

"On it he played a strange serenade,
And I was afraid..."

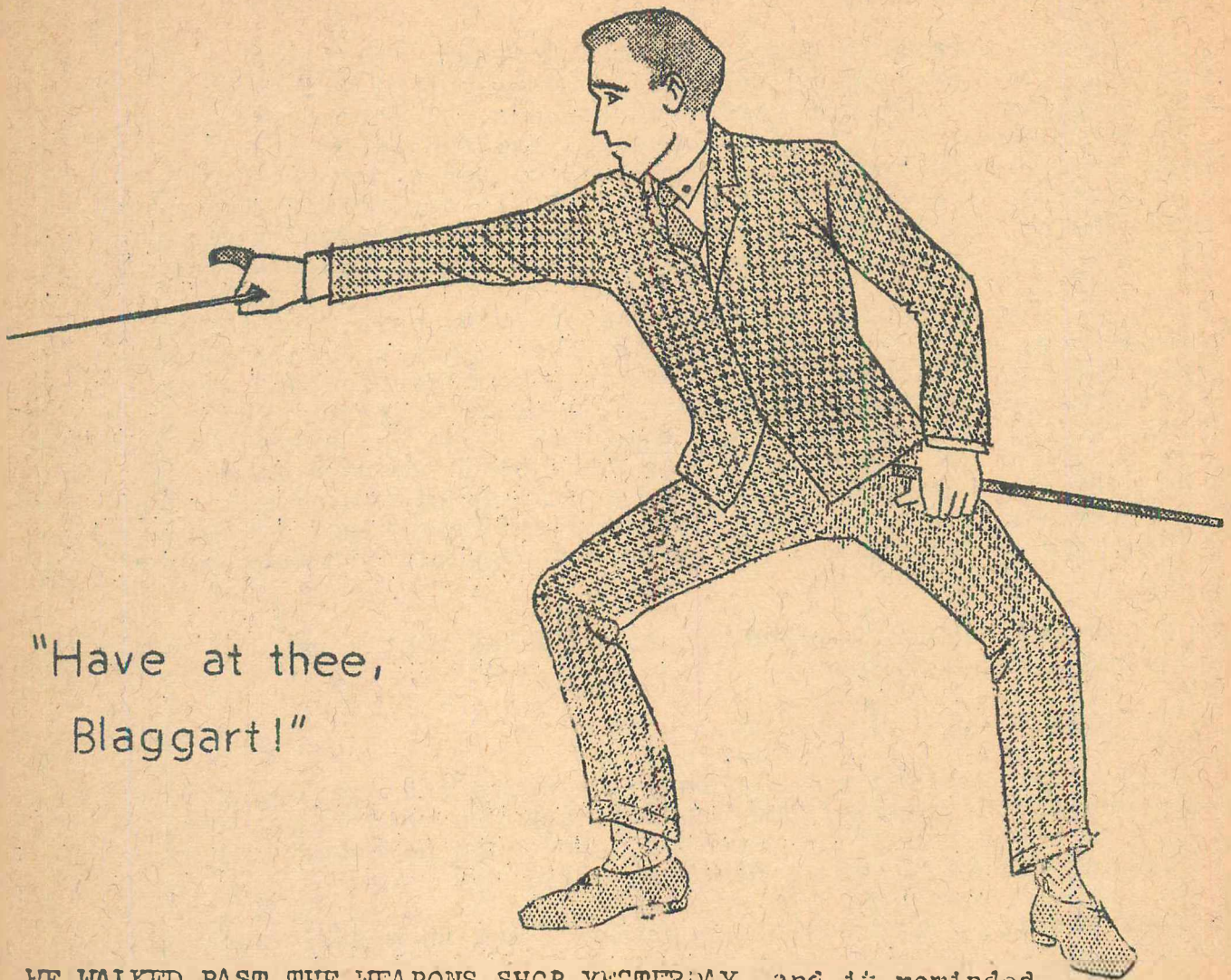
C H O O O G

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L. SHAW, LTD



"Have at thee,
Blaggart!"

WE WALKED PAST THE WEAPONS SHOP YESTERDAY, and it reminded

me of the time I was in there on business. It was just a few days before Christmas, and I had decided to give Larry a sword-cane in honor of that Holiday. Where to get a sword cane in New York, I wondered.

Then I remembered the Weapons Shop. It was a small, walk down store located in a spaceward between Broadway and Madison Avenue. (Manhattan is a deathtrap of space- time- and other dimentional-warps. Every time I go over there I run into one or more of them. I am the only person who can take any uptown subway from South Ferry to 42nd street, get off at 42nd street, get lost in the subway station and exit on Eighth Avenue.)

So I went looking for the weapons shop, and I guess it was one of my good days, because I found it. I stepped inside, and felt

THE WEAPONS SHOP (2)

the typical strange atmospherics of the warp. This time it was cool, and dusky and everything was softly hazy--out of focus--as if the shop's contact with our world was tenuous. I paused hesitantly within the doorway, gathering my courage, and then went on in. There were two persons inside. Behind the counter a man who looked in his thirties, tall and gaunt, and obviously in control of the situation. In front of the counter there was a portly gentleman in the street clothes of a priest, and the two were seriously discussing a weapon.

The room was crowded with weapons of every sort, and ancient coins, newspapers, etc. All the equipment that might be needed by the time traveller who was stocking up to enter some particular period. I looked at the priest and wondered when he might be from. And the gaunt dealer...was he from somewhere ahead of us on the spiral of time? It made me feel odd...an intruder in this place where a Mayan sun disk lay on a glass case that enclosed a display of pre-metallic cartridge hand weapons; where an umbrella-stand like container held upright a collection of swords and spears as anachronistic to each other as to me.

The gaunt stranger turned to me and asked what I wanted in a polite and even friendly manner.

"A Sword cane," I replied.

Obviously this was a key phrase. I could see his knuckles whiten as he clenched the edge of the counter, and the vein in his temple throbbed. "A sword cane," he repeated. And then he asked with strange emphasis, "Do you live in New York City?"

That was it. That was the question I had to answer correctly or else...

I didn't know what I should answer. If I gave the wrong answer, what? And even worse, what if I gave the right answer? But it was too late to turn back. I decided. I told the truth. "Yes," I said.

He signed and his hands left their claw-like grip on the edge of the counter. He relaxed, and I knew that I had given the wrong answer. I had identified myself as a mere casual weapons customer, and not one of them. I was glad.

"If you live in New York City," he said, "You have to have a license to own a sword cane. It comes under the Sullivan Act. A concealed weapon."

"I bought a beautiful sword cane in Chinatown a few weeks ago," the priest said, and I realised that he was not one of them either. That was undoubtedly why my presence had so disturbed the man behind the counter. The priest continued telling about this sword cane, and I enviously eyed some of the merchandise displayed in the store, aware that the clerk had something more to say to me as soon as his other

(Weapons shop)-(3)

client finished his dissertation.

Finally the priest came to the end of his story and stopped for breath.

"Do you know Sam the Umbrella Man?" the gaunt man asked.

I had heard of Sam, but I had never seen his place. I said, "Yes."

The stranger smiled a faint curious smile and said, "If you want a really nice sword cane, he can make one up for you. Fancy stuff."

I nodded. I had understood the implications of his statement. I knew what he meant. He had realized somehow that, although I was not One Of Them, I had sensed the multi-dimensionality of the shop. And he was referring me to his higher-up, Sam the Umbrella Man. But why?

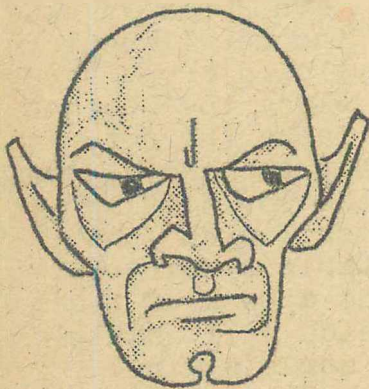
Was he sending me to Sam so that I could be initiated into Their ranks...so that I, too, could pass from time to time, and place to place, through the portals of these weapon shops?

Or did he think I was a snooper, and a thing to be destroyed? Was he sending me to Sam the Umbrella Man with a question that could mean only death...or worse?

I don't know. I haven't yet been able to work up enough nerve to go to Sam the Umbrella Man's to find out. I haven't even dared walk past and look in the windows.

But yesterday...Sunday...in the company of Harlan and Larry, I walked past the weapons shop. It was closed, resting in this dimension while its owner wandered elsewhere, I supposed.

As we walked past, I thought I heard footsteps behind us. But when I looked back, there was no one...



-- LeeH
Feb 25, 1957

TO ROBERT BLOCH AND (OTHER) OLD MOVIE FANS IN FAPA, and also lovers of fine old airplanes (the ones with wings on the top and the bottom.) Hooboy! After years of theoretically dispising it, and cursing it and even sinking to agreeing with Bradbury, I have completely changed mymind about TV. I've been changing it for quite a while, but the

OLD MOVIES (2)

final blow came last night. Last night on TV we saw DAWN PATROL. Byghu, that was a movie! Made in 1939, it featured Basil Rathbone, David Niven, and Errol Flynn, and it was about a small outfit of front-line flyers in WWI, RFC men in what looked like SE-5's through the snow and RF that we couldn't get out of the picture (we were watching in Manhattan where TV reception is notoriously bad). It was one good movie, done with the good taste and fine craftsmanship so much more common before WWII than after. I won't recount the plot here. On paper it would not show up so well as on film. But I can say this much, for some fine shots of dogfighting, rough landing, etc. this is the picture. And for the real excitement of the "canvas coffins" this is it. And for some nicely drawn characterizations, this is it too. One damn fine picture.

AND THE EVER POPULAR LILLIAN GISH: Saturday midday I saw a fine old silent film called PATHWAYS OF LIFE. It was "one of the few pure allegories ever put on film" and Miss Gish's performance was fine. But to me the most interesting part of the whole thing was a bit of production pointed out by the narrator. It seems that the picture was shot entirely on an estate in New York, and shot out of doors. Even the interiors were shot out of doors, utilizing the sunlight (and nothing else) for lighting. I knew, of course, that this was the common practice with exteriors. But logical as it is, it had never occurred to me that interiors might be shot the same way.

TV is educational.

I ALSO LEARNED FROM TV THAT there is segregation in the NYC schools.
THAT there are supposed to be more pawn shops in NY than any other city in the world.
THAT there are fewer pawn shops in NY than there have been for years.
THAT there are a number of pawn shops in NYC catering to the upper income clientele.
THAT there is a set of encyclopedias out "containing all the knowledge since the dawn of mankind" for about 15 bucks the set, and as a bonus, when you buy the encyc, you get a matched set of the works of Robert L. Stevenson. (Sometimes I wish I had \$15.)
THAT Underwood sells a portable typewriter ... with which they include a book of touch typing instructions which will enable "you to type as fast as 20 words a minute, even if you've never typed before". If this means what it implies--that on this model the top speed is 20 wpm--I'm not sure I want the typer at any price. Even John Berry's stroke-over machine can make better than 20 per.

25-2-57

"Wash me in the water,
Where you washed your dirty daughter,
And I'll be whiter than the whitewash on the wall..."

If anybody can tell me anything about this ditty, I'd appreciate the info. I picked it out of ACE OF ACES, and am curious as to whether it is Anything.

DEPARTMENT OF WELCOME NEWS: After seeing me suffer in this Black Hole of Stencilcutta--the hole between the end of the sofa, and the bookcase--where the typer is located, has offered to buy me a typer table...someday. The truth is he bought me a typer table the same day he bought me the typer, but I needed support under the mimeo worse than I needed it under the IBM. And for a long while I insisted that I wanted a table of a particular ridiculous height. Now, I'm willing to take what I can get. Anything is better than sitting astride the typer with the arm of the sofa nudging me sharply in the spine ~~while~~ I pack out this trash.

NOTE TO BILL DANNER IN PARTICULAR: That small railroad I spoke so vaguely about a while back (CHOOOG 2-1, I think) was the PINE CREEK RR, in Freehold, N.J. It was written up in the March 1957 issue of Mechanix Illustrated.

APOLOGIES AND MILD EXPLANATION for the occasional accidental double spacing, like above. I've been dabbling with a mss of a work of fiction for inclusion in this mailing, if I ever finish it. And I keep leaving the typer set up for double-space, and (naturally) forget to reset it when I go to compose on the stencil, as I do with this jabber.

IN THE SAME DEPARTMENT, the gooky spot above, and the lines in the phrase "astride the typer" are due to my typing over a drawing I'd already stencilled. I don't like these yellow stencils to cut drawing on, but I sure thought they'd be great for seeing the soft lines I sketched around the drawing with...to keep me from typing over it. Using a very used film obliterated my vision though. And if you want to know why I'm using film, it is to protect the rollers and similar interior devices on this ridiculously expensive machine. I recall what stencilling did to the old Underwood #5. Somebody (Harry Warner, I believe) once recommended running paper towels or something similiarly absorbant through the machine after a stencil cutting, as a preventative.

Certainly, some preventative measure is well worth while. And I am inclined to think that every new mimeo-zine editor ought to be warned that bare naked stencils can damage his typer. Wish someone had told me when I was new in the racket.

"THE WORLD IS MADE OF SNOW."

Lee Here----

It is much later in the year (actually sometime in April) and I am mimeoing this stuff. And I have goofed again (getting monotonous, isn't it?) so herewith a couple of misbegotten pages. Oh joy...

Further additions to the Department of Folk Music:

The First Three Verses of
THE RED LIGHT SALOON

A trip down to Bangor, the Fourth of July,
To make my connections with a train I did try.
The train it being late, as you all will know soon,
I was forced to take a trip to the Red Light Saloon.

I boldly walked in and stepped up to the bar,
When a saucy young damsel says, "Have a cigar!"
A cigar I did take, in a chair I sit down,
When a saucy young damsel came tripping around.

She boldly came over, to sit on my knee,
Saying, "Jack, you're a lumberman, that I can see,"
Saying, "Jack, you're a lumberman, and that we all know,
"For your muscles are hard from your head to your toe..."

Oscar Brand sings a variation on this, carrying it to two different further points, on his records BACKROOM BALLADS (CMS) and AMERICAN DRINKING SONGS (Riverside), but of course neither is a "complete" version. Anybody know a complete version? I'd be obliged for a set of the words.

I'd also be obliged for the words to the Lehigh Valley.

Typos on this page courtesy of the obliterate, which is in the next room, and I am too downhearted over goofing off the mimeoing, that is, putting wrong pages on wrong pages, to stir my weary bones after it.

Tradition record #1014 is LAUGHING AMERICA sung by Oscar Brand and (according to the catalogue but not the label or jacket) Fred Hellerman. Quite good. Some very pleasant banjo. And the most bowdlerized version of Kafoozalum imaginable. And the Talking Guitar Blues, which struck home with me, since I just returned to the guitar in February, and didn't have sense enough to buy nylon strings before making hamburger out of my fingertips.

Incoherence on this page is all my own. Your toleration is more than appreciated. More better overpage, I hope....

DEPARTMENT OF FOLK MUSIC

"reprinted" from a forthcoming
OMPAzine especially to fill this
gap _____ LHH

Maybe you've heard about Delia. At least, the calypso boys are singing about her now. Blind Blake is singing "Delia's gone..." on a recent record release (I don't know the title or label yet.) And the song is showing up in various places: so far I've heard it twice on radio.

But Delia was a Georgia girl and I'll tell you about her. First, though there was Brady. I mentioned Brady in ADDENDA in the last (Feb '57) FAPA mailing, quoting the only bits I had. Well, since then I've headlonged into Brady a couple of times.

First was on the Folkways disc, ROCK ISLAND LINE by Leadbelly. (Huddie Ledbetter Memorial Album Vol. 2) Leadbelly sings an old standard called DUNCAN AND BRADY, which proves to be the item I had been referring to.

Then tonight on his radio show, Oscar Brand tied the whole thing together for me. He sang about Delia Holmes, an old song about an old murder, set to the same tune as Brady and Duncan.

And on his record for Riverside, BLOODY BALLADS, Paul Clayton has sung the version that travelled to the West Indies and back with Negro sailors, and which is almost identical with the version sung by Blind Blake.

So there it is: Duncan & Brady, Delia Holmes, Delia, and Delia Gone.

Some suggest that Delia is kin of Frankie and Johnny. Duncan would seem to be some kin to Stackolee. Coonie shot Delia. Duncan shot Brady. Frankie shot Johnny. Stackolee shot Billy de Lyon.

Rubber-tired hacks carried them all away...

Delia, Delia,
Why didn't you run?
See that desperado
Had a .44 smokeless gun,
Crying, "All I had done gone."

Shot her with a pistol,
Number forty four,
"You did not marry me,
You cannot live no more."

Turned poor Delia over,
On her side, very slow,
She was crying, Coonie,
Please don't shoot me no more."

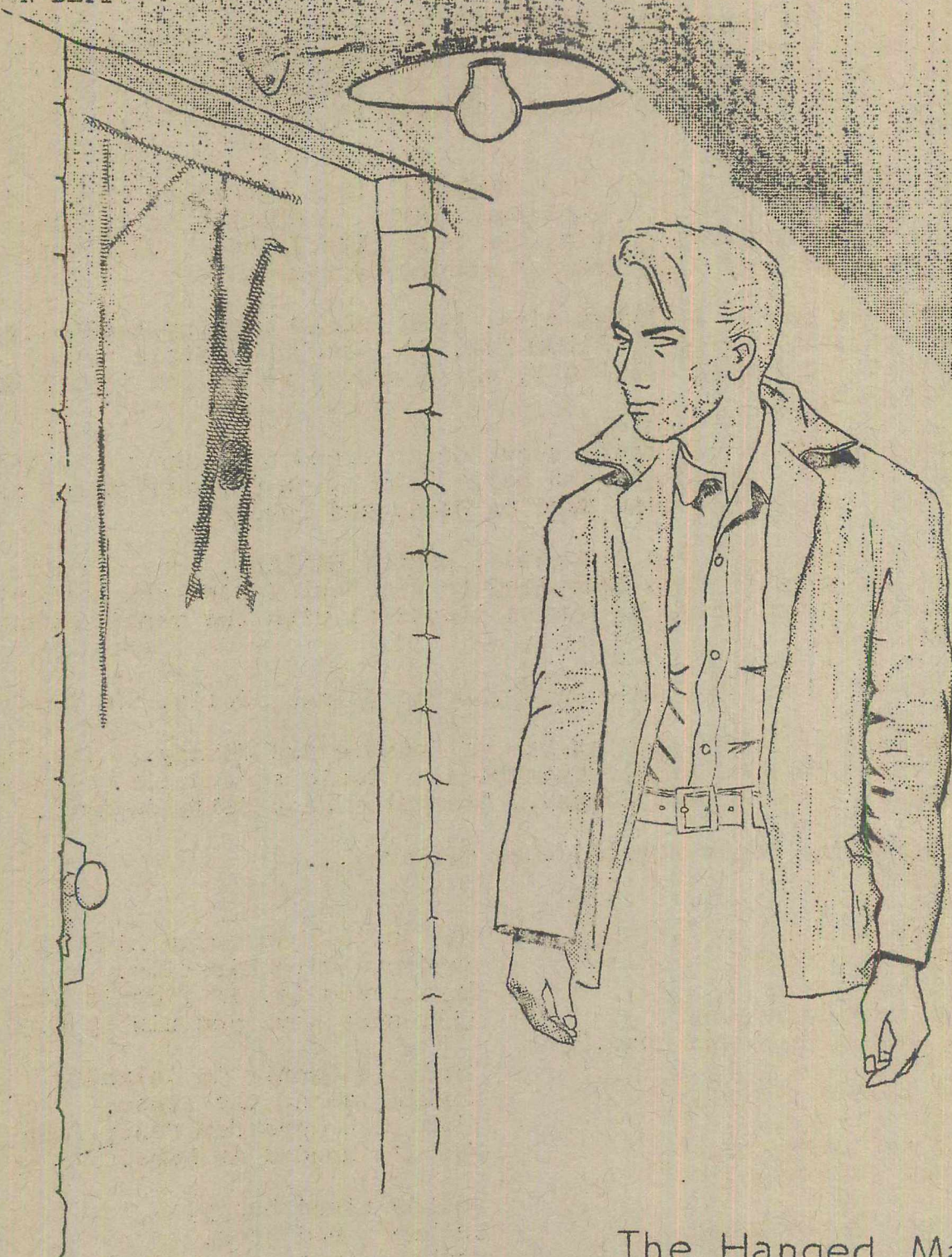
The judge that tried him,
Handsome with his time,
Says, "Coonie, if I don't hang you,
I'll sure give you ninety nine."

"This is Coonie in Atlanta,
Working among the stone,
I've been here for forty four years,
Now I'm needed at home."

Rubber tired buggy,
Rubber tired hack,
Took Delia to the cemetery,
Didn't never bring her back.

--misc. excerpts.

FICTION DEPT.



The Hanged Man

The wind was as cold as the blade of a knife. It screamed through the alley, recoiling off the tall, unwindowed walls that towered into complete darkness. Rayne paused under the bare bulb that gave light and form to the doorway under it. There was a

The Hanged Man (2)

symbol on the door, a painting that was dull and flaking with age. It wasn't the Tarot symbol. He recognized that much. Although the figure in the painting hung head down, the gallows was not living wood.

Rayne touched it, and his finger left a smear of red across the painted face. He looked at his hand, the dark blood that was freshened from the deep slash across the knuckles. There was no feeling left in that hand and for a moment he had forgotten the cut. He had forgotten so much. He shook his head and tried to remember what had happened to his hand. But his mind was a dull, confused ache. The woman had sent him here; that was all he remembered.

He looked again at the hanged man on the door. This had to be the place, even if the wood was dead. With his good hand, he fumbled in his pocket for the Tarot card the old woman had given him. It was still there.

He knocked softly.

Nothing happened.

He struck harder at the door, and harder until he was pounding it desperately with his clenched fist. His eyes were closed, but he could still see the image of the painting, and he was afraid.

The door yielded under his pounding. Startled, he opened his eyes to reality and saw a head and shoulders silhouetted against the light of the room beyond the door. He fumbled in his pocket, pulled out the Tarot card and handed it to the person in the doorway.

"What do you want?" The voice was withered as if it came from a body decayed with age.

Rayne frowned. For a moment he couldn't remember why he was in this place. When the memory came to him, it was only a fragment. "The card," he said vaguely, "the woman sent me here." He gestured with his injured hand.

"Blood," the old voice said. "I suppose you've left a trail of it right to my door."

"Hurt," Rayne mumbled, trying to remember what had happened to his hand. He wanted to know. Somehow he felt that he needed to know. If he could remember that he could remember why he was in this place... at the door of the Hanged Man.

The old man opened the door a little wider and gestured him inside. After he had closed it behind them, he said, "It's not the right card, you know."

Rayne shook his head. "It's the card she gave me." He could remember the old woman, her head wrapped in a colored bandana. A

The Hanged Man (3)

candle had burned on the table where she spread the cards. He remembered standing in front of the table, but where had that been, and when... and why? He remembered the cracked parchment texture of her skin and the dull glint of her gold earrings in the candlelight. But where?

The old man had moved into the light and his face was like the woman's had been, like the face of the figure on the door, weather-worn and flaking. His mouth was cracked open in a toothless grin, but the dark hollows of his eyes were without humor.

Rayne felt cold, as if the wind cut through the walls as easily as it had cut through his jacket. And his hand was beginning to ache. He wanted to get away from this place. He wanted to be somewhere warm and well lit, where he could drink hot black coffee and have his hand bandaged.

The old man motioned toward a couch covered with a floorlength black cloth. It and a table were the room's only furnishings.

"Sit down there," the old man said, and Rayne obeyed him.

The couch was hard, as if there were only planks under the cloth. It was nothing but a crate, he thought. A wooden box large enough for a man to lie down on, and he wondered if the old man slept on anything so hard as it.

He looked at the table, an old enamel-topped kitchen table with chips like black wounds in its white surface. In the center of the table was an ornate candelabrum that looked like silver all chased with a fine design. It had five branches and each held a candle with wax as black as the cloth on the couch. The candles were all fresh, unburned, their wicks startlingly white against their black bodies.

The old man laid his hand on a wall switch and the naked bulb that hung overhead from a bare twisted cord, went out. Rayne felt the darkness fold in on him like some thick thing intent on smothering him. And then it was shoved back as a fine flame sprung to life.

The flame delineated the hand and face of the old man. It danced on the end of the match that he held in one gnarled hand, and leaped to increase itself as he placed it to a candlewick. Quickly all five candles were aglow. They filled the room with faint light, and to Rayne the barren walls seemed to pulsate with shadows. He looked toward the old man, but he could not hold his eyes there. The candle-flames drew them back to the light, and he saw the black candles twist and writhe like living things. The flames were devouring them quickly.

There had been a candle on the table by the old woman, too. He could see her face before him, incredibly old in the candlelight. And, before that, he could remember the moonlight. The moon had been full and white and clean.

Between towns and between jobs, he remembered. It seemed as if

The Hanged Man (4)

he'd always been between towns and between jobs. They'd turned him out of the freight car at a cattle-loading ramp in the middle of nowhere, and he'd started walking down the road that ran parallel to the train tracks. There wasn't much traffic and nobody had stopped so he kept walking. In the twilight, the few cars had their headlights on, like eyes peering through the dimness of the evening. And they rushed past him without hesitating, as if those eyes were blind to him.

And then the twilight died and the tall trees that sulked far back from the sides of the road disappeared. But Rayne knew that they were still there. He could feel their presence, as if in the darkness they were creeping closer to the road, as if they were pressing in on him. Suddenly the blades of headlights stabbed through the night as a car rose onto the road ahead, and Rayne could see the trees dimly. They'd gone back at the touch of light, leaving the grassy berm to him for the instant. And then the car was past, and the trees crept toward him again.

At last the moon began across the sky, washing the road with its thin light, holding the trees at bay. In the moonlight Rayne could see that the road still ran beside the railway. The steel like white ice, stretched out on the dark ground.

He crossed the berm and climbed the embankment, to stand between the rails and look down at them. Parallel lines that met somewhere ahead. Somewhere in the future.

In the moonlight, walking the tracks was better than the berm. The thin streaks of steel either side of him were like barriers of light, against the trees. Against anything that might come out of the night. Anything but the trains, and the trains carried their warning lights ahead of them.

He had never feared the trains, even when he hung by numb fingers to the iron rung on the side of a reefer, with his legs dangling close to the racing wheels and the wind tearing at his body. He never feared the trains because he could see them, feel them, and know what their grinding wheels could do to flesh and bone. But the trees...

What would the trees do if they ever caught him?

Nothing, he reasoned. The trees were overgrown vegetables with their roots sunk so firmly into the ground that even if they had minds and wills they could never move. But still he walked between the tracks, on the high roadbed, away from the trees.

In the bright moonlight he could make out the form of the house-trailer long before he reached it. Its metal roof caught the light and flung it at him, and as he drew closer he could see the corrugations of its metal walls, and the little canvas tent that covered its entrance like a make-shift porch. It was an old trailer, up on chocks

The Hanged Man (5)

with its tires gone, and weeds growing all around it. There had been no sign of light through the windows and he thought maybe it was deserted here on the grassplot between the rails and the highway. Somebody had parked it here and lived in it. Then they had gone away and never come back.

Maybe the trees had got them; the thought flashed through his mind like a whispered voice. He denied it. The trees were rooted deep. The trees were mindless things. They could do no harm.

He picked up a corner of the tent flap and looked inside. The trailer door hung open. Maybe there would be something to eat inside, he thought. Maybe an old can left behind. And it would be a good place to sleep, away from the trees.

He let the tent flap drop and climbed into the door. The moonlight barely outlined a dust-filmed window, like a porthole, across from the door. He could make out nothing else in the darkness.

As he stood there the room slowly took some form. Under the window he could see a dim shape, like the surface of a table with dark spots, like objects, on it. He reached for one, to try and identify it by its feel.

As his fingers touched it a shock of pain seemed to explode in his hand. It raced like wildfire up his arm. He jerked back the hand. The warm stickiness of blood was on his knuckles.

And the room burst aflame.

No, not aflame. Just alight from the suddenly struck match that the old woman was holding to a candle. She was standing beside him, a shape taken life out of the darkness. She was holding the candle she had just lit in one hand. Her other hand held the bloody butcher knife that she had slammed across his knuckles in the darkness.

The candleflame reflected in small pinpoints of light on the surface of her eyes.

Rayne cradled his injured hand against his body and looked at the woman.

"Who sent you?" she asked.

"I was hungry," he said. "I thought this place was abandoned. I thought maybe I could find something to eat here."

"Oh?" her voice curled with suspicion, "Why were you going to put your hand on my cards?"

He glanced at the table. The dark object he had reached for was a deck of cards. The surface of the table by them was spattered with

The Hanged Man (6)

blood.

"I didn't know what it was," he said. "I couldn't see in here. I thought I could feel...tell if there was anything on the table. Maybe a can of something that had been left behind...maybe..."

"Nothing to eat here," she snapped. She reached for the cards but her hand stopped as her fingers touched the deck. "Blood," she said as if it were something significant, "Your blood on the cards." He saw the small dark spot on the back of the top card.

Her fingers turned the card over slowly and laid it face up on the table.

He stared at it. The face was no familiar symbol but an oddly drawn picture. It was a figure, a young man, but he hung from a sort of cross, suspended by one foot. His hands were tied behind his back and his body twisted. But the expression of his face was one of rest and peace.

Rayne stared at the card, making out the details of it. The cross was no ordinary scaffold, but a T shaped gallows of living wood. It had branches that bore new leaves. It was not just a gallows, but a living tree!

He suddenly realized that the woman was peering intently at his face as if she expected to find something particular there. She smiled, a thin satisfied smile, and turned up another card, a picture of a hand holding what looked to Rayne like an unrooted tree.

"What are these cards?" he asked.

"Tarot," she said.

He repeated the word questioningly after her.

She picked the deck up and shuffled it. Then she began laying the cards out, one at a time. Each was some odd picture. "The Tarot cards are older than any book you've ever read," she told him. "They are ancient wisdom and in them one can find the answers to all questions."

"The trees," he muttered.

She seemed to jump at the words. "What about the trees?" she asked.

He couldn't tell her about them. The trees were something no one else understood. Long before, he had tried to tell about them, but he'd just been called crazy. So he'd stopped trying to explain.

The old woman was still turning the cards. "Are the trees friends of yours?" she asked, but quickly amended it. "They are your

The Hanged Man (7)

enemies." she said and this time it was not a question.

"What do you know about the trees?"

"In the dark hours they come closer. They come out of the darkness. They move slowly, pressing in. Coming closer..."

"Stop!"

She stopped talking, but continued to turn over the cards, making a pattern of them on the surface of the table.

"I know you," he said to her. "I've seen you in dreams."

"Perhaps."

The candle was flickering low. The shadows in the room were wild, broken things. They whirled and then disappeared into darkness.

"You're one of Them!" Rayne screamed. "You're one of the trees!"

A match flared in the woman's hand. It flung him back into the reality of the trailer room. She took another candle from a shelf and lit it. She let it drip wax onto the surface of the table and then stuck it upright in the puddle.

"I'm just a poor old woman," she said. "I make my living with my cards and reading palms. I haven't much. A little bread, a little wine. Sit down and I'll cut you some bread."

As she pointed, he saw the narrow bed in the shadows. He seated himself on the edge of it.

She opened a cupboard and pulled out the end of a loaf of coarse bread. After she had wiped his blood from the blade of the butcher knife she cut a slice from the loaf and handed it to him. He bit into it hungrily.

She drew a bottle of dark wine from the cupboard and poured a water glass half full of it. She handed the glass to him and he drank from it. The wine was very thick and very sweet. In his belly it was warm and it made him feel drowsy. He felt the heaviness of his eyelids and he wondered if the old woman would let him sleep outside her door under the shelter of the tent. Away from the trees...

"Of course," he heard her say, "I wouldn't send you out there to the trees." But he was certain he had not spoken his thought. He tried to shake his head, to shake away the drowsiness, but he couldn't. Words ran through his mind with the incoherence of half-sleep. The trees were waiting outside for him...he didn't want to go outside again...not tonight...not ever...he wanted to stay in here in the warm light of the candleflames...the devouring flames...the twisted tortured

The Hanged Man (8)

candles that consumed themselves...but he had to get out...to go to the place with the door of the Tarot...the door of the Hanged Man...the old woman was telling him to go...to take the Tarot card to the place of the door...the place...to go...to go...NO!...someone had screamed--he was vaguely aware that it had been his own voice...the candleflame burned low...the tiny dancing flames...five flames like fingertips...like a Hand of Glory...slender flames that flickered as they ceased and then there was nothing but the darkness...darkness and he was falling into it...into the place where the trees were waiting...the old trees like shrivelled old people...falling...his hands were clutching at something,, at the couch...it seemed to collapse, leaving the empty cloth in his fingers.

And then there was light and reality again. The naked bulb overhead blazed into life. The darkness slunk back to hid itself behind the barren walls of the room.

Somewhere there was a voice, an old withered voice that was saying, "Too soon."

Rayne was on his feet, the couch cover in his hands. His arms were crossed against his chest, the cloth held tightly to his body. He looked at the box that had been under that cloth. He recognized the shape of it, the black iron handles at the ends and sides. He had ridden in a freight car loaded with such boxes once. It was a shipping crate. The kind of box they ship coffins in.

He tried to drop the cloth but his injured hand would not let it go. He let his hands fall to his sides, the cloth hanging from his fingers and piling up on the floor at his feet.

The old man was there, standing next to the table.

Rayne looked at him and then at the candelabrum with black wax in thick gobs on it, like the growths of some disease. The Tarot card lay on the table, by the candelabrum, and there was a spot of black wax dripped onto its face.

He remembered how the candles had seemed to twist and writhe. Illusion, he thought, just the dripping of the candle-wax in the flickering light. All illusion.

Suddenly he was very angry. "What have you done to me?" he shouted at the old man.

In the brightness of the naked bulb the old man looked very small and withered. His neck was thin and misshapen and his head looked too big for it to support. The line of his mouth cracked open like a fruit rotting. He started toward Rayne, saying, "Sit down."

The cloth was on the floor. The coffin box was bare. Rayne did not look at it again. His eyes were on the old man. With his good

The Hanged Man (9)

hand he reached toward the Tarot card on the table. The spot of candlewax on its face was like dried blood. His fingers touched it. But instead, they caught hold of the candelabrum, wrapping tightly around its base. He picked it up and was surprised at the heaviness of it.

The old man had come toward him, hands outstretched, mouth like an open, gutted would.

Rayne raised the candelabrum and struck out with it. It smashed into the old man's face and Rayne could feel the yielding of crushed bone...like old fruit, pulpy and decayed on the branch...on the limb of a dead tree...like the dead...

Dead. The old man lay on the floor, his head crushed, bleeding rot. The slimy corruption that had been his brain oozed among shards of skull, and nothing of a face was left.

Rayne set the candelabrum back on the table. He turned to the coffin box and raised its lid. It was empty. With one hand, he dragged the body of the old man to it, and heaved it in. Then he let the lid fall closed.

He jerked the black cloth free from the numb grip of his injured hand and flung it down on the box. With studied deliberation he spread it out, and then set the candelabrum, with its stubs of black candles, in the center of it.

Suddenly he ran for the door. His fingers caught the knob and jerked at it. The door swung open.

The alley outside was narrow. The light over the door gave form to a blank brick wall that seemed to loom up, cutting off any exit.

Rayne slammed the door behind him. He looked at the blank wall, its ends disappearing into the darkness of the alley.

Slowly he turned and looked back at the door.

He looked at the weathered, flaked paint that formed the figure of the Hanged Man. The gallows seemed oddly twisted. The gallows was not dead wood, but living. Its arms had spread branches that were flecked with young leaves. The gallows was growing. It had become a tree.

--LH
26-2-57

ESP



PSI experiments are so popular now days I thought I'd try one. Lacking any equipment to speak of, I decided to use a deck of cards. I proceeded as follows:

I set the deck face down, put my hand on the top card, wrote down my impression, and then moved the card into a second stack, unshown, to be checked against the list when I had completed the experiment. I did twenty cards before I decided that the headache I was quickly developing rated more attention that did ESP. Anyway, I did 20 cards and here are my results.

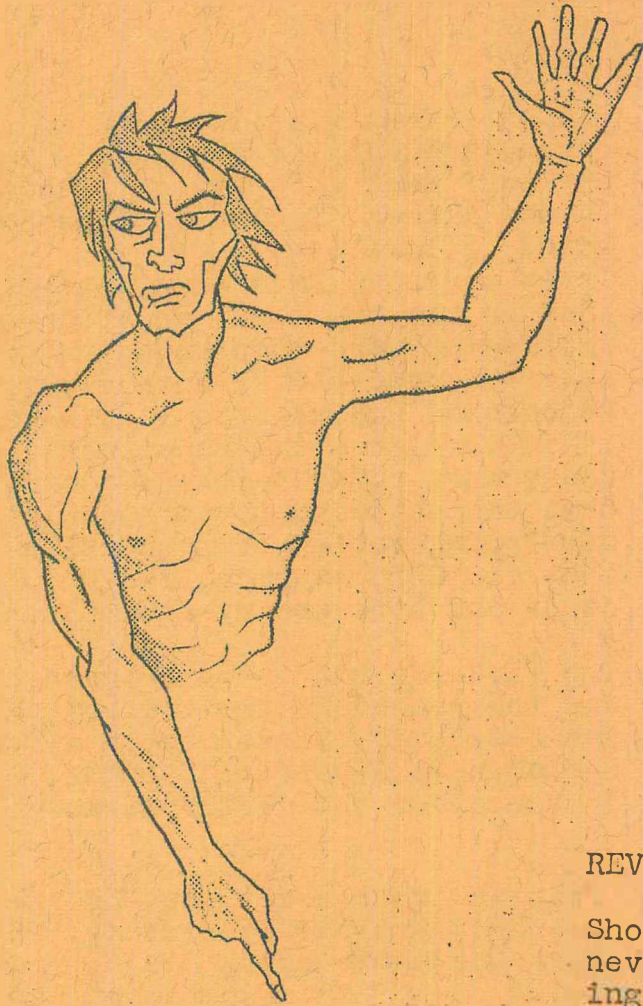
The first column is my impressions, and the second is the correct cards. The coding is, of course, C-clubs, D-diamonds, H-hearts, S-spades. In the order that I turned them

9 C	.....	Q D
J D		J D*
3 D		K H
5 C		7 H
8 C	.....	3 H
2 C		8 H
9 C		10 S
J D		7 C
3 H	.....	K c
8 S		K D
Q D		5 S
Q H		6 S
5 H	.....	6 H
Q S		8 H
9 S		5 H
3 D		3 D*
8 H	.....	7 D
Q S		Q H
no response		K S
8 H		8 D

That is two correct, out of twenty, of 10%. But the percentage, in fact the whole test, has no real value since the experiment was so small. This information could be of value only when related to more information. So maybe I'll try again sometime and see what happens.

I notice that I got 2 correct, got the value correct but the suit wrong in 2, and got the suit right but the value wrong in one case. I should like to point out the 15th card, thought. I put down 5 H, and the card was 6 H. I think that should count for something in my favor.

I'd like to try the cards with another person, a transmitter-person, and see what the results looked like. Certainly it should be easier to read a transmission than an impression through a card. Or would it?



Mailing Comments

second section

REVOLTIN" DEVELOPMENT: Alger -

Shouldn't that be "The zapgun will never replace the Remington Rolling Bloch!" # Interesting; the story about the young man who was learning to shift for himself. #

To me, the convincer that the Day of the Stickshift was past, is my Dad's new car, a '56 Dodge. I thought that he was one man who'd never give up the stickshift. In fact my brother (an automatic transmission fancier from way back) once commented that Chrysler would have to put out one stick shift Dodge every eight or so years just for my Dad. And then the Savannah Dodge dealer offered Dad this hardtop at a "good price", and now my Dad drives with push-buttons. It is disillusioning. Like having the Rock of Gibraltar crumble. # Speaking of the automatic transmissions and their dangers, it seems to be popular to leave small children in them in such a manner that the small children can start the cars and (a) run into other cars, or (b) run into little old ladies who are crossing streets. # "Don't fix it, throw it away," is about all one can do with a great deal of American merchandise. Particularly "low-priced", compact, printed circuit TVs. # I strongly suspect that carnival people can't be generalized about hardly no more than most any other employment classification of people. Generalizations are fine stuff as a sort of communicative shorthand. But people

Comments (2)

often get them mixed up with "facts", and fail to distinguish the many cases in which the generalization doesn't apply. Like the old bit says, "The exception proves the rule." Of course in that case "prove" means test, like it does in "proving grounds". The person who thinks in generalizations, like the dolt who thinks solely in well-worn cliches, is more to be pitied and re-educated, than censured. # Purty gold ink, Martin.

BANDWAGON: ryan - Much interesting. # I like trucks, but only on an emotional basis. I can see and agree with all sorts of arguments against the big fellers. # I thoroughly agree with you about the 157 Dodge, although it is hard to decide which of the '57 Detroiters should get the black ribbon as ugliest car of the year. It is a toss-up. # I like canals. # Very few people know anything more about Bob Ford than that he shot Jesse, and that John Carridine played the role in the movie. Like Jesse, Bob got his grounding as a sort of 19th century juvenile delinquent. He and his brother, Charlie, were part of Jesse's gang, and according to some sources, Bob was a cousin to Jesse. Jesse liked him well enough to have given him the pearl-handled, silver mounted Colt, with which Bob did the shooting. Bob was very young when the shooting was done. Around 20 I think. He and Charlie had been strongly tempted by the \$10,000 reward offered for Jesse. To judge from my sources, Charlie did as much if not more of the planning of the shooting, than Bob did. Certainly they were both with Jesse when it was done. Both drew, but Bob was faster, and it was his bullet that killed Jesse. He hoped for amnesty, glory and the \$10,000 reward. In that department, he didn't do too well. He was tried for the murder of Wood Hite (one of the gang) but the governor pardoned him. (According to my source, it was not Bob, but another of the gang who had killed Wood Hite. I can't find the reference, or the man's name right now though.) Bob returned home, and lived with his parents a while, and then took to wandering. He went on the stage with an act called THE OUTLAWS OF MISSOURI, coming out between curtain calls and telling how he had killed Jesse. This was usually greeted with jeers and catcalls.

It was while he was in the theater that he met and married Nellie Waterson, a chorus girl who fell for his good looks. After two seasons on the stage, Bob went on to a spot in P T Barnum's freak show, but he was still bothered quite a bit by what he had done, or by people's attitude toward what he had done. He drank heavily and gambled. In Las Vegas he and Dick Liddell (another member of the gang) bought a saloon, but Bob was so unpopular that his proprietorship was bad for business. So he moved on to Creede, Colorado, where he opened another saloon. In this rough town men drank where they could get it, so Bob prospered, and bought his Nellie a diamond brooch.

It was one night, on a visit to Pueblo, that Bob shared a hotel room with Ed Kelly. Kelly was a rough man, kin to the Youngers by marriage. Bob drank with him, and shared the room, and in the morning he couldn't find his diamond brooch. He accused Kelly of stealing it. Kelly brooded over the accusation, and when he heard that Bob was going around Creede repeating his accusations, Ed went after him. He failed

and was thrown out of Bob's saloon. The second time he went after Ford it was with a shot gun, and this time he succeeded. Bob Ford was dead. Ed Kelly was tried and sentenced to the Colorado penitentiary for twenty years. That was in 1892, ten years after Jesse's death.



Whatever Bob Ford was, a man or a dirty little coward, he gained nothing from the murder he did. # I saw part of that TV show, but I don't know who the boy who played Billy Gashade was. I wish I did know. # I thought the Civil War was fought over control of congress. #

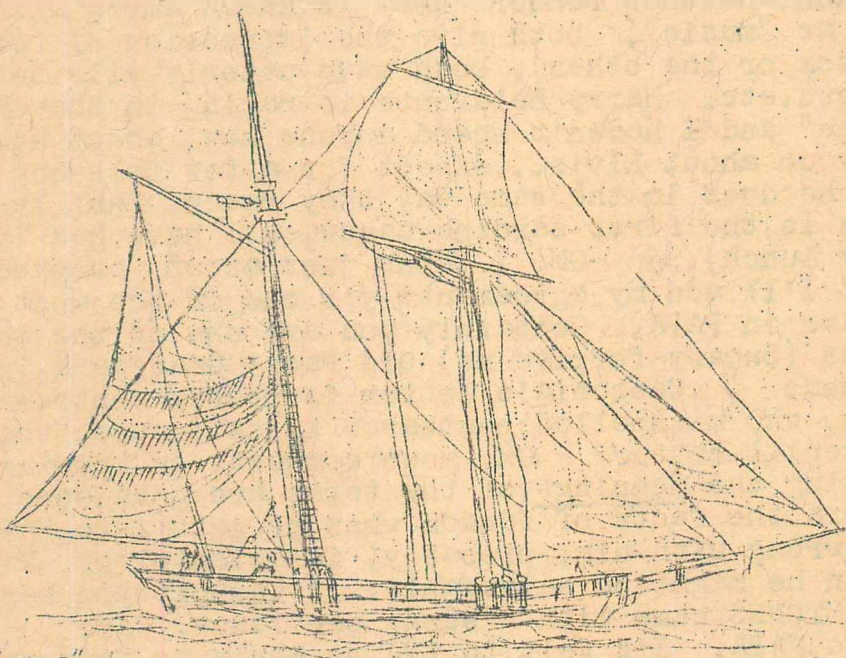
CENTURY NOTE: Eney - But think, if it weren't for fandom, some happy incident might have lead you into a Normal Way Of Life. # This is good, good, GOOD, but it falls into the group of stuff that I have nothing much to say back about. Alas. Except possibly to point out JYoung's story as extra good stuff. I liked it muchly.

BIRDSMITH: McCain - "women are actually the stronger sense..."??? # Your articlea on MM and GK are quite interesting, but I am inclined to wonder where you got your facts--you speak with such an air of authority than one can't question the validity of your "facts", can one? # If I could have the same peace, quiet and comfort in a motion picture theatre that I have in my own home, and have the fine quality work that has at one time been done in ht e motion picture field... good pcrpts and production work, clear sharp photography, good techincal work...I would far rather see a story done in movies than on TV. The reasons I see so faw motion pictures in theatres nowdays are (1) the few I've seen have been generally quite poor, (2) the ones advertised genorally sound very bad, (3) the people who crowd into a movie house seem decidedly unpleasant, smelly, noisy and all around bothersome, (4) S.I. movie houses operate at odd hours and Manhattan ones are too far away to be worth the trip for the tripe they run, (5) I'd rather spend my money on records, (6) there are so many good movies being run on TV, (7) I'm just too-lazy to bother going to a theater when there are such interesting things to do at home. I don't suppose I qualify as Average Movie-Going/TV Watching Public though. # I've never had any trouble frying eggs without breaking the yolks, but I don't know what secret technique I use to do so. #I've never notcied much of a resemblance between Rod Cameron and Robert Ryan. # Remember the line from the song, "why does Joan Bennett let Hedy wear all her old hair..."? # Not to interrupt or anything, but has anyone here seen the new Cadillac station wagons? Neither have I, but I've seen pictures, and they look almost like Cadillac hearses. # On to Bill Morse...This column is good stuff. A long time now, Bill has been one of the best contributors to FAPA, even though not a member. Congrats on the joys of married life.

myob

Comments (4)

GAVAGE: Janke - See you got a Speedoprint designoguide. Some fun, huh? Do you know what a mailing comment is capable of being? True, many of them are mere reviews of reviews of reviews, but in ideal practice, they are conversation. And that is a different thing altogether. # There are times I'm sorry I ever printed that interlineation about Courtney's boat. # Just because the composer-pianist had changed his mind about the composition, didn't mean he had changed it for the better. A lot of writers (word type and music type) get worse over a period of time, instead of better. # Sturgeon did not "ghost-write" I, LIBERTINE. AT least Sturgeon doesn't say so. According to him, he and Shepard collaborated on the book, under a penname. According to Shep, Sturgeon wrote 90 odd percent of the book. But that is not ghost writing. Sturgeon and Shepard were both present at the autographing party, and co-signed the book, each writing a part of the name FREDRICK R. EWING. Shep's picture went onto the book, as being the picture of Ewing. That was probably because they couldn't take pics of both Shep and Sturgeon and pass them off as Ewing's two heads. ---- If I, LIBERTINE wasn't satire, I guess I didn't understand it.



"SUBTLE"
1808

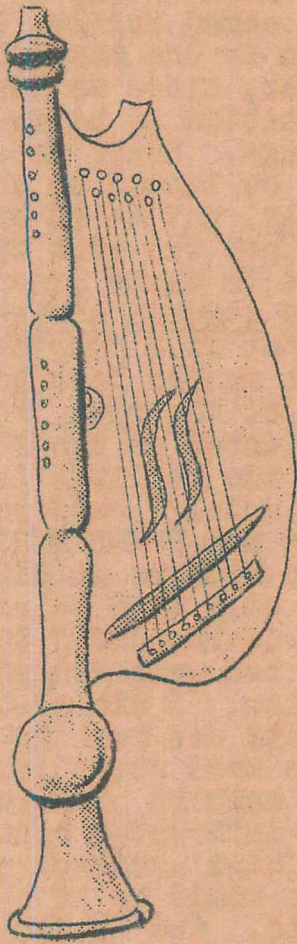
British Schooner of War commanded by Lt. Charles Brown RN
lost at sea Nov 1812 with all hands
while in pursuit of the privateer "JOE'S FAVORITE" -

Comments (5)

EXILE: Coslet - acknowledged.

GEMZINE: Carr - True. # In NY it is quite common for young women to wear woolen knee-socks on cold days. Makes a lot of them look very old fashioned. Quite nice, and practical too. # I recall FAPA dealing with Claude Degler, and according to reports, he was pretty obnoxious. # If it weren't for babies we wouldn't have Strontium 90 bombs to worry about. # If a good slate of TAFF representative-nominees is put up, under the circumstances you describe, it is not likely that the 3rd vote winner would be a 3rd rate candidate. I think the three-choice system has far more merit than a system that allows for "plumping". If you do want your candidate to win under this system, you have to give him your full 6 points, to give him a chance. In effect it is a system in which you have one vote, which you can bestow whole or in pieces. Why not a system in which you vote against the men you don't like, and the fan with the least enemies gets to make the trip? Drivel. Speaking, as you do of "fringe-fans", why not send a fringe-fan to Britain? For that matter, why not send a non-fan? I will nominate somebody completely unknown to fandom, if you all want to send a non-fan. # "Elvis' musical style is just about the antithesis of everything that aroused dislike for Liberace; and since the only thing -- and I mean the ONLY thing -- that Elvis has in common with Liberace is his well heeled bankroll..." I thought Elvis and Libby had a number of things in common: neither renders what is known among the more musically educated as "music", both give the impression of being over-sexed (toward one sex or the other), both have utterly vile smiles, both claim to be male, etc.etc. Harry Belafonte is raking in the cash for "musical performances" and I haven't heard anyone howl about him in the sneering way they do about Elvis...except for a few folksong purists who resent what he does in the same way they resent Burl Ives and Josh White. # This is the first sardine sandwich I have had in years. (Not GEMZINE--my lunch). # GM, I think just about everybody has said it already, but I'll add my agreement: y'r one of the most interesting people we have in FAPA. Certainly you are one of the ones who changed FAPA from the (Sneary forgive me) Old Fans' Graveyard into the Eager Fans' Playground. # Castoria's letter is pretty controversial in content. Gee, who misspelled pactsarcd in this case, the letter writer, or the stencil-cutter? GM, your comments on knowing terminology, and in knowing the meanings of the terms are good ones. I concur. Explain Castora the facts of fandom when he gets into SAPS, eh? All that is really wrong with him, probably, is scientology. With guidance and re-education he might be salvagable. I thought you were in SAPS way back when GEMTONES came with a stone per issue. Joe Kennedy recruited me into FAPA. I'd felt to LNJ to apply to join until Joe recommended it to me. Gee, I thought, if JoKe thinks I'm good enough to be in FAPA, I want to be in it. # Lost track of my subject change-overs in there somewhere. # Why not vote the Vegetarian ticket? # It is not good layout to break lines of text with pictures. Hard on the reader. # Mathematics is the only reality. All else is sensation. # See Roger Price (IN ONE HEAD AND OUT THE OTHER) for the truth about "Wrong Thinkers". # Is neurotic, or psychotic the same thing as dumb? # Language, as we speak it, is completely inadequate for complex communication. # Being opposed to a man's candadicy for

Comments (6)



a musical instrument
popular with the 4-handed,
6-fingered humanoids of
Hendyke III (444)

public office because of that man's religion is logical if the man belongs to a religious group one considers to be completely illogical. (I muzzed that statement up. What I mean is as follows.) If one feels about a particular religion that a person would have to be batty to believe in it, then how could he vote for a person who held with that particular religion? Do I make my inept self clear? I don't say I agree with this. It is just the obvious argument for opposing a candidate on religious grounds. Your comparison of this to voting against a Negro for racial reasons is not valid. Man has the freedom to change religious beliefs. Condemning a man for his religious beliefs seems as logical as condemning him for his political beliefs. # I thought the church was run by God. # Regards churches and labor unions, in almost every case, to obtain security, man must give up "personal freedom". To obtain "personal freedom", he must give up "security". Society chooses which it prefers...as it has done in the establishment of the labor unions which took decades of struggle to develop...and the individual is stuck with the social contract. # Janke says "nobody who can be that funny can be

dangerous." I thought humor was one of the most dangerous weapons in language. The satire, for instance. Remember the politician who wins by making a laughing-stock out of his opponent. # I held a membership in FAPA for some time. Then I got married. According to some authorities, my husband and I became one...entitled

Comments (7)

to act as an individual insofar as possible. My husband was on the FAPA waiting list. He wanted to be in FAPA. It seemed logical that we should share one bundle, and leave a place open in the ranks of FAPA for some other person. It seemed logical that, since we both wanted to be members of FAPA we should both be entitled to be members. We should both be able to contribute to the mailings. Since we were man and wife, it seemed reasonable that we should be listed on the FAPA roster as a team, sharing a membership equally, not as GM says: "...if the "joint" pr "guest contributor" partner got the idea that he/she was a full-fledged member of FAPA and tried to throw hiser weight around....". Larry and I feel that we are capable of acting as an individual in all official FAPA matters. That is a crucial point. We ask nothing of FAPA that the individual member does not ask. We don't ask for two votes, or extra copies of the mag. All we want is the privilege of having ourselves both listed on the FA, and for both of us to be allowed to contribute to the mailings in the form of COMMENTS. (It had not occurred to me until I read your comments to Castora that a FAPAN would object to a non-FAPAN making mailing comments within the organization.) If the members of FAPA object to the joint membership, then it would seem only fair to re-instate Larry to his position on the waitinglist (surrendered to some needier--at the time--fan) and let us occupy two memberships, thereby keeping someone else out of the organization. I can certainly see no logical reason why husband and wife should not both hold memberships, if they wish. To be honest the whole mess about joint memberships seems silly. What difference if both members of a marriage be listed on the FA? Where ever both members are interested enough to want to hold joint memberships, certainly the joint membership will mean more material from the couple than there would be if only one member were allowed to comment on mailings, etc. And if Sam Martinez wanted to, he could have his son write eight pages a year, and publish them with Sam's name on the mag as publisher. Or for that matter, if Sam wanted to freeloader in the described manner, he could simply have the boy join FAPA, drop out himself, and read his son's mailing bundles. There are plenty of ways to freeloader, all clear of joint memberships. When Larry and I proposed the joint membership, we thought it would be a Good Thing, for us and for FAPA. If it is not, we'll revert to the positions we held regards FAPA, at the time of our marriage. In fact, if the membership would prefer, I'll return to my original deadwood status, pulling an annual Perdue. Think of the money it would save in the costs of posting the bundles. # "National elections should be conducted in private." It seems to me that Archie is entitled to an opinion, on the grounds of freedom of thought and speech for all men. If not on those grounds then how about on the grounds that the US National Election, and its results, would affect Archie personally, the US' foreign policy being involved in the choice of candidates and all that. Seems to me that if we aren't going to allow foreigners to have (and express) opinions about our elections, we should not only keep our noses out of theirs, we should cease to have foreign policy as well. If anyone has an opinion, regardless of where that person lives, I think that opinion may be valid and important to me.