

# SWINGLINE

SWINGLINE #13, by Joyce Katz, 59 Livingston St., Apt. 6-B, Brooklyn, NY 11201, is done for the 14th mailing of APA, due on April 8, 1973. And, you couldn't possibly believe just how eleventh this eleventh-hour contribution really is.

I've gone through a lot of negative attitudes in the past month, which is the reason that I waited so long to begin work on this mailing...periodically, things happen that cause me to re-evaluate the wisdom of continued fanac on my part, and things conspired to introduce the most unfavorable attitudes yet, in the past month. But, somehow, as usual, I've landed on my fannish feet, determined to continue on just a little longer.... take that "little longer" with the grain of salt it deserves; chances are I'm here for the duration. But, now and then I have my moments of wondering if that's a good thing, and I suppose that adequately describes my train of thought toward the matter. Dammit to hell..as we've discussed, I know that fans aren't slans. But sometimes some of them will make you think they're not even average guys. And, I'm still susceptible to getting pretty upset about that.

Ah, ....sweet Apa. Jewel on the bosom of a sometimes spiteful fandom; I love you. Definitely more than enough to do some scattered comments.

DA Again, welcome to our ballpark, and it was nice to see you do such a good first contribution. -- Speaking of the brick shithouses on UFO: as I guess I've made overly obvious, I'm a really devoted UFO fan. Arnie and I missed the first two or three episodes, then started watching it regularly, and (for my part at least) it's grown to be a real favorite hour of the week. However, we've frequently encountered people who gave us very strange looks when we said we liked it; people who said they had watched the first episode and found it so distasteful they just couldn't imagine it getting enough better to even tolerate. It was hard to reconcile such extremely negative remarks, from people whom, in many instances, we would normally agree with in taste. Finally found out why: The show is on repeats now, and three weeks ago they repeated an episode that we had never seen before, which from its context, Arnie, Charlene and Bill all felt must have been the first in the series. What an incredible disaster it was! I was actually embarrassed by its badness. It was very continental in style, filled with innuendo, sexual overtones, background music precisely like you'd find in a 16 mm San Francisco film. Those brick shithouses you mention on the moon, Dan, were in at least one section, doing strip-tease dances on camera. And, if that sounds weird, you should have seen it....it really made for a strange science fiction experience. Absolutely Astounding the changes that show went through between the first (if that was the first) episode and later ones.

By the way, now that I think of it, I find the phrase "brick shithouse" to be highly offensive. Ye ghods, I wonder how it ever came to denote praise?! -- I had thought it was only a Midwesternism, but your use of it tells me that it must be more widespread than that. Too bad.

FRANK Are Krispee Kreem donuts any relation to Dixie Cream donuts? That's what we had in Poplar Bluff, and my my they were fine... -- Speaking of the general subject of food, I suppose everyone kept the meat boycott more-or-less faithfully. (Not that anyone seems to have any real faith that it will help any, but what-the-hell, you've got to do something...) Have you read any of the articles about the soybean meat that's in our future? I read (in the Wall Street Journal, no less) that quite a few supermarkets around the country (including one right here in Brooklyn Heights) are selling a mixture that is 75% ground beef and 25% soybeans. And they say that it tastes Just Right. (Haven't tried it myself...even though it's available here in the Heights, I have never been in the store

that's offering it...though have every intention of making a trip there soon.) The mixture sells for roughly 25-30¢ less than a pound of ground beef. --- The article went on to say that Some Company (named..but I've forgotten who it was..) has just announced that they can now duplicate the taste, texture, appearance, etc., of beef, using nothing but soybeans. I'm anxious to get the opinion of someone who's more of a food purist than I. Personally, I'm anxious to try both the meat-bean mixture, and the artificial meat. Not too surprising in someone from S.E.Mo., I have a deep-seated belief in the Goodness of soybeans, and I actually expect the meat-mixture to be a very good thing. In the case of the artificial meat, I'm more sceptical; I do expect soybeans to sooner-or-later conquer the problems involved with a meat substitute, but I'll have to taste it before I'll believe that it's already happened. I hope it has....to me, artificial meat (if it was actually a true substitute, and not just a make-do) would be a wonderful answer to some of the problems facing the future of a meat-eating populace. And, not incidentally, would also get rid of what I consider to be the only valid objection to meat that a vegetarian offers: no one is really happy about killing animals, I guess. Robin, if you're out there somewhere, I'd especially like your opinion about soybeans; are you for them; are they acceptable to you? Or do you consider them harmful?

I suspect that you're right, that Arnie feels slightly insecure around someone who's being very quiet...or, rather, this is particularly true when he's in position of host, and trying to make the evening into a pleasurable experience for his guests. However, once he has realized that the person is being quiet by preference, and not just because of lack of anyone to talk to, it doesn't seem to worry him...as Ross could certainly testify. (When I first started being around Ross on a regular basis, it used to worry me quite a bit that he was so quiet. Now I just accept it as part of his personality.) I'm sure that neither one of us took your unresponsiveness to be any sort of Comment; no apology was necessary.

BRUCE Wow, I'm sorry to hear that you might be allergic to cats. That's bad news. Yes-- it is possible to suddenly develop an allergy that you never had before; people do it all the time. Sometimes, under really bad circumstances, a person can even develop an allergy toward himself....and that do make it hard.

I'm with you, in wanting to be Told, when there's been a death, or going to be one. Each time there's been something Really Bad to be told me ("the child can't live..even if it did you could never take it home;" "she died this morning" "no more children..ever") the doctors were always very afraid...and it was so obvious from the looks on the faces of the people who were trying to keep it from me. Each time, some member of my family would finally very kindly, very straightforwardly tell me what I had to know, just as you told your father. And, for me at least, the Knowing is easier than the Fearing To Know. But, of course, I suppose there are people for whom it would be the right decision to keep the truth away from them...for some people the shock of knowledge is harder than the worry of not knowing.

Aren't you about due to come visit us, Bruce? -- Soon, I hope. And, of course, I suppose you're planning to be at Lunacon, aren't you? -- Come to visit some Saturday, and let's Bake Bread together. I'm really good at soft, fluffy southern-style white bread, and would like to be taught how to bake rye bread. Trade recipes?

ROSS For completely selfish reasons I'm glad to see your world drifting gradually back to a more normal state. I really miss those long meaty contributions you used to write, and hope you'll be able to get back to them soon. ## I suppose that I'm a relatively liberated woman, in the low-price field; the job I do is as often filled by a man as a woman; Arnie and I split up the housework according to each of our best abilities;

I certainly am not forced to lay aside my thoughts and ideals for those of someone else. But, I'm afraid that I really can't get very worked up against the male chauvinism of chivalry, as you so artfully phrased it. I enjoy having someone open doors for me, lift weights, lighten burdens, etc. And, I don't feel these actions on the part of a man make small of me, or take away from my individuality. Just small courtesies, is my view of it. And, I confess, perhaps it's partially my laziness that makes me enjoy these small courtesies so much. I don't think I've ever felt anything but extreme gratitude on those very rare occasions when a man has offered me a seat on a subway...and perhaps a trifling little bit of pity that he felt obliged to do so.

When I was in highschool, I was a tremendous flirt. (Of course, I have long since outgrown any such tendencies. Yes.) However, for the early years of the High School Experience, I was, not unlike most fans, a Pariah, probably primarily because of my intense shyness in face-to-face relationships. Back in those dark days, I didn't know about fandom...when I think of what difference to my life an introduction to fandom would have made, I want to cry...but I did have the habit of pen pals. Remember pen pals, gang? I had pen pals out of American Girl Magazine, and pen pals that were friends of friends: just names & addresses handed to me on grimy little slips of paper. I was also given to striking up conversations with strange young men on railroad trains, exchanging addresses, and then carrying on lengthy correspondence. Some of these correspondences...though really extremely innocent, even by the standards of that day, were very heavy stuff for an over-sheltered teenager like me and were the stuff of many love-sick heart stirrings. I had at least one rather lengthy correspondence with a guy I had never met...a Hawaiiin who was in the army, in Korea. An entire romance was born, lived...even progressed to a sort of engagement...and ultimately died, on paper. Perhaps that was my very first proposal...and god forgive me, I've forgotten his name; I had forgotten his existence till you mentioned your own romantic correspondences. -- Tell me, Ross: did we ever correspond? (I jest, of course.) Another correspondence progressed torridly until the guy came home on leave; (yes, I was given to correspondences with servicemen;) then a couple of real face-to-face dates convinced us both that we were destined to be good friends, and lucky to have realized that was all we could be to each other. -- Being of a railroad family, I traveled a lot on trains, and a number of my cross-country friendships resulted from rather casual meetings and address exchanges. But, even a casual meeting could, to a romantic, paper-expression-oriented teenager, develop into quite an exciting subject for dreams when followed by a half-dozen or so letters. Like you, Ross, I would definitely have to count in a few of these correspondents, if I were compiling a list of my romantic encounters. In at least one or two instances, I was very intensely emotionally involved, and the course of the correspondence had great bearing on my real-life. -- I sometimes think that a paper romance is, in some ways, more dangerous than a real one. A paper lover can never fail you; so much is left to the imagination; the other person, and this especially is true when you've never met, is just a skeleton to which your mind adds the design of flesh. You can imagine a paper lover to be perfect...and never be bothered by his (or your own) failures to live up to the perfection you've endowed his skeleton with in your mind. -- I have a niece who married one of these paper lovers. Linda must be a trifle like me, for she had only briefly met the boy and exchanged addresses before he was shipped away...based in Alaska, I think. She and Bill had an intense correspondence; it culminated in him taking leave and coming to her home and marrying her after less than a week. They honestly felt they knew each other quite well, because of all the letters they had exchanged. -- I've heard of such things ending very happily, but in Linda and Bill's case, it was a disaster. I often wonder what similarities they had discussed in their letters. In reality, I've never met two people more unsuited for one another. -- I don't think I've ever had your experience of being blind to the fact that some one was interested in me. As romantically, imaginatively inclined as I was, I had rather more difficulty keeping it in my head that the persons I adored didn't necessarily feel the same toward me. -- God, what a relief it is to be adult, and that behind me.

JOY How interestingly you write! And, how wonderful that you felt free enough to open up and discuss your life -- I'm glad you felt comfortable in doing so. ## I very much disagree with some of the things you said, of course...specifically, and for example, your feeling that the desire to touch/be touched is a juvenile desire, which a truly mature person will grow out of. I dunno, Joy...I don't think I can go with that one. I think the desire for Stroking, both verbal and in physical touching, is an extremely normal one that seems to be shared by most mammals...perhaps even by most animal life, mammal or reptilian. ---However, I've known people with precisely your feeling toward the matter; persons who were intelligent and expressive, but who felt that love was best expressed in other ways than physically. I admit to some rather wonderful relationships on that basis, in fact... but, even then, I often felt that perhaps the wonderfulness of the relationship would be increased if the person didn't feel that every touch was a draining of his life-forces.

I guess it's nearly universal, that people fear that being Open will cause them to be Hurt. The damnable thing about that fear, is that it does seem to be true. If you are Open, you are quite likely to be Hurt. Sooner or later it's inevitable. -- But, well...if you're not Open, you may never be Hurt (.I'm not really positive that part of it is true, but I guess I'll concede that Hurt might come less often to a closed-up person) but on the other hand, look at all the pleasures a close-up person misses. Over and over I've damned myself for having left myself open...and over and over I've done the same again. I guess, for me, I've fairly fixed on the notion of trying to be open-hearted, for the joy of the pleasures, even while realizing that now and then I'll get a kick in the heart muscles that will make it all seem in vain. I don't think there's a Right or a Wrong decision in this matter, by the by. I used to think that mine was definitely the Right attitude. But, after the last few kicks, I came to the conclusion that it's a very individual thing, and god bless any one who makes any decision at all... I wish them luck.

I know you're primarily a Talker, Joy, and not a Writer. I wonder if we're going to change you into a paper tiger like the rest of us. If not, we'll have to find more opportunities to Talk...

Terry Now that you're living the life of a southern gentleman in Virginia, when're you coming to the city? Come up and look at all the tall buildings and bright lights, and walk on our hart concrete. Somehow, I'm pretty sure you won't like it (--I suspect you've already pre-convincd yourself of that fact, for one thing--) but it would be a new thing. Besides, it would be nice to see you for a weekend.... Well, at the least, I guess we'll see you up here for Lunacon. Oh, oh. I see that you, in your paragraph to Robin, were very expressive on the subject of Stroking, and said most of the things that I was trying to express to Joy. True..very true.

TED I see you and I are having a semantic problem on the subject of "emotional involvement"...and feeling self-abasing tonight, I think I'll admit that your usage is much more proper than mine. Let's see if I can explain: when I speak about Emotional Involvement, I'm talking about the thing that makes you give up kith and kin and say "this is the one" and makes you follow a person to the ends of the world. Emotional Involvement to me isn't the tail that wags the dog...it's the whole damn animal. Your descriptions made me understand that we were simply talking at cross purposes; obviously, you're right and my definitions are probably acceptable enough for the thing I was talking about, but don't cover the little e little i that make up our more frequent contacts with other humans. And, you're certainly correct that total absence of emotional involvement is probably impossible in sexual encounters...and definitely undesirable. I think, in fantasy-based theory, that an unemotional orgy like the one you described might be theoretically amusing; in actuality, I don't think I could get my mind up for it, either. --Yeah, fantasy and reality are different. -- But, of course, that isn't what I was talking about when I made

my poorly defined testimony in favor of lack of emotionalism. I was talking strictly about the lack of any urges to make permanent changes in life style; a mutual recognition that the actions were based on attraction, flirtation, perhaps even admiration...maybe even friendship and the love that passes between friends...but not, god help us, on Love. I can see encounters based on nothing more than casual meeting and casual attraction, that have no ultimate destination beyond the moment. To me, that's unemotional. -- Does that explain my position a little better? -- On one level, I consider the "extended family" relationship one of the most pleasant that can come to pass; on another, I consider it very faulty because of the dangers it presents on the emotional basis. This is the basis (or at least part of the basis) of my statements that I think lack of emotional involvement could frequently be much better. I dunno, Ted...I guess I'm actually fairly flexible in my opinions on a lot of these things, and for the most part have more questions than answers. But, I seem fairly firmly fixed on the notion that "love affairs" are more risky than worthy, and despite our semantic quibblings, note that we seem to have fairly similar attitudes on this subject. -- You know, it's really strange, Ted, but I have this idea that a true Communal Family Living Arrangement is probably the best and most healthy setup that there can be. (Note the word probably in there; I think this is true, but damned if I know for sure.) Certainly there's a wealth of comfort, understanding and pleasure that can come about because of a true group marriage. And, I truly believe that group marriages may be a really viable part of the future. But, unfortunately, I don't think I'm ready for that...I don't think most of us are. Our social conditioning makes it darned near impossible to get over the hills that would have to be climbed first. -- Multiple wives aren't very far in my background; yet, my social conditioning would make it practically impossible to control the jealousy brought about by such an arrangement. In theory, fine. In reality, I don't think I could cut it. Also, I keep thinking...it's so hard to find even two people who can actually live together happily: the divorce rate proves that. Every introduction of a new person would increase the odds against compatibility to astronomical proportions. The closest living arrangement I've ever had with another couple was when they had the upstairs apartment, and we had the downstairs...and even though we were together constantly, we did live separately. And, even so, there was great friction. (That, by the by, was when Diane and Ben were still married...two persons I've mentioned to you many times. Later on, of course, Diane and Ben weren't married any more, and then pretty soon, Ben and I were the only couple left out of the four original friends. And this wasn't even from a communal arrangement, but just from close friends who lived in the same house.) I've had better luck living as half of a couple, with a third person living with us; somehow that arrangement was less threatening to everyone, probably because the property lines were so very clearly drawn.

As someone who's frequently used you and Robin as mentors, as to what would and wouldn't be a good idea, I'm kinda relieved to learn your attitudes toward privacy haven't changed all that much.

True to what has become almost a tradition in my apa mailing comments, I'm out of time, and out of stencil, and out of steam, and the last person in the mailing is getting nothing from me. Don't you just know it, this time it's Grant...and I do hope you won't make more out of the fact that it's worth, Grant: last month it was both Ross & Neal. See? There's not even an inkling of a plot against you...

Till next time.

Oh! Oh! Almost forgot! Arnie and I want to have some kind of party at Lunacon (barring the income tax thing coming out even worse than we expect)...and ye are all hereby invited. Probably Saturday night...see you then. (Bruce, in case you don't know: April 20-21-22).