

# SWINGLINE 10

THIS IS SWINGLINE #10, by Joyce Katz (59 Livingston St., Apt. 6-B, Brooklyn, NY 11201,) for the...oh, drat!...eleventh mailing of Apa on January 6, 1973. Damn, I'm sorry to have missed the last mailing; perhaps during some Ambitious Month in the future I'll do two mailings, just so I can even out the numbers again...

In my last contribution to apa, I told you all about some of the changes that were in process of taking place in my life, and purred-on-paper a bit about the fact that things were really Going Well. It seemed like, all of a sudden, things just started falling into place for us, and every day that passed made life look rosier. -- The processes that were beginning at the time of my last contribution have now come into full bloom (to really screw hell out of my metaphors). Probably the single most important thing that has caused life to abruptly get so much more pleasant is my change of jobs. I started my new job on November 13, and professionally that was the luckiest day of my life. I really like the job...it's enough more difficult than what I've done before to be challenging; it's very rewarding; I seem to have permanently escaped the inner office pettiness that had been so distressing in my last job. And, though I guess it's not too modest of me to say it, I really feel pretty proud of myself over it all...this is the first job I've ever had where I really felt I could say I was a professional insurance woman, instead of just a clerk. All of a sudden, it seems I've actually worked my way up to a Career. Oh, don't get me wrong...I haven't died and gone to heaven, nor have I completely escaped all elements of sexism. But I'm more free of that bullshit than I've ever been before... The pay is good; the surroundings are nice; the people I work with are, although ultra-straight, very pleasant. And, I'm just pleased as punch about it all.

And the next new addition to our life is the kitten. It's a yellow-and-white tomcat, and we've named it Foo Manchu. He's very lively and loving...and even Arnie likes him; in fact, Arnie has adapted beautifully to three-in-a-bed, having to hide pens and pencils out of the kitten's reach, scattered squeaky toys all over the house, and bags of kitty litter in every grocery order.

And, of course, we're just now winding down from our long Holiday Season. Arnie and I have developed the habit of kinda going onto Holiday Standing right around Thanksgiving, and continuing non-stop celebration til after my birthday...January 9. And, who can be unhappy while they're celebrating?

It's very strange and unique to be going through such an extended Happy Period. I've done a lot of reflecting about it, and mulling over the morality of it, and considering of the philosophic ramifications, and all that. I mean...it seems like a lot of people that I know are not too happy right now, and it makes me feel very strange that I am... I also feel peculiar about being On The Verge Of Success. I mean, after a long hard and very slow climb of it, I'm finally making a decent salary. And Arnie's rise has been spectacularly fast, in the editing field. Between the two of us, there's a good

chance of a fairly comfortable future. In the last month or so, I've found myself pausing more and more often to consider how I really feel about it, and whether or not creature comforts destroy goodness, and all those questions everyone must ask himself now or then. I haven't finished thinking of all this stuff yet, nor come up with any definite conclusions...I'll be certain to let you know The Answer when I find it.

Of all the questions, the Moral Questions are always the most difficult to solve.

Now, on to Mailing #10.

OO #10 I wonder how many apans figured out what happened last month? I mean, the oo talked enthusiastically about all the people who were coming over to help...and then, a little later in Arnie's comments, he mentions that I was sick, and the phone kept ringing.... What happened, of course, as you astute people must have figured out, was that between the time that the oo was done and the people were going to collate, every single one of us came down with flu. The phone just kept ringing.. and everyone reported in sick.

DOUG LOVENSTEIN Hello again, Doug...and welcome. It's going to be nice having you with us, and I for one am really looking forward to a chance to be in contact with you again. What have you done with your life since last I knew? --I know you can't answer that in twenty-five words or less...but perhaps I'll learn the answer spread out over the next few months. Whether I do or don't, though, I'm really glad to have you here....Welcome.

JOHN BERRY I'm really happy that you're back on this coast, John. True, even when you officially lived on the West Coast, we saw you so often that we never were really certain you weren't just hiding in Bronxville. But, despite that, it's still very pleasant to know you're actually more-or-less in the area, and to be able to see you more often. I hope it works out that you stay in the East for at least a while.

I know what you mean, when you speak of becoming conscious of family continuity, and of the increased feeling of kinship with your relatives. In the past year or two I've experienced much the same feeling; where at one time I felt very distant from my siblings because of our enormous differences, in past years I've come to be aware of our similarities. I still don't think it would ever be possible for me to be bosom buddies with any of my siblings...but, I've gradually come to appreciate them more than I did before. I suppose that I'm very glad that there's a fair amount of distance between me and my brothers and sister; if we were closer in proximity, it would certainly lead to friction because of our differing life styles. But, I've found myself becoming more and more concerned for their welfares, and more and more interested in my nieces and nephews. Tell me, John: what do you think has prompted your increased feeling of kinship with your kin? Do you think that this is something that comes about naturally, as age increases? I've wondered at myself -- perhaps your experiences and reflections on the subject might give me some enlightenment as to what has brought about these changes in attitude.

I guess the only time I seriously think about Leaving The Country is when someone suggests that George Wallace might actually get elected. Four years ago I was terrified at that possibility, and still would be if I thought there was any chance of it actually happening. But, even during those moments, I never was able to figure out where I'd go; Canada & Scandinavia are too cold...and Europe vaguely frightens me. And, although I love Mexico, there is the language barrier...and they don't much like us.

I don't know how you can hold a conversation about rootbeer without mentioning A & W.

John, no offense, but I really can't see you in the life of a tranquil farmer, working from sunup to sundown at manual labor. I mean, after all, you're the one who gets restless if you even stay on the same coast for too long...and you've indicated that even a regulation 9 to 5 job was too inhibiting for you at this stage of your life. How can you reconcile your lack of interest in stability and employment, with the life of a farmer...which is, to put it mildly, hard grueling work, seven days a week, 365 days a year. (You can't miss days with Suzy Creamcheese or her sisters, you know.)

LESLEIGH I really enjoyed both sets of your pages this time, and particularly have been interested in your reactions toward Wisconsin. I've found myself thinking sympathetic thoughts about your weather. -- The only part of Wisconsin I've ever been in is that little corner of the state you have to cross when you drive to Minneapolis from St. Louis (via Chicago). It was pretty...I remember that much about it. But, it sure gave the impression of a place that could get bitter in the winter.

A complete non sequitor: can you buy margarine in Wisconsin? (I know that at one time the dairy farmers were able to keep margarine completely out of the state...and the last I knew, you still couldn't buy yellow margarine. Is this still true?)

It's funny about your mother...since I've been in New York, I've gradually come to appreciate her quite a bit. I mean, she's done a few things that showed incredible thoughtfulness toward me, things I really appreciated. -- Sometimes I guess it's just necessary to put a bit of distance between people, in order to be able to see them in perspective.

As you know, I don't believe in any kind of spiritualism at all...for this reason, I don't believe in ghosts. (If I accepted the notion of any kind of life at all after death, then I'd have to re-open the entire question of religion, wouldn't I?) But, I have heard one explanation of the ghost phenomena that I just almost believe; that is, if a person experiences great trauma (and violent death would certainly be one example of that; though not necessarily the only one, of course) then it's possible that the imprint of his psyche might enter into the area where the trauma was experienced, which could produce manifestations that we know as ghosts. Pretty far-flung, I'll agree...but not nearly as far-flung as the notion of actual ectoplasm floating around in bedsheets.

I went through a long period of my life during which smoking always seemed to give me physical pains of one sort or another... finally gave up grass altogether because of it. Finally, though, I realised that the grass wasn't really giving me the pains; it was, as you say, causing them to be extremely annoying. And, I had also built up a thing in my mind, that when I smoked, I hurt. And, since grass is a hypnotic, it always had the result I expected it to have. -- But, now, fortunately, I have no problems...except that I think I'm uncommunicative when I'm stoned. And, since I believe this is true, it is. --- Like you, I find that I communicate better after drinking than after smoking, and am much less inhibited in all ways. Of course, the ideal thing is to combine the two...I enjoy that quite a bit, though it's something I haven't been doing very long. (I believe, in fact, that I mentioned in an early mlg. of apa, that I didn't understand why anyone would mix grass and spirits...just in the short time that's passed since then, I've learned to enjoy doing it myself.

Hey, are you planning any field trips (to dig up old ruins) in Wisconsin next year? Seems like I've heard of mammoth bones up in your area...and lots of Indian relics, of course.

ARNIE I really appreciated your defense of Len Bailes. I think that most of us tend to sometimes forget that irritating people are after all, just people, and the result of what has happened to them; it helped to get Len into perspective for me to hear about what he used to be like. I've only met Len once..at Bayton..and your description of the Young Len, coupled with what I saw of him in 1968 helped me to understand better what must be happening to him now.

GRANT I just can't tell you, Grant, how happy I am that you decided not to run Waste Paper through apa. Not that I don't like the zine; to the contrary, I enjoy it quite a lot. But I think it would really be a ..er..waste ..to send it through this group; and I'm pleased that you've opted for more direct communication with the rest of us than that would represent.

I've never slept on a waterbed, and don't know whether I'd like it or not. I've always had a vague fear of getting motion sickness in a waterbed. But, I guess my fears are foolish ones; certainly waterbeds seem to be applauded by everyone who tries them...as indeed I must, Reak Soon Now.

I suppose my favorite tv shows right now are U.F.O., Maude, All In The Family, and Mary Tyler Moore...and I'm a fanatic about all four; wouldn't consider missing an episode of any of those for anything less than Really Good Reason. Saturday night is Sacred around the Katz household; our routine is absolutely inflexible. We have cheeseburgers and frenchfries for dinner, and sit entranced before the set. Even Bridget Loves Bernie has our devoted attention; in the time space it occupies, we'd watch anything...and though it's definitely the worst show of the evening, for obvious reasons Arnie and I kinda get a kick out of it. -- I've been surprised that UFO hadn't excited more interest than it has; I've really been enjoying it quite a lot. We missed the first couple of shows; the third was moderately awful, and since then they've gradually improved until I guess it's probably actually my favorite show now. But I suspect UFO wouldn't be of much interest to anyone who hadn't been watching the entire series fairly faithfully; like The Prisoner, it's serial, and would probably lose a lot unless the viewer knew what had gone before. -- Maude a cheap rip-off? I don't think so...not nearly as much as, for example, Again Dangerous Visions (which I thought suffered a lot in comparison with the first volume.)

I just know Ted must have really got a lot out of your explanation of Dirty Words. Of a matter of fact, Grant, I wanted to take this moment to thank you for all the wonderful sex education you've been bringing to apa. It certainly is a wonderful thing to have someone tell us all this groovy stuff that we never even suspected before, much. Next month maybe you'll tell us all about swingers, maybe...and the month after that you can explain intercourse. That'd really be a groove, Grant.

Oh, oh...I can tell you for sure that the St. Louis python is real...though he is indeed usually stuffed with whole pigs or small children or whatever they feed him when you see him in the St. Louis snake house. But, I've seen him move around... and in fact only narrowly avoided seeing him fed. (They used to do it publicly; I guess they probably still do. But watching a snake eat was never my idea of how to get my kicks, and I hurriedly backed out of the snakehouse on the day they were doing this. Did you know they have to more or less force feed him, by poking the raw meat down his throat with a pole? -- It's true.

Why does being come on to by a gay guy bother you men more than being come on to by a chick you don't dig? There's no real difference between not wanting to have sex with a member of your own, or the opposite. You all should relax and have sex with the ones you like, and not with the ones you don't...and just not worry about it so much.

CHRIS                    Good to have you back again, and to learn what's been happening in your life. It sounds like you're in a Happy Period now and that's great. I can certainly understand how domestic tranquility can woo a person away from activity in fandom; I've fallen before that conquering force myself. But, I'm glad that you think fanac might be on the upswing for you.

How ghastly, to be shown your tonsils immediately after they've been cut out. Either the doctor had a real macabre sense of humor, or Claudia has an unusually strong stomach...or perhaps a bit of both.

Funny...though I enjoyed your pages a lot, I can't seem to find much to say about them.

NEAL                    GALLERY was awful, wasn't it. Like you, we bought the first issue and were struck by its being a copy of PLAYBOY. But, we haven't bothered to buy any more. Did it strike you as a really 1950-ish magazine? I felt it was incredibly old-fashioned, despite its protests to the contrary. -- I also was unimpressed by Oui. PENTHOUSE is definitely the best of the new sex mags...the lettercol is fantastic. Speaking of which, I understand that you can now buy a hardback book of the letters from Penthouse...I haven't seen it, but it sounds like a real winner for the kinky set.

ROSS                    I know you've heard me say this before, but it bears repeating; I do think one of the most wonderful things about fandom is the fact that it introduces a whole new set of relationships one can enjoy with another. For many of us, it's as you have described...much easier to be open on paper than in person. I don't consider paper relationships to be more or less than in-person relationships---I think they're a whole other facet of understanding that you don't get unless you are involved in our paper universe. And, I don't think that a paper universe is drastically inferior from a real one...just different. I think that it's probably wrong if the paper universe is all a person can really enjoy, and if the paper universe is more "real" than the rest of the world. But I don't think we should think of paper relationships as being a substitute for reality; I think of them as another set of experiences to enjoy...I feel that people who can really get it on, on paper, have an entire extra set of responses that mundane people can't enjoy. Rather than feeling there is something wrong with me for being able to be more open on paper than in person (--though I do think I'm capable of being fairly intensely outgoing in person, in the right circumstances--) I feel it's an extra set of senses, almost. Like, the sense of smell is neither better nor worse than the sense of touch...it's a different sense. And the talent of being able to relate well on paper is neither better nor worse than being able to relate well in person...it's an entire other thing. I've said this unusually poorly, I think; but maybe you'll understand what's behind the poorly expressed words.

Funny about Sheila LaMonte. -- I had a semi-imaginary love once, too. Well, maybe more than once; to be truthful. I was always capable of composing great fantasies about people I had barely met...and in my early teen years, I was about as mixed up and lonely a kid as you'd ever care to see. Shy beyond belief, and it was much easier to compose a fantasy universe for myself and some imaginary beau, than to cope with the realities of teenage courtships.

I'm with you, in hopefully having grown out of sniggering out of any kind of sex. I like to think that I'm sexually sophisticated enough to be tolerant of anyone's preferences...though, like Arnie, I have a great deal of trouble coming to terms with what happens between a sadist and masochist. And, I suppose I've been down

enough of the side streets of sex to recognise the possibility of pleasures even in those areas where I'm left disinterested. I actually think that sexual experimentation is very healthy; within the limits of an individual's moral tolerance, I think he/she should try to find out what the neighborhood is like even on those streets where he/she never intends to live. I know I've tried a few things I didn't particularly care for...and there are things I haven't tried that will probably come around one of these days.... At any rate, laughing at other people because they like things I personally just couldn't cut at all, is out of my baliwick. (This is not to say that I can't laugh at a joke about almost any sexual practice. Let's face it, humans are funny...and almost anything a man can do can be made the subject of humor.) -- Personally, I'm like everyone else in the world; the product of my environment and upbringing. I can't say I've ridded myself of every element of my unusually restricted upbringing; but, neither have I given in to the idea that I'm too old to change even more.

BRUCE My most ambitious biking was a jaunt through the Buttes in California (around Sutter, Marysville...that general area.) I was on a regulation bike, and I still have vague memories of it being a long way up the mountains...multiple gears would have made it much easier. I actually never even realized that there were multi-geer'ed bikes until when I was in Mexico. The bike is the most common form of transportation there; and I had an opportunity to ride one really nice one. I don't believe I could really get into biking now; I'm much too lazy for that kind of effort. But, I do have vague stirrings of envy when I hear your plans for cross-country touring; for someone who's in condition for it, that could really be fantastic.

I could, however, get excited about climbing. -- Climbing has always been my second favorite sport. (Swimming's first.) -- When were you in Glacier Park? Isn't it beautiful. I consider Glacier Park to be the most beautiful place I've ever been....but I wouldn't want to try to climb those peaks because of the cold. (I suppose I'd rather climb Mexican mountains than any...none of the weather problems you describe to bother, and all that lovely view and sun....)

HANK Oops. I see we miscollated your second contribution, and have your pages and Lesleigh's sort of intertwined. I'm sorry...the lack of page numbers did it to us. -- (Another good reason for you two to do separate zines---I really hope that someday you'll decide to.)

What do you mean, "reduced" to drinking a MacDonald's milk shake. Why, Arnie and I would go half across town for a chance to have supper at a MacDonald's....if there was one half across town. (And we'd go all the way across town for a chance at a PoppaBurger from an A & W stand. Ted, I've heard you're also a devotee of A&W stands---are there any in the area? When we were in Missouri, we went to an A&W and absolutely gorged ourselves on poppaburgers---we knew they'd be the last we saw for a long time.) -- Actually there is an MacDonald's in NYC...on the upper East Side, or the West Side, or somewhere that really isn't on our beaten track. We'd still make a trip there if we only knew where it was. I really like schlock hamburgers.

TERRY I enjoyed your pages...and I just wish I had some Meaningful Comments to say about them. -- I hope that what you suggest works out to be true, that in your travels you find something you really want to do. But--meanwhile, it sounds like you're enjoying yourself...and that's nice.

TED--missed you this time; see you in next mlg? Also ROBIN, I hope. And LANE LAMBERT WHERE ARE YOU?