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***dog days gone***

Charles Rampp

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**Mythcon 51: The Mythic, the Fantastic, and the Alien**  
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few words. It is like a beautiful tapestry presenting design of a large and intricate story in little space. But the reader seldom feels that he is really "there" within the scenery. This technique works in a short piece like The Accuser, but in The Hearth I thought it was a problem. There were only two places where I felt I was really "on the scene" -- when Adan-eren died and when Danu-sin died. That was excellently done, but there needs to be more of it. A reader's attention span can only be held so long by long-distance looking.

The Youth story, by James S. R. Ayling, had good potential and moves well. The concept of the U-tunnel and salt-mining is stimulating. My chief difficulty with the story is my inability to keep the speciation straight. I assumed, without being explicitly told, that the inhabitants of Catstar were catlike creatures, but the paragraphs describing them did not serve to remind me. Ziddori was explicitly called a "man;" what, then, had he been doing with the Catstilians? But perhaps that was in one of the episodes not published. General Ressav was specifically said to be a Catstilian, but nothing was said of his catlike-features (protruding whiskers? Green eyes? A tendency to purr and yowl?) in the conversations which concerned him. The idea of catlike-anthropomorphic beings is so charming that I missed finding out in more detail what they were like. [The illustrations of Ressav and Ziddori did not help much either. And since the catlike creatures were not developed, what were the Foxans doing there? Am I being too brutal? Perhaps you should leave out the section in

square brackets?]

The illustrations are wonderful. I really enjoyed them all, but I especially got a kick out of the portrait of Zeus and Hera on p.17 and the Dantesque suggestions on p.34. The woman on p. 29 was hauntingly expressive. The Callahan illustration on p. 10 was remarkable; I am hard pressed to describe my reaction. It evoked the mythic qualities of the story for me somewhat more vividly than the story itself, which as I said I had trouble understanding. All those sleeping bodies beneath the pond -- is that the unconscious, or are they like unborn children? It reminded me of Blake a little.

I look forward to the next issue greatly. I am thinking of requiring my creative writing class (Winter '88) to order an issue, but I fear that you may not be able to handle a one-time order of twenty or so issues.

Gwenyth E. Hood  
Mansfield, PA

*We'd just love to handle a one-time order of twenty issues! Let us know what issue you want when the time comes and we'll work it out. No problem-a. Obviously, we didn't think you were too brutal between the brackets but left the exchange as an example of how one might write a LOC and leave the editors some rope to hang by... I'm tickled by your response to Tim's Vijaya illo as that was the scene I wanted him to illustrate but I never told him so! I handed him a copy of the story and said, "See what you come up with for this one..." Small shivers of delight go up and down the back at such serendipitous experiences...*

dog days gone

fall will end humidity's hard reigning,  
but first grey fungi swell in ragged grass  
(lean city yards are poor of goldenrod  
though paper rich with discarded wrappers)  
as straight as if surveyed on median  
strip and round as elf's seat, a fairy ring  
was there the day before full moon was due.  
so here the Queen does ride the highway splitter,  
and subjects left this so she'd know they're loyal.  
two nights i've seen the moon in three months here--  
come soon, oh lady of most fair delight.

- Charles Rampp