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Welcome!

I'm back from Maui. It was delightful. Even after Bella got sick, a fever of 103 for 3 full days, it was still far better to be sick in Maui than well at home!

I actually started working on this issue on the Lanai of our condo in the Maui Sunset complex. I started after I finished the layout of the *Journey Planet* dedicated to Vincent Docherty. It's a good 'un, part-tribute, part-conrunner primer, part memoir, all action! Give it a read!

I've been working on getting a new set of webhosts for *Journey Planet* and *The Drink Tank*. Sadly, I haven't found anything that's easy enough for me to use.





Shuffleboarding

There are some games where my rules are better.

Shuffleboard is one of them. I 'learned' to play on a court I found at my Gramma's old folks home. The problem was, though they had the sticks and the biscuits, no one knew how to play. No one seemed to play, so one day the family, visiting for Easter I think, decided to take out the stuff and give it a go. We sorta made up the rules on the spot, and they made sense to us then.

First, the actual rules

2 players or teams alternate tossing their pucks down the court to try and land them in the marked portions of a triangle. If they get their pucks (called biscuits) into the spaces without touching the lines, they get that many points. If they go beyond

the triangle, or they go out of the court, they lose ten points. You play to 75, usually.

We came up with a version I now call '10-point plus'

In 10-point plus, you still push the biscuit towards the triangle with the scoring areas. If you land it completely within the scoring portion, If you land your puck completely within the scoring area, not touching any of the white line, you get that many points, no matter how many of you are in that section. If no one is in all the way, but someone is touching the scoring portion and the white line, they get that score, unless someone else is touching the same scoring portion, then whoever's biscuit is more within the scoring area gets those points. Since the biscuit is wider than the white lines between the scoring sections, you can score in more than one area, so the best possible score would be 30 with a single biscuit.

Now the complicated part.

Every round where at least one biscuit is in the playing field (between the two lines that are in front of and behind the scoring triangle) then however is closest to the '10' portion of that scoring triangle gets ten points UNLESS someone is in or touching the 10-point section, then only they can claim those ten points.

I like this version because you never lose points, like in the regular game when you go behind the scoring triangle, and so instead of playing 'first to...' style, we usually play three rounds, back and forth







I've had good food on this vacation.

The one thing I wanted on this trip was a plate lunch . The last meal I had in Maui was a plate lunch. The only plate lunch I had on the trip. The best five meals I had were all great, and I really didn't have a bad meal here. Including the ones I cooked!

Yak & Yeti—Appetizer Platter

The Appetizer Platter at Yak & Yeti was mostly pakora, though they also included a samosa and some onion bhaji. The Shrimp Pakora and Chicken Pakora were both excellent! The rest was good.

Vanessa had the Lamb Seekh Kebab, and it was spicy and lovely! The Tamarin sauce that came with it worked very well to take the fire!

We also got banana pakora, which I'd never had but were slightly chewy and delightful!

The Restaurant at Maui Ocean Center



I ordered the Hummus.

Joke was on me, the hummus was made from Breakfruit, Ulu. I would not have known if I hadn't read the menu.

The garlic and the flavor of the Ulu just made it taste exactly like hummus, and the taro and sweet potato chips worked on every level. It could not have been a more perfect appetizer. I only had a basket of

fries with it, and they were only OK. The Fish 'n Chips JP ordered were the thickly-breaded kinda, and were good. Vanessa had a venison burger, which was both tasty, and lean, without the normal gamey tang.

The Fork and Salad

I wrote about the lamb chili last time, but this time I'm writing about the butternut squash soup AND the lamb chili.

Like, together.

The Chili has a pointed spiciness that I really enjoy, and the Butternut soup is clean, with a hint of ginger, and coconut milk as the base. Adding a few spoonfuls of the Butternut Squash soup into the chili enhanced the flavor, added depth, made the



chili stretch a little further, and best of all, made the chili a touch less spicy. A HUGE win!

Maui Ocean Center—Feeding the Hanu

This is the cheat, but I need to say it—there was no highlight of the trip lighter and higher than getting to feed the Green Sea Turtles at Maui Ocean Center.

It's a part of the behind-the-scenes tour, and they have four hanu—they don't have names, but I named the one you see in the photograph below Pointy.

It's a perfectly cromulent name!

The Green Sea Turtle gets its color from the algae it eats,

which means that the hanu is the Flamingo of the sea!

At the Maui Ocean Center, they feed them green bell pepper, kale, spinach, lettuce, and I believe banana leaf. They seemed to love it, and Pointy eat about half of the bell pepper we all threw in!



Da Kitchen.

My last Hawaiian meal (I do not count the hot dog I grabbed in the airport!)

I got the Kalua Pork plate lunch. JP, upon hearing I was getting plate lunch, declared that he wanted a Teriyaki Beef plate lunch, but my Mom got him a Teriyaki chicken plate lunch, which he would not eat.

I gave him a bite of my Kalua Pork.

“Pops, this is the food of the gods.”

I tend to agree.

I had been eating off-and-on all day, so I only had a few bites of the pork, and one of the pieces of his chicken. The next morning, I had a couple of bites of the pork and the rest of his chicken, and he finished my pork.

And let me tell you, they were both awesome!

I get plate lunch here every now and then, and they're good, but the pork was exceptionally, slightly less fatty than here, and the chicken was great. They cooked it skin-on, which is exactly the way it should be made!







Kenneth Anger died May 11th. He'd been missing for years.

OK, that's overly dramatic, but there's truth to it. In his final couple of years, he had fallen sway to someone who controlled his last days. There's a lot of questions as to the why of things, but it probably boils down to money.

Kenneth Anger is an incredibly important figure in the history of cinema, and even more so to the legend and myth of Hollywood. His films were avant garde, expressions of myth, Thelema, and queerness in modern America. It's weird to think of where cinema would be without him and his influence. He didn't invent queer cinema, but he certainly helped perfect the im-

age that it projected in its early days on the main stage of festival culture. His masterpiece, *Fireworks*, was the kind of film that told the spirit of the times, of homophobia and homoeroticism and how the two played together in the 1950s. It was a film of daring visuals that are incredibly layered with art and cinema history. The opening shot, a sailor in dress whites, carrying Anger in a pose straight out of *La Pietà*, is as iconic as they come. The way that Anger plays with his themes, sometimes hinting at things with a mere half-second camerashot (like those of a set of urinals) and establishing ideas that would permeate early queer cinema, like the use of milk.

The films *Scorpio Rising* and *Inauguration of the Pleasure Dome* look into his occult philosophies, and they are just as layered. There's always been a thick layer of Thelema in Hollywood, and art in general, and Anger established a visual language for the late 20th century form.

Of course, as I've written about often, there's *Hollywood Babylon*. Yes, it's not a history text. Like his films, it's a series of impressions, full of rumors, creations, myths. He wasn't writing the history of Hollywood; he was telling the myths of Hollywood in the same way he was telling the myths of Thelema. He invented some, though there's little from either *Hollywood Babylon I* or *II* that hadn't been whispered before, but what he was doing was setting a secret history, a new history. It's a remarkable piece of work, but it's very clear he never intended it to be taken as gospel, but more as gossip.

If there's one thing Kenneth Anger was, it was a gossip.

I met him, kinda, through Forry. I remember seeing the two of them at the House of Pies on Vermont. I've been led to believe they had a falling out. This happened a lot with Anger.

Supposedly he shot a long piece on the old Ackermansion. I really wanna see it.

His passing was non unexpected, but still sad. He made his last significant work between 2008 and 2010. *Ich Will!* Is the only piece from that era that will likely be remembered with any fondness.

You could go on about Kenneth Anger for ages, and I probably will at some point. I devoured *Hollywood Babylon*, and found the second book to be one of the most impressive of all the books telling teh darker side of Hollywood. I know it's fashionable to be accurate, but would have done, he printed the legend.







I haven't been painting.

Now, I know I've been in Hawaii, but as I mentioned a few issues back, I haven't been painting for a while. I ran out of paint, and it's not a priority to re-stock. Vanessa's been doing her art and going to fairs and such, she even did OK vending at Illusive Comics & Games during Free Comic Book Day, but I don't sell so I don't NEED paint, but I miss it.

Why do I paint?

Well, I've always wanted to. I love art, and during 2020 and 2021, I found that painting was just plain fun. I used to be able to sign-in at work, do an hour or two, then take 30 minutes or so to make a few paintings. Or I'd do it after the kids went to sleep. Or whenever I found a moment. It was a lot of fun.

So, now I got a bunch of high-quality paper.

A batch of it was dumped on me and now, well, I'm not sure what to do with it all. It's about 50 pieces, large (16 x 25) and heavy stock. I'll probably end up holding it for a while, but really, it calls out for some colour.

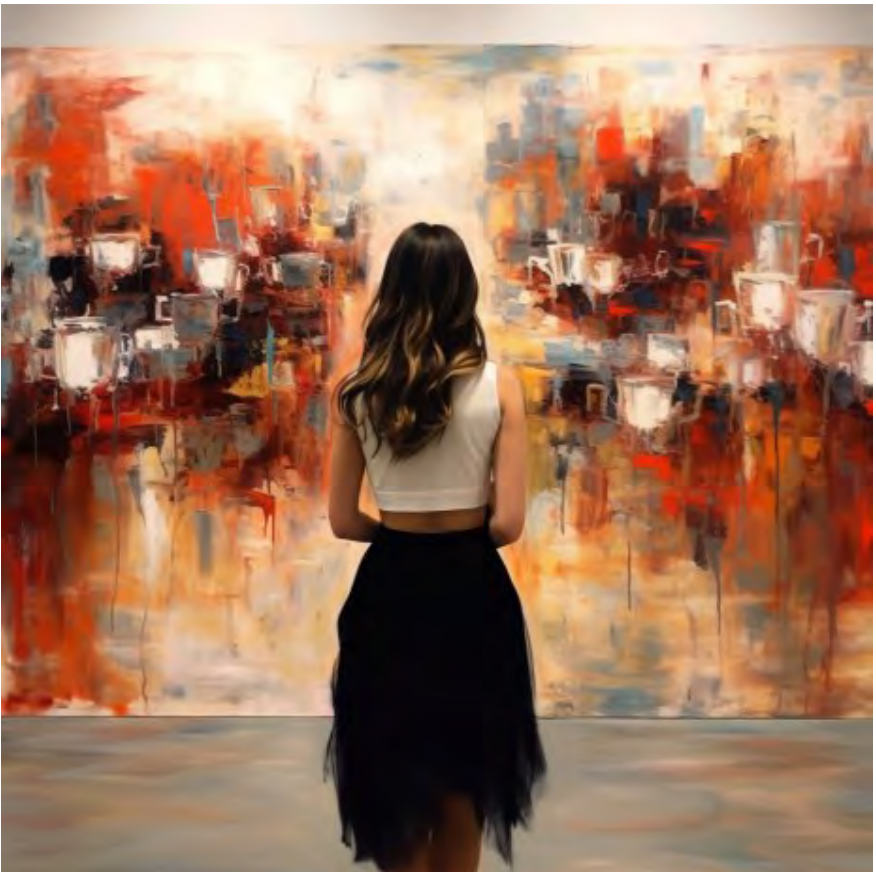
My thoughts on painting aren't exactly simple.

The first thing is the process has to be at least one of three things—therapeutic, necessary, or fun. Ideally, it's all three.

You see, not all painting must be to express your inner-most tortured feelings to get them out so you can see them. It's a totally valid reason to paint, or do anything I recon.

Necessary is a lot broader. It can be necessary because you've got an image in your head and need to get it out. It could be financially necessary. It could be important to do because you promised it to someone. There's a lot of reasons why painting might be necessary, and it's one reason a lot of people do paintings, especially professionally.

For fun, though, is the largest segment, because it includes everyone from those three year olds fingerpainting to the groups at old folks' homes haven't painting time. This is where most of my painting ends up. I'll add that it's also where a lot of my writing comes from. It's where I live with just about most things in my non-essential life. I just find it fun and wanna do it.



Now, there are complaints about all three of those.

The first is often called self-indulgent, self-focused, or worst of all, over-sharing. Whoop-de-doo!

The second can be called mercenary, or commercially-motivated.

The third? Frivolous. There is, apparently, no perfect reason for making art, and perhaps no even good reason.

I like painting, and since I have no way of knowing what my paintings are going to look like, I don't have the ability to see what I'm painting since I can't visualize, I am always shocked and often pleasantly surprised over what I hath wrought. Clearly a part of why it's so fun for me.

Now, part of why I'm so big into the AI art stuff, besides the fact that it can bring the stuff out of my head so much better than my hands can, is because it's basically free. I've spent decades study the intersections of art and commerce and computers and on and on, and basically I've come to the same conclusion I did years ago with Media-property fan art—*Do What You Will, Just Don't Sell It*.

And, for a lot of people, that's the problem with my painting. If I'm just doing it for fun, why share it? I got the same question about my zines in years gone by, back when people seemed to care. The answer is because that's fun too!

Maybe someday I'll have my art in a museum, though probably not. Maybe someday one of my pieces will sell for cash-money. Doubt it. Maybe, just maybe, I'll be buried with hundreds of them cluttering up my coffin.

Actually, I kinda hope that last one happens.







2020 National Video Registry Part 3

Hallmark Hall of Fame

One of the longest running shows in American television history, and one that's still pretty much going, and changing names and networks more than a few times. The real reason it's on here, other than incredible longevity, is that it presented some amazing stuff early on, and then later an entire cable station, The Hallmark Channel, popped up from the ground it tilled! The best episode ever is a raging debate, but I'll take *Sarah Plain & Tall* with Glenn Close and Christopher Walken.

General Hospital

The soaps have always been an important part of the television landscape, and there's never been a bigger moment in the general culture than when Luke & Laura happened in the early 1980s. It's weird that such a beloved couple could arise from a rape storyline, but here we are.

The famed wedding episode was watched by 30 million people, and propelled the series as the 1980s most important

soap, even when shows on CBS and NBC over-took it in ratings, and *One Life to Live* in storytelling and character development, it still remained a force. Today, it's ABC's only remaining soap, and it's still got it all.



The Simpsons

The Simpsons has run more seasons than any other animated show. There's a good reason why—it's funny.

Yes, earlier seasons were the best, and certainly the most iconic, but it's still really funny, usually topical, and mostly good viewing for smart people. Three generations of Americans have been influenced by the creation, and I think it's going to be on until the voice of one of the five main family members dies. Others have said that we're only getting a couple of more seasons, but that's been said before.

If you look at the checkboxes that determine if something should be on the Registry, it hits all of them really, really, really hard.

M*A*S*H*

I don't know why *M*A*S*H** the movie isn't a bigger part of American culture, but the television show certainly was. The acting was superior to just about everything else on TV, the writing was smart, even when it got Alda-level 7 preachy, and the characters were golden. This was a series that took the format and run into the corners. It was a comedy that was dramatic, and set the tonal floor for series like *Moonlighting* and pretty much every modern dramedy.

All Your Base Are Belong to Us

OK, this one is so important for understanding not only the rise of early meme culture, but on the importance of Japanese pop culture, and specifically gaming, on the generations born in the late 1980s and 90s. The poor translation of *Zero Wing* led to an explosion of tie in bits that people did all over the place, and some of them were actually funny! It's an important artifact of an important time when internet culture was being defined.







Mumford & Sons

The first song my kids ever heard was *Little Lion Man*.

I wasn't a huge Mumford & Sons fan, but I had downloaded the song and played it for the kids. They didn't seem to notice: they were in their incubators doing their damndest to stay alive.

Go figure.

That song, more than any other, has things that speak to me on a deep and important level. It's a song that features the line "I really fucked it up this time, didn't I my dear?" and there may be no single line in any song that is more appropriate to my

life than that.

The group formed in the mid-2000s, and they hit it big pretty fast. Their first album had Little Lion Man on it and that was their signature hit until we got their second album. The Mumfords dwelled in the world of American Old-Time music, but it's also a kind of old-time that never really existed. It's far from the kind of thing you'd hear on a front porch, and far more the kind of thing you'd hear from a heavily-produced bunch of folk singers.

That is not a bad thing.

There's a lot of melding going on here, with songs like The Cave feeling far more Alt Country than I would have expected. Winter Winds feels sea-shantyish, and Roll Away Your Stone is what comes closest to something you'd hear coming from a bluegrass band of the 1990s.

But it's Little Lion Man that really hits on every level. It's got bluegrass bones, but it's structured like a 1970s rock song. It's powerful, and smart, and everything hits like you'd expect. While I can never be objective about it, it was what I played for my kids while they were hanging by a well-tended thread in Neo-Natal Care, it is a powerful song. Best evidence: I had it on my phone so I could play it for them.

It also means that the first song I ever played my children not only contained the word 'fuck' several times, but one about failure and bad behavior, and darkness.

Good start for those kids, no?

The second album Babel wasn't as ground-breaking, but it was beautifully made, and the songs went into a more 1970s straight-ahead rock feel. It was a folk-tinged version of Fleet-

wood Mac, I think.

I Will Wait is the one song on the album that comes close to Little Lion Man. It's got soul, is more optimistic, and just feels like their peak. I remember when it came out feeling like they had felt out the corners of their sound at that moment.

I was right.

The third album, Wilder Mind, was your basic indie rock album. A good one, but still pretty basic. Here the feeling is that they weren't experimenting anymore; they found what they wanted and were gonna grab it the way they wanted it. It's right up there with Arcade Fire at their most pop-friendly.

The only song I legitimately love on the third album is The Wolf, which is somewhere along the Biffy Clyro spectrum. It's so good and danceable!

The Mumfords ended up losing one member because of Twitter dumbness, but really, they're not the band they were at the beginning, which we can't really expect most of the time. I re-visit those first two albums all the time, and if there's a band that isn't going to put the lightning back in a bottle, I think it's Mumford & Sons, not because they couldn't if they tried, but because they don't wanna try. I don't blame them, because they're making it work!







True Crime News

The fantastic podcast *Some Place Under Neith* returned for the third season. It's a great show that focuses on the stories of missing and exploited and murdered women. They've covered some dark material, and while they do get bogged down in some stories, they are an incredibly well-done podcast covering True Crime topics. They returned with a story about a ballerina named Dusty Buttons (her actual, real name!) and it's a doozy.

First off, I should say I love ballet. My love of classical music led me to enjoying the world of dance. If you've seen my Tik-Tok likes, you'll see about half of them go to dance videos. Ballet is pro wrestling without the violence, and it's beautiful. It is as close as I've discovered to physical embodiment of music. It's not

there in modern dance, sadly, but it's there in ballet.

Now, Dusty Button was one of those superstars from the get go. She had exactly the look and technique that makes superstars even though she started not in ballet, but in jazz-tap, a dark world in and of itself. She has an edgier look than most big company ballerinas, though that's a bit like saying the wildest stamp collector at the World Congress of Stamp Collectors.

Then again, I do know a few wild stamp collectors.

Anyhoo, she rose through the big schools and joined the Royal Ballet School in London, but became a Principal Dancer for Boston Ballet in 2012.



That's HUGE!

Being a Principal is a big deal, but Boston Ballet is one of the Big Three Ballet companies in the US (along with American Ballet Theatre and San Francisco Ballet) and if you make it there you'll make it anywhere.

I stayed in the Emerson dorms one summer, which we shared with Boston Ballet's summer program, and I can tell you those muscular thin kids sure can smoke the hell out of a pack of cloves.

She was also a teacher doing intensives at conventions and private lessons, typically with young women.



Which makes the True Crime part of this story so damn ugly.

Dusty is married to a fellow dancer named Mitchell Taylor Button. He spent years as an instructor, and while Dusty had built her name being a big company Principal and becoming one of the biggest names on Dance Instagram, Taylor was in the corps, but ended up better known as a teacher. He would use that position to groom girls who were his students.

There are several dancers who have come forth, four covered in a *Cosmo* article from last April. The four they mentioned are all important, but there are two that are among the best-known dancers in the US.



Sage Humphries is one of those dancers who has gone on to incredible success not only through Boston Ballet, but on Instagram. She's also a model, and has been the most outspoken. She was groomed by Taylor, and eventually this evolved into a relationship where the Buttons and Sage were a threesome.

There's a lot to unpack there, but the basic gist is this was made out to be a consensual relationship by the Buttons, but quickly turned much darker, including a rape that took place in the gun room of the Button home that seemed to have started out as some sort of scene that quickly went places that Sage did not want and she screamed through a spandex covering when they sexually assaulted her.

Though Taylor was the instigator, most likely, Dusty watched and at times, participated.

The Buttons point to relationship-y texts between Sage and Taylor as evidence that it was a relationship, and they flat deny that the assaults happened. The big problem is the power dynamic makes informed consent next-to-impossible, especially if promises of advancing her career were made. She was 19, but



was away from home for the first time and isolated. Even if what the Buttons claim about it being consensual, this was certainly an abusive relationship. It's pretty clear, though, that Taylor was abusing his power and that pretty much voids all thought of it being a regular relationship.

Danielle Gutierrez is one of the most beautiful dancers I've ever seen. I first discovered her on Instagram, and she's amazing. Her claims include physical abuse and that Taylor raped her when she was 17.

The one that's gotten the most attention after Sage's, though, is Gina Menichino. She's a super-star these days, both as a dancer and a choreographer. One of the most athletic dancers I've ever seen, but not at the cost of expression. Taylor sexually assaulted her when she was 13. This is a clear pattern, and Menichino says that Dusty knew, and to a degree, participated in continuing assault and abuse.

Now, there's another problem, and it is something that's difficult to stop— The Buttons are running an online harassment scheme.



They're fighting back. They've filed defamation suits, claiming that these women are seeking fame and making it all up, costing them endorsements and employment. They've spent hundreds of thousands of dollars trying to legally deflect these accusations, and now they're broke, so they are taking the fight to the internet.

Basically, they've started a website that seeks to turn the tide against those they abused and assaulted by posting rebuttal videos and content. It's a tactic that can horribly backfire, but it can also play well in the court of public opinion. One of those suing the Buttons has pulled out because of harassment.

In my eyes, it's a good thing they've lost any access to young women. Boston Ballet fired Dusty, and Taylor isn't getting any more students. If there's any good that comes out of this, it's at least that.

The film *Black Swan* took a hard look at what it means to be in Ballet, while some of these same ideas are present in one of my fave films, *Centre Stage*. It's a rough world, Ballet.







As always, Jay was working with the moment.

Tennis in the 1970s was going through a major moment. Stars had emerged that eclipsed just about every other player up until that point as far as penetration into the zeitgeist. The names McEnroe, Navratilova, Connors, Evret, Borg, King, Ashe, all of them pure legends, all of them known well-beyond the borders of the courts.

Thirty Love tackles three ideas—the idea of sports celebrity, the idea of the body and the mind being driven apart, and the idea of stepping aside.

The story looks at tennis and posits a 60 year old player named Charlie Duncan who lives a brief period into the future. He can see a little more than a second into the future most of the time, but at times he's able to see further.

In what he says is going to be his final tournament, a winner-takes-all tourney, he faces a younger player and sees that his winning will wreck him and he has to make a choice, which he does and we're given info that this turns out to be a happy ending.

OK, that's the easy stuff.





Charlie is easy going, a throw-back to the early days. That's a nice thought, that the nice guys can finish first. He's able to because of the foresight that the living in the future thing gives him, and that's enough to keep him in the game into his 60s.

That's ancient for a professional athlete.

The fame Battle of the Sexes from 1973 featured Billy Jean King beating Bobby Riggs, though he was 55 at the time. The story there, and it was a rumor from the day it happened, was that Riggs threw the match because he could make incredible money betting against himself in the UK through Ladbroke's. Nice theory, might be true, he was a gambler and a hustler, but who knows?

Charlie sees the future and decides to do what's best for his opponent. This is called 'doing business' in the world of wrestling. He gives the new kid the win, solidifies his career, gives him his moment. It's a nice thing, and there's a detail that Haldeman gives us that really speaks of his desire to make the ice-floeing of Charlie seem like a good idea—

- even if he wanted to, even with the knowledge of where that ball was going to go, he couldn't have returned it, it was just too fast for him.

That little tidbit shows that he understood his character needed to not only be making a choice where he was giving the kid the win, but one where he was right in giving the kid the win.

Because he should have been out to pasture long ago.

And thus, steroids.

Now, there have been PEDs and even 'roids in sports dating back to the 1920s. Yes, Babe Ruth took a form of PED, though he claimed only once. Mays, Mantel, Gibson, Killebrew, and on and on all took various substances to keep their careers going. Years after the story was written, we saw two careers lengthened by steroids that changed everything—Bonds and Clemens. They never made the choice to walk away, but instead leaned in to their crutch and stuck with it. Bonds, in particular, had a good reason; the Giants were always in the hunt for the World Series and he never won one. It wouldn't be until three years after Bonds retired, stepped away when he probably had another good year or four in him, that they won one.

This is a story as old as time, and not just in sports. The young being held back by the old-timers who refuse to let their crutches go. *Thirty Love* exposes that beautifully, and in a way that just feels exactly right. Of course, I'm getting to the age where I should be thinking like Charlie, but I ain't there yet.







And here we are, another issue doned.

I'm really enjoying doing these, particularly as I'm really getting more and more into coffee. The LION Coffee gold roast I drank writing each and every one of these pieces is great, is running low, and keeps me going, even on teh days after the nights when I'm awakened at 4am by a pesky child.

I did all the art with MidJourney this time, save for the couple of photos. Somehow, I've misplaced the drive with the fan art on it. It'll make a comeback, I'm sure.

I've got very little on my calendar for the next few months, though I'll be taping an interview about the history of video games for the Roku channel. Where is it taping? The Computer History Museum! It's with my old friend Steve 'Slug' Russell, the inventor of SpaceWar! And one of the nicest guys you'll ever meet! Back into the documentary interview game, that's me! Sadly, the Zodiac Killer project that contacted me appears to have stalled. Sigh.

Next issue, next week, probably Friday, but really, who knows these days?

Again, check out the latest *Journey Planet* and then maybe enjoy some *Drink Tank*, though the *What We Do in the Shadows* issue is a couple of few weeks away!

Bon Swah!

