

CLAW &

Number Twenty

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This issue of CLAW & FANG is dedicated to the Two Headed False Coral Snake of South America. This reptile is actually harmless but wears the coloration of the deadly coral snake. When threatened it rears both its head and tail which are similar in appearance in an effort to confuse its attacker. Such deception would be worthy of any Diplomacy player.

A TRIP INTO THE CLAW & FANG ARCHIVES

CLAW & FANG has been publishing for less than a year (it only seems like more) and a trip into the CLAW & FANG archives is not a long one. It usually consists of a short walk over to a round metal container with a plastic bag lining where most of my mail goes. Here is a letter (actually it was a xeroxed copy) that just arrived inside a Christmas card.

SEASON'S GREETINGS TO ALL MY FRIENDS.

Golly, it doesn't seem like a year has passed since I last sent all of you my Christmas letter. As usual, this has been quite an eventful year for myself, my lovely wife, Dolly, my three wonderful children, Tom, Dick, and Mary, and the family dog, Xenophanes.

As you all know, my hobby is playing a game--Diplomacy--by mail. Without going into detail about it again, let it suffice to say that there are seven players who write lies (ha ha) to one another and send in movement orders into an eighth person known as a Gamemaster. The one that lasts the longest, wins. I started 35 new games this year and finished 12. This means that I am currently participating in something over 120 active games. The precise number is not clear since these Gamemasters occasionally go bananas and their games remain inactive before someone else takes the game over.

I had to give my job up in April or May. It was interfering with all the letters I had to write. I won't bore you with the details except to tell you the satisfaction that I got when I uttered those immortal words, "You can't fire me, I quit!" The only trouble was that I had been fired three weeks before but no one had bothered to tell me. I guess I really should have gone in more often. But being an assistant taster in a pet food factory was rather demeaning work.

I'm not sure exactly when Dolly left me. I believe it was sometime during the summer. I remember I had been writing letters late into the night and when I finally got to the bedroom it was empty save for a note on the pillow. I guess it had been there for several days and I just hadn't noticed it before. I still have it as sort of a keepsake. It says, "Dear Franklin: I can't take any more of this. No job, no food, no clothes, just letters everywhere. If it were another woman I could adjust but that nutty game--- You can take those goddamned little blocks of wood and....." Apparently she thought better of what she had written and had carefully torn off the bottom of the page.

(continued overleaf)

12/1/73

I guess she took my three wonderful children with her. I haven't seen them around the house in sometime. They must be getting pretty big now. I think the youngest is 11 or 12 or something like that. Oh yes, I did see a picture of the oldest, Tom, in the paper the other day. It seems the police had detained him for selling some grass. I remember his mother once mentioned to me that Tom had a hobby and she was thankful it wasn't Diplomacy. At that time I remarked to her that she should have a hobby. I suggested that she write Carol Buchanan and inquire about joining the Diplomacy Widows Association. Dolly was really excited about the prospect until Carol wrote back and said it didn't mean that one was a real widow.

But enough about my wonderful family, let's get back to my real love, Diplomacy. The really great thing I did this year was to start my own gamezine, BLASPHEMY. After I ~~lost~~ quit my job I found it harder and harder to get the cash to enter new games. I did draw unemployment for awhile--when I remembered to go down to the office. I once took the Diplomacy game with me and taught some of the other fellows in line how to play. But the officials wouldn't let me do that again saying that all those shouts of "LIAR", "ASSASSIN", and "BRIGAND" were disturbing to the other clients.

At any rate, I hit upon the idea of starting my own zine and thus getting in money to enter new games. This has been so successful that I am planning to start five or six more zines.

Well, that's all for now. All of you have a happy holiday and I will send you greetings again next year.

Seasons best,

Frank Merrivoll

p.s. I just remembered, the family dog, Xenophanes, died three years ago which is just as well because I could never pronounce his name anyway.

LET ME SAY THIS ABOUT THAT

1. In the last issue I announced that I was changing my no-press policy to allow "diplomatic statements". I received two comments from players about this.

"I was sorry to see press creep into the zine. It was much cleaner without it. In my opinion, you have fulfilled your obligation to 1973J. If you try to allow limited press, I believe you'll wind up having to put the whole thing in, or gaining the ill-will of players by censoring what they submit." (Dave Forte)

"Though I enjoy writing press occasionally, CLAW & FANG's policy of no press gives it a refreshingly different quality, so why change it?" (Dan Gallagher)

In light of these two statements and the fact that I received no "diplomatic statements" or any other press, I am reverting to my original no-press policy.

2. Watch for the next issue of CLAW & FANG for announcement of new game openings. See page 6 of this issue for a special game opening.

3. This is your last chance to subscribe (resubscribe) at the 8/\$1.00 rate.

1973J

AUTUMN 1906: AUSTRIA A War Retreats to Mos
WINTER 1906: AUSTRIA Builds A Bud

SPRING 1907

Okay, Fellas, The Winter Is Over And Spring Has Arrived

AUSTRIA Bartnikowski: (9) F Bla-Sev*, A Sil* S A Lvn-Mar, A Vie* S A Bud-Gal,
A Mun* § FRENCH A Ruh-Kiel, A Bud*-Gal, A Nos* S A Lvn-Mar, A Tri-Bud*,
A Lvn-Mar*, A Boh* S A Mun
ENGLAND Linstrom?: (1) NMR F Lon* Hold
FRANCE Brooks: (5) F Iris-Wal*, A Hol* S A Ruh-Kiel, A Yor*-Lon, A Ruh-Kiel*,
A Par*Hold.
GERMANY Smith: (5) F Bal* S A Pru-Lvn, A Ber*-Mun, A War § A Pru-Lvn /d/ R(Ukr,
Pru, OTB)*, A Kiel § A Ber*-Mun /d/ R(Den, OTB)*, A Pru-Lvn*
ITALY Veill?: (12) NMR F Bre* Hold, F Por* Hold, F Spa(so)* Hold, F Aeg* Hold,
F MidA* Hold, F VMed* Hold, F Ion* Hold, A Mar* Hold, A Bur* Hold, A Tun* Hold,
A Pic* Hold, A Pied* Hold
RUSSIA von Metzke?: (2) NMR F StP(nc)* Hold, F NthS* Hold

Fall 1907 orders are due Saturday, December 22 at NOON. While I don't think for a minute that Andy has dropped out I want to play it safe and call for standby orders from Jerry Montgomery, 954 Farrest St, Baltimore, MD 21202. I do not replace for positions of less than three units.

There has been a call for a vote for a two-way draw twist Austria and Italy. Once again, to carry the vote must be unanimous.

1973AY

SPRING 1905

German and Turkish Armies Missing In Action. Austrians Give Up All Supply Centers. Switzerland Surrounded And Sues For Peace.

AUSTRIA Carlton: (2) A Vie-Tyro*, A Ven-Pie*
ENGLAND Boyer: (7) F NthS* C A Edi-Nwy, F Dent-Swe, F Bal* § A Kiel, F Swa* Fin,
F Bar* S A Edi-Nwy, A Edi-Nwy*, A Kiel* S FRENCH A Bur-Mun
FRANCE Bumpus: (6) F Ves* S ITALIAN F Nap-Tyr USC, F Bel-Hol*, F Mar*-Iyon,
A Ruh* S F Bel-Hol, A Bur*-Mun, A Spa*-Mar
GERMANY Kindig: (3) A Hol-Ruhr /d/ annihilated, A Mun* § A Hol-Ruhr, A Ber* S A Mun
ITALY Zahn: (3) F Tru* S FRENCH F VMed-Tyr NSO, F Nap-Apu*, A Rome* S F Nap-Apu
RUSSIA Sleight COA: (6) F Ber*-Bal, A War-Fru*, A Mos*-StP, A StP*-Fin, A Bud-Vie*,
A Rum-Gal*
TURKEY Forte: (7) F Aeg-Ion*, F Ion-Nap*, F Tyr*-Iyon, A Con-Bul*, A Erd-Ven*,
A Apu § F Ion-Nap /d/ annihilated, A Ser-Tru*

Fall 1905 orders are due Saturday, December 22 at NOON.
Change of Address for David Sleight: 217 E. Garfield, Tempe, AZ 85261

1973BM

SUMMER 1904: ITALY A Tri Retreats to Tyro
FRANCE F Mida Retreats to Por

Fall 1904 orders due Saturday, December 22 at NOON. Change of address for Tom
McCloud: 26540 Chisholm Ct. No.4, Hayward, CA 94544.

1973EJ

WINTER 1902

AUSTRIA	Stewart: (6) Build A Vie	Positions: F Bul(sc), F Alb, A Tri, A Ser A Bud, A Vie
ENGLAND	Stafford: (3) Remove A Lon	Positions: F NthS, F NwgS, F Mida
FRANCE	Willemsen: (4) Even	Positions: F Bre, F Mar, A Spa, A Gas
GERMANY	Buchanan: (7) Build A Kiel	Positions: F EngC, F Bel, F Den, A Kie, A Bur, A Pic, A Par
ITALY	Kindig: (4) Even	Positions: F WesM, F Lyo, A Fic, A Ven
RUSSIA	Gallagher: (7) Build A Mos	Positions: F Nwy, F Bla, F Bar, A Mos, A Sev, A Arm, A Fin
TURKEY	Barber: (3) Even	Positions: F Aeg, F Con, A Ank

Spring 1903 orders due Saturday, December 22 at NOON.

1973FB

SPRING 1903

Are Italian Forces On Strike Or Is It Just Another National Holiday?

AUSTRIA	Robinson: (3) F Gre-Bul*, A Bud*-Rum, A Ser* S F Gre-Bul
ENGLAND	Beam: (5) F NthS-Den*, F Skag-Swe*, F Nwy* S F Skag-Swe, F Lon* Hold, A StP* Hold
FRANCE	Smith: (6) F EngC*-Lon, F Bre*-EngC, A Bel* S A Bur-Ruhr, A Mar-Bur*, A Bur-Ruhr*, A Gas* S A Mar-Bur
GERMANY	Lott: (6) F Swe S F Den-Skag /d/ Retreat to Bal*, F Den-Skag*, A Mun*-Ruhr, A Hol*-Ruhr, A Ruhr-Kiel* (one unit short)
ITALY	Ayres?: (6) NMR F Ion*Hold, F Nap* Hold, A Tri* Hold, A Boh* Hold, A Vie* Hold, A Ven* Hold
RUSSIA	Wood?: (2) A Gal* Hold, A Mos* Hold
TURKEY	Burce: (6) F Bla* C A Con-Sev, F Smy-Aeg*, A Con-Sev*, A Rum*-Bud, A Bul S ITALIAN A Tri-Ser (NSO) /d/ R(Con, OTB)*, A Sev-Ukr*

Fall and Winter 1903 orders due Saturday, December 22 at NOON. Be sure and submit
conditional retreats.

I am asking for standby orders for Italy from Ronald M. Kelly, #210, 225 Virginia
Ave S.E., Washington, D.C. 20003.

WHAT'S THIS, THE FANMASTER HAS DESIGNED A GAME?

Well, Codedesigned Anyway!

One weekend last summer when my nephew, Peter Shamray, was visiting we put our heads together and came up with a new play-by-mail game. We named it World Decision.

It is played without a board or the need to purchase any equipment. All you need is a pencil and paper. Any number can play--in fact, Peter and I found it a very enjoyable two handed game. I would imagine that in a postal game you would shoot for six to ten players. Peter play-tested it with six people and again with seven people.

Every country starts out equal. In fact, the player gets to name his own country, e.g., France, Hertenia, or Fanmasterland. Each country starts the game with a hundred billion money credits. With the money credits he can raise army divisions, air groups, submarines, submarine chasers, or just keep the money in his treasury. The winner of the game is the first person to have more money in his treasury than do all of the rest of the countries have in their combined treasuries. If you keep your money safe in your treasury and persuade the rest of the countries to deplete theirs by warping on one another you could win rather quickly--but watch out. Without defending forces you may be invaded and be out of the game while your treasury goes over to your invader.

You increase your treasury by trading with other countries unless the submarines of some unknown power blockade you. That's where the subchasers come in--to keep your port clear so that your traders can get out and other countries can get their traders into yours.

You are never told how much money other countries have in the treasuries, what they have built, or who their submarines are attacking. You are told who has traded with who, what country has attacked what country, and what losses they have suffered (but not the size of the forces involved). From what facts are given you, you do your best to deduce the others. For example, if it appears that a country has spent most of its cash reserve to raise army divisions and air groups it is wide open for a submarine blockade to choke off its income.

Like other games of this type--including Diplomacy--you make deals with other countries for attacks, for defense, and for nonaggression.

Sound like you would like to try it? Then don't write me, write my nephew because the game is going to be run in OBSESSION. This new zine is devoted to both regular Diplomacy and variants of all kinds. Published monthly, the subscription rate is 12 issues for two dollars. The game fee is only 50¢ plus a subscription. You can send in \$3.00 and get yourself a subscription, an entry in World Decision, and an entry in their Diplomacy tournament. In the 49 man Diplomacy tournament they are going to send you back a nickle for every supply center you own when the game ends. If you win a game and go into the finals you get back a dime for every supply center you own when the championship game ends. You may not get rich but you could get your entry fee back and maybe a little more.

Write Peter Shamray, Bx 24872, Los Angeles, Calif 90024

Face To Face With David Teusch

Austria: All that I am or ever will be, I owe to my mother.
Turkey: Why don't you send her 25¢ and square the account?

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

A few issues ago I wrote that Fred Davis and I were considering forming America's first all MENSA postal Diplomacy game. Enough interest has been shown to go ahead with the project. This is the official announcement.

I am now accepting applications for a MENSA-HI Q Postal Diplomacy Game. This game will be open to anyone falling into the MENSA IQ category. To be a member of MENSA one must have an IQ that falls within the upper 2% of the total IQ population. This varies from test to test but loosely speaking it means an IQ of 140 or higher. If you are a MENSA, have been a MENSA, or believe you could be a MENSA and want to play, send in the application. Do not send money yet.

The game will be run in CLAW & FANG with my regular rules and deadlines. For this game only I am suspending my houserule about only one person from each state. The fee will be seven dollars for players and four dollars for stand-bys with a dollar off for membership in MENSA. If more than seven people sign up--and applications will be accepted until the first of the year--preference will be given to MENSA members.

MENSA HI-Q POSTAL DIPLOMACY GAME APPLICATION

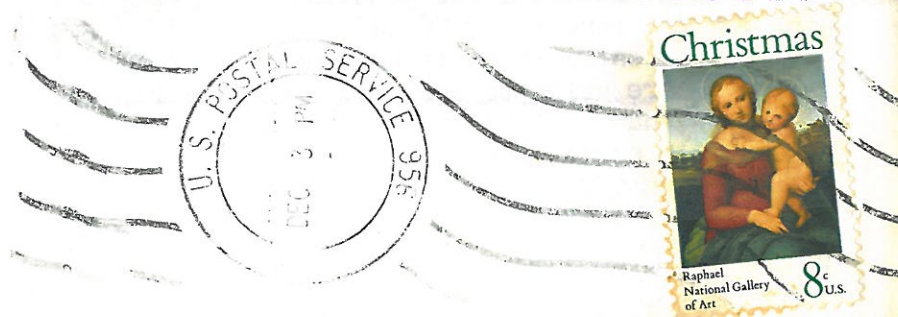
 I would like to play in the Mensa-HI Q Postal Diplomacy Game.

 I would like to be a stand-by player in this game.

NAME _____ PHONE _____

ADDRESS _____ ZIP _____

HOLIDAY HUMBUG FROM



FIRST CLASS MAIL

Don Miller
12315 Judson Rd
Wheaton, MD 20906