

## **PETER, PAN & MERRY #49**

A zine for SFPA # 233

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Come and Tarry on SFPA 232

Southerner – Rule # 4 strikes me as something out of John LeCarre. // The masthead is from a Soviet map of “Badhhd”? Seems almost prophetic.

Norm Metcalf – Ct Rich: I think the problem with the last installment of The Postman was there was too much postage for the heft of the package. // Ct me: Yeah, invasion was foiled, and that about wraps it up.

Ned Brooks - Ct Guy: You didn't know that turkey bacon as permissible in what way? I've seen and used pepperoni, ham and salami made from turkey meat and all taste fine. I have no doubt that the same can be done with regard to bacon. // Ct me: I don't recall (at this remove) what – if any – accent I may have heard in my head when originally reading LotR but it seems reasonable that the author, at least, would have heard the characters speaking with some sort of British accent. // Ct Gary: Doesn't Cuba also have tobacco as a natural resource? It's certainly well enough known for its cigars.

Richard Lynch – Ct Dengrove: Although I'm not sure of the mechanics involved the small comet makes sense if there was some sort of outer shell that held it together until the pressure from the expanding steam caused the explosion. Other than that I'm not sure what would have caused a mid-air burst as opposed to an actual impact. // Ct Toni: The “minimum total boundary length” rule for redistricting may not eliminate weird districts totally since if you do a good enough job in enough of the districts you might have one or two you could play with and still have a minimal boundary. // I also agree about awarding EC votes by district rather than winner-take-all.

Steve Hughes – So let me get this straight. While all of us wage earners have taxes withheld from each check (which give the gov't free use of our money), it's unfair for you to have to pay a quarterly estimate and lose the use and interest from that money? You're already getting several more weeks use of your earnings than I do. (I'd also expect that as the year goes by you would be able to fine-tune your estimate of the year's income and so avoid being too far off by year's end.)

Richard Dengrove – Ct Ned: Well what Archimedes did was a test for gold but it presumes that you have a weight of gold equal to the weight of the object. I guess more correctly it's a test for the purity of the gold in the object. / And why would the king have give the gold to a blacksmith to make into a crown? // I wouldn't call Internists and Family Practitioners “specialist trained to be generalists” but rather people whose specialty is being generalists. // Ct Guy: Sorry, tempting though it may be for him, Guy & Michelle Pfeiffer doesn't qualify as “/”-fiction. // Ct me: Sex between Luke and Jar-Jar would be both pedophilia and rishathra. As you say, Luke hasn't been born yet in this sequence. // I think just associating anything with terrorism these days is seen as a good way to campaign against the thing. The commercials that bother me even more are the ones that (for example) the auto accident someone was in because they'd been smoking dope and concluding that “It's not harmless.” Well yeah, overuse, abuse and misuse of lots of things are harmful. // And 9/11 happened early enough in the day that not everyone was at work anyway.

Twiggy Dengrove - Having determined that there are a lot of foods that a lot of people react badly to it's already clear that we aren't going to ban milk, peanuts, MSG, etc from being used. Which begs the question of why other ingredients should be prohibited. Clearly if something is harmful to a large %age of the population (supply your own number) it shouldn't be allowed, but as long as suspect ingredients are clearly indicated then I don't see the problem with allowing their usage. // I'd guess that a "federation" between Israel and a Palestinian state would involve some sort of joint "over-government" for international and joint purposes while leaving each to it's own domestic affairs. Something like the way the 13 colonies originally envisioned their relationship to each other and the federal gov't. // I think you have a point about flaws. A good biographer will tell the story warts and all but not use the warts as a place to point to draw attention away from the other parts. It's the whole picture that counts, not the few not-so-perfect brush strokes. Of course for so many, that willingness to "forgive" imperfections only applies to people who are on their side. // How do you "tax" industries that use illegal immigrants? I can see fining them appropriately after the illegal workers are found (a fine more than equal to any savings they may have accrued) but an actual tax seems difficult to administer.

While that letter writer could have been ignoring the fact that Sen. Feinstein also has her own conscience/beliefs to deal with, it really did read to me that he was implying that because HE wrote her against something that she had to do what he wanted. Either way he was clearly missing a point or two. // Ct Sheila: Well overall I think that the smaller diversions in Fellowship of the Ring were precursors to the wider divergence in Two Towers, like diverting a river. // Ct Toni: My understanding too (although I hadn't thought about it recently) was that in rural communities the farm kids stayed out of school until after the harvest. // Ct Randy: My sister-in-law and her husband have a nice collection of old stereopticon pictures (as well as a couple of appropriately-aged viewers). // How much did we bribe the Turks? Clearly not enough. // Ct Arthur: "THE PUBLIC HAS A RIGHT TO KNOW" We may have the right, but do we really have the desire?

Tom Feller - I think your comparison of Trek films vs the competition is rather skewed. While I'm not certain, I am willing to bet that the listed "competition" films did all not come out within 2-3 weeks on either side of the relevant Trek movie. That makes rather a difference in how you interpret that data. (This isn't to say that I disagree that "Nemesis" was one of the weaker of the Trek films, just that the point about competition is not an invalid one.) Trek films - like the Bond ones - have a certain baseline attendance that they can be assure of but it's the strength of the product that determines how well the film does overall. / Why are you only comparing Enterprise to Next Generation? How is it doing relative to, say, Voyager? // I find Shatner's comment odd since it seems to me that the \$ the series generates is based on how good a job of story-telling they do. // Ct me: If the hotel has only one sharps container for the property, how does the hypodermic get transported? Or is the sharps container brought to whichever location it's needed at? //

Guy Lillian - Whenever I hear the name "Perth" I tend to flash on Mark Sharpe, who was stationed there in the early '80s before getting back to L.A. // With 42 hours of flight time lined up, the best advice I could have given you was "Don't Panic". And always know where your towel is. // Your complaints about the "new" car remind me of the fact that Kay insists on having non-power windows so they can't get stuck closed (or open).

Guy Mundi - Those pictures almost make you look like a ballplayer who got carried away with the anti-glare shading under his eyes. // Ct me: Yeah, there's going to be a lot of things going on in Return of the King. I can even see why Jackson may have chosen to eliminate the scouring of the Shire just to try and get the main events dealt with properly. // While involving human limitations, I think Fail-Safe was more about the limits of technology and the danger in assuming that the technology one is relying on is perfect. Note that it, wisely, does not posit a solution to that problem beyond avoiding the situation. // There's clearly no way to know for sure how the last couple of years would have turned out if Gore had won although my gut feeling is that we'd still be concentrating on securing the situation in Afghanistan and would have been in a much stronger diplomatic position internationally to be able to exert pressure on gov'ts giving active or passive support to terrorists and with fewer distractions to deal with in that arena. / Except for the fact that it isn't particularly funny I'd say that W's policies were more Vaudevillian than Churchillian. // My recollection was that Anakin was assembling 3PO out of spare parts (albeit spare parts appropriate for that model droid) rather than having access to a full kit. // While the Democratic field isn't that apparently impressive yet, I seem to recall that it was similarly lackluster back in 1991. Never can tell.

Ct Gary: Even scarier is that – with all the things you cite about Bush – people actually think he's doing a good job. Must be cause he's telling them dang furriners where to get off. Or maybe this is just the modern version of bread and circuses? Cut taxes and kick butt. // Ct Janice: Essentially right, except you'd probably go right to Tomorrowland or left to Adventureland before going through Sleeping Beauty's castle. // Ct Gary R: Even in Jackson's version Galadriel is not the only one strong enough to face the Ring down – Aragorn does so, as does Gandalf – albeit not quite as dramatically as she does. // Ct Jeff: You didn't enjoy ST: Insurrection?

Don Markstein – Everytime I hear how this or that “suspect site” in Iraq turns out not to have any WMDs, I cross my fingers and hope that that whole pretext continues to blow up in the administration's face. The more that excuse is shown to be nothing but air the more likely the whole reign will come tumbling down (assuming anyone remembers it by next year). // I'm going to guess that “duck tape” got shifted to “duct tape” from it's use in things like heating and air conditioning systems to hold the ducts together. Certainly that's the context I first associated with the stuff. // Agreed on “supporting the troops”. I support them by believing they are good people doing a difficult job and should have the tools to do it right. Doesn't mean I agree with the job they've been sent to do. // As for “Opposing the war = supporting terrorism” I think that cards been played a few too many times in the last 18 months. Principled opposition is everyone's patriotic duty. And that line equates opposing a means with opposing the goal. Not the same thing at all. // It somehow seems to me that what GWB has been doing is far more worthy of impeachment than anything Clinton ever did – except of course the Clinton did whatever he did with an opposition congress.

Gary Brown – “The Constitution just sets minimums”? In some sense he’s right although it seems a badly worded statement. If you view the constitutional statements as absolutes then you end up with being unable to regulate things like inciting to riot, unable to prosecute planned criminal actions, and with the occasional clash of Principals having no way to be resolved. If you take the statements as maximums then you have nothing. So they are minimums in that sense but the question of whether a given set of “rights” is at or above that “minimum” is one that needs to be looked at very carefully – particularly after something has been ruled to be Constitutionally protected. // Ct me: Actually I think (at least by MinnStF) the moose they prefer as a symbol is Chocolate Moose. // And leave us not forget the sort of “High Crime” areas like Humboldt County. // I think the time has come for the Democrats to either go back to being the (shhhh) “liberal” party and stop trying to be something like Republicans. Being the middle-of-the-road party is fine if you have a true left and right to deal with. We don’t and by being MoR they lose both some part of their base to Greens, etc and not gaining anything on the right.

I have to wonder how many baseball fans (or sports fans in general) these days have much interest in the sport’s history. During the time I was most into baseball as a “kid” (‘60s and ‘70s) I read a few books on the history of the game and it’s players. Not like I was any sort of expert, but I had some feel for what had happened in the previous 75 years. I have no idea if that’s still the case. // // I remember that pitchers were always limited to 3-inning stints in All-Star games (don’t want to screw up the team’s rotation) but never there being an issue with having players still on the bench at game’s end. / You would think that, as with regular games, all players should stick around in the dugout at least until it was all over. I’m not sure how they could set that up though. // Generally speaking on the drive down from here the issue is the road itself (there are some fairly windy stretches) but how much of a problem that is depends on what sort of breakfast he ate. Richer food doesn’t set as well. / I remember carsickness being more of an issue when I was a kid too but I, m not sure how much of that may have been related to meals eaten before drives.

Ct Dengrove: One option for the threat to kill passengers if the pilot doesn’t open the door – try a few in-flight aerobatics. The passengers should be belted in for the most part. Ideal? No. But it could give the passengers the chance to fight back. // What I find interesting is that apparently Newt Gingrich said very much the same stuff that Daschle said about the failed diplomacy with regard to Iraq and has gotten no flack or coverage. That he’s not going to be contending for the presidency seems a factor in that.

Janice Gelb – So far, at least, the game of Where In Iraq are Weapons of Mass-Destruction is turning into a bit of a bust. Here’s hoping that both that and the Ties to Al-Qaeda accusation blow up in the administration’s face. I won’t argue with the “Remove evil dictator” ploy but that argument a) was an afterthought and b) takes on ourselves the right to make that decision pretty much ruins it as a support for this action. // I sent Greenlight Loans an on-line application and never heard from them. I hope to get in to the credit union this coming week (pre-Memorial Day) and get started on a refi with them. I won’t know for sure until I talk with them, but I suspect that we could get \$ out, move to a 15-year loan and still be paying the same amount per month. That’s work fine by me. // Re The Producers: My recollection of Gene Wilder in the role of Leo Bloom is that he did tend to run between two extremes.

Janice #106 - Ct Guy: I don't know if Bush will get the blame, but with just about every state and local gov't running deficits and cutting services Bush's plan to run up more federal debt could be what tanks his reelection. There are a lot of things that could blow up in his face and we can only hope. // Ct me: But why would someone who downloads a song and like the artist's work buy other works when they could just download the rest of them too? If you could only access a sampler of each artist's songs via the internet that would be a whole different story. // 2005. Oy, it would be that year when Minicon becomes possible again. Between Random's Bar Mitzvah next July and planning on going to Scotland again in 2005, Minicon will be a challenge. On the other hand, for Minicon.... // Oh, if you decide to take our advice and write your ID information on your underwear and would like some help.... // Yeah, Kay's father was a weird situation all around. She was telling me the other day that he looked so frail the last time she saw him that she was sort of expecting something like that over the winter.

Mike weber – Ct me: I have a vague recall of some Marvel stories set in Rutland VT but don't recall if that refers to the ones you are talking about.

Randy Cleary – “You...are...overly concerned with Janice Gelb's underwear.” And your point is...? // Well this year is my 30<sup>th</sup> reunion and, as with the 20<sup>th</sup>, I plan on not attending. // Thanks for the condolences. // I miss all the old dogs too although not all in the same way.

Gary Robe – Ct me: Seems to me that it's not the illegal immigrants that are taking “good American jobs” (although they may be taking a chunk out of the low-end, first step up jobs). The good jobs are more being lost to a) exportation and b) legal immigrants and work-permit holders. // Until and unless the economies of all countries are roughly equal, there is always going to be some loss of jobs to places where lower wages can be paid.

Jeff Copeland – For some reason your phrasing of “our” reasons for attacking Iraq sound more like something out of Hitchhikers than Monty Python, but I guess those two are close enough for gummint work. / I'd be willing to accept that we may be doing the right thing in Iraq – but not only for the wrong (or a least uncertain) reason but also at the wrong time and with the wrong methods. Maybe his use of the word “crusade” a year and change ago really wasn't a gaff. // Whatever may have been said pre-War, the official line now is that nobody connected to the Ba'ath party will be allowed any role on the rebuilding or ruling of Iraq. // Ct me: I'd forgotten that line about risk in exploration from a couple issues back. It does have a bit of an eerie ring when refracted through later events. // I'm also bugged by the “With us or Against us” mentality that extends beyond just having the same goals to having to agree on the methods of reaching those goals. // Ct Norm: Speaking of corrections producing more errors, we had a similar situation with the synagogue roster a couple years ago. I was the intermediate proofreader and twice sent back (electronically) a full set of corrected spellings, names, etc and yet when it went to the final proof readers there were more errors than before (and not just different ones, it was like he'd never uploaded my revisions and then made some further “corrections”) a rather longer than necessary process that time.

Hello Jeff - Ct Dengrove: I've been seeing the expectations things with education recently myself. Random was commenting that they weren't doing enough in their Hebrew class, so I got a copy of the book and we've been working through it (rather I assign him stuff and then we go over it afterwards). Everyone else is impressed with his Hebrew skills (and they are among the best of his peers), while I'm disappointed/annoyed when he doesn't do as well as I think he can. Truth is, considering how little they've had I think he's doing very well. // Ct Guy: "Q.F.A." Quit F---ing Around. // Ct Janice: Well, Kay has bought us a bagel-slicer, but I still prefer the old-fashioned way of doing things.

Eve Ackerman - Glad Yofi's feeling better, but someone ought to point out to your vet that a lot of people are also pretty thick with regard to what foods they are willing to eat and the consequences thereof. // "...a new Liaden..." I did a semi-reado of that as "Bin Laden". // As a tip I would be hesitant to abbreviate Valentine's Day to just initials. // Aside from some minor issues it sounds like you made the very most of your Boskone trip - you seem to do that sort of thing a lot. // Ct me: I know I haven't heard anything about "poppers" with regard to AIDS in some time. I suspect the clear trail of body fluid transmissions took out the "chemically induced" theory fairly early on. // It may sound odd in the writing, but there is no oddness in the segue from one set of condolences to the next. For one thing the two events segued together and for another a death in the family is a death in the family and Corky very much qualified as a member of the family. Dogs bring a lot to our lives and bring it all the time so the loss is a clearly noticeable void

Liz Copeland - I look at that Ziggy strip and am reminded of the old Jewish joke that has the punchline of the man saying to God "Would you mind choosing somebody else for a change?!" // So you, perhaps, won't feel as alone, one of my coworkers is just coming back to work tomorrow after having had both hips replaced over the last 6 months. At the least she is really happy with the results and I hope had/have had/will have had similar alleviation of discomforts from your operations.

TKFW Reinhardt - My main problem with the use of the term "appeasement" with regard to Saddam and Iraq is that the UN, US, etc actions over the last dozen years have born no resemblance to appeasement as it is most commonly defined. And anyone who implied that not invading Iraq was the equivalent of appeasement was just plain wrong. // The Chick was also wrong about the administration not taking into account the X% who opposed the war - Bush was pretty clear that about ignoring the protests and going right ahead. He took them into account - and discounted them entirely. // Ct Gary: "Castro is still in power despite decades of isolation" Only by the U.S. as Cuba has plenty of other trading partners I'd hardly call it isolation. "Public opprobrium didn't stop Hitler..." What public opprobrium? There was no serious response to his initial militarism. In any case I won't say that economic and social pressure work better, just that military action without some sort of direct threat is a horrible precedent to be setting. // So why not structure a tax cut so that the majority of the benefit goes to people making under, say, \$100K instead of the other way around. Seems to me that the spur to the economy would be greater if those on the lower end of the income scale had more disposable income than if those on the higher end do. // And, in general, why lower taxes at the same time you're increasing spending (albeit on the wrong priorities)? It's like lowering prices while upgrading your stock and services, if you can survive the initial shock you may eventually recover but it seems not the way to bet.

Yngvi is a TK – Ct Jeff: All accidents are preventable (at least in hindsight). A better way, IMO, to turn the question is whether this particular cause was readily foreseeable and what would have had to have happened to prevent it. From what I've seen so far it's clear that there was a breach in the heat shield but it's not yet 100% that it was related to the foam insulation. More important, to me, is to have in place some way to a) determine that it's safe to re-enter and b) allow for repair and/or evacuation and rescue while in space. // Ct me: Were you talking about deportation of all immigrants convicted of crimes? I presume so since illegals can be deported either way. In any case I'd want limit that option to those convicted of serious crimes – all felonies and some of the more major misdemeanors (no, I don't know just which I'd be thinking of). Should it be automatic? It should probably be the general rule but with some mechanism to forgo that if there is sufficient reason. // Yeah, Random's hand is all healed up. Aside from scaring him it wasn't even that much of a much at the time. // But what's to prevent a music fan from downloading all the songs that make up a given album, or just those they want from a set? What difference does it make if the unit is the song or the album if I can download as many songs as I want? Doesn't that get me the product without paying for it? / What Baen is including with books it sells is a controlled situation that isn't really comparable to being able to download what one wants.

**APAC = NC<sup>2</sup>** (Natter x Comments)

March really has mostly come in like a lamb this time with not all that much big happening. I've checked with my mom a couple of times and, while she's going to need another laser treatment in a month, her vision is coming along pretty well and she can read as long as she uses glasses with a bit of magnification. That's definitely a relief for her.

Financially March has been a bit both harsher and nicer than just a lamb. On the nice side was getting our tax forms sent off – with refunds of around \$4000. On the flip side, our water heater finally lost it. As we had previously discussed, we redid the system with an “on demand” water heater and moved it from the garage to the sheltered area outside the bathroom (much more centrally located). Of course this did leave us without hot water for a week ((died on Thursday, estimates on Friday, confirmed things on Saturday, they ordered the heater on Monday (we wanted the size they didn't have in stock), start on Thursday and ended on Friday)).

Also during March, we each had a dental appointment, plus Kay had to go back to get to cavities dealt with and Random had to have his four eye teeth extracted. All told – even with the insurance factored in – those will wipe out the tax refund. Not to mention doing a damn good job of going through my reimbursement account. But the timing was as good as it was likely to get.

The end of March was the dojo's spring tournament. Random's ranking group was going at 1:45 on a day I was working. I switched hours with my coworker and was able to stay long enough to see the first three pairs go (in the lower ranks you work alone, in the higher ones with a partner), of which Random was in one. They did a very good job with a nice combat scene at the end. Random and his partner took First Place and I'm told it absolutely stunned him. He told me that he'd been keeping track of the scores and hadn't thought they had won but, at least as of when I left, I knew they had been a bit ahead of the others. He'd done well at other tournaments, but this was a first. And now he's expecting to be able to test for the next belt level in April. (And got it.)

Last time I made mention of maybe teaching in the religious school next year. Well, I shook hands with my teammate so it's a done deal. I expect we'll be talking a bit over the summer. We'll see how it works out.

Of course then there's other things happening in the world. My opinion hasn't changed. It's still an ill-considered move on our part. Will we win? Sure. But to what benefit? Are we going back to the days of the early part of the Cold War when it didn't matter what type of ruler you had as long as they are friendly to our interests? I think a non-Saddam Iraq could be a good thing (depends what takes his place) but our direct intervention with no immediate threat is bad policy.

April. Not much to say about that really either. Passover came and went. And we had a lovely seder with just a few friends. It wasn't a heavy-duty affair, but everyone seemed to enjoy it. Although we did end up with too much food and a lost stick of butter. Turned out that one of our friends tends to bring her own butter along and when her husband was packing up and saw the stick on the counter he just assumed it was theirs. Left us scratching out heads for a day or so until she called to inform us of what happened. On the other hand, that gave us an excuse to go to see them at their table at Godwit Days. (Godwit Days is a bird-watching event held annually in Arcata. Our friend Gary does wildlife painting and prints.) The highlight of that particular visit was the raptors on display with a rescue gp. Several owls, a hawk and an eagle almost close enough to touch.

Ah yes, I know why April has not so much to talk about – it rained a lot. A lot of the time. In fact, we finished the month out with a record total – a bit over 11 inches – so I spent more time than usual indoors. Part of the time that wasn't indoors was spend playing with Quincy. A strange critter that one. He'll come inside, but within minutes he's clamoring to be let out. He's happy to walk or play with you, but seems to have almost no interest in just hanging out with us. (Although at night when he gets his bone, he does seem more amenable to getting gentler attention.) He's also managed to acquire a friend. While walking we'd seen an older gray Chihuahua wandering around. About a week ago he followed us and is able to get in and out under our fence. So part of the time we find that we have a guest. Kay and Random have taken to calling him "Little Dude". For my part I refer to him as "Gilligan" since he's Quincy's little buddy.

From the feline perspective, BJ and Pirate are getting some of their desires. Both are getting to spend time in the garage. It's not quite outdoors, but it is more interesting for exploration – particularly with stuff stored in the rafters. It seems to keep them satisfied for the moment.

Random has started studying for his Bar Mitzvah – next summer. I've offered to help with learning prayers but am staying well away from interfering with what he'll do for his "learned dissertation" on the Torah portion. I'd also been talking a bit with my sister about how to get my parents up here (she's doubtful it will happen). In talking about this at the Seder, the idea was raised of arranging some sort of teleconference between here and L.A. if we can't get them here. I hope to have some idea of the magnitude of that job in the next week or so when I check with some of the local providers. I'd rather they were here in person, but this would be the next best thing.

During April we watched about half of the traditional broadcast of The Ten Commandments. Now I know it'd been a long time since I'd watched that but I was Really struck by the heavy-handed overlay of Christ imagery on the tale:  
 The killing of the first-born was due to a prophecy of a Deliverer.  
 The birth of the Deliverer being indicated by a new star.  
 Moses being marched into and out of Pharaoh's presence with bar across his back looking very much like a variation on doing the stations of the cross.  
 Very interesting.