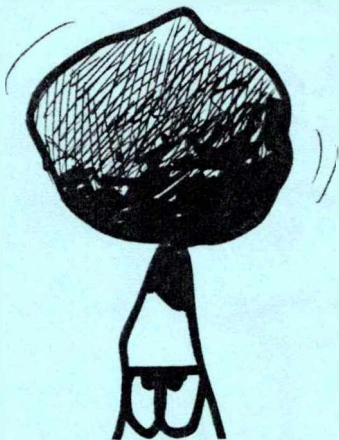


Sercon - Navigation

Again the Inner Circle convened. After the secret triple-scratch knock, the peephole opened and a rough voice asked us our business. Neither Bill nor I were afraid. We both new who it was and what was to be expected of us.

Bill lifted the box. I could see a bushy eyebrow rise with speculation through the peephole. "I see," the eyebrow said. Latches were released, chains unhooked, and deadbolts turned as the man behind the door facilitated our entrance.



He was tall and though not hulking could be construed as physically intimidating if you were not well acquainted with him and his eyebrows. He extended his hand as we entered and Bill and I both flawlessly executed the finger-flutter-pinky-hook-palm-slip handshake, the last secret test expected of all who entered there.

Inconspicuous lighting revealed the remains. Half eaten, pawed at and scavenged, they lay arranged on the table for

accessibility, food for their previous guests, a hoard of hungry miscreants, sickos, animals, and even (the spoor was evident) gamers. I shuddered as we moved on.

Following our dark host to the living room where She waited, we sat down upon their couches, I next to Bill, the tall man next to Her. Bill held the box lightly between his two hands on his lap.

"Well," She said, expectant as She leaned forward to gaze at Bill's lap. At the box.

"Yes," our dark host agreed to Her unspoken suggestion. Bill looked at me. I nodded, not in permission, for it wasn't mine to give, but in agreement. He flipped the top up, withdrew a brass apparatus, a bag of green, and to the delight of the tall man, Her, me, and I'm sure Bill, loaded a bowl. Time for Inner Circle business, conspiracy, secrets, and things best left unsaid. It's the Inner Circle after all!



Mailing Comments

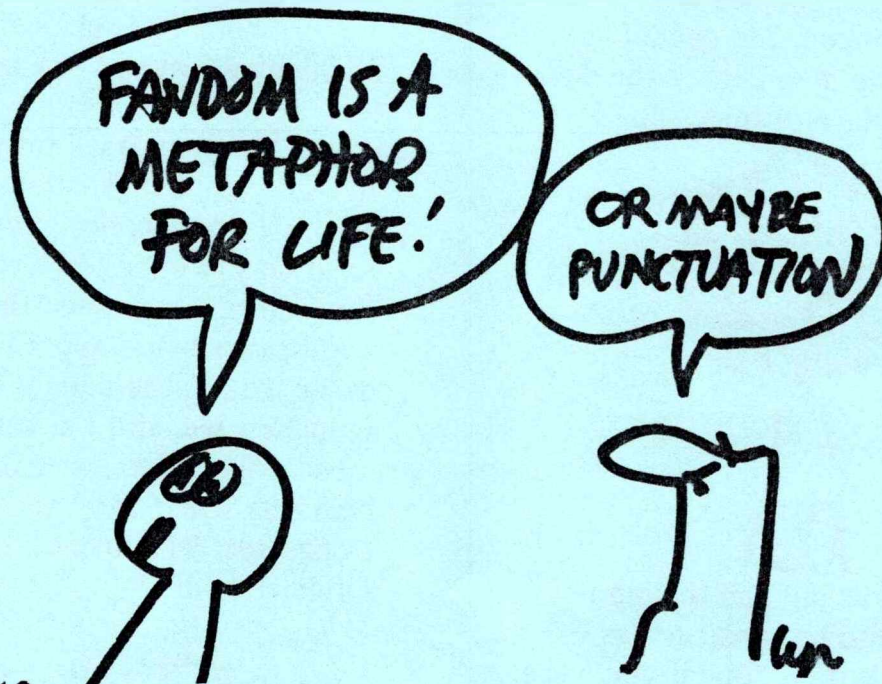
JOHN: RE

John Hardin

You forgot to mention that temporary insanity called "courage", which is that force in all of us that allows one to meet our fears head on. Results of said collision can be positive or negative, depending upon velocity and angle of trajectory. I think we all just close our eyes and hope for the best.

Is courage just another manifestation of fear; "fear of fear", a social prod? Or an acceptance of responsibility, fate, death, or whatever happens to be tugging at the seat of your pants threatening your mortality and underwear?

In any case I applaud your courage and responsibility for facing down, or facing up to, some of the things that have happened these past two months (some of which I fear!), successfully avoiding the tire treads of life many of us meekly wear upon our persons and psyche after such a collision.



PowWow #12

Joyce Katz

I loved trick or treating! Where I lived as a kid we were cursed with lots of hills and long driveways which made for some sweaty climbing. We had to navigate hungry dogs, older kids, horse flop, and curious parents after a successful night's haul. Yeah, when I was a kid we earned our candy...

I never went to a Halloween dance in highschool but I remember hanging up on several of my hormone riddled infatuations in the sweaty palmed heart pounding way of highschool boys. If I had known the girls were doing the same thing I might have screwed up my courage enough to say something stupid like, "Did you just call?"

Now, I'm a religious man in my own right. I believe. I talk to my Ghod all the time, but what poor dumb luck! To fall in love with Jesus! What was Joanne thinking? I mean, he doesn't even have a phone number, how's she going to hangup? And even if she could call him, she wouldn't talk to him. He's Jesus after all.

And even if she did talk to him, he wouldn't talk to her. And even if he did talk to her, and she talked to him, nothing would come of it. And even if something did come of it, and they agreed on a date, he wouldn't show.

And even if he did show, she wouldn't. And even if they both showed (she'd have to drive), he'd be an ass and they wouldn't have a good time. And even if they both showed, he wasn't an ass, and they both had a good time, he still couldn't pay the bill (no pockets).

And even if he could pay the bill, she wouldn't feel comfortable enough to invite Jesus over for a nightcap. And even if he asked her over for a nightcap, she wouldn't go.

And even if he asked her over for a nightcap, and she accepted, he wouldn't have anything to drink. And even if he did have something to drink, it would only be wine or water.

And even if he did get her drunk, or she got him drunk, they wouldn't do it. And even if they did do it, how well could she perform? And even if it was good sex, what could become of it? We're talking about Jesus here. He's got things to do, people to see, places to go! Sure, maybe he'd hang around over Easter, but that's it.

IMPLOSION

Arnie Katz

It's true, we don't have any basements out here in the southwest. Which leaves many eastcoasters to wonder, "Where are we gonna put all our stuff?"

"What about the attic?" you say, well, that's where we put our central heating units. The word central in no way implies that it has anything to do with the attic, but that's where the whole thing goes, along with the prickly insulation and dead rats found in every home in the southwest. Hence the invention of the four-car garage!

Fear, Terror, and Horror. Well done! Though I can find a bone or two to contend with concerning my experiences with Sinister Forces (the mold on my grout comes to mind) and basements I think you're right on with that "horror" bit. There may be things more horrifying (an IRS audit being one I've personally experienced), but to actually have lived through something like that, to have survived, adds a credibility most everybody else is found wanting.

Now, do you have nightmares? How do you feel? Any flashbacks? That thousand yard stare, whoa, that's pretty indicative of something like what you went through isn't it? Poor bastard.

Dangerous Jade

Aileen Forman

I've seen things, felt things, and heard things I can't explain away. In some cases I just don't know. Some of my dreams are premonition-like. Days later de ja vu will hit me like a spiked hammer between the eyes. I'll put my arms out as though to catch my balance, and I'll say most incredulously, "Whoa!"

I think strange things happen to everyone, it's just a degree of observation and belief that sets some of us apart from the rest. Things are unknowns, be they voices, shadows, breezes, images or floating Twinkies. Some intrigue, some frighten, but my favorite things are the ones that feel good.

Apa-tizer 8

Ken Forman

Oh, come on Ken, coffee and Mormons? You only have yourself to blame. Next time try a fast food joint, they'll have caffinated coffee and you won't have to venture near any "do do's", not to mention having to deal with those perky looking (but dangerous) Mormon natives.

As for that family reunion, next time ask for some leftovers. You wouldn't have to worry about spoilage, the lard not only insulates but protects and makes a great incubator for any wandering salmonella (which is what you'll need to animate this thing). It should only take a few days in a warm moist environment. You could keep it locked in a small cooler with bits of red meat and a saucer of water to keep it busy and growing on the drive home.

Then, after chaining the animated blob of meat and lard to a stump in your backyard you could begin training. With a large stick, some chains, more raw meat, and two to four (they come in pairs) Mormon missionaries (when you're done with them you can also sell the bikes) your ready to begin training.

First you should name this chicken/lard thing to give it a little personality and to create a bond. Besides, you'll have to call it something other than "gross". Start gradually, be sure to punish and reward accordingly. Train it to the leash, but don't bring it inside, I'm sure residual lard trails are the last thing you want on your carpet.

Eventually, after a period of time, trial and error, much aggravation, and a keen insight into the workings of an animated piece of lard enhanced chicken meat, you'll be ready for a field trial, and you're next trip through Utah!

Soon you could be the talk of the state with your Mormon hunting, lard enhanced, salmonella-animated chicken meat! Just think of the devastation you could wreak throughout Utah and those tiny isolated hamlets filled with inbred religious zealots! You'd be a hit at all the state fairs too!

Boy, just thinking about it makes me hungry.

RAYFLECTION

Ray Waldie

I understand why you no longer work in construction now. A timely retirement from the field was undoubtedly the best course of action. Have you thought about talking up Warner Bros. Cartoon Division about this?

My worst construction job accident was when a backhoe operator dumped a full bucket of dirt on my head from about ten feet up. We were looking for sewer connects in these seven foot deep trenches that we'd dug, the last bit of searching having to be done by hand, and while I was busy searching away he was shoring up the trench. I think he was daydreaming too.

Well, after I woke up, listened to his profuse apologies, and confirmed to my foreman that I was okay enough to continue work, I jumped the guy. His back was to me while climbing up into the seat of the backhoe. It felt good. After they pulled me off him, and I apologized, we got a new backhoe operator and returned to work, slightly concussed but vindicated. Construction's a dangerous occupation, don't let anybody tell you otherwise.

Sorry

(really I am!)

I'm sorry for not being able to finish my comments, but time's running short and if I'm going to get this hackneyed version out I'm going to have to stop now. But, I do want you to know, Marcy, Marcia, Joy-Lynd, Peggy, Ben, and Ross that I did read your stuff in Apa V #12, I just don't have time to comment on it. Next time!

The Last Box

Sercon-Navigation 5.5 is brought to you by the Tom Springer Brain Trust, "We think so you don't have to!"
For comments, questions, or hate mail I'm at 3073
Conquista Ct, Las Vegas, NV 89121.