

IMPLOSION

Implosion #13 is the local monthly fanzine of Arnie Katz (330 S. Decatur, Suite 152, Las Vegas, NV 89107). Everything is exactly as it was, except that You Are There. It is produced for the 13th Distribution of Apa V, the Las Vegas apa, which has as this month's theme "Animals & Pets" Today is November 5, 1994.

Implosion: The Fanzine that proves anyone can publish a fanzine.
Member, fwa.

Sad Sack Mad

Was there ever a sculptor cursed with baser clay? That is the question I asked myself as I sat in Ken and Aileen Formans' living room. I watched the cream of Las Vegas Fandom shamble and lurch through the gruesome Halloween decorations Glitter City's First Fancouple had so carefully prepared for their entertainment. My piteous moans and the trickles of tears down my sensitive fannish face were hidden from this room full of cavorting creatures, but I felt every pang.

Friday, October 28, 1994 is the day that will live in fannish infamy, assuming I finish and publish this article. That was the date on which Las Vegas Fandom, heedless in its moment of costume-and-candy Halloween joy, broke my tiny trufannish heart and crushed my soul like one of those paper cups Ken periodically scolds us for using.

There's something about looking at fandom through a hole ripped in a paper bag. It provides a fresh perspective on the entity known as The Fandom of Good Cheer.

There I was, arguably the greatest (or maybe the sixth greatest) humorist in

fandom today, comfortably seated at a large gathering of the group I had discovered for civilized fankind. Surrounded by over forty potentially admiring listeners. I was ready to be fabulous and fannish, perhaps even funny.

Seemingly, the recipe for a perfect evening.

Yet it went horribly, devastatingly wrong. These fans were oblivious to the desire of arguably the sixth (or maybe the twelfth) greatest humorist in fandom today to perform for their enjoyment. Inconceivable? Yes, but it happened.

Don't think this was some spur-of-the-moment wish, the whim of arguably the twelfth (or the 42nd) greatest humorist in fandom today to feed his overweening ego. No, this was the culmination of a long-range plan to feed my overweening ego. I had labored, and now I wanted to hear some of those good cheers for which Las Vegas fandom is nicknamed.

I had spent moments, even minutes, deciding on my costume. Appealing as it was to think of going to the annual Las Vegas Fandom

Some of you may wonder what the main piece in this issue has to do with the stated theme, "Animals and Pets." I have several possible explanations, each more fanciful than its predecessor.

This one time, I don't have the energy. I've been working like a horse this week, I'm dog tired, and I want to embrace sloth this afternoon, so I won't point out the obvious animal reference in my article about the recent Halloween party.

I read -- or rather Joyce read -- the piece to JoHn and Ross the other day as a sort of desert after lunch. (Yes, that was intentional.)

They laughed -- well, they almost smiled -- in some of the right places, but after Joyce completed her oratory, JoHn asked if I was really mad about the party.

I was not mad about the party. I had a good time, and thank Ken and Aileen for another serving of their usual high calibre hoospitality. As you read this, keep repeating to yourself: "This is only a story."

Don't concentrate so hard that you forget to laugh, however. I will be watching.

Halloween Party dressed as the inimitable Arnie Katz, I knew something more imaginative was needed to reap their approbation.

Like most fans, I began with grandiose plans. And like most fans, sloth and procrastination scaled them down. I had intended to go out and buy the finest quality paper bags, unwrinkled and professionally creased. I would wear my best suit.

Instead, we went to Cafe Uno for lunch with James Lamortacelli of Novalogic. So I used the only one we had in the house. It was a shopping bag from Borders bookstore. Joyce sewed a propeller cap, sent to me by a software publisher for no fathomable purpose, to the top of the bag. I decided to wear jeans and a sweater instead of the suit. We poked a couple of eye holes in the shopping bag -- I even made an entirely ornamental aperture for my sightless left eye -- and I became the Unknown Trufan!

Then something occurred to me. At the few convention masquerades I had seen, the most popular show entries were really presentations. Walking around like a zombie dressed as a space pirate was passé in the fandom of the 1990s. One must become the living embodiment of a space pirate to win the crowd's approval.

I can adapt, whatever Deindorfer thinks. Am I not the 42nd (or the 103rd) greatest humorist in fandom today? I spent several arduous minutes writing the perfect blend of corny, brandonized jokes and authentic nuggets of Katzian reparté.

Yes, I was living dangerously. Suitable second bananas are hard to find here in Glitter City. Local fans are long on generosity and friendship, but a little shaky when it comes to playing off the set-up to trigger the punchline. Out-of-context elliptical quotes from forgettable movies and near-puns are the leaden coin of the realm.

As Joyce drove the streets from our home in the Northwest to Ken and Aileen's place in the Southeast, I silently practiced the jokes, quips, and bon mots that would emerge in muffled magnificence from inside my bag. (Joyce had declined to cut mouth or nose holes, perhaps an omen that I should have heeded.)

I knew my well-crafted comedic turn upheld my honored position as the 103rd (or perhaps the 267th) greatest humorist in fandom today. It was a classic routine to resonate through the ages. It was a splurge of fannish humor that these lucky listeners would quote to their grandchildren if society permitted them to breed.

We parked a couple of doors down from the Formans' house. I nodded approvingly at the mock graveyard next to their front door. It commemorated Vegas fan friends and others who'd moved away to other cities. Near the marker for the recently departed Karl Kreder, now living in Phoenix, was one for Alex Borders. "One of the founders of SNAFFU," I noted to Joyce. "And still foundering, no doubt, no matter where he has roamed."

Well, I had to warm up for the part. That's my defense, and I'm sticking to it.

I donned my bag as Joyce opened the door. I was ready to make my grand entrance. Fanhistory was in the air!

I walked in, glorious in my new identity as the Unknown Trufan. Waving my arms theatrically, I boomed greetings to the fans already enjoying Ken and Aileen's ample hospitality.

Nothing happened. Absolutely nothing. No cheers, no applause, no happy laughter. It was small succor that their response to Joyce's Brunhilde costume was equally tepid, even when she played her taped theme music, "Flight of the Valkyrie."

A young woman in a fancy store-bought costume sniffed at me disdainfully. I may've had a sack sitting on my shoulders, but she had a bit of a chip on hers.

It wasn't as though either of us was going to win the informal competition for best costume. For the record, I personally declared Johnie Williams, in a spotted dog costume sewn by his mother Su, was the hands down winner. I reached this conclusion when Johnnie put his hands down on the floor to look for something or other and the Forman's giant dalmation tried to mount him. Now, that's what I call a realistic costume!

Perhaps my costume bored the young woman, whom I had never before encountered at a fan party. She obviously thought little of the time I had diverted from my awesome

responsibilities as the 267th (or perhaps 301st) greatest humorist in fandom today. "Maybe seeing the 301st (or 407th) greatest humorist in fandom today wearing a bag over his head is old hat to her," I muttered *sotto voce* within my paper fortress. "Or maybe she's used to seeing the bag from the inside."

This appeased the Unknown Trufan for a few minutes, but then the hunger for a chance to showcase my comedic talent returned, even stronger than before. Why didn't someone ask me about the rope handles I had artfully left attached to the bag? Then I could've explained that, "It's a training bag. If this works out, I'll use a regular one next year. If it doesn't, I'm thinking plastic dry cleaning bag."

Or why didn't someone at least have the curiosity to say, "So, you're a Trufan?" Was that so much to ask? I didn't -- and don't-- think so. If someone had done that, I could've said, "Actually, I used to be a media fan, but I've gotten into a new bag, a book bag." Then they could've read the "Borders" logo printed where my mouth would've been if I'd had a little more cooperation from Joyce, and I could have made my foundering joke aloud.

But no, no one asked the necessary leading question. Nor did anyone stand still long enough for me to hop back and forth around them, in partial simulation of the Unknown Comic, as I told my brandonized jokes.

I didn't have a million of them, you understand. That's the prerogative of the greatest (or perhaps the second-greatest) humorist in fandom today. But the 407th (or was it the 638th) greatest humorist in fandom today had enough material to make anyone laugh, or at least exhaust the patience of a saint. I'm talking big yocks like: "I was walking through the convention hall, and this zoned out kid in a Klingon uniform came up to me and said, 'Can you help me, I haven't had a bite in three days,' so I bit him." or "I went to a convention and met a nice female fan and we spent all of Saturday night trying the seventy-four positions in the Burbee Sex Manual. The next morning, I was walking along, kind of tired, and I ran into Sam Moskowitz. 'Sammy, Sammy, Sammy,' I

said to my *landsgman*, anxious to brag about my conquest of the previous night. 'SaM,' I said again, 'I'm having an affair.' 'So nu,' he said to me 'Who's catering?'. "

I was ready.

The costume was ready.

The fans, alas, were not ready. Badinage with a keenness only attainable by arguably the 638th (or maybe the 734th) greatest humorist in fandom today choked in my throat and soured in my mouth. Fortunately, no one was kissing me, since as you recall, the bag had no mouth for screaming -- or pleasanter pastimes.

I left the party and went to the Celebrity Deli to order an Arnie's Special, to salve my injured pride. It was closed, so I had to make do with a semi-cold Wendy's burger.

Then the 734th (or at least the 911th) greatest humorist in fandom today slunk home, his headgear between his knees. I gave the sack to Joyce as designer. She immediately detached the propeller cap. She has plans for it, she told me, big plans.

Me? Well, I have my plans, too. If I'm ignored at next year's Las Vegas Fandom Halloween Party, I plan to do shoot off more than my mouth. I'm going to wear a mailbag and go as the Unknown Postal Worker!

Not a Coda to the BOVE

Despite my explanation, I do feel that I may have slighted the theme, the last bestowed upon us by the Mainspring in his capacity as Apa V's Official Editor. I wouldn't want anyone to think my failure to toe the thematic mark signified less respect for the new OE, JoHn Hardin.

So I want to mention something that has bothered me on TV for at least the last six months. There's a series of nature tapes called "Trial of Life." It has individual titles like "Rending and Tearing." In other, this is the stuff for the people who tried Mortal Kombat and are ready to graduate to the hard stuff.

Anyway, "Trials of Life" is advertised with a video montage of bestial carnage.

The tag line is: "You'll see why they caii then animals!"

Isn't that a strange notion? What made them say that? Is this a secret nest of unregenerate Shaverites?

I need answers