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I wish that people who are conventionally supposed to love each other would say to each other, when they fight, "Please - a little less love, and a little more common decency."

—Kurt Vonnegut, *Slapstick*

EDITORIAL:

Five! Already...?

Artwork recycled William Rotsler

By Earl Kemp

Time really gets going at a rapid pace now and then, mostly now. It's really hard for me to believe that four years have passed just like that, in a flash, the proverbial blink of an eye.

Yet it is all too true. Bill Burns and I are beginning our fifth year of more or less continuous on-schedule publishing of *eI* through <http://efanzines.com> and while it is egotistically a personal zine, Bill and I don't really fight too much about my hogging the space far too much.

Nevertheless...away we go again, roaring like some of Buck Rogers' leftover firepower from our last issue just zooming our words through cyberspace out there where the truth is surely not to be found.

We couldn't have possibly done it without the help of hundreds of really kind people. All the writers, artists, designers, photographers, models, bibliophiles, professors, librarians, editors, booksellers, smuthounds, and other lechers who contributed their time and effort to help make your journey through my wide, weird world that much simpler.

Thank all of you, our regular readers, who take the time to write your letters of comment telling us how we're doing or how we're screwing up. Thanks for riding along with us.



I have to believe that Man, not God, will be responsible for the end of the world. Religion is useful as a means to happiness on Earth. It, like a cat's cradle, keeps children and idiots amused, but is insubstantial. No, I do believe that Man must take the rap for His own destruction.

—Kurt Vonnegut

THIS ISSUE OF *eI* is in memory of my brother Big Hearted Howard DeVore...always in our hearts and minds.

#

As always, everything in this issue of *eI* beneath my byline is part of my in-progress rough-draft memoirs. As such, I would appreciate any corrections, revisions, extensions, anecdotes, photographs, jpegs, or what have you sent to me at earlkemp@citlink.net and thank you in advance for all your help.

Bill Burns is *jefe* around here. If it wasn't for him, nothing would get done. He inspires activity. He deserves some really great rewards. It is a privilege and a pleasure to have him working with me to make *eI* whatever it is.

Other than Bill Burns, Dave Locke, and Robert Lichtman, these are the people who made this issue of *eI* possible: Robert Bonfils, Bruce Brenner, rich brown (Dr. Gafia), Graham Charnock, Brittany A. Daley, L. Truman Douglas, Robert Elkin, Jacques Hamon, Rose Idlet, Earl Terry Kemp, Tom Lesser, Curt Phillips, Art Scott, and Robert Speray.

ARTWORK: This issue of *eI* features recycled artwork by William Rotsler.

His mind whirled with the noisy gaudy pointlessness of a cuckoo clock in hell.

—Kurt Vonnegut, *Mother Night*

...Return to sender, address unknown.... 15

The Official *eI* Letters to the Editor Column

Artwork recycled William Rotsler

By Earl Kemp

We get letters. Some parts of some of them are printable. Your letter of comment is most wanted via email to earlkemp@citlink.net or by snail mail to P.O. Box 6642, Kingman, AZ 86402-6642 and thank you.

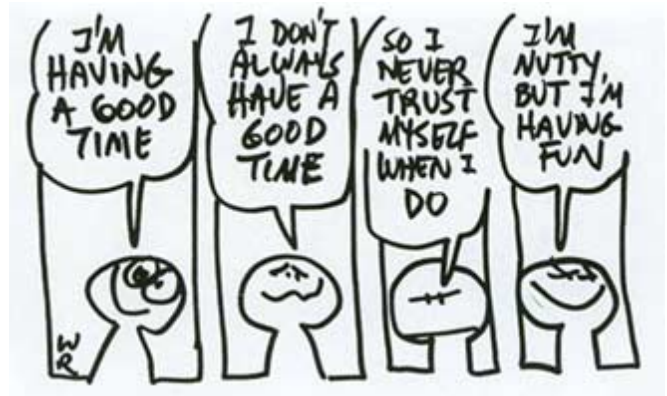
Also, please note, I observe DNQs and make arbitrary and capricious deletions from these letters in order to remain on topic.

This is the official Letter Column of *eI*, and following are a few quotes from a few of those letters concerning the last issue of *eI*. All this in an effort to get you to write letters of comment to *eI* so you can look for them when they appear here.

Monday December 26, 2005:

Thank you for Jon Stopa's Evil Prexy story and artwork. It may seem strange to say that bile-bitter contempt is a sign of decency in an indecent society, but Vonnegut got it right. As little of it as one sees in journalism or politics, it must be a sign of sainthood. But I hope not martyrdom. Imagine: in the Supreme Court as it now stands—with the probable addition of Alito—Bush's sanctioning of the NSA spying on ordinary Americans through reading their email and other communications is likely to be accepted as Constitutional.

You are right—the murder of 2,100 American soldiers and probably 100,000 Iraqi civilians is probably junior's chief evil. But the quantum contrast between the haves and have-nots in America is one of the other important examples of Bush's harm to our country. In New York (where the millionaire mayor who spent \$60 mil for his own re-election has called striking transit workers "thugs" as all the dailies applaud) random subway searches of backpacks and briefcases was recently ruled Constitutional by a federal judge. He said that in our times of unprecedented danger, we must trust "those in the best position to know"—even though they argue that random searches of about 4% of all subway passengers at exactly 2 or 3 of the 400 stations on any one day will deter terrorists. The power of authority has here completely trumped any Fourth Amendment protections. Once this kind of thing is allowed to stand, how can we ever get back our basic rights and sense of respect (and self-respect) as citizens? Will Bushworld ever go away? Will people who understand democracy ever be able to run to ground globally powerful corporations like Big Time Cheney's Halliburton? Only if, indeed, Bushworld can end up disgraced as in the cover of *TIME* you depict.



—Jay A Gertzman

Tuesday December 27, 2005:

Thanks for the index (which all the cool kids seem to be doing) and the wonderful issue of *eI* that came with it. Highly enjoyable, as always.

Must get the book of Arkham House covers...

Buck Rogers and I met in the 1970s on TV. I'm too young to have seen the serials, so that TV series with the biddy-biddy-biddy robot is my first Buck Rogers memory. It's kinda sad, until I remember that Erin Grey was amazingly

hot in those outfits. I had a few episodes on tape as late as 1995 and would watch them once in a while.

It's amazing that the modeling clay models of the ships survived. They look great too!

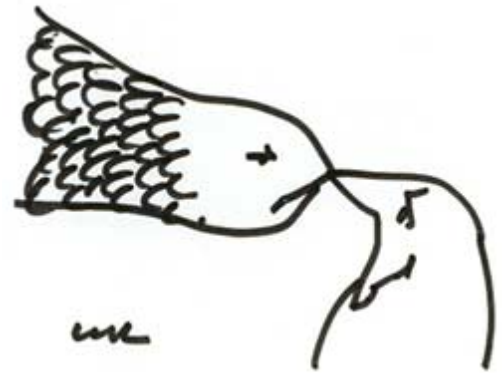
I can only say I've seen a few of the original Buck Rogers strips, mostly when I was doing a lot of research into comics and science fiction history. Arguably, they were the most important strips when you look at what they led to, bringing out a full series of great writers who grew up with Buck and others.

The Mongols instead of the Han made sense at the time. There were almost constant mentions of The Mongols at the time due to various famines around that period. The American Public was almost completely unaware of the history of anywhere, so they couldn't be expected to know that the Han were a Chinese Dynasty. On the other hand, they'd have heard of Mongols, or at least of Mongolia.

The inventions used in the various Rogers adventures are enough to warrant their own complete work, like the *Star Trek* technical guides and the *Star Wars* ship guides. I'd love to see that done. Hmmmm...maybe that's an article I can do in some future issue of *The Drink Tank*.

Everything that was at all popular in the 1940s was used to support the war effort. Reading comics that had existed before the war during the period of the war all saw them joining up to take on the Nazis. I'd never heard that Buck did it too, but it totally makes sense, even if the stories themselves do not!

I've seen that Wilma Pistol. Probably not that one, but one exactly like it. I think Ed Stiner of the Science Fiction Museum (not the Paul Allen one in Seattle) has one. It's one of the reasons I support them so strongly. I've seen a couple of The Big Little Books going for average sums and I've never bought one. I know that Disintegrator Pistol is highly prized, and I seem to remember one going for a ridiculous sum at a toy auction I was at in 1999 or so. There were two guys bidding against each other, and since it was the dot.com days, they had the bread to spend. I think it went for over 4 grand.



No question that the serials and the radio stuff are worth seeking out. There's also a Mexican version that was produced as a serial in the 1940s or '50s, I believe. That's the one my Grandpa would talk about when I was a kid and I'd tell him about Science Fiction stuff that I liked.

You know, I can't believe I've made it this far into this LoC without mentioning the Buck Rogers Tijuana Bible. There are at least three different ones (I think one is pictured in the book of Tijuana Bibles) and I've seen one with my own eyes. All the stars and stories of those days got the treatment, and Buck and Wilma going at it is an impressive sight. Certainly it was these little booklets that gave rise to slash fiction and the like.

I didn't know that Dick Lupoff had worked the Computer Biz. I must remember to ask him about it. Even when involved in faanish pursuits, I'm still a computer historian. Then again, I probably should talk to him about his Buck Rogers collection first, then get into the computer stuff. Then again, if I start there, I may well end up never getting around to the computer stuff. Hmmmm...

Oh, and there was a Turkish Buck Rogers film. I forgot about that. They've done a Turkish version of just about everything, including *Star Wars* and *The Wizard of Oz*.

Loved Mike Deckinger's look at ESFA. I'm always looking for new looks at the founding, growth and inevitable deaths of these fan groups. And FINALLY someone in fandom mentions Ed Emsh's short films! They are utterly wonderful (says the guy who happens to work on a short film committee and makes shorts himself from time to time) and George Dumpson's Places (I may have butchered the title) is a wonderful short that is included in the *Treasures of American Film Archives* Box Set. I've been pushing his works for the National Film Registry for a while now.

Words on Phil Farmer! Yes!!! My favorite author (or is it Vonnegut? Or maybe TC Boyle. Or maybe Dan Heyder. Or...) Wonderful, wonderful, wonderful stuff!

Graham Charnock's look at his gay life had me laughing hard at times and very interested the whole way through. It's the type of thing I expect from *eI*...only more British.

—Chris Garcia

Wednesday December 28, 2005:

Oh, I've already seen *eI23* - and I always find it amazing. You spend a lot of time and energy on the thing - far more than I spend on any of my own projects. I thought your Buck Rogers feature was terrific and gave me the inertron beam of waxing nostalgic.

—Alan White

Friday December 30, 2005:

Of all the Christmas presents I received this year, the one pointed to by your email of Dec 27th was by far the best! I mean, of course, the use of my "Buck & Wilma Adrift" illustration... Right at the top of the 'zine, and featured. It was also totally unexpected, since I had thought that the illo you asked for was going to be a small "sidebar" in the main text of the Buck Rogers articles. To see it as soon as the 'zine was opened had me pumping the air and repeating Sally Field's (second) Oscar speech: "You like me...you really like me..." Rather more seriously, though, I am, indeed, extremely flattered. (And can only hope that you don't lose too many readers because of it).



The icing on this Christmas cake came with your follow-up email of the 29th when you reported that Jim Coffeen said that "Although it isn't in the style of any of the artists who worked on the strip, it FEELS like Buck Rogers more than the drawings of most of them." As I wrote you when I sent the graphic, I was not trying to emulate the strip (I love it too much - especially the Dick Calkins' Sunday panels - to destroy such a work of art), but rather to get the feel of the low-budget movie serials of the time. Even if no one else agrees with Jim, I am happy in the knowledge that at least I DID connect with one person. I can't ask for more. Never one not to blow my own trumpet, I made sure to let Bruce Gillespie and Elaine Cochrane know of this present. Which was easy because some old time fans - Bill Wright, Merv Binns and his wife Helena - and I, drove to Bruce and Elaine's 'country

house' yesterday for an inspection and dinner.

—Ditmar

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I have a confession to make: as I sit here attempting to type a brief loc on *eI23*, all I can do is think, wow! What a zine! You make me feel like stealing away to wallow in the dark corners of the Internet feeling totally inadequate as a faneditor/fanwriter. All I can say is that Chris Garcia and Arnie Katz weren't kidding; you produce a wonderful fanzine. The layout is gorgeous - completely eye-friendly - complete with fine illustrations and text-against-background color. And the content is so much fun to read.

Which is really funny. As much as I enjoy reading science fiction - in fact, I have been enjoying reading *Venus, Inc.* again - I never really got into reading the old Buck Rogers books and all. I am, of course, well aware of it all, but being a baby boomer I wasn't exposed to that as an impressionable kid. These various articles were very entertaining to read, and the accompanying illustrations are all fabulous. Words fail me. (Good Ghu, I may need to crack open a thesaurus if I keep these platitudes going.) So I guess if people say that I read "that crazy Buck Rogers stuff," I can literally deny it.

In any event, I am so glad to see you producing such wonderful fanzines again. Keep them coming, and I will continue enjoying them at efanzines.com.

—John Purcell

Wednesday January 5, 2006:

I enjoyed the latest *eI*, but you may not realise how little-known Buck Rogers was in the UK, at least in my part of the world when I was a little chap in the late forties. We didn't get the newspaper strips or the merchandise, and he made only a brief appearance in the cinema (I think).

When I was six or seven my father sometimes used to take me on Sunday afternoons to something called the 'News Theatre' in central Birmingham, a long, narrow building in a side street that ran a continuous programme of about an hour's duration. We'd get five-minutes of Pathe Pictorial (a newsreel) - I remember a new volcano starting to erupt in a field somewhere in Mexico; a Disney nature-study (I hated those dancing scorpions!); some adverts; a couple of Bugs Bunny or Donald Duck cartoons, and then - the bit I'd been waiting for - ten minutes of the current serial. Captain Video was one, another was about two Civil War soldiers in a balloon being swept by a hurricane to a mysterious island, but Flash Gordon was the favourite, with both adventures - Mars and Mongo - being endlessly repeated. Oh, how thrilled I was by those Clay Men, when they lumbered out of the walls to menace Flash and his pals!



But I seem to remember on one occasion seeing the opening episode of another, similar serial, which started when our hero was found in a cave, I think, and the story was that in the 25th Century organised crime had taken over the world, with the legitimate government being holed-up in some hidden city, or fortress, all gleaming metal towers. What particularly stuck in my mind was the peculiar shape of the flying machines (I won't call them spaceships because I don't think they actually went into space), sort of rectangular shoe-box contraptions, which lifted-off with a loud buzzing sound, ascending in slow spirals with a spluttering firework at the rear leaving a trail of smoke.

Was this Buck Rogers? I think it must have been, but I only saw that first episode and never found out what happened. That is the only memory I have of the character, which shows what limited exposure he achieved in the UK. Believe me, if he'd been around I would have known - even at that age I was alert to anything that had even the slightest connection to space-travel and the future, as I shall explain in my forthcoming article!

—Peter Weston

Sunday January 22, 2006:

I enjoyed the latest *eI* but am unable to offer any lengthy comments at this time. I do recall watching one of the early Buck Rogers TV shows in the '80s. Just one. I was so unmoved by it I never bothered watching any further episodes or paying attention to its limited success curve. I much prefer Buster Crabbe's Buck Rogers serials of the '30s. The production values were primitive by today's standards, but pretty high class for that era. I do want to give credit where credit is due: The pictures of the Cryonics Panel, and Michael Avallone, in my ESFA article, were taken by Jay Kay Klein. Why not publish the e-mail addresses of your letter writers? I certainly wouldn't object.

—Mike Deckinger

[Mike, I've had a number of people ask me to NOT print their email addresses. I feel the same way about mine even though it's all over the place these days. —Earl Kemp.]

Sunday January 29, 2006:

An evil president...how true. When Jon Stopa said an evil president, but ours, I think it should be the other way

around, ours (yours) but evil. Canada has just elected a right-of-centre prime minister, Stephen Harper, and he got the usual buddy-buddy call from Bush, but Harper has promised not to cozy up to Bush, and there are millions of Canadians ready to make sure he doesn't break that promise. For instance, the borders of any nation includes the waters around any island land masses, but the Bush regime refuses to acknowledge that Arctic waters around our northern islands are Canadian waters. I don't think they do this with any other country. The softwood lumber situation has shown that Bush is wrong in all instances, but that doesn't stop him from his crazed proclamations. May the American electorate deliver the world from this madness, soon.

I will try to attach to this e-loc a sound file I found a short time ago of the bridge theme to Buck Rogers. (Actually, on page 25, it's there, [br.wav](#). I came across it in my own recent researches.) It might bring back some memories.

Many years ago, the local educational channel decided to give its viewers a slightly different education, and it showed a whole evening of Buck Rogers serials, plus interviews and commentaries. The common thread it had was how it taught generations of kids how to dream and imagine, something sorely needed these days. (In some instances, Buck fought everyday people in everyday situations, which gave it more of a *Terry and the Pirates* feel to it.) Even today, Gil Gerard and Erin Gray, who are now both pretty grey themselves, make appearances at conventions representing the *Buck Rogers* television programme, but I think many modern fans are unaware of the original Buck Rogers saga. Yes, Buck had a lot to teach people, as did *StarTrek*, that we do have a future, and it is wondrous, and that we can get past our problems to make the future happen.

I have had my own time in a science fiction club or two, but never did we have guests. We knew of no local guests, and besides the club was a Trek club. I found the two Trek clubs I belonged to were enjoyable, and I made so many friends in them, but I found the focus narrow, and I always asked what was next, or what else we could do. When I found the greater fandom, I found so much more to do, and so much more to read and catch up on. Today, I do not belong to any clubs (mostly because there are few local clubs to belong to, and what few there are are Trek and other media clubs), but pub nights replace the clubs just fine. Informal, no dues, and a regular get-together. And we do get SF writers like Rob Sawyer who come to visit with us every so often...

—Lloyd Penney

Newton was advised by those who were his nominal supervisors to take time out from the hard truths of science to brush up on theology. I like to think they did this not because they were foolish, but to remind him of how comforting and encouraging the make-believe of religion can be for common folk.

—Kurt Vonnegut, *Timequake*

A Little Piece of My Heart or Remembering Howard DeVore

By Earl Kemp

Sometime in the early 1950s, my science fiction story began. By now it feels as if I've told the tale a thousand times, only each time it's different, and for an entirely different reason. This time it's for the Good Times...it's for my brother Big Hearted Howard DeVore, only the story begins just a little earlier than that.

After exchanging a few letters with Mari Wolf (who was conducting "Fandora's Box" for William Hamling's *Imagination*), she insisted upon connecting me with local Chicago active fan Ed Wood. In fear and trepidation, at her insistence and by prearrangement, I went to meet the exalted co-editor of *The Journal of Science Fiction*. At the time, Ed introduced me to his other editor half, Charles Freudenthal, who remains today the single oldest fan friend I have that is still alive and reasonably coherent.

Science fiction fandom must have been in a sorry state back then, otherwise there's no possible explanation for the things that were done to me and the expectations expected of me and the glorious rewards heaped gratuitously upon me. It seemed that Ed Wood knew absolutely everyone involved with science fiction at the time, as well as lots of juicy gossip about them and their favorite proclivities. He immediately began expanding my knowledge base to include the University of Chicago Science Fiction Club that rapidly became my home away from home. He reached out further to the extent of local Midwest fandom and, through snail mail (how did we ever manage to do anything without email?), gave me to Cleveland, Cincinnati, Indianapolis, Warsaw, Ann Arbor, and Detroit, among other places and other fan groups.

Every one of them as apparently eager as Ed Wood to get their hands on me, and none quite so eager as that filthy used book dealer, Howard DeVore of Detroit. I was piss poor at the time, married and with children, working at a minimum wage slave job. I couldn't afford food much less fandom. I could hardly scrape up the few pennies it cost then to mail letters, much less buy books, however used and however filthily hustled by Howard DeVore.

Only none of that seemed to matter to Howard. He gave me books. He gave me everything I even thought I might need or want in the way of sf publications including some I'd never even heard about. He gave my children comic books in abundance and uncle things, once I realized he was my long lost brother and, regardless of what I did or how hard I tried, there was no way I could shake him or his generosity. Big Hearted was never the right description of him; it's much too small.

At Howard's insistence, and his contacts with regional movers and shakers, he arranged with some of his friends (Dr. C.L. Barrett, "Doc" and Jeannie Smith, Don and Margaret Ford, Ed and Leigh Hamilton, Phil and Betty Farmer, and a host of lesser lights and brighter persons than I could ever hope to be) to drag me kicking and screaming to a big private party in Bellefontaine, Ohio at a ratty old wood-frame lakeside resort known as Beatley's on the Lake that, naturally, had been renamed Beastley's just for the sf party crowd.

In those days I hadn't even heard of science fiction conventions, or knew that they existed or what they were or that they were heaven on earth. But that was then and definitely not now when those wonderfully comfortable gatherings have grown to the size of large cities and populated with thousands of people I would never ever want to encounter for any reason.

In fact, I didn't know who Barrett, Smiths, Fords, Hamiltons, or Farmers were, except that they were fellow sf readers and fans like me and Ed and Chuck and the UofC crowd that was home to my second longest living fan friend, Frankie Robinson.

And when I arrived at Beastley's, being driven there from Lorraine, Ohio by Dr. Barrett himself, I met a bunch of other, similarly inclined fans like Bobs Bloch and Tucker, Marty "Gnome Press" Greenberg, the ever lovely Evelyn



Howard DeVore with some of his books. Photo dated February 1958

"Galaxy" Gold, Arthur C. "Ego" Clarke, Reva "The Bat" Smiley, Fred Prophet, Lou Tabakow...and that reprehensible giver, Howard DeVore. Was I dead? Had I actually made the grade? Was that all there was?

Was it enough?



Howard DeVore,
North Plaza Motel,
Cincinnati
Midwestcon. Circa
1955.

Later that same year, at ChiCon II, my very first real science fiction Worldcon, I ran into most of those same people again only this time they were S*T*A*R*S of the first magnitude and no longer just simple fans like me. They were suddenly, somehow very far elevated above me and I could not shake off the awe they inspired just looking at them, daring occasionally to touch one of them...the very same down-and-dirty sf fans who had partied with me outrageously only months earlier at Beastley's on the Lake. My inherent lack of self respect kept me at arms length from my fan friends now turned cosmic icons. It took a long time for me to actually accept the offerings they were holding out to me.

#

I was, as the cliché says, hooked, lined, and sinkered.

And that was only the beginning. At Howard's insistence, and others, and with only pennies in my pockets, all of midwestern fandom opened its arms to me. There was Ray Beam in Indianapolis, Noreen Falasca in Cleveland, Dean McLaughlin in Ann Arbor (along with "the kid" Alexei Panshin), the down-home Grennells in Fondulac, the F*A*B*U*L*O*U*S Coulsons in Wabash, the snobbish and bigoted Economous in Milwaukee, and far too many more to even remember. And everywhere I went, it seemed, Howard was there, ready and waiting with his arms open and filled with used books and magazines just for the taking, and I took.

You can't refuse a brother anything, any more than you can your own children, however unworthy.

We (a gaggle of Chicago fans) would crowd ourselves terribly into borrowed cars and head out for almost any sort of fan gathering that beckoned to us in those days, traveling hundreds of miles just to attend a Really Good party. And everywhere I went, it seemed, Howard was there. Everywhere I went, it seemed, was old home week...a family reunion...orgasmic ecstasy unbound.

As time passed, and I found better paying jobs, my fanac increased correspondingly and I began editing *Destiny* as a genzine and *SaFari* for SAPS (and later for FAPA). And I became politically active sfwise, and even that was mostly because of Howard, who was even more politically active than I, to the point of bidding for a Worldcon for Detroit. And he (with the help of Dirce Archer of Pittsburgh) nurtured my lust for egoboo until I began my own bid for a Worldcon for Chicago.

Ah, political intrigue. Ah, wheeling and dealing. Ah, underhanded, under-the-counter secret agreements. Ah, bait and switch.

This was not only at the Worldcon level, but stretched to include the regional conventions as well, the Midwestcon being the most delightful of all of them. That was where Howard and I and the rest of the gang that we could tolerate to be around would really let go and howl like blithering idiots until none of us could drink any more or howl any more or do anything except collapse into unconscious heaps of burned-out fandom.

Ah, Pittsburgh. Hello, Dirce, "Sky" Miller, Kelly and Polly Freas. Hello, Howard, how the hell are you? Damn fine convention, old friend.

Ah, Detroit. Hello "Howard's boys" Roger Sims, George Young, and Bill Rickhardt) Hello, Howard, how the hell are you? Damn fine convention, old friend.

Ah, Chicago. Hello UofC SF Club. Hello, Howard, how the hell are you? Damn fine convention, old friend.

#



Noreen Falasca's "church group."
Posing in front of the Falasca residence are, (L to R): Howard DeVore, Lou Tabakow (in profile), ___ unknowns. Ben Jason (holding sign), Lewis Grant, Jon Stopa, Jim O'Meara, ___unknowns. Then, at extreme right, Earl Kemp standing behind Noreen and Nick Falasca, Steve Schultheis (kneeling in front of Noreen).
Cleveland, Ohio, photo dated October 1957. Any help identifying unknowns will be greatly appreciated earlkemp@citlink.net .

Private parties were something else in those days, literally difficult to explain because of their complexities and the personalities involved with making them unbelievably special. The Falascas were Hosts Unparalleled in Cleveland during those years. Everyone from 200 miles around in any direction would gather there with little provocation and relax, letting go, posing for group photos to remember it all by. "My church group," Noreen told her super-curious neighbors.

#

Halloween parties at my house in Chicago. Howard DeVore in drag...deliberately tattered pantyhose, huge attention-getting handbag, big floppy hat over his rubber gorilla full-head mask with garish lipstick and all...Lady Greystoke... bitch mother and suckler of Tarzan of the Apes. Could anything ever be any finer? Photographs by the dozens but all lost, gone forever, not one image of Howard as the Great Apeness (if there is such a word) remains today.

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Clichés of time took me away from paradise and dumped me into San Diego and an entirely different kind of life and a mind-altering, conscious-expanding, day-to-day existence of bumming around the world in my own time and at my own pace and all on a lavish expense account. For the first time in decades, I was too busy to stop long enough to enjoy the view or to smell the roses.

Still, somehow, Howard managed to keep track of me when almost all others could not.

#

Decades of disgrace and self-punishing exile later, I pulled myself out of my hiding place only to find Howard standing there, still waiting, his arms still open and still giving, giving, giving. Partially at his insistence (with a lot of

help from Bill Burns), I began something impossibly different for me...publishing my ezine *eI* online <efanzines.com/EK/>. Howard was a frequent contributor with his wit and entertaining stories of Post Office fuckups and fan days past.

And now he is gone, my real adopted brother, and as I write these words I find myself crying for him again, as I did upon hearing of his death, and that my name was the first on his list of people he wanted notified when that big heart fluttered with its last beat.

I love you, man. Wherever you are I know, I feel, I am positive your arms are still open and you are still giving, giving, giving....

Forever is a long, long time.

I promised you well over a year ago to meet you in Los Angeles later this year at the 2006 Worldcon to celebrate with you the honor you so rightly deserve. I'm sorry we can't do it as planned, Howard, but keep those arms open for me and a watchful eye out for me...we'll do it up right together when next we meet.

- - -

The spellings of names in this piece are all from bad memory and I apologize to everyone for not getting them right. Special thanks to Earl Terry Kemp for furnishing the photos for this piece and to Robert Lichtman for vetting it.

I am a fourth-generation German-American religious skeptic ("Freethinker"). Like my essentially puritanical forebears, I believe God has so far been unknowable and hence unservable, hence the highest service one can perform is to his or her community, whose needs are quite evident. I believe that virtuous behavior is trivialized by carrot-and-stick schemes, such as promises of highly improbable rewards or punishments in an improbable afterlife.

—Kurt Vonnegut, "Fates Worse than Death," 1991

Two of a Kind*

By Richard W. Brown

I didn't shoot him because he was making far too much noise.

But I had him clearly in the sights of my .30-06 while he was still 30 yards away, clomping clumsily down the sandy hillside through the brush and bracken. Myself, I was hidden at the base of the hill behind a large tree.

I kept him in my sights all the way down, resisting the urge to pull the trigger while trying to understand just exactly what it was that was keeping me from killing him—although, on some subconscious level, I already knew. It wasn't until he was 20 yards away that I actually saw the hazy blue outline of his field suit and understood completely.

Of course.

Only a Rip Van Winkle, a mental defective or someone invulnerable to anything this side of a rocket-launcher would make that sort of clamor out here.

He was *supposed* to be noisy—to draw my attention and fire.

I tried to determine where his partner might be, but gave it up as hopeless; the Feds are good at cat-and-mouse games, better than I could ever hope to be—and I'd had years of practice.

I also discarded the notion of just dropping my rifle and trying to get the hell out of there. The man coming down the hill knew I was here; so did his partner. The hidden man surely had me in his sights and was only waiting to see what I would do. If I tried to run for it, he'd kill me for sure. I couldn't even head back into the trees for cover—they would both have laser pistols.

I didn't know what I was going to do—until I did it. Then, when the noisy one was just ten yards away, I stepped out from behind my tree, my rifle still at my shoulder, aimed it at his chest and shouted, "Hold it!"

He stopped.

He had nothing to worry about—regardless of what I might say or do, he would be walking away from this encounter, so he might as well listen and wait and see—and he knew it. That reasoning also tended to explain why his partner didn't just send a laser bolt zipping through my head.

I yelled, "Who the hell are you, and what're you doing here?"

"I might ask ya the same," he yelled back.

"You might," I shouted in reply, "if you was holdin' the gun."

I somehow, through this exchange, managed not to show just how scared I really was, in either my voice or stance. When your survival depends on it, you can do just about anything; when other people depend on your survival, you can do anything you have to—or so I kept trying to tell myself.

At least the pose *felt* right. In the back of my mind, I was just short of certain I could bring it off—even though a nervous itch in the small of my back was anxiously anticipating the fiery hole that could be blown in it at any moment. There was no wind out here—you could almost say "no air"—so it was only natural that I perspire.

"I *am* holding a gun," he said.



Alicia and rich brown (Dr. Gafia).

“Bull.”

I fired at him as he dropped to one knee—knowing it wouldn’t hurt him, but also knowing I had to continue the pretense even if it meant he or his friend might kill me—and he, in turn, pulled his laser pistol and blasted the ground in front of me. The dirt erupted into flame and stayed on fire until he released the trigger.

Coughing from the acrid fumes, no longer having to hide my fear but using it, I dropped my rifle.

“Okay, okay,” I said, “you got me. Don’t shoot!”

I put my hands over my head, but he kept the laser pointed at my mid-section as he got to his feet and walked cautiously in my direction.

A twig snapped on my left—I was supposed to hear it—and I turned to see the second man, his eyes as cold and menacing as a snake’s, also covering me. The second man was wearing a field suit, too, but it wasn’t turned on.

“I think he’s okay, Nate,” the second man said without ever taking his eyes off me. “He had you in his sights when you was ‘way the hell up the hill. He could’ve ambushed you then if he wanted, but he could see you was no nigger.”

Nate—he’d walked close enough to me now that I could clearly see the craggy features of his leathery face—scowled. But he put his pistol back in its concealed holster.

“What the hell ya doin’ in Disputed Lands?” he asked me.

Since the second man still had me covered, I kept my hands over my head. But I still managed a shrug as I said, “Lookin’ for food.”

“White meat?”

“Hell no,” I said. “Not unless I got no choice. I ain’t no fuckin’ renegade, if that’s what you mean. Like your friend said, I could have ambushed you any time. But I figured you was just a poacher, like me, and I was gonna warn you off if I could.”

Nate looked at his partner. “Whatcha think, Fred?”

Fred, the second man, was biting his lip, considering. “What’s your name?” he asked me.

“Tucker,” I said. “Tucker Wilson.”

“Well, Tuck, how long you been poachin’ in these parts?”

“Past two years.”

“Any luck?”

“Mostly kids,” I answered. “The older Bucks and their bitches stay pretty well hid. A few of them—the older ones—are pretty well armed. Automatic weapons and all that.”

He nodded. I wasn’t telling him anything he didn’t already know. “So me and Nate’ve heard,” Fred said. “Back Kansas City ‘way, not many of ‘em got out of the Big Fire—and those as did didn’t have no guns worth talkin’ about. Fact is, that’s why me and Nate volunteered to come out here—ain’t no fun, back there, just trackin’ ‘em down and shootin’ ‘em. How’d they come to get guns here?”

I managed my hands-over-my-head shrug again. “Don’t really know,” I said. “This’s been rural since before the Breakup—I guess a lot of ‘em lived on farms, had hunting rifles. And some of ‘em was Old Army, too. I suppose

when they moved out, they took their guns with 'em, and I guess they've traded up ever since. I've heard a few Wetbacks have run ammunition to 'em, too."

"Damned greasers," Fred spat. "They're next."

Nate, still looking at Fred, asked again, "Whatcha think, Fred?"

Fred, his eyes still on mine, asked, "Where you from, Tuck?"

I don't think I flinched. I'd known, sooner or later, they'd get around to asking. I'd been thinking about it, too, trying to come up with an answer they'd accept. On the one hand, if I told them I was from some nearby town, they'd want to see my papers; on the other, if I claimed to have a farm nearby, they'd take me to a local farmer to see if he recognized (and therefore could vouch for) me. So the question was, did I want to burn in the frying pan or the fire?

"Newberg," I said without, I hoped, noticeable hesitation.

Sure enough, Fred asked, "You got papers?"

"Of course I do," I said, while at the same time giving out a sigh and shaking my head no. "But not with me, no. Like I said, I've been poachin'. We don't usually get Feds down here—"



"How'd you know we was Feds?" Nate stuck in.

"The fancy suits," I replied, "and them fire guns. You could be New Army, 'cept you're out of uniform if you are. So I figure you're Feds."

"And we told him we was from Kansas City," Fred said to Nate.

"And you told me you was from Kansas City," I agreed.

Fred nodded. "Go on. About your papers."

"Used to carry 'em. Not any more. Only people I expect to meet out here are poachers and niggers. If some other poacher don't warn off and we shoot it out and he kills me, he ain't gonna worry none about me havin' no papers on me. But I have to ask myself what happens if I meet a pack of renegades or niggers and *they* kill me? 'Specially if it's a pack of niggers—some of 'em can pass, y'know. They might take my papers and use 'em to buy guns, or settle in, or take up with some white woman and start givin' her black babies."

The excuse was damned flimsy, but somewhat plausible—and it had a certain emotional appeal. I just hoped the emotional appeal was strong enough to overcome its flimsiness.

"I say kill him," Nate said. But Fred shook his head no. Nate exploded, "Shit, *he* could be one of them passin' niggers."

"With straight blond hair?"

"They can straighten it. Ya never heard of bleach?"

"Sure, but look at that beard of his. He's been out here six, seven days at least."

"I still say kill him," Nate said, sullenly. "Maybe he's a renegade. Maybe he's a passin' nigger. And maybe he ain't neither one. But the only other choice we got is to take him to Newberg, and I didn't come all the way out here just to go to Newberg—I came to get me a Buck."

Fred paused to consider that, then nodded.

He turned back to me and once again leveled his laser at my navel. He spat into the dry dust and said, "Sorry, Tuck, but my partner's right. If we had time to waste—"

"Hey, wait," I said, "hold on!" Neither of them said anything—but Fred didn't pull the trigger, either, so I continued. "Maybe I can make it worth your while. Newberg's 16 miles from here as the crow flies. Right on the way—well, with a little jog off, about a mile, maybe less—right along the way I can lead you to the shack of the biggest Buck in the county. You'd never find it without me—I stumbled on it by accident."

A buzzard swooped down and flew toward one of the gnarled trees behind me. Fred turned his wrist just the slightest bit and winged it with his laser. I jumped back, having thought the shot was intended for me. Fred watched it flapping around on the ground for a while, then asked me, "How come you never got him, this Buck, yourself?"

"'Cause he's got a whole fuckin' arsenal up there," I said, "and I ain't huntin' for Bucks. He's got a bitch and at least two kids, but I've never been able to lure 'em away from that shack."

"And you want to be our guide, eh?"

"A hell of a lot more than I want to get shot," I said. "Besides, you get the Buck, I get the kids—"

Nate laughed. "Goddamn if maybe I don't think he's a poacher," he said. "Here he is, lookin' certain death straight in the eye, and he's figurin' on us givin' him the kids."

"You said you was after sport, not meat," I said. "I got a family to support and I don't like to see good eatin' go to waste, is all."

"I like dark meat," Nate said with a grin, "but not for eatin'."

I laughed as good-naturedly as I could under the circumstances, then turned back to Fred.

"It makes sense," I said. "You gotta take your Buck *somewhere* to get him skinned and mounted. Might as well be Newberg, it's as close as any. You can check me out then. Or you can kill me now and spend the next few months or years lookin' for that shack of his on your own."

"Okay, fella," Fred said, "you've got yourself a deal. Give me your rife and lead on." As he said it, he flicked his field suit on. Nate had never turned his off.

Relieved for the moment, I bent over, picked up my .30-06—careful to grab the barrel and the stock nowhere near the trigger—and gave it to Fred.

I wondered if they were planning to kill me afterward anyway, without bothering with a trip to Newberg. For now it didn't matter. I thought about how a wolf will bite off its own paw to get out of a trap, about what it must feel like to be a dead man, and—again—about frying pans and fires.

For now I was still alive. But I'd have to take them both straight to the prize they wanted if I hoped to keep on breathing a while longer.

Neither of them said anything about the knife in my boot. Since it was sticking up over the side, in plain view for anyone who bothered to look, I decided I wasn't going to say anything about it either.

#

We plodded through the parched dry hills.

Nate, perhaps trying to make up for the fact that he'd suggested killing me out of hand, was talking to me. "I figure just killin' 'em's not enough. Right? Right. 'Specially not with these suits—ain't no fun in that."

"Yeah. I understand."

No.

I didn't.

But he would make sure I did.

He went on, "Ever since a girl cousin of mine got gang-raped by a pack of niggers—it didn't catch, but she still can't have no kids now—ever since then, I try to bring a little humiliation down on 'em, too, before I kill 'em. Never really cared that much for that girl cousin, understand, but I figure I kinda owe it to her as a white man, know what I mean?"

"Right," I said.

He might have been telling the truth, but just as likely he was justifying his proclivities in advance of my seeing them.

Few whites have tolerated blacks—or any of the other races, for that matter—since the Breakup, but the Feds are always tested thoroughly to be sure they're at least a bit maniacal about their work. A little perversion never hurts and is usually considered a plus.

Fred fell back into step with us to join the conversation. "Me and Nate've had some fine times. One of the best was back in Frisco, not all that long back. You think only niggers got big dongs? Shit! We caught this Chink—he had a tool 12 inches long, and that was before it even got hard!" His eyes glazed over as he continued the remembrance. "We caught his daughter, too. Tied the old man up and fucked her good and proper right in front of him—she had a tight little ass for a 12 year old. Then we made her suck him off—told her we'd let him go if she did it right—"

Nate interrupted to steal the punch-line: "—but we didn't let him cum. We waited 'til she got him nice and hard, slit her throat, then we nailed his cock to the kitchen table and set the house on fire!"

They both laughed for a good long while.

"You say," Nate continued after they recovered, "this Buck we're after's got a wife and kids? What's she look like?"

"Young," I said, "and pretty for a nigger bitch."

"Hah!" he said. "Might be fun to have some fun with her while he's lookin' on—before we kill him. Right? Right."

I gave them both my biggest grin. "It might be fun at that." All the wheels inside my head began to whirl and I started to feel a little dizzy. Although the ideas that were starting to form were only half complete, it began to seem as though this might all come out all right after all.

A little further on I said, "Ah, shit!"

"What's the matter?" Fred asked, suddenly alert.

"That rock," I said, pointing to a huge bolder veined with blue and black.

Fred considered the bolder before he asked, "What about it?"

"It shouldn't be here," I said. "I mean, we shouldn't be. We should have veered off towards the mountain before this."

Nate touched the butt of his laser pistol. “You ain’t leadin’ us off on no wild goose chase, are ya son? ‘Cause if ya are, I’ll burn ya right here and now—”

“No, honest,” I said. “I made a little mistake. It’s only about a half mile, but we could’ve been there by now.”

They accepted my explanation and we veered, heading toward the mountain.

#

We were getting pretty close.

“Go easy now,” I said. “We’re getting close. Just over the top of that rise and we’ll be able to see the shack.”

They both smiled; with the field suits they were wearing, they didn’t have to worry about “going easy” or care about whether they were seen or heard, but they knew I did. “You just stay behind us,” Fred said.

The two cleared the rise together and saw not just the shack, neatly hidden away under the sparse shrub, but the woman as well. Nate backhanded Fred’s shoulder—his hand jumped away as their suits came close to making contact—and exclaimed, “Jeez, will ya look at them knockers!”

“Knockers, hell,” Fred said in kind, “look at that ass!”

She was young, all right, and perfectly formed; she had hair and skin as black as the proverbial ace of spades. Her two young red-haired children, playing under her watchful gaze, were almost white in comparison—although in fact their skin was as deep a rich brown as her eyes.

The two men, standing in plain view, took it all in.

She was paying too much attention to the children to notice them.

Finally, when Nate said, rather loudly, “But where in hell’s her Buck?” she looked up. She saw them. Slung over her arm was a double barrel shotgun which she raised to her shoulder; she gave Nate both barrels. The blast sent him sprawling but he was laughing even as he hit the ground.

I hit the ground and hugged it. Then I heard her yell, “Run!” and looked up in time to see the children sprinting, in opposite directions, to the nearby surrounding woods.

She dropped the shotgun then and, just like a woman, headed for the shack; it offered no real protection but it was, after all, her home.

Fred was after her immediately. Nate was back on his feet and just a short distance behind. I brought up the rear by a considerable distance.

By the time I got to my feet, dusted myself off and ran down to the shack and in the door, she was sobbing, her blouse had been ripped from her body and was lying discarded behind her and Fred was standing over her.

Fred looked over at me, his eyes squinting shrewdly, as I entered. “Thought you were interested in the kids,” he said. It was a question.

“Am,” I said. “But I can track ‘em later—after I get my rifle back and you get her Buck. Besides, from what you guys were sayin’, I figured this might be more interesting.”



This is the Joe Staton illustration that accompanied the original appearance of this story. Courtesy Curt Phillips Collection.

The woman swung her head to look at me and her expression might have changed, but at that point Fred slugged her hard, back-handing her with a fist, and she slammed back against the floor.

“You’re right, Tuck,” Fred said with a grin. “This *is* gonna be more interestin’.”

When he turned his attention back to the woman, the grin disappeared to be replaced by something cold and mean. He kicked her in the stomach and she moaned and he kicked her in the stomach again. “Where’s your Buck, nigger bitch? Out huntin’ white meat?”

I could tell she was really scared—as could Fred and Nate—but she didn’t say a word. This was just what Fred and Nate wanted, though. Fred was shaking with pleasure and excitement while Nate was standing across the room, his laser pistol in his hand, laughing silently at her distress, extracting his joy from her pain.

She rolled over on her stomach to protect herself from further kicks there. Fred grabbed her arms, pulled them behind her back and tied her hands together with a leather thong that had been dangling from his belt. He looked back at me and the grin reappeared—like a light he worked with an on-and-off switch from inside his head.

“You ever had any poontang while huntin’, Tuck? These nigger bitches are built for fuckin’ in the mouth and ass.”

She turned her head to look up into Fred’s cold, hard eyes. “What— What are you going to—”

He slapped her again, catching her face between his hand and the hard floor, this time with the grin widening on his face. “Open your mouth again for anything but suckin’ cock, nigger bitch, and I’m gonna burn the end of your tit right off.” He got up off her and touched the butt of his pistol for emphasis.

Nate, whose grin almost matched Fred’s, said, “We’re gonna be fuckin’ ya when that Buck of yours comes in. We’re gonna be fuckin’ ya and pissin’ and shittin’ on ya, and you’re gonna be lickin’ our cocks and balls and assholes, ‘cause if ya don’t . . . if ya don’t . . .”

“If you don’t,” I said, “we’re gonna go outside and find that little boy of yours. Then we’ll bring him back here and cut his pecker off—while you watch.”

Nate looked at me appreciatively—I was one of his kind, he was sure—and said to her, “And after that, we’ll make you eat it.”

The woman turned over on her side to look at me; her eyes, this time, were glazed not just with fear but shock that seemed to be saying that none of this could really be happening.

Fred said, “Get out of your clothes, Tuck.”

She looked from me to Fred to Nate and back to me again. I unbuttoned my shirt, took it off, threw it in a corner. Then I took the knife out of my boot, casually set it aside on the floor, and pulled off my boots. Lastly, I slipped out of my pants and underwear.

“Okay, sweet honey lips,” Fred said to her, “you just get on over to him and start suckin’ his cock.” She glared at him. He walked around behind her and kicked her in the back. She turned over, started to get up, like he said, but he kicked her again—and again—and again.

Through all this, she hardly made a sound. “Uh” when he kicked her—that was about it. But then he pulled his pistol from its holster, made an adjustment, said, “You ain’t listenin’ too good, nigger bitch,” aimed it at her shoulder and pulled the trigger.

She screamed.

It was a scream of utter anguish and unendurable pain; she writhed and kicked frantically on the floor, trying to get away, but Fred just kept moving the pistol, sending its ray up and down her bare arm.

He let his finger off the trigger and kicked her in the stomach again.

“Ya gotta learn, bitch,” he said. “When I say do something’, I want ya to do it right away. I don’t want to have to say things twice. You do what I tell you *when* I tell you, or I’ll give you more of this—and, believe me, I like doin’ it, I really like watchin’ you roll around on the ground and scream.” He pointed the pistol at her belly and pulled the trigger again; again, she screamed, and again—after a while—he stopped.

“Go suck him off,” he said again, quietly.

He had obviously worked this all out before, from experience, to achieve the effect he wanted—going from terror to pain to quiet exactitude. She started to get up to do what he said, as best she could with her hands tied behind her back, but he grabbed her by the hair and hauled her roughly up on her knees and forced her toward me. I kicked my pants, underwear, boots and knife aside.

“Make her lick it first,” Nate said to Fred. “Make her lick his cock and balls.”

Fred yanked on her hair. “Open up,” he said. “Suck it. That’s what your nigger lips were made for. And no teeth—my friend Tuck don’t like no teeth. Just take it all the way down your throat and use lots of tongue. Or I’ll keep you rollin’ around on the floor for half an hour.”

She looked up at me and I looked back into her eyes, my hands on my hips; then Fred forced her down over me. Hesitantly, she started to do what they said, and they started to get worked up just watching us.

“Look at her,” Nate said. “Look at her goin’ down on it. Shit!”

“When he cums, you swallow it, black bitch! Just keep suckin’ and drinkin’ his cum or I’ll put my pistol in your black cunt and let you see how that feels!” Fred kept one hand gripped in her hair but with the other he was messaging his groin. “Anything you spill, you can lick up off the floor.”

Fred let go her hair, waited with his hand poised above her head to see that she continued doing what she had been told, then said to Nate, “Keep your suit on and watch out for her Buck. I’m gonna help ol’ Tuck—while he’s fuckin’ her mouth, I’m gonna stick mine in her ass.”

Nate nodded, continued to laugh silently.

“Shit,” Fred said as he disrobed, “look at that bitch go down on him. Tuck, you’re all right!” He was out of his shirt and starting to take his pants off. His field suit was turned off—he couldn’t very well screw and have it turned on at the same time—but Nate still had his turned on and his laser pistol in his hand. Nate had no difficulty watching what I was doing to the girl while keeping an eye peeled out the window for her Buck—the shack had deliberately been situated so that it could be approached from only one direction.

Fred stepped out of his pants; he wasn’t wearing any underwear. He came up from behind the girl, reached around slow and started squeezing her large well-formed breasts; it started as a massage but ended up a painful twisting of her nipples. While he continued to mawl one breast, he reached down with his other hand, unzipped her jeans and started to pull them down over her hips.

She made a protesting sound.

“Don’t talk with your mouth full,” Nate said, snorting.

“Yeah,” Fred said. “You just keep suckin’ Tuck ’til he cums.” He let go of her breast and used both hands to pull her pants down to her knees. Gritting his teeth and looking up at me, he started working his middle finger into her ass.

I stepped back, pulled myself free of her.

“I’d rather have sloppy seconds on her ass,” I said.

“Sure,” Fred said, “if she’s got any left when I get through with it. I’m gonna split her up the middle.”

He looked like he was big enough.

He grabbed the thong which bound her wrists and pulled up on it, and pushed her down until her head was on the floor, meanwhile working his finger savagely in and out.

“I’m gonna piss on her,” Nate said. “Then I’m gonna stuff my shit in her mouth and make her eat it.”

I nodded—a grimace, when no one’s really paying close attention, can suffice for a smile—and said, “But it’s a pity she ain’t tasted no white cum—I’d do it myself if I didn’t want to bugger her black hole so much.”

“You figure maybe I owe it to her, as a white man?” he asked, smiling. He watched through glazed eyes—although dutifully glancing out the window every so often—as Fred held his penis in his hand, trying to push it up into her. She moaned in anticipation of the new pain, then moaned again louder as Fred made his breakthrough and brutally pushed in.

“Yeah,” Nate said at last, “yeah, I guess I owe her that.”

Trying not to show nervousness, I said, “I’ll keep watch. I’ll be able to spot her Buck long before he can get here.”

“Sure.” Nate turned his suit off, holstered his pistol and started pulling his shirt up over his head.

When Fred yelled, “Look out!” Nate didn’t even have time to pull it back down. I scooped my knife from the floor and plunged it directly upward under his chin, right up to the hilt, and left it there.

Nate only had time to gurgle and bleed.

I, on the other hand, had plenty of time to lift his laser pistol from its holster before he fell over.

“Loretta, move!” I yelled.

She lurched away from Fred, flattening herself on the floor—enough so that I could get off a clear shot.

The beam lopped off the upper left hand corner of his head. Fred looked down with his remaining eye at his erect penis, saw it spurt, then fell over, dead, on top of her.

Loretta screamed again and fought her way out from under his naked corpse although she was hampered by the thong on her wrists and her half-pulled-down jeans at the top of her knees.

I held the pistol straight out, looking at it and thinking, *Two lasers and two field suits—now we can do anything.*

But I knew, even as I was thinking it, that it wasn’t really true; they both ran off power packs, and power packs would run down eventually. Maybe not for a long time, but eventually. We’d just cut the odds against our survival. That was all.

I slowly lowered myself into a sitting position and straightened the fingers of my hand until the pistol dropped with a clatter to the floor. I looked down at it and at my wife, huddling on the floor sobbing and crying, and I knew that I should at least be saying something to her, untying her bonds, helping and comforting her—something.

I started to speak, but a wave of nausea hit me; vomit, rather than all the words I might have wanted to say erupted from my mouth, splattered my bare front and settled in a puddle on the floor.

Sometime later—somehow, she’d gotten free of her bonds—I felt Loretta’s hand on my shoulder.

“Go get the children,” I said, wiping my mouth with the back of my hand. “I’ll clean up this mess and have these two out back and hung for butchering before you get back.”

I realized then that the laser pistol would make the chore of butchering them a lot easier than it had ever been before.

That made me feel a little better.

- - -

*Reprinted from *Amazing Stories*, March 1977, with the permission of Richard W. Brown.
Special thanks to Curt Phillips for supplying the Joe Staton illustration and much other assistance.
Amazing cover scan courtesy Jacques Hamon <http://www.noosfere.org/showcase/>

It's very helpful if you're painting or telling a story to assume your readers know something.

—Kurt Vonnegut, “An Interview with Kurt Vonnegut,” 10/17/87

Curious Couplings 5

By Earl Kemp

As I wrote in *eI19*, I have noticed a number of odd coincidences regarding sleaze paperback covers and other publications that have intrigued me. Some of them were reasonable and understandable, some of them were outright criminal theft, and some of them were beneath contempt.

What I propose to do is to run a few of them in some issues of *eI* to see if I can create real interest in perusing the venture. It is a participation project. You send me jpegs of your favorite duos to earlkemp@citlink.net and I'll take it from there.

Here then is the next set of examples of Curious Couplings. These covers are from the collection of Brittany A. Daley.



Next we have a very interesting trio of covers from the collection of Robert Elkin:



The Sins of Cheryl, by Roger Blake (John Felix Trimble), and *Barred* (1965), published by Seven Seventy. Artist unknown though Princeotti did a lot of the France paintings. The *Barred* scan is from Tom Brinkman's "[BADMAGS](http://www.badmags.com)" website.

We welcome your contributions to this series. Please email your jpegs to earlkemp@citlink.net and thank you very much for participating in this novel and interesting exercise in futility.

I still believe that peace and plenty and happiness can be worked out some way. I am a fool.

—Kurt Vonnegut, *Jailbird*

The Whitewash Jungle*

By Earl Kemp

Part One

Surely it can't be true, that persistent rumor I keep hearing that Mother Lombino's two-faced son is cleaning up his past. Evan Hunter/Ed McBain is denying a major portion of his illustrious writing career...those freewheeling, easy-money years when he was almost much better known as Dean Hudson.

I'm pleased to refresh his memory.

While we never met in person, Evan Hunter was always a good friend/writer of mine. I picked him out personally very early on just for me, as a writer to watch out for. That was when I was ass-over-head involved with science fiction and earmarking things to come. In those 1950s and on into the '60s, I knew a lot of people in Chicago and New York involved with writing and editing and publishing...and all points between. True, most of them were science fiction related, but they in turn had the run of the entire New York creative grapevine. Certainly anyone related to the Scott Meredith Literary Agency, however tenuously, would blab...the fountain of truth and lies that spread out over every genre of hack pulp writing for decades.

I had personal favorite things like Hunter's "Malice in Wonderland," that appeared in *If*, January 1954. It finally turned out to be *Tomorrow's World*, by Hunt Collins (Avalon, 1956), in one of those wonderful matching-set rental bookstore editions edited by my old friend Robert A.W. "Doc" Lowndes. [Which Evan Hunter seems to have forgotten as well, or at least ignored; he lists it as *Tomorrow and Tomorrow* on his own bibliography. See cover scan.]

But I find myself straying from the point, trying to make a point that Evan Hunter was a known entity to me long before we ever began working together, and one I approved of and genuinely liked. It is really important to keep in mind whose side I'm on most of the time.

#



The Emsh cover for Evan Hunter's *Tomorrow's World*, by Hunt Collins.



I was working at Nightstand Books in Evanston, Illinois, when Evan Hunter was first introduced to me personally through Scott Meredith. Scott wanted to impress me with the quality of the writing talent working within his secret black boxes of infinite delight and sexual gratification...those manuscript boxes he was so ashamed of he made Henry Morrison front their operation out of a Grand Central Station post office box.

He was selling me a new writer into the group. Evan Hunter would write one book a month as Dean Hudson starting immediately ... joining a rapidly growing, already impressive group of Famous Writers of Tomorrow. What Scott didn't tell me but several others were eager to relate was that the two of them had made a terribly advantageous pact between them, for their mutual benefit and to rip-off the taxation authorities at the same time.

Scott agreed with Hunter's request, in exchange for his writing those sleazebooks, *to pay him in cash*...no records of any sort. The main reason, according to what I was told Hunter had said, was that his wife was extremely tight with the purse strings and accounted for every penny he spent. If Hunter was to live his secret sexual fantasy life, keeping it like some erotic *Captain's Paradise* totally unknown to his family, he had to have money to finance it with. Thinking of the savings in bookkeeping and taxes alone, Scott readily agreed.

We were paying Evan Hunter, through Meredith, \$1,000 per manuscript for those under-the-counter tomes. Knowing Scott's problems with proper accounting, it is altogether possible that Sidney Feldman was paying Evan Hunter a good bit less than that by withholding portions of the fee as some form of "operating expenses." And this was in 1960 dollars and you could buy an incredible amount of things with that much money being placed in your hands no questions asked from once to three times a month every month for a number of years. Luxuries beyond comprehension at today's prices.

Month after month after month Evan Hunter would deliver those manuscripts personally to Scott Meredith. Month after month after month, Evan Hunter would quietly go into Scott's big corner office to pick up the cash payment, stick it in his pocket, and quickly leave the offices of Scott Meredith Literary Agency. All the employees at the time knew this to be true and every one of them knew what Hunter was doing when he picked up his cash envelopes and knew with much envy where and on what he was spending that cash. And every one of them desperately wanted an invitation to Hunter's secret sexatorium ... the kind of things sleazebook dreams are made of. A large number of Hunter's contemporary black box writers, also working for Meredith, also knew of these things as well.

Scott Meredith couldn't say enough good things about Hunter...New York *Times* Bestsellers list. *The Blackboard Jungle* book (1954) and excellent movie to follow (1955)...and many other worthy achievements. Henry Morrison also talked about him frequently, as did Joe Elder, and all of them were praising him and complimenting us on having acquired him as a steady provider of superior erotica.

From that moment on, for five years, every month with few exceptions, we received a manuscript guaranteed by Scott Meredith to have been written by Evan Hunter.

It is not at all reasonable or conceivable that this was done without Hunter's knowledge. If it was done within his knowledge, then he is a fully guilty equal co-conspirator to at least fraud either at the time he did or didn't write those manuscripts or the time (currently) when he is denying that he did write them then.



Either way you look at it, Evan Hunter *is* the default writer of record for those Dean Hudson books and this record exists forever.

[Ironically, I note that Evan Hunter has not listed even a one of them on his website among the novels he has written in his bibliographies. I would be pleased to furnish him with a complete bibliography in case his isn't close at hand, including *Tomorrow's World*.]

#

Apparently, I have been told, there are two Evan Hunter websites, one at www.evanhunter.com and the other at www.edmcbain.com where there was a brief flare of discussion involving the recent Feral House book *Sin-A-Rama* and novels identified within it as having been written by Evan Hunter under the pseudonym Dean Hudson.

Among other things, the Commissioner Ed McBain [Evan Hunter] is quoted as having said, "I know Evan Hunter. And I ain't Dean Hudson, whoever he may be." Not exactly up to expected literary level, but crude and to the point.

Then, to add a bit of injury to the insult, making a second grand gesture toward sanitizing his writings, all those comments, everything, abruptly were deleted from the websites, as if they had never been there in the first place. Evan/Ed sticking his ostrich head into the sand so we can't see what he's been doing all along.

That included the original faint praise for Feral House's *Sin-A-Rama*, the questions regarding Evan Hunter's writing sleazebooks as Dean Hudson, and the denials supposedly originating with Hunter himself. All gone! Disappeared! Never happened! Total denial....

#

Is it possible for a figment of one's imagination to lie? Since Ed McBain doesn't exist, can he tell a lie for his operator, Evan Hunter? Is this some clever way of retroactively shaking off the blame onto some other writer or

writers?

Because I was on the receiving end of those black boxes, I removed Evan Hunter's manuscripts from them. I edited Evan Hunter's manuscripts for years, growing ever closer and closer to the shifting images of the Hudsons standing in line behind Hunter leaching after his position and his prerogatives.

Clouds of pot smoke from hookahs and bong, mixing in with a bit of patchouli incense burning between the hot beds....

Ah, the endless orgasmic lust of it all!



#

Me, square and uptight, hidden in a back-room office in Evanston, Illinois sharing Evan Hunter's life vicariously through the endless gossip about him originating within the Scott Meredith Literary Agency. How very much I envied him then and wanted to join the group toking the continuously burning Indica joint at his fabulous feet.

#

During those early 1960s years, I was getting all kinds of input about writers from all directions. I was personally juggling dozens of them every month...hundreds...eventually thousands of writers...and most of them told me things, gossipy things, about each other...real or imaginary things.

An entire mystique was built up around Evan Hunter over those hippy, love-in, free sex and drugs decades. Because he was a few years older than most of the black box pornography writers (and three years older than me), he didn't socialize with them, plus he had already succeeded in writing and selling things that his contemporaries could only dream of. That built a separation of awe between them.

Hunter did not join the Friday night poker social and Get Scott meetings of The Happy Pornographers. He didn't network with them, swap story ideas, or share joints.

What he did, if rumors are true, was turn into some sort of lesser god...a hero father figure for a large group of wannabe writers, a number of them females, who were all eager to live those sex and drugs and rock and roll days and nights to the fullest extent possible. Like a commune that somehow seemed to surround Hunter for nourishment and exist off him and his efforts.

The tales were glorious and wonderful, about how he was, mostly and habitually, surrounded by a haze of hashish smoke and a gaggle of worshipers. About how the females would fight over which was which and who would do what with Evan that day....

I really envied Evan Hunter. I wanted to be whatever it was that he was when I grew up. He was, according to

legend, living the life I didn't dare and could never aspire to.

And the unfortunate part of all that was a number of Hunter's acolytes wanted to be writers just like him. So he began to teach them, especially the girls, how to do it right, including some writing tips. (And he grew even larger as a hero figure for me because of that.)

Needless to say, after an initial honeymoon, the quality level of the Evan Hunter/Dean Hudson sleazebook manuscripts began slipping noticeably. The manuscripts began to be very amateurish all of a sudden, and continued that way for a long time.

I did a Dean Hudson checklist... I worked on it for 7 years and decided to publish it without revealing his real name. Robert Silverberg had told me, but on the condition I could not reveal him as my source. It remained off the record. I knew Evan Hunter would deny it, and I wanted corroboration... On my checklist, I wrote that there seemed to be two Dean Hudsons, one a good writer, the other a terrible writer. Now I know why.

—Lynn Munroe, email, June 18, 2005

We had many unkind words with Scott Meredith about that, and he assured us that Hunter would do better in the future. Perhaps he did. There was clear evidence that someone who knew what they were doing was taking portions of those love-in manuscripts and working them into an almost acceptable form.



Whatever really happened will never be known. Certainly if Evan Hunter is already denying that he had a very heavy hand in whatever it was that went on way back then when he was in New York not writing the damned things and I was in Evanston trying to turn them into readable formula pulp.

Evan should be proud of those books today. I certainly am. They command very large prices for single copies, and there are long want lists posted all over the place looking endlessly for more and more of them.

Evan Hunter isn't alone, of course, in attempting to deny his past or his involvement with erotica. He joins a growing number of people who had rather forget the past entirely and move on to something a good deal better....

...failing to recognize the glory that was.

Part Two

Part One of this article was written in July 2005. It was done in response to Evan Hunter's continuously denying that he had ever been Dean Hudson. I was there with him at the time when he was and it is my direct first-hand

knowledge that Hunter was indeed Dean Hudson. I burned out on his denials because, as Hudson, he was remarkably good, far too good to ever be allowed to deny.

I felt, in July 2005, that it was time for me to try to blast Hunter out of his secret hiding place with the tale of his secret hiding place, and how he financed an outlet for all those drugs and that excess sexual energy so rampant in the Age of Aquarius. By confronting him head on by reminding him of our shared past, I hoped to accomplish just that.

I had this article, plus Lynn Munroe's great bibliography, and Robert Elkin's pseudonymous bitch about the two Hunter websites all standing and ready to go in the next issue of my ezine *eI*...and then Hunter pulled the rug right out from beneath my feet...and died.

It had never been my intention to destroy or even harm Evan Hunter. Remember, I'm the person who had been enamored of his writing since Way Back When. He was one of my writer heroes. He was one of my life-style heroes. He was a man after my own libido. Through Hunter I was able to live, vicariously, the life I could never hope to know in reality. He was the man of courage who did it for all the weak wimps that only admired him even more so for doing it for them...for me.

Out of respect for a dead hero and long-distance friend, I aborted the posting of that issue of *eI* and pulled the three Hunter pieces out of the locked-in issue. Then I carefully put them aside for safekeeping with the certain knowledge that I would return to them, in time, and relocate my friend Evan Hunter somewhere outside the closet he had been hiding inside for the last...my God, has it really been...forty years....

And that time is now.



In the memory book, "He wrote like an angel," produced for Hunter's funeral, there are a number of things of significant interest to his old sleazebook contemporaries. There are bibliographies, photographs, original artwork, and all the accolades one expects at a time of great sorrow.

For instance, Stephen King wrote in part, "Evan Hunter...was one of the most influential writers of the postwar generation. He was the writer to successfully merge realism with genre fiction, and by so doing, I think, he may actually have created the kind of popular fiction that drove the bestseller lists and lit up the American imagination in the years 1960-2000...Evan Hunter...taught a whole generation of Baby Boomers not only how to write stories that were interesting but ones that truthfully reflected the times and the culture...."

And, for once, Stephen King was right-on correct. And beginning in 1961, writing as Dean Hudson and mentoring a large group of devoted followers, Hunter did indeed teach "a whole generation...how to write stories that were interesting...[and] truthfully reflected the times and the culture...." The 93 forgotten and denied even unto death Dean Hudson novels are stand-alone proof of that generous accomplishment.

And nowhere inside any one of the bibliographies included in "He wrote like an angel" was Dean Hudson mentioned nor was a one of those superior 93 Dean Hudson titles even referred to. A complete ostrich until beyond the final end with Hunter's head still stuck inside the sand even after his death.

Elmore Leonard, chief among my fiction writer heroes, wrote this about Evan Hunter, "He had a way of ending a scene in which he'd let the last sentence of a paragraph drop off to become a one-line paragraph of its own.... He could drip multiple declarative sentences in a row, some incomplete to maintain a rhythm, each a one-line paragraph that gained momentum, and I would think of Evan finishing a scene, Evan wondering how far he could go dripping sentences. Maybe try one more and cross it out. I would read the scene ender dripping as many as five one liners like a faucet, and have to smile. And think, Wow, The man knew how to write."

I don't suppose Elmore—who can write no wrong—had any way of knowing that he had just described Dean Hudson, and his novels, and the marketplace wherein Hunter learned to write the way that so pleased Leonard. And

to teach many fledgling writers how to go on without him and make it on their own, at least within the world of sleazebook fiction.

A quotation from Hunter himself serves as an excellent capstone for “He wrote like an angel.” I do not know where the quotation comes from, but Hunter said, “There was a thing that happened when I started writing, and when I began to read so much. I began to realize that there was no longer a frame around things. You weren’t limited to that frame they were teaching in art school. I could go anywhere—a dust speck in the eye to a battlefield—in a flash, in an instant.”

And so Evan Hunter left us...his loyal followers...his Dean Hudson completists, going somewhere, anywhere—a dust speck in the eye to a battlefield—in a flash, in an instant.

Rest In Peace, whoever you are and wherever you happen to be, secure in the knowledge that you are not forgotten.

[Part Two written January 2006.]

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*For Dean Hudson, who shouldn’t need any defense. Special thanks to L. Truman Douglas and Robert Elkin for help with this article.

His animus against so-called mainstream literature, moreover, wasn’t peculiar to him. It was generic among writers of science fiction.

—Kurt Vonnegut, *Timequake*

The First 20 Dean Hudson Novels*

By Lynn Munroe

This article on Dean Hudson's first 20 sleazebooks is actually the latest installment in a series I've been doing from time to time on the authors of William Hamling's Nightstand/Corinth/Greenleaf syndicate. Previous articles have looked at Andrew Shaw, Don Holliday, and Clyde Allison. [And those articles have appeared in previous issues of *eI*.] I do not intend to list all of the authors, but some of the writers of these softcore 1960s sleaze novels are worth a closer look.

I became curious about these books while researching the early writing careers of Lawrence Block and Donald E. Westlake, which led me to their friend Hal Dresner, who was the first Don Holliday. Somewhere along the line, I became a fan of William Knoles, who wrote as Clyde Allison. And throughout my Allison research, collectors and paperback dealers would tell me, "Read Dean Hudson, he kind of writes like Clyde Allison." So I began reading Hudson, liked a few (some more than others), and decided to put together a collection of Dean Hudson's books, to really research the body of his work.

Update

One of the Nightstand regulars told me who Dean Hudson really was, but he made me promise to not quote him as my source. See, I haven't.

A year after this checklist was first printed, the legendary Greenleaf editor Earl Kemp emerged from self-exile abroad and we began a correspondence that continues today. Earl was my quotable source that Dean Hudson was Evan Hunter. He also could explain why some of the Hudsons are well written and some are not.

Hunter would write some of the Dean Hudson books but for other months he would turn in a manuscript "written" by one of his protégés. This explained the dichotomy.

Of course Evan Hunter denied this, just as he denied many of his pseudonyms. But they knew at the Scott Meredith Literary Agency, the other writers knew, and the editor knew, and for many years the truth was just a rumor. Ad then Earl Kemp returned from the wilderness, ready to confirm the rumors, and thank you, Earl!

The First 20 Dean Hudson Novels

It is of course best to list an author's work chronologically, but since there is no such definitive information available on Hudson, and because the records of the publisher "were deliberately obscured for legal reasons" according to the editor, there's no way to be sure what order the books were written in, or who wrote them. All we have to go on are the publication dates, when given, inside the books. I have chosen, in an attempt to bring some semblance of order to this list, to list the books alphabetically by the various "publisher" names Hamling used (Nightstand, Ember Library, etc.) for each year Hudson was writing.

1961

BEDSIDE BOOKS

BB1205 *Showcase For Sin*

Bedsides were apparently published by different people at different addresses during the early 1960s, but the publisher of Bedsides 1201 through 1224 (1961-62), calling himself Pert Publications, used only Scott Meredith Literary Agency writers. The names or pen names are identical to the names being used at Hamling's Nightstand



Lynn Munroe is shown signing his article in the Robert Bonfils edition of *Illustration*. The Man from C.A.M.P., Victor J. Banis, is standing behind Munroe. Photo by Art Scott, Mission Hills, CA Paperback Show and Sale, 2005.

Books at the same time. Authors in this series include Don Elliott (Robert Silverberg), Alan Marshall (Donald E. Westlake), Al James (Al James Hjerstedt, who preferred to use the same pen name for all markets from *Manhunt* to *Midwoods*), Clyde Allison (William H. Knoles), Curt Aldrich (literary agent Richard A. Curtis, who told me that *Isle of Wantons*, *Bedside 1210*, was his first book, and that “Isle of Wantons” was a joke title meaning “I Love Wantons”), Dell Holland (William Coons), Nightstand house name John Dexter, and Dean Hudson, whose first books at Nightstand appeared the same year. (I don't know which were published first.) *Showcase for Sin* is the story of young New York City boxer-/stage actor Tip O'Connell, whose girlfriend Ellen Harrison falls “under the unnatural lusts of agent Mona St. Clair.” Tip uses his powers as a stud to win Ellen back.

BB 1209 *Sex Town*

With cover art showing a hand holding a switchblade knife menacing a naked woman, *Sex Town* looks like a J.D. novel. Instead, it's a sleazy crime novel about Matt Halloran, who goes to work for “The Outfit” at a ring of gambling dens and brothels. Matt is a sin-sick man who only enjoys women sadistically, a character trait we will see again from Dean.

NIGHTSTAND BOOKS

NB 1579 *Las Vegas Lust*

William Hamling was publishing magazines when, in 1959, inspired by the success of Beacon Books and other paperback houses, he started Nightstand Books. He used some of the young writers from his science fiction magazines like Robert Silverberg and Harlan Ellison. Ellison and Algis Budrys also worked as editors. Hamling entered into an agreement with the Scott Meredith Literary Agency. A team of Meredith clients and employees would each turn in one book a month. New names were added each year as the success of the series called for more and more titles. In 1961, one such new name appeared on *Las Vegas Lust*. It is apparent from the outset that Dean Hudson was going to contribute some interesting books. *Las Vegas Lust* is the hard-boiled story of gambler/ex-con Mike McCloud, who hitchhikes into town with \$5 and the clothes on his back. He quickly turns the \$5 into ten grand in one turn at the craps table. McCloud is a laconic, flawed, tough gambling antihero, the kind of guy Paul Newman and Steve McQueen were playing in movies like *The Hustler* and *The Cincinnati Kid*. McCloud goes to work for the casinos, busting the con artists and grifters who breeze through the story. The sex scenes seem added on (they probably were), and one way you can tell Hudson's heart isn't in it is that all the different women are described in exactly the same words (every single one of them, we are told, has “long and dark” nipples). None of the “variety is the spice of life” smorgasbord of feminine types of the Clyde Allison books is at play here. Although the story eventually peters out into a thoroughly unbelievable ending with plot holes you could drive a fleet of trucks through, there is enough going on here to make us want to give Hudson another try. If, that is, you can believe a cutie Vegas lounge singer/gambling addict could be a virgin. Of course, our virile stud Mike McCloud will handle that at the climax.

NB 1583 *Wall Street Wanton*

Hudson's other 1961 Nightstand is the saga of Cinderella Smith, a young woman who sleeps her way to the top in classic sleaze-book fashion. This book has a cover so outrageous—Cinderella sucking her thumb, looking at her stockbroker-conquest with wide-eyed lust—that it was recently offered for sale on eBay just on the merits of that cover image alone.

1962

MIDNIGHT READER

MR418 *Passion Suburb*

Bachelor writer Sky Carroll finds all the loving he can handle in the Long Island suburb of Rustic Acres. Lesbian scenes and racial violence, with the usual contrived happy ending all the early Hudsons share, as opposed to the sudden-twist doom endings of Clyde Allison and Andrew Shaw.

MR430 *Sin Gallery*

Artist Pete Carroll turns art forger in this Paris to New York story of the world of modern art.

MR442 *Passion Floor*

This story of the sex lives of eight residents of a New York hotel is a departure for Hudson, who up until now focused on single protagonists. But there is no mistaking the style of those sex scenes, where all the women have upturned breasts with long, red nipples. Makes you yearn for some short pink ones after a while. Category: soap opera.



MR450 *Lust Son*

Playboy Sky Benton (who is not to be confused with Sky Carroll, who is not to be confused with Pete Carroll) takes a job as a driver to solve his rich father's murder. Since he is incognito, he cleverly assumes the name Schuyler! Cornball happy ending, same tired sex scenes.

MR464 *The Glass Mistress*

Drunk actor Nick Bennett somehow manages the feat of being a drunken bum and a great lover at the same time, which makes him basically the same character as Evan Hunter's Matt Cordell (aka Curt Cannon), who was both a drunken bum and a great detective. This book is an unbelievable hoot about the New York theatrical and barroom crowd. His mistress of glass is of course a bottle of whiskey, like the one depicted on the cover. Surrounded by two nude women, all he wants is that drink.

NIGHTSTAND BOOKS

NB1593 *Casting Couch*

Ex-child star Joe Marriott goes to work for a Hollywood movie studio, where he enjoys the benefits of that titular sofa. The familiar obligatory sex scenes show us that (so far) Dean Hudson was one guy, not a house name.

NB1598 *Passion Man*

One thing we can be sure of with this publisher's books: the pen names got mixed up, apparently on purpose. So there's a John Dexter book that's really a Clyde Allison, and one of the Don Holliday books is really by Don Elliott, etc. Sometimes they have one name on the cover, another on the title page. And in that spirit, there is no question for me that *Passion Man* "by Dean Hudson" was not written by Dean Hudson. The plodding third person storytelling and forced sex scenes are gone, as is the forced happy against all odds ending. This one is narrative-rich, told in a lean first person style. The sex scenes seem to flow from that narrative drive, and the ending just leaves you hanging there. Political fixer Pete Harper needs a new mayor, and finds his man in Brother Johnny Wells, who before becoming mayor has been running a Temple of Love. Solid and involving. I have no idea who wrote *Passion Man*. Some of the stylistic turns are reminiscent of early Clyde Allison; but Lawrence Block was to use the name

Johnny Wells many times, both as a character and as a pseudonym.



NB1608 *Sin Search*

As deplorable then as it is today, somewhere along about here somebody decided that violence against women would sell more adult paperbacks. This is the first of two Hudson covers with naked blondes about to be strangled to death. The two books appear to be written by the same man, too. They are both dark, brooding, and disturbing. Now either Dean Hudson has suddenly improved as a writer, or someone else has taken over the pen name. *Sin Search* is set in the Violent Ward at Midwood State Mental Hospital, surely an inside joke for the group of writers who were also churning out books for a publisher named Midwood. A nurse is violently raped and then, to our horror, torn to bits. This style and subject matter remind me of David Case, who wrote some of the nastier Don Holliday books like *Beast of Shame*. The nurse's sister, Nikki Harrison, decides to use herself as bait to trap her sister's killer. Powerful stuff.

NB1630 *Lust Dream*

The thin line between sex and death has never looked narrower than on this haunting book cover. A nude blonde is being strangled, the killer's hands reaching out as if they are ours. A couple more blondes stand behind her, but wait, look again, one of them has a grinning death mask skull for a face. These deep-seated images are right from the book, the story of a young man who dreams such murders, and then goes out to walk the dark streets, looking for someone to crush...or kill. This is nightmarish, disturbing, adult reading, unexpectedly frightening. Sean is unable to enjoy normal, happy relations. One night it all comes back to him - as a child he had watched his father strangle his prostitute mother to death. And now she haunts his dreams, his days.

1963

MIDNIGHT READER

MR479 *Tropic Lust*

Like the last two books, this and the next are a matched pair, both obviously from the same author, suggesting a "Dean Hudson rotation." These two are both adventure stories, heavily plotted, with exotic lovemaking. Nothing like the earlier Hudsons, this one is set in Puerto Rico, the next in the Virgin Islands. The virile, manly, he-man hero's name changes, but that's all.

MR486 *Sin Hungry*

Title page says *The Sin Hungry*. An engineer builds a desalinization plant in the Caribbean. Cover artist Harold W. McCauley did some nice work.



NIGHTSTAND BOOKS

NB1637 *Sinville*

Clean-cut young Jeff Marlowe comes to vice-ridden Centre City with a deadly secret. First person, with a twist ending.

NB1642 *Sin Sheet*

Life at a tabloid newspaper.

PILLAR BOOK

PB813 *Sin Dealer* by Dean Judson

In 1963, Hamling was running scared. Prosecutors were threatening to find the books obscene, and during one court case Hamling cut back on production, stopped his popular Nightstand and Midnight Reader lines (both would be reprised, Nightstand in 1965, Midnight a decade later), and changed all the pen names. Well, he changed them, but just slightly. Who was fooled by this maneuver I have no idea. During this period, Hamling started some new lines like Pillar and Ember. *Sin Dealer*, by the cleverly disguised “Dean Judson,” is the story of a lusty female rare book dealer who takes a Greenwich Village bum as her partner.

1964

EMBER BOOK

EB935 *West End Wanton*

A tough guy is brought in to stop London cardsharps by “outsharping” them. If that sounds familiar, it should, it is exactly the same plot as *Las Vegas Lust*. Only the city has changed.

EVENING READER

ER751 *Passion Adonis*

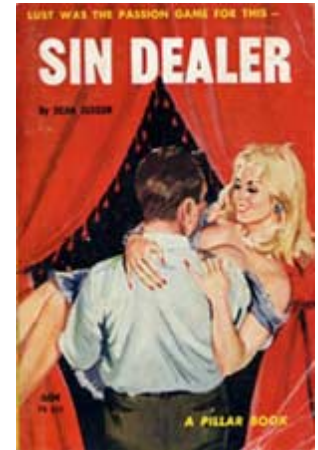
A male model starts a chain of “health salons.”

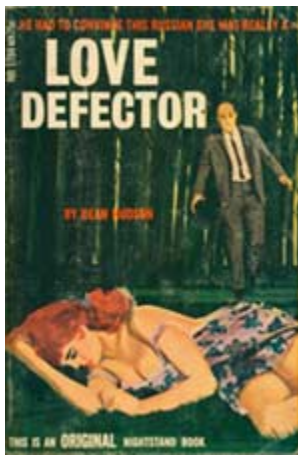
#

Honorable Mention

Of the 93 Evan Hunter related Dean Hudson novels, there was one outstanding series of four books. They are about Secret Agent xx96, Phil Scott, *Love Defector*, the first volume in the series, tells how Professor Scott is recruited to become a spy and sent to convince a beautiful Russian agent to defect. The Phil Scott books are imitation 0008 books, the main difference being Scott's insufferable egotism replacing 0008's brash *joie de vivre*.

It is hard to explain the difference between Clyde and Dean, but here is one difference. Each woman an Allison hero encounters is like a new adventure, because life is an adventure to be seized. Each woman a Hudson hero encounters is just another unimportant notch on his belt. Phil is too busy reminding us what a man he is.





For you list makers like me here is the correct chronological order of the Phil Scott series:

1. *Love Defector* - Nightstand NB 1784
2. *The Sexpert* - Leisure Book LB1156
3. *The Virgins of Cadabra* - Ember Library EL373
4. *The N.U.D.E. Caper* - Candid Reader CA909

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*Excerpted, revised, and expanded from *List 49*, Fall 2000. As always, gathering books as obscure as these would have been impossible without the dedicated help of some friends. Thanks for books and info goes out to Robert Speray, Bruce Brenner, Dave Bosco, Chris Eckhoff, Lance Casebeer, Tom Lesser, and Rose Idlet.

Before you kill somebody, make absolutely sure he isn't well connected.

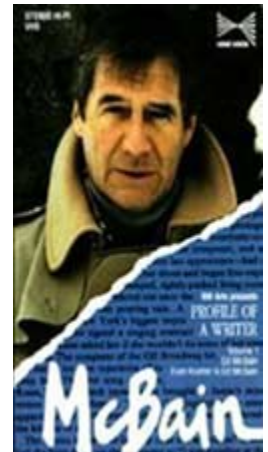
—Kurt Vonnegut, *Slaughterhouse-Five*

APB: Dean Hudson

By “Tobe Rinkler”

In my Horatio Alger-like drive to wrest rent and food from the great fucking steel teats of America and thereby keep a resident feline eunuch-prince in rent, food, and insulin, I often sell collectible books on a popular online auction site as a supplement to my scholarly and teaching activities (I write analyses of works of fiction and teach literature to university students).

Though I'm myself no real collector of books or much of anything else, I do appreciate, as a student of popular fiction, the literary moment I feel when I hold a first printing of a novel in my hands—and even more so with paperbacks, perhaps because they're so fragile, so vibrant, so *reflective* of the years in which they were born. Every now and then I still clutch one in my left hand and quickly smack it twice with my right, hoping to be magically transported back to 1968 by a paperback time-travel hyperlink...



Anyway, this past month, I've been auctioning off quite a few pseudonymous Nightstand, Idle Hour, Ember, etc. “adult” paperbacks from Greenleaf, and for each of them, I have been encapsulating a brief explanation of the writers-who-might-lie-behind-the-pseudonym as best I can. “Andrew Shaw” is referenced to Lawrence Block, William Coons, and Hal Dresner; “Don Holliday” started out as Hal Dresner and wound up being Victor J. Banis; “Alan Marshall” to Donald E. Westlake. And “Dean Hudson,” of course, is grounded into that fellow best known for penning *The Concrete Jungle*, Mr. Evan Hunter, aka Ed McBain, creator of the *87th Precinct*. Right, I think, as I put together my presentation of *Skin Queen* (Idle Hour IH476, 1962)...no big deal, I would think...some fan'll get some good stuff....



Hah! What followed became very quickly very different.

It seems that Mr. Hunter has an official website of his own (www.evanhunter.com), containing a forum populated by the voices of fans of (mostly) Mr. McBain's writing. Or perhaps I should say here “Commissioner” McBain—for once you go to the page, make yourself up a name and register so that you can become one voice among many, you are magically granted “police officer” status yourself (the only option—no “criminals” on this site)—and as a new graduate of this “academy,” you can then blog it not only with other “officers” from all over the world, but as well with the big cheese himself, the “Commissioner,” “El Jefe,” Mr. Ed McBain. Sound more than a bit like a sausage-fest? Palms sweating for that ol' back room treatment? An excerpt will have to take the place of that nice moist cookie:

Don't know if anyone is interested in this stuff or not, but I contacted the guy on [—] who has been selling these Dean Hudson books, asking him where he got his information from, and he replied with the following: "My info is general, and comes partly from Feral House's recently released hardcover volume *Sin-A-Rama: Sleaze Sex Paperbacks of the Sixties*...edited in part by Earl Kemp, one of the big names in the field...The relation between the two names, however, has been a thing stated by many booksellers..." The covers of the books on sale look very 'pulpy' and remind me of the Curt Cannon paperbacks, but then there seems to be a lot of similar stuff out there, so who knows.

—"X—" (Detective-Lieutenant)

Sounds like a sane compositor, right? Like a reasonable, open-minded, intellectually curious soul just looking to dialog over some cool info, and in the process discover something new about enjoyable literature...yeah, let freedom ring, man—

Ah, but we're talking about the "police," here, and JFK's murder yet remains unsolved. A reply more fitting to this ideal soon appeared on the site:

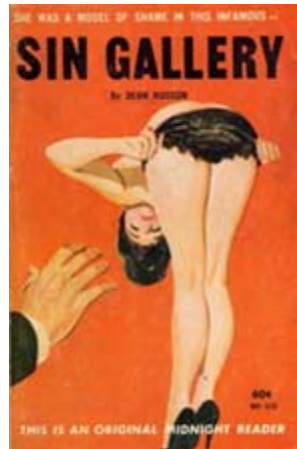
quote:

...there seems to be a lot of similar stuff out there, so who knows.

I know. Evan Hunter. And I ain't Dean Hudson, whoever he may be.

—"El Jefe" (Commissioner)

Now maybe I'm putting too fine a point on this, I'll admit it. Not everyone agrees with my hero Crash Davis's idea that strikeouts are fascist, and not everyone will see that throwing stones is a silly thing when you're standing on the highest hill in one ghetto (crime pulp) and tossing them at the already broken windows of another (sex pulp); but ya gotta admit—it's 2005, ferkrissake—the fucking 21 st century! The lid won't go back on the box, not even if you take the *Girls Gone Wild* commercials off regular television and slay every non-Republican you meet.



But El Jefe was not without support in his denial, and it seemed I was about to be targeted for further police attention....

X—,
'Sleaze Sex Paperbacks of the Sixties'
Jeepers.
Please post his email address so I can send him some spam.
Saleh,

—"x—" (Captain)

This is the way it works, of course. The detective digs up the information; the commissioner sets the policy; the captain puts it into effect. And criminals such as myself? Well, we do our job too, which is to say, anything we can that'll fuck with the aims of the po-lice. My own reaction was thus:

- 1) join this insane list under a non-recognizable name so I won't be immediately kicked off (my "alias" in the most traditional sense);
- 2) throw a few stones of my own at this "Captain" e-person, and if one should happen to stray to old virtual Jefe, so much the fucking better for his mendacity.

On my bookshelf staring me in the face as I conceived this was an Ernest K. Gann paperback, *The Trouble with Lazy Ethel* (1960). Ethel being a hurricane, and her laziness leading her to dwell in one spot, I got the idea that she would be a perfect metaphor for what I was about to do; all the way down to the estrogen I would now enclose as a weapon to counteract the testosterone-laced circle-jerk mentality in my sights. I became the lovely lass, myself, in other words. And posted, at eight in the morning, the following (I'm reprinting this from memory, which shall be explained):

Hey all,

Re *Sin-A-Rama*: Cool book—bought a copy last month. Lots of good info and artwork. Take a look before you send out the thought-police (!)

—"Lazy Ethel" (Detective/3 rd Grade)

Insightful? I hoped so. Any reaction would be a good one. But by evening...*the post had not only been deleted from the list, but the usual blog-note saying "deleted post" had been deleted, as well.*

Just as if I didn't exist.

Which, of course, I didn't.

Which not only says Hey, Jefe, the joke's on you, but also says something much deeper and sadder about police over-reaction and the "truth" behind law....

Well, I didn't stop there. The next day I made a follow-up post, just on the off chance that my previous day's reply hadn't taken for some digital reason:

quote:

'Sleaze Sex Paperbacks of the Sixties'?

Jeepers.

Please post his email address so I can send him some spam.

--

That's police corruption, isn't it?

What do you call he who rules the river betwixt NY and NJ?

When I posted this, I also discovered for certain that my previous post had in fact been deleted—for under my pseudonym, I was listed with two posts, and not merely the one. As you'll guess, when I went back two hours later, this post had been deleted, as well.

If this were *South Park*, I would no doubt go into some spiel here about learning a lesson today, yada yada. But that would be a positive, and this story doesn't end that way. In fact it doesn't end at all. No closure. You can still go to the website in question and see the thread; you can try to be Lazy Ethel yourself if you want. JFK's killers are still out there, even if they may be dead.

Oh, and we're still here, Mr. Hunter.

And we have your books.

- - -

Special thanks to Robert Elkin with help in locating Tobe Rinkler for this piece.

That is my principal objection to life, I think: It is too easy, when alive, to make perfectly horrible mistakes.

—Kurt Vonnegut, *Deadeye Dick*
