

Essays and
Other Diversions
celebrating the
lifestyle of the
IMMORTALS!

The IMMORAL Chronicles

Winter 1999
Volume II / No. 2

"Get your stinking
paws off me you
damned, dirty ape!"
—Charlton Heston

THIS ISSUE: Enough
Dawson's Creek features
to turn anyone to
MISANTHROPY!

Win a
Cameo in
Bob's
Film!

Chuck
Heston
takes the
Immortals
to Task!

Late Night
Feedings with
the Gordys!

Ski
Aspen
with
Homer!

Elope to
Middle Earth
with Randy
and Sadina!

Win a
Dream Date
with Ray!

Baking
with the
Brickman!

Globetrotting
with the
Delegeanes!

The IMMORTAL Chronicles

Volume II • Number 2
Winter 1998

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We welcome letters of comment, contributions, etc., from non-members. All articles and letters subject to ruthless editing, regardless of personal feelings, the relationship of the contributor to members of the Immortals, or what the author may have actually intended to say.

Why I Hate Immortals...

"More than any other time in history, mankind faces a crossroads. One path leads to despair and utter hopelessness. The other to total extinction. Let us pray we have the wisdom to choose correctly."

—Woody Allen

Despite the best efforts the *Teletubbies*, Rodgers & Hammerstein, Garth Brooks, and Leo Buscaglia, misanthropy has a proud place in Western culture and literature.

Now we're not talking about the kind of destructive, malicious misanthropy found in the abhorrent accomplishments of truly inhuman monsters like Hitler, Pol Pot, the Unabomber, or director Chris Columbus. (Elie Weisel himself has openly wondered about whether one can decently worship a God who has allowed both Auschwitz and *Mrs. Doubtfire* to exist.) No, we mean the work of creative, constructive misanthropes who through their firm belief in the very worst of the human heart have actually served to enlighten humankind about the mysteries of themselves as a people and society. We refer to people like H.L. Mencken, W.C. Fields, Ambrose "The Devil's Dictionary" Bierce, and, of course, the two Oscars: Oscar "I Can Stand Anything but Pain" Levant and Oscar "Spent All His Spare Time Thinking Up Clever Quips" Wilde.

So when this issue's theme — *misanthropy* — was chosen (randomly, we should add — literally pulled blindly out of an envelope full of themes by a fellow Immortal who shall remain anonymous, though his initials are David Scott Gordy), we thought, "Truly, here is a theme worthy of the attention of the razor-sharp wits of the Immortals!"

But then the columns started rolling in...

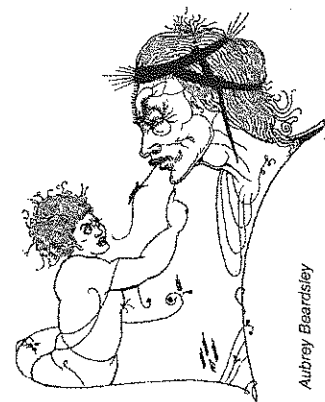
Why is everyone bringing up *lycanthropy*?! It's supposed to be about *misanthropy*, hatred of humanity and all its follies and horrors, not *lycanthropy*, the Lon Chaney, Jr.-esque, David Naughton-like need to tear your clothes off, grow hair and fangs, and run around after dark being chased by a bunch of Guinness-addled Scotsmen. (Not that there's anything wrong with that.)

Hmm, perhaps we seriously underestimated the vocabulary range of the group. After all, we never said you needed a minimum I.Q., or even a dictionary, to achieve elevation into the hallowed halls of Immortality.

Or, could it be that ye humble editors were just the victim(s) of a cruel joke? Some hoax perpetrated by unidentified Immortal coup-plotters in an attempt to hijack this issue's theme for his own twisted ends?

Naaah. That would be assuming the worst in people. Immortals are truthful, loyal, thrifty, courageous, and kind. We never met an Immortal we didn't like. Immortals *are* like warm puppies. Immortals *are* the wind beneath our wings. If you knew the Immortals like we knew the Immortals, you'd have to conclude it was sheer stupidity. ♦

— Ye Editors (always assuming the best in people)



Aubrey Beardsley

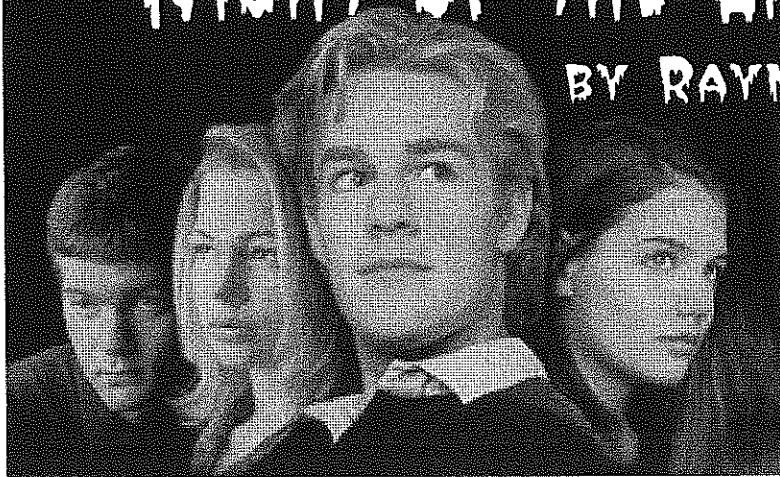
CONTENTS

Why I Hate Immortals	2
Night of the Living Unwed (by Raymond Marcus)	3
The Days and Hours of the Once and Future King (by David Gordy)	6
Baby Around Town (by Matthew Gordy)	7
Where Immortals Gather	8
My Friends and Neighbors	9
Portrait of the Artist (by Randy Reynaldo)	11
The Brickman Cometh (by Scott Brick)	13
Immortal Funnies	14
Sir Taterman's Shadow	15
Immortal Profiles featuring Scott Brick	16
Immortal Letters	17
Monthly Leash (by Terry Delegeane)	18
Ring-a-ding-DING, Baby!	19

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NIGHT OF THE LIVING UNWED!

BY RAYMOND MARCUS



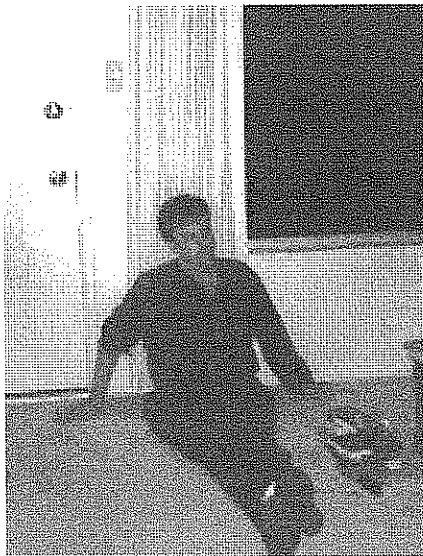
"Ben is so smug. Where does he get off kissing Joey openly in public — even in front of Dawson — when he doesn't deserve to touch her sneakers?"

I have entered the twilight zone. Now in the eleventh year of my doctoral program, I find that news of my ongoing status (*doctorus longevitus*) has permeated all corners of my life. Last month, for example, I went to the dentist's, as I am wont to do. It is the same dentist where both my parents go. I get the children's rate. After I'd clambered up into the chair and put my feet up, with a good view of the twin renditions of Raggedy Ann and Andy, the first thing the dental technician said to me was, "So, how's the dissertation coming?" And I'm like, "Do I know you, madam?" I'm sure she didn't mean any harm, but I've started to become paranoid.

I hear giggling behind me at the grocery store as I walk down the aisles, doing my shopping and minding my own business. When I whirl around there's no one's there. But then at the check-out counter the checkers all look at me funny, and sometimes drop my cucumbers on the floor. I mean, what am I, a lycanthrope or something? Nor am I safe in my sleep. In the rare, blessed dream when a woman and I are intimate, at the moment we approach the threshold of supreme happiness she suddenly bursts out laughing in my face. Ha-Ha! Ha-Ha!! Horrid dream! Nightmare! What recurring madness!

Speaking of madness, and something that I am sure you will all be glad to hear (except for dear Sadina, poor girl), I am now officially off the teen drama, *Dawson's Creek*. It was a January through November romance, my friends, but now it is over. Frankly, the kids have begun to annoy me. Oh, I still find some of the actors appealing (particularly the actress who plays "Joey," the illustrious Katie Holmes), but the blush of infatuation is off my cheek, and now I see the cynical machinations of teen Lotharios instead. Perhaps watching Randy's videos of the final season of the *Larry Sanders Show* gave me a dose of hard reality. Compared to *Seinfeld's* final seasons of mediocrity, *Larry Sanders* was pure gold, baby. Besides, I have a problem with high school kids who are getting more action than I am — and most of them are virgins. I tell you, it's disturbing. Rub my face in it, why don't you. Ill-mannered children.

On a more personal note, as I approach my 700th day of celibacy (March 28, 1999), my reputation lies in tatters. I used to think that the siege of



ABOVE: The author at a recent meeting of the Immortals' DAWSON'S CREEK fan club.

Leningrad was a big deal. That was 900 days. Now I'm thinking, 900 days? Hell, I can do that in my sleep! I can do 900 days before breakfast! Wake me up when you really wanna fight! And don't be throwing me any surprise parties, either, as the grim day approaches. This is a time of mourning.

Instead, I propose that we all gather together for a quiet evening of sherry and sad renditions of popular dramas. I shall play Hamlet, Bob the Tragic Muse, and Scott shall play "the Hole in the Wall," from "A Midsummer Night's Dream." At midnight my bachelor friends and I will dance the traditional "unwed dance," and wrend each other's garments. On second thought, perhaps we should invite our lady bachelor friends as well; an orgy might result.

Speaking of mourning, one morning in January I had my most bizarre encounter ever at a Red Cross donor center. This you will not believe. I should preface this by saying that I have been a regular Red Cross donor since 1986, from New York, to Indiana, to Washington, to California; I leave my blood where I go. Aye, buckets of it, my lads. Plenty for all! In the past, my conversations with the Red Cross

workers have been unfailingly professional and polite. But this time it was to be different.

It started when I was waiting to be called, and overheard one of the blood ladies talking about a cat she had found. This cat, apparently, has serious things wrong with it. Its hair falls out. It crawls around the room dragging its back legs, like the helpless tail of a kite. It also needs special medication in order to continue its existence, to the tune of five dollars a day. She was talking about her cat to the other women who worked there, and I took slight note as I read my volume of Proust. Ahh, Proust. That reminds me of a story. No. Where was I? Oh, yes. The eye, the evil eye! The terrible beating heart!

When the woman called my name we went back to the private booths. For those of you who have never given blood, they now ask you a series of highly personal questions, that began to grow in detail during the AIDS crisis in the 1980s. "Have you slept with another man, even once?" Define "sleep," I say, striking a defiant pose. "Have you ever had sex with another man?" No, you cad. And a plague upon your houses! "Have you ever visited Africa or the Caribbean?" Define "Africa," I say. "Have you

ever traded sex for money or drugs?" I've never paid for it in my life, say I, maintaining as much moral rectitude as I can muster. I fairly bluster. Then: "Have you ever engaged in private acts of masturbation?" Define "Caribbean," I say.

This time, however, in addition to all the questions that I now take in stride (I usually ask them about their own sex lives. "No, I haven't," I say. "How about you?") — this time, the woman asked me what I did for a living. "What do you do for a living?" Once again I felt the cold, thick tentacles of the twilight zone begin to wrap around my thin and wasted form, caressing my body with an air of unreality.

"My living?" I said. "Well, I'm a substitute teacher, but mostly I'm still in graduate school." The last phrase lingered in the air, like a fart in Windsor Palace. "Oh, what do you study?" she asked. "History," I proudly said. "American history."

The woman looked at me, brought her face close to mine, narrowing her eyes as she came. "How horrible," she said, gazing into my eyes, our noses almost touching. "Horrible, horrible..."

"What?" said I, taken aback. "Why do you say that?"

"What good is it?" she said. "All those people in the past don't matter anymore. All that matters are your grandparents and your parents, because they effect you."

"What about Jesus Christ?" I said. "He lived 2,000 years ago, and yet people read about him in the Bible everyday. Do you find any worth in that?"

"That's different," she said, after a moment's thought. "That still affects you."

"What about the Bible?" I asked. "Parts of it are thousands of years old. Some people consider it history, some people consider it myth. Do you find it relevant?"

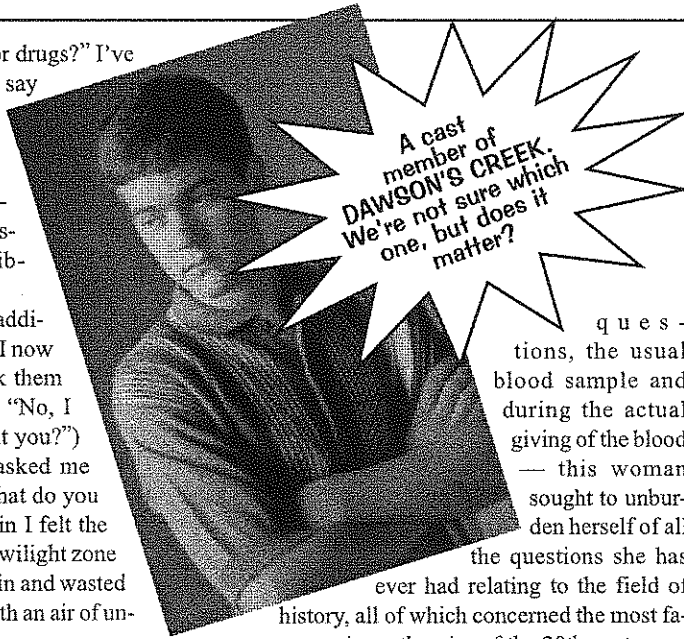
"What part of it is myth?" she asked me, worriedly.

"That's for each individual to decide for themselves," I said. "For some people, it's all myth, and for others, none of it is. But it is an ancient text, worth studying today. And what about Winston Churchill? What about Franklin Roosevelt? The policies that FDR established over 60 years ago are still effecting our lives, on a range of issues. Is he worth studying?"

"The policies are already there," she replied, a little uncertainly. "The policies are there now."

"You must find something in history that is interesting," I said, prodding deeper. "There must be something."

For the next half an hour — after the personal



A cast member of
DAWSON'S CREEK.
We're not sure which
one, but does it
matter?

questions, the usual blood sample and during the actual giving of the blood — this woman sought to unburden herself of all the questions she has ever had relating to the field of history, all of which concerned the most famous conspiracy theories of the 20th century.

"Do you believe in UFOs?" she asked.

"Yes," I said. "I believe in objects that have not been identified."

"I believe in UFOs," she said. "I believe that we are visited by aliens from outer space. Though they've never visited me," she added quickly. For some reason, people who sight UFOs are always dumb and drunk, which gives the rest of the UFO sightseer-wannabee crowd something of a public obstacle to overcome, for they feel they must distance themselves from their more disreputable brethren. "No, I've never been visited," she told me, nodding sagely.

"Perhaps they've visited you at night, in your backyard," I said. "Only you've been asleep."

She shot me a quick, troubled look.

"My cat would have said something if they had," she said. Then she looked up again, abruptly, careening off into a different subject entirely.

"Do you want a cat?" she asked, her tone becoming quite friendly.

Let's see, I thought to myself, is this the same cat who drags itself around the house like a hairy Quasimodo, leaving its fur in clumps as it goes?

"No, thank you," I replied, regretfully. "I'm allergic to cats." Which is true. She then wanted to know what I thought about the Kennedy assassination (using the Oliver Stone film as her text, I gathered from her remarks), the murder of Marilyn Monroe (by Bobby Kennedy, of course), then Bobby's assassination, the assassination of Martin Luther King, and finally the death of Diana.

"They murdered Diana," she told me.

"Who did?" I asked.

"The British secret service," she said. "They didn't want her marrying an Arab."

"I'm not sure if they had plans to marry," I said. "I think they were only dating."

Then she wanted to know about the Federal Reserve.

"What do you know about the Federal Reserve?" she asked. "Can they be trusted?"

"Well, I suppose," I said. "They have a fairly good reputation. Why do you ask?"

"Have you ever heard that the Federal Reserve is controlled by the Trilateral Commission, the Rothschilds, and the Bildenbergers?" she asked me almost coyly.

Good God, I thought. A conspiracy-laden anti-Semite is taking blood from my arm.

"The Rothschilds and the who?" I asked, knitting my brow.

"Bildenbergers," she whispered, again bringing her face close to mine. Images of hooknosed figures, with striped pants and top hats, greedily rubbing their palms, seemed to emerge from the shadows of our quiet room of blood.

"I think that's nonsense," I told her. "There's no basis for it whatsoever."

Suddenly she looked guilty. The rest of the room had fallen silent, as people quietly gave their blood, and others quietly took it. The woman asked me in a soft tone: "I'm not upsetting you, am I? I'm not supposed to upset the donors." I assured her I was not easily upset.

"But you tell me there's no point to history," I said, "and yet all you've talked about for the last 30 minutes are historical-related questions."

"That's different," she said, offering another proviso that negates the meaning of history. "That's all recent history. It still has an effect, if it makes people think bad about their government."

The session came to an end. But she left me with one last thought: "What's the point in studying history? The world will end in 2012."

Nor is my blood my only bodily concern these days. My hearing impairment, I believe, is growing worse. Oh, I know some of you didn't know I have an impairment; I hide it well. Usually when we're all together and you guys are all yabbing a mile a minute, and one of you says something and we all laugh, chances are I didn't hear you at all. Sorry, not a clue. Or when one of you says something to me, and I smile and nod my head, and you lean back and smile in return . . . forget about it. Not a chance. Like I said, I hide it well. I first had my ears checked ten years ago, and they couldn't find anything wrong. But I am sure it's grown worse.

What makes it worse is that when you're a high school teacher, hearing is rather important, and students are fidgety. Fidgety by nature. By God, they are fidgety and restless! When I'm subbing and the students are bent quietly over a test, the temporary silence that fills the space is like the sound of angels sighing. But I've found increasingly that in group discussions in my teacher ed course, and when I'm subbing at the private school, often I don't hear something from someone who's just a few feet away. It's the background noise that covers it up, interferes with the

signals in my brain.

Recently my Mom went to the hearing doctor to get her hearing checked out, and she has finally ordered a hearing aid. Mom will be 77 this summer, and I'm 36. But by the next New Year's party, you might find me sporting an aid myself. Either that or one of those little trumpets that old guys used to put up to their ears in cartoons. "What's that, sonny? The American Civil what? Eh?" I'm in my 30s and already my body is starting to go. And just seven years ago I was in my 20s! It's absurd.

I actually had my ears checked yesterday, and the technician and I ran through a battery of tests. She led me into a small soundproof booth, covered my ears with headphones, left the room, and began speaking into a small microphone, as she looked at me through a glass window.

"Ballpark . . . ice cream . . .," she whispered, as her voice came faintly to my ears. Duly I repeated her.

"Hot dog . . . machete . . . Rosebud," she said.

The pace continued, picking up.

"Skullcap . . . death shroud . . . trench warfare and mustard gas."

The little booth grew cold.

"Fingernails . . . pitchfork . . . cries in the night."

I looked at her sharply through the window. "Cries in the night?" I said.

"What?" she said.

"You just said 'cries in the night,'" I said, staring at her through the glass.

"No, I didn't, I said, 'crisis . . . ignite.'"

"Oh," I said. She made a notation on her pad. "Fingernails, fingernails, cries in the night...."

The test droned on into the evening.

Disconcertingly, when it was over, she told me that my hearing was fine. "Sure, it's fine when I hear sounds in isolation," I said. "It's when there's a background noise that I start losing it."

She seemed a little distracted. "Are you talking to me?" she said.

"Yes," I said, "it's background noise that I have a problem with. What do I do about that?"

"Try and control your environment," she said. "If you're in a crowded restaurant, ask to be seated somewhere off to the side, where it isn't so noisy. In a classroom, if you don't hear a student, ask them all to quiet down, and then ask the student to repeat himself. Remember, you are in control. At a party, try and sequester yourself with the woman in a quiet corner. The mood must

be intimate. When the moment seems right, put your hand on her thigh."

"Which thigh?" I said. "It has been so long. Do they still have thighs?"

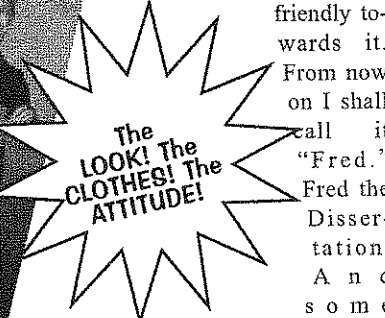
"Put your hand on her thigh, like this," she said, taking my hand. "You must touch her gently, intimately. Kiss her . . . like this. . . . Do not be afraid."

"It has been so long," I said. "It is so very long."

"Come," she said. "Let us return to the little dark booth."

Overall, I am very busy these days, what with my two education courses at Cal Poly Pomona, my second economics course at Pasadena City College, occasional substitute teaching, observing at various schools, and fighting the good fight with the nemesis of my existence, the ol' dissertation. Indeed, the dissertation has now been

with me for so long that I've decided to give it a name, to make me feel more friendly towards it.



From now on I shall call it "Fred."

Fred the Dissertation.

And some

day, God willing, I will pound Fred's face into the dirt from which he came. I feel better already.

On a side note, Ben is so smug. Where does he get off kissing Joey openly in public — even in front of Dawson — when he doesn't deserve to touch her sneakers? He seems so sensitive, but he is weak, damn you, weak; he and Joey mean nothing to each other. And yet their romance continues! How maddening! Is there no justice in this world? For how many seasons must I be subjected to this charade?!

Speaking of sneakers, I am now attached to five different schools or universities: I'm getting my doctorate from Indiana University; I'm in the teacher credential program at Cal Poly Pomona; I'm taking my economics course at Pasadena City College (that's three tuitions a quarter, though it still comes to less than \$850/quarter); I sub at Pasadena's Polytechnic School; and I have lending privileges at Cal Tech's main library, through which I order articles, theses, and secondary sources. In addition, this February I began observing classes in three different public schools, in Glendale, Altadena, Arcadia, and soon maybe in Pasadena.

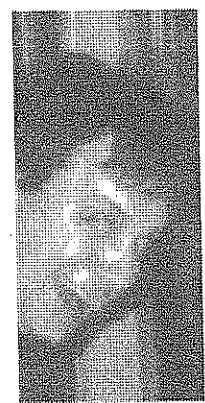
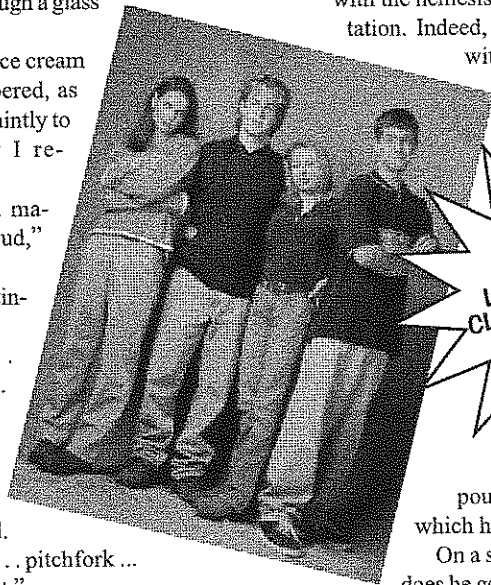
I've had so much education that it's coming out of my ears. In the meantime, while I'm wrapping things up, if any of you feels some need for information, whatever it happens to be, please

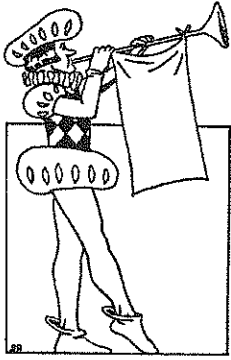
consult me, and I will offer my opinion. By no means act before you receive my advice! I shall look on it as performing an act of public service.

Speaking of public service, could you believe it when Joey told Dawson — a boy whom she has loved all her life, as we all well know, and whom she loves desperately still — that they should no longer be together, because she had to FREE herself from her obsession with him? That she had to "claim" a life for herself? God, how astoundingly selfish! When love like that, so long in coming and so, so right, is frustrated through the idiocies of puerile self-indulgence, it drives me insane. Had it not been for that one episode in October, they would be together still! Even as we speak! Even as you read these lines! Oh, I've done with it.

I am also applying now to Occidental College's teacher education program, since the program at Cal Poly has proved such a disappointment. All my life I've heard that teacher ed classes are a waste of time, but my current program defies reality. Last week the professor in my course in educational psychology (at least, that is the putative topic) spent seven minutes performing a little skit for us by himself, as he assumed speaking roles for four of the middle-aged students in our class, pretending that they were all children, and telling us why it is difficult to judge students' appreciation — using as an example Monet's "Water Lilies." I mean, what the hell does it MATTER whether or not it's difficult to grade a student's "appreciation"? You want them to appreciate what you're presenting, but you don't GRADE them on it! And he kept giggling during his presentation, while half the class stared at him in dumb amazement. I tell you, I was ready to slug him. So I hope I'm accepted to Occidental's program. Otherwise it will be a grim next year and a half.

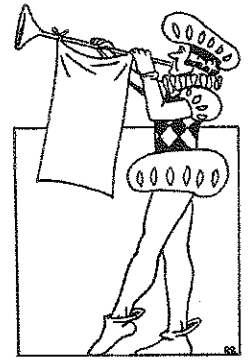
Finally, what's the deal with Jen? First she was the overrated blonde goddess (how I despised her insouciance!) Then she was the fallen woman, a veritable Whore of Babylon. Now she's a lovestruck kid, wanting Dawson so much after she, too, initially turned him down. Don't they see that they're torturing the boy? Can a man get his hopes up with such regularity, only to have them systematically destroyed when he gets too close to paradise? When Icarus flew too close to the sun, he fell, and there an end. But to rise up, a phoenix from the ashes, to once again aspire to the heights of love that only untainted innocence can reach, and once more be burned, and fall, and burn again? It is torture, weekly torture! Oh, I've done with it. ♦





THE DAYS AND HOURS OF THE ONCE AND FUTURE KING

a fairy tale by David of Gordy



Once upon a time, in the kingdom of Sea View in the palace of Cool Ledge, young King Matthew the Munificent, Lord of the Fiefdoms of Fisher and Price, Suzerain of Similac, Emperor of Enfamil, Liege of Lactation, ruled with wise decree and an iron mitten.

The King lay asleep in the royal bed, a massive contrivance with sturdy polished mahogany posts a veritable twenty feet tall, draped with curtains trimmed with ermine, possessed of sheets which were the labor of hundreds of thousands of silkworms. Yet the King was often restless, the weighty matters of state troubling his thoughts. He woke often in the night, crying to his servants for nectar or to massage the royal belly.

As the gamekeeper's rooster, the fierce black one with red coxcomb, crowed, King Matthew awoke and summoned his trusted servants, Ma and Da, with a great bellow, a sound so fearsome, that the animals in the fields, the birds of the air and the serfs in the serf system took notice. He saw his servants come and it was good. Ma and Da loved the young King, and were entirely devoted to his health and welfare. As always, they had eagerly rushed from their own beds to meet the kingly call.

Said the King, "Fetch me my royal nectar," and with that they rushed to the cookery, where a great cauldron, fires eternally stoked, warmed the King's food. Ma served the nectar to His Majesty in a wondrous glass goblet, where the heavenly liquid flowed through the thinnest of membranes so as not to irritate the royal mouth. He drank lustily of the goblet's contents, as Da placed a cloth of finest brocade placed over the King's shoulders to protect the royal garments. Any misplaced drop staining the royal breastplate would cause a very regal tantrum.

The goblet was drained in less time than the beat of a dragonfly's wing. "We are sated" the King announced, and accompanied his proclamation with a belch loud enough to be heard in seven counties and across the wide ocean. Nectar ran down his chin. Da dabbed at it lightly with a damask handkerchief. The King moved the royal lip to accommodate. Then as if

out of the very gates of Hell, a sulfurous odor permeated the room, foul enough to fell every mighty oak in the forest.

Da and Ma stood rigidly at attention, understanding all too well the next task at hand.

"We must be changed and dressed, and our toiletries attended to." As did Hercules clean the rank stables of Augeus, so Ma and Da labored mightily each and every day, for the King's excretions were many and fragrant, and his water fast and frequent. His

undergarments, of finest silk, were carefully removed with silver tongs and placed into a specially designed urn, decorated with images of the four winds, and representations of the seasons. The urn was taken to the laundresses Dreft and Tide, who labored night and day until the undergarments

were as white as the driven snow, and as soft as the King's posterior.

It should be known that, from time to time, the King would have great pain from gastric distress, and would cry a cry so loud that the trees themselves shook free their leaves. On such occasions Ma and Da and ten loyal retainers would have to take hold of the royal legs, push them back and forth, working free great gales of regal wind, enough to flatten farmhouses yon seven leagues off. Then as quickly as the pain would arrive, it would depart, and the King would breathe a kingly sigh, and smile a relieved smile, and the royal head would fall back in sleep against the back of the throne, for a short but necessary respite.

As this day was blessedly free of such kingly explosions, the King was wholeheartedly ready

for his exercise, and in the royal gymnasium, his muscles were flexed, and manipulated by trainers, the strongest brutes in the kingdom. He threw golden medicine balls, and pulled springs, and performed push-ups and sit-ups and various and sundry other maneuvers designed to keep the royal muscles firm and supple.

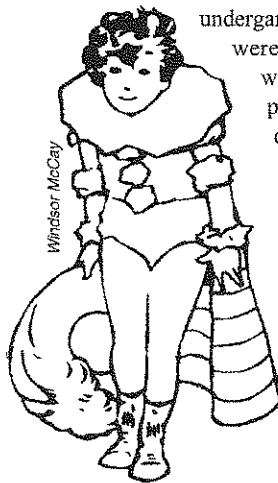
Ma and Da then bathed the King, immersing him in rosewater, garnished with petals of jasmine. His face and body shone as they were burnished with costly oils and perfumes, precious unguents and emollients from lands across the Eastern Ocean. His Majesty was dressed anew in fresh clothes, raiments of gold cloth, threaded with silver, rich with velvet and lace. He was shod with the finest calfskin, lined with sable to cushion the royal toes.

Then, at the noontime, King Matthew toured the kingdom in the royal chariot, a magnificent coach decorated with fine filigree, possessed of four matched snow-white horses, driven by liveried coachmen. Da and Ma walked alongside should the King have need of them.

The Young Monarch took little interest in the particulars of his realm. He sat on pillows stuffed with finest eiderdown, and greeted passing subjects with a bored royal wave or perhaps merely a glance in their direction. Subjects prostrated themselves at even the slightest reception of the royal presence.

King Matthew wore a cap of finest embroidery for his skin was fair and delicate and subject to the depredations of the sun. He regarded himself in a polished silver mirror given to him by Da, and smiled at what he did see, for he was a handsome king, though perhaps too proud and vain of appearance, possessed as he was of a goodly amount of fine brown hair, large hazel eyes, long dark lashes, and full, almost womanly, lips, which he pursed with contentment.

Upon his return to the palace, the King called upon his court jesters to amuse him, who played upon magical instruments that produce sweet music at the merest touch, and acted in dumbshows of great wit and playful aspect, and then Da told tales of comic exaggeration and

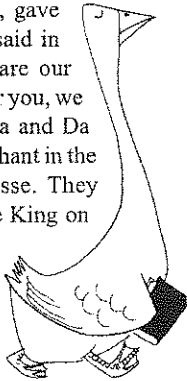


Windsor McCay

adventuresome derring-do, which provided His Majesty much amusement. All the while, a great pet lion of considerable mane, which the King was wont to lead around by a silver leash and an emerald studded collar, purred a loud purr, licked His Majesty's face, and curled up at his feet.

In the afternoon, it was the King's custom to receive visitors of state from all the neighboring realms, including his majestic peers, the fair Princesses Emily and Susannah of Culveria, and Jeremy and Johmetta, joint rulers of the Long Beach. He would discuss particular matters of statecraft, novel branches of learning, and current modes of entertainment with the notables of all the near lands, among them Count Robert the Sparky, Sultan Randi and Sultana Sadina of Koman, Grand High Sergeant Johnthomas and Lady Stephanie of Olde Parker Centre, Baron Brick of Rigel Seven, Earl Homer of the wide Glen Dale, Marquis Triant and Marquess Donna of Bongo, the Darks of Luton-up-the-Hill, and His Pedantic Personage Raymond of Champaign and Urbana, Ph.D., B.A., G.E.D., L.L. Bean, B.A.C.K. in the U.S.S.R.

Finally, when the day fell to a close, the King's musicians were summoned, all manner of melodious sounds emanating from their instruments, to accompany Ma as she sang, for she possessed the finest voice in the kingdom. It was the nightly ritual for Ma to chant pure, soothing songs that escorted the king into sleep's soft arms. But on this evening, a wondrous thing did happen. The King, just before sleep enfolded him, gave Ma and Da a royal smile and said in the most genuine way, "You are our favorite people. If it were not for you, we would be very sad indeed." Ma and Da were made richer than any merchant in the kingdom by this kingly largesse. They smiled and wept and kissed the King on the cheek, and bade him a good night. And Ma and Da and King Matthew lived happily ever after, or at least until the King began to grow the royal teeth. ♦

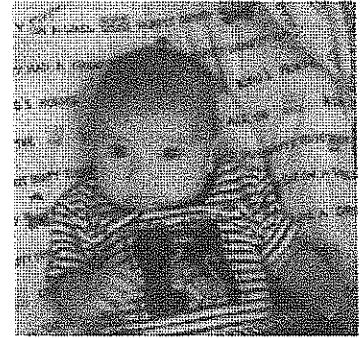


Top Ten Signs that You're a Lycanthrope:

10. You're burying Fatburgers in the backyard.
9. Suddenly, Gillette Sensor just doesn't cut it.
8. David Naughton poster in your bedroom.
7. Urine trail surrounding your office cubicle.
6. Have memorized all the lyrics to "Blue Moon."
5. Unable to floss away deer sinew.
4. "Rush is Right" bumper sticker (oops, that's "misanthrope").
3. Toilet water? Don't mind if I do!
2. Can now howl in C Flat.
1. You get a woody watching "Lady and the Tramp."

Baby Around Town

by Matthew Gordy



IMMORTAL CHRONICLES guest columnist Matthew Gordy provides his knowing insights and trenchant commentary on the foibles and follies of today's world...

It's 1999 already. Who'd have believed that in twelve months it will be 2000. The changing of the year always puts me in a reflective mood. It's the philosopher in me, I guess:

Baby New Year: I have always loved that kid . . .

For my money, there's nothing like Similac to give you that kick in the diapers you need in the morning . . .

Adam Sandler: I just don't get it . . .

I'd like to be able to hold my head up without support, but it's not the big problem you'd think it is . . .

Cry if you must, but cooing will get you what you want a lot faster . . .

Sleep is underrated . . .

I miss Mike Nichols and Elaine May . . .

Car seats are OK, but I wish they would provide a beverage

Have you ever noticed that Vanna White's head is extremely large. Absolutely bulbous...

I take a dump where and when I want to take a dump, and I'm not ashamed of it . . .

Winnie the Pooh is the consummate entertainer. And it's not just me that says it . . .

If I was banished to a desert island, and could only bring one toy, it would have to be the stuffed lion. . .

Baby wipes are for sissies . . .

Urine is an unpredictable mistress. Once the Huggies are off, I'm just not responsible . . .

A thumb never tastes as sweet as when it's after a good solid burp . . .

Ally McBeal is too thin. And it's not just me that says it . . .

My parents have very high-pitched voices. I hope it's not hereditary . . .

I wouldn't mind being placed on my stomach, if it weren't for the chafing . . .

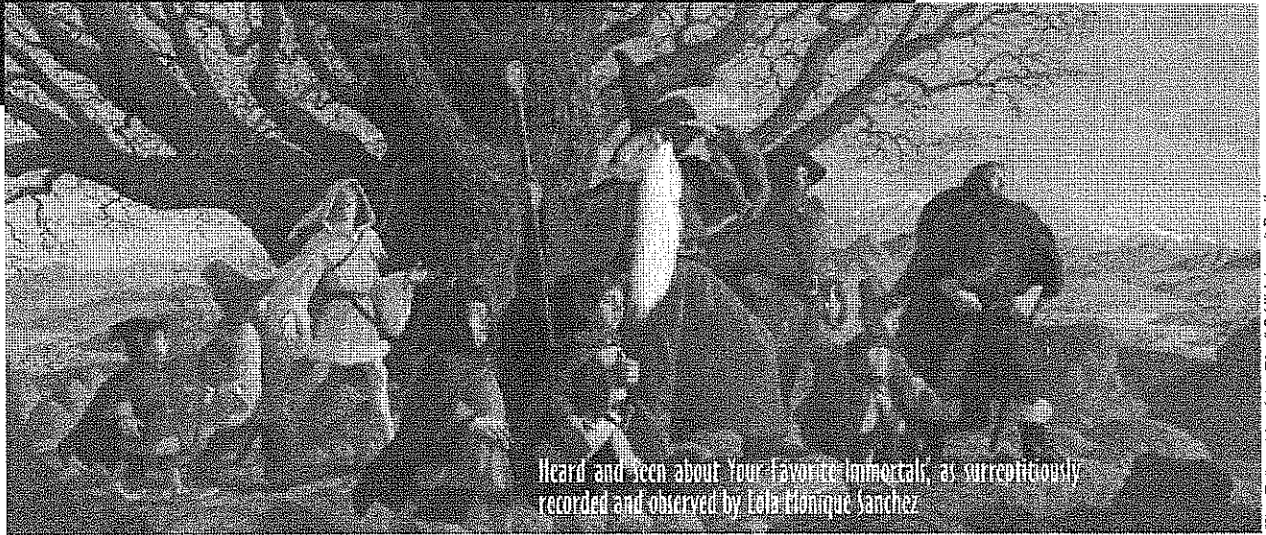
Vaccinations are no picnic. But nasal aspirators, don't get me started . . .

Call me corny, but that peek-a-boo thing has me busting a gut every time. Even when I know it's coming . . .

That's all from yours truly this time around. See you in the baby food aisle. ♦

Where Immortals Gather...

RIGHT: A typical Saturday morning for the Immortals as they quest for a baseball diamond bereft of Orcs, Trolls and Eurotrash soccer players.



Heard and seen about your favorite Immortals, as surreptitiously recorded and observed by Lola Monique Sanchez

The Fellowship of the Ring © Hildebrandt Brothers

Well, another six months have simply *flown* and I am once away called away from my normal duties as PR flak to the stars (latest clients: Tonya Harding, NMBLA, Joey Heatherton) to once again chronicle the comings and goings of that group of rascally ne'er do wells, the Immortals...

I Know What You Wore Last Night. Nightcrawler *Raymond Marcus* has been spotted wearing his spiffy new *Dawson's Creek* t-shirt (a gift from R. Reynaldo in one of his more experimental phases) at various hotspots around town, raising the jaded eyebrows of the hipster residents of L.A. — it seems that Ray has found the one style choice that's more revolting than triple lip piercings.

Some may sneer, but Monique says, keep it up, Taterman! Someone's got to put a scare into the straights!

A Geek in New York. Nerd scribe par-excellance and (still) master thespian *Scott Brick* has been spotted on the Right Coast taking meetings and availing himself of the very best that *le pomme grande* has to offer. Was that Scott we saw at Tribeca breaking *focaccia* with Bobby De Niro, Spike Lee, and Mira Sorvino (still pining for old Quentin T. we're told...guess he kind of went medieval on the poor girl's heart...)? Probably not. But we do have it on good authority that Scott was seen wearing his X (for X-men, natch!) cap in the company of Ralph Macchio. Of course, we're *not* talking about the fallen star of the *Karate Kid* and *My Cousin Vinny*, but one better known as the writer of innumerable pieces of Marvel-zombie fodder. (Which Ralph Macchio would have impressed you more? The correct

answer: NEITHER!)

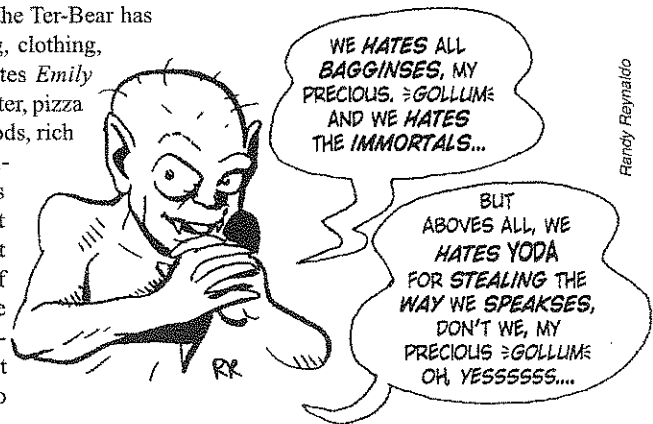
Junkets, Junkets, Junkets. *Homer Tom* is still living the life of Riley (and when Riley hears, won't he be upset!) Seems every time we talk to ol' Homey he's off skiing somewhere with tanning butter babes or fraternizing with ancient astronauts (this is not a reference to *Chariots of the Gods* but to Buzz Aldrin, who, we are assured, was *only a small baby* when the Pyramids first opened). Last we heard, the Tom-ster was enrolled on a special junket to the top of K-2 with a guest list that includes Delta Burke, Rev. Robert Schuller, and Puff Daddy. Don't forget those oxygen tanks!

Bachelor Father. With globetrotting spouse *Donna Johnson Deleageane* away performing good works of Christian charity in Points East (and we mean *FAR* East), un-puffed daddy, *Terry* ("Don't call me Triant!") *Deleageane* has been left holding the parental bag. Ever the soul of responsibility and the avatar of organization, we have it on good authority that the Ter-Bear has been doing just fine in feeding, clothing, and cleaning little Immortalettes *Emily* and *Susan*. After all, peanut butter, pizza and ice cream are nutritious foods, rich in calories — more than sufficient to keep the daughters *Deleageane* running for hours at a time. And who's to say that *Sandman* and the works of James Ellroy aren't appropriate bedtime reading for pre-schoolers! Not I.... (Say what you will, but Dr. Seuss is so

played. And the Brothers Grimm are just a couple of misogynist killjoys....)

At Home with the Gordys. And *new* daddy and mommy, *Dave and Lois Gordy*, are busy enjoying their salad days of domestic bliss in the company of Immortal-in-training *Matthew*. Happiness, of course, is anathema to gossip columnists, but don't worry, little Monique's hoping to take the next solstice off, and this summer's guest columnist *just may* be Winchell-Wannabe Matt Drudge, and since the Gordys are die-hard liberals and Clinton-sympy, we're sure he'll come up with something fascinatingly scurrilous that we won't have to retract for several weeks...

The Little Folke of Culver City. Meanwhile, it's hobbits, hobbits, hobbits, and the occasional Sauron Superman at the home of cartoonist-cum-bureaucrat *Randy Reynaldo*. Yes, the Frodo-Favoring-Filipino-American has gone into his tri-annual Tolkien torpor (just check out this ish's contribution from the fabulous Randster!) Decid-



WE HATES ALL BAGGINSSES, MY PRECIOUS. ≧GOLLUM≧ AND WE HATES THE IMMORTALS...

BUT ABOVE ALL, WE HATES YODA FOR STEALING THE WAY WE SPEAKSES, DON'T WE, MY PRECIOUS ≧GOLLUM≧ OH, YESSSSSS....

Randy Reynaldo

edly Non-Frodo-favoring-fiancee-emeritus *Dr. Sadina Rothspan* has been taking it all with her usual good humor, except for one nasty incident when she referred to the diminutive residents of Middle Earth as "midgets."

"But do midgets have hairy feet?" asked Randy, his face turning a unfamiliar shade of mauve. "Do midgets live in tiny little cottages and smials?! Do *midgets* retrieve lost magic rings? No, midgets become movie extras — *hobbits save worlds!*"

Needless to say, the good doctor spent *that* night in the Orc house!

Me American Girl, I Bored. Meanwhile, Hollywood *Bob Westal* has been indulging in a bit of phase of his own, obsessing over the music of Burt Bacharach. Playing anyone who'll listen his recording of Jerry Orbach singing the title song of 1960s Broadway hit, *Promises, Promises*. Yes, Bob, it's very impressive that it's Jerry Orbach singing. Isn't it absolutely amazing that he can really sing and that he's *not* a New York city detective?!

And, sorry, Bob, there really are no hidden messages in "Me Japanese Boy, I Love You" or "Do You Know the Way to San Jose," although we agree that L.A. is just a great big freeway. Bob, if you see me walking down the street, *please* walk on by!

Wambaugh, Thank You Ma'am or Lunch on the Beat. The ever mysterious desk officer *J.T. Thomas* of the L.A.P.D., has been rumored to be taking a little time off from protecting and serving the sorry likes of you and me to be meeting with filmmaker John Singleton (*Boyz in the Hood* and a bunch of movies we never got around to seeing) regarding the storyline for a possible film, not the *Last Temptation of Uncle Ogan*, but an actual film based on the life story of the first African-American member of the L.A.P.D. killed in the line of duty. Really. Our congrats to J.T. for managing to hold down a *real* job while also making real Hollywood inroads all *without even trying*.

And here's a suggestion: if your flick does get the magic green light from on high, consider throwing your support to resident Immortal thesp supreme Scott Brick for the leading roll. Sure, Scott is a bit, shall we say, pigment-challenged for the part (actually *extremely* pigment challenged), but for a WASP he is somewhat, er, *down* or something. He is, definitely, dope (okay, dopey, but it's only one letter) And don't leave out ol' Triant Delegeane either for one of his patented character bits. The acting world misses the T-man.. and he's not white at all, he's *Greek!* ♦

Lola Monique Sanchez is the former gossip columnist for **FANGORIA** and resides over the *Melrose Golden Apple* store with her dog, *Keanu*.

My Friends and Neighbors

by
**Bob
Westal**

In preparation for this article, I'd meant to see *Your Friends and Neighbors*. From what I've heard of the movie, it seems highly relevant to this issue's theme. But it left it's final resting spot at the friendly Fairfax Theater last night. So, you're spared the movie review.

Nevertheless, the phrase "friends and neighbors" seems strangely salient, because, at least here in L.A. ("Loads of Alienation"), the two categories have become entirely distinct. We have friends, determined by such factors as schools, interests, "affinity groups," and the like. And we have neighbors, who live near us and who, if we're friendly types, we deign to say "hi" to, but hardly a word more.

Occasionally, we'll do small favors based on convenience, feed each other's cats and pick up each other's newspapers while we're on short vacations (assuming we're reasonably confident that our neighbors are not drug-addicted kleptomaniacs or serial feline tormentors). If there's an earthquake or a massive "civil disturbance," we might temporarily bond with our neighbors as we commiserate on what we were doing when the cataclysm struck and maybe temporarily band together for purposes of looting and begging for food and water. But that's it.

On the other hand, we might go to an AA meeting or group therapy and tell several total strangers about our near-death experience caused by auto-erotic strangulation. ("I saw a light up ahead as I passed through the tunnel and I realized this was to be my guiding spirit in the Other World, it was Bob Guccione..."). We may call up talk radio and declare ourselves to have been pen-pal confidantes with John Wayne Gacy ("We used to trade clown pictures and discuss our respective near death experiences from auto-erotic strangulation"). But no such confidences are traded with our neighbors. Our neighbors are, literally, lucky to get the time of day from us. And I'm as guilty as anyone. In fact, when queried by my neighbors, I often pretend not to know the time out of sheer spite.

And then there's the fact that few of us bother to really explore our neighborhood, let alone meet our neighbors. With such distractions as demon-T.V., demon computer games, not to mention demon laundry, demon cooking, and demon dishwashing (and for those of us who spend too much time with our Ouija boards, demon-demons) we have little time to learn anything about the places we actually live in. Also, this being Los Angeles, we all have another excuse, the demon-automobile, which may allow us to explore parts of town we *don't* live in, but also prevents us from ever really seeing much beyond a one or two block radius of our living quarters.

Heroic character that I am, I have tried to break through this wall of alienation. After all, part of the reason I moved to Hollywood was that I could actually *walk* to some interesting places and maybe even meet some interesting neighbors.

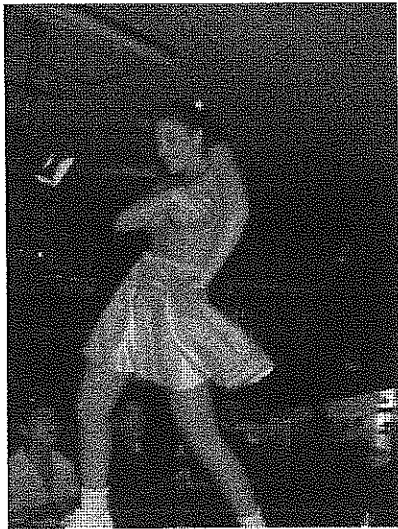
So, having now walked several times to the Chinese Theater and environs and found it interesting but hardly a place to meet any neighbors, since everyone there seems to be either from Taipei, Bavaria, or Barstow, I decide to set off in other directions.

I start, logically enough it seems to me, at a cozy local establishment called "The Seventh Veil" — among Hollywood's best known purveyors of disrobed entertainment. I take note of two things: the surprising number of men who appear to be there with their girlfriends (actually, I don't know for a fact that these women are actually the guys' girlfriends, of course, but the romantic in me would like this think this isn't a first date). I am relieved to note, however, that naked women in Hollywood look remarkably similar to naked women in other parts of town, only with more piercings in less appropriate places.

(The friendly and efficient staff of the Seventh Veil bring to mind the fact that, even in Hollywood, a few of us have not completely forgotten the old ways of the neighborhood. At night one



often sees young women just hanging around, shooting the breeze, or just strolling in the balmy evening air, occasionally giving a passing car a friendly wave. I often wonder why one only sees women doing this in my neighborhood...although it appears that men have not entirely forgotten the rituals of the old neighborhood as well. Strangely, all of these men seem to be gathering a couple of blocks south on Santa Monica Boulevard. One wonders why they seem to be avoiding the company of the young women of Hollywood and Sunset. Maybe some of them would hit it off, maybe go to Pop's for a malt... Obviously, the guys are intimidated. Must be the stiletto heels.)



ABOVE: Bob's solution to urban alienation: three strategically placed dollars!

In further search of neighborliness, I considered checking out some of my local bars. It doesn't help that so many bars, both old, famous and infamous, are located in my area that I'd have to be a bit of an alky to visit a significant percentage of them. So, I take the lazy man's approach to barhopping and go to the one bar located within easy walking distance (though, oddly, I never actually walked there since I just happened to be in my car at the time). That bar happens to be the Lava Lounge. Located in a decrepit mini-mall, it's actually pretty cool if you don't mind paying a small cover charge for the privilege of buying six dollar well drinks. Ambience is everything in this joint. As lounges go, it's pretty loungey.

I have a drink, look around at the crowd of hipsters and feel a sort of joyful disdain. Everyone seems mighty unneighborly. They're their with their friends. No reason to talk with any new people. Especially not this guy who's just there drinking and gawking and hoping people mistake him for just another alcoholic. That's good, because of the whole misanthropy theme-thing.

Later, I decide to give the bar thing just one more chance. I go to the Martini Lounge (where, perversely, I order a Black Russian, also six bucks) to check out a (mediocre) new band. I feel just a little bit old, until I spot the requisite 50 year old guys with the leather jackets and goat-ees. One geezer in particular resembles a split-gene clone of Kelsey Grammar and Sylvester Stallone. Oddly, I find this reassuring, if terrifying beyond words.

Next on my list of places to attempt an escape from urban isolation are coffee houses. The sudden appearance several years back of this once-

bohemian phenomenon was noted by one writer as being in response to a kind of critical mass in our L.A.'s alienation quotient. I don't know if they've helped, but, Starbucks notwithstanding, I like having them around. So, of course, I must explore the coffee houses in my vicinity. And since they are fewer than bars, and with all that wonderful, wonderful caffeine (*aka*, the staff of life, the stuff that dreams are made of), I have little trouble visiting all of them. Would that there was more worth visiting....

My explorations start with some promise. I visit a place called the Conservatory about four short blocks due east, located next door to the site of the then-unopened restored Egyptian Theater (home to — be still my film geek's heart — the new American Cinematheque). At first I actually become something of a regular, stopping by a couple of times a week. It's a nice little place. Cozy. Decent

music playing on the stereo. Still, they seemed to be having problems, the tourist traffic going by on Hollywood Blvd. perhaps not sufficient to sustain the business. (Figures, Folgers is good enough for the likes of them!) I resolve to support it. They'll do fine (and stay open late enough to please me), I reason, once the Cinematheque opens. (If you're going to be watching a new Uruguayan discovery detailing the lives and loves of a 14-year old plow boy and his mule, you need at least two shots of espresso.) But my resolve thins. *It's a whole three blocks away. They close too early. I can't figure out how to turn off the italics on my word processor....*

Then, an Internet cafe promised to open a mere half block from me, I reset my sites. Filled with anticipation, I await it's opening. Soon enough, it does.



Disappointment, thou art my copilot.

No sooner do I enter the confines of this clean, too well-lit, place than I hear the *THUMPA-THUMPA-THUMP* of the dance club next door (it's obviously technotrance-urban dub-acid-irritate-the-fuck-out-of-anyone-passing-by-music night). I might as well be in the club. The thumping comes through so clearly I already feel as if I'm being wordlessly rejected by every woman within a 30 yard radius while listening to joyless music, offering only booming bass and endless repetition. (Oh take me, gods of Curdmugeonhood, for I am already yours!)

Later visits to the Internet coffee house prove less noisome, but the place just isn't right for working or hanging out in. Too bright, and the music they play *by choice* also tends toward the techno. Nice baseball caps, though. I buy one and resolve never to return. It's back to the Conservatory for me. *Sigh.*

* * * * *

At this point, you're probably saying, "C'mon. If Bob really wants to break through the wall of alienation that threatens to engulf us all (well, actually Bob more than most of us, thanks be to Jehovah!), he needs to do more than consume a few beverages away from home. He needs to join a Synagogue, Ashram or Coven; take a class on Neuro-Linguistic-Programming; become a Big Brother; perhaps take a job in the growing field of industrial espionage; maybe join the Armenian Mafia."

You're right, of course. In fact, I'm considering changing my last name to "Westalian" and I've already whipped my resume into shape. It's just a matter of time before the good folks at Justice International give me a number and take away my name!

In the meantime, I shall continue to explore the (for now) seedy environs of Hollywood, even as it inches towards its dream of becoming Times Square West. And, you know, the next time someone in my building asks for the time of day, by God, I'll give it to them...correctly. ♦

NEXT ISSUE:
52K: THE IMMORTALS TACKLE THE NEW MILLENIUM!

Portrait of the Artist

by R.J.R. Reynaldo

in
The Fell
Misanthropel!

հայրն
ստեղծեց
պղծոյս

SINCE I AM CURRENTLY RE-READING J.R.R. TOLKIEN'S LORD OF THE RINGS, I THOUGHT I'D LET THE FRIENDLY DENIZENS OF MIDDLE EARTH SPEAK ABOUT THIS ISSUE'S THEME--MISANTHROPY!

զոտ պղծեացոյս Ե՛ր գեղեցիկ ձեռնեմուծածնա:

THOUGH THERE ARE MANY CREATURES BOTH FAIR AND FELL ON MIDDLE EARTH, NONE ARE LESS FAIR--NOR MORE FELL--THAN THE DREADED MISANTHROPE OF MIDDLE EARTH!

FORGED IN A SOCIETY THAT CHASES YOUTH OVER EXPERIENCE, AND BEAUTY OVER CONSEQUENCE-- AND FED BY THOSE DARK LANDS EAST AND WEST KNOWN AS MADISON AVENUE AND HOLLYWOOD-- THEY ROAM AMONG US AS NORMAL, EVERYDAY FOLK...

BUT IT IS SAID WHEN THE MOON IS FULL LIKE TONIGHT, AND THE AIR IS STILL, THE MISANTHROPE ASSUMES THE SHAPE OF A WARG OR WOLF, AND WALKS IN THE DARK EAVES OF WOODS, TROUBLING THE DREAMS OF PEOPLE FAIR-MINDED AND GOOD!

THEY ARE DARK OF HEART AND CYNICAL CREATURES WHO MISTRUST THE MOTIVES OF ALL...

--EXPECTING OTHERS TO BE BASE AND FALSE LIKE THEMSELVES!

B...BUT SURELY, ARAGORN, MISANTHROPE ARE NOTHING BUT OLD WIVES' TALES TO SCARE HOBBIT CHILDREN WHEN THEY'RE BAD!

PRODO, WHO ARE WE TO JUDGE WHAT IS FANTASY AND REAL...

--WE, A FELLOWSHIP MADE OF MAN, WIZARD, ELF, DWARF, AND HALFLING?



WHAT IN SEINFELD'S NAME IS THAT?!

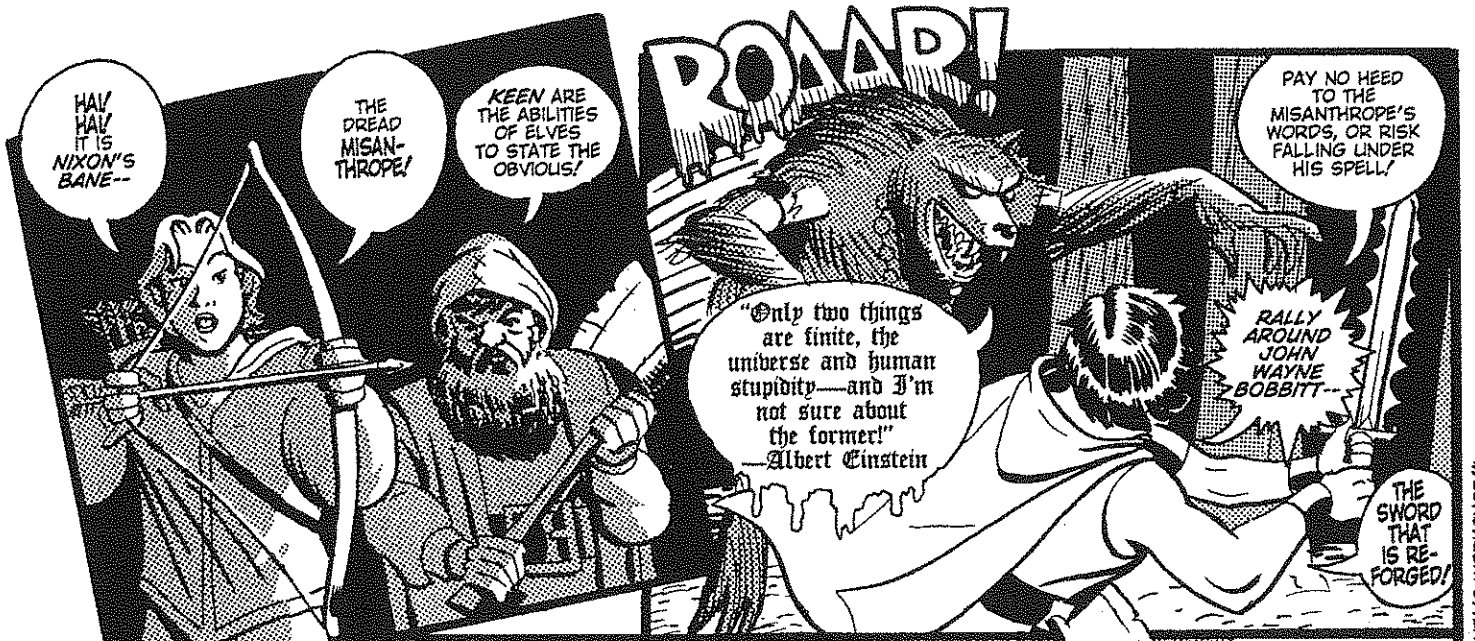
VERILY, I FEAR THAT GANDALF SPOKE TOO TRUE!

THE FELL MISANTHROPE IS UPON US!

QUICKLY! PUT YOUR BACKS TOWARDS THE FIRE! BE STOUT OF HEART!

I WOULD HAVE MUCH PREFERRED A QUIET GAME OF DUNGEONS & DRAGONS!





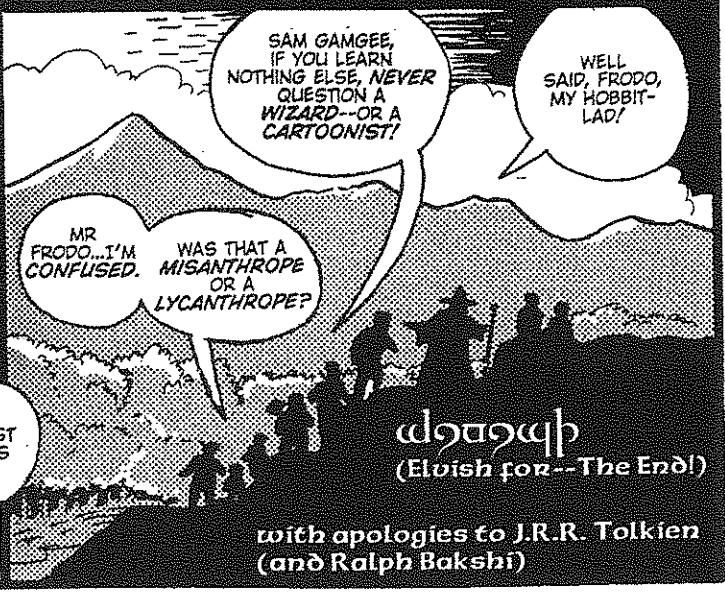
AND SO THE BATTLE OF THE MISANTHROPE WAS JOINED...

REMEMBERED IN EARTH AND SONG FOR MANY A GENERATION, JOHN WAYNE BOBBITT--THE RE-FORGED SWORD OF ARAGORN--SANG IN THE PROUD RANGER'S HANDS...

LEGOLAS, THE ELF, SMOTE THE MONSTER REPEATEDLY WITH THE BLUNT END OF HIS BOW...

GIMLI, THE DWARF, HEWED MIGHTILY WITH HIS AXE AT THE UNARMED CREATURE...

AND, SOON, THE REST OF THE FELLOWSHIP JOINED IN TO GIVE THE DREAD MISANTHROPE WHAT-FOR!



*OR, AS ROUGHLY TRANSLATED FROM THE HIGH ELVISH "FOR SANTA'S WORKSHOP!"

The Brickman COMETH

SCOTT BRICK reminisces about the terrifying MISANTHROPEs of stage and screen.

If most stories begin, "Chapter One: I Am Born," then my own personal tale must have continued this way: "Chapter Two: I Am Late."

I hate being late with submissions, but there it is. It's been a heady time recently, article-wise, so I find myself nearly the last Immortal to submit his column. Again. Ah, well, in a perfect world I'll be the first to submit next time 'round.

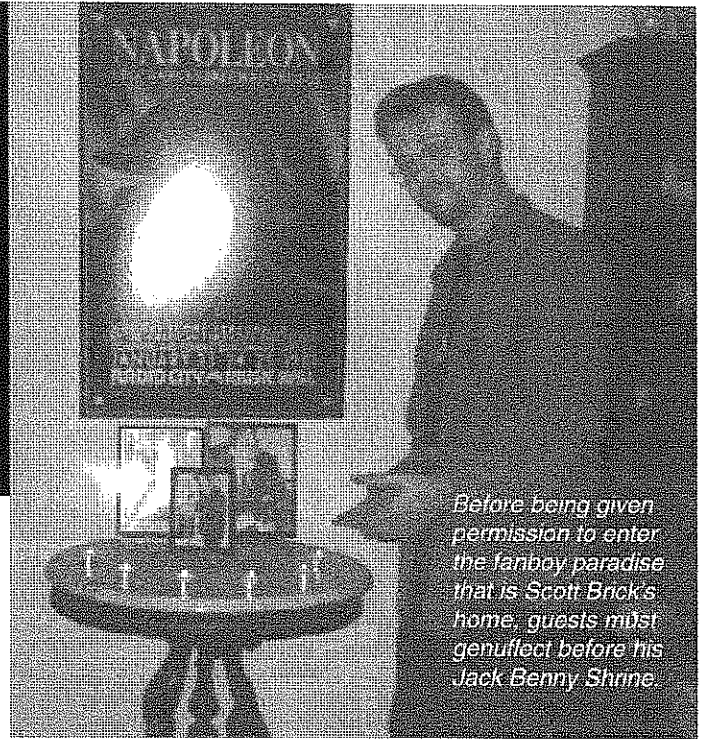
So here I am, at the eleventh hour, trying to make personal sense out of our theme, "Misanthropy." It's tough, as I've never felt it had any kind of personal impact in my life, except in very small ways. But hey, small things are what columns are made of, right? Therefore, here are two small tales, anecdotes really, that deal with our theme. Don't look for any greater theme to tie them all together; just take 'em as they are.

It's funny, but when you hear "Misanthropy," actors aren't the first thing most people think of. Maybe it's just my own theatrical leanings that make it so, but misanthropy brings to mind two actors for me: one of them well-known and talented yet overlooked in the end; the other, well... I never liked the guy, so I spent a good amount of time hoping he'd end up in obscurity, and as things have unfolded, that's exactly how it's turned out for him. Somehow, though, I think this has more to do with the difficulty of making it as an actor in this town than any kind of ill-will from me. Of course, I could be wrong.

For many of us, I'm sure, the mere mention of the word misanthropy brings Lon Chaney Jr. to mind, and I'm no exception. After all, Chaney's portrayal of Lawrence Talbot, the man doomed by the werewolf's bite in several legendary films, is arguably the most famous portrayal of a misanthrope in film history. Watching an A&E biography of him recently, I was struck by how sadly his life turned out. After beginning his career in 1932 and making over 100 films, Chaney died in the early '70's, his body (and career) ravaged by alcoholism. Sad, really, since his early days were filled with such promise. This guy played Lenny in *Of Mice And Men* years before he was transformed by the full moon.

But even though I have such fond memories of Chaney as the Wolfman, introduced to him as I was in *Abbott And Costello Meet Frankenstein*, my most vivid recollection of the man came from that TV biography. It seems that after several years where it seemed his career had stalled, Chaney's appearance with the famous comedic duo gave him the jump-start he needed, and soon he was back on the upswing in Hollywood. He really needed just one more big break to remind everyone what he was capable of as an actor. Sadly, he missed his chance.

In January of 1952, Chaney was hired to play Frankenstein's monster for an episode of *Tales of Tomorrow*, a television Sci-Fi anthology. Although he'd returned to playing horror roles and it was therefore something of a step backward for Chaney, it was a tremendous opportunity to showcase his dramatic abilities. The only trick was, the show was to be broadcast live. Well, I'm not sure if anyone knows the real story, but what wound up happening was that Chaney didn't realize he was on the air. Apparently he believed this was the final dress rehearsal. It's possible he'd had a bit to drink to help calm his nerves. However it happened, Chaney wound up walking his way through the part, permanently marring his reputation as a dramatic actor on



Before being given permission to enter the fanboy-paradise that is Scott Brick's home, guests must genuflect before his Jack Benny Shrine.

Scott is the first subject of our newest feature, "Immortal Profiles!" See p. 16.

BELOW: Immortals Bob Westal, Ray Marcus and Randy Reynaldo partake in the sacred rite by lighting votive candles in Benny's name. Lucky Strikes are then passed around and used to burn pictures of Fred Allen.





ABOVE: An American misanthrope in Paris.

national television. Whenever he ran across a piece of breakaway furniture he was supposed to smash, Chaney hefted it, threatened the other characters with it, then carefully put it down so as not to ruin it, assuming the furniture needed to be kept intact for the actual filming.

By all accounts, it was painful to watch, for everyone involved.

There was no opportunity to stop and alert him to the fact that millions of people were watching as his career drifted away. The people associated with the show, men and women who were at least marginally aware of Chaney's drinking problem, shook their heads in pity.

Despite a brief high-point when he played a washed-up gunslinger in *High Noon*, Chaney never again achieved the acclaim he should have. Although he acted for another 20 years in film, the movies were on the level of *Hillbillies in a Haunted House*. Sad, sad, sad.

Okay, end of first anecdote, on to the next. The next guy who comes to mind is Tony Finetti, although I'm somewhat reluctant to label him a misanthrope. Here's why.

First of all, I should admit up front that Tony stole my girl. (Bastard!) This girl I was crazy for at UCLA, Susan Settle, wound up throwing me over for Tony. Well, maybe I wasn't technically thrown over, never having admitted my feelings to Susan in the first place. Instead, I opted for the "she'll figure out how I feel and come running to me when the time is right" method. Looking back, my strategy seemed like such a lock I'm frankly surprised things went awry.

The long and short of it is, I couldn't stand the sight of Mr. Finetti, yet no matter where I turned, there he was. Tony was also an actor in my theater department, a beak-nosed SOB who had a reputation for stealing everybody's girls. Really, it's true, he'd switch relationships shamelessly, so I wasn't the only guy who wished failure and obscurity on the guy. But despite everyone's ill-wishes he'd keep showing up, and perhaps the hardest part to swallow was the fact that he kept getting good roles. He was a miserable actor and a talentless hack (and I can say that because we were very close!), but he would show up on UCLA's mainstage, nonetheless.

One such role was as the lead character in Molière's "The Misanthrope."

It was strange watching that show. Tony walked around in a tuxedo, similar to most of the

cast, yet he'd been given this bizarre make-up, somewhat greenish in hue. An interesting choice, one I was initially intrigued by, yet it ultimately went nowhere. Oddly enough, the show never really went anywhere, either. I mean, with a title like "The Misanthrope," there are bound to be certain expectations by audience members, myself included. As my playwriting professor was quick to point out in class, there's a little something called The Obligatory Scene. Raise the audience's expectations and they expect you to deliver. But by this show's final curtain, we were all tremendously disappointed.

I wound up seeing the show's director, Michael Hackett, backstage. Not knowing quite how to phrase my frustrations, I danced around the subject by asking why Tony's make-up was so green. He told me it'd been done for thematic reasons, to set the character apart by making him appear sick. "We wanted to illustrate that his misanthropic behavior was making him physically ill," said Hackett, or at least something to that effect.

I walked away, shaking my head, amazed that an intellectual fellow like Michael had missed the point. His misanthropic behavior makes the guy sick? Well, yeah, I can see that, if by behavior he means getting naked and howling at the moon in the middle of a freezing-cold night, or eating freshly-killed meat straight off a rabid dog's carcass. Sure, that kind of thing will make anyone sick, even if you're a hearty misanthrope, but the point is, we the audience members wanted to see that behavior! I sat there stunned. Not a hint of extra facial hair, no downy tufts on the back of the guy's hands, no sharp teeth... *NADA!*

I have to admit, my problem with that

evening's performance didn't begin or end with Tony's portrayal or even the direction. I blame Molière. I mean, what's the point in calling a show "The Misanthrope" if you're not going to go all the way with it? Instead of giving us the payoff we'd been expecting, Molière kept portraying his lead character as being more... oh, I don't know, maladjusted, I guess. This guy just seemed to hate everyone around him, as though he despised his fellow man. I know there's a word for those guys that I just can't recall right now. Maybe Molière should've called his show "The Misfits." That'd come a lot closer than labeling the lead character a werewolf.

Well, the end of my story doesn't have much in the way of a moral. It ended, and that's about all you can say of it. Tony took his nose and his chicks and entered the Hollywood fray, never to be heard of again. (At least, not by me.) When he dumped Susan, she of course turned to me for support, but it all ended badly. I had a few lingering feelings for her, but kept thinking, "Would I really want to be with a woman who found Tony attractive?" The answer, ultimately, was "No."

I suppose my greatest disappointment, looking back, was the sad feeling I had whenever I thought of those people who'd participated in that show. I mean, when you're a student, you look up to your professors, anxious for the opportunity to learn from their greater wisdom. It's a horrible feeling when you start to realize you're more clued in than they are. I mean, I can figure out that "The Misanthrope" is a poorly-named dog of a play but my professors can't? I still shake my head in wonder and puzzlement.... ♦



IMMORTAL FUNNIES

HANGOUTS OF THE IMMORTALS (No. 2 in a series): **ROYCE HALL, UCLA:** On a warm spring evening in 1982, Randy and Ray battle marauding **ORCS** in Royce's main lobby stairwell. Renovations in later years have since removed all traces of the battle -- such is the stuff of legend!

From the Beating a
Dead Horse with a
Bat Dept.:

Sir Taterman's Shadow

Just as the life of the mind spawns great friendships, so does it spawn great disputations. And sometimes such disputation turns into genuine strife — hurtful, hateful and interminable — as it is now for John Le Carré and Salman Rushdie; Alice Walker and Ishmael Reed; Harlan Ellison and Gary Groth*; and most recently, Paul Theroux and V.S. Naipul. We've seen it happen in the past too for countless literary greats whom we shall never forget, including Gore Vidal and Norman Mailer; Evelyn Waugh and... and some English guy, we think...; or Nelson Algren and someone else, who was an even more famous writer at about the same time; and we're pretty certain that Vladimir Nabokov must have been irritated with *somebody*.... Anyway, so it is among the Immortals!

It is with a curious mixture of fascination and horror to watch two great minds engaged in a mighty online epistolatory battle and to witness in wonder and pity a great literary friendship nearly broken in twain. Thus, keeping in mind the great feuds that have passed before involving Great Men of Letters, we present the following e-mail exchange between two Immortals of note, Scott Brick and Raymond Marcus. What follows may not be pretty to read, but it *demand*s attention.

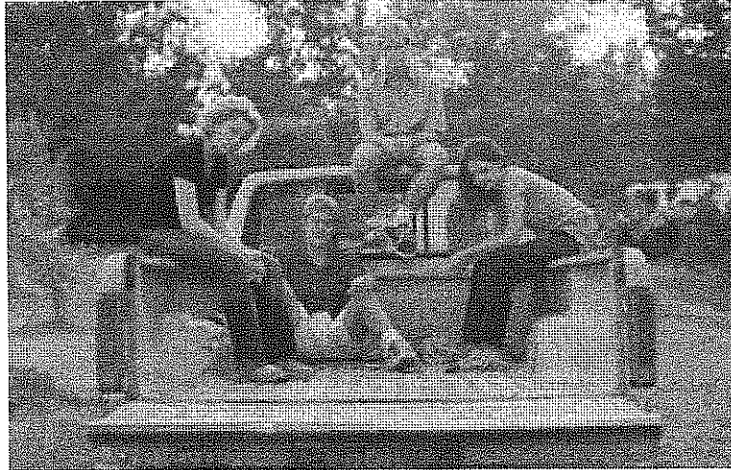
Date: Wed, 11 Nov 1998 16:13:28 EST
From: Brickman5@aol.com
To: raymond@ramvax.caltech.edu, randy.reynaldo@email.csun.edu
Cc: rothspan@hsc.usc.edu, J9K@aol.com,
Homer_Tom@warnerbros.com, ds Gordy@juno.com
Subject: Re: Happiness, Thy Name Is Felicity.

Ray, regarding your recent *Felicity* update, I have a simple question I hope you can answer.

Why are you watching this shit?

Isn't it bad enough that I have to admit to my non-Immortal friends that a close personal confidant actually watches the dreck that is *Dawson's Creek*? Have you any idea the kind of humiliation inherent in such an admission? People point and laugh when I walk down the street, Ray, merely because I bear your residual taint of having watched a laughable attempt at capturing pseudo-adolescent angst. To make matters worse, now you've gotta ruin me with the awful smear of Felicity, as well?

I have rarely seen a show so savagely mediocre in my life. I found the plots to be uninteresting at best; at worst, they were ANTI-interesting, re-



ABOVE: The cast to *DAWSON'S CREEK*. In your heart you LOVE them. You CRAVE them. You long to be LIKE them... Admit it. In your heart you know it to be true.

jumped into a great four-part *Starman* story arc. And it was fabulous! Jack Knight, the current Starman who formerly had no respect for his father, the original Starman, went on an adventure with one of his father's old cronies, the Golden Age Sandman. By fighting alongside this 90-year-old geezer, Jack came to terms with both his father's love and his legacy, emerging from the encounter with a grudging respect for the spandex-clad heroes he'd ridiculed most of his life. And a keen love for his father. And as for the Sandman, I got to encounter a living legend (or at least a comic book one) who'd missed his hero's death, who had to live out his doddering winter years waiting to be taken in his sleep, which for a character called the Sandman carries its own sense of irony, but who came to terms with that as well, realizing it's more important how many lives he saves along the way than how his own life ends.

That's right, Ray, I've just dissed *Dawson* in print while simultaneously praising the merits of funny books. And I'm justified in doing so. I'll take the nostalgic, bittersweet adventures of Jack Knight over Dawson's vague mumbblings any day. And count myself enriched for having done so.

I'll assume from the tone of your E-mail that you're at least vaguely displeased with *Felicity*, but as for *Dawson*, please, Ray, step away from the TV. Comics are cheap. I'll even loan you some of mine.

Scott "I'll Stand For No More Thinly-Veiled Crap Posing As Art" Brick

Date: Wed, 11 Nov 1998 20:27:10 -0700
From: raymond@ramvax.caltech.edu,
To: brickman5@aol.com, randy.reynaldo@email.csun.edu
Cc: rothspan@hsc.usc.edu, J9K@aol.com, ds Gordy@juno.com,
Homer_Tom@warnerbros.com
Subject: Re: Happiness, Thy Name Is Felicity.

What, you don't like it? I suspect that your aversion to *Dawson's Creek* is

* "Greatness," as we all know, is a matter of opinion. But we're pretty sure that both Groth and Ellison think of themselves as "great."

so great because you WISH you were Dawson O'Leary! It's jealousy, plain and simple! Not that I blame you; how many of us had beautiful teenage girls crawl through our bedroom window on a nightly basis, with the utter complicity of our parents, while we were still in high school? How many of us have that now? I have to work myself up just to ask them out on a date.

So, either it's jealousy (Oh, beware my lord, of jealousy), or else I must interpret your remarks as evidence of some freakish *Dawson's Creek* lovefest (as opposed to my own gentle moderation), in which you care for the show and the characters so DEEPLY that you must DENY to the world how important they have become to your lone-bachelor, comic book-reading existence! For you I must recommend DCA: *Dawson's Creek* Anonymous. Since you obviously haven't come to terms with your feelings for this utterly delightful show, featuring a host of playful, winsome adolescents figuring out the world around them, then I must strongly urge you to enter DCA's 12-step program.

I am not going to enter into a slugfest over comic books, because I am clearly outnumbered and my own buddy Randy is a professional. I will, however, in response to your remarks, say: "*Dawson's Creek* Rules!"

In your heart you know it's true.

Raymond "Intellectuals Appreciate High Quality Teen Dramas Too" Marcus

Date: Wed, 11 Nov 1998 20:27:10 -0700

Regarding *Dawson's Creek*, here is my final rebuttal: Jack Benny was one big weenie!

Ray

Date: Sat, 14 Nov 1998 01:42:34 EST

Oh, now you shouldn't have oughtta gone and done that. Really, you shouldn't. Mary was fair game, but not my man Jack. Men have died, unmourned and unloved, for having said less to me. I'm afraid I just cannot stand to see Waukegan's patron saint maligned so. I don't even think lighting a candle at my Benny shrine will suffice on this one.

Whereas I maligned the WB Network; you maligned The Man.

Nope, I think pain's gotta accompany this one if I don't see an immediate retraction. C'mon, quick and clean and heartfelt. Hurry it up and it'll all be over soon.

Scott "Now It's Personal" Brick

Sat, 14 Nov 1998 02:48:37 -0700

Dear Scott, my dear friend:

No, no, no. You misunderstood me. When I wrote, "Jack Benny was one big weenie," I wasn't referring to YOUR Jack Benny! Jack (Alfonso) Benny was a kid I knew in grade school, back in Illinois. What can I say, I just never liked the kid. And he didn't like me, I'll tell you that. I guess I never really got over my feelings of hostility to-

wards him from 7th grade, when one day he told Sheri Bango (who was physically quite advanced for her age) that I really liked her — which was true. But one simply didn't say those things back then, not in 7th grade. You had to keep your cool, and not reveal your emotions to the opposite sex (obviously, by the time one becomes an adult, all of this has changed).

Thus, sometimes, unexpectedly, my feelings towards J(A)B seem to come out of nowhere. I do apologize if there was any misunderstanding, in any way, shape, or form, as indeed there seems to have been. But that is who I was referring to when I stated, unequivocally, "Jack Benny was one big weenie."

Sincerely, Raymond

Date: Mon, 16 Nov 1998 00:35:59 EST

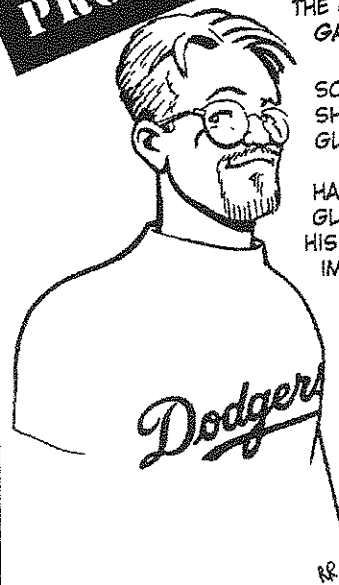
Thanks for clearing that up, Ray. Glad to hear it. I should have realized, of course. I mean, (my) Jack Benny has become the patron saint of the Immortals, so it would be silly to assume any of us had maligned him in print. But again, thanks for taking the time to make things clear.

I'd love to hear about your Sheri Bango ordeal; probably similar to my own tales of Becky Brenwit, who was also very "physically advanced for her age." Just something about those grade-school temptresses, eh? Perhaps we should commiserate over a fine glass of sherry one night while watching an episode of *Dawson's Creek*.

Have I ever mentioned that's a favorite of mine...?

Best, Scott ♦

IMMORTAL PROFILES



FUN FACTS AND TRIVIA ABOUT YOUR FAVORITE IMMORTALS! THIS ISSUE-- SCOTT BRICK!

THE ONLY TWO MAN-MADE OBJECTS THAT CAN BE SEEN FROM THE SPACE SHUTTLE ARE THE GREAT WALL OF CHINA AND SCOTT'S COMIC BOOK COLLECTION.

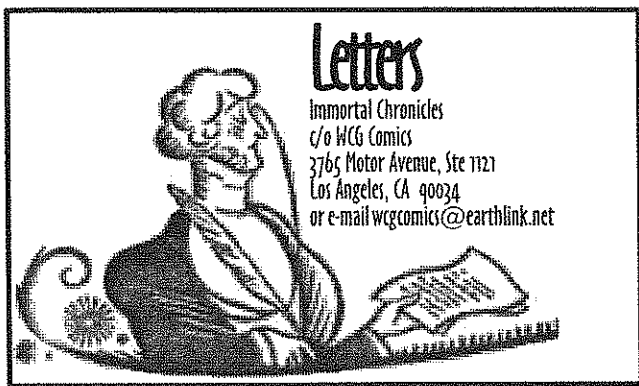
SCOTT IS UNDER FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION ORDERS NOT TO TAKE OFF HIS SHIRT AT THE BEACH, AFTER PASSING AIRCRAFT REPEATEDLY COMPLAINED ABOUT THE GLARE.

HAVING ACHIEVED THE PROUD NAME OF "BRICKMAN" AFTER YEARS OF STRUGGLE AND GLORY, IT WAS ALL THROWN AWAY ONE HOT SUMMER'S DAY ON THE BASEBALL FIELD WITH HIS FRIENDS, WHEN A MEAN FLY BALL EARNED SCOTT THE GRIM NAME OF "DOG BOY." THE IMMORTALS WHO WERE THERE THAT FATEFUL DAY WERE DULY SWORN TO SILENCE, AND THUS NO ONE SHALL EVER KNOW THE TRUTH BEHIND THAT UNFORTUNATE NICKNAME.

FOR YEARS SCOTT KEPT HIS GOLDEN MANE IN A PONYTAIL, IN HOPE THAT HE WOULD ONE DAY BE CALLED UPON TO PLAY "RAPUNZEL" ON BROADWAY.

SCOTT PERFECTED THE CONCEPT OF THE DISPOSABLE AUTOMOBILE AND SHOWS UP EVERY WEEK FOR THE IMMORTALS' WEEKLY BASEBALL WORKOUT IN A DIFFERENT CAR, DEPENDING ON HIS MOOD!

SCOTT WAS THE 1996 GRAND MARSHAL OF THE JACK BENNY DAYS FESTIVAL IN WAUKEGAN, ILLINOIS!



Splitting Clefts

Dear Sirs:

In a recent article regarding my Number One rated late-night talk show on NBC at 11:35 p.m. ("Don't Get Me Started!", Summer 1998), author Terry Delegeane refers to me as a "lantern jaw comedian." I am, in fact, an "anvil-faced comedian."

Hope this clears up any confusion.

Jay Leno
NBC Studios, Burbank, CA

Thanks for the clarification, Mr. Leno and thanks for all the hard work. But your show is still a model of network mediocrity.

A Biased Opinion

Chroniced Immortals:

Congratulations on a newsletter well done. Uniformly brilliant, if we do say so ourselves. Repeatedly. Particularly enjoyed the description of the 14th Century Immortals endlessly rehashing the funny parts of "The Canterbury Tales." And we've already got a higher circulation than **George**.

Here's to misanthropy in Winter 1998!

David Gordy
Los Angeles, CA

What's George?

And From the Desk of Mr. Heston...



Dear Sirs:

It seems that my name was inadvertently omitted from the first issue of your fine publication. As I am confident I shall be taken to task in your next issue, I shall now take up my trusty staff to swat away the locusts of liberalism and part the sea of ignorance.

First, let me reiterate that I marched at the side of Dr. Martin Luther King on Washington in 1963. I do not know how this is germane to my particular argument, but I'd like to state it anyway. As "Marty" said to me on the very steps of the Lincoln Memorial. "Chuck, it will never hurt

to mention that you marched with me on Washington. And by the way, I loved *Touch of Evil*. You were truly convincing as a Mexican, and I, Dr. King, did not detect any homoerotic context in that fine film."

In any case, you will undoubtedly state in your next issue that reasonable handgun control and a sensible waiting period after purchase will reduce violent crime rates and protect our children. Poor, poor

misguided fools. I may not be a prophet, although I played one on film, but as a lifetime member and current president of the NRA, and therefore, one who knows a great deal more about guns than you, I can say that your position holds little water, my friends.

I am reminded of an anecdote that I have never told before, except on just a few hundred occasions, which occurred during a little thing we liked to call the L.A. Riots. As is common knowledge in the entertainment community, I keep a small arsenal of firearms, and during the height of the civil disturbance, a liberal friend of mine (who shall remain nameless, so that verification of this story shall remain impossible) called in a dither to ask me if I could recommend a Smith & Wesson for his immediate protection. But I said to him, "Sir, surely you know that you have to wait five days to purchase a gun. It's the law." Said he, "Five days! But I need a gun now! How did such a stupid law get passed?" Said I, "Don't you remember, you voted for it." Hah, Hah, Hah. You voted for it, I said. What delicious irony.

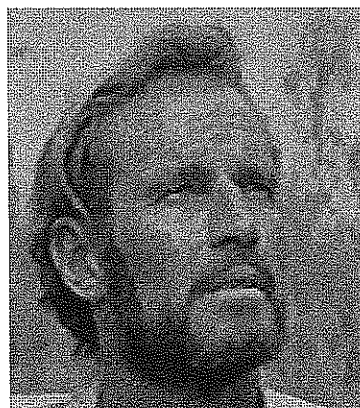
That, compadres, is what the 2nd Amendment is all about. The right to tell a good story. How I love that story. For you see, the firearm is what keeps your possessions and your castle safe from those that would take them away. I personally have 42 pistols, one for every room of my house, and if some ne'er-do-well scales the 10,000-volt electric fence, fends off my Rottweilers, overcomes my fourteen-man security force, eludes the laser grid, traverses the lava flow, and defangs the king cobra, I'll be there, trusty weapon at the ready, to fill him full of lead, and then say a prayer over his tattered soul.

As to those benighted do-gooders who say that guns are more apt to accidentally kill loved ones, I say: No, sirs, not these guns! When I was ministering to the poor and lame with Mother Teresa in India, I asked "Moms" her opinion on the subject. Imagine my pleasant surprise, when she said, "Chuck, you and I both know that a regimen of

firearm safety classes, combined with parental responsibility, the teaching of a healthy respect for the weapon, and the wearing of Kevlar vests at all times, ensures that children will hardly ever be shot in the head by their friends while playing war games. By the way, when I saw the Statue of Liberty at the end of *Planet of the Apes*, I nearly freaked. It was Earth, all the time, wasn't it?" Yes it was, Moms, indeed it was. Damn, but that woman was a pistol.

Finally, in your next issue you will most certainly excoriate me for refusing to oppose the importation and sale of assault weapons. Those that would ban these so-called "assault" weapons, should instead bear in mind the words of the eminent Stephen Hawking. It seems as if only yesterday I was gabbing with "Hawk," whom I plan to portray in my next cinematic undertaking. During a fascinating discussion of fractal geometry and its use in plotting helioseismo-graphic

fluctuations, the subject of semiautomatics naturally came up. I attempted to get a word in edgewise, but as anyone who is familiar with Hawk knows, the man dearly loves the sound of his



LEFT: Charlton Heston desperately seeks acceptance into *Immortaldum*. Keep wishing, Chuck!

own voice. Said he, "Chuck, there is philosophically, and one would hope legislatively, no difference between an assault weapon and that of the more ordinary variety. Only the frequency and quantity of the bullets differ. The guns remain equivalent." My awed silence spoke volumes. Truly, I was in the presence of a magnificent intelligence. Then Hawk said, "Also, it is scientifically impossible to make SoyLent Green out of people." Guilty as charged, my learned friend. I guess that's why they call them the movies.

By the way, as to the movies, you can tell that nancy-boy Gore Vidal, that if Bill Wyler had meant to include homoerotic context in *Ben-Hur*, he would have named it *Ben-Gay*. But that's neither here nor there. It has been a pleasure to do battle with you, metaphorically. So let it be written, gentlemen. So let it be done.

Chuck Heston
Beverly Hills, CA

The pleasure is all ours, you damn, dirty Republican! (Of course we don't mean to insult the redoubtable Mr. Heston. it's just that we can't get our minds off PLANET OF THE APES. In fact, Chuck, like your pal in Ben-Hur, we'd gladly kiss you...but you're so damn ugly!)◆

Monthly Leash

Another Nick Timber Mystery



Terry Delegeane

by Terry Delegeane

The egg salad sandwich had been in the trash can for over a month, and not being one to employ janitorial services, my office met me with a smell of familiar contempt as I opened the glass panel front door. Stenciled across the window pane was the ever present "Nick Timber — Full Moon Investigations." I removed the sign that hung on the doorknob "Be Back in a Month" and carried it over to my desk. I opened the drawer and dropped it in, stirring up the cozy dust mites and whatnots. Giving into an urge to sneeze, I braced for the blast.

AACHOOFFFFRWW!

I'd had hay fever since I was a child.

After blowing my nose and wiping the drool off my gums, I sat in my chair and sorted through the mail that had accumulated from March, weeding out the Lillian Vernon catalogs and student loan bills and throwing them away. I checked the answering the machine. I had 15 messages.

Beep...Beep...Beep...Beep...Beep...

Thirteen were from a fax with automatic redial, one was from a bank offering me life insurance, and the other was my monthly reminder from Mrs. Schuyler about the rent.

I wrote the check, dropped it into an envelope and placed it in the "out" box on top of the desk. Open for business.

It was 9 p.m. and my day was just beginning. I pulled a Jack Daniels out of the bottom right hand drawer and poured myself a double. My throat tightened around the amber grain that forced its way into the back of my mouth. Hair of the dog that bit you. I closed my eyes, panted a little, and licked my chops while I waited to see what type

of human trash would find its way to my front door. I was hungry, ravenous in fact, but the putrid smell of rotting mayonnaise held those thoughts at bay.

I'd seen it all. Everything from lost kittens stuck in trees to transvestites whacking their hermaphroditic lovers in a jealous rage. Talk about gender confusion. Somehow they always found themselves on my doorstep looking for a shoulder to cry on, a sucker to set up or someone to tell them how naughty they'd been. I'd long since stopped caring about their motives, but I could smell their decaying souls from the moment they entered the downstairs lobby.

* * * * *

It was 3 a.m. when I heard the anxious clicking of a pair of 8D Oxfords on the linoleum in the hallway outside my office. The shadow of a man in a top hat brushed past the window and then suddenly stopped. Briefly knocking, then sheepishly opening the door, I stood to greet my nervous apparition.

"Mr. Timber."

"That's me."

"I have a p-proposition for you."

"And that would be...?"

"If you would be so good as to die."

He pulled a pearl-handed revolver from his vest pocket, and fired with a surprising degree of accuracy in my direction.

I won't say I didn't see it coming. You show me a full moon, and I'll show you my collection of silver bullets with my name on them. Always misspelled.

BLAM! BLAM! BLAM!

I dodged left, then twice right to avoid the blasts. And then with a growl, I lunged at him.

Never underestimate the power of a good growl, especially when your dealing with a milksop that looks like the little mustachioed Monopoly guy with the top hat.

I ripped the gat out of his hand and then pistol-whipped him a couple of times. I threw in an extra one for good measure. I was kind of enjoying it.

"Spill it, Mr. Moneybags."

He spat out a couple teeth and wiped

the spittle off his lip. He started to cry as he sputtered out his sad sack story. I was *real* choked up.

"You bastard...my sister...you ruined it ... destroyed everything."

I slapped him... for effect. I told him I didn't have all night, seriously.

"You did it and you didn't even care. She had so much ...so much promise and you made her into an animal... an ANIMAL!"

I pretty much figured it out when he walked in the door. It happened enough, not as much these days, as when it first... Another innocent victim, one of mine.

Be sure to join us for the next installment of this Nick Timber mystery, entitled — **"BITING THE BULLET!"** ♦

BE IMMORTALIZED-- SEND A LETTER TO THE EDITOR!

Take issue with a column in the *Immortal Chronicles*? Have an unresolved conflict with an Immortal that needs to be aired? Need assistance in understanding some of the arcane references that only an Immortal can shed light on?

Well, send them to the *National Review* or the *Comics Journal* — we don't want to hear them.

But if you have any other comments you wish to share and have a burning desire to have your words immortalized here, the *Immortal Chronicles* welcomes your contribution. As you've no doubt noticed, we'll print most anything, especially if it's about our favorite subject — us.

Send your letter to:

The Immortal Chronicles
c/o WCG Comics
3765 Motor Avenue, Suite 1121
Los Angeles, CA 90034
(or by e-mail to
wgcocomics@earthlink.net
or j9k@aol.com)



WE FEEL A VOID

Because Immortal Terry Deleagene failed to completely fill in the requisite space that had been reserved for him, thereby renegeing on Immortal Directive #4223 (which states: "verbosity, self-indulgence and prolixity are to be fostered, encouraged, and enjoined"), we are forced to resort to filler material that until now had been placed at and beneath the bottom of our submissions pile. So as you recoil at the material that you are about to read — we ask you to, please, think of Terry!

Ring-a-Ding-DING, Baby!

"Never Rat on a Rat!"

— Francis Albert Sinatra

So the pallies and me — that's the *Immortals* to you, jack — are swaggering after a gasser of a night (we don't walk, baby, we *swing!*) across the main floor of Carrows at 1 a.m. after a late show, when some clyde who can't hold his iced-tea starts cracking wise, see?

I tell the dolly he's hanging with to tell him to put the skids on the wise talk, or me and the pallies might have to get fancy with the fists — and then some.

The dame (she had some set of charleys, let me tell you), she did not like what we were intending to inflict on her harvey, so she says to us, "Who do you think you creeps are, the Rat Pack?"

Then it comes to me. She's right. Think of it — those late night poolhall games with cigars and mixed drinks; swizzle sticks; the crisp white cuffs and starched collars; cutting a swaggering path across a crowded lounge after a late show, intimidating the harvs and impressing the twirls; crushing the careers of punk sams with clyde voices...

Frank, Dino, Sammy and the rest of the sharpies were the coolest cats and swinginest dudes in their day, but, they're *history*, baby — they're cashed out and sitting with the man at the big casino. It's time to make room at the craps table for the new cats.

The Immortals are here and we're livin' large, you dig?

Still, I ain't no bunter — after all, me and the pallies were into Sinatra and the whole *lounge* thing before these young punk Johnny-come-latelies thought it was time to take a sip at the trough of cool. (Hey, *take a number, jack!*) Makes you sick.

So before you toss this notion along with the same egghead theories that say that the Kennedy assassination was the Lincoln assassination all over again, check these out, my friend. The similarities are downright agitating!

Ring-a-ding-ding, baby!

Raymond Marcus — The Chairman — The failed marriage, his swingin' past (he kept a bottle of port in his college locker for late night trysts!), and his total lack of respect for the twirls, definitely puts him in the same league as the Chairman. And let's not forget Ray's well known temper that can explode unpredictably — he's been known to throw a bottle of port at a waitress when it arrived excessively chilled, instead of precisely 62° — "just right." Ray's mob ties are also notoriously well known; we're not implying anything, but let's just say that, despite some interference from a certain Santino "Boba Fett" Trafficante, his doctorate is finally *in the bag* if you catch our drift.

And, let us not forget that it was Raymond who dubbed us the Immortals — and no one had the guts to call him on it. (Who does this guy think he is anyway?)

Terry Deleagene — Definitely Dino — the curly top (well, what's left of it) and that dreamy Mediterranean voice can't hide it. I should point out that, while in college, Terry was constantly falling down *for no apparent reason*. It's clear now that the Ter-Bear was cleverly hiding a drinking problem. Terry might not be quite as, er, *relaxed* as ol' Dag, but like Dino in his later years, he'd rather



ABOVE: The opening act for the Immortals.

YOUR AD
HERE

**Livin' Large,
Immortal-style!**

LEFT: After a night on the town, the Immortals typically stop for refreshments at Carrows, which everyone knows is the group's longtime favorite haunt.

Here the pallies pose for the paparazzi while taking in one of the joint's famous floor shows, "Would you like fresh strawberries with that?"

The Carrows establishment works hard to keep the Immortals happy by keeping the iced tea flowing, the club sandwiches well baconed, and the Hearty breakfasts heart damaging.

(Hey, any man who walks into a Carrows wearing a tux definitely deserves special treatment!)

Photo retouched by Randy Reynaldo



stay at home with the family than hit the road on tour with the pallies.

Randy Reynaldo — All too easy: his diminutive size and well tanned complexion just scream Sammy. No *glass* eye, but he does have *glasses*, deprived of which he might as well be utterly bereft of peepers. And of course there's the Filipino Firebrand's flirtations with the occult and certain powerful psycho-active compounds. Okay, he's not Jewish, but he date's 'em, hangs with 'em, and eats pastrami like your Uncle Morty. His momma may not be *yiddische*, but

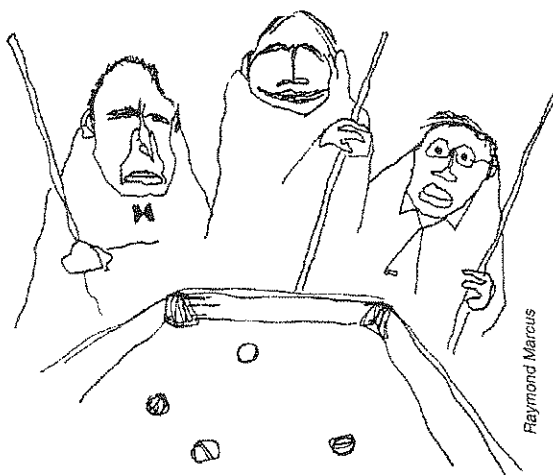
he's one *meshugganeh mensch* with *spilkas* to spare, if you get my drift. So don't give us none of your *tsuris*, baby!

Bob "Sparky" Westal — Constantly cracking wise, short-crop hair, the bad shtick, ignored and bitter — can it be any doubt that he's the Joey Bishop of the group? He *wishes* for his own talk show.

Scott Brick — The Brickman and Peter Lawford — both smooth talking second-rate actors. Babes dig 'em. Men tolerate 'em. Need we say more?

guy in *Ocean's 11* (also a featured player in films as diverse as the *Manchurian Candidate* and *Megaforce*). With that badge he carries, he's the torpedo of the group, and like Mr. Silva, he hasn't been seen much lately hanging with the pallies, causing some to doubt whether he really exists.

NEXT: A rebuttal that conclusively rates on a scale of 1 to 10, ("1" being complete doubt, "10" being metaphysical certitude) that — **FACT** — the Immortals are actually the liberal version of the McLaughlin Group — bye-BYE!♦



David Gordy — Well, he could've been Dino (he's got the hair for it), or Joey...but those spots are taken. That leaves Don Rickles. Sorry, hockey-puck!

Homer Tom — Okay, it's starting to get difficult... How about Louis Prima? Sure, yeah, Homer's a *lot* like Louis Prima. Gets lots of freebies...no, that's more like Lawford...No. Waitaminute, he's really "Skinny" D'Amato, the chairman's bud who *organized* all the freebies. Now we're swingin', jack!

John Thomas — J.T. is Henry Silva — yeah, you remember him, he's that *other*

