

REVENANT #14

Revenant #14, September, 2002 produced for SFPA mailing #229 by Sheila Strickland
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Silly me. Here I thought I was going to get two good issues in for this mailing; even had the mailing comments written in rough draft. Then I started graduate school. After less than one month, I recommend grad school to anyone with too much time on their hands and not enough to read. Despite the work load, I *think* I'm enjoying the class. With my low undergraduate grades, I was admitted on academic probation, which means one "C" and I'm out. During orientation, they let us know that anyone who made two "C's" wouldn't graduate. It's been over twenty years since I was in a classroom and had to worry about grades. All of this came together to make me a nervous wreck for a few weeks before the semester started, and the worry hasn't eased much since. We've turned in one assignment, but haven't gotten it back yet; so I don't know how I'm doing.

College has changed since I graduated. I enrolled for my class over the phone, paid my fees by credit card (either online or over the phone---I've forgotten which!), and participate in a class with people all over the state attending. I'm in a classroom in Baton Rouge along with the professor; but we're linked to six other sites around the state with students who can see and hear us and each other, and we can see and hear them. One monitor shows the image in Baton Rouge and the other monitor shows the image from whichever site spoke last. As you click the microphone at your desk on, the camera at your site turns to you.

I graduated from LSU, so I expected campus to be much the same, but there have been a lot of changes. The cafeteria/snack bar in the Student Union is now a conglomeration of fast food counters. The library was expanded not long after I left. Computers, of course, weren't nearly so common way back when I was an undergraduate; now they have several areas in the library where computers are available with word processing and internet capabilities. (And other places around the campus as well.) Of course the card catalog files are long gone---just lots of computer terminals now. Some things are still the same, though. The live oak trees behind the Student Union are still there, still beautiful. Commuters still have to park on the fringes of the campus during the day. I haven't spend enough time on campus to really get the feel of it, though. My class is Tuesday afternoons, so I leave work early, drive out there, park in my remote parking lot, walk ten minutes to my class, then afterwards, walk back and drive home. I may get there early enough to sit for a few minutes in the Student Union to cool off, but that's not really enough time to see much. I usually go to the library on Sunday afternoons to work on class assignments; so I figure once the weather cools down a bit, I can walk around some more on those Sundays, and start to feel like a student again.

Right now, I don't know if I'm going to manage to make it all the way through to my Master's degree. This course does not actually involve a lot of work, but there will be

a midterm and final which will necessitate writing down what I've (hopefully) learned over the semester in a coherent and orderly method. Other courses will involve writing papers throughout the session. It's a strain to sit and concentrate and take notes for the 2 and 1/2 hour class once a week as it is; I'm usually tired by the time class is over. Taking more than one course will be even harder. If I'm to finish this degree within the required five years (with 13 courses to take), I can't do just one course a semester. Enough with the despair for now! Worrying and fretting won't help; all I can do is work.

Mailing Comments for #228

“Yngvi is a Louse”/Toni: Nice cover. It looked vaguely familiar to me, though, and after some web searching I found that it looks like one of the pieces from the Isle of Lewis chess set, rather than from the Book of Kells. If you haven't heard of it, it's a chess set dug up on the Isle of Lewis, Scotland; dating back to the 11th(?) century believed to be of Viking make and one of the oldest chess set found.

On Hayden Christensen being “reasonable eye-candy “if you kind of squinted”. Maybe. If I squinted real hard. And took off my glasses. But I figure why bother? If I want eye candy in “Star Wars”, I'll go back to “Phantom Menace” and look at Liam Neeson. He's more my eye style. As for Christensen's acting---I just hope he gets a little better before the next movie.

The New Port News/Ned: Nice cover, again, though 1910 must have been an odd year with July only 30 days long!

Re: Ettleson's book contending *Through the Looking Glass* is full of Jewish symbolism---is this man serious? After all, the poem about Tweedledum and Tweedledee; and the poem and characters of the Lion and the Unicorn as English symbols all pre-date Alice. I think this is a more a case of the way someone can read whatever they want to into whatever work they chose.

The way I deal with telemarketers is by usually not answering the phone and letting the answer machine pick it up. If it's early in the morning before work, I do answer in case it's one of my co-workers; or if it's late enough in the evening, it may be a family member. Otherwise, I figure anyone who I want to talk to will leave a message and the spam phoners will hang up.

Sorry to hear you may not be making it to DeepSouthCon in the future, but I can understand the lure of inertia. I usually wonder if a con will be worth the hassle of traveling and taking the time off from normal life.

And apologies to all I skipped. I hope next time will be better. By then, I'll have a better idea of how I'm doing in class; and whether I'll be signing up for another semester or going down in flames!