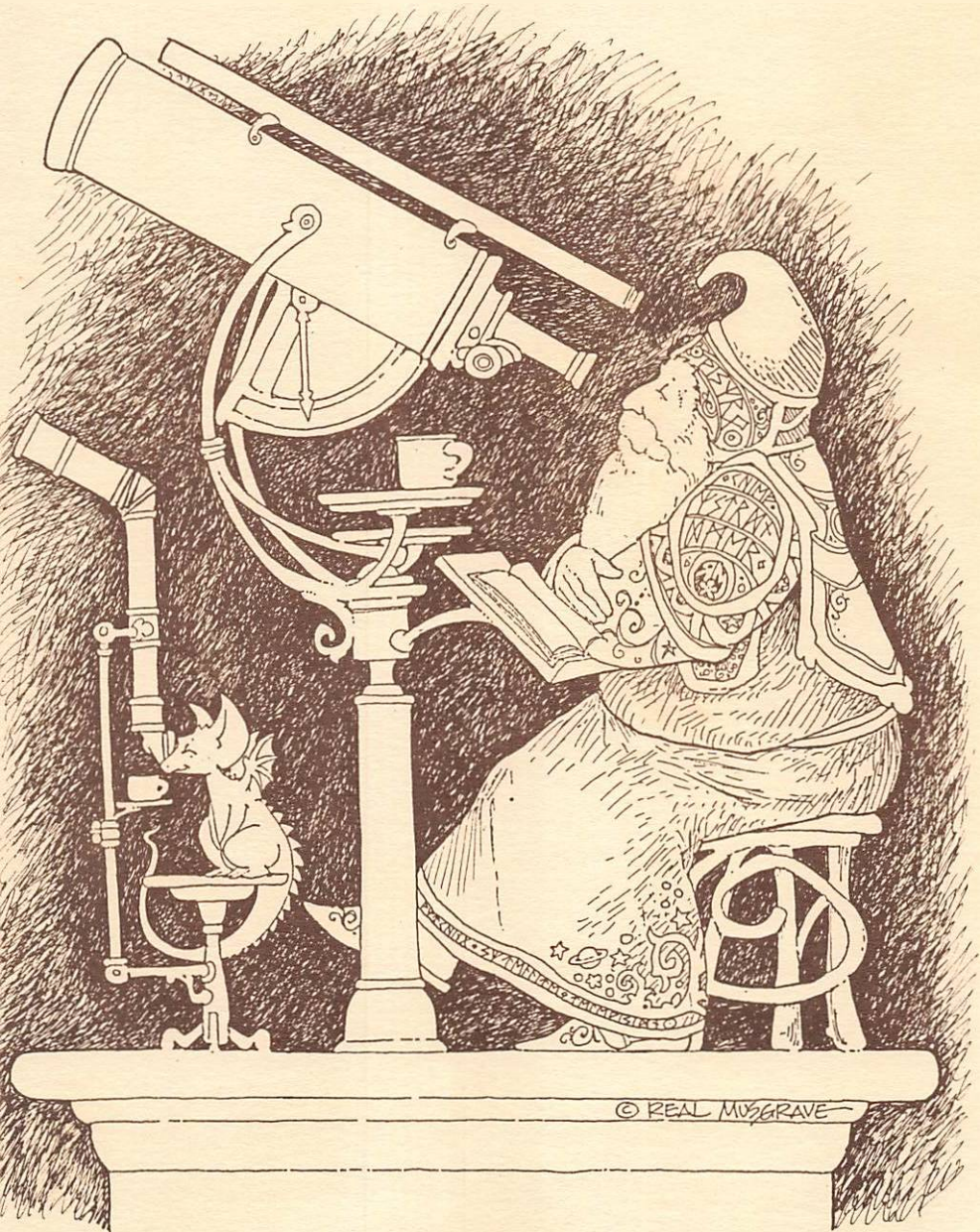


# CHATTACON XIV



*This program book is dedicated to the men and women of the  
world's space programs.*

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## DEPARTMENT HEADS

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\* Board of Directors

## WEAPONS POLICY

The practice of carrying or wearing personal weapons at conventions is one of the oldest traditions in fandom. Chattacon respects this custom, and we would rather not do anything to interfere with it.

Unfortunately, in recent years, a few fans have created problems by abusing this custom and behaving very badly with weapons. Therefore, we have reluctantly adopted the following weapons policy. Please read it because it will be enforced.

- All knives, swords, axes, shiraken, and other bladed weapons, whether sharpened or not, must be covered by sheaths, cases, reinforced cardboard, or some other protective wrapping. All blades or other small weapons, such as nunchukas, must be secured to the wearer's person or clothing in all public areas of the Marriott or Convention and Trade Center, including the hallways, the lobby, and all function space. Exceptions will be made for displays in the Dealers' Room and for Masquerade participants on a case-by-case basis.
- All functional firearms, pellet guns, lasers, sound projectors, and other projectile weapons are absolutely forbidden. No exceptions will be given.
- Replicas, blasters, and zap guns are allowed. Any director, convention staff member, or uniformed security guard may, at any time, require proof that a replica is not real.
- Anything can be used as a weapon. Therefore any object used in a dangerous or threatening manner or in such a way that it becomes a general nuisance to the attendees of the convention will be regarded as a weapon by Chattacon.
- Any weapon being carried or misused in violation of this policy will be confiscated and held until the convention is over on Sunday afternoon, at which time the weapon will be returned in Operations (Rm. 301). Anyone who refuses to surrender a weapon when asked to do so by a Chattacon representative will be ejected from the convention without refund. If the violation is very serious, the Marriott will be asked to evict the violator without refund and the violator may be liable for criminal and civil damages.
- No assassination games will be allowed. Players will be ejected from the convention without refund if caught. Please note this has been extended to include Lazer Tag™ and similar games.
- Anyone who deliberately or negligently injures or causes property damage to the hotel, trade center, or their contents, will be ejected from the convention without refund, ejected from the hotel, and may be subject to arrest and to civil or criminal prosecution.
- Interpretation and enforcement of this policy will be at the discretion of any Chattacon Director. In case of a disagreement about this policy, the decision of any two (2) Directors will be final.

All attendees please note: the civil authorities in this area have been known to take a dim view of persons carrying swords, knives, martial arts weapons, and/or large-bore particle accelerators. Please show some discretion when making excursions into MundaneLand. Please remember, when in Rome...

### *Post No Bills*

The Marriott has expressed some concern over the posting of flyers and notices in the hotel. There can be no posted notices on the lobby or restaurant levels. You can post notices in the elevator areas of other floors, but only using masking tape or other easily removed tape. There can be NO posting of notices in the Convention and Trade Center except on designated easels. Please use discretion with your signs.

# Son of the Red-Breasted Menace

A Biography of Spider Robinson

By  
John Varley

Your first question probably has something to do with his name. Was he born "Spider Robinson" or something else?

That's a tough question—and so are all the others. Real facts about "Spider" are hard to come by. Lessons learned early in life are the hardest to break, and interviewers approaching "Spider" soon find he will answer nothing until he's made his one free phone call to his lawyer.

But through diligent research and a few modest bribes I have unearthed a sketchy biography of this man known as "Spider," and I'd like to share some of the facts with you—at least the ones concerning which the statute of limitations has expired.

\* \* \*

The tiny kingdom of Freedonia lies wedged between Chile and Argentina. It is the only place in the world where Esperanto is the official language. There, on a date lost to history, in the capitol city of Hundofliki (in English, roughly, "Dogpatch"), a child was born to Jackie and Bill Rubekolofilo (roughly, "Son-of-the-red-breasted-nuisance"). Christened Juan Araneo Rubekolofilo, the child quickly picked up a nickname, "Sputinfaneto" (baby-who-spits-up-a-lot), even more quickly shortened to Sputter.

His childhood was pleasant, pastoral, bucolic. His father Bill was a penguin rancher, and his mother Jackie worked in the government office of Esperantization. Freedonia had been settled during the brief, almost unnoticed period of Basque Imperialism, so Jackie's days were spent turning Basque words into Esperanto words—no easy task, as she delighted in telling her

family. Sputter's brothers and sisters—Wheezzer, Froggy, Stymie, Darla, Alfalfa, Farina, Buckwheat, and Oatmeal—spent their time at the pointless, distasteful tasks familiar to all rural children, taking time out now and then to put on shows and make silent movies.

But Sputter was a rebellious youth. Old police blotters from Hundofliki tell the story: early arrests for breaking gumball machines, annoying the neighbor's sheep, slandering the State, unauthorized possession of a nuclear weapon, and punning in the forbidden Basque language culminating in a sensational trial on the charge of first-degree *anserohauto-ansero* (literally, goosing a goose, but more accurately "disgusting behavior with waterfowl"), the bird in this case being under age. Sputter was able to avoid prison through a linguistic technicality (something common in Freedonia at the time) by pointing out the correct charge should have been *pingvenoseksa*, "unnatural acts with a penguin." Since no one in Freedonia had the stomach to even write the word down, much less charge him with it, the case was dismissed. Thus, early in life, did Sputter learn the power of language.

Other demonstrations were soon to follow. Esperantization threw Freedonia into chaos. The economy was rocked when no one could decide on which word to use for "Farmer," a situation that threw thousands of honest Freedonian peasants into unemployment and created masses of refugees streaming into town searching for something to be. Sputter's brother Wheezzer was shocked to learn that his own name, in Esperanto, meant "my bladder is about to

burst," and his sister Darla disgraced when her name was translated as "she who pulled the train after the homecoming game." That was nothing compared to Alfalfa, whose name would not translate at all, and who had to cease to exist. This would have been hard enough for the Rubekolofilo family, having their beloved Alfalfa gone, if he hadn't been so noisy about it. His moans of hunger kept them awake many a night.

Sputter rose to his brother's defense. He led marches through Hundofliki, carrying placards reading "SAVE \_\_\_\_\_." The government was thrown into disarray, and soon toppled. Sputter and his family were forced to seek asylum with the neighboring Argentines—who were shocked and dismayed to learn of Freedonia's existence in the first place. An invading army soon remedied that situation, and Freedonia slipped into the mists of history.

But not Sputter. He found work in a slot-machine factory, and soon was losing all his wages testing the devices. (An interesting sidelight: Spider Robinson invented both the cherry and the sliced watermelon. Every time either one of them comes up in Reno, Vegas, or Atlantic City he gets a small royalty. Some years this adds up to as much as thirty dollars, Canadian.) He gathered his humble belongings—a set of lock-picks, a favorite blackjack, a month's receipts from the slot-machine company's safe—and boarded a tramp steamer, his departure unnoticed except by a flock of female penguins who wept disconsolately on the dock.

He spent three lonely months at Ellis Island—this despite the fact that the huge immigrant facility had been closed down for seven years. He later claimed the place reminded him of home, and he was reluctant to leave it. Reports of wild parties, shipments of illegal contraband, loud guitar music, and hundreds of irate harbor seals around Ellis Island at this time are still being investigated, and probably have no basis in fact.

Sputter arrived in New York to a tu-

multuous ticker-tape parade. The parade was for John Glenn, but that didn't matter to the starry-eyed boy from the hinterlands. This was New York! The Big Apple (in Esperanto: *Grandegapomo*)! Here he could make a name for himself, here he would make his fortune!

Two years later he slipped over the border into Canada, intact but for a patch on the seat of his britches, which he left in a bloodhound's mouth.

How did this come to pass? Details are sketchy, and certain matters still in litigation cannot be discussed here due to a series of restraining orders. Also the grand jury is still deliberating, and there is a chance that Governor Cuomo won't sign the extradition papers. Far be it from me to prejudice pending legal matters. So, circumspectly...

He quickly changed his name to the handle under which we all know him. He purchased an accent in a shop on 42nd Street. It sounds like the Bronx, but you figure it out. He went to work at the U.N., who hired him on the spot when he pointed out the vast organization had no Basque-Esperanto simultaneous translators on its staff. The work was to Spider's liking. Since no one at the U.N. spoke either Basque or Esperanto there was scant need for his services. This left him with much time on his hands to pursue his other interests—most of which we will not discuss here, for reasons mentioned above.

But three of Spider's interests during this period bear mentioning. The first is his music. He began singing on the streets, guitar case open to receive the tips of appreciative New Yorkers. Before long, he had earned four or five dollars, and was able to take his act into "beatnik" coffee houses, where musicians performed for no salary, for the sheer joy of their art. So meteoric was his rise in this career that in no time at all he had a busy schedule of performances in all the better burlesque houses, paying only nominal fees for his bookings.

The second of his interests is punning, which went from a mild affliction to a gal-

loping pandemic during this period of his life. The less said about it, the better... but it is rumored that his flight to Canada was precipitated by a pun involving an aardvark, a car park, and a card shark. Luckily, it is lost to history.

The third concerns what Spider always called his "weird stories." Back in Freedonia, perched on a rail above the penguin pens, he used to regale his brothers and sisters with odd little tales involving spaceships, ray guns, trips to the moon, and a bar where the strangest people were apt to drop in for a drink. Now, in New York, he got the idea of writing some of these stories on paper and sending them in to magazines and book publishers. They kept getting rejected, but Spider was undaunted. He wrote more, and kept sending them in. His friends told him to give up, that nothing would ever come of it. With fierce determination, Spider kept at it.

But his friends were right. Nothing ever came of it. Spider now lives in total obscurity in Vancouver, British Columbia, where he breeds penguins.

#

All lies, of course.

Some time ago, I was invited to be guest of honor at TusCon, in Arizona. Soon, as cons always do, they asked me to provide them with bio and biblio information. The prospect filled me with weariness. I have a ten-year-old bibliographical hand-out somewhere (I'll update it one of these days), but I can never find them. As to biographical information, I really don't like giving it out. It's a personal and illogical position, but there it is.

Then the TusCon people asked me who I'd like to write the bio page about me in the program book. I said, if he wasn't too busy, Spider Robinson would be perfect... and the whole scheme dawned on me. He could do it (if he had the time, and if he agreed to do it all) *only* if he made up all the facts about me prior to the time of our first meeting. He could tell the truth from then on—if he was so inclined— but he had to

make up all the stuff like where born, where educated, names of children, etc.

See, though I count Spider as one of my best friends in the world, I really don't know much about him. Not much factual, anyway. I assumed he didn't know much about my life, either. So this way, he'd be spared the tedium of asking me questions I didn't want to answer, and maybe everybody would get a giggle out of it. Judging from the reaction to his piece at TusCon, it wasn't a bad idea.

And so now, for my sins...you guessed it. He gave me the same set of conditions for Chattacon, with the results you have just read.

They asked me for two thousand words, and I'm getting close to that. And I haven't spent much time listing his books or praising his work, have I? And his books ought to be listed (let's hope someone else has been assigned the task of a bibliography, because you won't get one here). And as to praising him...for one thing, you got to figure he's pretty good, or why would Chattacon have flown him all the way from Vancouver, at considerable expense, to be your guest of honor? And you'd be right. If you haven't read Night of Power, or Mindkiller, or Tel-empath, then run, do not walk, to the dealers' room and pick up copies. And if you haven't read the tales of Callahan's Place, what are you doing at a science fiction convention, anyhow? Well, maybe you're just starting out. But **read** them. I envy you.

(I'm only supposed to discuss Spider here, but it's impossible not to mention Jeanne. I wouldn't want to do anything like the above foolishness about Jeanne, and I don't know if I have the words for serious appreciation. And while Jeanne, like Spider, is someone I've only met for short periods of time over the years...well, they're both special friends. (And if you know one thing about Jeanne, it's that she's a dancer. And I've never seen her dance. So why do I *feel* like I've seen her dance?)

*Concluded on Page 43*

## STEPHEN R. DONALDSON

*Fantasy Guest of Honor*

Stephen R. Donaldson is fond of saying that he has no useful biography. Born in 1947 in Cleveland, Ohio, he made his publishing debut with the first Covenant Trilogy in 1977. Shortly thereafter, he was named Best New Writer of the Year and given the prestigious John W. Campbell Award. He graduated from the College of Wooster (Ohio) in 1968, served two years as a conscientious objector doing hospital work in Akron, then attended Kent State University, where he received his M.A. in

English literature in 1971.

Donaldson now lives in New Mexico, where he continues writing as hard as he can. His chief ambition in life, however, is to learn to play Liszt's *Harmonies du soir* on the piano. He also wants to sing *Rigoletto* at the Santa Fe Opera, but that is never going to happen either.

Everything else is just a figment of someone's imagination.

(Editor's Note: He also plays a mean game of bridge. He has Gold Points, folks)

## REAL MUSGRAVE

*Artist Guest of Honor*

Teddy Wizards? Pocket Dragons? Guardian Teddies? No, these are not characters in an upcoming childrens' book. They are drawn from the boundless imagination of our Artist Guest of Honor, Real Musgrave.

Real Musgrave has been enchanting us with whimsical and fantastic art since he began selling prints of his work in 1974. Real is well known in fantasy art circles and his artwork is a delight to behold.

His artistic talent actually began blooming at an earlier date when, as he puts it, he "enjoyed drawing realistic things that no one could really see," since the age of five. He once told a reporter that he "liked being able to take things that were in my mind, but then putting them in a fairly realistic setting

so that even now my wizards and dragons are often in a Victorian setting. His artistic career was almost curtailed when his father wanted him to pursue a career in engineering. Real was hustled off to Texas Tech, but discovered a new MFA program there and, as fate would have it, pursued an artistic career.

Reals paintings amuse and bemuse the viewer, but he has fun doing them too. He enjoys planting "secret" messages in the painting in the form of *Futhoric* runes. These runes are normally in English, but he has been known to lapse into German or Latin.

He currently lives in Dallas, Texas with his lifemate, Muff, and their manageric of live and stuffed animals.



# Phoenixcon 4

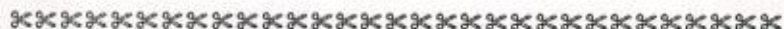
May 5,6,7 1989

Charles Sheffield - *Guest of Honor*  
Vincent DiFate - *Artist Guest of Honor*  
David Cherry - *Special Guest*  
Irv Koch - *Fan Guest of Honor*  
Brad Strickland - *Master of Ceremonies*  
Brad Linaweaver, Jerry Page, and more...

**\*\*\* Be Sure to come to our party Saturday night \*\*\***  
*or come by our table in the  
registration area on Sunday*  
*(Memberships will increase after Chattacon)*

- Art Show
- Con Suite
- "Derby Day" Party
- Jeopardy style Trivia Contest
- Video Room
- Science Lecture by Charles Sheffield
- Bad Book Readings
- Bad Movie Reviews
- Mighty Rassilon Art Players

This year our hotel will be the Holiday Inn at Powers Ferry Landing and I-285. Room rates are \$49 per night for 1-2 people. Add \$10 per person over two. For reservations, contact the hotel at (404) 955-1700 x195. Be sure to mention PhoenixCon to get the correct discount rates.



Please return this portion of the form (or a copy) with a check or money order (Do Not send cash) to: *PhoenixCon 4.0*, 1579 Monroe Drive Box F-218, Atlanta GA 30324.

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ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

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If purchasing more than one membership, please list each name and address separately on a separate sheet of paper. **Membership fees:** \$20 thru 1/15/89; \$25 after and at the door.

# CHARLES L. GRANT

by  
Lionel Fenn

*(Editors Note: After last year's problem with getting a biography from our Toastmaster, Charlie Grant, I decided to get a little sterner with him. I called Charlie at his home in New Jersey and told him that, if I didn't have a biography from him by the end of the week, I would call Phil Gilliam in Nashville and have the Blackpooles do his biography. The following arrived express mail the next day.)*

Dear Sir,

Please forgive me if I do not spell your name correctly, but Charles, even if he is my mentor, would not let me out of my own cellar apartment until I finish the thing he wanted me to finish because if I did not finish it, some guy named Phil would do it and make him look like a jerk.

Anyway, I am pleased to let the truth be known about this tightwad and humanitarian, and I hope you will not be too disappointed at my humble efforts. Perhaps some day I too will be able to take a trip to the Southland of this great country of ours; until that time arrives, however, I must remain busy, secluded, and miserable.

Thank you very much for your time.

Lionel Fenn

December 1988

Generally, biographies like this begin, "What shall I tell you about [whomever] that you don't already know?" Well, since I haven't the faintest idea about what you know about Charles Grant, I'll have to pretend you don't know him at all. Of course, you do know him, and I know you know him, but if you'll pretend you don't know

him, then maybe you'll know him better when I tell you what I do know; assuming, of course, that you don't know it already.

I'm confused.

The personal stuff: he's getting bald. Tall people know this, short people don't. And he wears what hair he does have kind of long because he's too cheap to buy a muffer. Next, he's getting his mouth rebuilt, which is why his dentist is putting a new addition on his house, and why Grant doesn't eat with his mouth open anymore. It's also embarrassing, especially when, two years ago, he drove home from this very convention and, halfway there, realized that he'd left his partial bridge in his hotel room. The maid quit. Thirdly, he snores. I don't know this personally, of course, but I have my sources. He denies it; he says he's merely thinking aloud in his sleep. Lastly, he thinks things like this are silly, because you people have better things to do than read silly things like this, especially when they are about balding people who snore. I think so too, but what the hell.

The professional stuff: as of today, he's ending his twentieth year as a pro. That's 76 books (novels, collections, and too damn many anthologies for my taste) and 150 short stories, plus articles and columns and stuff like that there. He also taught me and my brother, Geoffrey Marsh, how to write; and I can honestly say that neither of us would be where we are today if it hadn't been for him.

Your move.

His new novel, which he made me tell

*Continued on page 43*

## DAVID DRAKE

*Special Guest*

David Drake is 42 years old and has lived a quiet life as a full-time freelance writer since 1981. He was Assistant Town Attorney for the town of Chapel Hill, North Carolina, from 1972-1980, and drove a city bus for a year following. His first fiction sale was in 1966, and He's had about 20 books out since 1979 (though a couple are anthologies and several are collaborations). He works outdoors in the backyard a lot, where he and his family have a number of

bird feeders. Therefore, he is probably one of the few writers of Macho Military Science Fiction who is regularly (in the summertime) 'pooped' on by hummingbirds. (They drink; back up about 18", 'poop', and then take another swig. Cute little devils.

David is best known for his works of military science fiction such as Hammer's Slammers, At Any Price, and a number of collaborative works with authors like Karl Edward Wagner and Janet Morris.

# ChatSFic

Chattanooga Science Fiction Club  
A little bit of Chattacon every month.  
For additional information, contact  
Helen Pieve at (615) 899-3558.

## CHARLOTTE PROCTOR

*Fan Guest of Honor*

I called Charlotte on the phone to get her to give me something to put in her biography. I knew lots of things about her, but none of them were printable in a fine literary tome of this nature. So I asked her what she would like me to say about her.

She started off, "In the beginning."

I said, "Whoa, there a minute, not quite that far back!"

She says she was dragged into fandom by her then fourteen year old daughter. It seems she was reading some of Charlotte's SF pulps and came across the name of a local Birmingham fan named Hank Reinhardt. She wanted to contact Hank to get a knife for her father's birthday. Because Charlotte was very protective of her little girl, she took her over to see Hank and immediately liked him.

When they got home, Charlotte told her husband, Jerry, about Hank. Jerry, not being a trusting soul, and being an editor for the Birmingham paper, immediately sent a reporter and photographer out to "check this

guy out." Thus was born a long-time family friendship.

Hank took her to a convention. She says you can't imagine what it's like going to a convention with "the God of Southern Fandom." Honest, she said that.

Charlotte got started in fandom in the SCA. She gravitated along her chosen course from this point, to conventions, to convention committee, then to print media.

While in print media, Charlotte was the editor of Anvil magazine for 6 years, culminating in a 1986 Hugo nomination for best amateur 'zine. She has also done major publications work (program book, progress reports) for the 1986 Atlanta WorldCon (you all remember that, don't you) and was in charge of guest relations there. Ask Charlotte about Ray Bradbury's lost badge sometime.

Charlotte's one of those boundless bundles of energy that nothing can contain. We love her. That's why she's here.

P.S. She sings great helium.

## BOB MAURUS

*"Other" Artist Guest of Honor*

I asked Bob Maurus to brag about himself.

He wouldn't.

Bob has been sculpting since he graduated from the Atlanta College of Art in 1978. Sculpting was simply a matter of self-preservation. You see, Bob's real love is painting and drawing. He got into sculpting because he couldn't keep up with the print world. He had to work construction work to support himself during those early years and, after working a 10 hour day, he couldn't bring himself to go and clean up to run a press for another few hours. Sculpting can

be done on a couch, in front of the television.

Bob has a distinction that few of us know about. He has products in the Spiegel catalog. Honest. His products are shipped all over the United States and Canada. He says it's a real ego boost to go into a store and see a piece he made on the shelves.

He's also done something else. Bob's a crossover writer. He's had a piece published by Arkham House in an Anthology called Nameless Places.

Bob is a really great guy, and I think you'll all think the same thing.

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# DAVID DRAKE

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# THE MAN WHO TRIED TO GET AWAY

by

*Stephen R. Donaldson*

*(Writing as Reed Stephens)*

Of course, I lost weight. People do that after they've been shot in the gut. But I could afford a little weight. Cooking for Ginny had given me more pounds than it did her. My real problem was movement.

Muy Estobal's bullet had torn me up pretty good inside, even if it did leave my vital organs alone. And I hadn't done myself any favors with all that hiking around the night after I got shot. The doctor told me if I stayed flat where I was, nailed to the bed with IV's, until he started hearing "bowel sounds" and felt sure I was healing properly, he'd maybe let me get up to go to the bathroom. As a special reward for being such a good patient.

That was easy for him to say. He wasn't a stationary target. El Señor didn't want him dead.

I needed to get moving. Before Estobal's replacement came after me.

I didn't have any regrets about killing Estobal. Which isn't a statement I make lightly. Killing people isn't usually my idea of fun. But I sure as hell regretted the fact that I couldn't get out of bed.

I'd only been stuck here for forty-eight hours, and it was already driving me crackers. If they hadn't given me all those pills, I wouldn't have been able to sleep at night. I would have stayed awake the whole time, watching the door. Expecting to see some goon with at least an Uzi and maybe an entire bazooka come in and blow me away.

So far, Ginny hadn't been much help. She kept telling me there wasn't any danger, there was too much heat on el Señor, he couldn't afford the risk of having me hit so soon. Well, I suppose that should have been

true. I should have believed her. I believed her when she first said it. Didn't I?

But she wasn't the one who got that phone call.

It came during the day, when the hospital switchboard was on automatic, and the winter sunlight and the blue sky outside my window made everything I could see look safe. But I must not have been feeling particularly safe, because I believed whoever was calling me right away.

When the phone rang, I picked it up and said, "Yo," because that's easier than hello when your whole torso is strapped with bandages and you don't feel much like deep breathing anyway.

A voice I almost knew said, "Get out of there. He wants you. You're a sitting duck."

Then the line went dead.

Cheered me right up, that did.

When I told Ginny about it, she looked just for a second like she believed it, too. Her gray eyes got sharp, and the lines around her broken nose went tight. But after that she grimmed. "Probably somebody's idea of a joke."

Oh, sure. I'd killed Muy Estobal, el Señor's favorite muscle. Together, Ginny and I had come between el Señor and his revenge on a man who'd ripped him off, murdered one of his runners. Everybody around him probably laughed out loud every time my name came up.

But my caller wasn't finished with me. The next day, the doctor heard gurgling in my guts—bowel function struggling back to life—and took me off the IV's. I got the thrill of starting to feed myself hospital

gruel, which tasted like pureed dogfood. After that, I was allowed to get out of bed and actually stand until pain made my head ring like a gong and my famous bowels hurt like they'd been shredded.

I was horizontal again, holding the bed and doing my best not to gasp, when the phone rang.

This time, my caller said, "I mean it. You haven't got much time left. He wants you dead."

I felt like I was inches away from recognizing that voice, but I couldn't pull it in. Gremlins in spiked boots were racing up and down my intestines.

"Who?" I asked. At the moment, I didn't much care how much it hurt to breathe so hard. "Who wants me dead? Who are you? Why are you warning me?"

The line went dead.

So when Ginny stopped by for her daily visit, I made her get the .45 out of my locker and give it to me.

"You're taking this too seriously," she said like a woman whose mommy taught her not to laugh at cripples. "El Señor is practically paralyzed right now. The cops are watching everything he does. Even crooked cops are going to be honest for a while, with this much heat on. The commissioner is talking about 'wiping out organized crime in Puerta del Sol.' The newspapers are jumping up and down. I get interviewed at least once a day. Fistoulari Investigations has never had so much publicity. I'm actually having to turn clients away.

"Brew, you're safe. Just relax. Get well."

Just relax. Why didn't I think of that? "If this is supposed to be a joke," I muttered past my bandages, "I'd hate to meet whoever's doing it when he's in a bad mood."

Ginny let herself look marginally more serious. "You sure you can't identify the voice?"

I shrugged. It wasn't very comfortable, but it was better than arguing.

"I'll check with the switchboard on my

way out." She was humoring me. "Maybe there's some way they can take your line out of the automatic circuit. If we can screen your calls, maybe we can find out who's calling." I wanted to say, Don't screen my calls. Get me out of here. But I didn't. I let her go. She and I had too many problems, and the worst of them was too recent. She was using her 'prosthetic device,' the mechanical claw that took the place of her left hand, but she wore it like a handicap instead of something familiar, something she trusted. And it was being afraid for me that made her put it on. We'd spent entirely too much time in the past few years with her being afraid for me. I didn't want to ask her to take on any more of that.

Unfortunately, the switchboard had no way to cut just one line off automatic. The next day, I got another call.

By then, I'd spent twenty-four hours expecting it. I was just a touch jumpy when I reached for the phone. Ol' nerves-of-steel Axbrewder, calm as ever. Weak as spaghetti in that damned bed, I fumbled the receiver onto the floor and had to pull it up by the cord to answer it.

"Sorry," I said.

"Don't hang up," I said.

"Tell me what's going on," I said.

Impressive, no?

The silence on the line sounded like snickering.

"How did you get my number?" I asked.

"I got your number from hospital information," the voice I almost knew said. "Anybody in Puerta del Sol can find out what room you're in just by asking. You're a dead man."

Leaving me with that cheery thought, the line clicked dead.

Ginny showed up a couple of hours later. I told her about the call, but she didn't seem particularly interested in it. Instead, she studied me as if I was exhibiting strange side effects to a new medication. "This has really got you jumpy," she commented. Observant as all hell.

"Think about it," I snarled as well as I

could. "How many people hate me enough to think this kind of joke is funny?"

But my vehemence didn't exactly ruffle her. "Think about it yourself, Brew," she replied calmly. "How many people love you enough to give you this kind of warning?"

That stopped me. Who would know el Señor actively wanted me dead? Only somebody close to him. And who in that group would give a good goddamn what happened to me? Which one of his people would be willing to risk warning me?

I couldn't imagine anybody close to him feeling that way.

I made an effort to look like I was relaxing. "Well," I answered Ginny, "there's always you." That must have been what she wanted to hear. "Pure male ego," she retorted, grinning. "You overestimate yourself."

She could say stuff like that because we both knew overestimating myself wasn't very high on my list of personal flaws.

I liked her grin. I could watch it all day. But anything that let her think I wasn't worried was pure bullshit and moonshine. Things like immobility and helplessness never did much for my morale. For a few months now, I'd been able to believe in myself enough to stop drinking. But that, as they say, was tenuous at best. Nailed to the bed with pain and scarcely able to sit upright, never mind carry my own weight a few steps around the room, I wasn't a particularly healthy specimen of male ego. Or anything else, for that matter.

I was recovering too slowly. Where the hell were my recuperative powers when I needed them? Movement was life. I was running out of time.

I waited until Ginny left. Then I climbed vertical and practiced lugging the lump of tight fire I called my stomach around the room. Male ego, shit. Who did she think I was? She'd known me long enough to know I wasn't half as tough as I looked. About the time pain and exhaustion got bad enough to make me sob, I decided to lie down and just

let el Señor kill me.

Teach her a lesson, that would.

Self-pity may not be my most attractive quality, but I'm damn good at it.

So she took me completely by surprise when she came in early the next morning, before I had time for any phone calls, and asked, "Can you walk out of here?"

I stared at her.

"Well, can you?"

I stared at her some more.

She sighed—mock-exasperation. "If you can get out of bed," she explained, "put your clothes on, and walk out of here, we're leaving. I've got a job for us."

That early in the morning, my head was still muzzy with sleeping pills. I could have sworn I heard trumpets somewhere off in the distance. Walk out of here. A job. Something to do. "Aye, aye, Captain Fistoulari, ma'am, sir," I muttered.

In a fine display of moral fortitude and physical courage, I closed my eyes.

"Brew." She let a hint of a lash into her tone. "I'm serious."

"So am I," I said through a haze of drugs and fear. "Go away. This stinks."

"What's the matter? I thought you wanted to get away from those phone calls."

"I do. But not like this. If it's a real job, the last thing you need is a half-ambulatory alcoholic to take care of. And if it's a nursemaid job for my benefit, just to keep me out of trouble, I don't want it. You said you're turning clients away. Pick a job you can do by yourself. Leave me alone."

Unfortunately, that made her shut up. She didn't say anything for so long, I finally had to open my eyes to see if she was still in the room.

She was.

She stood at the window with her back to me, hiding her face against the morning. Something about the line of her back, the way she held her shoulders, told me I'd hurt her.

"Ginny—" I was going to apologize somehow, if I could just think of the words. I know you care about me. I like that. I



know you even trust me. I like that. Please try to understand. But nothing came out of my mouth.

After a while, she asked the glass, "Why is this so hard?"

"I don't know," I said. My usual contribution to our relationship. But as soon as I said it, I knew I wasn't being honest, so I went on, "Everything we do with each other matters too much."

She turned. Because of the sunlight behind her, I almost missed the fighting light in her eyes. Wearing the traditional suits she preferred, her respected-private-investigator clothes, with her blond hair nice around her fine face and her mouth under control, she looked like nothing so much as an up-and-coming businesswoman, lean and ready—except for her broken nose, and that light in her eyes, and her claw. The punk who broke her nose was long dead. She'd shot him more than once, just in case he missed the point the first time.

"It's a nursemaid job," she said straight at me, "a piece of cake. You may remember the commission suspended my license." Her tone was pure acid. "It's temporary, but for the time being there're only certain kinds of jobs I'm allowed to take. But the fee is real. And it's out of town—up in the mountains, where el Señor isn't likely to find you. It gets you out of here. It'll give you a week where you don't have to do anything worse than walk around. I don't care whether you want it or not. We're going to take it if you can just stand."

In my head, a few dopey synapses went click. Before I could question them, I said, "You believe those phone calls."

She nodded sharply. "I can't talk the cops into protective custody, but hospital security is watching your room most of the time. And the nurses here remember you from that bomb." She gestured with her left arm, and her claw gave me a flash of stainless steel. She'd lost her hand to a bomb in this hospital. "They're doing what they can to keep an eye on you."

She didn't let me interrupt. "It isn't

enough. If you don't get out of here today, I'm going to move in with you."

I shook my head without realizing it. "Why didn't you tell me? Why did you try to make me think you were laughing at me?"

"I didn't want you to worry," she snapped. "you're supposed to be recuperating, not lying there in a muck sweat."

All of a sudden, I felt like giggling. Which wasn't exactly a dignified thing for a man my size to do, especially when you consider the fact that I'd recently been shot in the gut—or that Ginny seriously wanted to save my life. But sometimes my own behavior gets so loony that I want to cackle at it.

"I don't know why I bother arguing with you," I said like a man with a secret hysteria. "You're already taking care of me. You've been taking care of me. You're going to keep on taking care of me. And I don't have any say in the matter. This job in the mountains just makes it easier, not different."

"In fact, you've been taking care of me ever since we started working together. The only way I'm ever going to convince you I'm a big boy now is to stop needing help."

Ginny glared at me. Sounding bitter, she rasped, "Is it the sleeping pills, or are you always this perceptive?"

But she moved her claw through the light again. That was her way of reminding me that taking care wasn't always a one way street. She'd been dependent on me for six months after she lost her hand.

I definitely wanted to giggle. A job. Something to do. Trumpets. Just for a minute or two, the pain in my stomach didn't matter. Even being taken care of didn't matter.

I got out of bed.

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I remembered getting dressed. I'd done it once before, when the hole in my gut was more recent. But that time I'd been too full of drugs and panic to have much rational grasp on what I was doing to myself. This time I knew where every single suture in-

side me was, and I could feel it pulling.

One thing you've got to say for us private investigators. We know how to have a good time.

Technically, of course, Ginny's the private investigator. She's Fistoulari Investigations. I'm just the hired help. I haven't had a license for this kind of work for years—not since I tried to help my brother, the cop, apprehend a purse-snatcher and accidentally shot him. Under the influence of alcohol. Amazing how the things we love best are the things that hurt us the most. I can't remember the last time I had one entire day where the idea of a drink didn't sound like heaven.

But I didn't drink when I was working. In fact, I hadn't had a drink since the day I figured out that Ginny needed me as badly as I needed her—since the day she lost her hand. But that was starting to change. She was wearing her claw now, doing things for herself. Every time I saw her, she was more the woman I used to know, the Ginny Fistoulari who could go after Satan Himself and not take any prisoners.

Muy Estobal's bullet put our relationship back on more familiar ground. I needed her. She didn't especially need me.

A solid gold occasion for booze if ever there was one.

On the other hand, getting dressed was work, no question about it. And we had a job to do. That was food for something, anyway.

She watched the fun I was having with my shirt for a minute or two. Then she said, "Why don't I go get your paperwork done while you're doing that, so we don't have to wait around for discharge?" She knows how I feel about having an audience while I suffer.

I shook my head for more reasons than just self-mortification. Sometimes I act like self-mortification is my favorite indoor sport, but on special occasions I can think about other things as well. I wanted her to watch me struggle into my clothes—I wanted her to have no illusions about my physical

condition, so she wouldn't count on me for things I couldn't do. And I wanted her to talk to me. Help me through the rather peculiar ordeal of putting on my underpants.

For no particularly good reason, I said, "That doctor's going to have a spasm when he hears about this."

"No, he won't." She was sure. "I already talked to him. If you're well enough to get dressed, you're well enough to go home. All we have to do is keep an eye on you—take your temperature, watch for infection, that sort of thing. I've already got your pills." Gazing innocently at the ceiling, she finished, "I didn't tell him about the job."

Well enough to get dressed. At the moment, that was debatable. And it was even more debatable whether she was telling me the truth. If I were a gambler, I would have bet cash money the doctor didn't say, If he's well enough to get dressed, he's well enough to go home. More likely that hippocratic purist said, Get him out of here. We don't need any more guns or bombs in this hospital.

On the other hand, Ginny had obviously spent some time getting ready for this case. That was more interesting than whatever the doctor did or didn't say. "Tell me about the job," I asked to keep her talking. "Who are we nursemaiding besides me?"

"You're going to love it." She made a studious effort not to wince every time my face twisted. "For once, I've got us something easy. Might as well be a vacation."

"Does the name, 'Murder On Cue, Inc.' mean anything to you?"

I shook my head again. If Murder On Cue, Inc. was a company that arranged assassinations, I was going to send them after the bastard who invented underpants.

"It's a small outfit—only two people, as far as I can tell. Unless they've got a secretary hidden away somewhere. Roderick Altar and his wife. They run what they call 'mystery camps.' They get people who like to try to solve crimes—people who

think it's fun to play at being Sherlock Holmes for a few days. Then they hire actors and plan a scenario and take the whole crowd to some secluded place where the real world won't get in their way, and they stage a murder or two for these people to puzzle over. Nobody except Altar and his wife knows the difference between the actors and the guests. Whoever solves the murder wins."

"Be the first kid on your block to catch a killer," I muttered. With my underpants on, I had to rest for a while. I couldn't look at Ginny. I didn't want to see whatever was in her eyes. "Don't these people have anything better to do?"

"Apparently not." As a matter of policy, Fistoulari Investigations doesn't sneer at people who have money. They tend to pay better than people who don't. But I could tell that Ginny shared my visceral reaction to Murder On Cue, Inc.

"So what do they want us for?" I asked to distract myself from my socks. "Let them catch their own killers."

"Security," she answered.

She didn't elaborate.

At last I had to look up to her. "What the hell do people who think killing is some kind of game need 'security' for?"

She shrugged. She was studying me intently, trying to see into my wounds—trying to understand them. "According to Altar, he's just the organizer—the guy who pulls the practical details together, like where do these people stay, how do they get there, what do they eat, who feeds them. His wife's the murder enthusiast. She hires the actors, plans the scenario. She even screens the guests. I guess Murder on Cue is really a kind of hobby for her.

"He says he wants security for the insurance. By protecting his guests and their belongings, he can get better rates. But his wife has different ideas—he says. She wants security because—how did he put it?—'the presence of private investigators makes the ambience more credible.' And it gives the guests somebody to compete

against. Solve the crime before the professionals do."

My brain must have been in even worse shape than I realized. I actually got both my socks on before I thought to ask, "You mean she isn't going to tell us who the actors are? She isn't going to tell us what the scenario is? We're supposed to play the same game they're playing?"

Ginny gave me a little smile. Probably gratified by my ability to cut so quickly to the heart of the matter. "Playing along is part of the job. Mrs. Altar isn't going to tell the guests who we are, and we aren't supposed to either. The only thing anybody else will know is that two of the people there are investigators. But we won't really have to try to solve the crime. In fact, we don't really have to do much of anything.

Our main job is just to keep an eye on the general safety of the situation. Apply a little common sense. Keep the guests from getting carried away. According to Altar, they've never had any trouble. He doesn't want to start now."

Maybe I was finally getting accustomed to the pain. Or maybe moving around made it less. I closed my eyes, lifted one foot into my pants—and was amazed to discover I'd survived the experience. I still felt like I was doing an appendectomy on myself with an apple corer, but aside from the usual lightheadedness and agony, I was doing fine. There's hope for you yet, Axbrewder.

Trying not to pant—trying to prove I really did have a wit or two inside my skull—I produced another question. "What do you know about this Altar? And his wife."

"Do you want help?"

She was referring to my pants. But she wasn't trying to dodge my question. She just didn't like being left out of all the fun. I shook my head. After a minute, she pretended to believe me.

"Roderick and Sue-Rose Altar. I haven't met her. He's in his early fifties. Not exactly fat—he just likes food more

than exercise. Used to be a venture capitalist, until he made too much money to keep working. Now he just manages his investments. And takes care of Sue-Rose and her enthusiasms."

"I don't have your talent for snap judgments"—this was a reference to my innate preference for intuition over reason—"but if you pushed me I'd say he's just a bit bored with Sue-Rose and her enthusiasms and his whole life."

Well, that settled it. A nursemaid job if ever there was one. Just what I needed. If Murder On Cue, Inc. had ever put on a mystery camp where anything actually happened, Roderick Altar probably wouldn't have been bored. With any self-respect at all, I would have gone back to rejecting the whole idea. But Ginny'd already made it clear she intended to take care of me no matter what I did. And I wanted her safe at the same time. It sure as hell wasn't going to cheer me up if she came between me and some goon and got hurt. So I kept what I thought of useless work to myself.

Almost like I'd done this sort of thing often enough to be good at it, I put my other foot into my pants and pulled them up.

Somebody should have applauded, but my audience didn't bother.

Get off the bed. Tuck in my shirt. Thread a belt through the loops. Buckle it. Keep your breathing shallow and act like you aren't about to fall on your face. A dazzling performance, Axbrewder. So maybe it was just a nursemaid job. If it required me to do as much as stand and walk and possibly even shake hands, it was going to be as much as I could manage.

"What about your coat?" Ginny asked. "You want help with that?"

I wavered and wobbled in front of her. For some reason, she looked taller than I was—which ought to be impossible, considering that I'm six five, and she isn't. Maybe I was in the grip of a metaphysical perception. Morally, she was always taller. Or maybe it was just *deja vu*—a reminder of all the times she's come looking for me,

looking for a way to rescue me from myself, and I'd stood there unsteady with drink and let her pretend she needed me. Wither way, I didn't like it. So I asked the kind of question that usually got me in trouble.

"Why us?"

I'd caught her with her mind somewhere else. Probably still trying to guess how far I'd be able to walk. "Why us what?"

"Why does Roderick Altar want Fistolari Investigations?" Speaking distinctly was as close as I could get to sarcasm. "You don't usually do this kind of work."

"I asked him that." She still wasn't thinking about my question. She had a frown knotted across the bridge of her nose, and her eyes kept flicking away from me as if she didn't like what she saw. "He said he must have heard my name somewhere. Or read it in the paper. I told you I've been doing interviews."

Which finally struck me as odd. She ordinarily didn't have much patience for the media. So I put in, "Why?"

"Trying to keep a high profile," she explained absently. "As long as we're news, we'll be harder to hit." "But I don't think he actually cares who we are, or whether we're any good. He isn't that interested in what he's doing."

I didn't want to think about keeping a high profile to discourage being hit. What she said made perfect sense, of course. But I didn't like her going out on that many limbs for me—I didn't like being protected. I wasn't keen on the implications.

I suppose the truth is that I'd been angry at her for a long time. With more intensity and less reason than her anger at me. She should have let me drink myself into my grave, instead of coming to pull me away from booze over and over again. She should have been stronger when she lost her hand, instead of putting the burden on me—instead of refusing to wear the claw, requiring me to take care of her because for six months she felt so crippled, so much less

*Concluded on page 44*

## DEALERS' ROOM INFORMATION

Greetings to all and welcome to the Chattacon XIV Dealers' Room, a little different, a little larger, and, hopefully, a lot easier to get around in. Here you will find any item your heart could desire...well, some of them. Our dealers have come from as far as a thousand miles away to barter their goods with you. New faces abound, all determined to pry you away from your hard-earned cash. Come in, browse, and enjoy.

Any suggestions (or complaints) that you may have as a guest, member, dealer, or staff are welcome. Either write them up and drop them in the suggestion box (next to T-Shirt sales) or talk to whomever you find behind the head dealer's table (during one of our less busy times, please!). Be assured that we do take your ideas seriously.

As always, we prohibit food and drinks in the Dealers' Room for anyone who is not a dealer, assistant to a dealer, or Dealers' Room staff. Smoking is discouraged. Room hours are very similar to what you have become accustomed to, although adjusted slightly so everyone can attend the Art Auction and Masquerade. Guest of Honor Speeches, Consignment Auction (both in the North Hall), as well as Autograph Sessions (Trade Center lobby and elsewhere) are closer and more convenient for dealers to slip over to. The Dealers' Room is now closer to the loading docks to make things quicker for loading and unloading.

For dealers and their assistants only, memberships for Chattacon XIV and XV as well as tables for Chattacon XV will be available at the head dealer's table throughout the weekend. Prices will be the same as this year's convention. Forms and surveys will be available there also.

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### Hours:

#### Friday:

9:00 AM - 1:00 PM - Dealers only

1:00 PM - 9:00 PM - Open

#### Saturday:

9:30 AM - 10:00 AM - Dealers only

10:00 AM - 7:00 PM - Open

#### Sunday:

9:30 AM - 10:00 AM - Dealers only

10:00 AM - 3:00 PM - Open

3:00 PM - 5:00 PM - Dealers only

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Key for Dealer information on following page:

A - Artwork, prints

B - Books, hardback, paperback

C - Comics

Cl - Clothing, costuming and accessories

G - Games

J - Jewelry

M - Miniatures

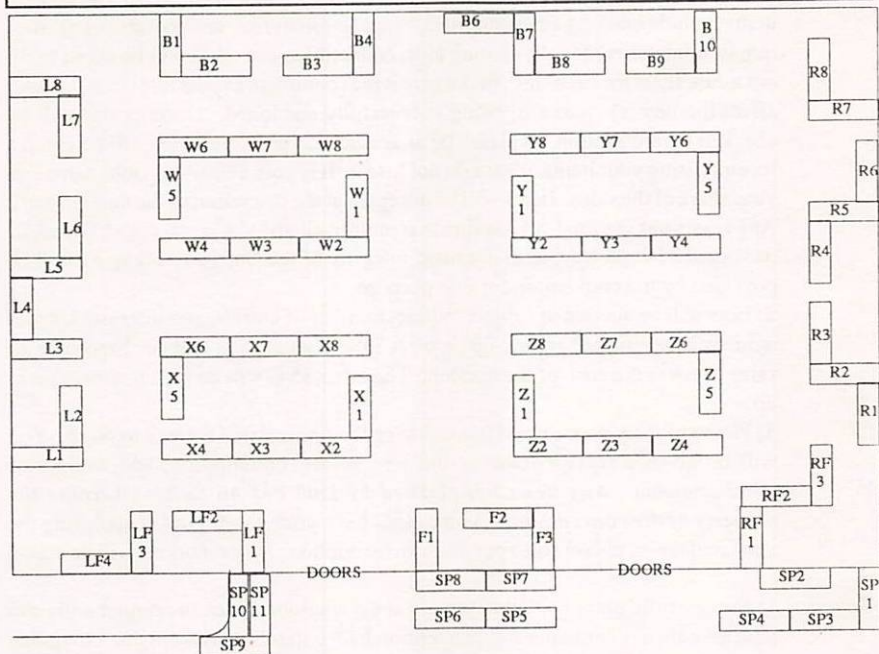
Mi - Miscellaneous

P - Publications, magazines, pulps, fanzines

T - Toys, Models

W - Weapons

# DEALERS' ROOM LAYOUT



## DEALER KEY

*Alphabetically arranged*

Assassin's Guild	B1	W,C,Mi	LSW Distributors	W5-W8	G,A,C
Stan Bruno	Y7	A	Vic Martine	LF1-LF2	J,C,P,Mi
Chattanooga Magic & Fun	R8	G,T,Mi	Bob Maurus	X1-X2	A,M,Mi,J
C.I.B.	R1-R2	C,P,G,B	Mere Dragons	L2-L3	J,Mi
Conquest Enterprises	W4	J,Mi	Moneyhaven	Y4-Y6	J,C,Mi
Craftworks	X8	B,J,Mi	Courtesy Parham	X7	?
Critical Mass	R7	P	Phillips & Mays	Z6	B,P,C,Mi
Mark Derrick	L4-L6	C,P	Tim Riley	Z8	C,P,A
Claire Dewberry	Z7	MJ	Sean O'Shea	L1	Mi
Elfwood	B9-B10	W,C,Mi	Dee Sharpe	RF1-RF3	W
Fantasies Unlimited	B6-B8	A,Mi	Sleepy Lion Graphics	X3	A,C,Mi
Joe Fleishman	LF3-LF4	?	Southern Fantasy	R3-R6	C,P,G,B
Reh Giadronich	Y8	A	Dick Spelman	X4-X6	B,J
Griming Gremlin	Z4-Z5	G,P,C,B,T	Star Books & Games	Y1	B,G
Tish Gruller	Z2	M,Mi	Starfire	W1-W2	?
Hodge Hobbies	B2-B4	G,T,M,Mi	Richard Stubblefield	L7-L8	C,Mi
The Holding Bin	W3	?	Treasure Island	Y2-Y3	M,J,C,Mi
Susan Homeck	F1	A,M	Ye Olde Dragon Shoppe	Z3	?
Norman Hood	F2-F3	A			

Chief Dealer's Table, Consignment Auction, T-Shirt Sales  
Special Usage Tables

SP1-SP4  
SP5-SP11

# CONSIGNMENT AUCTION

**Sellers:** 1) Register your lots, 5 maximum, each of less than 25 items or less, at the table in front of the Dealers' Room. Each 'lot' will be sold as a single item. Acceptable items include books, games/modules, magazines/comics, art, posters/prints, dioramas, miniatures/models, gaming aids, collectibles, etc. You will be asked to fill out a data sheet for each 'lot', make sure it is as complete as possible since this will affect the item(s) chance of being successfully auctioned. Descriptions will be checked before auction, so please be as accurate as possible. You will be given a receipt listing your items, please do not lose it. It is your claim to unsold items and your share of the sales. Items will be accepted at the discretion of the auction staff. Any rejections are final. Make sure that multiple item 'lots' are bagged, boxed, or packaged in some way, as to maintain integrity of the 'lot'; no packaging will be provided by the convention for this purpose.

2) Lots will be auctioned subject to time, number of entries, and interest. Unsold items will be returned at pick-up time. A 15% commission will be charged on all sales to cover the cost of the auction. The other 85% will be paid to you at pick-up.

3) Please pick up your unsold items during the times slated for you to do so. You will be given a receipt showing the lots, prices, commission, and amount of reimbursement. **Any items not claimed by 1:00 PM on Sunday become the property of the convention.** If you cannot have your goods picked up during the allocated times, please don't put them up for auction. No exceptions will be made.

**Buyers:** 1) Successfully outbid all other buyers at the auction. When the runner comes to you, give them your name and convention badge number. Accept the lot tag that the runner gives you and check the "sold" price listed. Make sure the sold price is the price you bid. **Do not lose this tag!** This is your claim to the merchandise and must be presented at pick-up.

2) During the times slated for buyer pick-up, present the lot tags to claim your merchandise. Present cash or check (with proper ID) sufficient to cover your purchase. You will be given a receipt showing the lots, prices and total paid. All sales are final, no returns or exchanges. Please remember that bidding in an auction constitutes a verbal contract and you are obligated to purchase what you bid on, so if you can't afford it, let someone else win the auction.

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## *Consignment Auction Hours*

Registration for	7:00 PM - 9:00 PM - Friday
Consignment Auction:	10:00 AM - 11:30 AM - Saturday
Open for Inspection:	10:00 AM - 1:00 PM - Saturday
Consignment Auction:	12:00 PM - 2:00 PM - Saturday
Buyer's Pick-up:	2:00 PM - 4:00 PM - Saturday 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM - Sunday
Seller's Pick-up:	11:00 AM - 1:00 PM - Sunday

# VIDEO SCHEDULE

Friday	15:00	SpaceBalls
	16:40	Ladyhawk
	18:45	The Hidden
		Japanese Animation Fest #1
	20:30	Dirty Pair #25: "What?! The Boy in the Mansion is a Terminator!"
	21:00	M. D. Giest
	21:45	Outlanders
	22:40	Urusei Matsuda: TV Episode #1
	23:10	Urusei Matsuda #2: Beautiful Dreamer
Saturday	00:50	Blackmagic: M-66
	01:40	Repo Man
	03:15	Death Race 2000
	04:35	The Barbarians
	06:05	Inner Space
	08:05	CLOSED FOR CLEANING
	09:00	Darby O'Gill and the Little People
	10:30	Light Years
	11:55	Creature from the Black Lagoon
	13:15	It Came from Outer Space
	14:35	The Fly (The Original)
	16:10	Outer Limits: The Galaxy Being
	17:05	Beetlejuice
	18:40	When the Wind Blows
	20:00	Return of the Living Dead
	21:30	Return of the Living Dead II
		Japanese Animation Fest #2
	23:00	Dirty Pair #26: "Seriously? The God Cannon is a Beauty's Keyword to Escape."
	23:25	Crusher Joe
Sunday	01:40	Warriors of the Wind (English dubbed)
	03:15	Prefectural Earth Defense Force
	04:05	The Empire of the Ants
	05:35	Voyage of the Rock Aliens
	07:15	Red Alert
	08:50	The Flight of Dragons
	10:30	Critters 2
	12:00	The Lost Boys
	13:40	My Best Friend is a Vampire
	15:10	CLOSED FOR ANOTHER YEAR



Friday, January 13, 1989

	Plaza A	Plaza B
6 - 7 PM	Opening Ceremonies	Closed
7 - 8 PM	<i>Creating BEMS Act I</i> Alan Clark Kevin Ward	Reading Spider Robinson
8 - 9:30 PM	<i>The Art of Real Musgrave</i>	<i>The Blood Salvage Road Show and Splat-O-Rama</i>
9:30 PM +	Dance Set-Up Dance	

Sunday, January 15, 1989

	Plaza A	Plaza B
	<i>Editors of All Descriptions</i> Charlotte Proctor Jerry Page P.L. Caruthers-Montgomery	<i>Getting a Start in Comics</i> Julius Schwartz Bob Giadrosich Ward Batty
11 - 12 PM		
	<i>Gallia en Tres Partes Est</i> Charles Grant David Drake Sandra Miesel	<i>Incest, Frankenstein and the Connecticut Yankee</i> Dr. Bud Foote
12 - 1 PM		
	<i>The Real and Steve Show</i> Real Musgrave Stephen R. Donaldson	<i>Special Presentation: RoboCop</i> Paul Sammon MGM
1 - 2 PM		
	Closing Ceremonies	<i>ASFA Meeting</i> David Cherry
2 - 3 PM		

	Plaza A	Plaza B	Trade Center Room One	Trade Center North Hall Far End	Trade Center North Hall Mid Section	Trade Center North Hall Auditorium					
10	<p><i>Special Presentation: Leviathan</i></p> <p>Paul Sarmon MGM</p>	<p><i>Surviving the Market Place</i></p> <p>Muff Musgrave Bob Maurus Stan Bruns</p>	<p><i>What's So Super About Superconductivity?</i></p> <p>Les Johnson</p>	<p><i>Society For Creative Anachronism Event</i></p>							
11	<p><i>Living in Dual Worlds</i></p> <p>Stephen Donaldson Tom Deitz Sandra Miesel</p>	<p><i>Romanticism/Realism</i></p> <p>David Cherry Reel Musgrave Doug Chaffee Mark Maxwell</p>	<p><i>Good Medicine is Good SF</i></p> <p>Sharon Webb Sharon Farber Jeri Webb</p>								
12	<p><i>Sex, Time Travel, and Other Complications</i></p> <p>Spider Robinson Charles L. Grant Brad Linaweaver</p>	<p><i>SF Writers of Cobb County and Critical Mass Magazine Present A Special Issue</i></p>	<p><i>Legends: After the Dinosaurs Went Away</i></p> <p>Charlotte Proctor Toni Weisskopf</p>	<p><i>Creating BEMS Act II</i></p> <p>Alan Clark Kevin Ward</p>	<p><i>Workshop</i></p> <p>Bob Maurus  (limited to Pre-Registered Students)</p>	<p><i>Consignment Auction</i></p>					
1	<p><i>The Mighty Rastilon Art Players</i></p>	<p><i>Legends: When Dinosaurs Roamed</i></p> <p>Julius Schwartz "Bob" Tucker Richard Gilliam Ken Moore</p>	<p><i>Robotics</i></p> <p>Elaine Hinman</p>	<p><i>OPEN ARTIST WORKSHOP</i></p>							
2						<p><i>Guest Of Honor Speeches</i></p> <p>Toastmaster: Charlie Grant</p>					
							Gaming	6	<p><i>Creating BEMS Act II The Product (We Hope)</i></p> <p>Alan Clark Kevin Ward</p>	6:30	<p><i>Art Auction Set-Up</i></p>
								7	<p><i>Masquerade Pre-Judging</i></p>		<p><i>Art Auction</i></p>
											9
	Dance (after Masquerade)										

## ART SHOW INFORMATION

Once again, the Art Show, located in The John Ross Banquet Room, will have many fine pieces of art for your viewing pleasure... If you wish to purchase a piece of art through the Art Show, there are several ways to go about doing it. Prior to the close of the Show on Saturday, if a piece has no bids, you may purchase it for the Immediate Purchase Price (IPP), provided that the artist has listed an IPP. If there is no IPP, a bid on the bid sheet, or you do not wish to pay the IPP, you must enter the auctioning process. This simply means that you must enter a bid. At Chattacon, the auctioning process is done in two steps. The first step is the written bidding or silent auction; the second is the voice auction that occurs on Saturday night. If you see a piece that you wish to bid on, all you do is write your name, your badge number, and the amount you wish to bid (provided the amount is higher than the minimum bid or any other bid on the sheet). This is the silent part. As soon as an item has two or more written bids, it is eligible for Saturday night's voice auction, where anyone can bid on a piece just by calling out a higher amount of money than the previous bidder. The person with the highest bid, written or voice, gets the privilege of paying for the piece and taking it home. All written bidding ceases at 4:00 PM, Saturday, and all verbal bidding ceases when the auctioneer says the magic word, sold. Oh, if you bid, and are the highest bidder (oral or written), please remember that you have entered into a contract and are obligated to purchase the item. So much for the bidding process. The Art Show will be open on Sunday morning for people to pay for and pick up artwork. Also, items that were not sold will be available for sale at the After Auction price indicated by the artist. Naturally, any item Not For Sale (NFS) are not for sale. The Art Show accepts checks, MasterCard, VISA, and good old American cash.

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### *Art Show Hours*

Hours:

Friday:

2:00 PM - Open for Artist Check-In

5:00 PM - 10:00 PM - Open

Saturday:

10:00 AM - 4:00 PM - Open

7:00 PM - Art Auction in North Hall.

Sunday:

10:00 AM - 12:00 PM - Open

12:00 PM - 2:00 PM - Artist Check-Out

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### *Print Shop Information*

Once again, Chattacon is offering a Print Shop. In this shop, you may directly purchase a print of one of your favorite works of Science Fiction/Fantasy art without having to go through the Art Show's bidding process. The Print Shop is located in the same room as the Art Show.

## MASQUERADE INFORMATION

Chattacon's masquerade will be bigger and better than ever this year. It will be run under the control of the Deep South Costumer's Guild and guided by Sue Thorne. We will be holding it in the North Hall of the Trade Center. There should be ample room for all and a raised stage for easier viewing.

Not only will there be prizes this year, but there will be cash awards for the most outstanding costume(s).

For a copy of the rules and sign-up sheets, go to the Operations Suite (Rm. 301) or Pre-Registration.

## REGISTRATION INFORMATION

Found badges will be taken to the Operations Suite (Rm. 301). Should you discover your badge is missing, you should attempt to locate it. You will be allowed into any convention function space until you find it. If you have lost your badge and cannot locate it, we will replace your badge for \$25. Since the price for this service is very high, do not lose your badge.

**Do not give your badge to another person.** This is grounds for immediate expulsion from the convention.

### Hours:

Friday: 1:00 PM - 11:00 PM

Saturday: 10:00 AM - 6:00 PM

After hours registration will be conducted in the Operations Suite (Rm. 301).

## HOSPITALITY SERVICES INFORMATION

Welcome to our sit around, relax, and have a good time room. Our desire is to provide an ideal atmosphere for your enjoyment. Please advise us of any suggestions for improvements.

There will be limited service in the consuite from 2:00 AM - 7:00 AM both Saturday and Sunday mornings.

### A picture ID will be required for service.

This years hours will be:

Friday: 12:00 PM - 11:59 PM

Saturday: 12:00 AM - 6:00 AM

7:00 AM - 11:59 PM

Sunday: 12:00 AM - 6:00 AM

7:00 AM - 4:00 PM

## T-SHIRT INFORMATION

T-shirts will be available again this year. The colors for this year are lilac, aqua, and maroon. The maroon shirts have a metallic gold screening on them. Prices this year will be \$8 per shirt or \$15 for 2 shirts. We also have a limited number of maroon sweatshirts for sale at \$15 each.

**DAVID DRAKE**  
**BILL DIETZ**

# CRISIS OF EMPIRE

## CLUSTER COMMAND

**THE  
GALACTIC  
EMPIRE'S  
FINEST  
HOUR...  
OR ITS  
FINAL  
DAYS?**



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The first Galactic Empire has entered what may very well be its last crisis: the Emperor has died untimely (perhaps by assassination) leaving an infant heir. Worse, the imperial mystique is but a fading memory; nobody believes in empire anymore. Indeed, nobody believes in anything beyond the boundaries of self. There are exceptions, of course, and it is those few to whom fall the duty of maintaining

a military-civil order that is corrupt, despotic—and infinitely preferable to the barbarous chaos that will accompany its fall.

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**NEW IN MAY FROM BAEN BOOKS**

# SURVIVING THE SOUTH, AGAIN

by  
*Charles L. Grant*

It appears that the survival tips for Northerners suggested in last year's program book were, to put it mildly, not taken very seriously. This is a shame. Refusal to believe said report resulted in the humiliation of at least seven Northerners that I know of, the jailing of nineteen, and the deportation of one, who isn't any great loss but one does share the responsibility for the idiots as well as the good guys, doesn't one?

The organizers of this convention have therefore asked me to once again pinpoint certain socio, economic, and cultural differences between North and South so that this year's charity auction can be used for charity, not bail. Myself, I'd let the dummies rot, we have too many people up North anyway, but I am reminded that my father was an Episcopal priest and so, by extension (or implication), I must have absorbed something in the way of love of neighbor.

Right.

1. Once again, I plead with you not to giggle at the South's version of winter. It didn't do any good last year; it won't do any good this year. Putting on chains, down here, has nothing to do with tires. Masquerades are a different matter; so are those occasional moans you hear in the lobby a few hours after midnight and you're wandering around, trying to find a party but all the doors are closed and the dorks lying in the hall can't tell you anything except the name of Spock's sister. These are the same dingbats, by the way, who, in the middle of the afternoon, are lying in the hall trying to figure out how the hotel got all these doors into the floor.

2. Banquet food, up North, consists of

freeze-dried pedestrians from Philadelphia. At Chattacon there is no banquet, so the committee, in a feeble attempt to save a buck and avoid snide comments like these, takes its guests to restaurants in parts of town you thought were actually in Georgia because surely Tennessee doesn't want any part of them, though if Georgia knew about them, they wouldn't want them either. If you are not a special guest of the convention, you are left blessedly on your own to discover the true delights of Southern cooking, none of which is available in the South anymore because all of the chefs went to New York and Chicago to open over-priced restaurants to cater to the Northern conventions that don't know no better no how because they think Southern cooking originated in the South. It doesn't. It comes from Vancouver.

3. Be patient with Southerners. They don't always understand us. For example, I have been driving to Chattanooga for several years, now, listening to, and accompanying, Willie Nelson and Emmylou Harris, Eric Clapton and Rod Stewart, at the top of my lungs. Ms. Wendy Webb, of the famous writing Webbs, thinks I do it in a pickup truck. Right. Seven hundred miles in a pickup. With sidepipes and a gun rack. Well, despite my hat, my clothes and my choice of music, I have a Thunderbird. It is a very comfortable automobile. It does not look like a truck; it sure as hell doesn't ride like a truck. My first wife did, but that's another story.

4. Up North, convention badges are very staid, by and large (and they have to be, considering the size of a fair amount of

Northern fans). Name and number, no frills. All very cost-effective. Sadly, the South has adopted a Northern device known as the pin. Instead of having a clamp you can safely clip onto your pocket or collar, you have this . . . thing that pokes holes in everything but Teflon. Which means that you either go badgeless and wander forever through the halls with people paying no attention to you at all, or you're forced to ruin your best shirt, jacket, etc. so everybody can talk to you while, at the same time, cleverly try to read your name so you'll think they remember you from the last time. This is very embarrassing when you're talking to a woman—or someone you think is a woman. Naturally, the registration people have either already typed your name out on your badge, or have run off those illegible computer labels. In either case, unless you pretend to stumble so that you fall against someone just right, you still can't read them. Personally, I do prefer the lean-and-squint method, because Southern women, unlike Northern women, are more apt to smile beautifully before they slug you. Sometimes, it's worth it.

5. Do not bring your watch to the South. They don't bother with time down here. If California is laid back, the South is downright prone. Rushing, a Northern method of squeezing an extra hour into each day, is, in Chattanooga, just a funny way of saying Soviet Union. Relax. If you don't, the convention will be over on Friday night, and then you'll be forced for the rest of your stay to listen to Tennessee newscasts, which assume that there is Tennessee and there is the rest of the world. The rest of the world is taken care of during the commercials for Hi's Imported Feed and John Deere Dealership; Tennessee is covered more thoroughly than a sunburn. If you must hurry, do it slowly. You'll live longer.

6. Southerners are very accommodating. There is an ad in the "Massage Parlor" section of the Atlanta yellow pages which says, "Hand Signals for the Deaf". I swear.

7. If you're accustomed to Northern

conventions, you will have noted that fans up there, publicly and in their fanzines, about not attending panels. This is *derigeur*. Go to a northern panel (unless it's about fans and fanzines) and your given a suit and tie and booted out into the cold until you learn your manners. Here in the South, however, Southern fans go to as many panels as they can—when they can find them. Which isn't often. This is because, whether the rooms have names or letters, the panels which have been scheduled for them have been moved to another room, usually on another floor, and, if the committee can swing it, in another building. The sign posting the change is then posted on a bulletin board amid several dozen announcements for room parties, pleas for rides home, and lonely hearts messages. If the panel members do find the room, they are given free Amelia Earhart luggage; if the audience finds the room, the panel members are usually so grateful that most of the hour is wasted in joyous celebration and telephone number exchanging.

8. Southern women are special. They have taste. To hit on a Southern woman the way you might a Northern woman is to invite disaster. They may look fragile and belle-ish, but they hit like a sumbitch, which is why so many Northerners walk around bent over by Saturday night; believe me, they are not looking for loose change. One must therefore, and for one's own safety, be suave, courtly, complimentary, and patient. A Southern woman has her own way of letting you know if you've passed muster; if you wait for a "Yo, stud!", you might as well ask a Mormon out for tea.

9. Southern fans, kid division: the next time you see one knock over someone in a corridor because he's in a hurry for his ninety-third viewing of the umpty-eleventh episode of "Doctor Who", don't get mad. Smile. Remember: those idiots don't know it yet, but in spite of everything, and with a little luck, they're gonna get old. I am already making a rogues gallery to show to my grandchildren. Revenge is sweetest

when taken cold. Besides, if you tried anything now, they'd probably lock you in a room and force you to listen to William Shatner singing, "Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds". If you ain't heard that yet, you ain't heard what a jilted moose sounds like.

10. Do not treat Stephen R. Donaldson like a Northerner. Do not treat him like a Southerner. He is from New Mexico and has nothing in common with the rest of the known universe. For example: it is true (I've done it, so I know) that if you leave Albuquerque on one road and head north, and if you want to make your first left to go back to Albuquerque on another road, you have to drive to Santa Fe first. Sixty miles. I swear it. Another fact: the penitentiary in Santa Fe once had all its electronic cell doors and perimeter gates pop open because of a lightning strike. Lots of guys took early leave. Third fact: true New Mexicans hate Texans. They think Texas is trying to take over New Mexico. I have spent a lot of time in both places, which is why I still live in New Jersey.

11. Volunteers, in Southern fandom, has two distinct meanings. Be careful. Saying you'll be glad to be one may find you playing tight end against Georgia Tech, and someone calling you a "ramblin' wreck" will no longer refer to the way you look on Sunday morning.

12. Be not afraid to ask Southerners for help. They are friendly, very friendly, and will do all they can to make you feel at home. Unless you're in the con suite and ask for the name of the woman walking by the table in the T-shirt that says "If You Love Something, Let It Go. If It Doesn't Come Back in Six Months, Hunt It Down and Kill It." A Southern gentleman will refuse such information. Especially if he's younger than you are, and so is she. In fact, he may call a friend over in order to convince you that Southern women are not crass sex objects, but objects of high esteem, regards, and worthy to be worshipped. Do not attempt to convince them that you also feel that way. They know better. The

best thing to do is go to your room and take a shower. Unless you're on the upper floors of this hotel, in which case your odds of getting in hot water are better by returning to the con suite and hitting on the woman with the T-shirt.

13. Sometime during the weekend, you will undoubtedly find yourself riding in one of those miserable glass-walled elevators that show you just how far you will fall when the cable snaps. At that moment you will learn two things: 1) that glass-walled elevators tend to shimmy in a high wind, and 2) that young Southern fans are, sadly, like young fans everywhere—they can't read the sign that says, "There are too many people in this elevator; please get off before you kill us all." Being young is not excuse. You can help by killing one or two of them before you reach your floor. This can be accomplished in one of two ways: you can switch their beer for water, thus giving them cardiac arrest; or you can put gum on their soles, press every button from top to bottom, and get off quickly. This will stop and start them so many times that the beer they've already illegally consumed will foam and fizz and blow the suckers up. Remember, all it takes is a paper towel and Glass-Plus to clean a glass-walled elevator.

14. Do not speak to Southerners of politics. Bad form, folks. After all, the North is effete, the West is peculiar, and the Midwest, while almost kin, also boasts Dan Quayle, who blames everything he does and says wrong as "youthful indiscretion". Poor Dan. He can't help it. He was born with a silver National Guard post in his mouth (sorry Ms. Richards; a cheap shot, but I couldn't resist).

15. Lastly, be sure that, before you leave, you thank all the good folk who run and support Chattoon, with little time this weekend to do much else. After all, if you weren't down here having the good time they're providing, you'd be up there, shoveling all that damned snow, wearing too

*Concluded on Page 43*



# The Paranoid

(excerpted from *Callahan's Lady*)

by  
Spider Robinson

It's amazing how many of the remarkable stories that could be told about Lady Sally's House have to do with secrets.

Oh, any bordello hears secrets, by definition: if our culture were not so sick that natural healthy urges are deadly secrets, there would be little need for bordellos. Father Newman suggested once, only half kidding, that we artists—that all prostitutes—function rather like priests for people who feel more natural confessing their sins while naked. (He also pointed out the convenience of doing so while the sins are still fresh in one's mind: one of several reasons the good Father likes to hang out in Lady Sally's Parlor himself.) Like any brothel, Lady Sally's House has probably triggered more confessions than St. Patrick's Cathedral.

Two things distinguish us from St. Pat's: the very nature of the absolution we offer, and the fact that every single prayer voiced in Lady Sally's House can be *proven* to have been heard on high, by an All-Hearing Ear. The ear, that is, of Mary, who sits in the Snoop Room on the third floor monitoring the dozens of bugs, for the protection of artists and clients alike. (Do you have any idea how much thirty seconds can mean to a paramedic in a heart case?) Herrig has a fast scan mode that can deliver her a slice of every conversation in the House within five seconds or less: to me it's just gabble at that speed, but Mary swears she can follow everything at once, and she's never lost a bet.

As is true at St. Pat's—and not, I think, true of any other brothel—no secret ever leaves the House. One of the most inflexible House rules is that we may gossip about

clients only with fellow artists, privately. Even then, we're not supposed to identify them by even House name. Mary talks to the rest of us about what she hears only when she thinks it's needful.

What seems to make Lady Sally's House *unique* is that we get secrets so weird that half the time there's no point in gossiping, because no one would believe you. Like the werebeagle, and the talking dog, and Colt, the Six-Shooting Stud, and the woman client who had three... well, you get the idea. A place as special as Sally's just naturally tends to draw bizarre and wonderful people. Luckily, the Lady's magic is white magic: the oddballs she attracts are almost invariably benign. (The rest get what she calls "an invitation to the world.")

Occasionally, though, the secret can be so downright creepy that you don't want to gossip about it.

Hell, I've already told you Lady Sally's darkest secret, something you'd have to be a client to know, something even the cabdrivers don't know:

She permits *puns* in her Parlor.

Well, okay, she hasn't got a lot of choice. Her husband suffers from the filthy habit; she couldn't very well ban it in the Parlor and then let Mike do it. Not that he's ever around before closing, except Sundays, but you see her problem. (Have you ever tried to cure a loved one's affliction? Little joy there.) So any night of the week you're liable to hear things in the Parlor like:

"Hey, did you hear about the vampire typesetter? All his mistakes are Type Os."

To which someone is liable to reply, "Then hemostatistically normal than any-

thing else." And people actually applauded.

If a new client turns out to be a carpenter, someone is sure to ask him, "How do you know if your wife is true?" just to hear the ritual response, "I check her out with a plumb bob." One carpenter achieved instant Parlor celebrity by suggesting in deadpan return that his questioner "go see Uri Geller and get bent."

All I can tell you is that there's no such thing as a perfect place to work: not even at Lady Sally's House. I suppose all things considered it's not really *that* big a price to pay. But I don't have to like it.

Maybe I'm being illogical. I like word games, anagrams, palindromes, verbal puzzles: why are they okay and straight puns so abhorrent? I think because in a straight pun, all the cleverness and wit has been used to poke a hole through the very idea of language, the possibility of communicating unambiguously with words—and that's too dismaying to be funny to me. Puns are my idea of rubber-crutch jokes. I concede that there are some excellent and witty rubber-crutch jokes... but few I want to hear.

Nonetheless a girl has her professional pride. If a client thinks a pun will make him or her look more attractive to me—and I'm constantly stunned at how often they do—I'll try and keep my real opinion my *own* secret. (In some ways, men have it tougher than women in this business.)

One night in late February, two years after I became an artist, I was sitting by the fireplace at the west end of the Parlor, in the opening stages of conversation with a new client. She was a tall stunning statuesque blond in her mid-thirties, whose House name was Diana. New chums are almost always self-conscious, so you have to play them delicately: you don't want them to feel pressured into selecting you out of politeness rather than desire, but you don't want to give the impression that you could care less, either. I usually just keep the conversation general and watch their eyes, and if I haven't seen what I'm looking for in thirty

seconds or so, I sadly remember an obligation on the other side of the Parlor and ask if I may be excused.

Of course, this woman could not be *too* self-conscious, or she would not be here, but in the adjacent Women-Only Lounge, which exists for that very purpose. Still, I was feeling my way carefully with neutral chatter, classic Parlor anecdotes and so forth, and observing attentively: I found her Valkyrie looks quite attractive, and was hoping for her business. She has an intriguing pair of earrings, big dangling milk opals, well domed and full of rolling blue fire; I remember finding it odd that they were clip-ons. There was a matching ring that had never known saw or wheel. I love good opals: these looked Australian. (The world's best, to my mind.) Her teeth were perfect and uncapped. There was an oddly endearing imperfection in one eyebrow, as though there'd been a slight wrinkle in the blueprint.

One of her conversational responses was drowned out by a stentorian suit full of wind on a nearby sofa, one of those City Hall bureaucrats who're always going on about what good shape they're in. "I'm telling you, Phil, right from the factory it had the spokes with that little curve to 'em, like they do, you know? and it kept making this little *whicka whicka* sound." Phillip, who hates being called "Phil," was looking a bit glassy-eyed, but nodded gamely. "So I had my bike man take 'em all out and straighten 'em and put 'em back in, and now it just goes *whirr*, and I put another point zero one five em pee aitch on my top speed. Just like everything else on a bike, it all comes down to wind resistance."

Phillip is a dear. I had halfway decided that it would be my good deed for the night to gracefully abort my present contact and go see if I could rescue him from that bore by sacrificing my fair body in his place, when Diana made it unnecessary. She held up a hand for the bureaucrat's attention, got it, and said loudly and distinctly, "I'm sure truer spokes were never *whirred*."

He frowned, blinked, cleared his throat twice, got up and wandered off to the nearer of the two bars. He looked back over his shoulder on the way, and all three of us were absolutely pokerfaced. When he turned away again, Phillip and I slumped in our seats and let broad grins spread across our faces. Diana too was smiling.

"Perhaps that was a little severe for his offence," I said, "but thank you on behalf of everyone in earshot. Which in his case was the whole Parlor."

"Oh, Sherry" she said, a little disappointed, "you're not one of those people who doesn't like puns, are you?"

"Well...honestly?"

"Of course, honey."

"I'd rather have a rash."

"Oh, no! Oh, it's so much worse when someone's clever like you and still dislikes them. Come on, now: won't you please make a pun for me?"

You can probably think of several reasons why I might have decided to accommodate her. So can I. I didn't think of any of them then, I just did it.

"Okay. I finally bought one of those newfangled gearshift bikes, after my old clunker finally rusted apart. There's a dozen dogs in this neighborhood, and all but two of them claimed possession of my new bike; so now it smells so bad I can't ride it. Which proves what I've been saying for years: a tens-peed bicycle really stinks."

Phillip reacted as if a small rat had appeared before him in mid-air, on fire; he sat up straight and sucked air through his teeth and averted his gaze. But Diana *relaxed* slightly and smiled with pure pleasure. Her eyes glittered oddly.

"Will you come upstairs with me right now and do anything that makes me happy?" she murmured. "Please?"

"Of course." I rose from the couch and smoothed my dress.

"Will you excuse us, Phillip?" she asked.

"Certainly, my dear," he said, raising one eyebrow. "And thanks again. I owe you

one."

"They all do," she said mysteriously, "and I intend to collect. Don't worry."

"I won't," he promised, and she took my hand and headed for the spiral staircase in the center of the Parlor.

Δ Δ Δ

It's always a pleasure to climb on that grand old staircase, to feel its sturdy treads beneath my feet and run my hand along its graceful iron drogeries. Some master blacksmith who was also a gifted artist made it by hand, and it may have been the work of more than one life time for all I know. It would not look out of place in Buckingham Palace or the Vatican.

I paused at the top, and asked the perennial question.

"Would you like to go straight to my own studio, Diana—or would you care to see some of the function rooms first?"

She smiled. "Now what, in a place like this, would constitute a 'function room'?" A common response from a new client.

"Well," I said, "there's the Executive's Office, and Mistress Cynthia's Dungeon, and the Doctor's Exam—" I don't know what instinct caused me to name those two first.

"Do you take many of your clients to the dungeon?" she interrupted.

"No. One or two, as an occasional thing. Folks who are seriously into that sort of game generally gravitate to someone who really enjoys playing it full time. Mistress Cynthia and Master Henry are the best in the world at domination—although the name of the studio is a clue as to which one is tougher—and Brandi and Tim are absolutely first rate submissives. I could introduce you to any of them if you like."

"It's not your cup of tea?"

"Rarely. Unless you know the client very well it can be like juggling nitroglycerine. No matter which end of the leash you're on. I'd just as soon relax, as a rule. Uh...I've never taken a new client there, for a first time, I mean."

She moved just a little bit closer and

bent slightly; the tip of her nose entered my personal space. A pretty nose, I noticed. A good three inches higher from the ground than mine, despite her stoop. I blinked up at incredible turquoise eyes. "If I asked you to come to the dungeon with me and let me put you in chains and do nasty things to you, right now, would you do it?"

"Yes."

"Does the idea excite you, Sherry?"

"No. It might, once I got into it. That would depend on you."

It did occur to me as I led her down the carpeted corridor that I seemed to be in a remarkably obliging mood. What had possessed me to agree, even hypothetically, to a B&D session with a first-timer? I knew what most often makes me agreeable: apparently I found this Viking maiden even more attractive than I had realized. Which was certainly odd, despite her beauty. I like sex with women—I'm not crazy—but I've always strongly preferred men. And I had not responded so...*docilely* to a woman since I'd figured out at thirteen that my step-mother and her friend Sergeant Alice were taking advantage of me. In fact, come to think of it, I hadn't responded to anyone like this since then night two years ago when my pimp Big Travis stuck a knife under my ribs, and I was carried bleeding into (Thank you, God, if you're listening) Lady Sally's House.

As if sensing my unease, she said, "You're not afraid, are you, Sherry? Please don't be." She was holding back her stride to let me stay in the lead. Amazing legs.

"I'm not," I said, and I really wasn't. With big Mary up in the Snoop Room, and Priscilla the bouncer and her lethal hands down in the Parlor, an established maximum of seventeen seconds away from any studio, what could possibly go wrong?

We reached my studio; I let her in, turned on the lights, closed the door behind us, and switched on the little red *in service* light out in the hall. She seated herself with easy grace on the bed, leaned back against the pillows and surveyed the room like a lazy lioness.

"Before we get started there's a little spiel I—" I began.

"I'll bet you have a very beautiful body, Sherry?"

I started to show her, and then caught myself. "Can I *please* just—"

She made another studied gesture, a tucking-one-blonde-wing-of-hair-back-over-the-shoulder, and twiddled her fiery opal earring. "I'd really like to see it." she interrupted softly.

Again it seemed to take an enormous effort to keep from reaching up and behind me for the zipper. But rules are rules, and all Lady Sally's rules make sense: if you strip while you're giving the client the set-speech, you might as well not bother. All right, so I could condense it. "Can I please just—"

Again, she didn't have to raise her voice to interrupt. "Please, Sherry? And please don't talk unless it's absolutely necessary?"

The zipper purred.

"Slowly, please. Yes, that's just fine, honey."

I wanted to ask if she wanted music of any kind, but I also didn't want to talk just them. It made a small internal conflict, and that threatened to distract my attention from making Diana happy, so I suppressed it.

"Stop just a minute. Turn around, would you? Lovely. Now back this way. You're very pretty, Sherry."

I suppressed the urge to thank her.

"You aren't afraid, are you, hon?"

"No, you asked me not to be, would you like some music? Thank you," I said in one long blurt. There, that was better.

"That's right, I did," she said, ignoring the last two clauses. "But you know what, sweet? I think I'd like it if you sort of *pretended* to be a little bit afraid. And reluctant. Like you were a successful professional woman and I was some creepy son of a bitch who could wreck your career if you didn't make me happy, could you manage that for me?"

"Sure." I cringed. "All right, you bastard, you win: I'll do what you want.

Will that change your mind?"

She twiddled her earring again and smiled faintly. "An attitude problem like yours could take quite some time to correct. I guess we'll just have to wait and see, won't we? Continue with what you were doing, bitch." Her voice was now pitched deep as a man's.

Warmly confident of my acting skills, I completed undressing. When I was naked, she had me twirl around again.

Then she asked me to do something I didn't want to do.

No, I'm not going to get more specific than that. Even the most oppressed of street hookers have their standards, their own unique personal and private set of lines they do not ever plan to cross even if their pimp kills them for it, and if you really want to know what mine are then come to Lady Sally's House and pay your membership and take me upstairs some Spring night and ask me, and if I like the way you ask, I might tell you a few of them. What Diana asked me to do was not something I would have died rather than do; more along the lines of a taste I had zero interest in acquiring.

I did it at once. Then she had me undress her as well, remaining in character, and the moment I had finished carefully folding what were supposed to be her boxer shorts, she asked me sweetly and jovially to do something I would have rather died than do.

I never hesitated.

Then she asked for something I would have rather killed a friend than do, and I was genuinely happy to do it for her.

In a very short time, she urgently demanded something I was quite prepared to do at any time, so vanilla that I literally fell all over myself striving to oblige. She had to ask me to stop when I was done. When her breathing had returned to normal, she asked me very politely not to ever tell anyone downstairs what had just happened between us—boy, was that going to be an easy request to honor!—and not to call anyone or go downstairs to the Parlor until

tomorrow. I promised. Then she took a silk robe from the closet, tied it around her waist, whistled softly to herself, and left me there in a heap in the middle of the floor.

After awhile, I got up and blinked at the pile of tangled clothes on the carpet. I had the vague, undifferentiated feeling that something trivial somewhere was wrong, but the warm sense of accomplishment easily overwhelmed it. I found the book I keep around for intervals like that, and stretched out on the bed.

△△△

The time passed pleasantly enough. But, eventually, I looked up from my book, noted that about an hour had passed, and decided it was time to shower. There was a shower in my studio, of course. But Phillip had one upstairs in his personal apartment that was better, with a special pulse-mode, and he let me use it whenever I wanted. Also he had a special shampoo, a new formula that was very good for people who sometimes must wash their hair four or five times in a single night. Diana had only asked me not to go *downstairs* until tomorrow.

I wandered dreamily out into the hall, and headed for the third floor. A client I passed on the way looked at me a little oddly, but I decided he was one of the rare prudes we get and ignored him. Phillip's door was unlocked as always.

The shower was already running. When I entered the bathroom, I could make out Phillip's silhouette through the translucent shower curtain. No problem; every shower in the building has room for at least two. I called out a greeting and pulled aside the curtain.

We both cried out.

I had seen a client in that condition, once. But Cynthia and Lady Sally had talked to him for an hour beforehand, and he had to be carried out, and though he sent flowers the next day (the same ones his wife had given him in the hospital) Cynthia said afterward that she did not ever want to take a client that far again, and Lady Sally had said good, she didn't want that sort of trade

anyhow. To see Phillip's beautiful body so badly marred was like seeing a beautiful painting covered with graffiti. Drawn in red. I couldn't imagine anyone wanting to do such a thing. Such things...

"Oh, my God," I said. "Phillip!"

"I think so."

"I didn't think you went for that sort of thing," I babbled.

"I didn't think *you* went in for *that* sort of thing, either." Oh, that was right. *He* had cried out when he had seen *me*, too. And that client had given me a double-take. But I wasn't cut up anywhere. What could be that wrong about my appearance?

I stepped back and looked at myself in the mirror.

After a long time I yanked my eyes away and got into the shower with Phillip, and we both burst into tears and sat down together, hugging each other and sobbing under the warm spray.

I washed my hair three times. I had him scrub me, first with soap and then a washcloth and finally with a stiff brush. Then we got out together and I did what I could for his cuts and abrasions. He hissed a few times but did not cry out.

"I'm okay, now," I said, "but you ought to be looked at by Doctor Kate right away. A couple of these need stitches, I think."

"Later, maybe," he said. "First we have to kill Diana."

"I'm sorry, you're right. Priorities."

"All right, let's plan it. It seems to me the first thing we—"

"Phillip, *what is it she did to us?*"

"Isn't it obvious? She made us do anything she asked."

"But *how?*"

"She said please! What difference does it make?"

"Don't we have to know what she's doing to stop her?"

"Not necessarily, if we're smart. Let me check some assumptions. You've been asked not to tell anyone downstairs about what happened to you? And not to call anyone or go downstairs until tomorrow?" I

nodded. "Okay, look: if she came back upstairs and we tried to jump her, she'd just ask us to stop. And as long as she's between us and the front door downstairs she can bolt at any time, and once she's out in the world we've lost her. But if we could just find some way to make a disturbance *at* the door, and stampede her back upstairs, where someone was waiting with his trusty softball bat..." He paused, looked thoughtful. "Maureen," he said, distracted enough to use my real name, "I'm afraid for once you are going to have to think like a punster."

"Huh?"

"You know the layout at the top of that staircase. Unless she comes up those stairs at a dead run, it's going to be hard to ambush her. That means we need out best hitter at that post. So *you* have to make the disturbance at the door and panic her into running."

"But I *can't!* She asked me not to. She said 'Please'."

"That's what I mean. What *exactly* did she ask you not to do?"

"The same thing she said to you. 'Please don't go downstairs to the Parlor until tomorrow'."

"I thought so. But she just asked? I mean, she didn't write it down or anything, just asked verbally?"

"Yeah."

"All right, now I want you to cast your mind back to one of your first nights in this House. You're outside on the sidewalk, your pimp Big Travis has come to get you and is taking you at gunpoint back off to slavery again. Mary kills him. Now: *how did Mary get there?*"

My eyes opened wide. "Oh, no. Oh, Phillip, no. I don't think I could—"

"—sure you can—"

"—I don't think so—"

"—you're young, athletic—"

"—*that's not what I mean*—"

"—*what then?*—"

"—*SHE ASKED ME NOT TO!*"

We both stopped speaking and let our voices echo.

"Speaking of Mary," I said, much more quietly, "how come she didn't pick up on all of this and sound the alarm? She knows what we won't do: remember that time somebody drugged Lucy?"

"Maybe Diana asked her not to. Or maybe she did and Diana asked the Lady not to pay any attention. That's why we've got to move fast, love. Now listen: you did not see her request on paper. Think like a punster, now, let yourself think literally. If I wrote her words down now, I could legitimately choose to put a space between 'down' and 'stairs,' couldn't I? People who fall one flight by definition do not go down stairs."

Mary had gone out the second floor window, landed on Travis, all two hundred or so pounds of her, and snapped his neck like a twig.

"Sherry, have you ever heard about the course they make you take at Annapolis, where you are given a theoretical problem and told to cut a set of orders for your classmates, and if any of them can manage to misunderstand your orders enough to screw up the problem, you bilge? Diana is going to bilge that course, tonight. Just start a fire or something to drive her this way at high speed—without letting her see you."

I wanted to go along with Phillip. The notion that *Lady Sally* might even now be dancing to Diana's tune was primevally *wrong*, the simple fact was more wrong, somehow, than the specific outrages that had been done to me. I wanted to drink Diana's blood, and she had never asked me not to. But she had asked me not to go downstairs until tomorrow, and in my heart I could not deny that I knew how she would have written it down. I just could not assemble the will to oppose her expressed wishes.

"I'm sorry, Phillip. I don't think I can."

"You've got to."

"If you think it's that easy you do it."

"I think I could."

"Fine, good luck—"

"How good are you with a softball bat?"

Can you be sure of silencing someone with a single blow?"

I waved my hands helplessly, close to tears with rage and frustration.

"Come on, let's give it a try, at least. Please? We can't just sit here: *how do we know what's going on downstairs?*"

He was right; we headed for the door. Maybe I could manage it after all, if I could manage to think like a punster, just keep it fixed in my mind that I wasn't actually going to be going down any stairs...

And it blew up in my face. I found that I could no longer walk back down from the third floor to the second. If "don't go downstairs" meant literally, "don't descend any staircases," then this one qualified too.

"Phillip, I've got a problem."

"Yeah, me too. I never thought of this."

"It looks like I'm a high living lady from now on."

"Atta girl! You're getting it. Come on."

"Where?"

"Your problem is not changed in kind, but only in degree."

"What are you talking about?"

"It's possible to land safely from a third floor window."

"Are you out of your God Damned mind?"

"You're right; let's use your plan instead." He turned angrily and started walking away, swinging his softball bat.

"Oh, shit," I said, and followed. "Wait up," Stop and grab fresh clothes from my own apartment? No, no time, no need, no time!

I thought at first he went to the wrong apartment. "Mary's flat is above the front door," I pointed out.

"Yeah, but this one is above the dumpster. Garbage is a more resilient landing zone than cement, as a rule." He went to the window, did not open it, looked out and down at the drop. "Sherry, maybe this isn't a good idea after all. If you're really reluctant to do this, you could land wrong; your

subconscious could bitch you up to resolve the conflict honorably. Let's switch: I jump, and you beat her brains out."

"No, Phillip. For the reason you've already mentioned, and three more. One: the lighter the body, the easier it lands. Two: Daddy was a paratrooper; maybe I inherited something. Three: you're in no shape for combat. Get out of my way."

Like I said, my father was a paratrooper. He always said the classic error was to pause in the doorway, looking down; most of those who did never jumped. So I was careful not to hesitate for a second, just hopped up on the sill, slipped the hook-and-eye catch, flung the side-hinged window open, put all my attention on targeting the dumpster, and stepped out into the night.

Δ Δ Δ

Nearly at once, even before I began to be scared, I realized an elementary oversight in my planning. I was naked, it was February. Oh well, it would give me an honorable excuse for shivering.

Then I began to get scared.

But by then it was too late; I had landed.

Take it from your Aunt Maureen: if there is any way that you can arrange your affairs so as to avoid dropping into whorehouse garbage from a great height, naked in February, then that is almost certainly the course your life should take. Still, I reflected as I climbed out of the dumpster, nothing seemed to be broken, and I was much cleaner than I had been when I had gone up to Phillip's place to shower. Most important, I had the use of my brain back.

Or did I? I had had the two seconds' resolution necessary to step off a ledge. But the closer I got to Diana, the closer I was to contravening her implied wishes. Could I go through with this?

So maybe it was a break that it was February midnight and I was naked. My body got me started in the right direction, and my brain got carried along.

We all take turns working reception. Ruth had it that night. She is the oldest

working artist I have ever met (pushing sixty then) and one of the most popular in the House. I can give no better explanation why than what she did when she saw me. I was expecting to provoke consternation or at least major surprise when I came in the door, but her unhesitating reaction was magnificent. "Oh my God," she said, "the damned sign fell down again."

Any other time I would have applauded. I was busy confronting the fact that I didn't have a plan. Create a disturbance that would drive Diana upstairs. Simple. I didn't have a match...or a place to put one. "G-g-get me a coat, will you, Ruth?" It was cozy in the foyer, I was already warming up—but I couldn't enter the Parlor naked. As she was getting me one, I heard a distant shout from the Parlor. "Is anything going on in there?"

She looked torn. "I've been asked not to say."

"I see. Is it bad?"

"Yes." She closed a heavy man's overcoat around me; it covered me to below the knees. "What happened to you?"

I too felt strong internal conflict. "I've been asked not to say."

She nodded. "Then you understand."  
"Yeah."

"I sure wish I could worry about it," she said plaintively.

"Asked you not to, eh?"

"Yes. But for some reason I keep thinking about it a lot just the same. I guess I'm just...interested. You know. Involved."

"I assume she asked you not to call the cops."

"Not to call anyone—or let anyone else make any calls. *Please* don't try, Sherry."

"I can't." What in the hell would I tell the cops? Officer, we've got a woman here at the brothel, and you have to do anything she asks. Lady, quit braggin'. "Look, Ruth, is there any heat in the weapons-check tonight?"

She hesitated. "Well, yes, as a matter of fact, we're heavy on ordnance at the moment. Johnny Rats is in the House, and



you know those two gorillas with him always pack enough for a small war. And there's some other stuff too."

"Finally, some good luck. Unlock it for me, will you, Ruth?"

"She frowned, clearly torn again. "Well, now, that's kind of a problem, sweetie."

My heart sank. Was I going to have to fight Ruth? Could I? "She asked you not to let anybody in?"

"Oh, she said if any clients came to show them right in. But she said if anyone came who looked like they might disturb her, I should keep them out. You'd probably be thinking of disturbing her, wouldn't you, dear?"

"That depends. Would you say a bullet through the head would disturb her?"

"Now, that's an interesting question, all right. Kind of philosophical, like. Let me give that some thought for a second." Her face went through a fascinating interplay of expressions, ending with sad. "I guess I'd have to say that it definitely would disturb her. Not for very long, mind—but a whole lot. I'm sorry, dear; you know I'd like to help."

"I know that, Aunt Ruth," I said gently. "How about this? Suppose you just get me the guns anyway, and I'll just sit out here with you and fondle them?"

She felt compelled to split hairs. "Well, but you see, that would amount to the same thing. Suppose you changed your mind, after I gave you the guns, how would I keep you out then? You see my problem." I was running out of ideas and time, and I didn't much want to fight Ruth. For one thing, she plays a good game of handball for sixty, and knows gutter-fighting. But she seemed to incline toward a strict interpretation of the Talmud, and I knew just how she felt. Thank God Diana hadn't thought to ask me not to disturb her. What the hell was I going to do?

And a pun saved me.

"That's okay," I told her. "Kind of ironic, isn't it?"

"How's that?"

"I mean, all those years of effort Lady Sally put into building and maintaining good relations with the cops and City Hall, and here we are now, victims of Please Brutality."

She winced. You cannot wince without shutting your eyes. I didn't much want to put her lights out, so I used a pressure point Daddy told me about once, and released it the moment her face lost color. She blinked at me and folded slowly.

The damndest thing. Just before her face went slack, she tried to smile.

I made her comfortable. The weapons-check locker key was where it's always kept. Ruth hadn't been kidding about Johnny Rats's goons. I liked the look of the Uzi, but an Uzi does not make a thunderous enough noise to panic someone who is not familiar with firearms: it is a terror weapon only to someone who knows what that asthmatic-sewing-machine sound means. Instead I selected the over-and-under pump shotgun and the Russian handgun. I'd never seen one like it before, couldn't read the Cyrillic script on the barrel, but its design was utterly straightforward and it made a Magnum look like a cap pistol. My father used to say that you couldn't trust Soviet technology—unless it was a weapon. "Paranoids," he said, "can be relied upon to make the best weapons." To complete my disguise as a dangerous male, I got a big furry sable hat that also looked Russian from the cloakroom and stuffed my hair up under it, found a pair of boots tall enough to conceal the fact that I lacked a pair of pants.

My plan was to slip through the door, locate Diana, shoot her if possible, and if not, quickly put enough slugs in the ceiling and floor to create the impression that the revolution had begun. She had every reason to feel confident; it would not be easy to stampede her. Perhaps Phillip's idea of a fire made more sense. But, while I was prepared to risk winging a few innocent by-

*Concluded on page 43*

# NO LIMIT ON HIPPOGRIFFS

by  
*David Drake*

Last night I took a splendid unicorn;  
A massive brute, & 's Blood, how he could run!  
He gave us forty miles ere he was done,  
And even then he fought the dogs till morn.  
I'll swear no finer beast than he was born.  
It gives the lie to those who'd spoil all fun,  
"Where thousands long since roamed, now there are none."  
By Jove, wait till they see this stunning horn!  
Of course, I will admit they have some grounds;  
I haven't seen a dragon for a while —  
But then, a dragon is sheer hell on hounds,  
And I don't like to beat — it's not my style.  
And still in many spots fine game abounds.  
I've thought of trying sphinxes on the Nile...

—David Drake



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### **The Guest List**

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**Lois BUJOLD**  
**Michael BANKS**

#### **Fan**

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#### **Artist**

**Kevin WARD**  
**Alternative Print Media**  
**Richard PINI**

#### **Filk**

**Mitchell CLAPP**

#### **Gaming**

**Richard TUCHOLKA**  
**Bill LEVY**

## THE PARANOID

*continued from page 40*

standers—friends!—to get Diana, I could not make myself set fire to Lady Sally's House. Even shooting it up was going to hurt.

Let's see: shotgun in the left hand, sloppiest weapon where accuracy is least. Check ammo on both guns. Spin cylinders, pump scattergun. Safeties off. Pause at door, feeling like something out of a movie. Review procedure one last time.

Earmuffs!

I grabbed a pair from the cloakroom, put them on under my furry hat. They weren't very good at muffling sound—why hadn't I thought to fetch my isolation headphones from my room?—but they would help. I decided if I could not get a clear shot at Diana, I would fire off my first rounds near my ears and trust to that to finish deafening me. But I hoped that would not be necessary. Back to the doorway, feeling like a Viking in all that gear. Appropriate. Set a Viking to catch a Viking princess. Hurry before resolution leaks.

—deep breath—

—through the door—

—located Diana at once—

—saw that I had no shot—

—raised both muzzles to the ceiling—

*Shh!*

There is an easel-like affair near the door, on which Lady Sally is accustomed to post allegedly humorous signs to greet the clients. How many other places have a sign saying "Come again," on the way in, for instance? But tonight's sign was peeled back, and on the next sheet on the pad Diana had hastily but legibly scrawled a new message with a black felt-tip marker.

PLEASE DON'T MOVE.

## Surviving The South, Again

*continued from page 31*

many clothes you can't get out of when that lady whispers, "Yo, stud!", and wishing you were down here with all the genuinely nice people from all over the South who want nothing more than to see to it that you keep on smiling, keep on laughing, and keep on trucking, even if it is in a Thunderbird.

## Son of the Red-Breasted Menace

*continued from page 6*

And, in the second place (there was a first place up there somewhere), you don't get the number of Hugo and Nebula awards Spider has unless you're a damn good writer. He's a wonderful singer and songwriter and guitar player, too. And I almost forgot to mention Stardance, the most moving story I've read in many years, and maybe that's why I feel like I've seen Jeanne dance.

With all this going for him, the puns are a small price to pay.

## Charles L. Grant

*continued from page 9*

you about on pain of raising the rent on my basement apartment, is called In a Dark Dream. My new novel, which he didn't make me tell you about, is The Seven Spears of the W'dCh'ck. I also finished a new book called Ken Montana \*IN\* The Really Ugly Thing From Mars. Maybe it'll be sold by the time you read this, and then you can make me rich and famous and I won't have to do this kind of thing anymore, and I can move out of the basement apartment which isn't all that hot anyway, even with the

furnace.

That's all I know. If you know more than I do, even though I probably know him better than anyone except maybe a couple of you, who have known him longer. Do you really want to know this? I don't know. Maybe we should all go home now.

## The Man Who Tried To Get Away

*Continued from page 19*

than a human being, not to mention less than a woman, that she didn't have the courage to do anything except hurt. And now that she was back to being herself, now that she was wearing her claw and didn't need me anymore, she should have left me to take the consequences of my own stupidity, instead of risking herself to save me from harm.

Down in my bones, where I could keep it secret, I was mad as hell at her.

Or else that wasn't the truth at all. In which case, the only other explanation was that I was mad as hell at myself, bone-deep and gut-sick furious at myself for all my weaknesses, for being a man who didn't deserve even sobriety, never mind actual respect or concern or love.

Either way, I didn't want to think about it. Even a nursemaid job was better than thinking about stuff like that.

So I said, "You still haven't answered my question. Didn't you tell me Murder On Cue has been doing mystery camps for a while now?"

Ginny made an effort to come back from wherever her head was. "So?"

"So Roderick Altar hired security for those camps, too, and it wasn't us. So what went wrong? Why wasn't he satisfied with whoever it was? Or has he really had some trouble he isn't telling us about?"

"Why have we got a nice, safe job like this right now—just when we happen to need it, and it's the only thing the commission'll let us handle?"

Now I had her attention—but not ex-

actly in the way I wanted. "Are you serious?" she asked, staring at me. "Is this really the way your mind works? Axbrewder, you're sick. Or they're giving you too much medication. Coincidences do happen, you know. Every event in life isn't aimed at you."

But that wasn't the point I was trying to make. "In other words," I countered, "you didn't ask him that. You let him offer you this job, and you didn't even ask him why." The tip of her nose had gone white, which usually happens when she's angry. Ominously quiet, she said "All right, Brew. Spit it out. What's your problem now?"

Luckily, I knew her well enough not to take this anger personally. She wasn't mad at me. She was mad because I'd touched a nerve. So I didn't have any trouble looking at her straight.

"You don't usually miss that kind of question. You aren't thinking hard enough about this job. You're thinking too much about me."

"It's a nursemaid operation," she snapped back. "How much thought do you think it requires?"

I didn't say anything to that. I didn't have to. As soon as she heard what came out of her mouth, she caught herself. "All right," she said again. Her eyes dropped. "I get the message. I do worry about you too much. There's no job so simple it can't get messy if you don't pay attention to it."

"Put on your coat. Call a nurse when you're ready to go." Without waiting for my opinion, she headed for the door. "I'll meet you at the discharge exit."

She didn't give me a chance to call her back. In some way, I'd shaken her self-confidence. Maybe I'd just reminded her that she had as many reasons to be angry as I did. Or maybe she was still more vulnerable than she liked. Disgusted at herself, afraid for me, and more desirable than any other woman I knew, she left me to figure out the pain in my gut for myself.



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☼ **Margaret Weis**

Authors of the **Dragonlance Chronicles**, **Legends and Tales**, and the **Darkword**  
**Trilogy** and **Adventures**, and game designers of numerous role-playing modules.

☼ **Tracy Hickman**

☼ **Gary Gygax**

Creator of **Dungeons and Dragons**,  
and Author of the **Gord** novel series.

☼ **and many others!**

More Artists, Authors, Designers, Editors  
and other interesting Guests to come.

Memberships are \$25 through 3/31/89 and \$30 through 9/15/89 and can be purchased using  
VISA or MC by calling Tevex, toll-free at 1-800-456-1162 or by writing **Dragon Con** at  
P.O. Box 47696, Atlanta, Georgia 30362. For further information call (404) 996-9129.

# PROJECTED BUDGETS

We at Chattacon thought you might just be curious as to "Where does all the money go?" Well, here's a breakdown for you:

## Revenues:

Registration Fees:	
100 @ \$15	\$1500.00
400 @ \$18	\$7200.00
500 @ \$25	<u>\$12500.00</u>
<i>Total</i>	<i>\$21200.00</i>
Dealer Tables	\$2500.00
Art Show	\$700.00
Program Book	\$500.00
T-Shirt Sales	<u>\$300.00</u>
<b>Totals</b>	<b><u>\$25200.00</u></b>

## Expenses

Trade Center	
Rents	\$2905.00
Insurance	\$660.00
Security	\$900.00
Miscellaneous	<u>\$250.00</u>
<i>Total</i>	<i>\$4715.00</i>
Programming	
Rents - Marriott	\$2275.00
Travel / Entertainment	\$4980.00
Miscellaneous	<u>\$1845.00</u>
<i>Total</i>	<i>\$9100.00</i>
Registration	\$525.00
Publicity	\$2000.00
Administrative	\$1000.00
Program Book	\$1200.00
Games	\$500.00
Video Room	\$150.00
Art Show	\$800.00
Con Suite	\$5000.00
<b>Total</b>	<b><u>\$24990.00</u></b>

Amounts based on 1000 persons attending.

CHATTACON XV GUEST LIST

*Guest of Honor*

**T.B.A.**

*Artist Guest of Honor*

**Danny Gill**

*Toastmaster*

**David Cherry**

*Special Guest*

**Wilson "Bob" Tucker**

*Fan Artist Guest of Honor*

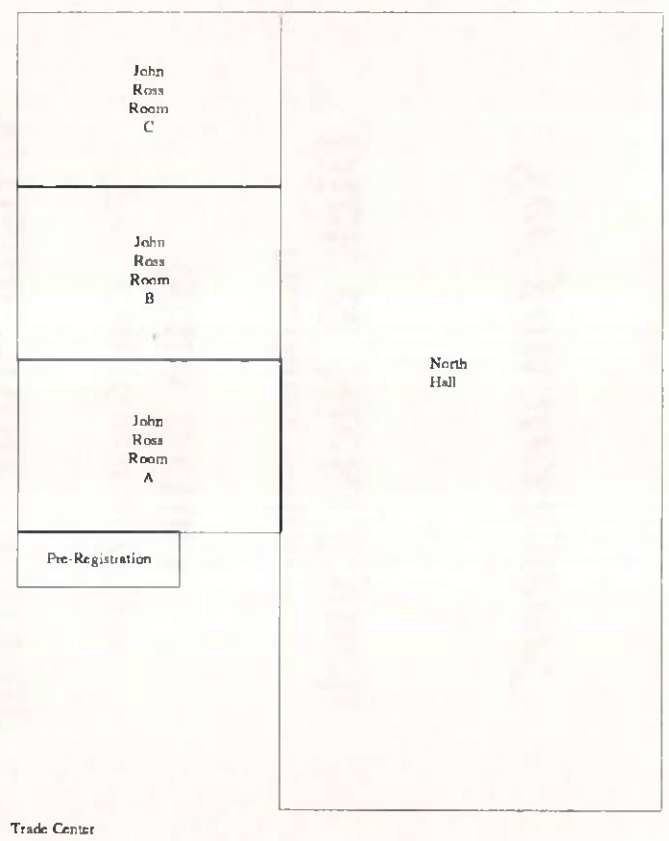
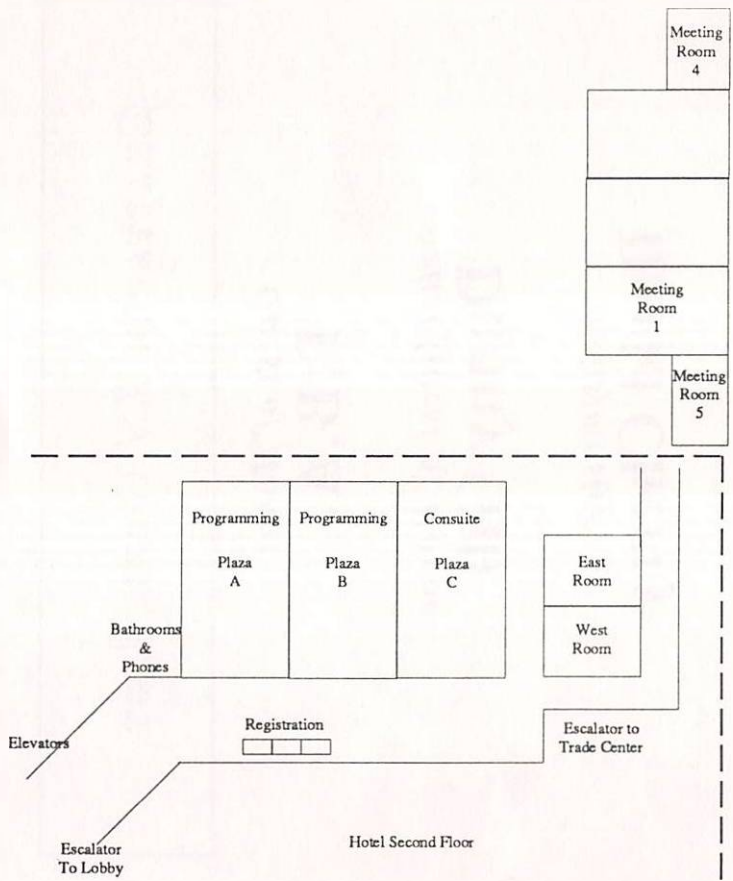
**Stan Bruns**

*Fan Guest of Honor*

**Dick & Nicki Lynch**

*See you next year!*





ChattaCon XIV gratefully acknowledges  
Russell F. Robards and his staff for the printing of this program book.  
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