

Ray X X-Rayer #142

8 November, 2018 © 2018

raypalmx@gmail.com

<https://x-rayer.com>

The Simple Edition

No fancy layout or graphics this time around. No worrying about resizing an image to fit the space. Just text. If this is a bit sloppy or uneven, tough.

I've been through the wringer lately and I don't feel like pushing myself any harder than I need to. Two weeks ago I suffered a fall that lacerated the back of my head. (NOTE: A severe cut to your scalp produces prodigious bloodletting.) No neurosurgeons here in Peeburgh, NY so I had to go to a hospital about three hours away. Like any hospital the nurses try their best but they're understaffed and overworked. I had to keep asking for the blood to be washed out of my hair. Three and half hours later they finally cleaned me up.

Earlier today I had another CT scan. My doctor said there was no change, a good thing. I'm hoping my subdermal hematoma will clear so that they don't have to cut my skull open.

A few days ago I cracked a filling while eating. Maybe the impact from the fall split it. I'm in constant discomfort: it hurts to eat or even talk. I'm living on Tylenol and penicillin every six hours. In the past the local hospital had a dental clinic where everything could be handled. But the hospital closed the clinic so it could pay its president over a million dollars in salary and benefits so he could walk around in a nice suit all day.

I called the dentist I had before but he no longer accepts Medicaid. I only saw him one time. X-rays were taken and then he "cleaned" my teeth, a cursory job compared to the care I got at the dental clinic. So he does a minimum of effort, bills Medicaid, and then when I really need help he tosses me out on the street. I wonder how many other patients received minimum attention so he could pad his profits.

So far I've only received two consultations, no care. I went to a franchise called Aspen Dental, willing to pay out of pocket a reasonable amount to have the tooth fixed. But the dentist insisted I needed a crown, "only" \$1,000. I decided to try elsewhere. One dentist told me that Aspen is like McDonald's – they always want to supersize you. I didn't need a crown, only a filling replaced. Big surprise.

There is a dental clinic over an hour away at another hospital where I could get the filling fixed but I don't have a car and the Medicaid transportation service sucks. Due to its incompetence I missed a medical appointment some time ago. The situation was a lot better when the local social services provided transportation. But to save money they allowed Medicaid transportation to be privatized. We all know how privatization works: save money while screwing over clients with inferior service.

There are also volunteer drivers with a community outreach agency but they're not dependable. One time I waited for a driver and finally got fed up and called. I learned the driver wasn't coming, another medical appointment missed. Kinda rude they didn't bother to call me about the no-show.

Next week if things go my way (for a change) I'll be helped at the out-of-town dental clinic, paying money out of my pocket to get there. If they find the damage is too great then the tooth gets yanked.

Anyway I feel miserable while treading water, trying not to go under. So just a basic format this issue.

To simplify things I tried once again to use my Chromebook with Google Docs. And once again Google Docs was pain-in-the-ass difficult crap. So back to Windows 10 and Open Office.

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A Quiet Place: Aw, C'mon!

Sometimes I skip to the end of a book or movie to see if it's going to be worth my time to eXperience the whole thing.

But some people say, "How can you enjoy a fictional work if you know the ending?" Simple. I've always been interested in writing fiction – never been published – and along the way I've learned how a work is constructed. I can enjoy fiction on another level, seeing how well it was put together.

The film A Quiet Place had a great premise: blind aliens have invaded our planet and they can only detect human victims through sound. Make a noise and you're dead.

I did notice that these carnivorous critters with their blindness can run around all over, at one point panically racing away in a beeline, without slamming into trees or and other objects. They even don't even slip on something like Little Johnny's

damn skateboard left in the driveway or one of Curt Collins' banana peels. But let's leave that aside.

I watched about the first third of the movie then skipped to the ending. OK, the ending works. So then I watch the middle part. Uh-oh.

I hate crisis clustering, everything happening at once to all the characters. It's just unbelievable that most characters survive three or four threats at the same time. The kids are missing. Their father searches for them, monsters prowling the cornfields. Unfortunately Lassie isn't around to tell him the poor kids fell into a grain silo, trapped. (With all that annoying barking Lassie produced she was probably one of the first ones to become a monster meal.) Meanwhile back at the ranch mother and baby are being stalked by a hungry space critter. And wombats are rampaging across Wisconsin!

This is compound melodrama, putting the characters in such impossible situations, threats in all directions. Save the kids, save the mom, and get those freakin' wombats out of Wisconsin!

Sorry but I don't buy it. A good story doesn't need a danger pileup to build suspense.

My place wasn't quiet as I watch the disappointing middle part. Guffaws and scorn permeated the air. Technically a well made movie, good acting and direction, but the distended middle didn't work.

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Opposing Viewpoints

In the last issue -- [1] *Ray X X-Rayer #141* -- Bob Jennings, Editor/Writer of [2] *Fadeaway* zine, wrote in his LOC some negative comments regarding Dr. Robin Wright. Robin is known for submitting dense philosophical essays addressing science fiction symbolism. Below is Robin's email to me which includes Bob Jennings' criticism.

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Subject: Sick and not a doctor
robin usher<robika2001@yahoo.co.uk>
Attachment - Sat, Sep 15, 2018 at 9:43 PM
To: raypalmx@gmail.com

Hi, I wrote to Robert asking him to retract these remarks that somehow found their way into what at first sight seemed a fairly innocuous letter to X - Ray # 141. However, he wrote that it was his opinion, although I've never written anything remotely approaching this as a summarization of my writing, '... evil womankind is corrupting the human race and destroying civilization.' I'm appending a letter so that the readers of X - Ray can make up their own minds, if that's acceptable to you?

Dr Robin Bright PhD

(NOTE FROM RAY: What follows is Bob Jennings' LOC comment Bright reprinted in his email. He didn't indicate the source.)

"Dr". Robin Bright sent a lot of articles to me years ago, hoping to get something in my fanzine Fadeaway. Needless to say I accepted nothing he wrote. I think the guy is a genuine nut case. Everything he ever writes, no matter how well it starts out, quickly turns into a tirade about "women's seed", and how evil womankind is corrupting the human race and destroying civilization. The stuff is not unintentionally humorous; it's just sick and sad, and not even logically written either. I admit I was shocked when one of his articles appeared in one of John Purcell's fanzines. I'm glad John has since repented that rash decision and has disassociated himself from "Dr." Bright

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(And this is what Bright wrote in his attached doc file:)

Robert Jennings of Fadeaway suggested I was sick, and not a doctor, in a letter to X -Ray, # 141, September, 2018. I don't want to be sick, and I take exception to being told that this summarizes what I write, '... evil womankind is corrupting the human race and destroying civilization.' (p. 4) Moreover, I think that English is a beautiful language, and I don't want it to be plain. However, this is as plain as I can make it, without being a muzzle `em:

Flesh Fiction

Bartholomew made a stab at what appeared to be a large fat sausage on his plate. Moving aside what looked like a couple of large potatoes, he made another stab at the apparent sausage, `Phew! It`d be difficult for the woman to sexually reproduce human brains without her penis.` Bartholomew chewed on fully thoughtful.

Robin Bright

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In a follow-up email Robin Bright wrote:

Subject: "Dr"
robin usher

Hi Ray, although I studied Human Biology (O) at school, it wasn't to the level of a Professorial chair. I quite understand your decision not to publish an article. Please, go ahead and publish my letter.

Robin Bright

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Information about Robin Bright can be found here:

http://robin-bright.wikia.com/wiki/Robin_Bright_Wiki .

[1] <http://efanzines.com/RXXR/RXXR-141.pdf>

[2] <http://efanzines.com/Fadeaway/index.htm>

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Dialing For Destruction

I was joking around with someone about a bad 1960s sci-fi novel called "The Day They H-Bombed Los Angeles" by Robert Moore Williams. Who was bombing LA? While our government, of course, trying to contain a plague caused by a rogue protein molecule turning humans into howling zombies. But our hero and his friends live to tell the tale after the City of Angels is H-Bombed three – count 'em – three times.

I joked the government must have been using low-yield H-Bombs.

And while I was Googling to see what was out there for low-yield A-Bombs I came across a reference to variable yield or dial-a-yield nukes. Some nukes can be

adjusted before they're loaded on bombers. There was the Mod-10 B61 bomb that had four dial settings: 0.3, 5, 10 or 80 kilotons.

So what would happen if the technician setting the dial was upset, the-wife-had-a-headache-last-night scenario? The dial is supposed to be at its lowest yield but the technician says screw it, ramps it up to 80 kilotons.

Dialing for destruction. The greatest idea since the neutron bomb that would slaughter people but leave buildings standing.

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MailBoX Write to: raypalmx@gmail.com

Re: X-Rayer 141

Lloyd & Yvonne Penney
1706-24 Eva Rd.
Etobicoke, ON
CANADA M9C 2B2 September 24, 2018

Dear Ray:

Hello!, and many thanks for X-Rayer 141. Ah, there is always something to say here, and I will start with...Fox News is utter crap, not news at all but misinformation and entertainment in one toxic ball.

There, how's that? Fox News used to be available on local cable here, as well as a Canadian clone called Sun News, but Sun News went bankrupt, and Fox News was dropped from basic service. Bullshit through and through, and it is amazing how many people believe that station, word for word. Honoured newspeople move from any given news service to Fox News, and no one recognizes them anymore, for they have destroyed their news careers, looking like complete maniacs after having been honest voice of reason for decades. Then comes alien abductions? How many layers of BS are there here? The true aliens are those who work at Fox.

It is still to me extraordinary that any president of the US would support neo-Nazis, white supremacists, and other organizations of bigotry and ignorance. How's my reality? Much more solid than anything that seems to come from right-wing media, from any source, and we have our own, believe me.

The local...as readers of the fantastic, we are still rooted in reality, and while we know flying saucers don't exist, wouldn't it be cool if they did? And, I think that's about as far as we'd take it. We'd still like that thrill of the unknown, and the drive

for adventure, but that's what we read science fiction for, with the emphasis on the fiction.

My loc... Just last night, the local Hallowe'en store opened, and we were there, seeing what they had on offer. The number of offensive costumes are way down, but they are still there, for those who still want to dress as a brave or a squaw, I guess. That store still has a mountain of pallets of boxes of merch yet to open and put on the shelves, so who knows what else they have there. One big seller, I gather... Trump masks, and even they don't look too sane.

Saleswise, our vendor's business is doing quite well, and we have a show in the big woodsy area of High Park to vend in this coming weekend. It's been lucrative, but any profits go into the table's bank account, so it is self-sustaining. We'd never make a living at it, but at least we're not draining our own bank accounts to support it.

Time to get this to you. I have a few resumes to get out in the e-mail, along with this loc. Take care, stay warm, and see you next issue.

Yours,

Lloyd Penney.

RX: Regarding your comment about Trump Halloweens masks not looking too sane. When does Trump ever look sane? His only other expression is the stupid countenance of a grinning orange-utang.

As for Faux News: There was a local newspaper article about people who support Trump. One woman said that she was worried about the ballooning US debt, that something had to be done. Oh, like give a tax cut to the rich and add a trillion more to the national debt?

This woman also stated that she didn't watch CNN or MSNBC news because they told people how to think. She only watched Fox News.

She was a retired schoolteacher. Shows you how bad the US education system is when some of the teachers are more clueless than the students.

Good luck with your job search.

- END XR #142 -