

The Patterns of Unthought filled my head and I walked in Shades. Shades of meaning of symbols and concepts which language gives to real referents--this was the pattern taught to us by the Mad Dwarf Moslow.

Well after five PM on a Thursday I approached the Loeb Student Center. The longing, the Call, grew stronger and stronger. I must return to Fandom and leave Mundane. I must fanpub, I must collate. For I am one of the zines of Nyusfs, one of the Nine Prints of Apa.

I could go inside, nod to the uniformed Guardian of Mundanity, and proceed to Room 414 of an antiseptic, sterile building of some all-too-"sane" architect, with business-like Conference Rooms. But that would not get me to fandom.

I now unfocused much of my mind, tight-beaming the rest as the Mad Dwarf had done so archetypically. All denizens of Nyusfs had this ability to Walk in Shades or they could never get to Nyusfs.

In Mundane, there is a society of strange outcasts and misfits who gather in a conference room. Passerbys may hear boisterous conversation, obscure references, and general disorder. A club for one of the many varieties of nuts on a campus, they may think and go on their way.

But, O Fan-Nyusfs! I am not riding an elevator. I am ascending the Heights --for now I walk in "hades. The doors are not opening, the barrier breaks and a passageway lays before me!

As I approach the Chamber of 414, associations come more and more rapidly. Shades flicker, modes of thinking lock into place.

Above me soar inertialess rockets speeding on missions through hyperspace. Below me anyone from Mephisto to Hades to Satan to his Son plot the downfall of heroes and the deception of the unwary. To the West, successful elves and hobbits sail to their reward. To the East, potentates dispatch their hordes and totalitarian utopias seek their clever subversives. Northward, barbarians slay their primitive foes and paleolithic monsters, spinning sagas and

crying oaths. Southward, isles of seeming-paradise lure and darkling enchanters curse.

I open the final door and I return to fandom.

"Hail, Sam!"

"What, ho! black-clad one!"

"Got any new zines? What's in Locus? The Alien Critic? When's the next con? Have you heard this filk?"

And I return the salutes. Hail, Ire-a the Short and Artful the Tall. Greetings, Big Sister Synthe and Little Brother Align. Tanstaaf!, Free Marketeers Genial, "helling Horowitz, Pensive Spinner and Robert Coldhand.

I sit and jape with my Family and gossip and intrigue pass among us.

Jest Grimshaw casts his Runes upon the calcified board.

Others trickle in and a meeting pursues its own inchoate direction.

The Mad Dwarf and Anton the Barbarian enter. Chaos ripples through and the laws of the universe warp around them. Then the Mayor arrives and a New Order spreads and eddies around, swirling in patterns around the Chaos. Harmony blends with Discord into the Grand Dance of Fanac.

The Cuneifan and Fringefan enter late as usual as the Mayor calls for business.

Leaves of our respective scrolls fall upon the table and are passed and sorted according to the Rites of Collation. Apa-v takes form.

Then, intrigue. Freed-man announces, "The Victor of Drecks is overthrown. No longer do the Funds of Aurora trouble us."

A joyous noise is made unto the Mayor's words.

"But, abide trufen! The coffers of Nyuadmin are not yet closed and urge us on. Do we raid the treasury to seek the company of wondrous pros or do we pursue the favours of the

kinetoscopic wizards and wow the Mundanes with bright, flickering pictures?"

"Darkling temptations!" cry the Free Marketeers.

"Seek the worst of flickers, the basest of horrors," urges the refugee to the Burg of Pits and the Grimshaw.

"What's wrong with excellence?" inquires Charles the Observing Venetian, from the Land of the Chosen. His mate, Myra the Mysteriophile, smiles tolerantly on.

"Can we get the funds in silver?" suggests Robber Coldhand.

"It's all a lot of crap and you're trying to get me even though I have a Great Sense of Life!" raves the Mad Dwarf.

"Two cents of life," jibes Align.

Pummel goes Synthe.

Shelling and Spinner begin reminiscing about fund-fights in their old school.

"I know what Heinlein would say in a case like this..." begins Shellman.

"WE KNOW!" roar the assembled multitude.

Interrupt goes Moslow.

Interrupt Moslow goes Align.

"ODIN!" calls the barbarian.

Skulk out goes any neofan chancing into the meeting.

"What do you say, Sam?" reasserts the Mayor.

Well, if you're going to ask for funds we shouldn't have anyways, ask for all and see what they leave us with.

"Let's vote and settle it," counsels Genial Shellman.

"VOTE?" admonish the rest of the Free Marketeers, myself included.

"So I'll go ahead and do what I decided anyways," declares the wise old Mayor sagely, the advice of his peers weighed with appropriate consideration.

"Where do we feast?" asks Genial.

"It must not be Unclean," stresses the Freedman.

"Crap," responds Genial.

"Too expensive," says Moslow.

"The bodies of plants only," urges Shelling.

"Raw flesh," shouts Anton.

Anything but the Second Avenue Deli, I exasperate.

Chariots are assigned, individuals are lost. Artful surprises us by 1) coming along 2) then not coming. Some disappear into Shades back to Mundane, others reappear from washrooms. Chatter of friends and heated arguments over minor points in the latest SF novels (or obscure old ones) surround the group as they reassemble in the cobbled streets of the village.

The Mayor and I intrigue over various fanfeuds. Others add their 2 cents (inflated).

Are we going to callate at Infinitycon?

"Are we ready to deal with the Moon-clique, Samos?"

Perhaps here I should explain, gentle reader, the whorls and eddies which engage the questing fan.

Fandom has many domains, though only First Fandom is Real and all others shades of First Fandom. Yet each domain is real to the inhabitants. Each Domain of the East, Midwest, and West battle every year at the fabled Worldcon where every trufan and weirdo congregate on the Day of Labour. Who shall put on the next of these legendary tourneys, these banquets and fairs of trade and collection?

Treaty has bound the larger Domains to alternate the hosting, and so the internecine struggle descends to the lower levels. Far to the South and West lies the Worldcon of this approaching annum, the exotic Aussiecon. Year the last, it was in the homeland of your effete Northern Barbarian scribe, though in the most decadent Eastern sector. But recently, the DisCon had gathered the greatest assembly ever.

To the Midwest and City of Kansas will follow the Fair-goers in 1976, and then...? The forces of Orlando are engaged in combat with those

of the Mystic Isle where Nyusfs is located (geographically, at least) and renegade Newyorkers seeking to the Northern City of the Royal Mountain, where strange croaks are heard as often as the Queen's English from the two-tongued natives.

Within the Mystic Isle, fandom is divided with the largest factor and most venom. The Clique of the Moon, with its offending closed gatherings and harrowing initiation, is old, dominant, and largely decaying. On Eastertide, those of their ranks summon the Lunacon, and most still heed the call. Scurrying hordes of creatures with little intelligence and much frenzy, the Trekkies, are perhaps largest in number and most annoying, and of least consequence. In small dukedoms and baronies, clubs rise and fall. Of these, the greatest (we boast) is Nyusfs.

But even within these circles, many feuds and offenses are given freely. It takes much effort to record and keep up with them, and their constant changes. Boggling as it is to the mind, many fen actually do not care about such matters! O ye of little ego!

And beneath all the above slithers the Carldon, plaintively croaking, "But I'll pay you back the rest next con!"

We have arrived at the appropriate feasting place. The food is deemed clean by the Mayor, and the Nyufen choose their plates and combinations.

"But Infinitycon is only three weeks away, Samos."

Aye, Rich, but we are late with this one, and furthermore I have always asserted that we can go tri-weekly (even if I did miss the last collation).

One voice rises in the background, of obvious source.. *Pummel* went Synthe. People sit at the nether tables in the inn we have chosen.

Also, Rich, I suggest we set an advertisement, post notice of our existence at the SF Shoppe so that more fen from the outlying areas can join Nyufen as Solarians. Then...

"Thou doth thrive on machinations, Samos. I think that thou seeketh the wrath of the Moon-Clique."

And doth thou not War with the Trek-yecch?

"Then, Samos, to battle," sighs the Plato into his plate. (It is oft rumoured that our Mayor Archetypes his fanzine.)

"Boy, am I going to get even with all those fans who did me wrong," muttered the Mad Dwarf, "even though they won't know about it until it's too late!" he yelled.

"Hey, how was the ESFA meeting and Gallun, Samuel Edward Konkin III?"

Drop the "uel" and the Edward Konkin II and just call me Sam, I filked.

Actually, it was quite enjoyable. Moscowvitz out-observed Moslow. He told me about the Worldcon where he kicked all the "commies" out. Now, I got to get Wollheim's side of it...

Far away, as they have a habit of doing, darkling clouds gathered. Plots were being carried out from the clubhouse of LASFS to the swamps of Gainesville, Florida to the boudoir of the Countess von Sternberg. Soon the Nyufen would foray out to Philcon, refreshed first at Infinity locally with a Harlan-heckle, thence back to the biggest regional of all...Lunacon.

Little did we know...

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IN A FUTURE ISSUE: THE SIGHING OF THE LUNACON.

Will the Mayor ever usefully and instructively inform his his trekkie students? Will the Cuneifan collate clay tablets? Will the Fringefan print the next Apa-v in FORTRAN? Will Mike even sit and listen politely at a meeting? Will Ire-a ever return? Will you ever see more of this drivel in print? Tune in...