

Chris Garcia's

DRINK

TANK

*Maurina Straky
2009*

We've got another Mo Starkey! She's awesome, ain't she? I think that's her daughter Macy in the image. I've never met her, sadly. Perhaps at Silicon this year.

This issue is kind of a catch-up. It's got some LoCs, an article from Taral Wayne, a little piece of my writing that I've been working on for a while, a piece from Frank and Brianna that I haven't run yet and have had for a while, and some other stuff.

A Parable of Mercy

Taral Wayne

There was once a man, a shopkeeper, who considered himself quite burdened by the cares and woes of his life. On a day that was rather like most, he closed up his shop and began his weary trek home. He was bent over, as though an old man, though he was only of middle age. His feet dragged, as though each step were toward nothing more attractive than the headsman's block. He muttered to himself.

"Bills. Why must they come after me with their writs? Almost every *hour*, another demand for money I can not raise until *tomorrow*. The incessant flow of my creditors would serve for a King's army, but do they raise arms against his enemies? No, they throw themselves upon me! Rank after rank, in one futile advance after another, until the battlefield of my shop is littered with the corpses of their expectations! Do they think I have gold hidden up my fundament, that I can produce upon demand, if it be loud enough, and unremitting? Fie."

But of course, money was not his only trouble. He had a wife too, and he was all but certain she was unfaithful to him. He had two sons as well. One was a ne'er-do-well, and the other a rake, and both were an unending source of awkward situations, small quiet payments to aggrieved parties, and vociferous arguments. There was a daughter too, who seemed too at ease with the next door neighbor's clod of a son, an apprentice swineherd.

Nor was family the end of his difficulties. He had also made unwise investments. When offered the chance to lend, and partake of profits from a cargo of pepper corns from the Borean Indies, he had mortgaged his best coat, his least worn gloves, certain items of the household silver, and an oak chest of some value left to him by his grandfather. He had hoped for a substantial increase in his worth. But the ship had not come in, and the profit had not been realized, and his valuables not redeemed. It did not occur to him at the time to ask, and now the suspicion grew in his mind that there was no such place as the Borean Indies.

As if these troubles were not enough, he was afflicted by excessive ear wax,



thinning hair, and his lumbago had flared up again.

He was the most miserable of men!

A few yards from the shop was a gate. It lead from the town square to the high road, and was not impressive as gates go. It was neither high nor wide, and existed only to bruise elbows and spill baskets. Normally it was too busy with people crowding through for anyone to linger nearby, but on this day there was a beggar.

People stepped over him. Now and then they stepped *on* him. It was no wonder, he blended in so marvelously with the dirt and refuse. Moreover, it was an imprudent citizen who acknowledged ever seeing such a beggar, for then it would be impossible to avoid giving the poor wretch alms.

He was more wretched even than is usual for those driven to begging in the streets. Where the normal run of wretch had a down-turned mouth, this one bore a scar from one ear that joined the twisted corner of his upper lip, traversed the space under his sunken, leprous nose, crawled across the left cheek, and finally dived under his chin at a sudden angle, as though frightened by the red, weeping sore of

an eye above. As he begged, he could not help but reveal he had only one tooth in three in his jaw, and those black. His hair was patchy, and lank. Where it grew at all it was unshorn, and greasy, and the shade of a nine day dead mouse. Instead of the usual rags, the beggar at the gate wore an collection of scraps that were held to his body mainly by the virtue of the amazing number of scabs stuck to the rotted fabric. He had but one arm. He had both legs, but both shriveled, and useful for little but dragging in the mud. He wore no shoes, all the better to show he had not the usual complement of toes. (There were too few on one foot, too many on the other.) To complete the tale of his misfortunes, the beggar was also hunchbacked, blind in the other eye, and his smell could not be compared favourably by anyone who passed by to a hundred and thirty-seven pounds of crusty old turds in a badly used sack.

He was, in other words, just about the most pitiable creature in the world that still drew breath. And he wheezed with the black lung.

The two men regarded one another. The shop keep stared at the beggar, and the beggar stared back at the shop keep. Then the well dressed man straightened up, put on a wan smile,

and walked past the outstretched bowl at the end of the hand-like thing that held it.

“Perhaps my circumstances are not so grim as I believed,” he thought. “I *could have* been that beggar, yet I have the mighty good fortune not to be. There, but for the grace of The God, might go I.”

The beggar shifted around in the dirt and lowered his begging bowl. No pennies for him tonight, and nothing to eat either, he thought. Looking at the well dressed back receding from him, he said to no-one listening, “That, but for the *cruelty* of The God, might I be.”

The Divine is all a matter of perspective, after all.



**Letter Graded Mail
sent to garcia@computerhistory.org
by my gentle readers**

OK, here's Mr. Steve Stiles!

Dear Chris;

Woo-hoo! My first fully abstract piece of art in an online fanzine -- and not a single naked hippopotamus in sight! It's quite a kick seeing that, and I hope it goes over well (or even okay) in fandom because I'd like to do some more from time; there's a long list of modern, nonrepresentational art that I cherish and it's kind of neat to play around in that area.

(Did I ever show you my Jackson Pollock tattoo?)

I'd love to have a Rothko tattoo, all the way across my back. It'd be awesome! I love your non-representational art and I hope we'll get to see more of it and I'd love to run more of it in the Drink Tank.

Thanks Steve!

And now, Lloyd Penney on issue 221 and 222!

Dear Chris:

Hey, we're all back home, and life, even two weeks after the even, is still getting back to normal. And, I'm two issues of The Drink Tank behind, and that's normal, too. Here are



comments on issues 221 and 222.

Let's get to it, shall we?

221...I admit I enjoyed the Hugos because more than the usual number of choices won the rockets. I was pulling for WALL-E, Dr. Horrible and Girl Genius, and they all got rockets. Only some of us who know the fan fields well actually become members of the Worldcon and actually vote; if more of us cared enough to become members and vote, those deserving fans would actually get a Hugo. Unfortunately, there's often complaining about who didn't win, and they don't vote, which makes their complaints sound hollow. None of whom I wanted to win a fan Hugo won, but at least I voted, and the Hugos work for me. I do wish there'd been more variety in winners over the past couple of decades; people might feel they have a chance to win, and more fans would want the rockets, and more would vote on them.

I would have rather had The Dark

Knight win, but I won't complain about Wall-E. I am so glad that Phil and Kaija won for Girl Genius and especially for Dr. Horrible. I haven't completed my tally from Handicapping the Hugos, but I missed all of the Fan Hugos, and Best Novel. I wish that my man John Picacio had won, though I absolutely love Donato's stuff. I voted, but only a couple of my votes managed to win (notably Weird Tales, and the aforementioned Girl Genius and Dr. Horrible).

Montréal...fortunately for me, I brought my translator with me J, and it did help. Our room at the Embassy Suites was very modern and artistic, but that meant that certain things were missing, and I will take functional over artistic any day, especially, if I'm going to live there for a week. The Embassy also provided a good breakfast each morning, so that helped to get us started right each day. Because of Yvonne's food allergies, we actually did a small grocery order on our way into Montreal in the western suburbs, around Dorion, and you probably saw us eating sandwiches... we brought along with us a bag lunch each day. Not that adventurous, but having familiar food each day, fresh fruit, etc., made sure we were ready for the craziness of the evenings, like Auroras, Hugos, etc. The Montreal party served up some great smoked

meat, and one of the best names in smoked meat is Dunn's. There's even a Dunn's in Toronto for those displaced Montréalais. Poutine varies from place to place, and it is usually a heart attack on a plate. Glad you got to enjoy the cuisine; Montreal has it all, and I wish I could enjoy it more.

Linda and I were talking the other day about going back to Montreal. I'd love it, but I don't think we'll be there anytime soon, sadly. It was really expensive for us, which is sad.

222...What does it take to win any Hugo? They are part judgment of the

work done over the past year, and part popularity contest. There are few awards that aren't. Fanzines may exert less influence than websites when it comes to choosing who wins the silver rocket, but today's voters are on websites, and aren't getting fanzines. As said, those who complain about who should have won but didn't aren't going to Worldcon to make their choices known; those on the websites are, and they are voting, and that's how Electric Velocipede won. Discussion time...who could be on that ballot in future years in all three fan categories? (I will add here that with the official voting figures,

Guy Lillian and I were each a mere single nomination off the ballot. This has been a public service announcement.) **And I'd have loved for both of you to have been on (along with Claire Brialey and various others!)**

Taral used to make much out of being a fannish outlaw... Anticipation made an excellent

choice, and he's had a lot to smile about over the past couple of year and past couple of weeks, and I hope he's still smiling. It was well deserved.

I think he had a great time, and I was glad to get to meet him. Really, a nice dude and I've been going over everything of what he's been

Off it goes to you and my LJ, and I will have something else in your IN box not long afterwards. Good to see you again, good to see Linda (hug!), and Brianna, I'll hug you on the escalator, give let me step a couple of steps up. Hug! Folks, it was a pleasure to see you all again, Jason, that includes you, too, and Frank, and all the bunch that made it up, and I wish España and Jean and Leigh Ann could have made it. We gotta do all this again, but where? Take care, see you next issue.

It would have been so great to have Espana and Leigh Ann and Jean around. They're a blast! Always great to spend a little time with the Penneys!

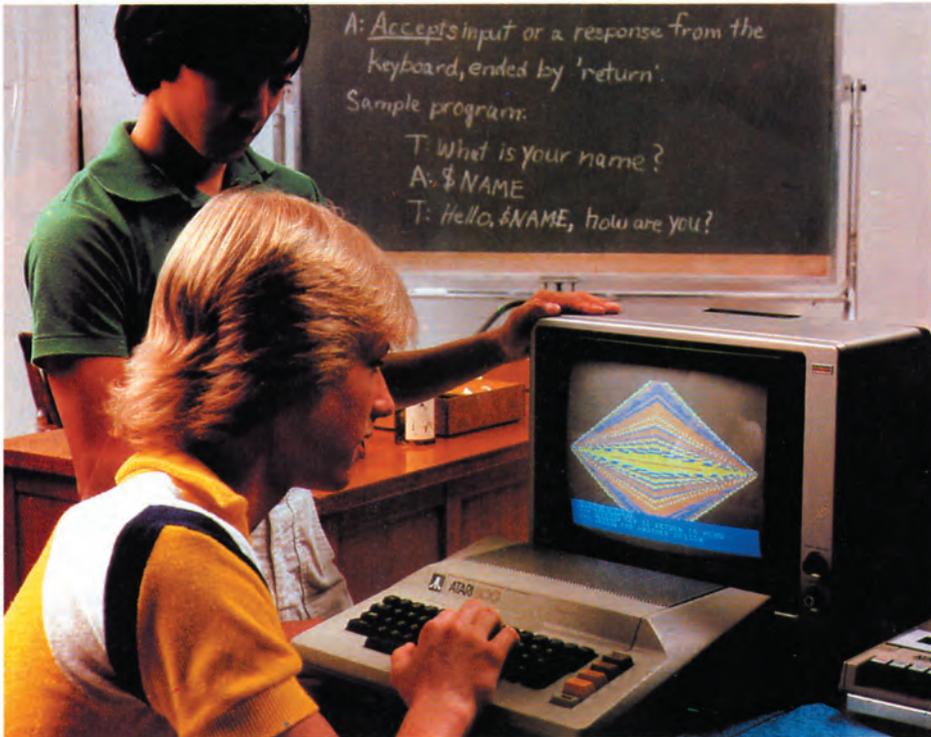
Yours, Lloyd Penney

And now, a special set of LoCs sent me to ages ago , re-forwarded by Frank Wu!

SUPERVILLAIN FAN MAIL

Dear Mr. Garcia:

Don't act so surprised, Chris Garcia. You weren't on any TAFF



mission this time. I have traced the rebel plans here - when you published them in ish 177, which was as clumsy as it was stupid. Now this fanzine is my only link to finding their secret base.

The ability of The Drink Tank to insert random typos is insignificant compared to the power of the Force. Don't be so proud of this fanzine you have constr---

Screw this. Writing a LOC to The Drink Tank "sucks." I used to be Dark Lord of the Sith.

Darth Vader

P.S. Big fan of the porny cover art by Brianna Spacekat.

Dear Chris:

You wanna know how I got these scars? Reading The Drink Tank.

The Joker

P.S. Brianna Spacekat's covers make my world burn.



develops a natural equilibrium with the surrounding environment, but fanboys do not. You fanboys move to the green room and multiply until every last Cheetoh is consumed. The only way you can survive is to spread to the party floor and the fanzine lounge. Fanzines are a disease, a cancer of this planet. You, Mr. Garcia, are a plague and I am the cure.

Agent Smith

P.S. Not even the Oracle could have foreseen how porny the Brianna



Dear Mr. Editor:

I'd like to share a revelation I've had during my time in fandom. Every mammal on this planet instinctively



Sic Semper this issue! I'd like to thank Taral, Frank & Brianna, Lloyd and various others for making it so I didn't have to write anything big!!! And of course, to Mo and Mason for their art. I got to meet Macey this weekend at the Steampunk get-together that Jean Martin put on as an SF/SF event. it was a lot of fun. There's another Steampunk thingee coming up, but that's for another zine, one called Exhibition Hall, isn't it?

The next issue will either be next weekend or a few days after that. Why? Because I've got so much to try and complete, including the start of the search for the next TAFF Delegate! If you've always wanted to stand for TAFF, and you think you can get 3 North Americans and two Europeans to nominate you, now's the time! The nomination phase will end October 1st and the race will start right after that. More details are to follow. It should be a fun race.

And there's more. The next issue will feature some Taral, a second installment of Ma Vie en Reno and more! I'm excited, especially with the cover that'll be the first Frank Wu cover I've had in quite a while! It'll be awesome!

And there are plans afoot for so many other things. I can't talk about all of them, but there's more. I'm really diggin' working on the Alternative History issue of Journey Planet (and if you've got an article for it, the deadline ain't until September 20th!) and I've already started in on Exhibition Hall 2: The Revenge. That one'll be fun too.

And so I sign off and hope that you all have a wonderful Labor Day, or whatever!