

Claims Department 69

That's an España Sheriff cover right there!

I'm sorry, that's Hugo-nominated Fan Artist España Sheriff! All the art this time is España!

Things around here? Mixed bag.

You may remember that I've been having memory issues. I do, which I guess is something of a good sign. Have they gotten worse? I dunno, but I did have a moment not too long ago.

When I realized that I had gaps in my memory of the past, which I'd always prided my self on having, I went back through old issues of the *Drink Tank*, trying to determine the edges of each lacuna. As I was going through, I came across a photo of a guy I didn't recognize. I read the article.

The photo was of my Dad.

Now, I remember my Dad, though I honestly can't conjure up his face. In fact, I can't call up images of many things; my memory isn't visual, it's sensation-based.

That moment was a bit scary, but as I dug through old issues, it seems that my memories are OK prior to 2016, and pretty much unchanged after. It also seems like these skips in the hard drive aren't full-time operations, but occasional.

So, I tried to get an MRI the other day, but only made it through half of it before I couldn't breathe. Oddly, it wasn't due to claustrophobia, but to my lungs. I never lay flat on my bag and I just couldn't get a lungfull of air. It started as soon as I laid down, and I managed to make it through ½ of the scan, then tapped out and as soon as I sat up, things improved greatly. There's no open-air MRI machine that my coverage will cover, so I'm hoping if there's any issue with my brain, it's in the top half of my skull.

So, I still don't know what's going on, and whenever I bring up my history of concussions, they simply wave it off. They're pretty sure it's not dementia or Alzheimer's, but they don't have any clue as to what it could be, and keep, CONTINUALLY, saying that it's almost certainly a vitamin deficiency

despite the tests always coming back with everything in normal range (and when I was prescribed a B12 vitamin (even though my B12 was normal) it actually didn't move the level of B12 in my next bloodtest) and then I bring up my concussions, and the cycle begins anew.

So, that's annoying, but it also means it's more important than ever that I keep doing the zines. They're not just a pastime, but an aide-de-memoire.

Money's tight, tighter than usual. My trip to New York actually was cheaper than living at home! Since it was just me, I gave myself a 45 dollar a day budget, ended up spending about 37 or so a day (thanks to morning free breakfasts!) and usually at home, it's 50 a day between gas, food for the family and so on. The real problem's gas prices and food costs. I blame the uncertainty of our political climate. If Trump gets back in office, we're all screwed, and I completely understand why everyone's hoarding cash for that possibility.

And sadly, it's very much a possibility.

Nessa didn't win TAFF. It was worth a shot, and we're talking about a future run, hopefully when we're spending far less time dealing with being seriously ill. We had so many plans that we just couldn't do.

Plus side, there was a WrestleMania and it was glorious!



JP has become a giant wrestling fan, and after he slapped a kid in his class unprovoked, and a change in his meds, he's managed to behave much better, partly because he wanted his wrestling back.

And especially because he wanted to watch WrestleMania.

I did my traditional Wrestling Chili (this ended up being slightly hotter than Medium-Spicy) and I made JP's Secret Stew (it's just meat, potatoes, carrots, and celery with seasonings, though I usually add at least two more things!) and we watched both nights, almost 12 total hours.

The shows were good, with one match, Cody Rhodes vs. Roman Reigns, being the main main event that was contested until No DQ meaning nearly anything goes. There was interference and strange happenings, the return of John Cena and The Undertaker, as well as The Rock, but really, it was an emotional event because it was the completion of a story that had started two years ago, and ended a World title reign that was almost four years long.

I love watching with the kids. They do wander off to their tablets or to play with Legos from time to time, but I was exactly like that with my Dad when I was a kid, so I get it. Still, it's our bonding and I love it.

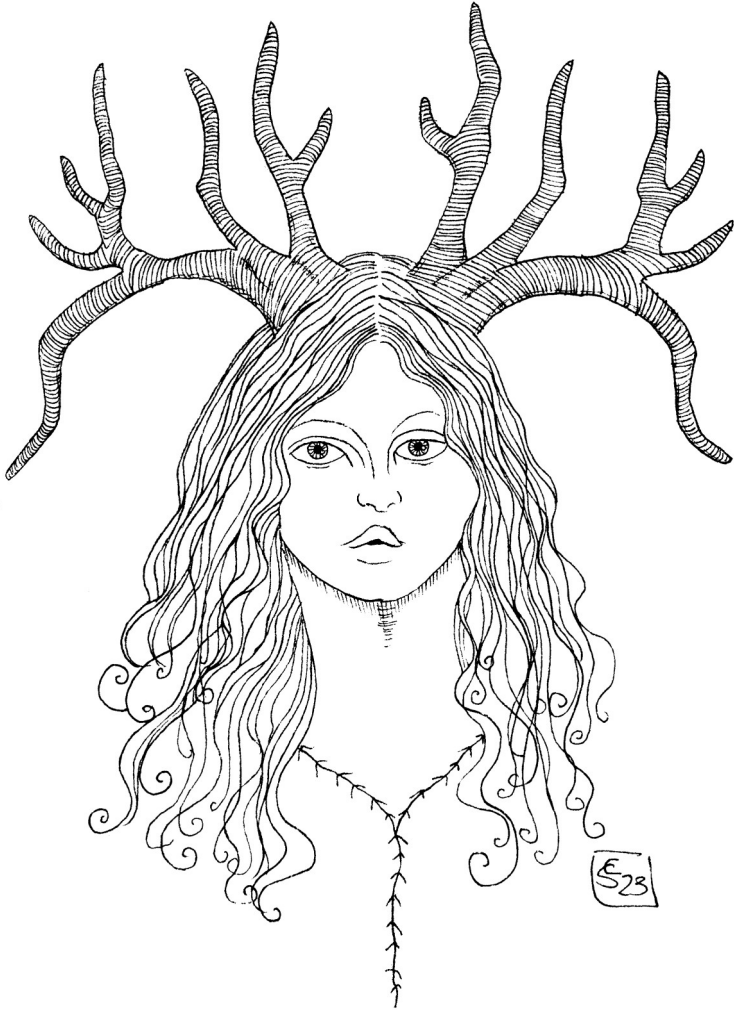
The chili was 7 out of 10. I'd go with 9 for the Stew.

The real bright spots, all of which come after my paycheck arrives on Monday, is SFMoMA. The whole family for going for the first time, and we're seeing *Infinity Rooms* Kusama that is cool, and trippy. I've not been to a museum since I got back from New York, so it'll be good to get and look at some art, and with the kids, it'll be even better! We've got two trips this year. One is easy. We're dropping the kids with my Mom and then spending a few days in Palm Springs and then off to LA to do some work research. UCLA is a library I've always wanted to get a look at!

Then, at the end of the year, I'm going to Boston. That's gonna take some doing, but again, it's part of work research, and that'll help defer some costs.

I got my first Royalty statement for my book. Bad. I sold a total of 172 books. I still owe about 300 bucks on my advance of 500. Not good, but I do have 14 years to earn that back!

Working on the Mexican Food issue of *The Drink Tank* and man, it's been fun. I love Mexican cooking, and while right now ain't the time for me to be experimenting with new recipes, I've been documenting a lot of those that are basically thoughtforms in my head that I pull out every now and again.



Dance Motherfucker Dance!

It may not be apparent, but I love dance.

While ballet ain't my thing (there's rarely enough jumping!) I do love modern dance and especially stage dance. There are two YouTube videos that show incredible example of both.

The first is a classic choreographed by arguably the greatest stage choreographer who ever lived, and the other is a viral dance sensation from a modern dance group that is just so wow.

Let's start old – *The Rich Man's Frug*.

Now, I've never actually watched the film *Sweet Charity*, though I might have seen it in a local production at some point. The film version might be great, but there's one section that absolutely blows the lids off my eyeballs. *The Rich Man's Frug*, a delightful nine-minute dance number, is an incredible example of Bob Fosse's choreography language. There's intricate hand movements, off-center locomotion, much of the movement having a slithering sense about it, and a tension in just about every movement. Fosse liked knees turned-in, and the shoulders had to do a lot of work, and here it's clear. I think in the portion called *The Aloof* we see the best example of his dancing philosophy. Fosse always seemed to want you to know that this weren't easy dancin' and this is a great introduction.



It's also got Ben Vereen before he was a huge deal.

The end shot of the sequence shows the importance of hitting spots in Fosse's signature style. It's the entire dance team in pose with cocked hips, far back lean, or simply being off-centre. When I went back through the whole thing, every one of those poses was a major part of each dancers' thing, and it drew me further into looking at how Fosse used the dancers' physical movement far more than camera movement to establish the dynamism of the scene, which is not to say the cinematography ain't great, it's very solid 1960s shooting, but it feels that the real focus is what's being shot. They could have held a single camera set-up and achieved the same effect.

The other one is actually one that I discovered because I was hanging out on Spoutible (which is easily my favorite Twitter replacement app) and someone posted a link to a video for the song *Somebody I Used to Know* by Gotye. Now, I had no idea who the singer was, but I certainly had come across the song before. For all I knew, this was the official music video.

It was not.

The CDK Dance Company is a Netherlands-based dance company. A lot of their stuff is on YouTube and it's really interesting. In this one, they use a sorta retro-70s vibe, only with updated flourishes that make it as of this moment, of the



now, or at least of what will eventually be a somewhat closer then. This does give it a sorta pastiche that isn't quite timeless, but isn't tied to any particular time. It could be 1975, and then you look at the sunglasses, and it's clearly 2023. It bounces between them, and a few years in the middle of 'em..

It opens on a blank room as the music is starting, and then a single dancer arrives, wearing a coat and carrying an umbrella. His movements are a bit jerky, precise. In fact, it reminded me a bit of the film version of *Popeye*. As the shot changes, a group against the same background rises so that only their upper torsos and up are visible. They begin to dance, using only head and arms. Another change, and this time, we get dancers shown to their waists. Their movements are not fluid, nor based on hitting poses. It's about moving in a way that passes through poses. The movements are somewhat stiff, and that makes the moments of fluidity stand out so much more.

This is best considered contemporary dance, I think, if companies like the Martha Graham Dance Company are the example of Modern Dance. This is stage dance, informed as much by the dance used as a part of theatrical musicals and popular dancing as it is by traditional modern dance technique.

The biggest difference between the two videos is verticality. Fosse is leaned back or forward, rarely vertical. The CDK video is about returning to verticality. That's a simple noticeable thing, one that even someone who really has no understanding of how dance works can catch on to.

