



Forty Four



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Albacon Roundup¹

And so it's back to parenthood². Our 24 hours in Albacon was due to finish, and that only left... Professor Salthouse's attempt to destroy the Central Hotel (again!)³. The man is a dangerous pyromaniac, and should be encouraged. Still, I wouldn't mess with someone who can manufacture his own liquid oxygen⁴. After such jollity, there was still time for the ceilidh⁵, which had the effect of burning off the large quantities of alcohol we'd consumed throughout the day. And so, with the prospect of the bars closing not so much looming as being a distant possibility, it was time to settle down and chew the fat with friends old and new. Just when everyone was flagging, the hip flask full of *Glenfarclas* was mentioned, and so started an impromptu room party^{6 7}. After that... we discovered something that could shake the very fabric of the universe⁸. When suitably primed with malt whisky and other ethanolic beverages, **Steve Glover** can snore like a pneumatic drill. Don't get me wrong. Pneumatic drills are wonderful pieces of equipment – in the right place. The right place just happens not to be on the floor of our room. **Jean**

¹ Which is nothing like Monsanto's *Roundup*. Quick summary of Albacon: If the purpose of a convention is merely to provide a backdrop for the socialising, then it only partially succeeded. Yes, we did manage the socialising, but far too many programme items were just too compelling to miss, so I suppose the convention itself became part of the conversation.

² Well, these things happen.

³ Each time he does his show, there are always some poor unsuspecting folk who haven't seen it, and so they sit right at the front, because they think you'll get a good view. When he does some of his experiments, you'd get a good view sitting in the next galaxy. OK, so I exaggerate, but not by much...

⁴ "Because BOC wouldn't sell me any"

⁵ or "jiggin'" as it is sometimes called...

⁶ Of course, Albacon was a slight split personality convention, as there was *also* Homeland, for those, strange even by fannish standards, who were dedicated to *Highlander* (the series, not the film. Certainly not the second film. I mean, anyone who enjoyed the second film has probably already been genetically modified...). **Fiona Anderson** once described running a stand at a media con as very weird. Unlike the general run of the mill fandom, where program items are things to be contemplated, considered, and often missed because someone has just got the drinks in, you average media fan treats the programme as sacrosanct. As a result, the hallways are empty except when a programme item ends. Well, the Homeland part of the convention was a bit like that. Still, it meant that the bar wasn't too crowded...

⁷ Hey, we were doing this 24 hour convention lark properly, and had even booked a room.

⁸ or at any rate, the fabric of the walls in the room.

..Another edition? Must be something funny going on. Write to me at **19 Cordiner St, Mount Florida, Glasgow G44 4TY**. Alternatively, a quick email to baereats@calumny-demon.co.uk or check the sometimes updated website <http://www.calumny-demon.co.uk> Still ©1999 Alasdair Hurburn

Thompson⁹ and **David Carlile** just don't know how lucky they were by sneaking away before it started to get light... Still, we just made breakfast, which, not surprisingly, was full of fans¹⁰

Nanocon One¹¹

Albacon, of course, was some time ago. I mean, winter has come and gone since then¹². So just to show that we haven't totally gafiated, we decided to have a little dinner party. Except that, what with assorted sprogs and what not, it was probably better if it started in early afternoon. Having rounded up Jean and David, **Cuddles** and **Ralph** and the "Afrossmen" (don't ask. No really), we managed to turn the afternoon into the evening. Into the night. Into the late night. Into the dark o'clock early morning. We also managed to turn a frighteningly large number of wine bottles into empty wine bottles, and so, like the best conventions, it took the attendees as long again to recover as they had spent there¹³. Around about this time, thoughts turned to the millennium¹⁴. I suspect that we may rashly have decided to stage *Hogmanay 1.1 and a bit*¹⁵, as an alternative location for all those who have discovered that the best venues were booked up years ago. Yup, it looks as though we will be spending 31st December, 1999 *chez nous*, so we might as well make a party of it. Proper invitations may even be produced sometime before the year end!

"Think of it as a challenge, Neil"

Hitch and his team successfully beat off Baliol College to go through to the quarter finals of University Challenge. Yo!

⁹ Strange but true: Our television does not possess any of the wonderful new fangled remote control facilities (unless "Go and change the channel" counts). By implication, this also means no Teletext. As a result, I still reckon it's a bit of a novelty. One day, when visiting Jean, I was idly flicking through the teletext pages on her TV when I stumbled across the letters pages. I was slightly amazed to see one from a Jean Thompson. "Oh yes, that's me", said Jean.

¹⁰ well, the restaurant was, at any rate. No one was actually attempting to dive into the mushrooms...

¹¹ Well, a bit smaller than a Picocon, but probably larger than a Femtocon...

¹² but then we may have been hibernating, so it seems like, well several months ago.

¹³ I was just about well enough to handle Calum and Fergus the following morning. Their idea of a long lie is five minutes *after* the alarm is due to go off; normally they tend to wake five minutes before...

¹⁴ which, as any pedant will tell you, is still one year and several months away.

¹⁵ If you weren't there: the second party felt a bit like an extension of the first one. The mere fact that they were for different year ends is neither here nor there (in fact they were most definitely for 'there', just beyond the meridian and Mandelson's Folly, geographically speaking).