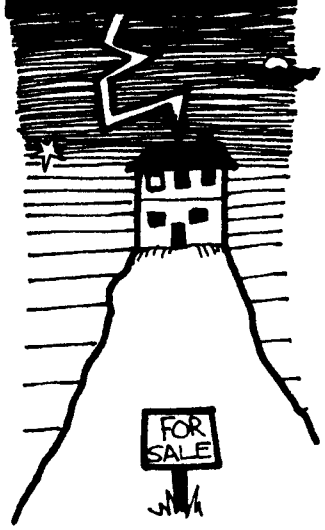


# ALLARGANDO numero 10



A few mailing comments before worldcon and the month of comatose days that will inevitably follow, just to save my membership, you understand: this is Allargando #10 and an Obsessive Press publication, #85, by golly, both from Jeanne Gomoll, PO Box 1443, Madison, WI 53701, phone number 608-255-9909. All material by Jeanne Gomoll, unless stated otherwise, and copyrighted © by Jeanne Gomoll, 1987.

**Lorelei Manney** I thought "Tiles from the Darkside" was a wonderful story. A good idea for a fanzine might be "Beaurocratic Encounters," since so many fans work one way or another in beaurocracies. (I just wrote a story for a fanzine that should be published real-soon-now—Six-Shooter—called "Bureaucracy and Me," and after I read your tiles story, I thought of a couple others that I'd read recently.) In fact our group here in Madison might be eminently qualified to put together a mammoth collection of such stories.

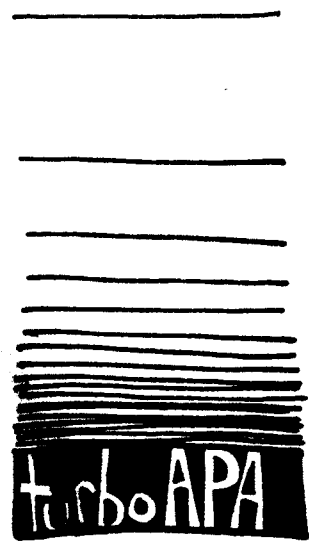
Oh, and thanks for the house-hunting hints from hell. Those warnings might just have been able to scare me out of house-hunting, if it weren't for the fact that there is an equally oppressive list of apartment-living-in-hell facts.

1) Know what you can afford. Remember, just because you want a kitchen that will accomodate more than one person at a time, closets that will hold most of your clothes, and windows that keep out cold air without supplemental cauking; keep in mind the fact that you must leave enough money in your budget for such luxuries as food and bus fares.

2) Know what you want, or what you absolutely don't want. Be willing to sacrifice such secondary desires as a quiet street for the top priority of absence of cockroaches, for example.


...Well, I could go on. But it's really getting to the point that the potential hassels of home-ownership are looking pretty minor compared to the monthly frustration of shipping out huge portions of my paycheck to a landlord and knowing that each rent payment would make a decent-sized mortgagepayment.

I read Nancy Drew too, as a kid. My first one was The Mystery of Blackwood Hall. The villain of that book had the same name of one of my father's clients, and I got so bound up with that book, that I seriously suspected my dad's business associate of criminal tendancies. Some days I can still remember the villain's name (today's not one of them), and I'm amazed at how really powerful the effect those early books had on me. I can still remember plots from some of the books I read in grade school, while—if it's not exceptionally good—I forget details from a novel read only a week or so ago. But Nancy Drew contributed to my interest in SF too, in a small way. I'd already encountered SF (with Madelein de L'Engle's A Wrinkle in Time), but the proximety of Nancy Drew and Tom Swift books in the stores encouraged me to read those. A kid in the seventh grade did a parody of Tom Swift books, which I think even now was actually really well done, and that just about did in my appreciation for either




Tom Swift or Nancy Drew. This kid's report made me think, for the first time, of story-writing as a craft, and plot as something that the writer made and manipulated. After having had the predictable plot lines pointed out to me, I struck out in search of less predictable literary fare with very little regret that I'd never catch up with the writer of the Nancy Drew series and be able to say that I'd read every Nancy Drew story. Actually it was a bit of a relief to give up on the quest. I could see that it was going to get rather expensive.

One more thing before I go on to some other, shorter, mailing comments (your zine was really good this time: at least I found an awful lot I wanted to comment upon. I really enjoyed it, and I'm sorry I missed your party last week. I hope I get another chance to see your new house.) The fireflies bit reminded me of a trip from Madison to Prairie du Chien a few weeks ago, a trip that immediately followed the moving moving story I hinted about last issue which included a detour to the emergency ward. Well, after all that bloody part happened, I was driving Scott's father's truck—empty—back to Prairie so that Scott and I could load it up again and drive back to Madison. It was the fourth of July and the sun was setting as I rolled west. While everyone else was gazing up at the sky in parks at exploding firecrackers and oohing and ahhhing at the displays, I was driving down empty highways, through quiet fields and woods. It had cooled down after a hot day and there was moisture in the wind. It was lovely. And since I don't usually like fireworks displays anyway (it always seems to me like we're oggling symbolic warfare), it didn't disturb me at all that I was "missing" the traditional entertainment of the evening. But as darkness fell, I was quite happy to be driving the old Ford truck down highway 151. It must have been mating night for fireflies that night and there were millions and millions of very excited fireflies out that night. The moon was only a sliver of light, but the glow of the luminous bugs in the fields that I drove past lit up the landscape wherever I looked. I've never seen so many fireflies at one time, and I wouldn't have believed that so many existed. It wasn't just a few blinking on and off here and there. In one field, any field, at any one time, there must have been tens of thousands of fireflies. One blinking off made no difference. Two others blinked on at the same time. It was as if I were looking at a candlelight demonstration that had degenerated into a riot several miles below me. Every few miles, I'd gasp again at the beauty of some glowing, blinking cornfield. I laughed to myself that I was having myself my own private fireworks entertainment, and that the symbolism of the show was the opposite of the traditional bombs and guns display.



**Kim Nash** I liked your homeowner hell story quite a lot. I'm certainly dreading that part of homeowning, but I know that mine and Scott's will probably include more bill-paying hell than you and Lucy accept. In your situation, with the toilet overflowing, not to mention the children wailing and partner exiting, I'd no doubt have called a plumber and decided to worry about paying the bill later. I don't think it would have even occurred to me to try to fix the thing by myself. Unfortunately, neither Scott or myself consider ourself Mr. or Ms. Fixit. We're definitely not looking for a house that gets advertised as a "handyman's dream." No.

Good for you, regarding your expansion of your Morocco stories. I'd suggest that you not worry a whole lot about who your readers are going to be once the stories get written. Write it for yourself, first of all, and if you must think about who is reading it, think about people who've already said they like your story-writing. But do it for yourself and you can't lose. By the way, I liked the dialog you put into the toilet story, the stuff between you and your kids.



**Lucy Nash** There certainly is a lot of good story-writing in this issue of the Turboopa! This was an excellent description of your work, Lucy, very descriptive, very funny in parts.

I agree with you on your comment to Bill Bodden about toy guns and the prevalent attitude that war is some sort of glorious game. Advertisers, movie makers and television producers want none of the responsibility for admitting that their work

in any way influences people's actions (other than convincing them to buy a product, of course). If pressed these media-makers will argue that they are only regurgitating what the public wants in the first place, which is true to an extent, because the public has always wanted easy answers. And it's easy to imagine that what's wrong in the world can be fixed or done away with if you can find the right person or group of persons to kill. "It's their fault, they did it. Kill them, and everything will be better." People have always preferred that easy answer; it's not just since modern movie-makers started diefying urban vigilantes. Sherlock Holmes had his Moriarity—there's so often an "ultimate" villain, that if our heros could only "get," we'd all be safe. That's a comforting thing to believe and we don't need the media to reinforce it for us, though they do. This is certainly no plea for censorship, but only an agreement with you Lucy, that I think Bill's approval of toy guns for children is wrong. The less we reinforce each other's desire for the easy solutions and the less we imply that those easy solutions are actually effective ones, the better our world will become.



**Spike** Good fanzine, Spike. I keep replaying in my mind Joe Hoppe's story about his car trip and the hitchhiker and being astounded at the sheer dumbness of some of their behaviour and the incredible good luck they had in surviving that episode. Fun to read, though.

I agree with you (this is going to be a very agreeable zine, it looks like. I must be in a very mellow mood.), anyway I agree with you on the issues **Diane Martin** raised about **David Busch**. I liked **Lorelei's** insights, too, about the unspoken social niceties that most of us absorb unconsciously and expect other people to observe. (It's true about the empty seats in a theater—or in a bus—there is a certain threshold of crowdedness before it becomes acceptable to sit next to a stranger. At a certain point, the crowd forces everyone to pull in their personal borders, and it's like that pulling in is perceptible and visible to most everyone else.) But more to the point of your comment, Spike, I also think that most apa members' behavior has been all right toward David. There have been a few exasperated comments that might be called rude, but one thing about dealing with people who don't notice those unconsciously absorbed social niceties, they require blunt communication when you're referring to their "blind spots." And as you say, it does seem to be working. David seems to be responding and as a result, people are writing more substantial mailing comments to him.



**Andy Hooper** Good stuff on the contragate hearings. You're looking for a personal way to exorcise your anger? You want to meet a fawning syncophant out there who voted for Reagan, and in fact still supports Reagan even in this issue? Go to New Berlin. Go see my dad. (No, I am not kidding, **Julie**. Mom, has been watching the hearings and is disgusted by the white house crew, but not dad. I heard him ageuing with Danny and some of Danny's friends the other day. Scott suggested that I stay out of it, which was very good advice.) But Andy, you're free go visit him...

Yes, isn't air conditioning wonderful? During these past few weeks I have been grateful that I work 8 hours a day in an air conditioned state office building and that on hot nights, we can turn on the apartment room air conditioner and swoop some of the cooled air into the bedroom with the fan. I may never again live in an older apartment building, complete with leaky walls and windows. These modern apartment buildings with conditioners (or, heavenly central air) are looking more and more to me like basic necessities.

**Peter Larsen** Thanks for the note. Did you get the package?

**Julie Gomoll** On guilt: Linda Pickersgill (a Brit fan) and I were talking on the subject lately, and she argues against it being a thing bred in Catholics. She thinks guilt is more typical of women. But going along with the religious



theme, she and Pam Wells (another Brit) have decided to proclaim a patron saint of female guilt, and they've chosen Saint Emily Bronte. Saint Emily Bronte, patron saint of guilt. Sounds promising. Think of all the woeful, tortured, hair pulling, guilt tripping done by female characters in Wuthering Heights.

I liked your description of your path to agnosticism. My road wound through a lot of thinking about the similarities of organized religious theory and fantasies/fairy tales. But also, as you decided, I resisted the idea of organizing a philosophy concerning something I would never have the least chance of knowing for sure, around wishes. (I wish I could live forever, therefore, let there be a heaven and a god who takes care of me.) Faith has never seemed like a virtue to me in these circumstances, so much as rationalization.

**Terri Schultz** You must be one of Peter Larsen's lamented "Terry's". Welcome to the apa. I don't know what Peter is complaining about. You spell your name with an "i."

You say you're not used to our heat. What (or where) are you used to?


**Peter Winz** Is this some sort of ironic/sarcastic analogy to Turboapa discussions?

**Julie Shivers** The old saying is that in our culture you can be neither too rich nor too thin. The somewhat antagonistic comments you've been getting, Julie, as a result of your complaints about being too thin, are not meant to hurt. But I think you are somewhat unaware of how your comments are received by most people. Think of it like this: Let's not talk about thinness, let's talk about money. Imagine how you would feel if someone who had a great job or was set up so that they didn't even have to work, came to you and complained about the hassels of having too much money and how other people didn't seem to like them because they had so much money. If you were feeling nice, you'd probably make light of the person's comments and joke that if they were really in trouble, that you'd be glad to take some of the money off that person's hands. Remember, you can't have too much wealth or be too thin. The same thing is working with you. Most people get the message through advertisements and movies and TV that they weigh too much. One has to be very thin indeed to escape thinking that these messages specifically embarrass you personally. In fact, no matter how thin they get, a lot of women especially, continue to believe that they are fat, despite all evidence and assurances of friends to the contrary. So when you complain about being skinny, they--perhaps unfairly--hear you saying (even though you may mean nothing of the sort) that they are fat, because compared to you, they are much larger, and society tells us that your weight is the preferable one. On this issue, you will find that most people are very, very touchy, and that you will have to be very careful in phrasing yourself. Great wealth calls for great tact: the more wealthy a person is, the greater the care they must take to play their money down and not rub people's faces in it. You too, should be aware, that right now you have something that some people, especially some women, spend the greater part of their lives working for or wishing for, and they will not be capable of great sympathy, no matter how genuine your feelings on the matter, if you disparage yourself, because the effect, in their minds, is a comment on their own bodies.

Your comment about your goals (marriage to an older, sterile man, etc.) reminded me of a novel I once read which talks a lot about women's goals and life choices. Maybe you'd be interested; it's a great novel and I'd be glad to lend it to you. It's called The Women's Room, by Marilyn French (who is one of my very favorite authors).

**Thomas Quale** The first "mots d'heures gousse rame" was Humpty-Dumpty sat on the wall... ("Un Petit d'un petit/S'etonne aux Halles..."). And the second rame was Now I lay me down to sleep... ("Noye, l'ami, dans toot, sa lippe..."). Whether there will be another poem in this issue will depend on odd or even pages.





**Tinney S. Kees** Wow! where'd you get that illustration? If we were having a contest for best, most appropriate illustration to fit the name of our apa you would win it hands down as far as I'm concerned. Funny!

Funny, too, how both of us launched into such long-winded discussions of the Gary Hart situation after reading **John Peacock's** essay on the subject. I just kept being bothered by the fact that there was a lot more going on in connection with the issues than was being raised by the press.

**?** **David Busch** I should think that one would have to know a great deal more than you told us about the situation at the other SF club to make any judgement. Because you weren't on close personal terms with any of the principals, I can't think that you knew enough to make any comments at the time. If I had been you, I think that I would have simply sat quietly and listened with much interest. You would have to know this woman very well, and preferably know the person she was accusing before you could possibly make any judgement or attempt to organize some action against him. Her close friends, I should think, would have been the logical persons to have offered shelter if she needed it. Nor do I think that any blanket generalization/rule can possibly be stated for this or any similar situation.



**Hope Kiefer** On the subject of mental ages and the men one chooses for partners, your theory makes me a bit nervous about myself, Hope. You know, don't you, that Scott is 5 years younger than me (and so was Peter), though that isn't so much a pattern in my life as that makes it sound. I think I derive my personal mental age more from what I'm doing than who I'm seeing. Like, my mental age jumped a jump when I got a good job with the state, and that affected all sorts of things in my life. All of a sudden I started feeling more comfortable about planning further into the future. I started thinking about eventually owning a house, and the sorts of relationships I began getting involved with were less transitory. While I was working temp jobs, and drawing minimal wages, and unsure about the necessities of life, I had kept thinking of myself as a student and as part of that age group, and life was divided into semesters, not years or seasons... It may be that until you've committed yourself to some sort of long-term activity of one sort or another and feel involved in something your subconscious defines as a "grown-up activity" (no judgements here, just gentle irony), you will mirror that judgement in the social choices you make for yourself. I don't think being in that "in between" stage is a bad thing at all, and as long as you are feeling good about it, you shouldn't put any pressure on yourself to make commitments for the sake of making commitments—to job or lovers—but I don't think you should worry, either, about the feeling that you identify more with a group of people who share your situation. That's natural, and only an accident that they tend to be younger people.

My only advice on this, and your comments on jobs/future, etc., is to take advantage of the time you've got to dabble in anything you want, to experiment with interests and experiences. Everything will eventually turn out to be useful in the most unexpected way. That's what I've learned. (Working with Janus and Aurora was, you know, only a dabbling sort of temporary, sparetime sort of hobby for me. It was fun, but at the same time I was nagging myself with all sorts of guilty worries about what I would eventually do with a capitol D. I worried about what my career could be since I'd stopped going to school after getting my BS in Geography, and had not gone on in Urban Planning. I worried about whether I should go back and get some "real" training in art. But eventually everything I was doing during those "in between" years after college turned out to be terribly, dramatically useful. Now I treat anything I have enough interest in to spend time and energy pursuing as being potentially useful.) Enjoy yourself. Pay attention. Take risks.

So what did you think about the story I wrote about our film-making? You leave me at the edge of my seat!

I think I already answered your question about what I did on the 4th of July back there in a comment to Lorelei. I watched lightning bugs flicker en masse along the roadside to Prairie du Chien. Unless you want to know what I did earlier in the day... Well, OK, I've got some space here.



When I move, I move all at once. I spend hours and hours, all night if necessary, getting everything boxed up entirely so that when the movers arrive the next day, absolutely everything is ready to go. As has been pointed out to me, part of this is due to the fact that my father is a corrugated box designer/salesman and getting boxes is easy for me. ("Dad, I need some boxes." "Oh? —How many would you like, Jeanne? What sizes? What color?") But my habit is also due to the fact that I don't own a car, and so I depend upon the help of friends with cars and more recently upon the schedules of paid movers. In both cases, it's absolutely essential for me to make use of the time friends give to me, and to make professional movers affordable, to be finished packing before they arrive. And so, the last time I helped Scott move, from McGregor, Iowa, across the Mississippi River to Prairie du Chien, I kept him amused and sometimes irritated by saying several times, "Let's get it all done today!"

Well, this time he knew what to expect and he firmly laid the law down. We'd move him his way this time. He had a car, after all. And there was no reason to kill ourselves moving him all at once. He traveled out to Madison every weekend after all, and could gradually move stuff out with each visit. ...All except for the big furniture, of course, and for that he'd borrow his father's truck for a weekend.

At first we thought we'd get all the big stuff into one truckload, but after some discussion, we realized that it would be impossible.

"Well, I'll just have to borrow the truck from father next weekend too." said Scott. But that would involve a large investment in gasoline which the old Ford truck drank down like gaterade. And so I made another suggestion.

"Let's get it all done this weekend!" Actually I wasn't so unsubtle. Actually I suggested that I give up my loafing around in Prairie on Saturday while he worked, and take the truck out to Madison for an extra trip. We'd be going to Madison together on Sunday, and the two trips together would move everything that he couldn't eventually fit into his little Ford Escort.

He couldn't argue with my logic. The weather was fine; we had no idea what it would be like next weekend, and that truck was an awful gas guzzler. So he said OK and showed me how to find the jack underneath the front seat. I crossed my fingers that I wouldn't have to use it, and we loaded up the truck. I dropped Scott off at work and took off eastward for Madison.

No, the truck didn't develop any flat tires or engine trouble. My troubles had nothing to do with machinery this time. (The last time I moved, my nemesis seemed to be wheels in general: cars, trucks and bicycle.) This time, I carried the problem with me; in me, in fact.

I arrived in Madison with no problem; in fact driving the old powerful truck was lots of fun. I got to Blear House right on time to deliver Scott's sofa to Carrie and Andy, who'd bought it for their living room. Andy and DuCharme helped unload the thing and settle it in its new home. Carrie and I conferred. On the phone that morning I'd asked her if she or someone in the house could go with me to unload the rest of the truck at my apartment, but as it turned out, she and Andy had plans for the evening and had to be someplace an hour later. Carrie asked me if I absolutely needed help, and I assured her that it wasn't really necessary. After all, Scott and I had loaded big things onto the truck, but nothing too big to be handled by one person. I reassured Carrie that I understood their time crunch and waved at her and Andy as I backed out of the driveway. It would be tiring, but I figured I'd have no trouble unloading the truck by myself.

I was wrong.

This was the problem: About two weeks earlier, I'd had a cyst on my <sup>left</sup> upper

arm removed. It turned out to be nothing (nobody had suspected that it would turn out to be anything. Minor surgery, nothing to worry about.) but the incision involved five stitches. The doctor said they could be removed a week to 10 days later and since he was going on vacation 8 days later, the stitches came out 7 days later.

First mistake.

They didn't tell me to be careful and to take it easy on that arm for a while after the stitches came out.

Second mistake.

I got to the apartment and decided to get all the unloading done, all at once, to get it done right away. To get it over with. And so, back and forth I went, up and down the stairs, up and into the truck, lifting and carrying chairs, end tables, file cabinet, etc. A couple hours later, or however long it took, I was breathing hard, and wiping sweat off my body in rivers.

Third mistake.

So I took a long, hot shower.

Fourth mistake, maybe. I don't know if the warm water which caused some of the adhesive strips to lose their grip on the wound on my arm was an essential part of what happened, but after I dried myself and lifted a sundress over my head to dress, it suddenly felt to me as if someone had crept up next to me with a butcher's knife and slashed its blade across my arm.

I screamed. And then I pulled my dress down the the rest of the way so that I could see what had happened.

The stitches had burst open and the wound was gaping open wide and red. It looked something like a wild animal had taken a fair-sized bite from my upper arm; it was shaped like a football and was an inch or so deep, and blood was streaming from it.

Actually, it's remarkable that I even remember this. I could only have looked at my arm in the mirror for a second or so, maybe not even that. Immediately after I realized what had happened I grabbed the towel on the bed next to me and slammed it onto the wound, putting pressure on it to stop the bleeding. I never removed the towel...not to keep the pressure on, but to avoid looking at the gaping hole in my arm. I think I somehow tied the towel onto my upper arm, found some sandles that I didn't have to fasten at all, and grabbed the keys to the truck.

And I must have driven to Madison General Hospital and found the Emergency Room underneath the parking lot. I must have, but I don't remember at all. Everything was automatic after I felt that savage slashing in my arm. I vaguely remember driving with my right hand clutching the wheel and my other arm straight down at my side, between the seat and the door, trying not to bend my arm and strain the wound further than it already was.

I remember sitting on a chair talking to the receptionist who asked me all sorts of questions involving numbers...My Group Health Number (which I never recall without looking it up), my phone number, Scott's phone number, my address, Scott's address, on and on it went. I was perfectly coherent, and I remembered absolutely every number, even though I'm seldom able to recall that sort of thing. Which was a good thing, since I didn't have my purse or any identification with me. After we'd filled in all the requisite paperwork, the woman smiled at me, and told me that someone would be with me right away, and wouldn't I just step into the waiting room for a moment.

At that point my head said, "Am I done now? I've done everything I can to get you here. Mind if I leave now?"

And I fainted.

I woke up on some sort of gurney. Apparently, that faint earned me instant attention. And they taped up my wound again, this time warning me to take it easy for the next week or so. I ended up having to go back to the clinic every couple days for the next week to have my arm re-taped. And they refused to let me go right away when they found out I was planning on driving back to Prairie again. I had to rest in the emergency ward for a couple hours until

—they were satisfied that I was going to be all right. While I laid there I recalled other times that I'd wounded myself or had been involved in some sort of crisis or another. It seems that this is my pattern when it comes to crises. My mind goes on automatic. I do what is necessary, avoiding too much thought on what is too awful to think about, and just do what needs to be done. And then as soon as I'm in a situation in which I'll be taken care of or when the emergency is over, crisis averted, I collapse mentally, maybe to take care of those thoughts I've been avoiding while getting the necessary done.

An interesting survival mechanism.

A couple hours later, the lighting bugs lit my way back to Prairie. I picked Scott up at work, unintentionally made him feel horribly guilty for having let me take a truckload of his stuff to Madison all by myself, and got a good night's sleep. It wasn't until the next morning that Scott had to remind me that there was a silver lining to all this moving hell.

"What?!" I had to ask. I couldn't imagine what the good side to all of this was. Showers and swimming would be verboten for the next week to ten days, and I was already depressed about that. What benefit could possibly come out of this?

"You'll write a fanzine article about it, won't you?"

"Of course."

That's it for this month, fellow apa-members. I'll be going to England on the 23rd of August with Scott and we'll return on September 14. Soon afterward we'll do the Last-Prairie-Home-Companion-Show party (the VCR tape arrived in the mail last week), and I'll start the long, arduous task of writing up my trip report. See you all next month, in person, more likely than in the apa.



Jeanne  
8/8/87

I hope I'm  
going 1st  
class, at  
least.  
Ono.

US POST  
OFFICE



SAVING MONEY FOR TAFF

Another name:

*Reine, reine, gueux éveille.*

*Gomme à gaine, en horreur, taie.<sup>1</sup>*

<sup>1</sup>"Queen, Queen, arouse the rabble

Who use their girdles, horrors, as pillow slips."

From *Mots D'Heures: Gousses, Rames: The d'Antin Manuscript*, Discovered, Edited and Annotated by Luis D'Antin Van Rooten, Grossman Publishers, 1967.

Thank you, **David Busch** for the phone call regarding the sale on the murdered smurf statues. I'll tell everyone else what I told you: At least one of them will be on sale in a special TAFF auction catalog that I will be publishing later this year to benefit TAFF. I'll send the catalog to the people in the apa, in case anyone else is interested in bidding on the wondrous items that will be advertised therein. Including butchered smurfs.