to the Marvel movie groups by people, usually new users, who either think they've not been seen before or that they're being clever by posting them. Many users of these sub-reddits are now being asked to age verify, despite not plunging into the seedier end of the site, and many of the site's users are now leaving in the hope of finding another venue for their interests that also isn't Facebook, me included. It's the same old saga; website becomes truly useful, some country or other objects to something or other and introduces legislation to control it, unintended consequences absolutely destroy website. People are inherently self-destruction, why wouldn't their social media be the same?

I have received two kickstarter packages in the last few days that I'd forgotten I'd even backed. I regularly back new issues of Cerebus In Hell, a rather non-linear continuation of Cerebus the Aardvark, the black and white independent title that started off as a parody of Marvel's Conan the Barbarian comic in the early 1980s and became one of the most essential titles of the period, running for three hundred issues. The two packages I've just received have precious little in common with comic books.

The first was a package of four black and white titles reprinting "adult" movie press adverts from the 1960s through to 1980, predominantly Italian. Most of the films in the volumes have a horror or other genre connection and one of the titles is specifically called Nightmare Nights, Sexy Horror Movie Press Ads. Looking back at these adverts with the benefit of forty years of studying schlock and bizarre cinema, they are remarkably tame. The days when Ilsa, the

Tigress of Siberia, was regarded as shocking and only available “under the counter” seem a very long time ago.



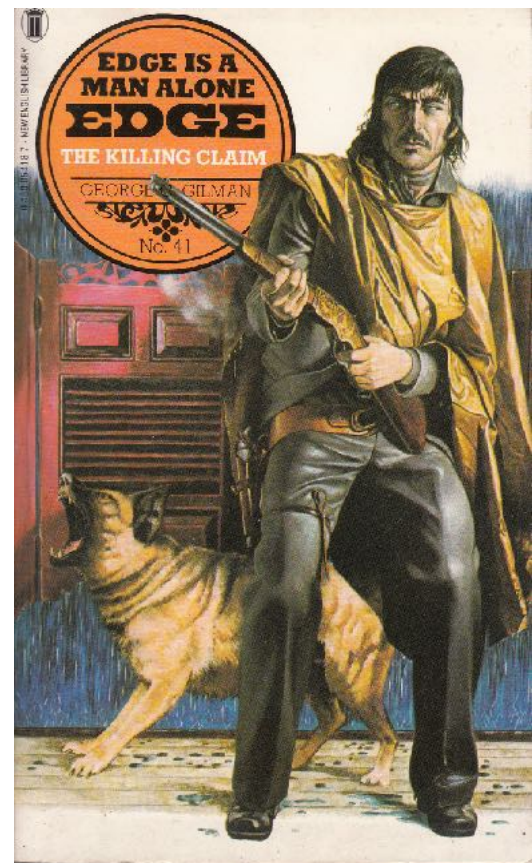
The reason I backed these four books (which were rather more expensive than they look like they should have been, to be blunt) was because I also backed a French volume called *Erotissimo*, a limited-edition hardcover that reprints Italian “adult” movie posters from the 1960s to the 1980s, from the same publisher. The thing with most European “adult” film posters of the period is, unlike British film posters, they weren’t allowed to use photographs or stills, so most of the posters were beautifully painted by Spanish artists, many of whom had a connection to *Metal Hurlant*, the predecessor of *Heavy Metal* magazine, once edited by one Ted White of this parish, and Warren Comics, who published *Vampirella*, *Creepy*, and *Eerie*. Several of the posters were painted by Paulo Eleuteri Serpieri, the Italian creator of the post-apocalypse adventures of *Druuna*, who seems to spend most of the pages of the multiple volumes of her saga being

stripped naked by various mutants and monsters. Not exactly subtle stuff.

The same publisher has two other volumes that interest me: *Barbarians from Conan to He-Man*, a cinematic history of Conansploitation and *After the World Ends*, When Post-Apocalyptic Movies were Telling the Future. I think I’ll spring for the approximately £25.00 each next month.

Coming in January is another weird and wacky kickstarter I’ve backed: *Spellbound*. This volume is a collection of the cover art from 1970s “occult” paperbacks of the kind mostly published by New English Library, purveyors of some of the UK’s sleaziest books of the period including Guy N Smith horror novels, various bootboy and bootgirl titles, and just about anything else that would justify putting a scantily clad woman on a cover. They did redeem themselves a little by publishing the George Gilman *Edge* western novels.

Tomorrow (Sunday 27th) I’ll be in the cinema to watch the new *Fantastic Four* movie, mainly because I don’t want to watch the England Women’s football team play Spain in the European Championship final on television. I’ve just got a suspicion that it’s going to be a disappointing result for the Lionesses, Spain really have looked like the class outfit of this tournament. The reviews of the movie have been good and superhero movies seem to be on a bit of a roll recently following *Thunderbolts** and James Gunn’s excellent *Superman*. I just hope the cinema isn’t full of noisy bloody children...



LOCO CITATO

[[“Do you love me enough that I may be weak with you? Everyone loves strength, but do you love me for my weakness? That is the real test.” (Alain de Botton) ...]]

From: wombat.scho@gmail.com

June 29

Kevin Trainor writes:

Thank you for the zine. I’m currently dithering over whether I should do a personal zine alongside the 2.5 I’m already doing for various APA, the main cause of the dithering being doubt that I have enough going on in my life that’s of interest to others to fill up 3 APAzines and a perszine without boring the crap out of people who have to endure more than one of my zines already. (Hi, **Garth**.) After all, fans don’t live by mailing comments alone. Speaking of which, more specific comments later unless I forget in the press of NSSAB and Son of Silvercon bidness, which is entirely likely.

Best of luck with the cellulitis. Been there, done that, hated it.

[[Re: also doing a perszine - Plenty of others “recycle” APA material as perszines, perhaps most notably Heath Row with his “bundlezine” The STF Amateur. Among the heavyweights, both Andy Hooper (Captain Flashback) and Fred Lerner (Lofgeornost) distribute those APAzines more generally outside the APAe themselves. Having revived APA-V, I don’t do that with my own contribution there, and (at least so far) I haven’t recycled any of that content into This Here..., nor submitted the distys to efanazines or Fanac. That might change at some future time, I suppose...]]

From: typographer@earthlink.net

June 29

John D Berry writes:

Fuck, I used to have that Yardbirds “Having a Rave Up” album. In fact, it might still be lying around. I remember it well. Had no idea at the time who Eric Clapton was.

Okay, you keep using this abbreviation without explication: what the fuck does DoBFO stand for?

[[I will happily remind you and other readers that the initials refer to the Department of the Blindingly Fuckin’ Obvious...]]

More reading to be done, RealSoonNow.

From: jabberwocky2000@hotmail.com

July 1

Brad Foster writes:

This Here.. 88 showed up in the mail. Always liked the look of double-number issues (88,77,66...) but do not know why.

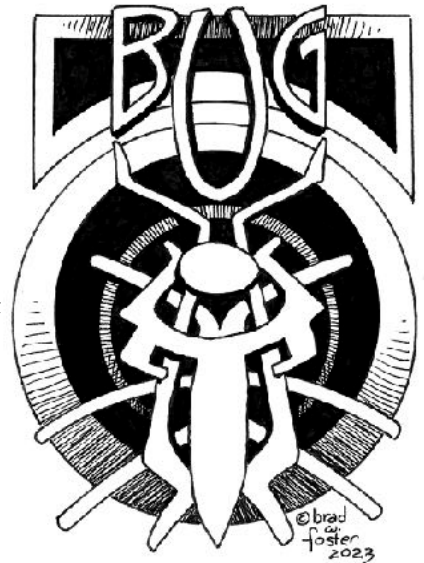
Anyways...

Three toons used this ish, so three new ones being sent. Balance is good.

Reading your opening musings on why you do your zine, made me think why do any of us do this? So before I get to the part of that article where you explain your own personal reasons, my random thoughts on the subject:

Mainly because we enjoy it, I would guess. There is work involved (you could simply sit and think these thoughts for your own amusement, never bothering with writing them down, or even more work of putting them into a format to distribute to other people); I could simply stop when I think of an idea for a ‘toon, smile and then move on, without taking the time to actually put it on paper, and then work to find someplace to get it where others could see it as well.

We do it because we want to and, somehow, each step is also kind of fun and interesting. And sharing stuff, and getting feedback, that is fun, too.



Back to the article now, and you list many reasons for why you do it, all of them good and sound, because they are your reasons for why you do it, and that is always the perfect reason for anyone. Personally, I am just pleased that anyone takes the time to share thoughts with others like this, rather than we all just sit in our houses, staring at the walls, with only our own thoughts and nothing from anyone else.

Whatever reasons they find to do it is good enough for me.

Pub that ish!

[[Equally interesting might be the reasons why we stop doing these things, whether permanently or on extended breaks? GAFIA? EAFIA? I suspect a fair bit of the latter, definitely in my case...]]

Bob Jennings' comment about how he loathes to cut his lawn reminded me how much I enjoy doing it here. I am not good at all in caring for a lawn at all, but walking back and

forth over it and cutting whatever random bits of things that have decided to try to grow there to a uniform height is actually kind of enjoyable. I like seeing it go from ragged mess to neatly trimmed mess that, if viewed from the street, will fool people into thinking it is not the home of a plant killer.

And don't get me started on trimming the edges—shudders of delight running that little trimmer back and forth to end up with nice, even, straight lines all around the homestead. Sets the pleasure endorphins popping all over my brain when finished to see it all clean and neat like a precise little pen and ink illo.

If we were neighbors, I'd only charge **Bob** a few bucks to walk over his yard each time I did mine. I too am not interested in all that other stuff—just keep whatever weeds, grass, and other green vegetation to an even height, and we're good!

Oh, and that toon from Teddy on page 9 is wonderful!

[[As always. It's on page 6 thish, wouldn't want you to miss it...]]

From: jakaufman@aol.com

July 1

Jerry Kaufman writes:

Thanks for the history of your fanzine production and your thoughts on gossip, your daily routine, etc. Makes me think that my editorial in the next *Littlebrook* could be some history about my publications - not entirely congruent with **Suzle's** and my joint productions. As for gossip, in our cohort, much of it is related to our health nowadays. Most of us don't have the time, energy, or even interest in having new relationships. We're lucky simply to make new friends or new interests.

"Keep Calm and Do Fanac" is a reasonable motto. Include it in each new issue.

[[If there's room...]]

Nice to see **Murray Moore's** announcement of a Corflu bid for Vancouver in 2027. That, along with Montreal's Worldcon Bid for the same year, will mean two trips to Canada for us, a pleasant prospect. But I don't think **Suzle** wants to be "Hotel Contract and Liaison." (**Suzle** and **Murray** need to hash this out.)

[[As I pointed out lastish, as things stand I am wary of crossing the border and attempting to re-enter the USA, but will DoBFO supper Murray's efforts...]]

The Adventures of Mary Darling is the hot fannish book at the moment. **Eileen Gunn** bought **Suzle** a copy for her

birthday, and it sits on our coffee table waiting for one of us to read it. In all likelihood, I will be the first one to crack the spine.

Our television viewing has included *The Residence* (I was beginning to think it was rather dragged out, but the final episode was brilliant and justified the series length) and, so far, five episodes of *Department Q*. So far it's been rather agonizing. I also got around to watching *The Last of Us*, but gave up on it after seven episodes for several reasons, including that anyone the two main characters befriend will die, and that I read a spoiler about the tenth and final first season episode that made me despair.

You've already had my answers to your crossword clues. Either they were much more straightforward this time, or I've picked up enough methodology from **Eli** and others to surprise myself.

[[As you may have already seen, I've tried to make thish's efforts a bit more difficult, although I think all are guessable...]]

I know just enough about people in fandom to identify some, if not all, of the people in the photos **Dave Hodson** includes, and I was at the 1988 Worldcon (where I met some of the Chicken Brothers). On page 11, left to right, are Terry Pratchett, Linda Krawecka (not her surname at the time), Ian Banks, Bryan Barrett (very tentative ID), and Mike Moir. The latter I knew because and his wife Deb had a small press specializing in Keith Roberts. On the next page, there's Ian Banks and you, but the fellow on the left looks like a college friend of mine who wasn't a fan, so wouldn't have been there. (Although when he and I reconnected a few years ago, I found out he was good friends with the Breiding family.)

[[The Archbishop may thank you, but you're not entirely correct eg not Bryan Barrett and not me either. "The fellow on the left" is the Hod-me-son hisself...]]

In the letter column I opine about homeopathy. You respond that I can't generalize about homeopathic effectiveness any more than I can generalize about other drugs being 100% effective. To the latter part of your comeback, I did not make any generalizations about drugs or treatments that are not homeopathic. To my knowledge, no drugs or treatments are 100% effective. As for my generalization about homeopathy, my understanding is that all homeopathic treatments are based on the theory that tiny amounts of certain substances - the tinier the better - activate recuperative powers in people. The amounts of these substances are so small as to be almost or entirely undetectable, like waving a bottle of vermouth at a



glass of gin to make a very dry martini. This contradicts medical understandings and logic.

[[OK, I felt that your denigration of homeopathy heavily implied that "proper" treatments were fully or almost wholly effective by comparison. I'll rescind that deduction, then...]]

But as I asked, might there be some studies that show more than a placebo effect from the use of such?

As for "Ms. East Ham," I don't think she is a liar, or at least not consciously. Her comment about the age of fans attending Corflu wasn't a lie (if memory serves, you pointed to her comment as an example of one of her porkies), it was an inability to correctly estimate age by appearance. I could well have made the same mistake if asked. The complaint about the inaccessibility of the main hotel building not being mentioned in advance, well, that does seem to qualify as a lie, sadly.

[[You're shading the "over 70" remark in the best possible light, whereas it was in fact an incorrect statement which was easily shown to be untrue, and suggestively, from an historian from whom one might expect veracity, perhaps deliberately unchecked in the service of making the snide point. It's an interesting contrast to get your view and compare it to that of Chuck Connor (locs, lastish)...]]

This time around, I find both of your "Ageless Beauties" to be, well, beautiful. I knew nothing about either of them, just as you suspected, so, despite your notion that I don't Google things (I do that, and sometimes I use Bing or even AOL's own search tool), I looked them both up. I'm pretty sure that you used a photo of Anja Huwe that's at least twenty years old. I couldn't find a date for it, but I did find pictures from her most recent album, and it seems more fitting for a 67-year-old woman. As for Marcella Detroit (who seems to have performed under several different names), bangs, mascara, prominent cheekbones, and very pale skin (or high-contrast lighting) are elements I find attractive.

[[The photo of Anja Huwe was at the top of her website, which may well have been "improved". So here's one that might be more accurate. As to standards of attraction, I've realized that one particular element (to use your term) for me is a slightly crooked mouth eg Drew Barrymore, Joanne Kelly...]]



From: kim.huett@gmail.com

July 6

Kim Huett writes:

Apparently it was the practice of Pharaohs to masturbate into the Nile to ensure good harvests. Try imagining the Pharaoh doing this to that Toto song, "I bless the rains down in Africa. Gonna take some time to do the things we never had. Ooh, ooh..." Or if you prefer, that classic Bangles song, "Wank Like An Egyptian".

[[groans...]]

So exactly what birds did they have in mind when they called themselves the Yardbirds? Not being English my knowledge of the possible avian possibilities is rather vague. The bird which first comes to mind is the sparrow, which is clearly not even slightly appropriate. Sparrows fit in more with a band like Herman's Hermits when I think about it. After that I'm not sure what birds might frequent what little yard the English are allowed. The robin? No, the robin is more of an Elton John than a Yardbird.

Of course yardbird might refer to some non-avian job or practise I'm not familiar with.

[[According to American Songwriter (and other sources), Keith Relf first coined the name, likely nicked out of Kerouac's 'On the Road' - "Yardbirds" was the moniker given to the hobos who used to hang about in the rail yards. Also suggested is a lift of Charlie Parker's nickname: <https://americansongwriter.com/behind-the-band-name-the-yardbirds/> ...]]

I do know we've used such terms in Australia. Back in the day off-track betting on the horses was illegal here. This led to the proliferation of characters accepting illegal bets on the horses. In order to safeguard their operations from police raids these SP Bookies would hire look-outs to watch for any sort of suspicious activity. These look-outs were known as cockatoos because if they saw the police it was their job to warn all and sundry by raising a racket. And if you ever hear a flock of sulphur-crested cockatoos you will know the true meaning of raising a racket.

I for one am most jealous that you were able to attend a show that featured both Weird Al (who I had assumed was retired) and Puddles Pity Party. And yes, Puddles does a nice cover of the track Little Roger & the Goobies recorded in 1978. My favourite performance by Puddles however is his shmoosh up of Folsom Prison Blues and Pinball Wizard which involves him transposing both sets of lyrics.

[[Happy to link that'un which is indeed well good : <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6bfPwtUTP4k> ; Jen is a longtime Weird Al fan, but that was the first time I'd ever seen him live. I was aware of Puddles previously though not as familiar with his stuff as I perhaps should have been. I enjoyed both, and as a writer of parody lyrics meself am

currently considering attempting "Fannish Paradise", based more on AI's "Amish Paradise", perhaps, than the Coolio original. I later learn that Ian Sorensen already did "Fannish Paradise" and has generously shared those lyrics for a future appearance in BEAM...]]

From: eli.cohen@mindspring.com

July 11

Eli Cohen writes:

This issue arrived in my inbox with no problems, unlike the previous two which seemed to have disappeared in transit. I guess the black hole between our email providers moved, or the visa issues caused by *This Here...*'s British accent were resolved.

[[I'm glad that appears to be sorted - it's a mystery as to why it happened. I'll separately advise you of this's mailing again just in case...]]

I appreciated the history of *This Here...*, especially given that I didn't start reading it till #40. And I do appreciate reading it, as it is not only entertaining, but also keeps me in touch with a chunk of what's left of fanzine fandom (even if I have a hard time keeping up with your frantic publishing schedule). (This is what we old fanzine fans call egoboo. I'd hate for all that old slang to disappear, dost thou not agree?)

[[Oh, I dost indeed. 'Boo is our currency...]]

'The Adventures of Mary Darling' is at the top of my TBR list (as soon as I'm done with the Hugo packet). It's getting lots of favorable mentions -- even Linda's book club read it. I should perhaps note that, having grown up with the Disney and Mary Martin Peter Pans, I was quite shocked (and amused) when I read 'Peter Pan and Wendy', the novel. An example of the kind of thing I hadn't expected:

The little house looked so cosy and safe in the darkness, with a bright light showing through its blinds, and the chimney smoking beautifully, and Peter standing on guard. After a time he fell asleep, and some unsteady fairies had to climb over him on their way home from an orgy.

-- *Peter Pan and Wendy* by James M. Barrie

A science joke just to finish up:

Why can't you trust an atom?
Because they make up everything.

[[The "jokes" are getting progressively worse, shurely?...]]

From: portablezine@gmail.com

July 11

W^m Breiding writes:

Regarding your navel gazing 'Egotorial.' I think a reassessment of why-I'm-doing-this is pretty natural to longtime active fanzine fans. The sense of ennui that **Jerry Kaufman** describes in his letter is something that I'm prone to and which has kept me inactive for years. This current run since starting *Portable Storage* back in 2019 is my longest, since that initial run back in the 1970s when I first discovered fandom. That ran about four or five years. This surprising loc hacking I've been doing after the demise of *Portable Storage* seems longer than it actually has been, a mere couple of years. Jerry calls it "a freeze of his writing desire" but for me it is simply a matter of getting tired of opinionating, and I, too, have been going through a similar unresponsiveness to fanzines, even though I have enjoyed reading all of them. I wonder if Harry Warner ever had attacks of self-doubt?

[[I tend to think Warner was "when in doubt, send out the form letter". My own apparent limit used to be eight issues (or less) but I've got past that (DoBFO)...]]

Had it not been for the patient kindness of such fan editors as Bill Bowers, **Andy Hooper** and Robert Lichtman over the years I might have strayed permanently into the Glades of Gafia.

I feel guilty when I don't loc fanzines. And worse, all the current hard copy genzines are likely to lop me off their mailing list if this goes on for too long. It's a disturbing conundrum to feel ennui about something I care so much about. Perhaps it's just the story of my life.

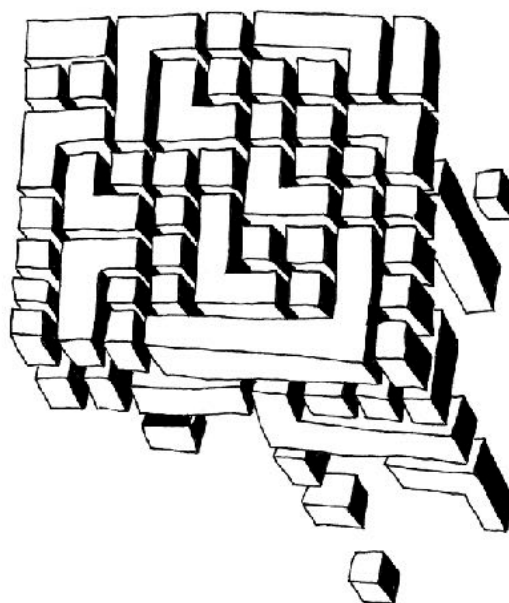
[[Getting "lopped off", as you put it, conjuring images of you trying to get around on one leg, doesn't seem as likely these days as it once was, even for hardcopy zines. As for the "Glades of Gafia", many faneds have spent time there, including notables such as Lichtman hisself...]]

Anyway, you're the one who started this navel gazing.

I go now.

Stay healthy. I wanna see some one handed push ups and close quarter fighting techniques.

[[Chair plummeting is as close as I'll get to any of that...]]



CUBING ALONG
(FIND THE "DOOP") ©brad w. foster 2023

From: gsmattingly@yahoo.com

July 16

Gary Mattingly writes:

'Egotorial': I'm glad you still find putting out *This Here...* satisfying. You certainly have more energy to write than I do.

'Corflu': I don't think I have ever been to Vancouver. So I hope that Corflu in Vancouver does happen and that I am able to cross the United States border into Canada without trouble, and then get back into the United States without trouble.

[[Er... you were in Vancouver at Corflu Pangloss, Gary...]]

Oh, I thought this expressed my feelings toward the Trump administration fairly well.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yJ6_Svnf_Fk

'Health Diary': Sorry to read about the continuing and new health issues and restrictions. I never heard of restricting vitamins. Although, admittedly, I haven't taken antibiotics very often.

'White Smoke': Lots of interesting notes and thoughts. I must have missed the part about **Jerry's** knees in the past. My brain and memory goes on vacation every once in a while. I probably just forgot. I agree with **Bob Jennings'** point, "I think worrying or trying to change the convention so it will appeal to people who are not primarily fanzine oriented fans is counter productive and foolish."

[[Bob makes a fair point, but also to an extent misses the point, which is that we need the "fanzine oriented fans" to exist in the first place. I doubt anyone involved with Corflu is seriously suggesting we change its fundamental nature to merely attract attendance, because then it wouldn't be a Corflu, would it?...]]

'Radio Winston': Entertaining and interesting notes on "rave up" and associated songs. All enjoyable.

'TV Guide': While I've watched the latest 'Doctor Who' season and many in the past, I certainly couldn't do the critical and historical analysis you do. You obviously have been paying a lot more attention to detail than I have and have a much better memory. I like the series, although I wouldn't say it is a marvelous example of great acting and writing. I just think it is fun and only pay a rather mixed level of attention to it while I watch it. Have you watched 'Nautilus'? I don't say it is great but I am finding it entertaining. It might fit into your action/adventure preferences.

[[Never heard of 'Nautilus', but it does look worth a wobble. I shall try to remember to check it out - which I did only to find that only the first episode is free on the subscriptions we have...]]

'Anorak': Again, interesting writing about trains and stations and such. I enjoy the photos and all.

'The Old Sod': What's a "lunch club"? Hm, I guess it is some event where you share food with others that you have prepared. Yes? Online I find, "Lunchclub is an AI superconnector that makes introductions for 1:1 video meetings to advance your career." I'm going to guess that isn't what you are talking about. Then I find that there is a place called the San Francisco Lunch Club, "San Francisco Lunch Club is a cozy eatery in the heart of San Francisco, offering a diverse menu of lunch options for those looking for a quick and satisfying meal." Ah, the things one can learn and the rabbit holes into which one can descend.

[[Er - how about the shurely DoBFO "group of people who go out to lunch together"? We used to have one when I worked at Scholl(UK) on a subscription basis and with a number of rules (eg no talking "shop"), the breaching of which incurred fines, so that in theory there might be enough in the kitty to cover the cost of a Xmas lunch in December...]]

I occasionally have problems with pollen and pollution, nothing extreme, but definitely annoying. I rely on pseudoephedrine, which always relieves the unpleasant symptoms. It is unfortunate that I always have to present ID, give personal information, and sign such information to be sent to the state, when I buy it. One box of same will most assuredly not facilitate the creation of any quantity at all of methamphetamine, I feel certain. I suppose there may be someone out there who would hit 47 stores and buy 47 separate boxes (or whatever the quantity may be) of it for its creation but still

'Loco Citato':

Bob Jennings: We have someone mow our front yard, trim plants, rake, etc. Patty pays for it so I don't know what it costs, but I don't think it is a lot. She pays them in cash. There are a lot of Latino lawn care guys out here and they don't do all that extra lawn stuff you mention unless you ask them to. I think I need someone to work on my back yard. I replaced the grass back there with a lot of plants, but now it is very overgrown. The invasive blackberries that were there when we moved in over 30 years ago are still there and they are horrible. They need to be cut back and killed. I don't trust the front yard landscape people to do the job I want done on the back yard, but I don't know if there is any lawn service that is as picky as I am, without costing a lot. And it takes forever for me to do it, which is why it is now very overgrown.

[[We have a bloke (and crew) who's very good. A year or two ago the landlord's rep said that in lieu of a rent raise we would be responsible for the yard work, which was good since the useless fuckin' lot they had engaged were total shite. We're currently having a mild bit off argybargy about

whether the big tree out front is included in "yard work", since it desperately needs the removal of dead limbs. A "whole tree" job would run \$700 (our bloke tells us), but we're having him come next week to do a cut down of the significant dead bits for \$280, since one of those limbs hangs over the drive and we're worried that a strong gust will have it come down on the car(s). I'm half-hoping that the landlord's agent will come back with "take care of the tree and we won't raise the rent this year". We shall see...]]

Curt Phillips: I have read that some rail lines in southern Missouri weren't maintained and sank into the swamplands on which they were constructed.

I never watched 'The Residence', although I've heard good things about it. Nevertheless, it has been cancelled.

[[Which doesn't stop you watching the original run, does it?...]]

Jerry Kaufman: It is my understanding that homeopathy is very popular in Germany, although scientific proof of it working is rather sparse or non-existent.

Gary Mattingly: Guess I forgot reading about your 'Star Trek' con beginnings in your earlier writings. This is why I can't be an historian. I forget a lot.

[[Including having been to Vancouver, apparently...]]

"Posh" movies? I watch "posh" movies? Really? (And then I suddenly have a leg cramp, actually a cramp in both legs, and I have to quickly (?) go to the other room to find my Hyland's Leg Cramps pills. Of course, Cosmo the dog has positioned himself in my path, which is rather narrow going from my desk to behind my La-Z-Boy and around to more open space. Cosmo likes to lie down and fill up the entire space behind the La-Z-Boy, and I have to attempt to balance and step over him. When he positions himself in front of Patty she just tells him to move. I'd rather not disturb him, and I am capable of balancing and stepping over him.)

Relative to 'Poker Face', I guess I enjoyed the formula in the past and am aware of it, but maybe I just tired of the formula or I felt that it held too tightly to the formula.

Kim Huett: Hm, now I forget how I brought forth vegetarian enlightenment.

'Indulge Me':

Vera C. Rubin - I've seen a lot of the stellar images from Chile, both online and on TV. Nice stuff.

I enjoyed the various photos in the issue and artwork by Berke Breathed, Alan Class, **Brad W Foster**, **Teddy Harvia**, **Lucy Huntzinger**, **Ulrika O'Brien**, and Elizabeth Story.

Somewhere in there I think you mentioned not reading much and I thought I would throw in that I'm currently reading 'The Tainted Cup' by Robert Jackson Bennett. It is a Hugo nominee this year, and I am quite enjoying it. I personally like it more than the two other Hugo nominees

I've read so far by Adrian Tchaikovsky, although I did enjoy 'Alien Clay', I didn't think 'Service Model' was great, okay, just not great. I still have three more novel nominees to read but may be forced to read 'A Drop of Corruption: An Ana and Din Mystery' (Shadow of the Leviathan Book 2) by Robert Jackson Bennett first. It is a follow-up to 'The Tainted Cup'.

Hm, might as well throw in that I recently watched 'Witness for the Prosecution' (1957) again. It was directed by Billy Wilder and stars Charles Laughton, Elsa Lanchester, Marlene Dietrich, Tyrone Powers and numerous others. I thought Laughton was excellent in this film and Lanchester was quite entertaining. Marlene Dietrich, of course, was also great. Tyrone Powers was okay. Anyway, highly recommended. Too bad Laughton didn't direct more movies. 'The Night of the Hunter' is also excellent.

Gee, this may go in well before your deadline, and I still have time to walk and feed the dogs and then go to Pilates. Now if I just had time to file all the new dvds, alphabetize and file a bunch of cds that escaped the shelves (okay, I listened to them and didn't immediately put them back), and enter a bunch of vinyl music albums into the database and replace all the shrink wrap with good plastic outer covers and all the paper record sleeves with better non-paper record sleeves, and all the other stuff I have on my to-do lists.



WAHF

Bruce Gillespie ; John Hertz : "Thanks for the **Foster**, **Harvia**, **Huntzinger** and **O'Brien** fanart in *TH*...87. I guess I

have to thank **Kim Huett** for Page 21. Pfu! on ISFDB for calling the 1955 S. Jackson story “non-genre” ; **Perry Middlemiss** : “You’ve done better than me. I’m taking a break for a few weeks. Too much else going on.” ; **George Phillis** : “I am working on getting fanzine reviews for *FanActivity Gazette*. I gather that **Mindy** has been otherwise preoccupied for a bit. I understand that international travel has become complicated.” *[I confirm to George that she’s been properly added to the distribution list to encourage the reportage of any news within...]* ; **Alan Rosenthal** : “Glad to see that **Murray** got back to you regarding his Corflu bid for Vancouver in 2027. I’ve signed on to be treasurer, as I have both Canadian chequing and US checking accounts...” ; **Garth Spencer**, who keeps losing his copy of *APA-V #69* ; **Spike** (see “Corflux Extra” in ‘Indulge Me’...) ; **R-Lauraine Tutihasi** ;

FANZINES RECEIVED

With the usual thanks, and an attempt to provide at least a tad of comment...

SF COMMENTARY 120 (Bruce Gillespie) - Obits and remembrances of Race Matthews and Damien Broderick occupy a quarter of the pages. Then there’s the typically solid sercon to follow...

VANAMONDES (vars.) from **John Hertz**...

THE OBDURATE EYE #53 (Garth Spencer) - Always a “must read” round here with its mix of news, opinion, capsule zine reviews (much better than my typical efforts in here) and more...

TWO CHAIRS IN PRINT #6 (David Grigg & Perry Middlemiss) - A boon for Luddite me (and perhaps others?) who have yet to master the concept of and access to podcasts. Much chat about the latest *Mission: Impossible* and more...

INDULGE ME

✕ **TV GUIDE DRINKING GAME** : We fill in the evening hours when there’s none of our shows on with rewatches of old favorites, or in this case a first watch for **Jen** of ‘Eureka’. A non-drinker, nevertheless she devises the Eureka Drinking Game: take a swig anytime someone says “lockdown” or “quarantine”, two gulps for “evacuate” and perhaps appropriately, finish your drink for “competitive” ...

✕ **NOT TEMPTED**: I’ve been doing a bit of private investigator-style research on behalf and at the request of a couple of friends (whom none of you know), and that’s causing me to check the Spam folder for a possible reply to one inquiry. The one with the subject line “I want to shag. I love shag” almost certainly isn’t it, but I’ll happily forward that secretively to anyone who asks...

✕ **BARGAIN!** : Extra from **Kim Huett** : “Thought you might be interested in seeing the attached page of room rates. These were published by the 1948 Toronto worldcon committee. Imagine paying extra for a bath! Still, if only Corflu could manage rates like these.”...

	WITH RUNNING WATER		HOTEL ROOM RATES (estimated)		BATH		TWO BEDS & BATH
	Single	Double	Single	Double	Single	Double	
THE BARCLAY 174 Front St. West	--	--	\$4.00	\$7.00 up			\$9.50 up
FORD Bay & Dundas Sts.	\$3.75 & 2.00	\$5.50 inside 3.25 outside	Single \$2.25 (connecting bath) " 3.50 (private bath) DB: 2.00 & 4.00 (separate bath) " 4.50 to 5.50 (private bath)				\$6.00 (shower) 4.50 & 5.50 (private bath)
WYOMING APTS 526 Jarvis Street	--	--	--	\$5.00 up			\$5.50 up
ELCO BLDG King & Victoria Sts.	--	--	\$6.00	\$7.00 up			\$8.50 up
PRINCE GEORGE King & York Sts.	\$2.50	\$3.75 up	\$2.50	\$5.00 up			\$5.50 up
ST. LOUIS Front & York Sts.	--	--	\$6.00	\$6.00 up			\$6.50 up
ST. LOUIS 494 Charlotte St.	--	--	\$4.00	\$5.00 up			\$6.50 up
MURRAY Sp. Hw. & College	\$2.00	\$4.00 up	\$2.75	\$5.00 up			\$5.50 up
CHARLESSTON 510 Jarvis Street	--	--	\$5.00	\$6.00 up			\$5.00 up
VALLEY PARK Front & York Sts.	\$2.55	\$4.00 up	\$5.50	\$6.50 up			\$6.50 (no bath) 5.50 (with bath)
TRINITY COURT 122 Dundas West	\$2.00	\$3.50 up	\$3.00	\$5.50 up			\$6.00 up
WILSON BLDG 80 St. Thomas Street	--	--	\$3.00 up 2.00 up	\$4.00 (shower) (with bath)			\$5.00 up

✕ **AGELESS BEAUTY (1)** : I clearly need to work a bit harder at tweaking the **Killer** with these (see locs), so here’s **Tessa Peake-Jones** in that spirit...



✕ **GO AWAY YOU BASTARDS** : No, not *you* bastards, but the all-day phone calls (“Scam Likely” as they come up on the phone) trying to ensnare me in alleged Medicare “benefits”. These are now voice bot recordings, so there isn’t much point in following my usual procedure of keeping them on the phone and feigning ignorance of everything they’re on about. “You do have Medicare Parts A and B don’t you?” “No idea”. You’d think that at some point they *must* run out of phone numbers (I block each one) but it hasn’t happened yet ...

✕ **SARTORIAL ELEPHANTS**: I had shared one of those FBF memes about cranky oldness, as demonstrated by the fact that you get very angry when they rearrange the grocery store (true!) which is completely unrelated to my latest creb - when, exactly, did boxer briefs stop having a

knob hole at the front, ey? This is well fuckin' awkward for those of us who feel the need for a Jimmy every time we stand up...

✕ **BOOKSELLING** : According to the artist himself, the new Folio edition of Stephen King's 'It', illustrated by the old scruff and National Treasure **Jim Burns**, sold out in under 20 minutes, a new record beating out DoBFO lesser works like 'Lord of the Rings'...

✕ **TERRIBLE "SCIENCE" "JOKE" FOR ELI** :

Q: What do you get if you cross an octopus with a chimpanzee?

A: An immediate cessation of funding and a stern rebuke from the ethics committee...

✕ **AGELESS BEAUTY (2)** : Oh, go on then, **Sela Ward**...



✕ **N3F LAUREATE AWARDS**: Just announced in *The National Fantasy Fan*, and congrats to the winners, particularly those in the fan categories, some of whom are: Best Fan writer **Heath Row**, Best Fan Editor **Mindy Hunt**, Best N3F Fanzine *FanActivity Gazette* and Best Non-N3F Fan Publication *Lofgeornost*. I note in the latter category there that the only other nominee was - er - *This Here...*, but DoBFO no

complaints on **Fred** deservedly winning out. Detailed ballot numbers which may not require the removal of shoes and socks to count will almost certainly not get published (unless the policy has changed), but there's somewhere around 35 potential voting members, I think...

✕ **TV GUIDE EXTRA** : 3 episodes in to season 3 of 'Star Trek: Strange New Worlds', and, tediously but not unexpectedly, the trolls have come out to play, easily identifiable by going round screaming "WOKE!" at anything and everything they deem unacceptable and, in some instances of actual fanwank, nitpicking stuff within an inch of its fuckin' life. The "familiar" crew and bridge roster of the original series is taking shape as SNW leads up to, presumably, Pike's immobilizing accident. We've got Scotty in play now, Kirk pops in and out (as captain of the *Farragut*), and Uhura has been there all along. My favorite character on the show is pilot Erica Ortegas (Melissa Navia), who somehow has to get moved out or moved on to make room for Sulu at some point. I guess they've started that arc by giving her some serious PTSD which is making her somewhat insubordinate. Still, the rest of this season, plus seasons 4 & 5 will presumably reveal all...

✕ **CORFLUX EXTRA** : **Spike**, bless her, takes advantage of an available fan table at BayCon 2025/ Westercon 77 to promote Corflu Pickled, and tells me that she printed out a couple of issues of this here jar of gherkins to add to the giveaways. Both, she said, were scooped up by persons unknown, "so if you get a strange loc from someone you don't know..."



She adds: "Note the charming Corflu 43 sign, created for me at the last minute by Mike Ward and Karen Schaffer after Kinko's closed early on July 3rd with our poster inside.

The table was mainly a way to promote Corflu and fanzines, but in spite of myself, I actually sold a membership. Gave out many of the leaflets Tom created. I gave away some fanzines, duplicates from Jeanne and me. I printed several zines from eFanzines, and gave those away too. Yes, I explained fanzines to several people! Jeanne sent me brochures, maps and timetables from the Santa Rosa area, so I had plenty to talk about. The big topic at the table was

transit to Santa Rosa -- I talked trains more than wine, believe it or not. Did you know, from the South Bay you can take BART to the Embarcadero in San Francisco, cross the street and catch the ferry to Larkspur, and from the Larkspur ferry terminal catch the SMART train to Railroad Square in Santa Rosa? It's 2-3 blocks from there to the Corflu hotel."

✕ **INSPIRING** : A cartoon strip shurely alluding to the Killer's progress past *most* of the "Ageless Beauties"?...



✕ **EARWORM** : A 'Radio Winston' extra just for **Steve Jeffery** (probably). I was reminded of this by earworm discussions in recent ishes of, inevitably, *Banana Wings*...



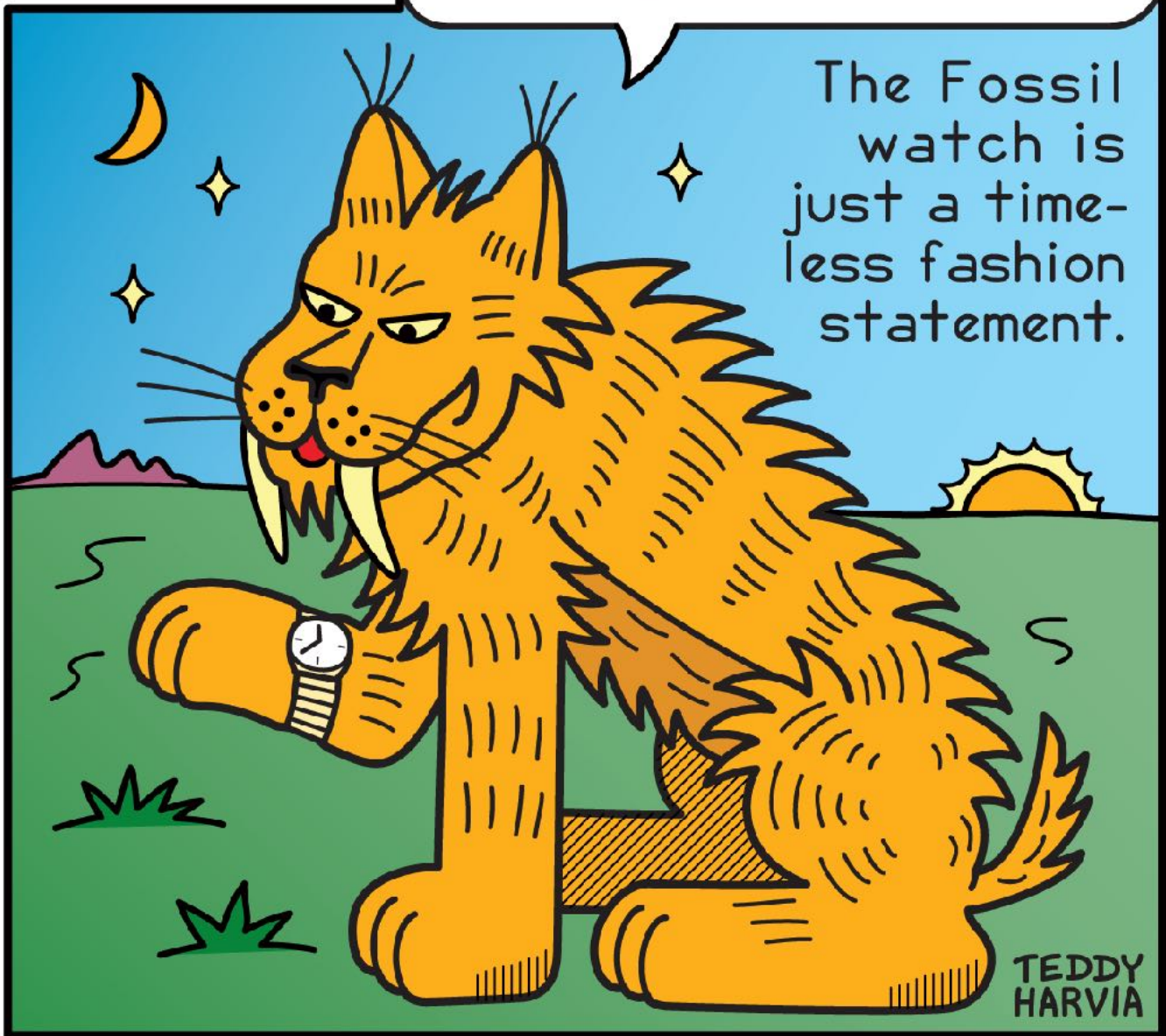
For anyone who doesn't get the reference : <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FMrlY9zm7QY>

✕ **NEXTISH** : Time for a five week House of Representatives-style gap? OK, how about August 30th then?...

Chat

The sabertooth has an uncanny sense of time.

The Fossil watch is just a timeless fashion statement.



MIRANDA

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"I borrowed Gypsy's Gibson just to show them
And now I'm a rock and roll star I don't want to
know them..."