

Hub Magazine

SCIENCE FICTION HORROR FANTASY

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by alasdair stuart

Welcome to issue 103. This week's story, *The Insect Garden*, comes to us from the superb Ilan Lerman and this week's feature proves that whilst there isn't a new sheriff in town, there is a very charming one as we interview Colin Ferguson of *A Town Called Eureka*.

Winter may be setting in but there's still plenty going on. Something you'll see more of in coming weeks as we introduce new features, modify old ones and continue to improve Hub as we head towards issue 200. Which is, let's face it, only 97 weeks away now...

See you next week,

Alasdair

FICTION

The Insect Garden

by ilan lerman

Leo dreamt of the garden.

He dreamt of his grandparent's garden, with its steeply inclined and narrow lawn, bound to the right and left by high wooden fences, dropping down the hill into strawberry patches, sticky vines and tangled hedgerow.

Leo crawled out onto the lawn, feeling the itch of wet grass on his knees. The clouds had just dropped a light shower of summer rain exposing the smell of moist, fertile earth and the musty scent of damp wood.

A woodlouse crept across the back of his hand and he watched it closely; magnified in extreme detail, the rippling fringe of legs, body like a segmented coffee bean.

Leo opened his eyes and realised he was actually *in* the garden, kneeling there in his Winnie-the-Pooh pyjamas. It wasn't a dream, but it had been exactly like dreaming, with his head at the centre, looking out onto everything.

He had always been able to exert control over his dream landscape with ease, and mould the surroundings there like the coloured lumps of clay and Lego bricks he played with.

It was as easy as blinking.

He stood up and examined the woodlouse again, turning his hand over so it could navigate a course across his palm. He felt a connection, like tiny pins prickling inside his head - the insect *belonged*.

Leo followed the connection, looking down at his toes. The ground had turned black. There were hundreds of woodlice spilling over his feet.

So he blinked.

The woodlice began to curve around his feet in the concentric circles that iron filings make around a magnet. They came in swirling waves, flowing under the garden fence. Streams of them joined the mass around Leo's feet from the neighbouring gardens, making soft, wet, clicking sounds.

Leo concentrated hard, screwing up his mouth. He used the woodlice to draw patterns with. They spelled out his name and he smiled. He organised them into a line, like a Roman legion marching to war, and then he set off down the slope for the bottom of the garden; down into the shade of the trees and the moist air of the strawberry patch.

Follow me.

He stood under a mighty beech tree and the woodlice made a spiral up the trunk like a barber's pole. They swarmed along a branch that jutted out, high up into the air over the wall of hedgerow that bordered the bottom of the garden. Beyond the hedge the grassy slope dipped sharply down to a fast-flowing stream.

Leo giggled with delight as he directed the flood of insects off the edge of the branch. They poured from the tree in a writhing, black jet of bodies and feelers that tumbled out into space and down to the rushing waters.

'Leo?' His grandfather called from the house.

His concentration was broken and the perfect river of woodlice broke its banks, shattering into thousands of individual creatures, hailing down from the tree. The chorus of soft clicking noises increased in intensity to a violent, chattering sound, as though they were protesting as a single entity.

'Leo!'

His eyes narrowed, insects spattering onto his head and shoulders, and then he started off up the slope

to the house at a run.

Leo held the hunched shape of his grandfather in his vision like a rifle target.

Morris was kneeling on the floor.

He had been contemplating the swirling red, gold and blue Paisley pattern on the carpet for quite a while now, but couldn't remember why. He had often worried about the possibility of Alzheimer's descending over him like a heavy, black fog. Was this how it started?

Then he saw Leo sitting on the sofa blinking at him, and he remembered.

The boy was staring right into his brain. Peering into his thoughts and memories, rummaging around and sifting them as he would with sand through his fingers.

Morris was overcome with the compulsion to behave like a dog; a nice little dog who wants to sit at Leo's feet and be a good boy. He padded over to the sofa, wagging his bottom as though he had a tail, ignoring the shooting arthritic pains that snapped through his joints like broken glass.

Good doggie. Fetch!

Leo was talking to him; he could hear his high-pitched clarinet tone of a voice, but his lips weren't moving.

It was the blinking of his clear, green eyes. *They* spoke to him. Morris reared up on his legs and bounded after the ball that Leo had just tossed out the French windows and into the garden. A scything disc of pain twisted in his lower back, right on his sciatic nerve. His limbs trembled as they were bruised by the ground. He ignored the pain. His will was to be a dog at all costs.

Morris flopped out onto the patio, tearing his trousers and gashing his knee. He chomped at the shiny red plastic ball with the remains of his teeth; he still had eleven natural teeth in his mouth, of that he'd always been proud. For a second he wondered what he was doing crawling around in the wet grass with a ball in his mouth. This was how you caught pneumonia. Was this what Alzheimer's felt like? Where was Barbara? She normally looked after Leo.

'Here, doggie!' shouted Leo.

He was a dog. That was it; a good dog fetching his master's ball. He padded up to Leo and dropped the ball at his feet, waiting patiently for his next command.

Go sleep, doggie.

Immediately, a blanket heavy weariness slid over him. The boy was engrossed in the TV, hypnotised by a film in which two lines of sword-wielding warriors swept across a battlefield and engaged in combat. Morris limped off to fall asleep.

He slumped to the floor in a corner under the living-room window, unable to shake the image in his mind of an obscene shower of insects spewing out from a beech tree into the air. Something in his lower back made a flat, popping sound as he attempted to scratch behind his ear with his foot.

Sleep began to take him and he curled up next to the broken body of his wife, Barbara, nudging her with his nose to see if she would get up. Her skin was waxy and yellow. Flies crawled across her face.

Leo was hungry.

The cupboards held no more food that he knew how to eat. Doggie was no fun anymore; he wouldn't fetch. He just sat in the corner shivering. Soon he would be broken just like her.

Leo's grandmother was starting to smell. A musty, pervading stench of rancid meat and burnt lavender. There were also flies hatching, hundreds of them that Leo gathered into a tightly packed dome on the living room ceiling.

The TV burned images of the outside world into Leo's mind. So many people. So much space. His garden was bigger than he had imagined, with more insects to play with. His stomach grumbled and complained.

How will I get there? It's so far away.

The tinny clatter of the doorbell echoed through the house.

Robert crushed his cigarette beneath his heel and looked up at the semi-detached house. It was

exactly the same as the thirty or so others that lined this street, and all the others tacked on to the outskirts of Glasgow: a 1960's pebble-dashed box.

It was a languid July morning and his cotton shirt clung to little island patches of sweat on his back. He opened his folder of case notes again and flicked through them, his gaze falling on those passages that he couldn't help but read over and over.

The child was called Leo. He was six-years-old and he had been left with his grandparents after the unexplained death of his mother and father last year. The final cause of death had been carbon-monoxide poisoning, in lieu of an actual explanation. How do the hearts of two people go into cardiac arrest at exactly the same time, but their infant child remains perfectly healthy? Five separate pathologists had been unable to come to a consensus. They opted for the poisoning outcome to avoid any further awkward questions that would arise from the decision: unknown cause of death.

Robert wiped the sweat from his forehead, wishing he hadn't gone in to work on the day this case had been foisted upon him. He was the new boy, and this was the job no-one else wanted to touch. Social work had been a labour of love; paying his own way through college with a succession of bar jobs. All for the simple goal of helping people, but this case was just a chore. One more dirty bar job before he could move on to the rewarding stuff.

He pushed the doorbell again.

'The grandparents must be in,' he said, 'they *must* be, at this time of day.'

The medical reports in his folder ran to several pages. Leo had been tested for everything under the sun. Epilepsy in all forms; Autism; Meningitis; the list was extensive. The child had a constant sleep disorder, defined by sleepwalking, seizures and temporary catatonia. Robert had some medical knowledge, but this was beyond him - anyway, that was Health's responsibility.

His remit was to check on the grandparent guardians and make sure they were supported in their care of Leo, and that adequate home education was being provided.

Still no answer. Robert leaned forward to try and peer through the smoked glass panels on the door.

The door slowly inched open.

'Hello?' Robert stepped into the hallway. The stench hit his nostrils.

He had to stop and swallow hard to stop himself puking on the spot. He knew that smell. Decomposing human beings all smell the same in the heat of summer.

There were clothes and toys strewn up and down the hallway. Robert entered the living room and cried out.

A naked old man squatted in the corner like a dog, his feet sunk into a pile of his own shit. He was covered in purple bruises and his eyes were closed, but his chest still heaved in and out.

Next to the old man was a shrivelled corpse, twisted around on itself like a dirty rag, skin tinged green and blue.

The sweat coating Robert's body turned into a million tiny shards of ice. His breath quickened. All thought had emptied from his brain. The scene in front of his eyes was all he could see. A swarming black dome above his head made a noise like radio static.

His vision bleached white and he turned to run, but his limbs stiffened and he didn't want to run anymore.

The little boy in the red and blue Winnie-the-Pooh pyjamas blinked at him from the sofa.

Leo gazed with joy at the buildings and people that sailed past the car window.

Robert the social worker had been easy to control, his mind a blank page just waiting for Leo to draw pictures on.

Drive me to the city. Find me food.

They had stopped at a supermarket and eaten cheese sandwiches and Battenberg cake. He liked Battenberg cake, the pink and yellow squares, the buttery sweet marzipan taste. His grandmother had always put some on the table with tea. He made Robert buy ten packets, and munched it straight from the plastic wrapper, dropping crumbs all over the car seat.

It was the most fun he'd ever had.

The car window was fully open and Leo stood on the passenger seat, letting the wind whip across his head and the sun burn his skin. He breathed in the scent of petrol, warm tarmac and suntan lotion. Loud music pulsed in the ground, through the air and inside Leo's eardrums.

Follow the music.

Brightly-coloured flags and streamers were attached to lampposts and trees all along the road. Thousands of people channelled along side-streets into a great flock on the main road. They were all walking towards the lush, green space of a vast park, eating ice-cream cones, shouting, laughing, singing. The music boomed out from the park, so loud it made the car windows buzz.

Leo gaped at the crowds funnelling through the trees. His garden was so much bigger than he had thought. There were so many of them; the connections washed over the edges of his mind like surf. They weren't like the other insects, all *belonging* together. Each connection had its own shape and washed out from its own corner, but they were still insects. They would still follow.

Constable Hume tapped at his radio, just to make absolutely sure he was hearing correctly.

'Calm down, Isobel,' he said, 'repeat please.'

She was still green. Only been on the board for a couple of months. Hume usually had no problem calming the rookies down, but there was a manic, desperate edge to her voice, and that put the fear of God into his bones. Six years on the beat, with all the blood and shit he had seen, there was still something that could spook him.

'It doesn't make any sense, Donald. I've lost contact with *all* officers assigned to the concert. You're the closest to Glasgow Green. Armed response and riot squad are on their way.'

'What about the eye in the sky, Isobel? They must be seeing something.'

'...chaos. It's utter chaos, Donald. I've never seen anything like it.'

Glasgow Green was only about half a mile east. Hume picked up his pace and started to run, feet thumping on the pavement. He heard *something*, muffled by the sandstone buildings all around him. Whatever it was, it sounded like an enormous flock of screeching seagulls.

The Saltmarket entrance would be blocked off for the concert stage, he would have to find his way in by one of the entrances along Greendyke Street.

His breath heaved, heartbeat hammering, legs turning to rubber – *better get your arse back on that treadmill, you fat bastard, lay off the lamb Madras.*

Hume ran out onto the main road of the Saltmarket and a crashing wave of people rolled at him from the opposite side of the street. There were bodies flying in all directions; slapping over car bonnets; blood-streaked, flailing limbs battering into each other.

He threw out his arms to catch a woman who had tripped over her own shoes right in front of him. He tried to sit her down in front of a green telephone-exchange box to shield her from the crush, but she was immediately up again and running. Her eyes were wild and darting, tears streaked through her make-up.

There was no way through, so Hume sprinted north up the road, away from the main thrust of the crowd, flanking the park through the quieter back streets. He scanned around for any patrol-cars, any squad-vans. The emergency services had deserted this area.

There had been something about that panicking crowd, something about their eyes. He had worked his fair share of crowd duty, and knew well enough how apt they were to become blind, snorting animals when terror spread through them like a virus.

Then he realised where he had seen the look that every one of them had twisted onto their faces and pierced into their eyes. He had seen it on the face of old George McCutcheon – a fifty-three-year-old schizophrenic who, for the most part, was just a typical lumbering tramp with a collection of plastic bags pulled in for vagrancy every other week. He would have frequent episodes of violent panic, escaping from what he called '*The White Devils.*'

The look on his face during those episodes was that of a man lost to the whirlwind of his own diseased mind. Eyes staring, pupils shrunk to pin-holes, seeing things only he could see.

That look was on the face of every one of the crowd that hurtled across the busy street of the Saltmarket. A look of pure insanity. Their minds had just gone, like overripe fruit filled with gas, they had just

swollen and burst.

He ran down Liberty Street, vaulting the wall that spanned the gap between buildings and out onto Greendyke Street. He could see right into the park.

What he saw in there made him stop dead, his mouth hanging open in disbelief.

It reminded Hume of a painting he had seen whilst on holiday in Madrid. It depicted Hell as a blasted landscape of surreal creatures and men committing obscene and depraved acts on themselves and each other.

The thing that really got to him, that rooted him to the spot and blew all the years of police training from his mind like confetti, was how much they seemed to be enjoying what they were doing. The ecstatic grins as they tore and ripped and lashed at each other. Blood spouted from necks; tangled bodies were strewn across the grass; guttural yelps and shrieking filled the air.

Hume tumbled onto his knees as the ranks of riot police thundered up the street from behind him and flashed past, charging into the park. He clutched at his ears, trying to block out the cacophony of slaughter.

'Holy Jesus Christ,' he said, 'Holy Jesus fucking Christ almighty.'

Leo was crying.

He hid inside the metal lattice under the stage, his whole body erupting with tears. If he had been able to hear himself over the hideous screaming, he would have heard a high, keening howl emitting from his throat.

It had been fun to begin with, sitting on Robert's shoulders like a general on his horse. Leo had a perfect view over the top of the bouncing heads, right across the park to the line of tall trees on one side, and through a forest of flags, waving arms and flying plastic bottles, to the stage.

The people on the stage were blown up to an enormous size on giant screens; their music blasted out into the air, sweeping through the crowd. It soared through every part of his body. He sensed the crowd come together. The music made them *belong*. It wasn't as easy as the woodlice, though. The connections were there, dancing around just out of reach, but there were so many curtains and boxes and walls inside their heads to get through, it had been difficult at first to make them play battlefield.

He remembered his mum making ice-cubes for the orange squash, how the water filled each hollow of the ice-cube tray by channelling out along tiny gutters. He screwed up his face as hard as possible, picturing the tap water flowing out of his head, along the gutters and into the hollow heads of the people. Soon they were lining up across from each other, just like in the film, and then they were charging.

It was perfect. For a few moments, Leo was part of everything, the flowing water of his mind joining him to all of the people. It thrilled him intensely, bringing on the uncontrollable sensation of giggles. A laugh escaped his lips and broke his concentration for a split-second.

The water swelled up and rushed back at him in a torrent. He found himself looking out of every one of the people's eyes at the same time. His vision shattered into tiny facets, seeing the world with the compound eyes of a fly, but every facet held a different image. The images whirled around and around in his head making him fall backwards from Robert's shoulders.

Then it had all gone wrong. They were all broken.

A man had lunged for Robert and fallen on him, pounding into his face like raw meat. He pulled back with blood slathered up his chest and over his neck and face, roaring like a gorilla.

Leo felt the connection in his head snap off like dead wood. The stench of fear rose like steam. A ripple passed through the entire crowd and within seconds there was nothing but the whirl of arms and legs - nails tearing, glass breaking, teeth stretching skin.

Leo scampered away through the grass, finding his spot under the stage.

He curled up under there, remembering his parents, the glow of love that had been warm like milk; the sting of anger when they had seen him with the broken rabbit. Leo had only wanted to see if it would fly.

Now they were broken as well. He cried for them, and wondered how he would ever get home again.

Martin leaned out of his car window, stuck his finger and thumb into his mouth and blew a

piercing whistle.

The two policemen standing on the street corner both turned around at the same time. One of them walked over to the car.

Martin turned to Hannah and nudged her in the arm, grinning like a schoolboy. 'Hey, one of them is coming over.'

'Sir,' said the policeman, 'you will just have to be patient. There is no chance this traffic jam will clear any time soon.' The radio on his shirt pocket coughed out some noise. He was clearly harassed.

'Can you at least tell us what's going on? We were trying to get to the concert then *this* happened. We drove all the way up from Newcastle today.'

'All I can say is that there has been a major incident at Glasgow Green. All the roads up ahead have been cleared for emergency services vehicles.'

'Shit,' said Martin as the policeman walked away. 'I can't believe this.' He tapped a Marlboro from his packet and tried to flip it into his mouth, but it just bounced off his chin and fell into his lap.

'You clown,' said Hannah. 'Do you have to smoke in the car? You know how much it stinks. It gets right into my hair.'

She was nagging him again. He decided to let it breeze past him like dust, not worth another argument. Not today, not when she was wearing that tight pink summer top that made her breasts swell out. He jammed the cigarette back into the pack and coiled a finger into her long blond hair, raising it to his nose and sniffing.

The traffic inched forward. Some people emerged from the street up ahead, just one or two at first, shambling like zombies, covered in blood and their clothes in tatters. The two policemen were suddenly animated, barking into their radios. One or two became ten and ten became hundred. Within a minute the policemen were swallowed into the crowd as they tried in vain to shepherd them into one group.

'Look at that!' shouted Martin. 'Jesus Christ...'

Hannah grasped at his arm, leaning forward to see.

They exchanged glances, and felt that little spark that occasionally leapt between them where they were certain that their minds were connected.

'Terrorists,' said Martin, 'has to be.'

'God, look at the state of them.'

The tide of bloody refugees massed down the street, drifting in-between all the vehicles, crowding around Martin and Hannah's car and blocking their view. Their faces were expressionless, sunken; they walked in a trance, heading nowhere, just filling the spaces in front of them.

'Shit, what do we do?' said Martin. 'Close the windows.'

Hannah gasped, digging her fingernails into Martin's arm.

'Oh God, Martin. Look.'

She was staring out of the passenger window. Martin strained over her to try and see what she was talking about. He felt her skin tighten; she had gone absolutely rigid and was opening her door.

'What's going on, babe?'

'Are you alright? You poor little boy. Of course you can come in. Have you lost your mummy and daddy?'

Hannah reached out to take the hand of the little boy standing there in his red and blue Winnie-the-Pooh pyjamas.



FEATURES

Interview with Colin Ferguson

with janet neilson

Colin Ferguson, about to start work on a fourth season as Sheriff Jack Carter on 'A Town Called Eureka', has definitely worked hard towards his break, with many single-shot television credits and a starring role in a series that never really got off the ground to his name. In this Q&A, he talks about his work both in front of and behind the camera on the 'A Town Called Eureka' set, his thoughts on his prior starring role cut short, and everything from technology to intelligence as shown in a government-built town full of geniuses hidden somewhere in the American Pacific north-west.

Hub Magazine: So you're at end Season 3 of [A Town Called] Eureka. How is that going?

Colin Ferguson: Pretty good. This is the make-or-break season for us, so we wrapped Season 3 at the end of January and then got it picked up in August, so we're going to do 22 more [episodes]. It was a big vote of confidence that the network gave us, which was nice. In Season 3, we lead off with Carter losing his job and ultimately getting it back again. At the end of Season 3, you're not sure if my daughter's leaving, and I have a love interest in Season 3 and you're not sure if she's leaving either. Those are the big cliffhangers.

HM: You also directed one of the Season 3 episodes ["Your Face or Mine", Season 3]. How did you get into directing? Was it something that you asked to do?

CF: I asked for it, but they were very encouraging. We've been through a lot of directors on the show up until this point; some were fantastic and others were not so fantastic. When they're not so fantastic, you end up partnering up with the DP and the line producer and the on-set producer and getting through it as a group. So I think there were a lot of people who knew that I couldn't mess it up any worse. [laughs] The fact that it cut together well and the fact that they were excited by it was really nice for me.

HM: This was your directing debut; how did that go?

CF: It was incredibly nerve-racking. You try to be as confident as you can be, but you hit walls and it's never where you think it's going to be. There was a moment when we were shooting this scene on the stairs, and it wasn't working. The scene didn't work, the blocking didn't work, none of it worked. So I made the executive decision to redo it, right then and there, to tear it all down and build it back up again. It was a huge confidence thing for me. I got incredibly nervous, because I knew it wasn't working – you can't lie to yourself – and having the confidence to say, 'Okay, let's break it down and build it back up again' and having it work was a big moment for me.

HM: Did it help having been on the other side of the camera for as long as you have, when you made the jump to directing?

CF: I highly recommend it. Anyone wants to direct: get your own show and once you're in your third season... [laughs] I knew the set, I knew the crew and I knew the actors, and they were without exception so supportive and so encouraging. Everybody was just there, and the fact that they were so generous with their time and their spirit was really touching.

HM: Prior to Eureka, your longest-term project was the American remake of Coupling. Having worked on a British television programme [Teachers] and worked on the American version of a British show, do you think that the American remake of Coupling was necessary to get the comedy and drama of it across to an American audience?

CF: It was a really talented group of people. You had Steve Moffat who was involved, and he couldn't be more talented. And you've got Jay [Harrington], who has his own show now on ABC, I'm doing a show, Lindsay [Price] is doing a show... It's a group of people who work and there was a lot of talent involved. It could have worked, but the mistake that we made at the gate was that we tried to make it too sexy, and it's a show that works because it isn't sexy. It's about people just trying to navigate relationships. I don't think it was necessary. It was a good idea to try it in another format. I think they could have made a better job of it, but the group that did that went on to do the American remake of *The Office*, and they learned a lot of lessons from *Coupling*.

HM: It's good to know that, while *Coupling* does tend to be considered *The Remake That Dare Not Speak Its Name*, so much good came out of it.

CF: I'm nothing but grateful for that experience. That show put me on the map and introduced me to a lot of great people, with whom I am still in contact, and I came out largely unscathed. I don't think anyone took the blame for that; it was just sort of, "Wow, what a mess". I have nothing but fond memories and I am incredibly grateful for that show, and I'll take that any day.

HM: Going back to 'Eureka', you've answered questions about your favourite bit of tech coming out of the show – you mention the hoverboards. Has that changed at all, or has some bit of technology come out of Eureka that's surpassed that for you?

CF: People always ask what item, so it gets very hard to go looking for an item. The science of *Eureka* is brilliant and I could talk for days about the advances in *Eureka* that it would be phenomenal if we had, but I suppose for the sound byte interviews, I always go for the hoverboard because it's easy to say without getting into the ins and outs of a theoretical discussion. There's a spaceship – we have a spaceship on the show! I'd like a spaceship! But it's not as fun as a hoverboard. But I mean, it's a spaceship! I want to go to space!

HM: Different question: What do you think is the most plausible piece of advancement to come out of *GD*?

CF: In *Eureka*, everyone walks around with these PDAs with just a screen on them. This is prior to the iPhone. You don't remake props – props stay for the life of the show – so it's sort of fun for us that now everyone walks around with these things that are just a screen, and it's so much cooler than what we came up with on the show. So that's probably the most plausible piece of technology because the real-life version is better than what we have on the show.

HM: What's the scariest?

CF: The going back in time machine. When he goes down the hill in that one shot, that was scary. The show had a darker tone then. No, wait, I'm changing my answer to the memory eraser. That's a scary one. It erases fifteen minutes or as much of your memory as it feels like? I have rooie drugs jokes going through my head now...

HM: As far as Jack Carter goes, he was starting to remember what Henry had done to him with that machine...

CF: Yeah, that was a fun plot point. Joe [Morton] and I fought really hard to keep that alive. The network was always interested in keeping things very episodic, so that viewers could just tune in, watch an episode and tune out, but we were glad that we did fight so hard for it, because for us it keeps the characters alive. The mistakes they go through affect them and change them within the relationship. So that was a great one for us.

HM: Jack Carter does start getting used to all the technology and the science and all the weird stuff that happens in Eureka on a regular basis, but does the show ever deal with the fact that he must be getting to a point where he cannot trust anything that's going on in front of him at any given time?

CF: [laughs] We joke about that on set all the time. "Why am I not suspicious? Why, with everything I've seen...?" So we do joke about that on set, but in Season 3, they've taken great pains to make him smarter and he is actually learning the science and learning the big words, and that's really fun. Because at a certain point, he's an absolute moron if he doesn't start to be able to put some stuff together. So it's a nice character change that I get to go through.

HM: What do you think that Eureka has to say about the nature of IQ and the whole nature versus nurture question of intelligence?

CF: I think it would be interesting if IQ was shown to be situational, so in the right situation, you can process a lot more than you can in other situations, which seems more human than making it a fixed constant. My take on nature versus nurture is that we're all a mixed percentage that varies from person to person, where some are born that way and they're going to be that way- you meet them and you know "That's who they are" - and others are heavily affected by their environment. So I would think that within Eureka, certain people would flourish ... like Zoe. Given the right situation, she can sort of bloom in a way that she wouldn't have been able to otherwise. And then others were just destined for that.

HM: How does Jack handle the fact that his daughter has the potential to seriously surpass him intellectually?

CF: I think Jack is smarter than he lets on. I mean, he hasn't taken an IQ test; I don't think that's true about his IQ. I think that he knows that he's smarter than he lets on but there's something about not putting himself above other people that I think is a big part of his character, and so for all his accomplishments – and really, he's done quite well for the town over the years – it's just his job, and he just hold it all down.

HM: For at least the first two seasons, he lets the town, then, treat him like an absolute fool. Why?

CF: Yeah; that's okay because if he's being treated like a fool, it means he has an advantage. His job is to keep the town safe, and everything that helps him keep the town safe is a matter of happenstance. Everyone else takes the brain; he takes the body. If he takes a hit that way, that's okay.

HM: He does seem to be learning, over the course of the series, when to crack down and when to let go, family-wise. Is that something that you think the writers have done consciously?

CF: Yeah, it was a slow relaxing of the reins. I think he's learning how to be a part of something, and in learning how to be a part of something, he's embracing that things can't always go his way. So he's becoming a better person, I think, through the relationship.

Law officers usually learn that if there isn't a steam vent, a situation is going to go sky high. It seems like he didn't pick up on that until Eureka.

CF: True. I don't think he applied the lessons he learned there to his family. The steam vent was his family.

HM: You deal with a lot of CGI. What are you actually looking at? I've heard of using tennis balls or once when a director mimicked a swarm of giant killer bugs by running up, flailing his arms and screaming "Bugs bugs bugs!" Were there any moments like that?

CF: Yes, there definitely are, and sometimes there are all the best of intentions, but you sort of go, "Please don't do that. Just put an inanimate object in there".

HM: How do you interact with all the CGI? How do you make yourself see what you need to see?

CF: Part of it is to be as articulate as you can with the special effects guys. They have a representative on set, so assuming that they're shooting straight with you – and we work with a company called Zoic, and they do shoot straight with us – you react as well as you can with that. Then you work with the operator and find out how wide you're being cropped and what the shot is. Then you talk to the director and find out what the cut structure is ... this is if you want to get really deep into it. Based on all that, you figure out what your proscenium is and then you sell it from that. It's really just information. The more information you have, the easier your job is.



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