

REFLECTIONS ON SAN DIEGO

Well, another San Diego Comic Con has come and gone. This year's Con was purported to be the biggest ever (approximately 50,000 people showed up from what I heard). Which more aware of the comics industry, or does it. I saw many new companies, but I also noticed that many companies that were there last year did not show up this year. Were these new growth in the industry. It is hard to say. All I can

say is that we did pretty good. I decided not to do any sketching this year in order to spend more time with my friends and Diego, so I never really got a chance to see much simply not needed from me. So this year I decided to simply enjoy myself and not work during the Con. Needless to say, I did enjoy myself, but as I wandered the show I began to

notice certain things that both delighted and What made me baptry was seeing how wellreceived we were by our readers and to see how we had several pros come by our table and nick up staff. I was able to talk to many seasoned pros and a lot of up-and-coming pros (they know who they are). I was able to get feedback on our books to see what we were doing well and what we were doing wrong. It was quite an

Having more time than awal. I wandered the floor and was able to see many of the dealers and their wares. My conclusion would have been Diego Comic Con, every single major Gold and that it wasn't even farery. I thought these suckers were supposed to be rare or something. I do issue or two), but I like looking at them. Something about old cornics like that appeals to me. sort of like a window into the past. Not just my past but America's past. I can see how these

books have changed over the years and how America has changed. It's kind of cool It was certainly distressing to see all the incredible displays set up by other comic comand a plastic sign that read "ANTARCTIC

companies had base monolithic displays that to put together a really cool display. One that can greet the AP reader in a way that will show

Another thing that sort of bothered me was the lack of AP books in general. Not that I'm complaining, mind you (more business for us). prolific among dealer inventory. I guess shows like these are expensive and they must figure there and people picked them up. With no discounts, no hard sell, no load music, no special editions (except the foiled NHS #0 which was old by 4 months) people simply walkedup, saw what they wanted and get it. No this year, so many older issues could not be

I guess my oditorial from a couple of months ago ("A LITTLE RESPECT") was actually unnecessary. At the time I was little pissed by how we were being treated and threw a little tantrum (I am human you know), but realized gotten a little better though, Several of the thanks to books like STRANGERS IN PARA.

Yes, San Diego reaffirmed my strength and To never rest on past victories and to force ahead with new and better product. And to all our readers who attended San Diego Comic CON THANKS FOR YOUR SUPPORTS

Trust Us, You'll Love It. As the Antarctic Press heads steadily toward its

tenth year, a lot of people probably think they have us menty well figured out. We're that small but dependable company that does all those arrhropomorphic and manga books, with a couple of creatorof people are probably getting pretty comfortable with that image of our company. Just in time for us to start changing it. all you manga and

anthropomorphics fans worry too much. I'm not talking about getting out of those areas we've come to be so heavily identified with ... I'm talking about getting into other things as well. Hopefully, by the end of next year, a lot of other things

December marks the beginning of a new pash for us. We've got three new, offbeat, hip kind of just a couple of genres: Schim is a book full of gleefully cynical looks at reality from Ivan Brunetti sive you could ask for, S.A. King's The Naked Exe has garnered praise from Dave Sirn and Peter Bagge. among others, for its scathing wit. And Nick Ryan: The Skull is a loopy pulp advesture from the feverish brains of David Watkins and Kevin Miller, who know what the 1940s should have been like.

even if they weren't. Also in December, Ben Dann turns his creative skills to Warrior Non Areala, an action-packed miniseries of heroics that should really turn some January we're serving up more hipness with David

Habri's Private Beach: Fun And Perils In The Trudsverse, a series I frankly can't even describe The reason for all this? Well, we turn ten years old in just a few months, and we figure it's time to

start making some real noise. So we're embracing readers in all genres of comics who don't have enough clever, inventive, artistic books to choose from, and our goal is to get his enough to do Want to help? We promise you won't be disap-

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FURRLOUGH

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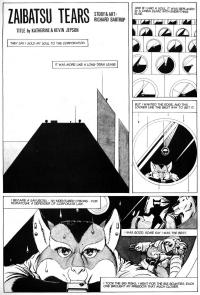
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Sorry to say that events have conspired to prevent us from bringing you "Romanics" by Joe Rosales this issue. Look for its return soon!

--EW & SH













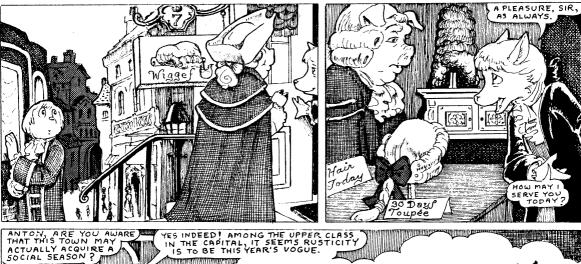






Here Comes A Candle...































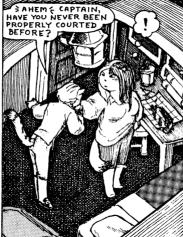




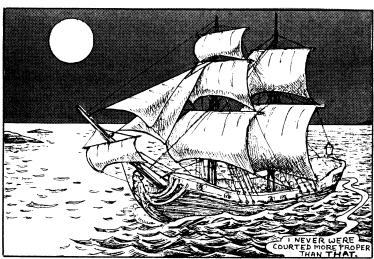






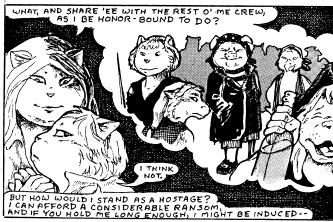










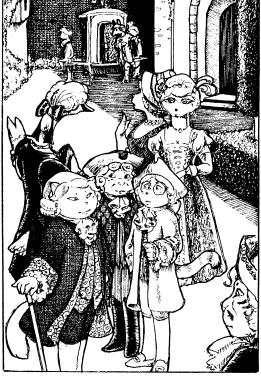








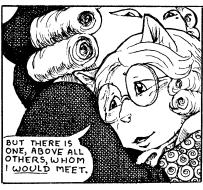
















To Be Continued....



























DEER JOHN

LETTERS TO FURRLOUGH
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Dear Friends,

There were two surpassingly excellent comic books published this week, two stories that were so far above the rest that they deserve special attention. One was Uncle \$crooge Adventures #27, "Guardians of the Lost Library", by Don Rosa, from Gladstone Comics, and the other was the feature story "Here Comes a Candle", by Mary Hanson-Roberts, in the anthology title Furrlough #17, from Antarctic Press.

These two stories are so noteworthy that, with your kind forgiveness, I am writing a single fan letter to the publishers, editors, and writers of both, with hopes that each publisher might recognize the hand of genius in the works of the other.

Deferring to his age, I'll speak of Uncle \$crooge McDuck first. Don Rosa's story blends raw humor and even Duckish slapstick with serious archaeological and historical truth. He takes us on an odyssey all around the earth, in search of the greatest treasure of all: knowledge. The wise curates in Umberto Eco's Name of the Rose might nod in quiet pride at McDuck's quest...but it is with an American flavor that the story ends, with an ironic conclusion in the style of O. Henry or Mark Twain, for, of course, what the crusty old quintessentiallionaire has been seeking has been virtually in his back pocket the whole trip.

The story is helped along, in a sad way, by the absence of Donald, who remains glued to his television, allowing for a series of mordant digs at the expense of "romance novel" adventure shows-- the sort thet are stamped from dies like bottle caps, all the same, all ultimately disposable.

We, the readers, are drawn in to a quest for the distant past, but are shown how great distances are, perhaps, not as great or unbridgeable as we may imagine. (My grandfather's grandfather was born a few years before George Washington died; the past is still reaching out to us, still seeking to share itself with us.) The recurring motif of

the lost knowledge-- burnt scrolls, mildewed parchments, and rat-nibbled books-- is tragic, and lends the quest a desperate poignancy, with the flavor of a rescue mission. But it is not the past -- dead and buried-- which needs rescue, but we, ourselves.

The in-jokes, referring to the Junior Woodchuck Guidebook and Reservoir of Inexhaustible Knowledge and \$crooge's resignation to its omniscience, are also a delight to an old Duckburg fan, and those of us above the age of eight can only bewray, with \$crooge, our lost opportunities to become Woodchucks. (The joke, of course, is that education is ageless, and Woodchuckery is always open to everyone.)

The art is crisp and clean, sparkling Rosa at its sharpest; but it is the story that inspires.

Mary Hanson-Roberts, in her adventures subsequent to the tale of Pussin-Boots, takes us into a past, of sorts: an age of elegance, an eighteenth century that would have been familiar to George Washington, had George Washington been a white-feathered eagle rather then a white-peruked man. This is an Aesopian otherworld, a yarn with a moral, a story for the child inside the adult.

This petit conte, this little tale, invokes the sense of nostalgia, but it is a sophisticated nostalgia, and the story is for the compromised intellect of men and women more than for boys and girls.

The story is pleasantly and ironically self-aware-- Master Birch's saucy conversations with the narrative boxes, and the narrative's difficulties in deciphering his handwriting stands as an elegant example. The story brings back to us the innocent joys of childhood--making fortresses of the furniture and arming ourselves with cookies-- and the innocent fears of childhood-- the strange deliriums of fever and the unquestioning comfort that is given when someone cares to stay the night awake by the bedside of an ill child.

Youthful awakening to adult responsibilities, echoed in the Western World's awakening to the Age of Reason, is made accessible in this Mother Goose-epoch

tale. The peccadillos of country life and the petty squabbles for status and for the squire's estate occupy center stage, and far, far removed are the horrors of war, famine, and death. Only pestilence takes a bow, aided by the well-meaning incompetence of the practitioners of "The Youngest Science" (in the words of the late Doctor Lewis Thomas). Even His (pestilence's, not Thomas'!) clutch is feeble, though, and the pain of death is eased by an eighteenth century vision of heaven, wherein all hurts are eased.

Two stories. Two brilliant stories. Each contains in-jokes, hidden wit, running gags, quips and humor concealed in the background, an element of surrealism, an element of realism, and a friendliness, an amical approachability that invites the reader's desire to live in such a milieu. Who among us would not trade toenails for webbed feet, and move to Duckburg (although not, perhaps, as Donald Duck's next-door neighbor, please!) Who would not find a kind of comfort in a fantasyperfect Mother Goose Europe, and rejoice in witnessing the laying of the foundation stones of modern science and philosophy?

Each is about animals-- ducks, cats, owls, and a salacious weasel-- learning what it means to be "human". Each is about children, learning what it means to be an adult. Each is about the past; each is about wisdom.

Two brilliant stories. Two of the best stories of the age, and, without any question, two of the best yarns in comics of the year. Hats off to Don Rosa and deep bows and curtsies to Mary Hanson-Roberts. Thank you for fulfilling the promise of the genre. Thank you for telling us these wonderful tales of joyous youth.

Thank you, Sincerely, Jefferson P. Swycaffer San Diego, CA

Wow! What a letter! I was going to edit it down for space, but after reading the whole thing, I felt it should all see print. Thanks for writing in Jefferson, we enjoyed hearing from you! As for the rest of you mugs, how come you're not writing?! Let us know what you loved, what you hated, and what you'd like to see more of! Tell us what you think! --EW

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