

**SLOW DJINN #77**

August 1992

**Dave Locke**

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In space and time it's Cincinnati and it's the middle of July, and everything including me is very warm and damp. This is not unexpected to anyone familiar with the area and the time. Fortunately, some very decent weather held court during Midwestcon last month, which was a joyous surprise because once again the convention was held at the Norwood Quality Inn with its outdoor socializing area. And that went far toward making it one of the better Midwestcons I've attended (the 13<sup>th</sup>). The other factors were as usual, including the number of people there who I wanted to talk with, and the number of those I actually managed to get together with. Did well on those scores. And it was great seeing so many of you again.

The second week of next month, right after this FLAP mailing, I'm flying out to visit my son and his family in Bennington, Vermont. The airline price wars got to the point where I couldn't afford to drive. Broke my heart having to trade four days on the road for four hours in the air. Now I get two additional days in Vermont, and also two days at home to get acclimated before having to go back to work. Hard to take.

There is one disappointment about flying, though. I won't get to spend time with fans Alice and Frank Morigi in Syracuse, which would definitely have happened had the great metal birds not lowered their rates. Now, that I'll miss. Alice, you guys raise a toast toward the ceiling about 9:30 pm on Friday the 7<sup>th</sup>, and I'll see what I can do about getting the pilot to tip a wing.

In October will come Octocon, with the good news that David and Marcia Hulan plan to attend. This will be their second Octocon, and we had a good old romp the first time around. We'll have to have a FLAP party. This time I get to set the time for it to start...

Our cat Scamper, or Scamp as we wound up calling her, began getting yancy around visiting dignitaries of the fannish persuasion. When company left, she'd settle down. Should have done the deed then, but I turned soft-hearted (hard to believe, I know) and didn't. Then I got awoken at 3:00 in the morning by Jackie hollering at me from the living room. The cat was attacking her whenever she moved. When I showed, it simmered down. Went back to bed. Deja vu. Grabbed the cat, stuffed it in the cat carrier, threw on my pants and a shirt, and took it to the local 24-hour vet. The city of Silverton frowns on discharging firearms at animals in the middle of the night or I might have gotten away cheaper, if I had owned a gun. And, no, we're not planning to get another pet. Amazing the things we can do now that we don't have to take a cat into consideration. "We can put that collated stack of pages over by the coffee table until after the deadline tomorrow," and "Go ahead, let the handset cord hang from the shelf; neither of us will chew through it while the other isn't looking," and "Hey, I can set these pills out on the table while I'm thinking about it, and I bet they'll still be right there in the morning when I need to take them!" and stuff like that. Having A Cat (or vice-versa) was nice, but now we'll enjoy No Cat for a while.

One-Sheet Wonder [FLAP #76 00]

Welcome back, Jackie Causgrove.

**Roy Tackett**

Watched a bit on 60 MINUTES on how we are three times more likely than the French to have heart attacks, and yet they're the ones who reallyreallyreally eat all the stuff that's bad for your heart. The working theory is that we drink too much milk (cheese is okay, milk is no good) and they put away at least two glasses of wine with their meals (wine apparently will unclog the arteries with a 15% efficiency). Made me think of that special I watched a couple of decades back about a branch of the Russian Steppa People. Some of them were 140/150 years old and loved to dance and kick up their heels. They smoked long, black el-ropo cigars and drank copiously from their vodka bottles.

#### Arthur Hlavaty

Amusing. Concerning the interim between now and the election we can be assured that gamesmanship will be all over the place, and if George can whip something up internationally it almost certainly would help him and he almost certainly would be staring temptation in the face. I'm having a very hard time coming up with a motivation to vote. I need someone to vote for (and there isn't anyone among the three who are really in the running), or I need someone to vote against (which is a problem: I'm against all three of them). Shall I throw away my vote on someone who isn't running, or write in the name of someone who either wouldn't take the job or couldn't possibly get enough votes to win it? Is that really better than not voting, or is it worse because of adding futility to an already sad equation? At the moment my tendency is to believe it's better for me to stay home and watch flies fuck.

#### Dean Grennell

All right, so why did you go to Salt Lake City? Just to see if you could still float there?

I've had enormous-mileage all-day just-keep-rolling auto trips like that, but I wouldn't do them at this late date. Back the last time I said "never again," and I was a whole bunch younger at the time. Matter transmitters. I think matter transmitters would be the answer.

#### Lynn Hickman

I already have an anti-talk shield, and it works more effectively as I get older. I call it Progressive Hearing Degeneration. I use an infrared wireless stereo headset to listen to television, for example, as opposed to cranking up the television volume until it blows Jackie out of the living room. I am absolutely incapable of understanding speech if more than one person is talking to me, or if the tv is on and someone is talking to me. The noises blurge together. The headset is a real boon: it wires me directly into what I want to hear, does so in stereo, and screens out other sounds, plus I can move about and still hear a broadcast so long as I stay within line-of-sight of the base unit. Now all I need is a remote control unit for people, so for example I can mute Bob and Carol and Ted while Alice is talking.

Refresh my memory about Dogshit Blues. You want it on VHS or on audiotape? I can dub it for you either way.

Jackie and I did serious damage to the raw bar at Dockside VI, three days running. Two days I sat in the restaurant and worked it for appetizers. One day I sat in the raw bar itself and shovelled it in. You're right: half of the oysters didn't work. Probably the ones with the sand inside.

See you at Octocon. Remember, lunch is on me this time.

#### Eric Lindsay

For some reason I missed getting in on the discussion of fanzines I really miss.

Cagle's KWALHIOQUA, Canfield's WASTE PAPER, David Hulan's LOKI, Jackie's DILEMMA and RESOLUTION, Gorman's CILN, Lon Atkins' MEL, Dean's GRUE, the Coulson's YANDRO, Bergeron's WARHOON. Probably the zine I miss the most is the one I coedited with Ed Cagle: SHAMBLES.

Anything fun or tasty must be given up immediately so that you will be healthier when you meet up with someone who displays an interest in clock towers and deer rifles. This is the rule.

**Mike Shoemaker** (postmailing)

There you are.

Shapes. I can't for the life of me make out people and animals from the constellations. The Big Dipper and the Little Dipper are the only constellations that make any visual sense to me. I think most of our early constellation-namers had discovered hump earlier than modern archeology would allow.

Come to think of it, I used to grip the steering wheel a lot harder when driving on water or ice, too. I'm sure that didn't help a damn bit. Hurt some, too.

**Bill Bowers**

I think the FLAP deadlines are more regular than my phone calls, Bill. I'm not certain that, all personal calls taken together, I make more than one call every two months. Maybe on some bi-months, but probably zero on others. When you talk on the horn all day long for a living, phoning doesn't become an action to initiate for the fun of it. We can discuss this in greater detail later. You can send me a fax.

"So, now it is that I work. It's not all that I do. I'd like to think."

Keeping working at that. Read the great philosophers.

I'll cross my fingers for you on your August 7<sup>th</sup> court date.

**Dave Wixon**

Hey, talking about winter is just fine. Looking out at it from a comfortable position is likewise. I just don't wanna be up to my ass in it or use it as a setting for dodge-um bumper cars. Besides, tennis is too difficult in snowshoes.

I remember one morning in Indian Lake, New York, when I woke up and showered and had coffee and got dressed for a work assignment and bundled up with boots and a sweater and a heavy jacket and heavy gloves. Opened the front door to leave the house and encountered nothing but a sheer wall of snow that had drifted in up to roof level. Stared at it for a minute, shut the door, and left a trail of boots and clothes and winterwear between the door and the bed I crawled back into.

So, with the squirrel bit you figure that I just gave in to an out of character good guy's natural instinct to help out the small and weak? Or maybe it was just that I like squirrels and don't much care for dogs. Then, too, I had this dent on the driver's door and might just have been trying to pound it out.

**Bob Tucker**

So that's the story about the great Chicago flood. Figures. We should have used bureaucrats to plug the hole.

Interlinos. Christ, I published a million of them in AWRY, most by Cagle and Grennall and myself. Used to use them at the top of most every page, and the biggest problem with that was not having enough interlinos. The second biggest problem was in creating them when the larder was empty.

I don't think the kangaroos would have needed weapons to fight the Japanese. Kick them, stuff them in their pouches, and bring them back as prisoners of war, where they would be taught english and exported to the U.S.A. to teach idiot Americans how to program their cars.

**Lon Atkins**



Someone in another apa criticized you for "expressing opinions" about the writing in the books you chose to review? What sort of strange people do they have over there in SFPA these days, Lon?

I've read Ross Thomas, but found him a little too dispassionate with his lead character. "Ageless" and "close-mouthed" describes the lead character in OUT ON THE RIM, too. Joe Gores has lead characters who are much the same, but his stories are more interesting and compensate better.

The book at hand is Grafton's "I" IS FOR INNOCENT (courtesy of a volunteered and unsolicited loan from Mr. Bowers), so your review was interesting. I'm only on page 36, with two impressions so far. The novel is better than "H" IS FOR HOMICIDE, but then any Robert Moore Williams novel would be better than that one. The story is interesting enough, but the actual writing quality is the poorest I've seen from her in the entire series. I gather from your review that it gets much better from here...

Highly recommended is the latest Joe Wambaugh novel, FUGITIVE NIGHTS. He outdoes the female writers at creating a female detective, does snappy dialog without letting it take over the story like Robert B. Parker does, makes every supporting character as alive and as quirky as anything by Hiasen, and the story itself is a real charmer. Strap yourself to your chair when you get to the golf tournament scene near the end, or you might fall off and break something. Best book I've read since Hiasen's SKIN TIGHT, and in the interim I've read such goodies as Burke's BLACK CHERRY BLUES, Lutz's FLAME, MacDonald's THE EXECUTIONERS, Parker's DOUBLE DEUCE, five "Richard Stark" novels (received from some used bookstore hound on the West Coast, as I recall), Campbell's SWEET LA-LA LAND, Shackley's LIVE GOLD (which was second best amongst this group of mysteries), and Hiasen's other three novels.

#### Danny MacCallum

Blue corn tortillas. Had one the other day. First time I'd encountered such a thing. Looked exactly like the matting you put on the floor before laying the carpet down. Fortunately it tasted just like a tortilla chip. Personally I like the white corn restaurant style; doesn't visually fake me out before I can get it into my mouth.

I remember, in grade school, having trouble distinguishing between stalactite and stalagmite. "C" for ceiling and "g" for ground sounds simpler than the way I learned. I remember my father saying a stalagmite might have been a stalactite had the calcium-laden water not clung tight to the ceiling. Cumbersome, but it worked...

#### Roger Sims

FLAPans will do. Or, as Roy coined it, Flep.

I once discovered the "Near Perfect Margarita" during an extensive testing session back in the early to mid 70s. My family was gone for the weekend so I got out all the glasses and cups and jam jars and lined them up on the kitchen table and around the countertops and out into the living room on top of anything with a flat and level surface. I then took a jumbo note pad and dashed off a million versions of the basic ingredients. After all, you use lime or you use lemon, and the only other difference is one of proportion. I set these numbered slips of paper in front of each glass/cup/jam jar, salted the rims of everything, and began mixing. The final touch was a big container of crushed ice to add to each glass as I went along. The upshot, when I woke up late Sunday night, was an asterisk pencilled in on one of the recipes. A later resurrection of this recipe was disappointing, but a closer look at the problem disclosed that my memory had merely transposed numbers. Upon resurrecting the correct superlative recipe when company was over, it was granted that the Near Perfect Margarita was done as follows:

1½ Tequila  
1 Triple Sec  
5½ Lemon  
1¼ Lime

I never did find the Perfect Margarita, but I did finally give up looking for it.

Well, my car blew up. Your advice to paint a five pointed star on the door came too late. Thanks anyway. These days I go to the park only during rainy weather and cold days, to avoid the hordes of fair-weather animal walkers and ghetto blaster enthusiasts. Right now, in summertime, the park is only a noontime parking lot. Bumper-to-bumper. I usually wind up at Frischs with a window seat and book on the table next to me, or at Gold Star Chile in Mt. Adams with exactly the same setup. Or Curry and I go to the Mount Adams Bar & Grill on a Monday for their Italian Wedding Soup (lovely stuff; neither of us have ever encountered it anywhere else).

The "BillTalk" segment of the Octocon/Ditto information is the damndest thing I've read in a fanzine in a long time. What with his asthma difficulties, you wouldn't think that Bill would be able to smoke that much hemp. I think you should perform a power takeover, Roger, and write all future promo pieces for this upcoming convention...

#### David Hulan

Christ, another person on beta blockers. I think this is a plot by the medical establishment to turn all their patients into walking vegetables (he said, popping another beta blocker because it's that time of day). Glad to hear the heartbeat problem didn't amount to anything.

No particular comments this time, but things seem to be going reasonably well for you both from the sound of it. Keep rolling that way.

#### BeeDee Arthurs

They don't charge anywhere near that much for such an E.R. visit out here. Paying two hundred bucks for a suture kit alone is the equivalent of the government's five hundred buck toilet seat. And they wonder why people want the government to step in and take over the health care industry. The insurance companies and the HMOs throw more paperwork at the doctors and try to roadblock them against using updated technology, and the doctors have to hire more people and charge more to make the same profits, and this game of tennis gets played until hardly anyone can afford health plan premiums. Nationalized health care has its problems, but it works better than our system.

I'm still reading O'Rourke's PARLIAMENT OF WHORES, and doubt I'll buy another of his books. He's alright in small doses, but he's a nasty son of a bitch and just a bit too cutting for my taste. On the other hand, I loved Molly Ivins' MOLLY IVINS' CAN'T SAY THAT, CAN SHE? Real style and wit and humor, and she can get away with saying even worse things than O'Rourke...

Space Mountain. That's that roller coaster ride in a dark closet.

#### Jodie Offutt

No specific comments on your touch-base zine, but enjoyed the four of us having dinner at Dockside 6 Saturday night of Midwestcon. Actually, I've gotten to the point where I enjoy that so much I'd be terribly disappointed if we wound up skipping one...

#### Marty Helgeson

