
maLaise #7

Vol. 2, No. 1

14 Dec 64

in which Dave Van Arnam says, oh, lots of things about lots of things, only maybe it won't seem that way, and maybe it won't even be that way...

Well, I had all these elaborate plans and all, last week, for all sorts things I was going to do for the honor and glory of Apa L, and like that there. And then Monday evening last week I got the flu or whatever, again. Well, sir, I want to tell you....

Well, maybe I won't. But it sure knocked my Elaborate Plans in the head. Maybe next week.

The last few mailings have been full of fascinating material (the last eight or so, actually). I would hate to miss out on this. If Fred Patten's New Rules fix things up, well and good. What with all the suggestions this last mlg, it looks to me like the Crisis shd be averted without Chopping off us Aliens' heads. In return, I'm going to try to send in stuff that satisfies me a little more than the rather hasty and hence rather scattered stuff I've sent previously. But if I keep coming down with Chills and Fevers, hell, I'll probably move to California to get away from this goddam cold weather I don't seem to be able to cope with any more. (This is going to be a Scattered issue, I can tell that right now.)

Gee, Tom, I'm sorry you mentioned that about air parcel post -- I've just been extrapolating from the office scales. I think I will just ignore air parcel post. I don't think I understand about it, anyway.

Interesting that I see response on the poetry from a number of you -- as I recall, I sent a fair number of pages of poetry and poetry discussion thru Apa F and got just about absolutely no response at all, at all. But here's Tom, Bruce, Jack, B.D. or perhaps R.F. Gold, and possibly Bjo, all indicating aliveness, response, potential interest, in the subject. I hope that by the end of this week, or maybe next week, I can build up something along these lines that will be discussion- or arguement- provoking. No, it will not be a reprint of stuff from Apa F. And, Bruce, I've gone thru the poetry I wrote at college (in four years I wrote a hell of a lot of it), and, gee, well, it doesn't stand up too well. As a writer, of anything, I'm a progressive-type. Which doesn't indicate politics (not by a long shot), but merely means that I started off as a completely putrid-lousy writer and have been hauling myself up from the very bottom-most pits ever since. This involved, in poetry, the writing of countless thousands of words and countless poems, none of which, for many years, was any good. It wasn't until after about five or six years of pouring out words onto the page that I began to be able to do it in a way which would not only satisfy me at the moment of creation, but the next day, the next year. Analogously, as a fiction writer I had done nothing whatsoever that was worth reading, altho I started, and plotted, hundreds of stories, including my Tremendous Fantasy Epic; then I sat down, one month, and in five weeks wrote 120,000 words of a serious novel I'd been thinking about and dabbling at for three years (this was in '61). Then I promptly rewrote it, cutting it down to 60,000 words. At present, the third draft looks to total maybe 50,000 words, and I strongly suspect

Null-Q Press

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that the book is totally unsuccessful -- as a novel. But it's a pretty damn good piece of writing, and it's how I learned to write -- by writing the bad stuff out of my system and learning new and better techniques at the same time. (Too bad I can't apply the same system to my Weekly Fanzines...)

The point being (he said, going back and rereading everything in order to find out himself) perhaps not so much that I write better poetry or whatever as the years go by; perhaps it is only that my critical faculties progress, and hence I'm able to find more and more of my older poems, all the time, that do not meet up with newly-discovered standards. Every time I reread Ezra Pound's poetry and criticism, I go back and throw out another year's worth of newly realized junk. It is a proud and lonely thing etc. etc.

This has been an exercise in Evading the Issue.

Hey, Dave Hulan, there are no 'rules, membership ((requirements, I presume you mean)), etc.' in Apa F! You don't even have to come to the meetings. Hell, one recipient of the mailings hasn't attended any Fanoclast meetings since some time before Apa F began, has attended no FISTFA meetings, and has contributed absolutely nothing to any of the mailings. We just happen to be trying to propagandize him to Leave California and Return to New York. I think you were just trying to put us on, Dave Hulan. And as for Apa L setting up membership requirements or whatever, the only thing you need do along this line is what Tom Gilbert has already done -- limit the Aliens; we'll drop out slowly but eventually, it is presumed. Richard Mann has already indicated that the joke is wearing a little thin for him. Me, I'd like to continue in Apa L. If I can stop getting sick every couple of weeks, I hope to contribute some worthwhile material. And if you're concerned about 'securing new members', Dave, gee, kicking half a dozen of 'em out of your apa doesn't seem exactly the politic way to go about it... The Agacon is fine, I agree -- but I don't seem to be able to reconstruct the acronym or whatever. Translation?

In case you people think I spend all my spare time sitting around being sick and putting out weekly fanzines, I also happen to do these things when I shd be doing other things (a not uncommon syndrome in fandom, to be sure). Such as right now, I shd be home, finishing up the job I'm doing for Ted White, which is namely typing his mss novel he just finished and which Ace Books is bringing out this spring. I've only got about 65 pages left to type by Tuesday afternoon. And then there's the novel that Ted & I are collaborating on (sf, of course). I'm doing the first draft, he's doing the second, and I'll type the final mss for submission with additional polishing. I've never collaborated in writing before, and I was rather surprised to see how well this is working out with Ted. Our respective styles and skills seem to fit, in the things we've tried so far. But I don't think Ted is as gassed as I am by such types of writing as Epic Fantasy and Galactic Swashbuckling, which is just as well, perhaps, because I wd be wanting to do these my Own Way anyway. But in the particular type of sf that Ted and I have been working on, there's no particular conflict of interests. And yet I've always been prejudiced against writing in collaboration with somebody else. I wonder if I shd begin reexamining some others among my sets of literary prejudices and such like?

Oh, but that's sheer nonsense. No point to doing such a thing at all. See you next week, and hoping you are the sane...

-- dgv