

# THE (UNLUCKY? THIRTEENTH) FORTNIGHTLY FIX

“I’m not crazy. My mother had me tested.”  
-- Dr Sheldon Cooper

## News From Planet Me

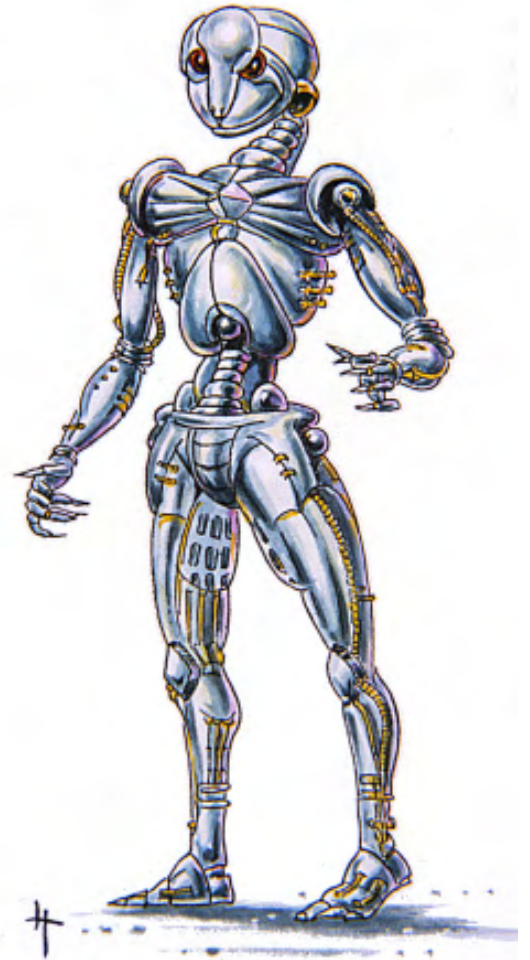
Golly, doesn’t time simply fly by when you’re waiting to discover whether you’ve got a second interview for pretty much the only job you’re actually trained for, to the point you decide to cast aside your alleged publishing schedule and head down south to spend a long weekend in the wilds of Oxfordshire with your elder god-daughter? Just keeping it real, folks.

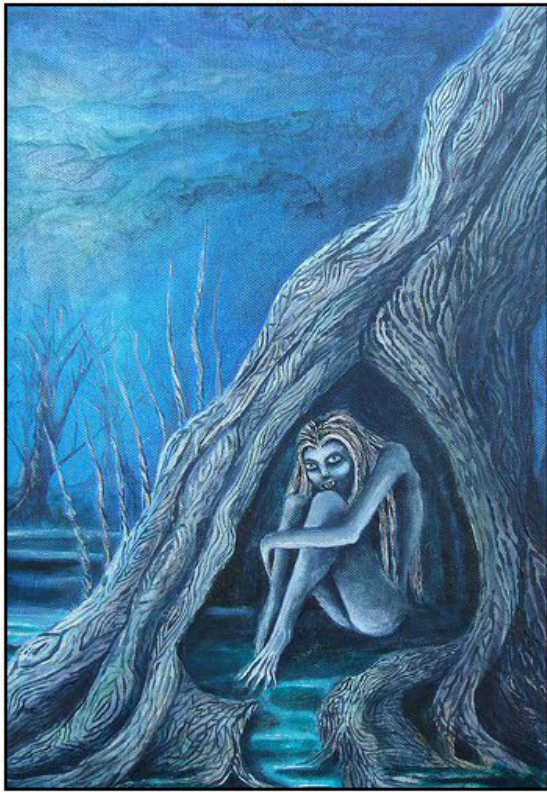
In any case, this edition of *The FFix* is only a few days overdue, during which time I’ve also locked down venues for the first few chapters of my TAFF report, following the prologue which appeared in *Argentus* and the alternative-universe spoof version published in *Journey Planet*. The initial Montreal dispatch is now slated for that city’s sf newsletter *Warp*, with the subsequent Worldcon section now promised to *Banana Wings* and one of the later extracts (most likely chapter four, which will cover Seattle) to *Littlebrook*. For the meantime, that leaves my voyage into the underbelly of Toronto fandom: any takers?

One very pleasant surprise during my brief sojourn in Faringdon was a wander over to the nearby Vale & Downland Museum in Wantage. Not only did I bump into Mike White, one of the original ‘brains’ behind Microcon (boy, was he chuffed to hear how that event has provided me with a terrific weekend in Exeter these past three years), but my host Peter Wright and I hung around for a lively talk on local canals by Brian Stovold, with whom we both shared a barge trip around the Avon Ring back in 1988. As I toured the rather splendid selection of exhibits, I was reminded of the afternoon Hal and Ulrika O’Brien suggested we walk from their home in Washington to the newly-restored turn-of-the-century residence which houses the Kent community archive, an equally impressive exemplar of volunteer achievement.

I did have one very odd experience that weekend. It’s been my unwilling custom these past twenty-odd years to erect fandom-related architecture across my dreamscape, populating the endless hotel corridors and bars with friends and (occasionally) family. Needless to say, Ann features in many, if not most, of these particular narratives. Anyhow, I woke quite early on the Sunday morning, fresh from one plotline which (true to Real Life) had me in deep trouble with my wife over some fantastical social *faux pas*, checked the time and chose to doze back off -- at which point, I was straight back in the same storyline.

Which is weird, because that’s never happened to me before. Sure, I’ve returned to similar dream sequences after days or weeks, but not within a matter of moments. I certainly wasn’t attempting some form of ‘vivid dream’ manipulation. So, the question for my correspondents this time around is quite simple: has the same thing happened to you?





## Deep In the Woods

One of my most cherished possessions this past year has been *Russalka*, a painting by my dear friend Lesley Ward. It was at one point prepped as a colour frontispiece for Joel Lane's 2009 short story collection *The Terrible Changes*, but the texture of Lesley's canvass apparently created an interference pattern when the publisher tried to replicate it on paper.

Back when I first met Les, when she lived an entire fifty-one houses away, I confess I found her artwork quirky rather than outstanding, though I still twisted her arm for a few direct-to-stencil illos in late 1985 (elsewhen, Les devoted the first issue of her fanzine *Dumble in the Works* to a conrep on Ann's and my wedding in December 1983, an event during which she was shanghaied as a witness).

But now, in oils, I am in awe. Lesley has a gallery over at [Flickr.com](https://www.flickr.com/photos/lesleyward/), which I urge you to check out. And if you produce fanzines, do consider using her work!

## Down the Loccol

- Jim Mann: "What's the context of the Barry Norman quote? Of all the giant insect, spider, etc. movies, the only good one is the one about giant ants (*Them!*)."

Norman was regularly dismissive of sf and horror movies, a form of critical colourblindness I recall he shared with the late Leslie Halliwell. Another reason I was really disappointed when the BBC passed Mark Kermode over for the *Film 2010* gig.

- David Flint: "Your quote from Barry Norman in the latest *FFix* reminds my why I loathed him so much. Personally, I'll take all the giant ants I can get, but life is *definitely* too short for Ken Loach films.

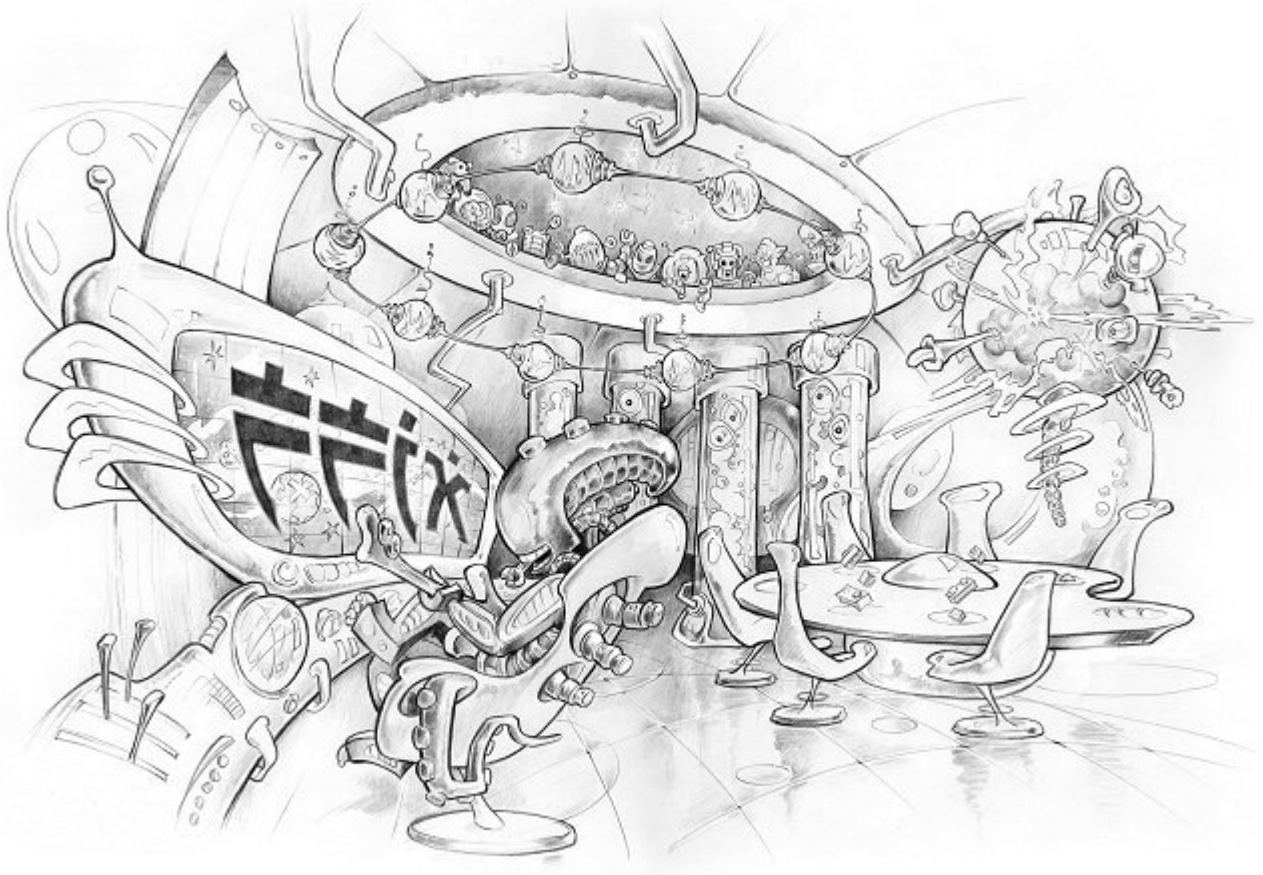
"And I agree about that horrible ad - he seems a weak-willed pushover (something that I imagine will work out just fine managing a football team full of egomaniacal jobs) and she's a needy narcissist (in my mind, she'd only been in the relationship for a month anyway).

"I wonder who this is aimed at? Women who like to be portrayed as so vacuous that the end of a relationship leaves them incapable of the most basic human functions? Men who get a kick from being a shoulder to cry on? All it says to me is that owning a mobile phone can be a pain in the arse. Bah."

- Hope Leibowitz: "I don't ever see first run movies any more (seeing *Avatar* twice was a major exception, and I loved it). So I don't see lots of ads, not having a TV either. But I must admit, seeing some of those ads once was amusing, especially in 3D."

- Ian Williams: "I tried as best as I could to avoid the election campaign but the aftermath has proved surprisingly interesting. I'm not convinced the coalition government will work, though I'd like to see it given a decent chance. I tend to think that the dogmatic reactionaries of left and right in both parties will end up wrecking it. Sunderland, to no-one's surprise, stayed completely Labour with three new women MP's. Mine is actually local and a former union organiser. If she'd been black and gay that would have ticked all my boxes."

- Jerry Kaufman: “Kim Huett is an interesting character, isn't he? I've heard of him asking to be dropped from other mailing lists with similar comments and no further elaboration. Me, I find *The FFix* to be slight, nimble, quick to pass across my path. I can't see that there's anything in it to take offence at, or anything unpleasant about it.”
- I also heard from: Joel Lane; Rich Lynch; Brian Stovold (“You do have a splendid writing style, Steve”); Sarah Mooring; Hazel Ashworth; Phill Probert; Eddie Cochrane; Geoff Hill.



This has indeed been the thirteenth issue of *The Fortnightly Fix*, dated 18 June 2010. Published by Steve Green. Illustrations courtesy Dave Hardy (pg.1), Lesley Ward (pg.2) and Pete Lyon (pg.3). My usual thanks to Bill Burns for its home on *eFanzines.com*. A Gutter Press fanzine. Suitable for vegetarians, but not vegetables. And remember, let's all be careful out there.