

Sercon-Navigation 11.1

Special Corflu Edition

Weeks before Corflu was to become a reality for me I began to accelerate the production of my fanzine, **Brodie #3**, secretly holding close to my heart the hope of having **Brodie** finished in time to hand out at Corflu. Putting anything together on my nine year old Macintosh SE is a chore. Thirty-two pages was really more than I was prepared for, but I'm the ambitious sort and had the bit firmly between my teeth.

Two days before Corflu I made myself believe that **Brodie** was close to being done, ignoring any and all signs that told me otherwise. I just had to type up a quick editorial, print out my letter column and my twelve page piece about my criminal friend, pick out some illos, do the layout, find a cover, then deliver the whole thing to Kinkos, pick it up for collation and stapling, then, WA-LA! - **Brodie #3** would be born! I had blindfolded myself and could only dream of the egoboo I might receive when I passed **Brodie #3** out during the convention.

I tried to coordinate my publishing endeavors at times when I thought many fans might be resting, and found myself working on **Brodie** at unusual hours, doing what needed doing, and frantic that I might be missing out on some great going-ons at the Plaza. I couldn't bring myself to hold off on **Brodie** until after Corflu (even when I was right in the middle of it, thinking I'd never get it done), figuring Corflu is an excellent (if not the best time) to pass out a fanzine. It's a faned convention for Ghod's sake! I wouldn't have felt right if I couldn't

hand **Brodie** out to ~~some~~ people.

In the beginning I dreamed of a large stack of pristine **Brodies** dominating the Free Fanzine Table, available to everyone on that first frenetic day when it seemed all the best stuff to be found on the FFT is laid out for the circling zine-hungry faneds. Deep down inside I was probably working on some sort of camouflage angle, but I'm a brave sort of lad (did I mention ambitious?) and I thought **Brodie** might be noticed among all the other fanzines and conbids. At the very least because it looked so -- neoish.

Late Wednesday night I found myself sketching out little niches of time throughout the next couple of days when I could work on my zine, but I didn't take into account the huge lump of time and energy the Katz's Pre-Corflu Kick-off Party would consume. I actually lobbied to provide my driving services but had prepared a few of good excuses to prevent my immediate indentureship into the ferry business, and so looked forward to leaving the office early Thursday afternoon. I thought, at the very least, it'd be a good opportunity to meet some faneds.

I arrived at the Katz's around 3:30pm on Thursday afternoon, ready to meet those many fans I've seen in the fanzines, eat, drink, be merry, and provide the occasional ride. Before my first trip out (which I managed to delay until close to 5:30pm) I met, for the first real time, Jerry Kaufman, Moshe Feder, Andy Hooper,

Shelby Vick, Dan Steffan, and a myriad assortment of other fen whose names escape me at the moment.

Inevitably I was asked to provide shuttle service. Several times before I had a handy excuse, but being plain all out (and knowing I was going to pick Ted White up, well...) My mission, which I chose to accept, was to pick up Ted, his wife Linda, and their kids; no problem in my Rodeo. A quick chat with Ted on the phone set up our rendezvous. I remember that someone needed a ride back for their medicine, but I was in such a state that I never discovered who needed the lift. No bodies were recovered Friday morning so I can only assume that person got their ride. Sorry about that, whoever you are.

A short time later I found myself pulling into the circular drive in front of the Plaza. Ben Wilson was there to point me out to Ted (I knew what Ted looked like from Silvercon 3 but he couldn't possibly have remembered me.) Ted and family piled in and off we went.

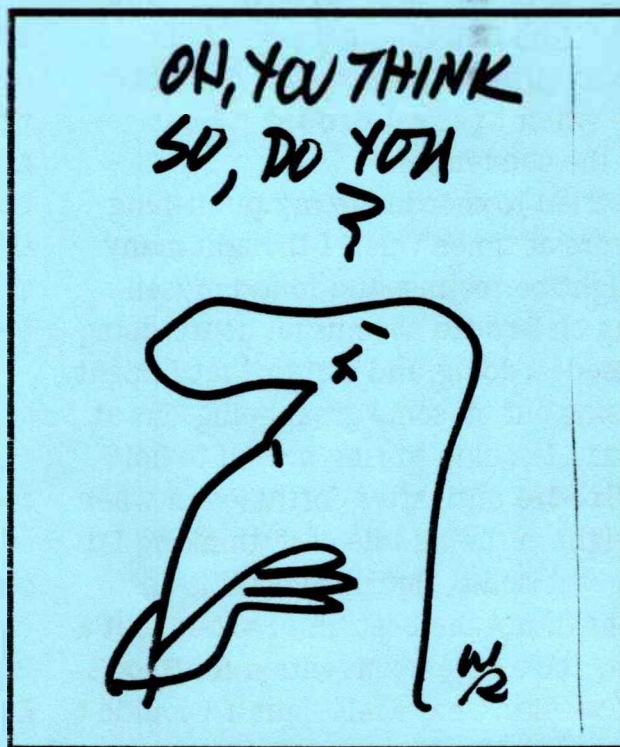
Now, unless Ted had a bit of the lemming in him and was going to lead his family in a planned jump from my moving car, I had him for a good fifteen to twenty minutes.

I couldn't help but goshwow over his reviews in **Habbakuk**. I asked him if the general response he was receiving was acceptable, to him. After exploring the topic a bit more it was decided that people might not be used to such a subjective review that wasn't just "so nice" all the time (like many fanzines of today.) I told him that I hoped he would continue his reviews without change, and he said he would. He said he had a

surprise for the readers of the next issue who thought Ted White was being too harsh. I could spill the beans, I actually know what the surprise is, but I've been sworn to secrecy, you know, blood oath and all that.

I told him I really enjoyed **BLAT**, and no, I hadn't read the last ish. Upon hearing that he graciously offered me one from his room upon our return to the Plaza. I was quick to jump on this, and as my reward I have a pristine copy of **BLAT #4** and it's accompanying **BLAT Archive** issue, **Syndrome #5**.

In our last minutes together I told Ted and Linda how Ted's mere presence in my vehicle had considerably raised my status before the eyes of my Vegas peers. I asked Ted if it would be okay for me to lord it over the Vegants, he nodded in what I took to be the affirmative, a small smile on his wise fannish face (which I secretly believed was also his benediction) as we pulled into the Katz's drive.



This momentous occasion in my life birthed a somewhat competitive-like reflex in me that I soon began practicing. I found myself cruising Corflu the rest of the weekend, looking for BNF's who needed a ride, to anywhere, just so I could claim bragging rights over my less ambitious peers. I would clean my seats every morning, set fresh donuts on the dash and provide worthy beverages and smokables to anyone of sufficient stature to satisfy my craving.

Now that Corflu is over I find myself offering rides to Arnie and Joyce whenever the mood strikes me. They inform me they have their own car but they neglect to consider the historical importance of my vehicle in regards to who has graced my gray-clothed bucket seats with their behinds. I've even gone so far as to replace the donuts. But they continue to deny me, smugly stating that their entire house had been inundated by fannish legends and BNF's, and that my car is only a transitory and unimportant site where fannish buttocks may have only temporarily rested. (They reveled in that word "temporary", hinting around the name of a certain fan they had in suspended animation in one of their back rooms.)

I've resigned myself to the fact that I won't have the same opportunity again to have so many real-live fans ride with me in my car, conversing about things fannish, and eating my donuts. But, I've also found a way to keep this compulsive coup-counting alive. Once a week I gift myself with the company of someone's fanzine, a symbolic representation so to speak. I still get the vicarious thrill of having a BNF (and in some cases even

several) ride with me, stapled together and seat-belted in, providing me with fannishly amusing thoughts as I cruise the streets of Las Vegas. It also saves on the donuts.

Having finally returned to the apartment after some five ferry trips, sometime around 3:00am Friday morning, **Brodie** still unfinished, I realized I wasn't going to make it in time for the Free Fanzine Table Fantasy I'd been lately nursing. ...Crap.

I was also unprepared for the unexpected fatigue. I consoled myself with a stale beer, and as I slowly drifted off to sleep, I saw the hazy image of myself passing **Brodie** out to the curious and celebratory fen in the consuites Saturday night, the fuzzy picture (I was falling asleep) of neoish dedication. Before unconsciously spilling my half finished beer to seep into bedsheets and mattress, I decided to do a lump of work Friday night, and finish off the rest Saturday morning, and late that afternoon deliver the finished product to Kinkos. But, as I was to later discover, I was dreaming.

Friday night turned into early Saturday morning, 3:30am to be exact. While my letter column slowly burped out of the printer (and my girlfriend blissfully slept), I was roughing out my editorial. Not quite done, I returned to the Plaza around a quarter to five, slept five hours, went back to the apartment, finished my editorial, did some proofing, layout, and printing, then scooted back to the Plaza.

I was to partake in the Fannish Feud and thought the entire proceedings would be more tolerable if I crogged my greep, so I headed to the ASS and enjoyed the company of the Falls Church Team for an

hour or so before we headed down to feud. (We had worked ourselves into a frenzy by being nice to each other.) Having disabled their buzzer to prevent the Falls Church Team the chance to answer by ringing their glass with their spoon (thereby alerting Arnie they had the answer), the NLE Boys made an incredible come from behind victory with the aid of a suspicious scoring system and JoHn Hardin's quick but humble skill with Team Church's spoon. Soon after, I abducted Tammy and made my way back to our apartment for a little finishing-up and printing.

I forgot how slowly my printer printed. It took over an hour to print out a twelve page piece, longer than I planned. It did give me time to raid my newly acquired **Rotsler-Gilliland Sampler Portfolio** for art, that I nabbed at the FFT sometime early Friday.

From 3:30pm to 6:00pm, I worked. Finally having figured out a cover (thanks Rotsler), and still cutting and pasting (but getting closer all the time), I was beginning to think my Saturday night fantasy might come true. With everything done Tammy and I jetted over to Kinkos for the final phase. (Where, after that long birthing voyage of creation, fanzines are broken apart on the uncaring rocks found along its jagged shore.)

I was told it couldn't be done until Sunday morning.

"Sunday morning?!" I cried, "Why, that's a day after Saturday! What about later tonight?"

"Nope, sorry. Tonight's impossible," the guy behind the counter said, "we're booked solid. But we can have it ready for you Sunday morning..."

Tammy held me close, comforting

me, and keeping at bay the dark shadow of despair that was threatening to overwhelm me. Now, I could have tried other copy stores (and probably should have), but yet another one of my egoboo dreams had been dissipated, and though I was on the verge of complete despondency (really), I was also eager for the evening's festivities to begin. It was a little past 6:30pm and I wanted to take Tammy to dinner, fuel up so to speak, then party the rest of the night. Running about looking for a more accommodating copy store just didn't fit into the evening's plans. Besides, Tammy promised she'd comfort me back at the Plaza.

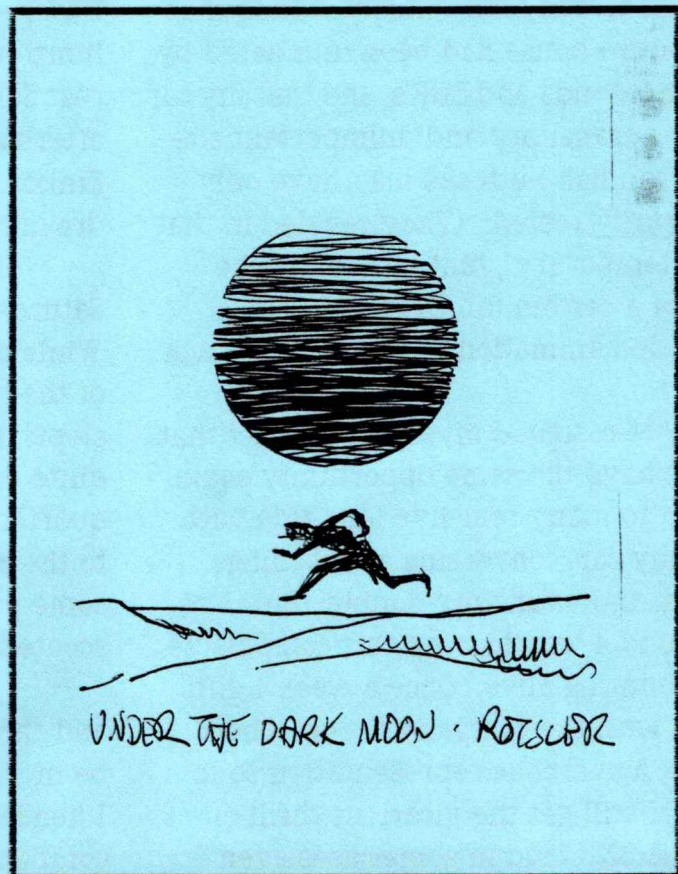
"When?" I asked dejectedly.

"9:00am," the guy said.

"9:00am?" I asked dejectedly.

"9:00am," I was assured.

Sunday morning it was. So much for my Saturday night hand-out fantasy. Back in



the car Tammy had already begun to comfort me, I swerved a little, and the idea of passing out **Brodie** during the Banquet formed in my distracted little skull. I saw myself gliding from table to table, a thick stack of **Brodies** cradled in one arm (cutting quite a figure, I must say), delightfully surprising the happy fen with my zine as they dined. (I'd never been to a Banquet so didn't know if it was at all possible, but I was dreaming, Tammy was comforting me, and it seemed a fine idea at the time.) Reluctantly (and with my head in the clouds once again) I decided Sunday morning would be a splendid time to pass out **Brodie**.

Corflu Vegas. Saturday night. Tenish.

From our room on the sixteenth floor, Tammy and I made our way to the consuites for a pizza feast we saw scheduled on the program for that evening. Upon our arrival Aileen and Ken (the Formans) said response to the idea was lacking so they had decided against any pizza. Tammy and I plucked the remains of some delicious chicken wings from a nearby wok while listening to this disappointing news. It's not like there wasn't enough food, but a pizza craving had set upon us earlier in the evening (after dinner, and after the comforting) and there was no shaking it. We saw the program and had made it our mission to descend upon the pizza feast with a hunger befitting the idea of feasting. No pizza. Well!

Being the actifan that I am (they don't call me Mr. Enthusiasm for nothing), I grabbed a nearby phone (really in the next room and not nearby at all), and began scanning through the yellow pages for possible pizza places. During this time (no

one seemed to deliver to the Plaza, much less know where it was) I met Mike McInerny. We sat on the bed together while I tried pizza place after pizza place, talking about movies, the Oscars, and what really deserved what, as far as we were concerned. Mike touted the Shawshank Redemption while I grouched about how I hated the Oscars to begin with. I finally discovered that New York Pizza would deliver, placed a conservative order of four pizzas (though knowing deep down in my heart that four wouldn't be enough) well, I figured, it would be quite a display of slice-snatching and pizza-pinching. Let the skilled gorge themselves on pepperoni and cheese. Survival of the fittest.

Having placed the order I excused myself from Mike's pleasant company and went in search of Joyce (telling Tammy I'd be back in a moment) to advise her about the unplanned pizza purchase. At this time, having cornered her in one of the consuites, we had begun to notice the conversational ripples of "bheer, we want bheer" floating down the hall and through the consuites.

"We want bheer," a thirsty fan with a beard and glasses said.

"Yeah," another piped in, "or we'll start touting you for a Worldcon."

Joyce recognized the danger of thirsty fen and suggested a quick bheer run to the Holy Cow. Now, we only planned for one run, Burbee's Bheer Bash Sunday afternoon, but it was Saturday night and the fen, mouths dry and throats parched, were understandably thirsty for the good stuff. They wanted bheer with a little color. A little character. Bheer that made you say, "Hey, I'm drunk!" Bheer that stained.

Somewhere along the way I said goodbye to my lover and recruited John

Hardin (not a fair trade but John can lift more), and together we decided it would be nice if we could find an out-of-town fan to accompany us (in the interest of out-of-town fan relations, and because we wanted one more person to help carry.) Crossing the concourse towards the parking garage, after being turned down only a time or two, who should happen to come along? Why, Mike McNerny!

"Hello Mike!" I said, "Whatchya doin?"

"Went up to my room to change," he answered, sipping a firmly gripped beer.

"Want to come with us?" John asked, "We're going on a beer run."

"Yeah," I chimed in, "and we'd like to bring an out of town fan with us."

"In the interest of out-of-town fan relations," John supplied.

"And my, don't you have strong looking arms?" I said.

Mike took another sip and looked us up and down with an inebriated and semi-critical eye, "You need help carrying the beer," he said.

"That too," John said.

(Having spent, Ghu only knows how much time in his car with his wife, driving from San Francisco to Vegas, I'm sure Mike was thinking, "Fuck, I don't want to go with these guys and help carry bbeer. I want to go see some of my old friends.")

"Sure," he shrugged, "it sounds like a good thing to do."

"We're going to the Holy Cow, it's just down the street," I said, as we started for the parking garage. "We'll have a couple as they fill our order."

"Okay," Mike said around another gulp from his can.

By the time we arrived at the top

floor of the parking garage where I parked, I realized that I'd left my keys in my room. John and Mike wandered about for more than a few minutes, but I was back in less than ten. Armed with a fully comprehensive understanding of "The More Bheer The Better" (a motto shared by the three of us), and with the warm knowledge that we were doing a good thing tucked near our hearts, we boarded my Rodeo and fastened our seatbelts.

I made short work of the parking garage and zipped down the Strip to the Holy Cow in no time at all. We placed our order for eleven half-gallon jugs of their beer (they had Guinness and such on tap but would only sell their own micro-brewed beer.) We decided on four red ales, four pale ales, and three wheat beers. It took a while to fill up eleven half-gallon jugs so we settled in for a pint or two and toasted ourselves with a deserved "well done."

"What did you get again?" John asked Mike.

"Their red ale," he answered, lifting his pint for a sip.

"How 'bout you?" I asked John.

"I got the Boston Red," he said.

"Can I taste that?" Mike asked, offering his for a taste in return.

"Sure," John said, as they exchanged beers.

"That's pretty good," John said.

"I like yours better," Mike said as they traded their beers back.

During this sipping and critiquing, while our pretty bar maid filled the jugs, I witnessed a belligerent drunk mobbed to silence by the macho cow cops that patrol the Holy Cow.

"Here," John said, passing me his beer.

"Mmm, I like that," I said, eyes wide as I watched the two cops quietly wrestle the drunk to the floor over Mike's and John's shoulders.

"Now compare," Mike ordered, passing me his beer and taking John's.

"Yeah," I said, after a good gulp, "John's is better." I passed Mike's back and Mike slid the Boston Red (the better of the two, so we say) back to John. By now the cow cops had taken the drunk away, leaving a soon-to-be-filled empty space behind my two companions.

"What did you order," John asked me, licking foam from his upper lip.

"Guinness," I answered proudly, "the best beer in the world!"

"Oh," John replied.

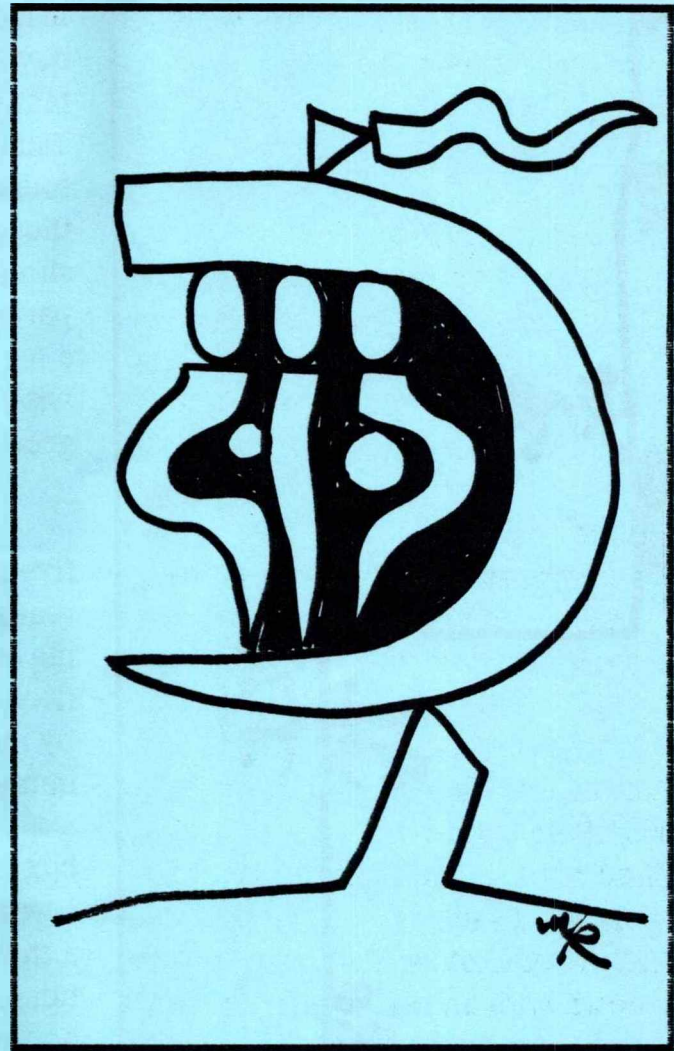
"Hmmpf," Mike said.

No one wanted to taste my beer.

I made no mention of the late struggle to my companions, choosing rather to let Mike enjoy our company instead of worrying about life-threatening drunks, macho cow cops, and the minor frenzy the combination produced.

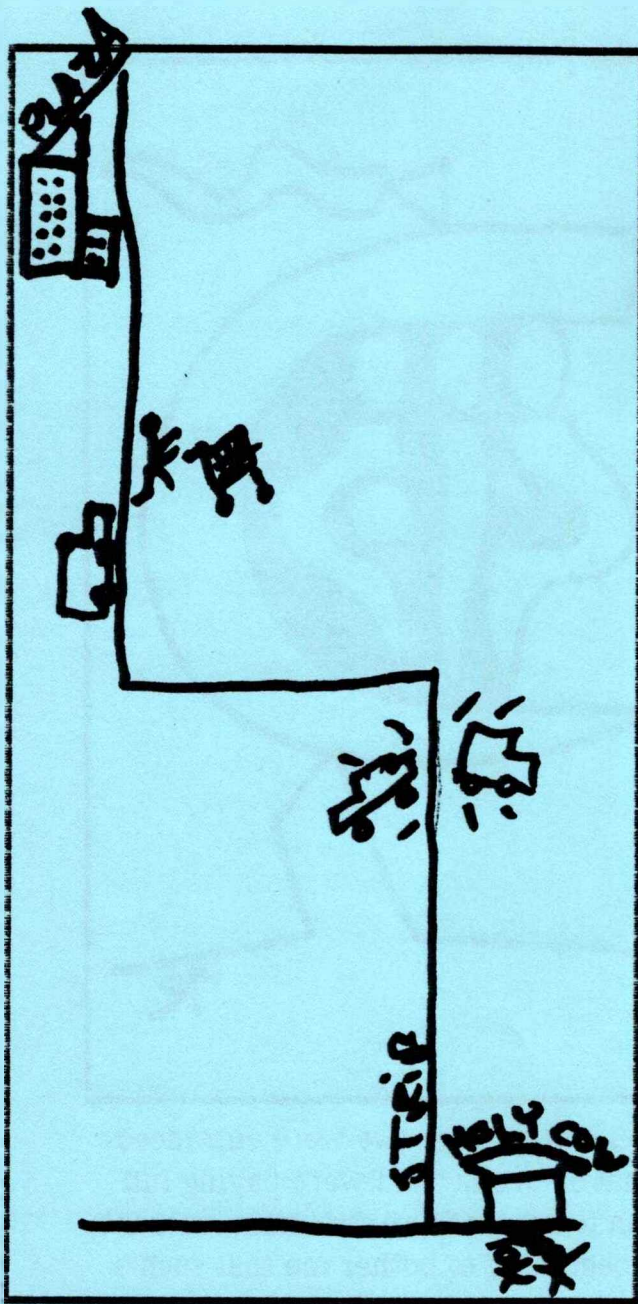
Incident ignored (I still don't know if Mike even saw it), we finished our beers and lugged the jugs to my car.

Northbound on the Strip, just a few blocks before Bonneville (see map) a local van owner and a taxi driver battled each other for road space. Typical Vegas traffic sans gunfire. The cabby quickly won the bout by slamming the side of his cab into the van's, pushing the local into oncoming traffic (a practiced move I myself relish, yet am now bereft of due to my new vehicle), forcing him to make a sharp and unexpected left turn into a side street. During this time Mike (from the backseat) was telling John and I how he



came to be in fandom (we were entranced (read that as drunk) and were paying full attention to his oration.) I remain ignorant (it was beginning to bother me that such a feeling was coming upon me so often) as to whether John and Mike even saw the brief traffic duel. Anyway, we left the taxi to cruise for unwary drivers and glided down Bonneville, chattering about this and that, oblivious to bumper cars and crazed cow cops.

Turning right on Main Street we were in sight of the Plaza when the car in front of us swerved (and I mean abruptly), taillights glaring as he hit the brakes. A shopping cart full of someone's life (Mike cautioned me) loomed before us, quickly followed by its'



made it. We returned to find the pizza devoured and a small hoard of dehydrated fans ready to relieve us of our sudsy cargo. Tammy, whom I left behind safe and sound, filled up on her share of pizza and thoughtfully saved John and I a couple slices. I turned to ask Mike if he'd care to partake, but he was gone, last sighted with a jug in hand wandering the consuites, his wise fannish face aglow with bheer and a good deed well done.

I think I went to bed around four or five in the morning that "night", but I can't really remember. My wake-up call rolled me out of bed at eight. I didn't get off the floor until half-past, but I made it to Kinkos by nine, awake, unwashed, and immeasurably anxious.

When they pulled out the ream-sized box my order was supposed to be in I knew I was in serious trouble. I had put together a thirty-two page fanzine. I ordered a hundred and twenty copies, and there was no way over two thousand pages were going to fit into a five hundred page box.

I opened that box to the muffled cracking of my breaking heart. Within its shadowed recesses I found one hundred and twenty perfect copies of my first and second page, twelve copies of my third and fourth pages, seven copies of my ninth and tenth pages, and ten copies of my fifth and sixth pages.

I wept.

No banquet distribution for me. No quiet thank-yous or congratulations. No egoboo. No fun. I sobbed into the crumpled copies of my cover, hands unknowingly clutching, as if to give those pages life once more. I stood there leaning against the counter, tears dripping pitter-patter into

separated and desperate owner lurching after it. I cranked the wheel left (into oncoming traffic), we swerved around both the cart and owner, missed some car going the other way, and soon found ourselves roaring up the parking ramps to the safe and fannish haven of Corflu. With not a jug jostled, bounced, broken (or sadly), opened.

It was a bheer run of Indiana Jones proportions, with drunks, crazed cow cops, a precious and priceless treasure, bumper cars, and homeless shopping carts, but we

the open box and useless pages within.

"We could have it fixed and ready by two o'clock this afternoon," a helpful voice promised me. I looked up to find the uncomfortable store manager staring at me, not only with pity, but a bit of revulsion as well. After having scuttled out of his office to see why this large unwashed, unshaven, smelly man was weeping in the middle of his store, he assessed the situation immediately and threw me that small line of hope.

"2:00pm?" I asked through my tears, desperate and perhaps a little crazed.

"2:00pm," he promised me with his oily and ingratiating smile.

I knew I couldn't trust him, but I had no choice (and it wasn't like I was thinking very clearly at the time). As I walked out to my car, my cracked and broken heart cupped carefully in my hands, I thought that it'd been a pretty good four days. My first Corflu, my second convention, and I'd been having a blast the entire time. Even without having passed **Brodie** out. Still, I thought, eyes narrowing as a plan formed, there was Burbee's Birthday Bheer Bash!

Why, that very evening a large number of fen would remain to celebrate Burbee's birthday (unfortunately without the Burb). Driving back to the Plaza I daydreamed of unsuspecting fen receiving a cool micro-brewed bheer (it was my job to run to the Holy Cow for the bheer that night) and a **Brodie** (a two in one deal, you just can't beat that), as I handed them out at the party. "It's still not too late," I told myself as I parked my car in the parking garage.

"Still not too late," became my mantra, muttering it under my breath while dressing for the banquet, in the

elevator on the way down, and even at our table. I was a little whacked out but Tammy wisely ignored me. Jack Speer's beenie distracted me from my worries long enough to get me back on track and enjoy that morning's meal, awards, and speeches, not to mention the slightly tired but happy company of my fellow fen.

2:30pm. Kinkos.

Instead of exploding with exasperation, killing all within the copy store and leveling it to the ground when I discovered two blank pages in my precious fanzine (one before my letter column, and the second my bacover), I just slumped my shoulders, defeated. A bit of drool hung down from my numb and disbelieving face as I stared at the tall pile of flawed copies that shared space on the counter.

I was no longer able to produce tears but didn't seem to have any trouble at all manufacturing a thick rope of spit that continued to slip from my slack-jawed mouth. As I shook my head (the beginning of a serious bout of denial) my rope of drool began to oscillate, swinging in time with my head as I sadly moved it from side to side. Given sufficient time I'm sure some sort of moaning wail would have begun to develop somewhere inside me, but the drool was more than I could handle and was becoming somewhat of a bother.

With a sharp shake of my head I sent it flying against the wire-wrought colored-paper display sitting on the counter next to my stack of flawed zines, encircling it with a wet bolo-like slap, little bits of spit ricocheting off and landing on the counter (and my zines) like sticky raindrops. This was too much for the store manager, and when I wetly suggested that I only pay for

twenty-five copies (stiffing them for the rest), he was quick to nod agreement while trying to discreetly signal for a sponge and pail.

Back at the Plaza I retreated to the ASS, dejected, defeated, but not down for the count. After all, I did have twenty-five copies. On the drive back I stopped and bought a stapler, and after a few calming tokes, Andy Hooper and John Hardin helped me staple together my paltry and flawed twenty-five copies. I will always remember those two kindly.

The migratory faneds in the ASS asked for copies and sooner than I expected I was left hoarding my last six slightly-crumpled issues of **Brodie #3**, carrying them around in my bag after leaving the ASS, adrift and alone. Yet again, another distribution dream, bheer and **Brodies**, faded into the times that never were.

Later that night Arnie found me explaining my trials to the firedoor at the end of the hall, slightly delirious but emphatic in my hatred for Kinkos, copy stores, and people in general. Looking to calm me, Arnie promised he'd help me copy off a whole new run of **Brodies**, assuaging my fears. He gently guided me back to the And Smoking Suite as I wiped a bit of accumulated spit from my lower lip with the back of my hand, nodding at his persuasive voice as the door to the ASS whooshed opened and we were enveloped by the smoky clouds waiting within.