

DRINK



TANK

The Drink Tank 376

~Your Editors~

Vanessa, James, Chris

This is Chris speaking, as often is the case. This issue is pretty much a Mo Starkey cover, a Steve Mix Article, a couple of words from me, a Vanessa tiny spot piece, and some Steve Stiles Abstract work. To me, that's a good Drink Tank.

I know, I know, it's kinda slight, but it really looks at the stuff I love about doin' the Drink Tank. I love the writing that is personal, and art that's fun and funky and fresh. I love Mo's cover, and I'm a huge fan of Steve's abstracts. And I say a little, and if you're gonna be a fanzine guy, you better love writing!

I've also been hard at work on the Jay Lake issue, which'll be available in print form at Westercon, and I'll be mailing a few out, mostly to contributors, and Guy Lillian. It's an issue that is mostly reprints, but the stories are powerful and the effect the man had is so obvious. I'm glad I could call him my friend, and I'm even gladder that I get to memorialize him in an issue of The Drink Tank. The fact that I FINALLY get a Gail Carriger piece to run in the Drink Tank is nice as well, especially since she tells a story which really sheds light on Jay's Super Power.

Westercon is soon, and there's gonna be a Fanzine Lounge! I've got a few zines (can't bring too many, we're flyin' in) and a lot of fun stuff! I'm hoping that it's gonna be a great time, and that I won't be so busy that I won't just get to hang out with the folks I seldom get to see. If you're there, lemme know and we'll talk! We'll be recordin' a lot of Podcasts!

And with that, this issue is off to the races!

Front + Back Covers by Mo Starkey

Page 5 by Steve Stiles

Page Number Borders by Vanessa Applegate



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Just Rambling About Death...That's All

by Steve Mix

It has been a rough 6 months. Three of my friends have killed themselves.

My roommate from the army was found dead two weeks ago. He was a good guy. Played a lot of video games and liked to draw.

I think we all saw it coming. He had a bad life after the army. Kevin got into a car accident right when he finished serving. Totaled his truck. His wife at the time had been looking for a reason to screw him over. She wasn't the best person. So she used the accident as a springboard to take his kids from him. She won in court and Kevin began the process of drinking himself to death.

Lord, did he drink. I would check up on him every week or so and each time he would tell me he was "about a fifth of the way through a handle of wild turkey."

I don't even know what unit of measurement a handle is.

Kevin's best friend Donnie died in Afghanistan in 2011. Donnie started out in our unit and he was another great kid that was a good soldier. It broke Kevin pretty bad. After that, he told me that I, "was his new best friend because Donnie is gone."

My friend Kevin deserved VA benefits, but he waited so long to get them. He was practically living on the streets when I finally got him to go down and begin the long process of getting benefits.

Two days before he died, he messaged me.

He was telling me how he was feeling down. We were coming up on the anniversary of Donnie's death and this sort of thing happened every year. "Shit's getting dark here," were his exact words. I thought I talked him down. We started laughing and joking. We chatted most of the night. I kept telling him to just jump on a train and come see me. By the end of the night he had decided to go live with my old team leader,

The VA has massive backlogs, specifically for vets of the Iraq and Afghanistan conflicts. Sometimes, the wait can be 6 months or more...



Brian. I was pretty happy about this. Brian was an excellent soldier and he would help keep Kevin on the straight and narrow.

I thought we had a handle on it.

I still don't know what unit of measurement a handle is.

Kevin messaged me the day after that at 2 a.m. (having gone through my facebook pictures) and he was telling me how lucky I was that I met Max Brooks. I woke up at 7 a.m. and replied with laughter.

Kevin was found dead shortly after that of a drug overdose. We don't know if it was intentional or accidental. He didn't leave a note. I can't help but think that I should have known that this time was different.

It's so hard not to take it personally. I wish I could have done something else, said something better or just decided to jump on a train and drag my friend away from his life. Somehow that would change his timeline and he'd still be here today.

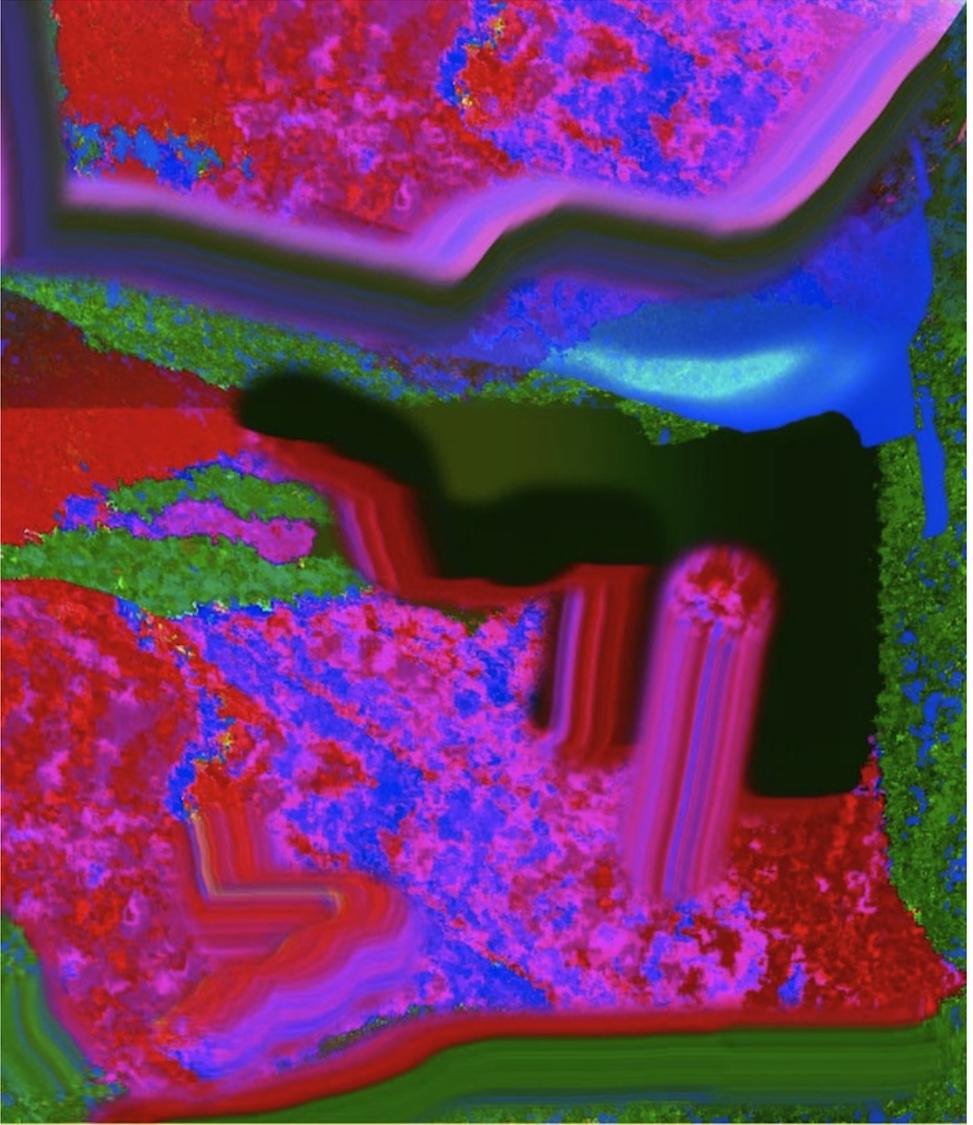
That's just the demons of survivor's guilt clawing at the inside of my skull, screaming to be set free. Their long sharp fangs and toothy grins keep me up most nights. Every time one of my army buddies dies, the demons grow in size and get sharper edges. I wish I knew a way to remove these monsters from my life.

I keep thinking I can just message Kevin and bullshit about random stuff.

I can't though. He's not here anymore.



There are more than 30,000 drug overdose deaths in the US annually. Some estimates put the number as 1-in-5 are intentional. It is the leading form of poisoning in the US



Steve Stiles

Steve Stiles has been nominated for Best Fan Artist 13 times since 1967. He needs a win!



Westercon 67 Preview

by Chris Garcia

Yes, I'll be the Fan Guest of Honor, and that's awesome! If you ever get the chance to be one, jump at it! It's a lot of fun, and even though it's a bit of work, it's great. The slate of GoHs is huge for this one. There's the amazing Cory Doctorow (and I'm re-reading *Little Brother* for the con) and the Writing Excuses team (friends like Brandon Sanderson, Mary Robinette Kowal, and the great Howard Tayler, and Dan Wells, who I've never met) as well as William Stout as the Artist GoH! I don't think we've met either.

The fun guy, who has agreed to being on the Podcast, will be Dr. Zombie - Bradley Voytek. He is an ACTUAL Zombie scientist, I believe working for the CDC. We're building questions for him that'll be both fun and useful! The more interesting questions will be his take on popular Zombie films!

And Special Guest Larry Correia's gonna be there for one day.

Conflicted having him there because he's the guy behind *Vox Day* on the Hugo ballot, and wrote a bit of a defense of him. I like his writing a lot, though.

The awesome David Farland. He's written *Star Wars* stuff, and a bunch of award-winning novels. I met him once, years ago, and he was super nice! I'm glad I get the chance to meet him.

So, there's a Fanzine Lounge. I'm bringin' zines, and fun stuff, plus a little exhibit about yours truly that will not only NOT illuminate me as a person, but will probably confuse you about me as well. Can't bring the Hugo, sadly, but the *Nova*, incredibly rare on the North American continent, will be making an appearance!

One of the things I'll be doing is interviews. Vanessa and I will do *Themed for Your Pleasure*, M. Todd Gallowglas and I will debut *Hardcore Fanboy*, and I'll do my little 5 Cons-like videos. It should be a lot of fun.



Westercon 67 is being held in Salt Lake City over 4th of July Weekend. I'm so excited, I think I could Plotz!

It's also the first time Vanessa will be meeting a lot of my Fannish friends, which means a lot to me. Y'all are kinda my family, and I really want you to get to know her.

Because she's gonna be around a while.

But more on that later...

A few panels are gonna be great, and one that I am excited for - The Match Game! I LOVE THE MATCH GAME! It's sometimes family fun, and sometimes filthy as Lucre. What you gonna do?

I've not done a con like Westercon in ages, so it's gonna be fun. A lot of my friends from around the country are going to be there, and that's always fun.

Sadly, I can't actually spend any extra time in Salt Lake, which is something that I always try to do when I go to a con. We're flying in the night before, then leaving the night the con ends. It's going to be tough. I'm hoping we find at least a couple of fun places right by the convention! I'm hopin gto find a cheap eats kind of place nearby!

I'll also be hosting a screening of The Giant Brine Shrimp and the Masquerade as well! I am super-excited to get to do both. Luckily, I managed to host the Masq-like event at BayCon, which was fun.

So, it's gonna be a great con, and I can't wait to see all the folks who show up. The con's been great to me so far and I can not wait to share with everyone how excited I am IN FREAKIN' PERSON!!!!

Also, you might have heard that there's going to be a HUGE announcement about San Jose in 2018's WorldCon bid. I am hoping we manage to get it and we can do some AMAZING stuff. I loved it the last time we had a San Jose WorldCon!



