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A Journal of J.R.R. Tolkien, C.S. Lewis,  
Charles Williams, and Mythopoeic Literature

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## Mythellany #2

Veida Wissler

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July 31 - August 1, 2021 (Saturday and Sunday)

<http://www.mythsoc.org/mythcon/mythcon-51.htm>



## Mythcon 52: The Mythic, the Fantastic, and the Alien

Albuquerque, New Mexico; July 29 - August 1, 2022

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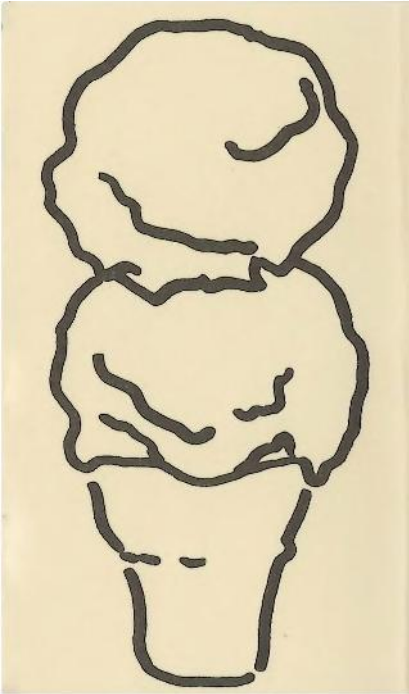
### Abstract

Our 1981 issue of Mythellany disappeared like Farmer Maggot's mushrooms. I hope you got one. If not, though, here is the all-new 1982 issue. It's expanded. More stories, more poems, more puzzles and crosswords and laughs.

### Keywords

Mythellany; Mythopoeic





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The Mythopoeic Society also publishes Mythlore, a literary quarterly focussing on myth and fantasy, especially the works of J. R. R. Tolkien, C. S. Lewis, and Charles Williams, and Mythprint, a monthly bulletin of mythopoeic doings, many of them Society sponsored, and Mythellany, a fantasy fiction magazine published annually and distributed by mail for \$2.50 per copy. For more information, write the Mythopoeic Society, P. O. Box 4671, Whittier, CA 90607.

# EDITOR

## HELLO FELLOW-MYTHERS!

Our 1981 issue of Mythellany disappeared like Farmer Maggot's mushrooms. I hope you got one. If not, though, here is the all-new 1982 issue. It's expanded. More stories, more poems, more puzzles and crosswords and laughs. Several contributors this year have appeared in other publications around the country, notably Diane Webster, Carolyn White, and Michael Collings. And Mythellany is visual. No sloppy pastiche or dull design. No competition can match us unless they're dropping big bucks.

And you should see what's in the pot for next year! Mythellany is listed in the Fiction Writer's Marketplace, submissions are already arriving for '83, and there are some good contacts developing. No details are available, but what farmer pulls up seedlings?

Bon appetit for '82, and for '83? Well, there is a coupon in the back if you want dessert.

## SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

Mythellany is a fantasy fiction magazine published annually around mid-July or early August.

Possible subjects are: retellings of mythology, stories of elves, fairies, knights, dragons, modern fantasy. We especially enjoy parodies, jokes, poems, and riddles.

Submissions should be typed, double-spaced, with one-inch margins all the way around.

Self-addressed Stamped Envelope (SASE) should be enclosed with adequate postage.

Submissions which are accepted will be kept and the author notified. All other submissions will be returned if SASE is enclosed.

Contributors of accepted material will receive a free copy of the magazine.

Submissions should be addressed to:  
Mythellany, P. O. Box 4671, Whittier, CA 90607

# THE UNEXPURGATED COMEDY OF DANTE ALIGHIERI

## THE PARTYERS

(O Reader, Intelligent&Discerning:

I have at last outlived those perils&solemn restrictions which barred the publication of these private documents. W/out further ado, I release them for your perusal. May they benefit gentlemen&ladies throughout our fair land. -ed.

My Dear W—:

I was for some years the pupil of the Great Gustave Racart, may heaven exalt his name&confound his detractors. The following "translation" was most likely prepared after the initial discovery by the Great Racart himself of rare, rush-paper writing from the ancient race in P—S—. These curious papers have come into my hands, though I am not at liberty to tell you how, nor in what form. I trust anything bearing on the life&work of the Great Racart I may repose in your capable hands. -Dolores Espinosa)

### Canto XVI Circle 7 Round 3

Where there we came upon a ghastly crew,  
Now just the thought of it makes me sick,  
In the midst of a suburban patio

An enormous kidney-shaped swimming pool  
Full to the margin with flat, warm beer  
And almost as full of dejected, belching

Wraiths: some floated bloated belly up  
Others bobbed and gagged and spewed  
And sank again. Still others swam

With dogged paddle lap on weary lap.  
Sometimes the wretched wraiths would try to climb  
Out; and be thrust back with barbed

Bargepoles wielded by demons swigging  
Ice-cold Michelob (But in appearance only  
Solely to torment the damned souls, for no

Delights at all cheer that perpetual waste)  
All of a clammy shudder I asked my guide:  
"O Master, who are these who puke

And piss and plunge in flat, warm beer?"  
My Master eyed those souls with grim  
Unpitiful glare, more severe towards them than any

We had witnessed yet within the Halls of Hell.  
"These are the Beer-Busters, the Lager-  
Lappers who chug-a-lugged their

Lives away. Then one swam over to where we  
Stood and gripped the poolside with  
Wrinkled, smelly fingers that almost touched my toes.

The wraith bellowed, "Donny boy!  
How the Hell are ya, fella? Dry with pity, my  
Throat had need to swallow thrice before

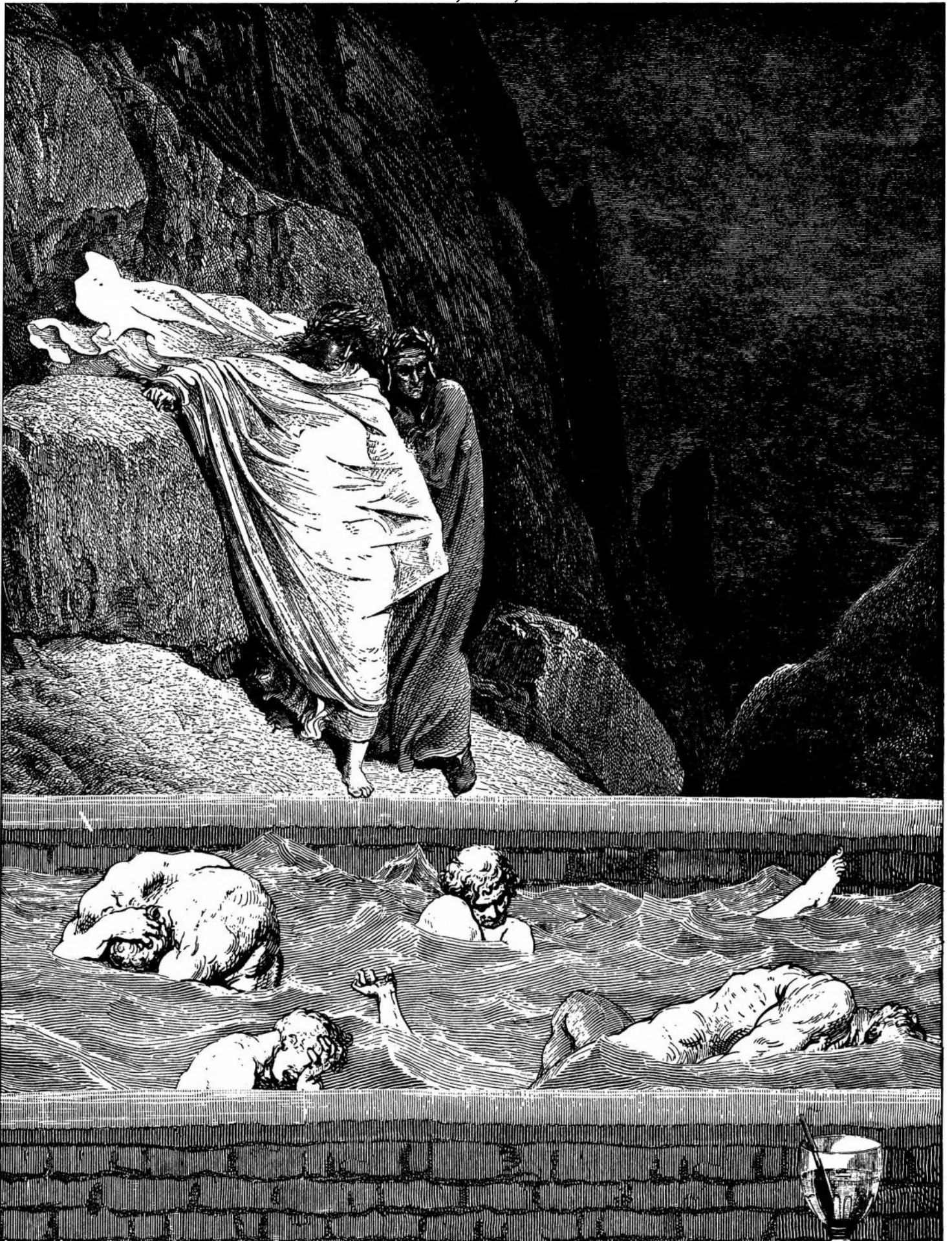
It could make answer. For this was  
Moose Munson, my erst-while next-door  
Neighbor: "How are you Moose, you poor

Old thing. It makes me sick to see you  
Thus; although I'm not surprised."  
And Moose made answer, "So how's life

Treating you, you old son of a gun?  
How's Marge, and the kids?"  
"Fine," I said. "They let me have your golf clubs."

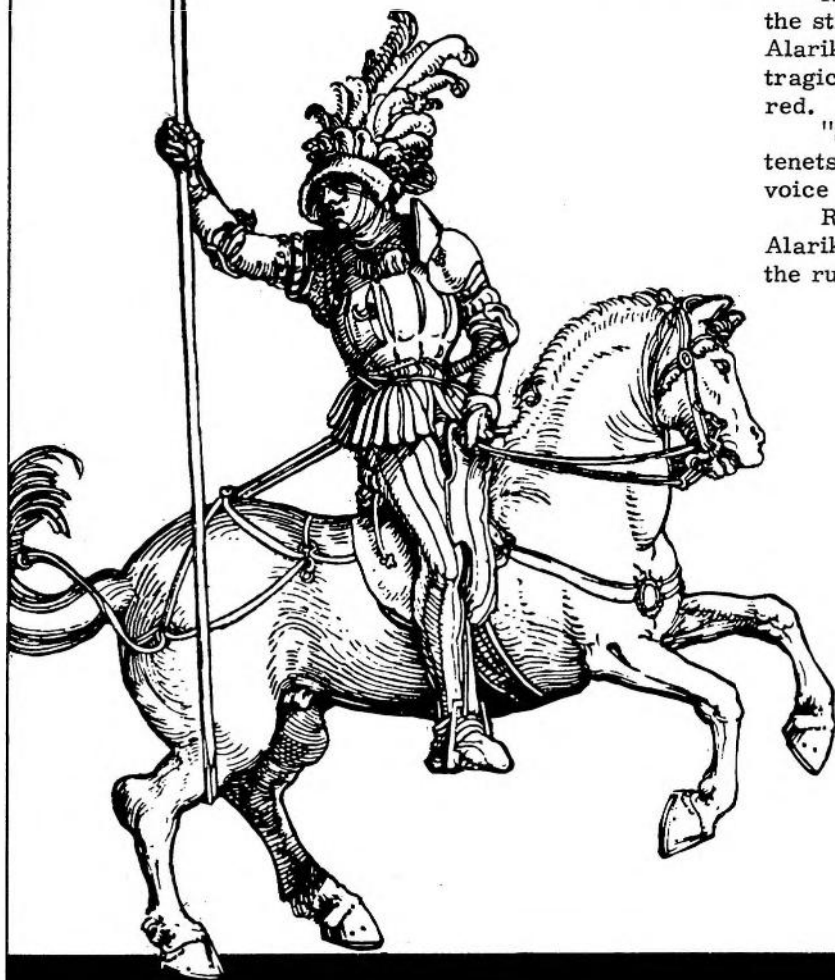
"Ha, ha," he bellowed as of old.  
"I never used 'em anyway!"  
Then a foul, foamy surge engulfed him

And swept him in from poolside.  
"Go for the Gusto!" he burbled  
And then sank out of sight.



# A FAIR TOURNEY

by Todd French



It was his second day in the forest that Sir Alarik met Sir Urens, knight of the keep of Thorn.

The cry had startled Alarik, filling his ears with panic insensible. With a brutal motion he had wheeled his trapper-clad steed around, lance lowered, pennon a-dance. Through the eye-slots of the rust-sheathed, closed helm, the knight had searched the thick foliage warily. When the second cry rang out, it hung on the air like a brackish wind, causing him to wonder if it had not been torn from the throat of some chained, avian demon. Bracing the wooden shaft of the lance against his body, he stared impassively into the gloomy undergrowth.

A few hundred yards away, hardly illuminated by the light that filtered through the coarse, twisted branches, a figure made its way haphazardly out of the wood. Screaming with excitement rather than terror, the figure made its way toward Alarik, who maintained his offensive pose.

The stranger wore a hauberk of mail with a mail cuirrass and simple, closed helm, all uncaparisoned, all badly dented. Patches of loose, iron rings hung from the man's limbs. Tufts of a stained, dirty, quilted arming coat protruded through rents in the armor. Goose grass, leaves, and twigs abounded throughout the mail coat as if the very wood had assaulted him. Wearing neither the protective linen surcoat nor the belt from which a cruciform-hilted blade could dangle, the man was a stark and martial figure.

Raising his mail glove in a supplicating gesture, the stranger knelt before the mounted knight. To Alarik, the man's face was a pair of bright green, tragic eyes and fumbling lips bordered by bristling red.

"Sir," the man gasped, "you are bound by the tenets of fair courtesy. I beg your help!" The man's voice was as tragic and weary as his eyes.

Relaxing his grasp on the shaft of his weapon, Alarik overcame his initial astonishment and steadied the russet-colored war-horse which whinnied softly



and pawed the earth into crescents.

"Who are you?" queried Alarik. "Who are you that seems to have taken the mistral of some forest wight? If you seek for succor in these woods, you are less informed of sense than I when I entered. Poor beasts, shrieking crows, and brigands are not sensible to courtesy, sir. Tell me, what demands fair courtesy here?" Now in a jocular mood, Alarik raised the shaft of his lance into a neutral position. A light breeze lifted the blue falcon pennon aloft and stirred the sister falcons on the beast's trapper and the knight's clean surcoat.

The warrior before Alarik dropped his gauntleted hands and replied in broken tones, "I ask your help because I can no longer defend the ideas I once entertained. So I am doomed." Rising shakily to his feet, the man swayed, caught his balance, and spoke again. "I cannot defend such ideas because of the Knight of the Oak!" The name tumbled from the man's mouth as if it were a mixture of Old Night and slow death.

Frowning, Alarik said, "Truly sir, I do not understand. I would know of you and why this Knight of the Oak hinders you from the code that, fair-mailed as you were once, obviously served."

The stranger bowed his head and after a few moments spoke in a halting, but unemotional tone.

"Urens is my name. Lately of the Keep of Thorn. There had been knights in our family these many years, glad-girded and strong blades, sir. But of late I loved a lady ... a daughter of an earl of these parts ... a lady, and no one was there with fairer tresses and more lovely eyes. But her father would not allow me to bear her favor or let her answer my words until I had broken a lance with a knight of this wood, a hermit of sorts who holds himself in great opinion in the pursuit of arms. I had expected one of the earl's retainers, a great old veteran standing before a bridge, but it was not so. The earl favors the ways of the older faiths. This Knight of the Oak is no real man. He is of some elvish mien and never leaves the shadow of his

pavilion or fights with good metal if he can help it. He draws his strength from the very oaks, accepting a challenge if the challenger will turn recreant if he loses. I faced him and was unhorsed by his sorcery. Now I can bear no good iron around my waist for the strength of the Knight of the Oak shames me."

Alarik considered this. "And you bind yourself to a recreant's might? This Knight of the Oak smacks of druidery."

Urens nodded bitterly. "Aye, sir. He is kinsman to the druid, to the baroow, to a cruel and hard glamor. And I fear it. He rings his garden with the blazons of the fallen. He is the bane of holy knighthood." Pausing, the knight looked up at Alarik and seemed to shrink in on himself.

Alarik smiled. "And this is what you would have me break a lance with? An armed tree sprite?"

Urens of the Keep of Thorn bowed his head once more. "Sirrah, I would. I would regain my honor. I would regain my lady's favor if you would help me. I ask only my sword which he keeps in a wicker basket -- and his helm."

"His helm? You would claim it as your own tourney?" Alarik laughed.

Urens of Thorn hunched over in misery and shrugged. "It is a small boon. I care for ... " The knight's voice trailed off helplessly, "... it is my promise to my lady."

"Though her father has cost you this?"

Urens of Thorn was quiet. Nodding his iron-clad head, Alarik was also silent as he regarded the man in front of him. At length he spoke.

"Yet you admit you have forfeited the right of courtesy."

The knight sighed, one hand moving unconsciously to where his sword belt might have been. The hand clenched, then relaxed.

"It is true, sir knight, you owe me nothing. I have no claim on you," came the weary response.

Tiring of the man's mood, Alarik waved his

hand dismissively, laughing. The single circlet of battered bronze atop the helm quivered in the late afternoon sunlight.

"Very well, Urens of the Keep of Thorn, I will break a lance with this Knight of the Oak. If I am successful, you may claim what crests there are. Do not think ill of me. I am a grim sword by necessity, but I would not leave a brother of our order to the promise of allegiance to the will of a forest sprite. You seem an honest man, Urens, and I would not see a knight bound to Old Night." Alarik's eyes blazed above the eye-slots. "No, I would not."

Sir Urens shivered in spite of himself. "I'll lead the way."

Passing beneath the gnarled, thickset branches, Alarik sat rigidly in his saddle, occasionally correcting the course of the steed with a jerk of the reins when the road took an unexpected curve. Urens strode noisily in front of the mounted knight. He walked with a confident gait now. Sometimes, Alarik would notice the man cursing a cairn by the side of the road or waving a mailed fist at crows roosting high in the trees. He mocked their loud, incessant racket. The abusive cawing accompanied the pair like a portent. It was the only animal chatter Alarik could later remember from the bleak, light-strangled wood.

The crows irritated Alarik; so did Urens' behavior. Through the din, he would call up to Alarik with a jaunty, "Not much further, lord." The man's attitude seemed entirely too optimistic to Alarik. He began to wonder if he should have offered to help the knight. He cursed the rules of errantry idly to himself as they continued. At length, Sir Urens halted and pointed to a twisted archway of limbs on the left.

"That will take you to the clearing. You'll find the black pavilion."

Sir Alarik nodded and clicked his spurs to his horse's sides. From behind him, the man's nervous cry rang in his ears, "And remember your promise!"

Bursting into the clearing, Alarik found himself surrounded by multitudes of mocking demons. No,

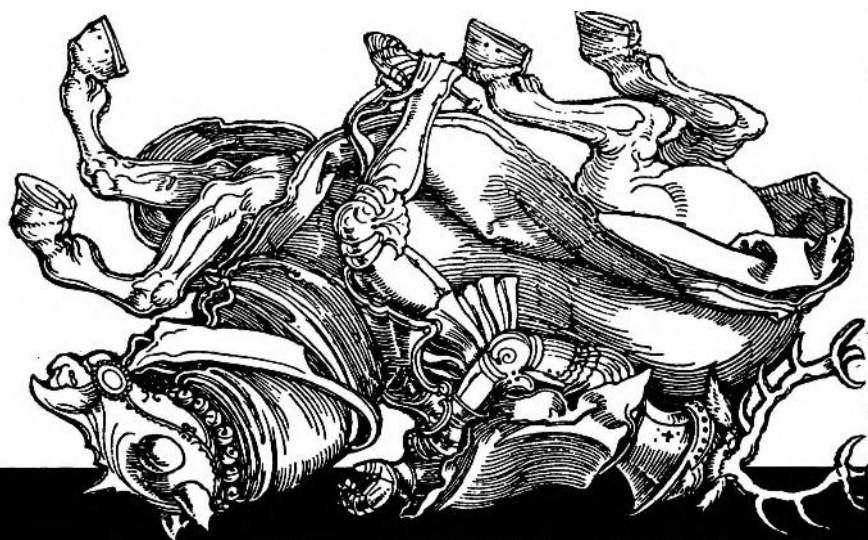
it was a fine illusion. On the trees bordering the small clearing, the blazoned shields of vanquished hosts peeked out of the great boughs and branches where they had been nailed. They surrounded the horseman like a ridiculous and silent chorus of ruin. From the heights, begrimed and weathered faces of chimera, dragon, eagle from gauntlet, rose, shake-fork, bend, and countless other blazons held tyrannical positions on their curling triangles of steel-bound wood. Peering out of his helm, Alarik surveyed the formidable menagerie of heraldic symbols. To

Alarik, it seemed as if a thousand, frozen, laughing maws mocked him, inviting his own triangular shield to join them in dark and silent hilarity.

Disregarding their bleak warning, the knight rode on into the middle of the clearing. At the western end, a single black pavilion jutted upwards like a sentinel-rook. From its peak, a single black banner emblazoned with a silver oak tree snapped in the breeze. A great war horse, clad in a trapper of black samite, nervously pawed the ground before a gloomy entrance. Nearly obscured at one side was an old, wicker basket containing a sword-shaped, leather-bound object.

A movement from within the pavillion riveted Alarik's gaze. Out stepped the Knight of the Oak. The warrior was seven feet tall. He wore a closed helm which appeared to be made of silver; jet-black stag horns crowned it. The hauberk was of the same metal as the helm. A resplendent black surcoat over the mail armor bore the crest of the oak. There were no iron greaves upon his leggings, but greaves like silver. He clenched a fourteen foot lance of oakwood without any pennon. In his left hand he held a round shield of ebony, bearing his crest. A silver-bladed battle ax five feet in length was tucked into a heavy belt at his waist. The Knight of the Oak was an imposing spirit if spirit he was.

Seeking the face, Alarik could only distinguish a thick, black growth of beard which fell beneath



the helm and onto his surcoat like a black waterfall.

"Ho," the Knight of the Oak called in a deep, gruff voice. "Another youngling to face me in a tournament? He is persistent."

Alarik answered haughtily, readying his lance. "I do not come to defend favors, druid! You claim the sword and rank of Urens of Thorn. No brother of our order should be beholding to any armsbearer of Old Night!"

The knight of the Oak threw back his metal-shod head and bellowed rich laughter, pointing his lance at the blade in the wicker basket.

"You would retrieve this for Sir Rabbit? Do you not know that he is a caitiff, poor in arms, and tricks every wandering and likely errant into pursuing his quarrel? You are not the first, sir knight. This Urens has not faced me in two years!"

Shaken, Alarik shouted over the insolent giant's laughter, "You lie!"

The Knight of the Oak chuckled deep in his helm and tossed his antlered crests.

"I do not. The purity of my faith forbids it. Do not mock it. My faith was strong when my kind moved as whole forests through the earth. In those days the harp of the Golden One was the scent of the air and stronger than the bleat from your sword-priests. We did not fear the White One. We did not fear his law; you brought it from your own fear. You loved that White God because you were afraid. You banished us because of your own arrogance, because we did not fit with the terror and dullness your holy men taught. You hate us because you no longer dream, sir knight. You cannot dream, so you drive us into the barrows with your dullness."

Before Alarik could speak, the giant held up a gleaming hand.

"However, I will give you a chance to prove that the tenets of your faith and office are stronger than mine. You may even have this—" pointing contemptuously to Uren's sword, "—if you can unhorse me, lance to lance. But if I am victor, and if you live, you must forsake the metal of your office."

Alarik debated this. To defend a caitiff, if the Knight of the Oak spoke truly, was intolerable; to lose to a servant of pagan Old Night was another, even more distressing matter. A familiar black feeling rose up within him like the fury of wheeling bats.

"Well?" The giant's voice boomed across the clearing.

Alarik licked his lips.

"I agree," he said in a clear, steady tone and began to prepare himself. He chose an approach from the east end of the clearing directly into the sun, something experienced knights usually avoid. With his back to the Black Knight, Alarik pulled off his linen surcoat and tossed it to the ground. Removing the triangular shield from the saddle, he lifted it to fighting position and turned. Alarik allowed himself a bleak smile remembering the cowardly Urens whom he defended, but his will and strategy hardened. He looked up for the challenge.

The early evening sun had left the field half lighted, half in shadow, from the trees at the

other side. Deep in shade near the pavilion, the Knight of the Oak tapped his weapon on the ebony shield, then drove forward laughing, eager for another easy victory.

Alarik spurred his own horse forward, the animal's blue trapper curling back into bright waves.

As the giant rode out of the shadows, he couched the clawed lance, but only ten horse-strides away, Alarik dropped his own lance to the ground and threw his shield aside.

The westering sun, picking out the crucifix engraved on Alarik's breastplate, leapt to meet the giant's charge.

"No!" the Knight of the Oak howled. His lance dropped and his shield shot up too late to parry the light deadly to his kind. A bright bar slid over him. A flash of sparks arose from the giant's helm as he passed.

Alarik watched with fascination as the Knight of the Oak disappeared, appeared again, altering in the shadows beneath the great oaks. The man's outline faded and in his place was a dark shape which writhed and shifted in a funnel of bitter light. Before Alarik, a lithe, malignant shape stared up at him with red-rimmed eyes. It raised its antlered head and bounded into the forest with mighty leaps.

Intending to claim a coward's weapon, Alarik turned and saw he stood alone in an empty clearing. From the twisted arch, Urens shambled forward and screamed with despairing rage, adding his voice to the rapt of the crows. Looking first at the patch of grass where the Pavilion had stood, then at Alarik, he screamed once again with hatred.

Alarik clicked his heels to his horse's sides, and smiling with satisfaction, rode away. ●

#### FROM THE WOMB OF THE WORLD

From the womb of the world whispers a moan  
As the atmosphere shivers, silently slain,  
And the last of the High Elves lingers alone.

Through lead-coffered heavens, rose-clouds blown  
Like derelicts scuttle for fear of the rain --  
From the womb of the world whispers a moan.

And a fire-ball spreading out filagree cones  
On a mountain range, thrumming a legend's refrain  
Where the last of the High Elves lingers alone.

Ashen evergreens, needleless Norns, like bone  
Thrown on cinder-heaps twisting arthritic in pain;  
From the womb of the world whispers a moan.

And brown silicon soil melts glass-down;  
Fertile imaginings struggle in vain,  
And the last of the High Elves lingers alone.

With the last human impulse, the last man alone  
Faults fantasy worlds. He dies, and they wane.  
From the womb of the world whispers a moan,  
And the last of the High Elves lingers . . . is gone.

by Michael Collings

# merlin's cave at tintagel

by Jean McClure Kelty

## (THE SETTING)

Time began there in the lee  
Shadowed cave of the west wind  
Hollowed by the sea.

Low tide spilled at the door's shingle  
The sensuous fleshy weed mingled  
With glass of seasoning sea,  
Bricks smoothed by a million waves to filigree,  
And rocks made satin by service  
To canons of the plainsong sea.

Anemones like giant jellied copper eyes  
From the slippery sanctuary walls  
Gazed idly, waiting the whim of the sea.

And as the hour turned and the sun played games  
With planetary dice, the shore line crept  
Imperceptively captured by the frothy nets of the sea,  
Edging quietly inward, filling crevices,  
Grasping and pulling as the gulls laughed,  
Spilling voiceless life into corners of the land becoming  
sea.

Until the darkened doorway vanished and even memory  
Turned on itself to question its own illusions  
Before the ever-growing, filling, spilling, sounding,  
shifting sea.

The land jutted into the sea like a giant craggy arm  
Attached tenuously to the body of the heathered hill.

Over the bleak soil the rocks clustered, tossed  
Casually by a god of sorts, silent, moving the world  
With relentless will --good or ill-- unthinking,  
Unrefined. Entrenched forever in solitude

The island rested precariously, claimed by all sides  
Of the never ending flow of tides and tall motions  
Touching, working to wash away the fragile causeway  
Between the barren island and the land, seeming to hope  
At each dread sweep to engulf the earth and snatch it  
Like another buried Atlantis in the breathing, breaking  
foam.



## (ACT I, THE PRESENT)

On the great island roof, beyond time's ruins  
Watching the moon scatter stone shadows,  
And the sea touch its tongue to the slight land below--  
Vivien sits . . .  
Arms clasped, chin on knees, her body curled like a  
lovely gold cat

Perched on a moonlit windowsill  
Chanting:

O Myrddin, O Myrddin, the magic is gone,  
The tales of the wizards are told and are done.

When the long greening hair spread to dry on the rocks,  
And the wind bore the world in its wing,  
The tidal pools burned with alchemical fire,  
And the gold dragons cradled the Spring.

O Myrddin, O Myrddin, the magic is gone,  
The tales of the wizards are told and are done.

"Both you and Adam," she turns and speaks to a shade  
beside her,

"Had a streak of non-magical, non-Biblical stupidity  
Or, at best, naivete about your haunting holy (less than  
holy)

Madness, holding out your less than brawny hands to  
private prisonment  
In tree--or stone--or islands--or servitude beyond the  
garden gate."

Merlin scowls, "Keep secret to yourself, child,  
such nonsense,  
Knowing you and only you put solid seal upon the  
isle-like door  
Of prison (Adam is beside the point . . .)."

"Oh no, not so . . .but let's not war, my love."

## (ACT II, THE PAST)

And he recalled a day a thousand falls before,  
She touched his life and all the old small  
Tears of time spilled down the memories  
Of the morning wind; he saw himself  
An ageless man, too weary of a priestly crown  
Which pressed down his own youth years,  
And left him yet too young for comfort's age;  
Too old to catch the dreams of idle days  
And breathe them into flight. While she  
Was always there, outside the court,  
Inside his own. Her gold eyes mirror  
For the magic in his own.

From youth to age  
The cool sane choice of logic's mind and reason  
Had built a future kingdom and a king.

Emotion and its rash unbalanced scale  
Remained for other men and his amusement  
Until he saw her that gold day  
When meadow land spun lace, her gold gown  
Lay beyond the black-eyed Susan's rim,  
And crowns and kingdoms slipped like jewels  
Down the satin edge of time's short age.

He saw himself outside himself, the fool  
Who ached that she should own his days,  
His nights, his reason and his spells.

"I will not show,"  
He argued then to her, "the spell  
Of time and sea and trees and wind, no--  
I will not breach the rim of Hell."

To which she only answered, "Be it so!  
I have not asked that you show aught  
But courtesy which you deny me now in seeing  
More than should be seen or heard.  
The scene you view exists but in your own  
Imaging mind. And do not tell me  
That a mage can see unseen, because a mage  
Like all men sees that he wishes to be so,  
But unlike other men, he sees it so  
And true, and therefore, so becomes."

"You twist words, child," his voice  
Was softer than he intended it to be.

"No more than you twist thought and spirit,  
Merlinus." The gold folds of her skirt caught  
The sunburst light anew.  
Transforming her to flame. "Nothing less  
Than more," she said, "I want from you,  
And nothing more than less unless  
You give your heart and giving give it true."

#### (ACT III, THE PRESENT)

Remembering, Merlin watches  
The moonlit Vivien, "Riddles spun you then,  
And riddles spin you still."

"Oh Merlin, love, how quaint you are  
To speak of riddling to me--you  
Who mastered riddles fore my name  
Was spoken in the dream-world's day.  
Merlinus love, remembering  
Does make us both alone in dark  
And weary boundaries of eternity."

"A child who binds can speak so lightly  
Of eternity! What is time to one  
Who owns and tends the hopeless life  
Of him who, prisoned on this rocky ledge,  
Lives on beneath the spell?"

"Which you taught  
To me. Do not forget. I did not ask  
To know or hold you even in my hands.



If you would free yourself, then teach me  
One more spell. I challenge you,  
And I will set you free of stone and sea and star  
To wander in the wilding world beyond."

"Love me but completely," he softly speaks,  
"I cannot teach to one who loves not all."

"And I," she answered, "cannot love  
As you would have me do for as I bind  
So am I bound and freedom is the key  
To love."

And then a silence falls between them as before  
Had many times the words been said,  
And both had blindly closed the door  
To any path save one, to choose instead  
The endless round, repeated more.

#### (ACT IV, THE FUTURE)

Time will begin again in the lee  
Shadowed cave of the west wind  
Hollowed by the sea.  
Watching the moon scatter stone shadows,  
And the sea touch its tongue to the slight land below --  
Vivien will sit . . .  
Arms clasped, chin on knees, her body curled like a  
lovely gold cat  
Perched on a moonlit windowsill  
Chanting:

O Myrddin, O Myrddin, the magic is gone,  
The tales of the wizards are told and are done.

When the long greening hair spread to dry on the rocks,  
And the wind bore the world in its wing,  
The tidal pools burned with alchemical fire,  
And the gold dragons cradled the Spring.

O Myrddin, O Myrddin, the magic is gone,  
The tales of the wizards are told and are done.

# Dragonkiss

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**DOLORES O'BRIEN ESPINOSA**

---

Winner of Almost Every Nebulous Award

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---

if a body meet a body  
flyin' through the air,  
if a body catch a body,  
will they fly, and where?  
Ilka impact has its measure.  
N'ane, they say, hae I.  
Yet all the lads they measure me,  
or, at least - they try.

if a body meet a body  
altogether free,  
how they travel afterwards  
we do not always see.  
Each tradition has its jingle,  
In balladetics high.  
For me, I ken not ane o' them;  
and what the worse am I?

The chamber was a turmoil of ripping, snarling, and tearing as Quesa struggled and swore. She fought back hot tears of pain and rage while the fur flew fast and shrill cries rent the air. Finally, defeated, she ceased struggling. It was no use. You can't untangle hair that hasn't been combed in ten years. If you don't believe me, try it. Quesa faced the most awesome decision of her life: either to cut it all off as short as possible and wait for it to grow out new, or to keep on looking like something the watch-were dragged in. Well, you know our Quesa: never take the easy way out. With firm though trembling hand, Quesa raised the shears and clipped the matted, evil-smelling, cheesy clumps close to her head. When she finished, she surveyed herself grimly in the glass. "By the egg," she whispered...



Kain' he'p lubin'  
dat man o' mine.

Quesa maintained her cool demeanor as M'luv kicked her playfully down the stairs. ("Tee hee! She'll never know I really love her!")

"You're a fool, dearie," thought Rotunda. "If Mumble tried that on with me, he wouldn't be bunking on my doorstep right now."

"Shut up, you ignorant slut," thought Quesa.



who's between?  
Who's between.  
That's what I asked you:  
who's between?  
That's what I said:  
Who's between.

"Hey! I've got a great idea," said K'chu, "why don't we just all go between back in time, then we don't have to worry about the Noodledreads at all!

"Dummy!" said P'lar, "that won't work. The Noodledreads will fall anyway; only without us here to stop them, they'll eat up the whole planet. And then, when we get to now again, there'll be no Garn. Poof?"

"So what?" said E'gad. "We'll all just go between to back time again?"

"You mean," asked S'poz, "doing that forever?"

"Sure!"

"Sounds crazy, but it just - might - work!"

"Hold on!" sounded the authoritative, incisive voice of M'luv. "It won't work! We know now wearing between back is. If all us Garnese keep betweening backward every time we get to now, inevitably we'll become nervous wrecks and future generations will be imbeciles and neurotics."

"But," countered P'lar, "they'll be past generations, really."

"That's it!" cried B'lip. "I think I'm beginning to understand this now! We've been betweening backwards for thousands of years. We are past generations. We've got to between back because ... we already have!"

Quesa fainted and M'luv tossed some dregs of cold blah in her face. Quesa wakened, murmuring, "when am I?"



...it's such an imposition  
for a girl who's got ambition  
to be an in-between ...

Quesa stumbled proudly down the corridor to her sleeping-room where Mummy, the crusty old house-keeper with a heart of gold was making up the sleeping-furniture.

"If it don't look like an ex-convict and a couple o' fat old lollies been here a week," she grumbled. Then, on hearing Quesa enter, she turned and started.

"Bless us, child alive, you look all in. What you need is a nice cup of steamin' hot blah."

"Yuk," thought Quesa.

"Let's go out for a spin, dearie," thought Rotunda.

"Ah, it's good to get away," thought Quesa.

The cool wind and warm sunshine streamed refreshingly over her head as Rotunda's powerful wingstrokes carried them higher into the sweet, free air.

"If only we could get really away," yearned Quesa, "to someplace where there isn't any trouble. D'you s'pose there is such a place, Rotunda? It's not a place you can get to by a boat or a train. It's far, far away, behind the moon, beyond the rain ... somewhere, behind the beyond --"

Suddenly, without warning, Quesa found herself spinning in a void. After what seemed an endless no-time of churning nausea, and coincidentally just when she thought she couldn't stand another moment of it ...



off we go  
into the wild blue yonder  
Flying high  
Into the sun  
Down we dive  
Spouting our flames from under

Quesa flew breathlessly into the council chamber where matters had deteriorated since she left. K'mart and B'bop were squabbling childishly.

"You stink!"

"Do not!"

S'nor and B'gad were slumped in stupor. X'lx and P'yew were huddled in grim, desperate conference. P'tui and P'sha wrung their hands and sobbed helplessly. M'luv, however, sat erect and soldierly, every inch the Weyrleader, getting quietly stinking on his tenth cup of blah.

"Attention!" trumpeted Quesa; her ringing tones instantly marshalled the men to alertness. "I think I've found the answer to our problems. We'll go -- Behind the Beyond. I've just been there and--"

"Fool!" screamed M'luv as he hurled his tankard at her head. "You might've been hurt! Not that I'd care," he added hastily, and limitless love and longing lay behind his white face and glaring eyes. Quesa met his gaze, her eyes dark with triumph and defiance. Then, with a peculiar sliding motion that he would remember all his life, she was at his side. Her voice, low and pleading, persuasive, thrilled him.

"You're right," he said at last. "This explains everything. All the auld ballads make sense now!"

"It's about time!" sang P'lar.

"Ha ha, ha ha," said all the guys.

"It all hangs together," resumed M'luv. "Behind the Beyond is the B'all! Quesa I ... I don't think I hate you anymore!"

"Darling!"



Answers to Crossword Puzzles Page 20, Page 29



# FREE MAN'S EYES

The woman gazed at distant shadowed hills, waited, then spoke to Freeman.

"The darkness now descending holds in its concealment the promise of tomorrow's truth and life under the sun," she said, watching him closely. "It is only the light of the sun that is hidden, not the promise it carries. Many things in this life are concealed, but they are there waiting. Do not hold back darkness. Do not fear it. Welcome its brief cover from things that would gleam and radiate falsely. Trust its promise and prospect."

"But--" he began when a sharp look silenced him. He continued to listen.

"Look beneath the absence of light. You look under and beyond light to find true essence. Do not let light blind you." She turned and watched the sun drop from view. "Neither let darkness reveal what is not there. Do not hide in the night."

"I have no intention of doing so."

"I see fear in your eyes," she told him.

"You may well see other things, too, if you look closely."

"Fear is what I see now, just now." She turned from him and looked at the dark, moonless sky.

"It is enough to see. Do you not think so?"

"I don't know," Freeman said flatly. "But thank you for your time and your-- Thank you." He paid the woman, a self-styled witch, or *bruja*, and left her hut, walked down a narrow and dimly-lighted street, hailed a passing cab, and returned to the busy and bright avenue near his hotel in Rio de Janeiro. He had gone up into the hills above Rio on the advice and recommendation of an old, Brazilian friend and out of his own curiosity. Freeman had been informed the woman truly possessed mystical and magical powers to look into a person's eyes and see what was there, the ability to gaze upon a person and tell something of the past, and the future.

Now, sitting in a sidewalk cafe, Freeman smiled and thought of telephoning his friend and telling him the woman was not mad, that she was no fortune teller, or seer, or witch, not possessed with any special gift, but just a windy, old woman. She probably told everyone the same thing in more or less the same words, depending on the price agreed on in advance. Everyone, Freeman thought still smiling, had an air of

by George W. Smyth

fear about them. Fear and... apprehension. You could see anything you wanted to in a person's eyes. Fear, concern, sadness or some sparkle of joy, it was all there, depending on the moment and the viewer. You could see something, everything, anything, or nothing.

Everything, Freeman thought as he sipped his beer, everything brought me back to Brazil. Fear, a certain type of fear, was one thing. And some kind of sadness, he knew, for the years between the time he had lived and worked in Rio 20 years ago and now, on his first return trip to the place he remembered with joy and contentment. His fear, he also knew, was a feeling that he would find the city so drastically changed that he would suffer something far worse than disappointment, a mere and minor distress. To Freeman's eyes, the city had not changed all that much. There were, of course, many more people, more buildings, more traffic and noise, but the natural beauty of the city on the large bay was unchanged. Freeman closed his eyes and looked beyond the people and buses and buildings and saw in his mind the deep blue waters, the dark green mountains, the glistening white beaches, and he felt that his stay of a month in Rio would be a time of happiness tinged with nostalgia.

And yet, he thought, the woman had spoken so much about darkness. What did all her words mean? They must have, Freeman reflected, changing his mind, meant something, not just nothing. He rubbed his eyes. He was tired. His eyes were bloodshot and there were circles under them. The woman had spoken of concealment. Am I concealing anything from myself, he wondered, or is anything being hidden from me by my friend, or by this city? What is it that has truly brought me back to Brazil, to Rio? Apprehension over lost youth? He smiled. And he thought: Am I all that old? I must have many good years left somewhere.

Freeman finished his beer and looked at all the life around him. The cafe was filled with younger people laughing and drinking and talking animatedly. Freeman thought: Yes, I see myself in these young people; I see myself here 20 years ago, but I also see life tomorrow under the sun. I see that welcome cover of night. Yes, I'll sleep well and go to





the beach tomorrow, but I will be careful not to let the light blind me. Good advice for anyone.

He shook his head, unable to dislodge the old woman's words from his thoughts. What kind of spell did she cast over me? I mustn't worry over mere words from an old woman in a hut in the hills. I will call my friend before I go to bed. I'll call him and tell him I've wasted my money and my time by taking his advice.

He left the cafe and walked back to his hotel. He rubbed his eyes again. He was very tired; it had been a long day. I can't go without sleep like I used to down here, he thought. It will be a short night, too short a night, too little absence of light. In his room he got on the bed and then he telephoned his friend.

"Freeman. Meet me in an hour?" the friend said.

"I don't know. For what?" Freeman sighed.

"I only called to--"

"I want to show you something. A lot, really. A real sight for you. How was the witch?"

"Never mind. I don't know. What do you want me to see?"

"A bit of magic. Real magic this time."

"I don't want magic," Freeman said, irritably.

"I don't want to see what's not there."

"What you see will be there, Freeman. Just there, waiting. You might not realize it at first. An hour? At the Antiguo Club?"

"What's that? I don't remember it."

"You'll see. Take a cab. You'll see. An hour?"

"I don't see anything in my immediate future, but bed and a good night's sleep, with no dreaming."

"No, Freeman, you won't see the future."

"You don't understand."

"Yes, I understand. I hope you'll understand what you'll see. We'll be waiting."

"We?"

"You'll see, Freeman. You'll see."

Freeman, at the Antiguo Club, first saw his Brazilian friend. He was waiting at the entrance to the bar when Freeman got out of the cab.

"So you didn't care for the old woman up in the hills?"

"How did you know that?"

"You told me."

"No, I didn't tell you that."

"You're forgetful, Freeman. You always were years ago. But never mind. We'll refresh your memory."

"We?"

"You'll see."

"You said that, but I don't--"

"Inside. Go inside, Freeman. They're all waiting for you. To help you remember."

Freeman hesitated. "No. I don't think I want--"

His friend gave Freeman a slight push and he found himself inside the bar. It was not as dark as he thought it would be. It was not as dark as the bars and clubs he frequented when in Rio 20 years ago.

"Hello, Freeman. Remember me?"

He turned and faced a middle-aged woman.

"I don't think I--"

"You really should remember me. We were engaged to be married. Years ago. Look closely. You don't remember? Are you sure you don't?" She smiled.

"Ruth? I thought you were--"

"Dead? You thought I died? You were misinformed by someone. As you see, I'm very much alive." She kissed him on the cheek. "More alive than then, in a way."

"But I saw where--"

She looked at him with disdain and walked off and joined some people standing near the dance floor.

His Brazilian friend took Freeman by the arm. "Don't let her upset you. She's something of a bitch, you surely remember that? The broken engagement? And she's been through a lot. Three broken marriages. Be glad you didn't marry her."

"I married someone like her."

"Yes, and I'm sorry about what happened. But she didn't suffer."

"No," Freeman said, "she didn't."

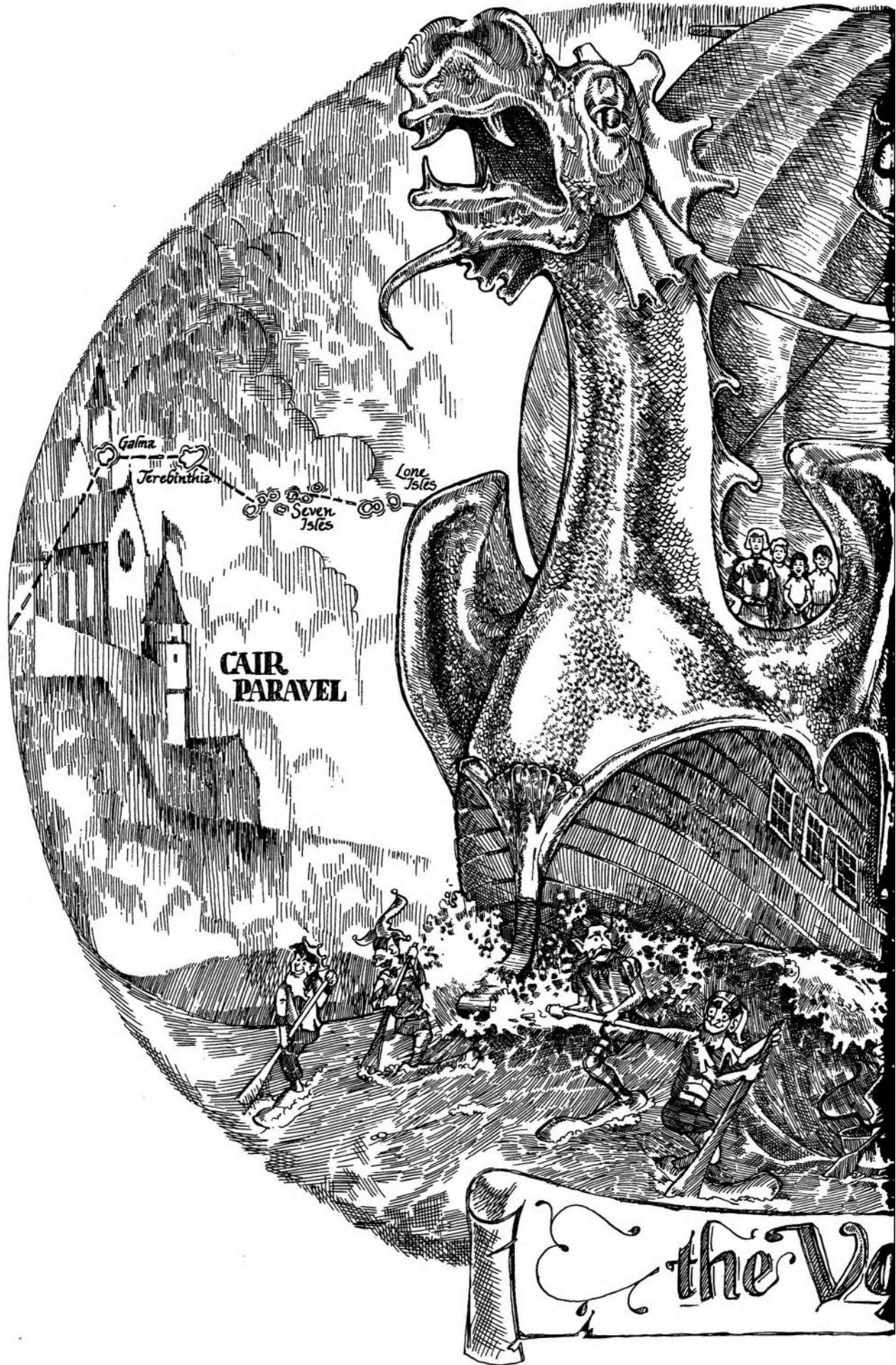
"Be thankful for that."

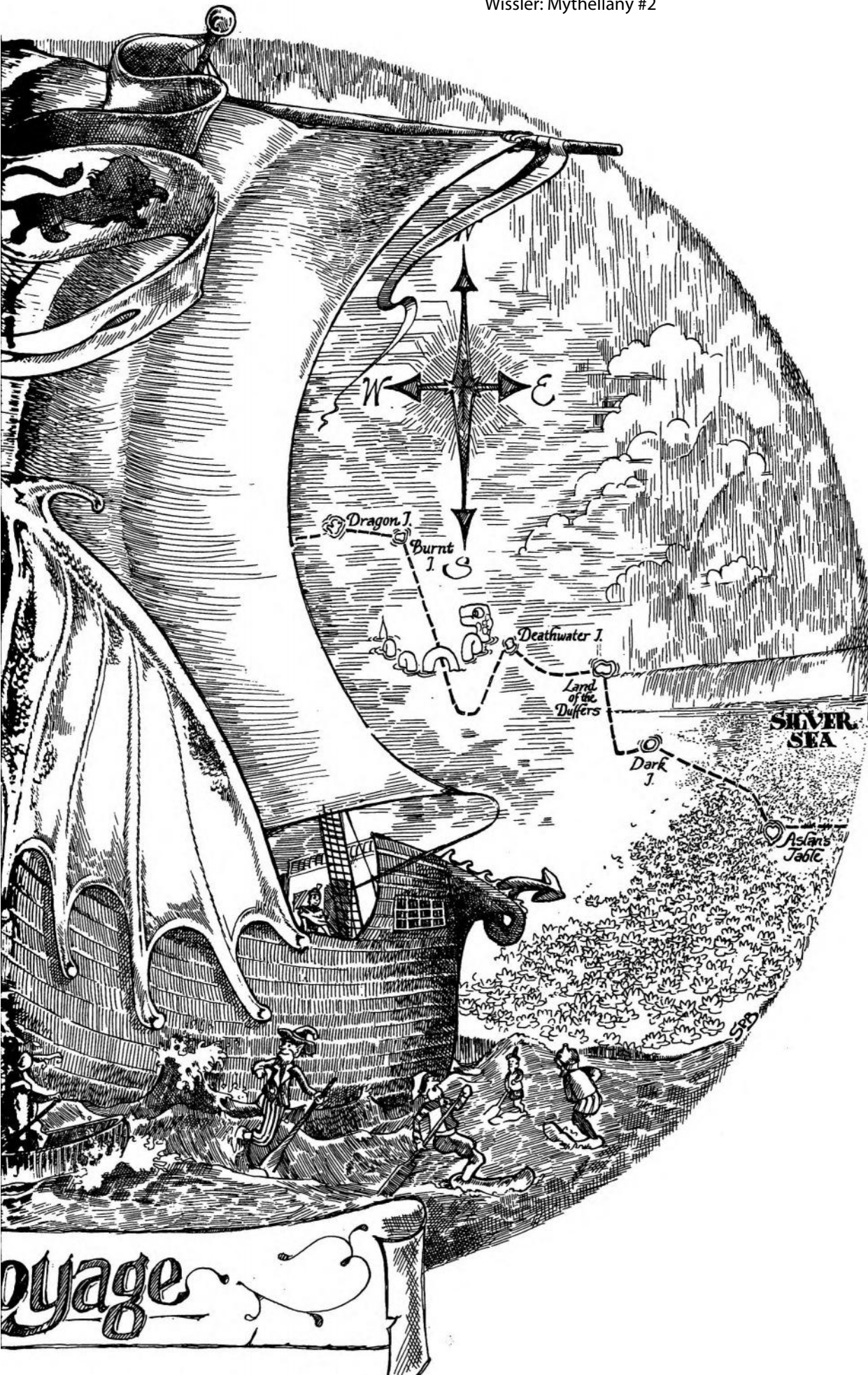
"I was in love with Ruth. Then. I--"

"Don't know what to think? Or say?"

"Yes. No. I can't believe she's here. Why is she--?"

"She's here, Freeman. Just for tonight. She came especially to see you. She lives in Rio now."





As we all hope you will. Live in Rio now, Freeman."

"I don't know. I didn't know about Ruth. Live in Rio now? I don't know that I could manage that."

"You could. We could all help. We're still your friends, Freeman, don't forget that."

"I haven't forgotten it. But, now, all this--"

"Don't worry about anything now, not just now. And there are a few more surprises waiting. You like surprises, don't you, Freeman? You used to. Come on. I want you to see some people. Really, you know them all."

"From... when?"

"Come on, Freeman, you don't know? You can't guess?"

"From... before." His voice was dead, drained.

"That's right. All from before. Twenty years ago. The past comes back. The past lives tonight. And it can exist for you for a long time. Live here with us, Freeman. You know that's what you really want."

"I don't want that. I'm only visiting."

"Freeman, I thought you wanted more than just a visit. You said--"

"I didn't say I wanted to see all the people I knew in Rio 20 years ago. I didn't tell you that."

"My mistake then, Freeman. It's too late now. You can't disappoint all your friends." He grabbed Freeman by the arm. "Look, Freeman. I mean it."

Freeman looked to the dance floor. He saw still figures, moving ones. The women were in evening gowns or tailored suits. The men wore dinner jackets or business suits. Freeman was dressed in slacks and a short sleeve shirt. "Like a funeral, sort of," he said, averting his eyes now and looking at his Brazilian friend.

"A funeral? Sort of like that, Freeman. Or a get-together party, perhaps? At any rate, they're all here to see you. That's the only reason they're here tonight."

Freeman looked at them again. "I don't see that they're seeing anything. Not even each other." He turned to his Brazilian friend, who grinned at him.

"You're not even going to say hello to them?"

"Hello to them," Freeman echoed and smiled weakly, "and good-bye also. They're all dead for

me. They can't be here. They don't belong here. Not really. They just don't."

His friend stopped grinning. "You don't belong here either then, Freeman. You won't accept your friends. You won't accept things as they are now. You won't take yourself as you are and not as you were. These people realize who and what and where they are. You don't. You don't belong here, I must repeat to you. You don't--"

"Wait. I want to explain--"

"No. No more waiting, Freeman. You'd better leave while there is still time."

Freeman looked at his friend. He had the feeling that he was seeing through him, seeing everything and nothing, anything and everything, -through him. He was frightened with himself and with things around him.

"I'd better leave?" he asked his friend, who was staring at him with steely black eyes. "I'd better--? You'll let me? You'll... allow me to go?"

"Yes. I've shown you what you thought you wanted to see. And, you see, you don't really want it. You want something, but not this. You don't want this sight, what is now waiting before you."

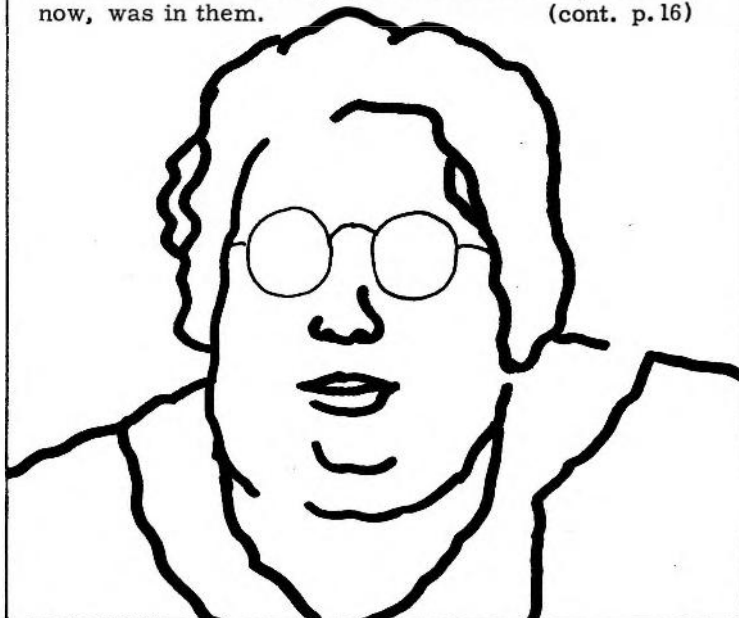
"No, I don't want it. It's--"

"Frightening? Repulsive? Fearful, Freeman?"

"Yes. Something."

Freeman looked at the dance floor one last time. He listened to the music of his past one last time. All of his old friends were now looking at him and beckoning to him, but Freeman turned and ran out into the night. He wanted to hide somewhere, but realized he could not. He ran fast and tried not to think of anything, anything at all that would make him want to join his friends. He ran, and then, exhausted, slowed to a walk and walked all night. He did not care to try to go to sleep.

When the first light came to the distant shadowed hills, Freeman walked up slowly to the old woman's hut. He went back to see her, knowing he had to listen to her words, words that meant something, again. He had forgotten much of what she had told him. He knew his life depended upon his listening to her, she who had the power to look at Freeman, look into Freeman's eyes, and tell him now, what now, was in them. (cont. p.16)



# FEAR IN ROOM 41-D

Diane Webster

Sandy Moore stood in front of Room 41-D. Her palms were moist, and her mouth felt like she'd just awakened from an all-night binge. She hadn't wanted this assignment, but Larry had said it would make a good human interest story. Sandy thought it was a hoax. After all, Fear was an emotion. It wasn't human, but still -- Oh, well, a story was a story. Sandy straightened her back and knocked on the door.

"Come in," sang a sweet, almost grandmotherly voice.

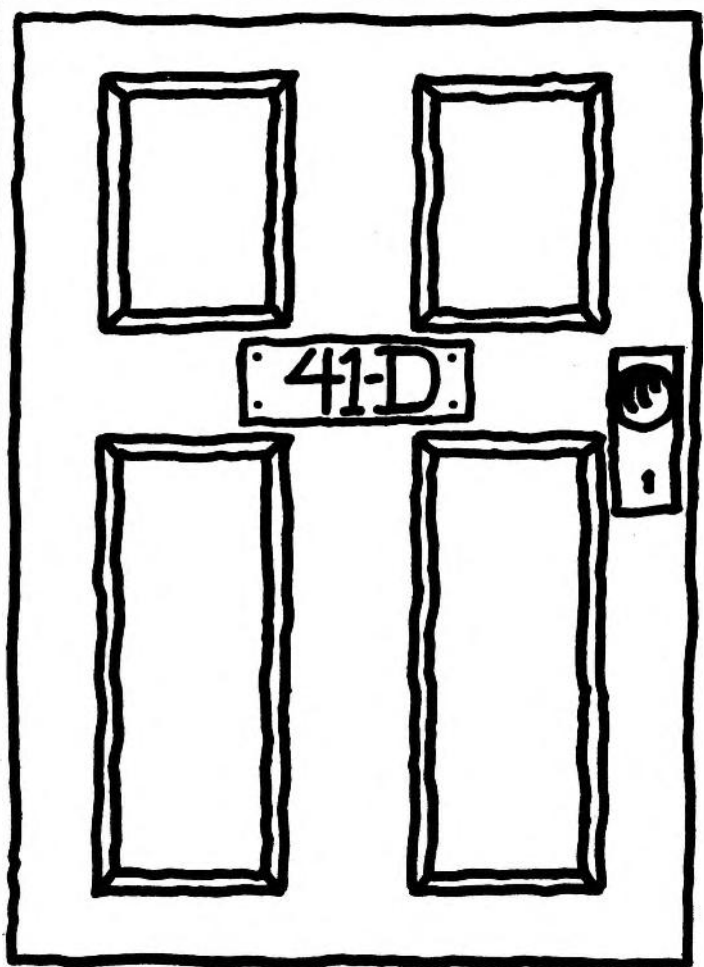
Funny. Sandy did not picture a grandmother when she thought of Fear, yet, Little Red Riding Hood and The Big Bad Wolf popped into her mind. The wolf in grandmother's clothing. Maybe it was a man, and he was only trying to sound like a woman to throw her off guard. Maybe -- Here you go again, Sandy. Letting your imagination lead. Get a hold of yourself. This isn't a horror show.

Sandy spread a smile on her face and opened the door. The room had the warmth and coziness of a room heated by a fireplace, but a cold shiver pricked Sandy's neck when she saw the massive screen looming in the corner. Before it sat a battered easy chair and a small round table with a pitcher and a paper cup. Waiting for her. A picture hung crooked on a faded wall.

"I'm so glad you came," said the same sweet voice from behind the screen. "Come in. Come in. It's quite all right. I won't harm you. This lead screen will shield you from any powers I might have. Please. Sit down. The chair is very comfortable."

Curiosity began to weave its tentacles through Sandy's mind. What does Fear look like? Can it even be seen or would it be like Medusa and too horrible to look at? What am I doing? This isn't real. I have a job to do, and I had better concentrate on that, even if it is with a crazy man. Sandy shook her head as if that simple act would shake her thoughts out of her mind.

"This is my first interview you know," spoke Fear. "Most people don't seek me out, but I suppose I know why. I have a very bad reputation."



"Well, you must admit the feeling you give people is not a pleasant sensation," said Sandy. "Why do you want to give this interview?" Sandy's pen was poised over her writing pad, but Fear didn't answer. "Did you hear my question?" Still no response. Sandy looked at the screen. I wonder what's really behind it, she thought. Probably some little old man who gets his kicks by calling the papers and then holding these phony interviews. He'll probably play me along and then jump out at me from behind the screen. I have half a mind to go over there right now and spoil his game. Oh, well, maybe this could turn out to be fun after all.

"Okay. I guess you don't want to answer that question." Sandy knew he didn't have an answer.

"Let's try another. Do you enjoy scaring people?"

"Do you really believe I go out of my way to scare people?"

"Don't you?"

"Not in the least, deary. You people call me. Let's say you're walking down a lonely street at night. What are you thinking about? The terrific evening you had with your boyfriend? Maybe, but more likely you're thinking about what could jump at you from around the next corner or who could be sneaking up from behind. Only then do I show up. Sometimes I think you enjoy a good scare."

'All the better to see you with, my dear,' thought Sandy, but she said, "I suppose sometimes we do. Horror shows do seem to be drawing large audiences these days."

"Oh, good. I'm glad you agree with me. I can

see we're going to get along nicely. Can I tell you something, Sandy?"

Oh, here it comes. The big clincher. What a disappointment. I thought he'd carry it longer than this. "Of course."

"I have been told that I am somewhat of a practical joker," and Fear laughed a high, almost screeching laugh. "I love to see people run. The park at night is my favorite place. You should go there sometime, Sandy. It has such large trees which are excellent for hiding behind, and the bushes are easy to rustle. It has high benches I can hide under, too. You should see people running and screaming after I've grabbed their ankles under the bench. It's a delightful sight! And the sounds they make are like classical music to my ears."

Oh, God, he sounds like a rapist. Sandy reached in her purse and found the little leather pouch holding her mace spray. She laid it on top so she could get at it faster if she had to.

Fear continued talking. "One time I was hiding under my favorite bench when a little girl sat down. She was quite alone, and she had been crying. I figured she had either run away from home or had lost her parents. She was such a sweet little girl. So small, so vulnerable. I wanted to comfort her so I put my hand on her arm. I thought her heart was going to leap from her chest. She started to cry and call for her Mommy. Something deep inside of me stirred. I felt myself primed for the pounce. I wanted to scare that little girl with all my heart, but a policeman walked by and took the little girl away. I was frustrated! I was angry! I followed the policeman, but he was too busy comforting the little girl and paid no attention to me."

During the last outburst, Fear's--or whoever's--voice had changed. It was definitely male now, a powerful, awesome man! And it filled the room. Sandy wondered if it was such a good idea to stay. This wasn't turning out to be much fun. She glanced at the door. Why did it seem so far away?

"I think I have enough information now," she said. "I want to thank you for your time, and --"

"But we only got started, deary." Again the grandmother voice.

Sandy started to get up. "Really. I think I have enough."

"You're getting upset, aren't you? I'm sorry. Please. Try to relax. I won't harm you. I'm just trying to provide you with some good information. I guess I got carried away, didn't I? Maybe you'd like a drink of water?"

"No, no. I'm fine."

"Well, try to relax. You're making me nervous."

Sandy sat down and pulled the mace out of her purse. If anybody jumped out from behind that screen, they were going to get a surprise themselves. The screen towered in front of her. It seemed to throw a shadow that was sapping her willpower, and the room was getting colder. Sandy wanted to escape. She didn't know why she was sitting there. Maybe she wanted to get a good story. Maybe she didn't want to provoke whoever was there. After she got out of here, she'd have that drink. Or two drinks. But it wouldn't be water.

"My ultimate goal in life is to find a fearless

person," continued Fear. "I'm not sure how I would react to that, but it would be an excellent challenge. I enjoy a challenge every once in a while, don't you, Sandy? It breaks the monotony."

Fear didn't wait for Sandy to answer. "One challenging case comes to mind. I remember it quite well. A teenage boy was trying to commit suicide by jumping off the East River Bridge. He was so young, and I figured if he could just have another chance at life, he'd make it. So I set out to scare him from committing suicide. I know what you're thinking. You're probably thinking I never do any good; but I do, Sandy. I'm not everything people say I am. I hope your story will reflect that."

"I'll do the best I can."

"I'm sure you will, Sandy. You're a beautiful woman, and beautiful women have a certain sensitivity, a certain empathy for others."

What's that supposed to mean, thought Sandy.

"Well, back to my story. I told the boy he wouldn't die instantly. The fall certainly wouldn't kill anyone and he would probably still be conscious when he hit the water. So if he wanted to drown, he'd have to work at it. I told him he might do only half the job. Someone might see him and rescue him, but before they could revive him his brain would have gone too long without oxygen and he'd end up a vegetable.

"I know. All of these are gruesome thoughts, but I saved the boy's life. He hasn't thought of suicide since. I check up on him once in a while and he's doing fine. You might even know him. He's the star athlete at the High School. People say he could play professionally if he chooses. And all because of me. So, you see, Sandy, I do do some good."

"I'm sure you do." This is stupid. Here I am, pointing a little can of mace at a lead screen. I must really look stupid. Well, I've had it. I'm getting out of here. Whoever or whatever is behind that screen is a little bit more crazy than I care for.

"What's that?" whispered the voice from behind the screen.

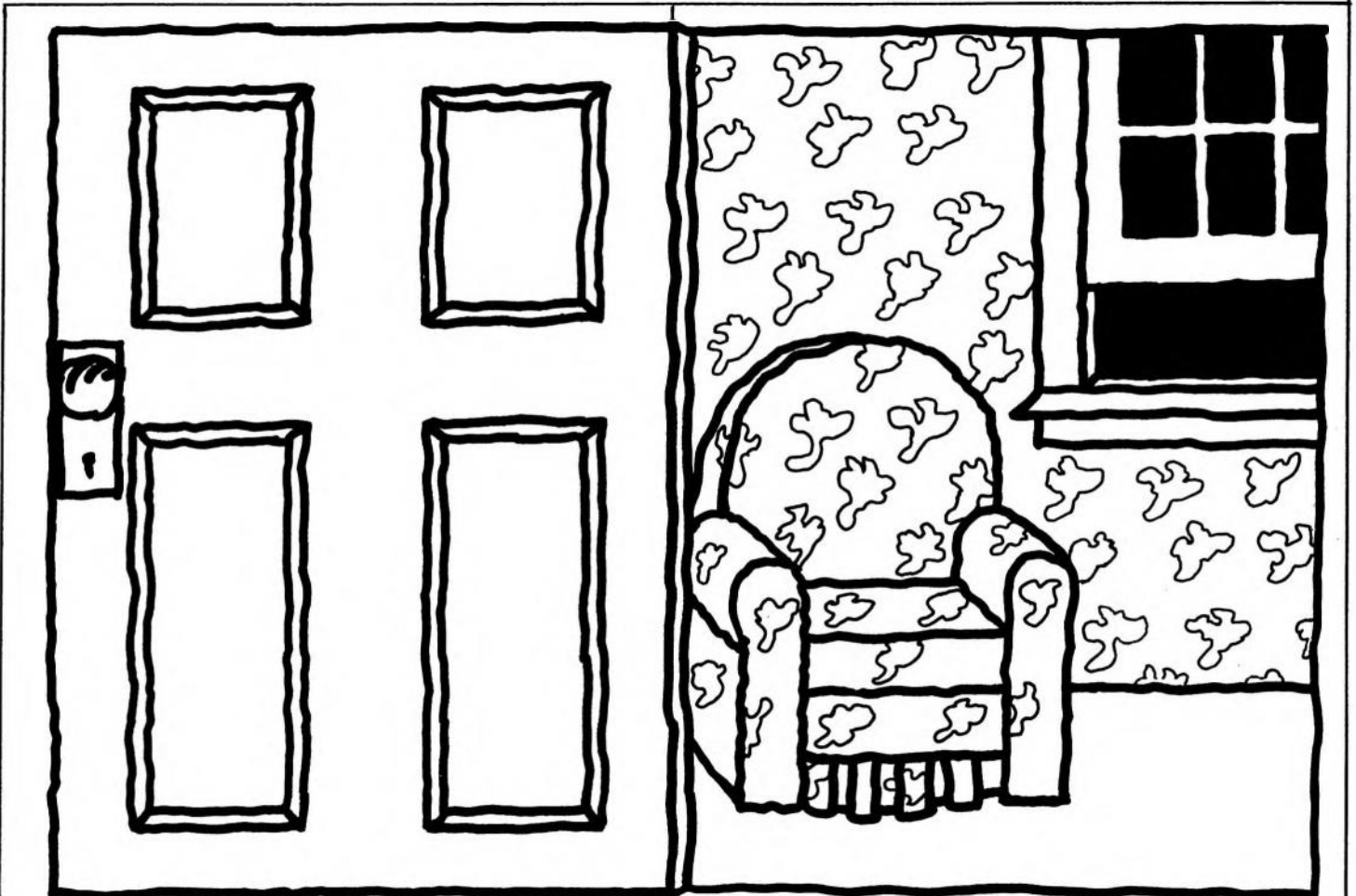
"What's what?" asked Sandy as she looked around the room, hoping she wouldn't see anything, yet also hoping she would.

"Why, it's your heartbeat, Sandy! Oh, what a beautiful sound! I could live on that wild beat. It's as beautiful as you are. And your body. Oh, Sandy you're beginning to tremble. What a feeling! What a feeling! What's the matter? Is something wrong? You're beginning to perspire. Would you like me to open the window?"

Before Sandy could say anything, the window slammed open.

"There. Feel that nice, cool breeze whisper over your skin. It will be night soon. Oh, do try to relax, Sandy. You're making me very nervous. With night coming on, you're making it very difficult for me to control myself."

Oh, God, what have I got myself into now! I should never have come. When I get back to the office, I'm going to tell Larry where he can put this stupid human interest story. Sandy stood and tried to sound calm. "I don't know who you are, but this isn't funny anymore. I'm leaving."



"Leaving? But you just got here, Sandy. I haven't told you everything yet."

"I've heard enough."

"Please. Sit down. I'm almost done."

It could be the breeze from the window. It had to be the breeze from the window, but whatever it was it felt like someone was caressing Sandy's arms.

"Why, your heart is almost ready to burst.

What a fabulous sound! But, please, don't be afraid. I won't harm you. It's not dark yet so I am still very weak. Please, don't be so nervous or I may be forced to do something you will regret."

Sandy felt an icy touch on her arm. She could stand it no longer. She sprinted for the door.

"Oh, that did it, didn't it? Yes, run for the door, but you'll find it locked. I locked it after you came in. Oh, don't look so scared. It won't be long now. Just give me a few more minutes. Then I'll show you a real good time."

"This isn't funny!"

"It isn't meant to be."

"Open this door. This has gone on long enough."

The room was very quiet now. Sandy strained her ears for any sound that might come from behind the screen, but there was nothing.

"You'd better unlock this door." Still no response. Still no sound. Damn it! This character is making me mad. Sandy kept the mace held in front of her as she crept toward the screen. She rested a hand on it to steady herself, but jerked her hand back. The screen was as cold as dry ice.

Laughter erupted inside the room. Sandy dashed

behind the screen, but no one was there. The laughter grew louder. Something touched Sandy's leg. She ran to the door and began pounding on it.

"Let me out! Let me out!"

"You can't escape, Sandy."

Sandy grabbed the water pitcher and hurled it at the screen. It shattered in a splintering explosion. Never before had she noticed the room being so sparsely furnished. In desperation she tore the picture from the wall and flung it at the screen. Frisbee-like, it lumbered through the air, then plopped harmlessly on the floor.

"Oh, yes! Throw things. Throw things! It will be much more interesting if you struggle. But you can't win, Sandy. I have you trapped, and it's almost night."

I have to get out! I have to get out! echoed in Sandy's mind. The open window! Yes! It's my only chance.

Before Sandy could reach it, the window banged shut. The lead screen slammed against it. Sandy glued her back to the wall. Her eyes darted wildly about the room.

"What do you want?" she screamed.

The door swung open. Sandy braced herself for whatever she was about to see. But nothing or no one came. She glanced quickly around the room and dashed for freedom. Just as she reached the door she was goosed from behind. She didn't bother to look. She ran. She ran as fast as she could, but the laughter followed her. Uncontrollable, tear-wrenching, rolling-on-the-floor laughter. ●



# Z E C H

At the four corners of the world stand four mills where the four winds are made. No trees grow there to impede the starting winds, and the mills alone rise above the wide, flat right-angles of land. From the earth's center the waters gather into four rivers which ultimately hurtle, blue and wild, over these corners. But before they fall in cataracts off the earth the rivers rush under the mills, turning the wheels which send forth the four winds.

At the world's western corner an ancient miller named Zecharish spun the steady winds of the west. The great wheel rumbled on its axis as the river coursed beneath it, hurrying to leave this world. Beside the river stood the miller guiding the mill-wheel with gnarled hands. The miller was not human. With his wheel and tools strapped to his back he had come to earth on the fourth day and established himself on the western corner. He was used to the work and took in stride beginnings and last judgments.

When he first arrived on earth he appraised the western river and deemed it of sufficient strength. He approved of the flatland that stretched tidily about him. Upon discovering neither stone nor hillock to block his winds, he erected the mill and attached a one-room cottage wherein he put a table, an easy chair and a canister for tobacco. In the loft he stored a trumpet, some rags and polishing wax. He never used the loft but regulated his life between easy chair and mill.

Being the first of four millers to arrive, Zechariah created the first winds and started the earth spinning from west to east. Pleased at how well the earth adjusted to his management, he lit a pipe and strolled about his new home. The sounds of the western corner -- the river's rush, the creak of the millwheel, the wind's whirr -- suited the miller who himself hardly spoke above a mutter.

While the earth was new, the miller passed the time in his easy chair. But when women and men began inhabiting central earth, their deeds increased the miller's labor. Of course, humans never ventured to the western corner, but the miller carefully watched their doings in his own way. Though many have heard it said that the winds change with the deeds of

women and men, few realize that their neighboring streams and lakes record those deeds. Collecting the news from villages and cities and isolated huts the earth's central waters channel it into the four rivers which bear it in detail to the four mills. Each day the miller studied human history as it appeared in the western river and accordingly adjusted his winds.

On the eighth day, Zechariah, witnessing the delicate courtship of man and woman, spun a gentle, encouraging wind. But as history continued, the generations falling upon themselves like stones down a hillside, the miller sent correspondent winds to disperse or guide. When men picked up stones or swords he turned their wars into storms. When they sat alone on cliffs, he sent winds to refresh thought. And always the earth turned his way from west to east, confirming an order that humans themselves through deeds sought to establish.

Meanwhile the miller of the north and the miller of the south took up tasks in their respective corners. With his winds the northern miller whined to Zechariah of the frozen north, of its bleakness, of the people huddled in shacks, of the great squalls he aroused to keep the waters stirred, the inhabitants spirited. Sporadically the southern miller sent him on the hot southern wind the drowsy scents of fig and cinnamon.

The western miller received their news as disinterestedly as he received that of human beings. He tested their winds, read their histories in the river and with his west winds modified the northern blasts and invigorated the southern winds which inclined to indolence. Being himself a fine technician, Zechariah sometimes doubted the others' fitness for the job. His suspicions trebled when he considered the very youngest eastern miller who made such pettish winds. Oftentimes the weak eastern winds had to be guided by those of the north and south. And when, in excited lisps and gasps, the eastern wind spoke of the dawn bursting, of the cock crow and the lark, Zechariah barely contained his alarm, dispatching immediately a stable wind eastward to act as example and admonition. Thus as the earth grew older the western miller not only attended to human deeds, but softened the north wind, strengthened the south and curbed the fits of the eastern wind.



by Carolyn White



## A I R I A T I



During the flood and the razing of the two sinful cities he guided the wheel. Although he disliked the irregularity, he briefly stopped the earth that day when the sun stood still, but respun it quickly after and continued to do so even as the stars shifted position and the earth grew hot and cold in turns. The west winds swept across the desert as tribes migrated to claim homes and as kings recrossed it, following a later miracle. Through all cosmic and human changes the miller maintained his steady influence over the earth.

On day, several thousand years after the beginning, Zechariah saw in the river a man, crowned with thorns, hanging upon a cross. From his nailed hands and feet fell three droplets of blood that bubbled in the river and in circles spread. The river turned pink then red until it thickened with blood. So it's come already, thought the miller, bracing his feet as if expectant of some upset. At that moment the earth beneath him convulsed, a stone in the millhouse cracked. Accordingly, the miller hastened the winds, making them likewise red and violent, so that the inhabitants of the west felt uneasy under the stress.

As the day waned, Zechariah saw within the river the dead opening their graves and walking among the living. The waters grew black at their resurrection and the miller spun black winds that obscured the sun and tied the clouds in heavy bundles. Across the flatland of the western corner into the central earth raced the winds in reply to human deeds.

Against the stormy sky of the western corner stood a white horse. No rider bowed its back; its proud bearing seemed to say that it ruled all earthly things and that this was its hour, this its storm. They waste no time, approved Zechariah as he watched the noble charger gallop towards the north.

With the sun the next morning came a red horse from the east. It reared up in front of the mill, striking the air with its iron hoofs. Its red eyes shone vengeance; it shook its head and neighed loudly as in contempt of peace. In the river, people wailed and beat their breasts. When Zechariah looked up, the red horse, glistening with sweat, was charging northward.

The black winds had turned pearl gray and the

river revealed a hanged man dangling from a tree, silver coins falling from his pocket, as a black horse, sleek and stately as a judge, appeared before the mill. At a nod of its magnificent head, the miller nodded likewise in acknowledgment of his duty and left the winds to their own devices.

He made no haste, but like a man grown confident with habit entered his cottage and climbed to the loft and there picked up the long-neglected trumpet and rags and wax. He blew the dust from it, tucked it under his arm, and after glancing out the window to see the black horse solemnly moving south, descended the stair. He set the trumpet on his knee and polished it until it shone like the river in sunlight. Then he laid it aside for the expected angel and went back to the mill.

The gray winds were now blowing wildly; the unattended millwheel rumbled round and round with terrific speed. As Zechariah secured the wheel and the winds, a haggard bay dragged itself over the horizon, as if seeking nothing but a suitable place to die. In truth, death had already eased himself into those protruding bones. "It's time," said the miller and loosed his hold on the wheel. The river froze; the wind stopped; everything stood deathly still.

Zechariah returned to his cottage without noticing the bay disappear. Nothing to do until the angel gets here, thought Zechariah as he settled into the armchair and filled his pipe for a final smoke. Leisurely he inhaled and exhaled; the tobacco burned and became ash; but the angel did not appear. Most irregular, thought the miller. He shrugged. It was no longer his affair.

After smoking a second and a third pipe, he grew impatient with the delay and stepped outside to examine the river for news. A gentle breeze touched his face. Could I have forgotten to lock the gears, wondered the miller, incredulous at his own carelessness. But not a wind stirred from his mill. He licked his finger to test the wind's direction.

"That fool of an eastern miller," he muttered, his face turning a mottled red and white, "He would want to give himself airs after all of us have stopped."

Zechariah returned to his chair, lit another pipe and forgot to smoke it. "If only I could use the wheel," he growled, "I'd teach that eastern miller his place."





He jumped up and paced around the table. Again the earth tremored violently; the windows shattered; within a moment his orderly cottage was in shambles. "Where is that angel anyway?" he cried out loud, sticking his head out the door to look.

The wind from the east briskly slapped his face. "He never should have been picked for the job," muttered the miller, "I told them so. He doesn't know the first thing about last judgments. Never could curb himself, and if he doesn't stop puffing his wind, the world will turn backwards from east to west."

The pipe dropped from his lips; the thought nailed him to the ground. "So that's it," he cried aloud, his rusty voice thrown back at him on the east wind, "the fool thinks to trick me and turn the world as he pleases."

Zechariah hurried to the wheel, unlocked the gears, but on reflection relocked them. "Where is that angel?" he shouted upwards, "he should have been here hours ago. Fifteen minutes more I'll give him and if he doesn't show by then, why, oh, I'll fix that fool of an eastern miller."

Eighteen minutes passed. Twenty. A half hour. The wind blew gustily from the east. "That settles it," he cried.

"Ettlesit, ettlesit," echoed the wind hurrying over the river and off the western corner of the world.

Hastily Zechariah engaged the gears, kicking the wheel to encourage the stalled river beneath it. The reluctant river splattered a few drops but refused to flow. Unused to disobedience, Zechariah glowered at the river and struck at it with the wheel. The river recoiled, gathered its strength and with a lunge attacked. Zechariah gripped the wheel as the wave burst over him.

As it receded, he seized the moment to spin the wheel against the river, making the old wheel grumble in complaint. A pettish little wind puffed off of his wheel and was dashed aside by the gusty wind from the east. Zechariah leaned against the wheel with all his might, for he who had turned worlds, older and far unwieldier than this, would be damned if he could not discipline a river and control a wind. But each western wind, once so powerful, had now to yield to the east.

"Play games with me, will he?" growled the miller into the wind. Again he heaved his weight onto the wheel, the sweat coursing down his cheeks. The west wind spluttered. It coughed, and striking back at the east, knocked aside for a moment the errant wind. The eastern wind rallied; but the western, regaining its old confidence, advanced. The eastern wind pommelled its brother. The western retaliated. About each other they danced, one striking, then the other, until like two boxers in a clinch they locked fast.

During the battle of the winds, the earth swayed

east and west, then stopped. The miller sweated. Like millgears his muscles were locked, his eyes popped with the effort. He who had governed worlds and their winds would not make this day an exception. The laws might be tampered with, but Zechariah the miller would hold his own.

At that instant the earth again convulsed, sending tremors from the historic center to all the four corners. Suddenly the darkness was broken by a light shooting up from the earth's center. The light like the sun at midnight bore within it the man crowned with thorns whose crucifixion had been pictured in the river three days before. A mighty force threw apart the winds.

The wheel lurched back, knocking Zechariah to the ground. As the miller lay unconscious beside his mill the earth for a long time conducted itself without him. When at last he awoke a light west wind was touching his cheek and he felt the earth moving in its usual slow way beneath him.

"What was all the commotion about then?" grumbled the miller, rubbing his sore head, "They shouldn't tamper with the signs." He stood up and with an admonishing glance put the world and the heavens in order. "I thought it was a little too soon," he muttered, but attempting to recover his usual humor, shrugged and reviewed the damage done the mill.

When all was tidied and in the river he saw human beings again squabbling in the streets and market places, he smiled. The dead had gone home, the four winds returned to their place. I guess I showed him, thought the miller, as he set the wheel for a gentle wind.

Zechariah swept the broken plaster from his house, put new glass in the windows and laid the trumpet carefully back in the loft. Then he settled comfortably into his chair and lit a pipe.

"Running out of tobacco," he muttered, "can't have too many days like that." But though the miller pretended to resume his habits, something had happened. No cloud obstructed the blue of the sky as the earth turned steadily from west to east. Yet Zechariah looking at the sun through his finely polished window wondered at the irregularity and felt uneasy in the new daylight. ●

## THE TOOTH FAIRY

by Diane Webster

I suspect she wears  
a necklace of baby teeth  
and a wisdom tooth ring  
to formal fairy balls,  
but on her nightly cruises  
a simple brooch will do.  
She eyes the pretty treasures  
with a hand-carved jeweler's glass,  
and like a lucky seven  
she rolls teeth into her bag.  
She flips a silver quarter  
as fair and legal tender  
and flies her cache away  
on fairy wings of crepe.

# WINGS of NACHE-MAR.

Paeter knocked softly, although Shahendra's door was unlocked and ajar. He then ran his knuckles down the doorframe before crossing the threshold because that was what you did when you entered a sorcerer's house.

"Shahendra?" Paeter called timidly from the shadowed front room while he quickly made the thumb-in-a-circle sign against enchantment. He heard nothing as he waited. Perhaps he was alone, he thought. More than anything, Paeter was afraid the sorcerer might return at a moment like this and find him in the house like a thief.

Paeter called again. This time, a gravelly voice answered from upstairs.

"If I could send some words, sir? That is, an' it please you and you are not busy. I can come back another ti-"

Shahendra came down, interrupting Paeter, dressed in grey pants and a tunic instead of his usual dark blue cloak and robes.

"Well, Paeter, how are things with you?" the sorcerer chatted soothingly as he laid out the necessary equipment. "Is your mother better today?"

"Much better, thank you sir. Those roots you gave her took the pain away directly."

"I'm glad to hear it. I will give you more before you leave. What of your cattle -- they haven't been bothered any more in the night have they?"

"They've been fine. Whatever that plant was you tied up next to my barn kept the sprites away."

"That is just as well, for miller Green told me of a black, winged thing abroad. I would heed him for he is an honest man and would not have imagined that thing on the road."

The sorcerer's tools were ready now. He motioned for Paeter to sit on the floor near the unlit fire.

"Please, sir, before you begin the message, I only have one silver penny and a few coppers. Will that be enough?"

"Well ... how far do the words have to go?"

"Not more than a few towns away, not even as far as Feorlynn."

"That's all right then. Just don't use too many words. Shall we begin?"

Paeter nodded. Shahendra lit several candles around the room, took two decks of cards out of a carved wooden box, and spread them out on the dirt floor. "This is to a young lady, is it not?"

Even in the candlelight the tips of Paeter's ears glowed red. He looked up sharply, confusion written all over his peasant face.

"There are certain things sorcerers can sense," smiled Shahendra. He put down the two of hearts to stand for the addressee, but Paeter put his hand over it and shook his head.

"I know this is an odd request, but may I be permitted to lay the summoner card? She gave me one to use especially."

The sorcerer was somewhat surprised that either Paeter or his girl knew anything about laying the cards,

by Robert D. Colburn



but he shrugged his permission and waited for Paeter to lay it down.

"Will it do any harm if I wait until the message is all spelled out before I place it? It might influence the way you lay the cards."

Shahendra frowned and said nothing. Paeter was afraid that this time he had demanded too much and sped on hoping to cover the tense moment.

"Tuesday, a week --"

"Day or night?" Shahendra interrupted.

"Night."

The sorcerer counted the days until next Tuesday and laid out the nine of spades without the moon card -- there would not be one that night.

"Two roads and a river --"

The magician laid out two traveler cards across each other and placed the card used for signifying running water beside them.

"-- wings to the south coast."

Shahendra looked up from his cards. "Are you sure that is the way you want to say it? 'Wings to the south coast' will need several cards unless I can just use the 'Autumn' card which shows birds flying south."

"Absolutely sure, may it please you. Those words exactly."

Shahendra shook his head slightly as he laid out the Ace of the Air, the two of clubs, the white cards for the South, and two cards picturing feather pens, which was the closest he could come to 'wings.'

"That's all," said Paeter, so Shahendra flicked through the deck looking for a card to sign the message. After looking at Paeter for a while and thinking, he chose

a card which pictured Adam tilling the soil after the expulsion from Eden. It was suitable for a farmer. Then the wizard nodded to Paeter to lay down his card at the top of the message.

From inside his leather tunic, Paeter took out the summoner card and keeping it face down, placed it on the floor. Only after it was in its place did he turn it over.

Shahendra was stunned and let out his breath sharply enough to make the nearest candles flicker.

"Young sir, you have made a very great mistake," he pointed at the card, "a very great mistake indeed. Do you have any idea whom this card addresses?"

Paeter shook his head at which Shahendra closed his eyes and sighed with annoyance. The card Paeter had laid down was the Queen of the Air -- the card used for, and only for, addressing messages to a ruling queen. In certain very rare instances it might also be used to address ladies of the immediate royal family, but not one any less noble. Nothing in Shahendra's sense of Paeter's dark-haired girl -- whoever she might be exactly -- had told the sorcerer anything about queens. Besides, Paeter had never traveled more than a few miles from this village during the twenty years of his life. So where could he have even so much as seen any royalty?

Shahendra's sense also told him that -- somehow -- Paeter was absolutely serious and that the Queen of the Air most properly did belong at the top of the message. Still shaking his head, the sorcerer gathered the cards up on order and placed them in a stack in the fireplace. There was an orange flash, and the top card flared up and began to burn. As each card blackened and curled away into ashes, the card beneath it took fire until the whole message had been burnt and the last of the smoke had risen up the chimney.

"Now we wait for the answer," said Shahendra, making himself comfortable in a chair. "Would you like to wait here or have it sent over later?"

Paeter looked apprehensively out of the window. It was getting dark and he very much did not want to be in a sorcerer's house after nightfall. "If you please,

sir, would you sent it 'round?"

Shahendra nodded. "Certainly. And take these for your mother."

The sorcerer did not have to wait long. The candles' flames stuttered and waved almost as soon as Paeter left. Shahendra began to shuffle the cards until the flickering stopped and he knew the cards were in order to read them.

Except for the addressee card and the sender card -- which was indisputably the Queen of the Air despite all Shahendra's doubts -- all the cards in the message belonged to minor suits with one card used as a spacer which meant they all stood for individual letters. This was unusual because almost any word could now be symbolised by one or two cards. (Wings to the South, being an unidiomatic phrase, was an exception.)

Shahendra was even further perplexed when he converted the point values of each card into letters. He rechecked his work. The order was correct. The candle flames stood upright and still on their wicks.

He spelled the message out carefully, but it still seemed that he had scrambled it somehow. Something was definitely very odd about this Queen of the Air, but he left the wording as it stood:

N-A-C-H-E M-A-R

What on earth did that mean?

That night Shahendra spent more than an hour staring into firelight and divining by means of a key on a string, but none of his senses told him anything more about "Nache-mar." Later that week, however, he received a momentary impression of Paeter in armor, holding a sword in his left hand instead of his right.

Paeter suddenly left-handed and a knight? It was as impossible as Paeter's being in love with a queen. All the same, Shahendra felt there was truth in it somewhere.

That next Tuesday just after nightfall, his sorcery having failed him, Shahendra waited on horseback in a grove of trees near the crossroads in order to learn just how it is that a peasant may love a queen.

Hard on the heels of midnight, Shahendra heard the sound of creaking and snorting. Around the bend of the road, a covey of devils swept into view and paused, casually suspended in mid-air. Suddenly standing before them was Paeter who had apparently appeared from nowhere.

Bewildered and alarmed, Shahendra caught himself making the common peasant sign against enchantment. Blinking, he gazed again at the weird scene before him.

This time, he caught the dim outline of a grand-wagon looming large and black against an equally dark stand of trees. He noted with relief his "devils" seemed firmly seated upon it. Two, winged and plumed horses pulled the wagon. There was a madly smiling clown, an armored knight, a horse divided in two -- its head conversing with its other end -- and a whole band of figures with twisted, broken faces on top of their own pates. Driving the wagon was the chief devil with a blue face. A queen sat beside him. She gestured to Paeter who ran to join them. Eager hands reached down to help him in.

### THE BEASTWOOD

Come, come, my son -- let's not be late,  
The woods are dark and no place to wait.  
The trees are old, the paths twist and lie.  
Shadows move under a new Moon's sky.  
The world is cruel and full of foul snares.  
I know it as well as a merchant his wares.

Don't speak, boy, but keep to my side.  
I pray to God, but where may we hide?  
Strange lore tells of a great beast here,  
Sired by Witch King and human fear.  
Gather the nuts and the wild bird's quill  
But quickly, for trees are strangely still.

A tavern may wait in the nearby town,  
In its yellow light black fears will drown.  
Dream of rich food -- roast goose, red wine,  
A thick bed so warm -- but look for its sign!  
Look! Crows flee the thicket's waste.  
O Domine! Too late! Even for haste.

— Tom Egan

"No!" Shahendra shouted at them when he saw what was happening to poor Paeter. He spurred his horse desperately onto the road in front of the wagon.

The creatures on the wagon began shouting. Before the sorcerer could do more to rescue Paeter from such evil company, the devil cracked the whip over the backs of the horses.

"Help!" shouted the devil. "Highwaymen, robbers, ho, help!"

Shahendra's horse shied and bucked and then plunged off the road entirely as the wagon bore down the road at it.

"There now, there now," the sorcerer repeated low and calmly to quiet it. "Nothing to be afraid of, certainly not from that."

Shahendra had finally put his impressions together. The devil, clown, knight, and others had to be a troupe of travelling actors. Perhaps they called themselves the 'Nache-mar.' Paeter must have seen them in some nearby village. Shahendra laughed at his own slowness and turned his horse toward home. "And a dark-haired queen ruling them all," he thought. Still, he noted that not all of his impressions were satisfied. After reaching home he continued musing over the picture of Paeter in armor with a sword as he smoked a full pipe of his favorite blend.

The actors on the wagon had seen the horseman accost them, lose control of his mount, and plunge off the road, but it was not at all clear to them what had just happened.

The devil whipped the horses for miles, all the while shouting, "Highwayman, help! Highwayman." The other actors for the most part joined his cry until Paeter made them understand that Shahendra was even more dangerous than a highwayman, was --in fact-- the sorcerer of his village.

"We're ruined then. No sorcerer will forgive being run down, especially not since you got away," the devil complained, "Why did he want to stop you coming with us?"

"I don't know," Paeter turned his thumb in a circle against enchantment.

"There must be a reason. You must have something he wants!" the devil continued desparately.

"Not I."

Paeter could tell by the way that the other actors were looking at him that they regarded him as someone who brought trouble.

"Don't listen to them. Say your lines," Ravnina, the queen, ordered, coming to his support. "Say the lines you made up to come after my 'So this day ends in grief' speech."

Setting aside his troubles, Paeter grabbed the side of the wagon for support and emphasis and began to speak his part of that scene. He and Ravnina had prepared them the week before, but he had not consciously tried to memorise them then and he was afraid he would lose them here. However, sitting beside her in the wagon, Paeter felt the lines intensely enough to perform them all the way to the end, and by the time he shouted his bitter "Spatter not her grave!" the other actors were confident that whatever trouble Paeter might have brought with him, he was every bit the intense actor Ravnina had assured them he was.



"Well done," she told him, then turned to the other players and said, "That, my friends, is what it means to know your lines!"

"I promise I'll know them tomorrow, Ravnina," grumbled one of the masked actors. "I just couldn't concentrate tonight."

Ravnina did not reply. Instead, she quizzed Paeter on the finer points of stage presence.

"And do you remember which hand to carry your sword with?"

"The hand that's not towards the audience and won't block their view."

"Quite right," she said approvingly, "which means that sometimes you might have to hold it in your left hand. If that feels too awkward, slip it into its scabbard."

They continued some miles in this fashion for tomorrow they were to perform in a coastal town called Cranham.

The grand arrival next day was stage-managed by Waldrys the Devil. His had each actor in full costume and carefully positioned on the wagon. When all was ready, the horses were whipped into full gallop. Grotesque maskers blew horrible noisy fanfares on long carriage-horns. Others banged drums. The effect on the poor citizens as the whole brazen riot wheeled into their town was beyond anything that could safely be imagined. The troupe had caught everyone's attention and the excitement of a play tonight fetched the townspeople running.

As soon as the wagon came to a stop, out on a grassy common, one of its sides was let down to make part of the stage. The clown hopped down onto it to entertain the gathering crowd while Ravnina and Waldrys went to obtain permission from the alderman to perform in his town. As they left, several of the maskers surreptitiously pulled out worn packs of cards for telling fortunes, hoping to

make a little money of their own on the side.

The two returned having gained the permission they sought with flattery, politeness, and in the end, a few guineas. A message waited for Ravnina, although it was really for Paeter. It was made of only two cards, the Wheel of Fortune and the Lame One. A plain dark-blue card signed it.

"It's from your sorcerer," Ravnina read, "He says for us to 'break a leg.'"

Paeter turned pale, expecting sharp pain to shatter his legs any moment. "He's cursed us then, hasn't he? Even from this far away."

None of the other actors said a word, but they did not look the slightest bit worried.

"No, my little silly one, don't you know what 'break a leg' means? I suppose I forgot to explain it to you when you joined. Actors never wish each other 'good luck'; they tell each other to 'break a leg' instead. Your sorcerer was only sending us his best wishes for the play tonight." She seemed puzzled for a moment. "I wonder how he knew that."

"He knows a lot of things," Paeter supplied, not entirely reassured.

Whether or not Shahendra's good wishes had anything to do with it or not, the performance that night was splendid. Paeter's defiant "O that I could swear the impossible to be true/ And squeeze Necessity to its smallest size!" drew loud applause, and the "So this day ends in grief!" scene was very moving, but nothing in the play compared with the effect produced by "Dragon Song" when Paeter and Ravnina rode onto the stage on one of the wagon's winged and plumed horses. At the end of the song, Paeter made the horse rear, and while its front legs were still kicking, the devil made everything vanish into darkness in an instant by throwing two wet blankets over the candles to extinguish the light.

They traveled the coast road for a week, stopping every evening to perform in one of the towns. Everywhere, their skill transported the audience to such wonder and excitement that the Count of the Southern Shore heard of them and sent a member of his staff to commission them to perform at his court at Donattur during the summer festival.

Paeter, who had never seen anything larger than his own village fair, found the wild, busy crowds more than he had imagined. There were open food stalls and dancing all night long. The nobility had come, too. Every afternoon, knights from Donattur challenged visitors to the joust. A local champion, Varnat, was particularly good. He demonstrated

a superb control of his lance and was unhorsed only once throughout the whole tournament.

Paeter, fascinated, watched every afternoon. At first the spectacle and the noise had confused him, but as he saw the rules and styles, it seemed that the knights moved more clumsily in their armor than he ever had felt in his stage armor. They handled their horses carelessly, leaving it to their esquires to settle them after each charge. Just for a moment, he allowed himself to imagine that he was the champion in the joust.

The troupe had rooms in one wing of Count Mollitor's stark, granite castle. They worked hard to prepare special effects and new endings for their noble audience.

Ravnina had played for nobility before. She knew how to use the indoor sounds to draw her select audience closer to the drama. Tonight, they could not help but let themselves be drawn. She held their passions in her hand by the end of the second act when she wept, "Leave songs of youth to happier days/ Old fingers cannot play the livelier tunes/ I must have silence now."

"Dragon Song" did not rouse the court the way it had excited other audiences. Perhaps the nobles had a more sophisticated taste. Still, they applauded warmly as was polite. Then the count and countess rose to their feet. The rest of the court rose, too. The applause swelled as the actors took a second, final bow. The count beckoned them down from the stage and shook their hands firmly one by one.

"You shall always be welcome here at Donattur," he told them, "Please think of yourselves as my personal troupe from now on."

Wine was brought into the hall to honor the actors. The court mingled with the performers asking questions and making comments on the play. Apparently here, the nobility took drama quite seriously and discussion was part of the entertainment.

Paeter and Ravnina had just turned away from a conversation with the countess when Sir Varnat cut across the room and grabbed Ravnina by the hand.

"Come with me!" he growled lewdly in a voice thick with wine. He tried to force her into a nearby shadowy passage.

Paeter laid a heavy hand on his shoulder. "Let go of her," he said to him, "sir!"

The count, ever watchful and correct, came over and remonstrated with Varnat who, being drunk, did not listen.

"She's but an actress after all," he leered.

At that insult, Paeter punched Varnat in the mouth. He was surprised how easily the burly knight fell. Varnat sprang up with an oath, but Paeter wrestled him to the floor with a vicious crossface hold he had often used on the pigs at home.

The count, an esthetic man, seeing his knight in a position for listening, said, "Wait, Varnat. This saddens me that this has happened between my best knight and my best actor, especially such a strong actor. Paeter, can I ask you to apologise to Sir Varnat? I would hope that he would not insist on your punishment if the quarrel ended here, even though you are his inferior. I'm sure he will agree. He is an honorable knight."

Varnat cut the count short. "I'm the agrieved party,"

#### VIRGIN

I could catch a unicorn  
from the mystic wood.  
You could not catch a unicorn  
even if you would.

But unicorns are hard to find  
'though I search here and there.  
While I could catch a unicorn  
there's not one anywhere.

by Annette Curtis Klause

he choked out being somewhat hampered by Paeter's grip. Paeter had forgotten the knight for the beauty of the count's speech. He hoped to use it sometime. But he finally let Varnat loose. That worthy knight continued, "And as my right, I demand a trial by Combat. If in Four Days, Paeter has not Enlisted A Champion to do Battle for him, then He must agree to Fighte Me according to My Choice of weapons or accept the Punishment due any commoner who Dares lay hand on a Knight." He staggered away, looking purple and throttled and murderous.

It's me he wants to fight, thought Paeter. He's hoping I can't find a champion.

"Sir Varnat is entirely within his right," the count said, "You do understand the terms?"

Paeter understood. He was then taken to a small room under the roof. It wasn't quite a prison, but it did have a thick wooden door. The single window was three stories above the cliff-top Donatur Castle was built upon. He was locked in. Just to make sure he didn't have second thoughts about anything. He was to be allowed visitors and could leave if someone stood bail for him.

Ravnina came within the hour and stayed for the whole four days. She said she felt safer here than out where Varnat could find her.

"Besides, you will need a messenger, and..." and it might well be the last four days of his life, they both thought, but neither of them said aloud.

Despite public appeal, none of the many knights in Donatur volunteered to be Paeter's champion. Sir Varnat's success at the earlier tournament was a strong deterrent. Also, there was not much to be gained in defending a commoner and Paeter was no pretty damsel.

"It's better I fight him anyway," Paeter decided that evening, "The other knights would have lost. I've beaten him already in one fair fight. Waldrys can forge extra pieces to my stage armor. It'll do."

Ravnina stood bail while Paeter found Waldrys and they got the armor in shape.

Paeter felt quite confident. He told Ravnina on his return that he really did not think he would be killed on the morrow.

Early next morning before sunrise, Waldrys brought the armor and weapons. The armor was double its normal thickness in all the crucial places, yet little weight had been added with the new strength. The lance was straight and solid. It was precisely balanced. There was no awkwardness at all when Paeter lifted it. Waldrys had brought the horse, Nache, rather than Mar, since he was largest of the two. Just as she did before a play, Ravnina helped Paeter on with his armor. Then Waldrys helped him into the saddle.

"Here, hand me your helmet," said Ravnina. She took it and rubbed it bright, then tied the ribbon from her hair onto the crest.

The field was crowded with festival-goers who wanted to enjoy this unexpected extra entertainment. They were mostly commoners themselves, had seen the troupe's plays, and so a cheer went up as Paeter rode by.

Sir Varnat, as the one who considered himself wronged, entered the lists first. The herald formally called for someone to champion Paeter. He waited a



moment, and as no one came, he called Paeter himself. Paeter rode to the other end of the list, entered it, then stopped. Both contestants, knight and commoner, saluted the count who presided over all challenges. The herald signaled them to prepare for the charge.

Paeter and Varnat kept their left hands raised. When they were ready to begin, they lowered them. Then the herald let his baton fall and the combat began.

Paeter was careful not to spur Nache into a sudden gallop all at once. Instead he nudged his mount into a trot for the first twenty yards until the gait was even, then let Nache have his head to run. Only then did Paeter set his lance into the hinged rest on his breastplate which Waldrys had designed to support it. The fighters were very close to each other now, and Paeter saw Varnat's lancehead bolting towards him. Imitating what he had seen of Varnat's tactics, Paeter waited until after Varnat swung the lance across the dividing fence before aiming his own.

Paeter was taller in the saddle, thus his reach was longer and his lance struck first. His hand jarred on the grip as his point caught Varnat solidly on the base of the helmet and the Varnat's lance stuck his breastplate in return. Even protected by his armor, Paeter's wind was knocked out of him by the thrust. For a moment he was so stunned he nearly fell out of the saddle. His hold on his lance slackened and the point slipped off its mark on Sir Varnat's helm and glanced harmlessly past. Paeter felt that his side would cave in if he tried to breathe. He reigned Nache to a halt at the other end of the lists still sobbing for air inside his closed helmet.

Sir Varnat was hurting, too. Paeter's stroke had landed well and Sir Varnat was as shaken and dazed as Paeter. The herald ruled that neither had

gained the advantage and the baton waved them to their sides to fight again. Varnat kept his hand raised a long time before he was ready. His horse was jittery and upset. He was still having trouble controlling it when the second joust began. This time he was slow in coming across, never striking fully. Paeter's lance struck firmly on the shoulder and there was no stinging jar, only the resistance of a strong hit which lasted only an instant as Sir Varnat was hurled backwards off his horse.

Amid loud cheering, Paeter rode back to the pavilion. The herald declared the trial by combat decided. Paeter was free to go. Meanwhile, two of Varnat's esquires carried their unconscious master off the field.

.....

The festival still had two days to run. After Paeter returned to the troupe's wing of the castle to get out of his armor, have cold compresses put on his bruises, and hear the promises of the maskers for the hugest celebration party that night in his honor, he and Ravnina went out on the town for their own celebration.

"Acting is better than jousting," he said to her as they stood and listened to some musicians.

Suddenly, he felt a tap on his shoulder. He whirled about, fearing someone from Varnat's holding might be after him. But, no, it was someone he feared far worse.

It was Shahendra, who stood smiling gently at him. Paeter made his instinctive thumb-in-a-circle, but Shahendra took no notice.

"You did very well in that jousting, Paeter," he said, "I always knew there was more in that old divining than just Paeter the Actor."

"You saw all this, sir?" stammered Paeter.

"Aye. How else do you think I managed to get here in time to help. You didn't think you did it all yourself, did you?"

Well, Paeter did, but he wasn't going to say so now.

"I saw a few other things as well," the sorcerer continued, winking at Ravnina. "Well, I must return to the village. Perhaps you will visit us before long."

Turning, Shahendra walked into the milling crowd and disappeared. Ravnina chuckled, slipped her arm through Paeter's, and drew him into a dance.

THE  
END.

ARMS AND ARMOR

by Faith Fastabend

Arrow

Battle-ax

Boots

Bow

Brassard

Chainmail

Cloak

Crossbow

Escutcheon

Gauntlet

Gorget

Horn

Halberd

Jambeau

Lance

Morningstar

Palette

Quise

Shield

Solleret

Spear

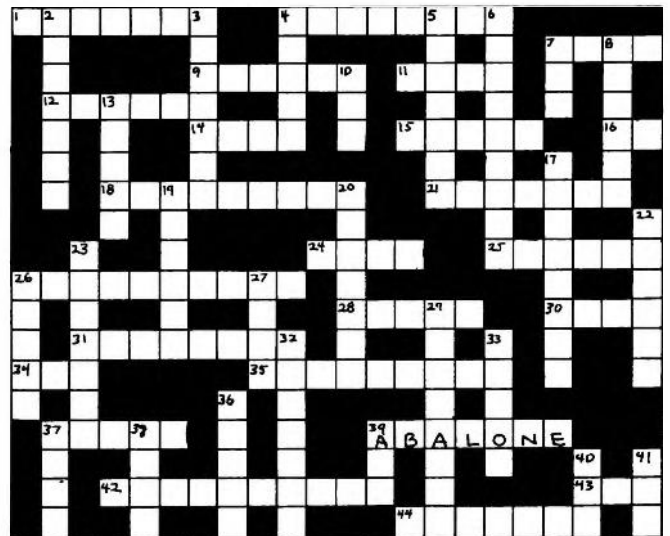
Sword

Tuille

Visor

G P H X R Y G S S T J D D S A R C I  
I I M U E O A A T E J E U R T B R U  
H S P L N T R E I D A S R E T O B E  
R E Y M D D A H E E T O G I U O O X  
U R T N L A I J X Y W R B D D D T B  
M C S E O L I B A O O M E D R G Y O  
E M I E L E J E E G B O O R O A Q W  
Y H Q O R T H A L Q S R B O S U X B  
S T W P O Z N C T Y S N A W I R N L  
T T L S O R P U T J O I S S V X R H  
A E U Y O Y R U A U R N E E S T M E  
E A R H N N I M B G C G O I N A N T  
A O O E D L B U H E T S C K G O R A  
T R N O L E N C Q E T T E L L A P D  
O V W E A L I A M N I A H C D A A F  
D G K U H S O H N R D R E B L A H L  
I D D N N T A S U K A O L C A T E I  
L L T E G T I H F E T J A P N O Q U  
B N N X T N S V P S C D O E C N F G  
A M Z D B N Z S A B C I I G E S C I

CHARACTER-I-SAY-TIONS by Richard DePrisco



ACROSS

- 1 DDDD↓
- 4 DI, DI
- 7 BA, BA
- 9
- 11 (0)
- 12 2 2
- 14 I, NNN
- 15 g, g, G, G
- 16 +
- 18 N-N-N-N, 6
- 21 P P P P ↓
- 24 ... JKMN ...
- 25 Σr
- 26 μ2L
- 28 T
- 30 15 - 0  
↑
- 31 ↓ 10, 10, 10

- 34 R
- 35  $\frac{x}{R8}$
- 37 CCcc
- 39  $\frac{NE}{a}$
- 42 R<sub>8</sub>
- 43 IiJ
- 44 S, nnn

DOWN

- 2 MR<sup>o</sup>WR<sup>M</sup>
- 3  $\frac{DD}{DD} VE$
- 4 πs
- 5 II ... (8)
- 6 E, 888
- 7 3-
- 8 ME

- 10 U
- 13 DFI
- 17
- 19
- 20 Z
- 22 R
- 23
- 26 p<sub>0</sub>
- 27 Ll l<sub>2</sub>
- 29  $\frac{M}{888}$
- 32  $\frac{x \cdot x \cdot x \cdot x}{x \cdot x \cdot x \cdot x}$
- 33 =  $\frac{A \cdot C D}{B}$
- 36 4, 4
- 37 ψ
- 38 Zp
- 39 Aaa
- 40 2-
- 41 V



FANTASTICAL AUTHORS

by Faith Fastabend

B S T A K D O N T N C B G S I S G D V N X M Z D I L N A  
 O D R A W D E R A E L N H I O N B E O A W U L F N I S O  
 L E N T R O C A Y O S C X W P B N V O N N E G U T N P O  
 Q W R T Y P S E D F G H N E A J K L Z X C C V B N D M L  
 U M O U S D R H Y S A E I L V L A N G R E M E F I S T H  
 O B S T R F A T O R M W U S Q A T B W R E A I H X A O I  
 G E R C F F Y C H M J R G C M A V O S L U H T C H Y H E  
 H O P A P O S I R E E B E T H O Y M N P Q A O W R W P M  
 A S C O D B T Y I O L R L A L E X A N D E R L E N G L E  
 J G B P I L L O X E V G N L T D S C E R Z G K N F K O B  
 M I C H O X E X M A B D A I C D M T S E I C I H F D V N  
 S B M C P Y N Y N A E G H E F I A Z E P B R E M R O E I  
 N O S Y N N E T U R D W X S B S I P D R E A N A B U C S  
 M N M A J V E M S Q H L S S N O L A C G T K W P S L R E  
 I K A D E S M E M T W R A I E N L Y N W R O T C M E A Z  
 P U D K A P N T T I B S E N R C I A E T H B N J Y I F L  
 J W A I O N J E O A R M D V O R W M P S G P X M E B T N  
 B E L L A I R S T P I G Q U A D O K L O M E G A J E O O  
 P Q U E E N P I N N S E L O R O C M B S E L O R O R D S  
 A S O N I P S E X M A R I J E B W A L L O R R A C E B D  
 E L L I V L E M Y J F D W K L Z P E M I R G F S I N T L

Adams  
 Alexander  
 Andersen  
 Baum  
 Beagle  
 Bellairs  
 Bradley  
 Carroll  
 Cervantes  
 Chesterton  
 Dante  
 Eddison  
 Graham  
 Grimm  
 Homer  
 Howard  
 Lang  
 Lear, Edward  
 LeGuin  
 Leiber  
 L'Engle  
 CS Lewis  
 Lindsay  
 HP Lovecraft  
 MacDonald  
 McCaffrey  
 Melville  
 Morris  
 G Myers  
 Nesbitt  
 Peake  
 Taliessin  
 Tennyson  
 Tolkien  
 Vance  
 Vonnegut  
 Walton  
 Wangerin  
 TH White  
 Williams

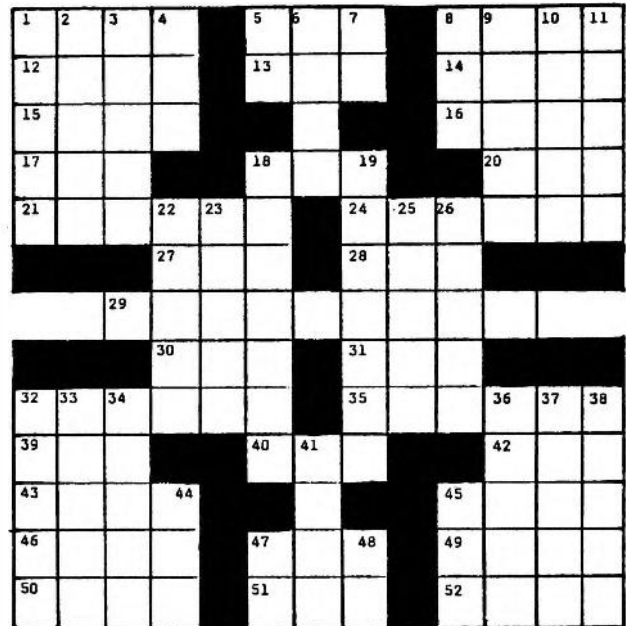
(Crossword answers on page 11.)

HORIZONTAL

- 1 "\_\_\_ of the Moon"
- 5 Joe Kubert's prehistoric comic hero.
- 8 Cover illustrator for over 30 Bantam "Doc Savage" novels.
- 12 Ruthless jeddak in "Chessmen of Mars"
- 13 Author McIntosh's initials.
- 14 To move or bounce loosely.
- 15 Verse or sentence that has a magic meaning.
- 16 Fountain, source.
- 17 Dominant rice-paddy culture of Thailand.
- 18 Piers Anthony hero.
- 20 In the past (adj.)
- 21 Author of "Werewolf of Paris"
- 24 Sauron's domain.
- 27 Robot play.
- 28 Polynesian island.
- 29 Novel by Frederick Pohl (2 words)
- 30 Suffix, with names of tribes or orders
- 31 Hebrew liquid measure (= one and a half gal.)
- 32 He played Paris in "Helen of Troy" spectacular.
- 35 Substitute; phony (Ger.)
- 39 First caliph of Mecca, \_\_\_ Bakr.
- 40 \_\_\_ Lancelot.
- 42 A "Thrilling Publications" annual (abbr.)
- 43 Famous "Astounding Stories of Super Science" artist.
- 45 "The Unpleasant Profession of Jonathan \_\_\_"
- 46 Male ant.
- 47 "\_\_\_ of the Jungle"
- 49 Operatic melody for single voice.
- 51 A follower of Sauron.
- 52 "A \_\_\_ From Bear Creek"

VERTICAL

- 1 "Le \_\_\_ d'Arthur"
- 2 "The Tombs of \_\_\_"
- 3 "Tower of \_\_\_"
- 4 Present plural of be.
- 5 Singer Jones' monogram.
- 6 Captain Future's android sidekick.
- 7 Actor Moore's initials.



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- 8 Abbreviation for defunct magazine, BEYOND.
- 9 What crew in Poul Anderson's "Brake" had to dispose of (2 words).
- 10 Planet where Gordon and his friends crashed.
- 11 "The Jewels of \_\_\_"
- 18 Author of "The Second Deluge"
- 19 Hero of comics & serial, "The Spy \_\_\_"
- 22 SF editor, F. \_\_\_ Tremaine.
- 23 Colombian woolen poncho.
- 25 Country of Howard's Hyborean Age.
- 26 "Breakfast in the \_\_\_"
- 32 Anwar \_\_\_.
- 33 "The Spirit's" sidekick
- 34 Sovereign.
- 36 Before (archaic)
- 37 Woman created by Turjan of Miir.
- 38 Arthur Leo \_\_\_
- 41 Pseudonymous "\_\_\_ Jorgensen"
- 44 Director of religious education (abbr.)
- 45 Hecate was called the \_\_\_
- 47 Composer Offenbach's monogram.
- 48 Initials to Copernicus' name.

MYTHELLANY 83

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