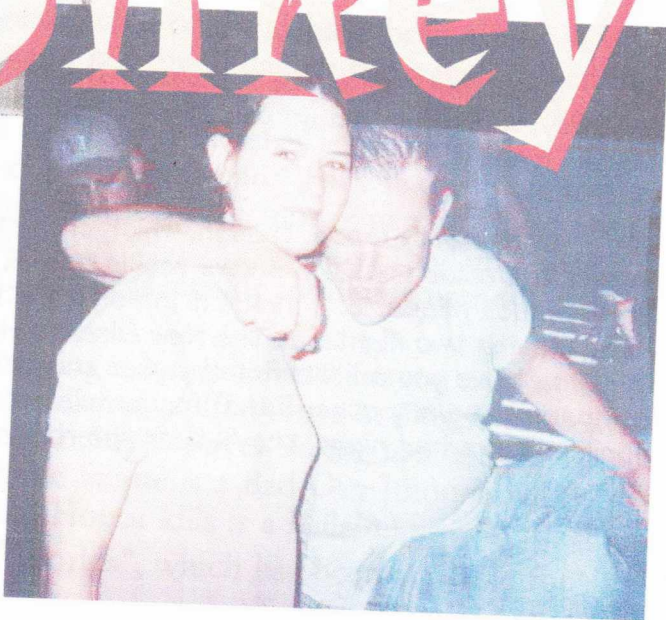


Me and

My

Monkey



Greetings, and welcome to

Everybody's Got Something to Hide

the latest SFPazine from

mike weber.

Mail still goes to

3651-E Peachtree Place, #373,
Suwanee GA 30024

though that may soon change.

Phone is 706 - 265 - 7610.

I'm trying out a new version of my favourite
cheap but versatile DTP package.



We used to sit back and write long, self-serving pieces about how hard it was to write anything for SFPA and wat a horrible case of writers's block we had and so on...

And by the time we had whined for a while, a significant part of our SFPA minac was done.

And i used to ramble on for pages about the cons i'd been to.

RiverCon was the last con i went to, and i really didn't have anything to say about it six months ago, and even less now.

Or i could rave about a Kinks or Dash Rip Rock show... but they ain't been by lately, though we did go to a Pretty Good Cowboy Mouth show right after Mardi Gras.

Only Pretty Good, though, which prompted Kate, Helen, Betsy, Jamie and myself to decide that CM shows within a week or two after Mardi Gras were pretty much missable. I mean, it doesn't matter how much damned energy you have, playing two nights at the New Orleans House of Blues for Mardi Gras itself is gonna leave you a little flat (by your own standards, not necessarily by comparison to any other band) for a while afterward; Michael Lach's dictum applies: "On a bad night, they'll tear the roof off. On a good night, they'll save your soul."

While the roof at Centre Stage was at least temporarily disincorporated, I'm afraid few souls were saved that night.

* * * * *

Changer of Worlds

-- 3 stories by David Weber/1 by Eric Flint

(Four star review on Amazon)

First, while I think the cover's better than the one on "Worlds of Honor", it's still not right -- those legs belong on a tree-antelope, not a tree-cat.

"But what's *in* it?", right?

This is another anthology, featuring three stories by Dave and one by Eric Flint.

The first story is "Ms. Midshipwoman Harrington". ((For a couple of reasons- ease of speaking being a major one, tradition another -- I think I'd have said "mishdhipman", but it's Dave's call -- his world, his ranks.))

The story of Honor's "Snotty" cruise, it fills in the background on remarks she makes during "Among Enemies" about having been on pirate-chasing missions in Silesia.

As usual, with Honor onboard, what ought to have been a relatively routine cruise with a bit of action and not much danger turns into something else. ((I mean, finding out you'll be serving with Honor Harrington is like being a cop in a small town finding out that Jessica Fletcher is going to be visiting...)) And Ms. Midshipwoman Harrington finds that she must rise to the occasion when disaster strikes. This story is a little more open and clear about the political maneuvering between the "working" Navy and the "time serving" Navy (my terms) in which Honor's career is already inevitably enmeshed, long before he knows it or of it.

Also it has a Villain. I'll be writing a longer review for my new website, wherein I'll go into my thoughts on Villains vs. Bad Guys in Dave's stories. (By my reckoning, Rob Pierre is a Bad Guy -- Pavel Young is a Villain. Wosname who was behind the Dome failure is a Bad Guy [though with villainous tendencies]-- his dupe who Honor kills is a Villain.)

Second story is "Changer of Worlds", which has been available for

more than a year on my family website by David's kind permission; it's the story of Laughs Brightly, bondmated to Cloud Dancer, who returns to his clan bringing Golden Voice, his new mate.

We know these people a bit better under other names, suffice to say. (Hint-- one of them is also known as "Nimitz")

(Skipping the Eric Flint story for right now, we get to Dave's third, "Nightfall".)

"Nightfall" is one of those stories that eventually has to be told in some form, if only as footnotes in some other work, i guess, but which i'd as soon not read. Despite the fact that there's a rather nasty little slice of spacewar let loose planetside in a major city, it's pretty much a static story of coup and countercoup and political maneuver.

We already know the fates, if not descriptions of the actual events, of a number of characters from other sources. "Nightfall" is the actual events. I found it uninvolving and unneeded. (Which is not to say that others won't enjoy it or be glad to see it.)

Involving conflicting and complex loyalties personal, patriotic and political, it revolves around the kidnapping of a fourteen-year-old girl whose father, a Gryphon Highlander, is an Intelligence Analyst attached to Manticore's Embassy in the Solarian League's capital city, Chicago.

Not just any fourteen-year-old girl; we've seen her before, when she was four or so, asking her weeping father if Mama had made them all safe from the bad Peeps. And she is everything her mother's daughter should be -- she's already working on escape from her kidnapers when first we meet her.

Before the story is over, we will be involved with Helen's father, with her martial arts instructor, with Havenite and Manticoran Ambassadors and their respective Security Chiefs, a young Peep SS Intelligence Field Officer who faces a personal crisis of identity (he actually believes in the ideals of the Revolution), a dissipated Peep Marine Colonel who is rather more, various genetically-engineered "super-soldiers" and revolutionary former slaves and an expatriate, far-leftist Manticoran noblewoman, one of only three people ever kicked out of the House of Lords by vote of their peers.

Stir thoroughly, apply igniter and stand well back till the flames die down.

Serve hot.

I give the book three stars overall; just the first three stories would have gotten four, just the Weber stories alone about three stars.

Good solid reading till the next novel, but it goes by awfully dismayingly and disappointingly quickly, which is one of the problems of a fast pace.

HERE BEGINNETH

SOBE

MAILING COMMENTS

FANTASY AND REALITY//JEFF COPELAND//I was quite disappointed with Shattered; while it was more coherent than Second Wind, it wasn't even so much so as 10 Pound Penalty. the last really good Francis, in my opinion. It just didn't seem to connect from one sequence to another logically.

Of the movies you speak of, i haven't seen any. I think that the last film i went to see in a theatre was X-Men. I used to go to a lot of movies. These days, i have most afternoons free, and i could go to a lot of movies. And i don't. I hardly even rent films on video any more...*sigh*

My Dad had back problems for most of his adult life -- starting about when i was seven, which makes him just about thirty-one or so -- that kept both a neurologist and a chiropractor (or rather a series of each as he moved around) busy. Dad had been just about five-ten or so at one point, then shot up to six-six in a little over a year, then shrank back to six-four over the next year or so as his spine settled, compressing the more-or-less cartilage that had formed instead of bone as he grew so fast. Presto! Chronic back problems for the rest of his life! (As a matter of fact, for the last five or so years of his life, he walked with a slight permanent list to starboard from the waist up.)

Well, maybe Microsoft ships crappy product because people will buy it, but the "only game in town" factor may have something to do with that.

OTOH, the people who make the laboured jokes about "If Bill Gates owned a company that sold cars..." miss the fact that the computer industry -- despite its sales volume and apparent technical sophistication -- is at roughly the point the auto industry reached sometime in the 1920s or 30s, speaking in terms of maturity of product. Think about a typical auto trip of any distance outside a city in the mid-30s -- including the almost-inevitable flat tires and boilovers. Think about a Model T, with a cooling system that worked entirely on convection, and a planetary-drive transmission that you controlled by pressing and holding a pedal a specific distance for each gear...

{About the Exchange development team}"...take it as read ... that their e-mail will never be reliable. I don't know how they get anything done." Are their cubes close enough together to holler?

I saw the Groucho Mikado when it first ran. He enters with a huge

axe over his shoulder; during the "Defer to the Lord High Executioner" routine, he's moving downstage between a double row of courtiers. On the beat, the ones nearest him on one side bow to him, and he returns the bow, almost taking the heads off the ones behind him with the axe. They duck, which he sees out of the corner of his eye and interprets as a bow, so he whirls, returning their bow, and causing the next lot on the other row to duck... and so on. The production was supervised by (and the album liner notes were by) Martyn Greene, possibly the greatest of G&S baritones, who originated the business with KoKo, after literally climbing the scenery when Katisha spins round angrily at him, plaintively delivers the line "Ah, Shrink not from me!" (He ad-libbed it when he was a bit bored during a matinee and they liked it enough they kept it in, and strengthened the flat and added hidden hand and foot holds on the back.)

I'm about halfway through L.King's *Night Work* as i type. It's going to be the next-but-one review i post at <http://www.electronictiger.com>, my new review site... (The next -- which ought to go up tomorrow, is a new Baen, *Stars Over Stars*, about which i have mixed feelings...)

Your comments about kids and schools and the Bad Things that happen there lead me to wonder if you've seen this:

LINCOLN PARK, MI -- Twelve-year-old Tempest Smith sat alone in her bedroom one chilly morning late last month and gazed into the mirror. Shortly before her classes were to start at Lincoln Park Middle School, she kissed her reflection goodbye.

The lipstick smudges still adorn Tempest's mirror, sad reminders of the day the tall, troubled girl slipped a leopard-print scarf around her neck and hanged herself from her bunk bed.

Tempest's journal, discovered under her bed after her Feb. 20 suicide, offers a



glimpse into a problem family and friends didn't fully understand: the incessant teasing she faced every day about her shy demeanor, choice of clothing and religious beliefs that made each day of school -- then eventually life itself -- unbearable.

Everyone is against me. Still, death will come sooner or later for me. Will I ever have friends again?

(The full article is still available at <http://www.detroitnews.com/2001/schools/0103/07/a01-196600.htm> as of 3/26/01)

It says Tempest was "tall" -- at twelve, that alone can get a girl teased unmercifully.

At a slightly older stage -- I think she was about fifteen -- Winona Ryder was into androgynous black clothes and androgynous black hair and looking interestingly pale -- sort of her characterisation in Betelgeuse -- and a couple of seniors decided that she was a male fag and beat her up...

Hey! Wait a minute -- Battle Beyond the Stars is excellent mind-candy; a very nice reworking of "Magnificent Seven". Despite all of the fannish slurs against it, I could still draw a full-house in the video room at cons with either Battle Beyond or Galaxina, another film that gets royally trashed by fens except when it's available to watch...

Using Word2000 to write HTML is An Abomination Before Roscoe!
It does indents with **cascading style sheets?**

hexhexhex word2000stay 'way from me hexhexhex

Repeat after me:

`

 `

gives a para break and five-character indent.

"John Snider" sounds sort of familiar, but no picture arises, and I haven't the faintest idea where Marstevan Drive is.

Guy hasn't seen Allie in "six or so" years? Heh. It's been what -- fifteen? since i saw her last? That was the trip where we went to a party somewhere, and i relexively turned and scooped her out of the back of the car... you said something like "She doesn't take well to strangers..." as she settled peacefully down in my arms. Except for the ones the beard

frightens, small kids and cats react well to me, as a general thing.



TWYGGDRASIL &
TREEHOUSE
GAZETTE/R,DENGROVE

BTW: Your index lists my MC as Page 23 -- it's on 24. This seems to happen every so often, i've noticed.

If i had some ailment that required daily shots that i had to give myself, i'd just have to seriously consider dying. I once passed out from knowing that i'd had a shot that i didn't feel in the slightest.

My own feeling that Campbell might be Completely Losing His Touch as an editor came later than the early 60's, though even then i was beginning to be convinced that more and more writers were selling him stories that pushed his buttons, rather than on literary quality. And even when i suspected it might be Campbell, i was also willing to suspect that there might be an overall decline in the field as a whole.

Again, i never got the feeling that Cambell was particularly trying to get people to think in order to get them to agree with him; he was trying to get people to think so that they'd think.

Lewis Carroll wrote "The Hunting of the Snark" beginning with the last line -- "For the Snark was a Boojum, you see." -- then he wrote a stanza ending in that, then he wrote the Ninth Fit ending in that stanza ("The Hunting of the Snark", an Agony in Nine Fits"), and so on.

Mystery writers do not necessarily write the ending first -- some merely populate the book with a large number of suspects with motives and opportunities, and then decide which one dunnit. (The Futurlans used a similar technique in writing SF novels quickly).

"Craig Rice" left a half-completed novel when she died (not a John J. Malone mystery, one from the other series i never could stand to read any of) -- the setup, introduction of characters, the actual murder, and the very beginning of the investigation. But she left absolutely no clue as to who the murderer was -- the first half was practically ready to publish, the second didn't even exist in notes, much less a draft.

Her publisher went to "Ed McBain", asking him to finish it. He took on the challenge, and eventually did so, even though it meant he had to solve the mystery himself before he could write it -- the publisher wouldn't let him rewrite what there was to make the job easier, either...

"God made an idiot for practise. Then He made a School Board." Mark Twain

Speaking of Pest Control -- we saw our first scorpion of the Spring in the house the other day -- or rather, Helen and her friend Cat did, in Helen's bedroom. The scorpion's day was not improved by being spotted by two teen-aged girls.

"Books in Minutes" -- a fancy combination of multiple laser printers and automatic binding machinery -- already exists. I think it's less than ten minutes to produce a paperback essentially indistinguishable from one printed by the conventional means, and hardbacks take only a little longer. B&N and Border's are both said to be interested in the idea -- any store could "carry" books that sell only a copy or two a month but sell steadily over the years.

No, the Very First Joke was about why does a member of the municipal squadron of anti-conflagrationists wear red garters...

Actually, the increased mass (not weight) under Einsteinian conditions would be imperceptible to the person actually travelling at a reasonable fraction of light speed.

An unsigned credit card is not valid. Whether or not one can bluff a merchant into improperly accepting an unsigned one is another matter.

Travis wrote it and recorded it in 1940. In 1943, one of the more prestigious folk-music publications -- possibly Sing Out!: anyway, a publication considered a Highly Authoritative Source -- published it, listing it as "Traditional, Author Unknown".

Tom Paxton has had the dubious honor of having at least two of his original songs pass in the public consciousness into "genuine folk music" -- "Bottle of Wine" and "The Last Thing on My Mind"...

I believe the Dean Device exhibited an apparent decrease in weight when tested on a spring balance, but not when tested on a beam balance -- i.e., it played games with inertia and damping coefficients.

About Abdul Bulbul Ameer:

"This song was written in 1877 by Percy French at Trinity College for a college concert. His original title was Abdulla Bulbul Ameer. He sold it to a publisher for five pounds. It was published without credit to him and he never received royalties for its later success. Many sources still list the author as anonymous.

"According to the Book of Navy Songs, 'This song is representative of the non-nautical and non-naval songs that frequently become a favorite of the wardrooms in the fleet. An English correspondent writes that originally it was a ballad of the Russo-Turkish Wars.'

"Given the date and author, the Crimean War (1853-1856) is more likely the setting than the earlier Russo-Turkish Wars."

Percy French bio: <http://www.contemplator.com/history/pfrench.html>

Songs whose author is more or less easily determined being, nonetheless, listed as "Anon" or "Trad" is amazingly common -- the most wonderful case that I can think of was "Dark as the Dungeon", Merle Travis's marvelous and wistful meditation on coalmining.

Travis wrote it and recorded it in 1940. In 1943, one of the more prestigious folk-music publications -- possibly Sing Out!: anyway, a publication considered a Highly Authoritative Source -- published it, listing it as "Traditional, Author Unknown".

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Hoyt Axton wrote "Greenback Dollar" when he was sixteen. He sold the rights to it for something like \$38. Some years later, a lawyer told him that he had a good chance of getting the rights back if he sued (apparently there was something a little shifty in the original sale terms). The way I heard the story, he considered it, then said "Naw -- how'd I look suing for the rights and royalties on a song that says 'I don't give a damn 'bout a greenback dollar'?"

Well, here it is time and past time to wrap this up and get to the printer and then add the colour and get it in the mail.

Sigh

Somehow it seems as if I'm constantly pushing one deadline or another; I guess having the OE in driving range spolt me.

Check out my new website at <http://electrictiger.com> and encourage others to do so as well!



"Hey! Get back here!"