

Hello, Mr. and Mrs. America, and all ships at sea. Ride with me

UP THE DARTH VATOR

To Los Angeles. To Rosamond, California. To Phoenix, Arizona and the 1978 World Science Fiction Convention. Across the mindless expanse of Texas home to New Orleans. You'll ride in good company, with LASFS and LASFAPA, Yarbrow and Anderson, Watership Down and sabretooth tigers. You'll hear Ellison on stage and Ruth Judkowitz off. You'll look at the stars as they should be seen, from the darkness of the Mojave Desert in the company of three teenaged girls.

It was quite a trip. I anticipate quite a time recounting it. I'm

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You're the Southern Fandom Press Alliance ... the Los Angeles Science Fiction Amateur Press Association ... the New York Amateur Press Association ... the Spectator Amateur Press Society ... or one of many folks encountered along the way.

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Hop in. Punch a button. Hold on.

I. Los Angeles

From the air it seemed eternal, grandfather harmonium, a patternless, entrancing spread of light, emphasizing not so much the different colors it shone but the different textures through which it shone. Here the distinct sparkle of subdivision streetlamps. Here the silver cords of an interchange held forever in a loose knot. "Patchworks" said the immediate impression, but no; from the air, and at night, the true and deep impression was one of vivid, various, endlessly various life, collected in many if not all of its colors and textures, drifted together into an amorphous, eternal colony, without pattern, with definite & awesome beauty.

The crummy movie -- If I Ever See You Again -- was past. It had served to numb with sappiness the tension of flight. Now the \$3 earphones broadcast Mel Brooks' 2013-Year-Old-Man, until the colony below began to assume recognizable shape, until the interchange knots were obviously roads, until the pilot announced final descent into Los Angeles.

It was August 23, 1978. Almost midnight, Pacific Coast time. The DC-10 landed on what felt like a kilter, then straightened out and hurtled, decelerating, down the runway. Ended a 3½-hour, \$80 ordeal, which I had survived by looking for the comforting lights of civilization below, and distracting myself with the dumb movie. I clapped my hands, once, and then forgot the plane flight, and turned myself ahead.

I was met, at the gate, by Celia Chapman, and the vacation began.

Part of what took me first to Los Angeles on my vacation, 1978, was my involvement in LASFAPA, the utterly fantastic Los Angeles Science Fiction Amateur Press Association. 50 members strong, it had, in the previous two years, grown from 19 pages composed of Apa-L overruns and second thoughts into the healthiest and happiest monthly apa going ... and risen to rank as my favorite fan activity. Three of its members visited New Orleans and GHLIII, and several others had expressed interest in same. Commentary in its pages was as free and as honest as any I'd ever encountered in fandom, and the folks doing the commenting were as lively and mature, generally, as any ... in fact, again generally, much more so than every other apa I'd ever belonged to. So I marched off the DC-10 -- my consciousness untormented by the demon rum, as all I'd taken had been a yellow-and-black doll given me by a claimant at work -- and waiting there were two LASFAPAs. (Wherever I would go this vacation, there would be LASFAPA.) James Langdell, tall, blonde-bearded, a penguin fanatic who would ten days later join Freff and Amy Sefton on stage during the masquerade. And Celia Chapman, benefactress.

For many months I had exchanged correspondence with Celia -- my sloppy legal-pad scrawls being answered with crisp, neat, multihued stationery -- at first trying to talk the author of Phoenix Rising (Apa-L and LASFAPA) into visiting New Orleans, then setting up this trip. She has slow-tumbling light brown hair and an hourglass face dominated by incredible eyes. She makes a grand subject for the inspired sketches of Linda Miller, whose Phoenix caricatures make much of this captivating characteristic (I shall reprint several herein, with Celia's permission. Celia has my deathless gratitude for, among much else, securing my Darth Vader cover from the unspeakably talented Ms. Miller). Now, there she was. Unmistakable.

As, apparently, was I. I marched up to them. "You must be Guy Lillian," said Celia.

"Who else could I be?" I said.

After pulling my lone-but-stuffed-full suitcase free of the clutches of National Airlines (an observation; we unload baggage much more efficiently here in New Orleans), we sashayed to Celia's Toyota, parked near the spider-like restaurant I remembered from my last visit to Ellay 7 years ago. It was chilly; I hadn't even brought an undershirt; I wore my good sports coat, looking ludicrous with even my fresh jeans. The backseat of the car was awash in library books and apas, mostly Apa-Ls. Celia,

apologized for the clutter, but no... I already felt at home.

It had to be Los Angeles. Only a few turns from the parking lot was an enormous, garish sign:

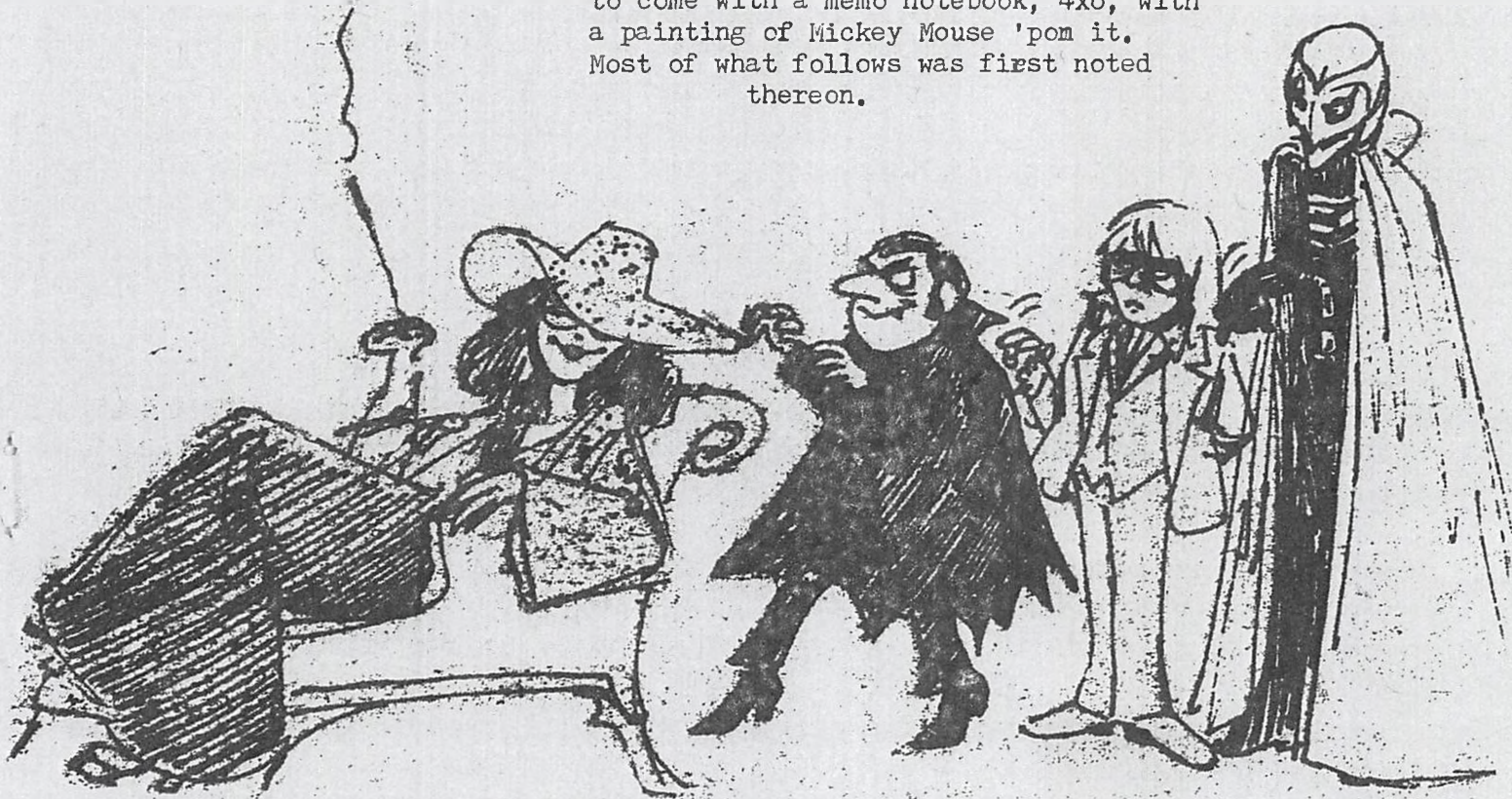
NUDE NUDE NUDE NUDE FROM 11 A.M.

Before which time everybody keeps their clothes on, no doubt. We swung onto a freeway, dipped down into The Valley, which, I was told, looked like Close Encounters' mothership when one entered it standing on one's head. Finally we found, out of all those streets, Celia's apartment complex; thereat, Celia's apartment.

Again she apologized for clutter, but the place was neat -- in every sense of the word. Poor Ms. Chapman would probably scream if she saw some of the fandangos I've seen. But before I finally let it all go, & gave up on 8-23-78, Celia and I sat up & talked. We knew each other in print. Now we began to get to know one another in person. We talked the real talk, about ourselves, our lives, and our hopes, and it was 3 a.m. there in the Valley before Celia went in to bed and I wrote in my journal that I'd survived the flight.

Morning, 8-24-78. A Thursday. The first California morning for me in 7 years. I was up early ... it was 2 hours later in Louisiana and my head if not my heart was still there. I looked out at the kids in the day care camp behind Celia's apartment colony, leaping happily on a trampoline, low tree limbs hanging leaves. California.

Ruth Judkowitz was on the phone ... then, shortly afterwards, Celia talked with the Munich marvel, Bobbi Armbruster, and her sterling husband Ron Bounds (Ruth and Bobbi are LASFAPans, oh readers in other apas). For the first of many times, disposition of the Lillian carcass was discussed. Celia & I hoofed it to a neighborhood supermarket, where the lady -- soon to attend the Wharton Graduate School of Business -- bought a Wall Street Journal and I primed myself for the action to come with a memo notebook, 4x6, with a painting of Mickey Mouse 'pom it. Most of what follows was first noted thereon.



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Watts, and I was surprised. This was not a teeming inner city, but a somewhat run-down suburb, and as I saw black kids on bikes, and neatly kept homes, I could only think that I'd seen much, much worse. But not in Ellay.

And then they were visible, and then, down a short, dead-end street, near the railroad tracks, across the street from a house from which came the cackle of chickens, as humble as could be, there they were, and if the morning had begun with the Pits, it climaxed in splendor ...

WATTS TOWERS

He
Reached
Up
As High As He Could
Probed
The
Sky
Left Iron And Plaster Fingers
Probing
Thru
Little Porcelain Pieces
Of
A
Million
Eyes

David Mann/1965

The Watts Towers --surrounded and protected on this day by a high chain link fence -- were created by an Italian immigrant named Simon Rodia over a thirty-year period. They consist of three huge towers and other structures, contained within a rather small triangular wall -- itself made by Rodia, who was an uneducated tilelayer. The tallest tower is over 100 feet high. Rodia built the towers and everything else by hand, without power tools, and without any help from anyone else. He did not weld or rivet the steelwork together. The towers and so forth are overlaid with a stucco-like surface into which Rodia placed bits of glass and porcelain and stone and shell and such like, many pieces of which were brought to him by admirers. There is no symmetry to the towers except the strangely satisfying symmetry of motion; the Towers are a jumping excitement of a place. They are a perpetual fireworks display, captured and held -- "frozen" is not the term for such warm, moving art. They are beyond description. They are wonderful.

Simon Rodia was a little guy ... we talked to a smiling black construction worker engaged in shoring up the Towers against possible earthquake damage, who had seen him. "Little stocky guy," he said, holding his palm at shoulder height. And smiled, as if the memory of the little fella who spent 30 years making this marvel was something to smoke, to savor, to enjoy itself. The nervousness of plunging into a riot center was gone, gone, gone, for both Celia and myself, as we looked up at the Towers. 'Scuse me ... gotta quote Clarence Laughlin, New Orleans photographer extraordinaire and mutual friend of Rodia and Lillian, on the work: "There is probably no one in our time who ever spent as much physical energy on a single work. When the significance of the imaginative achievement is added to the scale of the physical achievement, the Towers emerge as one of the most astounding works ever created by one man."

They do awe. Someday -- God be kind and grant it -- I'm going to take Guy H. Lillian IV there, and show him the Watts Towers. They were a gift of a lifetime, built, in a slum, of scrap iron and trash -- broken bottles, bits and pieces of glass and tile. One man did it. It took his whole life. But what he did was wonderful, wonderful beyond measure. I have never seen a more incredible monument to the imagination and joy resident in the human spirit.

Celia and I left the Towers -- for a second her car wouldn't start, but then did, explaining her onetime LASFAPazine title, The Luck of Teela Brown -- and drove back to her place. The effect of the Towers was intoxicating -- and still is. We passed through Hollywood and talked of the Hillside Stranger and how women weren't even stopping for cops for awhile there, but even that horror couldn't penetrate the tingle. Had lunch, and Lillian snoozed.

3 p.m. We have an appointment. We drive for 5 minutes ... which, I would later find, is the equivalent of "next door" in Los Angeles. The apartment complex is called The Elite. The owners -- or renters -- are Gail Selinger and Frank Gasperik, both of whom laid proud claim to being characters in Lucifer's Hammer (Frank was the hog-rid-in' cameraman; I dunno who Gail was, as she impressed me much more than any of that novel's characters). Lording it over the artful clutter was the largest cat I've ever seen free of iron bars.

Seated at the dinette table, his face buried in a briefcase, Ron Bounds harangued a telephone receiver. The Bounder waved greeting and concentrated on his call, which had something to do with engineering or some other madness. I was glad to see Ron; he's a fine fellow, and where he goes, it stands to reason ... I craned my neck, looked around. The vibrations were in the air. There seemed to be a psychic shine on the surface of things, and an excitement, a trembling underneath ... Yes, it had to be, and out of the back room ... ***S*H*E* came.**

SHE: Bobbi. Bobbi Armbruster. No one ever made that simple pronoun resound so intoxicatingly.

Filling in those luckless bozos in my audience who are not LASFAPAns or who do not know Bobbi from other contexts, I will simply state that La Armbruster, as she is known, is 29 -- as I am -- and about 5'10" -- as I am. She speaks English, as I do. There ends all resemblance, for Bobbi is a onetime model, and furthermore is possessed of a warm and giving and compassionate and cheerful nature, giving her outward beauty a verifiable glow of sincerity and truth. True, she is very slender, but I am reminded of the great Spencer Tracy line about Katharine Hepburn: "There may not be much there, but what's there is churce."

(After Bounds -- who is, after all, married to Armbruster -- gets through with me, I'd appreciate it if flowers could be sent to my mother, and a small donation be made in my name to the Guy H. Lillian II Memorial Spermbank.)

After I oohed and cooed over Armbruster for a b.t, she and Celia shooed we three lads out, and Frank and Ron and I hit the true glories of Ellay ... first, a Baskin-Robbins, where the Bounder and I discussed such diverse topics as Joe Celko, DSC, and what Rosy Green was up to (about 5'6", I'd say), while cramming our mouths full of frozen delights ... then, to Bargain Books, where Gasparik and Bounds sought an engineering handbook and I looked for copies of Werewolf vs. the Vampire Woman by Arthur N. Scarm and The Clones by P.T. Olem, the worst science fiction novels ever written. I found neither, but Ron found a beautiful edition of Robert W. Service's war poetry. Lastly, before heading back, Ron had Frank stop off at a butcher shop -- dizzying with the luscious smell of meat and blood, yummy -- where he bought a pound of real beef jerky. I can still taste the toothsome chaw handed me ... perhaps because a strand of the stuff stuck in my crown.

Back at the apartment I met Ms. Selinger, an incredibly energetic lady, who showed me some fabulous pictures of the Folies Bergere ca. 1910 (?), and provided the best line of the day when someone mentioned Emerson, Lake & Palmer: "My sister used to go out with the whole group!"

I made a call to Greensboro, North Carolina. Promised to do the night before -- which



seemed like two or three weeks before -- when I called there and was very frightened. The glow that was there before was made dim by that call ...

Dinnertime ... and some spread it was, too. Celia, Langdell, Bobbi and Ron and I visited a fine local Chinese restaurant, and the culinary carnage was unbelievable. Bounds was mostly responsible; the photograph I snapped of his wife and he at table caught the Discon honcho with a cheek full of Chinese delicacy. ~~But/that/night/did/~~ Very much a fifth wheel, I began a slump into gloom&doom, & Armbruster suggested that they pool their resources and buy me a date. *mumble*

But my fortune cookie had good news ... I guess: You have had a long-term stimulation relative to business. ? Swell ...

And then it was time for **LASFS** ...

Ten years ago, back in the 1890's, when Poul Anderson ushered my pink little ass into the Little Men and organizaed fandom, the name of "LASFS" was akin to myth. Throughout the decade between then and now, the name pinged into life every once in a great while ... and since I've joined LASFAPA, I've heard little but LASFS, LASFS, LASFS. Had to go see it! Had to experience it first hand. Had to be able to whisper, on my bier, that life had been rich since I'd attended a LASFS meeting. Thither we went, to the Trophy Shop which had been converted to a meeting house. The street outside was a'mill with fans.

The clubhouse was very close to Celia's house, and Ms. Chapman affirmed that this fact was one reason she had for living in Van Nuys. Many Ellay fans, apparently, live in the Valley because it's the locale of LASFS; in that galactic sprawl, in that humongous harmonium expanse that is Los Angeles, I cannot blame them. If I lived in Ellay I'd stick close to The People too.

And The People were there ... and this is the part of the trip during which I was much too busy to take notes. This is the part of the trip where I had the flash on Pat Strickland's Vivitar popping practically with every fresh footstep on the walk. This is where the fanzines became the folks ...

LASFAPA OE Marty Cantor, pipe enteethed, met us at the door. The Emperor, Charles Jackson II, bopped in, shades on, shirt open. And let's just run down the LASFAPA roster ... here's Virginia Bauer, a lively, sexy blonde girl, whose zine is named Window 24 after the teller's cage where once she slaved, a west coast version of Binker Hughes, another lady of antediluvian politics and celestial sparkle ... here's Ed Buchman, and what's the word for Ed? amen: "Putrid!" ... Greg Chalfin, recovered from his encounters with the Sons of the Sand ... Kara Dalkey, the tiniest member the bunch ever had, and I checked her height against pert Sue Fox, onetime claimant to that distinction; Kara was in town from Minneapolis, and was not a solitary traveler ... here the noble Tom Digby, LASFS' Hugo nominee (Fan Writer, '71 & '72), niftiest dresser, & the only voice in town with a tolerably Suthun accent ... smiling from a couch, a surprise, Seth Goldberg and Leslie Blitman, in town from Hawaii, where Seth's in grad school ... Daniel Gordon was there, weren't you, Dan? I know you were at the LASFAParty, fresh from Cal Tech ... Mike Gunderloy, same question ... George Jumper, Official Collator of Apa-L, was there, naturally, for the collation of Apa-L was on in earnest in a back room, o'erseen ably by able Dan Alderson, who DOES have a shirtful of colored pencils, and fan immortal Fred Patten ... here came towering anachronist Sam Konkin, a fellow III, and with him Schwarzin, whose hair is back to the proper length and whom I have now seen in Kentucky, Louisiana, Alabama, and California (adding Arizona to that list the following week); a sterling lad is SEK, especially because he is a III ... Bruce Pelz was greeted, and not much more needs to be said for orabout Bruce, who will be, after all, fan GoH at the Boston worldcon in 1980 ... Elena Pirov was there, herself recovered from SandSon exposure ... David Schlosser, who received the coveted "CHLIII-as-a-20-year-old-act-alike" trophy for his pre- and during-worldcon activities, no putdown, since I've never regained that form ... Jeff Seigel was there, true? ... and the delectable redhead Leigh Strother-Vien, tall and pale and possessed of a fine coif of the Real Stuff (all non-red hair

is beneath attention, unless you are snoo); Leigh had agreed to drive me to Phoenix, along with a friend of hers named Maureen Garrett, and that longhaired brunette with the challenging smile came up ... a trip that was arranged, by the way, by stalwart friend and compadre Alan Prince Winston, who was well-met yet again at LASFS, meeting 2141.

And these were not all, because arriving after Bobbi and Celia escorted me within were some very special people indeed. Coming the furthest were Carol Kennedy and Lee Pelton, like Kara, from Mary Tyler Moore territory. Carol, is, of course, a veteran of a Louisiana visit, documented in LASFAPA's most popular zine so far, A Snow Flake Falls on New Orleans. She is a most special friend. I'd never met Pelton before, but I'd greatly looked forward to doing so, especially since we've been having a philosophical argument about nothing at all for many months in the Ellay apa. (Of course, the best philosophical arguments are about that very topic.) He wants me to move to Minneapolis. I want Minneapolis and its marvelous fandom to love South, in one massive migration, so that I could stand to live there: too much ice and snow where it presently is. Carol was her usual glowful self, and Pelton was an altogether delightful guy. (I had the pleasure of introing Carol to many of the LASFAPAns whom I had only just met myself.)

On and on! say my notes. Judkowitz shows. Now this was one person I really wanted to meet. "What's Ruth Judkowitz like?" I asked some people some time ago. "She takes no shit," they replied. As Lillian is, in faanish occasions, 99 3/4% pure bullshit, I could hardly wait. When I heard that she was out front, and I hurried to greet her, and what to my wondering eyes should appear but a very attractive lady who sized me up in one hard stare. When I asked to take her picture she cocked her hip in mock cheesecake. Her attitude was an amalgam of Mae West and Ernest Borgnine. This lady was going to be fun, I could tell. She agreed to take me off Celia's hands in a couple of days.

I also snapped a picture of a tall lad -- beardless, unlike most male LASFSns -- who rushed in bearing a stack of large white envelopes, thrusting them at any and all and leering, "Saucer Sluts?" It was Vic Koman, author of the aforementioned opus, who was peddling the 13 issues of Impulse (a local tabloid featuring photographs of nekkid wimmen and other licentious and lew-ed material ... Ruth works for them, too, & I'm sure she'll be delighted that I've

told everyone reading this) which serialized his masterwork. The thing cost \$5, which was then prohibitive ... but I emphasize the "then".

Ron read some Service and was shouted down. Harry Andruschak introduced me to Beverley Kanter, who thanked me for defending her right not to like Lucifer's Hammer, & say so. Charles Curley was there, tall and bearded, and so much for my image of Charles Curley as rotund and smoothfaced. After a rousing "meeting", which saw Apa-L collated and given out (I got a freebie, as I'd run a zine of introduction, Call Me GHIIII, the previous week), Koman drove me and Curley and Ron to the usual (I gathered) after-meeting spot, a diner called Al's near Universal City, where yuks but not yucch were exchanged in great number.



God! What a great meeting! When Vic dropped me off at Celia's, Chapman having collapsed earlier and gone home, I was whipped ... but whipped up, too. One day down ... obviously this was going to be a vacation worth having.

Morning ... and fairly early, too. I found that a good healthy Louisiana snooze, being founded in Central Time, still allowed me to rise rather early compared to the Pacific Coast. Celia suggested breakfast at an IHOP "around the corner" -- remember that phrase -- and so we drove five miles to the IHOP. 5 miles is "around the corner" in the City of the Angels.

After food, bookstores were on the agenda; I had to visit A Change of Hobbit. Celia took the scenic route, Beverley Glen Blvd., and damn, they had houses hanging off the sides of mountains supported by nothing more than stilts. Here was this cliff, see, dropping down by some ridiculous angle, and here was this house thrust out from it like some sort of suburban tongue, and down below holding the slab of the house's base were these two -- two!?!? -- little poles. I was aghast. "One good tremor & those houses are going to slam down like coffin lids!" I said (or rather, wish now that I'd said; pretty good image, that. I did mention the threat of earthquakes, but) "Apparently not," Celia said. Some of these doomsday residences had survived the '70 shake.

We drove on, over gorgeous hills; how I've missed hills in Louisiana. A street sign flashed by: Coy Drive. P*R*E*M*I*O*N*I*T*O*N

Every moment brought a new discovery. We passed UCLA, and I -- crude to the very last drop -- groaned aloud about the subbleached "California girls" wandering the sidewalks. Soon we found the store, an Ali Baba's delight: posters, models (a legless Batman), sculptures by Kirk, two trillion science fiction works, new books and old, magazines and albums, oolala, it was a grand place. I discovered to my infinite disgust that I could buy only one thing -- an issue of F&SF, large charge -- but ordered a copy of the Handful of Darkness reissue from Ms. Gottlieb. Also did some snappy sales work for my Lafferty chapbook, which aroused a gratifying bit of interest in Sherry. Note to self: make book great.

Our travels next took us through Beverley Hills, and Celia and I bemoaned the terrible-ness of fate which forced poor souls to live in such destitution and poverty. Particularly the shiek whose house blazed -- or blared -- like a ruby foghorn there on Sunset Boulevard. Any man who put air raid sirens on his roof and had gold leaf pubes implanted onto his statues is obviously only trying to submerge his inner insecurities in gaudy pretense. And spend some of his eleventeen trillion dollars before the ink runs on the bills. GOD! at those palaces! I halfway expected Jed Clam- pett to come out of one of them and tell me to get the hell away from his daughter.

Up, over, and there we were in *HOLLYWOOD* (after first passing by 77 Sunset Strip, which was, alas, just a nude bar). Hollywood Boulevard has a load of fine bookstores, and that day we hit only a few of them (I would be back). Foremost, though, was a sojourn up the sidewalk of the stars -- you know, the stretch where the greats of entertainment are immortalized within stars set into the walks -- to Mann's (formerly Greumann's) Chinese Theatre.

Tourist! Hayseed! Lillian stands exposed as a gawking celebrity hound, a lowbrow clod, a fraud, a phony, a reader of SCREEN STARS MONTHLY, a watcher of soap operas, a hick, a turkey, a ... fan.

I throw the truth in your sneers. It is so. I wanted to look at the hand- and foot-prints in the cement. And damn it, I did.

Celia, no doubt ready to die with boredom, was kind, and photographed me by John Wayne's unfillable boots. I matched my handsize to Jack Nicholson's and to my delight found it an almost perfect match (if I had a better jaw I'd look like him, if I had a better nose, if I had a rounder chin, if ...). The same test on Cary Grant's hand-prints revealed that the grand Grant has extraordinarily long thumbs. Considering the

myths I've heard relating to thumbs, etc., that's worthy of a "HMMMMMMMMMMMMM..." Would explain a lot. The newest entry into that miracle patio was near the front, and probably the most remarkable slab of all: C3PO, R2-D2, and Darth Vader, leaving their foot-/tire prints in the blessed cement.

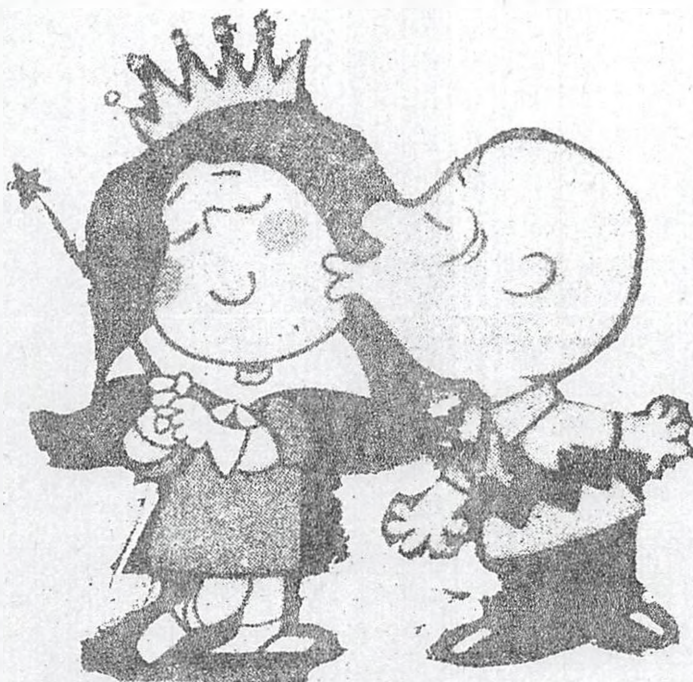
I don't care. It was a neat place. I bemoaned the horrible portraits of the Oscar winners and that the last 7 years weren't up there. A girl in a Chaplin costume mugged and mimed; your picture with Charlie for a dollar, folks.

Great. Great. I felt as if I were really there. Hollywood. Now, a haven for hustlers and hookers and strangers. And, still, a repository of dreams.

When Celia's was again reached, I dialled Oakland, California, and a number I'd secured from the Oakland phone book in the New Orleans library. The answerer gave me another number, which did not answer. Yet.

Before I tried again, it was time to do homage, and actually go see a movie. On the way to the IHOP that morning I'd glimpsed a theatre marquee and come close to jumping out of the car. Beauty and the Beast. Bride of Frankenstein. Ahh. No denial of these treasures could be brooked. There was another party on deck, but I convinced Chapman that these movies, which she had never seen, were worth getting to the party late. Langdell joined us for the Cocteau, which was as it always is wondrous, a titanic work of the imagination, the world's finest fantasy film, and the best statement I've ever seen of romantic sexuality. Bride -- which was directed, of course, by the matchless James Whale -- is another statement about sexuality, comic, exciting, and ultimately very sad. And appropriate, I might add, for reasons that I won't go into right now, but which were pretty obvious to all those who saw me.

There was indeed a party on that night, but before I let Celia leave, I made the call north to Oakland once again. This time she answered. Who answered? The Little Red-Haired Girl.



Her name was Jerrell, and a sliver, a hair, a flea fart less than $\frac{1}{2}$ of my life ago, I met her for the first time in a classroom at Ygnacio Valley High School. Years later, I'd find out that she was Canadian, but at the time all I knew was that I was a skinny twerp of 15, she was a redheaded beauty of 15, and never the twain shall meet.

I grew less skinny as the years went on. Little else changed. Jerrell really was lovely; she was one of those dark redheads -- Susan Hayward and Samantha Eggar are movie star examples -- with a turned up nose and feckles, and even then she was possessed of a husky depth to her voice that punched its message home right at the base of the spine.

And let us be scrupulously honest. I noticed ~~the~~ hell out of her -- we had Journalism I together, after all. Gross boxloads of Oxydol went to their sudsy reward due to her nocturnal influence.

That first year we had that class together. The next two years, our paths didn't intersect; she went her way & I pursued the student newspaper as my high school ticket to ride. I was constantly aware of her presence whenever it came to be, of course, and she couldn't help but know of me, broadcasting my twerpy arrogance from the Ygnacio Valley Smoke Signal. In our junior year she affected one of those horrible phony white fur coats in the vogue (but in no taste) at the time, and a hauteur to match. And went around with a scurrilous dickhead named Witherwax ... hey, I remember more than I thought.

Came college, and the celestial experience that was Berkeley broke through the zenith of heaven itself (go on, CHLIII: lay it on thick) when I ran into Jerrell on the street there and found that she was going there, too. The phony white fur snottory of high school had given way, thank Christ, to the blue-jeaned counterculture of college, a vast improvement for all concerned. The only class I shared with Jerrell during the 4 years I spent at the Big U was a huge lecture affair, Anthropology I, but I saw her from time to time, & as I too had begun to change with the onset of (dare I say it) manhood, I kidded myself that the limitless social gulfs between a phony-intellectual wimp and a crimsoncoiffed hot patootie would evaporate under the brilliant heat of the Berkeley experience. Let's be honest. I dreamed of a Shot at Her. But she moved at a different speed in different circles, naturally, and she was well into the dope scene (light stuff only, thank God) while I was still being "pennied in" by the schizoid physics and engineering majors at my dormitory.



BUT: she liked me. Or at least tolerated, and didn't seem to mind when I visited her at her little apartment on Berkeley's dark, hilly, goodsmelling northside, bearing my little offerings: stories I'd written. And on March 4th, 1969, she changed the face of Berkeley and indeed human existence for me ...

1969 was the greatest year of my life. It brought tear gas -- People's Park -- New Orleans -- the loss of my virginity, and about damn time -- the worldcon in St. Louis -- Barrington Hall back at Berkeley and, God damn it, introduction to amateur publishing. And March 4th was one of its highest moments.

Jerrell kissed me.

Usually seeing her sank me to the heart of Gloom, the LaBrea Tar Pits of the Soul, for she was The Proof that between me and the quality of Being Alive there was a gap, a schism, & between us, no bridge, only difference, only impossibility. That night, though, it all changed. The Berkeley lesson of 1969 was that I had a place in the world, and a time, and no matter that I didn't suck dope or hang around with spades, as did Jerrell, still I was Alive. Of humanity. Of Berkeley. Her tousled red hair and her little smile echo down through the decade since with enough force to baffle my inner ear even yet. Lesson: there are avenues open to you that you never dreamed of, Horatio.

Jerrell was studying dance. A redheaded dancer: the real thing. We became friendly, especially in my senior year, when I stopped trying Too Hard to bridge the awesome gap in lifestyles that was still there. Whenever we met the talk was easy, and the shared knowledge of my unspeakable, but at least unspoken, lust was a private joke, since it was never really decided ... except by time.

The last time I saw Jerrell her gaptoothed hoodlum boy friend from the Oakland ghetto was boasting expansively and monosyllabically to one of his spade mates, and she smiled a little at me and shook her head as if to say, "Well, whattyagonna do?"

She was beautiful, she was agonizing, and finally she wasn't my wet dream, she was my friend. Had to call her.

She remembered me, of course. What was she doing, still dancing? No, just working as a Kelly Girl in Oakland. Still writing? Heh, just working as an unemployment interviewer in New Orleans. She'd been to the 10th anniversary reunion of our class; no one had spoken about me, at least to her. Her hair -- blasphemy -- was short. Thinking about going back to dance, but oh, she's almost 30, and that's Too Old ...

I look forward to the one letter I'll write her, because it's a fer-sure that we have that one thing in common: the life in our lives is mundane, and in neither case does it have to be.

Ecstatic beyond redemption, I went on with Celia to the Friday night party. It was in Sepulveda (a familiar Angelean name), honoring Marti Lands, who was leaving for Denver. Going with her was the life of the party, a bundle of adolescent delight named (I was archly informed) Gretch'n. Pelz -- who was there, along with the Bounder, the Emperor, Alan Prince Winston, and many others -- called her "Gertrude". 14! Born the year I first set eyes on Jerrell back in Concord, California. She looked 20, and it wasn't until she spoke ... Delightful lady, neat party; a girl wore a tee shirt reading "If u cn rd this, u cn gt a gd blo jb!" and kept grabbing the tits of a pretty blonde who returned the favor. I kept leaving my game (with Bounds, Craig Miller, and WOL -- that's Winston) of rummy tiles to observe. Gretch'n sat on my lap, 14 years worth of delight, 20 years of prison. I will admit it. Ellay was wonderful those first two days ... but it was deucedly tough on my prostate.

Ah, but the worst was yet to be.

SATURDAY. Fanac called. Celia and I ripped off some ditto masters from Langdell's apartment and I began a slapdash LASFAPAZine called Pretty Boy Freud. My hands turned purple and, at 2 p.m., Ruth Judkowitz came to pick me up. Bookstores and Forry Ackerman's immortal fantasy castle were on the itinerary, even though MOON FAN didn't answer.

Ruth's car was remarkable. It was a '62 Plymouth with PROPERTY OF U.S. GOVERNMENT

fading on the doors -- and indeed, now that I could bring myself to look at the vehicle, it did remind me of the Atomic Energy Commission cars folks used to turn over and burn at Berkeley. In fact, it reminded me of what those cars seemed like after the fires went out, but Ruth seemed to think that it had Soul. (It had something, that's for sure. In LASFAPA Ruth is nowadays running a "Name that Car" contest, and I've officially Passed. Those wheels would baffle Joyce.)

Recall my introduction to Judkowitz, and that initial description, "She takes no shit." I found, as Ruth drove me to our 1st stop, that this generality was not precisely true. Ruth pummels "shit". She's a beautiful girl, a wide round face with dark eyes, crinkling in the corners when she smiles, and a Judkowitz smile is something to see. We talked, which is to say discussed, Roman Polanski (as we passed a Water and Power station, and I couldn't help but talk about Chinatown) & other filmmakers. We also talked, which is to say snarled, about sex, which is a topic that I somehow manage to introduce into almost every conversation I have with a lady. Thus my prior statement: "Ruth pummels shit". As we got out of her U.S. Government bomb on an attractive street somewhere in L.A., my bullshit-producing glands felt absolutely punchy. In we went.

Where Elena Pirov awaited. The house was that of two friends of hers, Mordecai and Vera by name; Elena is busy writing a book (on non-sexist weddings, or somesuch) with Vera. I photoed the two LASFAPANS and endured their comradely demolition of what remained of my pathetic male ego. It was worth it, because Elena handed Ruth a guitar and Ruth sang; I'd come to Los Angeles for many reasons, and hearing this moment was one of them.

The song was "Neighbor" and it was nice. Nice to hear and nice to watch, because when she finished Judkowitz' shy smile just glowed on her. There really was a glow. The John Wayne business was past, past, and what was left was...wow, tremendous. We hit the road.

And drove up into beauteous hills, past the observatory park, past, alas, a lot of sleaze at hills' base. But on Forry Ackerman's street there is no sleaze. There is only narrow pavement, and lovely houses, and a tremendous overview of Ellay, which looks good whenever one looks down upon it. (I, of course, have looked down on it for ages, but this is something else again.) Ackerman, of course, wasn't home. His mailbox sign, "45J of Karloffornia" was the only faanish item in view, and the bell rang without response. Inside this pretty house was the Greatest S.F. Collection of All Time. Disgusted, I stood outside and composed myself by looking at the scenery.

We drove down to Hollywood Boulevard, which was becoming downright familiar to me, and toured some of the bookstores Celia and I had missed the day before. In each I found the comics section and asked the same question: "How much for House of Secrets #92?", needing that first Swamp Thing tale to complete my present collection. In each, the same answer: "Don't have one." More disgust; what was with Ellay? Every southern huckster worthy of the name has \$20 copies of HoS #92 for sale.

The ladies and I scarfed pizza (served by the slice; how I missed that hallmark of civilization in New Orleans) and ice cream. I scampered across the boulevard to lean, in a manner gleaned from Midnight Cowboy, against the outer wall of The Gold Cup while Ruth snapped a picture of me ... and took her sweet time about doing so. I don't know if you folks -- SFPA, SAE, LASFAPA, NYAPA, or just plain reader-- make a habit of hanging around redlight districts, but the looks from passing cars were downright disconcerting.

Concert makes me think of music, which reminds me that we passed by a garage sale close to the Boulevard, and there I scored 4 near-new 8-track tapes from a fellow whose player had gone up in smoke with his car. A buck each for the New World Symphony, Pictures at an Exhibition, Also Sprach Zarath usta, and the Emperor Concerto No Barry Manilow or Kiss, but I suppose the poor boob just didn't have no culchuh, know whaddimean?

One more thing about that excursion: Ruth summed me up, at least for then: "You're the pilot on Bob Newhart." And she took me back to Celia's.

Party, party ... P*A*R*T*Y. That was the progression of my three nights in Los Angeles.

Bruce Pelz' parties are not mere faanish get-togethers. They deserve the appellation: extravaganzas. Celia and Langdell puttputted me into the Granada Hills and between the power towers to Bruce's house, perched in the hills. I had my sexy blue bathing suit with me, & visions of Ellay fandom as it has always been rumored to be ... oh, let me be the hick I was born to be. Cigareets and whiskey and wild, wild wimmen ... I gulped back my Methodism and strode in.

Beautiful house! Wonderful vibes! Who was there ... jeez, there was Don Fitch, one of the world's greatapans ... Schlosser, enjoying his eternal adolescence (just jealous, Dave) ... Armbruster, tormenting my eternal adolescence in a bathing suit, only confirmed the Spencer Tracy line quoted before ... Carol Kennedy, Lee Felton, Alan Winston, Gail Selinger, Larry Niven, a skinny blonde named Toni and many, many more.

I ought to explain that everyone was not there; Bruce and Elayne Pelz are fine folks but their facilities, while extraordinary, are limited. Therefore their parties are, alas, invitational. (The illo accompanying the invite passed along to me by Celia adorns the next page.) Great pains are taken to avoid the inevitable hurt feelings by rotating invitational lists. I know this is so because I just now called Bruce Pelz and verified this entire last paragraph with him.

The front room; snacking and conversation. The back rooms: poker in the den, video games in the parlor, tile rummy, yet again, in the sewing room. (The video room also boasted of an exercycle, on which I manfully struggled for one mile, or the equivalent thereof.) Bruce's collection, enormous, was on display in the library; in the den, bound sets of SAPS, Apa-L, The Cult, and even one or two years of early SFPA faced the card sharks. Outside, the real promise held, a fine pool and, beneath a protective, shielding overhang, the greatest gift to humanity since the invention of the eggbeater ... a jacuzzi.

For the sake of the Southern Fandom Press Alliance, a conglomeration of hayseeds from the boonies of Louisiana, Georgia, Florida, and other spots beyond the ends of the earth, I shall explain that a jacuzzi is a circular pool into which increasingly heated water is pumped; the pumping action raises the turbidity of the water to a rigorous froth, all of which both stimulates and soothes the most necessary ingredient in the jacuzzi soup, lots and lots of pink flesh. When we arrived it was still daylight, & the house rule of "bathing suits mandatory" was still in effect, as it would remain until post-dusk, but folk were still in the boil. I changed into my dashing blue trunks, borrowed a Morris the Cat t-shirt from Pelz to cover my shoehorn-shaped torso until I could immerse it in the wet and found a place in the crowd, as close to Armbruster as I could get. Oh, it was indeed a splendid thing.

Once the bubbling became too hot -- about 104°, it said on the thermometer squeezed in with us -- folks dashed for the regular swimming pool. Which felt, in contrast, like the crystal clear stream waters of the Alps, where, I am told, atmospheric conditions allow water to dip below zero celsius without the merest suggestion of ice.

It didn't bother Tom Digby, Kara Dalkey, the diminutive IASFAPAN (the shortest member; even ex-member Sue Fox topped her by a hair or two), or Schlosser, all of whom frolicked happily in the contrasting chill. Me, I think I screamed. Put on my Morris the Cat tee shirt and, looking no doubt quite weird, wandered. Watched the card game. Watched the video tilts. Participated in another rounds of tile rummy with Bounds, Winston, and the skinny blonde, Toni Symons, who wisecracked with every breath. Ate the remaining crumbs of the scarfables. Went back to the jacuzzi and boiled some more, along with Niven and Armbruster, who -- were she merely human and not celestial -- would have earned herself a throttling for hinting, while Larry sat nearby, of how much I thoroughly despised Lucifer's Hammer. Frankly, though, I waited for nightfall, to the accompaniment of Bobbi's warning: "Don't stare."

I know what Ray meant; in fact, I think that his statement was nigh onto brilliant in its insights into "hard" vs. "bananas" science fiction. But elucidating his comment will make good copy for the chapbook I'm planning; consider the query booked.

I also asked Larry if he'd ever gotten into fanzines, and, as we sat on the library floor, he replied while I brushed Leigh's hair (by her request). He allowed that although he'd pubbed a token few, all for Apa-L (there "Man of Steel, Woman of Kleenex" originated), fanzines rather scared him. "They're addictive," he observed. As I approach the beginning of the 9th full year in the files of the GHLIII Press, I wonder if he doesn't have something there ...

Celia and Langdell had long since made like the Red Sea and split, so as the witching hour screeched around, I asked Strother-Vien for a lift home. En route we stopped at a Sambo's, where she comforted me by saying that I wasn't being and hadn't been obnoxious, to her or anyone else as far as she knew, advised me to ignore others' opinions if they bugged me, and delighted me by crossing her eyes and wiggling her ears at the same time. I had been worried about the impression I was making, but right then and there the worries ceased. If a crazy redhead likes you then the rest of the world can go hang.

Early the next day Ruth came over to Celia's and retrieved me and my stuff. I felt that I had been underfoot at Chapman's long enough, and so bid the kind, lovely Celia adieu. She has my heartfelt thanks now and forever for showing this lout from Louisiana such kindness.

Off in the Governmental Plymouth Judkowitz & I bombed. First we visited OE Cantor in his North Hollywood lair. There I secured an extra copy of the latest LASFAPA for mc'ing purposes, as my own was feeding the mice back on Dauphine Street in New Orleans. Then some lunch, and while we were driving and eating we were talking, and one of the two or three finest friendships born of the trip was evolved. Her defensiveness and my offensiveness masked, we found, characters that had a very great deal in common. We went to her Van Owen Avenue apartment and talked and talked, the barriers falling as they rose before simple, but real, friendship.

The hype about Lillian has been a matter of real entertainment and treat for me. Because of it I've enjoyed a certain notoreity, and I'll admit to really enjoying it. The quivering wimp who used to drool after Jerrell Stewart gets a kick out of being imagined a ladykiller, a devastator, a (snort) casanova. (I knew a cat named Casanova in Berkeley; good fella, I got on well with him.) I'll probably never fully recover from those horrible days in my adolescence when women seemed truly alien, distant as the stars and just as untouchable. They're still terrifying, beautiful, and wonderful; so always, I think, will they be.

But the hype has had a contrary effect. Hype always does. Up come defenses that might stay down if the reputation, no matter how frivolously deserved, were not there, a third party, poisoning the time. Ruth takes no shit, man. That whole afternoon was devoted to communication, to getting Ernest Borgnine and my stupid reputation out of there so two nice people with lots and lots in common could talk.

I hope it doesn't sound like another slimy GHLIIIish nudge-nudge, fraught with suggestions of conquest, when I say that in my opinion, we got it together. So long, hype, and so long, tough guy, at least for the moment ... at least until, all too damned soon, the knock came on the door. Or was it a doorbell? Whatever, it was my uncle, rung up earlier from the Antelope Valley, the desert to the east, come to fetch me to my family.

I'd see Ruth again, in Phoenix, but for whatever reasons we wouldn't talk, much. Too bad. She told me that Tar Pits and Chinese Theatre all well and good, but she'd've liked to have shown me her Los Angeles, and considering the guide, that's a city I wouldn't mind visiting time and time again.

I tried not to. When in Rome do as the Romans. When in Ellay ... but no, even as the sun dipped its feiry head beneath the contours of Granada Hills and Pelz allowed as it was safely dusk, GHLIII kept himself covered. Others did not. It would be im-politic to name names, but when the first bikini top flew away from the jacuzzi, I admit to a moment of euphoric hysteria. Everyone would if they let the truth be known. (Aside to SFPAns: admit it: you'd flip out under such circumstances, true?)

Nonetheless, I believe that I kept my cool. (I almost added, totally without thinking of the ramifications, "hard as it was".) Actually, the bubbles and steam of the jacuzzi kept everything modest, and I found that relaxing one's titillations was easy in the physically relaxing environs of the steam. As time wore on, I could actually pretend to be used to seeing a naked girl climb in or out of the thing, wrap herself in a towel and light a cigarette as if all were perfectly normal -- as, naturally, it was. Of course, I was only pretending, but I got better at it as the night oozed on.

At least until Strother-Vien showed up. We were just going out -- a number of us -- for pizza, God's greatest food, shirt-tails again safely tucked in, when tall, R*E*D*H*E*A*D*E*D Leigh came in ... I believe with Maureen Garrett, her exceedingly nifty brunette roomie-to-be. With her around, it was only the promise of imminent starvation which drove me to the pizzeria. There are some things I will not miss.

But the conversation over the bubbling pasta was itself fun ... Selinger talked about bellydancing and one and all satisfied my flying phobia with stories of their worst flights. And the pizza was imminently gobbleable.

No comment about Strother-Vien, who was in the jacuzzi when we returned. The 45 minutes I waited for my dinner to digest before I returned to that human soup was the longest 3/4 of an hour in my life. Oh, I admit it ... without, perhaps I was a bit gloomy, enough so that Kennedy saw fit to bawl me out about it, and urge me first to flash the famous GHLIII grin and, of course, to move to Minnesota and join touch-fandom. Within, stoked by Leigh's smile and "meows", I was hotter than the jacuzzi, and just as full of froth. When she kiddingly accused me of chickenheartedness for keeping my trunks on, it was damn near rape-a-redhead night in Granada Hills. Thank God I somehow kept control. Thank God I didn't make an utter ass out of myself. Leigh and I became pals, and I credit this happy turn on her patience and my token rectitude.

The party was, of course, far more than my panting after Leigh. I talked to Larry Niven for the first time, and discovered him to be a right fine fellow, arrow-straight of course, but nonetheless approachable and congenial.

I'm working on a project involving R.A. Lafferty, the king of all Earth and most of its alternate gestalts. They represent very contrary facets of science fiction, and I thought that Larry's view of Ray might be interesting, and by the hairs on my palms, it was. Larry provided me with one helluva fine anecdote. Seems Lafferty had wandered up to him at some con or another & said, "You know, I get all of my story ideas from your story ideas; you just don't take 'em far enough. You just play with the surface." And wandered off, leaving Niven baffled behind him.



II. The Antelope Valley

My grandfather, Lance Elliot King, brought his family out to the deserts of California after he returned from World War II, which he spent in Hawaii and on the west coast in war work. Originally they came from Arkansas, from Gregory, a town so small that the one time I was able to find it in a road atlas, my mother found it for me. (I just tried; it ain't there so's you can see it.) While waiting to move California-wards, the King clan stopped off in Birmingham, where Nancy Lancelene King walked up to a table-ful of friends and remarked to the tall, gangly stranger among them "Where you been all my life, big boy." Guy H. Lillian Jr., with typical suavity, replied "Duhh, uhuh ..." at least if the tales I've heard are correct.

To the Antelope Valley, o'er the hills from Ellay, my uncle Bill drove me. Youngest of old L.E. King's kids, he was at 44 a grandpappy himself. Damn, I like Bill. I like all of them. He limped a bit on a knee that'd gone grungy in the 7 years since old L.E. and he had dropped me off at the Ellay train station and I'd last seen him. But he was the same man.

And it was the same Valley, too, and the same little mountain overlooking the same little oasis in all that yellow sand ... but damn, it looked good. It looked green. "Lotta rain in the last 3 weeks," said Bill. "'S'been hotter than a bitch dog in heat. You brought the rain with you."

First, we stopped at Lancaster, which is a sizable enough burg. I surprised myself by remembering how to get to Bill's house, where we found ... cousins.

Aggh! They were older! Hell, my cousins were just kids when I left California. People have no business growing up so damned much in 7 years! Here was Bill's towering Mike, a daddy now, with a moustache and a developing beer belly, and Johnny Johnson, my mama's sister's kid, who lifts weights for a hobby and looked like Arnold Schwarzenegger, not only a papa (whose child was, alas, in Alaska) but our family's 1st and only divorce. He had a quiet little longhaired gal there who's destined to be wife #2. High hilarity abounded as always in family talk, and then the door bashed open and Diane Keaton came in.

(Celia had gone to school with Diane Keaton's sister, and a week later, Joan D. Vinge would compare herself to her upon winning her Hugo. Thus the vacation tied itself together ... thus Lillian filled three lines of stencil ...)

Of course it was not Diane Keaton who flew into Bill's house; it was merely a girl with a truly remarkable resemblance to her. Who had had more resemblance to a fence-post with pretty hair and eyes 7 years ago, when I last saw my youngest cousin, Julie. She came roaring in all ticked off that she'd gone four-wheeling out on the desert and gotten stuck in the sand and she and Fred her girl friend (real name Sherry) couldn't get it unstuck but some nice people came along and they had a chain and good God, look who's here!

Wow, and did GHLIII ever feel o*l*d. Ten-year-olds turning into 17-year-olds, fence-posts evolving into Diane Keatons, now that's great, but I remember Julie when she used to waddle into a room and hand me a hat and smile and run out. That was only 14 years ago, true, but oh, man ...

I feel ~~ashamed~~. My grandmother was there and by every right known to man she deserved first mention. Living in a retirement community near Lancaster, she's in her 70's, but active, active, active, kickin' up her heels in dances and dates ... Bill delighted in teasing her about her Mexican boy friend, actually a retired Spanish gent. We had a ha-~~fa~~ about my call to her apartment from Ruth's, when at first I didn't identify myself and she didn't recognize my voice. When I mentioned coming over to see her she'd thought I was some old coot trying to make a date. Hmm, maybe I should gargle honey ... old I felt, but not that old.

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My cousin Johnny drove me the next 11 miles of the trip, along the stretch of the Sierra Highway that leads from Lancaster towards Bakersfield. At the 11-mile pole a cross-road leads out to Edwards Air Force Base, the big employer in the area, whose sonic booms were a constant punctuation to the days. Fourteen miles further on Mojave, California, where on 20 July 1949 the greatest event in the history of western man took place, rises from the desert floor. Here, at this cross-roads, the intrepid and/or unwary traveler may find Rosamond, California, one of 2 places in this whole universe where Guy H. Lillian III has always had a home.

L.E. King built the little house on Desert Drive (the street names marked by a pylon driven into the yellow earth; no # that I can recall, as all the mail comes to the post office) himself, before I was born. To that house I was brought a babe in arms; to it I was trundled on innumerable summer vacations, one time when it was being leant to a church for their meetings. There L.E. and my grandmama lived throughout the first 24 years of my life, until old L.E. died on Christmas day, 1973. My Aunt Flo and Uncle Glen own it now. And they have done wonders with it, put in new ceilings, carpets; painted everything. It was familiar even yet, and filled with relatives ... people I've known all my life and some new folks, too, my grandmother's greatgrandkids. For them, now, this is a home place.

I was the eldest of my generation; the eldest of theirs is my cousin Roger's boy, Craig, now almost eight *gasp*. In an ecstasy of reunion I photographed everyone; they told the kind lie that I looked good in my new weight, and Bill mocked me again for losing my hair. Man, it was a wonderful evening. Jeff, littlest male cousin, is taller than I am and should be pushing 21. Janice, his sister, in fact celebrated -- I should say -- her 20th birthday while I was in town. Everyone looked grand. Damn, what a nice time.

And before you throw this zine down in disgust, you might think about your family. If your a typical fan, I'll bet you don't consider their place in your life. You ungrateful sonuvabitch.

Nevertheless, I'm allotting only 4 pages to this part of my trip, and so I'll move on to the next day, when I drove up to my grandmother's retirement community and went with her to see the grave of the man responsible for it all, L.E. King. It was a moment I'd frankly been dreading. Because I'd never been in Rosamond without my grandfather there. I'd never had to face up to the fact of his death. The last time I'd seen him, in March, 1972, he'd been spirited and happy, bulling my folks, brother, and I with the story of how he'd met his wife. Two months later he'd been crippled by a stroke that would have killed a less strong man, a man less full of vigor and the raw bullshit of life. He'd made life for all around him Hell on wheels until Christmas Day, 1973, when release had come ... but I hadn't seen him in all that time. Now I stood over his grave in the open, wide-to-the-sky Lancaster cemetery, cleaning away the grass from his stone, while Granaw (my name for her since babyhood) talked about him.

I remember one visit to California made by train, when, pulling into Barstow, he was suddenly running alongside the coach, slapping the window with his hat to tell my mother, brother and I that we'd come home ... Well, now that was faced. The pain was all past for my folks, after almost 5 years. It came, sharply, and left for me.

Back in Rosamond, I secured my paycheck, mailed from New Orleans, and turned it into Traveler's Checks. I visited my Uncle Frank's ranch and admired his horses. Knowing full well that his citified sissy nephew is a scaredy-cat, he offered to let me ride one, and I called his bluff by saying that I'd be glad to ... tomorrow. And then it was back to Lancaster, "potty" in mind. I'll explain momentarily.

Bill and Margot, his frau, had invited me to ride with them to see Hooper at the local drive-in, but learning that Janice -- Frank's youngest -- and Julie -- Bill's youngest, keep'em straight, there'll be a quiz -- were planning on celebrating the former's 20th birthday, and being invited to participate, changed my mind. At 29, youth should be

clasped close, and treasured. I'd rather spend time with sexy teenagers -- even my own cousins -- than Burt Reynolds any day. Besides, they needed me to make the party, or "potty" as they pronounced it, complete. Obviously, they needed some malleable jerk who'd risk imprisonment, disgrace and familial banishment and buy them some beer.

The shouts of shame from my ancestors ringing in my psychic ears, I did so, after Bill and Margot had gone off to the flicks. Trundling the cousins and their girl friend, Fred/Sherry, into a car, I followed their instructions and headed out into the open desert. The brew -- which they paid for -- was purchased at a roadside hooch haven. Some Coke was secured for the staid criminal GHLIII. The proper dirt road was found, a couple of miles outside of town, and down the wash we drove to a point a couple of hundred yards off the highway.

The gals opened their cans and bottles and started to potty in earnest. I walked a short distance away.

It was night on the Mojave Desert. There was a slight breeze; it was cool but shirt-sleeved, I was comfortable. The sage and brush on either side of the road were only blotches on the sand in the night; there were cans and bottles, reminiscent of other happy occasions, and forlorn and lonely, a dilapidated vinyl easy chair, abandoned out here, its springs burst forth into the air. The lights of Lancaster were a glow in the distance; the Sierra Highway was a line to the south. There was only the wind, the distinct but distant laughter of the girls, and, 'way off, a cacophony of dogs, one picking the signal up from the one before, until the whole town was barking. And overhead the sky, the Milky Way blazing, meteorites flaring, crystal up there, ice crystal. I told the girls what lay beyond. The clarity was terrifying; each of the Seven Sisters was distinct in its place. I felt the thrill of the universe on me. The girls asked questions and talked and drank and laughed. It was fine.

Back at Bill's house, the gals whooped it up. Records found the turntable and the volume strained the roof timbers. They howled and danced and kept the empties in a bag on the stairs so they could hustle 'em upstairs at the first sign of parental return. They sang along, if that wild and crazy rock music promotes singing and not screaming. And yeah, premonition time again

"Now you're messin' with a (beat, beat) SONUVABITCH! (Nowyoumessinwifasonuvabitch!) Now you're messin' with a (beat, beat) SONUVABITCH! YOWWWWWW!"

Later, to tranquilize their tattered old fossil of a "cuz", they let me play Abbey Road, side 2, and grabbed my camera and snapped and snapped and snapped. Julie's a pretty good photographer, she told me. 7 years didn't matter to them, either. They still had the same affectionate tease in them that they had back when I photoed them in '71. And I must say it: Julie looks better than Diane Keaton.

Had a grand time, watching them dance, talking to Sherry, fretting about Bill. But they covered up magnificently and my fears were for naught. After Bill & Margot -- whom he calls "Sapphire", and you know the reference -- came home, I drove back to Rosamond, stopping once more out there in the lonely desert to commune with the magnificent apathy of the stars.

There's an abandoned gold mine in the hills near Rosamond, and the next day I drove up there with Frank. He's done some work -- earthmoving and the like -- for movie companies who've filmed up there, building a long earth ramp so some movie star wouldn't have to strain himself climbing up the regular path, laying a phony runway, and we tried to go see the place. I'd never been up there and damned if I knew when another chance would come. But it was locked tight. So I dropped him off -- driving my Uncle Glen's car -- and drove off around R Mountain, so named because of a giant R shaped on its side by a troop of Cub Scouts in the fifties. Used to be that my cousin Roger and I would climb to its crest, whereat a white pipe cross has been erected; I paid homage to Father Time by driving up a wash behind the mountain and hoofing it up only what remained, less than a third of the way.

At the top, beneath that cross, I could look out across the Antelope Valley, look away towards Bakersfield, observe the mountains to the west towards Los Angeles, the hills all round and varicolored, spotted with sage and the highway threading across the expanse like a great signature, an enormous sky and an enormous desert and a tiny town below blooming defiantly green, out in the middle of nowhere at all. The horizon was a mountainous suggestion beyond the milky haze. Seven years since I'd stood there; it looked the same but not static: it was alive, and that's what I'd come to see. I returned to the car.

Started to back the blue Monaco down the wash. Did fine until I came to a wide spot leading down into a gravel pit, where I thought I could make a Y-turn and head out. The Y-turn worked until the Monaco's rear left wheel sank hubcap-deep into the dust. Stuck.

I tried the tricks everyone knows. I jacked the back wheel up, piled rocks into the hole beneath, put a board atop the rocks, let the wheel down, revved up the motor. The board broke, the rocks flew, I was still stuck. And so I walked down from the mountain, jumped a rusty barbed wire fence, crossed a freeway, and hoofed it back to my aunt's, after failing in repeated attempts to get anyone to help me pull that car off that hill.

Fortunately, Uncle Frank showed, and he, my Aunt Marge and I managed to get the car free of its prison. Frank was a blessing; he assured me that he'd run earthmovers into pits that had him scrambling to safety from the top of his machine. Bill razzed me good about it. Those who have wild-eyed domino-playing uncles from Arkansas know exactly what I mean.

But this little humiliation -- which only reminded me that aside from being beautiful and, like the moon, magnificent in its desolation, the desert of my birth is hot and dusty and dry and in it, there are hidden pits of dust -- was only flavoring.

I typed a little on the LASFAPazine, using the Royal on which I'd hacked out The Hole in Space fifteen years ago or more. The thing smelled familiar, and it was the hearty smell of oil, not the residue of my adolescent space opera. I drank iced tea; never did it taste better than when I drank it there.

And the afternoon was cool, and my uncles and male cousins and I sat on the lawn outside of the house -- the lawn surrounded by the little fence on which Roger and I used to balance, and which was poked through with knotholes we'd knocked out. They told me about the terrible last months of L.E. King, whose stroke destroyed him long before it killed him ... but they could even look back on those times with affection. They asked me scurrilous questions about the ladies in New Orleans. I gave scurrilous answers. We talked about all those old times, and God did I get razzed some more. It meant a lot, it meant a lot of good things. Seven years ... ridiculous. I will not do that to myself again.

That's what I said to my grandmother, who, thank heaven, left that place and went home before I had to go. I don't think I could have left her there. But she left, & I made some promises about my next visit out there. And then Bill roared off on his motorcycle, and Granaw followed him to Lancaster.

And very soon after that, my Aunt Marge and cousin Janice came up, and I loaded my suitcase into their trunk -- forgetting, like a fool, my sports coat with the Heinlein blood drive pin, which had to be mailed back to me. Marge's dad was in the hospital in Torba Linda and she had to go there; they would drop me off with my ride to Part 3 of my vacation. Off we went. I promised to return within 3 years. Whatever happens, I will.

Fool that I am, I think I've rediscovered something that I abandoned when I choochooded out of California, dizzy with post-diploma depression, in 1971. Roots, maybe. And you can stop grimacing. Maybe you haven't been part of the chaotic suburban motion of growing up in the fifties, sixties, and seventies, but I have. And I needed a reminder of the place and the people where I began.

SPECIAL SFPA PAGE...

Surely that isn't all, I hear you cry. Not even Lillian is ridiculous enough to flap about a con report as much as has been flapped about UP THE DARTH VATOR, and then abandon it 20 pages along ... just as he's arriving at the con!

Fear not. Or fear on, as the case may be. This is by no means the end of UP THE DARTH VATOR. I indeed made it to Phoenix (which Quinn Yarbrow describes as "in theashes state") and have written the experience up. 28 more stencils await introduction to my silkscreen beyond these 20.

They are part of the same zine, part of the same CHLIII Press #, as the foregoing pages ... but they'll be enclosed by a different pair of staples and be included in a different SFPA mlg than Parts I and II of the zine, which you hold.

Problem is time. The SFPA deadline approaches. Problem is also ink. I have enough for this page and a few more -- but not enough for 28 stencils requiring 116 copies each (enough for SFPA, LAS-FAPA and my extras). Problem is money, too. I cannot afford to wait, buy more ink, publish the whole ball of wax (sheets of wax, actually) and first-class it to AHOE.

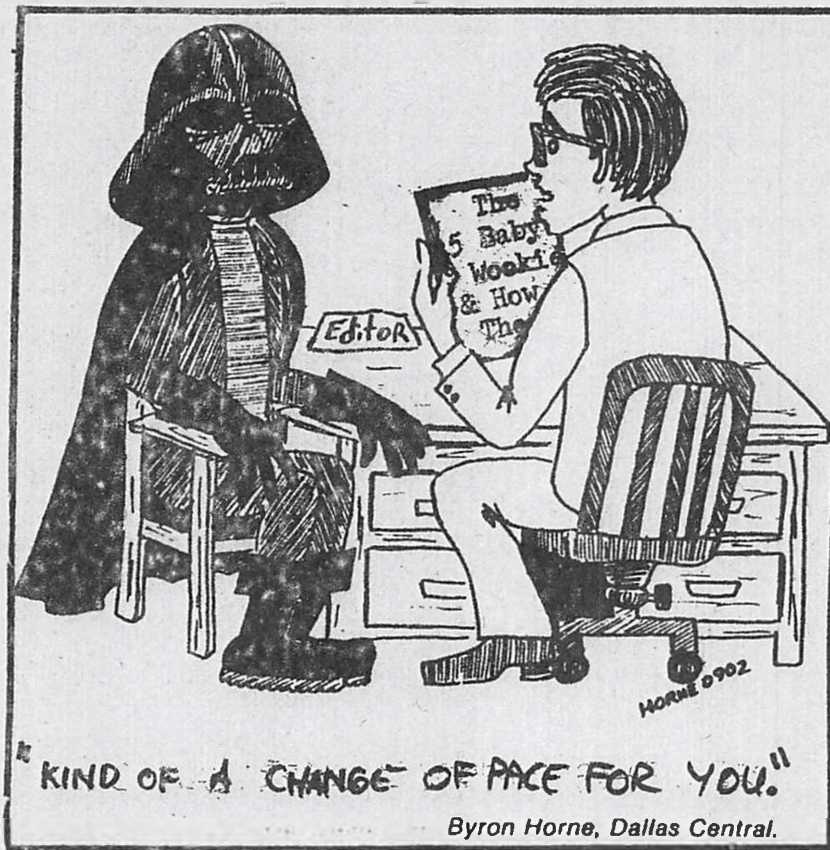
So I divide the zine. Parts I and II, here, and Part III, when I can. This section has a fair chance of making it into mlg 86, book rate. If, fine. If not, then it'll appear along with Part III in mlg 87. So it goes.

Iggy was quite a con. Delightful in some spots and feiry in others. My part in it will undoubtedly be controversial in SFPA. That's the way the foo shits, sometimes.

Part III will deal with it. Next time.

Oh yeah -- if you can't wait to read Part III, this zine will appear in one body in LASFAPA 27. No deadline hurry there.

Stuck between floors, folks ... free in a minute...



UP THE DARTH VATOR

PART III

"Propel, propel, propel your craft/Maliciously down the solution/Ecstatic, ecstatic, ecstatic, ecstatic/Existence is but an illusion!"

"Propel, propel, propel your craft/Maliciously down the solution/Ecstatic, ecstatic, ecstatic, ecstatic/Existence is but an illusion!"

Huh? Wha? To this fractured tune I swam back to life. Without, the desert. Within, Leigh and Maureen, belting forth girl scout songs. Thus began the first day of Iggy.

I will spare you, for once, the agonizing details. Although I really enjoyed the voyage, and certainly the company, basically there was just a lot of desert, warnings about dust storms ... I stuffed an orange into my face before a border inspector could take it ... jagged hills on the horizon ... Cotton in Buckeye and the ripe smell of chemical fertilizer. And then Phoenix.

We found the Adams. We were at Iggy.

Now the con report begins.

The girls were staying at the Adams, and they checked in; at the front desk I recognized an acquaintance from Southern fandom who came over with two buddies ... one of which was a fine surprise, LasFAPAn Lynne Holdom. Upstairs Leigh and Maureen oh-gee'd over their room, 1407 ... an enormous, gorgeous \$85-a-night suite which they were getting for only \$35! The view was as tremendous as Phoenix -- a flat, dull town notable mainly for the mountain ranges surrounding it -- could offer.

A blockaway was the entrance to the Hyatt, a sleek, mechanical contrast to the Adams, blessed with an enormous atrium filled brimful then and all con long with ... science fiction fans.

A lot of what follows will deal with what science fiction fans are ... are not ... and should be. Up the Darth Vator is about that. I have not written all this garbage for nothing. Right at this point, what s.f. fans were was numerous ... the registration lines much too long to hazard at this point, not with a plane to catch in a couple of short hours. I did greet the immortal John Guidry and the lithesome Dana ~~Adams~~ Longo (newly wed) from Nawlins, and gloomy old Irvin Koch from Tennessee, before staggering back to the Adams and 1407 for a snooze.

On the way back, we ate at the local Wendy's, one of the very few cheap eateries close by. Considering the greaseclogged food and the H*E*A*T, that was stupid. An arm around either lady, I strutted back to 1407, passing Larry and Fuzzy Pink Niven and moaning in obnoxious glory "Poooooorrrrrrr me!"

Awoke. Grabbed Leigh, but not for what you think. Airport, fast. Had to meet the plane my roommate was coming in on. And we were late, late. Fortunately, though, not too late, and we were just in time. Guess who got off the plane. Take a look at this self-portrait and just-the-hell guess.

"It's 99 degrees here, Lee Ann," said I to Ms. Goldstein as we passed by a group of Salvation Army saints, nuns, little old ladies and kindergarten kids.

"BIG FUHCKIN' DEAL!" she pronounced. Yes, Phoenix, it was the irrepressible eternal Goldstein, and ninety-nine sweltering degrees wouldn't be enough to keep her down ... or demure.

When Lee Ann had broached the idea of sharing roomspace at Iggy I had agreed, and we used her reservations instead of mine -- much cheaper. She registered and got room 640 on the atrium, only a five-floor ride up the darth vators from the humongous party on the atrium floor. My acrophobia was hardly tickled by the height, and there



LAC1978

was a comfortably wide barrier between the walkway and the open space. Below us, fans moved and grooved -- that atrium was wonderful, a massive gathering space, a veritable infinite party ... and any time I wanted, I could look out over it all. In one corner, the plastic pup tent had already been erected, for what purpose God only then knew. The registration tables were hidden from view by the glass elevators but a short walk around the sixth floor level put them in plain sight. It was neat. Others put the hotel down as not unlike a prison with its tiers (and tears) but that lobby conquered all. Groovy Goldstein leaned against the bannister and I snapped my first shot of the con there, of the lilting Lee Ann and panting Publius Nostrum.

(The second came almost immediately, as Ray Nelson bopped by, beaming a ray pistol at us. He seemed to enjoy the attention so I took a picture of him standing in front of one of the huge numbers on a door.)

Soon I registered, and on the atrium floor saw the only woman I have ever known for whom I can honestly say that I would kill. Almost anyone. (There are some people I would kill just for their own sakes, but for this lady, I'd strangle just about anybody.) Her name is Barbara Greenfield and she has the most beautiful eyes in the world and she and her husband Allen put on the very best convention I ever went to, Halfacon in December 1973, in and near their home in Atlanta and Southern fandom misses them unto madness, but especially Barbara with her huge eyes and high cheekbones and wonderful kind smile and brown hair down to her shoulders and if I don't stop I might start to cry, I worship and adore Barbara so much. There she was, a total surprise, a beloved delight. I groveled at her toes long enough to get her new address and swear that if there was anyone she wanted killed I would do the deed on the fifty-yard line at the Astrodome during a convention of 60,000 S.W.A.T. cops.

There was Cliff Amos, tall and portly and dignified in his three-piece suit and pipe and beard ... chairman of the fabulous Rivercons in Louisville and next year's NASFIC ... a fraud, yes, I say a FRAUD, ladies and gentlemen. In that dignified man's dignified pocket there is a garter, and that garter is for his own leg. Be it known that Cliff, great friend, visitor in this apartment for Mardi Gras '78, is a Rocky Horror Picture Show fanatic! That garter goes on the moment "The Time-Warp" begins! Play it for him and stand back. Hide your children from the most horrifying sight of their lives.

Lee Ann was going down the Hyatt escalators, proclaiming about something in her usual delicate way, when we met Lee and Carol and Dave (Pelton and Kennedy and Schlosser) coming the other way. They said they recognized her by her voice ... and what's funny is, they'd never seen her before. I saw the Raving Tim C. Marion. SAPS beauty Mary Williams, babyholding, came up and chatted. And dizzying flights of egoboo abounding, Poul and Karen Anderson greeted me.

IN PRAISE OF POUL ANDERSON. I've told the story many times, of how in 1968 -- ten years ago, good God -- a gawky freshman twerp at the University of California called up a great science fiction writer and bugged him into inviting him (the twerp) over to his house. How that turkey got his poor mother to drive him up there and wait outside -- unbenkonwnst to the great s.f. writer, who would've been horrified to know that the poor lady was waiting. The kindness the great man showed ... and the club meetings the great s.f.er told the newer-than-neo about and the first one to which he and his glorious wife (redheaded) drove the neo. That's the story and I've told it many times. It's embarrassing. Boy, was I ever an asshole...and I see those people shouting "'Was'?"

That class ... that generosity and kindness...Poul Anderson is a prince among men. It is an honor that he should even recognize me, let alone treat me so well. I would talk to him and his lady again.

From Poul I learned that the disappointments of the last two worldcons would not be repeated this time ... and so I rode up the darth vator, face pressed to the glass, to the Compass Restaurant atop the all. I toured the whole place -- which looked expensive and was therefore verboten during the con -- but could not find my mama. No, Mrs. Nancy King Lillian was not in Phoenix; Chelsea Quinn Yarbro, though, was.

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Later, I'll explain. For now let it be enough that I could not find Quinn and this was a matter of great dismay.

(I did spy a cluster of folk in one corner of the atrium and hurried over to peek in and see what was up. "What's this?" I asked. At cluster's center, a short, dark-haired fellow was holding forth to the amusement of all those around him. I knew the guy. "Oh," And fled. It was not yet time for Iguanacon to bring me into the presence of its Guest of Honor.)

Lee Ann and I went to feed. The Wendylunch had not yet made its full effects known ... so it was possible for me to eat. Dave Schlosser and Publius Nostrum joined us in the expensive Adams coffee shoppe. I wasn't at my best; in fact, a mizbul gloom had settled over me. Wandering about afterwards, the gloom was a bit dispelled by an encounter with Allen Greenfield, Barbara's most unworthy husband, and their handsome, criminal son Alexander.

Also post-meal, Laurraine Tutihasi made an appearance, the diminutive LASFAPAn introducing me to a fellow upstate New Yorker, and yet another member of the Ellay apa, Stella Nemeth. I fear my greetings were stifled in their cheeriness by an onrushing wooziness, which, coupled with the depression, might well have junked my congoing then and there.

Spotted Don Simpson, the Eldritch Doom, Quinn's hubby, and he told me that his lady was now, alas, asleep. Drat. Virginia Heinlein laughed through a crowd near the darthvators. The people parted before her respectfully. (Her mate, still recuperating from his surgery, could not come.)

Toni Symers
In the atrium, as night came on ... I sat with a friend and listened to her tell me that the despair on her face was "just hormones" ... encountered Tom and Dana Longo, of NOla, here for the world's weirdest honeymoon ... Leslie David, a handsome young lady with a ski-slope nose and short, pretty black hair, came up to me and asked how I minded having femmefen show up on my doorstep at Mardi Gras; when I managed to blubber to the LASFAPA & SFPA waitlister that jeezus, I allowed as it might be better than gargling nitric acid she smiled prettily and said that I was "a nice man" (nobody tell her) ... and sat and talked with my old friend and benefactor, Poul Anderson.

We sat in the atrium, by the windows, watching the con go by in its first night frenzy. We talked of Lafferty and I may get a paragraph or so of appreciation thereon by the Great Man from Orinda. Karen came up and got me to volunteer to do blood donor work the next day ... namely, escorting drained donors from the Convention Center, where the donating was to be, back to the hotel. The notion was that the awesome heat and the long walk across the plaza between center and hotel might clobber some of the less hardy. (I never did serve in this capacity, as Iguanacongoers' stamina proved equal to the task. No one fainted.) Poul and I talked of New Orleans, where I'd last seen him on the occasion of daughter Astrid's wedding ... and get this: some fellow, in his 20's, walked up to the two of us sitting there and stood there, a moment, shyly, in the manner of all neos approaching a person of respect. A fan wanting to meet Poul, no doubt, thought I ... but no.

"Mr. Lillian?" he said.

Was it from the Wendyburger or the ongoing gloom -- which had to be serious if Poul's company couldn't wholly evaporate it -- or the rush of egoboo that my head swirled? Who's to say? But the fellow -- in his 20's -- was a comics fan, and in that subgroup of fandom I am, believe it or not, something of a Name. He had a hucksters table and invited me to stop by for a free fanzine. (Did later, too.) He knew who Poul was and said a few words before departing, leaving me amazed. I'm known?

Eventually enough became too much, and as the witching hour dwindled into memory

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I decided to attempt a calming of my bod. But a visit to the con suite and a nice meeting there with LASFAPAn Marc Glasser -- mugged just prior to Iggy -- and Donna Camp, redhead, couldn't do the trick. I opened a can of coke and took a swig and nearly lost it all.

When Coke starts making me sick, it's time for bed.

Riding up the darth vator towards Hyatt's 640, we shared the cab with Mack Reynolds and Gordy Dickson. The author of Frigid Fracas invited the author of Time Storm to join him in a bottle of 100-year-old tequila. No jokes about tight fits, please if anyone could make it into such a bottle, it would be these.

.....

THURSDAY dawned absolutely unnoticed. It was nearing noon when Lee Ann and I, famished, set forth in search of victuals.

The Adams coffee shoppe was out, as funds were limited and their prices were not.

A bit of exploration in the truly vicious heat found a nice little lunch spot, nothing fancy and nothing ornate. Perfect, in short. I found that my nausea was gone -- probably only nerves and the Wendyburger's refusal to pass through my digestive tract without wreaking havoc. The depression was also in abatement ... thank heaven. The kind waitress leant me her morning newspaper so I could keep up on Jimmy Connors' progress in the U.S. Open ... which he eventually won, of course.

Lee Ann was toting an assortment of Mad Libs books, having caught a bug penicillin could not cure. Publius accompanied us, revelling in the heat. It's much like that on his native planet, you see.

Breakfast done, we separated, and I bopped over to the blood drive, creeping actually in the blaze of the Arizona sun. A few words about the plaza surrounding the convention center are definitely in order: although many crossings of the expanse earned it the nickname of "The Devil's Anvil" from me, it was one of the most attractive places I saw in Phoenix. Best were a group of lifesize, lifelike statues of dancing nudes, exquisite sculptures. Leslie David, who lives in nearby Tempe, said that there had been some small controversy about them when they were installed. It was Leslie whom I saw when I walked into the blood drive, as it was she who was in charge of the affair. Jack Williamson -- an Arizonan himself -- Nelson von Scyoc and others joined Ms. Heinlein at a table, autographing books for and giving lottery tickets to donors. Naturally Leslie encouraged me to bare my arm for humanity, but mindful of my condition the night before, pleaded off. The hucksters and art show rooms were still closed, so I returned to the Hyatt.

And there she was. Quinn.

My depression -- I've since figured out -- was caused by a combination of excitement of finally reaching the convention and a fear that I'd bollixed myself up with Los Angeles fandom, despite what Leigh Strother-Vien said. (I had not, I found, but at the time I was convinced otherwise.) Yarbrow put it all back into perspective. Glory be she.

"My son!" she greeted me. And added a motherly hug.



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I'll explain later. I could only have been happier to see Quinnie were she my real mother, unseen for -- good lord -- 7 long and destitute years. My own mama kept me alive through my physical babyhood; Quinnie kept me mostly on track during my equally torturous neohood in science fiction fandom. She is a wonder, a queen, a greatness ... and as an author, she's catching on. Time of the 4th Horseman, False Dawn, and the impressively popular Hôtel Transylvania are on my shelves, & belong on yours.

We sat and talked, much catching up to do. We go back A Long Way ... ten years, which predates my involvement in New Orleans fandom, even. She and I go back to the glorious days of the Elves', Gromes', and Little Men's Science Fiction, Chowder and Marching Society, meetings in Ben Stark's house, talks by Bay Area pros ... and laughing, we recalled our meeting and the way in which I became her "son". Explanation will come later. Suffice it now to say that much of our talk revolved around my "father" and how she often wanted to throttle him ... but couldn't, because damn it, she liked him too much.

(The sound of his typing, from his plastic tent, poked through the atrium air.)

Quinn has ten books done ... five more in the works, including prequel volumes to Hôtel Transylvania. She called upon her talents as a palmist and read my hands ... & lo, made sense out of the wrinkles and lines and shapes of my palms and fingers. Hokum palmistry may be, but with a reader who knows her stuff --as does the mighty Quinn -- it is a coherent and convincing hokum. Summing me up: "an interesting life to come".

While we were talking, Marion Zimmer Bradley huffed up ... and that's accurate. She mentioned to Quinn that someone had told her that Quinn had refused to be on a panel with MZB because of MZB's presence, and she wanted to know if it was so. Quinn said no. MZB said that this was good, because if it had been true, she was going to give Quinn a piece of her mind. And huffed off. Well!

Anyway, Quinn was due on a panel shortly, so she took off and I went to 1407 Adams (remember Leigh and Maureen?). Lee Ann wasn't letting me into 640 Hyatt just then, having business of a delicate sort to transact with a fellow LASFAPAN (or should I say, a LASFAPAN fellow). I did some typing on my still-in-progress LASFAPAZine and took a snooze.

I was up in time to take in Quinn's panel on Horror fiction, which was composed of the great lady Quinn, C.L. Grant and Ed Bryant. I made one small note of a different in terms: terror deals with the known; horror with the unknown. And Quinn's complaint that Hôtel Transylvania should have been subtitled "a novel of historical horror", as was the m.s., instead of the purplish "a novel of forbidden love", which sounds like it deals with dog sex.

Seeing Quinn and talking of "mein papa", I had to wander by "the bubble", where the GoH was still typing. I saw and photographed Norman Spinrad -- who hasn't changed much at all in the ten years since I'd seen him first -- and Hank Stine, new Galaxy editor, talking with Harlan in the puppet.

Obviously, I entered into a wand'ring phase ... because my notes touch upon the newly opened hucksters' room, a huge expanse in the convention center (wherein I bought a \$2 copy of Lafferty's Does Anyone Have Something Else to Add? anthology -- and that can't be his title), and a glimpse there of Don Markstein (I won't reveal the shorthand term I used for him; imagine if you can), whose much-ballyhooed "feud" with Ellison would be of great moment at this convention.

To no small concern from this corner, SFPAn know all too well of the mutual admiration Markstein and I hold for each other ... I believe the term used to be "animal hatred" before Leakey proved that animals do not hate. We've been at each other's throats off & on in the rebel apc for -- Zot on a Rock! -- almost 6 years, in the longest, most vitriolic, and ugliest fan feud I've ever known about, let alone taken part in. An article in Markstein's comic newszine Rally! had started

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the contretemps, an article wherein it was revealed that despite Louisiana's official opposition to the Equal Rights Amendment, Harlan had visited New Orleans in the past year for the Tulane University Symposium. Hypocrisy was alleged. It goes without saying that with Ellison's much-ballyhooed refusal to spend a cent in Arizona -- or even accept the free hotel room that was his due as Professional Guest of Honor, instead sleeping in a Winnebago camper in a friend's back yard -- his actions looked contradictory. But Ellison's story was different ... and I'm ahead of myself. Suffice it to say that Markstein was telling fans and zines and whoever would listen that Ellison was going to sue him, and was basking in publicity. Perhaps it was my own experiences with Markstein, perhaps it was knowledge of his techniques and temperament, that swiftly led me to the conclusion that he was using the disagreement to build his name in fandom ... but again, I'm ahead of the story. Naturally, we had absolutely nothing to say to one another. Our feud reaches back 33 bimonthly SFFA mailings (that's how I tell time), and has involved accusations on his part that I have "warped brain chemistries" (my reply was a full report on my blood chemistries and count, all of which showed me to be normal -- ! -- and a deliberately gruesome description of having blood taken; Markstein is a needle-phobe) ... nasty fanfiction from both parties (some of which is pretty good) ... innumerable snide remarks (I was a phony; Markstein belonged in a nutnest) ... & penultimately, the gut (& gutter) blow of an ex-lover, who fled to Markstein's side to get back at me for screwing someone else while she was away for 3 months. (Not that the reverse -- in a way -- hadn't been true seven years before.) Lots of pleural fluid under the Markstein-Lillian bridge, but we would not collide at Iggy. Markstein had raised his sights.

Leaving the Hucksters Room, I wandered to the fanzine room in the Adams -- staggering in the hellish heat -- and there met Victoria Wayne, published of the Canadian newszine, DNQ. A look at the editorial -- remarkably balanced and objective -- convinced me that all fandom wasn't as blindly pro-Markstein as so, so much of Southern fandom has been, and I admit that I penned in my notes a bluntly biased reaction: "Whoopee". I even subscribed.

After "Whoopee" is one word -- "Food" -- which indicates that I then ate. Then it was time to Meet the Authors.

I like this part of every worldcon because fannish foolishness is allowed to flower. Autograph-seeking is not only permitted with a grimace, but encouraged. Lofty cool is out and mad crazy adolescence is in. It's a great old fannish time, and if the writers don't enjoy it themselves, they don't have to come. Meet-the-Authors celebrates the ancient dichotomy of s.f.dom, fans and pros, and as an eternal neo at heart, I love it. I gathered together the stuff I wanted autographed and charged in. Silverberg tderantly autoed Time of Changes for me. I photoed andy offutt, Hal Clement, Frank Robinson with Quinn. And in room center, enjoying himself immensely ... autographing program books unashamedly ...

Someone with a microphone in the front of the room introduced Poul Anderson. I raised a shout. "Lillian, you're getting too old for this gosh-wow business!"

"Hi Harlan," I said.

I was not really surprised that he recognized me ... half of the time he does, half the time he doesn't, but what the hell.

Well, it's time to talk about Harlan. Again the "flow", be there such, of this report must suffer, as I Explain.

HARLAN AND I

To begin at the beginning, where all good things begin, and many not so good, I must take you back, back, back ... back to those dark, uncivilized sixties, back when Nixon was President and only the Best knew that he was Mad ... back to my freshman year at Berkeley, yes, that far back, ten years back ... to my first



encounter with Harlan Ellison. The following is an almost direct self-steal from ~~Verkley~~ Invidious #1, composed for SAPS in early 1972.

I met Ellison in May, 1968 at a special meeting of the Little Men held in Mountain View, California. The program featured a debate on the merits of Dangerous Visions, which had just been published and has just begun to raise its hell. Harlan was supposed to moderate this discussion, which pitted Norman Spinrad, a coiled spring of a fella in cowboy boots, and Mike Ward, "for" the book, versus fans Ed Wood and Bill Donaho, "against".

When Harlan strode into the gameroom of Wood's apartment complex, site of the fray, I was amazed. I was very impressed with the fact that he'd won a Hugo and a Nebula -- being, as I was, a screamingly rank neo. His pipe fascinated me; he would light it from time to time with a palmsized flamethrower from his seat in the corner. To show you how neo I was, in life as well as fandom ... Ellison was the first divorced person I had ever knowingly seen. I listened to his chatter

with some femmefans in awe. Smooth, practiced ... this was a new breed of cat for me.

The teams flared out winglike from Harlan, all behind a small table whereon were placed Harlan's personal copy of DV and Love Ain't Nothing But Sex Misspelled, Wood's tape recorder and the notes of those concerned. I counted better than 50 folk gathered in front of that table, among them Randall Garrett, Larry Niven (my first meeting with him, too; I asked him where he'd gone to school), Poul, Milt Stevens, Jerry Jacks, and sitting behind my floor's perch, a beautiful young lady named Quinn. I was unknown to practically everyone.

The debate rolled off, marked by good points from Spinrad, seemingly negative commentary from Ward, seemingly positive commentary from Donaho ("You guys should switch sides," Harlan muttered), and general dubiousness from Ed Wood. Questions & opinions from the multitudes followed, fielded and often answered by Ellison, who had turned out to be anything but an impartial moderator. No surprise there.

His frustration grew and his voice rose as the questions came on. I could only describe them as skeptical of the whole impulse of DV and the whole concept of the New Wave, then a big, big issue in science fiction. Harlan reacted with explanations & re-explanations of what he had tried to do with the book: "Arrange a number of different perspectives by different writers into a multi-levelled view of the future," he said. That struck a chord in me; as it sounded familiar, and so I raised my hand and must have spoken, because Ellison, by now in a steamy fume, snarled me down, "Will you just wait your turn, son?" I shrugged and did so.

After a few more queries, which went nowhere (except a nice statement from Quinn which earned her an immediate proposal), my place on the floor came into Ellison's view. He seemed a little contrite, and listened in increasing calm to what I had to say. Which was, approximately: "What you said about each Dangerous Vision associating with a different view of the world reminds me a little of Ulysses -- where each chapter corresponds to a different organ in the body, adding up to a man, Leopold Bloom." (Wood nodded, listening himself.) "It sounds like your job as editor of Dangerous Visions was to assimilate various organs as they came in from all over -- a liver from here, a heart from here, a phallus" -- that's what I said -- "from wherever ... but I don't see how you could make a unified sense from that without some sort of control over the other writers' work. If you did do it, Man of the Year."

Harlan looked at me with a calm and a seriousness I have never seen on him again. It was a very special moment. The Ruhr Valley smokestack he called a pipe was itself calm and a serene drift of smoke floated up from it. He spoke around the pipestem. "Have you tried writing?" he asked. "Well, please do. You're the first person I've talked to about this book who has seen its relation to Ulysses." He'd had just that relationship, he said, in mind.

"Well ... thanks!" I said. "Thank you," said Ellison. "When I marry her" -- and he indicated Quinn -- "I'll adopt you."

And that -- oh readers -- is why I call Quinn Yarbrow "Mama" and she calls me "Son".

The discussion went off in a more serious and yet more relaxed direction, as talk about the nature of the field predominated. Harlan was happier and the whole place was together in a significant fashion; the disagreements no longer rankled, the talk went places. The great Sid Rogers, one of the world's great ladies, came up to me afterwards and shook my hand, and led me up and introduced me to Harlan, who said, "Hey, you're good."

I saw Ellison many times after that during my west coast sojourn ... twice at Nebula banquets ... witnessed the ugliness with the ripped screen at St. Louiscon ... rode in Quinn's car with him, shared some experiences. One which I find typically Ellisonsque occurred before a Nebula banquet, when I was helping him carry his bags indoors; imagine the parade, Harlan, pipe booming, then me, a hairy quasi-hippy from Berkeley -- where I was studying and rioting at the time -- and then Louise, Harlan's six foot blonde girlfriend. As we were crossing the hotel lobby a hotel flack grabbed Harlan by the arm and said "Where are you playing?"

Sputter! Sharl! "Oh," said the hotel man. "You're guests." And vanished. At the front desk Ellison met Norman Spinrad. "Where are you playing?" he asked him.

The last time I'd seen him had been in Baird Searles' book store in New York. Two teenaged black kids were giving him a hard have-fun-with-Harlan time, and Harlan had turned to me and muttered, "I hate fans."

He didn't seem to be minding fandom at all, though, here in the Adams ballroom. His red pen was autographing everything in sight. He even jumped on me and autographed my name tag, and stared with mock dismay as I took the tag out of its holder and pretended to reverse it so the unmarked side would face out. He was in his highest spirits of the con, outside of the Hugo ceremony. I mentioned my feud with Markstein & Harlan said, "Amen, Markstein sleeps with the fishes."

I handed my camera to someone who snapped a picture of the two of us. His head's against my shoulder. I look like an amalgam of Lester Boutillier and Rick Norwood; terrible, in short. Fuzziness, probably, from the giddy company.

Stopping only to take a photo of Laurraine Tutihasi with Forry Ackerman -- Laurraine handled it better than I did -- I fled. On the way down to the street I passed Linda Karrh and Sperhawk, of Shadow-SFPA, on the elevator.

Party time ... I went around with Maureen to Boston's bidding party, where I met Lee Gold and saw ex-LASFAPA Nate Bucklin, strumming his guitar and wearing a Lunarians T-shirt. A visit to the Okon party brought me into contact with that con's lovely chairman, Rosemary Swift. We discussed the conflicting dates of her con and mine and what could be done about it (nothing, it eventually turned out). I also chatted with good Joe Haldeman there about the possibility of his putting in a DSC appearance. In fact, he suggested it, as he's GoH at Archcon in St. Louis the week after DSC.

And I saw Lester Boutillier there, a surprise. Lester had been making a lot of gaffiation noises recently, and I hadn't expected him to appear. Yet here he was, limping on his arthritic knee, and not saying much, but nevertheless, at Iggy.

Down in the lobby I met Alex Pournelle's robot, a converted trash can which rolled

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along spiffily and, it seemed, independently. It was not the only Jawa reject on hand; I have a photo of it greeting a brother pile of nuts and bolts, this one adorned with a small TV set for a head and a computerized smile.

Up at the Boston party (again) I sat with Armbruster, and ended the day in 1407, talking with Bobbi and Leigh and grand Maureen about the splendors of Chuck Jones, animator to the gods. So Thursday ended, a special Iggy day. On Thursday the convention became an assured success ... and never mind how. We all have our personal criteria for convention's failing or triumphing, and on Thursday it was decided to the good.

Friday of Iguanacon. Harlan's day. He would dominate Friday. Three events were his; I attended them all. All had their interesting points. They all added up.

I did other things on Friday, which will be noted in due course. I visited the Art Show and went to the best party I've ever attended at a con. This latter event shone with its own brilliance and was undoubtedly one of the great events of the vacation for me. But nevertheless, this was Ellisonday at Iggy.

It began with pizza by the slice with Lee Ann, down the block from the Adams. Pizza by the slice ... ah, what a wonderful thing. We do not have this fine example of civilization at its finest flower in New Orleans, and it is an indelible black mark against the Crescent City. Luscious. I went from there to the Adams ballroom, where Ellison -- clad in a sleeveless blue vest (do any vests have sleeves?) was being interviewed by Gay Miller, a brilliant lady who was altogether unawed by Harlan.

It was a fascinating dialog, centering on Harlan's social concerns, As usual, the GoH put on a spirited performance, directing his remarks to the crowd, drawing them in, pummeling them with his personality, exorting them to "be better".

He made ethnic jokes. "I am just your mouth," he told the crowd. "You're doing the speaking."

He defended profanity. "There are no bad words ... except, perhaps, 'Nixon'."

This was Harlan at his best, I thought, because his opinions on what is the matter with the world and its people match mine closely. "The darkness is coming," he said. "There is a diminution of feeling." The easy, comfortable way of doing things, looking at things, living is taking sway. Harlan's phrase was "the entropic flow of stupidity", and he used it to describe the marasmus of the mass, the lack of compassion for others, the pollution of language (even though I caught him saying "less" where he meant "fewer"). "You can be better," he said, and though he seemed to know that that sounded arrogant and condescending, he persisted.

"I am an unlimited person in a limited world."

It was a great performance. He called for a return to craft and to care, for a rejection of ease and sloth, for a rebirth of feeling and thinking. As usual, he double-damned the Box, and blamed our obsession with its attractions for the lack of concern people show for real life, real problems, real pain ... and real others.

"Charlie's Angels ain't cute," he said at last. "It's terrifying."

If he had more to say, the applause covered it. Good stuff, the real Ellison coming forth, the Ellison of his best non-fiction (the Glass Teats and Memos from Purgatory), the Ellison which looks beyond science fiction prodom and fandom to the world. It is where Harlan's attention belongs, because there, in the real world, he is a vivid and provocative voice ... and there that sort of provocation is needed. They need to be told to be better, to be as good as they can be. That Common Man he's harangued for so long ... he needs Harlan Ellison in his ear. S.F. ...? Well, s.f. would get its turn, first prodom, then fandom, as Friday went on.

ANYWAY, I was preceded out the door by a grinning Ed Wood, who no doubt did not recall me from those hallowed Little Men days, but still smiled when I remarked in my best neo-speaks-to-BNF terms that no one in the world could spiel like Ellison.

Outside of the ballroom, a fine surprise. Harlan had mentioned my name from the dais in connection with his fan troubles, and someone had heard. Ellen Fox, a.k.a. (or perhaps I should say 'formerly known as') Vixen, is a member of LASFAPA and is one extremely attractive and intelligent lady. While her defensiveness against being called such things as "girl" had brought us into patches of thorns in the Ellay apa, and provoked one member to remark that she'd probably be offended if somebody told her "happy birthday", I found her to be a rarity of friendly grace. Besides, she gave me something.

Ellen gave me -- totally unexpectedly -- a book on Marie Laveau, the Nawlins voodoo queen whose bones are interred three or four blocks from here in the St. Louis Cemetary, in a crypt marked with X's. The X's are supposed to be crosses, and making such a mark on the white stone is a protection against her spells. If anything is evocative of New Orleans in all its tacky heritage, it's Marie Laveau, and I was truly touched by the gift. She even inscribed the book for me: "Watch out -- The Powers of Marie will not let you escape. Vixen."

Said it before and I'll say it again. LASFAPA is a magnificent apa and a wonderful group of people.

The Art Show was at last, open, and I went there next. As usual nowadays, the con had employed rentacops to foil anyone who attempted to bring cameras into the room, thus endangering the oh-so-valuable copyrights of the artists. Paper sacks were being forced onto the Nikons and Kodaks of congoers who wished to enter the Show, and I avoided this disgusting insult to my honesty by sheer luck. The Vivitar was in its holster, attached to my belt. No one noticed it, and if they did, must have thought it a calculator or '45 or something ... but I did not pass unmolested into the Art Show. As I was hauling my program book along with some papaerbacks I wanted to get autographed (Hugo winners; it's my only sop to the super-faanishness of my youth). some flack tried to get me to bag those, too. But the Bounder was in charge and he came to my rescue, telling one and all that he knew me, and could vouch for the fact that I was too stupid to steal anything valuable.



Of which there was much, much in the Art Show. Complaints, I know, flew like seaspray about the show and the manner in which it was run (although my good buddy and fellow Southernor, Ken Moore, nominally in charge, did not catch any of the blame, fortunately). But I only came to look at the pictures, and there was some lovely stuff therein.

James Wolf's large, evocative canvases ... the simply fantastic work of Mark Rogers, including the best piece in the show for my money, an intricate, compelling "Treebeard" ... Cynthia Millan's work ... really fine, fine stuff. In an overflow room Bob McCall's METEOR painting was on display, along with other inventive, startling canvases, mostly space stations. Complaints there may well have been, but man, there could be none about the quality of work on display. I was only disappointed that there wasn't more Frolich, and no work by the fantastic Ned Dameron, who would have set that convention back on its collective coccyx.

The Art Show, like the gore drive (a vampire-clad committee member accosted people in the lobby, demanding blood) and the hucksters room, was in the Convention Center, and I took a peek at some of the program items underway. A single glance into the Publicity Panel showed me David Gerrold, so out of that I quickly backed. There was

a panel on Heroic Fantasy -- where were Hank Reinhardt and Jerry Page, glorious sons of the south who've edited an anthology along those lines for DAW? Home, alas, in Atlanta ... this panel was manned by artists, chief among them Kelly Freas. I didn't hang around past the time required to snap a picture, because although I like the hell out of Kelly -- his caricature of me from 1972 will see print somewhere in these pages -- I thought I wasn't in the mood for panels.

"Thought" I was. I reckoned without the "Neurosurgeon" panel.

IF YOU HAD IT TO DO ALL OVER AGAIN, WOULD YOU RATHER BE A NEUROSURGEON? That, approximately, is the name of the panel discussion beginning in the Convention Center. It featured a number of younger pros -- Jack Chalker, Roger Bryant, George R.R. Martin, Suzy McKee Charnas, and, of course, G. O. Harlan. The subject involved the pitfalls of being a professional writer, and sounded juicy. I walked in to give a listen, and Harlan called out that he needed to talk to me and to stick around, okay?

Okay. I took a seat -- glorying, I do admit, in the sudden attention being spoken to by Harlan brought me from my fellow fans (eternal the neo in Lillian glistens), and then grooving on the panel, which was active, involved, bitchy, and fun. The 5 writers took turns haranguing the publishers, the editors, even the fans.

"There ain't no such thing as a little bit of whoredom." Dead gophers mailed 4th class, heart attacks provoked, to publishers. One bit of financial interest was the amount writers were being paid for their work ... George R.R. Martin got \$31,000 for paperback rights to Dying of the Light, I remember, but that was by far the largest money figure mentioned. Oh, the anger and the anecdotes ... hoo! Hot stuff.

Speaking of which, entering shortly after me was a tall, brown-haired, red ... no, make that R*E*D-lipped lady in high, high heels enormous tinted specs, red velvet jacket and sumptuously snug corduroy pants over dark blue tights. Her nails were blood red as her lips, and her clavicle and sternum shone with startling pink decision. The thin strap of her purse crossed the wonderful territory from her throat to the seam of the tights, from exquisite angle of throat & shoulder to dimple one perfect mound. Holy cow ... she had been seen before, hardly an inconspicuous figure, sitting in the group around Harlan's typing tent; she could be found wherever Ellison went. Later I'd talk to her ... now, though ...

Now, though, Harlan and the other scribes were venting their frustrations and rage ... and cautioning the audience that careers would go to the block should any of this get out. And, as the panel closed down, someone came up to Harlan and mentioned two devastating tidbits: first, that a fan with a tape recorder had left the room in midpanel, vowing to play it for one of the eviscerated editors ... and that the convention itself had recorded the panel and would be offering tapes of the discussion for sale!

Holy hopping hell! The writers had said stuff on that panel that would put boils on the ass of a statue. None of them would be able to publish their names in the phone book if it got around. Harlan and Chalker and Martin pulled their hair for a few frantic moments and then took off helter skelter for the Hyatt, where the tapes were whirring. Several onlookers, including the redlipped cutie and myself, followed at a discreet distance and slow pace; I shall never forget watching Harlan hotfooting it across the Devil's Anvil with Bryant, Martin, Chalker and poor Suzy Charnas trundling along behind.

We caught up to the hurrying band in the atrium, at the taping table. Seems Iggy had arranged for certain panels, etc., to be taped, copied, and offered for sale to members. Harlan hadn't known that when he'd opened his yap about dead gophers in the mail and such. There he was, with his fellow panelists, pleading with the manager of the taping outfit for the master copy of that reel. "Careers are at stake! We didn't know we were being taped!" Careers sighed in quintuple relief when the tape was proffered and Ellison slipped the cassette into his pocket.

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Chaos ... people grabbed at Ellison ... "Harlan, you're late for a TV taping!" Finally, just preparatory to rushing off to change for this taping, he turned to me and said, "I need your help."

His contretemps with Markstein had reached a crisis point. He had sent him a letter rebutting the Rally! accusations point by point. Markstein had printed only the expletives and had left a copy of the zine by Harlan's typewriter in the pup tent. That was war; he'd warned him to print it all or face the consequences.

"I'm definitely suing Markstein," Ellison said. "I need his address. You're in that apa with him ... can you get it for me?"

And while I stood there in a definite form of shell-shock, the guy who'd warned him about the TV show grabbed Harlan and pulled him away.

Now I knew why Harlan needed to talk to me, and I was bugged. The red-lipped girl came up and asked what was going on ... and I told her, learning in the process that her name was Jean Malizia and that she lived in New York. Confused and a little ... more than a little ... apprehensive, I walked over to the atrium bar with her. She knew the bartender and scored a free drink for herself and a Coke for me. We brought them back to the pup tent and talked.

Jean was an interesting lady, as you might gather. She lived in New York, wanted to design fashions, hung around discos, and was in Phoenix just to see Ellison, whom she greatly admired. She had an extra ticket to the Harlan Roast, coming up on Saturday night, and agreed to sell it to me. She expressed delight with a girl who wandered by clad in a maid's outfit from Rocky Horror Picture Show, and on her suggestion I photographed them together.

Ellison, in the meantime, had changed into a brown corduroy suit, and was trying to find the guy who was supposed to drive him to the TV studio. All was panic and chaos. And then what should happen but a kid in glasses, carrying a briefcase and a chip on his shoulder, should walk past, catch Harlan's eye and pronounce "Hi there, hypocrite!"

Harlan grabbed him. "What's that? 'Hypocrite'? Who you? You Markstein?" Ellison had never set eyes on Markstein, who was, naturally, nowhere around. He exchanged a few words with the fan and then scorned him away with a "Geddouttahere, kid." The fan retreated to a sofa and sat there, looking both frightened and satisfied. He'd called Harlan a hypocrite, it turned out, because Ellison had accepted the Hugo given out at Baycon for "City on the Edge of Forever".

Maybe he asked for it, long ago, and okay, maybe he does so now, too ... but fans use Harlan Ellison. Disgusting.

He missed the TV show...but the taping was rescheduled. I split, met up with Lee Ann, Alan Prince Winston, Schlosser, and retreated gratefully to the Adams coffee shoppe to eat. Partway through the meal I noticed SFFA immortal Dave Hulan and his wife Marcia sitting at a nearby table, but I didn't go over. Hulan and I don't get along in print, even though I think he is a very fine gentleman in person, & why add tension to his evening? My own was tense enough already.

Because even though my admiration for Markstein is exceeded fiftyfold by my love for cholera, I didn't want this suit business to go on, for many reasons.

I suppose some of it had to do with all the attention it was bringing Markstein, & as a longtime rival, I resented it. I resented it because he was gaining it the way he had fought our fights in SFFA ... by loading issues, pushing and provoking confrontations, and then yelling for sympathy when the object of his attention replied. I had seen it time and again in SFFA and seen it succeed in winning over quieter members, shier types who admired his ego. Markstein always went after obvious targets in SFFA, just as he had earlier in the New Orleans Science Fiction Association, people whom he knew would be popular targets, either for their weird

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appearance or outlook. He only attacked when guaranteed of an appreciative audience in advance. When he had published that reckless item in Rally!, and had sent Ellison a copy, he had raised his sights to the Big Time, and when Harlan had objected to its half-truths, had played it to the hilt, milking egoboo from it, provoking Harlan all the more, Suing the guy would bring him nothing but more attention, and would win Harlan no satisfaction in the end.

That's what I told Ellison upstairs in the Adams Ballroom. I'd gone in with Maureen and had found Harlan talking with Ruth and some other people near the door. I spoke to him frankly, telling him that a lawsuit was just what Markstein wanted. Fans have for years used Harlan Ellison to get attention and egoboo -- hell, I've done it myself, even in this very zine -- and now he was being used again. "Suing him is not the way," I said. "He played this in fandom's ballpark. Meet him there."

Harlan listened seriously. I meant it seriously. I like Ellison ... for all his failings, he has never been anything but clean with me. And there was that encouragement from Mountain View, and 1968, to repay. He went up to the dais, meeting Fred Pohl there. I followed and sat on the floor before the front row. I had my notebook out. He asked me to keep track of, and report on, what he said.

First Pohl, natty in a blue leisure suit, introduced Ellison, making funny reference to the term "douche bag", which he'd edited out of the magazine version of

"I Have No Mouth, and I Must Scream". Then Ellison came up, unclipped the microphone, and went into his schtick. And it was fun, too. Ellison relates well to audiences. He told the tale of the Neurosurgeon panel, & responded to the goodnatured booing he got for snaring the tape with an equally good-natured "Piss on you." (Only he could say that and make it good-natured.) He told a joke about the Pope, and said that he was trying to sharpen his wits by typing under that plastic pyramid all day long. He mentioned The Last Dangerous Visions: 740,000 words, 120 stories, 3-volumed boxed set. Due RealSoonNow.

And he called for questions.

"What are the 39 Steps?"

He repeated the answer given by the Answer Man. He held up the script from I, Robot, from which he would read tonight and which would be auctioned off, later. It was autoed by both he, the scripter, and Asimov, the inspiration. And then someone called out, "What about Markstein?" And so.

First, Harlan called for a show of hands. How many were fans ... in other words, readers of s.f.? All right, how many were fans ... devotees of the social group known as fandom? (Some folks, myself among them, called out that they were both.) Harlan then said that Markstein had gone after him with the purpose of making a name for himself in fandom. "That's like being the best leper in the colony," he declared.

Before he sailed into the specific case, he went over his year for us. "It's been my worst year ever," he said. He revealed his motives behind continuing to be GoH and the reason for his decision to show support for ERA by eschewing the hotels for the Winnebago.



The reaction stunned him, he said. He held up his correspondence file, "Hate mail!" He had been accused of politicizing the con (I'd felt that way myself), and asked if he had done so. (No, he hadn't ... the ERA had not been intrusive.) There had been no appreciable diminution in the faanishness of the con. The mail, though, had been incredible. There was even a death threat: "Come to Arizona, Mr. Guest of Honor, and we'll treat you just like we treated Don Bowles," referring to the Arizona reporter who'd been murdered by the mob.

"But the meanest item of all was Rally!" He paraphrased the famous Rally! article which had begun the brouhaha, and then read it aloud when a guy brought it up from the audience, saying that to be fair the man's own words should be given. In the article, Markstein referred to Ellison's visit to New Orleans for the Tulane seminars, stated that the author had been "wined, dined, and wenched" there, and capped it off by mentioning that Louisiana had not ratified the Equal Rights Amendment. The functional thrust of the article: Ellison was a hypocrite.

Harlan went over his actions. He called around and finally located Markstein, and protested that the facts were askew, and to please publish a retraction. He had appeared at the Tulane Symposium with the full approval of the National Organization of Women, which had indeed sent representatives to the conference itself. He had had a binding contract to appear. Most conclusively, he had broken an ear-drum on his descent into the Crescent City and was therefore in no condition to be "dined and wenched" ... and he made a point to say that he's a teetotaler, so "wining" was out as well.

According to Ellison, Markstein hemmed and hawed, and Harlan got angry. Not only his name had been ill-used, he said, but the ERA had been discredited. He sent Markstein a letter. It was dated 31 May 1978, and he read it to the audience in toto.

The letter went over every single part of the Rally! article, giving the facts; as Harlan said, "I love it when I got the facts." It was angry, it was gross. It did indeed begin "Dear Unprincipled Yellow Journalist Asshole" (or something along those lines; I don't have my copy yet) and contain a few choice epithets. But it did tell Harlan's side of the story.

In the midst of all this, Harlan referred to me. It was, in a way, a highlight of Iguanacon, to have the Guest of Honor publically hail me as a good man. My name even brought a smattering of applause from the back of the auditorium... LASFAPans in the crowd. He praised my writing ability (he's only seen LOCs in comics, I believe) and mentioned my looonnnnnnnng feud with Markstein. "He's a sump, right?" he asked.

And though Markstein graduated downward from "sump" in my eyes years back, I demured.

Anyway, on Harlan went. He mentioned that he'd sent through his lawyer a certified letter to Markstein stating that if he printed only the insults out of the 31 May letter, as he'd said he would, that was a suable offense. The original article was irresponsible and sleazy, said Harlan, but not correcting it was provably malicious. And indeed, there was the second Rally!, left by Harlan's typewriter, in which every other word but the expletives were deleted.

And so now, Harlan said, he was in a quandary. If he sued the bastard, he would just be giving him what he wanted, more exposure, more attention. His hands were tied by his position. He could be attacked at will but could not reply in kind. "So what do I do, friends?" he asked Iguanacon. "You tell me what to do."

And from the crowd came a biting female voice. "We'll get him!"

The crowd erupted in applause and cheers. It was stunning. "No, no!" screamed Ellison. "Jesus, I've created a lynch mob! Ignore him. Ignore this guy. Don't go over to his hucksters table. Don't say anything to him!" Attention was the purpose of

Rally! and all that came after. Harlan had said his piece, and that was enough. He called to the crowd to give Markstein no more.

And he went on to other things. So did I. There was a party upstairs and I could not wait to get to it.

Believe it or not, I was feeling pity. That crowd was won over, and they were against a man I despised. Markstein had put me down for years ... and been put down in return, I admit. But his whole history as a fan was spun with people he'd put down, Don Walsh, Lester Boutillier, Dennis Dolbear, people who could not fight back in the arenas where Markstein took the frays. Now Harlan had, "Now you're messin' with a (beat, beat) SONUVABITCH ..." It was just, in my eyes, but it was also terrible.

Oh, God, did I ever need LASFAPA.

The event, just down the hall from Leigh and Maureen's room (1407), had been under discussion in the Ellay apa for literally a full year. At Suncon, several of us had gathered in Alan Prince Winston's room for a get-together that had become legendary. The LASFAParty (as I called it) at Iggy was to be even better. And it was wonderful.

I'd missed the start of the party, being busy below. I'll let Lee Ann's account of the outset do my background work for me. She and Dave Schlosser had purchased 3 cakes for the occasion, cut into 3 interesting and appropriate shapes: R2D2, Cookie Monster, and a voluptuous female torso. "LASFAPy Birthday" was written onto the last cake's belly.

"The two of us," says she, "closeted ourselves in the suite's dressing room with the ckaes, in order to make our preparations. First, I draped my veil over David's head. Then I took two birthday candles and stuck one in each tit of the bikini cake, and lit them. David picked up the cake, I opened the door and announced us, and then we walked into the room singing 'LASFAPy Birthday to You.'"

"Naturally, Marty Cantor, as the Little Tin ~~God~~ God," as LASFAPAns call their OE, "got to cut and take the first slice of cake. He took the crotch."

And Cantor himself writes, "I ~~delivered~~ sliced the cake in a particularly tasty piece -- after, er, eating some of it I did. proclaim that it was indeed a tasty (you should excuse the expression) piece -- of cake. That seemed to set the tone for the rest of the evening. With LASFAPA, who needs Apa-69, already?"

True enough. By the time I staggered into 1401, site of the party, that particular cake was well-scarfed, so I had to subsist on R2D2. I related the tale of the carnage in the ballroom to Schwarzin, who seemed sympathetic to my definitely mixed feelings of satisfaction & shock. And then I lost myself in that wonderful group of people.

Everybody was there. There was La Armbruster, scintillating like a star. I have a photograph of GHLIII prone on the floor with Bobbi's silkstockinged feet rubbing my chest, a look on my puss of absolute manic glee. Armbruster is a national treasure; Bounds should be heavily fined for every day he keeps her in Germany. Lee Pelton rubbed Lee Ann's shoulders; Lee Ann, just to be "putrid", wore her Southern Belle outfit. James Langdell, sans Celia, showed up -- he had duties in the masquerade the following night. Vic Koman came in, packages of Saucer Sluts underarm (an appropriate place for Saucer Sluts) and I thought what the hell, and bought one. I believe it was Armbruster who photoed the transaction, Lillian passing Koman five dollars, Vic passing me the porno. I called Ellen Fox "babe" and lived. I took a Cal Tech "purity test" brought to the party by Mike Gunderloy and Dan Gordon and out of a possible 100 scored 88 ... or 12 "no" answers. That was the lowest score in the room by far; I'm more of a Casanova than I thought.

I had ditto masters on hand, left over from Pretty Boy Freud, which I gave to Schlosser to print. In a rush of inspiration I began the official LASFAPA Autograph Zine;

and everyone at the party signed it. (Eventually I collected no fewer than 36 names, not counting waitlisters ... all the LASFAPAns at Iggy but one, Allen Trimpi.) And then the phone rang. It was LASFAPA's youngest member, Cal Johnson, who was at 15 too young to leave his home in Corsicana, Texas for the wilds of Phoenix. Again I turn to his own account of things. Cal first relates his impatience in waiting for the expected ring, and then his delight in hearing from Celia, who rang him up, from Ellay, to commiserate on their not being at the con. Then he goes into making the call himself.

"So the phone starts rining. 'Hello?' 'Hello. Who is this?' 'This is room ... what room are you looking for?' 'Oh, I know this is Alan Prince Winston's LASFAPA party -- who is the particular person I'm speaking to?' 'Oh, Leslie Blitman.' 'OK, Leslie, would you tell them Cal Johnson from Corsicana is calling?' 'Hey, everybody, it's Cal Johnson!'" A cheer went up. "And I heard in the background, through the shouts, 'Let's Get Small!'"

Let's Get Small is Cal's LASFAPazine.

"And boy, I just got extremely tiny. I doubt you could have found me with a microscope by the time everybody yelled 'GOODBYE, CAL!' I have never been quite so happy or received comparable egoboo."

It was a mass pleasure. I have belonged to 7 apas and been to more conventions than I care to count, but that party, that call, those folks ... well, the heights, that's what they were. The heights.

Gathered most of the members together and Maureen took a group portrait (which I'm trying to get screened). Cantor and Tutihasi and Judkowitz missed it, but almost everyone else is there. It's a grand group. Iggy was a worthwhile experience because of it.

One of our members, Seth Goldberg, called our attention to a short film which he had made, and a number of us accompanied Seth to the film room in the Hyatt to see 2002, as stunning a minute-and-a-half of film as I've seen since Bambi Meets Godzilla. Revelation of the plot would be criminal, but suffice it to say that the applause was great. I made a general announcement to the effect that the author of the masterpiece was present, and both Seth and his co-producer, Mike Okuda, were brought to their feet by a tsunami of hoorahs. To quote Seth's con report, "Poor Okuda is modest and had to coaxed into standing up, but I jumped up and probably looked like Harlan did when he got his Hugo. To write something, and then to see it turned from an idea into glorious color on the big screen with an appreciative audience is an experience to be savored all my life." Yay team.

(Before we went to the Hyatt, I dragged Maureen to the Texas Unified Fandom Party, and there, sho nuff, found Caryl Thompson ladling home brew into cups from a pot. Hadn't seen her since MAC and I suppose her face wore surprise, not shock. Good to see her again, and to see Texas fandom so ... so fannish.)



(40)

On the way back to the Adams, Maureen and I met Harlan and his lady on the street. The silver I, Robot script glistened in his grasp.

He looked very tired, very subdued, very pensive. We stopped and talked for a moment. "Did I handle the Markstein thing right?" he asked.

I said that I guessed so. That he'd pretty much finished things.

"Yeah. He's dead for me."

We exchanged g'nights. I took Maureen back to the Adams, and Harlan went to the Winnebago parked on the curb outside the Hyatt. I'd see him, of course, many times in the days that followed, but personal contact would be minimal. I like Harlan. He brings on a lot of the troubles he bears himself, but others come to him unbeckoned. There is something that fans forgot about Harlan a long time ago, as we made him the backbone of our pseudo-, miniculture, a "culture" based on that phantom quality and wauntity, egoboo ... that it hurts. Yeah, he's needed the attention of fandom, true. But dammit, he's just a guy. We didn't have to make him a totem. That was our doing, not his.

Glad I got to talk to Ellison at Iggy. Maybe I helped him out a little. Hope so. Maureen and I went back to the Adams and yakked with LASFAPans until 4 a.m.

Saturday.

Sign on an atrium bulletin board: ORGANIZING EXPEDITION TO DESERT TO AWAIT THE MOTHERSHIP. CONTACT: LACOMBE RM 1313.

Ate at the pizza joint. Andy Porter handed Goldstein and I flyers denouncing Locus' Hugo candidacy.

I went to the autographing lines in the Adams and had Ed Bryant autograph Cinnabar and Cynthia Felice her Godsfire.

In the atrium, costumes. One spectacular entry was a fine apewoman in chains, being led about by a cowboy. Wonderful performance; the ape looked confused and frightened and, splendidly enough, intelligent and curious too. Gal comes from Baltimore, I understand. Stunning stuff. (Little black kids followed her around all day.)

I went to the Convention Center hoping to see John Carradine, scheduled to be interviewed by Forry Ackerman there. No show. Poor 4SJ had to console the disappointed crowd. Tacky, Carradine.

I went to the Art Auction, sitting with Barbara Dryer, a Vancouver fan. Strange bidding. Mark Rogers' wonderful Treebeard went for only \$115, while a much smaller and infinitely less interesting sketch of a sexy frail and a rose went for \$250. Rogers' stuff went for insultingly low prices, I thought. The cover to the program book, depicting Harlan and Jeffty, went for \$350 ... not to Ellison. The Bounder did much of the auctioneering, and very well, of course.

In the midst of this I went back to the Hyatt, and fetched a book, and went to sit in the presence of a lovely, nervous whitehaired lady who was reading, in a small but very steady voice a work in progress. The book in my hand was Where Late the Sweet Birds Sang and the lady was Kate Wilhelm. For a few moments the frantic pace of Iguanacon was gone. Her voice, reading her quiet but powerful prose, put all the insect-like hustle away from that room and from the 20-some folk listening to her. After the reading she smiled for a Vivitar flash and gave unworthy, scurvy neofan Lillian his stupid autograph, graciously and kindly ... but the small, quiet voice, reading the steady, quiet prose, asked me to wait a moment so her hand could stop shaking.

Beats the living hell out of ray guns, kids.

I visited the hucksters room and talked for a moment to Schwarzin there. Markstein's mother came up to talk to her and I hid my nametag until I could gracefully split. Very nice lady and why upset her. Bought myself a bee-yoo-ti-ful sculpture, an incense holder in the shape of a demon, for \$12, a most worthwhile purchase; it had been dropped and repaired, thus went for half its usual price. If I could recall the artist's name I would be giving it instead of typing this silly sentence.

I flirted with Laurraine Tutihasi, who likes me much, much better in person than she does in print. I heave a sigh that she resisted my he-manly charms.

John Landsberg of Unearth came up and handed me a copy of that able magazine's 7th issue. "To another friend of Harlan's," he inscribed it.

Back in the hotel I took a tip from Tommy Longo and got my tickets for the Hugo ceremony. Tickets ... well, they only had limited seating and an al most, it seemed, unlimited con. I also scored tickets to the movie premiere that night ... from Bobbi, who set aside two extras for mutual buddies in case they couldn't get their own.

I bopped over to 1407 -- seeing Fritz Leiber on the street, old, tall, an extraordinary figure by anyone's perspective -- and helped Leigh put on her costume. I shouldn't mention how beautiful she was, because it's hard to concentrate on typing with such a memory.dogging me, but there is no sight in the world like red hair tumbling over pale pink skin ... Fortunately, again, I managed to keep cool and avoid serving ten-to-twenty in Arizona's pen ...

After she was all attached and adorned I walked her to the auditorium stage door, where I joined the crowd of photogs flashing their shutters at the costumed.

The costumes: as usual, some spectacular items, most supreme being a wonderful Minotaur, an elaborate affair of fur and makeup and stilts and articulated hooves that was truly fabulous. There were lots of Leias and Lukes, of course, but some fabulously imaginative and well-constructed costumes as well. The staff was frantic and fascistic. A Harlequin girl gave me some jelly beans. I saw only one set of undraped tits, curse the luck.

The photogs were given terrible seating in the auditorium, in the far left rear. Fortunately, John Guidry was nearby, and I sat next to a gal named Carol Gathings, who was filming the affair for, or should I say "fer", a "Texiss tahee-vahee stayshun" documentary. And Leslie David was our "guard", preventing anyone from taking our seats.

The contest went on for weeks. It was announced well, though, and ran fairly smoothly. The crowd was generally good ... when a LoTR group came out sans Frodo, who was late, they shouted "Take off the Ring!" But the groans for each new Leia and Luke became so audible that one Skywalker stalked off the stage, visibly pissed off.

(In all, I counted 6 Leias, 4 Lukes, 3 Darth Vaders, 3 Obis, 5 other Star Wars characters and four "spin-off"s, such as the wookie babysitter.)

Highlights of the incredibly dull evening were an Ellison lookalike, who erupted into an evangelical frenzy, a Chewbacca who fell off his stilts (and won a prize), a superb Wonder Woman costume (some genius yelled out "Stars and Stripes Forever"), and the Minotaur, of course. Judging took several months and "losers" were rather crudely sent into the audience to sit behind us ... a rather cruel and tacky way to handle things, I thought.

I'd really rather not mention Freff's intermission schtick, which only proved that the fella has terrific stage presence and needed much more rehearsal time. I enjoyed Langdell's clarinet recital more than any of the other routines, and yes, noticed the penguin on stage.



First they gave out workmanship awards, a very nice idea ... honoring people who put a lot of work into their costumes, no matter if others' were more spectacular. Among those honored was a kid who encased himself in a hairy ball -- ahem -- and rolled across the stage. Inventiveness was hailed and hooray for that. Then the judges all came out and gave honorable mentions, a tedious process. Then the real awards were given out ... the Minotaur had to cross that stage several times, he won so many honors.

I still haven't been to a good Masquerade at a worldcon. MAC's was best, but that was more due to Patia than anything else. Maybe it's just a dumb idea.

After the last unending moment, went outside to again stand in line, this time for the movie premiere. The lights illuminating the Phoenix night were broiling. I found LASFAPA people and told them that I'd save seats for them within. The hoooorah about tickets was unnecessary ... they had many left over and were passing them around. I saw redheads everywhere. Agony struck from all sides.

Within, we all sat together ... Leigh, Maureen, APW, Lee Ann (clad in her Rocky Horror outfit ... as ever, putridity reigned supreme) and I. The huge auditorium filled to capacity. Stagewards of us, Mitch Thornhill blew bubbles until a redcoated center kid asked him to stop. Paper airplanes flew. And then on came the movie.

Watership Down was the best new animated film I've seen since 101 Dalmations. It was effectively rendered, excitingly paced, well-"acted" by the voices of the characters. Oh, the loss to the world when Zero Mostel died ... what a delight to hear his Kehaar spit out "Piss off, rabbit!" and "Shtupid bunny!" And what a faithful adaptation it was, too. The Richard Adams novel is a colossal achievement; if any film could do it justice, this was it. Some anuses in the audience started singing "Kill de wabbit, kill de wabbit" during one of Woundwort's scenes, but the rest of us were enraptured.

Film done, Hazel and the black rabbit off to Frith, 1407 saw the last gathering of Saturday night ... Niven joined the LASFAPAns for a righteous discussion of the film we had just seen and others, including The Conversation.

On the way back to the Hyatt Lee Ann and I passed Donna Camp in a green wig. A monstrosity. Redheads should never hide their hair.

.....

I should have attended the Ranquet at the nearby Wendy's the next morning, but Toni Symons invited me to breakfast, and I figured I'd rather eat than barf. A goof, as my name was announced when the envelope was opened for Best Fan Hoax ... Yes, I had won a Hogu, and true to the category, I was not there. Lee Ann offered to pick up my award, but there was none, aptly enough.

Two months later, I must add, I still haven't received it. Glycer?

(Maybe I should blessings-count instead of bitch.)

Another meal formed the core of Sunday afternoon, and as co-chairman of the 1975 Halfacon which roasted Hank Reinhardt, I had to see Iguanacon roast Ellison. I joined Jean Malizia -- her hair dyed dead black, her face covered in gold mesh -- at a table in mid-room. Mack Reynolds joined us, and during the dreadful meal passed around small marble-sized nuggets of ferrous oxide ... part of a strange hail that had showered onto the town in Mexico where he lives. He thought they were extraterrestrial in origin, but one gal at the table suggested that they might really be hail ... volcanic dust agglutinizing in the stratosphere. Fool that I am, I even touched one to my tongue ... and remember nothing about the taste except that it was better than the entree.

Reynolds was a gem. He told stories about Silverberg and Ellison when they were teenaged fans, and how Terry Carr would send him fan letters with little spacemen drawings in the margins.

Jean told us all about Studio 54, and chased away a toddler who was sticking a screwdriver into an electrical socket on the floor.

The Roast itself was very long and intermittently funny. Ken Moore gave Harlan a belt buckle he had admired on a recent trip to Louisville. Tim Kyger, ex-LASFAPAN and Iggy chairman, bewailed the theft of some Ctein prints. Finally, F.M. Busby, one-time SAF and Iggy m.c., began the festivities by in troing Robert Silverberg -- who gave his old pal no mercy, quoting from Doomsman. He described Harlan as "The Thing in the Attic of Science Fiction," and made fun of his clothes (although Ellison wore a kayo tux that Jean implored me to photograph for her). Ellison took fervid notes and cursed him in Yiddish. Silverbob was followed by D.C. Fontana, who made tacky reference to Harlan's propensity for disastrous marriages, and was followed in turn by Vinnie DiFate, who surprised everyone by being the funniest speaker of the evening. He called Harlan "the greatest single argument against cloning", "the voice coach for the Jawas." "Never trust a wop, Harlan," he advised.

Kelly Freas gave Harlan a boxful of baby crabs, don't ask me why, and Ed Bryant went on and on and on about the travails of living in the same house as Ellison. A bunch of gay jokes did not go over well with the Guest of Honor, who did break up Ed's act by pretending to piss into a carafe. Speaking of such matters, David Gerrold followed him, nagging the poor Guest of Honor about People's imbecilic review of Strange Wine (he wondered aloud if the title was misspelled): "The literary equivalent of Star Trek!" And led a chant drilling this grotesque opinion into Harlan's brain.

It went on, and on, and much was funny, like Marta Randall's description of Ellison as a "stand-up shoe-shine boy", but I was getting restless. Besides, I had two books and a neofan's need on the table before me.

And so I excused myself & left for a bit,



slipped over to the Adams and there had Fritz Leiber autograph The Big Time and The Wanderer, his two Hugo-winning novels. It was the second time I'd had the man do this bit; at St. Louis he'd scrawled on them both as well. And then both books had been lost in the mail when I stupidly shipped them home that way from Berkeley. Oh well ...

Back at the Roast, Harlan was just getting in his vengeance. He poked fun at Bova, Gerrold ("who once had an ethic but took an enema and got rid of it"), and all the rest: "Marta Randall, who always has her back to fall back on ..." For that particular point he got a hearty "OOOOOOOOOOOO" from the crowd. He protested "WAIT a minute! I get short jokes and no cock and that gets 'ooooooo'?"

Everything was going along swimmingly and would have ended in the same good vibes in which it had begun, had not some schnook neo, as usual trying to get Harlan's goat, shouted out something and ticked Harlan off. Harlan froze up at once & devoted the rest of his time to telling the little prick that "on the best day of your life, pizmeir (sic), you wouldn't be worthy of carrying my pencil-box." Phooey. Even in the best of times the old antagonism comes through.

That pretty much finished that, so I found Maureen and Lee Ann and made plans for joining the looooooooooooooooooooo queue waiting to enter the auditorium for the Hugo presentations. Beforehand, I stopped off in the Hyatt gift shoppe to buy film, and was there accosted by two Arizona fans whose stated purpose was "getting into a Guy Lillian con report". They were NYAPans James Dean Pascoe and Greg Swan, stout lads both, who were crashing the convention sans nametags. Here's the mention, boys,

After surviving the insane line, which went over, under, around and through the Devil's Anvil, Lee Ann and I managed to obtain truly decent seats; Maureen, who had been working for the convention, had staff seating down close. A UFO group had a little exhibit in the hallway, where I hope they were unmolested; Ken Moore and I, in fact, stopped to chat with these nice, sincere fanatics and admire the artwork -- from the fifties -- that they had on display. Back inside, Ellison made an announcement about a pickpocket loose in the crowd, and Fred Pohl entered, looking cheerful and confident.

Busby appeared on stage, and the lights came down. He first introduced Tim Kyger, who advanced to mixed boos and cheers, to talk about the convention. He apologized for the broken mimeo (which had given Goldstein fits earlier) and advised everyone to party in the Adams, not the Hyatt, as "another group" had that hotel's nerves in tatters. (That other group: Kiss and its groupies. Gene Simmons had tried to waltz into the Roast unticketed, only to be stopped by Schwarzin. He didn't press matters beyond some snottiness, perhaps because of her first name ... and did buy a beautiful Virginia Aalko sculpture.) Tim also asked us not to skinnydip at the Hyatt, which was fine by me.

Fan GoH, in a flowing blue toga, came forth ... Bill Bowers, whose superb Outworlds has never won the Hugo it merits. A brown curl drooped over his forehead as he spoke about his faaanish history and poked at Harlan's ERA stance: "No one," he said, "speaks for me." He did express admiration for Ellison's courage and commitment, and then it was time for Harlan himself to come forward for his GoH speech. As Bowers had shown, Harlan's flash dominated Iguanacon, and everything was measured, for better or worse, in its shadow.

Ellison on stage. It was his finest hour. He seemed quiet, and even though he eschewed the podium, preferring to wander with the mike hand-held, he was almost subdued. He toed marks on the stage as he talked, & he seemed to be making an effort to get himself across for real this once ... not to perform, not to bamboozle, but to communicate. Harlan was being real. He talked about his history with the ERA. He told about how he was inspired by a Mack Reynolds story. He insisted that even in the bleakest of his stories there was faith, belief in the human race. "And in you."

"I come from you," said Harlan Ellison.

He put down fan politics as a juvenile waste of time. He praised the staff. Breaking into a lighter vein, he told the story of his GOMShip, which former Iggy chair and LASFAPA stalwart Greg Brown later poohpooched. He explained the theory behind the ERA boycott and again protested that his advocacy had not interfered with the usual con fun and functions ... in fact, just the reverse, and talked about the kid wearing an ERA t-shirt who was expelled from the Art Show by a rent-a-cop. (Much to Ken Moore's surprise.)

Finally, Harlan urged that fandom use its energy constructively. Get the space program started again. Support ERA. Move the world into the future we've played with for so long. And, he said at the last, release Harlan Ellison from his duties as totem. The stuff would be written. But he would not, he said, play the part anymore. He had to grow, he said. He had to put the fannish identity behind him.

"Lemme go in peace."

That was the end of it, and the crowd let him go ... in an ovation.

Okay, hearts and flowers done with, it was time for the business of the evening...

HUGOS

ETC.

Forry Ackerman was first on stage, to give out the E.E. Evans Big Heart Award. "Our winner tonight has published ten billion words in science fiction fanzines ... going by the old formula that one picture is worth ten thousands words. Bill Rotler ..."

The First Fandom Award was next, and hooray, it went to an old friend, E. Hoffman Price, who was, alas, not there to pick it up. Overdue honor to the old giant.

Lin Carter came on stage to give out the Gandalfs, and appeared in a startling way. When the wolf whistles deafened him, he turned to the audience and said, "Gotta give Fantasy some class." And then gave out the nifty Gandalf awards to Poul Anderson (great ecstatic huzzahs! abounding) as Grand Master and The Silmarillion as Best Fantasy Novel.

Kelly Freas presented Virginia Aalko trophies to Art Show winners. Lee Ann snoozed beside me. The John W. Campbell Award went in an upset to Orson Scott Card, whose "Ender's Game" was up for a Hugo later on.

And then they came ... the 25th Anniversary Hugos ...

Phil Foglio won Fan Artist again, in an obvious automatic vote stemming from the Suncon win. He did practically no work at all last year. Perhaps mindful of this, he withdrew his name from that particular category in the future.

Dick Geis, winning for the thousandth time as Best Fan Writer, was not at the ceremony, although I swear that I saw someone with his nametag wandering about the con (tall, thin, spectacled fella ... which could only fit half the fans in the world). He's the one who should withdraw from consideration in the future, but ...

Locus again won Best Fanzine, and both Cahrlles and Dena Brown got Hugos this year. They recognized a groovy trend when they saw one and withdrew the zine from competition ... but only for next year. And since they alternate this Hugo with Geis' SFR, as Lester Boutillier has said ... what's the big deal?



George Scithers was a nice surprise as Best Editor ... but I'm sure he had his fan past to thank for that. His award, though, was a good change of pace from the endless series of Ben Bova victories.

Rick Sternbach won another automatic Hugo as Best Professional Artist, defeating my favorite, Vinnie DiFate. He too withdrew from next year's competition, but damn, how he seemed to strut.

Next up was the year's least suspenseful Hugo ... Dramatic Presentation. The old fart sitting next to me, a blustering old fool of a fan who loomed like the Ghost of Worldcon Future, bellowed that if the obvious choice won he intended to boo. But if he did, he could not be heard as Gary Kurtz came onto the stage to pick up Star Wars' Hugo, the house rattled with approval.

It was a mark of class for Kurtz to appear, especially after the tacky boos he'd heard last year (for the sin of mentioning "sci-fi"). And he showed enormous class by thanking fandom for its kindness to him and the cast when they showed at MidAmeriCon, with Star Wars an unknown quantity. "Next year," he

said, "we'll have something more to show you."

Harlan's turn next, winning the short story award for "Jeffty is 5". He bounded to the podium like Rocky Balboa. "I thank you for Jeffty," he said, and said that if nominated next year, he would accept the Hugo. Let him go in peace, but keep reading, please.

I expected Raccoona Sheldon's "The Screwfly Solution" to cop the Hugo as Best Novellette, and duplicate its Nebula win, but Joan Vinge's "Eyes of Amber" took the award. The lovely Ms. Vinge assumed the stage and said "Now I know how Diane Keaton felt!" Her joy beamed.

"Stardance" by Spider & Jeanne Robinson took the Novella award, as expected, and as desired from this corner. Both authors got Hugos, both proselethysed modern dance, Spider engaged in a little mush.

And then it was time for the big Hugo, Best Novel ... and Gateway won it. I'd voted for Fred Pohl's novel; it wasn't the best s.f. I'd ever read but it was superior to the other nominees, and I was terrified that Ellay fandom, love it though I did, would give Lucifer's Hammer enough loyalty votes to carry it through. It did not, & thank heaven. Faulted and all, at least Gateway dealt with human beings, and human pain, and human resilience, and human imagination. In 1978, it was the best of all possible Hugos.

The auditorium rapidly emptier -- after the Pat Terry Memorial Award was given to Spider Robinson for his Callahan's Crosstime Saloon. The winners were invited to hang around to be photographed, and I joined the photogs dogging them at the lip of the stage. And down there, in the front row, I saw a New Orleans neo, quite anice fella, actually, though a bit loud and overbearing in his opinions ... He's been in fandom, in NOSFA, for some time now ... a movie buff ... and he was heard to remark, looking at the Hugos, "Hey, it's a little rocket ship!"

Gah.

Lee Ann and I sauntered over to the Adams, following Kurtz and his nervous escort, Craig Miller, who works for Star Wars and was afraid a bunch of asshole fans would bug his boss. But except for one turkey from Dauphine Street in New Orleans, who

took a picture of them together, they were unmolested. Gary Krutz, young, handsome in his Schuyler Colfax beard, every hair in place, and by all accounts a very nice guy, walked alone across the lobby, something extraordinarily beautiful to his credit, and a Hugo under his arm.

A word or two about this year's Hugos: they were gorgeous awards. The standard rocket that so impressed my neo friend from NOLa shared a wide base with an ornate plaque with the winner's name and category and the Iggy emblem. I talked with Kyger later and he allowed that as these were the 25th anniversary Hugos, they'd made a special effort to make them beautiful trophies.

Upstairs ... partying ... trapped between the knees of LASFAPA Jenny Montaire ... The Minneapolis in '73 party, lively and interesting, and much of that thanks to Jenny, Greg Brown's frau, who hotsy-totsied with charm, and made being p.t.ed a pleasurable experience instead of a contemptible torture. We had a long, good talk later; now, in the throes of the liveliest party of the night, she was content to bounce up and down on my leg ... the right one, you dirty-minded sonsabitches!

Going out in the hallway to dry off my knee, I photographed a Tarot reading some kid had thrown for Beth Schwarzin ... to show to Charlotte Proctor, a great lady, a great friend, and a Tarot expert. I met Sarha Prince and was struck by how much this fine-cheekboned gal reminded me of Valerie, Charlotte's daughter.

Jenny Montaire really was an extraordinary find that evening, and she made it one of the special times of the con, because she was sensitive to people's feelings and open with her own ... the pain as well as the good-times. I had made some fine friends at Iggy, and she was one, not so much for what she said to me as for what she said to a 14-year-old cutie named Patricia, who joined us out in the hallway. 14, long long light brown beautiful hair, a babyfat face and sloe eyes. As someone whose opinion on these and all other matters said, looking at her picture, she was looking for trouble and bound to get it. Jenny talked to her, drew her out, listened to her expressionless tales of her alky mother and dead home life, giving the message of life & love with straight talk from an equivalent lifetime away. Hey, that's a talent, to talk to kids like that and not have them yawn and recoil. Brown, you lucky swine, you don't deserve her.

There were all kinds of parties that night ... D'APA held one that I visited briefly, in Leigh's room (Strother-Vien helped pay her hotel bill by renting out her suite to partygivers). And it was so sedate by contrast to LASFAPA's ... man, the difference couldn't have been made up by Egg Rolls, I tell you that ...

That night ... 4 a.m. ... I was awakened by a phone call. Toni Symons, telling me that Maureen -- standing guard over Harlan's pup tent in the atrium -- was miserable and I should come see about her. I almost went. But Maureen wasn't miserable (I found out later), and for all too many reasons I couldn't have moved anyhow.

Toni Symons ... one more aside. The day before, bopping out to get our luncheon, we'd passed the pup tent, in which Ellison studiously labored to finish the story he'd begun on Day One. There was a sign above begging for no disturbance, but that meant nothing to Symons. She tore right in there with a "Hello there writer type person" to which Harlan, in charmed shock, replied with "Ahh, ahh ... Lillian, you getting it on with this manic-ac?"



Took a picture of the incident, sent it to Toni ... and she said that she'd made a point of showing it to Harlan. I replied, "No, alas," incidentally.

.....

Monday, Monday, can't trust that day ... G'bye Lee Ann, off with Schlosser to the airport. I moved my stuff to 1407, where I talked with Alex Pournelle, astonishing him by confiding that I hadn't known that Jerry was his daddy.

I attended a panel on mysteries -- just for the panelists. Poul and Karen Anderson and Quinn, wonderful Quinn. It was a delight. Did you know that Harry Harrison wrote Vendetta for the Saint?

Leaving ... after the last word, I went to the Ellison panel on Fans turning into Pros, featuring a rather heated argument between Harlan and Terry Carr, my fellow Bull editor. On the way out I heard Robert Silverberg allow that of course fandom was fun ... it was like slumming. Great sex scene in the middle, Bob. Everyone supported the semipro magazines like Galileo and Unearth, especially Harlan, who was donating half the proceeds of the Roast to it (the other half went to Arizona's NOW).

The English lady who filksang for Brighton at MAC held a hullabaloo in the atrium. Andy Offutt handed someone a "P" on a scrap of paper and said "Next time you have to take a pee ... "

I found Maureen and Leigh and bundled them off to the movies. No better way to cap Iguanacon than with the science fiction event of the past year, and so we bopped off to see it ... and appropriately enough, it was in a grungy, dilapidated theatre packed with Mexican kids ... a lousy print ... and the audience was unresponsive, nasty, and dull. But we weren't. We still wore out nametags. We were science fiction fans, and that certified us as crazy. And that meant cheering for C3PO and hissing the Dark Lord, to hell with the mannequins around us ...

Afterwards, in the early dark, we drove down Van Buren, Leigh and Maureen indulging Lillian, who wanted to get a look at this legendary haven for hookers. It was too early. The Force was not with us. And if we had seen some, all I wanted to do was gawk. We hope so, said the girls.

There was a dead dawg party on Adams' fifth floor -- Quinn was there -- and some skinnydipping out beneath the rumbling clouds. Big deal, a bunch of guys. A belly-dancer tinkled her finger-cymbals. A bartender told Maureen that there had been minor vandalism, but nothing serious, in the Adams. I bought Bethy Beavers a post card of a jackrabbit with the most amazing EEEEEEEERS I have ever seen and shipped it on to the beloved snoo in Greensboro.

Phil Foglio was everywhere, selling Windycon memberships. Leigh grabbed her stack of Ayewonders and went around peddling them. Maureen tried to photograph Ackerman on the Hyatt escalators, no luck. She sought an expedition up into the Superstition Mountains.

Randall Garrett dragged his "sister" (Maureen) off to his room for a small party there. She phoned me to come rescue her, and I did, utterly exhausted. It was only midnight or so, but GHLIII was all GHLIIed out, and so I went into 1407 and sacked out ... saying goodnight to Bobbi Armbruster, who was looking for Bounds.

I was beat, exhausted, whupped, finished, kaput, out-of-it, dead-to-the-world. All the physical reminders of a fine convention, coming to a close. I slept straight through till late morning, when Tommy Longo awoke me. I would be accompanying his wonderful Dana and he home, along with another NOLA fan. He had secured a needed tire and we would be leaving soon. It hurt more than a little to leave Leigh and Maureen, there in 1407 ... they were both fabulous people and grand buddies. Maureen had read me a letter she'd written to Harlan which I encouraged her to send; it would only make him feel better. But I had to leave. I carried my bags down

to Tommy's impossibly crowded Pinto ... somehow managed to get it all loaded in. What a trip! A fellow would be riding with us to Tucson and then the four of us would head on for NOLa, and no stopping till we were there.

Dana mentioned that she was hungry. "Tom," she said, "you know what would taste real good right now ...?"

I answered for Longo. "A plate of red beans and rice. I know this great place called Buster Holmes'. Let's go there."

And so we did. 28 hours later.

It began with the enormous, merging, flowing extravaganza of Los Angeles, seen from the air. It ended, in effect, in the tiny, soft brilliance of the eyes of deer, flashing from our headlights by the sides of the road.

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IGGY NOTES. Incidentals.

I don't remember how much the hotel cost. My share must have been around \$70.

It cost \$66 to have all the rolls of film I took on my vacation developed. I took 12 rolls.

I received my last credit card charge from the Iggy trip in early November. This insanely lengthy report is the last expense I anticipate from it.

Medically, three pills a day for ten days took care of everything. My sore throat was awful for a day or so, and then went away.

Harlan called me and told me that he was sending me a copy of the letter he'd mailed to his nemesis, which I will copy myself and run through the apas that see this zine. Which may only be SFPA and IASFAPA, after all.

I did not mention seeing Doreen Webbert for the brief moments that I did. Hail to the wonderful witch of the west.

I did not mention the W.O.O.F. mailing, to which I contributed a slight zine called Us, dealing with Southern fandom. It was adorned with the character sketch above.

And I have not yet apologized for the existence of this zine, and its obscene length. I will be pleasantly astounded if any one of you reads it all the way through. I can only plead insanity ... for me a convention is not done with until the con report is written, and I happen to be one of those types who believes that detail lends depth to a narrative ... whereas, obviously, it leads only to tedium and what Ned Brooks calls "typerria" in my case. I hope you found a thing or two to enjoy here. I hope I made no new enemies. Damn, though, I made a lot of fine new friends, and my thanks to them.

I guess art credits should be given ... okay ... Cover and illos on pp 3, 8, 15, 21, 37, 41 and the bacover are by Los Angeles genius Linda Miller. Celia Chapman secured each and every one for me; to her great wonderfulness, my great thanks. The lettering is all by me except for the colophon, which is by Elena Pirov. Steve Uhalley, page 11; Lee Ann Goldstein, page 22; Byron Humphrey, p. 25; Jim Pascoe, 47; rip-offs, all the others. I grovel to all of you in thanks.

And exhaustion. Today is November 14, 1978. Up the Darth Vator was begun two months, 5 days ago. Done now. Lobby. All out.



