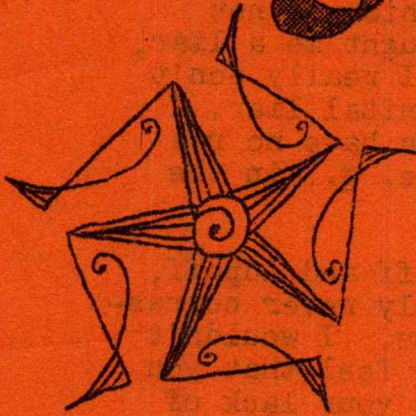


the Grand Vizier's Horsetail



This is HORSETAIL V, by Gretchen Schwenn,
P. O. Box 57242, Los Angeles, California,
90057. The date: Thursday 19 November 1964.
Duplicated by Gafia Press. Distributed by
Apa L, 5th Dispensation.

"The tail of a horse, of which one, two, or three were borne
before a pasha as insignia of rank." (Oxford Universal Dict.)
"In Turkey the Sultan is preceded by seven horsetails and
the Grand Vizier by five." (Funk & Wagnalls College Standard)

LUPOFF & LUPOFF:

I will begin by quoting you:
"Regarding Gretchen's version of her brush with Buechley, John,
I wouldn't accept any one version -- least of all that of a
participant -- as gospel. For one thing, in the heat of the
controversy one's observational and reportorial powers tend
to become biased in proportion with the cube of one's involve-
ment. And Gretchen was INVOLVED. For another, this particular
lady had developed long before the Pacificon a reputation for
highly imaginative reportage."

"Gretchen, despite my earlier
remarks to John Boardman, please don't think that I'm Picking
On You. The remarks about believing participants' reports
of violent encounters apply generally to all participants.
As for my remarks concerning your general reputation...well,
it's so, no?"

No; I don't think you are "Picking On Me." I think you
are foolish; is that any better? In your last paragraph you call
upon me to affirm my reputation as a notorious liar. If I were what
you consider me, it would be inconsistent for me to say so. I would

spoil my record as a congenital liar by saying I am one, for that would make me honest, at least for a time.

The matter of my liarhood can be considered in two ways. Surely, you must be aware that the consensus of opinion is not the source of truth, so that even if "everyone" thought me a liar, that would hardly prove me one. The second point, I really don't think that my general reputation is that of a congenital liar. I presume you refer to my reputation in fandom, as you have no reason to be acquainted with my reputation elsewhere, e. g., in the academic field, and others.

Speaking of acquaintanceship, my dear Lupoff and Lupoff, if we have met, I don't recall it. We have certainly never corresponded, nor even carried on any conversation of note. I wouldn't know either of you if I saw you, but you apparently feel that you know me, and that very well, indeed. It is perhaps your lack of "involvement", even to the point of nonacquaintance, that makes you experts on my character.

Reluctantly, for the issue should never have come up, I must say that I do not know that in fandom I am generally considered to be a liar. If I am so thought, then my personal friends are also liars, because they give me to understand that they do find me truthful. Perhaps there is a whole clique of us liars, who spend our time telling each other how veracious we are!

If you want my truthful opinion, I think that you have been talking to a liar and a gossip, who has told you that my general reputation is foul, and I think that you should investigate your sources more thoroughly. I do not affirm that I have never told a lie, or even that I have never told a gratuitous lie; I have done these things. I can only suggest that it is a common failing, and that I do indeed try to avoid lying, and that I am particularly sensitive to avoid lying. Intimate friends of mine, if you care to consult an "involved" source or two, id est, persons who know something about me, will affirm that they have often counseled me to tell the truth less frequently. They think that blurting out the truth is my worst folly, and I am inclined to agree with them.

If you think my report of what happened to me at the convention is a lie, then please have the grace to tell me specifically what it is that you think is false, and why you think this. It might then be possible to discuss the matter as though we were logical beings.

Don Fitch has objected to terming the Apa L product of each week "a mailing". I therefore suggest that we call the collection a "DISPENSATION", and I have done so in my heading. The Funk & Wagnalls dictionary says about "dispensation":

1. The act of dispensing; a dealing out; distribution.
2. That which is bestowed on or appointed to one from a higher power.

3. The divine arrangement and administration of the affairs of the world; as, the dispensations of Providence.
4. A specific plan; as, a special dispensation of nature.
5. Special exemption granted from the requirements of a law, rule, or obligation.
6. The period during which a particular revelation of God's mind and will has been directly operative on mankind: as, during the Christian dispensation.

I submit that the above all clearly applies to the work of the LASFS in general, and Apa L in particular. Let this then be the FIFTH DISPENSATION! (and so it came to be...)

x x x x x x x x x

It's an awful thing to have to explain an old joke, but sometimes it is forced upon one. I see that remarks made in Apa L about my coming to the next Hallowe'en party as the Cretan Mother Goddess were commented upon by Dave Hulan in FAPA -- but, Dave, you misunderstand me. I wasn't making a joke about breast size, man, but about literary censorship, viz.:

Areopagitica: A Speech of Mr. John Milton for the Liberty of Unlicensed Printing to the Parliament of England, by John Milton, published in 1644.

I quote from The Oxford Companion to English Literature about the Areopagitica: "Milton, addressing the 'Lords and Commons of England' attacks their recent order 'that no book . . . shall be henceforth printed unless the same be first approved and licensed'. . . . He shows that licensing has been chiefly the practice of. . . the Papacy and the Inquisition; while Moses, Daniel, St. Paul, and the Fathers, by precept or example, enjoin freedom in the pursuit of learning. Next, that promiscuous reading is necessary to the constituting of human virtue. And, thirdly, that the attempt to keep out evil doctrine by licensing is like 'the exploit of that gallant man who thought to pound up the crows by shutting his park gate'."

I was objecting to the censoring of Adrienne Martine, you see. As for me, I have Paradise Lost tattooed (in microscopic print) around my left nipple, and Paradise Regained around my right one. And THAT is why I intend to disguise myself as the Cretan Mother Goddess. It never entered my mind that anyone could view it other than as a serious and Christian exposition.

x x x x x x x x x

A Few Words to My Fellow Lers

To Bill Blackbeard: Yes, indeed, you are as good as Cole Porter; in fact, I may copyright those lyrics. As for me doing anything of the sort: I can't, man. I'm not anybody. Aha! You have been had. And here is your reward of four pages.

To Jack Harness: You're right, Jack, the two hollow spheres (balls?) are more fun, but mine are not available right now. I put bells in them, because I like music with . . . and that will do for now. . . .

Tailpiece —

