

SERCON-NAVIGATION

(Letters of Comment)

by Tom Springer

I'm going to give you fair warning here, so I don't want to hear any crap later on. Now, I've yet to see any LoCs for any of the Wild Heirs, so I've decided to fill a void that's been calling to me these last two issues. Whether or not the twenty-one editors of Wild Heirs feel that these comments should be included in this monthly issue is up to them, but I can't help feeling that some of these contributing editors would like to hear what a few of our readers have to say. Okay, one of our readers, who sometimes happens to be a contributing editor. But these comments should be looked upon as constructive criticism and helpful analysis, and be recognized as written evidence of the appreciation I have for my fellow editors.

I know that those contributing to this ish could have chosen to write on the topic, Sleaze and Trash, and one knows that you'll rarely find that sort of thing in a regular LoC, but that's not what I'm selling here. No, these LoCs to the editors are special, not only in their content but as a piece of work in its entirety. These are not merely LoCs, they're essays into the human condition, commentary on society, and brief but certain glimpses into our future. In some cases, these LoCs are really contributions unto themselves.

So perhaps our editors will allow a deviant moment from this Ross-inspired LoC'er, perhaps they'll follow not only their instinct, but also their good taste when it comes to making this decision. So, if you've read this far, read on, and see what I have to say about Wild Heirs #4.

PowWow #17, Joyce Katz

Hmm. Are you sure they smiled and waved you ahead? I mean, actually smiled? Were you, possibly, misinterpreting? Maybe you accidentally blundered into some Resnikian alternate Vegas universe where the drivers weren't the Mad Max imitators I've battled to these past five years. However, your experience with the unsympathetic tractor-pulled triple vans (the beginning of railless trains?) that thunder down our freeways sounds more like the Vegas traffic I know and hate.

I've always been partial to Jamie's, a breakfast/lunch place which makes its own bagels fresh daily. They also make an exceptional omelette.

Implosion #17, Arnie Katz

I don't know what to say.

Except, I like it.

Though it does bring something to mind that I saw about a month ago. I was leaning back on the couch, a smoke in one hand and a Coke in the other (no Ted White Pepsi flunkie here), surfing through Prime Cable's varied collection of infomercials around 1:00am, when my eye catches two large sweaty men punching each other (not something I keep my eye open for, but it's still a spectacle that catches mine). Naturally I stopped

my flicking, took a puff, and watched them battle for the full three rounds; Joe the Ladykiller Dubrowski vs. Mike the Cruncher something. I had stumbled upon the Northwestern Regional Toughman Competition Finals.

Sadly, they had Mr. T as the out of ring referee and look alike good guy, who though still looks essentially the same after all these years, *still* looks essentially the same. You can imagine my excitement.

Still, these guys were tough, some even spastically violent, so I twisted another one and settled down for the duration. The three-round bouts went quickly; the bell rang, and both men leapt from their respective corners, and began flailing away at each other, basically beating the crap out of one another. The dominant fighters were either large and fast, or serious healthy amateur boxers (one of which won the whole thing).

Like I said, spastically violent. One fighter, (with a nickname like the Punisher, or Pounder) actually went berserk, head-butted his opponent (twice in quick succession) to the mat, then in a spit-flinging fury, while he fought off the referee and the token cornermen, he proceeded to try to kick his opponent to death.

The third to last bout of the night was the best. Jim the Axe something (a tall rangy man) versus a short block of a man who went by the monicker, Stump. "And the Stump wobbles from another chopping blow by the Axe!...He's just cutting him down Charlie, just cutting him down...And the Stump lands another blow!...This stumpy little man from Seattle has just come alive in this last round!...And down he goes Charlie! I think the Axe is broken!" This was actually frantically written down verbatim during the fight. And these are the ones I thought I could get away with.

Roll of the Dice #6, Peggy Burke

I'm afraid you'll never see your hometown again; it's been over-run, knocked down, and built over. I think it was a better town twenty years ago too, but ya gotta admit, it's a sight!

I'm sure you'll love to hear that my father is responsible (in a small way) for the large majority of the now-established master planned communities. He sold all of the land to the separate developers who took part in the development of Green Valley. He's also responsible for the Lakes, and I also think Spanish Trails. He also created a neighborhood in Boulder City. You know what they say, "You can't go back."

Dither, Ross Chamberlain

You again inspire me to try the traditional Apa mailing comments, though at times it's hard for me to comment on everyone's work. Sometimes I find myself reaching a little too far, and I can only wonder how noticeable it is. Sometime it's small talk and sometimes it's not, but I more often click on something than not. But hey, what's wrong with small talk?

I can't say I've yet had the misfortune to be sucked into (I'm a heavy guy) the World's Biggest Tourist Shop, though I've visited the little Irish Pub next door. They didn't have Guinness on tap, so I think they're only Irish in name. Where have I heard that before?

I've really never had problems getting work before I began selling, but then I wasn't really looking for a career type job. I just wanted a "job" job. So, I can't say that I really know what it's like out there, but from what I've heard from friends and the many people I've talked to for the year and a half I lived at the British Bull Dog, there's definitely a "who you know" factor that tremendously helps in finding work.

It must be "**Untitled #4**", **Ben Wilson and Cathi Copeland**. (Stop playing with your fonts and think up a title.)

Cathi,

I don't think the attitude is socialize or die of loneliness; it's more like socialize or die. People may seem more socially curious, but I think it's only a survival instinct, a sophisticated herd mentality thing. If you're part of the crowd you won't be noticeable. You won't appear weak and be singled out by the predators. You won't be a victim.

That's why there are so many clubs in this town, from the Elks to Snaffu to crochet, AA, GA, bridge, Toastmasters, why, a veritable smorgasbord of social herds to hide in. Of course, when you stalk the streets with the powerful amble of a sercon fan, no one'll mess with you, 'cause you're better than them and they know it!

And, I've been meaning to talk to you about this Ben Wilson guy. I mean, are you sure about this? He's not really who you think he is. First of all, he may have told you he's from the Midwest somewhere, Detroit, something like that. Don't listen to him! He's really from Salt Lake City, Utah. Now it's true, he drinks caffeine, smokes, and has sex on Sundays, but it's all just a facade! He gets phone calls, right? Bet he says they're from his friends, family, work, stuff like that, huh? Nope. Those are his other wives calling. He's got two of them, besides you. One in Salt Lake and another here in town. It's true! If you don't believe me, ask Ben. He'll own up to it.

I bet he goes to work eight hours a day, at least he's gone that long, right? And sure, maybe he'll talk with you about it, and get a paycheck, but he doesn't work eight hours a day. He only works four, and sees Shelly, his wife here in town, after he gets off his regular four hour shift. You see, he's really Mormon. Now, I'd understand if you decide to reconsider, and I'll be there for you if you do, backing your decision all the way, so you just let me know when you wanna dump this guy and Ken and I'll be there for you. And if it's real sudden like, you know, abrupt, and I can't make it, just call Ken, he'll be there. Don't be afraid, he knows about Ben too, just ask him, he'll tell you. So, if you do decide to break up, we'll be there for you, Ken and I.

Maybe you better think about this wedding thing. Come on, he's not good enough for you! You don't need someone who loves you. You don't want someone who cares for you, worries about you, needs you, stupid stuff like that. You need a man who's less responsible. Someone with an interest in assault rifles and leather buckles. Admit it, you need a man who's riding a wave of insanity, who exudes the musky scent of danger (and suicide), you need a man who uses you, cheats on you, sketches clock towers, and ties you to the coffee table for hours at a time. You don't want a Mormon! Some happy, loving, responsible, sensible, amusing, caring goof who calls himself Ben Wilson. No, you want the kinda guy who picks up large male hitchhikers to make friends with and who invites

them over for a night or two, until they can find a ride out of town. You want a man like that. Well, dontchya?

Ben,

Hey, I didn't know you were a member! I'm gonna need to see your membership card and hear the password for today. Hold on a minute though, I do have to agree with you that Vegas looks and feels like a big city, and that perhaps it is. I think the reason it feels that way is because mile-wise, well, were only talking eighteen square miles here. Sure, that may seem like a lot from someone back east who's lived with the "build up" necessity all their lives. Out here we've got plenty of room to build wherever, however, and as much as we want. We "build out" here in the western states. And that's the same mentality used during a large period of growth (a twenty or thirty year spurt).in which Vegas was built out.

I'm sure that originally they never thought that the city would reach the feet of the mountain ranges to both the east and the west, that make up the valley in which Las Vegas is located. And now that those geographical obstacles have stalled that build out mentality, we're just beginning to stuff these migrating peoples, these pilgrims, into a town that really isn't big enough for everyone. Hence all the problems you listed.

We'll get to that membership stuff in a minute, first there's something I want to talk to you about. Now, are you ready for this marriage thing? I know, you've already told her you love her, but we both know you really didn't mean it. We're talking about the rest of your life here, are you sure you want to spend it with her? Sure, she's smart, attractive, witty, controls your life, and you've told her you love her, but there's still time for second thoughts. I mean, you can always keep this one on the stringer if you can't find something better, but shouldn't you at least give it a try? I mean for Christ Sakes, you're a man after all, don't you think it's time you started acting like one?!

What about that Lori chick we met Tuesday night over at the Crazy Horse? She seemed to like you. Sure, maybe it had something to do with the way you held your money, but you don't know that for sure! I mean, didn't she say you should come back sometime? Well did she? Of course she did. Now, doesn't that mean she'd like to see you again? Well, there you go, one instant date! It's only a start, but we can go somewhere different next Tuesday, you know, downtown, somewhere like that bar last month, only without the urine smell.

I know, I'm really pushing you at this Lori chick, but I'm worried about you. I don't think Cathi's right for you. I know she means well, but I just don't think that she's your type. I mean, don't you like taller women, with those severe crew cut hairdos and the masculine faces. You know, those chicks who are stronger than you, and dominate you, and make you do those things you love being made to do. Like last week with that truckdriver who picked us up when we ran out of gas, I saw how she looked at you. Steely eyed and hard, and who cares if she had a mustache, it wasn't that thick, besides, you're the one who tried on the cuffs hanging from the CB hook. Don't worry though, I won't tell anyone about what you did in the sleeping compartment if you promise to think this marriage thing over. Whatyathink? We got a deal? Promise? Good.

APA-tizer #12, Ken Foreman

Baby, you're right on! Every time I read this I want to go flying. Hey, what are you doing Sunday? Wham! Wham!

John re #11, John Hardin

I wonder if your life would have come out any different if, on your way up the Strip to Caesar's, while listening to "Private Idaho" by the B-52's on your walkman, three large men attacked you, robbed you, mortally beat you, left you for dead, then...

A couple hours later (not dying but wishing you were) with several broken bones and something burst inside you that hurts so much it keeps you from being able to move, that's when two homeless men find you and drag you off the side of the road into some weeds where no one can see you. They wrestle you out of your clothes, even your underwear, because it's cold out and they need everything they can get. As you lie there, face down in the dirt, unable to fight them off, too paralyzed with pain to do anything but lay limp and moan, you realize you're coming down from those two spirals you did a few hours ago. Of course, the three big guys took your drugs, but you're coming down real hard, and that's all you can think about.

An hour later, you're still lying face down in the weeds just off the road, and you really think you're going to die, 'cause not only are you coming down badly, something feels broken inside, and it hurts so much when you move that you lie face down in the littered dirt, naked, robbed, beaten, and ignored, thinking that you're dying. And, while you're lying there, dying, a rotweiler comes upon you. It scoots up to sniff your head, then your ass. It licks you on the butt a couple times. You lie there and think you're dying, and, "*what the fuck is that?* Christ! Get off! Christ! Get off! Ow! Aah, huh, huh, huh, huh!" That's when it comes to you. You're lying there off the side of the road in the weeds naked, beaten, robbed, ignored, left for dead, coming down real hard, and you're being fucked up the ass, raped, by this lucky rotweiler. You wish you were dead, but you're not.

The nice doggy sticks around a few more hours while you lie there face down in the weeds off the side of the road, naked, beaten, robbed and left for dead, coming down real hard while this fucking dog frantically dicks you up the ass every fifteen or twenty minutes for a few hours. You're found in the early morning hours, off the side of the road, in the weeds, unconscious, naked, beaten, robbed, raped, and left for dead.

You survive.

Three months later you show no physical signs of what happened, but you remember.

So now, I wonder... Would your life have turned out any different?

rambles vol.2 issue 2, Belle Augusta

The old man and his donkey should have gone to Boulder City; it's much nicer there.