

# THE ALL-NEW

# LIGHTNING BOLT

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**AN EDITORIAL OF SORTS...**

The saying goes, "United we stand, divided we fall".

Not a popular sentiment these days; division seems to be the primary focus of so much in our contemporary society. Muslims versus "Americans". Black versus white. Rich versus poor. The "1%" versus everybody else. Democrats versus Republicans. Republicans versus the "Tea Party" versus the "Stormtrumpers". Hillary supporters versus Bernie supporters. Gays versus "Christians". (And, just so you know why, I put "Christians" in quotes because, by every yardstick I can bring to bear, these people are NOT following any of the teachings of a certain Yeshua bin Yusuf, born in Bethlehem and raised in Nazareth.) Rational people versus ideologues. Freethinkers versus demagogues.

You get the idea.

Debate is no longer a matter of the idea with the most logical, evidence-based arguments winning; it's become a matter of who shouts the loudest, and who repeats their "bullet points" most frequently. Free speech becomes who says the most outrageous things to gain the attention of the ratings-starved news media. Civilized debate becomes who has the most vocal, violent, and fanatic horde of followers.

And, despite the fever dreams

of "right-wing" candidates who claim that America was created a "Christian nation", and that the Founding Fathers would approve of what they are trying to do, the evidence shows, not only in the documented quotes of said Founding Fathers, but also in the words of their framework for our republic today, the Constitution, that religion was intended to be totally separate from the government of the United States of America.

Witness the words of the First Amendment, one of ten without which half of the first thirteen states would not have signed and ratified the entire Constitution.

***Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.***

"Shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion": The United States is prohibited from establishing a State Church, such as the Church of England, of whom the British Monarch is the head. This, in the opinion of many of the Founding Fathers, was a deep and abiding flaw in the British system of government. If the Church is an arm of the Government, then the

Government will demand taxes for support of the Church. (This used to be the case.)

"Or prohibiting the free exercise thereof;": The United States is also prohibited from passing laws restricting, criminalizing, or attempting to abolish the free and open practice of religion - **any** religion. And, as has been said on many occasions, freedom *of* religion necessarily implies freedom *from* religion.

There are many other aspects to the First Amendment, which I would be willing to present logical, rational arguments about, but that is not my choice at this time.

The Constitution of the United States, in addition to making fascinating reading, is the basic structural framework of our entire system of government. I recommend heartily reading it repeatedly, and attempting to interpret it both in light of when it was written and how it applies to today's circumstances.

This would make us more in-

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formed citizens, as well as less likely to "sell our birthright for a mess of pottage", as is said in Genesis 25:20. (Checking the reference is left as an exercise for the student.)



### WHAT DREAMS WE HAD...

When I was growing up, back in the mists of time, we Americans had dreams...

We dreamed of rockets to the Moon and Mars, manned exploration of the solar system, a network of manned space stations, both civilian and military. We dreamed of Luna City, the first permanent settlement on the Moon. We dreamed of colonies on Mars and Venus, and possibly on the moons of Jupiter and Saturn.

We dreamed of Man finally liv-

ing and working in space.

I believe it was Konstantin Tsiolkovsky, the Russian space theorist and pioneer, who said, "The Earth is the cradle of humanity, but mankind cannot stay in the cradle forever." But our national will, which was strong and resolute until Neil Armstrong and Edwin "Buzz" Aldrin landed on the Moon on 20 July 1969, has cooled its ardor.

Many decry the money spent on the "space race" up to that point as wasted; they contend the money could have, and should have, been spent more fruitfully on Earth's problems. They say poverty, racism, hunger, and associated problems deserve more of our time, our resources, and our attention. Some even say that we should abandon attempts to leave Earth altogether, because Man was not meant to live in space.

My contention is that Man, as a species, is not "meant" to do things; Man means to do things. Before 17 December 1903, the widely accepted view was that "Man was not meant to fly". Orville and Wilbur Wright meant to show that powered flight could happen, and they did. Konstantin Tsiolkovsky and Robert H. Goddard laid the foundations of the Space Age by proving that liquid-fueled rockets could fly, and would fly. Wernher von Braun, designer of the V2 rocket for the Nazi government and the Saturn V, which sent Americans to the Moon, for the United States, Sergei Korolev, rocket designer for the Soviet Union's space program in the 50's and 60's, Willy Ley, science writer and space advocate who did much to promote

spaceflight awareness in that same time, all ignored the "conventional wisdom" that Man was not meant to do things. They pushed the limits of our knowledge farther each day.

In addition, the aerospace establishment, the companies that contracted with NACA (NASA's predecessor), the Armed Forces (particularly the Air Force and Navy), and the Federal Government itself to develop stronger materials, more powerful engines, and methods of peeling back the layers of unfamiliarity that loomed the higher and faster we went.

In 1961, we sent men into space; we were not the first to do so, since the Soviets had sent Yuri Gagarin into orbit in April of that year, his Vostok completing one orbit. But Alan Shepherd's and Gus Grissom's suborbital flights, parabolic trajectories from Cape Canaveral to the Atlantic Ocean, served as a proof of concept of Project Mercury, and John Glenn was the first American in orbit, completing three circuits of the Earth.

We went on with Project Gemini, proving the technology and developing the piloting skills to rendezvous and dock in orbit, setting the stage for the Apollo Moon flights. When Project Apollo began in 1967, at the successful conclusion of Project Gemini, we had in our hands the technology to do almost anything we wanted to.

We ended up losing the will to do it.

The Vietnam war, the protests and riots at home, and the growing anti-government sentiment fostered by the Johnson and Nixon Admini-

#### COLO(RECTAL)PHON:

This is *The All-New LIGHTNING ROUND* Volume 3 Number Three, about Mayday! 2016. Since this is a science-fiction fanzine, science and science-fiction WILL be mentioned, or even discussed in its pages. **YOU HAVE BEEN WARNED.**

This is another Totally Superfluous Publication by Alexander Bouchard, who disavows any knowledge of his actions. Bill no posts. Two spaces after a period (I'm old school, yo.). Edited by Al Bouchard. Published by Megan Bouchard. **eFanzines.com** has copies, and others available by whim.

Letters of comment, summonses, general inquiries, provocative photos of Harold Stassen, one-liter bottles of club soda, and unexpurgated transcripts of the Nixon White House tapes should be addressed to:

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If this had been an actual insurgency, you would have been given instructions.

This concludes this test of the Emergency Revolution Television System.

# LOC'N'LOAD

strations hamstrung NASA. After the Space Transportation System (the official name for the Space Shuttle program) went operational, years late and over budget, any goodwill NASA had gained from the years of successes, in spite of the launch pad fire of Apollo 1, taking the lives of Gus Grissom, Edward White, and Roger Chaffee, had long since evaporated.

It didn't help that we had no overriding national goal. We could have had a permanent colony on the Moon by now, and be well on our way to exploring and colonizing the rest of our solar system.

Once we had dreams... we reached for the stars. Now the ashes of that dream lie bitter on our tongues, giving cold comfort, if any, to those who still look to the stars.

Hopefully this will not be our epitaph, that we stood on the brink of racial immortality, spreading our species throughout our system, and turned away from either lack of vision or lack of will.



**TOO MUCH OF A  
BOOKMARK FOR JUST  
ONE ASTERISK...**

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April 11, 2016

Dear Alex:

Finally got to it; my time has not been my own. Here comes some commentary on the first two issues of the new Lightning Round. Let's try to make some sense...

Vol. 3 No. 1...I know how you're feeling, I haven't put out an issue of a zine for a long time, but responding to the zines I do does take a lot of time. I hope there's more than me in the local.

*Yes, Lloyd, there is more than just you. But you are always welcome, like our late friend Mike Glicksohn.*

Many people call elections the silly season...the current US election turns silly to scary. The idea that either Ted Cruz or Donald Trump may become your president scares a lot of us up here, so it should terrify you. No, we don't want Ted Cruz back, and I suspect neither does Mexico.

*As I understand it, his father emigrated from Cuba; I doubt Raul Castro wants him back, either.*

Let us know more about the films you're working on, and if you need some voiceover work, let me know. I do it here for film and media students from time to time, and I also have a regular paying gig, but I am always looking for more to put on my resume and IMDB page.

*Everything now is in "headdesk" stage right now, which translates to "still trying to write something that doesn't make me sick". Progress is still being made.*

Vol. 3, No. 2... Are politics and entertainment two sides of the same coin? Yes, but only if you like horror movies. I have read that many people around the world, when they see the Republican candidates (ecchhh!), and read about how human rights are being curtailed by many states, openly wonder when American abandoned democracy, and embraced an oligarchy running the show, and controlling the money supply. I have not been in the USA for some years, and when I read the results of this continuing election campaign, sorry, Alex, I do not want to go there. It is a scary place for many non-Americans like me, and for many people, non-American seems to mean the same as un-American.

*I suspect that is the whole raison d'être behind the Dominionist/Tea Party/ right-wing nutjob part of the Republican Party. They make the Klan and the John Birch Society look sane...*

I saw the first two Star Trek reboot movies once each. I'd rather go back to the timeline followed by the last few TV shows, and find out what happened

after Voyager returned home. I have also seen Star Wars Episode VII, and felt in many ways, it was a remake of Episode IV, but with new characters, and some new ideas, and a new generation of rebels. I see few movies, so when I want to see a movie, I want it to be worth my money, and it's probably the biggest reason we rarely go. There's a multiplex I can see from our balcony, but we might be there once or twice a year.

*We don't go to theatres much, because whatever they use to clean them screws with Megan's respiratory system. If we want to see a movie badly enough, we wait until it comes out on DVD or Blu-Ray, and buy it then.*

What we've done the last few years...save our money. We wanted to go to the London Worldcon a couple of years ago, but we just couldn't save enough to go. But we continued as best as we could, and this coming August, we will be going to England for a trip to the Harry Potter exhibits just north of London, five days of exploration in London proper, and a long weekend full of steampunk fun at The Asylum in Lincoln, a two-hour train ride north of London. We expect great fun, and we hope to meet a lot of new people. We still go to local conventions, but mostly now not just as attendees, but as dealers. At the end of the month is Ad Astra, and we will have two tables there.

*I'm glad that you two still manage to get out in the metro Toronto area. We haven't been to a con since Detcon, and we find the local cons are pricing themselves out of our range. We sold at a couple of local comic cons, but it's getting uneconomic to do, as well.*

Done for now, and please do

keep the issues coming.

Yours, Lloyd Penney.

*I keep trying... when I finally broke that word logjam, I rapidly filled up two issues of two and four pages. This one's looking to go six, maybe eight. (We'll see.)*



Newsflash! Semi-noted fanzine editor John Purcell, in a semi-awake state and in need of another cup of coffee, decided to take semi-note of Al Bouchard's latest attempt at pubbing a fanzine by writing a semi-letter-of-comment on the aforementioned fanzine that goes by the title of *Lightning Round*. Purcell feigned semi-interest, then went off in search of that second cup of java.

*I'll have one, also... Number Two coffee... too hot, too strong, too black. Anyway.*

I am glad you have decided to re-enter the fanpubbing fray, Al. It always pleases me to see another fanzine being revived, or a long-time fan start up a new fanzine. One must admit that the electronic format certainly makes the cost of production much more affordable, although some of us still produce the occasional dead-tree version. I have one of those - *Askew* - and since your snail mail address is included in the latest issue I am adding you to that mailing list. More copies are due to be mailed out next week, so keep your eyes peeled (such a painful sounding idiom) out for it.

*Muchly appreciated, John. It was an itch I'd put off scratching for far too long.*

Elvis has still left the building. Or he may have simply gone home. You decide.

*Heads, he wins... Tails, I give up.*

The political scene in America is the ultimate reality show: it's lengthy, disgusting, alternating between fascinating and boring, hilarious and serious, even passionate and apathetic. Definitely quite the show. No matter what, the main thing for all Americans who truly care for the direction of their nation over the next decade or three need to get out and vote. By this I mean Independents and Democrats: they need to overcome their disinterest and petty squabbles to once and for all unite and vote as a bloc to defeat the GOP machine, which is intent on destroying America As We Know It only to reshape it into their own warped image.

*I have something of an idea what that image entails, and I disagree with it in both form and content.*

The previous political statement was an unsolicited and unpaid and uncalled for announcement.

Back to your lives, citizens.

*And I disavow any knowledge of my actions.*

And I hope to see another issue of *Lightning Round*, Al. The latest (36th) issue of my e-zine *Askance* is likewise posted on [efanzines.com](http://efanzines.com), so feel free to take a gander. Hope you like it, too. Oh, before I forget, you really have a household nuisance named Babe Ruth Bouchard? You are not a baseball fan by chance, are you? If so, then we have a major shared interest - besides science fiction, fanzines, conventions, and the like. If ice hockey is another interest of yours, then I don't know what I'll do. Probably have another cup of coffee, only this time I'll add the butter rum syrup.

All the best,

**John Purcell**

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*When we acquired Babe a few years ago, she was nine, had lived with one woman her entire life, and was only called "Babe". We added the "Ruth", in part because of George Herman Ruth from Baltimore, because all our felines have middle names. (How else could they tell when we're mad at them?)*

*As for hockey sur glace, growing up in a border city, with one of the Original Six teams, you needn't guess where my loyalties lie, The Winged Wheel is our Aspect and our Avatar. And don't forget the Silver Broom curling championships on CBC... Curse those dim-bulb regulators on both sides of the river for turning CKLW-TV's antenna pattern away from Detroit, and the switch to "digital TV", so we can't receive the analog Canadian signal.*

*As for the additive, make mine a liberal shot of Tullamore Dew.*



**WHAT WE HAVE HERE  
IS FAILURE TO COMMUNICATE.**

**Spaces intentionally  
left blank.**

### MY ANTI-SOCIAL LIFE

When I was growing up (a dubious claim at best), I never had that much of a social life. I didn't have a lot of friends, so I didn't go to a lot of places in groups. I also didn't spend that much time in any one place, which makes it difficult to form lasting relationships.

For a number of years, my social life consisted almost entirely of conventions and concon business. Then, for reasons I won't go into, I left committees.

I didn't even attend conventions, for the most part. The last convention that Megan and I attended was Detcon I, the NASFiC here in Detroit a couple of years ago. We had planned to go to Sasquan, in Spokane, but that fell through, for one reason or another... and we had memberships to MidAmeri-Con II in Kansas City this year... and it looks as though we won't be able to make it there, either.

Then, to top it off, several people whom I have known over the years at conventions have crossed the Rainbow Bridge, to whatever fannish Valhalla there may be. Even though I haven't seen these friends in a while, their loss diminishes me. John Donne is almost right - no man is an island, not even me. However, the land bridge between me and the rest of humanity in general is becoming as tenuous as the highway down the Florida Keys.

I don't know if it's the screwy weather, the depression kicking back in, or some sort of low-hanging brain fog, but I find it more difficult to do almost anything. So, it seems, that this semi-regular work on a fanzine may be helping keep me (somewhat) sane...

More Knowledge Contained In Fanzines...

Al's Pals

An occasional comic strip by Al (@) Bouchard



## SOME SEMI-FINAL THOUGHTS...

### PURPLE PASSION

During the past week or so, as I write this, there has been a loud wailing and gnashing of teeth at the death of one Prince Rogers Nelson, better known as **Prince**. He has been hailed as a genius, a trailblazer, a true prodigy of the sort not known more than once in a generation... which is all well and good, as far as I'm concerned; he was much more talented than, say, the pompous pretender Kant'you West. (I have trouble calling what that vacuum-skulled nullity does "music"; I think a chorus of chimpanzees are more melodic and have more profound lyrical ability. But your mileage may vary.)

Many things have surfaced in the media about the heretofore secretive M. Nelson; some good, some bad, and all designed to titillate the tastebuds of the consuming public. This is the way our society works now, and I don't have much to say about it either way at present.

This much, however, I will say, and leave it at that... I was never a fervent devotee of the man, his music, or the phenomenon he embodied. I liked some of the songs, didn't care for some others, and left it at that.

\*

### GOD SAVE THE QUEEN?

Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Second, Monarch of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Defender of the Faith, and whatever other titles I've forgotten, reached her ninetieth birthday this past week. She is the longest reigning monarch in the history of the U.K., having surpassed her great-great-grandmother, Queen Victoria, in the past year, and is currently atop the line of succession to the British Throne, followed by her son, Prince Charles, his son, Prince William, and William's son, Prince George. I do not pretend to understand all the legal ramifications of the succession laws of the British Monarchy, but I do know that as of 2011, female children are not moved down the line by the birth of a younger male child.

Seems fair to me...

Now, the question in play is this: Will Prince George live to ascend the throne? I don't choose to speculate about Charles, since his grandmother, the Queen Mother Elizabeth, lived until she was about 102 years old, and his mother the Queen doesn't show much sign of slowing down. He'll be 70 in 2018, while his mother will be 92.

In short, your guess is as good as mine...

### PAVEMENT ENDS

We come to the end of this installment of *The All-New Lightning Round*.

That is, I could do more, but I think keeping it down to six pages is a reasonable idea... prevents you readers from burning out on my think pieces.

Will to write, time, and "inspiration" (a highly elusive thing, it seems) willing, I'll be back sometime after Memorial Day (or Decoration Day, as I grew up calling it). In the meantime, read more fanzines! Bill Burns and *eFanzines.com* provide a large archive of some of the best names in fan writing for your erudition and delectation; I'm in there too.

Write LoCs! Draw fillos! Do something!

Fanzine fandom begins with you - don't let it end with you!

*Shredded paper packaging material!*

{Explanation: another term for "Excelsior", the legendary sign-off of the legendary Stan (The Man) Lee.}