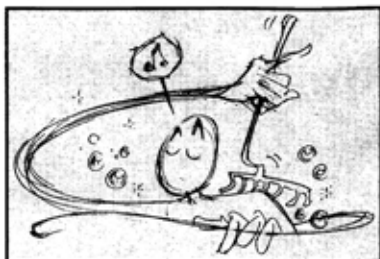


BUCK GODOT

ZAP GUN FOR HIRE



THE HERODOTUS COMPLEX

NOTES BY P'OILGOF LIVY

CHAPTER 7- THIS THING CALLED 'DEATH'

The Sentients of the Gallimaufry have as varied a reaction to the concept of Death as they do to the statement "The Party is Over", and for approximately the same reasons.

The vast majority feel annoyance. They're having a good time. There are still things to ingest, things to experience and sentients who are no doubt just waiting to hear them explain just how very smart they were when they bought into Thulium futures at 417.

A smaller, but still surprisingly large number are just as glad it's all over. The drinks were flat, they never got to do their balancing a waffle-iron on the nose trick, and if they have to listen this moron talk about Thulium Futures for one second more, their heads will explode.

Another segment is just never able to wrap it's head around the idea. People come and go, certainly, but where and how are really none of their business, and while it might be troubling that one is running out of people to talk to, they will continue to chatter on (to the hatrack, if they must) until they are forcibly thrown out.

Some are perfectly aware that the party is coming to an end, but know that there will be another party next week and they'll be there to see it, and there are a

few who smile quietly to themselves and take the party with them.

Among those races that do die a Final Death, there is an almost infinite variety of customs surrounding the event, ranging from the perpetual planetwide mourning of the Sqeemtoks to the boisterous Cannibalistic Bar-B-Ques of Old Terra's Canadians.

A favorite pastime is trying to discover new ways to avoid, circumvent or redefine death. The most popular are downloading personalities into artificial bodies or clones, replacement of one's corporeal body with one of pure intellect, altering one's rate of travel through the fourth dimension, incorporation into a gestalt group mind, or being granted a wish by the fairies.

Some races don't understand the importance that others place upon corporeal existence, and believe that if a sentient's works (in the form of books, poems, music, films or advertising slogans) continue to exist and still accurately communicate that sentient's ideas to future generations, then the important part of said sentient is immortal and you don't have to actually put up with an actual living, breathing personality that might do embarrassing things like make commercials for wine coolers or write sequels.



www.studiofoglio.com

BUCK GODOT- Zap Gun For Hire #7. Published Eventually by Studio Foglio, LLC: 2400 NW 80TH St. #129, Seattle, WA 98117-4449. Story and Art © 1997 by Phil Foglio. Buck Godot, Asteroid AI and Madame Louisa Dem Five are ™ 1997 by Phil Foglio. All rights reserved. No portion of this publication may be reproduced without the express consent of the publisher. This is a work of fiction, and any similarity to actual persons, events or institutions is purely coincidental. All letters to BUCK GODOT are assumed intended for publication and become property of the magazine. FIRST PRINTING: August 1997.

WWW.ZAPGUNFORHIRE.COM

Printed in Canada