CONTENTS

- 2 Contents
- 3 Meeting Notices
- 4 Editorials
- 4 It Came In the Mail
- 5 LOC's
- 6 Samurai Lost by Clifford Dunbar
- 10 Fran's Trip Report
- 12 Hugo Nominees
- 13 Book Reviews
- 14 Membership Form
- 15 Birthdays
- 15 Con List

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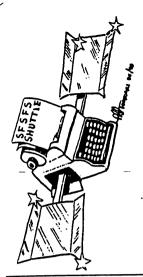
Moral support was out of town



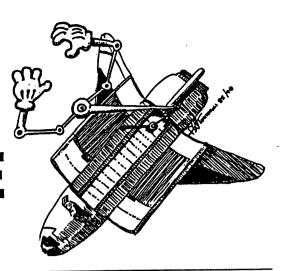
The SFSFS SHUTTLE August 1991 #77

The South Florida Science Fiction Society is a Florida non-profit educational corporation recognized by the Internal Revenue Service under Section 501 (c) (3). General membership is \$1 per issue. The views, reviews, and opinions expressed in the SFSFS SHUTTLE are those of the authors and artists and not necessarily those of the publisher.

And so it goes . . .



SFSFS SHUTTLE



The Official SFSFS Newsletter

GENERAL MEETING

DATE: Saturday, Aug. 17th, 2:00pm

LOC: Imperial Point Library

5985 No.Federal Hwy.

Ft. Lauderdale (305) 492-1800

The library is between Commercial and Atlantic over the Book Stop.

Program: Discussion of Hugo nominees, and possibly a video of one of the nominated movies. Bring your thoughts for discussion if you have read any of those nominated. (see list later in this ish)

Tropicon X Committee Meeting: Thursday, Aug. 15th, 6:30pm at the Siclari/Stern domicile:

4599 NW 5th Ave Boca Raton

(407) 392-6462

Directions: Take I-95 to the Yamato Road exit. Go East, make the first three right hand turns.

This will be a collating party to prepare the Progress Report for mailing. We really need your help!

News:

Remember those SFSFS T-Shirts we tried to organize a while back (don't worry, I forgot too)? Peggy will be returning your very outdated checks next time she sees you, 'cause she couldn't get enough orders together. So now we get to start all over again. We will be discussing it at future meetings.

Look for a new book out by SFSFS member **Gregory Zentz** titled JUPITER'S GHOST published by Praeger Publishers for \$39.95 (including a forward by Vince Miranda). It is a non-fiction work dealing with the connection between science and fiction. Gerry promises a review for the next shuttle.

Orion's Belt will be performing a 1/2 hour concert Saturday at Chicon. Check the program book for times.

Quote most heard at OKon:
The only difference between this hotel and
the Titanic was the Titanic had a band.

F.M. Station

In the interest of getting the shuttle out sometime before dawn, just a short note. We have been pleased to see a good response with letters and reviews, but would like to receive more artwork. We love the things passed on to us by Gerry and we'll continue to use them, but we don't want to repeat the same ones ad infinitum. Special thanks to Sheryl Birkhead for the cover art!

- Fran Mullen

DEClarations

The point has come, so I suppose
To write a line or two
Of space - and time - and books of lore Of legends false and true And all the many lives that come
Through stories old and new.
But now the hour is getting late
And this will have to do.

- Don Cochran

⊠IT⊠CAME⊠ IN⊠THE⊠MAIL

- The Colorful Metaphor. Quarterly newsletter (postmarked 23 May 1991) of Star Sector: Northeast Florida, PO Box 1509, Orange Park, FL, 32073-1509. Ed: Karen Rhodes. Article by Asimov on dangers from use of fossil fuels and non-degradable chemicals. Flyer for Crackercon 1992.
- FOSFAX #155 (May 91). Bimonthly clubzine of The Falls of the Ohio Science Fiction and Fantasy Association, PO Box 37281, Louisville, Kentucky 40233-7281. Eds: Timothy Lane & Janice Moore. 64 pages jammed full of letters by many well known fans and pros, as well as articles and reviews.

- THE INSIDER #163 (Apr/May 91).

 Newsletter of St. Louis SF
 Society, PO Box 1059, St. Louis,
 MO 63188. Ed: Kay Goode. Many
 reduced reproductions of con
 flyers.
- Neophyte #3(May-Jun 91) & #4(Jul-Aug 91). 769 Bret Drive, Denham Springs, LA 70726. Ed: Jeff Behrnes. Genzine for writers especially of short stories.
- OPUNTIA #1 (Mar 91). Box 6830, Calgary, Alberta, Canada, T2P 2E7. Ed: Dale Speirs. Commentary on Canadian SF & speculative fact articles. Unusual format: booklet size, small print double column, pages arranged like a calender.
- OSFS STATEMENT #166 (Apr 91) & #168 (Jun 91). Ottawa SF Society, Box 6636 Stn J, Ottawa, ONT, K2A 3Y7. Ed: Lionel Wagner, 17-368 Zephyr Ave., Ottawa, Ont., K2B 6A1.
- Penguin Dip #44 (May 91), #45 (Jun 91), & #46 (Jul 91). Ed: Stephen H. Dorneman, 94 Eastern Ave. #1, Malden, MA 02148. SF, gaming, & Diplomacy.
- Resnick at Zenith #1. Ed: Doug Roemer, 674 Newbridge Ct., Arnold, MD 21012. Very downbeat graphic story called "The Destroyers". Unusually bound transparent covering with spine slide.
- ROBOTS AND ROADRUNNERS v6#1 (Mar 91). Ursa Major, PO Box 691448, San Antonio, TX 78269-1448. Ed: Lynn Garcia.
- THE TEXAS SF INQUIERER #38 (Apr 91). Fandom Association of Central Texas, PO Box 9612, Austin, TX 78766. Fanzine correspondence to Eds: Alexander R. Slate, 1847 Babcock #406, San Antonio, TX 78229 or Dale Denton, 2016 Ravinia Circle, Arlington, TX 76012.



Harry Warner, Jr 423 Summit Ave Haggerstown, MD 21740 July 9, 1991

Dear Don & Fran,

Your first Shuttle is at hand. You ask what I'd like to see in future issues and my answer is: more of the splendidly large and clear typeface you utilized in the July issue. It flows so fluently through the eyeballs, straight to the reading center in the ruins of my intellect. No squinting, no magnifying glass necessary, just the thing for any fan with less than 20/20 vision.

I'm glad your club has sent good wishes to Walt Willis. He will probably be overwhelmed with messages from fans, now that news of his illness is in print, so don't be disappointed if you don't receive an acknowledgment for a while, at least. I've still not caught up from how far behind I fell in writing letters during a couple of months of inactivity while recuperating from a broken hip in 1961.

Meanwhile, Sheryl's concern for me is mostly unneeded. The only problem is the fact that I'm gradually melting down to a noisome grease spot because of the abnormally hot summer and the non-airconditioned status of my home. The inside temperature got over 90 degrees 10 days ago and it seems to be heating up toward those regions again. I try not to get stains on my locs.

A vampire who was sired by Henry VIII is a different sort vampire, no doubt about it. wouldn't need to worry much about what sunlight does to vampires, because it rains almost all the time in England. However, I still haven't found the vampire novel I'm looking for. This will be a book whose vampire hero is an angry young man who rebels against all the standards and customs of other vampires, refuses to adopt the same diet as other vampires even though it threatens to ruin his health, stays up all day and all night just to be sleeps rebellious, and insists on carrying a cross around constantly in spite of the extreme physical Just think discomfort. of the tension this will create between the dauntless young hero vampire and his stodgy elders.

It's an excellent first issue under the new editorship. I trust there will be an interminable quantity of successors to the good beginning.

Teddy Harvia P. O. Box 905 Evless, TX 76039 July 6

Dear New Editors -

My comments gave Sheryl Birkhead an idea for a fillo? Oh, no, my comments were never meant to be illustrated! The imagination runs wilder without pictures.

Francine, allright, another expatriot Tulsa fan. OKon l was one of my first cons. I still have my badge with my single digit membership number on it.



SAMURAI LOST by Clifford W.Dunbar

I was bigger than my enemy and did not fear him. He had been foolhardy enough to follow me to 17th century Japan, where I am In my element. He deserved to die.

"Enemy at seven o'clock," the audiosensor said into my implant, "about 50 meters off and moving slowly."

l tethered my horse, a beast genetically engineered for strength and stability. I was not inclined to be stalked any longer. The infrared signature of my adversary stood out clearly in the forest's thickening I had encountered this shadows. man Roberts before, in another place, another time. He was a Now he had the bounty hunter. impudence to come here, where it all I moved to confront him, began. distorting electrically my infrared emissions so that he would see only an amorphous blob coming his way. The cloud-covered moon and stars would not help him much.

A crude laugh sounded in my ears. "You're wasting your energy with the distorters, Oshima. You orbitals and your hi-tech. A good tracker doesn't worry about infrareds."

I rested my hand on the hilt of my sword as I approached him.

"Second enemy presence at six o'clock. Thirty meters off, unmoving now."

I paid attention to the audiosensor but kept my eyes on Roberts. His hands were empty, but I did not believe him to be unarmed. Nor was he dressed in the clothing of the era, a sure sign that he did not intend to stay long.

"You're on Earth, Oshima. No trespassing allowed."

Let him talk. In this time period, he

was the trespasser. Foreigners were outlawed under the Tokugawa shogunate.

"Multiple enemy presence, circular formation, 31-33 meters."

A large party then. The situation had quickly become serious.

The sword and the chrysanthemum. Outwardly, I appeared a chrysanthemum, calm and tranquil. Inwardly I was a sword ready to strike.

Surrounded and outnumbered, I felt the first faint twinge of fear threatening my perceptions. Angrily, I brushed it away. Quickly I became a chrysanthemum inside.

And a sword outside. I leaped and drew my blade and attacked in one swift movement, a practiced *iaido* stroke that would have killed if it had connected.

It was stopped by the bounty hunter's force shield. But the sword, made of orbital alloys, had a force shield of its own. I had adjusted its cutting edge to extend half a meter beyond its visible edge. It caught Roberts by surprise, the powerful blow slamming him unconscious to the ground. My blade hummed as it sought the frequency of the man's field automatically adjusting itself for dampening and penetration.

"Multiple enemy closing in."

I had now time for the killing stroke.

circle of drawn handlasers surrounded me, their tips glowing in activated readiness. My weapons were more subtle, intended without betraying their non-contemporary origin. The shapes of my enemies shone clearly Perhaps in the infrared spectrum. they expected me to hesitate.

I made eye contact with the closest and rushed him. The fools! All their force shields were set to the same frequency! The unfortunate man lost his head as my blade whipped through his neck.

Another man raised his laser and lost his hand at the wrist. He screamed and collapsed, useless.

A blast of heat seared past my ear but I was not an easy target. I wove in and out of the circle of attackers, drawing their blood and letting them fire at each other.

Suddenly the cold mechanical Q-transport came of the voice through my implant, slicing into my gut like samurai steel: "Position compromised."

With the Q-transport compromised, I would never be able to navigate the probability trail out of the Edo period.

red." the said "Condition Q-transport.

My left shoulder flared with heat. I had let myself be distracted. own force shield was no protection Nor was the against laserfire. colorful armor I wore.

"Roberts regaining consciousness," the audiosensor dutifully informed me. His groans wafted my way as I lopped off another head.

Suddenly I found myself alone in the dark clearing, the spilled blood around me still softly glowing in the infrared. The enemy wisely backed off, finding it to their advantage to move outside the range of my sword.

Lasers leveled, they looked to me like a firing squad. I was tempted to rush them again but they were not

close enough together. I shifted my sword in my hand,

groping for the switch that would release the poison-tipped darts that would home in on their body heat and dissolve without a trace in their bloodstreams.

A quick movement from Roberts and my hands were scorched. Still I did not drop my weapon.

"You're finished, Oshima!"

I deflected his next blast with my polished blade.

"We've gotten past your vehicle's defenses."

"Condition red condition red condition red." the mechanical voice of my transport calmly repeated to me.

Slowly." "Take him apart, boys. The bounty hunter grinned. His lips glowed in the infrared, standing out against the darkness of his beard where it hid the heat emissions. don't need you alive to collect my reward, Oshima. I don't even need The wreckage of your your body. transport will be enough." His grin disappeared. "You can rot here, you blood-sucking orbital."

The heat seared into me from many Amidst the flaming directions. brilliance, everything went black.

I awoke to the sound of a mother scolding her children. Peasants. terrifled of a samurai and his powerful sword. Gracious of Roberts to have left it. Or perhaps he knew about the booby traps.

"Native presence, close range."

The sensor could be a nuisance at I tongued the switch in my times. mouth to shut it off. At the same time I clicked off my infrared vision; it could be a distraction in the daylight.

A slight movement within my а supply brought A samurai endorphins to my lips. never shows pain.

With difficulty I raised my head. My horse still lived. Then Roberts had not known he was irreplaceable to me.

"Get this off me," I croaked. The woman was suddenly silent. My armor was scorched in a dozen places. The tiny scales of lacquered

iron were still warm to the touch. Whatever color they had once had was now meaningless. My body was in even worse shape. Skin clung to my linen underpants as the woman peeled them from me. Blood ran freely down my sides.

The woman gasped and bowed her head.

"Send the children for water," I ordered through a parched throat. The children, a boy and a girl, left without waiting for their mother's instructions. I had no doubt the whole village would know of my predicament within minutes.

The woman remained kneeling, eyes fixed on the ground beside me. "I was struck by lightning," I told her, though there had been no storm. The loss of blood was making me dizzy. I searched for some way to distract her. A vial of healant was concealed within my upper armor. It was vital that I get to it as soon as possible.

"See what's keeping the children!" I demanded, and she fled.

With stiff limbs I groped through the armor for the spray. I covered my whole body with it. I returned the remainder to its hiding place.

"Quantum transport, state your condition," I said out loud. Silence. I did not try again. If the main computer still functioned, It would have answered me. My next move would be a personal inspection to see what, if anything, had been left behind.

But not yet.

The soft grass rubbed my skin like an abrasive cleanser. I contemplated the sky, the site of my future birth. Trapped in the land of my ancestors, I wondered if I would ever see my wife and two children again. Five hundred years from now my people would evoke the jealousy

of their military-minded neighbors with their technological creativity and ingenious management skills. Our orbital factories would be staffed by the brightest minds and the most tireless workers. Finally, Earth would have no more of us. The prejudiced leaders of the dirtborn would exile all Japanese from their planet forever.

Now they struck even at our past.

The time period in which I was trapped was most crucial. world's first robots were under construction scant kilometers from where I lay. Twenty centimeters tall, powered by whalebone springs and dressed in boys' kimono, carried tea to guests, bowed, and returned to their places, in two the heirs of the centuries, robot-makers would be asked to take apart the machinery of the west, rebuild it, and improve upon it.

The probability computers had pinpointed these four years as the most critical. I was to bodyguard these early robot engineers for that time. Now, Roberts had seen to it that I would remain here. My superiors, distracted by attacks on other fronts and nervous about the consequences of interference in this time zone, would never risk another jump into this era. There would be no rescue.

I would never see my homeland again.

Lying injured, dirtbound, trapped in a time five centuries before my birth, I considered my mission. By the time the villagers returned with food and water, I had a different idea, I would not be spending the rest of my life in this century. In fact, I would never arrive here at all.

I walked onto the ground of Trinity College with my sword drawn and ready. Cambridge was a long way from Edo; it had taken me years to Along the way I had get here. the great destroved most of universities of the Middle East and Europe. Countless scholars had died blade; their most beneath mv promising students had died at their of the world's Dozens sides. greatest libraries lay smoking in my path, their charred ruins useless to I had laid waste to the any one. greatest storehouses of knowledge known in this century.

And still I remained trapped in this barbaric time period. I had failed to destroy the mathematics which ultimately led to quantum theory. Until I obliterated all hope of quantum travel in the 21st century, many more great intellects would perish beneath my blade. Nothing in this age could stop me. Half the armies of Europe had fought me; my steed, sword, sensors, and force shield had made a mockery of their efforts.

If I recalled correctly, Isaac Newton was still an undergraduate at this time. I hoped I was not too late.

But there was a war on, and no time or resources could be spared to develop the technology to access the nexus. I alone was sent to hold this place against enemy attack. Nevertheless, my defensive firepower was great, for any call for help would take centuries to reach the nearest Nihon fighter.

"Your precautions are useless, Oshima." The bounty hunter mocked me. I had fired a stream of plasma missiles in his direction, but he had managed to decoy them away.

I readied myself for another attack on his fleet, but I knew I was hopelessly outnumbered and outweaponed. The Kamakura battle computers had dismissed an attack of this size as wildly improbable, but here it was.

An alarm rang inside my head, signaling that the installation's defenses had been breeched. Blasts of fire approached me from the sky. They struck, and the installation caved in around me, fiery walls scorching my skin as I fled outside.

"You're trapped, Oshima!" Roberts gloated into my radio implant. "A prisoner for life on this nowere rockball!"

I reached the outside and lay, gasping, on matted grasses. I had managed to grab a medical kit as I escaped; the spray salve it contained would help to heal the burns.

"The war is going badly for both sides, Oshima. Don't expect it to end in our lifetime. You'll have no rescue. Say goodbye to me, the last human you will ever know!"

Now there was only silence from my implant.

I would never see my family again. I lay back on the soft grass, cursing the physics that made faster-than-light travel possible...



Chuck & Fran's Travelling Filk Show

Chuck and I made our veariv Tulsa. pilarimaae OKon at to Oklahoma the last weekend of July. Chuck traditionally works Security and I help out at the Art Show. GoH this year was Jo Clayton, AGoH was Lucy Synk (who did a great job in stint auctioneer). as FanGoH was Muff Musgrave (Real sported a badge that said "Muff's Husband") and FilkGoHs were Barry & Sally Childs-Helton. If you get a chance to see them, don't miss it. They put on one heckuva show. Barry sings and plays guitar and Sally plays a multitude of percussion instruments. Their material witty singable. refreshing, and Toastmaster was ably performed by Warren Norwood, looking in the best of health, and jamming with the filkers on his dulcimer (bet you didn't know he could play). I also got to meet Special Guest, George Alec Effinger. George is still a bit frail from surgery, but stayed off his medication in order to be coherent at his panels. He was most helpful with ideas for new writers in one of the panels I attended.

No "Smoke"ing was the word Friday night (actually about 1:30 Saturday Some dummy left a morning). smoke-bomb in one of the Gaming Rooms and succeeding in clearing out two floors of the hotel (including some families not attending our con). The mood was ugly the next day: if the guilty party been found there would have been an old-fashioned Chuck says that there lvnching. were gamers still playing in the smoke-filled room as they were clearing the floor, one claiming extra points for obstructed vision. Nothing interrupts the gamers. The rest of the weekend was uneventful.

The Dealer's Room was large, with a variety of merchandise on sale. There were dealers of books, comics, videos, jewelry, art, t-shirts, buttons, weapons, even three filk dealers. Something for everyone (I bought a Bodhran - anyone know what that is? "chuckle, chuckle").

The art show grossed enough to give \$2000.00 to this year's charity (Community Aid,inc), and other collections should bring it even higher. OKon has given several thousands of dollars to various charities in the past fifteen years, but it appears that will be coming to a halt.

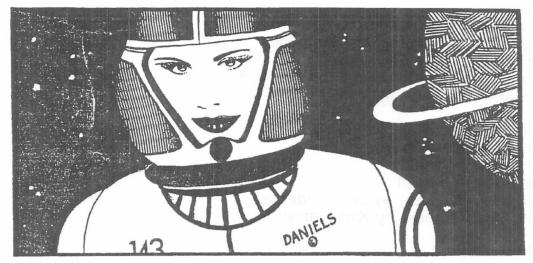
Sadly, next year will be the last OKon. Tom & Mary are ready to give it up and do something else with their vacations (you mean there are things to do outside fandom?) and noone else has picked up the ball. Chuck and I were married at the OKon masquerade four years ago and celebrate our anniversary there. Now we'll have to find another way (Key West, anyone?).

All in all, we had a great time, saw lots of old friends and lost a lot of sleep (sleep, what's that???). At least there's still one more to go.

I took some extra time off to visit my daughter (and acquire a sunburn) the week before OKon. Tisha will be attending the Univ. of New Mexico this fall. She attended Ghost Ranch while we were at OKon, so I didn't want to miss her. Kids sure grow up fast, don't they (you'll find out soon enough, Gerry)!

TROPICON X

the South Florida Science Fiction Convention



Guests will be dropping in from all over the galaxy To celebrate ten years of Tropkon with

Guest Of Honor

ANDRE NORTON

December 6 – 8, 1991

To ensure an appropriate celebration many previous Guests Of Honor are returning for the festivities including:

Lynn Abbey

Forrest J Ackerman Marion Zimmer Bradley Poul Anderson

Hal Clement

Vincent Di Fate

Lee Hoffman

Special Filk Guest: Kathy Mar

Ginger Curry Joseph Green

Garu Alan Ruse Rick Wilber

and Filmmakers:

Alison Drake

Jack C. Haldeman II

Dana Reed

Charles L Fontenau Rob MacGregor

Gary Roen

Prudence Foster T. J. MacGregor Jeanette Spencer

Sid Pink

Herschell Gordon Lewis Ken Mitchroneu There will be the normal programs, films & video, Dealers' Room, our fabulous Art Show, filking, Masquerade and a special banquet honoring our guest, Andre Norton.

Membership:

\$18 until Julu 31, 1991

\$21 until Nov. 1, 1991

Hotel: Fort Lauderdale Airport Hilton Griffin Road & 1-95

Rates: \$61 Single, \$71 Double Call (305) 920- 3300

Make checks payable to: South Florida Science Fiction Society

To register or for more information, write Tropicon X, do SFSFS, P.O. Box 70143, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33307-0143

1991 HUGO NOMINEES

Best Novel
Earth by David Brin
The Fall of Hyperion by Dan Simmons
Queen of Angels by Greg Bear
The Quiet Pools by Michael Kube-McDowell
The Vor Game by Lois McMaster Bujold

Best Novella

"Bones" by Pat Murphy
"Bully!" by Mike Resnick
"Fool to Believe" by Pat Cadigan
"The Hemingway Hoax" by Joe Haldeman
"A Short, Sharp Shock" by Kim Stanley Robinson

Best Novelette

"A Braver Thing" by Charles Sheffield IASFM, Feb 1990
"The Coon Rolled Down and Ruptured His Larinks, A Squeezed Novel by Mr.
Skunk" by Dafydd ab Hugh IASFM Aug 1990
"The Manamouki" by Mike Resnick IASFM Jul 1990
"Over the Long Haui" by Martha Soukup Amazing Mar 1990
"Tower of Babylon" by Ted Chiang Omni Nov 1990

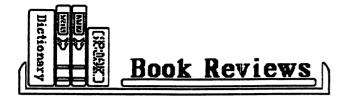
Best Short Story

"Bears Discover Fire" by Terry Bisson IASFM Jul 1990
"Cibola" by Connie Willis IASFM Dec 1990
"Godspeed" by Charles Sheffield Analog Jul 1990
"The Utility Man" by Robert Reed IASFM Nov 1990
"VRM-547" by W. R. Thompson Analog Feb 1990

Bury My Heart at W. H. Smith's by Brian Aldiss
Hollywood Gothic by David J. Skal
How to Write Science Fiction and Fantasy by Orson Scott Card
Science Fiction in the Real World by Norman Spinrad
SFWA Handbook edited by Kristine Kathryn Rusch & Dean Smith

Best Dramatic Presentation
Back to the Future III
Edward Scissorhands
Ghost
Total Recall
Witches

This is a partial list so you can be prepared for the next meeting. The books can be had at our advertisers stores. Most of the movies are available at your local video store for sale or rent.



DRACULA'S BROOD edited by Richard Dalby Equation Publishing(UK), 1989, 353 pp., \$6.00

A book of horror stories usually exists for the pure joy of reading. DRACULA'S BROOD, а collection selected by Richard Dalby, is a montage of vampire tales written in Victorian /Edwardian England that not only satifies the prime directive, but seconds as a great historical source book. The unifying theme (for marketing purposes) is based on the vaporous premise that these "...twenty-three stories were written by friends contemporaries of Bram Stroker..." The marketing director also invodes the names of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, Algernon Blackwood, and M. R. James. There is no need for this hoopla.

DRACULA'S BROOD is a delightful romp through the long gone. will discover the mega-syllobic H. B. Marriot Watson of ("The Stone Chamber"). None of his characters simply wash their hands: they "perform the proper ablutions". Mary E. Braddon ("Good Lady Ducayne") exercises venerable technique of a woman writing from a man's point of view. You will meet, them, Hume Nesbit ("The Vampire Maid"), Violet Paget ("Marsyras in Flanders"), and Sabine ("A Dead Finger"), Baring-Gould who were as far ahead of their time as Mark Twain and Ernest Hemingway.

Keep your eye out for some "The Living original ideas. Stone", for example, by E. R. Punshon: a sacrificial takes on a life of its own after generations of being laved blood. After all, ...The blood is the life." Ulric Duberry, in "The Sumac", creates a fangthorned bush that gorges on the blood of its owners. In compiling this collection, editor Dalby used very broad marker to define vampirism.

Best of Show: "The Feather Pillow", by the Argentine Horacio Quiraga. Read this and for all future times you will check your pillow before laying your head down. And even then.... It is from tales like this that phobias are made.

DRACULA'S BROOD is good. Well worth your while. It is, in fact, better than it is touted, being both horror and time travel rolled into one.

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THE VOR GAME
by Lois Mcmaster Bujold
Baen Books, 1990, 345pp., \$4.50

THE VOR GAME continues the deeds of Miles Vorkosigan begun in THE WARRIOR'S APPRENTICE. I can't decide which I like the better. Lois Bujold has a gift for putting Miles in some complicated plight with no apparent escape and then letting him work his way out with minimum Deus Ex Author.

Miles has just graduated from Barrayar military acadamy. He is posted to the remotest of Arctic infantry bases to test his self-discipline while waiting for a ship assignment. However, there is nothing at all routine about his stint as base weather officer. Miles uses his birth to protect soldiers against a sadistic commander and gets sent secret mission out-system till the affair blows over. He lands in the middle of a four-or-five-way interstellor crisis with the Free Dendarii Mercenaries mixed in. And to thicken the plot even more, he has to safeguard the Barrayar emperor Gregor. Miles and Gregor being tossed in the same lockup is a bit of coincidence that should have been written around, but otherwise the plot twists seem to flow fairly naturally.

My idea of a good book is one with interesting characters doing memorable deeds leading to a satisfying conclusion. THE VOR GAME qualifies nicely.

- Don Cochran

REIGN by Chet Williamson Dark Harvest, 1990, \$20.95

After Stephen King's THE DARK HALF and "Secret Window, Secret Garden" (far and away the better

of the two) in FOUR PAST MIDNIGHT, you'd think a moratorium would be declared on the return of the doppelganger in horror stories. Chet Williamson obviously thought otherwise and, to his credit, has created one of the better tales of this sub-genre since Poe's "William Wilson".

In REIGN, actor Dennis Hamilton decided to bring down the has curtain on a very lucretative and long-running career of protraying the Emperor in the romantic musical A PRIVATE EMPIRE (imagine Yul Brynner & THE KING AND I) and devote his time, money, and guidance to assist in creating & staging new American comedies. His forum to showcase these comedies is the venerable Venetian Theater, a 75-year-old city-block-long complex built by "philanthropist, humanitarian, quack" David Kirk as a monument to his wealth in tiny Kirkland, Penn.

Like all old theaters, the Venetian has it's "ghosts". Now the "Emperor" has manifested itself (in "scenes" written in script format - complete with stage directions) and is feeding on the Venetian's "psychic residue" as well as Hamilton's diminishing sense of self. His reign of terror commences when he decapitates a stagehand by dropping a 5-ton fire curtain.

Unless Hamilton, a man described by his acting mentor as "the most consistent mask wearer I know.", can re-discover his own identity, he will be destroyed by a character he has spent 30 years creating.

Williamson has complemented the battle between Hamilton and the Emperor with a fascinating cast of theater characters. The only false note among them is Hamilton's rather two dimensional wife, who is easily manipulated and dispatched by the Emperor rather early on in the proceedings. Her death serves as a contrivance that allows Hamilton to re-kindle a romance with a love he lost early on in his career.

character The most fascinating to be the in REIGN would have Venetian Theater itself. It was shock to hear that this no great of Thespis baroque temple based theater where onhad himself performed. Williamson He describes her with the loving admiration of a priest for a grand cathedral.

"Four Ghosts in Hamlet", In the Fritz Leiber (no slouch actor himself) writes know, the science fiction writers are missing a bet there. time machines right Theaters time Theater. are machines and spaceships too. take people on trips through the and the past and future might-have-been elsewhere and yes, and if it's done well enough, give them glimpses of Heaven and it's intriquing Hell." From to it's triumphant grand prologue "theater finale. REIGN is experience" well worth the price of admission and a treat of the finest connoisseurs Dark Fantasy.

- Gerry Adair

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AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

3 Clifford Simak 1904 5 Neil Armstrong 1930

6 Piers Anthony 1934

11 Alan E. Norse 1928

15 Bjo Trimble 1933

16 Hugo Gernsback 1884 Stuart Allen Roosa 1933

18 Brian Aldiss 1925

20 Howard Phillips Lovecraft 1890

21 Anthony Boucher 1911 Miriam Allen DeFord 1888 Gene Roddenberry 1921

22 Ray Bradbury 1920 Gerald Paul Carr 1932

24 Stanton Coblentz 1896 Gregory Bruce Jarvis 1944

26 Frank Kelly Freas 1922

28 Jack Vance

Aug 29-Sept 2, 1991 Chicon V
49th World SF Convention
Oct 11-13, 1991 Necronomicon
Tampa, FL
Nov 8-10, 1991 Con*stellation
Huntsville, AL
Dec 6-8, 1991 Tropicon
Ft Lauderdale, FL
Feb 14-16, Boskone 29
Springfield, MA
Mar 13 - 15, 1992 Crackercon
Jacksonville
Sept 3-7, 1992 MagiCon
50th World SF Convention Orlando

Sept 2-6, 1993 ConFrancisco

51st Wrold SF Convention





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