

This is THE ROGUE RAVEN 22 and comes to you from Frank Denton, 14654 - 8th Ave. S.W., Seattle, WA 98166. It is written essentially for friends as a sort of letter substitute and has a run of about 100 copies. If you happen to see a copy and want to subscribe, who am I to deny you. It's going to cost you \$1 for six issues. This issue should go out about April 30, 1976 more or less. Onward.

A PRESENT (mar. 28)

Every once in a while a paperback publisher comes along with a book or books that seem almost like a present even if you have to pay a good price for them. That's how I feel about Popular Library right now. It's often enough that I'm angry about the current prices on paperback books. But I paid \$2.50 gladly for the volume I picked up tonight at the local Safeway Store. Since the early 50's Anthony Powell, one of Britain's finest novelists, has been slowly producing a monumental work with the general title of "A Dance to the Music of Time." Now Popular Library is bringing out the twelve novels which comprise the work in a series of four paperbacks. Each includes three complete novels. This first volume includes A Question of Upbringing, A Buyer's Market and The Acceptance World, novels produced between 1951 and 1955. The volume carries the cover title of Spring and features a circular cutout cover with a spring flower garden showing through. I suspect that this is going to be a long slow read. I've read several of the novels sometime in the past. It will be nice, however, to have the whole set of twelve books at a somewhat reasonable price. At today's prices the set would probably fetch \$75-\$100 in hardback.

(I noticed that the April 5 Newsweek had a review/interview of the whole series. It seems that a new complete edition in four volumes hardback is being published by Little Brown at \$12.50 a volume. The paperback edition is going to be fine value, however. Powell has spent a quarter of a century on the series, but now is quoted as being glad to have said goodbye to the characters. "I always used to reread the whole thing before starting a new volume," he says. "It was tortuously boring." I don't know about that. Personally, I'm looking forward to it.)

Speaking of a cutout cover, I've noticed several publishers lately trying to capitalize on unusual covers. Recently The Seige of Krishnapur was published with two covers. The outer one is 2/3 width and shows the city in peaceful times. The inner covers shows the violence of the outbreak of war at the same location. Another innovation is the recent paperback of Donald Westlake. I'm sorry that I don't remember the title. It features two bikini clad damsels. The bikinis are flocked on, a first according to Publisher's Weekly. Also reported to be selling like hot-cakes, or hot bikinis, if you will. If this is successful, I suspect that we'll see a lot more innovations of this sort. Paperbacks may become collectors items for more reason than that they are sometimes first editions. Where will it all lead?



CLEO LAINE CONCERT (Mar. 29)

I meant to say a bit more about the Cleo Laine concert last time but I ran out of space. So I'll add a bit here. The concert took place at a strange time; 11:15 in the evening. The advertisements made a great to-do about dining fashionable late and then coming on to the concert. The real reason, however, was that there was another event scheduled for the Seattle Opera House earlier in the evening. It gave me the opportunity to attend the monthly meeting of The Nameless for about 2½ hours, then drive down to the Seattle Center and meet Anna Jo.

The last concert Cleo Laine gave here was last summer. We were in England at the time and obviously could not attend. The time previous to that Anna Jo went alone. She said that there were only a couple hundred people in attendance. Although she had purchased the least expensive seats, the ushers did not even open the balcony area. They had the less expensive seat holders sit at the back of the main floor and told them that they could move down when the concert started. So she ended up with a very good seat. Something has happened since that time, it seems. We tried the same ploy. The opera house was filled and we sat in the second balcony, right where our tickets said that we should.

In the meantime, Cleo has appeared several times on the Mike Douglas and Merv Griffin shows. She has gotten some good reviews and some fine television exposure. So now she packs them in.

She is hard to categorize. She's not a jazz singer, although she can sing jazz with the best of them. She can also sing ballads, rag-timey tunes, blues. I guess the best thing to call her would be a song stylist. Something in the manner of Barbara Streisand, I suppose. She's vivacious, has a great stage presence, establishes a nice rapport with the audience and then sets out to entertain them. She varies her program from up-tempo to slow ballad to poems set to music and on to a blues or a rock beat song. She has a three octave range with a rich voice and styles the songs nicely.

She is backed by a four piece group led by her husband, John Dankworth, one of England's great jazz musicians, a poll winner several times over. John plays sax and clarinet. The piano player has both electric and standard piano and plays a fine electrified violin. The bass player was more than adequate, taking some fine solos on electric bass. The drummer, Kenny Clare, is another jazz poll winner from England. At times Cleo would use her voice as an instrument singing scat in harmony to the sax or violin.

The concert ended at almost 1:45 in the morning, over two hours in length, with one 15-minute intermission. Cleo sang something for everyone, including my own personal favorite, "The Streets of London." You could tell from audience reaction that other people were hearing their favorites as well. All in all a very nice concert. If Cleo Laine and John Dankworth appear in your city, you could do yourself a good turn by plunking down a few dollars for a ticket to their concert. Good music and good musicians.

MOVIETONE NEWS (Mar. 30)

The other evening Anna Jo and I hied ourselves off to the theater to see a couple of pictures. First up was "The Man Who Would Be King," with Michael Caine and Sean Connery. I had heard a lot of good reports of the movie, but I'm not certain that it came up to my expectations. The plot basically involves Caine and Connery as a couple of ex-army rogues in India who believe that if they can go to Kafiristan they can

themselves up as kings. After a long and arduous trek over the mountains, they do manage to whip some tribes into the likeness of an army and subdue the surrounding countryside. A holy city is inviting and they go there to convince the priests of their superiority. By this time Connery is looked upon as Alexander, the Great's son. He is nearly killed by the high priest when the Masonic emblem from the watchfob of Kipling saves him. It matches the sacred symbol in the holy city. Connery settles in with earnestness to become a real king. Caine wants to take some treasure and run. Connery is serious about his kingship, dispensing justice, rendering decisions between families and tribes. Caine vows to leave but agrees to wait until Connery's wedding to a beautiful tribeswoman. At the wedding she bites Connery's cheek, he bleeds and the priests realize that he is not a god. Gods don't bleed. A battle ensues, Connery meets a ghastly death; Caine escapes to return to Kipling to tell his story.

I haven't thought much of Connery's acting lately. He does much better in this film and is quite believable. Anna Jo says that he is growing older gracefully and taking parts which don't attempt to portray the youngish James Bond image. Caine rarely fails to do a good job of acting. I wish I hadn't missed "The Black Windmill" which ran here for about a week as the second film of a double bill. Caine's wife, Shikara, plays the beautiful tribeswoman, but it wasn't much of a part. I think I liked Christopher Plummer best in the relatively short portrayal at beginning and end of the film as Rudyard Kipling himself. Much of the scenery was magnificent, especially the high mountains. I felt, however, that the film was jumpy, not smooth. It seemed episodic.

Actually I was more impressed by the companion feature, "Conduct Unbecoming." The names here were Michael York, Susannah York and Trevor Howard. Again the setting was India. Two young officers come from England to join the regiment. One, a cynical young man, doesn't give a damn for the regiment and intends to be sent home as soon as possible. At a ball on the first weekend, he is introduced to the young and handsome regimental widow, played by Susannah York. Her husband has died while on patrol and she is kept by the regiment, rather than returning home to an England she does not know. The cynical young officer, having had a bit too much to drink, pursues Miss York to the garden. Soon she comes stumbling back to the regimental house, bruised and bleeding, and accusing the officer of assault.

Rather than sending him up for court-martial, to the dishonor of the regiment, the officer is made to stand an internal trial. Michael York is designated as his defense and contrary to his instructions, delves seriously into the event, unearthing a variety of things best not spoken of. His own career is soon on the line. A good deal of the movie takes on the appearance of a courtroom drama. An excellent film with an unusual ending. Well acted throughout, even by minor parts. A very enjoyable film and for me it overshadowed the main feature. Recommended. Between the two films, I have this strange hankering to read Kim again, one of my all-time favorite books.

AFTERMATH (Mar. 31)

We have a staff member, a photographer, who is a keen moviegoer and a pretty good critic. I always enjoy talking with him about almost anything since he is art-

iculate and perceptive. Whenever I have been to a movie I try to compare notes with him a bit. Yesterday afternoon I was relating much of the foregoing to him, and he said that he had read some reviews of "Conduct Unbecoming" which were not too kind to it.

I decided to look up some reviews and see how the critics viewed the film and how I felt about their reviews. Obviously, folks, I am not cut out to be a movie critic. I can't tell the good from the bad. "Conduct Unbecoming" was a pure waste of celluloid. In Time Magazine, Jay Cocks labeled it "Gunga Dumb," called it a "wheezy courtroom thriller" with a "cast which was a virtual mothball fleet (Trevor Howard, Richard Attenborough and Christopher Plummer). He claims that it was "directed with almost definitive incompetence" and was a "textbook example of the use of unskilled labor."

Wanna hear more? Pauline Kael in The New Yorker called it "contrived," claimed that "there was not a new performance from any of the actors," that it "doesn't begin to know what it's about," and that "Anderson's staging is barely functional." Thanks, Pauline.

Colin Westerbeck in Commonweal talked about a "trail of moral red herrings," "Anderson's skulking camera" and said that playwright Barry England and Director Michael Anderson are "bullshit artists." He dwelt at considerable length on one scene which he found particularly offensive until I had the feeling that the entire movie was comprised of that scene.

I love you, Judith Crist. In The Saturday Review she called the film "a first class suspense with a tidy final twist." She also said that it was "old-fashioned, but in the grand tradition." She even got all of the facts right: the year was 1878, the regiment was the 20th Indian Light Cavalry stationed on the Northwest Frontier. And the kangaroo court was called a "Subalterns Court Martial." Well, it's nice to know that I don't have any real sense of what makes a good movie. I just need to remember to read reviews after I've seen the movie, not before. Otherwise, I'd probably never go again.

GRYFFYN (April 2)

The Gryffyn Band has undergone changes again. About three weeks ago they fired their black lead singer who was causing all sorts of problems. Then when Tim and Candy came home from the Aleutians for a short vacation, the drummer got very interested in going back with them to work at a steady job for a change. So he quit. Sean was in a real quandary for a while. Through the union he tried a number of drummers, none of whom fit. A couple of them didn't want to travel, one wanted a weekly guarantee, two were country-western drummers. Finally they picked up a drummer who had previously played with the band from which the last changeover had brought the keyboard and bass players to Gryffyn. They weren't so sure how it would work out as he didn't seem to be that strong and he hadn't been playing for about four months. However, he seems to be working in just fine and getting stronger every night.

Meantime a young girl who had sat in with the band a couple of times came back to town from New York. She has a good voice and a lot of energy and has taken over some of the singing chores. Sean is back singing quite a bit of the lead also.

Last night we went out to My Place to hear them for the first time since the changes. They sounded very good, that is to this jaundiced ear. The music is more on the disco-funk side than I care for, although in one set they did rip off three good old rock and roll numbers in a row. So they've been able to meet all of their contractual obligations during the changeover and come out of it sounding pretty

strong. Next week Olympia, then Ellensburg for a week, then probably back to Seattle for a week at The Pipeline. Sean is the only original Gryffyn left. When John, the drummer, left it ended a nine-year association. They've been together since the 7th grade.

THE CRAB CANNERS RETURN (April 5)

Back up there somewhere I mentioned that Tim and Candy had come home from the Aleutians. People keep writing to hear of the continuing saga of Tim and Candy among the Aleuts. The crab season was tailing off and an additional problem cropped up. It seemed that another cannery firm was offering a better price and even though it took a considerable time to go the extra distance to unload, the crab boats could make a better profit by doing so. So things slowed down considerably.

The kids approached their boss and suggested that they come down on vacation a bit early and then come back up to the Aleutians in time for the start of the Tanner crab season. They had already decided that they would go back up for the summer months. The boss decided that wasn't such a bad idea, so they flew out. They woke us up one morning about 2:30 a.m. banging on the front door. They stayed down for about three weeks, visiting a lot of friends. They went up to the cabin for one weekend, but it was way too cold and they came home again. They flew back north around the 11th of March if memory serves correctly. There will be an almost total changeover of the crew. Tim will be the head of his shift's glazier crew (they do the freezing) and it was thought that Candy would be working in the galley. As it turned out later, however, she is on Tim's crew, readying the boxes. Hmmm. I wonder how she finds Tim as the boss. Either way it would be a better job than pulling crab apart and getting out the pieces of meat, or so it would seem to me from this far distance. They probably won't be back now until the end of September or the first part of October. Tim is looking forward to seeing the Aleutians in better weather and in getting in some fishing later on. He's heard tales that the fishing is superb and his boss has a small boat that they can go out in. So they're gone again.

A later letter from Candy suggests that the difference between Winter and Spring in Dutch Harbor is that in Spring it snows a little bit less. It still hasn't begun to warm up too much. According to the weather report last night, it's about 37 degrees up there right now. But on the other hand it didn't get an awful lot below that all winter. Just below freezing, not some of those ungodly sub-zero temperatures that you read about.

PRUDHOE BAY VISITS (April 5)

We had other friends from Alaska visit also. John and Jean Maze, old friends, went north to work last Fall. John has been in several camps on the pipeline and now is at Prudhoe Bay. He works in parts and supplies for ARCO at the present. A while back he was working for Alyeska at another camp. One day he signed up for a drawing which was to be held. The prize was an all-expenses paid trip to Disneyland. Danged if he didn't win it. So they arranged to stop off here in Seattle to take care of some business (they still own a home here) and to visit old friends.

We got all of the

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old gang together for a party at our house and we had a full house. It was just like one of the big parties they used to throw at their house. Lots of good people, a good punch, lots of potluck food. John even brought some slides to show; Old Griz, a Grizzly bear at the garbage dump of the camp where he formerly was, and a number of pictures of a pair of wolves that also came there. These same wolves were identified at another camp a hundred miles away. Quite a territory they roam.

It was great to see them again as well as their two girls, Cathi and Heather. I'm godfather to both of them. They've grown a lot, and both of them were as cute as bugs' ears in their long white-and-checkered dresses. We managed to run a few errands for the Mazes while they were in California. Anna Jo bought some Advent speakers for John to take back. Now I have a taping project to send him tapes of all the new records I buy. I told him that my tastes and his didn't correlate much, but he said that they are so starved for something new up there that he and his two partners would be happy with anything. You asked for it, John.

BOOKS (April 6)

It's been a while since I've written anything about the books I've been reading, so now's as good a time as any. But first, a word from our sponsor. A while back I wrote about a new Mark Geston book which turned out to not be new after all (blush!). All you people who wrote, go ahead. Have another chuckle. Finished? Good. There is a new Mark Geston book which is due to be released on May 7. It's entitled The Seige of Wonder and Doubleday will publish it. Price will be \$5.95. I've only seen one review of it so far, one which was not very kind. Geston writes a special kind of prose which I suspect is not all that popular. But I, for one, look forward to this new one.

Meantime I've been reading some things for review for The Seattle Times. I just finished Michael Crichton's Eaters of the Dead. It's a curious novel written in the form of the travel log of one Ahmad ibn-Fadlan, a 10th century Arab. While on a diplomatic mission in the year 922, he is kidnapped by and made to accompany a band of Vikings. They travel back to Scandinavia where they engage in a series of battles and raids to protect the Kingdom of Rothgar from humanlike beasts called the wendol. There are a lot of pseudo-academic footnotes and appendices to make it look scholarly. As I say, it's a curious piece and I wonder how it will sell.

Ben Bova's Millenium is a story of people and politics in the year 1999. Earth is overcrowded and the U.S. and Russia are still at each other's throats. A couple of minor incidents bid to set off an atomic war. A settlement on the moon has both Russian and Americans living in a single, but divided, enclave. The American commander convinces the Russian commander that they can prevent the war by declaring their independence and taking control of the anti-ballistic missile defense system based in space stations. From there they can jointly destroy any missiles before they reach their targets. They succeed; the American commander comes to Earth to intercede through the United Nations. There is an attempt to recapture the stations, but it is unsuccessful. Pretty well written technological type novel.

Future Power is an anthology of mostly new stories concerning the uses and abuses of various kinds of power. It contains stories by Ursula K. LeGuin, Vonda McIntyre, Damon Knight, R.A. Lafferty, Gene Wolfe, Felix Gottschalk and others. Uneven, as one might suspect, but a couple of really good stories there.

The new Pyramid editions of the Fu Manchu books has got me going on a Sax Rohmer kick right now. I'm reading Master of Villainy, the biography that came out a couple of years back, and am also just finishing the third Fu Manchu book, The Hand of Fu Manchu. The cover illustrations are superb on these new editions. Seven of the series of thirteen Fu Manchu books are out as of the date I type this.

HIYA, SPORT (April 12)

Last Friday night was a great night for a good many sports fans in the Seattle area. The very first sporting event was held in the new King County Domed Stadium, generally known as the Kingdome. The Seattle Sounders of the North American Soccer League met the New York Cosmos and their great Brazilian star, Pele. The combination of this great soccer figure and the first sports event made the game a sellout. Not all of the seats are installed yet, but every seat available was sold. The figure was 58,128, a new record for a soccer crowd in this country, breaking the old record by almost 20,000.

The stadium is a multi-level, covered stadium that looks like a big hamburger from the outside. It is situated near the south end of the business district or downtown Seattle. I suppose that's the best description of it; it's "downtown." There is not a great deal of parking immediate to the stadium and many people were concerned enough to take the bus. Metro Transit was clever enough to capitalize on their slogan, "Take me, I'm yours" to advertise "Take me to the Kingdome." And lots of people did, including yours truly. I haven't ridden a bus in years, but it was relatively painless. There is a "park and ride" lot near us and we left the car there and boarded the bus. It meandered around a bit, but we got to the dome in relatively good time, something over a half hour.

The stadium itself is magnificent. When all of the seats are in, it will hold about 65,000. It's not the biggest stadium in the world, but it's all right for Seattle. Although 59,000 season tickets have been sold for the Seahawks in the National Football League and that only leaves 6000 seats to go up for grabs on a single game basis. We had purposely chosen the least expensive seats in the house for this game, just to see what they might be like. We got our tickets early so we were on the first level, but just one row from the back. We could see the field perfectly and I suspect that there isn't a bad seat in the house. There was an air conditioner unit above me which blocked the main score board and the television screen upon which replays can be shown, as well as occasional advertising (yech!). Other than that the view was good. It doesn't have the old intimacy of the 17,000 seat Memorial Stadium, but that just wasn't big enough for the rabid soccer fans in this town.

I can't say that the Sounders played all that well, but it was an exhibition game and didn't count. Got beat: 3-1. Several new players just arrived that week and the team hadn't jelled yet. In 10 exhibition games we've only won two and tied one. Yep, lost seven, but primarily with the taxi squad, young draftees and free agents who need a lot of game experience and practice to see if they can develop into real professional soccer players. So I'm not too upset at this point.

On the other hand, I see the whole league as being much upgraded and it's quite likely that the Sounders will find the opposition much stronger this year. I am doubtful that the season will be nearly as successful as the first two years of Sounder existence. I'll try not to expound about the Sounders too often, but you'll forgive me if I slip once in a while, won't you? Won't you, Gene Wolfe?

I was particularly interested in how the stadium would unload when the game was over. The game finished and the teams went off at 10:08. Anna Jo and I are never ones to jump up and stand in a crowded aisle waiting to get out. We've learned to sit quietly and people watch until it begins to thin out. Much less strain that way; better for the blood pressure. So we waited patiently and still were outside of the stadium on the ground level at 10:15. That's not too bad, methinks.

Ah, but getting home by bus was another matter. There was a short walk of a couple of blocks from the dome to the bus stop. The police had traffic pretty well taken care of. We waited only a few minutes before a Burien bus came by. Unfort-

unately it was loaded to the gunwhales, if a bus can be said to have gunwhales. So we waited patiently for another. Quite a few buses came by with other destinations in mind and the crowd at the stop thinned out considerably. Finally a bus came rolling up with no destination marked on it. A dispatcher from the transit company asked where we were headed. "Burien," practically everyone shouted. He went around to the front of the bus and spoke to the driver. Then he came back and said, "He doesn't know the route." "We'll tell him," the crowd shouted. About that time another Burien bus came along and we loaded both of them. The plan was for our driver to follow the other one who knew the route.

It turned out to be a pretty ridiculous ride, wandering about the residential section of South Park and Des Moines Way. Not a soul got off the bus until we got back to the Burien Park & Ride. We could have had a straight shot and been home in about 20 minutes. The transit company is going to have to get smart enough to put on some express buses when there is a game of any kind. Twenty minutes each way from the park and ride isn't all that bad. But we didn't arrive back in Burien until 11:30 and I'm not sure we'd stand for that each time we went to a soccer match.

Well, that's enough of a tale of our first experience in the Kingdome. The stadium is great, the soccer team may have more competition than they are up to this year, and the bus service was on the negative side. I'll let you know if things improve as the season goes along.

JOHN CARL WRITES ABOUT TOM ROBBINS (Way back in December)

"I've probably already recommended Another Roadside Attraction to you, but in case I haven't I now do so. Tom Robbins wrote it. Tom has a lot to learn about the craft of writing, but I am thoroughly convinced that when he has learned he will be the greatest writer that ever lived. He is already today's foremost stylist. You might have a geographical interest in it: It is set in the Sung dynasty lands 60 miles north of Seattle, where the author lives."

Yep, John. You haven't been listening to me rave about Tom for the last couple of years. I'm happy that you've discovered him. Occasionally I've talked about him in Ash-Wing, but I think a lot of people don't really get turned on to him until they happen to somehow get ahold of a paperback of Roadside. I stuck your letter in here because here's what I had written on April 13th:

I'm told that the new Tom Robbins book is now out. I had an April 20 release date on it and the one brief review I have seen in Publisher's Weekly was not too kind. A girl who attends classes at the college and who has talked to me about Another Roadside Attraction popped into my office the other day to ask if I had seen the new book yet. She already had a copy and it appears that it is out in paperback at \$4.95 and also in hardback at \$10.95. The title, in case you've forgotten, is Even Cowgirls Get the Blues. If you are a Robbins fan, you'll want to get this new book. Those of you who do, might drop me a line about your impressions and we'll keep up a running commentary about Cowgirls. (More further on, if there is room.)

MAILING LIST (Written Sometime)

The list of people who receive this is edging toward 100 again and that's too many, so I'm going to start cutting back. Those of you who haven't responded in a while (I mean like several issues, not in terms of time, cause I haven't been too regular myself lately) might think about it. I'm grateful to those who do respond and thank you kindly for your remarks. TRR is not essentially a magazine in trade for other personalzines. It's a let me hear from you on a postcard sort of zine. Letters are more than welcome, but pc's are just fine. I may even begin listing the "we heard froms" so I have something to refer to when I start chopping.

VISITOR (April 20)

Anna Jo's cousin, Margaret Stamper, came to visit from England. She came first of all to attend a wedding of some younger relatives, then to visit with a variety of relatives up and down the west coast. She flew into Seattle from California on last Friday and will be staying with us through Thursday.

This is the cousin with whom we have stayed a couple of times when we have visited England. She has just retired from running a 400 acre farm with sheep, pigs, and milk cows. She was also at one time a partner with her brother in a long-haul trucking company.

Margaret lives in the old family home, Rosebank, in Culgaith, near Penrith and the Lake District. It is about 20 miles south of the Scottish border. The countryside about there is beautiful with the Pennine mountains just a few miles to the east.

We spent part of our time seeing some of the sights around Seattle and Tacoma and drove to Mount Rainier one day, although at this time of year the melt has not yet begun. At Paradise, the highest point to which you can drive, roughly 5000 feet in elevation, there is probably 20 feet of snow still packed. The headquarters building is open, but the lodge is closed. Still Margaret enjoyed visiting there, as she has been there in the summer time when the snow has gone and the mountain meadows are abloom with wild flowers.

Another part of her time, we saw to it that she got to meet relatives as she is keen on the family. One evening we had about nine relatives over for light refreshments. One of the younger cousins is a Mormon and they do a great deal of work in genealogy. Margaret was greatly surprised at the relatively complete family tree and the photograph album of ancestors and ancestral places, including her own home.

Easter Sunday we had the Easter dinner at our house, with Anna Jo's sister and her family coming from Olympia, and Anna Jo's mother from Tacoma. Another evening we had our own family with Sean and his girl and Shannon, Joe and Aaron.

Finally on Thursday, I drove Margaret to Raymond, about 135 miles away, where she would stay for the night with other relatives and then make her way back to Longview for the weekend, before flying home from Portland on Tuesday. It was great having her with us and being able to repay just a little of the hospitality which she has extended to us on various occasions. When I said goodbye to her, I told her that it would only be about 15 months before we would visit her again in England. She replied that there would always be a room for us at Rosebank. That's the sort of thing that really gives you a nice feeling.

MORE TOM ROBBINS (April 26)

Are you getting tired of hearing about Tom Robbins? Y'know, there is a coterie of Robbins fans out here in Rogue Raven Land. Perhaps that is the sole purpose of the Rogue. To subversively spread the gospel of Tom Robbins. As a matter of fact, there does seem to have sprung up a cult around his first novel.. Among my own acquaintances I know that Michael Carlson, Doug Barbour and Larry Paschelke are fans of the first novel.

I mentioned his new book, Even Cowgirls Get the Blues, a ways back. Last Saturday Tom was autographing books at one of the big department stores in downtown Seattle, so I took my copies down to get them signed. When he finished with a couple of people who were ahead of me, I gave him my books and we began to talk. Fortunately it was at a time when there was no one behind me waiting. I told him that I tried to do my bit to spread the word about him and that he had a number of followers amongst

sf fans. He said that he had been very pleased with Ted Sturgeon's review of Another Roadside Attraction which appeared in Galaxy. He also said that he had received a very complimentary letter from that most mysterious of authors, another ex-Seattlite, Tom Pynchon, author of V, The Crying of Lot 49, and Rainbow Gravity. I almost got to meet Tom Pynchon once, but that's another story. Not worth telling anyway, since it never came to pass.

Tom Robbins also told me that he would be teaching in a writer's workshop in Port Townsend, an old Victorian town up at the top of Puget Sound. He wanted to know if I knew Ursula LeGuin who had been asked to teach there, but had turned it down. As far as I know she is still in England. He said that Vonda McIntyre was now going to be teaching there and I told him I knew Vonda. It was about this time, with the conversation going just great, that I realized that there were about six people in line behind me and I had better move on. Pity! I thanked him for the autographs and told him that I hoped we'd have a chance to meet again.

Somewhere in there he told me that he will be going on tour to hawk the book. But he said that he doesn't want to do it for too long a time. He said that the old Protestant work ethic takes hold and he feels that he's got to get back to the typewriter. He writes like Silverberg, trying to finish three pages a day and have them just the way he wants then, then not returning to them unless he absolutely has to do so. I have a lot of respect for people who can write like that, and someday want to force myself to write a story in that manner to see what happens. Mostly I write in fits and starts with lot of stuff to cut out, revise or otherwise throw away. I suspect Tom's method makes you really consider what you are writing at the time, rather than having to go back and rethink when a draft is completed.

Well, I found Tom Robbins engaging, interesting and also interested in what I had to say. He's probably nearing 40, has relatively long hair liberally showing gray, is of medium build, and seemed like one heck of a nice guy. For real Robbins ~~me~~ I offer a photocopy of an article that appeared a couple of weeks ago in The Weekly, a new and vibrant newspaper that has just sprung into being and which Seattle needed desperately. Just drop me a postcard and I'll send you a photocopy of the article. No more room and it's about time this thing got finished anyway. May 13 '76

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