

Tuesday, June 30, 2009

Firefox 3.5

Tuesday should see the release of Firefox 3.5, which has a lot of exciting features I hope to be able to take advantage of from this blog - including using localStorage to implement the "Auto-save" feature, which should cut down on a lot of the un-published drafts that accumulate every few months. I encourage you to download the new release and give it a try!

Posted by Ancient of Days in Gathering Darkness at 08:36

Monday, June 29, 2009

Benoni (Section 4)

I had a short morning shift Tuesday morning with Kim. It took me a while to ask her if anything catastrophic had happened the night before as Ben and Erica shared their first shift. I didn't want to seem nosy. I finally decided to just work to it from a sideways direction. "So. Ben seems to be working out pretty well here. Dave seems to have really bonded with him."

"I told you he was a good kid. My biggest worry at this point is not showing favoritism," she beamed.

Right, I thought. "Guess I'll have to redouble my efforts to be your favorite, then," I sort of half-joked.

"Oh, Rhys. It's not about who's my favorite. We're all just supposed to really enjoy selling books."

"And getting paid in them too, I suppose."

She laughed. "Good thing my husband pays all the bills. Otherwise I couldn't afford to work here." I chuckled somewhat ruefully at the truth of her words. Occasionally things got a little tight for me too. That was the problem with being a "book whore" as Kim gleefully referred to all of us. I couldn't really dispute it either, not having a whole lot of willpower when it came to spending time or money on books. I shook my head as I realized my thoughts had wandered off the course of my investigation. "Did Erica say it was busy last night? I half-expected from the way she usually handles new employees that the whole place would shine, but it looks like some of the magazine piles are slightly askew." There, that seemed subtle enough.

"Oh. I don't know. She didn't leave a note, and I haven't checked the till from last night yet. Ben said he had a really good time though. I was actually a little surprised. I expected Erica to give him a little bit of trouble to be honest. She's a little rough around the edges, bless her heart. But Ben apparently won her over. Said they even went for ice cream together after closing."

I almost dropped the books I was holding. "Seriously?!" I didn't quite keep my voice under control and squeaked a little on that last syllable.

"I know he's a cute boy, but that's no reason to be jealous." I couldn't tell if she was joking, but I definitely regretted that squeak.

"Oh, I'm not jealous. He's a couple years younger than me anyway, isn't he? I'm just surprised that he won Erica over so quickly. She, um, usually takes some warming up to." I clearly needed to work on my detective skills. Poirot never got caught sussing out details so easily and Kim was painfully aware that I was interested in how things had gone last night.

"Mmhhh. He's actually just a year younger than you, and I'd much rather. . .well, maybe I shouldn't say that as the boss. I'm playing favorites again. Jim keeps warning me I need to get along with her better," she trailed off muttering about how it should be impossible to have PMS constantly.

I went back to work thinking about how wrong I'd been about Erica and Ben. It just seemed so weird. She didn't get along with anyone at the bookstore well. Definitely not well enough to go out for ice cream. I decided to just let it go until my next shift with her. Maybe he shared some secret interest with her none of the rest of us had been able to uncover.

Posted by The Mad Giggler in Playing a meta-game with the same theme at 08:32

Thursday, June 25, 2009

Benoni (Section 3)

I had the closing shift two days later with Dave. He was a college student so he had weird hours, but he was the one person in the store who loved reading non-fiction, especially biographies and history books. I was pretty sure that was the main reason he still had employment with us. He wasn't much of a self-starter and he often conveniently forgot to finish everything you gave him to work on if you weren't constantly checking up on him. But he was genial enough and customers shopping for non-fiction loved him, because he could almost always find them exactly what they were looking for. Kim had worked the morning shift with Ben, so I chattered with them as their shift ended.

Ben seemed even more confident and I watched him help a shopper find her husband the latest military thriller; he even talked her into buying a Book Club selection. It was one of those romance books that was kept in the fiction/literature section because the author was famous. When he finished helping her and she left the store, he asked me about the book
he noticed me carrying into the store.

"Oh, it's a mystery book. One of those by-the-numbers serials where the protagonist has a supernaturally helpful dog that always points him in the right direction at just the right time. It won't win a Nobel prize, but it's pretty entertaining." "Oh, that sounds really interesting. What's the setting?"

"This time the protagonist was invited to a conference in Belgium. He's trying to find a missing Flemish noble."

"So he's involved in a political intrigue?"

"Yeah. It's pretty cool. The good guys always win in these kinds of books, but since I'll never get to Europe on a bookseller's wages, it's like a sort of cheap vacation." I grinned.

"Sounds awesome. I'll have to check it out after I finish this book Dave recommended." He looked over my shoulder and
waved at someone. "Hey. How's it going?"

I turned and saw Dave walking in with bags under his eyes. I waved and grinned at him and he sort of moved his head in
a jerky movement I'd come to realize over time was our resident History major's equivalent of a warm greeting.

"I was up until four cramming for an exam I almost slept through, and I'm not sure I passed it. But there is karmic balance in the world, because I was seated behind and slightly to the left of this really hot girl who doesn't seem to believe there's a limit to how much cleavage is too much cleavage, and what with the stadium-style seating in the classroom, I couldn't help but enjoy the view. I caught the professor looking when she turned in her test, so I guess I wasn't the only one who appreciated her choice in fashion."

"So it was a pretty good day, then?" Ben asked as they both busted up laughing. I kind of huffed and double checked what I was wearing to make sure Dave wouldn't be enjoying any views of me today. Pervert.

Kim looked as puffed up with pride as a cat surveying a new litter of kittens. Whatever. I noticed during my break that she'd already posted next week's schedule in the break room, and sure enough, Ben was working with Erica Monday
during the closing shift. Oh well. Nothing much I could do at this point. I was sure I was overreacting anyway and he'd be fine. I mean, if he's doing the male bonding thing with Dave, he ought to be comfortable enough to handle the cold shoulder from Erica. He'd have to work with her sooner or later anyway, right?

Posted by The Mad Giggler in Playing a meta-game with the same theme at 16:39

Alice in Wonderland

Okay I admit that I'm a huge Johnny Depp Fan. I'm also a huge Tim Burton Fan. Put the two of them together and it pretty much assures I'll be there opening weekend.

That said, seeing the pictures from the new Live Action Alice in Wonderland movie, has kind of got me excited. That world seems like it would be perfect for Burton's type of film, and these pictures bare that out.

I especially like the one of Depp as the Mad Hatter.

Posted by Sideshow in Movies at 09:11

Tuesday, June 23. 2009

Dungeon Masters

Does this remind you of anyone? I know I sure had some flashbacks to the inter-net-solutions offices.

Posted by The Mad Giggler in D&D at 10:01

Monday, June 22, 2009

Benoni (Section 2)

It was inevitable that I'd still be giggling at those two chuckleheads a while later when a customer approached me to ask where the Young Adult fiction section was located. He seemed a little miffed that I laughed at his question, but I didn't really think he'd be happier if I explained so I led him back and helped him find a book about a fictional baseball player for his son. I guided him back up to the registers after unsuccessfully trying to get him to bite on a few related titles. Kim had Ben ring him up and I was impressed by how quickly he'd picked up on the system. I mean, it wasn't brain surgery or anything, but it had taken me several shifts to get as comfortable as he seemed to be after just a half hour or so on the training machine.

By the end of the shift, I was so impressed I asked him if he'd ever worked for this bookstore chain before.

He smiled and replied, "No. Computers and books have always come naturally to me and Kim is a really good teacher. Besides there haven't been that many customers and I'm sure you'd have handled them better."

"Uh. Sure. But let me tell you, I sure didn't pick up on the store system that fast." I was serious. Guy was a whiz. Maybe Kim hadn't been exaggerating about how smart he was.

She apparently believed what she'd been saying, as she stepped in, "Rhys, you're embarrassing him." He blushed as if on queue. "But as you can see he's picked up on things quite well, so if you want to take off a little early, we'll take care of things. It won't take much to close things up."

I shrugged. A half hour off my shift wouldn't make much difference on my next paycheck and there was a movie I'd been hoping to catch tonight anyway. "Sure. It was really nice to meet you, Ben. If half of what Kim said about you is true, it'll be great working with you."

"Thanks, Reese! That's really nice! It was really nice to meet you; you're much more funny than Kim said."

I wasn't sure what to make of that. I'd already been half-turning to go pick up my stuff from the break room so I just continued on my way and mumbled, "Thanks." I tried not to think too much about what Kim might or might not have said about me as I took off my bookseller apron and grabbed my purse.

My next shift was two days later and this time I was working with Erica. She had a slight build and was a little taller than me. She had long black hair, an unfortunate nose, and a bad case of acne. She also suffered from a bit of a chip on her shoulder since Kim had been promoted to manager from a different store in the city. Erica was assistant manager and she and Kim hadn't liked each other since they'd first set eyes on one another at a regional gathering a few years back. Since they were both technically my boss, I'd done my best to be Switzerland. If I'd had to choose, I'd go with Kim, since Erica had a bit of a vindictive streak that was easy to set off. Kim was also a little more straightforward when you displeased her. I'd learned my first week that Erica would only give a slight eyebrow twitch as the gears in her mind started cranking. And a month later, I found out that I really shouldn't have left that last stack of books for her to put away.

I was really not looking forward to having a conversation with her about Ben. I was pretty sure that she'd made up her mind a half second before Kim mentioned that she'd be hiring her cousin.

"Oh. My. Goddess." It was a strain, but I managed not to give a visible sign that that particular imprecation bugged me. "Did you see that little pig nose clown she hired?" There was no pause for me to respond as she really started to get going. "What a fawning little priss. He thinks he's so funny. He tried some book humor on me. Please. Like I haven't heard every book joke out there. I've worked in this industry my entire adult life." Yep, all five years since she'd turned sixteen. "Ugh. And Kim just about humped him on the spot she was so happy he's working here. I'm pretty sure they're kissin' cousins, if you know what I mean. What a little whore. I don't know what the regional manager sees in her. Maybe Kim's treating him to a little afternoon special too. I can't see any other reason for him to give our store away to the brain dead runt."

I winced. Maybe if I faked sick or something. . .no, I'd still get to hear the ranting, but she'd have had those extra days to really work herself into a froth about it. Better to just take my lumps and hope it was a high traffic day so Erica'd be busy doing her job instead of thinking up new insults for her nemesis. She continued a steady stream of unprofessional critiques for forty-five minutes before we had a customer brave enough to approach the counter. I almost hugged the guy but thought that might result in the "conversation" taking a turn for the very much worse. I tried to keep him there as long as possible. I asked him about every special we had going and every customer loyalty program he might or might not be eligible for. I asked him about each of his three books and tried to convince him to look at some similar titles but as he got increasingly uncomfortable with the suddenly aggressive sales staff, I finished scanning in his books and took his payment. Joy. Cash. Couldn't the guy at least pay with a card. That extra ten seconds of time for the sale to be approved were ten seconds I wouldn't have to deal with. . . .

"Sun and moon, Rhys. Finish the man's purchase already." She grabbed the bag of books from me and handed them to our lucky friend. "Could you take any longer? I'm surprised he didn't have a knee-length beard by the time you finished. Did you really have to tell him about the teacher discount? I mean, no teacher's going to be here on a school day until after three or four. Sometimes I really wonder about you Rhys. Anyway, so could you believe the shirt widdle Benoni was wearing? I couldn't. I bet he got it at a thrift store and still hasn't washed it. It smelled like a Fallout Boy concert. Not that I would know, but you know what I mean. Couldn't Kim at least use her massive undeserved salary to get her little boyfriend a new shirt. . . ."

And so it went for four hours. I almost cried when it was time for my lunch break. I considered leaving a note for Kim to never let Erica work with Ben. I wasn't sure that Erica would actually do anything to physically harm him, but she wouldn't exactly treat him professionally (like an assistant manager should) either. Thankfully business picked up markedly after lunch and we had a steady stream of customers to the end of my shift. I almost sprinted to my car I was so happy to leave that black cloud of misery behind me. Shifts with Erica always ran the risk of going badly, but sheesh. I went home and took a long, hot bath. The water couldn't get hot enough to make me feel clean. Part of me felt like I should have defended Ben, but I barely knew him. I thought about calling Kim and warning her that Erica was out for blood, but I was enjoying soaking there so much I decided to just let it go. Surely Kim would think that one through on her own.

Posted by The Mad Giggler in [Playing a meta-game with the same theme](#) at 09:38

Podcast 23: A perfect 10? or Why won't Joey shut up?

I couldn't decide which title to choose for this podcast, so I figured why not use a throw back from the old Rocky and Bullwinkle days. We did indeed see our first rating of 10 (though it does have an asterisk). And lastly, Joey really had a ton to say about The Nth Degree. We actually cut a bunch more that didn't make it in. Thankfully I am in charge of telling Joey what to cut. This podcast covers episodes 17-20 of Star Trek: The Next Generation, Season 4.

Various topics discussed in this podcast include:

- Listener comment/question - Leah
- Locked in Syndrome
- Dreaming - Directed or otherwise XKCD comic
- What is your fear?
- Joey plots the next step of human evolution
- Joey won't shut up about the Nth Degree
- The difference between fantasy and acting
- Becoming who you want to be
- What sort of boss should I be?

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Here are the ratings that we gave for each show: Night

Terrors: 34min 27sec

Peter: SciFi - 6 Television - 3

Joey: SciFi - 6 Television - 3

Identity

Crisis: 25min 56sec

Peter: SciFi - 8 Television - 4

Joey: SciFi - 7 Television - 4

The Nth

Degree: 55min 23sec

Peter: SciFi - 10* Television - 5

Joey: SciFi - 9.5 Television - 5

Qpid:

43min 14sec

Peter: SciFi - 4 Television - 7

Joey: SciFi - 6 Television - 5

If you have something to say then we welcome your comments below, or feel free to email us at trekwest5@thehomestarmy.com.

Posted by Radar in Podcast at 07:25

Thursday, June 18, 2009

Benoni

Author's Note: I started this during the writing game from a couple months back. Since things have slowed down at work, I'm thinking I might get to finish it. No promises.

I knew this must be Ben from the little squeal Kim unleashed on him. He had dark, curly hair cut close to his head, no doubt to prevent it from poofing out like he was Ronald McDonald. It seriously looked capable of going all clown on him. The slight upturn to his nose didn't help, but he had dark brown eyes and the kind of pale skin you get from living in a place with almost constant cloud cover. He had an average build, definitely not an athlete, and was about average height. He certainly wouldn't stand out in a crowd. He walked through the door with a vacant expression on his face and I didn't think he'd last the shift, let alone stick around long enough to have a lasting impact on my life.

They briefly hugged and Kim brought him over for introductions.

"This is Benoni, Rhys. Benoni, this is Rhys," she pronounced with a big grin on her face.

"It's nice to meet you Reese. Please call me Ben." He extended a hand, and seeing no other option, I shook it.

"Nice to meet you too, Ben. I understand we'll be working together now." I was beginning to feel a little awkward. She was smiling so much I was afraid it might break her face. "Yup! Well, Rhys, would you mind watching the registers while I show Ben around?" Kim was clearly a little too excited about having her cousin work for her, but whatever.

"Sure, Kim. No problem." The store was dead anyway. Not many folks hitting up a mall bookstore at two in the afternoon on a Sunday.

I picked up a magazine to read as they walked around through the aisles; Kim explained the different sections and how they related to each other. Why each group was located where it was and how to help a customer find the book they were looking for while suggesting several related items to prompt impulse spending. At some point as they circled the store, I was interrupted by a little old lady walking up with a stack of six or seven romance monthlies. She was a regular and already knew about all the latest sales pitches - had already bought into most of them. It was a quick transaction and I sent her on her way with my best professional smile. "Thanks and come back soon."

As she walked out the front entrance, Kim floated up with Ben in tow. "I'm going to take him back to read through the employee manual and fill out some paperwork in the break area. Everything under control out here?"

I gestured vaguely at the now vacant store and said, "I think I can handle it."

I patrolled the front of the store and straightened up some loose books and magazines. Not much was really out of place, and there didn't seem to be any risk of a shoplifter, so I went on a quick circuit through the store to see if there were any disasters in need of immediate attention. Whoever had closed up must have had extra time because the whole store was in tip-top shape. There wasn't much else to occupy me, so I went back to my magazine behind the registers. Kim was already back, but without Ben, so I figured he must still be filling out paperwork.

I decided to make small talk. "He seems nice."

"Oh he is! He's always been just the nicest boy! I don't understand why he was. . .um, I mean, I think he's here because of a misunderstanding," she seemed to catch herself like she was going to say something else.

"What do you mean? I thought you said his parents were moving here and they sent him ahead to get adjusted in school."

Suddenly that story seemed a little less plausible.

"Well, I mean, sort of. Really, I. . .think they will move here when they see how well he does here and how well accepted he'll be."

"So. . .they sent him here for a second chance in new surroundings?" I'd heard that before. Seems like every family in suburbia has a cousin who's "a little lost." And from what I'd seen, these kids brought their troubles with them.

"Oh no. You make it sound like he's some drugged-up gang banger whose parents can't handle him. There was just a . . .problem with the school. He's going to do great here. You just watch, he'll be great to work with too." She seemed a little defensive, and I really didn't care that much.

"Sure. I mean, you'd know him best, right? Having known him all his life."

"Exactly. He's never been anything but an angel around me. You're going to love him."

I just nodded trying to be non-committal. I sensed a classic case of cognitive dissonance but I liked my job and figured with the rate of turnover we enjoyed, he wouldn't be around long. He eventually must have finished the gauntlet of new employee forms because he wandered back up from the break area rubbing his left wrist. Huh, I thought. A southpaw.

He started smiling at Kim and seemed way too happy for someone starting a new job in retail, and I say that as someone who really likes her job in retail so believe me, the grin was a bit much. Almost as if he were on some kind of . . .well, having that kind of attitude about him really wasn't going to help. Clearly Kim was going to keep him here as long he didn't get caught red-handed stealing from the register. Maybe even then. I decided to make the best of it. "Welcome back. Looks like you've got the beginnings of carpal tunnel there. Corporate really does love their paperwork."

"Thanks, Reese. I'm sure my wrist will be fine. . .in a few years," he laughed. "So, read any good books lately? I think I might be able to recommend one or two, thousand."

Hmm. Bookseller humor. How quaint. "Hmm, only two thousand? Why, there's gotta be three or four thousand titles here in the store. You better get reading."

He convulsed chortling and I started to worry that maybe he was having a seizure. Kim must have been thinking the same thing, because she said, "Oh Ben. It wasn't that funny. Besides, you don't want to encourage Rhys or she'll bring in a mic and start doing stand-up for the customers."

I thought he'd been laughing hard before. There was nothing to be done but roll my eyes. "I'll be straightening books in the humor section, working on my routine." More laughter. I couldn't resist chuckling a bit. Their laughter was a little contagious, and I'd always found myself a bit more funny than anyone else did.

Posted by The Mad Giggler in [Playing a meta-game with the same theme](#) at 16:11

Wednesday, June 17, 2009

It hurts when you aren't wanted

Peter: I wanted to clarify something about this Friday
I get that we aren't going to be doing r-ball, ming's, or podcast, but you haven't sent me the itinerary for what we will be doing

Joey: O.o

Peter: am I supposed to just meet you at the restaurant?

Joey: LOL
Uhm...my wife and I will be eating dinner and then going out to see the a movie

Peter: so just meet you at the theatre then?

Joey: creepy

Peter: nobody does creepy like me. And it should be noted that I did not descend in to the truly disturbing

Joey: Duly noted and greatly appreciated

Posted by Radar at 09:12

Tuesday, June 16. 2009

Always with the IMing

Sent at 9:32 AM on Tuesday

Ancient of Days:

Which PA storyline did you vote for?

The Mad Giggler:

Lookouts

Ancient of Days:

I've been calling everyone I know and having them vote for Automata

The Mad Giggler:

h8chu

Ancient of Days:

The Mad Giggler:

it was my least favorite

Ancient of Days:

Lookouts was mine

The Mad Giggler:

that's because you are a jerkface

Ancient of Days:

A jerkface who doesn't like the soft, girly-like colors and lines of Lookouts, but prefers the harsh, bleak choices made in Automata

Sent at 9:44 AM on Tuesday

The Mad Giggler:

Have now voted 4 times for Lookouts.Ancient of Days:

LOL

I voted multiple times too

Ancient of Days:

I mean, it takes all of about 30 seconds to google for how to spoof votes on surveymonkey

The Mad Giggler:

lol

I can clear my cookie and vote as many times as I want

Ancient of Days:

And I can just do: while [-f .continue]; do lwp-request ...; done

The Mad Giggler:

lol

Ancient of Days:

Being a gray-hat, of course I put a "sleep 3" in

The Mad Giggler:

lol

I hope you get your lame Asimov-ian story

Ancient of Days:

But it was silly of them to use such an easily compromised system - at least zoomerang you have to generate a unique identifier each time

The Mad Giggler:

I don't know how much they care for accurate results

Ancient of Days:

I guess I just never enjoyed Boy Scouts, so I'm not that interested in hearing it told again

The Mad Giggler:

I guess I just never enjoyed BEING YOUR FRIEND

Ancient of Days:

LOL

I don't know who you think THAT'S a surprise to

The Mad Giggler:

haha

for someone who is one of my closest friends, I'm continually surprised at how different our tastes are

Ancient of Days:

It does make it kind of fun

Ancient of Days:

I thought you liked Asimov, though

The Mad Giggler:

I do

that's why it seems so weird

It feels almost exactly like Caves of Steel

Ancient of Days:

yeah, like a really good graphic novel version of it

The Mad Giggler:

Automata is going to win and it'll become my favorite PA project of all time and I'll hate myself for falling in love with it

Ancient of Days:

BTW, rather than deleting the cookie, you should have just marked the cookies.sqlite in your profile directory as read-only

Then they can't even set the cookie in the first place

The Mad Giggler:

I didn't actually delete any cookies

Ancient of Days:

oh

The Mad Giggler:

I just opened Safari, Chrome, IE, and Firefox

Ancient of Days:

LOL

Yeah, I didn't actually bother scripting it, either. I just used my 13 different firefox profiles.

The Mad Giggler:
lol

Posted by The Mad Giggler at 11:59

Monday, June 15, 2009

West Fest

Official Invites will be made up, but just so everyone can know, and possibly mark their calendars, West Valley City's annual West Fest is about to happen, and since they do a Fireworks show on Saturday, my family and our neighbors take the opportunity to have a nice Block Party.

So Saturday June 27th.

Not sure of the time but whenever.

Be a nice little Barbecue. Hot Dogs/Hamburgers will be provided, but if you want some other kind of meat bring it and we'll grill it.

It's a pot luck so some sort of side dish would be awesome.

It'll be in Bubba's back yard.

Fireworks usually start around 10:00 ish.

Posted by Sideshow in Group Activities at 11:04

Podcast 22: Oh Bebe you...

Why the heck haven't we been keeping a list of hot trek babes during our watching? Was it because we wanted to go for substance and not sex appeal? No. We just weren't smart enough to think about it. Clearly we aren't above stooping to lower forms of entertainment. Well from this point on we are going to do a better job of looking for the hot chick. The recognition of hot chicks may just be the thing that rockets us to massive fame. Either that or make us look creepier than we already are.

This podcast covers episodes 13-16 of Star Trek: The Next Generation, Season 4. We were joined by long time contributor Aaron and 2nd time participant Anne. Enjoy.

Various topics discussed in this podcast include:

Welcome to new listener Jim

Can a father sign a contract his child must fulfill?

Betrayal by friends

Lying to your friends because you were ordered to

New TW5 Sponsor: The Anne and Aaron Puppy Show

Hot Trek Babe - Bebe Neuwirth

Would you trust an alien species?

Peter wanted to claw his eyes out

What constitutes being violated?

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Here are the ratings that we gave for each show: Devils

Due:

Peter: SciFi - 4 Television - 3

Joey: SciFi - 7 Television - 3

Anne: SciFi - 6.5 Television - 3

Aaron: SciFi - 6 Television - 3

Clues:

Peter: SciFi - 7 Television - 5

Joey: SciFi - 7 Television - 6

Anne: SciFi - 4 Television - 9

Aaron: SciFi - 5 Television - 5

First

Contact:

Peter: SciFi - 8 Television - 6

Joey: SciFi - 7 Television - 7

Anne: SciFi - 7 Television - 6.25

Aaron: SciFi - 8 Television - 6.5

Galaxy's

Child:

Peter: SciFi - 7 Television - 6

Joey: SciFi - 5 Television - 6

Anne: SciFi - 7 Television - 6

Aaron: SciFi - 7 Television - 6

If you have something to say then we welcome your comments below, or feel free to email us at trekwest5@thehomestarmy.com.

Posted by Radar in Podcast at 04:00

Sunday, June 14, 2009

Site Outage Notification

If everything goes as planned, thehomestarmy.com, wingedwolves.com and joeysmith.com will be offline starting Friday afternoon at about 3pm through Sunday morning while we validate our backups and test recovery scenarios.

Posted by Ancient of Days in Ooops at 23:29

Friday, June 12, 2009

Is It Okay to Hate AND Love a Man?

Why?

Posted by The Mad Giggler in Sports at 13:37

Monday, June 8, 2009

Yoda Day

I finally figured out how to counter all this Star Trek stuff going on here at the Homestarmy. Yoda.

Posted by The Mad Giggler in Movies at 13:23

Podcast 21: Data's Podcast

Joey will be posting this entry, as Peter has closed all of his internets and can't get them open again. Even though we had no special guest, Peter was incredibly excited to talk about Data's Day, one of his favorite episodes, and the strong writing in Season 4 continues. This podcast covers episodes 9-12 of Star Trek: The Next Generation, Season 4.

Various topics discussed in this podcast include:

- What to do with nuclear waste
- For the good of the group
- Counseling - Is tearing people down good?
- Cosmic Strings
- Markov Chains(sp?)
- Joey: Society's Judge
- Joey admits he is wrong
- Captains can't marry people
- Talking someone down from a ledge

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Here are the ratings that we gave for each show:Final

Mission: 38min 53sec

Peter: SciFi - 8 Television - 6

Joey: SciFi - 7 Television - 6

The

Loss: 30min 38sec

Peter: SciFi - 5 Television - 3

Joey: SciFi - 7 Television - 6

Data's

Day: 46min 48sec

Peter: SciFi - 9 Television - 6

Joey: SciFi - 8 Television - 8

The

Wounded: 34min 21sec

Peter: SciFi - 7 Television - 6

Joey: SciFi - 5 Television - 6

If you have something to say then we welcome your comments below, or feel free to email us at trekwest5@thehomestarmy.com.

Posted by Radar in Podcast at 01:00

Thursday, June 4, 2009

IM conversations, for the record

AoD: Besides, I don't read Batman comics. Psychologist Fredric Wertham said that "The Batman type of story may stimulate children to homosexual fantasies, of the nature of which they may be unconscious. Only someone ignorant...can fail to realize a subtle atmosphere of homoeroticism which pervades the adventures of the mature 'Batman' and his young friend

'Robin.'"

MG: Wow

MG: Puts racquetball night into a WHOLE NEW LIGHT!

AoD: LOL

AoD: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Batman#Homosexual_interpretations

(more funny behind the jump)MG: old news

MG: people have been making gay jokes about Batman & Robin for ages

AoD: While Frank Miller has described the relationship between Batman and the Joker as a "homophobic nightmare," he views the character as sublimating his sexual urges into crime fighting, concluding, "He'd be much healthier if he were gay."

AoD: Oh, I know that. But I'm pretty sure that Dr. Wertham wasn't making a joke.

MG: yeah, he's just dumb

MG: it's impossible for men to be friends now

AoD: That's why you and I must be enemies

MG: h8chu total

AoD: And why I snuck up to your house to ring it with explo....I mean...err...this conversation never happened.

MG: that reminds me

AoD: Neither are these the droids for which you were searching

MG: I need to plan a Homestarmy get together at my place sometime

AoD: yeesss

AoD: get them all in one place

MG: including you, you fool

AoD: What, you think I'd miss THAT fireworks display?

MG: haha

MG: all your enemies exploding in one great ball of fire

AoD: It's a satisfying thought, no?

Posted by Ancient of Days at 16:23

Wednesday, June 3, 2009

Brandon Sanderson's "Warbreaker"

I saw Brandon Sanderson's Elantris back in 2005, and thought it looked interesting -- especially because he was a local -- but never bothered to pick it up. I didn't hear the name again until he was selected by James Rigney's widow to finish *The Wheel of Time*, a fantasy series I've long held dear. When

I heard that Harriet selected him based on his *Mistborn* series, I decided to get them on audiobook and listen to them.

Six hours into the audiobook, I was crushed. THIS was the style of writer Harriet chose to finish my beloved *Wheel of Time*? The story is disjointed, with great swaths of time passing between pages. The dialog is overly-simplistic, as if the author were writing to the Harry Potter crowd - which, OK, I have no proof that he WASN'T, but it's certainly not a style of writing I find enjoyable. (I never even finished the Harry Potter books, having put down Book 6 and realized "I'm not enjoying this, why do I keep reading it?") The quality of characterization is uneven, with secondary characters like Hammond or Breeze being far more entertaining and vibrant than the "main characters of Kelsier and Vin. All hope for a pleasant ending to the *Wheel of Time* faded from me, and I became a bitter and angry fan.

Then, my good friend Peter suggested I read a book called *The Name of the Wind* - perhaps the best new work of fantasy

I've read in the past 5 years. I started following the author's blog, which eventually led me back to Brandon Sanderson's blog, which - to my astonishment - I found I thoroughly enjoyed.

So, it is with no little trepidation that I bring you links to the free, online copies of Brandon's upcoming work, *Warbreaker*. I have not yet read it myself, but here's the piece of Brandon's entry on the book that really caught my attention:

How would [being transformed into a deity] affect a person? What if they, themselves, didn't believe that their powers made them a god - yet everyone else did believe it? Could you have a god who didn't believe in his own religion?

I'm willing to give him another shot, and maybe even go back and finally read *Elantris*, which some people have told me is quite good - of course, they also really liked *Mistborn*...sigh

Posted by River of Words at 22:05

Monday, June 1. 2009

Podcast 20: If This Mic's a Rockin'...

We recorded Podcast 20 in Joey's location, and it seems the microphone was unstable, as there's a persistent sound effect of the microphone 'rocking'. Oh well, we still had a good time discussing TNG. Also, it is worth noting that this podcast is under 2 hours. So all you complainers can stop crying. This podcast covers episodes 5-8 of Star Trek: The Next Generation, Season 4. Our guest for this podcast is Aaron.

Various topics discussed in this podcast include:

- Joey is a security freak

- The

- Endowment Effect - Great article written by Jeff Atwood

- The best definition for friendship: "As I experience certain sensory input patterns, my mental pathways become accustomed to them. The inputs eventually are anticipated. And even 'missed' when

- absent. When something once expected is no longer there." - Data, to Ishara on friendship

- Data has Yar Fever

- THERE IS NO CONFERENCE ROOM!

- The proper use of a Bat'leth

- Someone else choosing your leader

- What's the point of birthdays?

- Peter screwed up a listener comment from Jared

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Here are the ratings that we gave for each show:Remember

Me: 28min 56sec

Joey: SciFi - 7 Television - 4

Peter: SciFi - 7 Television - 3

Aaron: SciFi - 7 Television - 2

Legacy: 23min 24sec

Joey: SciFi - 6 Television - 4

Peter: SciFi - 4 Television - 4

Aaron: SciFi - 4 Television - 2

Reunion: 33min 48sec

Joey: SciFi - 5 Television - 4

Peter: SciFi - 5 Television - 5

Aaron: SciFi - 5 Television - 6.5

Future

Imperfect: 29min 53sec

Joey: SciFi - 7 Television - 4

Peter: SciFi - 7 Television - 5

Aaron: SciFi - 6.5 Television - 4

If you have something to say then we welcome your comments below, or feel free to email us at trekwest5@thehomestarmy.com.

Posted by Radar in Podcast at 04:00