



Here Lies Unknown
Born - January 3, 1863
Died - February 16, 1885
Reborn - March 14, 2009

The Drink Tank
Issue 158

Cover by Brianna Flynt and Frank Wu!

This issue will be kinda brief as I'm spending much of my time working on the Annual and trying to get my new place all worked out. I've found a new apartment and I'm moving in in a couple of days. It's a small place, but I kinda like it. Close to work, not much noise, cheap enough that I'll only have to go begging once a year or so. It's everything I could have hoped for. The worst part is that there's nothing within easy walking distance for food or supplies. That's a shame. A while back there was a Cattleman's restaurant where we'd go for breakfast on Sundays right across the street, but now that's closed, but they are opening a Sunny Buffet there in the next few months.

This issue features a piece of Faan Fiction, an article from Frank, and a little some-thin'-somethin' for the rest of us!

Vetted

Hillary: "I think everybody needs to be **vetted** and tested. That's the way elections are supposed to operate. The last thing the Democrats need is to just move quickly through this process."

Hillary: "Of all the people running for president, I've been most **vetted**."

By "vetted," I take it that Hillary Clinton means that, over the years, the Republicans have found all the dirt on her there is to find, after they searched in 1992, in 1996, in 2000, in 2006, and every year in between. So now it's old, stale dirt that websites and the remaining newspapers won't reheat.

True, it is often the case that some big black mark, previously undiscovered, comes to light during a presidential campaign. Who knew that Geraldine Ferraro (the Democrat's VP candidate in 1984) had a husband who would refuse to release his tax reports, or that her parents had been indicted for gambling when she was a baby (she didn't even know that)?

I suppose that Obama could have some skeleton in his closet. It's possible. Few of us don't.

But every time Hillary uses the word "vetted," it reminds me of... Bob Dole. Bob Dole, as you might recall, was the 1996 Republican nominee



for President - after his failed runs for the nom in 1988 and 1980, and after he was the bottom half of the losing ticket in 1976 with Gerald Ford. Dole won in 1996 - against the likes of former VP Dan Quayle and Pat Buchanan - essentially with the argument, "Gee, I've been a Senator for almost three decades, I've been Majority Leader, then Minority Leader, then Majority Leader again, for over a decade total, I'm older than Reagan was in 1980, and I've run for this office twice - basically, **it's my turn.**" It's not an unreasonable argument - the nom often goes to the most experienced or highest-ranking member of the party. But the "it's my turn" argument isn't enough. Dole ran a lackluster campaign. Where were the ideas, the fresh approaches to improving the country? There weren't any that I remember. I do recall one day when Dole gave a speech about Clinton during the 1996 campaign, and while he was still talking, the Clinton wonks were quickly looking up the real facts and writing them up, and as the reporters were leaving the auditorium, the Clinton wonks were already handing them print-outs about how Dole was wrong and Clinton was right about this issue. And the Clintonites' position, not Dole's speech, was on that evening's news. How do you compete against a machine that smooth and efficient? You can't, and Dole - who appeared old, feeble and out of touch with new, fast and efficient ways of thinking and acting - was utterly destroyed.

And so every time Hillary says, "I've been vetted," I hear her saying, "It's my turn." I hear her say, my adulterous loser of a husband got to be President, and I'm way smarter and stronger than him, and I

fought my way through two Senate races, I toughed it out against a vast right-wing conspiracy that's spent a decade and a half trying to destroy me. "It's my turn, it's my turn."

Perhaps, but... we live in a democracy (ideally). Yes, I know there's a long history in this country of wives who've succeeded their husbands in politically office (often after he died). But there's also a feeling that each individual has to earn his or own spot. When Robert Kennedy ran in 1968, a lot of folks thought he was riding the coat-tails of his martyred brother. "Jack was nimble, Jack was quick, but Bobby simply makes me sick," went the chant. George W also got the same flak in 2000. We live in a democracy, not in a hereditary dictatorship, the reigns of power passed without resistance from father to son, from husband to wife. No, this is America, and every one has to prove himself or herself.

So, Hillary what exactly did you do with your seven years in the Senate? Anything? Anything? Where are your brilliant new ideas?

Sorry, Hillary, perhaps it is your turn, but that's not enough. You're going to have to do much better than that if you want to win.



A Corflu Carol

by C*****s D*****S

Fanzine fandom was dead, to begin with. There is no doubt whatsoever about that. The register of its burial was signed by the costumers, the filkers, the con-runners, and the furrries. Emcit Eljay signed it, and Emcit Eljay's name was good for a fan Hugo. Fanzine fandom was as dead as a doornail.

One fine Spring evening, on a Wednesday - the very Wednesday before the Corflu Silver weekend, Emcit Eljay sat with her laptop at a club meeting. Ho, she thought, a witty remark may have been passed I had better post it. And so she spent her time using the coffee-house wi-fi connection to stream her bits of thoughts to the web audience she knew lurked on her every phrase. Even while posting, though, she kept a sharp eye on her clubs younger members - DT Kris and Arty Woo - to make sure they were not surreptitiously slipping pencil to paper. Both of her proteges were finding too much conviviality in Corpse Fandom. Emcit Eljay was particularly worried that DT Kris might fall to the necrophiliac impulse and produce a printed fanzine.

"Posted anything clever, yet?" Emcit Eljay asked her chums.

"We're just looking at the corflu.org site." replied the pair.

"Corflu!" said Emcit Eljay, "Bah! Humbug! I suppose the two of you will be wanting the weekend free so you can go to

Corflu?"

"It *is* only once a year that the worldcon of core fandom occurs." said Arty Woo. (Standing Kev, who had been silent until now, suddenly harrumphed. "Can't say that...it's a service mark.")

"Yes," said DT Kris. "If it's quite convenient."

"Convenient? Well of course it's not convenient." replied Emcit Eljay. "We could be adding clever bon-mots to the world wide web all weekend instead of you two off pursuing this foolishness of Corflu. It's a humbug, I tell you. Nothing but a bunch of old fools reminiscing about typers and stencils and recalling how when they were fans things were different. What a waste. Every idiot that goes to Corflu should be forced to hectograph a thousand copies of their own drivet then scan it and post it. They should!"

"I've never seen a hectograph." said Arty Woo. "Maybe there will be one at Corflu." He said the last word with a hint of reverence. Emcit Eljay snorted in disgust and made her leave.

One of the most noticeable features about the apartment building in which Emcit Eljay lived were the pair of heavy oak doors that admitted one to the lobby. Now it is a fact that there was nothing at all particular about these doors except that each possessed a large knocker. Approaching the door to her apartment

Emcit Eljay was surprised to see between her knockers, not an expanse of oak, but a face. A face she in fact recognized almost instantly from its twinkling eyes and scowling brow. But Laney was dead. And, when she looked once more, the face was gone.

Emcit Eljay shook her head, squinted at where the apparition had appeared, shook her head once more, and muttered “Too much caffeine.” With those words she entered the building and took the stairs to her apartment. Caffeine or no, she carefully pressed the handle lock, turned the deadbolt, and slid the chain-lock into place. Comfortably cut-off from the outside world, she opened her laptop and connected to her wireless network. Just as she entered the URL for her blog she heard a shuddering moan come through the threshold of her doorway. Alarmed, she glanced at the entry way to see the door still securely triple-locked. “Perhaps an overly spiced piece of pepperoni.” she thought. The moaning sound came again, accompanied by a rhythmic “whoosh, click” sound as if a cylinder were being cranked as paper passed beneath it. Once more Emcit Eljay glanced at her triple-locked apartment door and this time she saw a shimmering form begin to coalesce and solidify as it spirited itself through the solid obstruction. “I know him,” cried Emcit Eljay, “It is Laney’s ghost!” and with that she collapsed onto the sofa.

“Emcit Eljay, look at me.” moaned the ghost of Laney.

“I will not,” sobbed Emcit Eljay.



“You are not real. You are a spot of indigestion, an inflammation of the nerves. Some Alka Seltzer will settle you!”

“Emcit Eljay,” moaned the wraith, “I am none of those things. LOOK AT ME!”

Trembling, Emcit Eljay did as she was told. She saw the eyes that once sparkled with wit and intelligence were now downcast as if they saw naught but sorrow ever and the mouth which once told tales of insurgency with a raconteurs joie de vivre was turned down in a perpetual scowl as if the apparition were a Cheney not a Laney. This was a Laney

dispirited and distraught, far removed from the enormous presence he once had been. “Emcit Eljay, suffering awaits you, suffering and despair such as I experience now for all eternity. I wrote “A! Sweet Idiocy” and in doing so turned my back on all that was good in fandom and for this I must suffer this purgatory wandering hallways in search of parties never found forever! OH WOE! WOE! But, Emcit Eljay, it is not too late for you. Three spirits shall visit you this night to provide you with a chance to avoid my fate!” And, with a clap of air rushing into a vacuum, the ghost of Laney was gone.

The clock had just turned to 1:00 when the first spirit appeared by Emcit Eljay’s bedside. Unable to sleep due to the fear that Laney’s ghost had instilled she saw the apparition as soon as it manifested. “Who and what are you?” she stammered out.

“I am the ghost of Corflu past. Come with me Emcit Eljay.” And with those words the spirit seized her hand and she found herself transported to a large white building built high on a hill overlooking a large bay. The spirit barely paused to let her notice the convention hotel before they had plunged in to the ballroom where a film was showing. “Oh wow,” Peter Fonda was saying, “I’ve never seen an orange like this before. Look at the energy...” and here comes Rich McAllister with a box of oranges handing them out to all in the audience. “Merry tripping! Have an orange” but the spirit moves on to a

second room where we see Terry Floyd and Sharee Carton and others typing madly on a stencil while applying different colors of ink to a variety of mimeograph machines. "What are they doing, spirit?" asked Emcit Eljay. "Producing the one shot SMOCKO," replied the wraith. "It is still remembered after 25 years. Let us move forward."

And the pair found themselves in the wine country of Northern California where a banquet had been going on. A french man was at the podium pounding his blue tennis shoe - "Do you know how many Smurfs died to make this shoe?" he asked excitedly. Meanwhile the guests were busy guessing what the dessert was - Scope a-la mode was the popular choice.

After the banquet people were busily trading fanzines with one another but the spirit would not allow them to stay. Onwards they went, through Virginia, Ohio, Washington, Minnesota, until, eventually, they spanned an ocean and ended up in Leeds where the spirit pointed out a younger Emcit Eljay fondling an issue of YANDRO. Suddenly she recoiled and dropped the fanzine to the floor. "Ouch," she expostulated, "the staple in this old fanzine has just given me such a big prick!" Nobody stopped what they were doing. No expressions of sympathy flowed her way. The young Emcit Eljay left the room determined to tell the online world the truth behind Corflu.

Although she wasn't sure exactly what had happened, Emcit Eljay found



[The Ghost Of Christmas To Come]

herself back in her bed with the clock showing 1:59. As the time changed to 2:00 she suddenly saw a new spirit appear at her bedside. This one looked uncannily like an apple core with legs and arms. "Are you the spirit of Corflu present?" asked the trembling blogger. "I am," replied the spirit, "though some, well, one, thinks of me as the spirit of core fandom. I can't help it if I bear a resemblance to an apple core, though. Come, now, Emcit Eljay."

Quickly the pair, one mortal the other not, found themselves in Texas watching an arm-wrestling contest. Spirited enthusiasm was shown in the crowd of onlookers as the trio of judges

carefully watched for any blatant violation of the 27 rules of arm-wrestling. Later the entire convention was found at a barbeque joint outside of town and earlier the assembled crowd had cheered the con committee of one by acclaiming her past president of the Fan Writers of America.

Michael Moorcock and Howard Waldrop, among other famous fans, were in the con suite chatting with luminaries from all across the US, from Canada, from the UK, from Australia. Truly this looked like the Worldcon of Core Fandom. Again and again a fanzine was pulled from a satchel and handed across the room; again and again the recipient reached into their own satchel and handed back a fanzine. Even DT Kris was there encouraging the sole filksinger to "just make it up" which he did with panache.

"Oh spirit," asked the amazed Emcit Eljay, "how can it be that these corpses are having so much fun and enjoying themselves so immensely? How is it that this spirit is never there at the large conventions of real fans that I attend?"

The spirit gave her a pitying look and once again Emcit Eljay found herself in her bed.

At precisely 3:00 the last of the ghosts appeared next to the bedside. This was a fearsome image dressed in a dark cloak with a hood that prevented any view of the face beneath. It gestured for Emcit Eljay to stand but did not speak.

"You must be the ghost of Corflu to come," said Emcit Eljay with a quaver in her voice.

The wraith nodded, almost imperceptibly, and took her hand. This time there was no sudden movement to foreign cities but the apartment became subtly changed - perhaps a bit dustier, perhaps more cluttered. The door suddenly opened and four men entered the place.

"Okay," said the man in the suit, "let's get this all cleared out. She's dead now and nobody has shown any interest in that; I doubt they'll be by to clear her possessions. Sort of sad, now that I think of it, to die alone and friendless."

"But, but, spirit, they cannot be speaking of me. I have so many friends. They even voted me a Hugo once... although that was a long time ago and since then I haven't been as active on line as I once was. Oh, spirit, have I been forgotten?"

The spirit made no reply but took her hand and transported her to a hotel meeting room. An auction was underway and it was clearly a Corflu auction. The auction lots were available for inspection on the table: Shaggy's and Cry's and Grue's and others from the more than 75 years fanzines had been being produced. Collections by Laney, by Willis, by Boggs, and by Pickersgill were available for purchase.

The auctioneer held up a jewel case. "I have here the collected writings of Emcit

Eljay, rescued from the web prior to the loss of her domain. Can we get \$5.00?"

"Who is that?" called somebody from the audience.

"I'm not sure," admitted the auctioneer, "although it says on the liner notes that she won a Hugo once."

"Ever win a FAAN Award?"

"Is there anything we can *see* to bid on?"

"No," said the auctioneer dejectedly. "No interest here? Okay." He tossed aside the CD and brought up his next item. "An assortment of 5 issues of PABLO LENNIS. Who will start at \$5.00?"

The bidding got exciting when it reached \$25.00 and eventually the 5 issues brought in \$27.50. Emcit Eljay, tears streaming down her face, sat there stunned. Not only was nobody interested in her writing but Pablo Lennis...

Emcit Eljay tossed and turned in her bed. "Not Pablo Lennis, not Pablo Lennis, forgotten, not Pablo Lennis..." she kept muttering in her sleep until, with a start, she awoke and saw that the clock showed 8:00. What day was this? She hurried to the laptop and saw that it was Thursday the 24th. There was still time. She wasn't too late.

It was the matter of hours to get to Las Vegas and to find the Plaza Hotel. A

matter of moments to find the convention.

"Bill Burns, let me have one of those Core Fandom t-shirts," she called out with pleasure. "Oh for a quire of stencils, an ounce of corflu, and a ream of twiltone! Do we have them here? Happy Corflu, everybody. Happy Corflu!"



So, More TAFF talking! The plane Tix have been bought and the plans are now more solid. First, I arrive into the UK on March 15th at 11:35am or so. I'm leaving here late on the 14th on Virgin and arriving into Heathrow. That's the scariest part for me. Flying 10 straight hours in a plane. I really don't like flying.

I've been lucky and had two groups agree to put me up for the first four nights. First, the Banana Wings crew have been so kind as to offer up their place for two glorious nights, which is good because I'm betting they'll be polishing off the Banana Wings that will go out at Eastercon and I've always wanted to watch how serious fanzine people finish stuff up! After that, it's north London and members of

the PLOKTA Cabal will be housing me. That leaves only one day before Eastercon that I don't have housing for the night. That's much better than I expected. After Eastercon, I'll be staying around London for one more night and then...well, that's the question. I have to go to Birmingham, Manchester and Edinburgh for the week after. I've got a BritRail pass (first class) and will be making my way around on Rail. I've never ridden a lot of trains as transit, so it should be either fun or totally frustrating.

There are people and places I have to go. One person I have to see is Pete Sullivan. He's the reason I ran and helped me more than any other human by putting together the website and being a good guy. I've gotta get out to see Steve Green who won't be at Eastercon. I've gotta go to Bletchley Park (because the Museum said I could have the time off during a critical part of our Timeline work if I made the trip there) and to talk with at least one or two different fan groups. It's going to be a very busy time and I'm really looking forward to it!

There will be a big BArea presence as I understand it. The Lovely and Talented Linda is probably coming, which will be wonderful! Frank Wu and Brianna Flynt will be there too. I understand that Rich Coad is going too, which is nice since I've not gotten much chance to talk with him over the years. There were a couple of other names on the list of attendees that looked awful familiar (Ian Stockdale, for example) and I'm wondering if this'll be another full-fledged BArea con invasion!

I've started dropping hints about getting TAFF as the con charity a couple of

places, but who knows if it'll happen. That would be a nice way to raise a couple of grand for the Fund and raise the exposure of TAFF to those who might not regularly look in that direction.

There's more! I now own an old 12 inch iBook, bought from eBay for about 250 bucks. Really, I paid for the new versions of Adobe inDesign, Photoshop and Illustrator (along with Macromedia Freehand, Dreamweaver and Flash, all programmes that I'll never use) and the laptop happened to be the transportation vessel. That means I will have a laptop with me when I go to the UK, which means that I will likely, depending on the availability of internet connections, be able to do at least one issue of The Drink Tank and a 'Live as it happens!' section of my TAFF report. Also, the new version of inDesign (well, new to me as it's been out for at least a couple of years) has a lot of new options and puts out a better quality piece. If you're in FAPA, the second of my zines for the coming disty was done on the computer. I think it's swell.

And so, TAFF keeps on rolling. I've just put in an order for TAFF ribbons for BayCon (I might order more for other cons, and I'll certainly have some for WorldCon) and I'll get some more recognition stuff for TAFF over the coming months. I'm gonna need a lot of that!

Now that I'm moved, I'll be working extra hard to get TAFF's name out using as many different means as I can. I'm hoping that increased presence of the name at cons around these parts will help raise the money totals ever-heavier. I wanna leave the fund far better off than when I found it (and it's already in great shape!)





Fannish Memory Syndrome

by Steve Green

To Merthyr Tydfil in South Wales, for a pre-xmas visit with Ann's octagenarian mother. I stave off the inevitable boredom by watching the *Back to the Future* trilogy on my laptop, whilst recalling the very first occasion I found myself in this one-time hub of coal mining and steel manufacture...

It was January, 1982. I'd just spent a weekend in Worcester with Martin Lock, then editor of the highly-regarded fanzine *Bemusing* and future publisher of Harrier Comics. Martin had been an amiable, if less than exciting, host (I caught the drift when my suggestion that we adjourn to a nearby pub on the Friday evening met with the response "No, let's save that until tomorrow") and I remained rather pissed off that my old friend Phil Greenaway had ducked out of joining me at Chez Lock at the eleventh hour.

His excuse had been an allegedly unavoidable recall to the family bosom back in Merthyr, so I decided to call

Birmingham's infamous Digbeth Coach Station (since demolished to make way for something slightly less akin to the first circle of Hell) and, wary of the assorted prohibitions on alcohol sales then enforced in various patches of Wales, used the stopover in Cardiff to pick up a 35cl bottle of Smirnoff.

Unlike the first half of the journey, which had been motorway pretty much all the way down, the remainder seemed designed to call in at every site with a population in double figures. It was scarcely surprising that I punctuated the tedium with the occasional nip from my vodka reserve – and even less so that I didn't notice the girl watching me, a couple of seats away.

Phil was waiting when the bus finally arrived in Merthyr, so we grabbed a quick pint before heading off to meet his parents. It was several hours later, after we'd hooked up with his mate Ian, a fellow comics fan, that Phil mentioned a group of their friends would soon be

him up and invite myself down for the following weekend. Come Friday, I boarded a bus from

converging upon the Lady Charlotte, a pub on the other side of town named for the translator of *The Mabinogion*. After the previous weekend's exile from humanity, that sure sounded good to me.

So the three of us walk into this bar, full of the joys of near-spring, when I suddenly hear a shrill valley voice intone "It's the alcoholic on the bus!"

Turns out that fellow passenger had been Gillian, a close acquaintance of Phil's and Ian's; more crucially, she'd confessed her concerns to both her boyfriend Jason and his friend Ann (yes, *that* Ann). By the time the last arrived at the pub, she'd already had her head filled with images of some shambling wino on the Cardiff-Merthyr non-express; plus, for additional effect, Phil had dotted the previous two years with alcohol-related anecdotes about this newspaper reporter he knew up in the Midlands. It probably took fewer than twenty seconds for her to conflate both legends into one and...

Fast-forward to 2008.

Against all odds, we dated, got engaged, got married. Right now, we're considering how to handle our silver anniversary this coming December.

And I blame it *all* on fandom...