

FRIENDS...a oneshot typed by Rich
Small on the night of June 4, 1973
at 117 S. Meridian St. #3, Tallahassee,
Fla. 32301 Richall Press

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Marcus Wielage and Don Moore were just over at my apartment not more than a few minutes ago. Marcus was JoeD's roommate but will be moving out due to their mutual dissatisfaction with each other. He wants to move in with me (! live in a two bedroom apartment and part of my collection is housed in the spare bedroom). Fine with me, I could use the extra money. I won't deny that. However, first and foremost, it is my apartment and Marcus would have to live by MY rules. Marcus says, that no, this isn't fair, that my rules are too strict. There are certain things that I value above others and one of those is the freedom to do what I want, where I want to do it and when I want to do it. Of course, this is the freedom to do these things ONLY when it does not infringe of the freedoms and rights of others (a principle I highly admire and try to live by). If I let Marcus in my apartment as my roommate, I would be giving up considerable freedom. Such freedoms I would not give up easily and certain things would be required of anyone who were to move in my apartment with me. I won't kid myself or you by saying that my terms and rules are lenient. They aren't. However, it is my apartment and like the medieval castle lord, I reserve the right to have the final word. I have explained all these things to Marcus so that he will not move in without knowing what he is getting in to. He feels my rules are unfair. Perhaps they are. However, no one is forcing Marcus to move in. If he finds my restrictions and rules too rough, he does not have to move in and can move in with someone else who is less particular.

However, that is not what this oneshot is about. It is about friends, that and much much more. While here Don brought up the subject of Bill Ritch. One thing that I have never tried to hide is that I do not care for Bill Ritch. Bill has gotten the reputation of a jinx and while this may not be true, I will say that the fact that Bill is incredibly inept, clumsy, insensative, overloud and not too incredibly knowledgeable about many things and the fact that he always seems to cause disasters may have gotten him the reputation of being a jinx. Bill is, however, extremely friendly and when he does things wrong and turns people off, he overcompensates and tries harder to make people like him and be his friend, which only causes him to act clumsier and cause more disasters which turns people off even more. Bill also considers himself to be a vastly superior and knowledgeable individual and the fact that he isn't only worsens his situation and turns even more people off. It is also no big secret that Bill Ritch is well known for making off with others peoples property.

I do not like Bill Ritch. There are so many things that he does that are completely opposed to my beliefs that I could never be very friendly to Bill Ritch. Call me old fashioned if you will, but I truly believe it is wrong to steal, not because of what a certain well-read book might say, but because I have respect for others peoples property. I do not steal anything. As far as I can remember I have never stolen anything. Nor do I ever plan to steal anything. Not even from my worst enemy. I will not lower my standards for those who have no standards. If I did I would be worse than they were, for they might

not be aware of what they were doing, yet I would know what I was doing and I would know that what I was doing, in my eyes, was wrong. If you don't have any respect for the things you believe in, what can you have respect for? If you don't believe in your own ideas enough to follow them and do as they dictate, whose ideas can you believe in?

I search for what I would like to term as the truth...the truth about all things (a vague statement, this is, I know, but it's the best I can do at present). I don't merely wish to know that things happen, I wish to know why they happen and also the reasons behind the actions, not just the actions themselves. In trying to understand the reasons why people are as they are and act as they do (whether they are aware of it or not), I hope to be able to make myself a better person. Maybe I'm succeeding. Or maybe I've failed. I really can't say for sure. Part of having knowledge, is the belief that you can never ever really hope to know everything and that for all you may know, you really know so very very little. So, why I may never be able to know all I want to know, that doesn't mean I should stop trying. I do not plan to stop trying.

I reserve the right to choose my own friends. I do not allow others to come up to me and tell me that I should take X or Y as a friend. I will check on X or Y to see if they are the type of person that I would like to have for a friend, but I reserve the right to make the final decision and I don't feel that I have to justify my reasons to anyone (oh, I will probably do so, if you ask me, but then again I reserve the right not to do so, if I so deem).

Bill Ritch is somewhat close to being universally disliked among the group of people known as Tallahassee Fandom. With one or two exceptions, I can not think of anyone who could be called Bill's friend. Don Moore tells me that it is wrong for me not to like Bill Ritch and that I should be nice to Bill Ritch and not treat him as 'mean' as I have been. He then sort of threatened me 'that unless I was nicer to Bill Ritch, it might come to pass that I would suddenly find myself without any friends and that people whom I have known would start to make it a point to ignore and avoid me'. Or, in other words, unless I conform to peer pressure, I will be socially ostracised. Such 'threats' impress me little. If I do not have the courage to stand up for my beliefs when the going gets tough, then I'd really be in pretty sad shape. I often say what I mean. Perhaps I shouldn't. Perhaps I should lie through my teeth and say things that I don't believe in, just to keep others happy in the knowledge that I am doing what they want me to do and not what I want to do. However, that's another thing I don't feel particularly fond of...lying. I'll do it when necessary and especially to avoid pointless hassles. However, if there is any way I can get around a subject that I consider touchy, I'll do it. At other times I don't really care. Sometimes I tell people what they don't want to hear. My one big problem is that I don't know when to keep my mouth shut. Hopefully, the people that count will realize this when I do it. The others can think as they like.

Sure I feel sorry for Bill Ritch...and am doubly glad that I am not in his shoes. But that doesn't mean that I have to like him. I feel sorry for cripples and puppy dogs and kitty cats that get run over by cars. That doesn't mean that I am going to go out of my way to like or be a friend to every cripple I meet. I may feel sorry for certain people, but that doesn't mean that I am, of necessity, going to like them. Sure it's sad if X is a cripple or if Y is deaf or if Bill Ritch is clumsy and stupid. However I judge people on their traits, beliefs

and individual merits. I do not judge them by what other people say about them, but by what they say and do and the way they act and react to life.

I do not have to have everybody I meet go away thinking what a great person I am. Some people have the need to call everyone they meet a 'friend' and actually believe that all these people are their friends. When they find out otherwise, they are shocked and can not figure out why people who were supposed to be their friends turned out to be otherwise. I try to understand the reasons behind the actions. I try to see what it is that makes things as they are. Many people do not and are content to worry merely about the actions. Yet it is the reasons behind the actions that control the actions. Figure out what the reasons are and you can control the actions. Or at least so I think. And I tend to live under the idea that I know what many of these reasons are, so that when someone asks me, "Why is this?", or "Why is that?", I feel that I am in a position to tell them. And sometimes, in an incredible show of stupidity on my part, I wind up telling them something which they would probably have been better off not hearing (and better left alone to wonder 'why'). Like I said my big problem is that I don't know when to shut up. Even though I realize that when people ask 'why' they really aren't looking for the actual reasons, but are looking for something more in the line of sympathy or a pat on the back.

Maybe I'm fooling and deluding myself, but I consider myself to have high standards. It takes quite a lot to be considered as one of the few people who are classified as my friends or are at least considered as my friends. There aren't a whole heck of a lot. Perhaps some people I know consider me as a friend, yet I not them. I don't know. I can't read minds. All I can do is reason and form conclusions. Maybe I can't justify my conclusions to anyone else (not many people ask), however, I welcome the chance to do so with mature intelligent people. I am not an emotional person. I rarely get angry. It takes quite a bit to get me angry (and even then you have to try real hard or make it so obviously blatant that my continued ignoring of it becomes a chore). However, I don't stay angry for long and I don't plan revenge of any sort to such people no matter what it was they did. I see no reason why I should lower my standards simply because I allowed myself to get a little emotional at one point. The fact that people act unkind to me gives me no reason to act unkind to them. Maliciously unkind, that is. Such people can expect no favors of any sort from me however. Besides, why should I waste my valuable time concerning myself with such petty matters as revenge or hatred? Such thoughts can only lead to the making of a less desirable personality and can only bring harm to the individual. Self-control is a far more valuable and desirable trait. I can't say that I am always successful in the practice of self-control, because certainly I am not. But at least I do try. That must be worth something.

In conclusion, I will state that I can never be friends with Bill Ritch. His personal qualities may be appealing to other people (though I have my doubts about these people myself), but they do more to repel me than anything else. I also sort of believe in the 'Jinx' theory (laugh if you will...it's something that's difficult to explain but...) (as un-logical as it is). I have no objections to others being the friends of Bill Ritch. However, I chose not to be one of these people and will not go out of my way to do him favors. I will not call him a lot of the things others say behind his back and generally try to treat him civilly when I see him. But I will not now or ever consider him my friend. I may feel sorry for him, but that's the limit, barring, of course, some spectacular change in the Bill Ritch character makeup. But that seems unlikely at present so my decision will probably stand for a long time.

I have a saying 'You knew the job was dangerous when you took it', which says a lot about what I believe in. In everything I undertake I try to analyze the risks, the benefits and the long range effects. I try to realize what it is that I am doing and hopefully will (through the use of this method) keep me from taking on obligations that I will be unable to fulfill. I also try to realize the implications of what I do, so that if certain things begin to happen, I will at least, know WHY these things are happening...and there will be no one to blame but myself.

There are some people who do not even realize what the job is, let alone the risks involved. And yet when these people do/try to do something and it goes wrong and they bemoan their (to them) inexplicable problems what does one do? Tell them why things went wrong? Maybe it would be a favor...maybe not. I think not. At least not with a sensitive and or immature person. It depends on the individual.

I'm not completely convinced that my way of thinking is necessarily the best or the right way. It could very well be that I am incorrect in my present manner of thinking and that days/weeks/months/years from now, I'll stumble onto a far superior way of thinking and will refute all of my old beliefs and statements. I will anticipate that day, for I am most (or seem to think so) interested in knowing the truth and what makes things 'tick'. Yet until that day, I still have my present beliefs and will hold on to them, for based on what I now know, they appear to be as close as the best as I can come. So for now, that's all I can do. It's all anyone can do. I still however, reserve the right to chose my friends, when how and where I want to.

It's 3:45 am in the morning and I think it's about time to wrap up this oneshot. I never planned to do 4 pages anyway.

RICHARD SMALL

TALLAHASSEE FANDOM COMIX AND STORIES

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RICHALL PRESS#39

BRIGHT ONE NIGHT, THE NOBLE HERO IS GOOFING OFF WHEN HE GETS A STRANGE MYSTERIOUS PHONE CALL...

YOU LUCKY DOG! YOU ARE NOW SPEAKING TO THE WORLD'S GREATEST NOBLE HERO, A FEAT NOT EASILY ACCOMPLISHED IN THESE TROUBLESOME TIMES.

BLEAH!!

TGR

FROM A STRANGE, MYSTERIOUS PHONE CALLER

FOR IT IS NOT EVERY DAY THAT ONE GETS TO SPEAK TO THE NOBLEST OF NOBLE HEROES! INCIDENTLY, WHO IS THIS?

WHY I AM JOHN ELLIS, ONE OF THE NEW MEMBERS OF THE GREAT RICH-ALPHA APA, THE APA DEVOTED TO THE SERIOUS DISCUSSION OF THE GREAT RICH. YOU ARE MY IDLE SO I DECIDED TO CALL YOU UP. ALSO I AM BORED.

SHUX... AND I WAS HOPING FOR AN OBSCENE PHONE CALL.

WHO HAS WORDS OF WISDOM...

DESPITE EXCELLENT ADVICE TO THE CONTRARY, I HAVE DECIDED TO VISIT THE PALATIAL OFFICES OF YELLOW BUFFOON. ALSO, I WANT TO MEET BULL FOACK AND ALL THE OTHER CRAZY PEOPLE IN TALLAHASSEE FANDUMB!

THE NOBLE HERO IS ALWAYS GLAD TO BRING A LITTLE BIT OF LIGHT INTO THE DULL, MUNDANE LIVES OF SOUTH FLORIDA FANS. COME ON UP!

THEY DO NOT IMPRESS THE GREAT RICH MUCH, BUT THEN WHAT DOES?

BUM... YELLOW BARFOON... ER... BUFFOON... ER... BALLOON. WHAT DOES HE KNOW? FOR THAT MATTER, WHAT DO I KNOW? MAYBE HE KNOWS MORE THAN I KNOW... GAD WHAT A FRIGHTENING THOUGHT!

I KNOW, I'LL CALL MAD MARCUS. HE KNOWS EVEN LESS THAN I KNOW AND THAT AIN'T MUCH.

MAYBE MARCUS WILL WANT TO INDUCT JOHN ELLIS INTO THE NON-EXISTANT MIRACLE PRODUCTIONS EMPIRE.

HELLA MARCUS. GUESS WHO'S COMING TO WINNER GOOD OLD TALLAHASSEE FANDOM?

HOWEVER THESE WORDS DO IMPRESS MARCUS WHO GOES MAD AND CHARGES OVER TO THE NOBLE HERO'S ABODE WHERE HE GOOFS OFF AND DOES SCREWY THINGS SUCH AS ANSWERING THE PHONE IN A FUNNY MANNER.

SMALL INSANE ASYLUM.

IF IT'S A GOOD PRODUCTION, IT'S A MIRACLE!

AND WHO ARE YOU BY THE WAY?

LET ME SPEAK TO THE GREAT RICH... I THINK.

A MIRACLE PRODUCTIONS CREDITOR... OOPS.

IT IS THE STRANGE MYSTERIOUS PHONE CALLER WITH A STRANGE MYSTERIOUS QUESTION FOR THE NOBLE HERO.

LIKE, HOW CAN WE BOTH APPEAR IN THE SAME PANEL (WITH NO PANEL SEPARATIONS OF ANY SORT) WHEN IN REALITY, WE ARE 600 MILES APART?

HOW, HUH?

HMMM...

SUCH QUESTIONS HAVE BEEN KNOWN TO BEFUDDLE THE GREAT RICH IN THE PAST, BUT NOT THIS TIME AS HIS COMPUTER-LIKE BRAIN COMES TO GRIPS WITH THIS PROBLEM WITH INCREDIBLE IMMEDIACY...



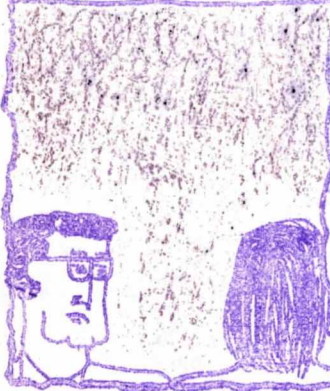
WITH THE BEST AND MOST PLAUSIBLE ANSWER BUT SCANT INSTANTS AWAY. MANY, INDEED, ARE THE REASONS THAT THE GREAT RICH IS KNOWN AS THE MIGHTIEST OF MEN...



HIS IMAGINATIVE AND POWERFUL BRAIN, EVER WORKING, EVER READY TO LEAP TO AND ATTACK THE MOST DIFFICULT AND PUZZLING TASKS



NEVER GIVING UP, NEVER ADMITTING DEFEAT, NEVER COPING OUT! YES, THE GREAT RICH IS TRULY A NOBLE HERO



SUPPOSE YOU DRAW ME LIKE SOME SCHNOOK-LOOKING PERSON, WHY, I MIGHT GET SO ANGRY THAT I'D THROW AWAY MY GREAT RICH FAN CLUB CARDS AND TEAR DOWN THE BIG 3'x5' POSTER OF THE NOBLE HERO FROM MY WALL AND REPLACE IT WITH ONE OF CHARLES KORBAS OR BILL RITCH. ALSO, HOW CAN I GET TO YOUR APARTMENT?

ONE WHO WOULD THINK NOTHING OF ANSWERING A DOZEN OF THE TOUGHEST QUESTIONS AT ONCE!



IF HIS LIGHTNING QUICK BRAIN FAILS TO IMPRESS PEOPLE, THE NOBLE HERO CAN ALWAYS COUNT ON HIS WINNING PERSONALITY AND HIS LEGENDARY REPUTATION OF BEING ONE OF THE GREATEST OF THE FANNISH FANS AND GOOD PEOPLE.



AFTER TALKING TO GARY BRUIN AND 200 OTHER HIGH RANKING FANS, I HAVE DECIDED NOT TO VISIT YOU ON SUNDAY. HOWEVER, SOME NON-FAN FRIENDS ARE GOING TO TALLAHASSEE NEXT FRIDAY AND THEY'LL PROBABLY FORCE ME TO COME ALONG, SO...

EVEN THE BIGGEST OF FANS CONSIDER IT A GREAT HONOR TO BE PRIVILEGED TO VISIT THIS PARAGON OF FANNISHNESS AND TACT.



AND OFTEN CALL FROM DISTANT PLACES JUST TO HEAR THE AWE-INSPIRING SOUNDS OF THE NOBLE HERO'S MAGNIFICENT VOICE.



AFTER REGRETFULLY AND SADLY, THOUGH QUICKLY, TERMINATING HIS TELEPHONE CALL TO JOHN ELLIS, THE NOBLE HERO TURNS TO MARCUS, WHO TELLS HIM TO DO STUPID THINGS.

WHY DON'T YOU DRAW A COMIC STRIP ABOUT ALL THAT HAPPENED AND CHANGE ALL THE FACTS LIKE YOU USUALLY DO SO THAT ANYONE WHO SEES IT (AND WHO KNEW WHAT WAS GOING ON) WON'T HESITATE TO CALL IT A PACK OF LIES!

THAT GREAT SPECIMAN OF GREAT-RICH-HOOD WOULD NEVER STOOD SO LOW!



AND SO, AS THE SUN SINKS SLOWLY IN THE WEST, WE LEAVE THE NOBLE HERO, WHO, AT THIS POINT IS TROUBLED BY JUST ONE THING.

REPLACE IT WITH ONE OF CHARLES KORBAS OR BILL RITCH?



JOED'S NEW ROOMMATE...a sequel to the oneshot FRIENDS, typed by Rich Small, on June 6, 1973 at 117 S. Meridian St. Tallahassee, Fla. Richall Press #40.

I JUST THOUGHT OF SOMETHING...
~~MAYBE THIS IS A GIANT JOKE BY ALL~~
~~OF TALLAHASSEE FANDOM ON THE GREAT~~
~~RICH. IT'S TOO REAL TO BE A DREAM.~~

When Burybrad jokingly told me a few days ago, that he had told Bill Ritch (who was looking for a roommate) that he might check with Joed, I was incredibly amused. The thought of Bill Ritch living in the Joed apartment was so laughable and unlikely that I didn't even give it serious consideration. In the past, Bill Ritch has lived (in a dorm room) with Warren Williams and Brad Linaweaver, though both on separate occasions. Warren was lucky to escape after a few weeks and later when he was living with Burybrad, Burybrad would always tell him how stupid he was for rooming with Bill Ritch, for even such a short period of time. However, due to academic pressures and problems of various sorts, Warren freaked out and moved out of the dorm room, leaving Burybrad by himself. Now, according to dorm rules, you must have a roommate, otherwise you must pay extra. Burybrad could not afford to pay extra, yet at this late date where could he possibly hope to get another roommate? Well, it just happened that Bill Ritch was hunting around for another roommate and was quite happy to move in with Burybrad as they shared similar political beliefs, liked comics and science-fiction and had similar tastes in films. Poor Burybrad. This was the ultimate bad joke that had been played on him. All this time he had been critical of Bill and his habits ("Why anyone would have to be crazy to want to room with Bill", he said), and now the ultimate jest of all...he was Bill's roommate. Despite the filth, Burybrad managed to survive for a while, however the combined effects of lousy FSU food and living with Bill Ritch (and who knows whatever else) finally caught up with him and put him in the hospital for a couple of days. Now, it has been rumored that Bill Ritch was engaged in certain amorous pursuits on the night that Burybrad was sickest and was rumored to say something like "Gee, I sure hope Burybrad doesn't come home tonight". It is a fact however, that the night these alleged activities, that one person on the same dorm floor died of an overdose of drugs. Perhaps this is all coincidence, but I think not. Bill Ritch is a jinx, pure and simple.

One ironical incident that occurred when Burybrad got out of the hospital and went back to his and Bill's room. The room was hopelessly littered and looked as though it had had no human habitation for several years. The shock of seeing his room in such deplorable condition, drove Burybrad insane for a few moments and he kicking and smashing things, trying to get the Bill Ritch junk/litter/refuse out of the way. After going at it for a couple of minutes, he came to the horrible realization, that despite all he had just done, the room looked no different than it had before. It was just as deplorable as before. Burybrad could take no more and moved out and incredibly into Warren Williams room. The irony of the entire range of events struck me as incredibly amusing. Burybrad and Warren are rooming together when Warren moves out. Bill moves in with Burybrad, Burybrad freaks out and moves in with Warren. So for all practical purposes, the Quarter ended as it had begun. Burybrad and Warren were roommates at the beginning of the Quarter and they were roommates at the end of the Quarter. Logically, it would appear that they had been roommates all Quarter, but such was not the case. Such was not the case.

Now getting back to Joed (remember, this oneshot started off being about Joed), we see that his present roommate, Marcus Wielage decided to move out (partially because he was fired from his job at the WFSU TV Station and partially because he could not get long with Joed). (I will clarify the point that Marcus had planned to stay here during the summer and work at the TV station, however, when he was let go for lack of funds, this signified that he would have to return to Tampa for the summer, so Joed would have needed a roommate no matter what.)

Now Joed had tried to get Burybrad and/or Big Lee to move in with him, however both were unable to, though they would have liked to. Enter Bill Ritch, who mentions to Burybrad that he is looking for a place to stay for the summer and does Burybrad know of anyone who might have a spare room in an apartment. With a suppressed chuckle, Burybrad tells Bill that Joed may be looking for a roommate. What a fine bit of humor this would be. Who could ever imagine Bill Ritch living with Joed? The thought alone is so humorous and ludicrous as to immediately remove it from a person's mind as a serious possibility. After all there would be no harm in Joed baiting, especially so when you consider all the time that Joed had spent in Burybrad baiting. The thing that makes me wonder the most...no one seriously expected Joed to take Bill on as a roommate...if Burybrad knew that Joed would accept Bill as a roommate, would he have ever mentioned anything to Bill? I think not, But then again I'm not Burybrad.

What will happen? Only time will tell. Has Bill Ritch improved as Burybrad seems to feel? Granted that most people are capable of improvement, but Bill Ritch? The thought boggles the mind.

In a way, this will be the test...to see if Bill Ritch has improved... or is still his same old bungling, clodish, inept and hopeless self. Joed has always been the one fan who never accepted the story that Bill Ritch is a jinx...a big clumsy kid, yes...a jinx, no. Joed has always accused me of being an idiot for believing that Bill is a jinx...well maybe I am, however this will be the acid point. If things work out ok, then that will be great and once again Great Rich will have been proved wrong (can't win 'em all). However, if Bill IS a jinx then things will start to go wrong for Joed. Maybe he won't get the job as Film Director (at FSU) even though he is the only qualified applicant for the job. Maybe he'll be fired from his jobs as ticketseller and projectionist. Maybe the mimeo machine he recently bought will blow up or perhaps his car will break down necessitating some costly repairs. Maybe all the tape and book clubs that Joed owes money to will catch up with him. Maybe Joed's landlord will throw him out. Maybe...Maybe...

Maybe none of these things will happen. I can't really say for sure and predicting the future is one ability I never consciously was aware of. I do feel that Bill is a jinx and will feel that this event is important enough to record on paper. Suppose that Bill is a jinx and that Joed is unable to admit this fact and yet has no rational way to explain things. It could get Joed down enough so that he might leave Tallahassee for good (a thing I hope would not happen). Joed acted strange tonight and pulled pranks that would have been expected of an immature individual. I wonder, is it happening already? Regardless of what is happening, this oneshot is a good way of recording my initial thoughts on the subject and is a good tangible record to compare later results with. Besides, I saw Bill Ritch tonight and he asked me if I would type up anything about the 'new Joed Roommate'. It was almost as if he was asking. I said I would.

Richard Small