

REVENANT #13

Begun in June, lost and reclaimed in July, and finished in August, 2002

It's the first of what I hope will be two issues for SFPA mailing #229

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My computer has it in for me. Or else it's going bonkers. I had eight pages almost ready to print out for last mailing when the computer suddenly refused to read the disk my zine had been saved on. (No, I hadn't backed it up or saved to the hard drive like I know you're supposed to do.) I took the disk to work to look at it on the computers there. Not much better. One stumbling block was that the zine was in MS Works, and the computers at work only have MS Word. They also don't have at least one of the typefaces I used. After trying several strategies; I was able to open the file and print it out. It wouldn't copy to a disk or the hard drive, but at least I had the words visible. It was unusable the way it printed out, so I re-typed taking advantage of the extra time to make corrections. I still don't trust this machine, so I'm going to use the bulk of what I had for mailing #227, and send this in early. The second issue in this mailing should have my Toronto trip report, and possibly some natter about grad school--I'll start on August 27.

DeepSouthCon

DeepSouthCon 40 was held June 14-16 at the Huntsville, Alabama Hilton. Guest of Honor was Allen Steele, Toastmaster Connie Willis, Artist Guest of Honor Vincent Di Fate, Fan Guests of Honor Rich and Nicki Lynch. There were many "also attending" pros including Robert Asprin and Adrienne Martine-Barnes.

Some conventions are great, some terrible, some mediocre. I'm still not sure of the reason, but this convention was not an outstanding one for me. I think it was more due to my state of mind rather than the con itself; because they certainly had most of the elements that go into a good one. Interesting guests, a hotel staff that seems to have been very accommodating; events running smoothly (at least on the surface). However, I did enjoy my side trip to the Space Museum and the vacation from work was wonderful; so I'd say on the whole I had a good time.

It's a long drive from Baker to Huntsville, but I was able to keep myself entertained. I left home before 7 A.M. Friday, and started out listening to "Morning Edition" on NPR. After it ended, I switched to the tapes of *The Fellowship of the Ring* that I had borrowed from the library. This is a full-text reading---15 tapes and something like 20 hours long. I had my quibbles with the way the reader did some of the voices, but I liked the way he sang the songs and recited the poetry. The familiar story swept me along and I made it into Huntsville by 4 P.M. with only a few stops. I had no trouble finding the hotel---I had downloaded driving instructions from the hotel web site and they were very easy to follow. The Huntsville Hilton is in the downtown area across the street from the Civic Center and also across from a small park. It made a nice break on Sunday

when I spent some time in the park walking around the pond watching the ducks and appreciating the trees.

I know I have a terrible sense of direction, but I still think that the hotel was laid out in a peculiar fashion. There were two wings, but on the sleeping room floor the wings weren't on the same level with each other. To get from one wing to another, you had to walk down one corridor, go through a door, walk down several steps, then go through another door. The secondary panel room on the main floor was at a distance from the main part of the convention. To get to it required walking all the way down one corridor, turn, and walk all the way down another one. It brought back to mind trudging down hallways to find the con suite at MilPhil! From some reason, I never could get straight on the layout of the rooms in the main convention area, either; I kept expecting them to be around the corner when they were right in front of me or vice versa.

Friday's highlight was the Meet the Guests reception held after the Opening Ceremonies. The hotel provided a lavish spread of cold cuts, cheese cubes, stuffed tomatoes, crudités, and rolls plus a cash bar. Naomi Fisher made an elaborate cake complete with Space Shuttle and a message reading "Happy 40th DSC". There was even ice cream to go with the cake just to make it a real birthday party. I mingled and munched a bit and went to a few room parties, but made an early night of it.

Saturday I attended far too many panels, but it's all the con's fault for having too many good guests. Connie Willis' reading was a pleasure, as always. Her novel about alien abduction which she mentioned at MilPhil is on hold since the events of September 11. It seems some of the pokes she make at the expense of various governmental agencies read a little differently now. Willis hasn't completely abandoned alien abductions, though, as she demonstrated by reading part of a non-fiction piece about visiting Roswell and Las Vegas. It'll be published in a chapbook in time for ConJose. She's also working on a novel about time travelers and the Blitz set in the same universe as *To Say Nothing of the Dog* and *Doomsday Book*.

I found a Chinese restaurant for lunch buffet and got back to the hotel to hear a panel on Topic Drift. And sure enough, they drifted into telling panel and con horror stories. They didn't get into any serious discussion on how to prevent drift or whether it was a good or bad thing; but it was amusing enough to keep me there the full time. I then heard the Guest of Honor speeches, then the live readings from "Mimosa". Several people read pieces they had written for "Mimosa" in the past. I didn't take notes, so the only one I remember now was Charlotte Proctor's piece on the neighbors who seemed so nice at first, but insisted upon getting upset at normal events such as burying a cat at night and good healthy activities like knife (or was it ax?) throwing. I understand these readings have been done before, but this was the first time I had seen them. I'm hoping it won't be the last; there is a lot of good fan writing out there that deserves to be heard again.

I hadn't planned to attend the Art Auction, but when Naomi Fisher said there would also be items auctioned off to benefit DUFF, I sat in long enough to buy a couple of things. I came away with a very nice t-shirt with a drawing of a koala bear and "Australia" embroidered on it (unfortunately it's so thin, I may never wear it in public!), plus a koala mama and baby pin. While I was paying for them, Naomi swooped down to thank me and gave me a DUFF ballot. The voting deadline was the Monday after the con, so she was actively pushing them.

The Masquerade Saturday night was very short, but amusing enough until the judging intermission which went on and on and on...and I gave up to go partying. The parties were hopping and crowded, but I never got into the mood. I was about to give up and go to bed when I realized I was missing the Meade Frierson tribute. I heard just the end of it; I'm sorry I didn't see more.

Sunday morning brought the usual SFC meeting and site selection vote. Randy is now SFC president; Julie now vice-president. Good luck, Randy! I had taken my laptop computer to the con to work on notes for the con and had it with me Sunday morning since I had checked out of my room and didn't want to leave it in the car. Which meant I had no excuse when Toni caught up with me after the SFC meeting and asked if I had had a chance to contribute to the one-shot. I even had a blank disk with me; so I typed a semi-coherent paragraph or two and gave the disk to Steve. The DSC site selection meeting had its traditional question about whether members not present could vote in the site selection. Once again, the rules were suspended to allow members working in the dealer's room or taking down the art show to vote. (The usual rule is that you must be present in the room where the meeting is being held to vote.) Happily, a committee was appointed to study how to amend the rules to take care of that in the future for good; also to clear up some inconsistencies in the rules. Charlotte and Memphis were bidding for 2004; Memphis won easily. It will be run by the same people who run MidSouthCon and held on their usual mid-March dates.

The last panel I attended was Connie Willis talking about comedy. It was a small group, so she came down off the podium and we made a circle of chairs. Willis contended that contrary to what some say you can analyze comedy and proceeded to do just that. She gave recommendations for "funny stuff" and asked for our own favorites. I couldn't come up with any off the top of my head, but by the autographing session a little later I had remembered one name and told her about Bill Richardson, a Canadian writer I've enjoyed. She hadn't heard of him, and made a note of his name.

Closing Ceremonies were so low-key as to be almost a non-event. Not that I expect an elaborate production, but it seems that if you schedule a Closing Ceremonies as a program item, you should do more than just stand there and say, "Well, I guess it's over. Bye." Tell us how many attended, thank the guests and workers again, tell us how you're never going to do this again/have big plans for next time. Do something!

I took advantage of the break in the action to drive over to the cheaper hotel where I'd be spending the next two nights. I checked in there, then went back to the Hilton. There were a few people hanging around the con suite, but it was pretty dead, so I went outside for some fresh air and walked around in the park across the street.

Back in the hotel, people were starting to gather for the Dead Dog party. The con had provided food in the con suite all weekend---breakfast items in the morning, munchies during the day, and actual food in the evenings. Tonight it was pizza, then ice cream. I passed on the pizza since I had had dinner, but indulged in the ice cream.

At one point Robert Asprin came in and drifted over to the corner where several other people and I were sitting. He got to talking about living in New Orleans in the French Quarter and how it's really like living in a small town with everyone knowing each other. He's been there since 1989 and sounds like a life-long native griping about the tourists at Mardi Gras! Asprin had brought along several pages of a novel he and another

writer are working on which is due to the publisher in December, I believe. The noise level in the suite was too high for him to try to read it out loud, so we passed the pages around to read and comment on. One segment we read focused on a general resurrected into the body of an ineffective military man by a mage who has plans to reunite various city-states on his world. In his world magic is common and used in all segments of society. The other part we read focused on a 19 year old magic student. She believes her unknown father is the powerful mage who founded her school and brought back the general. She is willing to do anything to anyone to get ahead (and her school encourages students toward that). It made for interesting reading and I'm looking forward to seeing the entire novel.

Asprin went off for a smoke (non-smoking con suite) and I noticed Adrienne Martine-Barnes was over on the other side of the suite with a circle of her own. The contrast between the two pros was amusing. Asprin had been his usual exuberant, almost raucous cheerful self; and Martine-Barnes was sitting there very straight, almost primly as she spoke very precisely and clearly. I heard her say something of how she felt she was done out of a costume award at the '84 WorldCon because her group didn't have the flash and glitter of the winners; but everyone had told her that her group should have won. I wasn't interested in listening to any more recitals of past wrongs; and I was beginning to fade. I was surprised to see that it was only 10 P.M. or so, but I decided to pack it in for DSC this year. On the way out, I saw George Wells and his wife, plus Rich Lynch and Naomi Fisher chatting in the lobby. I hung around for a few minutes, but soon left.

Monday morning it was off to the Space Center. There's a lot of good and interesting material there, but the arrangement is less than ideal. You'll be looking at an Apollo exhibit, then next to it is an underwater exploration exhibit, then more Apollo, then Army equipment, then Mars info. It was as if the museum was built and the exhibits set up; then they acquired a lot more unrelated material that they had to shove into any corner they could find. Still, it was well worth the trip. Lots of neat stuff to see and some hands-on exhibits to play with. I didn't try the shuttle lander simulator (with Peter Schickele as the instructor voice) but I did try stacking blocks with the waldo arms (although they call it something non-sciffy).

I wondered how they would present Werner Von Braun and his work before he came to the U. S. Not surprisingly, his work for the Nazi war effort is glossed over. There's no mention of what he thought of the use of his work on the V-1, no mention if he ever thought of all the people who died as a result of those rockets.

I took a break to watch the IMAX film on the Hubble telescope. For about half the film, I was thinking maybe I had heard the description of the film wrong as the Hubble wasn't even mentioned. I was expecting pictures from the Hubble, instead the film was mainly on the shuttle and its work in space. I didn't mind, though, the pictures were gorgeous, even if the film itself was less than enthralling. The info presented was interesting, but the presentation was not very good. As I said, though, the images were gorgeous, and I'll look forward to seeing another IMAX film some time.

I discovered another drawback of the museum when I tried to get something to eat. Maybe because it's so oriented to school kids, but the food offerings were dismal. Hot dogs, hamburgers, french fries, and pizza. None of which I wanted, but I didn't want to wait too long to eat, so I opted for the pizza. It was edible.

I hadn't wanted to wait too long for lunch because I still had the outdoor exhibits to view. They have two Saturn V rockets; one lying down and another standing up towering over the center that you can see from the interstate as you come into Huntsville. They are immense. It is incredible to look at those behemoths, to walk and walk and walk alongside one and see up close just how gigantic they are.

After the wonders of the morning, I was ready to spend the rest of the afternoon doing more mundane things. I checked out the local Barnes and Noble, then took a look at the mall. The Suncoast Video store in the mall had some LOTR action figures, so I bought an Aragorn figure to go with the Legolas one I already had. The guys are still in their boxes, but I'll take them out to play with them one of these days---I'm not planning to treat them as collectibles!

I left Huntsville early Tuesday morning and listened to the tapes of LOTR most of the way home. It seemed like a longer drive back than it had been to get there and it was nice to finally make it home. And discovered that my phone was out! I drove over to a nearby supermarket so I could report it and let the cat sitter know I was back. The phone was repaired by the next day and I was able to check e-mail once more.

I hate to think of missing DSC next year, but I may have to. It's in Chattanooga, which is even further away than Huntsville. It was a long, long drive this year; really longer than I like to do in one day. Flying is likely to be too expensive and making a two-day trip of it starts eating up the vacation time. We shall see.

Mailing Comments for Mailing 227

Variations on a Theme/Rich Lynch: Nice to have seen you at DSC. I don't remember ever learning much about Bach's life other than about his many children. (And of course his "youngest and strangest" P.D.Q.) I've been fond of Bach's "Little Fugue" ever since I heard the Canadian Brass perform it live at LSU years ago. They spaced themselves in the audience and onstage so that you got the "stereo" effect.

Tyndallite/Norm Metcalf: Thanks for explaining why you don't consider "Forbidden Planet" and such as science-fiction. Your comment of a movie scrolling text reminded me of a comment on a Tolkien (I think it was) newsgroup poking fun at some other posters who seemed to be offended that Peter Jackson daring to make a movie of *Lord of the Rings*. One suggested that they could have just scrolled the text on the screen; but others pointed out the difficulty of establishing how fast to roll it; therefore Jackson was "forced" to actually film actors.

Bruce Pelz/Jeff Copeland: Thanks for including this. I knew of Bruce Pelz only by name; it's good to learn a little more about him and to learn just what a loss it was.

The New Port News/Ned Brooks: We missed you at DSC. I believe it was one of the very few you've missed?

Ct Sphere: It's possible the terrorists chose to strike on 9/11 because of its association with the number 911; but only if they were using American referents. In most parts of the world Sept 11 would be written as 11/9, and the emergency phone number would vary from place to place.

Ct Peter, Pan & Merry on cattle on what they are fed: I'd heard some of this before, which is one of the reasons I stopped eating beef. I can't control all the potentially harmful things I ingest; but cutting out beef was an easy step.

Twygdrsil and Treehouse Gazette/Richard Dengrove: Nice to have gotten a chance to talk with you (briefly) at DSC. The Deputy Administrator who thinks that all knowledge is on the web shares that mistaken assumption with a lot of other people. I've found a lot of information may be on the web, but not all of it is true. My favorite example of why you shouldn't rely on the internet as your only source came about when I was helping with a beginning internet class we did at the library. I used Bablefish to translate, "How much is that little dog in the window?" It came out more or less right until the end where "in the window" became "dans le Window"!

Ct me: the problem with teaching Sunday School is not just the public speaking bit, but the need of having to say something of substance. The teacher's book helps one along; but the teacher is still responsible for teaching not just the scriptures covered, but leading the discussion along as to what they mean and why we should take heed.

Oh, I'll forgive you for buying Austin Powers videos. It could be worse---you could have been responsible for making them! I did see part of one of the Austin Powers movies on TV the other night. I was watching another movie and during the very long commercial breaks I'd flip over to see a few minutes of it here and there. It looked like one of those that if you're in the proper frame of mind, could be amusing entertainment for a couple of hours. Just too over the top for me to watch all of, though.

Variations on a Theme/Rich Lynch: If this is the last of your postcard diaries, I'll miss them. I enjoy reading them, not just for the places you go, but the experience of another country. Sightseeing can be exciting, but getting to meet people the way you've been able to fills out the feel of another place.

Trivial Pursuits/Janice Gelb: Thank you for including those personal memories of George Alec Effinger. I'm one of those who didn't know of the past you shared with him. Reading what you said about his childhood and learning more about his health problems; I find it amazing that he was able to be as productive as he was. In that alternate universe he talked about where the two of you were living in Iowa, I wonder how much more he could have written? If only...

I took you up on your recommendation of *The Eyre Affair* and am very glad of it. Great fun! I loved the "Rocky Horror" version of Richard III. I see the author has another one coming out next spring set in the same world; I'm looking forward to it. Did you see his web site?

Ct me: A supporting membership for Con Jose is not terribly expensive, no; but to vote in site selection, you also have to pay a voting fee. It gives you an automatic supporting membership for the winning con, true; but my idea of cheap is 5 or 10 dollars! I realize that's an unrealistic expectation; so I usually go ahead and send in my money.

As to LOTR slash fiction...well, it's just a good thing Tolkien is already dead, or learning about such things would have put the poor man away! I once wondered aloud to a friend why anyone (especially a woman) should write Trek slash fiction featuring Kirk since he was such a raging heterosexual. She opined it was the reasoning that said, "If I can't have him, no woman can."

I haven't used an immersion heater in years, so I don't remember whether they gave a metallic taste to the tea. I got around the tea problem at DSC this year by taking along my electric kettle. Bingo---just like home.

The Ellison Webderland Experience: Wow, what to say. Incredible. Incredible that anyone would spend that much time and energy attacking someone they don't know.

Frequent Flyer/Tom Feller: Nice to have seen you and Anita at DSC. River Stages sounds like a fun event. I think the harmonica you mention Blues Stew using would be in the category of Blues rather than Cajun instrumentation. Still, it sounds like an interesting mix of styles. Is this the festival the same one you mentioned before that's a free one? Baton Rouge is between festivals right now; though one that ran for years is supposed to be brought back next year.

Confessions of a Constant Liar/Arthur Hlavaty: Ct Gary Brown: You mentioned owning a book with pictures of baseball cards; have you seen the "American Memory" section on the Library of Congress web site? Lots of images of fascinating historical documents including a collection of baseball card issued between 1887 and 1914.

Spiritus Mundi/Guy Lillian: Nice to have seen you and Rosy (and met Jesse!) at DSC. Was this Jesse's first con? And how did she like it?

Thanks for sharing your memories of George Alec Effinger. Do you know if the fourth Marid book will be published since the lawsuits were dropped? It's bad enough to have lost him; it would be a shame to lose his work as well. A writer's works are a type of immortality; as long as they exist, the writer is in a way still with us.

Ct me on the oregano marijuana bit: Oh, I'm old enough to get the joke. I haven't tried smoking any of the herb in my garden, yet; I can barely get enough to use for cooking. If my grass cutting people would stop sticking their weed wacker into my flower bed, it could grow decently. The time before last they cut the grass, they wacked the oregano; last time I put an overturned planter in front of it, and they wacked one of my day lilies in the same bed! Of course, I didn't notice it until they left.

I did see "The Two Towers" trailer at the theater the last time I went to see FOTR. Nice looking; I eagerly await December.

My idea of the difference between Baptists and Methodists is that Methodists won't flip at the idea of having a glass of wine.

I liked the Space Center in Huntsville, but yes, it's a museum in the sense of showing past glories rather than an ongoing process.

Enjoyed your "memory" of Twincon. Since it took place in an alternate reality. I won't ask if your question, "*What risqué stories?*" shouldn't have been, "*Which risqué stories?*"

Peter, Pan & Merry/David Schlosser: I'm sorry to hear of Kay's brother's death. My sympathies to you both. A sudden loss like that has got to be a shock.

Ct Norm on werewolves: With all of us brainstorming this issue, we'll get it solved. Right now, I think your explanation sounds most likely. It's been too long since I saw any werewolf movie to remember just how the trait was passed along.

How is Kay enjoying her Prius? I'm hoping I won't have to replace my car for years, but the Prius is on my list of possible new cars. For me, the major stumbling block is the price. I could buy a new Saturn like the one I have (and like a lot) for much less than a new Prius. I don't do a lot of driving at high speeds, or for long distances; so the fuel saving might not be as great for me as it would for someone else. Still, I like the concept of it and hope the price will drop in years to come.

Offline Reader/Irv Koch: Glad to hear that things are looking up, somewhat. And sorry to hear of your health problems. I hope the doctors you've been having to tell it to over and over are able to do something to help. For all that our medical history gets written up, sometimes I wonder if anyone ever reads it. Certainly if you go to a different place from where they keep your file; you have to recite it all again. My oncology doctor has me get a CT scan every year or so. And every time as they're ready to begin, they ask, "Have you ever had any surgery?" and I have to go through the whole story.

Away from Home with the Armadillo/Liz Copeland: I'm sorry to hear of your stepfather's death. I see from Jeff's zine that it wasn't unexpected, but that doesn't usually make it any easier.

Oblio/Gary Brown: My sympathies to you on losing your cousin. It's nice you got to see him that last time to just talk. And you say your father's health continues to go downhill. One of the drawbacks of getting older is to see our family and friends fade and leave us.

On the retouched photo issue: I agree with your paper's decision for the reasons you gave. Did the paper get any complaints because of the change?

Ct me on the next two LOTR films: Oh, I think they'll do just fine. The DVD of FOTR will have a preview of "The Two Towers", which will work to interest those who skipped seeing FOTR at the theater, but rent it from the video store. There'll be another wave of LOTR related merchandise coming out this fall. Supposedly, some theaters are running trailers for "The Two Towers" already.

Ct Tom on the copy editor not knowing about "Leave it to Beaver": He/she must not watch much TV! It shows up all over the place it seems to me plus the references the show gets in other media.

Ct Jeff on the Bat Cave layout changing: Perhaps it's due to Alfred. He gets bored while Batman and Robin are off adventuring and goes downstairs to rearrange things.

George's Zine/Bobby George Poulete: Interesting bit of stream of consciousness there, but someone at DSC claimed to know who you really are. I'll see if he repeats his theory.

Tennessee Trash/Gary Robe: We didn't manage to connect at DSC, but I did see you once or twice, I think. I hope Isaac is doing well, since I didn't get to ask you there.

Sounds like a hairy trip you had to Venezuela. It seems like your martial arts came in handy to scare off the potential mugger. Congratulations on being able to get business accomplished under what appear to have been very difficult conditions.

Being able to see stars from your backyard is something I miss. When I was still living in my mother's house; I could do a little stargazing from the yard; but there are too many streetlights and lighted businesses around here to see much of anything. The planetarium in Baton Rouge is supposed to re-open in the next year or two; so maybe I can get my star fix there if not in reality.

Comments/Steve Hughes: Another one that I barely saw at DSC.

Your bookcases and printer table are envy inspiring. I could buy a few at least decent bookcases of my own, but that would involve getting rid of some of the unused stuff in the house. I keep telling myself I'll get organized one of these days.

Ct Rich Dengrove on grieving: I don't think Catholics are necessarily more restrained in that department; it may be a cultural difference rather than a religious one. Years ago, after my sister died, in the interval between her death and the funeral, my brother-in-law commented on how "stoic" we were in contrast to his French Catholic family who would have been weeping and wailing. Grief is what one feels because of a loss, you can grieve because you will miss the person; not for their situation, but for yours.

Ct Rich Lynch on irradiating mail: I hadn't realized that it could change the composition of the paper. That's not good! I can see where some collector who's just shelled out a lot of money for a book printed on archival quality paper would not be happy to have the paper quality change. The worst part of it is, they might not realize it until some time had passed.

Ct me on seeing LOTR: Oh, I would have loved to have seen it at an IMAX theater, I was thinking as I watched the IMAX film in Huntsville how I'd like to see a really good movie in that format. It was gorgeous on the normal big screen as it was. The Scouring of the Shire is a bit of an anti-climax, to be sure; but I'm glad it was in the book, at least. It showed how things may go "back to normal" after world-shaking events; but things (and some people) will never be the same.

All the Stars in the Sky/Jeff Copeland: At first glance I noticed only Stonehenge on your cover and not the nice conjunction of planets. I immediately thought of how much I want to see Stonehenge in reality after seeing so many picture of it over the years. I realize that it's not as accessible as it used to be; still it's a must for whenever I finally do get over there.

I'm not sure I would like the idea of subscription based TV series. I'd be willing to fork over the money for "Farscape" or "West Wing" for instance, but I wouldn't want to pay for a full season of a show I might watch only once or twice. Plus, how do I know if I like a show until I've seen it a few times?

Ct Guy on the right fate for bin Laden to apologize to the next of kin of the dead: It might make us feel better, but it wouldn't change his mind or make him sorry for what he did. Without knowing his mind; I'd guess that to him individuals don't really count as people; that they're just components in the machinations. If two people on his side get killed, well, that just creates a justification for killing twenty on the other side. What he needs is a shot of compassion for all of humanity.

The Sphere/Don Markstein: Oh yeah, rabbit's good. In the past, I've even eaten rabbit that someone shot. Interesting eating, having to pick the buckshot out of your meal. Or was that squirrel?

Avatar Press/Randy Cleary: I caught a glimpse or two of you at DSC; but you were usually busy working. I enjoyed the story by your friend. Is she going to write any more in that setting? She did a good job of giving a glimpse of a very different Chattanooga; I'd like to read more.

Yngvi.../Toni Weisskopf Reinhardt: Belated good wishes to you and Hank. You both looked so happy in the various pictures people ran; I hope the joy continues for many years.

The Terry Jeeves piece was a gas. I read a grand total of two Doc Savage novels years ago; and I have the feeling I could pretty well predict how any others would read.

I like your thoughts on despair in *Lord of the Rings*. There's a bit of that in the movie as well; as Aragorn has to fight against his fear that he won't be the type of man that is needed to fight against Sauron. There's a scene in Rivendell with Elrond and Gandalf talking about who will save Middle Earth. Gandalf mentions Aragorn; Elrond says something like, "He has chosen exile." In other words, he's given up. Happily for all, he does get motivated and some live happily ever after.

A Handwritten Page/mike weber: I can sympathize with the computer/printer troubles. For all that they are marvelous instruments, they can be a major pain!

And to all: I hope to get this printed up one way or another and off in the mail before I go off to Canada. I also hope to show up again in this mailing. So, see you shortly?