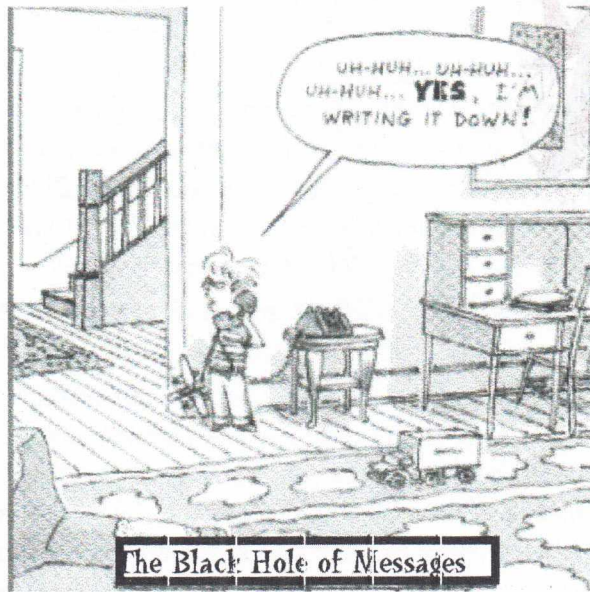


Oh my god!!



*There are
Actual Mes
in Here!!!*

Home with the Armadillo -- L.Copeland --



*The Harley &
the Ivy*

The "Baby Blues" with the teddy bears reminds me of the "Phoebe and the Pigeon People" strip in which Little Sunshine Karma Goodvibes's hippie parents gave her a toolbox to avoid gender stereotypes -- last panel in her bedroom, LSKG is holding a wrench and a hammer and "Would you like to go to the Prom, Barbie?" "Oh, yes, Ken, I'd love to!"

I've been Meyers-Briggsed a few times, and no-one who knows me ever believes the results that come out.

The "Better or Worse", about "we're all headed for the same place eventually" reminds me of a simply beautiful Cowboy Mouth song by Paul (Sanchez). "At the Foot of Canal Street" -- Paul and a buddy (a black blues man) discovered that both of their fathers were in the same New Orleans cemetery. The other guy said "Black or white, rich or poor, sooner or later we all wind up in the same place...", from

which Paul extrapolated a lovely bittersweet song.

The way of figuring the interest so you actually have to pay a penalty for early buyout is called "Rule of 78", and that's all I know.

Your comments about Allie and JJ's schools and making friends -- poor Helen has been in a situation for some years where she was quite some distance from most of the kids she knew in school with little or no mobility. We hope to change that somewhat when we move to Dahlonga and she begins at North Georgia College (it's her senior year in High School, but it'll be at the college... She's just finishing up a special summer program for Brilliant Kids at No Georgia this week, too.) and gets her driver's license. With luck we'll be able to provide her with some sort of vehicle.

Trivial Pursuits -- J.Gelb --

Re: comment to Lynch: While I might take a course in HTML programming to pick up things I haven't managed to pick up for myself, the only book I've seriously consulted is the "for Dummies" quick reference book -- about the size of a mass-market PB and comb bound, It has minimal instruction and then documentation of HTML commands. There are a few

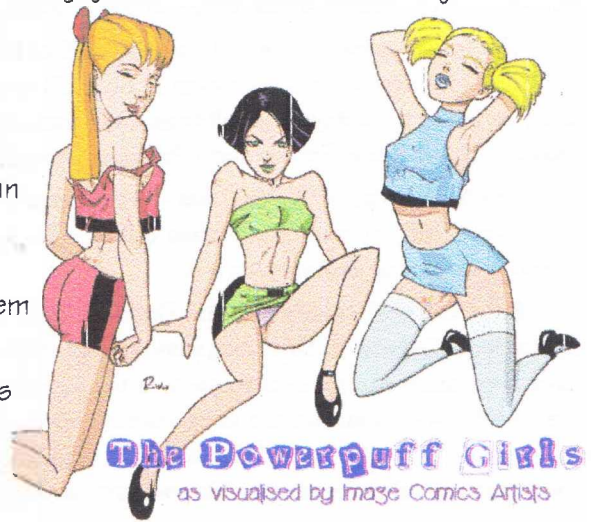
things i suppose i'd be better off knowing that i don't, i guess, but mostly i've just picked it up for myself.

I've been finding more and more errors and omissions in the IMDB, the more i look. A classic example -- unless they've accepted the correction i e-mailed last week (haven't checked yet) there are three errors in the cast list for "O Lucky Man" and they fail to note that the original American version was cut by thirty-something minutes. With regard to another film --they insist that "Get Crazy" is merely an alternate title and that "Flip Out" is that film's true title, despite the fact that i can find no indication anywhere that it was ever released as anything but "Get Crazy", and that i have corresponded with a guy who was an extra who says it was being slated as "Get Crazy" while it was being shot... Grrr.

Well, i looked tonight to look up something else, and they have accepted my comment about the shorter American version on "O Lucky Man!", but they haven't done anything with the three other corrections and additions i gave 'em on that one...

My problem with "Second Wind" is that it didn't seem to make sense. At least "10 Pound Penalty" and "Come to Grief" made sense. "Wild Horses" (isn't that the title? About the movie director, anyway) is my recent favourite, though.

The first time i saw the phrase "magic cookie" was in an "Odd Bodkins" collection of strips Dan O'Neill did at least thirty or thirty-five years ago; it was part of a running gag. Considering that his constituency has always been heavily biased toward the SF/LA area, it wouldn't surprise me if the current useage derives from that... (i found his web site and i noticed copyrights on the strip running back to '63; i dropped him an e-mail asking him when he began using the term and did he think the current useage might derive from him as "spam" is alleged to derive from a "Monty Python" routine...)



Letter to the Editor, People Magazine, e-mailed 7/22/00:

Sirs

Beginning his review of "X-Men" (PEOPLE, 7/24 00), Tom Galitto (?) says:

"At what point did comic book superheroes become psychologically tortured and prone to philosophical posturing? It's as if Hamlet put on a cape, flew out a window and then sulked on a skyscraper ledge.

"Batman' seems to have led the way..."

The short answer to Mr Galitto's question is "Sometime around 1962 (with the creation of Spider-man) or 1963 (with the origin of the X-Men)".

The longer answer is that it's a process that has been ongoing for almost forty years -- one of the bases of character of Spider-man is his guilt over the fact that, saying "Let the cops catch him", he failed to capture a small-time crook running down the street -- a small-time crook who soon murdered Peter (Spider-man) Parker's beloved Uncle Ben.

The basic point of "X-Men" has always been a concern -- more obviously and more melodramatically at some times than others -- for the rights of the individual and the place of the extraordinary in an ordinary society.

From the 1961 creation of The Fantastic Four by Stan Lee and Jack Kirby, through Spider-Man, Daredevil, Dr Strange and others, comics in general and Marvel Comics in particular have been more and more concerned in the actual philosophical implications of the existence of the super-powered among the more normal; "With great power there must come great responsibility" is a tenet that has been the basis for much of what Lee and his various collaborators and successors at Marvel have wrought in the past and continue to produce to this day.

As to Galitto's Batman reference -- yes, in movies, "Batman" was pretty much the first comics-based film to mine this vein, but Batman himself was one of the late-comers to the paradigm, since it's easier to write a story if The Batman remains a cardboard cutout figure of fear and retribution and all of the emotional content is carried by the other characters.

When such self-awareness and questioning of assumptions 'did' hit Batman -- in Frank Miller's incredible series "The Dark Knight Returns", it was stunning.

I have not yet seen the "X-Men" film. It has a good word-of-mouth among those who know and understand what comics are about and what comics actually 'do', so i anticipate that i will enjoy it.

New Port -- N.Brooks -- "HTML's inability to justify"? There is definitely a "justify" command -- it appears to work in unit spaces rather than micro-justifying, but it works. As to indents, just paste a small transparent GIF to the beginning of the line.

Actually, the problem with carbon monoxide is precisely that it **doesn't** knock you out fast; it sneaks up on you gradually and the first thing it does is to decrease your ability to recognise that you're being impaired, just like any other form of anoxia.

I'm pretty sure that **i** first encountered "myrmidon" as part of the phrase "myrmidons of the law" in a Charteris story, as you say.

But the Heart, Brain and Courage the Wizard gives the three in the book are no less placebos than what's in the movie -- he refills the Scarecrow's head with a mixture of bran and needles and pins and says "you have bran-new brains"; he cuts open the Tin Man's chest, installs a red paper heart and rivets him back up and he gives the Lion something equally placebo-ish to drink. I think that what he does for them in the film is probably the most accurately in-line with Baum's original concept of almost the entire film.



"USB" = "Universal Serial Bus" -- a new high-speed bus that can theoretically daisy-chain up to 127 devices onto one port (without the probs you get with parallel-port daisy-chaining), is theoretically 100% plug-and-play, and is theoretically hot-swappable. Notice the "theoretically"s in the above.

It's supposed to replace serial and parallel ports and ISA and PCI slots in the Next Generation of legacy-less PCs.

When i see it...

The cookie-less sites you visit work better than the ones that want to set cookies because they're proly programmed in more-or-less straight HTML without any Jave or Javascript or proprietary extensions. There is a site i visit regularly that almost invariably crashes the Opera 4.01 browser, which is 100% HTML compliant, does both Java and Javascript **and** knows most of the proprietary extensions -- but the "Dilbert" site locks it up seven times out of ten when it's partly downloaded.

The scar i have on *my* left shoulder is a smallpox vaccination; i wasn't aware there *was* a TB vaccine.

CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT PROPOSAL -- J. COPELAND --
SOUNDS GOOD TO ME. LET'S DO IT.

Guilty Pleasures -- E.Ackerman -- no real comments here, but i think you either need to use about one less column per page or else smaller type; the short lines this combination is giving you read very choppy.

Peter Paul & Merry -- D.Schlosser -- Re: Elian: "...a situation that essentially wouldn't occur if any other country were involved."? I dunno -- this bit with the Bahraini princess looks like it's going to be interesting.

"Show us your Lark pack!"

Re the Wizard/Tin Man/love -- your formulisation here echoes the Beatles: In the end, the love you take is equal to the love you make..."

Commenting on "who cares" about Weaver's bra in "Galaxyquest" -- i think it would have been amusing to have it change colour between scenes. No overt mention, just Bad Continuity.

Revenant -- S.Strickland -- We made it down for JazzFest, but, what with one thing and another, the only music we caught was Marcia Ball and then Cowboy Mouth (our reason for being there). It went well enough that Kate (who hates to travel) immediately began making plans to catch at least a whole weekend worth next year...

Oblio - G.Brown - Anyone who looks in the "history" section for info on the Old West is going to find damned near as much fantasy and fiction as he will in the "Western Fiction" section. There are at least three "authoritative" and completely mutually contradictory bios of Wyatt Earp, Wild Bill Hickock and Bat Masterson. And the revisionists who tell us what Horrible Evil White Men did to the Poor Noble Savages who were here first are right there, too. I saw a book entitled

something like "Myths in Our Historical Sites" that was an attempt to debunk popular "history", and, according to it, pretty much, no historical site involving the interaction of the white man and the red man was accurate, except for the ones run by indians that showed white men's atrocities, and *all* of those were accurate...

When i was learning "Duck and cover" in the Cleveland schools circa 1955, i don't think anyone but us had The Bomb, and what we were being trained for was a conventional air raid, which, after all, almost made sense, considering it was only ten years since the end of WW2.

Yngvi -- TKFW -- In my own not very humble opinion, some of the better productions of G&S in recent years were *not* D'Oyly Carte; the D'OC company got a bit fossilised toward the end. Marty Greene, the man who *owns* most of the baritone roles -- the man who *created* the business with Ko Ko climbing a stage flat when Katisha pounces at him -- once asked Danny Kaye if he would autograph the Decca recording of Kaye singing G&S for him (Greene had to come to the US to get it, as it was illegal in England.) Kaye was flattered almost beyond words. The production of "Mikado" that i have on tape somewhere with Eric Idle as Ko Ko is a gem. Even "The Pirate Movie", a Very Broad Parody of "Pirates of Penzance" from Australia, has its moments...

And, by all means see if you can find a copy of "Yeomen of the Guard" -- by preference the Johnathon Miller version done for BBC (i think it was) with Joel Grey as Jack point. "Yeomen" may be G&S's only tragedy, and it is wonderful. "O, I have a song to sing-oh..."

Actually, "PMB" was just one of several acceptable ways of listing a mail drop address, and apparently the rule has been liberalised or even lifted completely -- note that my address is such and i simply list the street address and the box number, and the Postal Service doesn't care at all.

Mysteries and SF don't cross over because in general there's no way to write a really good SF mystery, most of the time. Even the Lord Darcy ones are marginal as mysteries, because there's always the *chance* that *this* one is going to turn on actual magic, instead of mundane factors.

Donald Westlake's "Nackles" is a wonderful fantasy. Forget everything to do with a story of the same title on "Twilight Zone". Read the original.

Spiritus Mundi - GHLIII - "Naked is the Best Disguise" --
the best disguise is no disguise at all, perhaps? "Hide in plain sight?"

Talking about professional feats -- like Drysdale and the tack in the ceiling) -- NASCAR driver Curtis Turner would set up two rows of Coke bottle about two inches apart than the front and back bumpers of his Cadillac -- one of the *big* 60's ones -- and then do a 180-degree bootleg turn between the rows without touching one of them.

Speaking of a nice Jewish boy who gave his mother a religion for her birthday: Jesus looks around in Heaven and gets upset. He heads for the Gates.

"Pete! You're slipping! I see a lot of people in here who never should have got in. How come you let them in?"

"It wasn't me -- I told 'em they couldn't come in -- but they slipped around to the side gate and your Mother let 'em in!"

Actually, Guy, it looks as if there's a bit more to the shooting of that immigrant in New York than your rather oversimplified comments here. Yeah -- they were wrong. And they knew it; i recall reading that at least one has already quit the force because he can't face the thought that he might find himself in a simnilar situation. Based on the article that the "New Yorker" did a while back, i think that the acquittals were acceptable, and i think that one reason that there was relative calm is because people in New York -- white *or* black -- know just what a razor-edge situation it was. Read the lyric of Springsteen's new song inspired by the incident, "Forty-One Bullets" that more or less overtly draws a direct parallel between the cops and the guy they killed as victims of a situation and a system none of them made.

Your grandmother is gone. I'm sorry. Mine is still (physically) with us, and i wish i had never seen the day when she would be brought so low and made so undignified by simple oldness. I want my Nana back.

Cross-Train -- J.Copeland -- I never met Kate or Helen, my step-daughter, before she had grown into an at-a-minimum coltish cutie-hood at age fourteen. At sixteen, she has finally had the opportunity to discover BOYS in a big way, with a recent special summer honors program for high-school kids at North Georgia College, and seems to be blessed with the proper *ahem* bait and lures to

make the discovery interesting.

Helen, unfortunately, through no fault of her own or even of her parents, has pretty well lived in settings where she had little or no association with kids her own age outside of school hours. This summer in the dorms at No. Georgia has fixed that. With any luck, we'll be living in Dahlonga (reasonably close to her classmates) in a couple months while she continues at No. Georgia, taking her senior year of high school at the college, and also with any luck she'll get some sort of wheels of her own...

About lawyers with passion vs. lawyers who know the law -- Rumpole cheerfully admits every so often that he really doesn't know the law all that well. But if i were in criminal difficulties, it's a Rumpole or a My Cousin Vinnie i'd want defending me. ((Which reminds me -- at one time there was allaeedly a "My Cousin Vinnie" sequel being planned, in which Vinnie was going to get involved in a case at the Old Bailey. I immediately had visions of Leo McKern in a tatty black robe and somewhat yellowed peruke being seen periodically in the fore- or background. No lines, just looking very Rumpolian.

(Kind of like if i'd been making the Fiennes/Thurman "Avebgers", i would NOT have missed a chance to have a BRG-with-yellow-trim Lotus Seven driven by an intense-looking dark-haired man in a black jacket with white piping pass them on the ramp that they drove down into an underground garage at HQ...)

Anne Rice's writing doesn't strike me as worth my time, period. And it looks as if the songs she was trying to write for Cowboy Mouth weren't accepted; at least i haven't heard/noticed any.

I think that hte killing of the villainess in "World" was one of the truest-to-character bits in any of the Bond films. Right up there with Bond using the villainess as a human shield in "Goldfinger" and "Thunderball", and even joking about her death in "Thunderball".

Incidentally, re your quote from "Casino Royale" -- i understand that they're actually planning a straight version of that book as one of the upcoming Bond films.

Speaking of Evil Willow and the leather -- i really suspect that there were two different versions of the same costume in the episode where Willow masqueraded as



Evil Willow, because Allyson Hannigan sure looked different pretending to be Allyson Hannigan, if you see what i mean. And i did like the line about "Kinda tight, but I guess vampires don't hafta breathe..."

I strongly suspect that "magic cookie" traces back to the useage of the same term in Dan O'Neill's "Odd Bodkins" strip, dating back to the early Sixties.

Similar to Eisner (and every time i see that name, i flash on *Will* Eisner, who definitely wouldn't have been so clueless) not knowing who Richard Lester was is the fact that, at least at one time, Jack Warner wasn't sure what cartoon characterss his studio had.

The Sphere -- D.Markstein -- Speaking of the Grinch as a character whose story has been told, what do you hear about the Jim Carrey movie? What i'm hearing is horrifying if true...

Anent your comment that getting old sucks, lately, after having been down to my grandmother's house, and seeing what has become of her, i'm beginning to feel that i've lived rather too long. I can hardly stand to see how much she has lost in the last year or so; even her short-term memory is going, and she will call my mother and ask her the same question over and over, every five or ten minutes. And she's convinced that she and my mother are staying in some hospital or hotel and that she needs to be getting home.

My grandmother was almost more of a mother to me than was my mother for a couple years, when i was four or five and she was about my current age. She took care of me and my grandfather with no trouble at all. Back a little earlier, during the war, despite the fact that she was a nice upper-middle-class Southern Lady, she had a job as an inspector at a bomber plant, and was responsible for nailing at least three people for sabotage.

In many ways, from time to time, my grandmother was the pillar of strength that we all revolved around.

And now she's a scared little old lady who doesn't know where she is or who most of her relatives are.

It's not "hope I die before I get old" ... it's "hope i die before those I love get Old".

There are about six or seven people in the whole damned world whose concern

for me, and my love for them, helps me to keep going. If not for them, i think i could die tomorrow and not be upset knowing it was happening...

Twyg -- R.Dengrove -- "The version of HTML i've been using doesn't give you a great choice [of fonts]". Well, unless you get into dynamic fonts or whatever -- which proolly won't work with some browsers -- you can only use fonts that the person viewing his site already has on his machine, or at least that's the way i think understand it.

Oh, what Heinlein's dragons breathed was really fire -- it just wasn't fire till it came out of their mouths; they belched up gastric gasses and they were ignited by hypergolic compunds in their front teeth.

Speed of light is the same relative to all frames, not in all frames...

Actually, per your ct. GH1111, Hitler still has several surviving relatives, quite a few of whom apparently live in the US -- there's an article in this week's "New Yorker".

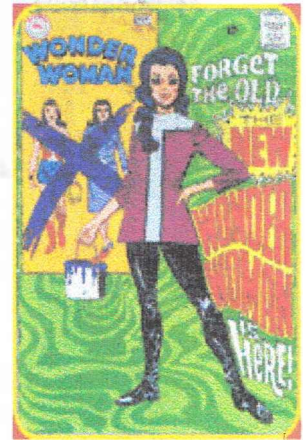
The problem with Juno is that every time you run it it resets your default e-mail client to its own lousy one.

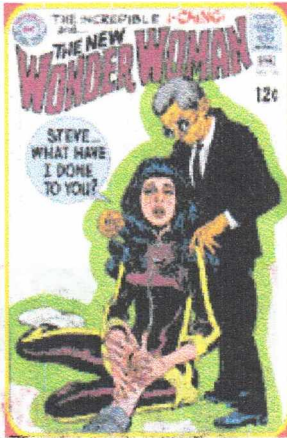
"Saturn a GM marque?" Well, yes. And always has been. As to where a car was built, it has to say on it. My '88 Honda was built in Ohio.

"No more ludicrous than Orson Scott Card's world where the Cherokee and the Algonquins have their own states." If it hadn't been for Andy Jackson, the Cherokee might well *have* their own state -- they were prosperous land and slave owners, and there were a *lot* of them in this area.

<<IT'S ALMOST 5AM AND I HAVE A DOCTOR'S APPOINTMENT THIS AFTERNOON AND I'M FALLING ASLEEP BETWEEN READING PARAGRAPHS, SO I'LL BE BACK TO THIS LATER...>>

You've heard it a little wrong -- Wonder Woman did, indeed, lose her powers and became a Mrs. Peel type crimefighter, complete with white boots and purple jump suits with white piping -- editted and drawn for most of the run by Mike Sekowsky -- but she didn't use the I Ching to foretell the future.





I Ching was a character, a blind Chinese master of the martial arts who taught Diana the skills needed for her new career.

The following is a quote from "The Wonder Woman Pages" (<http://www.hastur.com/WonderWoman/>) (i don't agree with certain statements in it...):

"At the end of the 60's, Wonder Woman surrendered her powers to remain in 'Man's World' rather than accompany her fellow Amazons into another dimension so they could 'restore their magick. Diana Prince, now no longer Wonder Woman had a new mentor: I Ching. The book became a bit like the show Kung-Fu

with Diana taking the role of Grasshopper. She was mod, as was the fashion of the time and ran a boutique.[1]

This lasted for two years, with Wonder Woman being restored to her powers and costume in the early 70's.

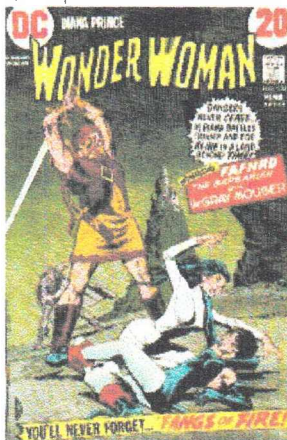
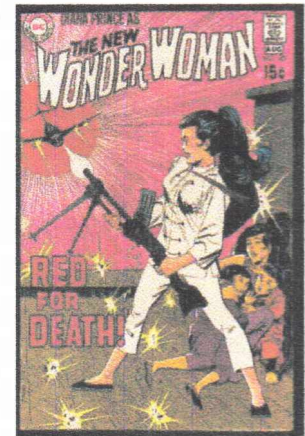
In the midst of this stupid depowering story line[2], Steve Trevor had been killed by Wonder Woman's then arch-nemesis, Dr. Cyber. Steve was resurrected, killed, then later resurrected again as Steve Howard."

[1] Apparently this person never saw "The Avengers" in his life.

[2] I disagree strongly that the storyline was "stupid", but, given the nature of comics, it was unfeasible to run for long.

Another site,

(<http://lacosa.sion.com/ww/html/comix.htm>), says:



With the boom of superagents and spies on its peak, Wonder Woman was turned into a plain-clothed and Emma Peel-like sort of agent for which Mike Sekowsky (creator of Supergirl) was responsible. Along with Samuel R. Delany, Sekowsky envisioned Wonder Woman as a powerless agent who is teamed up with a blind Chinese mentor named I-Ching in Wonder Woman #179 (October 1968). In spite of being charged with a lot of action, undoubtedly this was the worse period, leaving this "New Wonder Woman" unrecognizable, and even going to the extreme with Steve Trevor's death in Wonder Woman #180 (February 1969). In 1972, Ms. magazine made a compilation of Wonder Woman stories, somehow recalling

the "real" character. Fortunately, in 1973, the editors decided to go back to the roots. In Wonder Woman #204 (February 1973) I-Ching is killed and Wonder Woman's power are restored by Queen Hyppolite and thanks to the "Amazon Memory Chair".

Again, i disagree with the assessment that this was necessarily a Bad Idea. In issue #202, Diana met up with Catwoman and -- Faithrd and the Grey Mouser! And then, two issues later, they blew it as far as i'm concerned, and changed her back.

In Case You've Been Wondering Dept.

This is
Ohmygod!!
There are
Actual MMs
in Here!

a SFPazine from

mike weber.

of 3651 E peachtree Parkway, #373

Suwanee GA 30024.

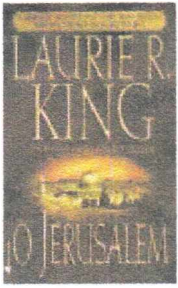
I suppose you could try phoning either

770,564,9893 or

678,643,9893

or even emailing

krasnegar@mindspring.com



Holmes. Russell. Danger. Adventure – What More Could I

Ask?

O Jerusalem

Laurie King

4-star review

I notice that some readers feel that dropping back to the time of "The Beekeeper's Apprentice" for this fifth book, rather than continuing in chronological order may have been a mistake. Personally, i don't.

If nothing else, it gives King a chance to establish Russell's feelings toward her background and her heritage as a young Jewish woman in the period just after World War One, as she travels through the Holy Land. It gives her a chance to again depict and to clarify the early relationship of Holmes and Russell, and to show us the beginnings of the change in that relationship.

And it gives an excuse to write a grand, old-fashioned but quite "modern" adventure novel – exotic places! Strange customs! Assassins in the night! Plots and counter-plots! Hair's-breadth escapes! It's all there.

Needing to lay low for a while, Holmes and Russell accept a request from brother Mycroft Holmes and head out to the Holy Land, newly-conquered by the British under Allenby, and to discover just what is going on.

Accompanied by a pair of alleged Arab allies, Ali and Mahmoud (there's something just a bit too good to be true about these fellows...), Holmes and Russell begin their investigation. And the plot that they discover – and find themselves called to thwart at the last instant – is one to rival or even surpass Guy Fawkes's Gunpowder Plot in the scale of consequences. Fawkes, after all, was only looking to blow up Parliament; this plot strikes at government, clergy and some of the world's holiest sites simultaneously.

As would be expected from Laurie King, though there are some 'very' funny moments – the dinner at the American Colony in Jerusalem, with Russell and Holmes, both in disguise, acting the parts of complete strangers, for instance. (Holmes chooses the alias "William Gillette" for this...)

But there are some dark moments, indeed – Mary's loss of family in a car crash is vividly recalled, Holmes is tortured, several killings take place – staged in a

manner to stimulate unrest/rebellion.

But in the end, of course, our heroes 'do' save the day.

As much as anything, this book is a set-up for the next to come, in which i understand that Homes and Russell return to the Holy Land; by teaching Russell what she needs to operate undercover there in this story, she avoids the necessity to slow down the next.

Not Quite As Good As Being There Would Have Been...

The Cropredy Box

3-CD box; Live at their 1997/30th Anniversary Cropredy Festival

Fairport Convention and a whole mess of Other People

5-Star review

Having managed to make it to Cropredy for Fairport's twenty-fifth anniversary reunion [1992], i had hoped to make it over for this one as well... but it was not to be.

And, while my memories of that previous trip to Cropredy, when compared to the CD version (which is also worth having, to say the least) lead me to believe that this set is in no way a satisfactory substitute for *Having Been There*, still it is, withal, a fine and pleasing set of tunes and vocals, indeed.

There is not and never has been a band that can compare to Fairport in doing what they do – which is the effortless blending of the most modern rock sensibilities with the most traditional of folk music and everything in between, as well, and this set confirms it yet again.

It is wonderful to hear essentially every still-living member of the band (save, i believe, Iain Campbell, who couldn't make it) getting up there on the stage and re-creating the various line-ups one after the other – especially since there are no live recordings from some of the more interesting versions of the band, and this set does a little to fill that lack.

It's heart-warming, as well, to know that everyone there extended well-wishes to usual MC Danny Thompson (who was in hospital, but, i understand, recovered just fine), a fine fellow, excellent MC and outstanding bass player.

Every time i listen to this set, it reminds me that i have pledged to make it once

more to Cropredy before all of us geezers (on both sides of the mike) die or get too old to perform...

*((Also included is a phone recording of an April Fool joke Simon Nicol played on Dave Swarbrick many years ago. It's hilarious, but the little label that says "includes explicit Swarbrick" is a warning to be heeded -- this is definitely *not* something one could play on even FM radio without a little cleanup...))*

Half Magic -- Entirely Fun

"Half Magic" by Edward Eager

5-star review

In 1956, I found a copy of this book in Miss Hollytree's third-grade classroom in Greenville SC.

I was already a confirmed reader (with a couple of the "Swallows & Amazons" books under my belt), with an inclination toward fantasy, and this was Just My Thing.

The concept that each bit of magic has rules that you have to deduce and learn in order to make it do what you want was and is a wonderful one (with echoes, intentional or otherwise, in Dave Duncan's "Man of His Word" books), which hit me, age eight, like a thunderbolt.

The setting in a time gone by (the 1920's), the references to other books and other stories (there are even more in the sequels and Eager's other children's fantasies) and the general air of slightly bewildered straight-faced whimsy endeared the book to me, and still do, almost forty-five years later.

And there are a couple of valuable little lessons more or less painlessly worked into the story, which ought to endear it to parents and teachers (but don't tell the kids, right?)

This book and its sequels have gone in and out of print for years; whenever, after a long drought, I would again encounter it, I would realise just what large parts of it I had painlessly committed to memory, and I would realise just how much I again enjoyed re-reading Eager's whimsical prose.

It's a kids book, but adults who enjoy a good light fantasy with a touch of truth at bottom should like it, also.

(The wonderful original illustrations by N.M. Bodecker, reprinted here, still complement the text perfectly...)

