



A fanzine for Rowrbrazzle 131, August 2016
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Kiddelidivee Books & Art 310 and hardly likely to be the last.

RATSASS 2

Well, it's here. I found *Rowrbrazzle 130* in my mailbox yesterday. It would be wrong to say that I was excited, exactly, but I was hoping for the best while simultaneously trying not to expect too much. After all, the new OE has only had one mailing to work his magic on before he's condemned to the stake as a fraud. So let's think happy thoughts and proceed...

The first surprise was to discover that my contribution was reproduced in colour. I really didn't expect that – the colour in the file I sent to Edd was to please myself. I didn't expect that anyone other than Edd would see it in anything but tones of grey. If Edd decides to save a little money in future by running my back pages in grey, I won't complain. The tiny touches of colour on *every* page in the first issue were quite unnecessary.

My second surprise was that some of the promising fans that had been scouted for membership *didn't* contribute. I was hoping they would, so that this mailing would not just be a reprise of the last. However, we can always hope to hear from them in the October mailing.

My next thought was that it was going to be hard to comment on the mailing at hand. Ideally, every contributor would receive a share of sensitive, supportive, insightful comment ... but it isn't in me. Unless I really mean something, I'll choke on it.

petting zoo

At last, I saw The Movie everyone is talking about.

Everyone else saw it weeks and months ago, because there was no option but to drop the eggs you were frying, leap out of your iron lung and bungee-jump into the nearest Wal-Mart or Target to buy the \$37.95 Blu-Ray copy of *Zootopia* as soon as possible.

But not me. For weeks and months now, I've been saying that I'm sure it will be a fine movie, but I can wait until the rental store down the street begins selling off excess copies for \$14. I had every intention of

doing *just that*. After all ... how good could *Zootopia* be? I waited for *Toy Story*, I waited for *Shrek*, I waited for *Monsters Inc.*, *The Incredibles*, *Coraline*, *Ratatouille*, *Box Trolls*, *Cars*, *Tintin* and *Inside Out*, so I figured I could wait for *Zootopia*.

Oh, but how could I wait? *Zootopia* is about an anthropomorphic civilization!

You know what? I don't give a rat's ass. I like good animated films, and they don't have to be about talking animals – they neither add nor detract from my enjoyment of a good film. Having to like things because they have anthropomorphic characters in them is like wearing gang colours. You wear them to prove whose side you're on. It's not for me.

As it happened, I was in Wal-Mart the other day and the new release of *Zootopia* in Blu-Ray and DVD was on display. I didn't need Blu-Ray since I don't have a 12-foot screen and my vision isn't 20/20 anyway. The DVD copies were priced surprisingly reasonably, though. \$19 and change. That was a bit more than I would pay for a used copy in another month, but not so much that I felt as though it was wasted money. So I bought a new copy.

The upshot of all this is that it really *was* a fine movie. There were no surprises, really. Kid from small town goes to big city, and does good. Girl meets boy, girl gets boy. Innocent retains her innocence despite the cynicism all around her, and Cynic learns new hope. It's been done before, you have to give it that. Layering on the subplot about a villain spreading division and fear for political gain echoes oddly the events unfolding right at this moment at the Republican National Convention ... and the divide between Prey and Predator rings a bell too. Black and White, dare I guess? But I wouldn't go so far as to say *Zootopia's* observations were especially profound. All things considered, that bit is probably a coincidence.

In conclusion, *Zootopia* is a fine movie ... but not one that knocked my socks off or blew my mind. I prefer to be moderate in my praise.

Since all the positive attributes – the first-rate animation, the engaging characters, the humorous touches and the rampant cuteness have been spoken of, ad infinitum, by other viewers, I won't bother.

The only thing I really wanted to say is that the McGuffin in *Zootopia* was just too damn obviously a McGuffin! There is no reason why there should be a magic flower in that world that drives animals back to their primitive characters, and introducing one creates a problem that had no reason to exist otherwise. Therefore, discovering that the magic flower is the cause of the problem that should not be a problem is not really a solution, either. Is it at all likely some thing as dangerous as this magic flower could exist and nobody knows about it except some country bumpkin who reappears late in the movie merely to pass this vital information on to the heroine? The whole business of the magic flower could have been added to the script at the last moment by an editor's pencil. I know that plots often require a McGuffin to keep all the players in a film from standing around, remarking on the weather. But this one was so obviously what it was that it might have come in a box that plainly identified the contents as "McGuffin (One), Do Not Open Until End of Movie."

Maybe the plot needed a pinch or two of Foreshadowing? Something that made the magic flowers seem to belong to that world, as though they were a drug problem, let's say.

Otherwise, did I mention it was a fine movie? One can be too subtle in finding flaws in *anything*.

Schmoozing

Charles Garofalo – I'm *almost* surprised to still see you writing for 'Brazzle. But judging by Fred's overwhelming output of small press anthologies, there is a big segment of furry fandom writing fiction. I can't really comment on it, though. I reviewed one of Fred's books last year, I think, and while it was a lot better than I expected ... on the whole ... I don't have any especial interest in a story being "furry." I was thoroughly tired of the subject by the time I got to the end. I don't mind non-human characters when done well, but the sort of talking-animal story like *Zootopia* doesn't appeal to me anymore, I can't take them seriously. This puts me at too much of a disadvantage trying to comment on like-stories run in 'Brazzle. That being the case, I may not have a lot to say in my mailing comments to the fiction writers in this apa.

Being a thorough hypocrite, that won't stop me from running any of my own if I write them...

Edd Vick – It's good that you can get published. Have you been able to get paid, yet? My tiny ventures into the professional world of writing have only managed that first step – not counting some articles I sold many years ago. I'm not entirely satisfied with getting published and not getting paid, especially as I only get a printed version of the book if I buy it from Amazon. I'm entitled to a free .pdf of it, but it doesn't do the trick at all. "Hey, everybody! I'm published in a book! Where is it...? Um, well, I could show it to you *if* I had a Kindle." Not the conversation-stopper at parties I was hoping for.

I remember *Heckle & Jeckle* cartoons and comic books. Weren't they usually trying to cheat a certain Fontaine Fox out of free meals, or his savings? Mmmm... no, that was *Fox & Crow*. As I recall, the two Terry Toons characters could be quite nasty. In any case, the story you reprinted doesn't seem typical to me, weak as my memory of the comic book is.

Ken Marcin – Just a thought, so you needn't fly into a rage or go to pieces over it. But I would have thought that the idea of having a dragon live with you would work better dramatically if "Bill" wasn't *also* a talking animal. Once there *are* talking animals in your story, a dragon seems a lot less surprising.

Kjartan – So *much* graphic violence has little dramatic impact, something I've felt about your Savage Squirrel stories from the start. Violence that serves the story is fine, but you tend to go over the line into firearms pornography. There... I've finally said it. That's just *my* opinion, of course... who said there was anything wrong with pornography?

William Earl Haskell – You value my opinion? I don't need this kind of responsibility! Also, while I'm here now, I could easily come to my senses about *Rowrbrazzle* and drop out again.

(Cont.) One thing you mustn't really expect from me is intelligent comment on fan-written fiction. My basic philosophy about that is "life is too short." If I don't have the time to read a new Lindsay Davis "Falco" mystery, a biography of Herge, the latest Hugo-winning novel *and* a work of fan fiction, you can guess which I give least priority to. Also, what value is there in my giving a harsh critique ... or in lying to the author? So I've always shied away from the subject.

Mind you, consistency is not one of my virtues, so will probably run my own fiction in 'Brazzle. *sigh*

Simon Barber - "An unfeasibly large backpack." I could use one of those. I'm forced to use an electrically powered chair (called Traveling Matt) to get around the neighborhood these days - though I'm okay in my apartment. The problem is, there's no practical way to carry much in one of those chairs. You *can* carry a bag in your lap, though it's awkward for any length of time. I quickly learned to hang a bag on either (or both) of the pushing handles, but that makes the whole shebang wider, and consequently that much harder to squeak through narrow spaces ... such as doors. In the end, I slung my backpack across the back of the seat, the shoulder straps wrapped around both handles. But support of the sack is poor, and I don't get the best use of its volume. What I really need is a much larger backpack with a stiff back. Maybe one day I'll go shopping for one.

About fan fiction - I think I've already given fair warning about this.

Kristin Fontaine - I suspect any attempt to blend hand and wing is doomed to failure - or at least a highly ineffective compromise - unless the creature is also as small as most birds. It would be very difficult to use hands that were encumbered with a delicate, relatively immobile structure of feathers and delicate bones. A solution I've seen in science fiction is to presume another set of limbs - small arms attached to an extra joint on the shoulder blade.

Errr... that human hand has six fingers.

Robert Alley - Your story about the glasses left on the floor of an art museum being mistaken for exhibits happens *a lot!* I suppose it's usually a gag ... but I bet sometimes it's just a natural mistake. I have nothing against minor decorative arts, per se. Why anyone pays half-a-million dollars for such stuff and preserves it in art galleries, though, is a mystery to me. I suspect that the basements of galleries a century from now are going to be stuffed with an incredible amount of absolute garbage that we spent billions of taxpayers' dollars for in the 20th and 21st Centuries ... meanwhile, curators and collectors of the early 22nd Century will scramble for genre and popular art that has become incredibly scarce ... because nobody took it seriously *at the time*.

DucKon? Near Chicago? I recall attending a very early one, circa 1990s, driving a couple of other fans to the con all the way from Toronto. It took something like 16 hours behind the wheel, and, as I recall, it turned out to be a mixed furry and media con, with not much furry attendance. Of course, it was *so* long ago, I may have several cons confused. We never attempted it again.

Steve Gallacci was one of the original members of 'Brazzle - as was I - and appeared first in the second mailing. It is not the first time that Wikipedia has been wrong.

Mike Sagara – The game industry swallows up a lot of artists, doesn't it? Games are *terra incognita* to me, but it sounds like a better fate than doing charcoal portraits of horses or children at the county fair.

Steven Scharff – New York or Vermont? New York can be anywhere – from an isolated Amish community in the Adirondacks to Manhattan. Vermont is pretty much just what it sounds like – green mountains. If that's your choice, say hello to Dick Loudon at the Stratford Inn for me!

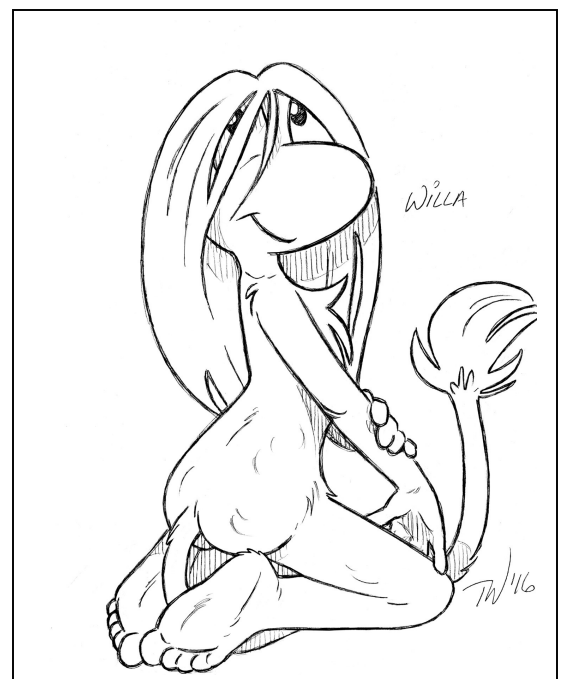
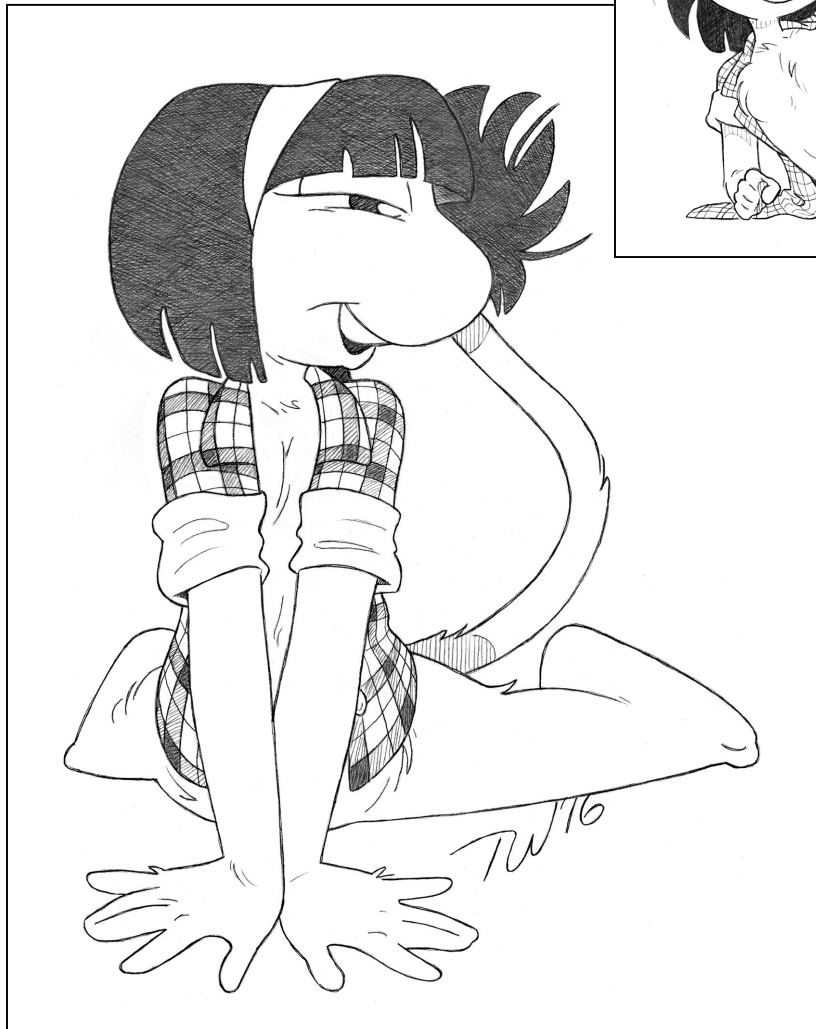
Re: fiction. I may print it, but I'm unlikely to read it, unfortunately.

Steve Gallacci – “16 Shells From a Thirty-Ought-Six” (Tom Waits)

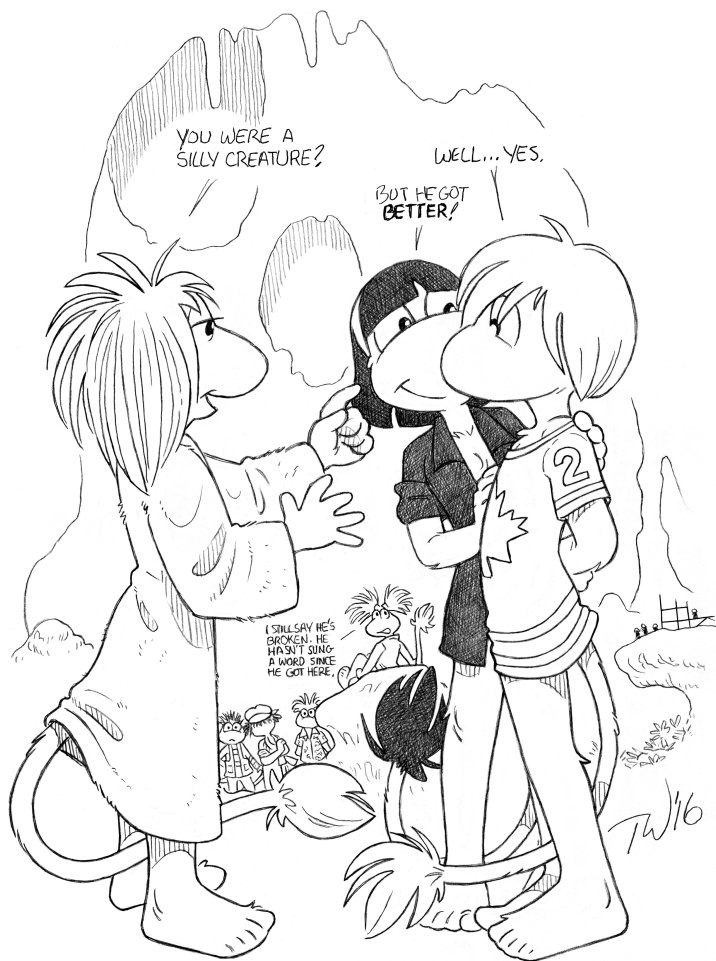
Gosh! Just like that ... *I'm finished!*

The Biluvious

Kiki Has an Idea!



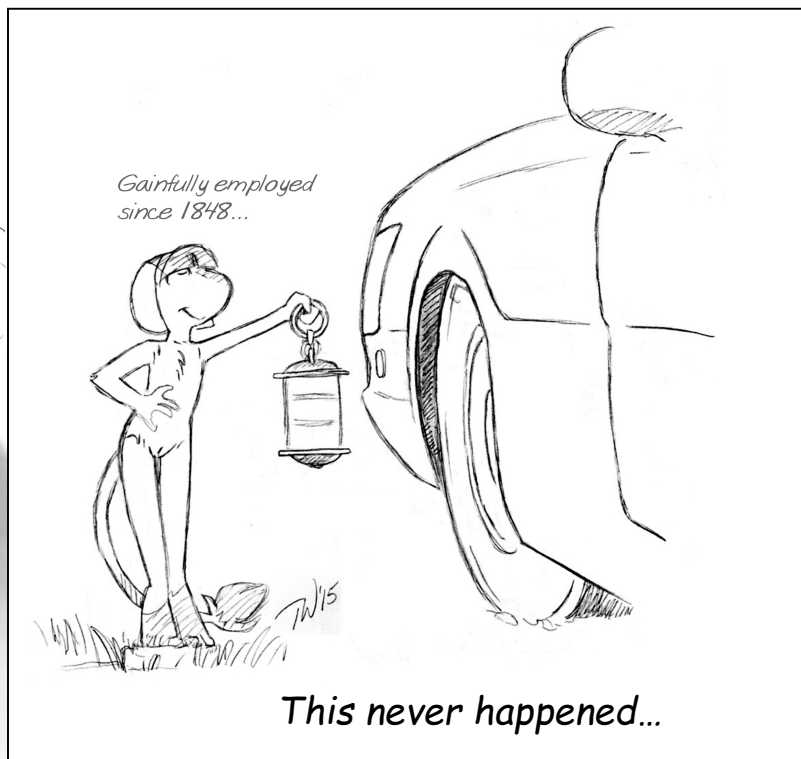
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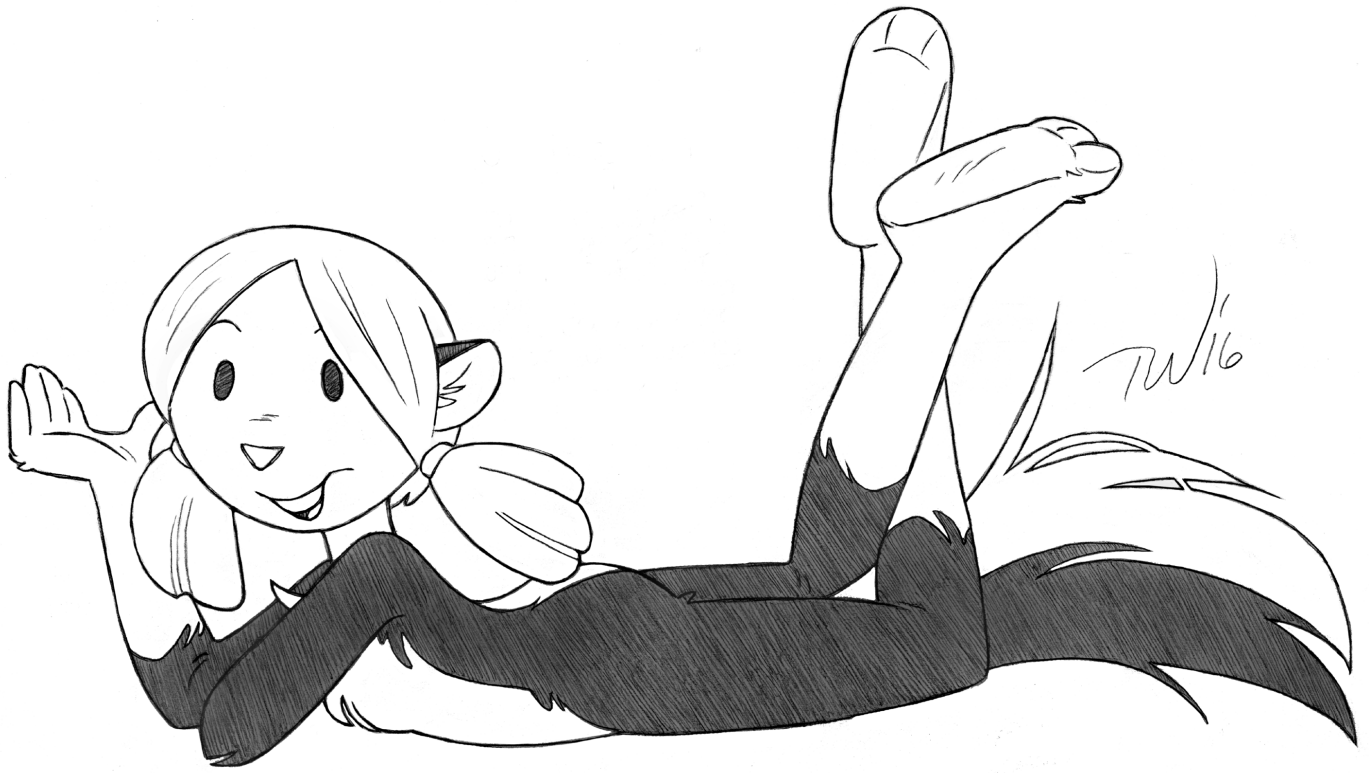


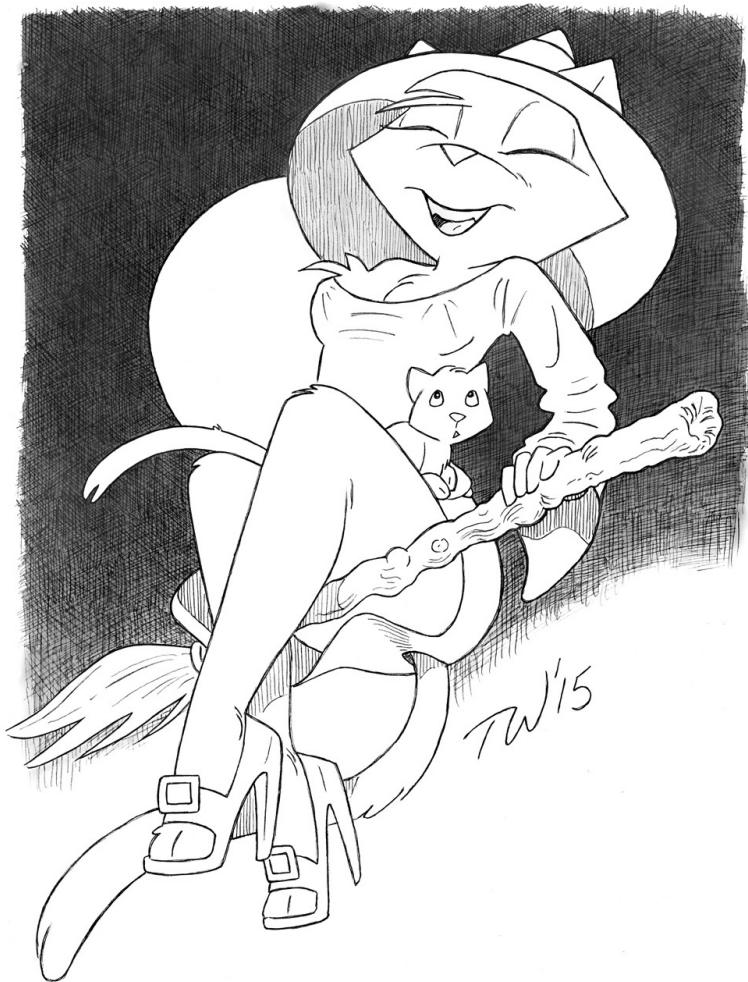
Morning Bath



Darl Fraggles







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