

# ALEXIAD

(ΑΛΕΞΙΑΣ)

\$2.00

It was a bumpy weather ride last night. Joe and I went back to the house early. It turned out we need not have done so but that is twenty twenty hindsight. The best information we had was that bad weather would move in around five o'clock. When you're told there will be severe thunderstorms you're wise to seek shelter before the storms are scheduled to start. The storms held off until around eight before the clouds began gathering. It is about an hour later that the sirens go off. I go downstairs and into the downstairs bathroom where I cower in fear and think of Mayfield until the sirens stop. When that happens I realize that this time I have dodged the bullet. Other parts of Jefferson County are not so lucky. Unlike Mayfield no lives were lost here but there was damage to property and roads got blocked with debris enough that school had to be cancelled. And unlike Mayfield those neighborhoods that were hit were not destroyed. None of our neighborhoods were made to look like Ukrainian cities.

— Lisa

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Pascha is April 24.

The 148th Running of the Kentucky Derby will be **May 7, 2022**.  
 The 147th Running of the Preakness Stakes will be **May 21, 2022**.  
 The 153rd Running of the Belmont Stakes will be **June 11, 2022**.

Printed on April 22, 2022  
 Deadline is June 12, 2022

## Reviewer's Notes

One of the most popular themes for alternate history works is "Nazis win." And yet, the more serious fans have dissected these possibilities and find them extremely improbable. And they have some very powerful sources, such as Adam Tooze's *The Wages of Destruction* (2006). Tooze discusses how the Nazi economic miracle was founded on smoke and mirrors, based in resource-looting, and constantly on the edge of collapse.

(I am reminded of the presentation in *Cracked* magazine, back when it was just a second-rate version of *Mad*, on the rising popularity in culture of the Nazis. One item was a WWII version of Monopoly. The title deeds for the various countries, instead of being mortgaged as they are in regular Monopoly, listed the country as being pillaged.)

In spite of this, it's still popular, in books (Jo Walton's *Small Change* trilogy) and TV (*The Man In the High Castle*). Perhaps it feeds the need for activists to feel they are rebels united against an evil empire.

The Covid pandemic seems to be ebbing. Yet activists continue to exploit it. Skeptics carefully and thoroughly discredit and debunk their scientific arguments. Which has no effect, since the antivaxxers use political arguments, seeing the pandemic as a worldwide Reichstag Fire, used by the powers that be to increase their control of the people.

Skepticism was once a very active movement, with writers, scientists, and other diverse members promoting their goals. Now, though, skeptic movements seem to consist of people famous for their skepticism.

And newspapers still run astrology columns. Dowsers say, "It works. I don't need to be tested." Psychics blithely continue their predictions, even though their predictive efforts are less than random. (Disturbingly, that also seems to hold true for forensic profiling.)

Sorry for taking so long, but I have been not entirely well and harassed by other issues.

— Joe

## RANDOM JOTTINGS

by Joe



Buy my books. (All available on Amazon.com for quite reasonable prices, except the Hugo-nominated *Heinlein's Children*, which can be bought from Advent Publishers, or from ReAnimus Press in electronic format.)

<https://www.AdventPub.com/1531>

Advent Publishers  
P.O. Box 16143  
Golden, CO 80402-6003

<https://reanimus.com/store>

— Advt.

In what became only an embarrassing moment but what nearly turned out to be a less than pleasant historical recreation, the *SY Agulhas II* was trapped in the ice of the Weddell Sea, at the location they had deduced was that where the *Endurance* had sunk. Fortunately the *Agulhas II* had the engine power to get free.

Then, on March 5, at 1600 hours, the wreck was found. The reporter said, "It is sitting upright, well proud of the seabed and in an excellent state of preservation. Some damage to fo'c'le deck and part of starboard side but otherwise intact."

After photographing the wreck, Captain Knowledge Bengu of the *SY Agulhas II* took the ship to South Georgia, where he laid photographs of the ship on Shackleton's grave. Yes, that's really his name, and he's a Zulu. The wreck is a designated monument under the Antarctic Treaty and *no* artifacts are to be removed from it. The position of the wreck on the seabed is being kept absolutely confidential to aid in this effort.

Meanwhile, the RRS *Sir David Attenborough* has completed her first Antarctic supply mission, restocking the British Rothera station, on the Antarctic Peninsula. The BAS scientists were spared the embarrassment of being replenished and relieved by the RRS *Boaty McBoatface*.

We are pleased to announce that the final volume of Hugh Lupus's Different WWII, *An*

*Extra Knot Part VIII*, is now out (2022; APS Books; ISBN 978-1789967227; \$20.99; 2022; APS Books (Kindle); \$4.99). Germany is fallen, Japan is being battered, and the *Hood* is there. And due for an interesting fate, too . . .

### IMPORTANT NOTICE FROM BOB MADLE

#### PLEASE BE ON THE LOOKOUT!

We are searching for my copies of "*Science Fiction*" Fanzine #1-5 (1932-33), Jerry Seigel – Editor. Issue #3 contains the first appearance of Superman.

I recently discovered that many of my fanzines from the 30s and 40s, including all five issues of "*Science Fiction*" were stolen from my collection. The theft occurred sometime prior to the start of the pandemic – before March 2020.

I'm attempting to track down the "*Science Fiction*" fanzines since these are so rare and any sale would be notable. If you hear of a set for sale or are contacted about them, please let me know.

As most of you know, these are extremely rare; there are only a few copies in existence. This is a very special item and means a lot to me, so again, I would appreciate it if you hear anything about a sale or purchase of them, please contact me.

Thanks,  
Bob Madle

[bobmadlebooks@gmail.com](mailto:bobmadlebooks@gmail.com)

Paramount has officially announced that Mr. Spock's full name is **S'Chn T'Gai Spock**. You may have heard this before.

It's from Barbara Hambly's *Ishmael* (1985). Understandably she is overjoyed at this, and feels she can call herself Spock's godmother.

This is the book that sent Spock back to the time of "Here Come the Brides" — which had Mark Lenard (Sarek) playing a major role! And she not only slipped in references to other Western TV series, but had ones to the Doctor.

### MONARCHICAL NEWS

**Prince Mihai of Romania** was born at Polizu Hospital at Bucharest on **April 15, 2022** to Princess Alina-Maria and Prince Nicholas. He is the grandson of Princess Helen and the late Robin Medforth-Mills and the great-grandson of King Michael (Mihai I) and Queen Anne.

### YOU'RE SO VAIN

by Joe

There will be two solar eclipses in 2022. The first will be a partial eclipse on **April 30, 2022**, visible in Chile, Argentina, Bolivia, and Paraguay with the maximum eclipse being visible at 62° 6' S. 71° 30' W., off the Antarctic Peninsula. The eclipse is part of Saros 119,

which began on May 15, 850 and will end on June 24, 2112.

The second will be a partial eclipse on **October 25, 2022** visible through Europe and the Middle East, and past the Urals into Western Asia, with the maximum eclipse being at 61° 36' N. 77° 24' E. near Nizhnevartorsk, Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Okrug, Russia. The eclipse is part of Saros 124, which began on March 6, 1049 and will end May 11, 2347.

NASA Eclipse website:

<https://eclipse.gsfc.nasa.gov/eclipse.html>

Other useful eclipse websites:

<http://www.hermit.org/Eclipse>

<http://www.eclipse.org.uk/>

### A NEW CAR

Note by Joe

The Taurus had got us through thick and thin, We had driven to Washington, Boston, Raleigh, Chicago, and Denver. We had gone often to Lexington, Henderson, and Hopkinsville, and occasionally to Nashville. It was big enough to take Tim and Elizabeth and all their luggage too when we went to Dayton.

But it had 200,000 miles on the odometer, and parts had to be replaced. Beyond that, starting turned out to be . . . interesting. Particularly when I took Lisa to church, went to eat, and the car would not start.

The shop said it was the starter wiring harness, which had given trouble before, and to take it to the dealer. The dealer told me that they did not make that part any longer.

I supposed I could have found it on eBay, or at a local junkyard. But the former was problematic and the latter was aimed at people who had their own tools and could pull parts out. If I had been in touch with Doug from work I might have got him to help. Emphasis on "might".

So it was time to bite the bullet and get a new vehicle. Financing was interesting and that's beyond the purview of this tale.

I settled on a Ford Escape SUV. My plan was to sign the preliminary papers and come back the next day with a check. I had been driving a rental car because we needed to go places not conveniently on a bus line, even though it cost \$\$ per day. The rental people offered to take me to the dealer's when I dropped the car off, as they had come to 1409 Christy when I rented the car. That turned out differently.

It was the last day of the month. Inventory figures would look very good if they had money instead of cars. So I signed and signed and signed and signed, until I was in possession of a 2018 Ford Escape SUV.

Then we finished cleaning out the Taurus and went to dinner.

It gets good mileage. One of the ways that

it does is disconcerting. If I stop at a light, after a few seconds the engine cuts out, and doesn't restart until I hit the gas.

In the physical field, it has a shorter wheelbase which makes parking and tight turns easier. It is higher and I can get in without ducking (the rental car was a small one and I had to bend myself double to get in).

The controls are different. They have gone to a console gearshift (automatic transmission; I cannot shift for myself). There are compartments where I can put my sunglasses and more to the point the GPS (so I have it ready to go, but it can't be seen when I'm not using it).

The car warms up quickly. This feels good on cold winter mornings. The air conditioner also works well. When there's a hot day followed by a cold one, this is a good thing.

The running lights come on automatically. They are so bright that I was forgetting to turn on the headlights.

Everything is electric. If I try to open the door using the key, it sets off the emergency signal. But there are elapsed-trip indicators and a system for connecting a phone to the car that I still haven't been able to figure out.

To reset the clock I have to turn on the radio. Don't ask me why.

### GO SET A WATCHMAN

Commentary by Joseph T Major on

#### THE LAST CLOSET:

#### The Dark Side of Avalon

(2018; Castalia House;  
ISBN 978-9527065204; \$19.99;  
Castalia House (Kindle); \$5.99)  
by Moira Greyland

Vox Day (Theodore Beale) certainly loves to set a cat, preferably one that is rabid and has been starved and abused until it is extraordinarily ferocious, among the pigeons. Accusing fandom of being a haven of pedophilia would be expected. (One wonders why he hasn't seized on the Disclave incident, to add BDSM to his store of accusations.)

Even excluding the publisher, the author might be said to have issues. Since she is accusing two dead people, there is no way to get their defenses. And she even gives a plausible cause; she was excluded from her parents' will.

And yet . . .

She begins by recounting the early lives of her parents, Marion Zimmer Bradley and Walter Breen. MZB suffered from the "pink monkey" syndrome, of being different, and skilled in skills that were not welcome. Breen was intelligent and had skills, yet he began to turn different after an injury.

Then they got married and had children.

Moira makes out her childhood to have been one of oppression and isolation. Her father in particular was sexually aggressive, regretting only that she was not a boy. His theory, she says, was that homosexuality was

the normal state of human sexual relations and people were brainwashed into heterosexuality. At the very least her mother was culpable and she describes in painful recollection how her mother also made a pass at her.

She tried to stay away from them, living with friends and acquaintances. But she had to get financial support, get an education, somehow.

Gradually her parents deteriorated. MZB aged poorly, while Breen's habits finally caught up with him. He was imprisoned for child molestation, and died. She died too, separated from her family, dominated by her companion and editor. (Who, it seems, was the beneficiary of MZB's will, getting half the estate.)

Moira tried to make a life for herself, changing her name, establishing a career as a harpist, being a performer at Renaissance Faires. She doesn't mention that much of her life (She has a daughter, it seems, but the woman is not mentioned.)

Again, the question arises: is this an attack against those who cannot reply? Breen's career is well known; the book usefully reprints fanzine reports on the Boondoggle, the debate over whether to ban Breen from the Pacificon because he *might* molest a child. There were also reports of MZB's "companionship" with Dark-over fans, some of whom even lived under Renunciate names.

Grayland described a disturbing inversion of what is recognized as aberrant behavior when heterosexual parents do it; she was criticized for *not* being a lesbian. This is as bad as tyrannizing and abusing a child for being gay or lesbian. Given the nature of human behavior, it should not be surprising that the inverse relationship can apply, but some people decline to believe it.

Grayland has been criticized for presenting pederasty as a consequence of homosexuality. There are too many (but any is too many) heterosexual child abusers. She may be drawing too much on her own horrific experience.

In many ways this is a profoundly disturbing book. The reader can wonder "is it true?" It is, again, her side of the story. And yet this is a problem often found in sexual crimes; the accuser becomes the accused, having to meet unreachable standards of proof, while the accused is given the benefit of the doubt.

In response to the publication of *Go Set a Watchman* (2015), a prequel which had a radically different perspective on the characters of *To Kill a Mockingbird* (1960), the satirical website *The Onion* announced the publication of a third novel by Harper Lee, *My Excellent Caretaker Deserves My Entire Fortune*, described as "the heartwarming relationship between a deaf and nearly blind author in the small-town South and the extremely kind and attentive caretaker to whom she wills every penny of her \$45 million estate". Is there a real-life version of this in here?

### UNPLEASANT NEWS

Commentary by Joseph T Major on  
*SERPENT'S WALK*

by "Randolph D. Calverhall"  
(1991; National Alliance)

This is a novel about a group of underground Nazis. They have been working in secret to make themselves real *Übermenschen*, and having succeeded, in 2040 emerge and take over the world.

It would appeal to the *Turner Diaries* crowd, naturally. So it should be a footnote in the ugly, empty, pointless story of neo-Nazi politics.

Except, it seems, that "Randolph D. Calverhall" was Muhammed abd-er-Rahman "Phil" Barker, creator of the exotic world of Tekúmel and deviser of the role-playing game set therein, the inspiration and (until now) pleasure of a small but devoted band of role-playing gamers.

This revelation has disheartened many and disgusted some. Barker seemed to have lived two lives. (He was even on the advisory board of the Institute of Historical Review, the neo-Nazi and Holocaust-denying group.) Yet none of his gaming group, or his correspondents on Tekúmel, seems to have noticed anything at the time.

### HORSE NEWS

by Lisa



Two Derby winners died in March, 31-year-old Go for Gin and 29-year-old Grindstone. Go for Gin had been at the Horse Park and so Joe and I got to see him. Both Derby winners enjoyed long lives. I felt a pang at their passing and then my thoughts turned to Medina Spirit, who did not get to enjoy a long life and whose short life was marked by so much controversy.

### ANY RESEMBLANCE TO RECENT EVENTS . . .

Review by Joseph T Major of  
*IGOR'S CAMPAIGN*:



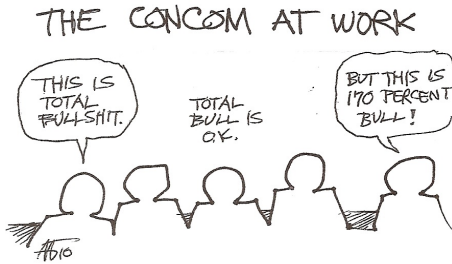
### *A Tale of Ambition*

(1996. 2022; Amazon.com Kindle; \$0.99)  
by Tom Veal

In 1958, after various financial quarrels and other thoughts about establishing a regular governing authority for Worldcon, the World Science Fiction Society, Inc. was incorporated in New York. The principal movers of this effort were the people running the existing worldcon, the Nycon 2, which would take place in September of that year.

All Fandom Was Plunged Into War over this, and after much argumentation and other such efforts, the company was allowed to lapse in 1959. We have seen recently how many pros believe that there is such an authority, what with the petition to disallow the Jeddicon bid, the proposed settlement of the San Diego con protest, and the like.

Louisville fan Mike Sinclair sponsored a hoax bid in the early 1990s, for Moscow in 1995. It gave him an opportunity to throw parties and otherwise have fun, but he did say at times that he had a contract with a Moscow hotel. It never came up to actually bid.



But in this story, ex-Soviet oligarch billionaire Igor A. Strudelorski, a rocketry entrepreneur (got the Korolev Bureau for 10 billion rubles or \$75?) went on to win the Wordcon. As our story begins, drunken Russians (if that's not a redundancy) are at a room party selling crudely printed pieces of paper for real American dollars. Our protagonist buys them just so he can get out of the room.

His room, it turns out, is occupied. Fortunately the woman who got double-booked can read Russian, and she manages to make out that these are stock certificates in the World Science Fiction Society, Inc., incorporated in Russia — a few days from now!

Then there comes the Business Meeting. Where Strudelorski, presiding, uncorks a fast one. Under the provisions of, not Robert's Rules of Order, but the Zemsky Sobor, it turns out he can introduce a motion and it can be retrospectively ratified on the behalf of the previous Worldcon as well.

Then he introduces his motion to set up that WSFS, Inc. and it passes. Which leads to a scramble for votes.

The overseas fandom as a whole has 49% of the stock. Strudelorski has 49%. Our

protagonist has the decisive 2%. Then he gets made an offer . . .

### THE MORE THINGS CHANGE . . .

Review by Joseph T Major of  
**BULLARD OF THE SPACE PATROL**  
(2021; Hassell Street Press;  
ISBN 978-1014325341; \$24.95;  
2020; iktaPOP Media (Kindle); \$2.99)  
by Malcolm Jameson

There were writers who died too early, having made their mark, but with signs of further greatness. We know Louisville's own Stanley G. Weinbaum, and the acid-tongued Futurian Cyril M. Kornbluth. (Imagine Kornbluth surviving to become editor of *F&SF*, and receiving the manuscript of *Stranger In a Strange Land*: "Finish the first part of this, Bob, and you've got something." \*GRRR\* \*GRRR\* \*GRRR\*.)

Lesser known, but with his own promise, was Malcolm Jameson (1891-1945). He was of the noteworthy contributors to *Unknown Worlds*. But he was principally known for his "Bullard of the Space Patrol" stories, tales of a noteworthy officer who acknowledges his imperfections and strives to overcome them, as he rises through the ranks and has various levels of command.

The stories are very much influenced by his experiences in the U.S. Navy (he retired at the rank of Lieutenant). It's a real navy, with budget cutters, regulation-nagging commanders, sleazy dives (How ever did this win the Boys Club of America award?), drugs, and fiendish terrorists. Also, dry humor; the last line of "Bullard Reflects" (*Astounding*, December 1941) for example.

### IF YOU STRIKE ME DOWN I SHALL BECOME MORE POWERFUL THAN YOU CAN POSSIBLY IMAGINE

Review by Joseph T Major of  
**ENTEBBE DECLASSIFIED:**  
*The Untold First-Hand Stories of  
the Legendary Rescue Operation*  
by *Sayeret Matkal* Operators  
(2021; BooxAi; ISBN 978-9655779066;  
\$18.99; BooxAi (Kindle); \$5.99)

The history of a battle, is not unlike the history of a ball. Some individuals may recollect all the little events of which the great result is the battle won or lost, but no individual can recollect the order in which, or the exact moment at which, they occurred, which makes all the difference as to their value or importance.

— Arthur Wellesley, Duke of Wellington

One wonders what Old Nosey would have made of an army of Jews. Just as likely, he would have been struck by the efficiency and force with which this command performed its duties.

And forty-five years after the raid, the Israeli

government delivered a collection of memories of the battle. On July 4, 1976, operators from the elite *Sayeret Matkal* (ת"ר"ס ל"כט"ג), the Reconnaissance Unit General Staff, had carried out an amazing and desperate hostage rescue in Uganda. There has been no final report, due to the demise of the unit commander, *Sgan aluf* (Lieutenant-Colonel) Yonatan "Yoni" Netanyahu, during the raid; the only fatal casualty in the force.

Now, what we have are the stories of the participants, not only the *Sayeret Matkal* men but the others who were on the ground during the mission. This illustrates Wellington's point about the history of a battle. We hear voices of all sorts of men from a diverse and argumentative army, one that sets to its mission and performs with power and will.

The reader will see that such an organization needs all kinds of support, many soldiers who do not take up arms but instead make the taking of arms possible and effective. They did their part because they knew it.

There are debates. One of the long-standing difficulties was the actions and attitudes of second-in-command *Rav seren* (Major) Moshe "Muki" Betser; the reports do not take sides, there are differing observations.

The ranks and assignments of the men are given, and their careers afterwards are described. They did very well. (Yoni's two brothers also served in *Sayeret Matkal* later. You probably know one of them: Benjamin "Bibi" Netanyahu.)

There is a key to the success and efforts of *Sayeret Matkal*. The author of the introduction, *Tat aluf* (Brigadier General) Yiftach Reicher-Atir, puts it at the end of the introduction, so casually that it might be passed over:

"Who dares wins."

### NEBULA FINALISTS 2021

Courtesy of SFWA and File770.com

Here is the complete list of finalists:

#### NOVEL

- The Unbroken*, C.L. Clark (Orbit US; Orbit UK)
- A Master of Djinn*, P. Djèli Clark (Tordotcom; Orbit UK)
- Machinehood*, S.B. Divya (Saga)
- A Desolation Called Peace*, Arkady Martine (Tor; Tor UK)
- Plague Birds*, Jason Sanford (Apex)

#### NOVELLA

- A Psalm for the Wild-Built*, Becky Chambers (Tordotcom)
- Fireheart Tiger*, Alette de Bodard (Tordotcom)
- And What Can We Offer You Tonight*, Premea Mohamed (Neon Hemlock)
- Sun-Daughters, Sea-Daughters*, Aimee

Ogden (Tordotcom)  
*Flowers for the Sea*, Zin E. Rocklyn (Tordotcom)  
*The Necessity of Stars*, E. Catherine Tobler (Neon Hemlock)  
 “The Giants of the Violet Sea”, Eugenia Triantafyllou (*Uncanny* 9–10/21)

## NOVELETTE

“O2 Arena”, Oghenechovwe Donald Ekpeki (*Galaxy's Edge* 11/21)  
 “Just Enough Rain”, PH Lee (*Giganotosaurus* 5/21)  
 “(emet)”, Lauren Ring (*F&SF* 7–8/21)  
 “That Story Isn't the Story”, John Wiswell (*Uncanny* 11–12/21)  
 “Colors of the Immortal Palette”, Caroline M. Yoachim (*Uncanny* 3–4/21)

## SHORT STORY

“Mr. Death”, Alix E. Harrow (*Apex* 2/21)  
 “Proof by Induction”, José Pablo Iriarte (*Uncanny* 5–6/21)  
 “Let All the Children Boogie”, Sam J. Miller (Tor.com 1/6/21)  
 “Laughter Among the Trees”, Suzan Palumbo (*The Dark* 2/21)  
 “Where Oaken Hearts Do Gather”, Sarah Pinsker (*Uncanny* 3–4/21)  
 “For Lack of a Bed”, John Wiswell (*Dialectical Plots* 4/21)

## ANDRE NORTON NEBULA AWARD FOR MIDDLE GRADE AND YOUNG ADULT FICTION

*Victories Greater Than Death*, Charlie Jane Anders (Tor Teen; Titan)  
*Thornwood*, Leah Cypess (Delacorte)  
*Redemptor*, Jordan Ifueko (Amulet; Hot Key)  
*A Snake Falls to Earth*, Darcie Little Badger (Levine Querido)  
*Root Magic*, Eden Royce (Walden Pond)  
*Iron Widow*, Xiran Jay Zhao (Penguin Teen; Rock the Boat)

## RAY BRADBURY NEBULA AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING DRAMATIC PRESENTATION

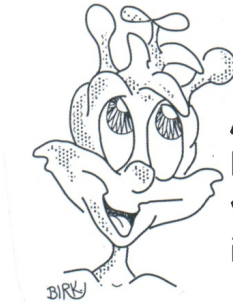
*Encanto* (Walt Disney Animation Studios, Walt Disney Pictures)  
*The Green Knight* (Sailor Bear, BRON Studios, A24)  
*Loki: Season 1* (Marvel Studios)  
*Shang-Chi and the Legend of the Ten Rings* (Walt Disney Pictures, Marvel Studios)  
*Space Sweepers* (Bidangil Pictures)  
*WandaVision: Season 1* (Marvel Studios)  
*What We Do in the Shadows: Season 3* (FX Productions, Two Canoes Pictures, 343 Incorporated, FX Network)

## GAME WRITING

*Coyote & Crow* (Coyote & Crow, LLC.)  
*Granma's Hand* (Balogun Ojetade, Roaring Lion Productions)  
*Thirsty Sword Lesbians* (Evil Hat Games)  
*Wanderhome*, (Possum Creek Games)  
*Wildermith* (Worldwalker Games, LLC, Whisper Games)

## HUGO AWARD FINALISTS 2021

Courtesy of ChiCon and File770.com



Ah . . .  
 It's Hugo  
 voting time  
 in Fandom!

Here is the complete list of finalists:

## BEST NOVEL

[1151 ballots for 443 nominees; Finalist range 111-242]

*A Desolation Called Peace*, by Arkady Martine (Tor)  
*The Galaxy, and the Ground Within*, by Becky Chambers (Harper Voyager / Hodder & Stoughton)  
*Light From Uncommon Stars*, by Ryka Aoki (Tor / St Martin's Press)  
*A Master of Djinn*, by P. Djèlí Clark (Tordotcom / Orbit UK)  
*Project Hail Mary*, by Andy Weir (Ballantine / Del Rey)  
*She Who Became the Sun*, by Shelley Parker-Chan (Tor / Mantle)

## BEST NOVELLA

[807 ballots for 138 nominees; Finalist range 90-235]

*Across the Green Grass Fields*, by Seanan McGuire (Tordotcom)  
*Elder Race*, by Adrian Tchaikovsky (Tordotcom)  
*Fireheart Tiger*, by Aliette de Bodard (Tordotcom)  
*The Past Is Red*, by Catherynne M. Valente (Tordotcom)  
*A Psalm for the Wild-Built*, by Becky Chambers (Tordotcom)  
*A Spindle Splintered*, by Alix E. Harrow (Tordotcom)

## BEST NOVELETTE

[463 ballots for 171 nominees; Finalist range 44-74]

“Bots of the Lost Ark”, by Suzanne Palmer (*Clarksworld*, Jun 2021)  
 “Colors of the Immortal Palette”, by Caroline M. Yoachim (*Uncanny Magazine*, Mar/Apr 2021)  
 L'Esprit de L'Escalier, by Catherynne M. Valente (Tordotcom)  
 “O2 Arena”, by Oghenechovwe Donald Ekpeki (*Galaxy's Edge*, Nov 2021)  
 “That Story Isn't the Story”, by John Wiswell (*Uncanny Magazine*, Nov/Dec 2021)  
 “Unselie Brothers, Ltd.”, by Fran Wilde (*Uncanny Magazine*, May/June 2021)

## BEST SHORT STORY

[632 ballots for 589 nominees; Finalist range 44-96]

“Mr. Death”, by Alix E. Harrow (*Apex Magazine*, Feb 2021)  
 “Proof by Induction”, by José Pablo Iriarte (*Uncanny Magazine*, May/June 2021)  
 “The Sin of America”, by Catherynne M. Valente (*Uncanny Magazine*, Mar/Apr 2021)  
 “Tangles”, by Seanan McGuire (Magicthegathering.com: Magic Story, Sep 2021)  
 “Unknown Number”, by Blue Neustifter (Twitter, Jul 2021)  
 “Where Oaken Hearts Do Gather”, by Sarah Pinsker (*Uncanny Magazine*, Mar/Apr 2021)

## BEST SERIES

[707 ballots for 194 nominees; Finalist range 66-242]

*The Green Bone Saga*, by Fonda Lee (Orbit)  
*The Kingston Cycle*, by C. L. Polk (Tordotcom)  
*Merchant Princes*, by Charles Stross (Macmillan)  
*Terra Ignota*, by Ada Palmer (Tor Books)  
*Wayward Children*, by Seanan McGuire (Tordotcom)  
*The World of the White Rat*, by T. Kingfisher (Ursula Vernon) (Argyll Productions)

## BEST GRAPHIC STORY OR COMIC

[340 ballots for 239 nominees; Finalist range 19-66]

*DIE, vol. 4: Bleed*, written by Kieron Gillen, art by Stephanie Hans, lettering by Clayton Cowles (Image)  
*Far Sector*, written by N.K. Jemisin, art by Jamal Campbell (DC)

*Lore Olympus, vol. 1*, by Rachel Smythe (Del Rey)

*Monstress, vol. 6: The Vow*, written by Marjorie Liu, art by Sana Takeda (Image)

*Once & Future, vol. 3: The Parliament of Magpies*, written by Kieron Gillen, illustrated by Dan Mora, colored by Tamra Bonvillain (BOOM!)

*Strange Adventures*, written by Tom King, art by Mitch Gerads and Evan “Doc” Shaner (DC)

#### BEST RELATED WORK

[453 ballots for 303 nominees; Finalist range 27-65]

*Being Seen: One Deafblind Woman’s Fight to End Ableism*, by Elsa Sjunneson (Tiller Press)

*The Complete Debarkle: Saga of a Culture War*, by Camestros Felapton (Camestros Felapton)

*Dangerous Visions and New Worlds: Radical Science Fiction, 1950 to 1985*, edited by Andrew Nette and Iain McIntyre (PM Press)

“How Twitter can ruin a life”, by Emily St. James (Vox, Jun 2021)

*Never Say You Can’t Survive*, by Charlie Jane Anders (Tordotcom)

*True Believer: The Rise and Fall of Stan Lee*, by Abraham Riesman (Crown)

#### BEST DRAMATIC PRESENTATION, LONG FORM

[597 ballots for 192 nominees; Finalist range 67-261]

*Dune* (Warner Bros / Legendary Entertainment)

*Encanto* (Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures)

*The Green Knight* (BRON Studios/A24)

*Shang-Chi and the Legend of the Ten Rings* (Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures)

*Space Sweepers* (Bidangil Pictures)

*WandaVision* (Disney+)

#### BEST DRAMATIC PRESENTATION, SHORT FORM

[386 ballots for 337 nominees; Finalist range 25-44]

*The Wheel of Time: The Flame of Tar Valon* (Amazon Studios)

*For All Mankind: The Grey* (Tall Ship Productions/Sony Pictures Television)

*Arcane: The Monster You Created* (Netflix)

*The Expanse: Nemesis Games* (Amazon Studios)

*Loki: The Nexus Event* (Disney+)

*Star Trek: Lower Decks: wej Duj* (CBS

Eye Animation Productions)

#### BEST EDITOR, SHORT FORM

[319 ballots for 123 nominees; Finalist range 47-72]

Neil Clarke  
Oghenechovwe Donald Ekpeki  
Mur Lafferty & S.B. Divya  
Jonathan Strahan  
Sheree Renée Thomas  
Sheila Williams

#### BEST EDITOR, LONG FORM

[182 ballots for 85 nominees; Finalist range 12-44]

Ruoxi Chen  
Nivia Evans  
Sarah T. Guan  
Brit Hvide  
Patrick Nielsen Hayden  
Navah Wolfe

#### BEST PROFESSIONAL ARTIST

[233 ballots for 210 nominees; Finalist range 19-34]

Tommy Arnold  
Rovina Cai  
Ashley Mackenzie  
Maurizio Manziari  
Will Staehle  
Alyssa Winans

#### BEST SEMIPROZINE

[312 ballots for 78 nominees; Finalist range 39-113]

*Beneath Ceaseless Skies*  
*Escape Pod*  
*FIYAH Magazine of Black Speculative Fiction*  
*PodCastle*  
*Strange Horizons*  
*Uncanny Magazine*

#### BEST FANZINE

[243 ballots for 87 nominees; Finalist range 21-76]

*The Full Lid*, by Alasdair Stuart and Marguerite Kenner

*Galactic Journey*, founder Gideon Marcus; editor Janice L. Newman; associate writers Gwyn Conaway, Jason Sacks, and John Boston

*Journey Planet*, edited by Erin Underwood, Jean Martin, Sara Felix, Vanessa Applegate, Chuck Serface, Errick Nunnally, Evan Reeves, Steven H Silver, James Bacon and Christopher J Garcia

*Quick Sip Reviews*, editor Charles Payseur

*Small Gods*, Lee Moyer (Icon) and Seanan McGuire (Story)

*Unofficial Hugo Book Club Blog*, editors Amanda Wakaruk and Olav Rokne

#### BEST FANCAST

[384 ballots for 202 nominees; Finalist range 32-55]

*Be The Serpent*, presented by Alexandra Rowland, Freya Marske, and Jennifer Mace

*The Coode Street Podcast*, presented by Jonathan Strahan and Gary K. Wolfe, Jonathan Strahan producer

*Hugo, Girl!*, hosts Haley Zapal, Amy Salley, and Lori Anderson; producer/editor Kevin Anderson

*Octothorpe*, by John Coxon, Alison Scott, and Liz Batty

*Our Opinions Are Correct*, presented by Annalee Newitz and Charlie Jane Anders, produced by Veronica Simonetti

*Worldbuilding for Masochists*, presented by Cass Morris, Rowenna Miller, and Marshall Ryan Maresca

#### BEST FAN WRITER

[368 ballots for 168 nominees; Finalist range 31-117]

Chris M. Barkley  
Bitter Karella  
Alex Brown  
Cora Buhler  
Jason Sanford  
Paul Weimer

#### BEST FAN ARTIST

[230 ballots for 122 nominees; Finalist range 15-49]

Iain J. Clark  
Lorelei Esther  
Sara Felix  
Ariela Housman  
Nilah Magruder  
Lee Moyer

#### LODESTAR AWARD FOR BEST YOUNG ADULT BOOK

[451 ballots for 208 nominees; Finalist range 59-117]

*Chaos on CatNet*, by Naomi Kritzer (Tor Teen)

*Iron Widow*, by Xiran Jay Zhao (Penguin Teen / Rock the Boat)

*The Last Graduate*, by Naomi Novik (Del Rey Books)

*Redemptor*, by Jordan Ifueko (Amulet Books / Hot Key Books)

*A Snake Falls to Earth*, by Darcie Little Badger (Levine Querido)



*Victories Greater Than Death*, by Charlie Jane Anders (Tor Teen / Titan)

2029  
Dublin  
<http://dublin2029.ie>

**ASTOUNDING AWARD FOR BEST NEW WRITER**

[416 ballots for 187 nominees; Finalist range 44-119]

- Tracy Deonn (2nd year of eligibility)
- Micaiah Johnson (2nd year of eligibility)
- A.K. Larkwood (2nd year of eligibility)
- Everina Maxwell (1st year of eligibility)
- Shelley Parker-Chan (1st year of eligibility)
- Xiran Jay Zhao (1st year of eligibility)

2031  
Texas  
<https://alamo-sf.org/>

**NASFiC BIDS**

2023  
Orlando  
<https://orlandoin2023.org/>

Winnipeg  
<https://main.winnipegin2023.ca/>

**WORLDCON**

2022  
Chicon 8  
Chicago  
September 1-5, 2022  
<http://www.chicon.org>

2023  
Chengdu  
Year of the Water Rabbit  
August 16-20, 2023  
<http://www.worldconinchina.com/index-e.html>

Controversy seems to follow the Worldcon. This year's big squabble has to do with the people on Worldcon panels. Allen Steele had volunteered for panels at the ChiCon. He was turned down, and made a point of complaining about it.

The two sides formed up. Some argued that old writers who weren't being read any more had no appeal to the contemporary crowd. Others regretted the end of an era where one could mix with those who had made the field.

And for too many it means just another reason not to go to Worldcon.

Perhaps Worldcon has gone through a paradigm shift and become a different kind of experience. Or a kind of meeting at which the sort of people who established it are no longer welcome.

A few years ago I read a story that was making a parallel. There was a model train society. At their meetings they would show off pictures of their new layouts, discuss new products, and explain their researches.

Then some of them started featuring their connected interests. There were people who researched real-life railroads. There were people who built dioramas. And so on.

Then people who were interested in those things, but not in model trains, joined. The club grew huge, it gained order, with officers, formal meetings, and a treasury.

The model train people found themselves being pushed out. One wonders.

(I keep on thinking Taral wrote this, but he says no and I can't find the original to confirm or deny it and find the author. Does anyone else

remember this?)



My health continues to collapse. My hemoglobin content remains depressingly low, close enough for me to get a transfusion. As it is I have to spend one day a week getting an iron infusion at \$\$ a pop. It only takes an hour and a half, but there's getting there.

Diabetes seems to be getting to be the national ailment. I am surrounded by fellow diabetics. And my blood sugar crashed recently, with extremely expensive results. At least I was not injured.

But I am getting stiff. And my sleep pattern is erratic. It doesn't help that I seem to have a lot of energy around midnight, which means I get to sleep too late in the early morning.

Grant gave me a book titled *All of My Friends Are Dead*. (by Avery Monsen, 2010). That is not quite the case with him, as we are still alive and so are Tammi Harris and Carolyn Clowes. But his old friends are gone.

The people who knew me in childhood are going. The closest one is the first cousin who was practically our sister (there were reasons). She tries to get us together, at her house in Tennessee. It's so hard coordinating our schedules, but for a few hours we are together again.

But all our parents and uncles and aunts are gone. Lisa still has her father, who went to Washington on an honor flight. He seems to be the last survivor of the sinking of the USS *Bush*. And she has aunts on both sides, and even an uncle who is young enough to be her father's son (Kentucky families often seem to span generations unusually).

Most of those who made fandom have passed away. Bob Madle may soon join them.

**WORLDCON BIDS**

2024  
Glasgow  
August 8-12, 2024  
<http://glasgow2024.org/>

2025  
Seattle  
Mid-August 2025

2026  
Jeddah, Saudi Arabia  
<https://jedddicon.com/>

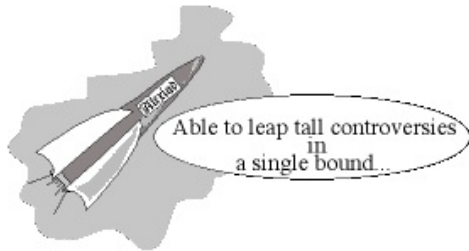
Los Angeles

Nice, France  
August 12-16, 2026  
<http://nice2023.com/en/home/>

2027  
Tel Aviv  
August 2027

2028  
Brisbane, Australia  
Mid-August 2028  
<https://australia2025.com/>

## Letters, we get letters



From: **Taral Wayne** February 19, 2022  
[taral@bell.net](mailto:taral@bell.net)

I actually read your comments on the “Chinese” Worldcon, which is a little unusual as I have no interest in book reviews since I read no new SF or fantasy. But I am interested in an emerging Chinese superpower that wants to take the West’s place in the sun. A Chinese Worldcon is only an afterthought of that place in the sun, but it’s all part of the whole glorious plan to restore China as the center of the universe. I think we can expect more attempts to buy future Worldcons. Why not one in China as often as the Party wants? Even with the current rules, a Chinese could seek to bid every year. 2000 memberships are a cheap price to pay for a national government. It follows that the business meetings will be taken over so that the rules can be changed – such as abolishing the unfair US rotation system entirely, and opening the whole world to fans everywhere. Why should the US, and a handful of English speaking and western European countries dominate the Worldcon, when by rights they should only expect to win a bid every 10 or 20 years? Assuming that China will allow any other nations to host the Worldcon. Perhaps only China-friendly nations like Russia will be given permission to bid occasionally, for example. Byelorussia or Kazakhstan? Perhaps Syria? North Korea?

I don’t expect matters will become that ridiculous, at least not soon. But time is not on our side. If the Worldcon doesn’t become genuinely international, it is as likely to be bought up by corporate interest, the way that the San Diego Comics Con ceased to be a truly fan oriented, fan organized, for-profit event long ago. I don’t expect to live another twenty (or more) years to be there to watch it all happen.

Wait until the Jeddicon organizers figure out they can do the same thing.

—JTM

From: **Darrell Schweitzer** Feb. 20, 2022  
[darrells@comcast.net](mailto:darrells@comcast.net)

I wonder if we Old Fans are not like aging grandparents watching the Kids Today run off toward adventures we will never be able to share. Old Fandom, the fandom of Fancyclopedia and numbered fandoms and the Great Staple War is fading away beyond memory. Very few people I know who are involved in fan activities or conventions are at all aware of such things. On the other hand, I know a couple experts, who are magnets for such lore, but they are few, and they tend to be elderly. Ask the average fan what “The Enchanted Duplicator” was and you will get blank stares. You would then have to explain the punch line to them (“And enchanted duplicator is one with a true fan at the handle”) because they don’t remember the days when duplicators had handles. “The Enchanted PDF File” somehow lacks the same resonance.

It’s entirely possible that the Worldcon will evolve into something we no longer recognize, and which no longer has any interest in us. You and I can remember an era in which convention programming put an emphasis on the elders of the tribe and the living history of the field, and fans flocked to see figures like Jack Williamson or Frederik Pohl or Isaac Asimov or Sam Moskowitz or whoever. Today, many such people are dismissed as being no longer of interest. Some conventions have had demographic purges (often in the name of “diversity”) to eliminate such figures. Likewise the control of the Worldcons may soon be out of our hands. I don’t know how long national governments are going to be interested in the Worldcon for propaganda purposes, but if they are, there is little fans can do to stop them. If the Chinese can buy 2000 memberships and own the Worldcon, there is nothing to stop the Saudis from doing it, and can the Russians be far behind? I rather doubt North Korea would be interested, but they could do it if they wanted to, to celebrate the glorious futuristic vision of Kim Jong Un.

### *So Igor’s Campaign was predictive?*

There doesn’t seem to be any real solution to this. Separate the Hugos from the Worldcon and give it out at the NASFIC? Anything like that would be openly discriminatory, even if the zone of eligibility were extended as far as Japan and Poland. The Hugos are pretty well ruined by our own internal politics anyway, and may not be worth saving. Just imagine how next year’s Hugos are going to turn out, with those 2000 Chinese members (who may or may not exist as individual fans) doing most of the voting. We Old Fans may just have to let it go, and watch the system evolve into something else. Meanwhile, NASFIC or some of the less ideologically-slanted regionals become a kind of last bastion and retirement home, rather like that last colony of Neanderthals who survived on Gibraltar for centuries after the species was extinct elsewhere.

Speaking of old-timers, I once heard Fred

Pohl describe being on the Long John Nebel show with “The Tsar of All the Russias,” i.e. a person who claimed to be the Tsarevitch Alexis. He didn’t have haemophilia, by the way. He had gotten over it. He had apparently been on the CIA payroll for years, because they thought they could use him, and when it was clear they could not, they finally dropped him and so he went to the talk-show circuit. I wonder if this is the same person described in Agent Sniper. His Imperial Majesty did reveal to Fred an awesome secret. He told him who Jack the Ripper was. It really was the Duke of Clarence, who, when he was found out, did not die (that was faked) but was exiled to the Far East. Later he made his way back to Europe and established himself in Austria. He tried to make a living from art for a while. He served in the German army during World War I, then became involved in radical German politics ... You can see where this going. Jack/Clarence must have also had possessed the secret of extended youthfulness, to make the chronology work.

That was probably Golenewski. He claimed he really had not had hemophilia, and the period and location of his career, seem about right.

Your suggestion (p. 4, in the review of *The Quiet Americans*) that the only alternative to American-backed dictatorships was Soviet-style tyranny seems a trifle naïve in the light of history. Many countries, from Egypt to India, found another way. There is a reason that America is so hated (or at least distrusted) in many parts of the world. Maybe there was “rejoicing” when Mohammed Mossadegh was overthrown in Iran, but that too may have been staged by the CIA, which organized much that had gone before, including fake “communist” demonstrations in Mossadegh’s favor. But you will note that the Iranians still do not love us. The original shah, Reza Shah, was an army officer who seized power in a coup in the 1920s. He was allowed to stay as long as he served British and American oil interests. But during World War II he seemed to lean toward the Nazis, and therefore was removed, and his more pliant son, Mohammed Reza Shah (“our” Shah) was installed. Mohammed Reza Shah was forced out by the Iranians in the early 1950s and Mossadegh elected. But when Mossadegh proposed to take control of the country’s resources, he was branded a “communist” and deposed, and the Shah re-established. The Shah was both a westernizer, which might have been good, but also a typical American-backed tyrant, who ruled by terror and corruption. The result was a social explosion, and the Iranians did not end up in a Soviet concentration camp. They found their own way, which is a weird combination of theocracy and democracy (Iranian elections do matter, but the Grand Ayatollah decides who gets to run), and



while Iranians may not love the present system, I do not think they want to go back to having foreigners pick and choose their rulers. The Egyptians under Nasser probably felt the same way. They were glad to get rid of the foreign imperialists (and of the appalling King Farouk). Nasser was no democrat, but his Egypt was truly independent and this appealed to national pride. If someone else were removing and installing American presidents, I don't think we would like it either. Now, as American credibility and influence are on the decline, we will be seeing more countries trying to find their own way.

In aftermath, the Soviet aid and interventions were about as useless. It might be useful in this context to read *The Ugly Russian* (1965) by Victor Lasky, which discusses these goofs. (Sending a snowplow to Guinea, for example.) However, the animosity of the Iranians seems to stem more from Islamism, which the elites don't want to believe exists.

—JTM

From: **Tom Feller** February 21, 2022  
[tomfeller@aol.com](mailto:tomfeller@aol.com)

Thanks for e-mailing the zine.

Anita and I are not planning to attend the China worldcon. We'll be lucky if we get to Chicago.

Maybe you could stop off in Louisville for lunch on the way there?

—JTM

We are still wearing our masks when we go out in public. My main concern is that I might get the Covid without knowing it because the symptoms are so mild and then give it to someone who might get really sick.

My first choice for the Hugo in the novel category was Susanna Clarke's *Piranesi*, followed by Mary Robinette Kowal's *The Relentless Moon* and Martha Wells's *The Network Effect*, which was the winner. The series itself was also the winner in that category.

From: **Trinlay Khadro** February 23, 2022  
[trinlayk@gmail.com](mailto:trinlayk@gmail.com)

Re George Price; When my Polish-Jewish grandmother arrived in NYC at 14-15 years old in 1915, she knew what she'd be facing here... it was still much better than what she was facing back home. Of the extended family who figured "it couldn't get worse" by 1945 there was 1 cousin left.

It's pretty much the same situation for folks fleeing South and Central America. Much of the chaos back in their countries is also traceable to the actions of the US since about 1900. (Often disrupting democratically elected gov-

ernments for the benefit of US business interests.) the US certainly CAN afford to extend asylum to them, as well as other refugees, AND pay liveable wages, AND protect civil rights, and assuring access to affordable healthcare, and maintain public roads, public health, etc. But y'know that would mean reasonably taxing billionaires.

**Elon Musk paid \$11 billion (that's billion) in taxes.**

Additionally, history from grade school up, needs to teach \*real history\* and even introduce primary resource material and how to judge source materials. It does no one any good to teach \*mythology\* and call it "history".

What does he think CRT is?

Because it's Law School level examination of how systems have been and continue to be biased in multiple ways. (Locally we had a redlining case hit the courts about 10-15 years ago. Where banks and realtors were restricting home loans to minority families, despite credit ratings and stable incomes.)

From: **Lloyd Penney** February 26, 2022  
 1706-24 Eva Road, Etobicoke, ON  
 CANADA M9C 2B2  
[penneys@bell.net](mailto:penneys@bell.net)

Thank you for issue 121 of *Alexiad*. I am trying my best for more timely response to the zines I get, and I know I am early in responding...well, good for me! Here comes some comments on the issue.

Indeed, our numbers are shrinking, and the pandemic has not only reduced our numbers further, but has reduced conventions and other events where we could socialize. Our next event will not be until June. That's plenty of time to let this pandemic peter out, or I hope not, prepare for another variant to cut our numbers even further.

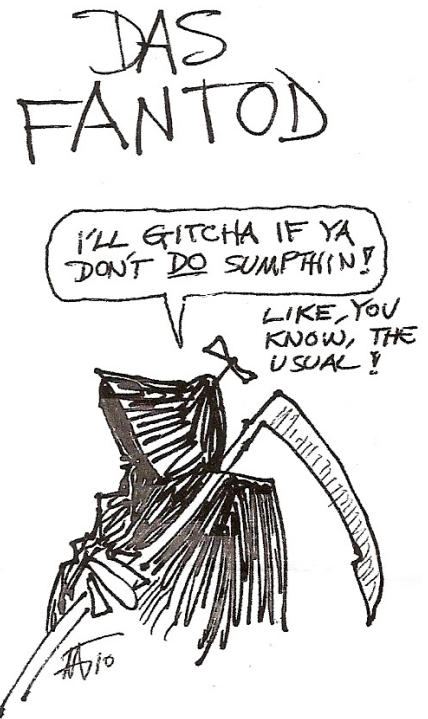
Our interests are not those of succeeding generations, just like when we were neos, our interests were different from generations past. That's why I recognize so few names on the Hugo winners lists. With the attitudes of China towards the West (the recent Olympics were a show of that), why would any Western fans volunteer and spend megabucks to get to China, and not have any restrictions to protect you from a potentially hostile government? With the invasion of Ukraine by Russian forces, I wouldn't want to be anywhere in central Asia right now. Chengdu holds no appeal for me at all, and I suspect the Chengdu Worldcon will be almost totally Chinese. If senior fans who manage the Worldcon are unable or unwilling to go, Worldcon could become an Asian property, and I certainly hope I am wrong.

**Read Igor's Campaign and be amazed and astounded (and even analoged) at Tom Veal's powers of prediction.**

Torcon 3 did that they did with fannish programming because after getting rid of me and Yvonne, and others, they really had no one left with any Worldcon experience. The executive had a few connections with fandom, but the attitude of many of them became we're can cater to the pros, why bother with fandom? (I am certainly biased about this, and my attitudes are coloured by their treatment of us.)

Programming there was in general confused and unsure. Mike Resnick recounted his misadventures in program items in his con report, with the much-repeated lament, "I just love the Torcon programming committee."

Roger Sims will be much missed. Our few encounters with Roger and Pat were always lots of fun.



I had a few hopes that Winnipeg would win the 2023 Worldcon, but it was not to be. There are certainly frustrations when a big group you didn't even know existed swoops down to take your cherished item away, without even a guarantee you might get it back. (We've had a convention stolen from us, so we sympathize with Winnipeg a whole lot.) I can see where some think the whole thing was bought... As said above...I can't go, and wouldn't go. Let's see what happens, and learn from it. Will Chengdu be a success without Western fans attending? I suspect the Chinese government will cover all costs, but will there be the sharing

of funds to finance further Worldcons? Would the Chinese government allow that? Would the US government allow Chinese funds in like that? The Chinese presence will politicize the whole thing, and who ever expected that Worldcon would become a pawn in East-West tensions? Winnipeg is looking at the NASFiC for 2023, and so is Orlando. I suspect Orlando will win, for US fans will want this con at home to spend US cash. I have heard and read others say that the Worldcon has been away too long, and they want it to come back home. (This kind of betrays the word World in Worldcon, but I will not go further.)

In the local...I have heard too often of people dying in hospital from COVID, still convinced, exclaiming with their final breath, "It's all a hoax!" Our leaders are correct, the pandemic is still on, but now, it is a pandemic preying on the unvaccinated. It is hard to have sympathy for them, as vaccines are wide spread and free for the asking. Some of our neighbours in our building are gone; nothing is confirmed, but others think they died of COVID, especially those who were immunocompromised.

Chandler Davis, a name from the past, one of many fans who came up to Canada to escape the draft. The last I heard of him, he was retired from his professor's position at the University of Toronto. I hope he is still with us.

According to Fancyclopedia, yes.

[https://fancyclopedia.org/Chan\\_Davis](https://fancyclopedia.org/Chan_Davis)

My loc...we now have a COVID vaccine from a local company, Novavax. Now to see what happens to it. I think the number of vaccines we have available to us is around 5 or 6. It might be our rumoured 4th dose, and we'd be happy to get it.

Do you think that, as has happened here, that the minting of pennies will stop the US Mint? The Canadian Mint stopped minting pennies in 2014, I believe, and the lack of those pennies has been overcome with software for cash registers to keep track of cents charged or forgiven when it comes to making change. There really isn't much difference, given that most transactions are electronic, and rounding up or down isn't necessary with those. You probably know that we have \$1 and \$2 coins, and there have been rumours of a \$5 coin sometime in our future.

There is a \$1 coin, but it is not popular. The old silver dollar was too big and bulky, and the current ones are too much like quarters.

We saw plenty about the disaster in Afghanistan, with the Taliban easily moving in, and promptly NOT running the country, but banning so many innocuous things, innocuous in our own experience, anyway. This has caused a new Afghan diaspora, and India and Pakistan are setting aside some differences in

order to coordinate food shipments to Afghanistan to prevent an impending famine. Are the Taliban sitting on their thumbs? They have the country they wanted, but seem unwilling to anything with it. Added to the afore-mentioned Afghan diaspora is the Ukrainian diaspora after the Russian invasion a few days ago. Both our countries, and others, are going to have to deal with a lot of new people.

The Taliban are doing something with their country. They are enforcing Sharia law.

—JTM

This was a good issue for me, look at all I can able to come up with. That, and a good night's sleep, must have helped. Thanks for this issue, and we will see you with the next. Take care, and stay well and safe.



From: **Richard A. Dengrove** March 5, 2022  
2651 Arlington Drive, #302, Alexandria,  
VA 22306-3626 USA  
[RichD22426@aol.com](mailto:RichD22426@aol.com)

Here are my comments for *Alexiad* February 2022. I thought I sent you guys a letter for the previous issue but obviously not.

Lisa, I'm glad no one you knew were killed or injured by the destruction of the town of Mayfield. Of course, it's too bad that anyone

had to be.

Joe. No question that fandom, as we knew it, is dying. I think part of the problem is that it's OK for mundanes to like science fiction and fantasy. There's no longer any need for fans to put the wagons in a circle and get out the rifles. Also, for the same reason, fandom can no longer keep the diverse fandoms in one tent. For instance, the furies have long since left us and founded their own cult.

As well as giving an explanation, I ask "Ask Lovecraft?"

<https://www.youtube.com/c/LeemanKessler>

*Agent Sniper*. I wonder how much misinformation Angleton, the head of counterespionage, spread by depending on his pet spy, Anatoli Golitsyn. Faced with accusations from Angleton, Michal Golenewski, who had been a secret source under the name The Sniper, was driven to claim he was the ex-Tsar of Russia. I guess the idea was wouldn't try a crazy person for espionage.

*The Quiet Americans*. I suspect those CIA men failed because it was too easy to be recognized as a Communist by Americans during the Cold War; and it was too easy to recognize the enemies of the Communist as having the support of the natives.

*The Last Blue Mountain*. Haramosh sounds like a hard mountain to climb with all its avalanches. I know the Oxford expedition made preparations but I imagine the Italians did something the Oxford people didn't do. Obviously, it was not an impossible mountain to climb.

They realized very quickly that they had gone at the wrong time of the year.

Time Traveler Must do Research. Rodford Edmiston Smith says that, in order to be a time traveler who knows what he's doing, you have to do your research. Otherwise, you might reveal yourself an enemy of the people. One way to avoid that is explore the past first protected by invisibility. Another way would be to waylay people from the past, bring them to the present and interrogate them. There, you can question them. A better alternative than these two might be to take modern weapons with us when we time travel. When they see what they can do, people will be very friendly to us.

Worldcon Chinese Communist Style. I disagree with Taras Wolansky a lot, but not on the prospect of Worldcon going to China. Unfortunately, China sent the resources to win this time around.

Godzilla's Home ID'd. Why should we name a feature of the ocean for Godzilla? He's famous. Also, so we can thank God that he never actually existed.

Now for the letters.

Cathy Palmer-Lister. I have a number of ailments due to old age. Thank God, nothing that causes me to suffer continual pain. ...Not



yet.

Tom Feller. I can understand why it should be a big deal that Sax stole atomic secrets. But why was it a big deal he stole FAPA or VAPA secrets? ...Oh, that was a joke.

Lloyd Penney. It's great that you got paid for editing a book. That does mean you've turned pro. Are we going to get a science fiction novel from you soon? On the other hand, being an editor is probably more stable a job than writing science fiction. There are already too many wouldbe novelists.

George W. Price. I was just giving what, I thought, people would accept in place of money: precious stones and gold. I have forgotten why I excluded silver. These, on average, would go for their something approaching their market value

As for using silver or gold for money, that is something else. I think if gold and silver costs more on the market than it does as money, they can't really be used as money anymore. I understand your problem: what do we do if the state messes up? Of course, we can always use precious stones, silver, and gold as money whether they are State sponsored or not. Right now, money is based on all the goods and services, hopefully give or take a few percentage points.

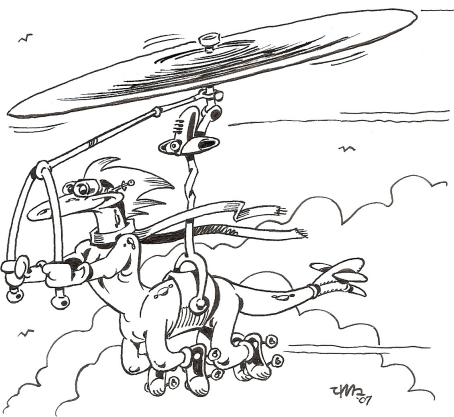
Taras Wolansky. You liked Mary Robinson Kowal's *The Relentless Moon* as a Hugo winner. Isn't she a leftist, though?

Not Quite Clear on the Concept. Oh, they were clear on the concept: make money from put-ons having to do with the novel *Dune*.

**They thought they owned the rights. No. I think they consulted AO3 too much.**

—JTM

I guess that's it.



From: **David M. Shea** March 4, 2022  
4716 Dorsey Hall Drive Unit 506,  
Ellicott City, MD 21042-5988

I do hope your health is improving.

As to whether Fandom as we know it has a future, I remain skeptical. But, NMP: "Not My Problem". As for a Worldcon in China, I wonder who voted for it. But I don't really care.

**Who voted for it? Two thousand Supporting Members who joined at the last possible moment.**

March 22, 2022

Thank you for sending V. 21 #6, I hope you're feeling better.

About polio vaccine: I believe at the time children in public schools were simply lined up and given the oral vaccine. Parental permission was not asked.

On a related topic, Taras Wolansky points out that the drug ivermectin has been used for humans, which I did not know. However, clearly some people bought large quantities of the veterinary form at farm supply stores and decided what dose to take on their own. That does not strike me as wise.

**The New England Journal of Medicine has a new study showing no (NO) benefit in treating Covid with ivermectin. Not that this will convince those people.**

Richard Dengrove: I did not work at the brokerage with whom I argued about "birthday" cards. I am a client. I have an investment account with the firm.

AL du Pisani: In America we once tried to do away with alcohol altogether. As anyone with a gram of sense could have predicted, the attempt failed miserably. The sense here is that people should be responsible for their own drinking.

In summer 1942, King George on an inspection visit at Scapa Flow, toured the American battleship U.S.S. *Washington* and ate lunch with the captain and his officers. By what I take to have been an odd naval honorific, the King was declared "officer of the watch" for the afternoon watch, and solemnly signed the log "George R.I., Admiral of the Fleet". That logbook is still in U.S. Navy archives.

On a related topic, Saturday May 21 is Armed Forces Day. Monday May 30 is Memorial Day Show the flag. Donations to the VFW are welcome.

I see small chance of my attending any Worldcon in the future, so that does not greatly interest me..

- Q. What do you call a bacon-wrapped Christmas tree?
- A. A porkupine.

**"Everybody loves bacon!"**

—JTM

From: **George W. Price** March 13, 2022  
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60630-3333 USA  
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February *Alexiad* (#121):  
The onset of winter weather reminds me of a "puzzle" verse I saw a while ago. As best I recall, it went about like this:

The day was cold  
When a lady bold  
Skated briskly out  
Upon the ice to frisk.  
The ice was thin  
And she fell in –  
What a fool she was,  
Her shapely \*.

Clue: Pronounce the star symbol as "asterisk."

\* \* \* \* \*

When Russia announced diplomatic recognition of separatist forces in the rebellious Donbas corner of Ukraine, it was obviously the last step before outright invasion. I momentarily wondered then, what would happen if NATO instantly announced that Ukraine's application to join NATO was accepted as of right then. Would Putin have called off the invasion?

It couldn't really have happened, of course. NATO could not possibly act that fast. And a couple of days later the notion became moot as the invasion began. In hindsight, the time to take Ukraine into NATO was several years ago, after the Russian-dominated government had been replaced by a genuine Ukrainian government. Alas for missed opportunities.

But I still wonder if Putin's towering ambition – or obsession – to become the Great Man who reassembles the Russian Empire would have impelled him to charge ahead even if it meant open war with NATO, and thus war with the United States. And that is still very much an open question.

When I was a schoolboy learning geography, circa 1940, there was no such country as Ukraine. There was only "the Ukraine," a region in Russia. I suppose there was a Soviet Socialist Republic of Ukraine within the Soviet Union, but that was generally disregarded by English-speakers. It was always "the Ukraine," like "the Sahara" in Africa. That little "the" implied that it was a geographical or ethnic area, but not a political entity. Does the Russian language make any such linguistic distinction? Mr. Putin certainly acts as if he is unable to believe that "the" Ukraine is anything but a natural part of Russia.

A number of commentators, notably in the *Wall Street Journal*, think that Putin is going for broke on forcing Ukraine back into Russia. They argue that his obsession might well mean his overthrow if it turns out badly in terms of Russian blood spilled, economic damage, and loss of standing in the world. What was supposed to be a walkover now looks like a quagmire that might be worse than Vietnam was for us, even if Russia wins militarily. A Pyrrhic



victory indeed! (Read up on the fate of that 40-mile-long convoy.) The oligarchs who support Putin won't like this one bit, and he knows it. Putin may see it as "win or die" for him personally and literally. I hate to think where this might lead.

\* \* \* \* \*

No one said anything in this issue to bubble my bile, so I will stop here.

**Congratulations on being nominated for the First Fandom Hall of Fame.**

—JTM

From: **AL du Pisani** April 2, 2022  
945 Grand Prix Street, Weltevredenpark  
1709, REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA  
[du.pisani@kilos40.co.za](mailto:du.pisani@kilos40.co.za)

I started and abandoned this letter in January. I'll update it with new information.

Wuhan Pneumonia: In South Africa, the State of Disaster proclaimed to combat Wuhan Pneumonia have been relaxed a lot. The only reason that it have not yet been lifted is that the government botched the successor legislation so badly that it was easier to keep the State of Disaster while relaxing the already reduced restrictions. There are some indications that maintaining the State of Disaster has become untenable, and that it will be dropped in the near future.

You still have to mask indoors. Limited to 100 people at funerals, and are not allowed to engage in night vigils associated with funerals. The latter appears to be a feature of the Black community culture, and government have been extremely harsh on it – trying to stamp it out, for some reason.

But for the most we are getting over it.

Not all of us – There are still the terrified, who think gathering in the open with some jabbed friends is too dangerous, and who are making life a misery for the rest of us.

But I was able to engage in group activities of the type that was normal pre the Great Lock-down, and see that it will happen more often in future.

Unfortunately, not with the SF crowd – there had been some in person gatherings, but it was made known to me that I would not be welcome.

**I am sorry to hear this. It seems so unfannish.**

Electrical Power: By end of January, we had loadshedding again. When loadshedding started, I already had three instances of unscheduled power outages. Scheduled power outages is at least a bit more predictable.

For one of the unscheduled outages I later found a notice published at the time of the emergency shutdown, with an estimated downtime. It is a pity that I only found out about it

after my power went out. With a later unscheduled outage I found an acknowledgement that there was an issue, without any indication of what the issue was, what caused it, who is working on it or when we can expect it to be resolved. There was an update a couple of hours later, that tersely denied the rumours of a three day outage, without giving any information which backed up the denial. Luckily the power came back during the night.

I also had a two day outage, when part of a substation burned. There at least the updates were a bit sparse, but regular – there was a new update every three hours during daylight hours. And they did restore power on the schedule they originally predicted – even though they had to stop at one time due to heavy rain. I was fortunate that it was cool enough that my refrigerator did not heat up significantly – there were some food that went off a bit quicker than I expected.

Work: This resulted me going into the office for one and a half days of normal (pre everything) work. It had certain good features, and it was good to interact personally with the small number of people in the office. But I do not see me returning to the office anytime soon – The travel to and from work was just horrendous. And the personal interactions was not meaningful enough to seek them out.

Holidays: I had a good Summer Holiday. Even though the weather was not cooperative. Mostly cloudy days, with some rain and some wind. That did not cause me unhappiness – I was so glad to see my family again, and that it had rained properly, that is with a repeat shortly after, on the family farm. My mother had been through four years of minimal rain. Like 20mm for the year, two years ago. In December they had more rain than in the previous four years combined.

The rains continued after I returned – The Summer had been both wetter and cooler than recent memory. Although not out of line – I can remember a year about 20 odd years ago where I either drove to work in the rain, drove back in the rain, or both, up to March.

SF: I seem to be either binging on some SF author new to me, or am in a drought where I cannot find anything I am interested in reading. I have not been impressed with the visual SF I have recently been exposed to.

Responses: In the December 2021 *Alexiad* George W. Price commented on Rodford Edmiston talking about the coal industry failing – The South African experience seems to indicate it is more a case of the coal industry being murdered. Now, granted, the South African experience is not great, with an awful lot of corruption and incompetence in the mix. For instance – South Africa is not able to export coal fast enough to meet overseas demand due to the railway network being in a terrible state, with lack of maintenance and corruption.

Eskom, the glorious electricity supply monopoly, built two huge coal power stations. There corruption managed to increase the cost a lot – the original design was for R30 Billion

per power station. The ANC managed to increase the design cost to R80 Billion, making sure that the right companies with the right ties to the ANC were selected for the build. And then Eskom mismanaged the build process so badly that we are at R240 Billion and counting. This included modifying the power stations back to the original design, when it became clear that the optimised, cheaper design actually built was not up to the job. There was also some sabotage, some incompetence where a generating unit was blown up, and other such cheerful things.

**This reminds me of the California High-Speed Rail, which has had similar massive overruns and in fourteen years has not produced any useful trackage.**

I have a bit of a problem with the gargantuan scale that governments operate at – it is not enough to build a power station, they have to build the biggest power station in the world.

What is not very well known is that a couple of years later Eskom was allocated a third coal fired power station – one which they could not build because they could not get any funding for. And they were explicitly told that because of ESG concerns, they will never get funding to build a coal fired power station from their traditional money men.

Blade Nsimane is a Communist and Trade Unionist – Not somebody I have a lot of respect for. But he has said some interesting things recently. That the money that has been promised to South Africa if we only kill off coal and switch over to solar and wind power is about the same as what the coal industry in South Africa generates in a year.

Very few people have run the numbers on what it will take to switch to solar and wind with electricity storage – The one calculation I have seen indicate that the cost of replacing the existing electricity infrastructure will raise electricity prices somewhere between 18 and 30 times.

Let me digress a moment – The US Air Force developed the concept of Technology Readiness Level (TRL) – With TRL1 at the low end (was seen to occur in a lab setting), and TRL9 at the high end (you can buy it commercially). This is also used by NASA. I am more familiar with the version for spaceflight. (A lot of the reasons why the James Webb Space Telescope was launched 15 years after originally planned, at a cost of about 20 times the original estimate, was that the technology needed to make the concept work had to be taken from TRL 4-6 levels to something higher. This is also why no follow on space telescope is ever going to make use of the unique deployment method of the James Webb Space Telescope.)

With a lot of the Green solutions, I am asked to believe that replacing a TRL9 coal infrastructure with a TRL1 solar and wind infrastructure is going to be cheap and easy.

In the February 2022 *Alexiad* Joe mentioned the search for the wreck of the *Endurance*. An instance where the news of the success of the search reached me before I read that the search is happening, in *Alexiad*.

### And it was found by a South African ship!

George W. Price asks why “It was a dark ans story night” is so bad as an opening sentence – It is that Bulwer-Lytton did not stop there, but went on with the sentence for another 50 odd words to describe in detail just how dark and stormy the night was.

Taras Wolansky – I am bemused by the idea that asking a voter for an id is racist.

We actually had one election in which voter id was not asked for – the 1994 election which opened South Africa up to the wonders of Democracy. The more I find out about that election, the more I get the idea that it was a shambles behind the scenes. And it turned out that some of the poster children of voters which used their ability to vote, for the very first time, in a South African election, were neither South African nor eligible to vote even under the relaxed standards in use for that election.

So it was that from the next election onwards an id was required to vote.

In conclusion: I am glad to maintain my contact with you. Even though SF fandom seems to be splintering into groupings which often seem not to know about each other.

And hostile as well.

—JTM

I hope that you will always find something that scratches your SF itch.

From: **John Purcell** April 2, 2022  
3744 Marielene Circle, College Station,  
TX 77845 USA  
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Whoops! The editorial deadline for the next issue was yesterday! My bad. On the off chance that you and Lisa have just begun the assembly of the 122nd issue so there is probably a little wriggle room available, here is a quick collection of comments on the February issue of *Alexiad*.

The weather is a constant topic here in Texas. Comments about it anywhere from viciously hot, mega-windy, dusty, to “where’d that cold front come from?”, now it’s the rainy season, it’s effin’ hot again, and “is that snow?!?” No matter what, weather patterns here in SouthCentralEastern Texas are always an annoying burden. At least we do get \*some\* variety other than the eight to nine months of constant summer heat. I miss the predictability of the changing seasons of Minnesota. Then again, the older I get the less I want to shovel snow and chop ice off car windows, the driveway, and sidewalks. Guess there is an upside to everything when you look for it.

Joe’s musings about the decline of fandom and the Worldcon are an all too common topic in fanzines, blogs, podcasts, and social media these days. As much as I would love to attend another Worldcon in my lifetime — Chicon 8 is now officially off the agenda — doing so is increasingly unlikely to occur. Odds are, if we can swing it financially, going to Glasgow for the 2024 Worldcon will be the last one for Valerie and I unless, of course, Texas wins the bid for 2031. At this stage of my life, thinking a decade ahead is impractical, so I am not going to even consider it at this point. As for the Chengdu, China Worldcon next year, there are definitely many issues involved, such as travel costs, but notably the international affairs currently affecting everything. The overall decline of fannish fandom’s influence on the Worldcon from which this beastie sprung is decidedly apparent from program books and guests of honor names. For many traditional fanzine and convention fans, science fiction conventions are mainly an excuse to take a vacation trip to hang out with friends we have known for so many years. This is A Good Thing, in my mind, and I am fine with that. If there are authors I get to talk with or work on a convention in some aspect, that’s fine, too. Speaking of Worldcons, looking at the bid listing on page 8, I have to admit that Seattle would be a fine city to visit, and Valerie and I would love to go to Europe again, so Nice, France (2026) and Dublin, Ireland (2029) are tantalizing offers. \*sigh\* Such temptations. I had better get onto a different topic in a hurry.

Oh, yeah. Taras Wolansky shared his experience at Discon III’s worldcon Q&A session with the Chengdu bid representative. I have no real comments on this except that I am not surprised at the editing/censoring of submitted questions. That entire scene must have been extraordinarily uncomfortable for everyone involved. Dare I say “good luck” to the Chengdu Worldcon committee? Yes, I do dare to say that here. No matter what happens, this is already an historic transformation for the science fiction world community, so only the future will see the end result.

The curious way in which they won the bid is problematic, but what is a greater concern is that they issued a list begging for foreign assistance, and then seem to have shut down communications.

—JTM

As always I enjoyed the spot filler art by Marc Schirmeister. I really need to brow-beat him into submitting stuff to *Askance*. He is a great talent with a warped sense of humor. Yes, indeed, I have to write to him about this. You have been warned, Marc! Submit art. Resistance is futile.

Thank you so much for the issue, Joe and Lisa. I wish you both well and hope to someday meet you two in person instead of only via print. Until then, in the words of the great Canadian

philosopher Red Green, “Keep your stick on the ice.”

From: **John Hertz** April 5, 2022  
236 S. Coronado St., No. 409, Los Angeles, CA 90057

The outstanding thing about Site Selection at the 2021 Worldcon is that Chengdu got the votes. Winnipeg didn’t.

Anyone who wanted the 2023 Worldcon to be held at a site other than Chengdu, or managed by a more experienced con committee, and like that, only had to vote for Winnipeg.

DisCon III had 2,359 Attending Members + 952 Virtual Members. In voting before the con Chengdu had 1,950 votes, Winnipeg had 332. During the con Chengdu got 56 more, Winnipeg got 475, a substantial gain for Winnipeg but not enough; Chengdu won by 2,006 to 807. There were 5,410 Supporting Members. About 3,000 were from China, a third of them not voting in Site Selection.

With my 3rd Grade teacher’s voice calling “This would have been easier for you if you’d done your Arithmetic homework”, I make that 4,908 people who might have voted for Winnipeg but didn’t.



With Nic Farey’s voice calling “Don’t be [foolishly] obvious”, I note how similar this is to the sad state of the fan-category Hugos.

The voice of the Comte de Tocqueville calls “People having power and not using it”.

### WAHF:

**Martin Morse Wooster**, with various items of interest.

**Nic Farey, Cathy Palmer-Lister, Lee Muncy** with thanks.

**Rod Smith**. Our condolences for his loss.

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## CONFRONTATION

Slowly, inexorably, Bond walked forward towards the great arc of table where the leaders of SPECTRE waited. The man at the centre — Olberhauser, Blofeld, whatever — gave him a sinister smile. “Welcome, James. It’s been a long time. And finally, here we are. What took you so long?”

Bond was about to reply when a burst of gunfire thudded into the table. Blofeld jerked his vision up and shouted, “Do you want to die? There are easier ways to kill yourself!”

The voice that replied was familiar. “Yeah, like yelling at the guy who’s holding the AK-47.”

It was that man Jason Todd! Bond glanced upwards. Or was it? The man had a red helmet that covered his face, Yet his stance . . .

He said, “I have a quarrel with you people. Bond, shall I cover you?”

Then a slow, cold, unfunny, laugh filled the air. Someone came in behind Bond. In a weary, empty voice he said, “And I thought . . . my jokes . . . were bad.” The Joker! Why did he turn up now?

Blofeld was losing it. “You! What are *you* doing here?”

The Joker continued to walk forward into the light. His mocking voice continued. “Let’s wind the clocks back a year: These cops and lawyers and international agents wouldn’t dare cross any of you, so what happened? Did your balls drop off? I know why you choose to have your little, ahem, ‘group therapy’ sessions in broad daylight. I know why you’re afraid to go out at night. Bond here. See, Bond has shown the world your true colors, unfortunately.”

A shot cracked over their heads. Todd let out a vicious growl.

“You know, I used to wear an outfit a lot like that. Mine was a lot more flashy maitre d’ than motorcycle fetish. You kids today . . .” The Joker laughed again. “I killed him once already, but I just can’t keep him down! Gotta give the boy points! So who’s got a camera? Ooh! Ooh! Get one of me and the kid first. Then Bond and me, then the three of us. Someone get me a crowbar.”

Blofeld took advantage of the distraction. “Get them!”

The first man who jumped up took a shot and fell back, wounded? Dead? None of the others dared to move and Blofeld looked furious at this disobedience of his orders.

“Ah, ah,” the Joker said. “Let’s not *blow* this out of proportion.” He opened his coat, exposing an explosive vest.

Bond tried to stop him. The Joker laughed again, “NO! Don’t spoil it! This is better! I’m the only one who’s gonna get what he wants! **Yes! Big bang boom!** We all go out together! Don’t you just love a happy ending?!”

The other SPECTRE leaders took advantage of the deadlock to bolt. Bond ignored the Joker then and ran, tackling Blofeld.

Behind them, the insane laughter of the Joker rang in the meeting room.

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This is issue **Whole Number One Hundred and Twenty-Two (122)**.

**Art:** What we are mainly looking for is small fillos. Your fillo will probably be scanned in and may be reused, unless you object to its reuse.

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