

Ray X X-Rayer #130

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raypalmx@gmail.com

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Don't Think, Keep Marching

In the last issue I mentioned the term "marching morons." For those who didn't get the connection I was referring to a short story by Cyril M. Kornbluth first published in the April 1951 edition of *Galaxy Science Fiction*.*

"The Marching Morons" opens in the future, a world where low IQ citizens greatly outnumber the intelligent class. The simple-minded people need constant attention and care from their mental superiors.

But a solution to this problem is found when "Honest John Barlow," awakens from suspended animation. Back in 1988 a dental accident induced a deep sleep in Barlow. After acclimating himself to the future wheeler dealer Barlow thinks of a scheme to deal with the surfeit of the simple-minded.

Suddenly the public hears that traveling to other worlds has been perfected -- or so it's claimed. Advertising and "news" articles urge people to travel to the paradise of Venus. This compels everyone to there, their departure helping to reduce the growing number of the simple-minded.

(When this story was published it was thought that Venus and other planets might be similar to the earth in climate and atmosphere. That was the conceit of Ray Bradbury's *Martian Chronicles*.)

People who take the trip write back to friends and relatives with stories of how great Venus is. Barlow remembers how Hitler had letters from concentration camps faked to hide the real conditions.

One of the simple class, Mrs. Garvy, is caught off guard by references to traveling to Venus. A TV commercial uses the phrase "easy as a trip to Venus." Puzzled she tells her husband that she thought no one could go to Venus after "that one rocket thing crashed on the Moon." From what she remembers they gave up on space flight because it was too dangerous. Her husband dismisses her, saying that women don't follow the news.

Barlow's scheme uses multi-media to dupe the simple-minded. For example a new character is introduced on a TV soap opera, a master rocket pilot who handles the Venus run.

With poor memories and a need for authority to do their thinking the human lemmings willingly march into their space coffins.

In light of recent events there's a key detail I should mention about the master manipulator, John Barlow. Before he awoke in the future the opportunist was a real estate developer.

*A PDF copy can be found at this link:

http://mysite.du.edu/~treddell/3780/Kornbluth_The-Marching-Morons.pdf

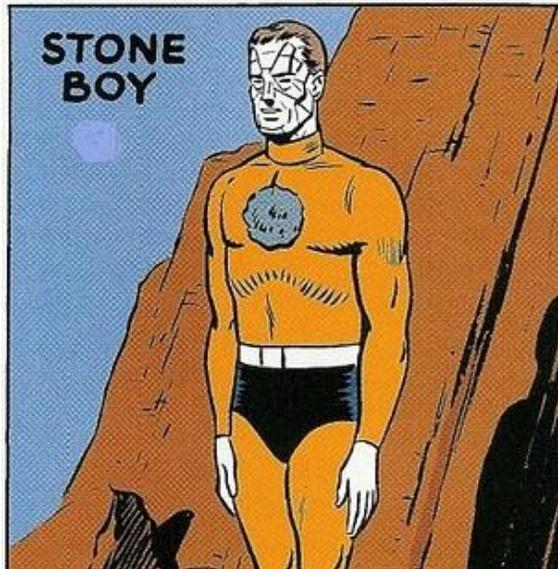
Dead In Winter

I have the perfect symbol to represent winters in the Plattsburgh, NY area.

Dead means "the middle" in the idiom dead of winter, referring to its long nights and cold killer temps. Lately during the day the mercury is a little above 0 degrees F/ -17 degrees C. At night the temp can take a double digit drop from that point. Death does rule.

This time of year -- January -- is around the middle of the arctic season around here. Winter usually drags on for six months. April showers? Forget it, you can still trudge through snow on the ground. In fact the white death can even drop in May. Nothing says spring more than shoveling snow during Mother's Day weekend and suffering a heart attack.

And nothing says stupid more than bottom of the barrel superheroes. At DC comics there is the Legion of Super Heroes, a top-notch group operating in the future when space travel is commonplace. A Legion member is super-powered by accident or by the natural ability he was born with on his native planet.



Many apply for LSH membership but few are accepted due to their unimpressive abilities. Take Dag Wentim -- Stone Boy -- from the planet Zwen. Evolution has blessed his people with the ability to turn into stone, falling into suspended animation to deal with the long winters.

And how long are those winters? Six months. Just like around here.

MailboX

Comments? raypalmx@gmail.com

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tyrbolo@comcast.net

Hi Ray,

There's a gloom and doom that settles over any human when the crappy weather sets in. It is probably because of our origins as a tropical rain forest monkey accustomed to basking in the sun and occasionally hurling some shit at the neighbors just to get some excitement started.

Once the summer rolls around again the gloom dissapates like a bad dream to be forgotten and ignored until it arrives again. Full spectrum LED lightings go a long way towards getting rid of the unneeded psychological effects.

[RX: I tried one of those light therapy boxes that sits on a desk. You had to sit there for half-an-hour for it to take effect. That didn't work. For what I spent on that one unit I've replaced the bulbs in my apartment with daylight balanced CFLs and LEDs. The white light is more stimulating than the piss yellow illumination from old style tungsten bulbs or the new soft white ones. It's artificial sunshine but for me it does the job.]

Like you I dig into weird literature, my own interests are in mainstream heretics. When the mob starts crying that a person can't possibly be right it piques my interest. The ancients of fandom were always digging into such creatures for their own nefarious motives (looking for a good story line). Few bother to read Oswald Spengler, look at B F Skinner, or ponder the intricacies of Korzybski these days. Not too much of a surprise since the schools produce crippled consumer fodder for the corporate machinery of our third rate banana republic 'empire'.

If we have a totem it is Moloch (as represented in Roman era propaganda) where we have decided that the sacrifice of our children and their future is a marvellous business model for the 21st century. Once the mainstream decides something must be heresy and starts whining about it you know there's some idea hidden in it that conflicts with the corporate dumbing agenda. That makes it worthwhile to search such things out. It doesn't confer any cachet of authenticity to the heresy but it might make you think a bit.

The real danger of Trump is that things might change and it has caused a panic among those who like to talk about changes but have no interest in seeing things be different in

any way. However he has represented a perfect opportunity for the 'viewing with alarm' crowd to vent their fears in fantasies of storm troopers marching through american streets rounding up democrats and herding them into re-education camps. This won't happen, but I'm sure reality has never been the long suit of the true believer in Clintonisms.

[RX: I was no fan of Hillary but she doesn't cause alarm like Trump. He's a narcissistic bully and pathological liar. That might work in the business world but leading a nation requires intelligence and tact. Aren't you disturbed that Trump counted Roy Cohn as a friend and adviser? While Trump won't be herding all Democrats into re-education centers I don't rule out a return to McCarthyism. Anyone who doesn't fall in line and march behind Trump will be vilified and persecuted like heretics. Really want to feel uneasy? Google the words "Trump nuclear" and see what hits pop up.]

I had a teacher who assured us in solemn tones that Andrew Jackson had ruined the US when his river boat brawlers broached a giant barrel of whiskey, lit a bonfire on the White house lawn and fired their guns in the air to celebrate as the cityfolk of the east coast stared in horror at what they had unleashed upon the indians. It had now come back to haunt decent folks and ruin the country. Few crack a history book these days, so the purveyors of 'fake news' can easily convince them that this last election was the first time such a thing has happened.

Another heretic I enjoyed immensely was Vilfredo Pareto, he was a horror to academics in the soft sciences for having the gall to investigate how human societies really work and putting it on a scientific basis. His work is a priceless read if you only go through the footnotes which cover a broad range of shenanigans by those in charge. I'm not sure but I noted that he married a gal who left him whose last name was Bakunin. I think she was the sister of the anarchist of the Paris Commune revolt. Bakunin of anarchy fame is worth a read if you avoid the Marxist introductions. Bakunin correctly identified Marxism as the horror it would turn into if it got into power. It turned out he was exactly right about it.

In my digging into the dark corners of heresy I turned up the book of Max Stirner. Later I found that a bunch of young Parisians who identified as Stirnerites had invented the bank robbery using a get-away car. They had borrowed a rich mans car, robbed a bank and zoomed off leaving the police in the dust. They were also a bunch of water drinking vegans with odd relationships almost the prototype of todays fringe. Once Clouseau got on the case they were chased down and exterminated in an inspiring keystone kops routine by the french forces of law and order.

You can find most of these characters works at archive.org. The new interface there makes it harder to dig them out but if you persevere the rewards are great.

The problems of isolation are more difficult to solve but in this age you have enough access to use Leary's mantra on a wider scale than ever before. "Find the Others".

I'll cheer you up with an apochryphal quote.

"LSD has been known to cause psychotic behaviors in people who have never used it."

Dave

RX: Great quote when I think of the psychotics who ran MK-Ultra and projects like Midnight Climax.

penneys@bell.net

December 30, 2016

Dear Ray:

Christmas was such a busy time, and I've got a big New Year's Eve party to go to tomorrow night, so now, I have some free time. Here comes a loc on issues 127, 128 and 129 of the X-Rayer.

127...I still don't know what to make of ET or UFO reports. People must have seen something to make them report like this, and many of them do sound alike, but I wish I could know exactly what they have seen. I don't want to ridicule; I just want to know for sure.

[RX: When it comes to UFOs I think true unknowns are very rare. With the constant flood of reports you would think all these ET vessels (if they are indeed spaceships) would create a traffic jam in the sky among themselves. In that case the Roswell crash could have been a traffic accident.]

In the early days of comic books, or movies for that matter, there was a question all of us asked...how did a brilliant scientist, usually male in those days, wind up with a daughter? And a beautiful daughter at that? Perhaps he was a studious sort, and that turned on the hot girls? We didn't believe that, even then. Another scientist with two children? Yes, this really IS science fiction, isn't it?

My letter...I regularly hear from fanzines I respond to who say that I am the only respondent. I have never felt that fair to the faneds who work to put an issue together, and get close to no response. That's where I come in, I guess. If things are as bad as

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you think it will be, my couch won't help. (Besides, take a number.) Check with your local Canadian consulate, and get the ball rolling. Might take a few years. I know some might say that Canadian citizenship is not a consolation prize if your candidate didn't win. I suspect that once President Turnip takes office, you're going to miss Dubya.

[RX: Dubya is considered the worst US president ever. That honor will change with Trump. While Dubya was a simpleton frat boy -- for example, at a conference he came up behind Chancellor of Germany Angela Merkel and suddenly gave her a neck rub -- his limited intelligence wasn't that great of a threat with minders like Dick Cheney around.]

128...Based on what I've seen during my meagre Christmas shopping, Krampus was busy...elsewhere. I was hoping he might come to take away at least a few of the screaming, temper-tantrumming brats I see regularly. I've seen pictures of the Elf on a Shelf, sitting and exchanging a few stories with the Mensch on a Bench. Police state? I am sure he will try. I pray he isn't successful.

Well, the local is better this time around. I think one thing that made the old space pulps so fascinating to that young audience way back when is something we are sorely lacking in these days, a sense of adventure. Sorry, kids, video games just don't cut it, and never did. Adventure would bring many like-minded people together in a positive way.

129...It sounds like you really need to move out of Plattsburgh. I am nearly expecting the Trumpjugen. Many say that his body language clearly says that he is out of his depth, and has no idea of what to do. He might resign because his new job is keeping him from his main business of losing money, and getting tax credits for it. These are truly the interesting times we were warned about. I know I am not safe up here, either...Turnip says he will break NAFTA unilaterally, and he really can't do that. Both sides need the deal, but he wants a better deal for the USA. No smart person here or in Mexico would sign that, so it looks like free trade between Canada and the US would end suddenly. Ghod, I hope it's only four years of this schmuck...

[RX: Mushroom clouds popping up could shorten his term.]

Time to go, Ray...it's getting late, I've made the page, and tomorrow is New Year's Eve. Hope your Christmas was great fun, and 2017 has got to be better than 2016. Heck, I might even get a job, who knows? Stranger things may yet happen. Take care, and see you next year.

Yours,

Lloyd Penney.

1706-24 Eva Rd. Etobicoke, ON CANADA M9C 2B2

RX: Many thanX for your comments. I do get tired of my own voice after a while and like to hear other POVs. Good luck with the job hunt.

jose77sanchez@yahoo.com

Sorry to hear about your situation friend-but if anything, one good thing is that nothing ever stays the same-and eventually your situation will improve for the better. Nothing ever stays the same-life is dynamic and ever changing.

It's great that you are into photography, which I think IS an art form of itself- my brother has always been into taking pictures for many years and I'll tell you that as an artist, if it wasn't for all the wonderful imagery captured by photographers-my art would be very empty and non-inspired-so kudos to all of them !

I thought that your reference to the "glittering can" picture you took was pretty neat.

I can imagine how cool that might look. You'd be surprised how everyday objects can lend themselves to some pretty inspiring ideas and excellent photo reference material as well in their own right.

Anyway, hope you had a descent Christmas and wish you a better New Year.

In Spanish they say: "Año nuevo, vida nueva" which means: With a New Year comes a New Life"

take care,

Jose Sanchez

RX: ThanX for the comments. I get through sometimes by griping instead of keeping it all in.

Jose Sanchez then replied:

That makes perfect sense. I'm glad that you are able to use this technique. As long as it works for you- that's what matters. :0)

BTW: "Happy New Year!"

RX: "Depression is merely anger without enthusiasm." — Steven Wright

Fuck Chromebook and Google Docs

For the second and last time I've tried producing this zine on a Hamstrung Chromebook. I can't believe I've encountered more glitches using that system compared to Windows 10 and Word.

With the Chromebook I have to be extra careful when selecting text. I wanted to only change one paragraph into italic and found the highlighting went beyond what I wanted. So I selected the text I wanted back to normal, supposedly the correction was saved, and then emailed a copy of the file as Word to myself so I could proofread it on my seven inch Android tablet, making sure it looked OK on the smaller screen.

But when I open up the file the correction I made for changing italics to normal remained was missing. I'm now editing this on my laptop using Word and I still have problems thanX to Google Docs. Docs has fucked up the page numbering: page 1 is now page 0, page 2 is page 1. It can't be changed. I tried unchecking the different first page option in Word but the glitch remains in the footer. I'm not wasting time in trying to fix that shit so no page numbers this time around.

Previously I emailed a copy to myself and found half of the zine's contents missing. So I had to email it a second time.

What I saved as plain text with Chrome is one block of text, no breaks, when I open up a copy in Windows. Notepad is unable to insert the proper returns. I have to open up the file in Jarte and save it as RTF to get the returns.

I don't want to keep screwing around to make Docs work properly in compatibility mode with Word. My life is too short for this bullshit.

Another added bonus when using Chromebook offline: if you accidentally delete a file you can't rescue it from a trashcan, it's gone forever.

Chrome wordprocessing: word carving with a dull oversized blade.

Computers don't fucking save time.

Note: I save vulgarities and obscenities for special occasions.

-- END XR #130 --