



The fifth issue of a weekly, or thereabouts (colds permitting), letter substitute from Tommy Ferguson, at 768 Manning Ave., Toronto, Ontario, Canada, M6G 2W6. Email: tferg@globalserve.net Phone: (416) 539 8992 Web Site: <http://www.globalserve.net/~tferg> Distribution in the UK by Eugene Doherty, 110 North Parade, Belfast, BT7 Email: e.doherty@virgin.net Available in the North Americas only via the net at the moment but send me a note and I'll print you a copy and put you on the list. Dated, already, 24/2/97.

"The Abyss: A nice place to visit..."

I had a bit of a fight the other night with an old, old friend and we're now not on speaking terms any more. As we've been friends now for at least ten years, in actual fact 11 and eight months nearly to the day, we've had these troubles before but our relationship usually comes through. That sort of long term investment in continuing to see someone, even in different countries and now continents, means that a tiff like this is seen for what it is - a clearing of the air, venting of the spleen and generally taking a break from each other.

Alcohol and I do that every once and a while. Usually it is after we've spent far too much time together. I get to know him, it is a him, and we just hang out for a few days together. I invite a few friends over, or I meet new friends in the old haunting places and introduce them to alcohol and we all get on famously. Sometimes I meet alcohol there and he introduces me to some new friends and they then become good mates - I met Irish Whiskey that way and have been friends with him for nearly ten years now. We hit it off instantly.

As I said though, this past week we'd been hanging out a bit too much together, so much so that I got fucked off with that life long friend of mine, regular food. Yeah, yeah I know there are some friends that you can't just do without, but alcohol and I have this special relationship whereby quite a lot of things get put by the wayside. Thankfully at least one adult friend, employment, never suffered - although he did have a couple of solid kicks to the head, but no permanent damage. Alcohol and I are like that, and recently, well, it go to be too much.

As you all know I recently made the move to Canada, where alcohol's cousins are a bit more serious and there are quite a few of them. Canadians know this and tend to treat alcohol with a bit of disdain, and generally give him a wide berth. At 5%, Canadian alcohol can kick the sand in the face of any Irish or British alcohol with impunity. Even the little brother of Canadian alcohol, "Lite" is a fair match-up at 4% and compared to

the British equivalent of "LA" at 1 or 1.5% I think it is the fresh air and huge scale of the country that gives Canadian Alcohol its robust nature.

So much so that I had a bit of a rough and tumble with him over the past week. Nothing serious I hasten to add, no broken bones or cuts etc., but a bit of an argy bargy that went beyond mere words into slight fisticuffs. The cause of this was a bout of homesickness and the realisation that things were becoming more settled for me over here. I was to be seeing a lot less of alcohol over the next few months and even less during the summer with the job starting. In the fall I hope to start teaching a course (more later) and of course, alcohol would have to take a very distinct back stage presence then. So I thought, as I wouldn't be seeing that much of him, we'd get together, meet up with some old friends and check out some spots in Toronto.

As is usual we spent most of a long weekend together - entirely ignoring our good mates food and exercise for four days. Oh, I called food on the phone and left messages etc. and sent an e-mail to exercise - but not what they truly deserved as the long time friends that they are. Things came to a head when some real time friends got the wrong idea in some fanzines and e-mail and thought that I was completely ignoring them - not at all. I was just ignoring them for a while; when I start the job I will ignore them on a truly monumental scale.

So I've bid adieu to Alcohol for a while, let him think about our relationship and see if he can come up with a better plan. Me? Yeah, well you need the distance every once in a while. And it is nice to spend time with my real friends every so often.

Of course, there is Vancouver and Potlatch next week...

=====
=====

Talking of which I hope to meet up with a bunch of folk there. Maybe there might even be some of the people on Larry Hancock's mailing list who, inadvertently, got a reply I had intended to send to Larry only. Hope Leibowitz noted:

"Question: how did you send your reply to everyone on Larry's disty list? I don't imagine that you typed each address. I haven't figured out how to do that simply yet. I know it must be possible." <tiki@interlog.com>

Yeah, I know it is possible too - but Chirst knows how it is done. The re-mail thing on Netscape has now assumed terrifying heights for me, after I was initially only afraid of the thing. The response I got from this humungous error have been relatively polite, considering the content. Larry himself noted:

"Sorry you weren't pleased to receive the previous message. The message itself was an announcement by an animated film producer about an animate theatrical release that they are getting under way.

My reason for forwarding the message to several people was because the producers have bought the film rights to THE SILENT INVASION, a comic book property that I have worked long and hard on with my friend Michael Cherkas. My reason for forwarding the message to you was because I thought that you might be interested in things that I am up to, since I am 1997 co-chair of the Bid Committee."

{That is Toronto in '03 Worldcon bid which I hope everyone will be supporting. Pre-Supporting memberships are now available: CND\$20.03 and US\$15.00 made payable to Toronto in '03 and sent to: Toronto in '03, P.O. Box 3, Station A, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, M5W 1A2. Larry's email address, for queries and offers of help is given below. He finishes with: }

"I have no problem with you querying me, but I am disappointed that you decided to broadcast your query - and your phrasing - to everyone else who received my original message." <hancock@inforamp.net>

Again, I can only apologise for that mishap, the technology is a reason not an excuse. As for the phrasing, Hope notes:

"I thought your reply to Larry was very funny. I too thought something like that, though I've read some of Emma Bull's books and she is a very good writer."

It was not meant to be taken seriously, if it was, I apologise again. Beer is on me on the 8th March.

Vancouver on Wednesday, Potlatch on Friday, as I was saying. Maybe you'll meet me. Maybe, though, you'll get lucky.

This is being distributed to a whole bunch of friends on the net, if you received this and would NOT like to be on the mailing list please accept my apologies for this intrusion and let me know so that you will not be bothered by further ramblings. If you know someone who would like to be on the mailing drop me a line.