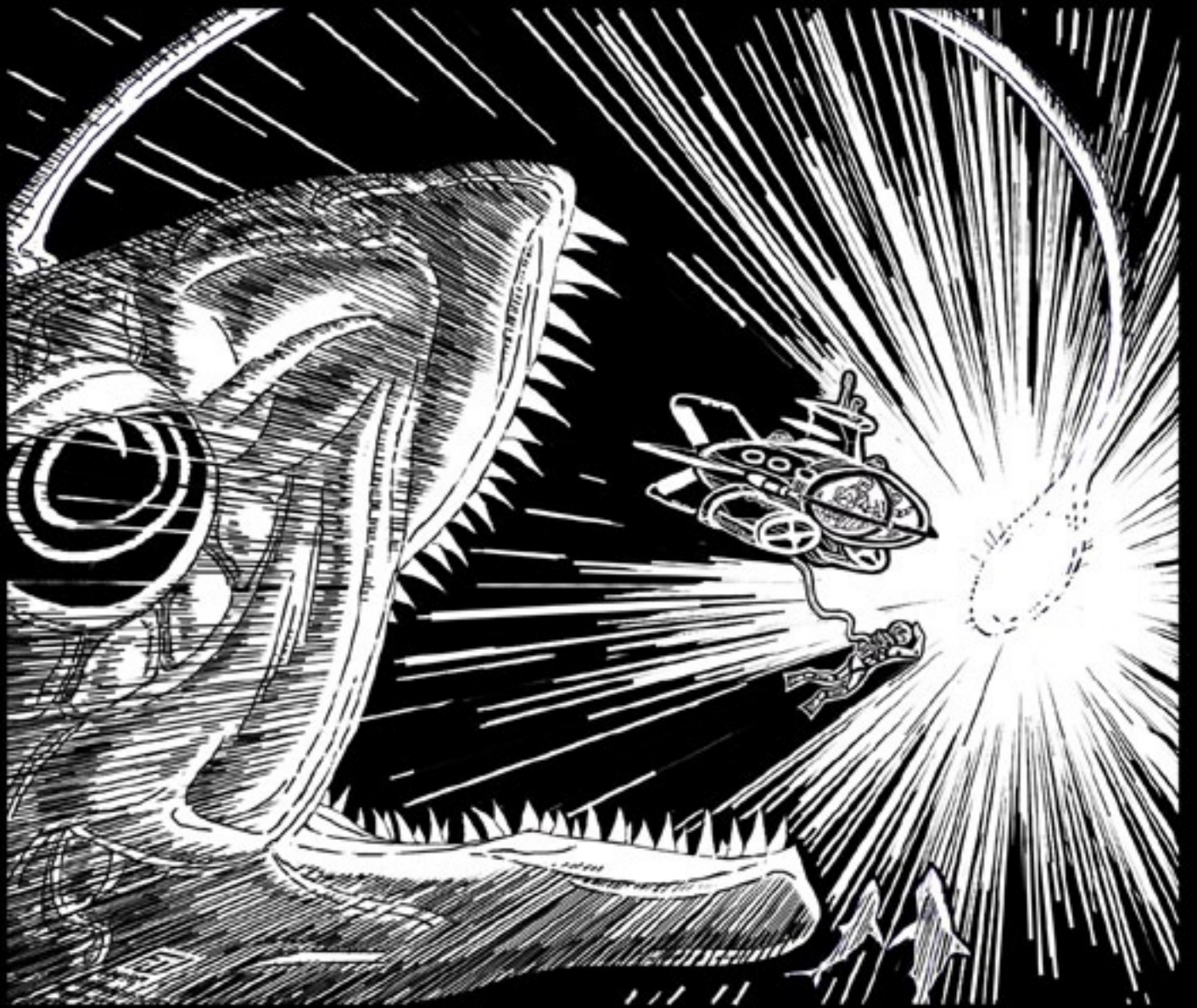


The Drink Tank Issue Fifty-Nine



Featuring a Frank Wa Cover and his thoughts on the passing of Robert Sheckley, SaBean Morel on a Rave, Mike Swan Fiction, CWoCs and Christopher J. Garcia on all sorts of stuff...
garcia@computerhistory.org

A FIGHTING CHANCE

By Frank Wu

I am writing this remembrance of Robert Sheckley on the mostly-blank back cover of issue 17 of "Lady Churchill's Rosebud Wristlet." This is intentional and appropriate. I love every word that comes from Small Beer Press - they can make even a masthead or subscription rate list laugh-out-loud funny. It's difficult to imagine slipstream or the New Weird - or whatever you want to call what Kelly Link and her pals write - without Robert Sheckley paving the way. He was writing absurdist, laugh-out-loud funny stories a decade before Ms. Link was born (no disrespect intended). Sometimes Mr. Sheckley gets the credit he's due, sometimes not, but sadly I've never read of the historical lineage of absurdism drawn directly from his work to Ms. Link's.

The day Mr. Sheckley died, it was fascinating to track the flurry of edits to his Wikipedia bio, as his memory was shaped and re-shaped by dozens of hands. He was remembered for stories which inspired the films "Freejack" and "The Tenth Victim." Curiously, though, he was incorrectly cited as a script-writer on the original "Twilight Zone" TV show. (Though the self-correcting Wikipedians quickly fixed this mistake.) I find it intriguing that he'd be confused with

"The Twilight Zone," because he and the Zone's creator, Rod Serling, saw the universe in profoundly different ways. The Zone itself acted almost like a character, a Trickster ex Machina, appearing at

the end to snatch defeat from the jaws of victory. Eyeglasses are suddenly broken, so hapless Burgess Meredith can't spend joy-filled days reading. The tiny invaders destroyed by Agnes Moorehead turn out to be humans on a first spaceflight - thus rendering our dreams of interplanetary travel pointless and fruitless.

In "The Twilight Zone," the absurd universe will squash us, despite our best efforts. All attempts at love and righteousness are doomed. I don't think Mr. Sheckley believed this. Whereas "The Twilight Zone" concluded that everything was absurd, Mr. Sheckley started from this assumption and then asked, If the world is absurd, how do we respond?

For another comparison, I toss out Harlan Ellison, Mr. Sheckley's buddy and sometime collaborator. Mr. Ellison's stories often beat the same drum, that "I am brilliant, and you either can't understand that and thus fear me, or you can understand it and are thus jealous, but in either case will you will keep beating me down until you've won." Think: "Jeffty is Five." "Repent, Harlequin! Said the Tick-Tock Man." "The Executioner of Malformed Children." The Man wins, again and again. In Mr. Sheckley's universe, sometimes you win, sometimes you lose.

Depends on your cleverness. Sheckley was an absurdist, but also an optimist

- victory is possible, and it doesn't have to be Pyrrhic. Sometimes triumph is as simple as a well-earned drink of water, or a successful starship launch, or escaping your job assignment by



becoming a bird. Heroes have a fighting chance.

I choose to end this remembrance with commentary on Mr. Sheckley's story "Beside Still Waters." There are a million to pick from. Ask any dozen people to identify their favorite Sheckley stories, and no one will name the same one. I could have picked "I See a Man Sitting on a Chair, and the Chair is Biting His Leg," an Ellison-Sheckley collaboration, knowledge of which earned me a prize in a Trivia for Chocolate game. Or:

"Specialist," which tells of a spaceship made of alien bodies - wow! Or: "Down the Digestive Tract and Into the Cosmos with Mantra, Tantra, and Specklebang," which showed me what it was like to take drugs, so I didn't have to. Or: "Cordle to Onion to Carrot," in which a businessman honks at a driver slow to move when the light turns green. The driver - our hero - gets out of his car and confronts the businessman, dressing him down in front of his family, as tens of thousands cheer our hero on, and tanks and missiles line up in his



Original Virgil Finlay Illustration

support. That story showed me - then a shy and awkward teenager - the Powerhouse I could be.

In the story "Beside Still Waters," a lonely man spends his years on an asteroid, his sole companion a robot. But in Sheckley's universe, good can come from bad. The man, Mark, is cynical and sad, but he builds a different personality for his robot friend: calm, idealistic, content. And in the end, our hero gets what he earned - fond, eternal remembrance from a true friend.

I only met Mr. Sheckley once - at a

World Fantasy Convention - where I

was able to tell him that in high school he and William Shakespeare were my favorite authors.

Shakespeare made me think, he made me laugh. I also got to tell him that he was a National Treasure.

Though I only met him that once, I carry his words and his optimism in my soul. His spirit was a friend of my spirit, and my spirit will fondly remember him forever.

On Robert Sheckley
by Christopher J. Garcia

Robert Sheckley was a funny writer. I think he was a type of funny only funny people understand. I haven't read nearly as much of his stuff as Frank has, mostly because I haven't read nearly as much of everything as Frank has, but I have to say that Sheckley, along with a chap with the last name of Sturgeon and one called Farmer, all did a great deal to keep me hooked into SF. I have to say that I have a collection of Sheckley stories that I haven't finished yet, and as soon as I finish the next book on my list (The Second Age of Unreason book) I'll plow in and read the whole thing.

The Drink Tank Issue 59 Was finished on Sunday, December 18th at 10:43 in the morning at the Computer on my desk at the Computer History Museum. The Writers, Frank Wu, Sa-Bean MoreL, Christopher J. Garcia, Mike Swan, Evelyn Aurora Nelson, Lloyd Penney and Eric Mayer.

If you've got comments or questions, sending them to Garcia@computerhistory.org or dropping a mail to 1401 N. Shoreline Blvd. Mountain View, CA will get to me.

The Next Issue will end my year.

2006: The Year of the Zombie!!!

The beauty of the current times is that people want to be scared...sort of. What's been going on over the last few years is the cuddly-ization of the once terrifying. There are Cthulhu stuffed animals and Godzilla dolls with bows! There are comedy shorts about Slasher Killers getting hugs and such.

And then there's zombies.

I've written a lot about zombies over the last few months, and it's obvious that the Zombiephilia that's goin' around ain't gonna stop anytime soon.

And here's why.



The release of all the zombie movies over the last couple of years have really brought them back into the light. People have been watching Day of the Dead and City of the Dead and enjoying the hell out of the comedy and action and horrific deaths and gore.

Something else started to pop up about the same time: the zombie as the comedy item.

Yeah, there have been comical portrayals of zombies dating back to the 1960s, but of late, I've seen many, many more than usual. During the CineQuest shorts selection, which is an excellent gauge of what folks are doing in the shorts community, I saw about 4 short zombie comedies last year, including one that features the latest trend called Attack of the Sexy Zombies. This was a group of three lady zombies, who were all hotty-fied, who slowly advanced on a group of guys who were more interested in getting on them than running away. It was funny, but too long for us to use.



The funny zombie movie started popping up all over the place. The most interesting one I've seen is by Ed Helms of The Daily Show called *Zombie American*. Basically, Ed plays a guy who is a zombie who is trying to live a regular life, trying to date and basically trying to be undead in America in the new Millennium. It's hysterically funny stuff at times, and it runs 8 minutes which is just perfect. It'll be in CineQuest 2006.



So, 2006 will be the Year of the Zombie. I'll have my *Zombie Slideshow* ready for the road (I'm thinking about *World Horror* as a debut) and a likely comedy *Zombie Project* with some of the good people at BASFA that will open whole new worlds of *Zombie* possibilities. It'll be funny, I promise you that.

In addition, there's the *Chainsaw Mafia*, which is a good group for making these delightful films and they put them on at all sorts of fun places.

And I hear there's more Joe Lonsdale on the way for *Western Zombie* fans!

There idea of the sexy zombie really started to take off with the art world. I can remember seeing several Pin-up style sites that had zombie girls, like *zombiepinups.com*. There were even a couple of models who did a bunch of that, like San Jose's own *Miss Conduct* or *Persephone*. They did some great *Zombie*

shoots ages ago, but now, now it chic. *DeviantART.com* is full of sexy zombie pictures, which isn't surprising because it's full of all sorts of weird pictures.

The *Living Dead Girls* (I wrote about them around Halloween) are the perfect example of the phenomena. They even say that they're 'Dead Sexy'! It's just another part of the grand zombie-ing of the world. Every small timer is getting in on the act because if you can do a few make-up effects, you can make a zombie film.



You know, sometimes I get the best responses when all is over and the joke is gone. Good example was BASFA last night. I had given Frank a copy of the last issue of *The Drink Tank* that I printed for a few folks (and he was looking at the page of M bent forward a lot for some reason) and he was spotting errors left and right.

"Chris, do you even read your stuff?"

In fact I do, but I don't have a good eye for errors and my spell check works only so well and I do manage to catch about 1/2 of the errors I find later.

I don't quite remember exactly what I said in response, but I know what I SHOULD have said.

"Are you kidding? I can't read that crap!"

Drugs and Hugs: A Rave Story

by Sabean Morel

There's a thing that happens when you're at a rave, or at least at the Raves that were happening in the late 1980s and early 1990s. They were places where people went to have a good time...a naughty good time actually. It was a place for sex and drugs, and sometimes even sex without the drugs...but not often. There was a sort of brother/sisterhood that I enjoyed a



trance and one of the girls grabbed me and gave me a giant hug.

“I’m so glad you could make it.” she said in a voice that was almost fingernails down my spine.

“Thanks.” I said, not being happy about it.

I wondered in and the whole place was covered in hearts and rainbows and all sorts of whacked shit.

That same thing with the girl outside was repeated for or five times, all from people I didn’t know. A couple of guys, a couple of girls, none of them worthy of tying down and screwing. I even had a guy come up and hand me a PLUR (Peace, Love, Unity, Respect) sticker that he put on my boob and didn’t even have the courtesy to cop a feel. I really didn’t get what was going on.

I suffered for nearly an hour with hugs, gentlemen coming up and telling that I was pretty and hoping that I’d have a good time dancing. I’m a rocker. I don’t go in for Peace, Love & Understanding, so I was hating life.

Until the guy came up to me.

“I know what you need. One tab or two?” He said.

“You could tell, huh?” I said.

I opened my mouth and held up two fingers. He plopped two tabs in and handing me some orange juice.

“I’m SaBean.” I told him.

He led me by the arm to the distant

lot. There was a weirdness though that I’ve never gotten over. It was a party in a warehouse in SF that was just plain weird.

You used to hear about Raves by phone message boxes or from word of mouth. At SFSU, I had both at my fingertips. I must have been to forty or more raves in the semester and a half I was there. There was a point in my life where I spent more time fucking than sleeping and I wasn’t getting it as often my whore of a sister (at the time, she’s much better now!). I heard about one at a warehouse in the part of the city that I had never been to before. It was a residential area, but one that was begin demolished to make way for a planned community, so there were all sorts of empty houses and at least two complexes. I left for the joint around 10pm, picking up the map from the map point (Yes, Groove did in fact use the traditional method of getting people to know and then having them go to a map point where you pay for the map and then you know where to go) and I headed over, not getting there until around midnight.

I should have known that this place was fucked up. The music, which was bouncing all around, was the type I’d call Happy House, the preferred music of those girls who dressed like Rainbow Bright and carry Stuffed Animal backpacks. I saw that these types were congregating on the outside, sweating from dancing. I walked up towards the en-



portion of the chill room where we made the best of the X fuzz and fluff corner that was made for people like me. After a few minutes, I was deeply fucked up, swimming and rubbing against anything handy, including the guy who had provided the entertainment. What I had thought was syrup and sickening while (mostly) sober was trippy and made me want to grab and lick and touch everyone of those messed-up Lov-eniks.

In other words, I can handle the hugs as long as I have the drugs.

A Masked Revolution!

I've already announced that the whole masked thing has come and gone, in favour of the New Zombie thing, but there's a revival about to happen and I'll tell you why...in a 'round-about way.

So, In the mid-1990s, a magazine hit the shelves of various stores I used to frequent called From Parts Unknown. IT was a magazine that was years ahead of everyone. It talked about masked wrestlers, not just of the day, but of all-time. There were some great articles, often mixing Wrestling with sex. This was most pronounced in the issue called, of all things, the Sex Issue, number 5 I believe. They had a range of writers and models including the lovely Queen of the Spiders, Reina Arana. She was way too hot. They even had a spread with current fetish/pin-up girl Dita Von Tease (who become Miss Dita Von Manson after marrying Marilyn) who dressed up as a Mummy girl. It was way hot.

Masked wrestling in actual wrestling

has come in and out of style. The 1980s saw a few masked guys, but mostly they were jobbers. The 1990s saw the introduction of Lucha Libre to the mainstream of wrestling and guys like Rey Misterio Jr, La Parka, Psicosis, Juventud Guerrera, and Super Calo all made a big mark. The WWF then started working with their own variety of masked man. Mankind, aka Mick Foley, Vader and Kane were all popular masked wrestlers, though Kane and Foley both dropped the mask. Dumb booking decisions took the masks off of guys like Mysterio and Psicosis and this was the low point for masked wrestling.

A bunch of artists started doing masked wrestler art, and comic books started using the masked man as a regular theme. Sonambulo by Raphael Navarro, is



the best known, and one of the best comics of the last decade. The thing that I say changed everything is the novel Hoodtown by Christa Faust.

It was a beautiful, sexy, sleazy, funny, smart, and intense noir novel. To say that it was the best novel I read last year would be entirely appropriate. Faust wrote the main

character as a wounded luchadora who had to become a sex worker of sorts to afford to live on the wrong side of the tracks. She ends up having to follow a trail of clues to the guy who has been killing masked hookers in Hoodtown. It flows wonderfully, but mostly, it just rockets over highly uneven ground with the masterful ease that comes with writing about harsh subjects.



So, why do I think that the Masked Wrestler is making a comeback? Well, that's easy. A bunch of guys in SoCal met up with some Vegas dudes. They were all wrestling fans and they all worked as dot-com suckas. They also all got out of the market with their options with a little time before they would have been hard hit. They put their resources together and started working on a movie called *El Luchador*, the story of a prototypical Mexican wrestler who has to come to Vegas to rescue his sister from a Brothel Ranch where she's been held against her will.

I'm interested to see it, especially since I hear that the script was fairly good and has won at least one script-writing competitions. When I first heard about it, from the guy who just signed to score it, I realised that even if it only plays the festival circuit, it'll be an interesting matter to see how it's received.



remotes that saw every type of bioluminescence and this was none of those. It wasn't a dim, wavering light, it was solid, like the single headlight's shine after a car had plowed through a deer and ended up wrapped around the tree in the total darkness. This was brighter than sunrise as they came closer. And besides, they were less than ten meters down, hundreds of meters off the floor where those beasts lived. Perhaps the Earth had been preparing a new Moon under the water and was now ready to spit it out.

The only thing stranger was the fact that the Hutchinson's sonar had gone out not five minutes before they first sighted it, and the mini Hartman was doing no better on readings.

"Execute exterior movements!" the captain cried over the ComLink. This was the cue that diver Archibald had been waiting for. With less than ten meters between him and the...the...thing, he would be the first to know what it was.

The water was evacuated and Archibald along with it. He had used the tinted goggles that allowed him to see. It wouldn't do much good though, as when he got close enough, he saw the thick cord that the huge light dangled from, and then, a second later, he turned and looked, just a moment before the teeth came crashing through him, devouring the mini and not



Some Fiction

By
Mike Swan with Art by Frank Wu

"We're forty meters and closing, Captain." Mr. Kohl announced from the helm of the mini-sub Hartman.

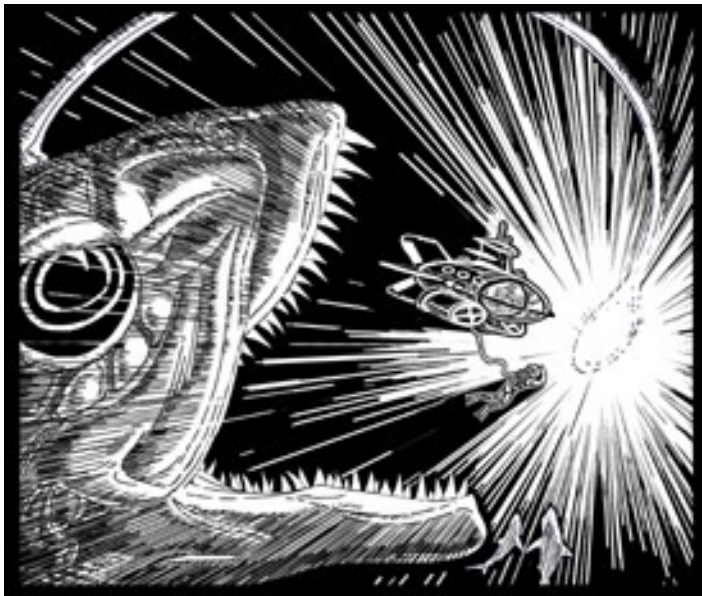
What the hell is that thing? thought shipman Kohl. It certainly wasn't anything he had seen before. He had done dives in

even chewing. The Hutchinson tried to restore contact, but everyone knew they had been swallowed by something that science would never be able to explain.

And a few minutes before, the Leviathan, the long-run underwater project of some country you've never even heard of, came the following communication.

"Start jamming procedure and fire up the light. We'll let our friend here have a little snack before we head out again.

And they sent the mild shock through the bio-engineered monster on whose back they rode, and the light, nearly a thousand feet away, lit brighter than hellfire in the unnatural dark water that always announced the coming of the beast.



Coin-Operated Boy: A Set of Theories (and parody) brought about by a series of Emails with M Lloyd and SaBean Morel

Whenever I start listening to a new band, I drop a line to M, Jay and SaBean, and invariably, they send back the news that I was way behind the times and should have heard of them years back. That happened recently with The Dresden Dolls.

I bought their CDs last week while I was supposed to be Christmas shopping (I still have to get my Uncle Wayne and my Mom something, not to mention Gen, and Evelyn wants a book of Unicorns and one



on Spaceships) and as I started listening, I fell in love with lead singer Amanda Palmer's voice, and came to appreciate their song writing. There was a song on both of the CDs they put out (The Dresden Dolls and A is for Accident) called Coin-Operated Boy that really stood out.

You see, it details a young woman who is sick and tired of regular men in her life and gets herself a boy who happens to run when you put a coin in him. This is an obvious automata song and is one of the rare pieces of SteamPunk (oh, that word again!) music that really stands up.

The combination of themes is interesting. There are very few pieces of SteamPunk anything that really look at romance. It exists as a sub-theme in several pieces, but mostly the stories tend to be about the mechanics and the -punk side instead of heart-to-heart stuff. Palmer's lyrics are lovely, especially the bridge, which she references as a bridge, where she adds -er to words like bitter to make stronger statements.

I mentioned it to M in an email and she said something very interesting.

M- I love that song. It joins She-Bop, I Touch Myself and Turning Japanese as the greatest Masturbation Songs of all-time. There's no better song about a vibrator ever!

Chris- What the hell are you talking about? It's about a girl in the older times who has been hurt and wants to have a boy she can totally control.

M- Silly Chris. Simple, silly Chris. It's not about love or a broken-hearted girl. It's about good old-fashioned playing the battery-powered body blender.

I didn't quite know what to think of that. I sat on it and I printed out the text of the lyrics. There are a few clues that seem to support M's theory. She want's a boy



she can control, and if you let 'boy' represent 'sex'... Well, made of plastic is an obvious sign that that may be what it's about (though I don't know where Elastic would fit, as that's part of what it's made of too) and then there's the line about never leaving the bedroom again, which is something I've heard women say after receiving a nice New Shiny. The 'sitting on a shelf' lyric also works far better with it being a vibrator than an actual doll or person.

The general theme of the song, if you

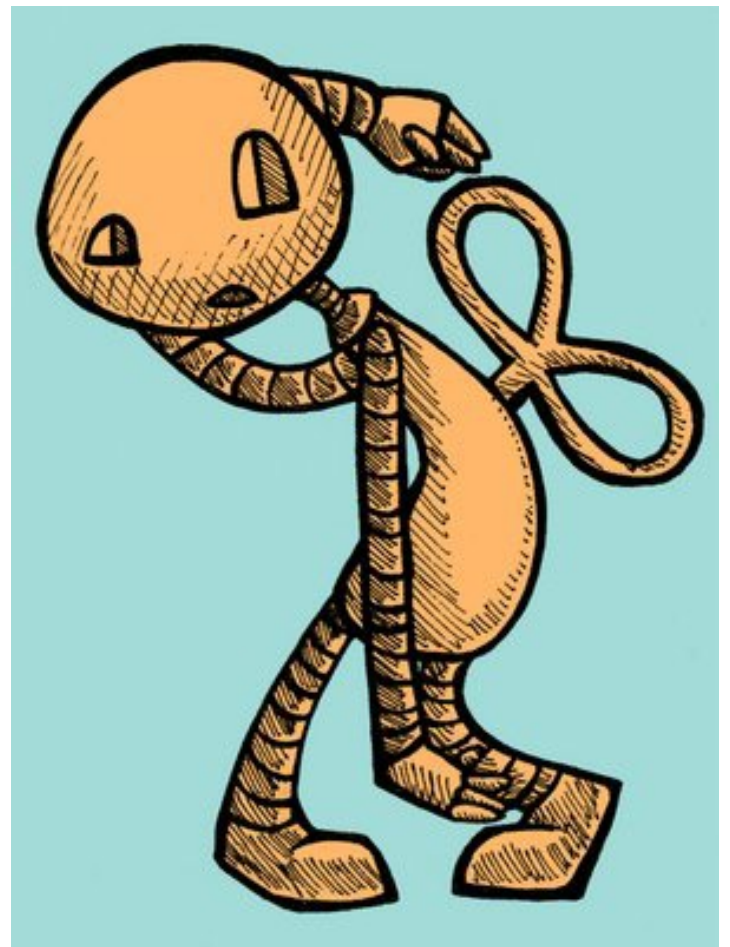


buy the Lloyd premise, seems to be that coin-operated simply means automatic and not that it literally requires a coin. It really only works with the version that is on the Dresden Dolls album because it says 'I can even take him in the bath' as

opposed to the live version which says 'I can even fuck him in the ass'. Interesting theory, but I don't fully buy it.

I forwarded the mails to SaBean who said that both M and I were idiots. She says that a lot, but here she proposed a different idea. Her thought was that the Coin-Operated Boy was a male prostitute or prostitutes.

This one holds more water when applied to both versions. It's an obvious point that coin-operated could easily be put into the category of prostitution, as you simply give him money and he performs. There are a couple of other things that SaBean pointed out (and M followed-on) that also make this



a good point.

First there's the line 'He's not really experienced with Girls', which is a point in SaBean's favour because, as M pointed out, there are far fewer female customers than male for male prostitutes. It also follows that both 'take him in the bath' and 'fuck him in the ass' work on equal levels. Many weights and sizes to choose from would tend to point to the woman having her choice of man-whores. The bridge where she's obviously telling a guy she's interested in (or was seeing) that she's much happier with her coin-operated boy makes much more sense if you're talking about a real male prostitute and not a vibrator. The

There are weaknesses to the theory. He would not be made of plastic or elastic, though is it were a female prostitute with a strap-on, then both cases could be made (but that would be a far leap and never work) and 'he'll say he loves me' thing is probably not something any member of The Trade would do.

Still, the best answer, and the one that fits the lyrics and makes the most sense is that it's a literal Coin-Operated Automaton Boy who she plays with, because, once it again, that would prove that I am right.

Damn Banana Wings!

I admit it, history has always been my strongest subject. I suspect that's why I'm a historian. So, when Banana Wings printed a wonderful article by Tony Keen about those poor Princes (Edward The V and his little bro) who were murdered (most likely), I read it with great attention (and read it again while waiting in line for King Kong. It's a fascinating article, particularly when Tony smartly goes on the side of logic (Richard did it) instead of the side of New Logic (Hank 7 did it). No matter who did it, they're dead. Very dead in fact, and though their remains may have been found (in a trunk buried in the Tower of London for more than a century in the Sixteen Hundreds, they've never been able to figure out what happened to them or



if they were even certainly killed.

This got me on the investigation trail, starting, of course, with the Wikipedia. As I read up on the princes, I found that there was a link to a grouping called Disappeared People. That sunk my entire week's productivity.

The Princes were not the first famous Disappeared people. In fact, most folks just believed that they were murdered (and almost all sources that are of people who were around say that Richard was the one what had it done) and that was that. There have been so many others though, that the grouping had some names that I didn't know had disappeared.

I love Ambrose Bierce. I've read a lot of his stuff in all sorts of areas. He's the only journalist who journalistic pieces I've looked for. Usually I just try to read the other stuff they'd written, but Bierce, even when reporting on things I have no clue about, had a style that was plain readable no matter what area he was writing in. I didn't know much about his later years, and he was on the list of folks who plain vanished off the face of the Earth. It happened in Mexico in 1913 (or maybe 14). This was the time of Pancho Villa

and of Zapata in the South. Bierce was supposed to be heading off to meet Villa, and he well may have. Villa would have welcomed Bierce, he was a publicity hound of the Nth Degree (worse than me even), so having one of the great names of the time visit would have been a big deal. I'm almost certain that Bierce ended up the same way a lot of folks who headed down to Mexico in those days ended up: robbed and dead in the desert.

I found a lot of figure connected with WWII. Raoul Wallenberg I knew had vanished, likely into a Russian Gulag for years and years before he expired, likely in the 1960s. He had helped thousands survive the Nazis. Franz Von Werra, on the other side, disappeared not during a raid, but on a regular patrol. He had escaped the Brits and made his way back to Germany and won the Iron Cross. I knew about both of them, but there was also Glen Miller, whose plane may have been downed by the Royal Canadian Air force as they were dumping bombs in a 'Safe Zone' after an aborted run over Germany.

One name that I'd read before but knew nothing about was Bela Kiss. Kiss was a serial killer, but he also managed to disappear without a trace. He killed at least 24 women, mostly as a part of a marriage scheme, and then went off to join the Army during WWI. A detective named Nagy was on his tail, but it was all while he was in the service, so he was hard to get a hold on. Oddly, there was a sighting of Kiss once in New York City, where rumors had placed him living as a janitor. This wouldn't have been hard to do since the borders were a lot more open, and the officials a lot less vigilant, right after WWI.

There was the one that ranks highest on the scale of lives lost trying to figure out what happened. Percy Fawcett was an explorer, and in many ways a lot like my favourite formerly disappeared and now mere-



ly dead & buried adventurer: George Mallory (whose partner, Andrew Irvine, is still simply disappeared). Percy went into Brazil, as he had many times before, and in 1925 he did not return. He left a cryptic note saying that if he was lost no one should come and find him for fear that they might 'meet their fate'. This didn't stop people as more than 100 lives have been lost in the search, and though some of them have come up with clues (and a set of bones that had nothing to do with Fawcett), none have located Percy. Some say that he took up with a tribe, which may have been the case, or he may have just been eaten, which would be a much more likely theory to have come true.

There are so many people. It makes me sad to think that none of their families had a chance to really get closure. For every villainous Bela Kiss or , there is a beloved figure like Amelia Earhart or Joshua Slocum. Some of them are thought to have planned their disappearances, like Tom and Eileen Lonergan, on whose disappearance the film *Open Water* is based. There are those who probably could have been kept from disappearing, like Iraena Asher, the New Zealand model who simply disappeared after her parents called the police to say that they were worried and that she was bi-polar and unpredictable.

It's a sad list, but at the same time, a list that provides endless fascination for those of us who want our mysteries real.



More Spaceship Talk

I'm always interested in thinking about Spaceships more. I love the concept of space travel, and there are a lot of people who would do it despite the risks even if it meant never coming back to Earth. I don't know if I'd go that far, but it does interest me quite a bit. Evelyn, aka The Little One, wants a book about Spaceships. I'm not sure where to find one, but I'm going to try. I'm also working on an issue of The Drink Tank for next year (maybe around WorldCon time, so I'm not actively working on it, but I'm thinking about it) where I'll have my crack team of writers and friends come up with a ship and a crew and talk about the specifics and so on. That'll be fun.

Mostly, I just wanted to run the above graphic, and since I had a couple of things to say about Spaceships, I thought I'd run it.



More Hot Zombie Talk...sort of.

If you read LiveJournal as much as I do, you might have come across Andy Trembley's recent post about the project Andy, I, Kevin Roche, Frank Wu and likely others are about to head down

(and Frank WILL be involved, mark me!). The project has its roots in a discussion of new forms of zombie and Australia, for some reason. We came up with the idea for Zombats, Zombie Wombats! These undead and unholy beasts that burrow beneath the Earth, the darkest of all possible existences.

That led to the concept of the PlatyPire! What could be more evil than the Darkness that walks with form in a form that happens to be Monotreme in shape! It's an egg-laying furry beast of terror!

The final evil comes in the form of the FrankenRoo! It's basically a Kangaroo with bolts in its neck, but still, E-V-I-L!!!!

And you may wonder what the picture at the top of this piece has to do with anything? Well, it doesn't have anything to do with anything, but since there are no images of any of the AustralioEvils, I had to run another sexy zombie!

Art and Artists For This Issue

• **Zombie with Kitten and Spaceship and Wind-up Boy** by Nekofoot

• **Cover and Segments of Fish Story** by Frank Wu

• **Zombie Prom** by Lupidog

• **Zombie Nurse** by Kirmatu

• **Zombie Pin-Up** by Love-and-mascara

• **Mask of the Golden Tiger** by Shanya

• **Trust Your Doctor** by Draztic

• **Christa Faust Promo Shot From Parts Unknown**

• **Rave and Star Rave** by Art Faery

• **Dresden Dolls images** by Lindiel and PrincessHariboo

• **Rose** by picklecow

• **Zombie Behatch** by Bettyboner

Most of the listed art is available on DeviantART.com under the name listed here...except for Frank Wu. His stuff is at Frankwu.com

EMAILED WORDS OF COMMENT SENT TO GARCIA@COMPUTERHISTORY.ORG BY MY GENTLE READERS

From Etobicoke...Lloyd Penney!

December 15, 2005

Dear Chris:

Behind again, what else is new? But then, with the way you produce these issues, give me a week, and I'm behind. Here's some comments on issues 56, 57 and 58.

56...Interesting little story, with elements of detective and horror fiction. I read neither, with the exception of the Holmes canon and associated pastiches, but I can tell those who enjoy horror that the 2007 World Horror Convention will be held in Toronto. I won't be going myself, and I probably won't work on it, either. I just know it'll be here.

That's after it transitions from San Francisco! That's right, the 2006 version will be in SF and I'll be there, likely showing a film in their film festival.

I know how many people enjoy Harry Turtledove's alternate histories, and there's even an apa about these alternate histories that may have come about if one turning point had turned another way. If onlies are just as much fun as what ifs. If only John Kerry had been elected...

I wish I could join that APA, but I sent a message to the OE and never heard back. My favourite one is what if Heaven's Gate had been a massive hit instead of a tragic flop.

Looks like Judith and SaBean Morel have jumped the gun on the issue about your innermost secrets. These days, it is difficult for siblings to like each other, let alone love.

My two younger brothers hated me for a long time because they saw me as being preferred by my parents. I don't think that was true, but perception becomes truth if that's all you can see. My family and Yvonne's family have done some genealogy to see who's in the family, and all I will say is don't research your family tree unless you are willing to accept everyone you find.

My sis and I get along great, probably because I'm 14 years older, never lived with her and have only seen her about 20 times in total. I've got Jerry Garcia, and Jerry Falwell in my family tree. Falwell is closer than The Dead, sadly...

Hey, Chris, I'm flattered by being included in your list of fans historians will remember, but in that paragraph, are you talking about me or Robert Lichtman? If it's me, the cheque's in the mail. I do this to take part, have some fun, and keep my writing chops sharp. I'm under no illusions that anything I write will be long-remembered, but people like my writing, that's a bonus. I hope there's some quality with my quantity.

Oh, I meant it for you, my friend. It's an important thing to have not only quantity (which I provide) but quality (which I leave to everyone else!) You very well manage both. Not to say that Bob Lichtman isn't important too, he's the only other BNF who seems to take eFanzines seriously in his LoCs.

Lost and found...those guys who invented the Space War game have a lot to answer for in terms of lost productivity. Who knows how much ahead we'd be if we weren't playing Solitaire or Freecell or Space Cadet,

like I was earlier this morning?

And I was playing SpaceWar this afternoon!

Pros to remember...Rob Sawyer, I can see. He's tried to be as cutting edge as he can, and his success in writing is inspirational. China Miéville's writing will be memorable because it leaves you with a vaguely unclear feeling after you've read it.

I love Bobby J.. I think his books are pretty good, though his endings usually leave me cold. I do love China, but there's an element of 'ugh' involved with his work.

My loc...my Christmas shopping is done, halleluiah!, and I'm at home waiting out the arrival of a huge snowstorm we've been promised. Good thing e-mail means never having to trudge through a snow storm to get to the post box. Living on Vancouver Island was a heady time indeed, for so many things happened to show me that I was a worthy and normal kid after all. I'd like to go back for a visit and see all the changes there have been.

You and Gen are on hiatus? Temporary break-up? Break from each other's company? Getting back together soon, I hope.

Actually, it's almost certainly not permanent. Really, it's just a break where we both get a little time out. I still see her most days when I watch Evelyn (which I've always done, even when we broke up last time which we both thought would be for good). It's actually nice at the moment.

More on Eddie Guerrero...death from natural causes, including heart failure. He wrestled himself to death, by the looks of it.

Really, he lifted himself to death. The combination of years of drugs and booze combined with the fact that he seldom ate anything but plain salad and lifted

anywhere from 3 to 5 hours a day will put a lot of stress on the body.

There's a Pastafarian holiday coming up for me. Monday is Yvonne's birthday, and she has decided to pass up going out for dinner in favour of a massive spaghetti dinner at home from me. Now, that's one of my specialties, so spaghetti, meat sauce, Parmesan and garlic bread will be her dinner Sunday night before the big day. Monday is also her office Christmas party, and she is expected there, although she doesn't really want to go.

The reaction to the death of Stan Berenstain was almost of the scale of the reaction to Ted Geisel passing. It seems that only when they die do you find out the breadth of their careers, and what else they did. Geisel was a political cartoonist with a vicious wit, and the Berenstains did adult work as well. You must be looking forward to the Curious George movie. As the posters say, Show Me The Monkey!

I laughed a lot at that.

57...produced by Noodles Romanoff and his Band of No-Goods. Name that cartoon. TV series on ghosts and hauntings are fun to watch, but belief is tough to come by here. Tricks of the light, coincidences...if ghosts do exist, they must be awfully bored. Now if they could perform some real explain-that!-style of tricks, they'd really get our attention. I remember Conan Doyle was a big believer in the supernatural, but most of what he offered up as proof was faked photographs.

Ah, Roger Ramjet, if I'm correct. Good cartoon. Yeah, Conan Doyle was a believer, a little too much of a believer. When I did the panel on paranormality at LosCon, we had an excellent conversation in a room of skeptics and semi-believers. Probably the best group to do that type of panel with.

Most of the events Eric Mayer discusses here are a little before my time, and I will not judge these folks. I won't even judge Abi

Frost. Discussing what happened is a fair idea, and one fanhistorians would like to take a crack at. Rehashing the feud is to no one's benefit. I suspect that Bergeron had his reasons for doing what he did, as did other people involved. I have my own copy of Warhoon 28; it's on my reference shelf by my desk.

True, I think that's the big problem: no one can seem to talk about it without bringing up the bile again.

Peter Sullivan should know I was in grade school in the 60s, so I'm lucky to remember who my teachers were. Most of my personal 70s, I've tried to forget. And, I usually say that about Worldcons...if you can remember it, then you weren't really there. We learn more about what happened at the Worldcon from the reports people post on their websites, blogs, etc.

I've gathered enough info on the 2005 WorldCon to pass myself off as having been there, which will come in handy someday. In the 1960s, my parents were in Elementary School and Junior High, so neither of them had hippy pasts, which means that I can admit that they are my parents!

58...The Cardimums...not sure what to make of all this, Chris, except that maybe The Cardimums were one of the best air bands of all time, or one of the best bands that never existed. Think MTV would be interested in hearing about this? Not on the scale of Spinal Tap, perhaps, but... Not having much, or any, musical talent hasn't stopped some people from making careers of music. If some of these photos aren't file, they must be of the Morel sisters, and they are beautiful young women indeed.

They're both. We think that they were a terrible band in the beginning who became a very fun hoax. One of the photos of SaBean is a fake that she told me to put in. The photos of Judith are quite lovely. M is the one constantly

showing off her cleavage. Go figure.

Hmmm...why am I a fan? Besides the interest in fantastical literature, fandom allows me to be creative with the SFnal bent to it. Just about anything can be done that way, and then, there are other activities that catch the imagination. I prefer to do rather than just read and watch. What do I intend to do for the rest of my fannish life? Party, go to cons, be with friends, wrap up my career in convention management, write lots more locs and do a little resting on laurels.

You know, if you added 11 words, this paragraph could be one of the One Hundred Worders! There's nothing more comfortable than a bed of one's laurels.

All done and caught up! At least, until the next issue. As I wrote earlier, a huge snowstorm is on its way, and we are promised at least a foot of snow. That's a very good reason to stay at home, have a hot lunch, and bury myself under a couple of quilts and watch cartoons on TV all day. A mental health day is sounding better and better all the time. It's only 10 days to Christmas, so Yvonne and I hope you have a great Christmas, and party hearty for the New Year. I am hoping for big things in 2006. If not, I want my money back. Take care and see you nextish.

When is Canadian Christmas? A month after Canadian Thanksgiving? or is it in June? I can never keep track. Seriously, Merry Christmas, Happy Hannuka, Felix Ano Nuevo, Joyous Yule, Have a Bad-Ass Boxing Day, a Krazy Kwanza, a Tip-top-tet and a solemn and respectable Ramadan.

Yours, Lloyd Penney.

In the EWOC lounge, Mr. Eric Mayer performs his hits!

Hi Chris,

Another great issue. I dunno if it's a fanzine. Do fans think it's a fanzine?
I've decided that it's not really a fanzine.

Every few issues it becomes just a zine.

I knew a guy named Mike who wanted to start a band. He didn't play an instrument but he would imitate Jim Morrison in front of his bathroom mirror and was given to saying "I am the Lizard King" at odd moments. He decided his band would be called The Plastic Squatter Band.

Ooh, good name.

His advertising campaign was uncomplicated but rather successful. Wilkes-Barre sits beside the Susquehanna River. One of the major bridges -- the gateway to Wilkes-Barre -- as if anybody would want one, features in the middle, at either side and spanning the sidewalks, two towering arches surmounted by eagles. One night Mike drove out onto the span with a can of spray paint and wrote the name of his band on one of the arches.

Now, that is dedication. Reminds me of that movie Turk 182.

I say this was rather successful because it announced the band to half the people entering Wilkes-Barre every day for at least 25 years. The paint job was carried out around 1971 and as recently as the early nineties I made a pilgrimage to the site and when I walked out to the arch the name was still visible.

See, now that's the way to go about it!

Since then, after a near flood caused some damage, the bridge was renovated and sandblasted and so the Plastic Squatters have vanished into history. But, for a Wyoming Valley Band it did pretty well. Who recalls The Lear Brothers, or Glass Prism? Granted, the Plastic Squatters have to be ranked behind The Buoys who, in the immortal "Timothy", sang about cannibalism following a mine cave in.

Ooh, how Nick Cave & the Bad Seeds. I can't say I've heard of either of the bands.

Indeed, Mike probably would have rivaled the Buoys had he actually penned any songs for his group. I am recalling, of course, the talents he displayed in his imaginary underground newspaper "The Glory Hole"

with its accounts of orgies on the college president's estate, "where man and beast ran hand in hoof."

I long since lost touch with Mike. I heard he became a school psychologist. ***And that sounds like exactly the guy I'd want helping the odd and ill-adjusted youth in our schools.***

--

Eric

The Tale of Evelyn's Teeth

by Christopher J. Garcia and Evelyn Aurora Nelson

On Thursdays during the Christmas Holidays, I watch Evelyn from 3:30ish through until her Mom gets home from the Toy Store around midnight. I make her dinner, I take her to my place so she can play with my Mom, I watch a little TV with her. Then I make her brush her teeth.

That's always the hardest part, because Evelyn HATES brushing her teeth. She hates flossing more, but brushing will typically cause her to go into various forms of hysterics. So, on Thursday, I had her brush and offered as her incentive that she could watch the Simpsons (her favourite show) while she was brushing. She was basically just touching her teeth gently with the brush, so I told her to brush harder. When she did a tooth went flying!

And it landed more than five feet away and it took some looking, so we found it. I had her stop the bleeding and we started flossing her teeth. As I flossed the other front tooth, right next to the one she had lost, it came loose and I had to remove it with the floss in a garrote manner. That's right, a week before Christmas, Evelyn lost her two front teeth, I kid you not.

Her reaction: Chris made my brush hard and I lost a tooth. Then he flossed and I lost another tooth. I got ten dollars from the tooth fairy, but first we had to find them. I like losing teeth.



York and not tunnelling far down.

Having seen just about every King Kong ever made in the US/New Zealand, I can say that Jackson's is the most interesting on several levels, but the Willis O'Brien effects and the general wonder of the original make it a bigger event of a film.

The 1933 version is magnificent, if dated. It's certainly un-PC, but if you're lost in the story, you don't notice. The effects, miraculous in their day, seem so jerky and weak to viewers like me who grew up watching Star Wars and computer generated effects, but still, there's something magic to them.

The 1976 version is a disaster. It's got one of the most incredible leads at the time: Jessica Lange. Watching it the other day on American Movie Classics, I realised that she was probably the hottest female in Hollywood at the time. She was just plain smokin'! Charles Grodin, always dependable, could do nothing to save the film. The story was basically a call to hate Oil Companies. The effects were OK for the time, but just a year later, Star Wars would change everything.

What's Peter Jackson got that the others don't? He's got Naomi Watts, who is magnificent as Ann Darrow, the Beauty the Kilt the Beast. It's got amazing effects. It's got Jack Black in the role of the scheming producer (who actually says 'I'm the type of guy you can trust: I'm a movie producer') and it has a beautiful set of love stories in

it: one with Adrian Brody which is OK, one with Kong which is heart-breaking.

The acting is strong, far stronger than any previous, and the effects are mind-blowing. Jackson is our best big movie director. I can't recommend the movie enough, but I'll try!

I Give You...KONG!

The movies start getting better right around Thanksgiving, and I'm a movie fiend, so I go and see them. King Kong was delightful, despite some really wonky physics which I won't point out except to say that heavy-laden trucks in the 1920s and 30s would often cause serious sink holes due to the weakness of the tunnels beneath. I only say this because Kong ends up landing on the streets of New

