

* Exhibition Hall *



MUST YOU
KEEP SAYING
THAT?

I thought the cover and its artist deserved a few words of appreciation, and that the editors of *Exhibition Hall* could be imposed upon to publish them.

Although I take full credit (or blame) for the Photoshop colouring, the artist who drew “Modern Times” was Joshua W. Kennedy. Josh is a furry artist with a love/hate relationship to the subject, who lives a somewhat hermit-like existence in Virginia. I think I may be one of the few people in fandom – any fandom – to have met him. We’ve been friendly for a great many years, and have been frequent parnters in art-crime.

A couple of years ago, Josh was going to have a comic book published. Unfortunately, monopolistic practises of the only major distributor of comics put an end to that foolishness. Worse, the publisher had already persuaded me to write a glowing introduction which would subsequently never be used.

Josh has a thing about my skunk characters. Also my deer characters. And one or two other things over the years that he found too irresistible to leave where he found them. For a while it was enough to simply draw pages and pages and pages of skunks in lascivious poses, crediting them as “inspired” by Taral Wayne. Then, Josh went far beyond that by inventing his own cartoon character, Zandar. She was a walk-on character in his own work at first. Next, the star in a couple of short stories. Then, without warning, Josh began an epic saga about Zandar that has run for around 250 pages, so far, and shows no sign of ending as long as he can find patrons. He is becoming the Charles Dickens of furry fandom.

I like Josh’s story-telling. Okay... the plot sometime bogs down a bit while Zandar is put through her sexual paces. Wild, unrestrained, energetic sex. This tedium rarely lasts more than three or four pages. Often less, thankfully. Then it’s back to mirth, magic, tragedy and mayhem – the good stuff. His art matches



Notes on This Issue's Cover

by Taral Wayne

his narrative for its expression, and bounces right along.

When I came to the page 223 of “Zandar’s Saga” I found the medieval heroine had been kidnapped from her Poe-ian self-immolation in a wall, stuffed into ugly and uncomfortable Victorian garb, and finally whisked away into a steampunk city that she never imagined could ever exist. What else could she say, but “Eela!” – which is some sort of pseudo Anglo-Saxon for “Holy Shit.” Or possibly a misspelling of “Eilah” which is a misspelling of pseudo-French that I originally borrowed from Walt Kelly.

From the moment I saw page 223, I knew it had to be coloured. Josh does few beauty shots like this one, and only rarely colours anything, so I took it upon myself to do the honours. I knew how it had to be done, almost down to the last sooty brick. What I didn’t know was how long it would take. By sticking by it, doing a little more work every few days, I eventually surprised myself by finishing.

Myself, I’m not partial to steampunk. I can take it or leave it. Given the Victorian architecture and costumes, though, a steampunk fanzine seemed to be the natural place to submit the art. That gave me two alternatives – *Exhibition Hall* or *Journey Planet*. By some arrangement I remain happily ignorant of, both zines have more or less the same editors, and they suggested *Exhibition Hall*. It was a fairly simple matter in Photoshop to expand the speech balloon to make it large enough for the longer title. And there you have it; the story behind this issue’s cover. Don’t you wish you had skipped right to the editorial?

And, when you have read the rest of this issue, you might consider reading “Zandar’s Saga” from the beginning. Including, of course, this cover in its original black and white glory.

The beginning – <http://www.furaffinity.net/view/933764>

Page 223 – <http://www.furaffinity.net/view/3889786/>

EXHIBITION HALL THE THIRTEENTH

CHRIS GARCIA - EDITOR, JAMES BACON - LONDON BUREAU CHIEF

ARIANE WOLFE - FASHION EDITOR, MARY KINGSLEY - 'ZINE NATURALIST

I've been busy. Work, taking The Little One to her Roller Derby practices, running around the country for conventions, writing, making strange food concoctions, it's across the board. Luckily, there are good folks out there who have more time and are putting out great stuff.

Including movies.

There's Steampunk: The Movie. I'm interested to see where it goes. There've been a lot of attempts at Steampunk films that have just fallen flat. This one does have the advantage of having an 'Honest-to-God' bareknuckle boxer among the characters. You can see the trailer at <http://steampunkmovie.com/>. There's not too much there, but you'll get a taste with the trailer.

Luc Besson, whose forays into science fiction gave us Subway and the amazing Fifth Element, has made The Extraordinary Adventures of Adèle Blanc-Sec, an adaptation of a Belgian graphic novel. I've not seen it yet, though the trailer is awesome. It's an interesting point that a number of the best Steampunk movies have been French. The City of Lost Children springs to mind (directed by the Amazing Jean-Pierre Jeunet who recently did Mic-Macs) and various shorts that've been around the festival circuit. Besson, one of my favorites, has gotten good reviews for the film and I'm pretty sure we'll get it in Art House release in the US shortly.

Ahnectha is a Turkis short film directed by Can Eren. It's a good one, though I've not been able to find it available for home purchase yet. I saw it and I thought it was really good. Turkish film takes some getting used to, and this has many of the hallmarks of great Turkish cinema, including the rare use of dialogue.

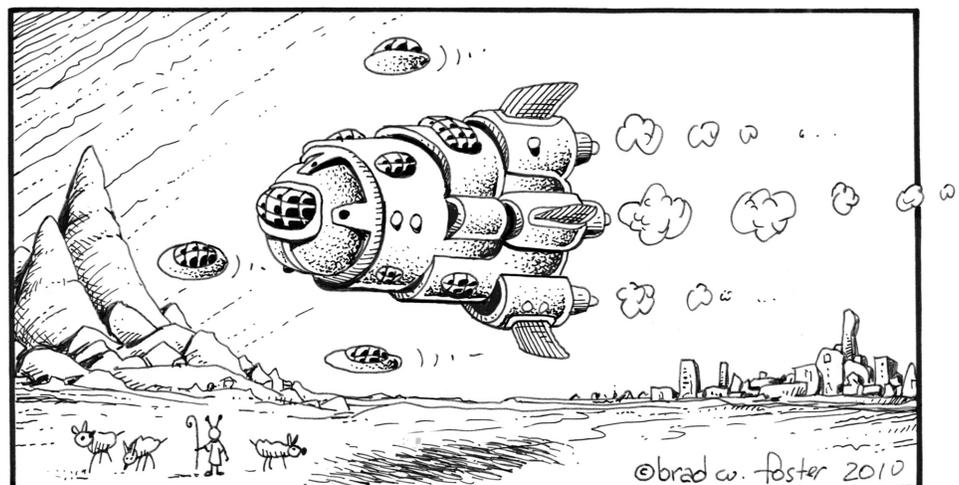
I disliked 9, though I did enjoy the short film that they made before the feature. I was most impressed with concept, but didn't like how it came together. It's was an excellent example of what the steampunk aesthetic can be used in fantasy science fiction instead of the traditional ways in which we

see it. There ain't no Victoriana in that one!

I was at ReConstruction, the NASFiC (North American Science Fiction Convention) last month and it was a good time. It was much smaller than I had hoped, but the Fanzine Lounge ran well and the scene was a blast. London Bureau Chief James Bacon was there and hosted a grand party for the 2014 London WorldCon bid. I loved that party. Also excellent was Mary Robinette Kowal's party for the release of her first novel. She's good people and the party's theme was Regency, which is always fun. Our Pal John Hertz, famous for bringing Regency Dancing to science fiction conventions, was there dressed splendidly as usual. The party wasn't quite at the level of the famous release party for Gail Carriger's Soulless at World Fantasy last year, but it was a great time. I also got to meet and chat with the magnificent Emmett Davenport of the Clockwork Cabaret. She's a blast and I hope that we can get her out for the Nova Albion convention in March! Maybe the Exhibition Hall scholarship fund will lhave to come into play!

What's this issue got? Well, you're going to get to read about the new Cheri Priest book, Clementine, and Diana Vick's been kind enough to get us a preview of SteamCon II, where a bunch of the folks who are related to this here zine will be in November. We've got James Bacon on various things, Taral Wayne gave us the business up-front and there's on and on! We'll also be looking at a couple of comics that caught my eye!

Alright, let's do it!



• EXPLORATION TEAM •

VOX-HAUL & I

HIS EXCELLENCY - LLOYD PENNEY!

Dear Chris, James & Ariane:

It's another Exhibition Hall, and many thanks. Issue 12 looks great, but are they getting smaller with each issue? Don't mind me, not supposed to notice these things... Comments follow this very paragraph.

Yes, they are shrinking, though I'd originally hoped the zine would only be a 10 or 12 page thing, so it's getting back to where I first saw it!

Steampunk: The Musical! Bring it on! This kind of video could go viral, and that's just conventions, never mind YouTube. Chris, what would you know about George Formby? You're far too young for that, unless James put you wise. Next, you'll be talking about Lonnie Donegan and skiffle.

I found a Facebook page called Steampunk Conventions, and the fellow running it, also called Steampunk Conventions, is trying to find them all, much like a Pokémon tournament. I don't know how many people here are going to Dragon*Con for the steampunk programming, and the same goes for the Michigan and New Jersey sequel conventions.

My loc...the Yipe! editorial team finally got a reminder sign-up on their website, so I won't fall behind again, at least not as much as I have. Gotta keep Jason Schachat hopping and wondering. Yet another steampunk fashion show is happening in Toronto, and this time, it's at Fan eXpo, the big gateshow-convention behind held at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre, where Torcon 3 was held. We are taking part in the show, 10pm Saturday night, and we may be on stage for less than half an hour. Still, could be a lot of fun.

If you get any photos, send 'em our way!

Lisa Smedman is from the Vancouver area, and was connected with BCSFA for many years. A little Canadian history mixed with steampunk should make for a very Victorian adventure. Add this to the enormous list of steampunk novels...so many to keep up with.

I'm actually interested to see what else she's written.

Wrestling? At least in the 19th and early 20th century, wrestlers were true athletes, and there were

no hints of drama or choreography, or anything soap-opera-ish. Sure, there were a few ringers, all done to make some extra cash. I've never been to Battle Creek, Michigan to see the Kellogg Sanatorium, but the whole reason behind breakfast cereal was to decrease the sex drive and keep people quiet and sane.

Well, they were athletes, but anyone who says that today's guys aren't has never been elbow-dropped through a table.

Nothing more, I think...Futurecon should be a good time at New Year's, and SFContario in November, both new events locally. And, I can hardly wait for the Canadian National Steampunk Exhibition in the spring. Many thanks, folks, see you next time.

Yours, Lloyd Penney.

Always good to hear from you!

And we'd like to hear from you!
journeyplanet@gmail.com



THIS ISSUE'S ART

COVER - JOSHUA W. KENNEDY COLOURED BY TARAL WAYNE, PAGE 1 - JOSHUA W. KENNEDY
PAGE 2, BRAD W. FOSTER, PAGE 3 BY AJASIN (AJASIN.DEVIANTART.COM)
PAGE 8 PHOTOS FROM DIANA VICK, PAGE 11-14 BY ARIANE WOLFE, PAGE 14-15 BY MARK ANDERSON.
PAGES 16 TO 19 STEAMPUNK AND WORKS-IN-PROGRESS BY CATHERINE KARCHER, ILLUSTRATOR (WWW.EKKOART.NET)

CLEMENTINE BY CHERI PRIEST

I didn't get why *Boneshaker* was nominated for the Hugo. I liked it, though it pretty much fell apart for me towards the end. I would have rather seen *Soulless* or *Leviathan* on the ballot, but it's not like it's a disgrace that it ended up there. Still, I don't think it would have deserved to have won.

You see, Cheri's follow-up to *Boneshaker* was more straight-ahead than *Boneshaker*, which may seem like a bad thing. *The Walled Seattle* was a great world, a powerful setting that made the story. If there's anything you can say about *Boneshaker*, it's that it's an amazing construction. *Clementine* takes place along a path, mostly in airships or in hotel conversations and attacks. There's a ton of action, every bit of it spectacular. Priest understands how to write a chase, a brawl, a dog-fight, a gun fight. Of all the authors who write action-y steampunk, Cheri is the finest practitioner.

Oh, and she's great with airships.

Here, she gets to play around with different kinds of airships, and that's a good thing as she's so good at it. She makes you understand each one as a type, a form. Too often airships has this unity of vision that makes it seem like they're punched out with cookie cutters, but Priest gets it and shows us the variations.

The story is of a trio of escaped slaves who are trying to get the airship they stole fair-and-square, rechristened the *Clementine*, and a female Pinkerton operative on her first assignment. They go forth on completely separate paths: the men in another stolen airship and the lady making her way from Chicago to make sure that the

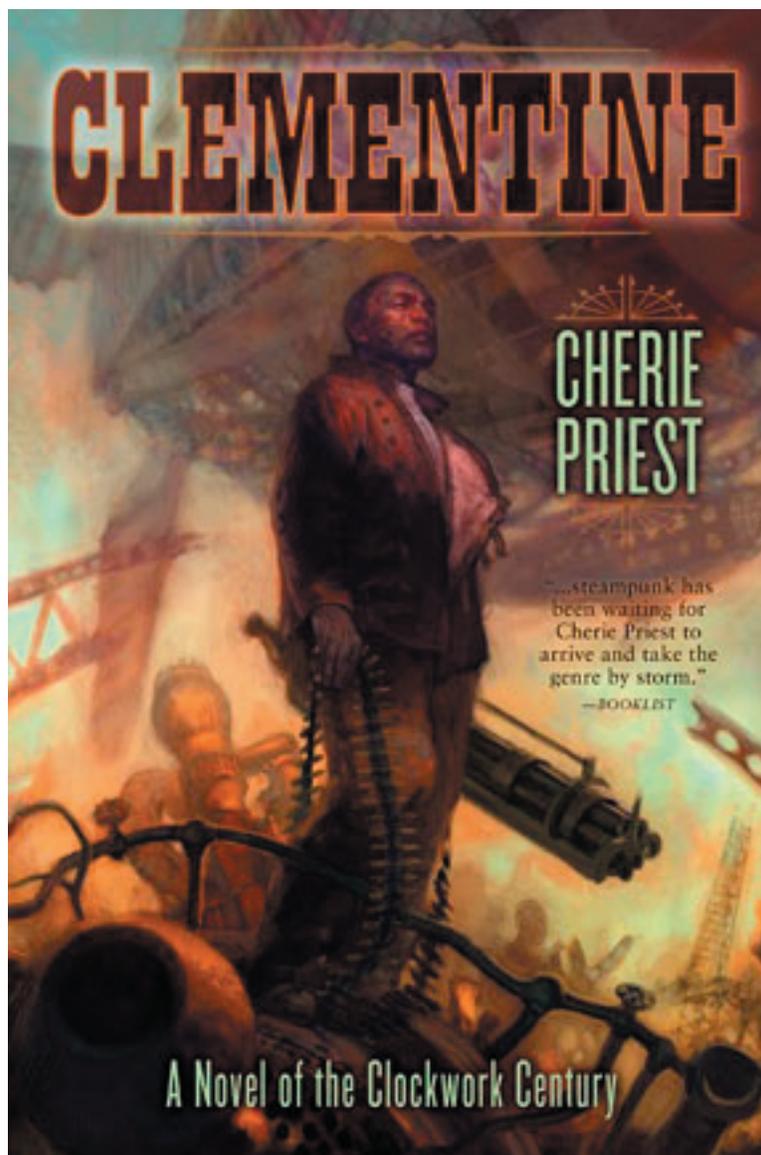
Clementine makes it to its destination. They eventually collide, and they end up in an uneasy alliance traveling to the show-down. It's very simple, but every step along the way is action-packed.

The characters are actually much more entertaining and less annoying than those in *Boneshaker*. While Captain Hainey is the star, Maria, the Pinkerton woman, is the one who is most drawn. She is not a looker, but she's got a hot body, or so we're led to believe. She's a former Confederate spy who went on to become an actress now gone to Pinkertons. She's famous, in more fields than one, and she's presented as a dangerous woman. It's a good character, and every time I expected things to fall apart for her, she comes up big. She's a great character, sometimes using her feminine wiles to get out of jams, sometimes relying on cold steel. She's a much stronger and more entertaining

character than Briar from *Boneshaker*. She also proves invaluable to the airship.

Captain Hainey is also really a powerful character because he's Capt. Ahab, only black and obsessed with his stolen airship instead of a white whale. It's fun the way he goes about things, he's straight forward and he fights hard and he has vision. He's the kind of resourceful and intelligent character that you want to be heading up every novel. I really liked him.

The others are suitably talented and put upon in equal measures. The crew of the airship is fine, the guy who stole Hainey's airship is almost absent, which is sad as there's a story to be told there. The way Cheri writes the Pinkertons



REVIEWED BY CHRIS GARCIA

may be the first time a writer has actually managed to make the Pinkertons not so much of a villainous band of bastards. Missing is the rag-tag band of misfits that inhabited Walled Seattle and provided so much entertainment. Here, the chases, the airship battles and the fights have to settle the bill and they do just that.

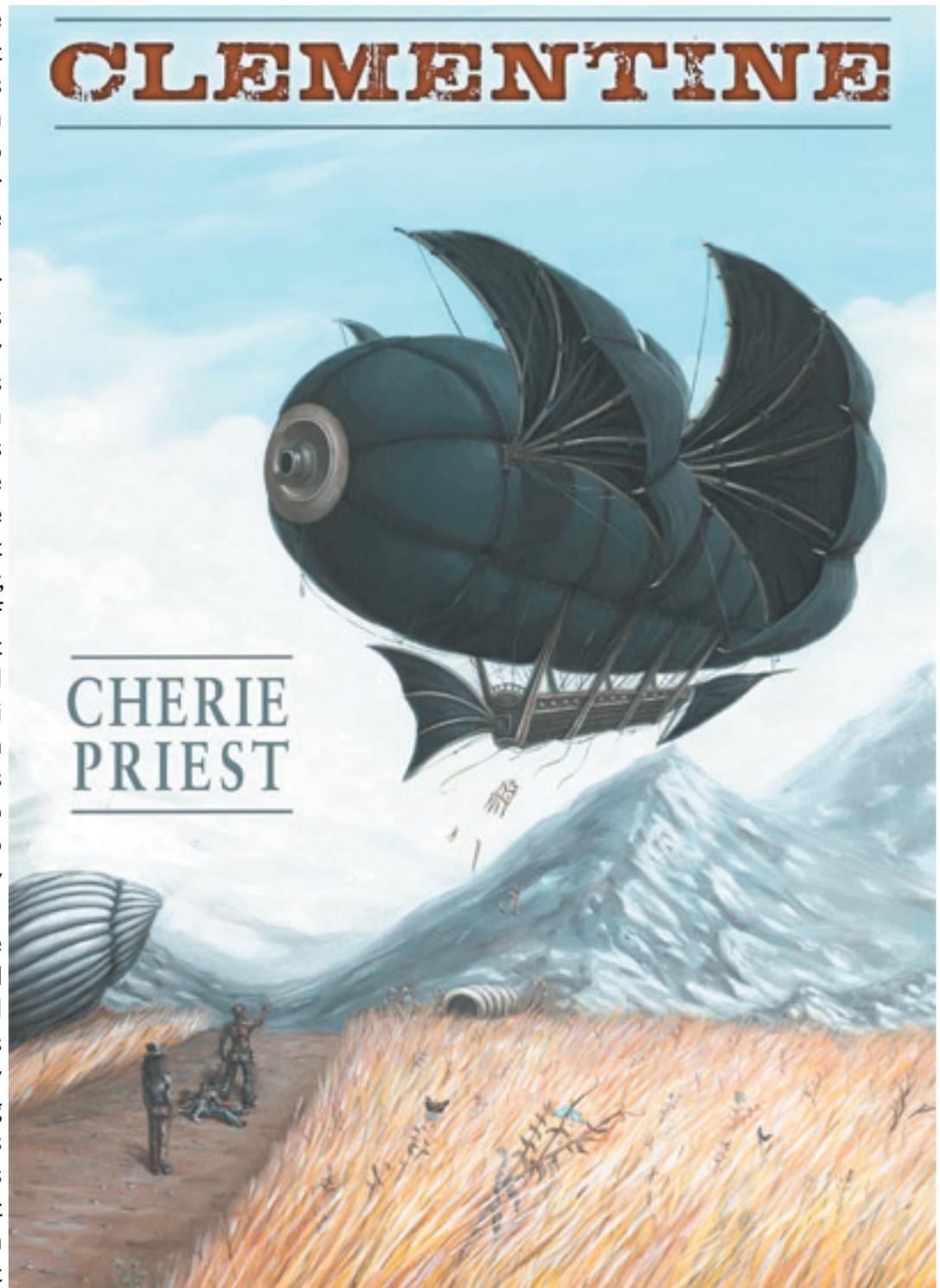
If there's one problem I have with the characters, it's the Evil White Guy Syndrome. Priest gives us a variety of characters of the Caucasian persuasion and only one seems at all decent. All of the villains are white dudes, which isn't a terrible thing, but anytime you have all the villains being one race, there's something that jumps out at me. This was not as much of a problem in *Boneshaker* (though I do know of at least one other reviewer who made the point), it stood out here.

The one other problem I had was exactly how helpful every encountered individual was to our heroes. They run into someone and it ends up that they either have important info or they're totally into their cause. It makes it a little too easy, much like the ending of *The Apparition Trail*, but again, it's the exceptional action and the way Cheri writes it that makes it an entertaining novel. I was gripped and just had to keep reading and reading to make it to the end. So very good.

This doesn't feel like a sequel to *Boneshaker*, and it's not. It also doesn't feel like a book in an endless series, though that's exactly what it is. It has a beginning and an end, and that's something a lot of books in a single Universe don't have. You could drop in on *Clementine* and it won't

be a difficulty at all to attach to it. They're two very different stories: one a straight ahead adventure and the other a serious horror sci-fi story. I have a well-known bias against open-ended series, and this doesn't feel like one. I love that feeling.

I can give my highest recommendation to *Clementine* to anyone who enjoys steampunk adventures. It's my favorite steampunk novel so far this year and now I can't wait for *Dreadnaught*, the next stop in the *Clockwork Century*!



ARROWSMITH; SO FINE IN THEIR SMART UNIFORMS

WRITTEN BY KURT BUSIEK AND PENCILS BY CARLOS PACHECO

160pp pb £9.99 DC Comics
(Wildstorm)

Our eponymous hero Fletcher Arrowsmith lives in a wonderful fantasy world but in a far off land darkness has fallen. He is a blacksmiths son in the United States of Columbia, living in Herbetsville on the great lakes. He encounters a display by the recruiting Overseas Air corps in 1915 a volunteer force and Fletcher becomes infected with the desire to do something to help those in war torn Europe as his own nation is neutral. His neighbour, Rocky a rock troll who had seen firsthand the horrors of war and had come to the United States to escape it all, but Fletcher is idealistic and strong headed in a youthful way and has a polarised view from the safety of his small comfortable town.

We follow Fletcher as he and his best friend jump a night goods train and they leave to join the corps. In New York they do not learn how to fly magnificent machines, rather, they are provided with Orichalc a mined mineral that holds a spell that transfers the power of flight from a Dragonet to the airman. Thus airmen fly, and learn how to duel with both sword and ballistic weapons. Each airman has a special bond with his Dragonet and they wear the shedded skin from dragonets mother as puttees. New York is a true melting pot and we find every type of mythical and magical creature working, doing business in this city, interestingly the different creatures have the accents of the nations of their myths. Fletcher meets the beautiful Grace who he infects with the desire to act, and she ends up joining the volunteer ambulance corps.

Soon enough Fletcher and his friends are in the mire that is the western front and much blood and tears are shed in his first taste of battle with the airborne men of Prussia. Battles are won and lost with the assistance of wizardry, magic and creatures mythical that exist in this alternative historical vision of the world at the time of The Great War. Wizards



create weapons of considerable destruction and one can see many parallel drawn with the more sinister aspects of war and Fletcher upon his involvement in a heroic atrocity has cause for much reflection which is not helped by an encounter with both Grace and his neighbour Rocky, who are cut off as a result of the counter attack driven motivated by his actions.

With many intelligent war stories, the futility of war is prevalent in this comic as are the bonds that young people make that can be so easily broken by our mortal frailty. Creatures, deadly sprites to powerful Dragons mounting artillery are no mere addition; they are intrinsic to this world where Gallia and Albion fight

against the central powers of Bavaria, Prussia and Tyrolia-Hungry. The device of letter writing helps to add to the narrative.

I cannot describe how much I really loved this comic. I grew up on the weekly comic Battle and Pat Mills's seminal ongoing series *Charlies War* was a firm favourite and in recent times, I have enjoyed Naomi Novik's alternative world with dragons fighting in the Napoleonic era. This comic originally published in 2003 mixes magic and mysticism into an alternate history in the right doses and with beautiful visuals and somehow is both a brilliant war and fantasy comic a hard mix.

The artwork by Carlso Pacheco is very nice indeed and he had a hand in the creation of the tale, but it is his ability to create realistic visuals that back up a fantastic story that is the real winner here. It's all very well being a good artist, but the subliminal accuracy and attention to detail that allows a fuller submersion into this alternative yet very realistic feeling world that is its real strength.

This series collected is one of the most underrated and missed fantasy comic alternative histories and one that is worth seeking out.

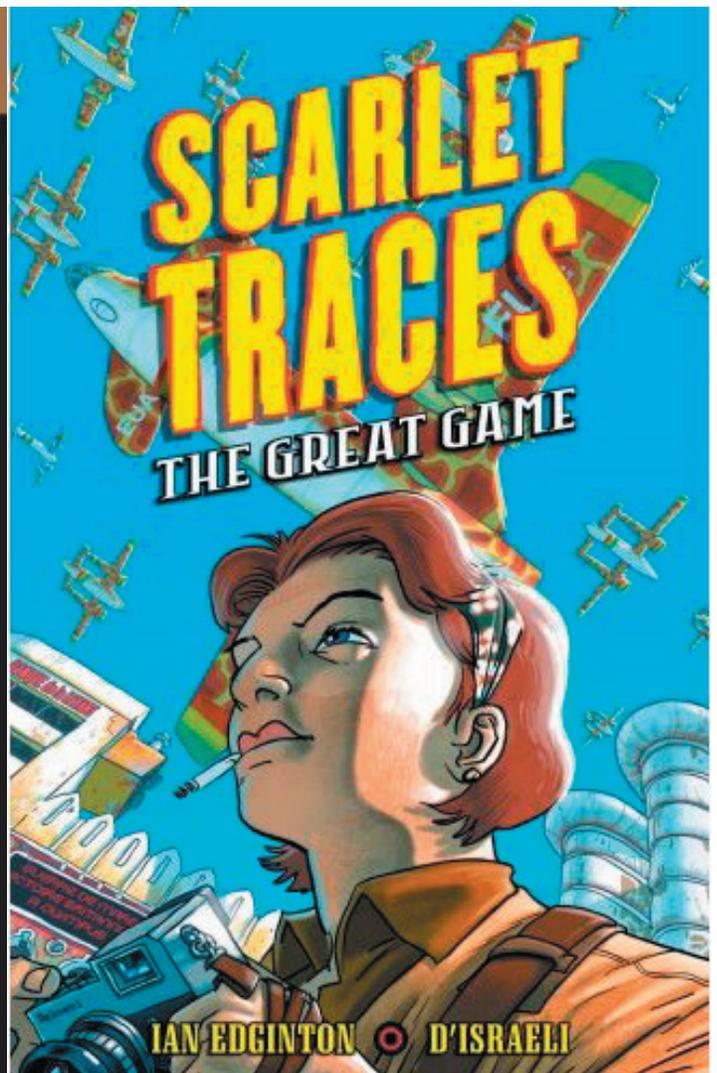
REVIEWED BY JAMES BACON: LONDON BUREAU CHIEF

MY RECENT ACQUISITIONS: NEVERMORE & SCARLET TRACES

Nevermore is a graphic adaption of nine of Edgar Allan Poe's short stories, the title taken from his story *The Raven*, which is also adapted in this fine collection. This is a fine selection from the publishing house of Self Made Hero, who have been producing the Manga Shakespeare line of graphic novels. There is a mixture of talent in this collection, from Jamie Delano to Leah Moore and John Reppion. The *Murders in the Rue Morgue* is nicely adapted in a futuristic Victorian styled setting by Ian Edginton and d'Israeli. Alice Dukes artwork on the *Tell Tale Heart* and Natalie Sandals work on the *Oval Portrait* are both very worthy of mention. These are adaptations and some of the writers have had their own take on the stories, while still encompassing the terrifying and intriguing imagination that was Poe. One hopes more such works may bring works of well known horror writers to new audiences while still

managing to do justice to the original work which this collection succeeds at doing.

From Ian Edginton and D'Israeli we have an adaptation of *War of the Worlds* produced by the American publisher Dark Horse Comics, ok not a local publisher, but this comic feels locally and lovingly produced. This graphic Novel is nicely presented in hard back form is the first of a trilogy. The pair had envisaged a sequel to *War of the Worlds* and produced *Scarlet Traces* which looks at the aftermath of the world following the failure of the Martian invasion, but of course to the winners are the spoils of war and technology takes an interesting direction. This adaptation which I suppose is *Scarlet Traces Zero*, is very emphatic to the original work and is a really beautiful adaptation. The whole series is well worth looking at.



BY JAMES BACON: LONDON BUREAU CHIEF

STEAMCON 2: A PREVIEW



the local musicians of Bakelite 78. The award winning author, Cherie Priest will be there to talk about her runaway best seller, Boneshaker. There will be a new addition to our convention called “Author’s Row”, where you can talk to up and coming steampunk author’s about their creations and pick up a copy. “Artist’s Alley” will give artisans a chance to show off their creativity as well. The Foglios of Girl Genius fame, return to perform one of their wonderful radio plays. Also returning will be Mr Bodewell’s Cabaret, with extended hours, more performers and even burlesque. Our very popular tea party and fashion show will add an extra show to Sunday to give more folks a chance to attend. On Friday night we are very pleased to announce the addition of the Airship Awards Banquet to honor the most outstanding talents in the steampunk community. Also new for this year are the Riverboat Gambler Night, the Pearl de Verre Cotillion and the Artful Bodger’s Gizmos and Gadgets Show.

The theme for this year’s con is “the weird weird west”, and is meant as an addition not a replacement to our beloved steampunk format. We wanted to remind everyone that steampunk doesn’t have to be set in London. Some of the best examples of steampunk come from the American west; The Wild Wild West television show and the movie , the third Back to the Future movie, and the little known television show Legend are steampunk stories at their best. So put on your brass spurs, holster your aetheric sixshooters and head on out west to the rip roaringest little steampunk con ever! Check out our website at www.steamcon.org.

Last year Steamcon®, held in October in Seattle WA, was a smashing success, generously exceeding attendance expectations. This year’s show should be twice as good. We have added a lot of conference space to accommodate an even larger crowd. Our vendors’ space will be twice as large as last year as will be our art exhibition. The Games department will have two rooms to play in as well as a large panel room.

Shane Hensley, the creator of Deadlands will join us to run games and talk about them. Our author guest of honor, James Blaylock, one of the fathers of steampunk, will be on hand to entertain and edify. Jake Von Slatt, one of the most popular makers in the steampunk community will talk about his creations, his methods and his sartorial style. Our favorite airship pirates, Abney Park return to perform on a larger stage along with the hellbilly rockers, Ghoultown and



BY DIANA VICK

OLD-TIMEY BATS AND BALLS

The 19th Century was where modern sporting developed. I've said it before, I'll say it again. While many sports had long-standing traditions of local play for various games, it was the invention of the railroad networks and how much easier travel became that really made competitive sporting possible. Most, if not all, of the major sporting teams rose out of cities that were on major ports or railroad terminuses. While Soccer and various forms of football rose quickly (and that's the next article), it was bat and ball games that really exploded and changed the way sports was played.

Let's start with Cricket. Cricket has been around in one form or another since at least the 16th Century. There are lots of references to games like Cricket much earlier, but the first reference that used the name Cricket (well, Creckett) is in 1595 or so. What was being played was country cricket, and later there developed a form called village cricket, which became the popular form for wagering on.

The 19th Century saw the rise of the Cricket Clubs. Many of these are still around, and they started playing touring matches. The first international cricket match was actually between the US and Canada at St. George's Cricket Grounds, the major Cricket club of New York at the time. The year was 1844, and it would be 15 years before the first English International matches against the Americans. The English toured a lot, as did the Australians, who had been a very powerful nation in Cricket for years. In 1868, a group of Australian Aborigines toured England, making them the first Australian team to tour outside of Australasia (they had toured New Zealand previously). This was the start of International Cricket, a sport with massive followings around the world. Australia and England played a lot of matches against each other, including a very famous match at The Oval, which led to the regular event called The Ashes, which is still played today. International Test play was pretty much between Australia and England, though South Africa joined in on Test play in 1889.

Every sport needs a superstar to turn it into something huge. In wrestling, it was Muldoon and Burns (see issue 12 of Exhibition Hall) and for boxing it was John L. Sullivan and Jack Dempsey. For Cricket, it was W.G. Grace. William Gilbert Grace was an amazing batsman, probably the best batter from his start in 1865 until his retirement around 1898. The rules for



international play weren't solidified until after his era, and they were partly codified with help from Grace. He was a massive man of heavy frame and that made him the Babe Ruth of his era. The period between 1890, when Grace was no longer the greatest player in the world, but was still productive, and the start of the first World War is often thought of as the Golden Age of Cricket. There were a number of the legendary names playing at that point and it was thew period that solidified it as England's top sport.

Baseball is much like America English: a complete bastardization. The game known as rounders had been played since Tudor times. There was also a version called Town-Ball, and a German game called Schlagball, which was very similar to Town-Ball. All this was happening in the early part of the 19th Century, and by 1840, a lot of groups had started playing Base Ball. The rules were very much as those of us who currently enjoy the game. This is the version of the game that catches on with clubs like the Knickerbocker Base Ball Club. The rules are pretty flexible until the 1880s, but after that, things get more standardized and the rise of teams like the Gothams, The Philadelphia Quakers, The Buffalo Bisons and the Red Leggings.

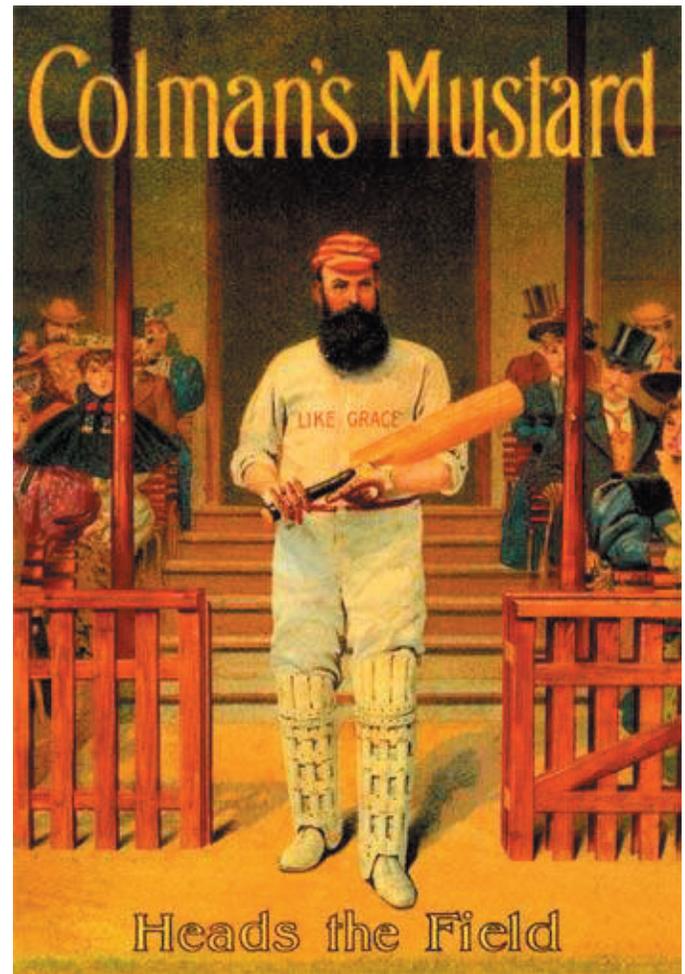
The rise of organized teams and leagues led to Base Ball becoming the national pastime. The leading figures in the game of the 19th Century are still well-

BY CHRIS GARCIA

known, as Baseball has always been one of the few sports to take its history seriously. Names like Tris Speaker, Cap Anson and Nap Lajoie were huge stars, and players from the period of 1900 and 1915 are often seen as the Golden Age of Baseball. Ty Cobb, Christy Mathewson, Connie Mack, John McGraw and Cy Young are still huge names and they were all active in that era.

One thing that has started to peak up in the US is Vintage Baseball. This is likely the kind that would be of most interest to the Exhibition Hall readership. It's the combination of costuming, sporting and historical re-creation. Basically, groups try to re-create the Baseball of times gone by. Most try to bring back the kind of baseball played in 1845 (by the Knickerbocker Base Ball Club), 1890 or as late as 1920. These groups wear appropriate outfits for the day and play the established rules of the time. There are dozens of clubs around the country that play Vintage Baseball, including one in Auburn up in the Gold Country. I've often thought about going out and playing with the guys, but alas, as a non-costumer, I'd probably have a hard time.

I've not seen any groups that play Vintage Cricket, but there's something we might want to think about for a future Steampunk convention. If there's one thing that's missing from Steampunk Fandom, it's physical culture!



DRESSING THE PART

Steampunk Attire From West to East!

I am almost finished with a new coat, a thrift shop find that I've been modding for Nova Albion's "Wild, Wild East" Exhibition in March. Moving away from a Euro-centric aesthetic has been an interesting stretch for me - there's a huge field of possibilities and interpretations that could fit the theme, and I'm having a lot of fun deciding what I want to wear and how best to present it. I'll show you the coat and talk about it in a minute. The bigger part of this month's Dressing the Part is that I want to see what YOU will create for that same theme - and Nova Albion is willing to put up some comped passes to the Steampunk Exhibition, to find out!

The prizes...

- Runners Up (2 winners): Two comp tickets to Nova Albion's Wild, Wild East and your outfit mentioned and displayed in Exhibition Hall and on the Steampunk Exhibition site
- Grand Prize: Two comp tickets to Nova Albion, your winning outfit featured in Exhibition Hall, a full blog post on the Steampunk Exhibition website... and a spot as a Guest Judge for the Exhibition's Friday night Costume Competition!

Some guidelines...

- Your creation does have to be clothing with or without accessories, that can be worn - not sketches, drawings or digital art depicting an outfit. Concept art is always welcome, particularly as part of your documentation and we will be happy to post it if we like it... but it will not be considered your contest entry
- Your submission can be a special article of clothing, a couple of pieces that go together or a full outfit. The goal is to showcase what you feel best epitomizes and represents an Eastern Steampunk aesthetic or attire appropriate for a day (or night) in the "Wild, Wild East"
- Area of origin depicted can be anywhere considered "The East" (near, far or middle East) during the Victorian era

How to submit...

- Send photos, a description of what you've created, how you went about it (the more detail, the better), why you feel it represents the theme and

anything else you think we need to know, to me at:

ariane@steampunkexhibition.com with "Ex Hall Costume Creation Contest" in the subject line

- Your creation can be completely hand-made, altered vintage, modded thrift shop wear or even new and modern stuff you've repurposed... so long as YOU (or people you name with you) did the work on it
- Be sure to include your full name and contact information, the title of your submission, and what materials were used
- We will accept submissions through, hmm... **October 15th**, to give you time to put something together

So...

I found this jacket at a thrift shop in Berkeley a while back.



I tend to grab things that look like they'll be useful or fit a theme or character I know I'll be putting together, and sock them away until their time arrives. When I saw this, I knew I wanted to make something Steampunk out of it, but I didn't really get the vision for it until a few weeks ago. It was also several sizes too big... which I figured was easier than too small, but would still take a bit of alteration. The first thing I did was to cut off the sleeves...

BY ARIANE WOLFE: FASHION EDITOR



I laid them out side by side, and decided that, with a little creative coaxing, they would make excellent coat tails!

So I set to work. I used a leather piece from a pair of old braces (suspenders) that I had, and a couple of brass buttons, and stitched them so it would look like the tails were buttoned on and removable. I actually did toy with making that a functional feature, but it proved a bit too unstable, so I kept the look and stitched them down...

I had some wispy tuling, and tied, then stitched it into a bustle of sorts. It's not done yet, but by putting elastic loops up on the top edge, I will be able to attach the bustle to the brass buttons or not, depending upon my mood and the occasion.

I found a shirt, also at a thrift shop - a hippie-gypsy-ish piece with a few ill-placed sequins and sparkle cloth, that I felt nevertheless had one very usable element - the collar.



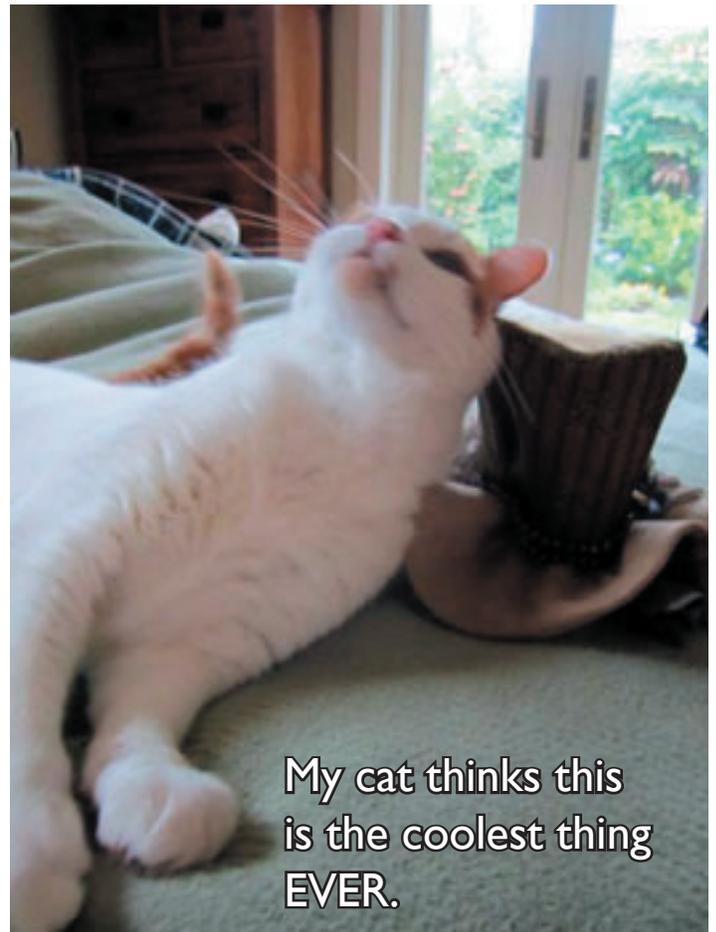
I separated it out from the rest of the shirt (which close up, was really not half so nice as it seems), and plan to place or stitch it over the collar of the coat. I am also putting hat wire inside the collar itself, so that it can stand or be shaped. Oh! I almost forgot the amazing upholstery fringe I found! One never can have too many tassels!



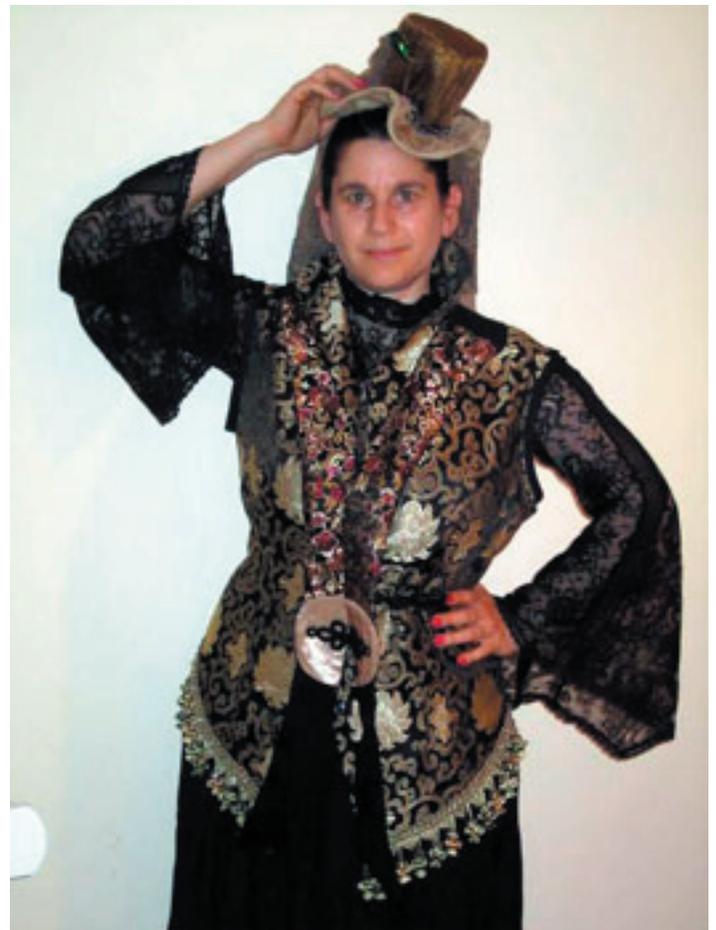
To pare down the coat by a few sizes, the back was gathered in a bit (and reinforced inside) when I attached the buttons and tails; I also added two rows of large eyes (think, "hooks and-") up high on the back, that will be laced together to take away some of the oversize bulkiness.



I found some lovely asian silk brocade at the discount fabric store and decided to try my hand at making a mini-topper, to go with it, too! I used the other suspender piece and more brass buttons, to tie it in with the coat, and added a new-but-antique-looking piece of lace from the fabric store...



My cat thinks this is the coolest thing EVER.





That's what I've been working on...
I can't wait to see yours! Get your submissions in...
In highest esteem,
Ariane



TRAIN TIME

Tap, tap, tap.

The cane foot tapped measuredly on the plank, hammering out a steady tick-tock rhythm. It was not a rubber foot, such as had been common on cane-feet for a century now, but a proper pinned steel cane foot, suitable for a weapon or a prop to lean on or a scepter with which to gesticulate. It kept its clock-like rhythm even as a steam engine pulled out of the station, a few feet from the bench where its owner sat in his frock coat and top hat, measuring the minutes in percussive time.

The late afternoon summer was dry and hot, save for the oppressive blasts of humidity that coated the ticket window with fog for a few brief moments when a locomotive deigned to grace the lonely platform with its presence. The endless in-between times stretched on like the deep-split grain of the wooden planks that seemed to continue uninterrupted from one floorboard to the next. Across the double-tracks, past the far platform, flies and weevils swarmed above the autumn grain, taking from it what pickings they could before the harvest.

It was the last day of summer. Soon the dust would rise from the fields and the northern world would hunker down for a winter season that was comfortable and warm, circumscribed by brick and fiberglass, hearths long since replaced by electric heaters. The days when people froze to death for want of wood, or heating oil, or gas were well gone, but the anachronistic frock coat and cane went seemingly unnoticed on the forgotten railway line, where steam power serviced the nostalgic aging population whose automated homes drew nuclear power from the worldwide grid. The coming months would be a time of hibernation for Europe, but neither the cold slow yearly death the old world had endured, nor the slowed down fallow time of the new world were in the future of this man from out the storybooks of Conan

Doyle or the misty streets of Whitechapel. And yet for all his out-of-place formality, the bench he sat on was wrought iron, and the foot of his cane kept perfect time. He seemed a fixture in the weatherbeaten station.

The steel band left small indentations in the old, grey oak, and the cane's wielder was beginning to regret his promise to await the train from Bonn. It had seemed like a good idea at the time, it had seemed the most natural thing in the world. Leaving Gibraltar, they each had business to attend to, loose ends of past lives to tie up before they embarked together for the new frontier. She could have flown in, of course, the airport was near enough from their ship's moorings. Or she could have driven, but somehow, even back in Morocco, the steam train had seemed best. It had seemed fitting that they leave their old world behind in its proper style, and the Orient Express and a few of the other remaining locomotives on the planet ran right past their destination.

So, it had been settled. They had kissed goodbye with promises to meet in two months. There had been chats, and vid calls, and letters, and every other sort of communication that was available to them, and when they got busy and went without each other for a few days or a week, their reconnection was that much sweeter for the absence. She was a hunger for him, as real as his need for meat and far more dearly sought, while he was to her like water. That's what she had said, over and over again.

Tap. Tap. Tap.



That was what she had said, and he had believed her. But he had been here, waiting on the Orient Express, its last run of the summer, for two days. It had been delayed, there had been no word. Perhaps a mechanical breakdown had stranded it in a high pass - but he discarded the notion as soon as it occurred to him. This wasn't the nineteenth century - there were were sat phones and radios, and if

nothing else the ticket agent should know something.

But if he knew anything, he wasn't telling.

She was a practical woman, not one to wait around for repairs. If the train were stranded she'd probably found a flat to let while she waited, even though the train had comfortable accommodations, she'd want to take advantage of a last chance to explore an alpine village. She'd dig in and sample the culture, find a club with a good local band and drink microbrews. She'd tour the local historical monuments and maybe have a long conversation over chess in whatever language was spoken in that remote corner of the world.

She spoke all the languages, she'd have no trouble blending in. But when her train departed she'd be on her way to him again, forsaking whatever brief affair she found to occupy her time, to be her last hurrah.

Assuming she had gotten on the train at all. Assuming she would tear herself away from her new life by the stranded train.

Tap. Tap. Tap.

That was, of course, assuming that she was even able to board or re-board. Even in today's relatively safe world she may have met with intrigue, or accident. She could have been abducted and ferried off to one of the remote corners of the world where they trafficked in women like her...but no. Of course she would come. It was not her fault that the train had been inexplicably delayed. Was it possible that it had simply vanished?

Certainly there had been two other coaches through from Berlin, how else could they have gotten through if the old master of the European railway had fallen on hard times and was blocking the track? Could it have slipped through some tear in the fabric of the universe, vanishing in the mountains like an ancient Roman legion?

As ridiculous as it sounded, it seemed the only thing that fit the facts.

He took out his antique gold watch and

popped the cover, enjoying the ritual quality it added to checking the time, and the sensuality of the softly pulsing clockwork. Their time was slipping away. Tomorrow, the last ship would be leaving - the last that they would be allowed on board, the last that could be caught. If they missed it, there would be little left to do. The new life they planned together would be frustrated.

They had both, with great care, disposed of everything they would not need on their voyage. Jobs had been quit, possessions that were not too dear to part with were given away to family, to friends, to old lovers, and to charities. Loved ones had been bidden farewell. There was little now left to do but wait, and hope that she arrived in time.

Each day, as the hours rolled away around the clock face, he would take his lunch at a bistro on the main street and sit by the window, where he could watch the train tracks wending their way down the mountains from the pass into the vale. As his teeth cut through the bread and meat he would contemplate the voyage that lay before them, and as he sipped his wine he would roll it around on his tongue, remembering the taste of her sweat in the North African heat. He closed his eyes and remembered photographing her that first day they had met; she had lain naked atop a crumbling arch in the ruins of Carthage, painted orange and rose-pink by the retreating sun, making a cruel mockery of the exquisite idols strewn over the city long-since wasted. They had lasted longer than she would, and yet she burned brighter - the Platonic ideal the ancient

sculptors had aspired to.

He had left her there among the ruins, dancing to music only she could hear - had he not known better he might have thought her mad, but somehow he understood her madness. He had read the secret in her eyes and her words, and he knew that she understood what he was about, as he understood her - too well, too soon, and perhaps too much, but the age of the place seemed to reach up from the salted earth like a specter to haunt their



time together, and it fostered the understanding. After they met again the following day in Casablanca they did not part again until their ways diverged in Gibraltar. From there, she had gone home to London, and he to his home in Florence.

The sun was getting on now, and the cane tapped measuredly against the aging varnish on the oak. He knew underneath his justifications that she might not be on the train when it finally came in. It may not even have been wise to part as they had - the tying up of loose ends always seemed to spawn new threads in the tapestry, after all. What was it someone had once said?

“Let the dead bury their own dead.”

Tap, tap, tap.

Tap.

The cane came to a rest, as if it had, of its own accord, measured out the final seconds that it was allotted. The man in the frock coat knew that his time for waiting had not yet expired, that there was another day yet that he could wait here, alone, at his post. He had taken this post of his own accord, a promise freely given. And yet the cane would not move.

And still the train would not come. As the shadows lengthened he heard the music of a lone guitarist from somewhere beyond the wheat field - a softly lilting tenor voice sang a plaintive lament that mirrored the man's own angst. Sounds of beauty and longing, words of delight turning too soon to nostalgia, as if the maple leaves were falling in June instead of October.

It wasn't her fault, he reminded himself, that the entire train seemed to have disappeared from the face of the Earth, nor that the underpaid railway staff seemed remarkably unconcerned. That alone told him that sooner or later it would arrive. He steeled himself to wait just a little bit longer.

His cane's foot began to move again, no

longer marking time, but meter. It gave him 4/4 time and he hummed the song that he'd danced to with her so often in Casablanca, and as time went by he let the music grow in him until he floated in a dream, his music accompanied first by strings, then by brass. He repeated the lyrics like a mantra, as if it could summon the Express back from its mythic past and mysterious present and onto the platform where it belonged. Had he been standing rather than sitting on the bench he was sure that he'd have been dancing much like she'd danced in the sunset at Carthage.

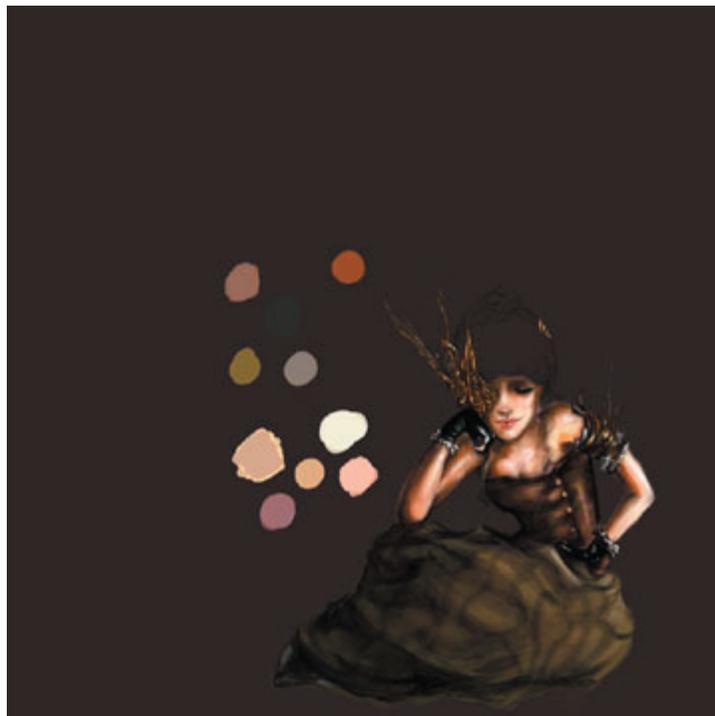
The music built in his mind, built until it seemed to ring with a single, sustained note from a steam whistle, echoing off the mountains and rolling across the now-dark plains to his ears.

He opened his eyes with a start and looked up into the notch between the high peaks, where he saw snaking along the dark path a small, glowing millipede under a full head of steam. Van Gogh himself could not have painted a more perfect sight under the stars.

And as his heartbeat mounted upon itself like the coal in the steam engine's furnace, and he began to hear the rapid, rhythmic chugging, his eyes flitted away from the locomotive and up to the towering granite peaks beneath the infinite expanse retreating forever above them, and he was suddenly seized with an overwhelming regret. After tonight, there would be no more chance encounters in ruined cities, no more lovemaking in the grass, no more sunsets, no sound of the lark and the nightingale, just the artifice of radiation shielding and oxygen scrubbers. When her train finally

arrived they would both be embarking to a realm where they knew nothing, and no language would serve them. A place where they would be equally aliens. It was the future, the chance to build a new world whose soils had not yet been fertilized with the blood of feuding brothers, but the grand destiny and the import of the task didn't soften the latecoming realization that tomorrow he would be leaving mankind's cradle for the last time. This too he had freely promised.

And yet, with all the



Catherine Karcher, Illustrator - www.ekkoart.net

aching beauty he would be leaving behind, he would be taking with him the paragon the Earth had produced, and there would be new generations to carry her beauty forward to the new worlds not yet familiar with the grace and barbarity that humanity would bring. She would be with him, and that thought tempered his grief.

The train was close now, less than a kilometer away, and he waited at the near end of the platform like a child trying to make the distance between himself and a long-expected guest as small as possible. As he watched it barreling towards him he made out the words "Orient Express" emblazoned under its smokestack and he breathed a sigh of relief at last.

It had arrived, his time of waiting was over.

All that remained to be seen was whether she was actually on board, or whether she had come at all. The living, after all, had to get on with the job of living while the dead buried their own.

As the enormous coal-fired dragon lumbered to a halt and its doors opened, the man wrapped his cloak close around his body and closed his eyes, afraid to find that his thread and hers no were longer entangled on Fate's skein. If he concentrated, he could almost see the tapestry. He could nearly pick out his thread, and hers...

With his cane tapping again upon the rough oak, marking the seconds as the train emptied, the new story began with a tap, tap, tap.

