

A science fiction illustration of a rocky, cratered landscape under a large, glowing orange and yellow planet in a starry space. The planet has a textured, fiery surface with a bright white spot near the center. The foreground shows dark, jagged rock formations and a sandy, cratered plain. The sky is filled with numerous small stars.

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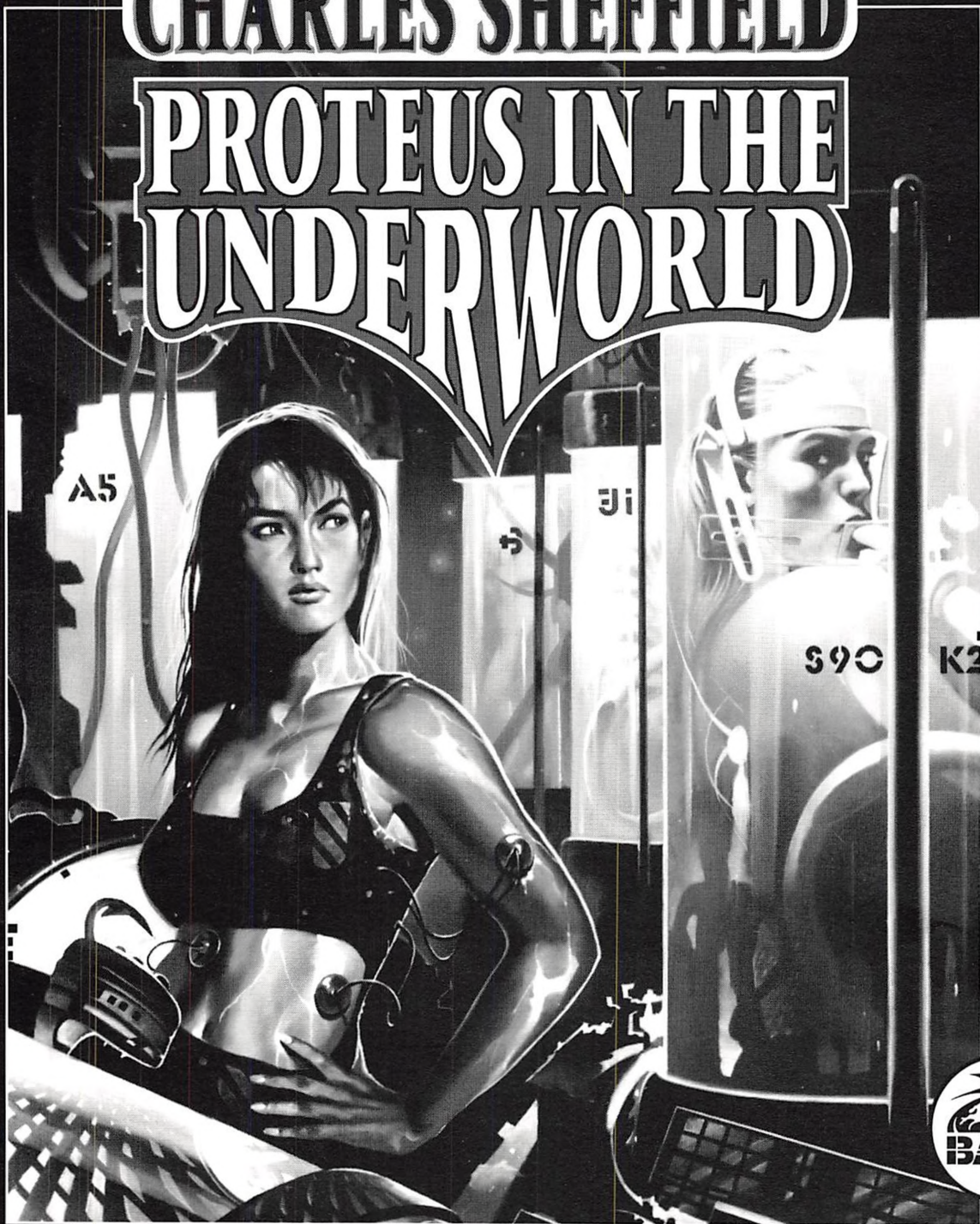
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CHARLES SHEFFIELD

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DISCLAVE 1995

RENAISSANCE WASHINGTON HOTEL

May 26-29, 1995

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GREETINGS FROM THE CHAIR

Hello Disclades, Hello Disclones, and all the ships in space. This is Chairman Dan, welcoming you aboard Disclave 95, Washington's premier science fiction convention, a relax-a-con with some programming added to help us look busy.

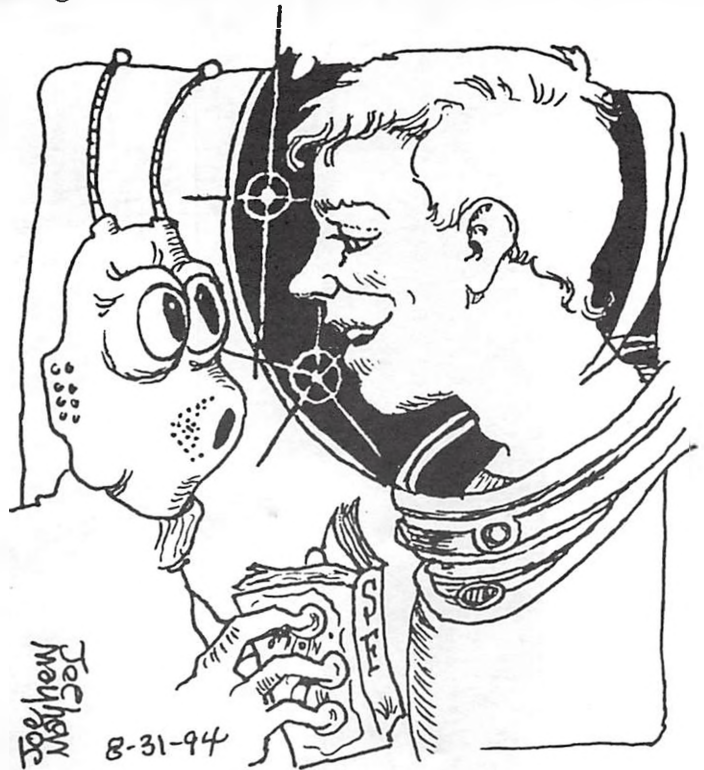
This year we celebrate and honor Washington's newest Hugo winner, Charles Sheffield, and Rhode Island's most surprised Hugo winner, Bob Eggleton, and our special guest, former Washingtonian David Bischoff. All are fine scientifictionists and known party animals. I hope you get the chance to observe this first-hand.

You'll of course find Mac providing the famous Discave hospitality, this time with professional free beer service from the nice bartender. (Tip the nice bartender!) A new addition is the Signature Reception on Friday night, where you will have an opportunity to garner signatures for all your books at one session. Wheelbarrows will *not* be provided.

The program will be the usual laid-back Disclave fare, with some interesting quirks added by Bre'r Mike. Sister Judy will run the Art Show with the able assistance of the usual suspects. And Kitty will be managing the dances with her well-known efficiency and charm. John will steal a few moments away from his brand-new daughter to provide a stunning film program. (Hint: if it runs off the reel, wake him up.) This year, we have Larry to help you find a way to join in the fun of making Disclave work — you'll find him sharing the desk with Chris at Information. (I have forty more names to drop, but I won't drop them here. Volunteer — your name could be next.)

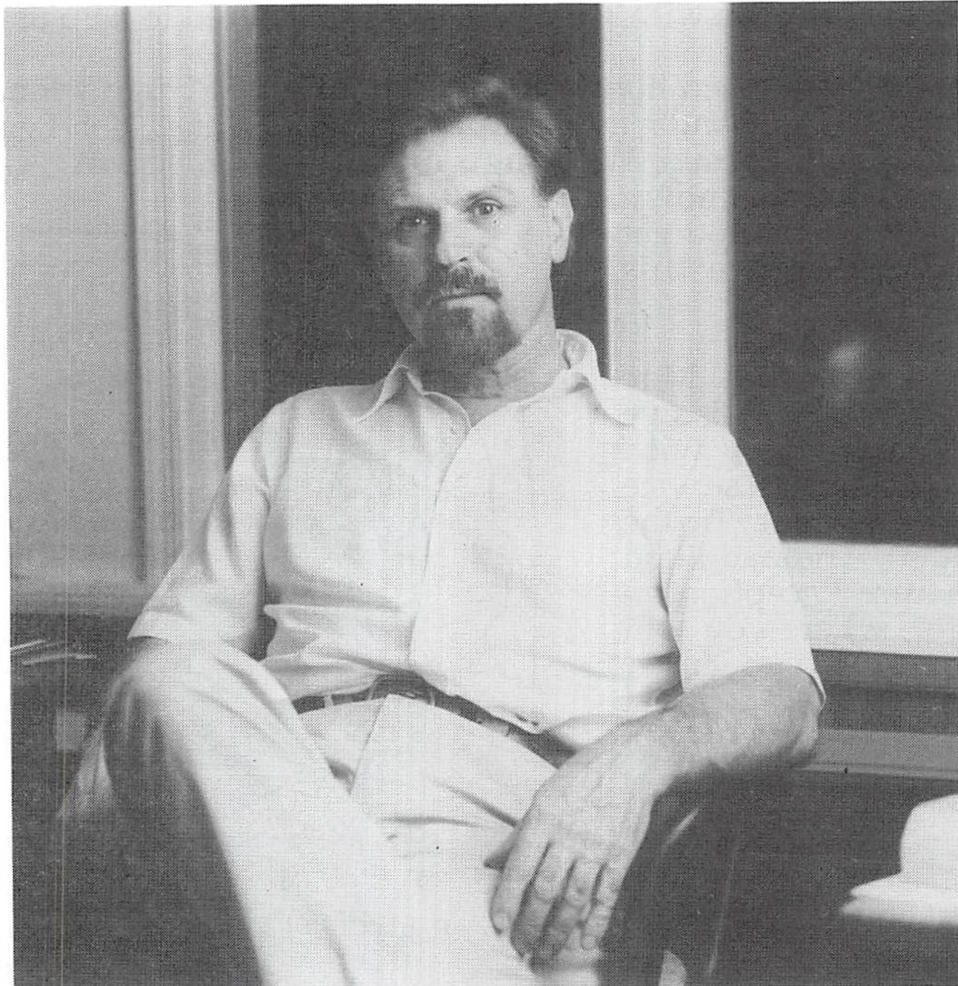
We're back in the city this year, at Renaissance Techworld, so I hope you get a chance to see some sights and hop some restaurants during your stay. But please stay in well-lighted and well-travelled areas after dark — this is a mostly friendly city, but you have to respect it. And be kind to the hotel; we plan to come back next year, and we need to teach them we don't bite.

All in all, it looks like a banner year for Disclave, and I'm mucho gratified to play my part in bringing it to you. Party hearty, and hot jets!



Dan Hoey, Chair, Disclave 95

WRITER GUEST OF HONOR: CHARLES SHEFFIELD



Your Faithful Disclave Program Book Editor: A story, Charles? That's great!

Disclave Guest of Honor Charles Sheffield (with a charming British accent): Yes. It's a story that explains the Redskins' 1994 season.

Y.F.D.P.B.E.: Well, it's terrific that you're letting us publish it. I hadn't expected to be able to include a piece of original fiction from our Guest of Honor. We'll put it in the program book right after your bio.

Sheffield (with a British accent that sure was charming): Bio? What bio? I don't want you to publish a bio.

Y.F.D.P.B.E.: No bio? But you're the Guest of Honor!

Sheffield (whose accent still seemed charming despite his attack on fannish tradition): I don't care. No bio.

Y.F.D.P.B.E.: How about a bibliography?

Sheffield (charmingly using his British accent to display an amazing disinterest in promoting himself): No. My work speaks for me.

Y.F.D.P.B.E.: Well . . . OK, but I don't know what we're going to use to introduce the story . . .

THE WHOLE THREE YARDS

BY CHARLES SHEFFIELD

Pacemakers are great -- I'd be dead without mine. But sometimes they take their job a little too seriously.

Like now, in the final seconds of the Superbowl with the Natives five points behind and on fourth down. Johanson finds Rolovicz open with a short screen pass, and then it's a foot race, Rollo heading for the goal line, fifteen yards to go, Sy Andeen of the Cowboys right behind him and closing -- Andeen, fastest man in the League, three point seven for the forty.

And me, up in the press box, covering the final play.

"Twelve yards out, Rollo at full gallop -- but Andeen's gaining. Six yards -- two -- Andeen has him at the waist. But Rollo's leaning, still driving. He's almost there -- he's in! Touchdown! A new record, twelfth Superbowl TD for Rolovicz!"

My voice rising to a scream, pulse racing, adrenaline pumping, blood pressure going through the roof. . .

I wish.

But, no. Pulse steady at seventy-two beats a minute, adrenaline normal, blood pressure one eighteen over seventy-nine. My voice might be high and fast, but that was acting. I was excited all right -- inside my head. But my pacemaker knew the parameters for my seventy-two year old body, and it dictated the rules. I was as physically unaffected by Rolovicz's record as the computer by my side that quietly performed its real-time analysis of offense and defense.

In any case, my condition didn't really matter. To the audience, the picture was the thing. My TV cameras had caught every step of the slow-motion struggle as young Sy Andeen closed on Rolovicz, every line on Rollo's battered face as he forced himself that final yard to break the line. I could have stood

on my head and sung *Rule Britannia* and been totally ignored.

Which was as it should be. Commentators fall in love with the sound of their own voices. I can live with playing third fiddle to immortals like Rolovicz and Johanson. Anyway, even though the game was over, my job wasn't. I still had to do something that no camera/computer system could manage.

I pocketed my computer's data analysis module and headed for the Natives' interview room. The place was a zoo, packed with young and eager reporters from every media outlet in the country. The boiling center of the action was Johanson and Rolovicz, grinning like monkeys, sweaty arms around each other.

I couldn't fight my way through that lot. Fortunately I didn't need to. Rolovicz had seen me come in, and he nodded. I went out through the side door and along the tiled corridor that led to the showers.

My permanently rented cubicle was tiny, not much bigger than the little table inside with its bottles of give-away shampoos and lotions. I sat down and waited patiently. After maybe twenty minutes during which I played at post-game data analysis, Rollo appeared. He was dressed in sweat pants and a white T-shirt, and he was walking very slowly.

I waved him to the other chair. "Stiff?"

"Ready to seize up. Nothing like as bad as I'll be tomorrow, though."

"So enjoy today. You did it again, Rollo. Another record. Congratulations."

He dropped heavily into the chair. "Yeah. Mr. Speedy, that's me. I bet I can still run the hundred in fifteen

seconds -- downhill, with the wind behind me."

"You made it look easier than ever."

He grinned, but he shook his head. "You couldn't see how I was *feeling*. That final pass, I felt I was running through treacle. I thought I'd bust a gut. It's the last time, Harry. I've had enough. I'm retiring."

"You're kidding me."

"No. I'm serious, and it's definite."

"You've announced it?"

"No. You're the first to hear it. Think of it as a little present from me. This season is my last. You can quote me."

I certainly would. It was a major scoop. Though others had speculated about Rollo's possible retirement for years -- make that decades -- I would be the first to report the facts from his own mouth.

"I'm sixty-seven years old, Harry," he went on, although I already knew that very well, and he knew that I knew it. "Time to step aside. Time to do something new."

"You're nine years younger than Jack Smithson. He's still playing."

"Course he is. He's a *kicker*." He said it as though field goal kicking was about as physically challenging as embroidery. "So long as Jack gets decent protection he can go on 'til he's a hundred."

"Or until the last of his fans dies." I was struggling with the thought of a hundred-year-old Jack Smithson, kicking field goals -- and a ninety-six year-old me covering the commentary. "What about *your* fans, Rollo? There's plenty of them left, and they'll be really

disappointed at the news that you plan to retire. There's nobody else like you, you know. Never will be."

He dismissed my remark with one wave of his leathery arm, its knotty muscles tied by tendons like cables. "That's bullshit, Harry, and you know it. The League has Dollfus, and Klikeman, and Borne, and Wulpit, all approaching their peak. Ten more years, and every one of my records will be broken. The young kids won't know who I was. Anyway, none of the fans knows what it's like. They ought to try to run for a while on my creaky old legs."

"You could buy enhancement."

"I intend to -- for my love-life, though, not for the playing-field. I'm done out there." He grinned at me. "You got it wrong, Harry. *You're* the one who'll miss me, not the fans. When I'm gone you'll have to start doing an honest day's work again. You'll have to learn the stats for youngsters like Sy Andeen."

"He's my next stop after this." I knew Andeen's stats forwards and backwards. Rollo was just ragging me, making me work for my exclusive. I made sure my camera had a close-up on his gleeful brown face, then I said, "I'll tell you a secret. I'm planning to retire, too, at the end of the season."

"You can't do that!" His face showed the change I was looking for, from smug satisfaction to a comical disbelief. "My God, Harry, Johanson and I don't agree on a lot of things, but we agree on this: Harry Nicholson is the only decent sports commentator in the business, the only one who knows how to find his ass one-handed. I've been listening to you for over forty years."

"Yeah. And I've been yakking on the air for fifty. That's *why* it's time for me to bow out."

"I don't see that. A jaw isn't like legs. There no strain in yakking. You're not getting arthritis in the throat, the way I am in the knees."



We had roamed far from the usual post-Superbowl interview, and now it felt more like Rollo was questioning me. But what the hell. I had my scoop, and I wasn't at all looking forward to interviewing Sy Andeen. Rollo and I could ramble for a while.

"It's not that I'm tired, Rollo," I said, "or that I'm wearing out. It's a mental thing. I don't *want* to cover Andeen or Steenberg, the way I've covered you and Sal Misha and Jack Smithson. And even if I did, there's commentators like Tolman and Leidecker, kids who are close to the same age as Andeen. They appeal to the young fans the way I appeal to the old ones. To the youngsters I'm just a boring old fart."

"Your ratings don't say that. You pull twice Tolman's audience."

"Total, that's true. But you haven't seen the demographics. I have. I get eighty percent of the over-sixties, and less than ten percent of the twenty to twenty-five year-olds."

"That's because you genuinely are a boring old fart." But Rollo shook his head and stared far away at nothing. "Are you really going to talk with Sy Andeen? He'll be feeling awful low. He lost a Superbowl by two inches."

"If he'll talk to me. I'm pretty sure he will. He's still young enough to think I'm important."

"You are. It was your damned ideas that started the whole System. I'd come with you to see Andeen, but I'm afraid he'll think I want to gloat. You know, he's really good. Stiffsuit and all, he almost caught me." Rollo's face became wistful. "He's the luckiest man alive. He'll be playing the game for another forty years."

"He will. But he's not the luckiest man alive -- you are."

"I'm *retiring*, Harry. I'm dropping out of the only thing I'm good for."

"I still say you're lucky. The System came along--"

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"You *made* it come along. You son-of-a-bitch, you and your fancy writing."

"-- at just the right time for you. If it hadn't, you and Johanson and Smithy would have been forced to retire thirty years ago."

"I know, I know." He stood up slowly. I could almost hear his joints creaking. "But it's still hard to think of leaving the game."

"Sure it is. But consider the alternative. You may think your joints are bad, but your knees still bend. You can still walk. You know what the League used to do to a man physically, before the System was introduced. And it was getting tougher every year. Professional footballers and prostitutes have this in common -- "

"Don't quote me that one again."

"It's true. Or it used to be, before the System. They both sacrificed their bodies for the entertainment of others. If you'd started to play ten years earlier you'd be like Denzel Morrone, in a wheelchair. He's not much older than you. He only retired one year before you started playing."

"Sure. Lucky me. I still have the use of my limbs, and I just set a new Superbowl record. So I have to be happy as a pig, right? But I'm not. See you at the post-game party, you can cheer me up some more." He turned to hobble out of the cubicle. "If Sy Andeen seems depressed because the Cowboys lost," he said over his shoulder, "you tell him that he has no right to be. Tell him Ken Rolovicz would change places with him in a flat second."

As he left, I wondered just what it took to make a professional athlete happy. Rollo had enjoyed a fairy tale career, forty years at the top. He had no right to be miserable, but he was.

Whereas Sy Andeen had every right to be down. And I was quite sure that he was, too. You couldn't win.

I knew Sy's obsessive habits. After a cliffhanger loss like this there would be no post-game party for him. I headed for the stadium studio, confident that I would find him.

And there he was, slumped in an armchair in his underwear, his helmet and his blue-and-white one-piece suit on the floor in front of him. The studio video unit was on, and as I came in he was watching a play from the third quarter of the game, running it from every camera angle, backward and forward, in slow motion and in real-time. It was a near-interception, one that he had missed by inches. He was jumping up and sideways, stretching until at the peak of his leap the tips of his shoes were more than half a foot off the turf. His straining fingertips were high enough to push the ball away from the receiver and prevent the catch being made, but he could not reach quite high enough to catch the ball himself.

He was oblivious to my arrival. I stood behind him and did not speak as he studied his own body movements from every angle.

"Good play," I said quietly, as he at last advanced to a new video sequence.

"Not good enough." He glanced around and a curious expression came onto his face, somewhere between dislike and accusation. "Oh," he said. "It's you."

I knew the unspoken rest of it. I was fifty years older than Sy Andeen, but he knew what I had done. *It's you, that look said. The human fossil who dreamed up the System and pushed for its acceptance. The man who made it impossible for me to catch up with Rolovicz on that final play. The man who made me lose this Superbowl.*

I sat down next to him. "Yes, it's me. Got a few minutes?"

"I've got all night. Nothing for me to celebrate."

"I could argue with you on that point. But I won't. Do you mind?"

I reached down, and at his nod of consent picked up his uniform. He pointedly turned away from me to watch another play video, a fumble that Johanson recovered before Sy Andeen could get closer than three yards to him. I gently worked the thick cloth of Sy's shirt, bending the elbow backward and forward. Then I tried to flex it twice as fast. The stiff-suit's reaction was immediate -- and far stronger than I expected. It took a huge effort to force a single rapid bend of the elbow, turning the forearm up toward the shoulder and down again. I whistled to myself, and reached for the suit's legs.

That was even worse. When I bent the joints to correspond to a slow, walking-pace movement, the suit felt like pliable but heavy cloth. But as soon as I tried to make it bend fast, the way it would when worn by a running man, the resistance to change was monstrous. I couldn't make any sort of rapid flex at knee or hip by hand -- and I was just as sure that I wouldn't have been able to do it if I had been wearing the suit.

In one sense, all I was doing was confirming the results of my own earlier computer analysis. On the other hand, there is no substitute for the direct physical manipulation of a stiff-suit. I laid the uniform back on the ground.

"Sy."

"Yeah?" Still he did not look round. "If you want to interview me, go ahead and get it over with."

"Didn't Tolman or Leidecker interview you?"

"Both of them did."

"Then I don't need to. My audience roots for Rollo and Johanson and the other old-timers -- on both sides. They're as interested in the Cowboys as they are in the Natives. Tolman and Leidecker are the

commentators who talk to *your* generation."

That finally got his attention, and he swung to face me. "Then what the hell are *you* doing here, if you don't want to interview me? I'll tell you one thing, I don't feel much like answering a lot of dumb questions tonight about why I didn't catch Ken Rolovicz. Does that come as a big surprise to you?"

"It doesn't. And that's not why I'm here. I want to talk to you."

"So talk." And he added under his breath, *Harry the Mouth*.

I didn't mind. He must have heard that from one of the younger reporters, the twenty-five year-olds who consider me ancient and wonder why I'm still hanging on. They didn't know I'd been called a lot worse in my time. They ought to have been around when I first came up with the idea of the Handicap System.

"I think I know how you feel, Sy," I said. "Trying to run with that suit on. You know, don't you, that your uniform's rigidity settings are as high as any in the League?"

"Tell me about it." His young face was bitter. "I wasn't just *trying* to run with that suit on. I *had* to run with it on today, or die in the attempt. Do you know my best time for the forty-yard dash?"

"Officially, you've run it in three point nine. That was your time in the national unencumbered sprints this year. But there's talk that once or twice you hit three point seven when the back-up timekeepers weren't around."

"Three times. But when I'm handicapped, with that damned suit on, running as hard as I've ever run . . . you know what I do? Six point two for forty yards. At that speed I'd find it hard to catch my own grannie. I felt like an idiot out there. It must have been obvious to everybody."

"Not really. You were still the fastest man on the field. If I had to guess, I'd say the place you may have a right to complain is in your vertical jump settings. They looked a little too high to me."

"Jumps? What jumps?" he said miserably. "Look."

He rose out of the chair, crouched, and did a vertical standing leap. I didn't watch his feet - I'm too experienced for that. I kept my eye on his center of gravity, right about waist level. My guess was a whole body elevation of a little better than three and a half feet. Sy Andeen could jump like a Moonman.

He sat down again at once. "That's after a hard game, when I'm tired out. Fresh, I'll manage another three or four inches. But you saw me on that video replay when you came in."

"I did."

"That was my best jump of the whole game. What do you think it was? Seven inches?"

"Seven, maybe eight."

"Seven, eight, nine -- an *elephant* could do that well."

Actually, I didn't think that elephants could jump at all. The fact would be little consolation to Sy Andeen, since elephants do not currently play in the United Football League.

But something was still bugging me. I knew that the stiffsuit's settings were all fixed *before* the game, in the presence of the managers of both teams. They could not easily be tampered with. And the same settings applied to both jumping and running. I hauled out my little data analyzer and asked it a couple of questions.

While I was staring at the screen Andeen looked on impatiently. "I thought you said you wanted to talk to me," he said at last. "If you just sit there muttering to yourself,

I'm going back to review the play-by-plays."

"No need for that." I - or rather, my computer - had reached a conclusion. "Sy, I know you think the whole System stinks, and you blame me for it."

"Shouldn't I? You invented it. You're the reason I have to go out there hobbled and shackled and slowed. If only I didn't have to wear that stupid suit . . . it was like running through treacle."

"That's exactly what Ken Rolovicz told me. But you know what? Next year you'll be a year older, and because of that your suit settings will be a little bit lower. With a reduced handicap you'll be able to run a step faster, jump a little higher. But Rollo's getting older, and he'll lose a fraction. He'll never be as fast again as he was today. If that final play were repeated a year from now, you'd catch Rollo before he reached the goal line."

This was no time to tell Sy Andeen that Rollo would not be around next year for him to catch. Maybe I wouldn't, either, to cover the plays. Rollo and I were getting old.

But I remembered being twenty-two - vaguely. Although these days it seems like it's breakfast every fifteen minutes, half a century ago one year was an awful long time. It was no surprise that Sy seemed little cheered by future prospects.

"Is that all you wanted to tell me?" he said.

"No. I want to talk some about the old days, when the Handicap System was new. You know I suggested it and pushed hard for its introduction, but do you know *why*?"

His scowl deepened. "To benefit old guys like Johanson and Rolovicz. To make it harder for people like me to win games."

"Sy, when the System was introduced, Rollo *was* a young guy

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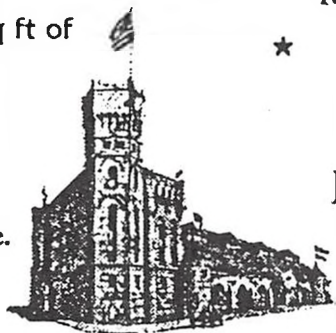


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like you. Do you know what happened in the first Superbowl where the System was used?"

"The Mariners won. They beat the Natives by three."

"Correct. You know your history. But did you know that Rollo had a chance to win it for the Natives? In the last minute he found open space to run in, and he headed for the line. He almost made it. One yard out he was pulled down by Seth Nunn. Rollo was twenty-three years old, Nunn was forty-five. Rollo's stiffsuit had high settings, and Nunn was hardly encumbered at all. Sound familiar?"

Andeen nodded, but did not speak.

"And do you know what happened after that Superbowl?" I went on.

He shook his head.

"I'll tell you. This isn't in the history books. Ken Rolovicz sought me out after the game. Before I even had time to say hello, he swung at me. Knocked me down, and smashed my face. That's why it looks this way." I reached up and touched my nose, still slightly bent after forty-four years. "He said what I had done robbed him of his Superbowl touchdown, made him lose the game for the Natives. You seem surprised."

"You and Rolovicz are buddies. Everybody knows that. He gives you exclusives whenever you want them."

"Hell, he ought to, after all this time. I've been covering his games for the Natives for close to half a century. I've seen every one of his Superbowl wins. But he doesn't give me exclusives because we're friends. He does it because he *owes* me, for what I gave him. And he knows that."

"You gave him something?" Andeen's face was puzzled and guarded. He was probably thinking bribes, media payment for inside information. That has been a part of football since before the System;

it still goes today, and it will probably go on forever.

I laughed. "Don't worry, Sy, I'm not going to try to corrupt you. I'll tell you what I gave Ken Rolovicz, and it's the same thing I'm giving you. I provided him with thirty extra years in the game and a reasonably healthy body. You see, there are other parts of football history that don't show in the record books. But I remember them, because I was there *before* the System.

"A team would take a promising player like you, with terrific potential. And you would play. Play when you were in pain, play when you were running a hundred and two degree fever, play with broken bones and torn ligaments. And bad injuries like that were bound to happen every game, because players were running smack into each other at full speed. I've seen compound fractures on the field, players carried off on a stretcher with broken leg bones sticking out through the muscles and skin. I've been to the hospital and visited quadriplegics, men with broken backs and necks who would never use their arms or legs again. I've been to funerals, and comforted widows and children.

"You might say those players were just the unlucky ones. But even the *lucky* players were constantly battered and bruised and aching. The game was brutal, and it wore them down - fast. A good running back, one who avoided major injuries, might hang on at the top for ten years. A quarterback who was willing to work through shoulder separations and knee surgery could go as long as fifteen. Then they were put out to pasture. Tell me this, Sy: Is football important to you?"

"More than anything in my life."

"So you can imagine how it must feel, to play your heart out for a team until you're told you're broken and past it, and then get kicked out when you're still a young man and most of your life is ahead of you. That doesn't happen

any more. With the System, the injury rate is a hundredth of what it used to be. The wear and tear on your body is far less. If you want to do it, Sy, and you keep in condition, there's no reason why you shouldn't be playing for the Cowboys forty years from now. If Rollo and Johanson can last that long, why can't you?"

"I'll stay in good condition. I always have."

"Then you'll find your handicap less and less annoying as the years go by. But you have to stick in there. You can't afford to weaken, mentally or physically."

"I'm not a quitter." And then, with a strange look at me, "I've never seen pictures of football injuries anything like what you say."

"You won't. They're not part of the 'official' history of football. No one wants to admit what a killer and a maimer the old game used to be. But I have those pictures, scores of them." I tapped my head. "Up here. And I finally reached the point where I couldn't take it any more. That's when I got the idea of the Handicap System."

Sy Andeen wasn't looking at me now. He was staring *through* me. He had reached past today's irritation at the stiffsuit, on beyond to a possible thirty or forty years with his team.

"Nobody ever explained it this way before," he said. "You really think that in the old days I'd have been washed up in just ten years?"

"Washed up or worse. You might have been crippled. Don't take my word for it, look at the player statistics from half a century ago. You'll see for yourself, careers used to be terribly short. Where are you going?"

He had stood up. "I have to go to the post-game party. Tolman told me he'd be there. I promised to tell him my plans for next year as soon as I knew them."

"You're serious? You were really thinking of quitting?"

"I don't know quite what I was thinking. But I know what I think now. I'm staying."

"Then I don't need to tell you this to persuade you, but you might as well know. You broke a record today."

He didn't speak for a moment, just stood there frowning. I could see the wheels turning. He knew his own performance as well as anyone, kick-off returns and interceptions and tackles made and missed.

At last he shook his head and said, "Sorry, but you lost me. My stats were good, but not super-good."

"You still broke a record. You'll hear about it when the team analysis is performed. There's supposed to be a limit to how fast a man can run with top stiff-suit settings. You exceeded that on your final chase after Ken Rolovicz. I suspected it when I saw you jump. I could believe that, you see. It was consistent with your suit setting. But your last run wasn't. That was pure, high-octane adrenaline."

"Are you sure?"

"I just checked it." I tapped my performance analyzer. "I know I'm right."

"Even so, it's not much of a record."

"Tommy Tolman won't agree with that assessment."

"You really think so?"

"Trust me."

He nodded, started for the door, then hesitated again. "Want to come along to the party with me?"

"I'll be there, eventually. You carry on. Your fans want to see you -- not to mention the owners."

He nodded. "Thanks, Harry."

"Any time, Sy."

As he left I moved to sit in his seat and turned the play-by-play system on again. Not for today's game -- I had all of that where it ought to be, inside my head. Rather than this Superbowl, I called the central video files that went all the way back to the time, forty years ago, when Ken Rolovicz first entered the league. Maybe those games were in my head, too, but I wanted to see them again, like re-visiting old friends.

Sy Andeen was still young and innocent. He gave me credit where no credit was due. Sure, I had hated it when players in the prime of life and potential were destroyed by injury. But that wasn't what led me to the idea of the Handicap System, and it wasn't the reason that I had pushed so hard for its adoption. The motive for that had come years before, when the Natives had suffered what used to be known in those days as a "transitional season." That was a year when by an accident of timing an extraordinary number of a team's players became too old, or too injured, or their contracts expired and they transferred.

Suddenly I was faced with a group of total strangers who happened to be wearing Native uniforms. I didn't know them, and I didn't want them. I wanted Lars Larsen and Rudiger and Plante and Mury, the people who started their playing careers when I first became interested in the game. In any decent system, a man ought to be able to go on rooting for his idols as they grow old together.

And the younger players, coming in later? They will have *their* fans, the younger people rooting for them. That's exactly what the System guarantees.

I had promised Sy Andeen that I would be at the post-game party, and I'd keep my word. But no one would mind if I was a few more minutes late.

I told the retrieval system what I wanted and waited while we

wound back thirty-five years through the data files. And I watched, one more time, the thrilling run that gave Ken Rolovicz his *first* Superbowl touchdown. He was struggling to run in a burgundy-and-gold stiff-suit with maximum settings, and he was being chased by Big Bill Stoughton, fifty-eight years old and out of retirement for eight months. It was a foot race, Rollo heading for the goal line. Fifteen yards to go, Stoughton of the Cowboys hobbling along behind on his gimpy legs, but closing. Twelve yards out, Rollo at full strain -- Stoughton gaining -- six yards -- two -- Stoughton had him at the waist. Rollo was leaning, still driving. Almost there, lunging in, toppling across the line.

Touchdown!

They don't make plays like that any more, do they?

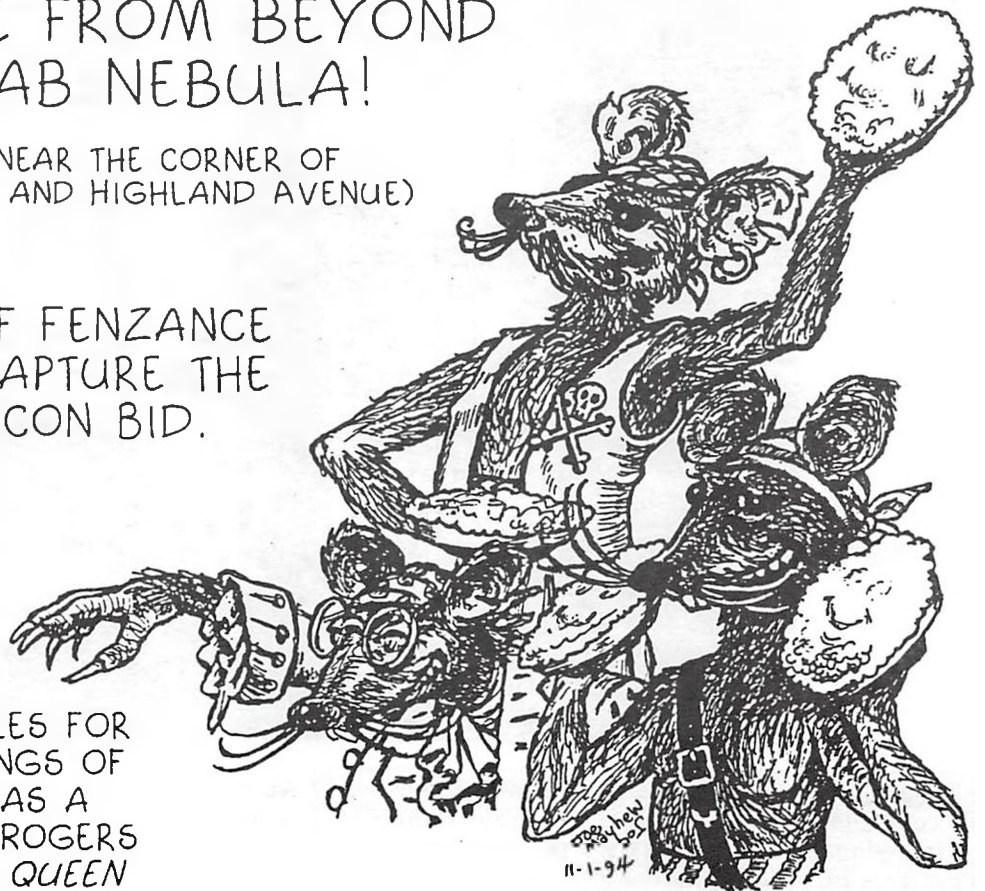


Plan 98 from Baltimore

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THE CRAB NEBULA!

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ARE HERE TO CAPTURE THE
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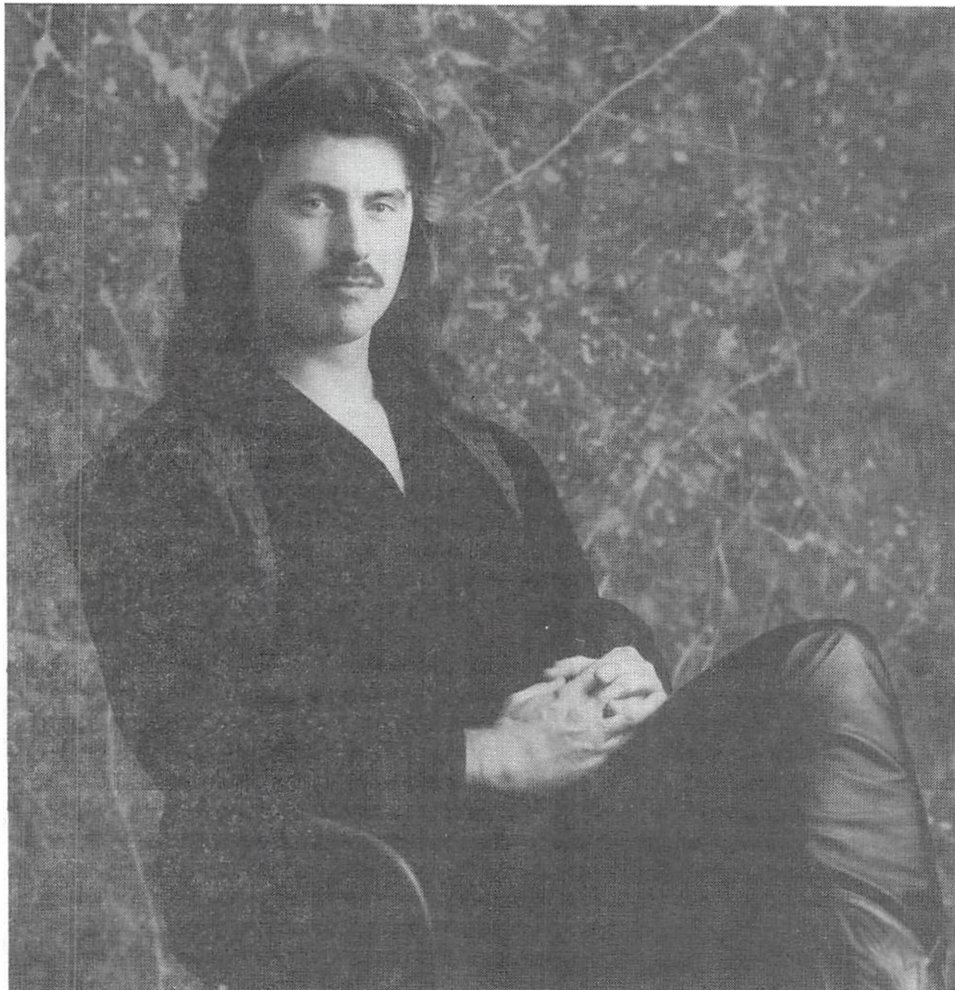
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SAMURAI CAT AS A
PIRATE BY MARK ROGERS
AND *THE PIRATE QUEEN*
BY RIC FRANE.

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ARTIST GUEST OF HONOR: BOB EGGLETON



Disclave Artist Guest of Honor Bob Eggleton was recently nominated for the 1995 Hugo award for Best Professional Artist (don't forget to vote!). His current projects include numerous book covers for such authors as Stephen Baxter, Daniel Hood, Gregory Benford, and Alan Dean Foster as well as a dinosaur anthology edited by Gardner Dozois. Most recently he finished the covers — all seven — for Foster's newest Pip and Flinx adventure and the six previous books in the series. He has a card set from Friedlander Publishing, two screensavers from Second Nature Software, and, in the fall of 1995, *Alien Horizons: The Fantasy Art of Bob Eggleton* will be published by Paper Tiger Books of England. The softcover book will have about 100 images of SF, space, fantasy, and horror.

Bob recently gave the following interview to *Absolute Magnitude*. It appears here with the magazine's permission.

Absolute Magnitude: You do a lot more magazine covers than other artists of your stature do. When you approach a magazine cover, how does it differ from the way you approach a book cover?

Bob Eggleton: The book cover is essentially packaging. It's designed as a point-of-purchase sale. You have less than a second to get someone's attention. When you design the cover you're not so much illustrating — the advice I give to many new artists is don't worry about illustrating, worry about packaging design. It's just like packaging a product; the product just happens to be a book. You've got to make the most effective, simple, visual punch that you can. The cover really does sell the book. Good reviews and the author's name do help a lot too, obviously, but for newer and lesser-known authors the cover does sell the book. It has to be designed specifically for maximum impact. When you're doing that a lot of esthetic considerations, such as how well it suits the book, have to take second place. Magazines are a lot

different. Magazines go out to subscribers. That means that essentially it comes into the mailbox, and the selling is already done; it's a pre-sold audience. Even magazines on the newsstand are purchased by the same people over and over again. Magazines have very loyal readerships. That's what's kept magazines like *F&SF* and *Analog* going for decades.

AM: So you don't have to sell the product.

BE: Exactly, now you can spend your time concentrating on artistic and esthetic concerns rather than worry about whether or not it appeals to the right age group. It's a strange difference. The magazine work invariably gets more attention. The Hugo nominations for the best original art quite often go to magazine covers. That's what gets seen; that's what everyone gets in their mailbox. I try to tell new artists this: Support the magazines because ultimately they will support you. They will get your name around. They don't pay as much as book covers, but it's still supporting. I've done the cover for this magazine [*Absolute Magnitude*]. I'm doing a cover for Algis Budrys' *Tomorrow*. I'm doing the cover for *Marion Zimmer Bradley's Fantasy Magazine*. I want to support magazines because ultimately magazines have a lot to offer.

AM: You're a big Godzilla fan. As an artist what is it about Godzilla that attracts you.

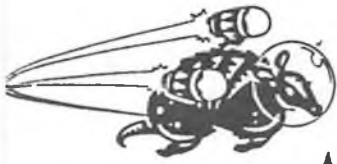
BE: Godzilla was my childhood hero. I think he's a big monster with a lot of charm, the way the Japanese do him. I'm a bit leery of the American Godzilla, only because Americans don't create monsters with the same charm as the Japanese. What works so well in any Japanese monster movie, and I include *Ultraman*, *Caju*, *Mask Rider*, *Super Giant* and the like, is that they are beautifully shot. There is a movie called *Prince of Space*. It's one of the crummiest movies I've ever seen. The head alien looks like he was lopped off of a pinball machine. It makes *Plan 9 from Outer Space* look serious, but the way it's shot is very artistic. The set-up of the shots is absolutely beautiful. It's well-composed, like a good painting. Ultimately, I relate to that. I just love Godzilla. I thought maybe I was the only adult who loved Godzilla, but I was wrong. Lots of people love him. Twice I've had the professional opportunity to paint Godzilla. That was a hell of a lot of fun for me. There are a lot of science fiction people who just blow Godzilla off. They say, "What did you paint that stuff for? Godzilla is so stupid looking." Godzilla is this, and Godzilla is that. Well, he sure is popular. Whenever I do my slide show at an SF convention, it ends up being a standing-room-only crowd. That has to say something. Godzilla calls to your inner child. It takes me back to times when I really had a lot of fun with stuff. I was inspired to draw Godzilla which got me drawing dinosaurs and all kinds of wonderful stuff.

AM: Are there any writers that you would like to work with that you haven't had the opportunity to work with?

BE: I'd love to do more Arthur C. Clarke. I've done a couple of his books. I did *Rendezvous With Rama* and *Beyond the Fall of Night*, the book that he kinda, sorta, wrote with Gregory Benford. They essentially took the old *Against the Fall of Night* and had Greg write a sequel to it. They put the two together and called it *Beyond the Fall of Night*. I did the cover for that. I would love to have done 2001. I would love to do 2010. I see nothing wrong with doing more of that type of work. Ray Bradbury . . . I've never done anything of Ray Bradbury's. I'd love to do something with Harlan Ellison too. Not only is he one of the best writers in fiction today — not just science fiction; he's great — he gets involved in the "creation of the picture" process. He's got a good artistic mind, a visual mind. If you say to him, "Harlan, what do you think would go with this? I'm really stuck," he'll come up with a great idea. Unless I miss my guess, he's extremely instrumental in what the image on the cover of his books look like. I'd love to do H.P. Lovecraft. I've illustrated him indirectly. I did a painting of Cthulu, but I'd love to do something like "At the Mountains of Madness." He was an incredible writer, and he was from right here in Providence.

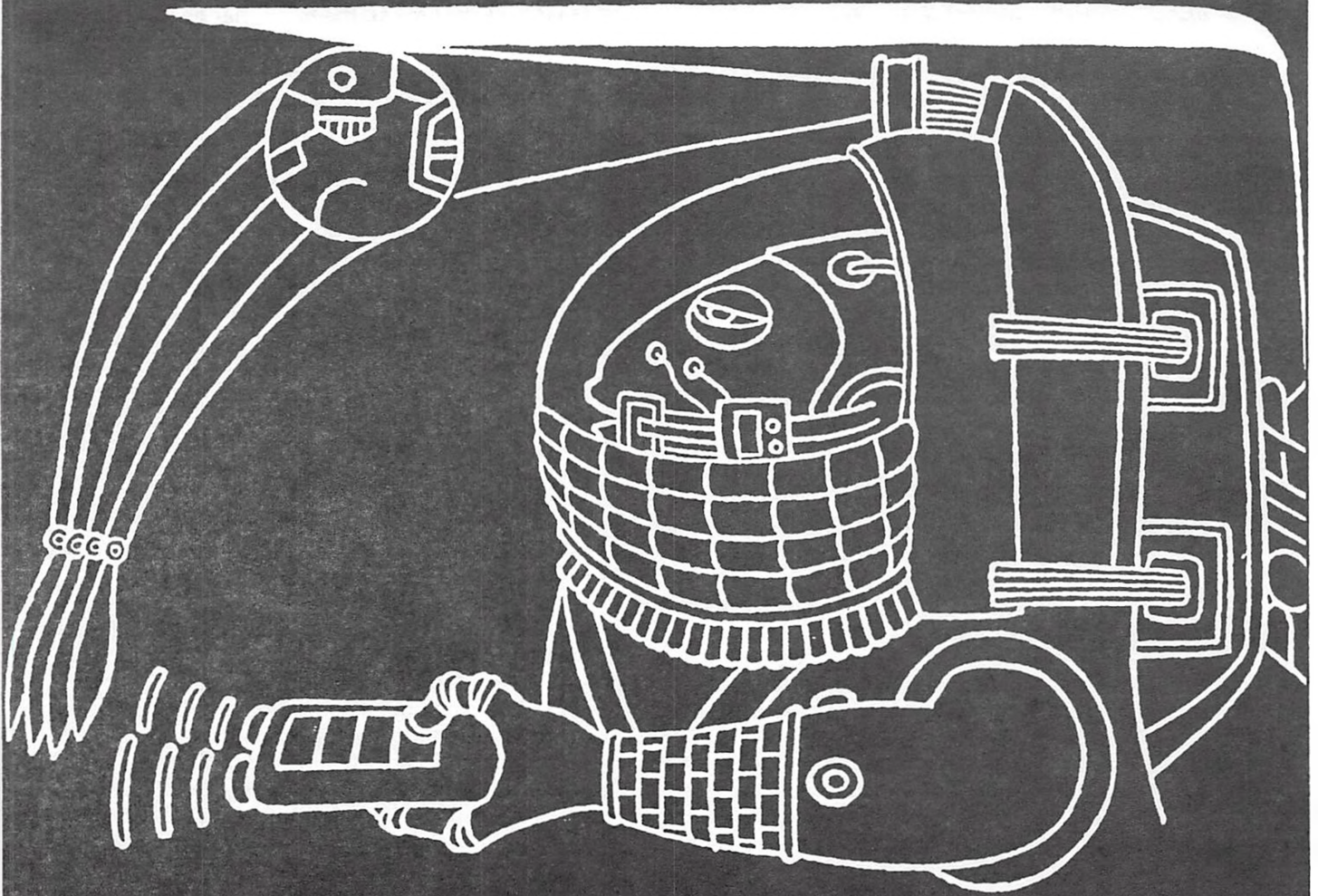
AM: You use very bold highlights, was that a conscious decision or just something that developed over time?

BE: It's just something that developed. I was influenced by Alfred Bierstadt, the great Hudson River Valley painter, who did some wonderful mountains. He did these really strange lighting effects. This guy, if there wasn't a lighting effect, he'd invent it. Then there's Frederick Church and Thomas Cole. They used clouds to great effect to regulate their lighting in pictures. They'd have a lot of highlights. That's what I like to do: I like to work from the highlights. I have a lot of unorthodox ways of painting that I really can't explain. Michael Whelan, for instance, has a very methodical way of painting. It really works for him. I invent mine along the way. I improvise, and I mess around. I do things that people say you can't do just to see what happens. I use everything to its own end. I never make the thing a technical painting. I don't say, "I'm going to do this painting all with this kind of brush." I usually throw in everything but the kitchen sink. Don Maitz works similarly, but he takes longer to do it than I do, partially because he works in oils. I envy anyone with the patience it takes to work with oils. I get very bored with paintings very quickly. I tend to work kind of fast on them. I do try for a strong lighting effect. I'm known for my lighting. I'm often praised for it. That's very important to me; that's my strength. I don't do just one subject matter, whether it be science fiction, fantasy, or horror. I depend on the lighting effect. Lighting is the most important thing in a painting. Everything else is subjective.



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AM: So you don't just stick to one tried-and-true, safe method.

BE: I work with acrylic only because I worked with oils and I ended up getting them all over me. I've had art reps and agents tell me you have to do it just like this, so the layman can understand it, so the corporate executive who is writing the check can understand it. To set yourself up in one method is self-defeating. By definition an artist is an explorer, one who tries different techniques to achieve one end goal. You'll die if you get stuck in one groove. I've tried not to do that. I almost got stuck doing airbrush work. I started losing my sensitivity, and I felt like I had to get it back. So I wanted to try different things. It keeps me on edge. I have a creative edge. It makes me very nervous, but I do have a creative edge, and I'm happy about that.

AM: What can you tell me about the collection of your work that you're putting together?

BE: I'd like to put together an art book entitled *The Art of Bob Eggleton*. I'd like it to have five or six paintings that are unpublished. It's a good hook to get people who already know my work to buy the book. The problem I have generally with art books is that they end up being collections of paperback book covers. Michael Whelan put out a gorgeous book: *The Art of Michael Whelan*. It's really lovely. A few other artists have put out books equally as good. Tim Hildebrandt has a very nice one. Carl Lundgren's book is incredible. I highly recommend it. He talks about his whole life, his troubles, his worries, and what makes him create. I think it's really nice to see that side. It's the most interesting read you'll ever get. He also shows a lot of his early work. You see his progression as an artist. I think it's really important to show that. With mine I would like to show a lot of my book covers. I'd like to have it divided up into sections. In one section I'd explain how I do book covers and why a book cover looks the way it does. I'd explain why some people don't do book covers, why I don't like a lot of my own book covers. I'd also have a section on how things work as far as painting. And then paintings that weren't done for book covers, that were just illustrations for me. I think that it's really crazy to just do book covers all the time. I think you have to explore, and you have to grow as an artist. If you fail to grow you end up losing in the long run. A lot of younger artists don't get that. They're very obsessed with doing one thing and making money. It's a very commercial attitude to take. A lot of people say, "Oh, you're the guy who does astronomical art." And I say, "Yeah, but I do fantasy art, and I do horror art, and I do surrealistic art, and I do wildlife art." I think it's nice to dabble. If you get stuck on one thing the public may know you for it, but that's short term. Ultimately you have to grow. One of the hardest things in the world is taking a chance and doing something different. The biggest compliments that I get is when people tell me that my work is growing and developing. That's wonderful. Recently I got a letter from a fan who was reading *Asimov's*. He pointed out a technical flaw in one of my paintings. I was hoping that no one would see it, but he did. It proved to me that someone was really

noticing these things. Someone gets the magazine and really scrutinizes the cover. There are people who look at covers as more than decoration.

AM: What's the least rewarding part of your job?

BE: The overtly business aspect of it. Dealing with people who don't understand what I do. They don't understand that what I do is a business, that I have a business, that I make money at what I do, that I can't always snap my finger and come up with an image. I do need to eat and sleep and do other various bodily functions. They don't understand that a rush job is not going to be a good job and that I need to be compensated for what I do. They're happy enough to get the work, but do they want to pay for it? Doing taxes is the monster of the id for me. It's the half of me I can't talk about. I get so beside myself worrying about this, that, and the other thing. You get accountants, lawyers, and I.R.S. agents who simply don't understand what artists and writers do for a living. They aren't linear jobs. Linear is a big word these days. Being an artist or writer is a very fluid way of making a living. It's hard for some people to understand that. There are a tremendous number of people in the corporate world who love to control. The greatest exercise of control someone can do is to control their own life and actions. You just can't control other people's lives. Unfortunately there are those in corporate America who do not understand this.

AM: What's the most rewarding part of your job?

BE: The act of creating a world, something that no one's ever seen before. That and people telling me that my work takes them there. That's a big reward for me. It's better than the money. Certainly there are better paying markets than science fiction. It's the esthetic rewards. I've gotten awards and Hugo nominations. [Shortly after this interview Bob won the Hugo for best artist.] The awards let you know you're going in the right direction, but you can't rest on awards. You've got to keep growing and becoming a better artist. When people ask me which of my paintings is the best, I tell them my next one. It's the best way to do it. It's that quest, that feeling that you're never going to where you want to be, but you have the illusion that you might get there. That illusion is what keeps you motivated. If you figure that a painting is your best work and that nothing you do will ever be better, that's it; nothing ever will.

AM: What got you started in the field and how long have you been at it?

BE: Exactly ten years ago. I started doing book covers. I worked for Baen Books back in 1984. I had some interesting experiences with him [Jim Baen] and some equally interesting covers. What got me into it was the World Science Fiction Convention of 1980 in Boston, Noreascon 2. I'd never been to anything like it. I just sort of showed up to this thing and put up my art. I won best amateur artist. It knocked me off of my feet to get all those awards in my first con ever. I realized

that people liked my work so I should stick with it, and I did.

AM: Is there anything you'd like to say?

BE: Only that I'll continue on doing this. This is something that I really like doing. I don't see myself doing anything else. A lot of people think the computer is going to replace the artist. I think that's dead wrong. The computer is a wonderful assistant, but it's only a tool. It's not creative; it takes creativity. You're going to see a lot of hackish amateur work come out because some people in high positions would like to see a computer replace a creative individual.

AM: Do you think it's analogous to when drum machines first hit the scene? Everyone said it was the end of drummers, but in the end it was, for the most part, just a fad.

BE: Yes, exactly! It'll be a fad, and you just won't have that personal touch. Ray Harryhausen said a wonderful thing in an interview recently. He said the *Jurassic Park* dinosaurs looked really nice, but they just didn't have the same creative intensity that the moving models did.

AM: What do you think of the artists aids they have for computers where you can tell the computer what color you want a brush stroke to be?

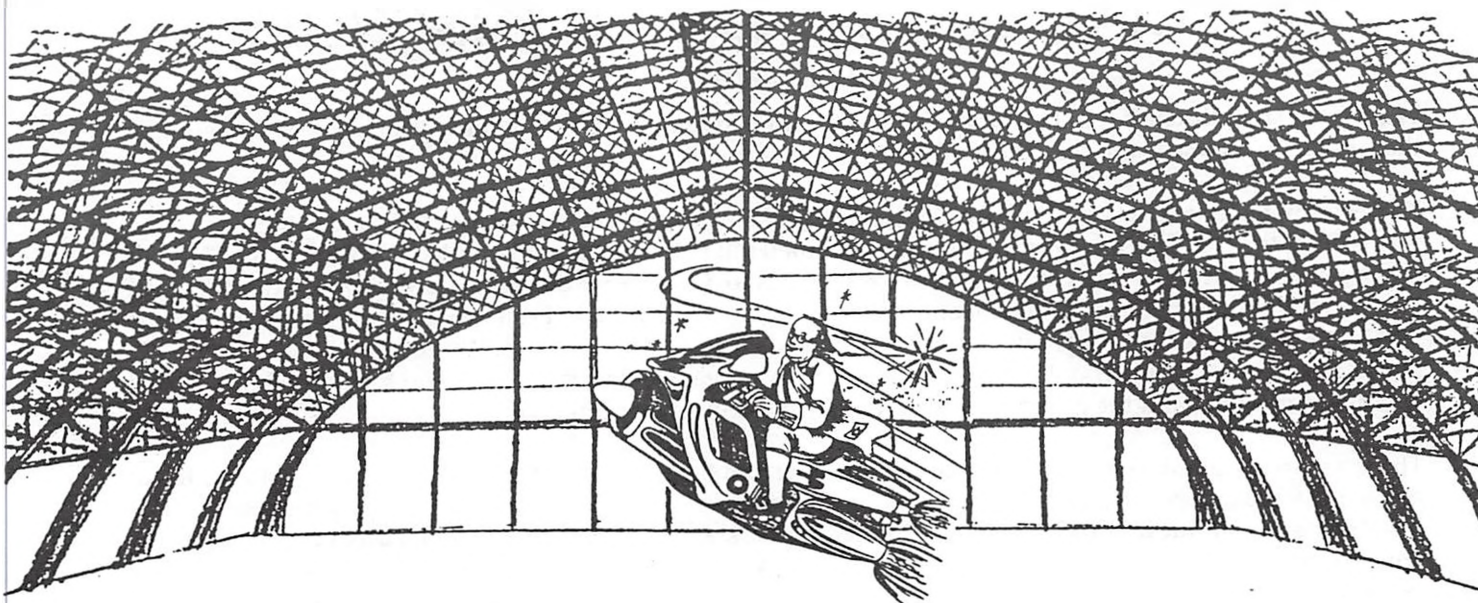
BE: Again, they're wonderful tools, just as an airbrush is a wonderful tool. It's not a style. It's a means to an end. That's what people need to understand. If there isn't an artist behind it, it isn't creative. I've seen computer generated drawings.

AM: When you're eighty years old, looking back on your career, what do you hope to have accomplished?

BE: I'm hoping that I'll have a body of work that I'm really happy with. I'm hoping I'll still be working. They say that artists don't retire, they just draw their lives to a close. People ask me what I'm going to do when I retire. I'm not going to worry about that right now. I have to enjoy what I do now. The best thing about being an artist is that you can just keep working. I'm hoping that no matter how old I am, I'll be doing really fun and interesting stuff, as fun and interesting as what I'm doing now. I'm hoping it'll be fresh. I'm 33 years old, and I don't feel it. I don't worry too much about aging. You just get better with age. I hope that I'll be remembered as an artist and not just a science fiction artist. That would be a good way of being remembered.



2001: The Millennium PhilconSM



"I guess he *can* fly that thing in here."

Have you ever been to a Worldcon with an exhibition hall big enough to park zeppelins or fly a rocket cycle in? You will. (If Philadelphia wins the 2001 Worldcon.) The A-B-C exhibit hall in the Pennsylvania Convention Center in Philadelphia is 840 feet long. In fact, the Convention Center is large enough to hold two Worldcons simultaneously.

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Comparison to Competition

(sizes in square feet)

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<u>Philadelphia Pa.C.C.</u>	<u>Boston Hynes C.C.</u>
A-B-C 320,000	A-B 82,000
D 115,000	C-D 74,000
Marriott 36,000	

Theatre Seating

Grand Hall 55,000	Auditorium 37,000
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Meeting Rooms

84 rooms 170,000	41 rooms 96,000
Total Space 696,000 289,000

Memberships

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Millenium Phil-Kin	\$40.00
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SPECIAL GUEST: DAVID BISCHOFF

BY TED WHITE

I first met David Bischoff (or "Dave," as I've always known him) more than twenty years ago, at a meeting of the University of Maryland (or "U of MD") science fiction club.

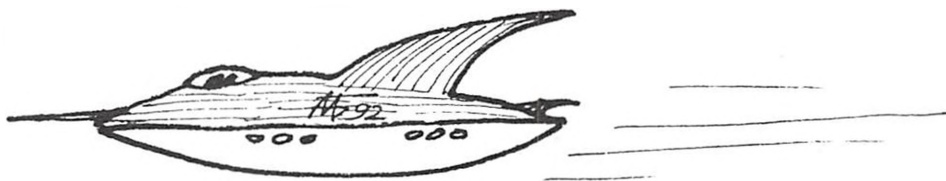
I'd been invited to address the club by Doug Fratz (or "D. Douglas Fratz," once of Accident, Maryland) who was editing the club fanzine, *Thrust*. The club was small but enthusiastic, and would soon launch the Unicons of the seventies. They — the entire group — took me out to dinner after the (late afternoon) club meeting, and at some point during all that — the meeting or the dinner — I met Dave. Dave was in those days, and maybe still is, a rather "beamish" boy, full of enthusiasms and eager to discuss them. We got along well. Then Dave joined the writers' group Grant Carrington and Tom Monteleone had founded, "The Vicious Circle." Since I was also a member, and the group met weekly, I began seeing a lot more of Dave.

The great thing about The Vicious Circle, for me, was the talent pool it formed for my use as the editor of *Amazing Stories* and its companion magazine, *Fantastic Stories*. Grant Carrington had been my first "slush pile" reader. Eventually, most of the members of the group took a turn at it. (The slush pile are those manuscripts which arrive, unsolicited, from unknown authors. A few of these stories will be good — perhaps even very good, in rare instances — but the majority will be awful. Less than 1% of the slush pile submissions are publishable.) It can be invaluable for a fledgling writer to read slush pile manuscripts: Most are unwittingly cautionary tales, full of outrageous examples of what *not* to do in a story. Certainly Dave profited from his experience as slush pile reader, especially since he was paid the munificent sum of 25¢ a manuscript! And soon Dave was selling his own stories. One of his first sales was to, yes, me. For this was the groups' second contribution — stories. We'd workshop a story, and, if I liked it, I'd offer for it on the spot. I'm sure this gave the other members of the group an added incentive, knowing as they did that a story might sell to me immediately.

The group created an author. His name was Michael F.X. Milhaus. He wrote a series of stories for *Fantastic* concerning a charming female demon, Anathae, and also had one or two letters published in the magazine. He was a hoax, the collective creation of The Vicious Circle. But, more to the point, his published fiction, later collected as a Signet Book, *A Personal Demon*, was written by Dave Bischoff, Linda Richardson (previously published as Linda Isaacs), and rich brown. I wrote Milhaus' non-fiction, and edited his fiction.

The concept behind the stories was one rich brown and I had been batting around together since 1964 and an earlier writers' group in New York City. It was loosely inspired by Myers' *Toffee* stories of the early 1950s, which in turn were inspired by Thorne Smith. I threw a little Wodehouse — then a current enthusiasm of mine — into the mix when I brought it up to the Vicious Circle. As things evolved, stories would begin in a group discussion of ideas and aims — what we wanted *in* the story, and what we wanted the story to *do* — and then one of the three principle authors would write a first draft to be read and discussed the following week. Very often it would be used instead as a sort of platform from which to launch the second draft, although ideas,

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scenes, and sometimes even actual patches of prose would be retained by the author of that second draft. This draft too would be workshopped and significantly refined in the third draft, which might reconcile the first two drafts, picking a middle path between them, but which in any case rarely needed much, if any, further revision. Although Bischoff, Richardson, and Brown did not always take the same role, from story to story, generally one could say that Linda did the first draft, capturing most of the important ideas but often missing the mark on *tone*. Then Dave would do the second draft, perhaps dropping some of the ideas Linda had used but correcting the tone remarkably. Finally, Rich would seamlessly blend the earlier two drafts, using and developing Linda's (and the group's) ideas, while refining upon the tone of Dave's draft.

In other words, the three authors put about 150% work into each of the Milhaus stories, and that's not counting the input from the rest of the group. Not very efficient, but we liked the results.

I think his participation in Milhaus' stories was another formative step in Dave's development as an author. One of Dave's first major stories — and later it would be a book — was "Tin Woodsman," with Dennis Bailey. This too was workshopped by The Vicious Circle, and first published in *Amazing*. In the mid-seventies Dave and I also collaborated, on *Forbidden World*. After serialization in *Amazing*, the novel was published by Popular Library — but that was not its original destination.

In the mid-seventies Roger Elwood was a phenomenon. He edited scores of anthologies — many of new, original stories — making him an important market for SF authors. Then Elwood persuaded the publishers of Harlequin romance novels to do a science fiction line (edited by him, of course), Laser Books. The very first Laser Book was by Tom Monteleone — a book which was never put on sale but was given away as a promotional device (It quickly became an embarrassment for Tom). Elwood was desperate for books; he had an ambitious schedule to maintain. And Laser quickly became a haven for the work of newcomers and hacks. Dave, a newcomer to the ranks of the pros then, was able — mostly on the strength of his friendship with Monteleone — to sell a book (before writing it) to Laser. And so did I. Elwood had called me up and begged a book from me. I was not happy about his prior treatment of me, but I relented when he waved money under my nose. I resurrected a series I'd started in *Amazing* five years earlier under the name "William C. Johnstone," which had never been written beyond the opening story, and Elwood bought it.

But I didn't have time to write it. So I asked Dave if he'd like to write it, from my outline and with my editorial guidance, for a larger proportion of the money than just half. He liked the idea, but Elwood did not. "I bought a book from *you*, Ted White — not from White and Bischoff!" He was quite upset, although I failed to understand why, since a) he liked Dave's work and was planning to buy another book from him; b) all his *contract* specified was "60,000 words in the English language;" and c) the original byline on the book was not to have been "Ted White" but "William C. Johnstone." (I strongly suspect that Elwood's agreement on that last point was bogus, given his subsequent reaction.)

So we didn't do it as a Laser Book. (I was very pleased when Laser folded soon thereafter; it appears the sales of Laser Books was not at the Harlequin level . . . or even approaching it.) But we did write it together, for publication in *Amazing* and then by Popular Library, and later Questar Books. The opening line is Dave Van Arnam's. The rest of the first chapter is mine. All but a few scenes in the rest of the book is Dave's.

Since this is *my* piece about Dave, I'll gloss over his collaborations with others, but I have to mention his most important collaborator; Charles Sheffield. Charles too was a member of The Vicious Circle, out of which a number of fruitful collaborations developed. He and Dave created a synergistic collaboration that went far beyond my collaboration with Dave, verging on mainstream success and bestsellerdom.

In the mid-eighties a publisher came to me with a magazine title he'd just bought (from a gaming company) and a concept for a multimedia SF magazine, *Stardate*. He asked me to edit it, but I didn't feel I was appropriate for the job, so he made me editorial director and asked me to find and hire an editor.

I thought long and hard about that. There were a number of possible choices. But when I'd considered each in turn, one stood out: Dave Bischoff. Dave had *all* the necessary qualifications: he was by then well known and well liked in the field, and he was thoroughly knowledgeable in the field. Equally important, he knew and liked gaming, Dr. Who, and Star Trek. And, finally, I knew he was someone with whom I could work.

All I had to do was to convince *Dave* that he was right for job.

I encountered him at a weekly poker game we both played in, and sounded him out. He was dubious: "But, Ted, I have all these book contracts lined up. I don't have any time . . ."

"Dave," I pointed out to him, "it is every fan's dream to someday have a prozine to edit, and the opportunity comes to very few of them. This is *your* opportunity. Don't let it pass you by." I twisted his arm.

Dave was an excellent editor of *Stardate*. The shame is that the magazine's owner had less cash than he had represented himself having. An heir to a DuPont fortune, he neglected to tell us that most of it was tied up in a trust fund and inaccessible to him except in dribbles. After a year and less than half a dozen issues, his checks started to bounce. Checks to artists and authors, checks to the staff, even the rent check — all bounced.

And that was the end of Dave's brief editorial career, but I think it was a good one, and one in which anyone could take pride.

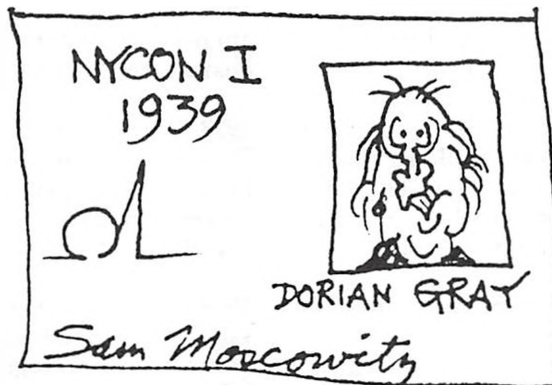
By the end of the eighties Dave had left our area for Los Angeles, Hollywood, and TV script writing. These days he bides his time in idyllic Oregon — where you can live well on an outside income — and we at The Vicious Circle see far too little of him. Our loss.



46 YEARS OF DISCLAVING

BY JOE MAYHEW

1950 The Washington Science Fiction Association which was then barely three years old, decided to hold a "Conclave" at the Wardman Park Hotel (Which became the Sheraton Park, site of DISCON II and several Disclaves). It was a one day affair held on April 30th. Rocket Scientist Willy Ley was the featured speaker. He and the other dignitary, pro SF writer Seabury Quinn, were both DC locals and had attended WSFA meetings. The evening was capped off with a showing of the film "THE MUMMY'S HAND". Chair Bob Briggs reported that about 75 attended. He would chair the next three Disclaves.



THE CON BADGE OF
DORIAN GRAY

1951 saw the second Disclave at the Statler Hotel (future site of DISCON I) on April 29th. GOH Sam Moskowitz, Art Rapp, and Seabury Quinn got a crowd of 23.

1953 found Disclave back at the Statler on March 22nd. They couldn't get any pros to attend, so they held a "Proxyclave," that is, letters from writers were read to the 22 fen who came. It is not surprising that there was a five year gap before they tried again.

1958 We "Disclaved" for *two* days at the Arva Motel on Route 50 up the hill from Rosslyn, Virginia over the Mother's Day weekend, where it would stay until 1970. Chair Bob Pavlat didn't have a Guest of Honor, neither did we have one again until 1965. Bob wrote in the ad flyer, "This is a disorganized conference, no speeches, no banquet." The rooms were \$7.00 a night but the con was free. 65 came and partied so hearty on the roof and elsewhere that we did not get to return to the Arva. They changed their mind at the last minute.

1959 was at the Diplomat Motel (now torn down) on New York Avenue near Bladensburg Rd in DC. This year Bob Pavlat, listed himself as "Dictator." As a WSFA group was bidding for the 1960 WorldCon "Capacon" They blew their war-chest of \$65.00 on party stuff. The club itself also kicked in its entire treasury of \$22.00 insure success. 65 came and partied, but we lost the bid. Still, we managed to stay in the same hotel until 1965.

1960 Chair George Scithers let Bob announce that the program would be "The same as last year. That is, none." Which is a tad misleading as fen used to bring their own program with them. Someone would bring a movie, amateur theater types would make tape (or wire) recordings, someone (Chick Derry) would bring a mimeo, and turn it over to someone else (Don Studebaker) to put out a one-shot fanzine. They'd all go out "Great Walling" to some unsuspect-

ing Chinese restaurant, come back and party with vigor. George chaired the next two, then he packed up and left Washington.

1961 40 fen came. I think it was my first Disclave.

1962 Attendance dropped to 32. There was a sort of program in that Linn Carter brayed on and on about Moby Dick. As the crowd would change, he'd recycle. I did a sort of Dadist one-shot called the "Well-Tempered Disclavier." It was really awful. I think (hope) I have the only copy of it left. In 1963 we did DISCON I and couldn't seem to get a Disclave going for the next two years. So the next one was in —

1965 was at the Howard Johnson's Motor Lodge near Wheaton Plaza in Maryland. Chair Banks Mebane broke with tradition and had GOHs: Chris and Sam Moskowitz. It was also the last free Disclave. Even so, Alan Huff was recruited to sit by the beer tub and collect a buck from any he could. 83 fen came.

1966 was back at the Diplomat, but Chair Jay Haldeman decided to start it on Friday, thus adding a *third* day. Baltimore Fan/Writer Roger Zelazny was GOH. 99 attended paying their one buck up front. Jay would chair Disclave through 1973.

1967 was held at the Regency Congress. Despite its elegant name, it was a dismal motel wedged close to the edge of New York Avenue overlooking the Washington freight yards. Jack Gaughan was GOH.

1968 For some reason, Disclave was back at the Regency Congress. Robert Silverberg was GOH. Jay Kay Klein wrote a wonderful marathon-length con report (*WSFA Journal* Sept. 68, reprinted in part, Dec. 1987).

1969 Surprisingly, Disclave was moved to an even more dreadful hotel. The Skyline Inn was in the hellish ghetto off South Capitol Street near the freeway. There was no place to eat within safe walking distance, or any other sort of walking distance. Lester del Rey was GOH, but the con is most noted for the conception of the International Cookie Conspiracy as a means of feeding fen trapped inside a Hotel.

1970 Naturally we returned to the Skyline Inn for the May 15-17th con. "Murray Leinster" (Will Jenkins) was GOH. Jay would make him GOH for DISCON II as well, perhaps as recompense. The ICC kept everyone from starving.

1971 Jay cut a deal with the Shoreham (across the street from the old Sheraton Park), a wonderful old hotel with large, clean rooms in a safe neighborhood. Terry Carr was GOH. This was the first Memorial Day weekend Disclave, complete with another night and day to "dead dog." So from here on it's a four day affair.

1972 With Ben Bova as GOH, we moved across the street to the Sheraton Park thanks to visions of DISCON II sugarplums in the manager's brain. The Sheraton Park was modeled on Gormanghast or perhaps some drawing by Escher. You could walk directly from the lowest part of the hotel basement to the 8th floor of the attached Motel. This was the home of the fabled C-640 Con suite, which allowed Disclave to build its tradition of real hospitality. We stayed there until they tore it down around our ears.

1973 Gardner Dozois was GOH. This was Jay Haldeman's last Disclave. The next year he would move to Florida despite the fact that he was Chairman of DISCON II.

1974 Alexis Gilliland decided that we COULD do a Disclave just a few days before the World Con. He invited Kelly Freas to be GOH and had 284 Fen in attendance. Alexis would run the next four Disclaves.

1975 To the surprise of many SMOFs, DISCON II did not break up WSFA, neither did we skip having a Disclave the next year. Gordon Dickson was GOH and 360 fen came to see him. Alexis and Doll had a rather flexible deal with the hotel: Whatever space they weren't using that weekend, we got. Sometimes the program would wander about in the hotel from place to place, but impromptu programming such as the "Fannish Inquisition" usually could get space to carry out any sort of nonsense they had in mind. We ALWAYS had C-640. That's what really mattered. Alexis was always the perfect host. 360 came.

1976 "William Tenn" (Prof. Phil Klass of the University of PA) was GOH. Alexis performed a "clown" wedding uniting Artist Freff & Amy Sefton. 675 fen were registered.

1977 Old time WSFA Joe Haldeman was GOH. 850 attended. A lot of them came to see my *Trollogy* Well, I heard them say that they came because of Joe . . .

1978 We had our first Fan GOH, Bob Tucker. Wilson Tucker was a Pro GOH. 1005 came. Alexis' *Star Wars Roots* was first performed that year. It was a roaring success, but due to WSFA's Ruritanian Revolution, it was the last Disclave for Alexis until 1981.

1979 Chair Alan Huff invited Roger Zelazny back as Writer GOH and had Michael Whelan as Artist GOH. There were 1485 registered that year. Ray Ridenour's "Zelazny Players" were featured in the program. But there was a Damoclean sword hanging over the con, or to be more precise, a wrecker's ball. One could look out the windows and see girders for the new hotel inches away. When we left, C-640's door plate was unscrewed from the door and the next day the hotel's oversized corridors and wonderful rooms were demolished. Disclaves are still being held there in the Con-Warp.



1980 We had to go somewhere, but that turned out to be the ironically named Hospitality House in Crystal City, VA. Chair Tom Schaad got stuck with the hotel, but by ingenious planning made it work a lot better than it should have. His Guests of Honor were Spider and Jeanne Robinson. Jack Chalker and Somtow Sucharitkul were Featured Writers, and Robin Wood was Featured Artist. The did my play *Gossip* for Friday night programming. I didn't get to see it because I was registering artists for the art show. . . Just as well, from what I heard. The hotel was so rude and uncooperative that it almost undermined Tom's excellent management of the con. For me the highlight of the con happened while I was auctioning. The room was a ground level exhibition area with two vast doors in its back. While Jack Chalker had his back turned, sipping coffee, the doors opened and a SWAT team with loaded machine guns barged in. Someone had been seen on a balcony of the hotel with what looked like a gun. It was a very security minded area. We don't know how many attended with or without the G-Men.

1981 Alexis returned as Chair, and moved the con to the Sheraton National on Columbia Pike in Arlington. His GOH, Isaac Asimov, drew 1400!

1982 We returned to the Sheraton National with Jack Chalker and Eva Whitley as Co-Chairs, Elizabeth Lynn as GOH, Tom Miller as Art GOH, and Barbara Lantry-Miller as Featured Artist.

1983 It was again necessary to move and this time we went down the road to the Marriott Twin Bridges near National Airport. Chairman Alan Huff has George R. R. Martin for GOH and Jack Gaughan as Art GOH; Marnie Montgomery was Featured Artist. As you might expect, the hotel was less than ideal. The jets overhead was not quite as bad as the tortured construction of the function space and the flooding on the roads which made it difficult to walk to food (all distant). 1100 attended.

1984 And so we moved again. This time it was to a place then called the New Carrollton Sheraton. Chair Jane Wagner had scouted it out and got a good deal with them. It was, indeed located in New Carrollton, surrounded by plentiful free parking, fast food at an easy walk, convenient to transportation and, we would learn once there, it was also an ugly, repulsive roach trap for those who like that sort of thing. Jane had Connie Willis for her GOH, Eric Blair (George Orwell) as Ghost of Honor, and Paul Yurek as featured artist. 900 showed up. We would stay there until 1991, but if you went by the hotel's name, you'd never know it.

1985 Michael J. Walsh, fresh from running Constellation, the Baltimore WorldCon which gave you more than you paid for, invited Ed Bryant to be GOH and Bob Walters as Art GOH. The hotel was now called the "The Sheraton Inn."

1986 The hotel was now called "The Sheraton Washington Northeast." Chair Jack Heneghan had William Gibson as GOH and Steve Stiles as Featured Artist. As usual, it rained on our "poolside" con suite, but, as there was an 8 or 10 foot fence between the cabana room and the pool, it probably didn't matter. . .

1987 They gave me the ball and I was Chair. Naturally, I had Gene Wolfe for GOH. Barclay Shaw was Art GOH, and WSFA founder Chick Derry was Fan GOH. Over objections, I moved the con suite down into the vile, grimy exhibition center, because it would be out of the rain and there would actually be places to sit down. Evan G. Phillips got involved with furnishing and decorating the first "DISCAVE" (A term originating in my misspelled sign). 1350 fen were registered for it.

1988 By the time Disclave rolled around, the Hotel was the Howard Johnson New Carrollton. Most of our fliers hadn't called it that, but everyone knew where it was. Tom Schaad was Chair again. He invited Barbara Hambly to be GOH and English artist Jim Burns to be Art GOH. Evan's Discave was a marvel. He turned the grubby "bunker" into a fantasy world with C-clamps and paper. We ate like gods. Since the demise of C-640, Disclave's hospitality had suffered, now it was back and with style! Again, about 1350 attended.

1989 Lucius Shepard was Chair Mike Walsh's choice for GOH. Naturally, J.K.Potter was Art GOH. Evan's Discave out-did his previous one. It was done out as an English village and was scented with fresh funnel cake. His con suites inspired Noreascon III, Boskone and others to new flights of fancy. Mike Walsh produced a book of Shepard's short stories, *Father of Stones* for his Disclave.

1990 Ah, but this year the Hotel not only had a new name, but claimed it was somewhere it wasn't. It was still in New Carrollton, but it was now called the Sheraton Greenbelt. Chair Eva Whitley had Mike Resnick as GOH and Dawn Wilson as Art GOH. Somtow Sucharitkul was Movie Mogul Guest of Honor, Marty Gear was Fan Guest of Honor, and Doug Beekman was Featured Artist. Jack Chalker and Eva Whitley produced a book Mike Resnick's short stories called *Through Darkest Resnick with Gun and Camera*. Evan's oriental paradise Discave was again, the high point of the con. 1300 attended.

1991 The hotel was still the Sheraton Greenbelt, and for many, that had ceased to be much of a positive. Chair Peggy Rae Pavlat had Lewis Shiner and Alicia Austin as GOHs, Evan produced a space-fantasy Discave with the usual unusual, but the hotel was being difficult, and there was no plan to return. Still the 1200 who attended mostly had a good time. Another book was produced *The Edges of Things* an anthology of short stories by Lewis Shiner.

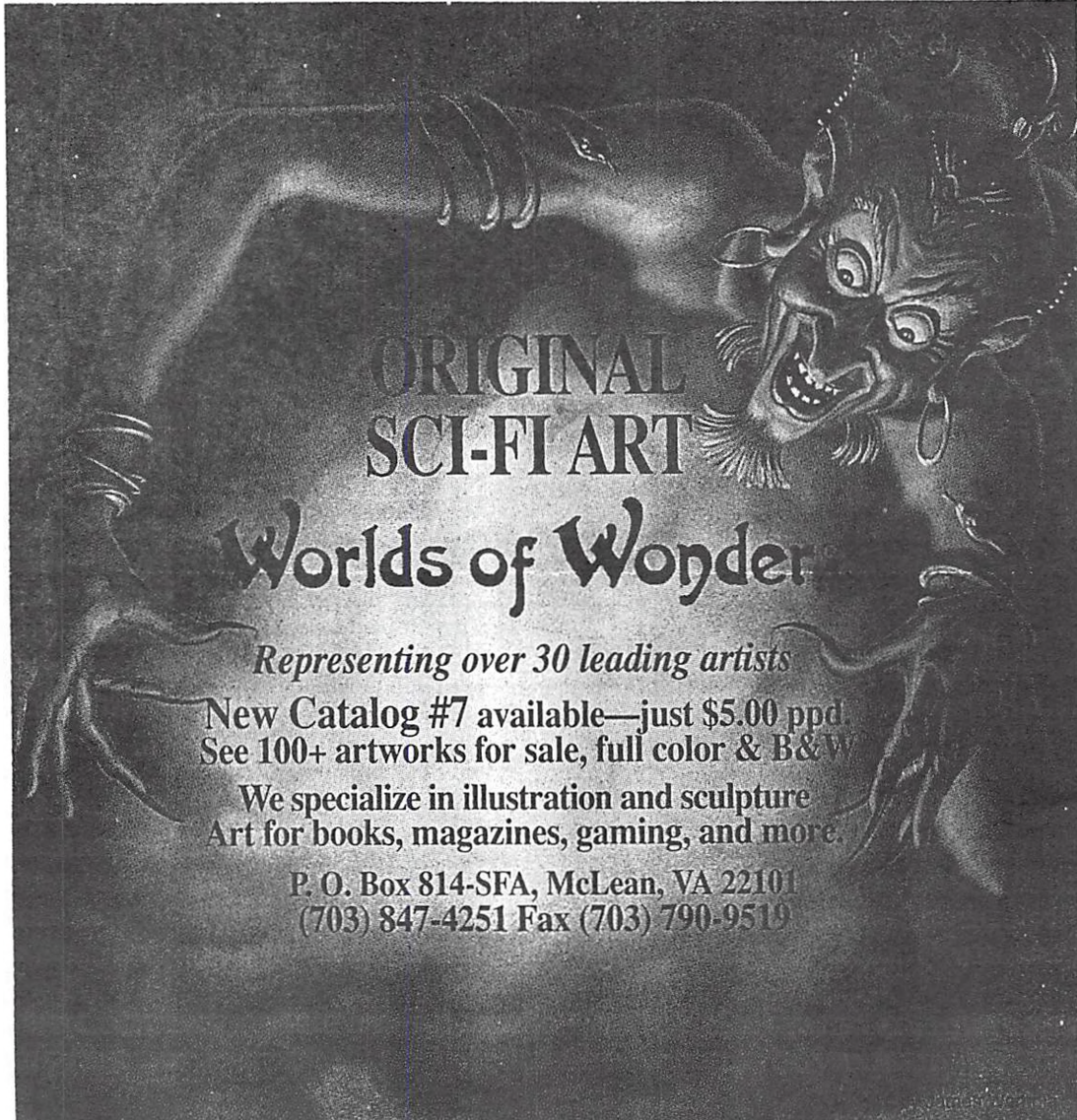
1992 And so we moved. This time it was to the Washington ("Hinkley") Hilton on Connecticut Ave. Steve Fetheroff had been elected chair, but had to move to Washington State. So, Michael J. Walsh, who swore he would not be able to be there, was elected to replace Steve. In point of de facto, Covert Beach got stuck with running it. Pat Cadigan and Tom Kidd were Guests of Honor, Hal Clement's 70th Birthday Party was a featured event. Another anthology was produced. This time it was a collection of Pat Cadigan stories called *Home by the Sea*. Lamentably, Evan was unavailable to produce another Discave. So I volunteered to do the Con suite, which I called the DisClub so as not to tarnish the Discave reputation.

1993 was Covert Beach's turn to actually run his own Disclave, but he had to do it at the Washington Dulles Airport Marriott. It was actually rather a nice place, if somewhat way the hell out in the middle of nowhere near the Dulles(t) International Airport. Evan ran a decent consuite, but without the filthy old bunker, it just wasn't the same. Katherine Kurtz and Patricia Davis were GOHs.

1994 Co-chairs John Peacock and Paula Lewis took Disclave to the Sheraton Premier at Tyson's Corner, Virginia. Lois McMaster Bujold and Steven Vincent Johnson were GOHs, Darlene P. Coltrain was Special Guest. Somebody booked the place out from under us, so we moved on to the Renaissance Hotel Techworld for this year.

By the way, the New Carrollton Howard Sheraton Hotel has since become a Ramada.

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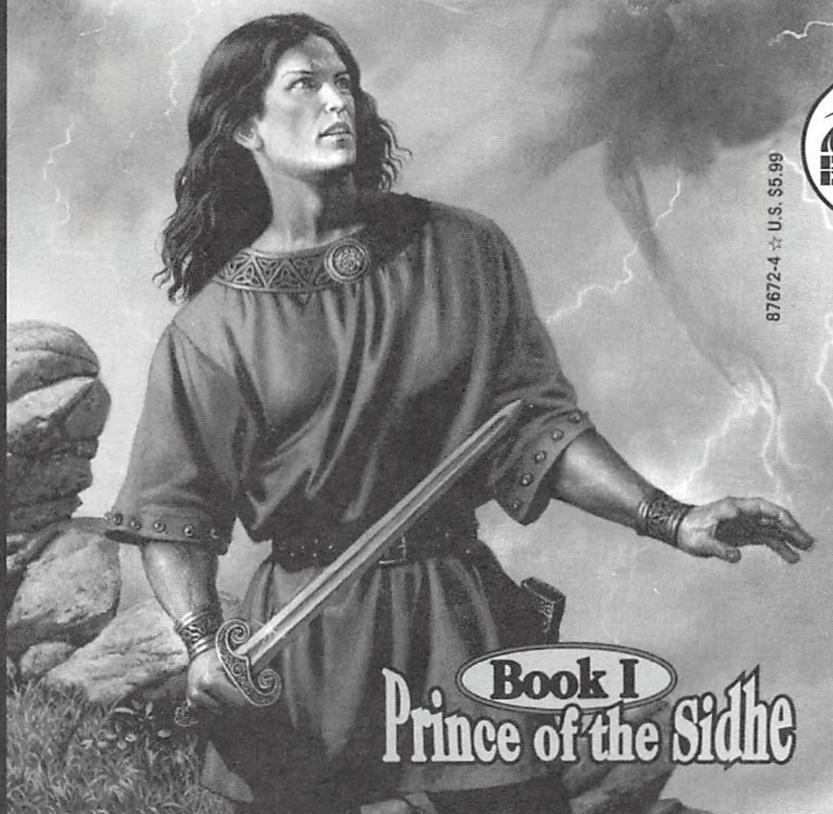
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