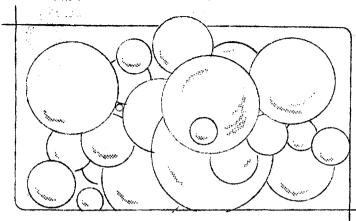
LI BURTH FOR BOGGS



FINLAY NUDE TAKING BUBBLE BATH

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First Issue

Hlep! I ca'nt splel!

Nobody draws cockatrices like Richard Bergeron. And that reminds me, what is the officially sanctioned plural of cocka-

trice, as you seem bent on producing them in plural form and also what ever became of the Richard Bergeron aforesaid? Some time before we left Fond du Lac, appalled by the quantity of big fat blue fanzines he had sent me with little or nothing in return, I dabbed out a letter and took the entirely unprecedented step of sending him a dollar bill. Now I do not begrudge the busk in the slightest, inasmuch as I had received fanzines exceeding that value from him. But what I am afraid of is that we have this virulent jinx of mine working again. I long ago learned that a column from me will put the hardiest fanzine out of existence; in certain instances, even the editor personally. And I can name any number of would-be TAFF contenders who might have been tapped for the trip had they not rashly solicited my support and gotten it. (Which is why I no longer try to stump for TAFF candidates!)(Although I'm prepared to quote a fee for supporting your opponent...)

Now it looks as though even my lawful currency of the US carries this dread taint of doom and disaster. Ah me, woe & wurra.

I hear that Hefner, of P'boy fame, has had a mild brush with the authorities (which, I'm not certain) over the spread on Jayne M'field in the recent issue. It will be mildly interesting to see if publisher and publication will react as did Esquire after its kampf with the p/o back in the mid-40s. I guess it is still being published but I'd guess most people today, on hearing the name, would be apt to think first of shoepolish.

Odd that you should mention Nick Carter. I had a letter from him not long ago. (Yes, I did, actually and literally!) His father, Ed Carter, is the publisher of a trade journal and Nick is the editor. I have met Nick Carter, a genial endomorph of some 35 summers and 230 avoirdupois pounds. I asked him if many people kidded him about the name and he said that a few mentioned it but not as many as you might imagine. And no, he had never personally read any of the adventures of his intrepid namesake. For that matter, neither have I although I own a copy of the shagedge pulp, circa 1933 or so; it was just too thick to wade through. It's surprising how often one encounters names such as this. Since hearing from Nick Carter, I've had a couple of letters from Miss H. West, out California way and I used to drive past Doc Savage's office every couple of weeks...he's a gynecologist in a city upstate and I've had dealings with Bill Bailey and...oh, you'd scarce believe all the celebrated names I could drop, had I a mind to.

I agree with Thomas Wolfe: You can't go back again. I can understand the impulse that took you back to Alamogordo and doubtless, if I came that close to Tonopah, I would likewise succumb to curiosity. In fact, one of the compadres of that bygone day, with whom I still correspond a bit, did stop at Tonopappy a couple years ago. He sent me a snapshot of the old tarpaper range-office, which is apparently still standing. It looked appreciably smaller than I remembered, as buildings long unseen but well-remembered have a way of doing. I sometimes wonder if anyone has ever prospected the rich trove of lead which lies, in the form of 230-grain nuggets encased in rusty steel, for a few acres to the west of the old pistol range. Literally hundreds of truckloads of ammo were unloaded onto that range and hurled forth at 780 ft/sec by shivering aircrews, under the supervision of shivering 938s. Even on hot days, we shivered because you never knew when the barstids would turn on you. Now that you mention it, I wonder what ever did happen to all the old Forts and Libs. The AT-6s and the other trainers--even a few B-25 Mitchells -- were mostly gobbled up at surplus prices but who in tarnation would want a B-24? I wonder if even the Smithsonian has one. You may recall that I quoted a line of Michener's once, via the WO3W about how one day Guadalcanal would ring upon the ears as soft and distant as Valley Forge and Gettysburg. As I recall, you grotched at his use of the term "an American quality about them," which, you said, was incapable of definition. Myself, I'll have to agree with you, though: It is hard to realize that a fifth of a century has spun past since last I brushed pulverized particles of Texas from a pair of GI shoes. The Air Force wore brown ones in those days

I'm not all certain our poetic tastes are at all congruent and I must say I envy you this unshakable air of certainty that ones own opinion is the opinion and the only one that can possibly ever be. From the samples you quote, it sounds very much as if the Kennedy book is the sort of poetry that I would enjoy very much. And that will doubtless solidify your own conclusions like nothing else possibly could. (((+)))

Once, a couple of annual deadlines ago, I went through the waiting list and made note of those names belonging to people of whose existence I was reasonably certain. I by no means meant to imply that all the rest were phantoms or figments of some hoaxter's febrile brain. I have since that time transferred at least one of the unknowns across the line into the category of those personally met: Charles Hanson was at Chicago/Sep'62. Of the rest, I've visually verified the existence of these: Deckinger, (Hanson), Main, DeVore, Schultz, Wells, Breen, Berman, Lupoff, Sanders, Scithers, Davidson, Girard, Lindsay, Willis(!!), Budrys, Hickey and Irwin. I'm faintly haunted by the possibility that there may be one or two that I have seen but do not recall with enough positivity to list. Yeah: Ed Meskys should be added to the list. It is largely a matter of examining people in the mind's eye and squinting hard at the name-tags they wore. I will not precipitate another crisis by listing the names of people I never encountered. After all, I do believe in Daphne Buckmaster if for no other reason than her celebrated letter to "-" and the notorious first word on page 13, or wherever. Hoping you are the same, Brownn Grennell