

This Here #1

EGOTORIAL

Welcome to the inaugural but hopefully not last issue of *This Here*, a fanzine by Nic Farey.

Herewith a little exposition:

I've pretty much decided at this point to retire *Arrows of Desire*. While the last issue (#8) was generally well received (and the subject of a terrific review by Paul Kincaid in *Banana Wings*, tx Paul, grovel, grovel), its subject matter and to some extent style weren't really consistent with what I had been doing with *Arrows* in previous issues, although one or two of those had featured some similar intensely personal writing from both myself and others. Feeling drained though encouraged by *AOD* #8, I had actually gotten about four pages into what might have been *AOD* #9 by which point I realized I already had three or four threads going, as well as a backstory flashback. Considering this, I realized that telling the story of the year following Dee Ann's death (actually the period covered would have been from July 1996 to April 1997) would have to involve something like eight threads.

Brilliant though I might think I am, I figured that this would fly about as well as the Spruce Goose. Or JFK Jr.

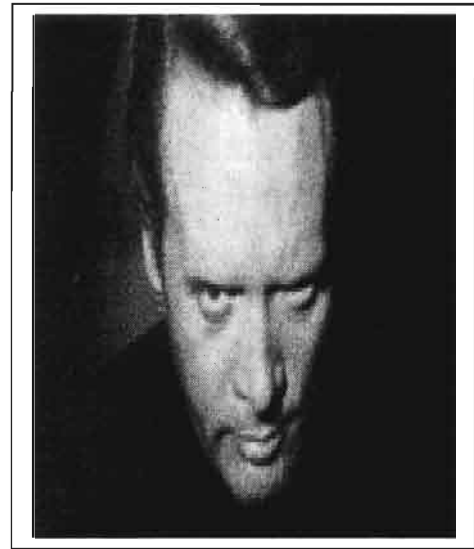
As Supreme GUFFO Paul the K pointed out in his review, I had used my perennial writing pseudonym of "S V O'Jay" as a kind of neutral commentator in the original piece, writing the more personal sections as – er – "Nic Farey". I got to thinking (pause for laffs from the usual suspects) on the drive home from the airport after our Novacon trip that it might actually be time to find out whether "Nic Farey" does in fact have a genuine writing identity.

Hence... *This Here*.

I intend to produce issues of this perzine as infrequently as circumstances allow

(translation: when I fucking feel like it, OK?), and will probably keep it down to a few pages a go. Parts of what would have been *Arrows of Desire* #9 will undoubtedly end up here in the form of individual anecdotes. Might even be one in here somewhere – imagine that!

For anybody who might have been interested, part two of "This Time Next Year" was subtitled "...And I Don't Need to Be Forgiven". This was to have been the cover picture:



Make whatever deeps out of that you will.

Finally for people who like to know about *that* sort of thing, "This Here" is a Ray Charles track from the 1970 album "My Kind of Jazz", which I believe has recently been reissued by Rhino Records as an inclusion with the "Genius + Soul = Jazz" set. The album also included the curiously named "Booty-Butt", which I believe was Ray Charles' last top 40 single.

It's rather good.

UnTAF Trip Report (Novacon 29)

I just finished reading Wendy Graham's Novacon 29 "report" in FTL magazine (to be found at www.ftlmagazine.com). The phrase "self-serving bollocks" came to mind. Factual errors aside, it seems like Bendy would like to come across as the all-knowing high priestess, and everybody else to look like an oaf. It will amaze readers (and Tony Morton) to hear Carlos Santana described as "turgid C and W stuff". At least she admits she only bought "a couple of my Beatles CDs", after whose demise it appears her musical knowledge departed for Pluto.

So here's what we *really* did on our 'olidays (fancred subject eh Yvonne?).

Now one thing you have to remember is that I'm taking some interesting drugs throughout the time described here – for the reasons why see later. The side effects of Predisone are numerous (and include bleeding from the ass which is not fun right now) but for our purposes here include mood swings, so if I come across as having been cranky at times, that's my excuse and I'm sticking with it. Bobbie actually gave me much less grief than usual over my behavior, since I had the wit and foresight to print out for her the list of the drug's interactions and side effects from the Web. This from www.thriveonline.com, which I can highly recommend.

We arrived as usual on Thursday night, bloody tired after a bumpy flight, and leaving Bobbie to catch some z's I decamped to the bar (and the pub, and the other pub, and back to the bar) to find the portly smiling figure of Chris Murphy, eager to regale me with the revelation that he'd figured out how to do simple mental arithmetic. It seems he'd worked out all by himself that Scammell (MKS) had e-mailed the programme notes too late for me to have gotten them, and thoughtfully provided a copy which I proceeded to scribble mightily over.

Mighty Mo, gracious and sweet as ever, tendered a personal apology later. Who can resist *that* disarming smile?

Friday brings breakfast practice, several hours of "wenzafukinbaropen", and an existential discussion on whether there are in fact two separate entities named "Pat McMurray". It took a few beers to calm down after that one, I can tell you. Teck gear arrives, teck gear is set up and checked, more beer consumed, hello, how are you, fine thanks etc. etc. Opening ceremony proceeds without much incident, and Teck crew bugger off to leave yours truly i/c Friday noises. I was a little pissed off by this, but the Blessed Bobbie thoughtfully reminded me that I do Friday nights every year, and to check out the drug alert I wrote earlier. Ah, that's all right then.

I think it makes you forgetful, too, because Wendy seemed bossier than usual (plausible), and the sainted Plummer more absent than usual (less plausible), causing me to have a mild case of the snits. But think!, my inner voice sez, ye remember the boy Mark when 'e were nothing but a shy, mild-mannered lad who used to apologize to 'ee for not having a pot to trade or a zine to piss in, and now look at 'im, multiple award winning BNF that 'e is, bin swanning off to Southern parts. Which not only suggests the connection that he was probably *drinking* Swan, but also begs the question whether said sainted Plummer is the sort of person you'd want swanning in your Southern parts *at all*. Mostly harmless, I'd say.

Saturday dawns with only a mild hangover, drugs and breakfast. Last night's broken teck bits had been replaced by the goodly supplier, and we prepare for Ian and Jack's slide show with the jaunty air of people who have no idea that the radio mike receiver is fucked. Ah well. I inform the gallant Chris "*Mister Ops to you*" Murphy not to worry, and not to pay for that piece of kit either. We carefully set up a couple of hand held mikes on stands up front, with plenty of lead for the notoriously peripatetic duo, who proceed not to use them.

Gravy for a while, with shifts sorted, and we are cheerfully heeding earlier admonitions from chair-entity Carol i.e. "don't play the music so bloody loud", with

the possible exception of Wendy's Beatles CDs when Rog Peyton is in the room, since he apparently despises them.

I in fact heard several disparagements of the venerable bookseller over the course of the weekend, which made me wonder who the old bugger really managed to piss off lately. It's a shame that with so many much worthier targets around, *some* people still have to pick on the sick and elderly.



A pensive high priestess

Saturday night brings around the venerable and traditional Teck Room Party, as always an exercise in good-humored extortion, this year to benefit RNIB. As we're in a single room (must be some mistake, honest guv), the turnout of worthies soon become very well acquainted indeed. One of the Pat McMurrays turns up in a most sober outfit (inappropriately, some would say). A rumor is quietly floated that these are his everyday business clothes, in which case the business in question would appear to be that of Victorian pox doctor's clerk. Now wash your hands.

(Incidentally, that sounds a *lot* better in a Scots accent. Go on, try it – *poax doacter's clerruk!*)

Speaking of Scots accents, the elfin Barbara adds further delight to the proceedings by producing a bottle of

Czechoslovakian whisky, an interesting counterpoint to Jim Beam Rye, Jose Cuervo and Cinammon Schnapps, and upon which a grateful nation (well, a Pat McMurray anyway) pounced.

Photos are taken of Bobbie in an informal arrangement with Anders, Noel and Fishlifter, and she is persuaded against her better judgement to have another Tequila. Liquor having been mostly dutifully consumed and all concerned parties relieved of several pounds for the privilege, we decamp to the "Swedish party" in 302, where Anders the graceful host will subsequently claim to have had his ear licked by Bobbie, a claim she vehemently denies: "I wasn't licking, I was *talking*."

I am accused of being far too friendly with Julia, copping feels & snogs with impunity. I decide not to deny this, given the presence of 30 witnesses and Tobes, and am rewarded by a scratch on the back from Bobbie which resembles a Masai scarification ritual and still hasn't healed up. I release Julia and we head for the bar to see if anyone can calm us down. Oh dear, 5:30am and I'm too bloody old for this!

Sunday morning – er – breakfast, drugs etc., and we pursue the Teck path for what we are known. Bobbie emerges a little after lunchtime, and I proceed to piss her off mightily by remarking "Wow! I'm surprised you've got the balls to show your face today!". She storms off, we Teck on. Fence-mending, I retrieve her later in time for the beer tasting, by which point I am about dead on my feet and we leave almost immediately for me to have a bit of kip.

Returning after a couple of hours, we join the general conviviality, including Tobes, who relates the story of a program item which he had been conned into at another convention. I forget the subject, but the subtitle was "Tobes discusses with himself". He related his entry into the empty room, and, as asked, he did in fact begin to discuss with himself the subject in question. At this point in the tale, he paused for a moment's reflection, then added "Actually, I got quite argumentative."

The socializing continued into the wee wee hours, and we ended up spending a good deal of time with Martin & Helena Tudor. I'd asked Martin earlier in the weekend whether we'd get to see his good lady wife, and he did manage to persuade her through the doors, despite the fact that recent personal tragedy made her understandably reluctant to face the rigors of a Novacon roomful. Both of them have been (and are) under a lot of stress, and it was undoubtedly good to be able to blow off a little steam, especially in the company of friends.

It certainly was good to see Helena, who is still as good-looking and charming as ever, and it will be nice to do the same next year, hopefully under happier circumstances. And no, if you don't know, I'm not telling, out of deference to my long-time friend and his dear wife. I *will* be asking Martin if I can recount the "missing story" from his TAFF report, however. Hows about it MT?

Generally, we enjoyed this Novacon a great deal. Bobbie was much more relaxed this year, having met so many people who were so nice to her at Novacon 28 (Alice, this means *you!*) and so she was able to be more of her outgoing self, mounting a spirited defense of karaoke in the face of withering criticism from Tony Berry. The programme was, on the whole, a very enjoyable one (kudos to Mighty Mo), and believe me when you're doing the Teck thing you sometimes get to see more programme than you might otherwise like. The only real disappointment was Ian's Guest of Honor speech, which was basically just a Guest of Honor reading and pretty much devoid of his usual charm.

Oh yes, and the breast-jiggling contest was won by Claire Brialey by the convincing score of 2,346 – 0. How *does* Carol Morton keep those things that still?

Home sweet home

On returning from any trip, I always start to feel good when I cross the Maryland state line, and even better when I cross the

Calvert County line. We had to take a slight detour on the way back from Dulles airport to pick up Bobbie's car from her ex's, since he was supposed to have fixed the bodywork. (Not! He's *still* an asshole.)

We picked up the car anyway, as she needed it for some school thing the next day, and I beetled off through North Beach, pulling into the Fastop for some gas, *American* cigarettes and a six-pack.

Driving the Cadillac back through the county, I'm chugging a Busch and smoking a Merit when Creed's *Higher* comes on the radio. That's when I knew I'd gotten home.

Surreal Tales



St. Cecelia at the pipe organ

A recent book review of a history of the Surrealist movement recounted a World War 2 era tale of Max Ernst, who was interned several times in camps in France, and escaped just as many times, trying to make it across to Spain.

On this occasion Ernst had made it as far as a train station at the Spanish border, but aroused the suspicions of the guard who demanded to know what the rolled-up items were he was carrying under his coat. Resigned, Ernst began tacking these (his works) up on the peeling walls of the train station, creating total silence from both the guard and the others at the station.

Finally the guard directed Ernst to take down the paintings, and addressed him thus:

“Sir, you have a tremendous talent, and I greatly admire talent. However, I must send you back to Pau (in France). This train on the right is the train for Pau, the train on the left is the train for Madrid. Here is your passport. Please do not get on the wrong train.”

Which is how Max Ernst finally made it into Spain, and speaks volumes for the artistic taste of an unknown crossing guard at a small border town.

True story.

Tunes!

After much deliberation, I decree that the Single of the Year has to be Creed’s *Higher*. Honorable mentions to *The Kids Aren’t All Right* and *She’s Got Issues* by The Offspring, *Heavy* by Collective Soul, *Smooth* by Santana with Rob Thomas, *Fly Away* by Lenny Kravitz, *Praise You* by Fat Boy Slim, *All The Small Things* by Blink 182, *Holding Hands* by Everlast, *Cowboy* by Kid Rock, *Black Balloon* by the Goo Goo Dolls and *Steal My Sunshine* by Len. This last one despite the fact it has “one hit wonder” written all over it in indelible marker.

Album of the Year: *Supernatural* by Santana (and guests). No contest. (Probably because I haven’t gotten Creed’s new CD *Human Clay* yet – I’m reliably informed it’ll be in the Xmas stocking.



Not a C&W album, Wendy

Personal Injury

Have you ever noticed, wondered (or even cared) that my left ear now sticks out more than the right one does?

I think it may have been back in March or April of 1996, I’m not entirely sure (of the month, that is), but there was a party up at our friends Butch and Libby’s house in the neighborhood. All their kith and kin were there, including a couple of the inbreds from out of the mountains. Turned out one of these assholes had married a girl who used to hang around Kenwood Beach, she was related to old lady Garnett who has the house right by the shore. In my usual attempt at what passes for wit after 20 beers, I gave her the old line: “Come and sit on my lap and we’ll talk about the first thing that comes up”. Hell, at this point I didn’t even know she was married to this little twit, not that I was interested in her anyway.

Well, a minor blow-up occurred, with the also drunk hillbilly taking great offense (perhaps understandable). I apologized in front of the room full of people (and meant it), and figured that would be an end of it. Not so. I walked back down to the fishing pier later, and this little fuckbag was sitting there (why, I don’t know). He repeated his earlier mumble: “I don’t like what you said to my wife”, and I blew up on him, giving him the full tirade about how *my* wife was in hospital dying of cancer, and I wasn’t interested in his old lady, and like I gave a shit about what he thought anyway. Next thing I knew, he was running up the road at a rate of knots and I was feeling something warm around my left ear.

Being hit upside the head with a Michelob bottle will do that.

Realizing, even in my drunken state, that I was leaking the red stuff all over my shirt (and stopping shouting “Come back ‘ere you fuckin’ coward” at hillbilly boy who had quite sensibly legged it up the road), I reeled back to our street and managed to persuade my buddy Pat’s girlfriend (also called Pat) to drive me to the ER. I knew she’d be a safe bet to be (a) home and (b) sober, since she’s

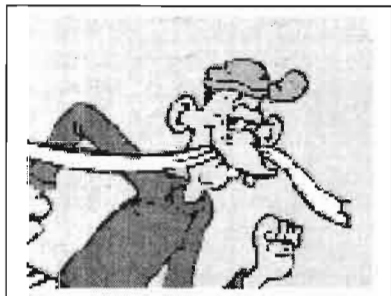
not known for her great sociability when it comes to hanging out with roomfuls of drunks.

Not much else to tell, except I managed to punch a good crack into the windshield of the car from the inside on the way up there.

Next morning me and buddy Pat strolled around the neighborhood looking for this little hooligan, and nearly got into a war over it with Libby's jailbird brother Davey. I managed to talk him out of major hostilities, since all we really wanted was to sort things out between me and the culprit, which he was OK with, it seems.

That was just as well, since Davey has AIDS and his favorite method of attack is to cut you then spit on the wound. We never did get the hillbilly, who at least had the sense to hide out before leaving, and to stay away for a year.

Plug



While the fierce intellect of Tommy Ferguson and the sweetness and charm of Sue Mason are both worthy attributes for a TAFF winner, it occurred to me that if you put the two together, you might get M K Speller, or something like that. Though obviously, not as good-looking.

Therefore (and now for something *completely* different) it has to be **TOBES FOR TAFF** this time. Vote wisely, vote well. Send money.

Loco Citato

I'm keeping the LoC pages title from *Arrows of Desire* for the sole reason that I'm rather fond of it.

Well *obviously* there aren't any LoCs this time. But I'll use this space to thank a few people who said nice things about *Arrows of Desire* 8, sent me fanzines and so forth....

So a tip o' the feather to (In no particular order) M K Speller, Steve and Ann Green, Steve Jeffery, Sue Jones, Ken Cheslin, Sandra Bond, Paul Kincaid, Mark Plummer, Claire Brialey, Noel Collyer, Tobes de Valois, John and Eve Harvey, Yvonne Rowse, Alice Lawson, Martin and Helena Tudor, Chris Murphy, Dave Lally, Tony Morton, the Plokta cabal, FOSFAX and a Pat McMurray. Sorry if I've forgotten anyone, but there's a deadline on the USPS y'know.

Indulge Me...

§

I've noticed that lately I sometimes sleep (or go to sleep, more accurately) with my arms up next to my head, wrists crossed. This is the exact position in which someone would be tied up to be flogged.

§

Do you ever listen to music (particularly rock music) on the radio, and wonder how it would sound played on the bagpipes?

§

If you try to fail, but then in fact succeed, which did you do?

§

I can't believe the WCW is bringing back Ric Flair but letting Randy Savage go. Flair looks so out of shape and is such a useless, sad old man that he couldn't sell a move to a blind man. At least Savage still looks as though he can rassle. (I subsequently learn that Flair's contract requires him to make personal appearances *only* in his final year – to the end of 2000. Apparently the old goat is a little miffed.)

§

Memo to Steve Green: Remember, "I wish you wouldn't call me Daddy when we're gettin' it on..." (Tee-hee).

§

Congrats to stud-about-town Mike Ford and the Lady Jane on the arrival of baby Grace, November 27th 1999, 5lb 4oz.

§

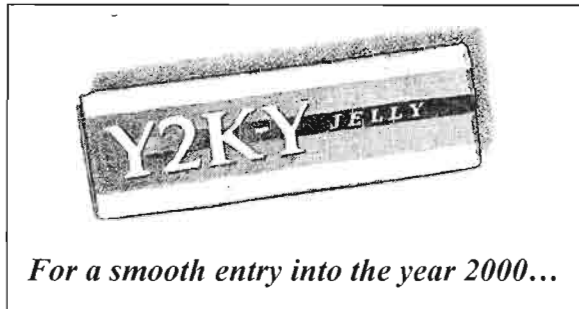
The *only* station that really rocks, DC-101 (to which my car radio is permanently tuned) can be heard worldwide by getting into their web feed at www.dc101.com

§

E-Bay has been having lots of fun with banning stuff, hasn't it? The latest snippet to catch my eye is a ban on "hate-name" sites, brought about by someone called 'animus' who was trying to auction the web address "niggers.org" for \$1 million and up. Apparently the NAACP *does* actually try to buy these names when they come up, as does the Anti-Defamation League for anti-semitic names.

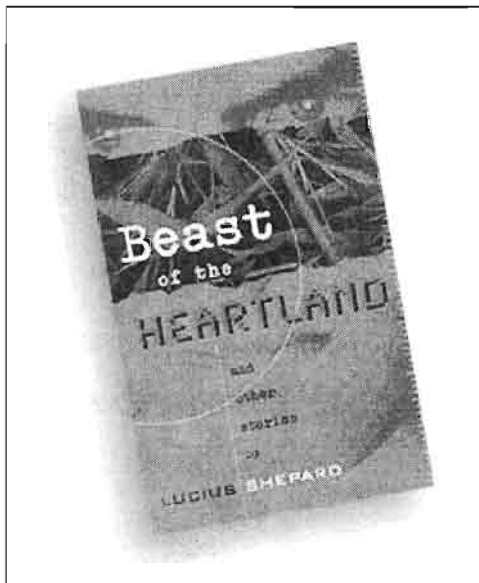
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In a related story, there are apparently only *six* of the so-called "seven dirty words" which are totally excluded from use as domain names. Apparently "shit" is a useful syllable in Japanese.



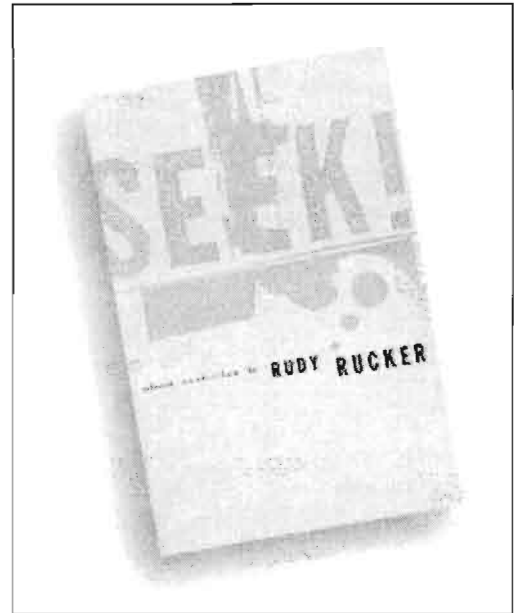
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I might (or even should) get kicked in the ass for writing *This Here* when I probably ought to have been finishing off book reviews for *FTL*. However, as a blatant space-filler, here are the potted versions:



Beast of the Heartland (Lucius Shepherd) – fiction.

This is jolly good.



Seek! (Rudy Rucker) – non-fiction

This is jolly good, but some of the travelogue stuff gets a little repetitive.

§

I nearly forgot to mention two outstanding live cover versions we heard at the *Farm Aid* concert this year. Neil Young jammed with the Dave Matthews Band on *All Along the Watchtower*, and country diva Deanna Carter closed her set with a surprising (and *very* good) cover of Tom Petty's *Free Falling*. More concert review next time, maybe.

§

There you are, then.

The Fanzine Miranda

This Here is an occasional perzine by Nic Farey, and is available for "the usual", assuming you know what that means. If you don't, you're not a real fanzine person then are you?

Oh, very well: you got this rag for one of the following reasons:

- You gave or sent me a zine (or will)
- You have LoCced (or will)
- You bought alcohol (or will)
- I know where you live (or will)

Anyone who didn't get a copy of *Arrows of Desire 8* and would like one, either send me a stamped, self-addressed legal size envelope with enough postage (or IRCs) for, say, half a *Banana Wings* (would that be *one* wing?), or e-mail me at the address below and I'll send you the Word document as an attachment. Please *do not* send cash unless it is a large amount, and you specifically want me to spend it on drink and forget you ever existed.

This Here is likewise available by e-mail, and anybody is free to redistribute it themselves to people they presumably don't like very much.

E-LoCs are preferred, but don't let that put you off, unless you *really* can't find the exact crayon you need.

THIS HERE...

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**MORE FUN
than SENSE
TOBES
AND TAFFI!**

*Say it ain't so, I will not go, turn the lights off,
carry me home...*
(Blink182)

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