



Western Romance #7 is done for FAPA and Fandom by Joyce Worley Katz, PMB 152, 330 S. Decatur Blvd., Las Vegas, NV 89107, in Nov. 2003.

Thanks to **Arnie and Ken Forman** for the production help. The lovely logo is by Alan White, and the rest of the art, if there is any, is by me. Note the new Email address: JoyceWorley1@cox.net.

Mojave Mojo

We're Getting Settled

As predicted, we completed our move in September. In fact, the entire process went extremely smoothly. First, we listed the old house on Bridge Glen with one-time FAPA Woody Bernardi, and he sold the house within the first week it was on the market. Actually, it was quite remarkable; everyone who came to see the house made an offer. This surprised us, although I'm not sure why: we were similarly charmed by it when we first saw it.

Woody also solved the other half of the problem, by finding us a place to move. We told him we wanted a low-to-no maintenance yard, no pool or spa or sprinkler system to maintain, and needed as much size as possible in order to accommodate all our things. I hoped for a fair-sized apartment or condo, but he went us one better and found a house we could afford to rent.

A small white ranch-style house, it boasts a desert-landscape in front (read gravel with one olive tree) and no landscaping at all in back (a large back and side yard made of packed clay and scattered rocks.) It has six rooms and two baths— living room, kitchen, dining room where I've taken one corner for my office space, master bedroom, guest bedroom, and the third bedroom which is Arnie's office.

It's two rooms and about a thousand square feet smaller than the old house, but it's long on charm and extremely comfortable. Neither Arnie nor I are fond of change, so our furniture and books are arranged as close to the same as we could manage...incidentally, echoing the arrangement we had in our apartment back in Brooklyn.

I miss the neighborhood cats that used to visit us, but I know they're being fed by other cat lovers there, and of course by their own owners. And there's a new group of them here that I'm gradually seducing. And I really miss my flocks of pigeons, doves, wrens and the grackles that hung around for handouts. Poor things, I don't think there are any other bird-feeders in the old neighborhood, but I guess they'll go down to Lorenzi Park and beg from the picnickers. Meanwhile, my new barren backyard is an idea place to scatter crumbs, and I've already got a couple of dozen doves plus a group of sparrows coming for breakfast every day.

But aside from the livestock, I don't miss the old place. It was wonderful for 14 years, but we were ready to move on. And, ready for the financial improvements — my last water bill at the old place was \$189+. My first here was \$6.57. The other expenses are similarly reduced.

So here we sit in our new digs. It took the cat almost a month to get happy again after the moving trauma, and we still have moments of disorientation when we don't quite know where we are. But, we're getting there.

The Kitchen is Important

I am particularly fond of my new kitchen. This new one has a lot of cabinets, and a very efficient layout with plenty of countertops. This has enabled me, for the first time in my life, to have all my appliances right at hand. First off, the landlord installed a new electric stove and dishwasher when we moved in. Since I left the old microwave behind, we bought a new one, and I chose countertop so there'd be no question about taking it with us if and when we ever leave. My refrigerator was almost new and came with us. Around these big pieces there's the normal cluster of toaster, cuisinart, blender, deep-fat fryer, crockpots, and thanks to a moving-in gift from Arnie, a new George Foreman grill.

Let me pause here for an unpaid testimonial: The Foreman Grill is the most wonderful appliance I've ever had! It works great, it's easy to clean up, it keeps all that grease out of the kitchen, and all of you should run out right now and get one for yourself.

This house was build 25-30 years ago, and as was the fashion of the time, it has lots of "pot shelves". This is a big help in fitting in all the glassware and pottery I've collected. Now, if ever I find the rest of my soup tureens.....

The garage is still solidly stuffed with boxes. Unfortunately, tax records and old software seem to be what's in front. A lot of décor, and some of my pots & pans, and all of our paintings must be buried behind. Ah, well. Someday they'll surface.

The Ruckus On Line

I think most of us here in FAPA are also online. And a great many of us are members of one or more "list-servs" (discussion groups.) So there's nothing I'm going to say here that you don't already know; you may skip these paragraphs with no risk of missing any excitement.

Fanac is being forever changed by the list-servs. The first problem is the banality; it is incredible how many words can be exchanged about totally irrelevant matters. Even assuming that the topic is of general interest, patience is strained by the number of people who feel they must respond even when they have nothing to say but "yes" or "AOL that."

The second and larger problem is the hastiness. The Internet promotes quick response, and we too quickly shoot off ill-considered replies. A few minutes might make us reconsider, or at least reword for readability. Instead, the rush to respond provides opportunity for limitless misspellings, typos, bad grammar and poor construction. That says nothing about sloppy thought.

But the biggest problem is that it provides too much opportunity for argument, often over totally inconsequential matters. We've all seen it happen — sudden explosions of fury, oversensitivity, genuinely hurt feelings, and unnecessary rifts — when onlookers can say little more than "Huh?!!" at unexpected problems between members of the conversation.

Way back in the '60s I remember witnessing similar upheavals when members of the energetic band of Apa 45'ers used little or no restraint. They at least had youth to excuse them for shooting off ill-considered slashing retorts; today's list-serv members are too long-in-the-tooth for that. Also, unfortunately, too long-in-the-tooth to bounce back when they're slapped in the face by an unkind respondent.

It seems hardly a month can pass without some venerable fan who should know better getting in a tizzy because of a remark made on line. At the worst, they leave the group over it, or force the removal of their critic. At the best, it raises the hackles of everyone watching, promoting unease...and ulcers.

Can anything be done about this? Are the list-servs ruining fandom as we know it? What can you suggest? The only thing worse than what this is doing would be to not be on line at all.

The California Fires

There's been a great exodus of Las Vegas fans in the last couple of years. Most recently, Ben and Cathi Wilson moved to Simi Valley, California. Tom and Tammy Springer, who left Vegas for the Great North Woods of Oregon a few years ago, relocated this year to Tehachapi, CA. And of course, Mr. & Mrs. Mainspring, Ken and Aileen Forman, are in Yucaipa, CA, as is old Vegas fan Karl Kreder and his wife Alison. And, both Arnie and I have relatives there.

This made us fearful for them during the California fires, but thankfully all remained safe. The fires got altogether too near Yucaipa; it seemed certain the Formans would have to evacuate, but then the weather turned.

Vegas also felt some effects during and after the fires. Our valley filled with smoke, so much that the sun became just a red ball so well-swathed that you could stare right at it. Even inside our house, with windows closed, it was so smoky that the fire alarm went off once.

During the first week of November, the effect is being felt in a completely different way — the price of lettuce has skyrocketed, along with other produce from California. I don't know if this is because the farms burned up, or if it's because distribution was disrupted.

I'm not sure how Californians endure their steady diet of crises. I grew up in tornado alley, and also in an area where disastrous floods counterpoint with dangerous droughts. Missouri also has occasional earthquakes (though great destruction only occurs every couple of hundred years.) But Californians suffer through fire and storm, mudslide and earthquake as regularly occurring plagues. I'm not sure why they stick it out; and I particularly don't see why they keep building houses on the sides of cliffs. My sympathy is mixed with questions about sanity.

A Good Autumn for Drama

It's hard to budge me from in front of the TV this fall, especially on Sunday nights when my heart, or at least my attention belongs to HBO. Naturally I'm a big fan of The Sopranos. Right now I'm also anticipating the return of Six Feet Under (which I hope will be back in January.) I still enjoy Sex In The City, although I'm glad this is their last year; I really feel the series is winding down. I also like Curb Your Enthusiasm, and Arliss — both are in reruns now but should be back soon.

But this Autumn, my top pick is Carnivale. Are you following this show? It's a mysterious, almost Bradbury-like story about the interplay between Good and Evil, set against a broken-down carnival touring the Dust Bowl during the 1930s. A great many of the characters have supernatural powers, though it's not too easy to know if they're from the good or dark side. Recently, they reran the first 6 or 7 episodes marathon-style, and we captured them on tape. I recommend you do the same if you get a chance...this is don't miss viewing.

We attend few movies, but are right now anticipating LotR 3: The Return of the King, which will open in mid-December. I'm rereading the book to be ready, and this weekend Alan and Dedee White are coming over to see The Two Towers on dvd. This trilogy of movies is undoubtedly my favorite of the last decade, maybe even of all time. (I expect the third to be right up there with the first two.)



Council Fires

(Mailing Comments)

Fantasy Amateur What a wonderful listing of new members! Welcome indeed, to Calvert, Kemp and Stinson, and I'm also looking forward to full participation by Phillips, McInerney and Hinz. (I don't know Warman and Halme nearly as well, but they're welcome too.)

Despite my complaints about the argumentative quality of much online fanac, I do think that we should accept it as qualification for FAPA. As Robert points out, they'll have to produce a paper fanzine to be in FAPA. Meanwhile, there are lots of fans who aren't doing paper fanac, just posting their thoughts on line. We'd be cutting off our noses ...if we ignored them all. In these days of reduced paper fanac (and soaring paper fanac expenses) we are lucky to get good people with an interest in FAPA. Too many are content to just keep it on line.

Good to see the Egoboo Poll results, and thanks to those who very kindly remembered me.

A Different Drummer (Eric Leif Davis) You say that John Carter got to Mars by wishing it were so. Isn't it interesting that people are able to "Jaunt" (in *The Stars My Destination*, by Bester) by the same method. Yet the first is seen as fantasy, and the second as science fiction.

I believe that time travel will eventually be done the same way, just by desire. We already can just almost do this. Imagine a time you'd like to revisit...your momma's kitchen when you were a child, the arms of your first boyfriend, the home of your father...and you can just almost put yourself there, almost taste the moment. Someday we'll be able to do this under control. So will this be reality or fantasy? Does it matter, if you come back feeling you've been with them?

Big Cat (Ray Nelson) Love the cats. They're a great compromise in art styles, and so perfectly reflective of the Beat Generation, back when we were all cool cats. You are right, that the large black areas would have made these cartoons unusable back then; how wonderful that's no longer a problem.

Sansevieria 54 (Dale Speirs) Fascinating discussion of code-breaking. I've never quite understood how people did this, and you made it sound logical. I had seen examples of the pigpen code but never known how it worked. My own code-making and breaking as a child didn't get far beyond letter and number substitution.

Ben's Beat (Ben Indick) Your last sentences in *A Life in the Pharmacy* hit me strongly, as they so well evoke my own feelings as my career winds down. "...all strangely replaced now by a kind of nostalgia in which everything is a natural thread in a colorful fabric." Like you, I feel richer for it, and also like you, I don't think I would like to go back...

I've always had an aversion to returning to old neighborhoods, old pursuits, now-finished avocations. I don't like pretending to still be part of something that has moved on without me, and when I do so, it makes me feel I've been unfaithful to my old interest, whatever it was.

Nice Distinctions 2 (Arthur Hlavaty) I don't think I'd like to try to pick my own all-time favorite singles, but I was interested in your choices. I like all five tunes you chose, but *The Great Pretender* is the only one that would have even a shot on my top 10. Probably I'd end with a list of old sentimental faves, like *Across The*

Wide Missouri, Amazing Grace, or The Old Oaken Bucket. You get into the problem of what type of music you're going to choose; I wouldn't want to limit myself to Rock. I'm also very fond of Reggae, Cajun, Country (before Hank died), Folk and Blues.

For FAPA (Eric Lindsay) I sympathize with your discussion on rising printing costs; this and the rise in postage has driven many of us to give up paper versions. I agree with your remark, later to **Arnie**, about fans retreating to the "cursed weblogs" (though in our case, it's not weblogs but PDF files.) It's disagreeable to face up to these changes. But at least in the case of the PDF files, the fan ends up with a solid paper copy, assuming he goes to the trouble of printing it out. And, you get the added benefit, along with no paper, ink and postage costs, of getting to use color in your design.

Safari (Earl Kemp) Arnie and I have had DVD for a few years now, but still haven't accumulated many movies. We have the Stanley Kubrick set, including two or three more of his films...basically everything but Spartacus. And I have the first two Lord of the Rings movies, and will get the third when it's released. But what we do have is an enormous collection of recorded video tapes, where we concentrated more on programs than on movies. We have lots of Masterpiece Theater productions, all of Dallas, Soap, Mary Hartman Mary Hartman, Knott's Landing, many tapes of Dr. Who (unfortunately recorded in New York pre-cable, but it's better than not having Dr. Who.) We have 3 or 4 years worth of The Sopranos, Wise Guy, and hundreds more. I hope the VCR format doesn't vanish in the next few years, because I'd hate to be unable to play our collection. As came to pass on our 4,000-LP Album collection, which we recently sold (at a fraction of their worth! Dammit!) Our turntable had played out, and we just didn't want to be bothered to get another, and we also wanted the space back. Sic transit vinyl!

Alphabet Soup 39 (Milt Stevens) I'm glad to know Mae West was "rich enough to do just about anything she pleased" in her later years. (You mentioned this in your response to **Arthur Hlavaty**.) I liked her a lot, and consider her a real trail-blazer for independent women. And I admire her courage for putting herself right out there, and not curtailing her personality to suit some of the more uptight spokespeople of the generation. I think she is worthy of emulation in many facets of her personality. Unfortunately, most people don't get past her act to think of the person.

Voice of the Habu (Roger Wells) I noted your discussion of Who's Who in your comments to **Ben Indick**. Growing up in Poplar Bluff, MO, one of my main influences was Helen Cain, the town's librarian. I learned that she was named in the Who's Who and was so impressed — I hoped someday to be like her and be similarly honored. Later, this did happen, but by then I'd lost my innocence about the process of choosing such lauds. I realized it was merely an editing chore, and certain categories of employment guarantee entry. And, being there once practically guarantees you'll be there again, and again....and in other publications such as Who's Who in (your state), Who's Who in the West/East/South, etc However, I'll admit I got mileage out of these tidbits, mentioning them in job interviews, and to less-savvy friends just to impress them. Like Ben, I do not buy the books.

More recently I've been similarly "honored" by inclusion in several books with

titles like Best Poets & Poetry of 2001, 2002, etc. This is a wonderful credential to cite to someone who doesn't know how these things are done, but unfortunately has little or no validity whatsoever since it's nothing more than a book-selling scam. But I confess to vanity; I did buy one, just so I could show my relatives that I've made good. Even though in my heart-of-hearts I know I've only made some editor's list of potentially gullible self-inflated ego-hounds.

But as you say, such things sometimes help you acquire other, more worthy goals.

Lofgeornost 72 (Fred Lerner) You remarked to **Ben Indict** that you didn't become a member of First Fandom when they recently relaxed the rules. I'll admit that it's inappropriate for me to be listed with such as Warner or Moskowitz. However, I was delighted when invited to join and gratefully accepted. I understand their desire to keep the organization alive, which requires admitting fans of a more recent era. And, I was pleased to have a chance to rub elbows with my fancestors.

Bird of Prey (Janine Stinson) I didn't know birds-of-prey were called raptors. Of course, I don't really see many of those here in Vegas, although yesterday I noted one dove was assiduously chasing away the others from a particularly tasty morsel.

You definitely got a good start reading science fiction by reading the Anthony Boucher volumes. And, Bester's *The Stars My Destination* is undoubtedly one of the greatest (arguably *The Greatest*) science fiction novels written.

The Road Warrior (Tom Feller) As you said to **John Davis**, the Commodore 64 was certainly a memorable machine, and durable as an old plow horse. There are still C-64s in use, doing such things as managing elevators, working security systems, and I even know of one that does factory inventory for a small firm in Indiana.

I think I've used almost all of them, at one time or another, for gaming and word processing...Apple, Apple 2-C, Macintoshes of several varieties, Vic, Commodore, TI-99-4A, Adam, Atari 1020s (which were wonderful but you couldn't find a repair-shop), Amigas... Now I live in the PC universe, though I really think the Macintosh is a better computer.

Fantasy Commentator (A. Langley Searles) What an incredible issue! And, what an accomplishment to reach your 60th anniversary issue. Congratulations, and my compliments!

Hidden From History accomplishes its goal admirably, establishing the prominence of women writing in what was thought to be a man's field. And, the Tables listing women participants is a great piece of work.

Bare Back Side (Helen Wesson) What a great title for a zine! The bare back sides are probably showing on even more zines, now that they're being printed offline. Wonder how many people bother to use both sides of the page? (and thus ends this issue of **Western Romance**.)