



Brought to you by: K.D. Wentworth, Uncle Guido, Warren Brown & Chris Merle

**Special "Triple Xmas Issue" • December  
(Oct. Nov.) 2002**

**\*\*\*More Colorful. More Filler\*\***

**\*\*\* HELLO, OSFW \*\*\***

*Editor's Note: For those of you of collect the GPIC religiously, or irreverently, or just want to know what happened, there were no GPICs published in October or November of this year. So if you should come across issues published for those months, either they are not the real thing, or you're right next door in an alternate universe.*

The December meeting and Xmas party will be held on Saturday, December 14 at 7:00 at the Brown residence, 6012 South Pittsburg Ave., 747-7624. It will be a potluck as usual. Pasta, tiny little sausages, soft drinks and ice will be provided. Also as usual, each attendee who wishes to participate in the gift exchange is asked to bring an item for the gift exchange, value not to exceed \$10.00. Also, we've had some fun with the story fragment contest over the years, so by all means bring a two or three page fiction fragment. May the millennium squirrel bring you safely and in good spirits to the gathering.

**\*\*\*CONTINUUM\*\*\***

**September 2002**

**By M. T. Reiten**

Jennifer Carlson read "Bespoke Boots." A story revolving around a dying breed of

craftsman, Everett, a custom bootmaker of the highest caliber. A rather sinister gentleman places an order for a pair of Wellingtons—not the rubber boots, rather the ancestor to the modern cowboy boot—with special emphasis on the quality of the leather. The patron is diabolic in fact as well as demeanor and he tempts Everett's professional pride with the opportunity to work with rare, mythical leathers. But the devil promises to be only after new soles rather than a new soul. The story delivers with a unique perspective and sufficient trade details to establish credibility. Highly enjoyable and satisfying.

"Iriel's Winter" by Amanda Gannon is a duelist's tale. What unfolds in the reading is vaguely gothic tale of a renaissance era dandy who falls in love with a powerful blade that is terribly out of style for a young rake. But there is a ghost tied to the deadly sharp sword. And the demon bewitched steel thirsts for blood. The twisted tale of love and death that follows pulls one along, morbidly captivating.

"Richard's Return" is the current title of Randy Farran's alternate pseudo-history. The story poses the question: What if Prince John had pushed far enough to make the Magna Carta a constitution for a republic? Picking up where King Richard finally returns from the crusades and his captivity, Robin Hood meets with his former sovereign to explain that things have changed. They

burned down the throne and cast aside the monarchy for a more democratic government. Not surprisingly, the old king doesn't find the idea as intriguing as this reader did. While I feel this story lacks a sense of resolution to stand firmly on its own as it was read, it does paint an interesting world and proves that ideas are still central to the fiction of the imagination.

Warren and Lana Brown wrote and Warren presented "Every Zombie Can Learn." This deep parody and ghastly satire contends that the dead walk among the living... through the school halls, classrooms, and cafeterias. Putting a wicked spin on the political correctness rampant in today's educational system, the story pokes fun and reminds everyone that the frontline teacher makes the impact on the students. Of course, to make the connection, the teacher must become like a zombie himself. The story has everything, romance, an evil witch stealing the credit, witty dialogue, and brains. Perhaps there weren't any brains fresh out of skulls, but someone did threaten to eat the cat.

### \*\*\*Reviews of Works and Happenings\*\*\*

#### **Solaris** by Warren Brown

I came to Solaris with the usual disadvantage of having heard a couple of reviews of the movie on NPR. I like to think that sort of thing doesn't usually affect my approach to viewing a film, but one never knows. There's still no thrill to a dedicated movie fan like seeing a movie cold in a theater with a good audience, good projection and sound, and finding out that it's also a good movie.

But maybe there's something to be said about knowing a little about a movie before seeing it and still finding it to be a pleasurable experience. This is the case with Solaris. Even armed with a pretty good idea of what it was about, and knowing that it

was based on a book by Stanislaw Lem, which was made into a legendary film in Russia, I found Solaris to be well-made, well-acted, and filled with the sort of questions that good SF (and good art): Who are we, really? What about God? Can that which is not born of humans be "human?" Can you go back again? Can you go back by going forward? Are we doomed to repeat the same mistakes?

At a human level, Solaris does a good, and entertaining, job of asking those questions. It's something of a blend of Orpheus and 2001, A Space Odyssey. It's a mystery story, a journey story, a quest story, an alien invasion story (but not quite the kind one would expect). A critic on T.V. this morning said he didn't know quite what to make of it, that it asked a lot of questions but didn't answer any. There's a line in the movie that covers that criticism: "There are no answers, only choices."

I'd recommend you choose to see Solaris. Sometimes a movie that is hard to pin down is just what one needs to see after a few Rob Schneider previews. I think even one or two guys on the Coca Cola racing team would have enjoyed this one.

(A word of warning to those who only like to see a certain kind of SF: no phasers were fired nor light sabers lit during this movie—and no aliens were harmed—or were they?)

#### \*\*\*Bimbos of the Death Sun\*\*\* The Novel at Age Fifteen

Mel Tatum was kind enough to lend me a copy of Bimbos of the Death Sun. She thought that on this, the book's fifteenth anniversary year, it might be fun for OSFW folks to re-read (or in my case read it) and talk about how it holds up.

I finished the book last night, and found

it to be an entertaining read. Interestingly, if such a thing can be, it's a book almost without style. Of course, any English major, or avid reader will tell you that for a book to be without style is almost impossible. Perhaps what I'm getting at is that the narrative style is pretty unembellished.

As someone who likes a bit of metaphor, a dash of poetry, I didn't find that to be a plus. On the other hand, I just finished reading *Sirens of Titan*, by Kurt Vonnegut. After a turn with Vonnegut's writing, almost any stylistic exercise would sound plain jane. In many ways Vonnegut and Lafferty are style, if not soul, mates.

But that's another review entirely. *Bimbos of the Death Sun* is a mystery set at an SF con. The plot involves a famous, infamous, and, ultimately, murdered fantasy author, who is bedeviled by his own fame.

A very well done aspect of the book is its unerring understanding of how some SF/Fantasy fans tend to take over ownership of certain authors and their characters, creating situations where in fiction, hopefully only in fiction, where an author can become the victim of his disrespect for his own work.

Another strong point of the book is its ability to describe the gamut of SF convention-going fans, from those who don't entirely give up their ties with the "mundane" world, to those who never managed to develop any in the first place.

Its satire of fandom hits pretty hard, and is sometimes far more astringent than simply a gentle poke at con-goers. At the same time, it would be too harsh to say the book is mean spirited. The truth

does sting a bit.

All in all, *Bimbos of the Death Sun* is an enjoyable journey through con fandom as seen through the eyes of both fans and "mundanes."

At the best of times I'm not that good at solving mysteries and I didn't solve this one, which is fine, because wouldn't solving them take the fun out of them anyway? (I didn't think it was the robot butler, but I was betting on the sociopathic large girl. Oh well.)

If *Bimbos of the Death Sun* is a landmark, I'm not sure what kind of landmark it is, but for anyone who has ever been to a con (and probably anyone who hasn't) it's a worthwhile stop on that sometimes strange tour that is SF and fantasy. Read it for the title's sake alone.

### **\*\*\*Tom Corbitt's View Master Adventure\*\*\***

#### **Part 3 – The Mystery of the Asteroids**

SCENE ONE - "An hour later, Roger Manning struggled back to consciousness and raced to a phone. The Marsport Control Tower connected him directly to the *Polaris*. "Tom," he shouted, "They've got Joan Dale and all of our figures. Now listen, they've probably already taken off, but if we can hit space within an hour I can pick them up on the *Polaris*' long range radar. I'll be there in 45minutes; be ready to blast"

Forty minutes later, after a wild ride through Marsopolis, Roger climbed into the *Polaris* and within 30 seconds, the Solar Guard's 500-foot cruiser climbed skyward under the full power of her four great atomic engines!

After waiting impatiently for them to bandage his head, Roger activated the search

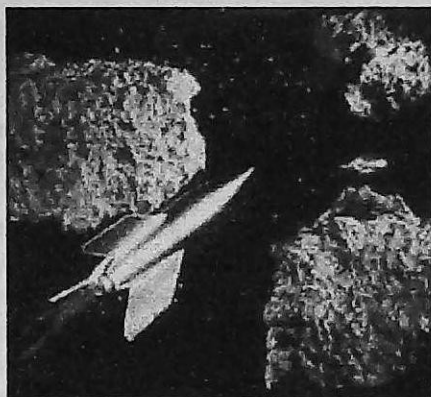
radar, a tremendously powered set with twice the range of any previous radar. Minutes passed, while the invisible search waves probed empty space thousands upon thousands of miles toward the Asteroid Belt.

"I've got them," Roger suddenly announced. "See that shadow!" Change course and we'll follow them just beyond range of their radar"



SCENE TWO - The chase lasted 30 days and covered over 100 million miles outward from the sun. In gradually overhauling the IC ship, the Polaris reached a top speed of over 100 miles per second.

As they neared the Asteroids, both ships decreased their speed, and Tom closed in keeping the sun at his back to prevent visual or radar detection. The chase became a game of hide and seek among the Asteroids.



SCENE THREE - As soon as they were within visual range, Tom manned the six-inch direct vision scope. After a few hours of dodging hundreds of whirling rocks all sizes and traveling all speeds, Tom cried out, "There it is a red asteroid about a mile in diameter. They're landing! Reduce speed, Astro. We'll circle and land on the opposite side!"

They laid the ship alongside the great rock - mooring it with a chain. Almost weightless, they gained the surface of the asteroid by pulling themselves along the chain, then with a series of leaps rounded to the side where the IC ship stood. Nearby, set deep in the meteor-pitted red stone, was an odd-shaped structure, open and Deserted!



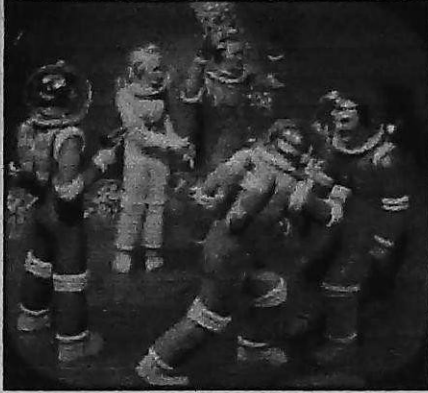
SCENE FOUR - "They must be inside," radioed Tom to Astro and Roger.

"Roger, you guard the entrance. There may be more of them in the ship. Astro, when I give the signal, we'll rush them! OK. . . Now!"

The two space-suited figures plunged down the open ramp into an underground room. The two IC men who held Dr. Dale there were completely surprised. Astro drove a fist into the stomach of one while Tom held a paralyzer pistol on Rondo, the leader. Freed, Dr. Dale disarmed Rondo.



The rest of the crew were lured into the room and captured without a struggle. Astro and Roger went aboard the IC ship and with the disarmed crime crew at the controls, blasted off for earth leaving Tom and Dr. Dale to bring back the contents of the metal chamber.



SCENE FIVE - "It must be a Time Tomb," declared Dr. Dale. Behind sliding panels they had found a world of objects, devices, papers and pictures, and reels upon reels of what looked like magnetic tapes for recording sound and sight. "A complete record of a civilization that discovered space travel long before there was any life on earth!" Tom was exploring some controls near the blank wall at one end of the tomb.

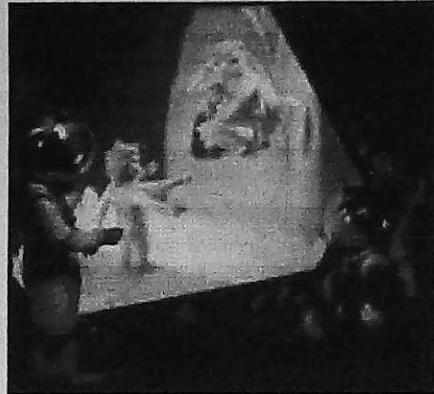
"This lever seems to be movable. I'm going to pull it down."

They heard a dry whining and the blank wall before them began to glow. Then, by some optical miracle, they saw projected on it a picture that moved, was brilliantly colored and had three-dimensional depth!

Onto a small balcony, they saw a small creature run out. It was covered with large, green, flexible scales, had a pale green, pleasant face from the top of which two antennae-like tendrils protruded, and four arms! It waved two or three of its arms at something in the distance.

As this object drew closer, they saw a larger creature of the same kind floating through the air on a purple disc. It must have been an anti-gravity device because it hung perfectly still in the air while the large creature stepped onto the balcony and caught the small one up in its four arms!

"Father coming home from work - a billion years ago," marveled Tom.



SCENE SIX - Tom and Dr. Dale loaded the contents of the Time Tomb, including the odd projection equipment that "played" the hundreds of magnetic tapes, into the Polaris. During the long trip back, to Earth, Dr. Dale spent hours studying these strange records out of the past.

"Eight hundred million years ago," she told Tom, "another planet, which they called 'Earth', circled the sun between Mars and Jupiter. The sun was young then, and its intense radiation warmed this planet 250 million miles away, enabling a race of six-limbed creatures to evolve. They struggled up through ignorance, disease, famine and war until they reached undreamed of heights of social and scientific achievements. They derived power from the complete destruction of matter, conquered gravity, and reached the stars with a many-times-faster-than-light drive.

"But tidal and volcanic forces beyond even their control began to tear their planet apart. The other planets of the young Solar System were either violent balls of fire or massive spheres of ice and corrosive gases, so this race Fled to the stars. Knowing that life would come to the cooling inner planets, they came back later to build the Time Tomb and leave clues to its existence. Now their descendants live somewhere among the stars, probably forgetting that this was their birthplace!"



SCENE SEVEN - Six months later, in the top-secret laboratories of the Space Academy, Tom Cornet stepped onto an experimental anti-grave bar and under the direction of Dr. Dale gingerly turned the simple hand control.

"It works! " he whispered incredulously as he floated high over their heads.

"It works and Earth has anti-gravity!"

"And we've found clues to the ancient race's faster-than-light drive," said Dr. Dale. "I hope that someday, some distant tomorrow, we'll meet them out there among the stars. Then we can say, 'Thank you'"

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\*\*\* MANY THANKS TO \*\*\*

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\*\*\* SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION \*\*\*

A subscription to Son of GPIC, the official newsletter of the Oklahoma Science Fiction Writers, may be obtained online or by mail. \$13 for the hard copy of the newsletter, \$15 for a family membership, \$7 for the electronic-only version of the newsletter. Mail a check or money order in the correct amount, prorated by quarter, to:

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6915 New Haven  
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(Checks should be made out to K.D. Wentworth)

\*\*\* OSFW INFORMATION \*\*\*

The OSFW meets at members' homes the second Friday of every month to read, critique, and promote in general SF, Fantasy, and Horror writing. All willing to contribute and (after a couple of trial meetings) pay their dues are welcome. **There is no age limit but parents should understand that material with adult themes and language is read and discussed.**



### \*\*\* GPIC NEWS AND ARTICLES \*\*\*

GPIC solicits news and articles from OSFW members. We prefer they be on disk or sent via e-mail. Pseudonyms are OK. We accept files on either a 3-inch Mac [well, maybe] or PC disk. We like RTF files or MS Word files compatible with Word 97. Always include a separate ASCII file just in case. Send any email to Warren at [underland@aol.com](mailto:underland@aol.com), with "For the GPIC" in the subject line.

You retain copyright on material. If this is of special concern you might let us know who you really are along with your pseudonym. We reserve the right to edit (although we try not to).

\*\*\* NEXT GPIC DEADLINE \*\*\*

**Pesky deadline for January issue: December 31.**



Millennium squirrel & ghost of Xmas indeterminate enjoy a quiet moment

## OSFW 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

1977 – 2002

**Twenty-five years of making it up  
as we go along.**

