

CACOETHES 1





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Hello FAPA. This is CACOETHES - we'll call it issue #1 - just to make it easy for you and difficult for other people - and comes to you from the fingers of Dian Pelz. 1231 12th St. #J, Santa Monica, California is a perfectly acceptable address. Oh yes, Zip Code 90404. I apologize for the run-together words, but I find myself temporarily out of control, and now that I am in the mood to type I FAPAazine, this is no time to be distracted by such minor considerations. It seems hardly real to be getting into this august organization after such a long wait. I remember when I joined the waitlist. It was in 1962, I believe. Bill Evans was on a visit to California and happened to be visiting the Trimble's at their place on 3rd street, (Mathom House) naturally, this was a good excuse for a larger than average fan gathering. I presented the poor man with a more than usually cruddy neozine and was duly presented with a position on the waitlist. I've been there for six years. I am not sure whether mania or inertia has kept me there. Ah well, the end result is the same.

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I work, for those of you who may be interested, as a technical artist for PLASTIGLIDE MFG. CORP. (they pay my salary, therefore I will grant them the honor of capitalization) located right here in ever lovin' old Santa Monica. To be more specific, I draw small plastic components for the catalogs, advertising, etc. It's sort of a fun job, the pay isn't too bad, and the work is almost frighteningly easy. Right now my immediate supervisor is on vacation, I have very little to do, and fill up the chinks in the day by drawing advertisements for the FUNCON (that gets capitalized on its own merits). As a matter of fact, suppose I pause here to deliver a small speech on the merits of the FUNCON/WESTERCON. First of all, it is being run by two admirable people. Bruce Pelz, whom you all know and love as a Publishing Giant (Burbee said so, honest) is co-chairman with Chuck Crayne, White Star about town, hi-fi snob, and general prodigy. These two are ably assisted by Ken Rudolph (slightly potty editor of SHAGGY), Sally Crayne (part time flower child and general Ghodd Person), and yours truly. I can't claim much for myself except a lot of grouching. Next, the convention is being held at a hotel which is only one block from the Santa Monica Mall. Now, the Mall was constructed about two years ago and contains virtually any sort of store you could possibly want during a convention from liquor through optometry to maternity. You will also be only about three blocks from the great Pacific Sea (which you may chunder in on the third day of the convention.) A new addition to the Santa Monica pier (about four blocks from the hotel - long blocks)(well, not that long, easy walking distance) is one of those gigantic slides. Bruce and I fled down to the beach to escape the heat the other day and spent some time watching the enthusiasts sliding down the thing on their little gunny sacks. Bruce offered to give me a dime if I wished to indulge, but I declined gracefully. I don't even like rollercoasters and that thing is just like a rollercoaster with the cars removed. Brrrrrr. Such minor considerations aside, I think this is going to be a really great convention. The trouble is, we need a slogan. How about "Pitch some woo at Funcon II"? -- well, to tell the truth, that's how I felt about it too.



DO I REALLY HAVE TO? Vote for a President this year, I mean. The more I hear from our respective candidates, the more I feel like maybe we ought to tell King George we've changed our minds. Tricky Dicky seems to think he has some sort of right to the office since he was done out of it the last time. Horrible Hubert looks and sounds like he expects to get hit in the face with a custard pie, and Wallace... well, I feel dirty just typing his name. Now I understand that both of the candidates (there are two candidates, one anachronism, and Pat Paulsen) undoubtedly have their good points, and those of you out there in FAPALand are undoubtedly enamored of one or the other of them, but from this quarter the situation don't look good. Right now I feel as though I will probably vote for Nixon (ech, ptui) because he claims that he will see that we have a little more domestic tranquility (probably next week he will offer to do this with low yield atomic weapons and I will have to go vote for Humbert). I don't know what the devil they are going to do about Viet Nam. The simplest way of pulling out of a war like that is to just up stakes and leave the land to the vultures, but pride, strategy, the balance of power, and economic prosperity are very thoroughly against that. Well, things may be bad here at home, but at least we're better off than the Czechs. Of course, Wallace says that if we were to let the police have a free hand for two years we could solve all problems. I happen to be one of the few people around who hardheadedly maintain a steadfast affection and honest admiration for the police, but even I think that would be about like letting a two-year-old get his hands on an open tube of toothpaste. This is the first year I can recall that I have had any interest at all in political maneuverings. Usually I relegate the matter to the same corner at the troubles Charles II had with Parliament, or Senicherib had with his ministers. You know, in 1,000 years what will it all matter anyway. Our founding fathers didn't intend this country to be a democracy, and they were probably right. The problem is finding the right oligarchy. Anyway, there is I, not really caring, but oddly interested. The Republican convention was dullish, but sort of a nice echo of the romantic past with its conga lines and bunches of balloons. Then there came the Democratic convention. I was really charmed. I felt as if the whole fantastic affair was being put on solely for the benefit of the television viewer. Ah, with what verve and tenacity they retired to little smoke filled rooms for their conferences. With all great facial expressions of honesty, integrity, and greed they stood up to be counted. And the tastefully inserted ads by the Chicago Chamber of Commerce extolling the exciting life in their city. I think Mayor Daly ought to be commended for putting on such an exciting spectacle especially for the occasion. I wonder if you had to have a special ID card to attend the riot... Of course, the thing that keeps running through my mind is, if those "peaceful" demonstrators had stayed home and tried to figure out how they could honestly render some aid to the other people in the world instead of going out and throwing garbage, insults, and abuse at the police; or joined the Peace Corps rather than tearing down flags, they wouldn't have gotten billyclubbed, now would they? Everyone has got to do what he thinks is right, and everyone has to make his own mistakes. From joining Communism and smoking pot as a lark in the early 40's, to warring for peace and smoking pot in the late 60's. Do people really ever progress?



WHATEVER HAPPENED TO ECHRU?

Or is that how you spell it? Have you ever noticed how colors come and go? It isn't all together the dictates of the fashion world. Oh sure, we have reds some seasons, and browns some other seasons, but the colors are still around if you are looking for them, even if they aren't the rage of the moment. Part of the changes are, of course, due to the difference in the dyes being used now. Modern colors are a lot different in tone from those used, say 50 years ago. As a matter of fact, this is a fairly large problem for stage and movie costumers if they are trying to strive for authenticity. Now only are the colors they need almost impossible to get, but the effect of the stage lighting pretty well negates the impact of the colors they can get. Probably the only sabinggrace is that the majority of the people who watch historically ghastly productions neither know nor care that some robe ought to be four shades lighter and two shades redder than it appears. I don't know that I really would notice anything out of the way in a drama if they put Julius Caesar in green robes instead of royal purple - I'd just assume that the man had a right to change clothes once in a while if he felt so inclined. But still - where do good colors go to die?

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"25 dollars a spoon? That's ridiculous." Actually, sugar's gone up.  
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I HAD A BRIEF CONVERSATION with my boss this morning about the preparation of the dead. She, it turns out, had been at an American Legion meeting where some woman had suffered a coronary and subsequently died. The woman's husband had also died, and two of the Legion members who happened to be morticians got the business. Now, some weeks later my boss happened to be riding in the car belonging to these two august gentlemen, and was horrified to discover that the ashes of the decedents, in their little urns, were locked up in the trunk. She was unhappy about these objects being so casually treated, and was even more upset to hear the morticians talk "shop". I don't think it ever occurred to her that a body has to be prettied up before it is offered to the gaze of the bereved. Anyway, I then asked her if she had ever noticed that caskets are not only lined with nice soft satin, but often have little pillows to rest the head of the corpse. People aren't really civilized, they just think they are. If we took a really civilized view, all bodies would be consigned to the fire, or made into soap or something. Instead, modern man practices customs but very little removed from the ways of his superstitious forebearers. I was told not too long ago that in mortuary "Slumber Rooms" the dead are propped up with their favorite surroundings and clothing, and made to look as though they are merely resting - for the supposed consolation of the survivors. Sheesh. Children are often buried with their favorite toys, women with their jewelry; and yet we smile pityingly at the accounts of the Egyptians who buried their dead with virtually everything a person used while alive to the extent - in the case of the wealthy, of several tons of miscellaneous junk. (Junque - it's worth money) I wonder if Man in the Middle Ages took a lot of pride in the fact that he was civilized? Perhaps even the paleolithic man prided himself on the great atrides he had made beyond foolish superstitions. Afterall, one man's religion is another man's mythology.



As a matter of fact, while reading through a tome on mythology the other day, I was wondering if oriental texts on the same subject list Christianity as a mythology. Of course, the spread of Christian belief into the remote sections of the world might pretty well rule that out. We seldom think to try and see how things that we are convinced are true may appear to the outsider. I use "we" as a matter of convenience, being an agnostic myself. I am sure that to a devout Zoroastrian, Western beliefs appear rather quaint. Or perhaps as an odd new-fangled quirk, considering the relative ages of the two.

I have fun, sometimes, projecting my thoughts ahead and imagining how wierd some of our ways and thinking may appear to those who will be ruling the roost then. Oh, I can hear the cynics now "Yeah, if we don't all blow ourselves to bits first!" I have a great faith in the dumb luck syndrome being able to preserve the Human race, and even if it doesn't, weeeel, are we really all that wonderful? Man has been killing and laying waste to this world since he learned to stand on two legs and swing a club. Wouldn't nature breathe a sigh of relief to be done with such a distructive animal?

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If a solid is permeable, what do you call a liquid that permeates? I am having trouble with my liquid plastic. I made a two part mold to cast some figurines in, and find to my horror that the liquid is steadily and (seemingly) unstoppably seeping right through the mold and through the bottom. I tried running strips of tape along the junction line ( the mold was already tied together.) and then putting a few layers of cotton under that (well over it, but since that's the side the mold is sitting on...) Nothing. The liquid goes right throuh the cotton as though it weren't there. I thought the packing of the wet fibers would slow it down until it had a chance to set. When this mess finally sets up so that I can scrape it off of everything, I think I'll try coating the mold with a thick layer of vaseline before pressing it together. That might prove to be an effective seal. Failing that, I don't know what to do. Plastic works great in a lost wax mold, where it can't escape, but when you want to cast more than one of an object, you are sort of stuck. Liquid plastic is very cheap at paint stores, very pretty, and reasonably easy to use in a limited area. I have had the feelijg for a long time that it was sort of being neglected as an art medium, being relegated to the realm of swag lamps and ashtrays - although Don Simpson has done some beautiful work with it. Well, keep tuned to this station and I'll let you know how it all turns out.

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The World Series cost me ... lessee, 25¢ each for the first three games, 50¢ each for the next three, and \$2 for the last game. I'm talking about the office pools, you understand. It's part of the Game of working in an office. No, of course I didn't win. My boss won one of the \$25 pools, plus an additional \$5 from a friend who lost \$500.00 to assorted other people by having too much faith in the "Greatist Living Pitcher." My boss is originally from Detroit, and is still stubborn about it. This time it paid off for her. The guy who lost the \$500 said he won \$650 last year, so I told him to think of it as still being \$150 ahead. He said he'd try.



## THE ROYAL SAGA OF STONEWORTHY

Stoneworthy Suchkin lived in a tree. For no particular reason. Many hundreds of people had asked him why he lived in a tree, and he always gave them different reasons. Stoneworthy wasn't very old, nor yet very young. He was just in that in-between age where a man can't decide whether to be dignified or a rounder, and a woman can't decide whether to be blonde or brunette. As a matter of fact he was quite a fine looking figure of a man. He had long black hair which he kept tidy with a tortoise shell comb that he had gotten without the consent of the tortoise, BIG grey eyes that always looked either nervous or dazed, and smooth olive skin. He wove leaves and flowers in his hair fresh every morning when they were in season, and braided his hair in 79 braids when they weren't. He generally wore a jerkin he had made out of the discarded down and feathers in last years bird nests. Stoneworthy was a bit of a local landmark.

He seldom lived in the same tree for more than a month or two at a time. It was rumored by the townspeople that a month was all any tree would put up with him, and that after that they found WAYS of getting rid of him. The only exception seemed to be a young sycamore who had no taste, and was really too juvenile to know better. It wasn't that Stoneworthy was a bad sort, really, but he was an inveterate gambler. Perched on the lowest limb of his tree-of-the-month he would play poker with the local residents by the light of aardvark fat lamps until dawn. Naturally there had been some question of his having an advantage by reason of being able to see half of the hands in the game, but he crossed-his-heart-and-hoped-to-die, so after that no one even thought about it anymore. While the cards were being dealt, the favorite pastime was to ask Stoneworthy why he lived in a tree, and try to catch him repeating the same story twice. They never did. The fame of the Stoneworthy poker games was such that people came from miles around to play cards at the feet of the Master. It wasn't that he was that good, but he styled himself the Master-Of-The-Monthly-Tree, and people certainly sat at his feet. The odd thing about Stoneworthy was that, although no one had ever observed him to descend from any tree and take up a new position, he had likewise never been observed to commit an improper, rude, or socially unexceptable act. "After all," replied Stoneworthy when queried about this, "There are ladies present." And so there were. The village nymphets were no stronger than the boys, and the housewives no stronger than the men. One and all they came at various times to play Jacaranda (pass seven, pass four, discard three, pick up twelve, bet fifteen times, exchange cards with your second opponent to the left, bet twice, pass four, discard seven, and roll your own. They did not use a standard deck.) and other simple games. Being mere villagers they did not feel that it was proper to play the more sophisticated games of the nobility, such as Kackrat, Dependable Dozens, or Chuck-Always-Wins

Stoneworthy lived a quiet and virtuous life, asking no more than to win once in a while and to hear the flutter of the deck through the sleepy reaches of the forest. It was on a bleak day in Decemover that all of this came to a sudden and tragic end.



It was about seven in the evening and the nightly game was in full sway when a STRANGER turned up . Now, right away the participants could tell that this was no ordinary, run-of-the-mill stranger. He was riding a huge black charger, had a retinue of seventy-four persons, was addressed as "Your Majesty" and was wearing a tall gold crown. As a matter of fact, it was King Gogolbert, ruler of the neighboring monarchy, who had come to play cards. The players respectfully made a spot for him on the grass, and were even unusually courteous when he admitted he had never played "High-lo, jury-rig your own". As a matter of fact, they accepted him.

It might be well at this point to say a few words about the King. King Golgolbert was the scion of a long line of rulers. His mother had been a princess before she was a queen, and his father was the umpty-ninth in the ruling house of Golgolberts. Our particular King had been raised to the spatter (so called because of the Royal Spattered Robe, which had been purchased by the First Golgolbert and stained with gravy at the Royal Coronation. It had never been cleaned, as a mark of respect and laziness, and was consequently quite stiff.) since he was a mere babe. He was sick of it. Golbert (as he liked to be called) imagined that if he saw one more yard of royal red carpet, or heard the words "your majesty" once more, he would scream, scream, scream! He tried to abdecate, but there was no one he could abdicate in favor of. He had neglected to marry, feeling he had been pushed into enough already. He tried to get some of the neighboring kings to annex the country, but they refused. He even tried to wage war and thereby hand over his problems to the winner. He rather embarrassingly managed to win the two combats he tried and gave up in disgust. The only thing left was to cheat. Golbert reasoned that as the king of the country, and an absolute monarch, he owned the country lock, stock and vinyards. Not to mention unwashed populus, mangy cur dogs, surly innkeepers, and brown-nosed servants. He obviously couldn't sell it, there was no one around who either wanted it, or - since those disastrous two wars- could afford it. So, the next best thing was to lose it in some game of chance. King Golbert was a bit of a poker hustler. He could play every game that Stoneworthy knew, and lots more besides. And he cheated like a true master. In training to be king, he had been taught to lie, keep a straight face, dissemble, sandpaper his fingers, and develop good peripheral vision. (It was part of the course in Diplomacy.) Now he bided his time. The game went on.

By nine o'clock the game had dwindled to four. By midnight there were only three, and at two in the morning, Golbert had the helpless Stoneworthy to himself. A lesser man would have pulled out, aware that something was fishy (a herring sandwich in the king's hip pocket) but Stoneworthy, inveterate gambler that he was, stayed on. By four in the morning a dazed Stoneworthy found himself handing his bird-down jerkin to the king in exchange for the Royal Crown, and was the sole proprietor, owner, and responsible party for the Kingdom of Cascorrigol, winner of two major wars, possessor of the finest vineyards in the land, and - incidentally - betrothed to the daughter of the King. (No, the King never married, but he wasn't obstinate either.)



King Golgolbert, now divested of his title, his royal properties, and his worries, ogled the local blacksmith's daughter, eventually married her, took over the smithy, raised seven huge and surly sons, and gloated to the end of his days. At any rate he now passes out of our narrative never to be heard of again.

The host of servants that has accompanied the previous king were happy enough to do homage to King Stoneworthy the First, feeling that after more than umpty-nine Golgolberts it was time for a new royal monogram, but there was only one trouble. Stoneworthy refused to leave his tree. He shook his head and maintained that there was nothing in the agreement that said he had to come down to earth to be a king. So he sat in the sycamore with his arms folded, the crown sitting jauntily on his head, and continued work on a jerkin made of cast off locust wings. Eventually the court solved the problem. Comandeering a local labor force, they gently and carefully uprooted the sycamore, deposited it on a huge wheeled platform draped with velvet and pulled by the two most magnificent royal elephants in their most magnificent trappings, and bore their king triumphantly home.

Once the royal palace was reached some additional debate was carried on with Stoneworthy, but as he still refused to descend, the sycamore was planted in the royal courtyard, which was partially roofed over, and the people accepted their new ruler as a true individual.

The ex-king's daughter, faithful to the wishes of her father, came to the palace from her home with her mother - the village seamstress, (her father had always had a weakness for domesticity) and duly wedded the new king. She was dressed magnificently in gossemer and red satin with ropes of rose colored pearls through her raven hair. The sycamore, being considered by many people as part of the king himself, and often petitioned for favors, was draped in cloth-of-gold and emeralds. Stoneworthy had by then finished his locust wing jerkin and supplimented it only by tying a different playing card to each of the braids of his hair, it then being winter.

Unfortunately, the details of the marital affairs of Stoneworthy the First have been lost to posterity, but speculation has run rampant on the significance of the thirty trees which the young queen caused to be planted at various locations between the Royal chambers and the courtyard. In any case the young queen was in due time delivered of a fine young boy with the same coal black hair and olive complexion as the king. The members of the court, relieved to see a continuous line of rulers in their future, and being much enamored of tradition, scoured the neighboring forest until they found a tree which they deemed suitable for the son of the Master-of-the-Monthly-Tree. This tree, a truly elegant maple, was planted in the courtyard at the side of the much revered sycamore, and was ascended by Stoneworthy the Second when he assumed the crown. As for Stoneworthy the First, at the end of his life, filled with the richness of years, he died in peace and was muffled in elegant wrappings and ceremoniously carried from one to another of the monthly trees from then on. It is rumored that, just before he died, he confided to his son the true reason he lived in a tree.