THE LOG THAT FLIES

#14

It has been an unusual couple of months. So much has happened! I made my theater debut in Romeo and Juliet. The brakes failed on my car. My computer crashed (again). The Interregnum label file was corrupted (don't worry, there was a backup). Life has been full of surprises. Perhaps I'll be forgiven for a little detail:

Demon Program

The computer was the first thing to go. In a way, that was a good thing; if my car had died first, I'd never have been able to drive the computer back to the repair shop. Come to think of it, Interregnum #13 would not have come out.

The crash was an interesting one. The computer booted into Windows when I turned it on, but strangely—every single one of those windows was completely empty. I couldn't find any programs at all, and I couldn't install any of them. When I tried, the system froze solid.

I booted up without going into Windows, and found that my hard drive was 99.999% full. Oops! It seemed likely that this was the problem, and so I started to ruthlessly delete files.

Or at least, that's what I thought I was doing. The system thought so, too; it kept telling me that more and more space was free on the drive. Yet the freeze-ups persisted. A more careful examination of the drive with CHKDSK revealed that in fact *no* space was being cleared, no matter how many files I deleted.

Why? I soon figured it out: it was Microsoft's fault. Among the utilities that had come with Windows/DOS was Undelete. The Undelete program has several layers of protection: when I'd first purchased the computer, I selected the most powerful protection, Sentry. The Delete Sentry setting protects you by storing all deleted files in a hidden directory for 30 or 60 days after you delete them.

I tried to delete the files from the Sentry directory. It wasn't possible—they were "access denied". Not read-only, not archived, but "access denied" in a way that I couldn't change or touch. I had to take the system to the shop.

At the shop they didn't know what they were doing. They re-installed Windows (actually they

replaced my Windows 3.1 with Windows for Workgroups—not a bad free switch), incidentally wiping out all my installed programs in the process. Still the Sentry was active, and the hard drive completely full. The Windows popped up empty.

Finally we located a large file called SENTRY in the *root* directory. That one was accessible, and when it was deleted the Sentry program didn't save it. Finally Windows would run.

The first thing I did was go into Windows, re-install the Delete Sentry program, and turn it off. What a horrible utility! If anyone out there has it, make sure that it's not on. Right now! Go on, I'll wait. ☺

The Play's the Thing

Several months ago I was persuaded to play the role of Capulet, Juliet's father, in a local production of Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet. The director was Lois, a one-time (and future) contributor to IR who has been playing in my

Nereyon campaign for seven or eight years. Apart from some half-remembered fiascoes in elementary school, it was to be my first stage experience.

Incidentally, I don't know if many Interregnum readers or contributors have done much acting outside of roleplaying; it's not unlikely I suppose, though I don't recall that anyone local does.

I was very nervous. Would I be able to remember my lines? There were a lot of them. Would I faint onstage? That seemed silly, and yet who knew how I'd react to the pressure? How bad would the stage fright be—would I be vomiting before (or, god help me, during) each performance? What had I gotten myself into?

A lot of work, as it turned out. A play doesn't leave a lot of time for the rest of your life; rehearsals almost every night for weeks and weeks make it difficult to do anything much. My games had to be cancelled for the two or three weeks preceding the show.

Still, in the final analysis I'd say it was worth it. Memorizing the lines was difficult at first, but it became easier and easier every day—until it got to the point that I'd virtually memorized the entire play. I'd notice if anyone said even a single word out of place (though I tried not to remark on that too often).

Stage fright…never happened. That was a surprise; in the closest thing to a public performance that I've ever done in the last few years, I was absolutely terrified. Of course that was the "Feast" game for the New England IFGS (written up in a past issue), a complete nightmare. If I'd received the script for Romeo and Juliet the night before the show I'd no doubt have experienced some pangs of terror. Still, I'd been expecting some sort of strong reaction, and nothing turned up.

Part of the reason for that may have been—all modesty aside—that I knew that I was good.

Really good. The role was custom made for me: authority and anger. I enjoyed playing with the subtleties of the role, making the anger felt through soft speech at times to enhance the feeling of menace. It worked; several people remarked later that I was extremely frightening.

To what extent did my roleplaying experiences make me a better actor? That's difficult to say, though I should go and re-read Lois' article on the subject. Memorization isn't really part of RPGs to any great extent. GMing has given me the opportunity to play many different roles, but I've seen many GMs play as many roles terribly. At a guess, GMing made me more comfortable using whatever skills I already possess.

Perhaps the most important thing was *confidence*. The egomania of actors is a stereotype, of course; and yet I can see now that strong self-confidence not only makes acting easier, it also makes it better. It allows one to concentrate fully on projecting the role.

There's one thing that roleplaying and SF/fantasy really helped me with: language. Most people have great difficulty understanding Shakespearean English, but apart from one or two cases I had no difficulty at all. The use of archaic forms in RPGs and books made words such as "demesnes" familiar to me, and I often found myself explaining meaning and pronunciation.

The play itself went well. There were six shows, on two consecutive weekends; some of them weren't very well attended, but for others the house was packed. Unfortunately few of the people I know were able to come.

Would I do it again? I don't know…it *was* fun, and I'm sure I could get roles. But it takes so much time out of your life that I suspect it really has to *be* your

life. I can understand getting that involved with theatre, and can even sense that I could let myself get that involved…but I'm not, right now, and can make a choice not to be. It's nice to know that the possibility is there, and someday I'll probably do it again. But not too soon. Still, if anyone out there gets a chance to try acting, I'd recommend it.

PC or NPC

Over years of GMing I've created so many NPCs that it's become hard to remember much about any of them. I think I've managed to make them all different from one another, but must admit that I often find myself drawing on other sources for characterization—giving them qualities from books or movies I've seen. So far I don't think I've ever been caught out, which may be a tribute to my ability at throwing players off the scent or merely the result of poor acting on my part. ☺

I control my NPCs according to their own internal logic. They have their own motivations, and I often like to give them their own special
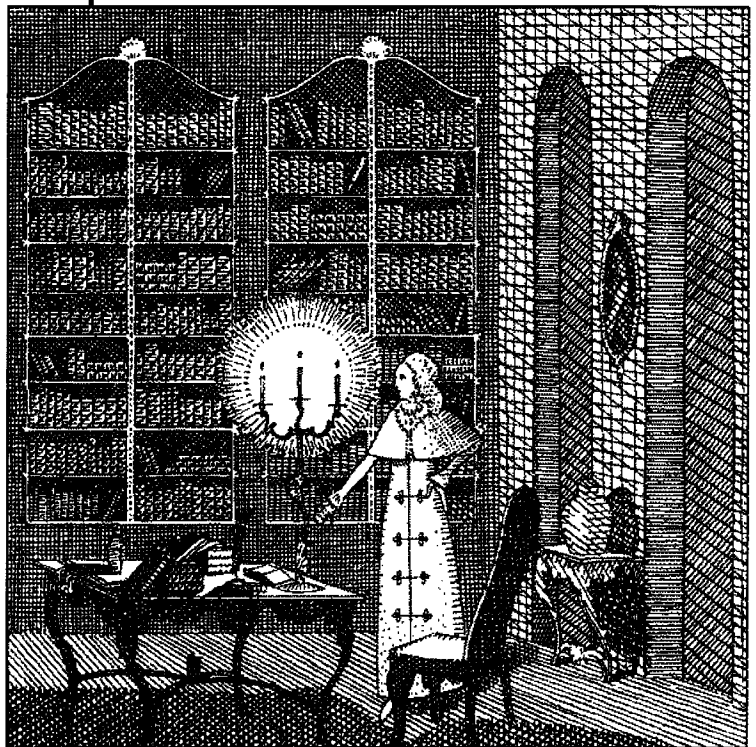
secrets—even the throwaway ones who are made up on the spur of the moment as the whims of the PCs dictate. Usually these secrets make no difference, but they turn out to be interesting—and are revealed—often enough to keep things interesting. Mind you, the secrets are likely as not to be irrelevant to the PCs interests. It would be silly to have a world of nothing but hidden kings and undercover immortals.

I can remember one NPC I created that worked rather well. The game was Disque, my first original creation: a world shaped like a, well, Disk, with some interesting properties. It was influenced by the works of Lord Dunsany, and even more strongly by a story in the Dunsany style by Larry Niven.

The details aren't important here, though I may write about the world some other time. Suffice it to say that through hard and dangerous investigation the players had become aware that there was a large and sinister cabal of magicians in their world. The inner circle of this mysterious group of wizards were known only by numbers to their underlings: One through Ten. As the PCs grew in power they found themselves more and more often in conflict with the secret plans of the Ten.

And so I feared that I was being too obvious one day when the party met an earnest and helpful mage. In type he was not unlike a less goofy version of Judge Reinhold, though at the time I wasn't familiar with that actor. He was sandy-haired, cheerful, and young. As a magician he was quite competent, with some unusual skills. He was quite curious, and asked many questions. His one prized possession was a wand of great though peculiar power: when invoked, the result could be nearly anything. Often the effect would be useless, but every so often it would save the party, or help them enormously. Oddly, he refused to let anyone touch the wand, saying that it was an heirloom of his house.

His name was Quintus.

It may seem obvious to *you*. In truth, it seemed too obvious—even corny—to me. And the players were among the most intelligent I've ever gamed with. Nonetheless…

It was the end of the game, and the fundamental nature of the world was changing. In fact, the shape of the world was changing. One effect of that change was to allow travel to other worlds. The PCs were interested to see nine cloaked and hooded figures—obviously magic-users—walking toward the portal at the center of the world. The figures bore artifacts and enchantments of such power that there was no doubt that these magicians were members of the Ten. But all the players were surprised when Quintus walked away from the group and took his place in line among them, as Five. He never looked back.

As you may have guessed, his wand was barely magical at all. It had simply been enchanted to *seem* magical. Quintus used it as a cover to cast powerful spells at need, and as occasional comic relief.

Ed Wood

I don't see many movies. Nor do I rent videos any more; since the local video store moved away, I haven't bothered to join another one. But when Scott (my roommate) rents a video tape, I sometimes take a look.

Or five looks, as in the case of *Ed Wood*. I've known about Ed Wood, the "Worst Director in History", since I was a child; he was prominently featured in <u>The Golden Turkey Awards</u>, a book about bad movies that I reviewed in the "From the Closed Shelves" column some time ago in <u>The Wild Hunt</u>. I'd seen *Plan 9 From Outer Space* at bad movie marathons, too.

Yet for some reason I didn't see *Ed Wood* when it came out—probably because no one else I know would want to see it, and I hate seeing movies alone.

My mistake! The movie is absolutely hilarious. Johnny Depp is perfect as Ed Wood, the transvestite WWII veteran with a fetish for angora sweaters and bad movies. The rest of the cast is top-notch as well, with particular credit going to Bill Murray as "Bunny" and Jeffrey Jones as Criswell the psychic. But the true standout performance is—astonishingly- —Martin Landau as the aged Bela Lugosi.

I've always liked Martin Landau, but never fooled myself into thinking that he was a good actor. In fact, I long considered him one of the worst actors around. In all the years that he played the Commander on <u>Space: 1999</u>, did he ever express an emotion? Change expression? Or in any way show any ability to act at all?

Not really. And I never thought he would. Yet in the last few years I've noticed something: Landau was getting good. In *Tucker* and Woody Allen's *Crimes and Misdemeanors* he was <u>very</u> good, and in fact was nominated for Oscars for both roles (not that a nomination proves anything).

In Ed Wood Landau excelled himself again. He's perfect as Bela Lugosi—looking at him, it's hard to tell who he really is. Of course great makeup helped him a lot, and the role itself is wonderfully written—the funniest in the film. But in his voice, expressions, and

movement Landau *is* Lugosi. And he well deserved the Oscar he received for the part.

It strikes me as odd that he should have become a great actor late in his career. He's in his early sixties, not terribly old—but how did he develop such virtuosity *now*, after so many years of ineptitude? Was he simply forbidden to show his skills in the past? That's hard to believe, since he was equally wooden on any number of shows.

But it doesn't really matter. The point is that *Ed Wood* is a wonderfully funny film about some very marginal science fiction/horror people. It's certainly worth seeing more than once.

Wonder, Act I, Sc. II

Previously: Caught in the middle of a battle on a desolate plain, the party saw their caravan destroyed. Separated and confused, the PCs managed to hide or protect themselves through the end of the battle—only to find that everyone in sight was dead. With the temperature dropping fast, and snow coming down thickly, they faced death by exposure—until they saw a strange blue glow in the northwest…

Not yet aware of each other, the PCs made their way toward the glow. As they got closer, they saw it came from a very strange-looking tower on a hillside near the battle plain: a tower curved like a horn, yet flat-topped. The total effect was very alien, like nothing they had seen before. Nonetheless, it offered some shelter from the elements. Light streamed from a large door stood open
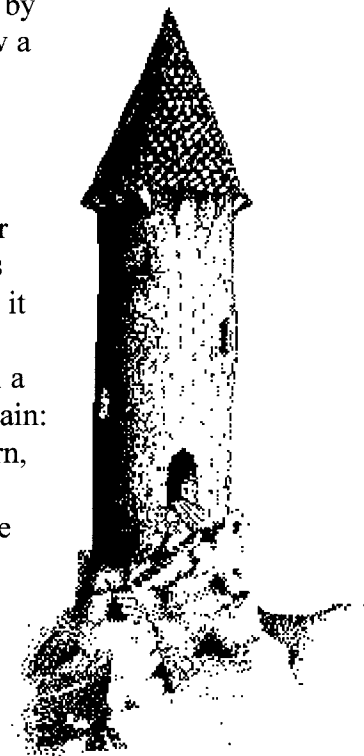
in the base of the tower. As they approached, the PCs saw one another. After a quick consultation, they decided to enter.

Inside, the tower was as strange as the exterior. A peculiar bluish light suffused the area. The walls of the tower stretched upward, until they were lost in the curve; faint strange markings could be made out above. A huge central pillar seemed to fill much of the interior of the tower. But at the base of the pillar was something that was easily understood: a fireplace with a warm fire, luxurious blankets on the floor, and tables piled high with exotic food and drink. After some debate, the exhausted characters ate, drank, and slept.

They woke refreshed. The food on the tables had been replenished; after breakfast, the group wondered where they were, and why they had been given such luxuries. In response, they heard the sound of stone grating softly on stone from above. As they looked up, they could see a tall grey form walking along a ledge in the central pillar of the tower. The figure did not seem human.

The party followed along below the figure as it walked toward their right. As they did, the ledge sloped noticeably downward. Before they had walked half-way around the pillar the ledge opened into a raise dais with a massive half-reclining stone chair. Sitting on the chair was an extremely odd looking creature.

Smooth grey skin. At least nine feet tall, but quite slender. Large eyes, and features of roughly human proportion—but stretched to fit an enormously elongated skull. The head alone was at least two and a half feet high, with more than half of the length above the eyes. It leaned its head back into the chair and regarded the group. Then it spoke (for convenience I'll paraphrase what was said).

The creature called itself the Pnopticopt. This, it appeared, was some sort of powerful Dreamer—one powerful enough to have created the tower. Yet the Pnopticopt was ignorant of the outside world. It (he) claimed to have been sleeping a long time. He asked the PCs to tell him all the stories and dreams they knew, as well as their own adventures and travels. This the PCs did. Though the stories should have taken years to tell, dream-like they seemed to be finished in a single night.

When they were through, the Pnopticopt offered the party employment. He needed agents, people of the world to travel throughout Wonder and bring back stories, dreams, and facts about the world. The main payment was unusual, but tempting: as long while as the party worked for the Pnopticopt, they would not die. They could suffer, and even be wounded or maimed, but they would not die.

The group accepted his offer. He presented them with a number of gifts, among which were the following:

1) A small box. "Put things in it which you don't want anymore. Be careful not to put your fingers in it." "Will things put in it never come back?" "...probably. Not for a long time, anyway."

2) A veil which makes the wearer very hard to recognize.

3) A reusable bandage of somewhat gruesome appearance that greatly accelerates healing.

4) Dirkka, a small she-wolf with an unparalleled sense of smell. A master tracker.

5) Keen, a small hawk of incredible speed and extremely sharp eyesight.

6) Gud, a worm that lives in a box. Able to dig through almost anything, given enough time. Always able to tunnel to the surface.

Also stacked outside the tower was all the loot of the battlefield: much of it bloodstained and broken, but still enough to equip a small caravan.

Putting their gear together, the party headed south. Their first destination was the city-state beyond the hills: the home of one of the armies that had destroyed their group.

Next issue: The City and the Circus

Comments #13

Rich Staats: Another great guest appearance! I don't know how you find time to do it.

❋ One thing that I like very much about the "Which Witch?" scenario is that it doesn't fall into the usual roleplaying genres. I suppose it could be adapted into other genres and games, but it's nice to see something that isn't written for the same old standard-fantasy or SF settings. I'd like to see "Which Witch?" run sometime-...perhaps we'll get someone to do it at Arisia.

Virgil Greene: I'd noticed that you'd predicted domestic terrorism shortly before the Oklahoma City bombing, Virgil, but forgot to comment on it. Unfortunately it seems likely that we'll see more of this sort of thing as time goes on. One thing that puzzles me about media reporting of this sort of event is the attempt to "balance" reporting. Most reporters seem unable to avoid suggesting that there are two sides to every issue! They imply that Waco was somehow some sort of justification for Oklahoma City. That's just crazy, in my book.

I was also bemused to hear reporters and commentators saying that "both sides" of the abortion debate were in some sense responsible for the atmosphere of hate that resulted in the clinic shootings in Brookline. Strong language has been used on both sides, but I haven't heard of any pro-choice people shooting or attempting to kill right-to-lifers…while the reverse is all too common.

❋ Again, the fiction inserts were excellent.

❋ The "immortality as curse" idea reminds me of my experience with the ultimate killer GM: the one who killed every player's characters off at least three times per session except for that of his best friend. That one was immortal and unkillable "by any force in the universe…it's kind of a curse." It was kind of a crock, in my book.

❋ I'd suggest some other shows be listed as classic SFTV, but I see in this issue you have covered most of them…one of the advantages of being the editor.

Scott Shafer: Glad to have you back again! I should say before I forget that Interregnum seems to run to dark printing; I had to make a specially lightened master copy of your zine before I ran off the whole issue. I can't lighten everything indiscriminately, because then other materials start to fade out of view. You might want to adjust the printing darkness of your zine accordingly, if you can.

❋ My condolences to you and your wife on the loss of your mother-in-law.

❋ Congratulations on the birth of your daughter. It's good to have another red-head in the world, though my head is looking more like a baby's every day. I have to wonder: was she *born* with red hair? I was, and I'm told that at first it looked like a rash! ☺

❋ Welcome to the world of clones…it's a bigger, but more frustrating place. If I told you the number of times my computer has been down in the last 14 months, you'd probably faint.

✳ Sorry that <u>IR</u> took so long to reach you; I can't remember the reason for the delay, but I assume that it was some sort of computer-related disaster. ☺

✳ Ah, Saint Paul. I remember once reading a blistering attack on Paul, but I can't remember where or when; instead I'll repeat one of my favorite bits from SCTV.

Saint Paul's Letter to the Ephesians:

> Dear Ephesians,
>
> How are you? I am fine.
>
> Come on down to Rome some time.
>
> Your buddy,
>
> Paul
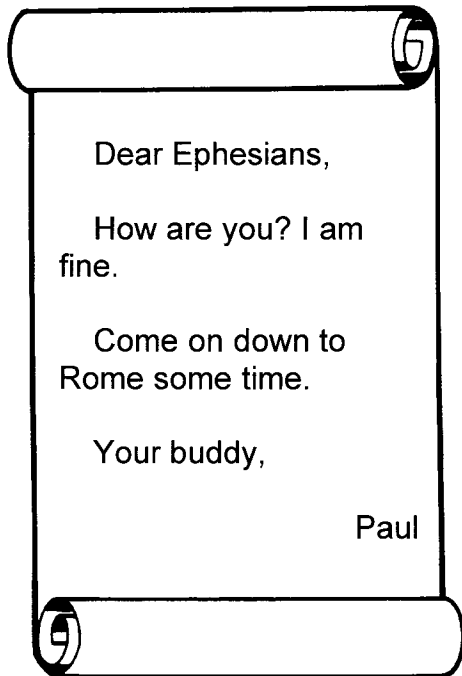
George Phillies: You're right; to say

"copywritten and trademarked" *is* redundant, and probably unnecessary. Still, TSR says that any work which includes any of the words they claim to have copyrighted is a violations of their rights—and they claim both trademarks and copyrights. Okay, TSR is, as usual, full of it. Call me a belt-and-suspenders man. Not having enormously deep pockets, I prefer to avoid risk where possible. Our writers do use several of the words that TSR claims to own.

It's an insane situation. But as long as TSR remains unchallenged in court, they're going to keep doing this sort of intimidation. I do wish that someone would hurry up and fight them…but I have a strong suspicion that it will never happen.

✳ Re <u>The Warrior Unseen</u>—that's quite a gap! I made the jump without difficulty this time, but the missing events sound quite interesting—I was sorry not to see them. I'm still enjoying the story very much.

I have to wonder—if the manticore venom was so extremely toxic as to utterly incinerate a man from momentary third-generation contact, wouldn't "lots" of it have made searching the stream for Elaine's body a…warming experience? Not to mention the long-term environmental effects…

Michael A. Lavoie: Again, sorry about the dark

artwork effect! In a later printing I was able to improve the image somewhat, but only to a limited extent.

✳ The "Two Priests" plot hook is quite well done; I use much the same sort of situation. It has a nice moral ambiguity. Here's a question for you: when you set up a situation like that for your players, have you actually *decided* what the truth of the matter is? I suppose you probably do. In an open-format anything-goes game (such as mine often are), I have to make up scenarios virtually instantaneously, several times in each session; most are then ignored. I'll admit that once I've worked out a dilemma or mystery, I don't always work out the solution right away…

✳ The characters of the Tuos campaign are *quite* interesting; how were they created? The setting has an oddly modern quality. That seems to be an inevitable effect of a sufficiently high level of magic "technology" in a society. That's a point well worth discussion, actually. At what level of complexity does "high-tech" magic cause a campaign to lose its mythic qualities? Is that an inevitable effect?

Chris Aylott: The store sounds like a lot of fun…I

envy you. I'd really like to make a trek out there to visit. It's funny—one thing that is *so* important to the success of a store is the friendliness of the people who run it. It sounds as if you've got that down pat. Why did that thought come to mind? Well…I'll admit that I might be thinking of a certain bookstore owner in the Harvard Square area. Amusingly enough, yet <u>another</u> person has volunteered to me that they didn't like that store—entirely without any prompting from me (in fact, they were afraid that they might offend me with that observation). I don't think that
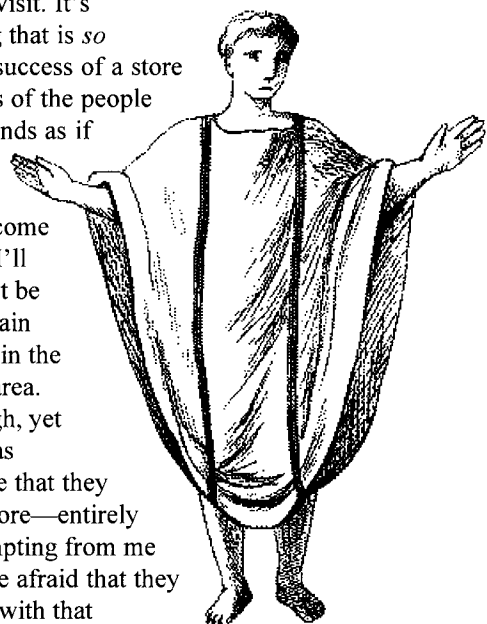
many businesses could stay in business while driving customers away...

❋ I hear through the grapevine that you're holding Magic tournaments at the store? If I do visit, make sure to let me know when the tournaments <u>aren't</u> happening. I think I've developed a Magic allergy. ☺

❋ I like the idea of business in roleplaying—as long as the boring elements don't come to dominate the game. That's what always seemed to happen in **Traveller**, in my experience. The PCs would end up spending all their time hopping from system to system, *trading*. When the GM would try to liven things up by introducing an adventure hook, the group would go out of their way to <u>avoid</u> it—after all, it would interfere with their profits! I can't believe that I once designed a spreadsheet for a Traveller campaign...

Gil Pili: My sympathies on the end of your Harn campaign; but it does give me an excellent idea for a future topic. "Ending it"...maybe for #16.

❋ Re the multiple plot hooks: A very impressive display of creativity—so many ideas! That sort of mini-hook description is just the sort of thing I'm interested in. I'd definitely buy a book of such ideas, if one were available.

❋ Re the Lovecraft script questions: some answers:

Setting: 1920's or 1990's? Both have advantages, and I'm torn between them. The 1920's have atmosphere, a

hell of a lot of atmosphere. The 1990's have the possibility of interesting technology and more special effects—and though it may be foolish to think so, slightly greater hope in the face of Cthulhu and Nyarlathotep.

A 1990's setting would be cheaper to film, since period sets wouldn't have to be constructed. Costuming would be cheaper too. A possible point of appeal. Also, I suspect that humor would fit in more naturally in a modern setting—and humor seems to be required for all genres, these days.

While both action/adventure and horror/gore are essential for a Cthulhu movie, I think I'd prefer a slight emphasis on the former. And most important is *atmosphere*—any horror should be, well, <u>stylish</u>. Much of the impact should be in subtle details. I don't know, though; my two favorite horror films are *The Shining* and John Carpenter's *The Thing*. Two quite dissimilar movies.

Bits of the Mythos should be used for flavoring—and to give "insiders" something to feel special about. Handled properly this should add to the atmosphere of the film. Perhaps there should just be hints at first? Of course it's necessary not to go overboard with Mythos-ology.

Insanity is not a topic that is easily handled in movies, I think; certainly not in any sort of first-person situation. Minor characters can go insane, but main ones should not unless it's the high point of the movie, and all stops are pulled out. It would be very difficult to make Mythos-related insanity work. The prospect of going mad simply because one *sees* something—or reads a book—would

probably be hard for a modern audience to take seriously. Though perhaps if it was all handled off-screen…

What one element should be changed for a Cthulhu movie? Step one: No sex or romance. It's not appropriate for a Lovecraft movie. I liked *Re-Animator* very much, but the sexual element was a real drawback in my eyes. Though it did give me a straight line for one of the funnier (though more obvious) comments I've ever made.

Jenny & /-\ntara Glover: "West Side Story"? I won't ask. ☺

✳ Tara: Is the Eirik hook from an actual game, or did you just make it up? It gives the impression of extensive background.

✳ The Cthulhu bit is right in line with the spirit and tone of the stories. Well done! I have to wonder, though——how (and why) would a vagrant be "well known"? ☺

✳ Oddly enough, I was in much the same situation as the protagonist in a **Call of Cthulhu** game once. My character considered himself lucky to get a chance to blow his head off before Nyarlathotep got him. An all-too-common fate for prying intellectuals in Lovecraft's world…by the way, I recently re-read a biography of HPL. Did you know that for much of his life he was a fanatic Anglophile? He wanted the United States to re-join the British Empire, and called himself a monarchist.

✳ The clerk in that game store sounds like quite the insufferable donkey. But I'm confused—why does that mean that Tara can't roleplay?

✳ That beings to mind a question: what's the gaming climate like in the UK? I hear a lot about fundamental-ists attacking gaming in the southern US, but have seen little evidence of such stupidity here. It's odd that I've never thought of it before, but I have no idea if there are fundamentalists in England. I suppose there must be.

✳ Tara is at a school *leprosy* event? Really? I…never dreamed that that sort of thing would be necessary these days. Perhaps it's the fault of those horrible Thomas Covenant books, though I don't know how or why…

Curtis Taylor: Thanks for the RQ/Glorantha update and product reviews. Since I've stopped reading or saving the Glorantha Digest altogether, your zine is the last connection I have to that system. I don't think I'll ever really get back into it…my own creations take

up too much of my time. Still, perhaps I'll run a RQ scenario one of these days if I get bored.

✳ The campaign preview was interesting, though I'd need more details about the setting to make an intelligent comment. I'm a little surprised that you're running AD&D; are you having trouble finding RQ players?

One point that was a little unclear to me: the Headband of Mental Alertness. Does the wearer have to spend psionic defense points to use it? If so, it seems to have no function! Though I could be wrong, since I haven't followed the system for a very long time.

Joseph Teller & Kiralee McCauley: Welcome to IR! It's good to have another sometime-TWHer on board.

✳ Wow, what a great zine header! ☺ Hee hee. I'd better admit for the sake of the general readership that I designed that front page with some of my new art. I'm rather pleased with the result (and no, I never claimed to be terribly modest…☺).

✳ Is art necessary for game sales? *I* never base my purchasing on art content, but then I'm not normal. Lacking facts, I can only make two generalizations. First, atmosphere is not dependent on art for expression (unless one assumes that the game-buying population is getting more and more illiterate).

Second point: accurate figures about the roleplaying public seem to be seriously lacking. I suspect that younger

customers are more influenced by art in their purchasing decisions, but what portion of the market is the under-20 crowd (for example)? And is Magic: the Gathering bringing new people into FRP? I suspect not. Just as roleplaying killed off the lion's share of wargaming (Avalon Hill's recent announcement of a major shift in emphasis from boardgames to computer games comes to mind), it seems likely that card games will be the end of RPGs for the next generation—though it's quite possible that RPGs wouldn't have made it past 2020 anyway.

✳ "If I can't get feedback then I want money." Bravo! That's as good an argument as I've seen for retaining the practice of commenting in APAs. And for some reason it makes me chuckle to read it. ☺

✳ I wish I could think of some way for you to publish your game, but nothing comes to mind off the bat. IR-style publishing wouldn't work; for a full-scale game I suspect almost anyone would insist on professional binding and possibly glossy stock. I seem to recall hearing that printing gets very cheap per-page when you get into a decent-size print run (maybe IR will go that route some day), but a glossy color cover is still a necessity—and there is no way I know of to do that without huge expenses. Pus the binding—perfect-binding is practically *de rigeur*, and it isn't cheap. Saddle-stiching (a staple down the middle of folded double-size pages) is cheap, but I have my doubts as to whether it would sell. Not to mention the problems of publicity and distribution…

Cynthia Shettle: Welcome, Cynthia! The review was quite interesting; from your comments I don't think I'll pick up the game. I had to wonder what sort of system you were playing it on, by the way. Not that the bugs you mentioned would be affected by a slow or fast CPU…I hope we'll see you in these pages again.

NEXTISH

This and that…more Wonder, probably. Perhaps a bit about my Nereyon campaign. And if I possibly can, I'll resurrect a feature from my zine in the The Wild Hunt. Until then, take care!

—>Pete