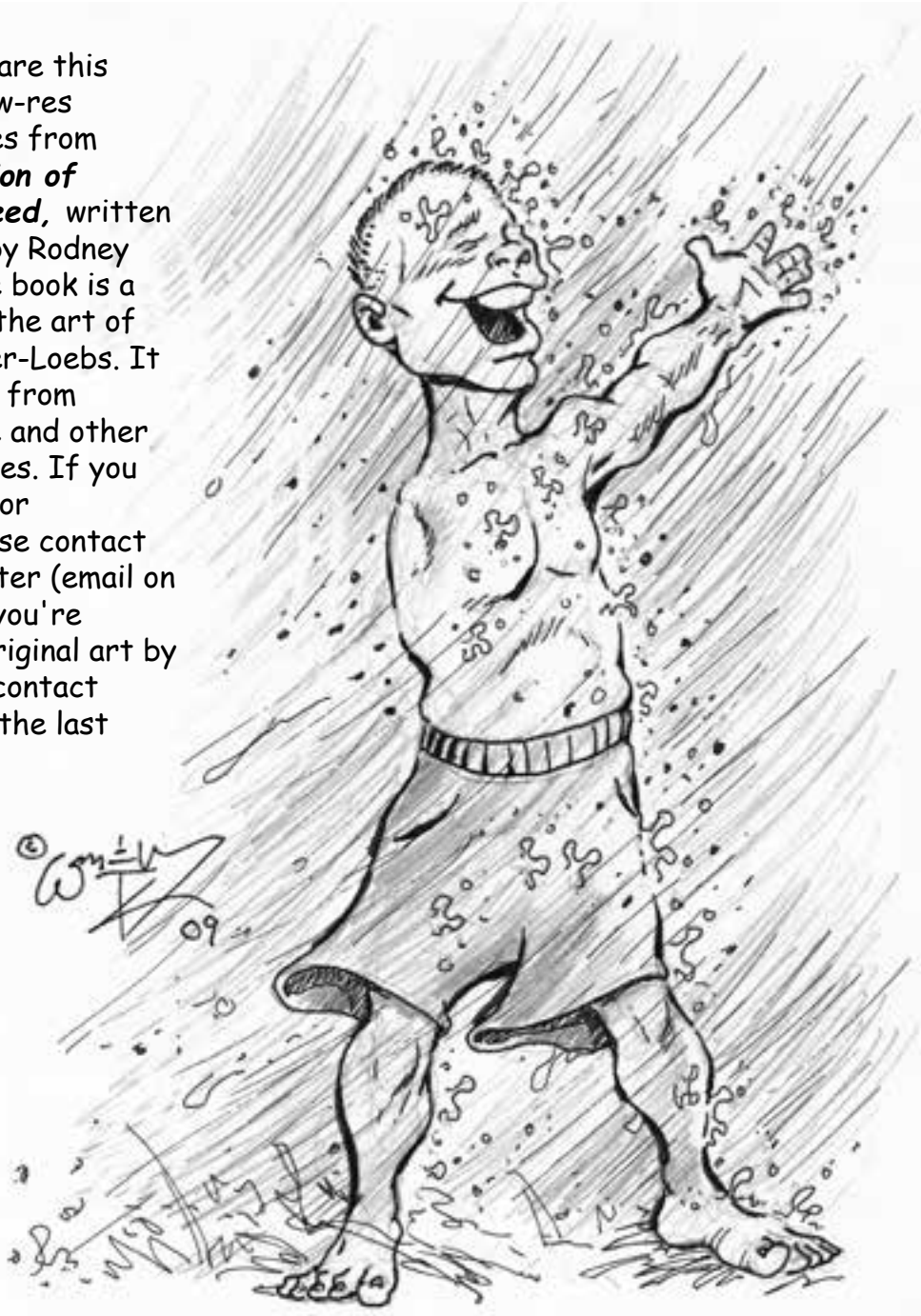


Mission of Benevolent Greed

Excerpts

Feel free to share this collection of low-res excerpted pages from the book, *Mission of Benevolent Greed*, written and published by Rodney Schroeter. The book is a celebration of the art of William Messner-Loebs. It can be ordered from Barnes & Noble and other online bookstores. If you have questions or comments, please contact Rodney Schroeter (email on next page). If you're interested in original art by WML, see the contact information on the last page.





Mission of Benevolent Greed

ISBN 978-1-945307-34-8

Book designed by Rodney Schroeter

Text Copyright © 2023 Rodney Schroeter
Art Copyright © 2023 William Messner-Loebs
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Proceeds from the sales of this book
will go to William Messner-Loebs

Mike Jones helped in the creation of this book.
Earlier versions of portions of this book were first
published in Robin Snyder's *The Comics!*



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Mission of Benevolent Greed

Text by Rodney Schroeter
Art by William Messner-Loebs



Human Interest Stuff

7-31-06 draft
June 2006

Human Interest Stuff
Schroeter / Messner-Loebs
Page 3

Page 2

A	
B	C
D	E

Panel 2A

Scene establishment panel:

Interior, police station. Seven people present:

Mel Craig:

(has bruised mouth, swollen eye. Is being held, his feet dangling some inches from the floor, by Guttman & 1st Officer. His expression is sullen. Face is downcast. Mouth shut, he's not saying anything.)

Officer Guttman:

(holding one shoulder of Mel's coat. Mouth open as if he's shouting. If possible, show that one of his sleeves is tattered; it was bitten by the dog.)

1st Officer:

(about as tall as Guttman; holding other shoulder of Mel's coat. Mouth open as if he's shouting.)

Mel's Friend:

(because he's smaller than Mel, it only takes one cop to hold him in the air. He's angry, struggling. Mouth open, as if shouting.)

2nd Officer:

(holding Mel's Friend a few inches from floor. Mouth open, as if shouting.)

Lieutenant:

(standing up behind desk, leaning forward, hands on desktop, arms straight. Lower jaw juts out. Mouth open, and open wider than anyone else's.) **QUIET!!**

Reporter O'Leary:

(at far right of panel. Looks at entire scene with amazement.)

Note:

If it doesn't work to show that the two prisoners' feet are dangling from the floor--you'd have to have full-figure shots of everyone except Lieutenant--than simply show that the cops have the two prisoners physically under control by having hold of their coats.

Note:

Only one word balloon in this panel. However, the air above the cops and prisoners should be filled with swearing symbols (@\$!*%, etc;



The Windy City Pulp and Paper convention has changed my life. Literally.

2005's show is the one example relevant to this book.

In the show's auction, super-collector Robert Weinberg had several items from the Popular Publications archives. Checks endorsed and letters signed by pulp writers. There was a series of letters to and from Albert Payson Terhune, and I decided I would bid on them. I wasn't familiar with his work, but the checks and letters were interesting, something I'd never had in my collection before.

I was top bidder on the Terhune letters.

This kind of thing serves as a springboard. I'll buy something like this, related to someone I know nothing about, and decide, "I should know something about this person!"

Among other books, I read *The Albert Payson Terhune Omnibus*. One short story therein was "Human Interest Stuff."

I found that story so powerful, that I wanted to do something with it. It would make a great short movie, but I was not a movie maker.

But that which would make a good movie, often will make a good comic book (or graphic narrative, or whatever term you prefer). Now *that* I knew a little something about.

Like many comics readers, I grew up wanting to create my own comics. And I did, for some years. I self-published *The Weirdo* and *Bat Comix*. But in the mid 1990s, I re-evaluated my artistic level, and decided I was not committed to spending the time needed to achieve the artistic competence I aspired to. So I gave up drawing to concentrate on improving my writing skills. In retrospect, I consider that a wise decision.

But "Human Interest Stuff" (HIS) buzzed around in my mind. I developed a script, breaking down the elements of the story and adapting them into comic book form.

Who would do the artwork? I wanted someone with a more traditional style. For the most part, the styles of contemporary comics left me cold.

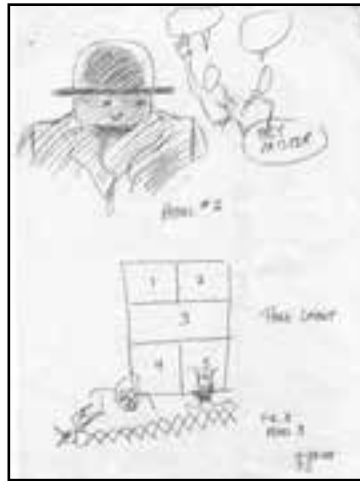
I remembered reading that William Messner-Loebs (WML) had fallen on financially hard times; that he was no longer doing professional comics jobs; that he had lost his home. I thought, maybe he would welcome this work.

In March, 2006, we had our first phone conversation. We got along well, and agreed to take the project forward.

But first...

WML suggested we work together on a one-page piece, just to see if we could collaborate harmoniously.

The result was a little gag I'd sketched out at one time. I gave it no name; WML entitled it "Sartre Street." It appears below, as he originally lettered it. For its appearance in Robin Snyder's *The Comics!*, I used the little I knew of InDesign and Photoshop to letter and color it. This one-pager appears on the next page.



Sketch by Rodney Schroeter, prior to knowing it would become a collaborative piece. "Figure X"? 2005.

I put lots of detail into the HIS script, describing each panel of each page. But I avoided sharing any layout sketches (with one exception, which I'll describe later). I wanted the visuals to be all *his*. He'd proven (to me) he was more than competent at page and panel design through his work, including on his series, *Journey*.

I also asked WML to not look up the original story by Terhune. I wanted my script to stand on its own. Without familiarity with the original story, he might detect any logical flaws or gaps in the script.

WML said the script contained some good things. Being a storyteller and writer himself, he offered several constructive suggestions. There were instances where WML did things a little differently from the script, and I just stepped back and let him go with it.

I recall one suggestion from the script which he didn't follow. Here's a partial description from Page 2, Panel 1:

Only one word balloon in this panel. However, the air above the cops and prisoners should be filled with swearing symbols (#@\$!*%, etc; there is a venerable tradition of such symbols, which you should draw on so that the intent is clear; however, you can also be creative). It cannot be determined which of the four shouting individuals any particular set of curse words emanates from. The sets of curse symbols run up against the Lieutenant's 1-word balloon, as if they are meeting resistance, crashing into and being stopped by, that word balloon. Would be visually impactful & pleasing, if patterns of cuss words would flow across the top of the panel, into the "QUIET!" word balloon, where they become compacted, disrupted, shattered--as if they are speeding cars, flowing gracefully across the page, then crashing against Lieutenant's immovable barrier.

I'm not complaining. The final panel (below) is completely effective. Maybe it's better storytelling to fill the panel with struggling, writhing bodies, rather than

SARTRE STREET BY SCHROETER AND M-LOEBS





curlicued obscenities.

As we started working on HIS, WML sent me a couple of drawings, shown on these pages. I'm not sure where the "Mr. Generosity" came from (well, OK, I helped him out a little with his expenses), but the "American Gen-

tleman" is a reference to Boston Terriers.

Somehow, I had misremembered that the main dog in HIS was a Boston Terrier. Finding that wasn't correct, I asked WML to draw the dog as a generic, unidentifiable breed. (I think it worked better with the story's

seem too upset by it.) (But then, maybe he's just good at hiding blast-furnace-level, white-hot rage.)

Looking at the rough sketch of this panel (top left, page 10), reminds me of a question I asked Will Eisner, when he was Guest of Honor at the Chicago Comicon in the early 1980s: "When you do a preliminary sketch, and then do the actual work, do you ever find there's some nuance in that preliminary, which you just can't seem to capture in the final piece?" His answer: "All the time!" (He later thanked me for the "great question.")

I bring that up because, to me, the lightning and stars in the prelim portray pain much more effectively than either WML's final version, or mine.

For HIS, I set up an "about the creators" page. I asked WML to draw me, and I drew WML. WML used several photos to create the likeness of me at right. I did the pencil drawing of Bill. People have expressed amazement at that drawing. I never fail to tell them that I simply put the black and



After seeing art from Human Interest Stuff, are you still baffled as to what the story is about? If so...

Good!

That's intentional. I hate giving anything of a good story away. (Which makes reviews difficult!)



LOYALTY

To some, a meaningless word.
To be picked up, carried for awhile, tossed
aside as soon as it's inconvenient.

This is not that kind of story!

To some, it's part of one's being.
Never to be forgotten or surrendered.
Even if it means risking everything. **Everything.**

This *is* that kind of story!



Will Eisner always said that Bill Loebs was the closest to his own drawing style and story-telling methodology, among Will's many acolytes, in whose number I proudly count myself. "Human Interest Stuff" establishes that Bill can still hit and sustain that exalted high artistic note, adapted from Terhune's deeply affecting short story, with gifted collaborator Rodney Schroeter. It's like having Will back with us again. Bravo!

Dave Sim

I do think you've picked up on the flavor of the Albert Payson Terhune story.

Marilyn R. Horowitz

Rodney Schroeter and William Messner-Loebs have revived that time-honored but half-forgotten pulp subgenre, the sentimental dog story. You will never forget Tatters!

Will Murray

I don't suspect I've read a comic book since I was 12 years old—but as they say, sometimes you need to stuff your old ideas and ways of doing things aside and look at something in a new light.

Well, was I ever surprised. The story starts out with action and it just keeps right on truckin' along, keeping the reader, looker, or whatever you call a comic book consumer right on the edge of his chair wondering what's about to happen next.

This is a fine story, no question about it. Makes a good point, in fact several of them. I like the way the story is organized, and I like the way it takes a few twists and turns. Oh, I also like that even the threat of the pen can make some folks squirm a bit—and sometimes do what's right.

Jerry Apps

Rodney Schroeter has delivered a smart script, a page-turner, a winner by every yardstick. Best of all, he was clever enough to recruit Bill Messner-Loebs as his artist, so you have to stop and stare at every panel. "Human Interest Stuff" is the dope.

Clifford Meth

Once upon a time the comics were fresh, original, emotional, exciting, timely and timeless, interesting, romantic and memorable.

"Human Interest Stuff" is the type of story that attracted and attracts me to the comics.

Rodney Schroeter and William Messner-Loebs deserve a 21-gun salute.

Because.

Once upon a time is now.

Robin Snyder

Hey, why is Bill's signature upside-down? Is that intentional?

I never talked with Dave Sim; we kept leaving each other phone messages. He warned that an endorsement from him could be a kiss of death. Since I consider *The Fountainhead* by Ayn Rand one of the greatest books ever written, how do you think (if you know anything about that book's theme)

I responded? (Hint: You see Sim's endorsement.)

Aesop for the OR



Mission of Benevolent Greed



I am not usually aware of my skeletal system. And I don't consider the stretch of Hwy. 144 from my home to Random Lake to be especially bumpy. But just a few miles into my trip of March 1, 2013, the truck hit a section of road near Random Lake that sent corrugated waves through my bones. The resulting clacking of upper and lower teeth made me glad I wasn't in the habit of sticking my tongue out often.

This was only the first few miles of the trip! And how far did I have before me?

Six hundred miles? One way?? Twelve hundred miles of having my skeleton rattled around in that truck?

I looked in the rear-view mirror. Oh, right. There wasn't one. Two side mirrors. It was dark. The only thing I could see in those mirrors were headlights behind me, and not the nice, attractive, comic book cover kind. And you know how well you can estimate the location and distance of a car, relative to you, based only on headlights in the dark?

You *can't*.

And it started to rain.

Why was I making this trip?

Roberto Benigni's film, *The Tiger and the Snow*, was released in 2005. Amazingly, I first saw it when my wife gave me a copy for Christmas in 2012. Had I known of it earlier, I would have purchased and watched it immediately.

I commented thus on the the film at Barnes & Noble's site:

How did I miss this one??? After *Life is Beautiful*, I became a complete Roberto Benigni fan. This movie came out a few years ago, and I just saw it tonight. HIGHLY RECOMMENDED. Without giving a thing away, this is about a virtuously, nobly selfish man who WILL NOT GIVE UP. Not your typical Hollywood anti-hero. The greatest

of civilizations, my friends, are made up of people like the main character in this movie.

It has to be a coincidence, right, that if you drop the last letter of Benigni's name, it spells...

Or maybe it's not.

The title, *The Tiger and the Snow*, describes a sign, an omen in the movie's story. "You will know [something], when you see a tiger in the snow." Esthetic crafting in books and movies sometimes requires that kind of coincidental sign. But real life doesn't offer up such tidy symbolism, does it?

Or maybe it does.

Why was I making this trip?

My ultimate destination was Brighton, Michigan, home of Bill Messner-Loebs.

Bill and I first got to know each other in early 2006. At that time, we started collaborating on a comic book adaptation of "Human Interest Stuff," a short story by Albert Payson Terhune. I wrote the script. He illustrated it, and contributed other valuable advice during the comic's development.

The comic was published by the Wisconsin Writers Association Press. On Dec. 6, 2012, I loaded 18 heavy boxes, 3000 magazine-size comics, into my car at Documation (the printer) in Eau Claire.

In 2011, I started auctioning pages of Bill's original art on eBay. He sent me all the inside pages (no covers, darn!) of two issues from his 1980s series, *Journey*. The main character was Wolverine MacAlistaire, a *voyageur* crossing 1810s Michigan Territory to deliver a mysterious package.

eBay sales were good. The market had never seen *Journey* originals before. The first few pages brought over \$300 each, and went to places like Austria, West Wales, Canada, France, and many places within the US. Some of these buyers became more than customers, but friends, as I dealt more and more with



Kinda Unique

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Storage

1985
\$3.725

Notions

100's
of Ways the
Apostrophe is
used incorrectly
to try to
indicate plurals!

9 Ideas too
BIG
for SMALL minds

**Closets of the
Celebrities**

**25 WEEKEND
STORAGE
PROJECTS**
that will Take You
from Expert to
Beginner in Just 2.5
Days

**Affordable
Home
Entertainment
Centers**

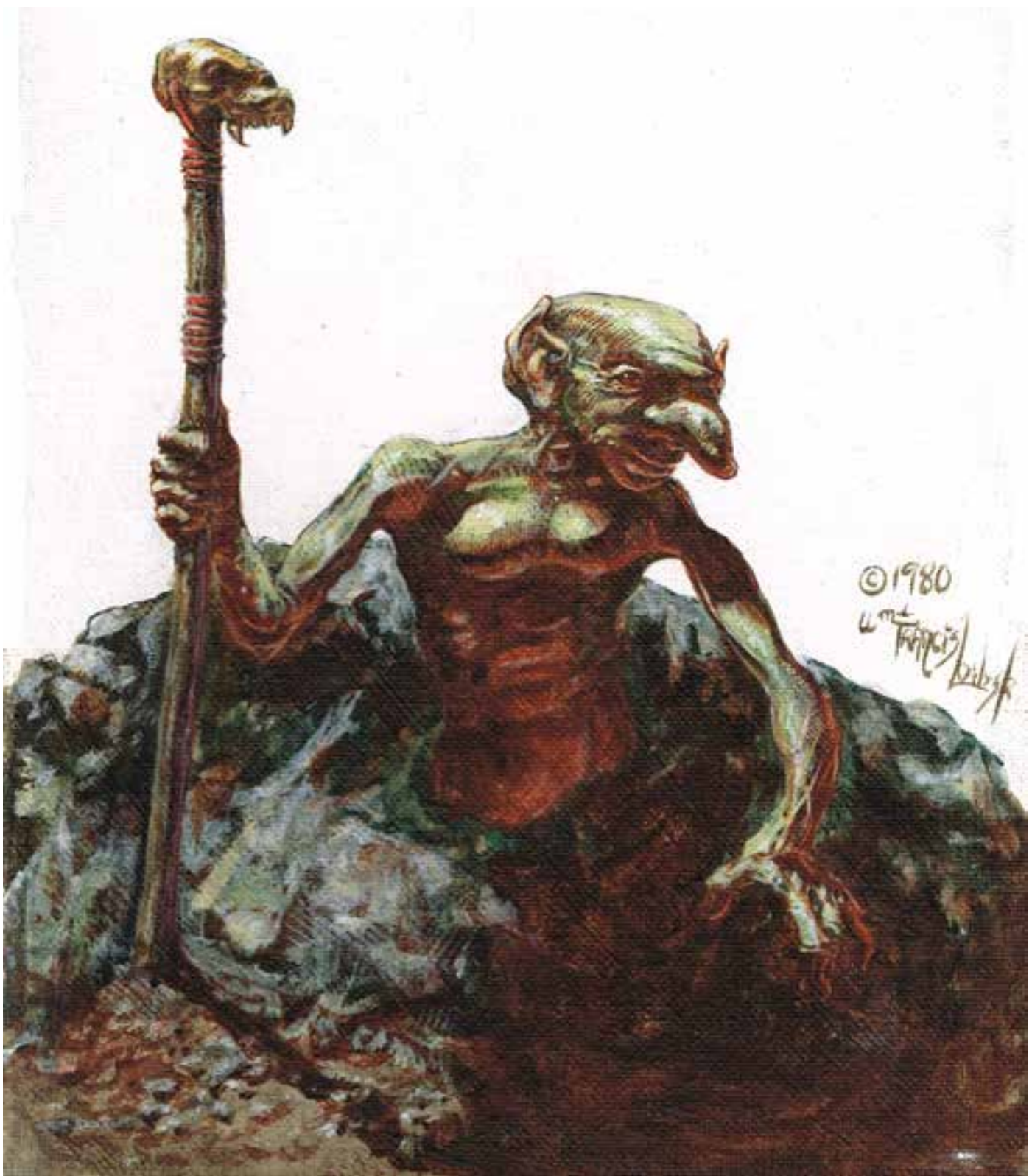
(Arrange a Chair So
That You Can Look at
All Your Junk)

More Tips, Tricks, Picks, Nix,
Hicks and Practical Jokes than
You Can Shake your Sticks At



"Out of Chaos, Comes Order?"
How Would Nietzsche Address Today's Storage Problems?





drive it in a circle around Lake Michigan for the purpose of burrowing into a storage bin and bringing back a load of treasure?

Roberto Benigni's character had done something great in that movie. Had I?

Many people would look down modestly, shuffle their feet, and say, "Aw, shucks, that's not for me to decide, I'll let others judge that."

In contrast, I think I'm the person best suited to conclude whether or not I did something "great."

But I'm also the only one that really needs to know my conclusion.

Originally written May 2013.

Revised August 2014.

Revised Spring 2023.

Mission II



Left:
Published cover of Journey #15.
Center:
An unused version.
Right:
Another version



I wanted *more*.

The lure of much more *Journey* art unaccounted for, including the famous bear chase story from #1, brought me back to Brighton for a second trip. In October 2013, I took my Envoy on the ferry across Lake Michigan. Compared to my journey with the truck earlier that year, this trip was sheer luxury.

I went to work on the same large bin I'd found the original art in. I came across boxes full of books, comics, and so many et ceteras as I contorted my body to fit into the bin's crevices, that the scope of the situation once again became psychologically real to me. (I still never saw the back of that bin, but I frequently thought I caught glimpses of tiny, glowing eyes.)

I uncovered a canvas suitcase. I tried to lift it. Too heavy. I unzipped it, and discovered it packed solidly with original art from several issues of *Journey*, including the famed first issue.

In my hotel room, I made one gigantic pile of art. I went through it piece by piece, thrilling to the texture of each bristol board sheet I handled. I fully indulged my greed, reveling in the concentrated wealth I had at my hands.

Wealth? As in money? Yes... but that was long-range, far off—to be realized only with much effort.

Wealth? Artistic wealth? Ah, that is what truly filled me with grinning, clear-headed intoxication, in that hotel room. Sheer esthetic eudaimonia. To me, that stack of artwork represented a near-lifetime

of self-developed talent and artistic effort. It was of far greater value than would be a room knee-deep in doubloons.

Was this stack of art “loot”?

To the contrary! I had *prevented* it from *becoming* loot!

Certainly, I would see my share of money, from the sales. But then, so would Bill.

That evening, I luxuriated in an incredible amount of wealth, which could never be taken from me:

I had held each precious page in my hands.

I estimated that my fully-packed car, with the artwork carefully wrapped in towels found in the bin, carried greater value than the larger volume I'd brought back in the truck, months before.

Bill and Nadine treated me to a fine meal at a restaurant in Ypsilanti. I told Bill, “It would really be a shame if the ferry capsized on the way home, and this car full of art sank to the bottom of Lake Michigan.” He had to agree.

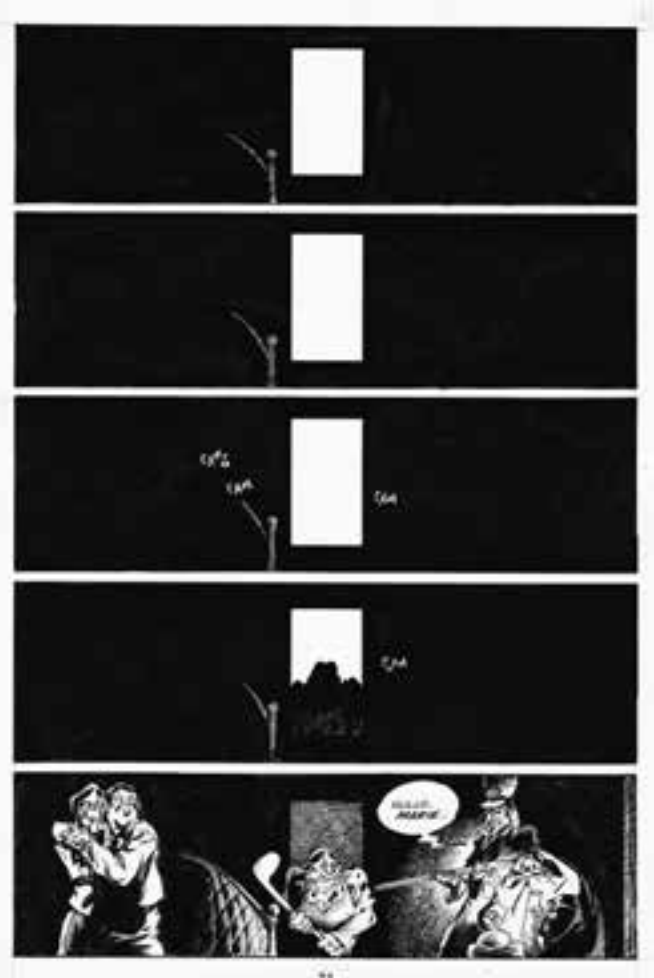
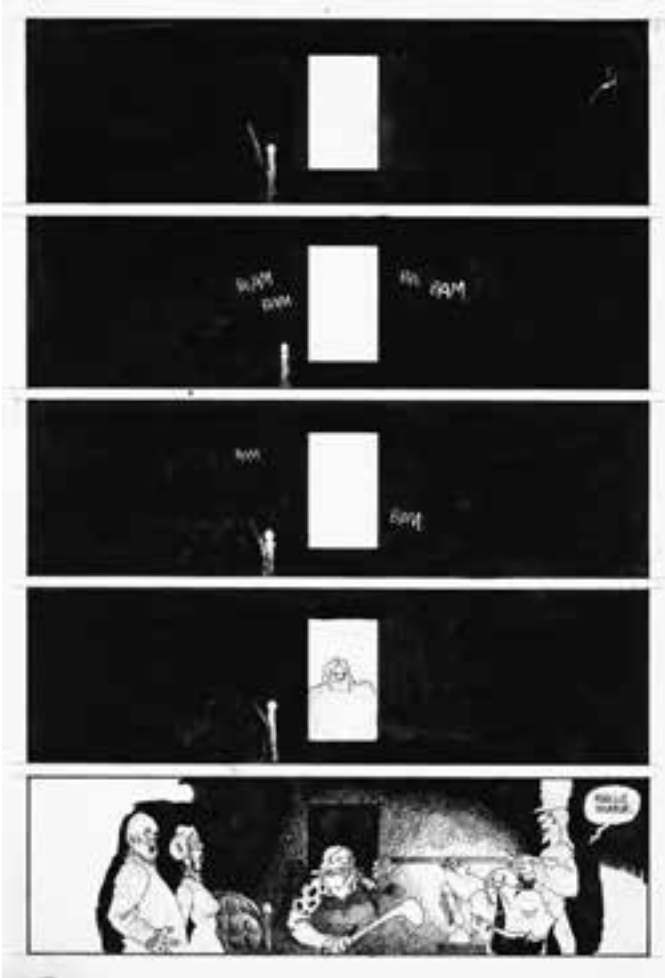
Well, the ferry made it back across the lake just fine. In the months following, I continued to sell Bill's originals on eBay and through private transactions. I continued to give Bill a share of each sale, which helped him out.

Bill's fans are very loyal to him. They are a pleasure to deal with, and are glad he benefits from their purchases.



Surprise! On the reverse of the original cover art of Journey #19 is this penciled piece. Compare to the published cover of Journey #16.





March 2013

Gem City Comic Convention, Dayton OH



Bill and I gave a presentation at the Gem City Comic Convention on *Human Interest Stuff*. The crowd was sparse; Mark Waid, presenting in the adjoining room, was a bigger draw.

In late March of 2013, my wife and I drove down to Dayton, Ohio, to meet Bill at the Gem City Comic Convention, where he was one of several guests.

In our hotel room the Friday night before the convention, I watched full episodes of *Storage Wars* for the first time. I was mesmerized by a mini-marathon of that show, feeling an eerie, slightly terrorized affinity to the show's participants as they clawed through chaos to find treasure. We became fans of the show, and watched it for the years thereafter that it lasted.

We'd brought lots of stuff with us, for Bill to sell at his table. We sold copies of *Human Interest Stuff*, sketchbook drawings, even one *Journey* original page. Lots of fans asked Bill to sign things.

At tables nearby were Stan Sakai and Joe Staton, whom I met for the first time; and Howard Chaykin, whom I'd met years before at Chicago Comicons.

This small and very pleasant convention took place in a university gym. There was cosplay, lots of aspiring artists, and many dealers.



Left: You can't help but wonder: What if this guy were real? And he parked his saucer out back, wandered in, saw all the cosplayers, and concluded, "This planet is too menacing (or nutty?) to attack!"
Right: An interview is conducted, publication of which I have been unable to identify or locate.

May 2013

Lakefly Literary Conference, Oshkosh WI

I had worked with conference coordinators to arrange for Bill to be a guest speaker. He and Nadine took the train from Michigan to Milwaukee, where I picked them up and drove them to Oshkosh. (On the way, we stopped at my “work” place, where I showed him off to a few co-workers. We also stopped at Burmesch Variety Store, the Random Lake drug store where I’d bought most of my comics in the 1960s. (I was trying to display and sell copies of *Human Interest Stuff* there. (Not much success.)))

Bill and I gave a presentation on *Human Interest Stuff* at the Lakefly conference.

I arranged two other events: Bill and I sat at a table at Power House Comics in Appleton, where we chatted with fans. (If you ever visit this store, ask owner Zach to see Bill’s original, which he purchased, and

since has had tacked up behind the counter.) I also arranged for Bill and me to give a 2-hour presentation on creating *Human Interest Stuff* at the Appleton library.



The owner of Appleton's Power House Comics purchased this original.

September 2014

WWA Conference, Wisconsin Rapids

One highlight of this trip: After again picking Bill and Nadine up at the Milwaukee train station and driving them nearly 200 miles to the conference city, I realized I’d left my packed suitcase home on the bed. What a laugh!

Human Interest Stuff had been published by the Wisconsin Writers Association. I’d arranged for Bill to appear at the conference and deliver a talk on collaboration between writer and artist, something most writers eventually contend with.

I’d used my beginner’s skills at InDesign and Photoshop to design the conference handout / booklet. I used one of Bill’s illustrations for the cover, coloring it with a tablet pen.

The evening before the conference started, Bill sold and signed comics at Book World in town.

At this conference, I discussed a story idea with Bill. It would be an adaptation of Hugh B. Cave’s short-short story, “Two Were Left.” I said I would see if I could secure the rights. Bill was receptive to illustrating it. Shortly

after this conversation and conference, I delivered to Bill a five-page script and paid him in advance for the work. Nothing was done with this project for several years, but with the help of Mike Jones, Bill did the five pages of

art, and it was published by Robin Snyder in *Tales of the Mysterious Traveler* #34, Autumn 2021.

Bill delivered the following general-session talk at this conference.

49½ Shades of Collaboration

by William Messner-Loebs

Delivered at the 2014 Wisconsin Writers Association Conference

Text Copyright © William Messner-Loebs

When I started writing this, the first thing I wrote was there are few art forms that are more collaborative than comics. And then I realized that I would have to somehow prove that, because I think every art form is somewhat collaborative.

Let me open with a heart-warming anecdote.

In the early 1990s, I was writing the Batman newspaper strip. There's nothing quite like writing newspaper strips. They typically have three panels in a daily strip. The first panel is a summary of the day that came before. The middle one advances the plot. And the third one foreshadows what's to come.

According to at least one or two theories on newspaper strips, you should not have more than thirty-five words, total, that anyone speaks in a single panel.

Well, that really slows down the amount of things you can actually do, if you use dialogue for the summary. You can't put anything important in the Saturday strip, because so many people don't subscribe. And for the Sunday strip, you have to write something exciting which makes people want to continue

reading it. But because some readers get the daily paper but not the Sunday (or vice versa), the daily and Sunday strips have to be completely detachable from each other. This is one reason we don't really have good adventure strips anymore, because of all the rules that have been ladled onto them.

A Sunday strip often has two tiers of panels, but sometimes it will have a third. That first tier is important, it introduces your story—but you have to understand that it might not be used. A given newspaper can choose to use all three tiers, or, for the sake of space, drop the first tier. So there's another limiting factor.

My collaborator on the Batman strip was Carmine Infantino. Now, when Carmine was about 17, he did the original Flash in the 1940s. He came back in the 60s and re-did the character, and actually re-created the whole notion of what a super-hero looks like. He also helped re-create Green Lantern and Wonder Woman. He eventually became an editor at DC and then the publisher. He did something called the new-look Batman, as well, turning Batman into more of

Meet your

Featured Speakers

William Messner-Loebs

Born in 1949, Bill grew up in and lives in Michigan. His reputation as a comics creator was established with his 1980s series, *Journey: The Adventures of Wolverine MacAllistaire*. Written and drawn by Bill, it told of a pioneer mountain man in early 1800s Michigan territory. Recently, *Rolling Stone* magazine online published a list of "The 50 Best Non-Superhero Graphic Novels." *Journey* was number 35 on that list. In the 80s and 90s, Bill continued to draw, but also did much comics script-writing. He wrote over 30 issues of *Johnny Quest* for Comico. For DC, he wrote *The Flash*, *Impulse*, *Dr. Fate*, *Wonder Woman*, and *Hawkman*. He scripted the *Batman* newspaper strip in the last year of its run. For Marvel, he scripted several issues of *Thor*. Bill co-created *The Maxx* with artist Sam Keith, a series that was animated for MTV. More recently, he's written stories based on ideas originated by H. P. Lovecraft. With Rodney Schroeter, he co-created the 2012 WWA Press publication, *Human Interest Stuff*.





with you.”

And he looked up at me with this very nice smile, and he said...

“Who?”

And I realized that he probably didn’t remember any of the last ten years.

He said, “So you liked the new-look Batman?”

I said, “Yeah... you know, you’ve always been a big influence of mine, Carmine, and I was really looking forward to meeting you.”

And he said, “Well, thank you. Thank you, son. And if you give me one of those Batmans, I’ll be glad to sign it for you.”


So my big thing about collaboration is, you should always tell your collaborators how much they mean to you, while they’re still around.

And Rodney?

The next beer is on me.

*This talk was transcribed
and edited by Rodney Schroeter.*

The Wisconsin Writers Association presents



Wisconsin Writers Conference

Take a Minute.
Write it Down.
Sept 26-28, 2014
Hotel Mead
Wisconsin Rapids, WI


Featuring:

Speakers & Presenters

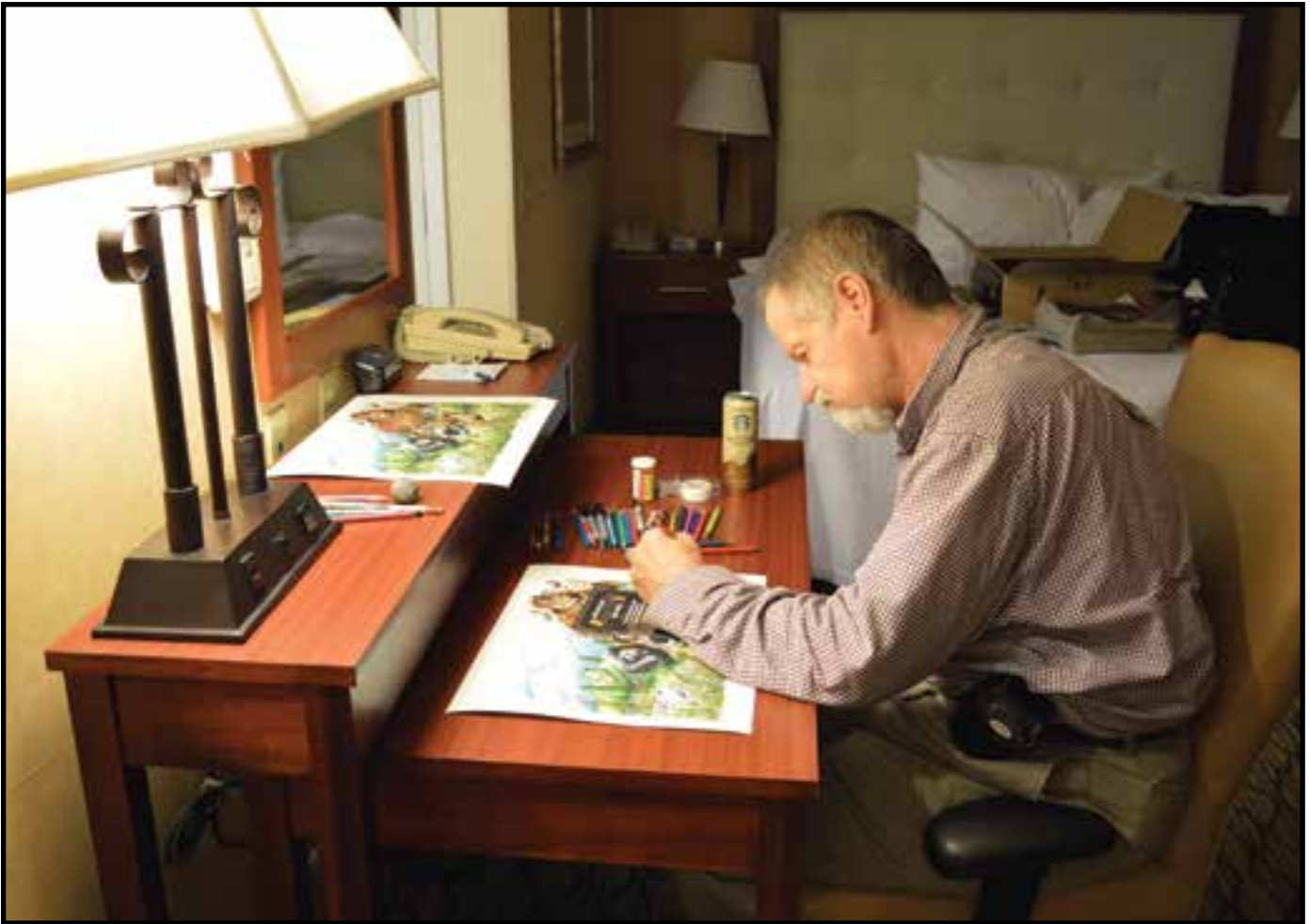
- Sandra Kring
- Laura Scheer
- John Walsor
- Bill Messner-Loebs
- Tom Hanratty
- Christine Keleny
- Kym Brunner
- Katie Sparks
- Keith Schroeder
- Greg Peck
- More!

Workshops & Panels

- Book Fair
- Awards Banquet



Giclée



Sketchbooks

Several sketchbooks were found in Bill's lockers. These featured hundreds of pages of pencil drawings, inked drawings, story notes, comic page layouts, and profound thoughts.

This section contains a small sampling from those books.

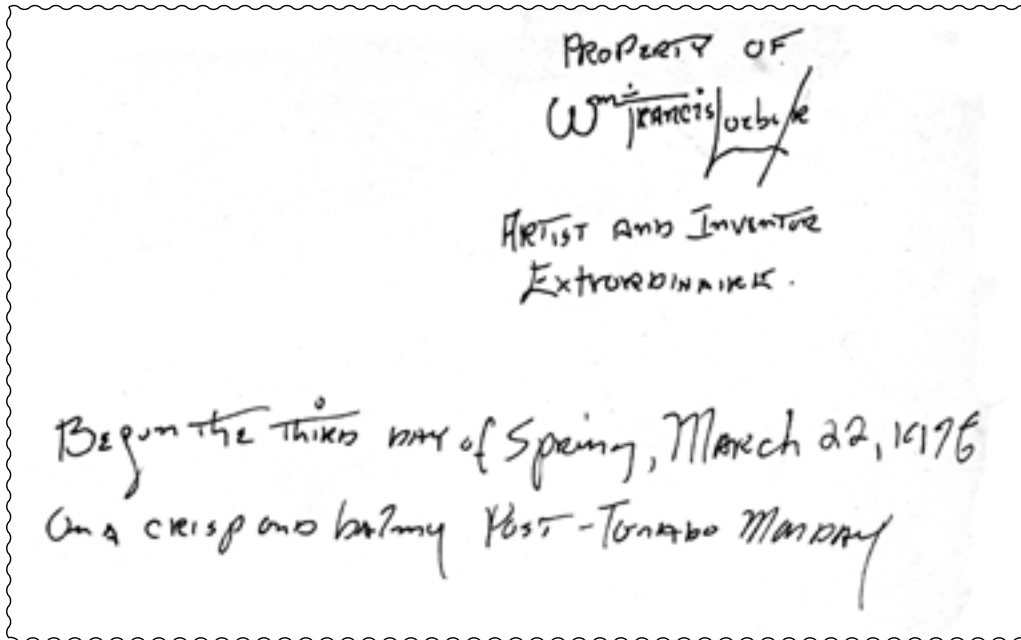
They are presented here in total disregard for rhyme or reason.

Not all are reproduced actual size.

Some were darkened with Photoshop to enhance legibility.

Some pages have been cropped.

Suspected personal information (phone numbers, addresses) have been removed.









ARDOORK-VONASHKEM PRESENTS

A UNIQUE story

IN 1789
Benjamin
Franklin
R. G.
1789

IN 1754 the
Rev. Emph.
had been
for 200 years ...



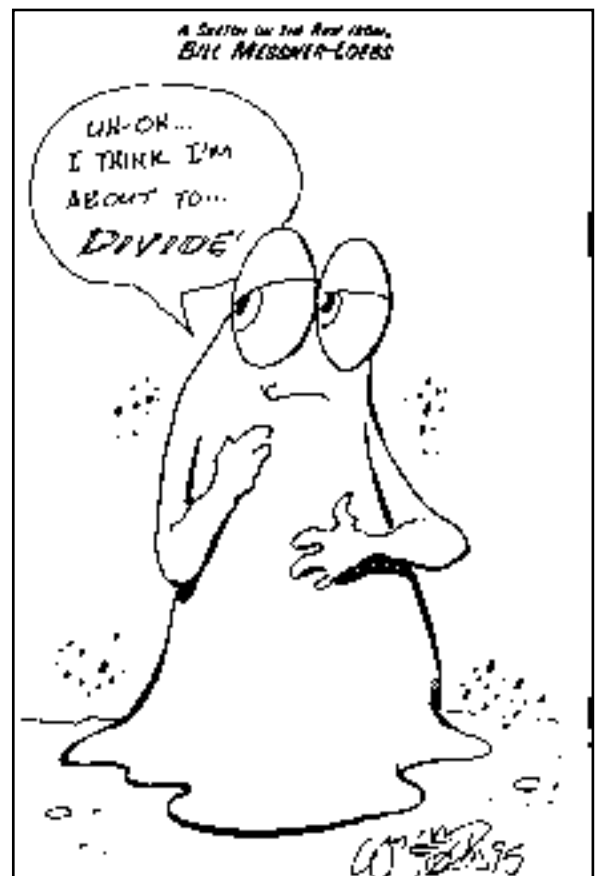
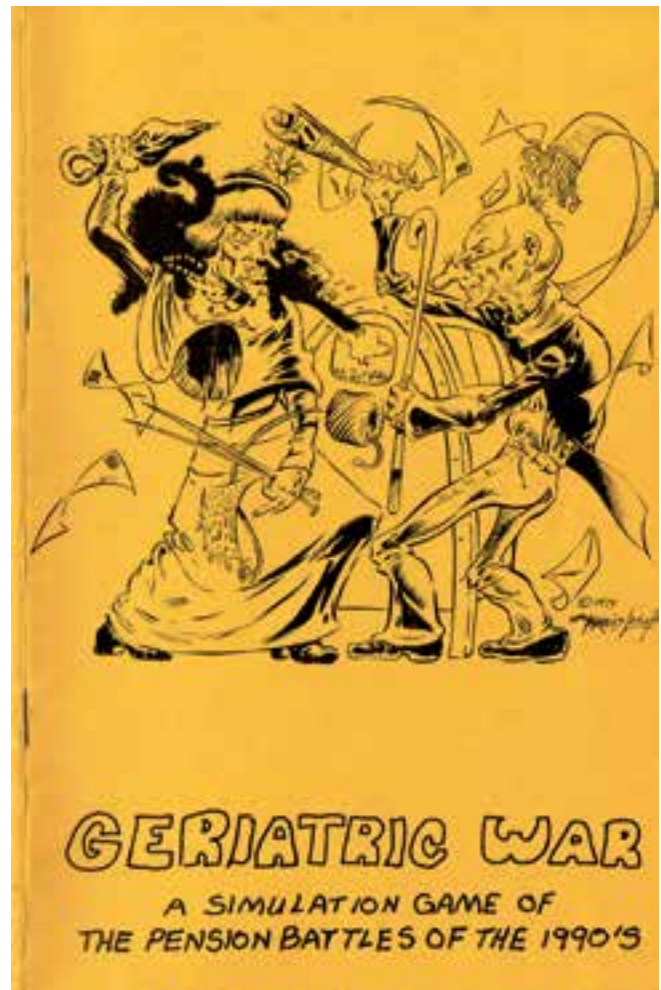
Et Cetera



Jan 2, 1980



MOUNTAIN MAN DISCOVERS GNOMES
1782





San Diego Con 16
PROGRESS
REPORT #1

Ilse
Gartenkinder-
Kollb
Bunten

Chapter 4 - ^{the} Woodschildren.

Page one - Panel one

Craft - The cabin was musty, dank, stinking of old smoke. If not for the rain, they'd have stayed anywhere else. If not for circumstance they'd have been anywhere else.

Craft - Black and dismal, the slug-like clinging night, swirls about me. The ground ripe and evil sucks at my feet.

Page two - Panel one

Craft - Suddenly it appears before me, ancient, dreadful diety of the degraded aborigines, Quasihoblimoochoo, squeezer of the shadows.



Ilse - You asked ^{for} him to read a ^{recite for us.} "little something."

Panel two

Ilse - "...to ^{cheer us up?} entertain ~~our~~ ~~troubles~~?"

Craft - At last it is ^{comes} coming for me... hideous inhuman... I hear myself ~~after~~ ^{slobber.} insanity.

Panel three

Craft - The ancient racial memories - oh god oh god! I should never have come to these godless stretches never have dared to read what should not be read... it... it is squeezing my shadow.

Ilse - um. Very nice, herr Craft





Thank you

First and foremost:

To William Messner-Loebs,
for creating a body of work
that is worth
preserving, protecting, and promulgating.
"You should always tell your collaborators
how much they mean to you, while they're still around."
(Who said that?)

With gratitude:

To every admirer who has purchased Bill's work
in a way that has helped him financially, and/or advanced him artistically.

With further gratitude:

To Mike Jones, who accepted the torch, and is now also
preserving, protecting, and promulgating
Bill's work.
As of this writing,
Mike is selling original art and other material on Bill's behalf.
This includes *Journey* pages, sketchbook pages, personal commissions,
and other work. He can be contacted through the Facebook page,
"Fans of William Messner-Loebs."
You can support Bill through his Patreon page:
www.patreon.com/billmessnerloebs
For many interviews Mike conducted with Bill, see the YouTube channel:
Yeet Presents

And finally:

Here's to *you*, Dear Reader. Your purchase of this book benefits Bill. **Thank you!**

Most pieces featured herein were rescued from Bill's lockers.
Most are presented without identification or context,
and certainly in no chronological or metalogical order.

Identification is a (hopefully enjoyable) task that falls to you, Bill.
Your many devoted admirers would love to hear
the stories behind some of these pieces.