

A Look Into WindyCon's Past

74 WindyCon I

Location—Blackstone Hotel
GoH: Joe Haldeman
Fan GoH: Lou Tabakow
Chairs: Lynne & Mark Aronson

75 WindyCon II

Location—Ascot House
GoH: Wilson Tucker
Fan GoH: Joni Stopa
Chairs: Lynne & Mark Aronson

76 WindyCon III

Location—Sheraton Chicago
GoH: Algis Budrys
Fan GoH: Beth Swanson
Chairs: Lynne & Mark Aronson

77 WindyCon IV

Location—Arlington Park Hilton
GoH: Bill Rotsler
Fan GoH: Meade Frierson
Chair: Larry Propp

78 WindyCon V

Location—Arlington Park Hilton
GoH: Bob Shaw
Fan GoH: George Scithers
Chair: Doug Rice

79 WindyCon VI

Location—Arlington Park Hilton
GoH: William Tenn (Philip Klass)
Fan GoH: Tony and Suford Lewis
Chair: Larry Propp

80 WindyCon VII

Location—Hyatt Regency Chicago
GoH: Robert Sheckley
Fan GoH: Gardner Dozois
Chair: Midge Reitan

81 WindyCon VIII

Location—Hyatt Regency Chicago
GoH: Larry Niven
Fan GoH: Mike Glyer
Chairs: Ross Pavlac & Larry Propp

82 WindyCon IX

Location—Lincolnwood Hyatt ("Purple Hyatt")
GoH: Frederik Pohl & Jack Williamson
Chair: Dick Spelman

83 WindyCon X

Location—Arlington Park Hilton
GoH: George R. R. Martin
Art GoH: Victoria Poyser
Fan GoH: Ben Yalow
Chair: Tom Veal

84 WindyCon XI

Location—Hyatt Regency Woodfield
GoH: Alan Dean Foster
Art GoH/Fan GoH: Joan Hanke-Woods
Chair: Kathleen Meyer

85 WindyCon XII

Location—Hyatt Regency Woodfield
GoH: C. J. Cherryh
Art GoH/Fan GoH: Todd Hamilton
Chair: Kathleen Meyer

86 WindyCon XIII

Location—Hyatt Regency Woodfield
GoH: Harry Harrison
Art GoH: Arlin Robins
Chair: Debra A. Wright

87 WindyCon XIV

Location—Hyatt Regency Woodfield
S.F. GoH: Vernor Vinge
Fantasy GoH: Jane Yolen
Chair: Debra A. Wright

88 WindyCon XV

Location—Hyatt Regency Woodfield
GoH: Orson Scott Card
Art GoH: Erin McKee
Chair: Kathleen M. Meyer

89 WindyCon XVI

Location—Hyatt Regency Woodfield
GoH: Barry B. Longyear
Art GoH: David Lee Anderson
Chair: Lenny Wenshe

90 WindyCon XVII

Location—Hyatt Regency Woodfield
GoH: Barbara Hambly
Art GoH: Robert Eggleton
Chair: Lenny Wenshe

91 WindyCon XVIII

Location—Hyatt Regency Woodfield
GoH: Mike Resnick
Art GoH: P.D. Breeding Black
Chair: Marie Bartlett-Sloan

92 WindyCon XIX

Location—Hyatt Regency Woodfield
GoH: Robert Shea
Art GoH: Todd Cameron Hamilton
Chair: Marie Bartlett-Sloan

93 WindyCon XX

Location—Hyatt Regency Woodfield
GoH: Joe Haldeman
Artists GoH: Kelly Freas & Laura Brodian-Freas
Chair: Dina S. Krause

1994—WindyCon XXI

Author GoH: Sharyn McCrumb

Artist GoH: Janny Wurts

Fan GoH: Alice Bentley

Toastmaster: Barbara Hambly

Scholar GoH: Dr. Clark E. Wilmarth

ISFiC GoH: George Alec Effinger

Special Guests:

Suzy McKee Charnas, Barry B. Longyear,

David Lee Anderson

And also including:

Don Maitz, Buck & Juanita Coulson, Todd Cameron Hamilton, Glen Cook, P.J. Beese, Mike Resnick, Phyllis & Alex Eisenstien, Martin Harry Greenberg, Mickey Zucker Reichert, Richard Knaak, Robert Weinberg, A. J. Budrys, Barbara Kaalberg, Diana Harlan Stein, David Stein, Frederik Pohl, Elizabeth Ann Hull, Judy A. Synk, Erin McKee, Sue Blom, P.J. Breeding Black, Jody Lynn Nye, Michael & Rozalyn Levin-Mansfield, and more!

WINDYCON XXI STAFF LISTING

Bheer Ghod Ememritus In Absentia

John Donat

And the usual gang of ~~claves idios~~ great people....

HOTEL LIAISON

Allan Sperling

Dina S. Krause

INFORMATION BOOTH

Marie Bartlett-Sloan

Kirby Bartlett-Sloan

with occasional appearances by

Louisa Bartlett-Sloan

OPERATIONS

Bill Krucek

Staff

Madred Bradford, Lark Underwood,

Mike Blake, Bob Hillis,

Liz Gross, Chris Young

and a cast of thousands...

except for Mark Herrup.

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John Donat

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Trudy Puda

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Bill Roper

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Assistant Manager

Joseph A. Nickence

Program Ops

Curt Clemmer, DI

PUBLICATIONS

Bill Roper

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Michael Madaj, Lanny Waitsman

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Suzette France, Jon Bradley,

Kirby Bartlett-Sloan

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Aardvark Flying Squad

Maria Gavelis-Pavlac

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Assistant Director

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Henry Osier

House Manager

Glen Boettcher

Backstage Manager

Mike Vande Bunt

Sound Chief

Jeff Sparrow

Sound staff

Greg Mate

Mark Christensen

Master of Ceremonies

Kyym Kimpel

Check-in Clerk

Joel Kimpel

Polaroid

Bob Weissinger

Den Mom & Repair table

Michele Solomon

Head Catcher

Duke Boettcher

SATURDAY NIGHT DANCE

DJ

Jeff Sparrow

Assistant DJs

Greg Mate

Mark Christensen

FOOD GUIDE

Editor

Ross Paviac

Research Assistance

Maria Gavelis-Pavlac

Debra "Party Goddess" Wright

TREASURER

Leni Wenshe

Assistant Treasurer

C. Malebranche

Welcome To WindyCon XXI

What brings you to Windycon? Is it the fine and gracious array of guests that we can bring to you? Is it the 'touching base with old friends or perhaps making new ones? Is it the very creative and extensive ways we can entertain you? Or perhaps just to have fun? For me Windycon is all that and more! I met my husband here. I've got my friends of the head and heart here and for those of us whose biggest kick is seeing a job well done, I find that all in Windycon.

As you walk the halls of this fine hotel (or perhaps reflect upon your wanderings) think of the numerous people it takes to make a convention run.

WindyCon is a special convention. It always has a wonderful intellectual presentation of Guests and Programming as well as plenty of fun and Special Events; a delightful and creative Art Show and full-to-the-brim Print Shop and Dealers Room. There is Gaming and Filking and we even entertain and education Children. We have actual Movies and a magical Con Suite (anything or anybody could appear at anytime). We have this wonderful Program Book and Pocket Program and new this year... the information booth.

We also have lots of people working behind the scenes to make sure this goes as smoothly as any hurricane! There are Operations and Logistics people, also the Hotel and Guest Liaisons. We also have our very quiet efficient Security, Treasurer and Green Room. There is our Data Base Manager and, of course, Registration. Plus the Chair and anybody else I forgot.

All this takes work, a lot of work. We thank all the people who have worked so hard, to make Windycon so great. I have rarely seen such dedication in making sure that all of you have a good time. So let's get out there and do it!

Have a Great Time
Dina S. Krause,
Chair, WindyCon XXI



PROGRAMMING

Along with the usual disclaimers (schedule changes, panelist changes, better ideas, etc.), here is a brief summary of the each many hours of programming for this year's convention:

And Things That Go Bump in the Night - Come for a late evening scare-a-thon of horrors we have known and loved.

The Art of the Auction: How to buy art at auction - How to get the piece you really want without being taken.

Art's Other Outlets - How to sell your art at Renaissance Fairs, Craft fairs and other non-fannish outlets.

The Art of the Comic Book - Join Barbara Kaalsberg for a demonstration of comic book inking. Ask her questions about how comics are put together.

At the Movies - Are today's science fiction/horror films better than the films from the 50's and 60's. Or are they worse...

Author Readings - Check your pocket program for specific time to hear our guest authors read their own works.

Building a World Mythos - SF and fantasy authors discuss creating a world culture - entirely from scratch.

Can There Be too Much of a Good Thing? - There are probably more science fiction television shows on now than ever before. Is it possible there may be too much?

Chicago in 2000 or Why the Hell are We Doing it Again? - The perpetrators of the bid to host a Worldcon in Chicago in 2000 get a chance to explain themselves.

Children of Fans or How to Warp the Young - It had to happen. We've replicated ourselves and now there's a whole new generation of Fan. Let's see if we can raise them right.

Darling Clementine - Project Clementine was the first mission to the moon since the last of the Apollo missions. In this presentation, Bill Higgins discusses the mission, the pictures and some of the puzzles that Clementine found on the Moon.

Dealing for Dollars - Here's the panel for all you folks who figure to make BIG money selling in the Dealer's Room.

Do You Have to Like It to Paint It? - How do you illustrate a story when you just don't like it.

Do You Know Your Market? - When you write a story, do you know who you want to read it? Does your editor have a clue? Are these two audiences even remotely related?

Fanzines - What are they? Where do they come from? What's good? What's not?

Filking Without Embarrassment - You've heard the tape and peeked into the rooms, but you aren't sure you want to join in. Here's your chance to learn the ropes (or the Ropers).

The Funnt File - This is a new audio SF program featuring the adventures of one Dirwood Phylo Funnt, a former starship captain who has fallen from grace. This will be the world premiere of the show. Mark Banash, the producer, will have the series pilot and the first regular episode. This show has been developed for the public radio market. Mark would appreciate your comments after the running of these episodes.

The Great Jovian Train Wreck - The many fragments of Comet Shoemaker-Levy 9 collided with Jupiter during a week-long period in July. Never before have astronomers had advanced warning of such cataclysm, so thousands of telescopes were watching the giant planet

during the bombardment. In the slideshow, Bill Higgins discusses Jupiter, comets and what happens when they crash into each other.

Homebrew on LaGrange - The Sumerianns brewed it - the Egyptians brewed it - can beer be brewed in space? We will discuss the technological hurdles that need to be overcome before we brew beer in a space station environment. We will have homebrewers and scheduled to appear is Ken Pavichevich, President of Pavichevich Brewing (Baderbrau Beer).

How to be More Than a Promising Young Amateur - How to make the leap to professional. Folks that have done so will share their secrets with you.

I Wrote That? - What happens when the story YOU wrote is edited to the point that you don't even recognize it.

Interview With the Author Guest of Honor - Dina Krause interviews Sharyn McCrumb.

Mixed Messages: Crossing the Genre Line - What happens when you mix science fiction with mystery or romance or history? What do you call it? How does it work?

The Meaning in the Message - Science fiction has always been speculative. Should it also take a political/moral stand?

More Than a Pretty Picture: 3D Art - The art show is more than just paintings. There's jewelry, pottery, sculpture and more. Artists talk about the proliferation of 3-Dimensional Art.

Mystery Conventions vs. Science Fiction Conventions - Mystery fans have conventions just like SF fans do. Maybe you have even been to one. The question is: Who's weirder?

Once upon a Time: Incorporating Fairy Tales into Science Fiction and Fantasy - How do you take a well known fairy tale or myth and incorporate it into your story?

The Original Janny Wurtz/Don Maitz Slide Show - 'Nuff said.

Readers Advisory - A panel for authors, dealers, librarians or anyone who recommends what you might want to read.

Real Men Don't Read Fantasy - Or do they?

Real Men Don't Write Fantasy - It seems as if there is an inordinate number of fantasy writers are women...or are they?

The Rise and Fall of Military Science Fiction - The Cold War has been declared officially over. Is there any room or reason for military SF.

Science Fiction's Worst Nightmare: PCs Have Taken Over the World - They are great little time and labor savers but aren't we just a little too dependent on the XXXXX PC.

Stereotypes: We're SF Fans and Proud of It - But are we acceptable in mixed company? Maybe we are weird as the world says we are.

Trials and Tribulations of Editing - Sure, editing is easy. Just sit there and hack somebody's life's work to pieces. But it's not easy telling someone their work stinks.

The Very Worst Convention I've Ever Attended - Come and share your favorite horror story with seasoned con-goers.

Women Authors: Accepted or Exceptions? - How are women science fiction authors received by the trade and by the readers.

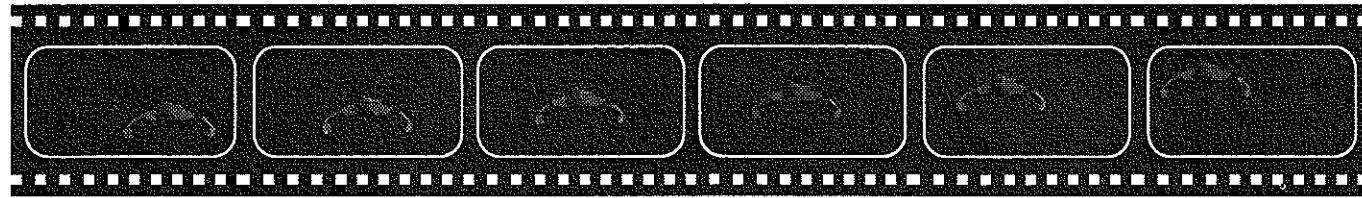
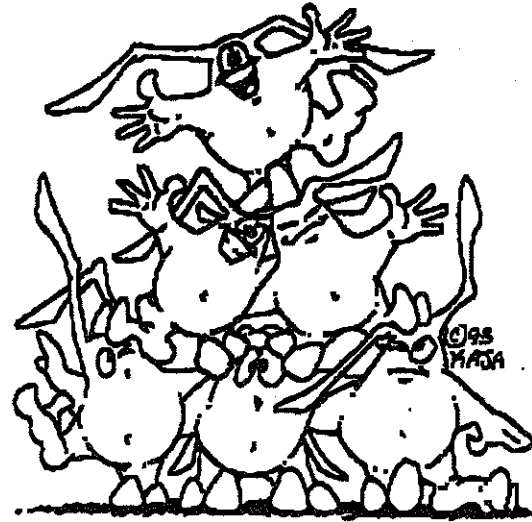
Would You Let Your Son Marry a Space Woman? - Women's roles in science fiction have certainly changed over the years. The question is: For better or worse?

Writer's Workshop - a perennial favorite Barry B. Longyear conducts a 2-day, 2-hour per day, workshop for beginning writers.

Weapons Policy

Past incidents have forced us to adopt a strict policy concerning weapons. Consequently, no real or realistic-looking weapons will be allowed anywhere at Windycon. Such weapons cannot be worn or displayed in any way, at any time, and their sale is prohibited.

Violators of Windycon's weapons policy will be required to relinquish their weapons for the duration of the con, or surrender their memberships. In all matters regarding weapons and the enforcement of this policy, the Windycon Committee reserves the right to be completely and viciously arbitrary.



WINDYCON XXI FILM PROGRAM

Yet again here we are trying to present those films we hope are worthy of the eclectic tastes of you: our audience. We have tried to assemble the best the year has to offer; the most recent of blockbusters, the best of the classics and some favorite cult films. The theme of this year's program is the presence of women and women's roles throughout science fiction, horror and fantasy films and we have done our best to highlight a variety of female performers and directors. In addition to that we will be showing some of the "meatier" female roles from earlier films.

FRIDAY

2:00 PM **Dark Crystal***-Jim Henson's wonderful puppet fantasy of good vs. evil.
 4:00 **Buffy the Vampire Slayer**-Rutger Hauer, Paul Reubens, Cheerleader kickin' butt, get it.†
 5:30 **I Married a Monster From Outer Space** - Is your husband who he really says he is.†
 7:00 **Addams Family Values**-She's after the family fortune, but she underestimated baby Pubert.
 8:30 **Nightmare Before Christmas** - What happens when the King of Halloween decides to take over Christmas. Tim Burton's wonderful vision comes to life in stop motion animation.
 10:00 **The Mask**-Jim Carey is Ssssmokin', and the effects will blow you away in the blockbuster from this summer.
 12:00 **Mid Cat People** (1942)-She changes into a cat, a deadly one at that too.†
 1:30 AM **Ladyhawke**-Michelle Pfeiffer is a hawk by day. Rutger Hauer is a wolf by night. That's one tough relationship!†
 3:30 AM **Metropolis**-Fritz Lang gives us one of the earliest strong, for 1926, female roles.†

SATURDAY

12:00 Noon **Real Genius**-Yes, it's Val Kilmer, but were really showing it because it is the film debut of director Martha Coolidge.†
 2:00 PM **GHOST & Mrs. Muir** - O.K. it's sappy, but a wonderful fantasy romance.†
 4:00 **Witches of Eastwick**-Cher, Michelle Pfeiffer, and Susan Sarandon give the Devil his due.†
 6:00 **Break for Art Auction**
 8:00 **Film Crew Dinner**-Restaurant TBA If you want to join us let us know by 1 PM today so we can make reservations. P.S. NO film talk allowed.
 11:30 **Jurassic Park**-\$355 million in the U.S. who hasn't seen it. It's time to see it again!
 1:45 AM **Lost World** (1925) - You Just saw high tech dinosaurs, this is low tech...70 year old low tech.
 2:45 **Escape From New York***-Dnskr Blitzkin...I thought you were dead!!

SUNDAY

12:00 Noon **Nightmare Before Christmas**-See Friday 8:30 PM
 1:30 PM **Jurassic Park**-See Saturday 11:30 PM

*Presented in Cinemascope wide screen format.

† Part of "Women in SF Movies" program.

WindyCon Film Crew-

David Hoshko, Wendy Zdrodowski, Mark Mallchok, Bernadette Burke, Mary Mascari

WINDYCON ART SHOW RULES 1994

(i.e. Don't play with your gum while looking at the perty pitchures)

This year WindyCon is trying something new. We are going to be selling Recycled Art, or Previously Owned Art, or "I Have Run Out Of Wall Space And I Must Scream" Art. The rules listed below are for artists with original work as well as those selling previously owned art.

1. Artist/Agent must be a member of the convention.
2. All art subjects must relate to science fiction, fantasy or science.
3. All art must be clearly marked with artist's name, title, medium, and minimum price and if previously owned art, the current owner's name.
4. All flat art must be matted or framed.
5. **PRINT RULE.** One (1) signed and numbered copy of a print will be accepted. There is a Print Shop, so put extra copies there. You may add a note to your panel in the art show informing viewers that prints are available in the Print Shop.
6. No mail-in art will be accepted.
7. Panels are limited to two (2) per artist or one half (1/2) table unless space becomes available. If you have special needs please see the Art Show Director. Panels are approximately 4x5 ft. Tables are 6ft x 30 in.
8. **FEES:** \$0.50 hanging fee for each For Sale piece of art. \$1.00 hanging fee for each Not For Sale piece of art. (Hanging fees pertain to artists and previously owned art. NOT PRINT SHOP.)
- 10% commission on all sales (artists, previously owned art and print shop).

Hanging fees must be paid at check-in.

9. Artist will be paid on Sunday after all pieces of art are accounted for; check will be issued — 11:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. Agents must have a letter of authorization from the artist in order to receive the artist's check. The art show receipts and the print shop receipts will be paid separately.

10. **HOURS:** Open to all: FRIDAY: 9:00 A.M. - 7:00 P.M. SATURDAY: 9:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m. **VOICE AUCTION:** SATURDAY: 8:00 p.m. (or as soon as we can get ready for it)-?. Pick-up only: SATURDAY: 9:00 p.m.-until the auction is over. SUNDAY: 9:00 a.m. - NOON. All purchased art must be picked-up by noon on Sunday. Artist/Agents must pick-up unsold art by 1:00 p.m. on Sunday. Any art left at that time will be charged for shipping and a handling fee of \$20.00. Artists and fans are encouraged to pick-up their art during the auction.

10. Photography (and cameras) are not allowed in the art show.

11. Bags and packages will be checked.

12. All bidders must register with the art show.

13. The silent auction: Write-in bids will be accepted until the close of the art show on Saturday at 7:00 p.m.

Pieces with one (1) bid are considered sold to that bidder.

Pieces with two (2) bids are considered sold to that bidder.

Pieces with three (3) bids are considered sold to that bidder.

Pieces with four (4) bids or more will go to the voice auction where bidding may/may not exceed the last bid.

All bids must be \$1.00 increments or more.

PRINT SHOPPE

The WindyCon Print Shoppe is once again being brought to you by the same loyal suckers people as last year.

Denise Clift - Manager; Roberta Jordan - Asst. Manager; Lynn Fancher - Asst. Manager

This years hours are:

Friday 12:00 - 4:00 p.m. Artist check-in

Friday 4:00 - 8:00 p.m. open for Business

Saturday 10:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m. open for Business

Sunday 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. open for Business

Print Shoppe rules are simple - Just Say NO: NO Smoking; NO Eating; NO Drinking; NO Picture taking; NO Bidding; NO Auction; Just say yes to Buying! Visa & Mastercard will be accepted this year \$10.00 minimum.

Artist Rules are as follows:

(1) When checking pieces in or out all pieces must be counted by a Shoppe staffer.

(2) There is no hanging fee. But there is a 10% commission fee on sold pieces.

(3) If you wish to be paid at the con, please contact the Print Shoppe manager by Saturday night.

(4) All others will be paid within 2 weeks.

(5) Any time put in by the artist in the Print Shoppe will be heartily appreciated.

DEALER'S ROOM

The Dealer's Room is on the lower level of the hotel (around the corner from registration). There are 69 tables where about 40 dealers will be trying to trade you trinkets for WAMPUM. Remember that Christmas is just around the corner and up the street...You can begin shopping for fannish family, fannish friends, and (of course) fannish you.

Dealer Room Hours:

Friday 3 p.m. - 7 p.m.

Saturday 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.

Sunday 11 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Smoking is NOT permitted in the Dealer's Room. Eating and Drinking in the room are also a No-No (except for Dealers while they are behind their own tables). Free spending, however, is permitted and even encouraged.

A Listing of Dealers & Locations was not available at press time.

GOPHERS

Thanks for all the memories, the fun, and all your hard-working help.

Without gopers, this Con couldn't run as well as it does. We in Operations appreciate each and every one of you (you know who you are).

Thanks again for all your help!

Guest of Honor Biographies

This is just a quick note about WindyCon's Guests of Honor. Not only are they all very talented and very different women, but they all have a multitude of abilities. They are all equally capable in a number of areas. They are complex human beings and are all a pleasure to talk to and befriend. Enjoy their company; they have a lot to offer!

Dina S. Krause, Chair

SHARYN MCCRUMB: AUTHOR GUEST OF HONOR

Why is Sharyn a guest at WindyCon? She is a prolific writer with a wonderful satirical attitude. She is extremely successful as a mystery writer and has begun to successfully tackle the highly critical field of science fiction. She has a warm spot for SF and conventions as they appear in many of her novels (sometimes only a small but affectionate mention). We can try to encourage this talented woman to continue to entertain us. This is what Jeffrey Marks has to say about her:

Trying to characterize Sharyn McCrumb is like trying to sum up life in a single sentence. The *New York Times* called her work elegiac, adding that "McCrumb writes with quiet fire and maybe a little mountain magic," while in the same year *Kirkus* insists: "Bar none, McCrumb is the funniest woman writing mysteries today." Can they be talking about the same writer? Yes, but not the same book. One of the most versatile of contemporary novelists, McCrumb writes about English murders, the cult of science fiction fandom, life in the Southern mountains, and anything else that takes her fancy. "Mark Twain never wrote the same book twice," she says. "Maybe we both have a low threshold of boredom." She won the Edgar, mystery fiction's highest honor with *Bimbos of the Death Sun*, a spoof of science fiction conventions, but her serious novel *If Ever I Return Pretty Peggy-O*, a study of the legacy of Vietnam and the culture of the 60's, is required reading at universities throughout the country. Just when you think you've figured out where she's coming from, she writes a totally different book.

A native North Carolinian, McCrumb now lives in the Virginia Blue Ridge with her husband David, an environmental engineer, and their three children. The hard part about talking to Sharyn McCrumb is having to keep up with her. At the end of a multi-state tour, she was signing books in Tennessee, setting of her literary novels, the Ballad series. Her father's family settled in the Smokey Mountains that divide North Carolina and Tennessee back in 17909. "I found that all the tales and memories of substance come from that side of the family," she says. Her father grew up in a railroad town called Erwin, famous as the town that hung an elephant for murder back in 1916. Her grandfather was an eyewitness. Perhaps McCrumb's interest in crime fiction stems from such family tales of murder and vengeance.

Sharyn McCrumb announced that she was going to be a writer at the age of seven, and spent her childhood reading books and writing "ten-page novels." This practice gave her the grounding she needed in grammar and narrative, but she notes, "It's only after I was grown up that I found anything to say." She graduated from UNC with a communication degree, and worked as a journalist

before completing her MA in English at Virginia Tech.

MacPherson's Lament (Ballantine, 1992)
The Hangman's Beautiful Daughter (Scribner's, 1992)
Zombies of the Gene Pool (Simon & Schuster, 1992)
Missing Susan (Ballantine, 1991)
Highland Laddie Gone (Ballantine, 1991)
If I Ever Return, Pretty Peggy-O (Scribner's, 1990)
The Windsor Knot (Ballantine, 1990)
Lovely in Her Bones (Ballantine, 1990)
Sick of Shadows (Ballantine, 1989)
Our Separate Days (anthology, Rowan Mountain Press, 1989)
Paying the Piper (Ballantine, 1988)
Bimbos of the Death Sun (TSR)

JANNY WURTS - ARTIST GOH

"She draws real pretty!" said an anonymous source when asked about Janny "She also writes good!"

Janny is the SFWA (Science Fiction Writers Association) and ASFA (Association of Science Fiction Artists) liaisons. This means she has her hand and heart in the science fiction world.

Todd Cameron Hamilton said about Janny's art that it is lush in both texture and color. She works in oils and her art is vibrant and luminous. She uses dramatic lighting like the early Pre-Raphaelite illuminationists. She also likes horses!

The cover of the program book shows both her ability to dramatize as well as her love of horses. Her background in theater is also evident.

She is also married to the talented Don Maitz.

She is also an author as the following bibliography shows.

Series

The Cycle of Fire

Stormwarden (1984); *Keeper of the Keys* (1988); *Shadowfane* (1988).

Wars of Light and Shadows

The Curse of the Mistwaith (1993); *The Master of Whitestorm* (1992); *The Shops of Merior* (1994) [forthcoming]; *Sorcerer's Legacy* (1982); *That Way Lies Camelot* (1994) [C]

with Raymond E. Feist in Feist's *Riftwar Universe*

Daughter of the Empire (1987); *Servant of the Empire* (1990); *Mistress of the Empire* (1992)

ALICE BENTLEY - FAN GOH

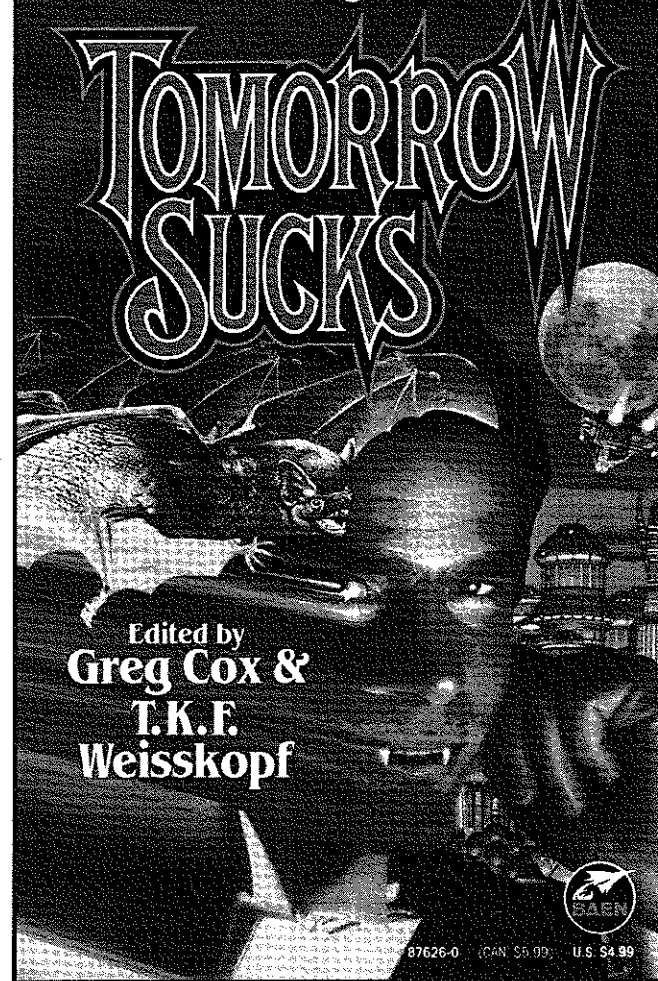
Alice has been involved in Science Fiction from perhaps day 1. She was in her high school (Lane Tech) SF club (Class of '72) and has just gotten more and more involved. As the eldest of the Insley children she has been able to spread the SF 'word' to any who would listen.

Alice is, as an anonymous source said, "Perky", but she is also extremely "honest", "clear headed" and truly speaks her mind.

She has been involved in Capricorn (gopher to chair to president of their board) as well as many other conventions in Chicago, down state Illinois and Michigan. She also throws some absolutely great parties!

Alice as a physicist for many years until the desperate need for a Science Fiction bookstore was felt. She, with some help of many friends and family was able to start the bookstore "Stars our

SF in a Jugular Vein

TOMORROW SUCKS
GREG COX & T.K.F. WEISSKOPF

Science Fiction in a Jugular Vein

From the streets of old London town to the squalid fleshpots of Mars, from the Russian steppes to the gleaming decks of interplanetary spaceships, a new breed of bloodsucker is on the loose. Born of bacteria or technology or extraterrestrial biology, these *scientific* vampires stalk through time and space in search of prey both human and otherwise.

Not even Dracula was more deadly.

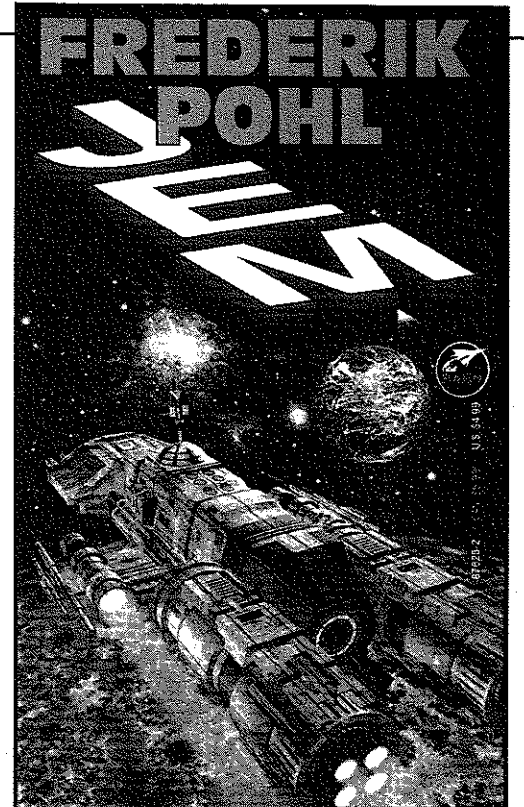
So throw away your garlic. Pour that holy water down the drain. The old rules no longer apply, and nothing can save you: TOMORROW SUCKS!

TALES OF SCIENTIFIC VAMPIRISM BY

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OCTOBER 1994

JEM
FREDERIK POHL

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Destination". She has worked diligently over the past few years and now has not only the best Science Fiction bookstore in Chicagoland but one of the best in the country. Recently Alice added another portfolio to her long list of accomplishments. She and husband Mike have a son Martin. She is truly a 5 ***** fan and great all around person.

BARBARA HAMBLY - TOASTMASTER

Oh good, Barbara's back at Windycon. Oh good, Barbara's back at Windycon. The echo was heard all over. Not only is Barbara a "splendid conversationalist," "fun", "clever" "enjoyable", she is also president of SFWA (Science Fiction Writers of American) and loves ethnic food.

The following is from her latest book. *Stranger at the Wedding*: At various times in her life Barbara Hambly has been a high school teacher, a model, a waitress, a technical editor, a professional graduate student, an all-night clerk at a liquor store, and a karate instructor. Born in San Diego, she grew up in southern California, with the exception of one high-school semester spent in New South Wales, Australia. Her interest in fantasy began with reading *The Wizard of Oz* at an early age, and it has continued ever since. She attended the University of California, Riverside, specializing in medieval history. In connection with this, spent a year at the University of Bordeaux in the south of France and worked as a teaching and research assistant at UC Riverside, eventually earning a master's degree in that subject. At the university she also became involved in karate, making black belt in 1978 and competing in several national-level tournaments. She now lives in Los Angeles.

Works of Barbara Hambly
Published by Ballantine Books:

Dragonsbane

Sun Wolf and Starhawk
The Ladies of Mandrigyn
The Witches of Wenshar
The Dark Hand of Magic

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The Time of The Dark
The Walls of Air
The Armies of Daylight

Sun-Cross
Rainbow Abyss
The Magicians of Night

Stranger at The Wedding

Those Who Hunt The Night

Search The Seven Hills

Biography of Scholar GOH-Clark E. Wilmarth

(The following was found among the papers of long-time fan and President of Moebius Theater, the late Alan Ziebarth)

Windycon XXI is indeed honoured to have as its Scholar Guest-of-Honour the famed archeologist and world explorer Dr. Clark E. Wilmarth. In this age of expanding informational technologies it isn't often one comes across a truly "Renaissance Man".

I first met Dr. Wilmarth while studying Cultural Politics at world famous Miskatonic University. His lectures on the truth behind world archetypes was a major influence on the intellectual and religious beliefs of all who heard them. His lecture at opening ceremonies-"Lovecraft, the Rapture and the Oncoming Millennium" will alter the reality tunnels of all who truly listen.

Dr. Wilmarth is, of course, the grandson of Prof. Albert Wilmarth, famed professor of literature at Miskatonic University who along with the Nathaniel Peaslee, William Dyer, and Henry Armitage brought fame and fortune to Miskatonic through their scholarship and exploration.

Dr. Wilmarth (A.M. Miskatonic, PH.D. Princeton, Litt. D. Johns Hopkins) has had a rather illustrious career for a man who still has more than half of his life ahead of him. After finishing his doctorate in Cultural Politics at Princeton he spent a number of years exploring Australia and Central Africa. (He just recently finished a year exploring the long closed former republics of the Soviet Union-Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan.)

He is currently the Chair of the Department of Cultural Politics, once held by Willard Peaslee, son of the famous Wingate Peaslee. Besides his role as an advisor to world governments (and longtime member of the National Security Council) Dr. Wilmarth has had a distinguished publishing career, both academic and popular.

His books include:

Dancing With The Shadow; Rhythm and Alliteration In The Necronomicon (Oxford, 1988).

At The Well Of Darkness: A Selection Of Rituals From The Pnakotic Manuscripts (Harper & Row-San Francisco, 1989)

Havamal; Poetic Survivals Of Elder Rituals In The Icelandic Sagas (University of Chicago, 1991)

Man Are From Mars, Women Are From R'lyeh (Workman, 1993)

The Cthulhuine Prophecy (Simon & Schuster, upcoming)

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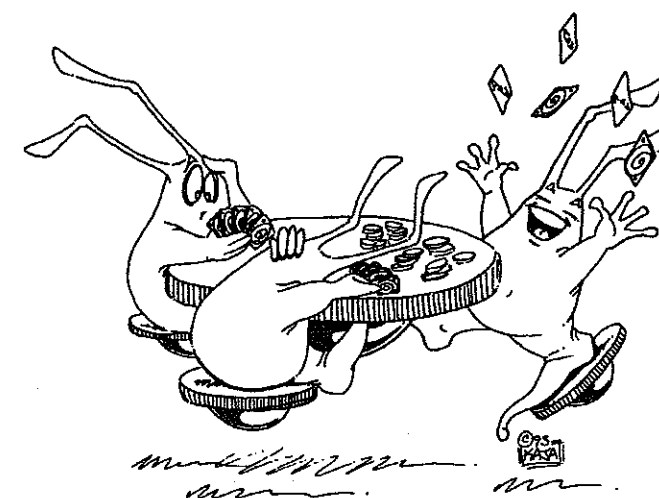
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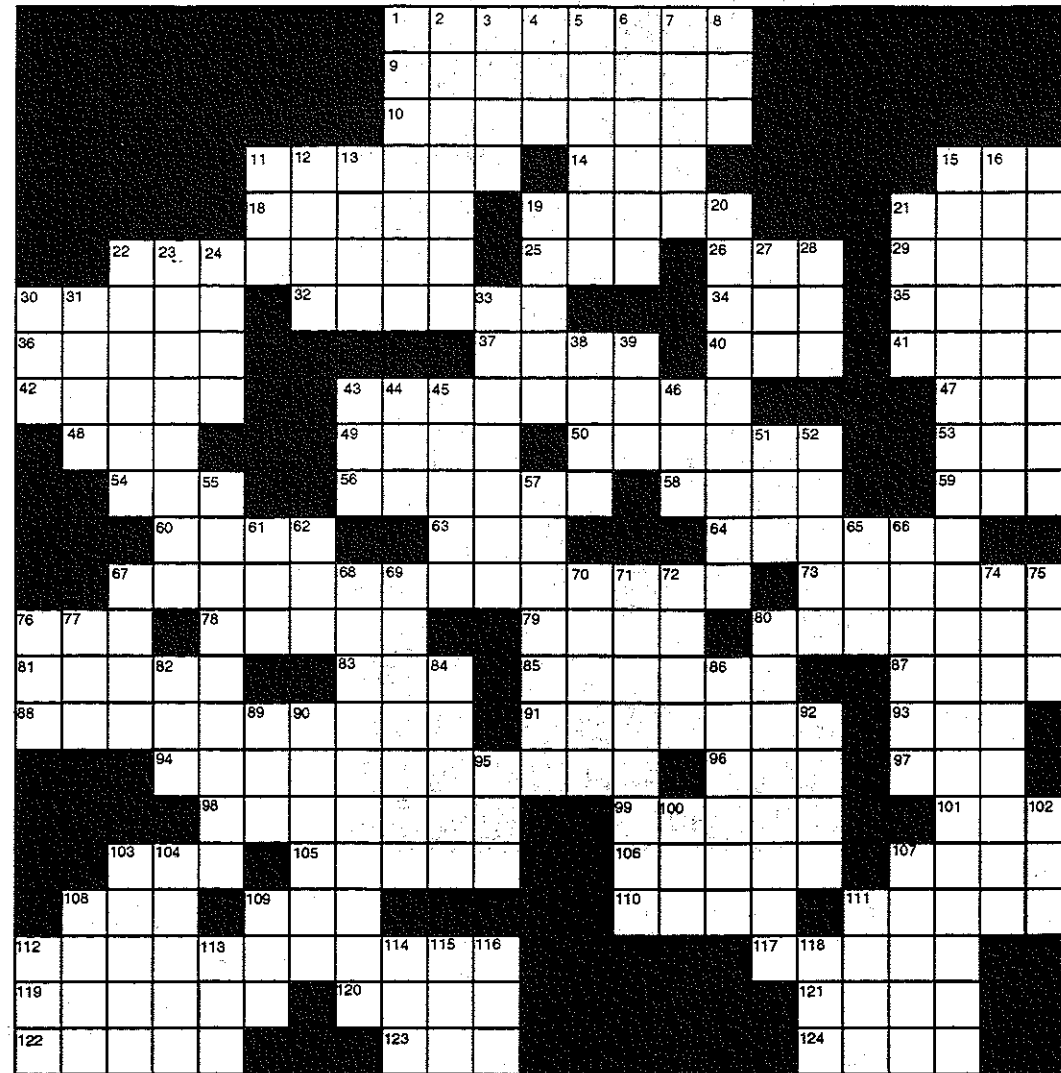
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ACROSS

1. Hugo-winning Simmons novel
 9. Facial ornaments
 10. Totally lawless
 11. Detroit Tigers manager
 14. Hebrew letter
 15. ____-Fi Channel
 18. Medieval trade association
 19. Eastwood film, "Two ____ for sister Sarah"
 21. A unit of matter
 22. Feelers
 25. Malt or Canton ending
 26. "Body Snatchers" kind of bed
 29. Tom Hanks role
 30. See Threepio's buddy
 32. Old Faithful, for one
 34. A kind of murderer
 35. Brithstone
 36. Lend moral support to
 37. Coalition of nations
 40. Frequent partner of ham
 41. Italian appellation
 42. A division of an epic poem
 43. Schwarzenegger tag line
 47. The (Ger.)
 48. Follows Feb.
 49. Nautical (abbr.)
 50. A few eggs have to be broken to make it
 53. ____ Age
 54. Toss a grenade
 56. Woodland spirit
 58. Trendy "building block"
 59. Punk rocker vicious
 60. Famous naturalist
 63. B-F connection
 64. Dr. Who companion
 67. God of gymnastics?
 73. Has being
 76. A winning Tic-Tac-Toe play
 78. Judge Doom was one
 80. Weakling
 81. "____ of Frankenstein"
 83. ____ sum
 85. Kind of valve
 87. Bitsy's pal
 88. Electrically charged layers of Earth's atmosphere
 91. Necessity for a scuba diver
 93. Egyptian Boy-king
 94. One place to make a call
 96. Salt (Fr.)
 97. "Zine
 98. "Popular" news source
 99. Passage in an airplane
 101. Chemical suffix
 103. Higher Higher education test
 105. In another's place
 106. M. L. King's "I Have a ____"
 107. Popular cheese
 108. Greek letter
 109. Architect I.M. ____
 110. North Korean river
 111. ____ to bed
 112. Hulk Hogan's holds
 117. ____ voice
 119. Military storehouse
 120. They're found at every Con
 121. Raison d' ____
 122. Find out about
 123. Tor. province
 124. Harry Hausen and Bolger
 DOWN
 1. Unconfirmed testimony
 2. "Damn ____"

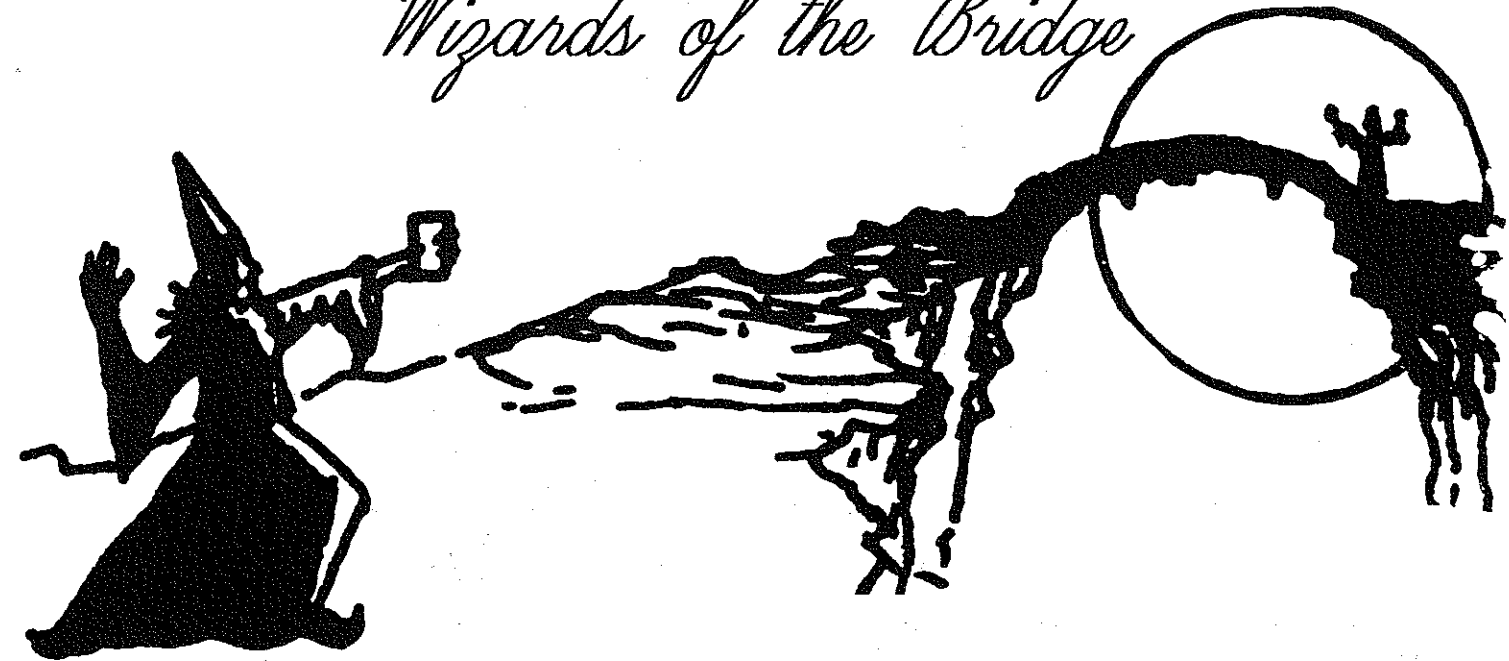


3. Beseech
 4. "Tp ____ is human..."
 5. Cleft
 6. Bill Clinton didn't
 7. Pointed arch
 8. President's advisory group
 11. Roseanne film "____ Devil"
 12. Guilty feeling
 13. McCaffrey
 15. What 29 across says
 16. Legendary gymnast
 17. Begged
 19. Country music's Haggard
 20. "Glittering" extras on a birthday cake
 21. Awestruck
 22. Can't sing a note
 23. Ripley's spaceship
 24. A dog in Kansas
 27. Before hemoglobin and moron
 28. Across Sandra ____
 30. Early Jackson 5 hit
 31. Wander
 33. Wave cycle
 38. Woodwind

39. Kind of wheel or gear
 43. Those elected to office
 44. Movie horse "Phar ____"
 45. Addams Family butler
 46. Original cartoon drawing
 51. Type of maniac
 52. Oscar winner for "My Cousin Vinny"
 55. Vaudeville routine
 57. Recurring every third day
 61. Wedding words
 62. What to do with an oar
 65. Guns 'n Roses main 'Rose'
 66. Khrushchev
 67. Tarzan's preferred cloth
 68. 'Next Generation' planetary organization
 69. Ancient Greek warship
 70. Concerning molecular matter
 71. SNL's ____ for prime time players
 72. Tiny pest
 74. Tasty mexican treats
 75. Mata Hari was one
 76. ____ Wan Kenobi
 77. Gold (sp.)

80. A king of Sparta
 82. Computer term
 84. Tragic Greek princess
 86. Central German city
 89. Clever play on words
 90. Gretel's partner
 92. Kaddidhopper
 95. With subtract, multiply, divide
 100. A Gershwin
 102. Comedian Phillips
 103. Potentially harmful rays
 104. Scuttlebutt
 107. Contest submission
 108. Container weight
 109. Snoop into one's affairs
 111. ____ boy!
 112. Famous movie computer
 113. Seabird
 114. Company bigwig
 115. ____ Tiki
 116. Huge aircraft
 118. Poetic contraction

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An experienced committee: Our committee covers the fannish bases -- dealers, artists, fanzine and APA publishers, costumers, gamers, filkers, and even a few SMOFs. (*Oh, dear.*) We've held top-level positions at virtually all recent North American Worldcons and have extensive experience running cons all around the continent, even Chicago!

A strong fannish base: A successful Worldcon needs a multitude of local volunteers to make it happen. With five annual SF cons -- all independently run -- Chicago has the largest group of experienced, capable volunteers in the Midwest.

Superb facilities: We're back at the Hyatt Regency Chicago, home of Chicon IV and V. And with 2000 sleeping rooms and 210,000 square feet of function rooms and exhibit halls, you never have to go out into the sun or rain unless you want to.

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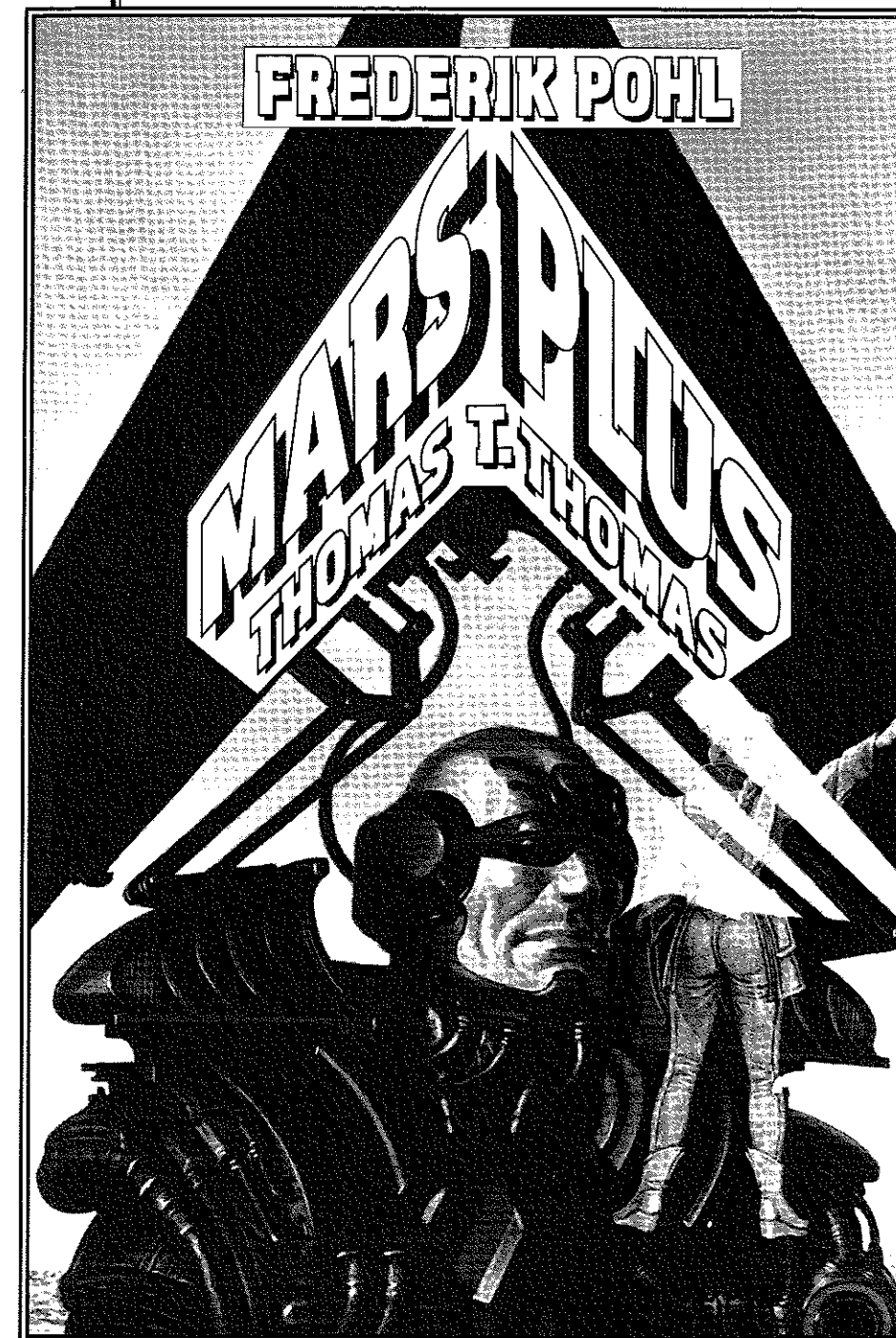
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Packers

The ambulance docked atop the hospital. Drowning victim Sharyn Madison, twenty-six, went to E.R. Lifetechns recorded her neural net into a padded rectangular pack the size of a small briefcase. Efforts to revive her failed. Two pack specialists took over. One secured connections to the brainstem and attached the unit to her back with flexlinks.

The second tech yawned and monitored the pack's autonomic signals. "Motor neuron read: standard efferent dysfunction. Sensors up. Eating and walking programs online." He almost turned to look up at the figure watching them from the viewport. "The husband can see her soon."

The first tech did glance up, at a thirtyish man with short dark hair, a blood-drained face, and swollen eyes. The man leaned heavily against the thick, angled viewport. Handprints stained the glass.

"I hate the way they stare like that."

"What do you expect? I wouldn't want to trade places with them. Ready to switch awareness back on?"

"She's gonna wiggle."

"Usually do."

Spasms racked Sharyn Madison. Her eyes fluttered open and stared.

#####

One of the recovery room nurses suggested to program the light-walls a different color. Elliot Madison chose pale bluebird-blue, Sharyn's favorite. He sat beside her medbed, still shaken, her hand cool in his. He Aput his head down by her pillow.

Her perfume implant had run out. The faint scent of roses faded from her. He drew nearer, closed his eyes, and blocked out a replay of the canoe accident. Old dredged up memories of his grandmother's bedridden death struggled to rise, but he held them down.

Instead he clung to Sharyn. He pictured their home. She put up with him being a slob. They had a cat, Twister, an orange tabby from the shelter. Elliot hardly ever fed or watered it, or scooped out its litter, but when he came home, Twister ran right to him, crying for affection. Sharyn would smile.

"Hello? Mr. Madison?"

A small stocky woman, around forty, stood at the door. She wore her brown hair short, and no hospital garb except for her name tag. She looked tired.

"I'm Nishal Adler, your packer therapist."

He bent his brow. "Therapist?"

She stepped in further. "For the two day training period. You'll learn to care for your wife. Can we talk in my office?"

Elliot pulled his hand away, Sharyn's fell back.

Nishal Adler's office: a comp desk, three chairs, and barely any room. He slumped down across from her.

"Call me Elliot."

"What do you know about packers?"

"I read a blurb about them a few years ago on Timenet Speedfacts—controversies about costs, objections from some churches. We had minimal riders for retrieval added to our medical credit software, in...in case anything..." Tears rushed up. He covered them with his hands.

Nishal nudged a box of tissues to him and placed a steady hand briefly on his arm. Elliot took a tissue and momentarily exposed the jagged white lines on his wrist.

He wiped his face and looked up at two framed pictures of a child of about eight on Nishal's desk. The girl wore the same dress in both pictures. Twins maybe?

"Nice kids," he said.

Nishal picked up one photograph and brushed a hand across it. Lines in her—faces deepened. "My daughter, Tonnie—before and after." She put the picture back carefully next to the other. Her fingers ran through her bangs.

"Elliot, here's the straight stuff. Since the health care crunch of 2051, consumers get as much treatment and support as they can afford. First, the good news. Your wife's mind is stored in her pack. Efferent dysfunction leaves her aware, but unable to move or communicate. Smart monitors and programs, like those for the disabled, are built in. Once attuned to your voice, they'll respond to verbal commands: sit, walk, stop, eat, and so on. Within reason, the safeguards won't let her overeat, fall, or walk into things." She took a deep breath.

"Now the bad news. The pack only approximates her neural signals. Eventually her body will deteriorate. Packminds atrophy and seldom revive if stored dormant for the nine month cloning period. The pack must remain tuned its original body until the moment of transfer. Then the new brain takes over. The old body's final decay can be quite grim."

Elliot met her eyes and rubbed a throbbing wrist. "When?"

"Around six months, escalating after that."

"Will she be in a lot of pain?"

"Most likely, no."

He wiped his sweating palms on his knees. "I know we took the cheapest package, but why can't I get some help?"

"I wish it didn't come down to money, but I double-checked with accounting. Thanks to a legal software glitch, her assets are tied up in probate. You'll get two check-ups each month, emergency outpatient care, and the transfer. Private care falls to you."

She hesitated, then handed him a card. "I'm not supposed to do this, but when things get bad, call me if you need help."

Elliot slipped the card into his wallet, clenched his teeth, and tightened his lips.

"For the record," Nishal said, "I do most of my work on a volunteer basis. The Health Center slashed my salary in half a year ago."

He nodded absently, mind still awash.

"Any relatives or friends who can help?"

He rubbed his face, needed a shave. "Our parents are gone. Maybe Sharyn's sister...there's a friend from college who became a nurse."

"Call them. For the next two days, your four hour training sessions start at eight. I know you're upset, but you have to tell yourself you can get through this. You have a second chance. In nine months, you and Sharyn can still be together."

#####

That evening he went for a walk and stopped at a hardware store. He bought a package of carpet knife blades. He wasn't sure he could handle what might happen. To get Sharyn back he'd try.

The next day he watched vids. One of them traced the third trimester decay. Elliot threw up in a wastebasket around the eighth month. Nishal shut off the vidwall.

"I won't be able to handle it if she gets like that," he said.

"Because of your grandmother's death?"

His fists clenched.

"We have your medical history, Elliot. I know how you hurt yourself. You've experienced a lot of loss; we should discuss that."

"I've had therapy." Elliot stood up slow. "You're getting my life from some file. I lived it, it's done, and I don't need to rehash it!"

She held her palms out. "Okay, sorry. Just be sure you know yourself going into this."



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He sat down, folded his arms, and glared at the vidwall. "Show me the rest." He choked down his gorge twice before throwing up again, but he watched the vids to the end.

He learned how to feed and bathe Sharyn, how to manage an I.V., and how to care for lesions, sores, gangrene, and amputations.

For the last minutes, Nishal brought in a former packer. "This is Clea Barnes. Thirty-five, divorced mother of two. Three years ago she was injured in a high speed train accident. Nine months later, she transferred into a clone."

Tall and bony, Clea let down a sun dress strap to show him her packer scars from the transfer—small, lighter colored bursts of flesh from the flexlinks and other connections, like a constellation of stars. "Sometimes people don't believe me," she said.

Nishal sat down with them. There wasn't much time left, and Elliot had questions.

"Was there any pain?"

"Not physically. Not being able to move or communicate was painful. I sent my kids to my sister's before the decay. The worst was during the last month, when my boyfriend Phil left me. I haven't seen him since, but I understand. Some medical students volunteered to watch over me until the transfer."

"What was it like?"

"Being a packer? Watched a lot of vids, listened to disc books and music. Slept a lot."

"What about sex?"

She colored slightly and smiled, but her eyes glistened.

"I didn't mean to upset you. Nishal said packers enjoy sex."

Clea laughed and wiped away a few tears. "I sure did. I felt so close to Phil—alive. The touching and intense pleasure—I can't describe it. I wanted to tell him how much it meant to me. I'm seeing someone else now, but I'll never forget Phil."

Nishal nodded. "Physical contact and closeness with loved ones means a lot to packers."

"What about the transfer?"

"I was so happy to see my kids again...to hold them...talk to them..." She wiped her eyes on the backs of her wrists and blinked. Nishal checked her watch. "I'm sorry, we're running late here."

Elliot stood and shook Clea's hand, wishing he could have spoken to Phil. "Thanks, this has helped. Good luck."

She shrugged. "I'm alive. Good luck to you; you've got the hard part."

Elliot fingered the package of blades in his pocket, turning them over absently in his hand. "I hope so too," he said.

#####

The first day back at their condo, Sharyn stood at the door he opened. "Walk," he said. She moved forward. "Stop. Scan room. Save." Once the pack read the room, he sat Sharyn down in her favorite recliner and turned on vids.

Twister ran in from their bedroom, ignored Elliot, and jumped up on Sharyn's lap. The cat meowed, probably out of hunger and loneliness.

In the three days since the accident, Elliot had only stopped in twice, but the house was still cluttered. He smiled at what Sharyn might say and promised to do better.

For lunch he fixed his specialty: tomato soup and grilled cheese sandwiches. When he went to bring Sharyn to the table, Twister lay curled up, purring himself to sleep in her lap. Sharyn cried.

Elliot knelt down and touched her tears. Of course they were involuntary, but any reaction at all seemed miraculous. He kissed her forehead and moved Twister to the couch, much to lazy cat's protests.

He made a game of feeding Sharyn. The eating program allowed her to chew, drink cooled soup through a straw, and swallow.

Elliot chuckled when some soup spurted free, and dabbed at her with a napkin. "Hey, you dribbler. Guess I'm gonna have to get some bibs, huh?" He kissed her cheek. The program shut down when she was full. He sighed and zapped his cold food in the micro.

On her way back to the living room, he noticed that she smelled. They detoured into the bathroom. He connected the void unit from the hospital's home care package to her underpants and clipped the discharge hose to the toilet. He cleaned her mouth while the unit washed and dried her.

Both of them needed a shower. Undressing Sharyn was awkward, but not without rewards. He enjoyed touching her. Yet her lack of reaction bothered him.

He bathed himself first and then Sharyn, caressing her soft skin and hair. She was a little flabby in places, but firm and voluptuous overall. The warm pulsing water warmed them.

He tried not to touch the pack, but he knew her essence was trapped inside. He hoped Sharyn took delight at his touch, that still had needs for closeness and affection. Elliot towed both of them off, dried their hair, and brought her to their bed.

She lay beside him on her back to his left. His right hand trembled and slipped over her cool flesh, fingertips moving with patient ardor. He brushed her lips over hers and pressed past her teeth to seek her tongue.

Her mouth tasted rancid, even after the oral rinsing. He pulled away and ran to give his lunch to the toilet.

He cleaned up and crawled back in beside her. "Sharyn...I'm sorry, honey...I couldn't help it." Tears filled her eyes and burned into him. She was aware. He babbled more apologies, but how could he make things right when they weren't?

He held her until he found the courage to start again, to stroke her

THE WINDYCON CON SUITE

will be open

Friday: From noon until 5 am, (closed for cleaning)

Saturday: From 9 am until 5 am (closed for cleaning)

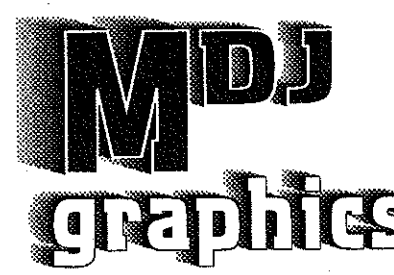
And Sunday: from 9 am until 3 pm (Dead Dog Time)

We will have the usual comestibles, and some unusual ones, too!!! We will be featuring Baderbrau, bbeer from Pavichevich Brewing in Elmhurst.. If you were at Chicon V, you know how good this stuff is—if not, come up and try some!!!!

The golden liquid (bbeer) will be available from 3 pm until 4 am on Friday, from 3 pm until 5 am on Saturday and from noon on Sunday until the Con Suite closes (or until we have to get the tappers back). BE AWARE that the legal drinking age in the State of Illinois is 21. The convention badges will be color coded, but please don't feel offended if someone on the Con Suite staff asks you for further ID; with the increased awareness of alcohol problems, we're just covering ourselves from problems with the Blue Meanies (and litigation). The Con Suite Staff would also like to issue an urgent plea for anyone who would like to work with our merry band of people; please see us in the Con Suite after you have registered, or see Operations and tell them that you want to work in the Con Suite. Especially appreciated would be people over the legal drinking age to assist in the distribution of the bbeer.

We will be in room 5321, the same suite that we have had in previous years, and it will remain a non-smoking Con Suite. Smoking will be allowed in the elevator lobby on the 5th floor. No smoking in Con Suite or Halls! If you must smoke the elevator lobby on the 5th floor is the only acceptable place.

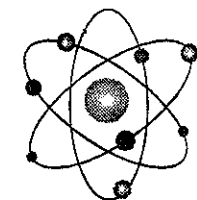
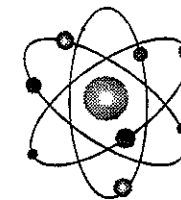
Come up and see us during the convention; it promises to be the usual crazy time!!!!!!



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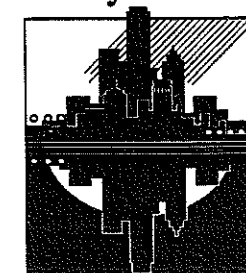
A long time ago....

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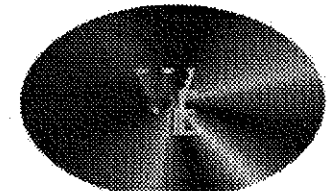
Fans boldly go where they've always gone before...

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To all my friends and customers:
Sorry I didn't make it to Windycon this year.
I'll be back.

auburn hair and meet her eyes in the blue tint of starshine. The night flowed in above them from the skylight, as if they were under water.

"Don't worry," he said. "I love you, Sharyn—always will."

He kissed all around her face. He nibbled her eyebrows the way Twister did when the cat wanted to wake them up for attention. Tears laced down from her eyes. He ensnared them with his lips and prayed they tasted of joy.

Elliot felt his own need. He kissed, nibbled, and sucked—all the way down her neck, shoulders, breasts, the silky insides of her arms, her navel. He adored each part of her, pleasing her with his hands and mouth. Sharyn's lips parted slowly and closed as slight gasps escaped her.

He swept into her like a wave of yearning and the light of her half-veiled eyes met his, hazed and afire.

#####

After four months, Elliot had their routine down. That Sharyn could walk made things easier around the house, but out in public her pack attracted attention, not all of it good.

The park they liked was small: a duck pond, white oaks, red maples, the usual squirrels and pigeons. Elliot walked with her there as often as he could fight off his weariness. Some people stopped and stared. Bold kids giggled. Rude ones shouted openly; teens called packers 'zombies.'

One day a guy confronted them and pointed an accusing finger at Sharyn. "This thing is an abomination," he shouted. "Depart, you undead legion of hell! I cast you out of this unclean flesh in the name of Jesus!" He shoved her down. Her head barely missed the recycled plastic sidewalk and struck the grass.

Elliot gaped and then punched the screaming man in the kidney, then in the face. The zealot backed away bloody, and dodged other wild blows. Elliot stopped and let him run.

"You lunatic! Stay away from her!" He helped Sharyn up. His bleeding right hand stung, but the tension release felt good.

Elliot grew paranoid and kept Sharyn home. The pressure increased. Sharyn's sister Helene and his college friend Warner Gietzen had offered to help. He had Nishal Adler's number. But he wanted to take care of Sharyn on his own for as long as possible, and reserve the extra help for later, when the decay started. Sharyn couldn't move around, so she was fine on her own while he worked.

Caring for her and making ends meet wore Elliot down, and his job performance slipped. He went on probation. Each day he stumbled home, his fatigue growing. Five more months to go.

On top of everything else, he felt isolated. Friends didn't call anymore. That angered him. He refused to chase after them, and did his best to hid his growing bitterness from Sharyn.

One evening she belched clam chowder all over him and the table.

"Goddamn it, you sloppy bitch! Do you think it's fun cleaning you up all the time?" He took the bowl and smashed it in the sink. Soup and shattered ceramic splattered the kitchen. He stopped and leaned against the counter, unable to face her.

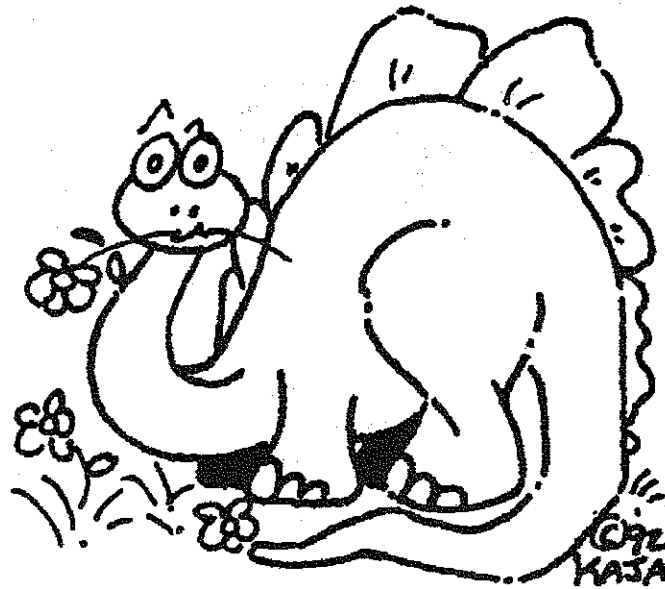
"Honey, I'm sorry. I'm...so tired. I'm losing it."

Elliot phoned Warner. They babbled on the phone, Elliot talking most. He told Warner his fears. The attack in the park came up.

"People are like that, Bud," Warner said. "Persecute and victimize the helpless. What better victim than a Packer? You can't trust anyone you don't know."

Warner was between jobs and divorcing his second wife. Elliot invited him to visit for a while. He'd look for work, and being a nurse, he could help out a lot with Sharyn.

Warner arrived the next day with one bag and the clothes on his tall, skinny frame, his hair short and orange with tiger stripes. In



college he'd been pretty wild, but life's hardships seemed to have mellowed him somewhat. At least Elliot felt he had someone to share the load with. That night they went through three big bottles of cheap wine.

Two weeks later, just into the fifth month, Elliot came home and found Sharyn crying in front of the TV.

"Warner, what's wrong with her?"

"I don't know, Bud. I tried changing stations—"

"Any bruises? Sores?"

"Frost, Bud. It's probably nothing."

They checked her from head to foot. It was still too early for the decay. Sharyn kept crying.

Elliot took her in for an examination and waited for the results the next day. Dr. Polzon called him at work.

"Anything wrong, Doc?"

"We found no evidence of decay or much discomfort. But one of the nurses noticed something minor."

"What?"

"It was barely noticeable. Are you and your wife still having relations?"

"I was told that was all right for the first six months. Should we stop?"

"No, but try a little lubrication. There's some general swelling and perhaps soreness around the anus."

"Doc...we don't do that."

"Oh—"

Elliot hung up and left work.

In the living room, he found Sharyn naked and bent over the couch crying. Warner, in a t-shirt, pulled away from her. He covered himself with his right hand and tried to ward off Elliot with his left.

"H-hey, Bud—"

Elliot got one hand on Warner's throat. He kept up his momentum. They slammed into the wall. Warner's head struck hard.

A haymaker smashed into Elliot's nose. They separated.

"Son-of-a-bitch!" Elliot shouted. Warner circled around the sofa. Elliot tacked him. They fell onto the coffee table, shoved it aside. A leg broke off. Elliot cracked his head. Warner sucked air. Both of them kicked to get free.

"Crazy asshole!" Warner said. "Get off me!" He dove for the broken table leg.

Elliot gouged Warner's genitals, sank his fingernails in, and twisted, trying to tear them off.

Warner shrieked. Elliot jerked him up off the floor and let him fall back whimpering. Then he took aim with his knee, dropped down, and hammered Warner's groin to the floor. Warner gurgled and passed out.

Elliot staggered to his own feet and kicked at Warner before calling the police.

#####

At six months Elliot still blamed himself for what happened. He swore not to trust anyone to take care of Sharyn on his own. With her trauma and the decay coming, they stopped having sex.

Sharyn gave off an offensive odor. He bathed her more often and started regenerative implants. Her skin still developed yeast infections, boils, and peeled off in sheets. Small bumps turned into bruises; minor scrapes and cuts became seriously infected.

Sharyn's flesh grew progressively sallow and leather-like after seven months. Gray, stinking decay crept up her extremities. At eight she lost the ability to cry, and her muscles did not respond to the walking and eating programs. An I.V. fed her, blocked pain, and bolstered her immune system.

He carried her to the bathroom one day and came away coated with pus. He put her to bed, ran outside in a thunderstorm, and screamed at the lightning. Holding her at night grew unbearable.

With two weeks to go, Elliot was fired. His emotional state mirrored Sharyn's physical condition: both of them were falling apart. For three helpless days he watched Sharyn's decay worsen. When he dozed, he clutched one of her gooey hands. He thought of ending it: a pillow while she slept, a few open veins, and then himself. They'd both be free. Was there anything worse than watching her rot?

During the third night he stood over her thinking, and finally his hands reached down for her neck. A slant of moonlight caught her eyes as they opened and looked up into his.

"Forgive me," he said, and collapsed at the side of the bed. He grasped one of her hands. The fingers and palm pulled free. He shook and tried to scream, but no sound came. He dropped what he held, scrambled to his feet, and backed away until he struck the bathroom door frame. He let his vision clear.

Sharyn's arm drained a dangerous amount of blood and fluid. He used his belt for a tourniquet and chocked down his bile as he sobbed.

"I can't take this anymore!" He backed away again, slipped, and fell writhing on the floor. He pulled himself up and ran to punch up Helene on the phone.

"I'm calling your sister," he yelled back to Sharyn. "She's only a few hours away. All I think about is killing both of us. I never was any good at caring for people. You'll be safer without me."

Helene answered. He'd give her no chance to refuse. "Helene? Elliot. Things are bad. I have to leave. I have to. Just listen! Get the hell over here and take care of Sharyn. She only has eleven days until the transfer. I'm not going to make it two more minutes. No, damn it. I'll be gone when you get here."

He tore the phone down and fled their home on foot across lawns and sidewalks into the chill of the night. Should he turn to someone, or just use the blades in his pocket? The pain and self-loathing had to end.

He saw a phone and thought of Nishal Adler. She'd said it'd get bad. His hands wouldn't stop shaking, but he made the call. Nishal picked up.

"Hello?"

"This's Elliot Madison; I've left my wife. She's rotting and I can't take it, so I called her sister to take over. I can't ever go back!"

"Calm down, Elliot. Let's talk." He took down her address.

Nishal opened her door to him in sandals and faded blue coveralls.

"Come in, Elliot. Try to relax."

He stepped in "Relax? I abandoned my wife when she needs me most!"

She tried to sit him down on the couch but he stood up again, and paced about the cluttered living room.

"You'd be surprised," Nishal said. "Lots of people jump ship long before the last two weeks."

He collapsed on the floor and leaned against her sofa. "I was going to kill her...and then myself," he whispered.

"I know. Relax a little longer; things will clarify."

"How the fuck do you know?"

"Listen, and I'll—"

"Stop it!" a child's voice screamed. She ran to her mother from the short hallway nearby, wearing a thin nightshirt—the daughter from Nishal's pictures. She was a year or two older, but it was her, short blond hair and eyes the deep color of bluebird feathers.

She faced him in fear and anger. "Don't hurt my mom. Don't yell at her!" She turned away from him and hugged Nishal, who took the child in her arms. Elliot noticed light starbursts of skin on the child's back, like a constellation of scars.

He paled and suddenly understood why Nishal kept doing her job. "Shh, Tonnie. He's not going to hurt me. Someone he loves is sick, like you were once, and he feels bad. He needs to talk to me; that's my job." Nishal kissed her. "Go back to bed."

Tonnie glared at Elliot again. "You woke me up. I heard yelling." She turned and trundled back down the hall to her room. "No more yelling at my mom!" A short silence passed.

"I saw her scars," he said, and swallowed hard. "Must have been hard with a kid."

"I took off before the last month, abandoned my own child. Some nuns took care of her. I came crawling back after the transfer—and there was my baby again. She still loved me. She forgave me when I couldn't. I had to go out and help others before I could do that."

"Tonnie said being a packer wasn't all bad after she got used to it. Most of them say that. It's the caretakers who have all the pressure. You've done enough. Think of yourself now, Elliot."

He bashed the carpet with his fist. "That's all I ever do. I take everything like a martyr, but then I resent it. It was the same way with grandma. She was in pain, and she asked me to release her—a pillow, anything. But I couldn't. I let her suffer, and you want to know why? Because I was afraid. I didn't want to be alone."

"Elliot, you were a fifteen year old boy who'd lost his parents less than a year before." She tried to put a hand on his arm but he jerked away.

"She cursed me," he said. "My grandmother moaned in agony, and cursed me. I called the hospital once I knew she was gone." He offered up his scarred wrists. "Then I did this. Everything seemed like it was my fault. I didn't care anymore. It's the same way with Sharyn now." He bawled openly.

Nishal shifted her crossed legs. "Elliot, when Tonnie's arm came off in my hands like a doll's, euthanasia and suicide crossed my mind too. Deep down we're all cowards, especially when it comes to something like this. Death is hard on the living, not the dead. People consider suicide when they fear living more than dying."

"But with packers, after the transfer, we get the one we lost back. We get a second chance."

Her words should have made sense, but they bounced off the walls he'd built up. He ran his shaking hands over his head, tearing at his hair until the pain distracted him from his racing thoughts.

"I don't think she'll take me back. I wouldn't if I were her; not after what I've done. She won't forgive me. And even if she does—I can't."

"Elliot. You said her sister is coming out. Look, I'll run Tonnie over to my neighbor's and go check on Sharyn. Promise me you'll stay here until I get back."



He nodded. Get her out of the way.

"When I get back I'll find you a place to stay until the transfer. You've done enough, Elliot; more than most people. Stop tormenting yourself. It's surprising how happy people are after the transfer. Everything that happened before doesn't seem so important. You stuck by Sharyn all this time. She'll remember that and forgive you, and that'll heal you both."

She called the neighbor, got her coat on, and wrapped up Tonnie before going out the door with Elliot's address and his keys.

After she left, Elliot ducked out and ran down the old paved streets, a run down section of town without recycled plastic paving. He'd been so upset he hadn't noticed before.

He avoided the glare of sparse street lights as if they could expose what he felt to the world. The darkness about him matched better what he held inside. He sought the shadows.

#####

Three weeks later, he knew the transfer was complete. Sharyn was probably up and around. She'd have access to her accounts and she'd be fine, better off without him.

His accounts were closed, all credit revoked due to job loss and neglect. He brooded in the streets, turning something over in his pocket, just as he turned one thought over and over in his mind. He'd given it his best, and it wasn't enough.

He staggered about in a bleary, malnourished daze, invisible to the rest of the world unless he got in someone's way. He wore the same clothes, tattered and stained from dumpster raids and other sleeping places. He caught his own reek, and even he didn't recognize his reflection when he saw it. He didn't give a shit. Let the filth on the outside match that within.

Elliot wandered into the park where the fanatic had attacked Sharyn. Greening maples and oaks smelled of life, in ironic contrast to his own stench and decay. He was like Sharyn had been when he left her, but no rebirth was possible for him. The part was as good as any place.

Down on his grubby hands and knees in the grass, he crawled in

among some bushes beneath a large red maple. He took out the carpet knife blades and tore open the worn, fingered wrapper with his teeth. The blades fell like flashing alloy leaves. His grimy, black-nailed hand trembled as he plucked one up, but he didn't hesitate. Vicious swipes raked each wrist before he grew weak. Blood spurted from his veins and sprayed like strange lawn sprinklers pumping red. He gained a sudden clarity, and thought of Sharyn while he grew dizzy.

The final irony came too late: he was still being selfish, still thinking only of himself. So afraid to face Sharyn. But what if she could forgive and love him? What would his death do to her? She'd be alone. She'd blame herself. Out of his own fear and pain, he'd do to her what his grandmother had done to him.

He'd made the wrong choice, and taken the coward's way out—again.

"No!" He fought back. "Sharyn!" he screamed. He pushed off against the tree like a swimmer and crawled out of the bushes, leaving a bright red wake. He didn't get far—too stupid to deserve another chance. Someone screamed nearby.

#####

"Poor woman," the tech said.

"I wish she wouldn't look down at us like that. Get him to reco so she can see him."

Elliot's eyes flickered open. He tried to scream, tried to jump up, run away, but he couldn't. Sharyn wept as she stared down at him through a viewport covered with handprints.

Sharyn put her arms about him in the recovery room, a smile beyond her tears. God she looked good. Elliot felt uncomfortably numb, a stab of pain here and there, but not bad.

"El, don't worry. I don't blame you...for anything." Her words broke up.

"Forgive yourself. For months you took care of me, loved me, protected me. It drove me crazy. I couldn't tell you how much I loved you. Sometimes I wished I would die, just to release you from the pain."

She smoothed his hair. Gentle fingertips touched his slack face. "I'm going to be there for you, El. And I won't be alone." Tears filled his eyes, blinding her from his sight. Her lips brushed over his. She smelled of roses and life.

— Emmett Gard Pittman



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