



BromeliA dvisory

July 2012

WEBPAGE: <http://www.bssf-miami.org/>

 http://www.facebook.com/groups/BromeliadSF/?bookmark_t=group

 <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Bromeliad-Society-of-South-Florida/84661684279>

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What	Who
Sales Table	Antonio Arbelaez

JULY 17, 2012 7:30 PM

Speaker: Bruce McAlpin

RAFFLE TABLE: Bruce McAlpin

FOOD: Usual Suspects and Barbara Sparling and Charlotte Futefas

ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Bruce McAlpin is a longtime member of this society who recently retired and moved north and now fulfills many duties for the Caloosahatchee Bromeliad Society.



Bruce McAlpin

A retired professor at Miami-Dade College in horticultural biology, Bruce will be delivering a high quality lecture to our society.

Bruce has spoken to this society on many occasions and lectures often before other societies throughout the state. He will be bringing in goodies from his new abode.

His topic will be on neoregelias and their related concerns.

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President's Message

by Carl Bauer

It's July, so we have lots of beautiful bromeliads to enjoy in our gardens. Take the time to enjoy them and "spruce up" the area where they are growing to show them at their peak performance.

The World Conference-Orlandiana is fast approaching. This most important bromeliad happening will take place in Orlando, Florida, September 24th to the 30th, 2012. Your Society will be playing a big role in the conference as is appropriate to our stature in the bromeliad world. It's not too late to sign up-any of your officers can help you with the specifics.

Our next meeting is in the Corbin Building at Fairchild Garden on July 17 at 7:30 PM. See you there.

Carl Bauer

In Case You Missed It

by Robert Meyer

Nat DeLeon spoke to the membership about the basic concepts for mounting bromeliads – primarily on trees – for your yard.

The illustrations and lecture discussed more than hardware and angles for use of the same, but delivered concepts of horticultural symbiotic necessity for the gardener.

Nat initially told the audience that choice of the tree was a fundamental demand for good sense. Use the shady trees to deliver shade for the shade loving plants and less shady trees for the opposite plant. For instance, *Guzmania* and *Vriesea* would adore the hammocks of oaks while *Tillandsia* could survive the suns of summer under the few-fronton shade provided by a narrow palm,.

Nat also told us that after mounting on the shady or sunny habits, the plant – whether in the winter dry season or otherwise – would still need some attention from the sprinklers or hoses as water would be demanded at some time. Mother Nature would not be able to take care of the plants each day of a year.

Dicots versus monocots was another concern. Thicker barked trees like the oaks can accept deeply embedded nails or staples, while palms and other

thinly surfaced trees should be devoid of hammered-in nails or staples. The opening of wounds in palms increases chances of fungal invasion and potential loss of a favorite landscape plant which has been in the yard for decades.

Employing the use of tool belt was also advised. When climbing ladders to reach higher limbs or trunks, the gardener must carry plant, hammer and staple (or other tie on device) – literally the equivalent to a chore for three hands. And, when climbing the ladder, more than one more hand will be required. Hence, utilization of the tool belt frees the hands and allows the gardener to gain heights without sacrifice of manual dexterity.

Once high on the tree's side, Nat endorses using staples – a u-shaped nail system often also called cable staples or u-nails. Nat dislike the galvanized nails as they glitter long after their employment and distract from the plant's natural habitat. Nat also asserts that the staple should not be placed at a 90 degree angle from the vertical base, but rather likes a 45-degree angle for the staple. This angle allows each side of the staple to touch the plant and dissuades slipping.

The less a plant slips, the quicker the roots grow according to Nat. Hence, tightly placed and angled staple will provide the best results. If clumps are large, Nat asks that the gardener break them up, staple them piece by piece to the tree – but each tightly against the other. When the project is completed, the clump appears to have been revived and the naked eye will not perceive the cluster as pieces, but rather to be like the original – one large clump.



Staples commonly used for nailing in plants.

The sphagnum moss debate continued. Do you or do you not include the moss under the plant or between the tree and plant? Nat answered in the negative as he stated that the roots focus upon the moss and not the tree – hence when the staple or other tying device wears out, the plant's allegiance to the tree is subordinate to the moss – and the result may be a plant falling off the tree with roots firmly embracing the moss.

Nat allows fertilizer regimes – but forewarns that utilization of same requires watering regimes. So, grower beware.

Nat also discussed using the procedure for driftwood. Because the same is more likely than not a rotted wood, do not bang heartily with the hammer. Instead, get the drill out and lightly put holes in it. Some holes can be used to draw through

fishing line. Or, use the holes as guides for the staples and lightly punch the heads into the manmade slots.

Nat's experience of more than five (5) decades was eagerly received by a crowd of 50 well wishers.

For pictures of the meeting, you can go to: <http://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=oa.396572520379149&type=1>

Also, this topic was previously included in our BromeliAdvisory and now on facebook. Go to: <http://www.facebook.com/groups/BromeliadSSF/doc/222674954435574/> OR http://bssf-miami.org/newsbulletins/BromeliAdvisoryJuly_2011.pdf

A Curmudgeons View of Molecular Phylogenetics (Part 1)

by Alan Herndon

Molecular phylogenetics [The study of evolutionary relatedness among various groups of organisms through molecular sequencing data and morphological data matrices] is a fancy way of saying you are trying to figure out how different plants are related to one another using information derived from molecules within the plants. This field of study has a very short history – about 20 years if you count only studies based on data from DNA sequences, 35 years if you include studies based on DNA fragments and proteins.

My major problem with studies of this sort is that they all depend on a large number of assumptions with very few signs that the people doing the studies ever test those assumptions.

To be fair, many of the assumptions are not specific to molecular phylogenetics, but are part of the slightly older discipline known as cladistics. Cladistics is based on an appealing idea: evolutionary processes in organisms leaves traces that we can find if we look hard enough. This is, of course, an assumption.

Immediately following is the assumption that we can recognize the phylogenetically important characters in the organisms under study. Unfortunately, neither plants nor any other natural organism comes with labels designating such characters, and habitat factors such as rainfall patterns or temperature patterns can

create variations in organisms that are sometimes confused for phylogenetic variations.

Even before we reach the stage of cladistic assumptions, there is the more basic assumption that plant material used in studies is correctly named. This may seem to be a trivial matter, but it is not. Identification of plants is not a simple matter of comparing a specimen to descriptions in a recent floristic, revisionary or even monographic treatment. Even with a high quality specimen possessing all characters necessary for identification, a successful identification often hinges on familiarity with similar species. Basically, identifications usually depend upon comparisons between the unknown specimen and other, already known, species (in this case, I am talking about species already known to the person making the identification.) If you have access to a large herbarium, it is sometimes possible to identify a unknown specimen by comparison with previously named specimens. However, even in the most carefully curated collection, mistakes in identification are made and may persist uncorrected for many, many years..

It is also not possible to depend solely upon the accuracy of the formal literature. The Smith and Downs Monograph, the most recent treatment of the entire Bromeliaceae is based on what was known 40 years ago. The number of recognized species is at least 1/3 greater now. Even with the species known at the time, this monograph contains numerous errors, including species assigned to the incorrect genus. For instance, *Aechmea disjuncta* is placed in the genus *Hohenbergia* in the Monograph. If you actually examine a blooming specimen *Aechmea disjuncta*, you will see a loose resemblance between the tight clusters of flowers to those on *Hohenbergia*, but you will also see a much closer resemblance to the flower clusters on *Aechmea mulfordii*.

This is far from the only species that has since been transferred to other genera, although most are cases where groups of species have been separated from a former generic home (such as *Alcantarea* and *Werauhia*, both taken from *Vriesea*, *Canistropsis*, moved from *Nidularium*, and *Racinea*, taken from *Tillandisa*). Two more cases where plants were simply put in the wrong genus are *Portea leptantha* (recently transferred to *Aechmea*) and *Portea pickelii* (recently transferred to *Canistrum*).



What happens if you complete a molecular phylogenetic study of bromeliads and find a species (or genus) that appears to be out of place? Naturally, you assume that your molecular study gives the correct answer, so any disparities must be due to shortcomings in previous morphology based taxonomy. It might seem reasonable to now go back and reexamine the plants used in the molecular study, just to check whether there are any questions about the proper identity.

If such steps are ever taken, they are not reported. It is more convenient to make the assumption that the names you are employing represent the best that can be done using morphological data. Standard procedure is to put in a statement about the unreliability of morphological data for bromeliad taxonomy and proceed with a discussion of how the new molecular data changes our understanding of bromeliad evolution. Of course, if there are a few misidentified or misnamed plants in the study, this new understanding could be unduly influenced by the mistakes. For instance, a *Hohenbergia disjuncta* and *Portea leptantha* that stubbornly hang out within *Aechmea*, could be interpreted to mean the three genera must be united into a single genus. Even worse, what if the problem is not one of using outdated taxonomy, but failing to identify the plants correctly? What if an *Aechmea* is misidentified as a *Canistrum*, or a *Portea* is misidentified as an *Aechmea*? Both misidentifications are possible for a competent taxonomist who is fully familiar with the bromeliad literature, and almost guaranteed for a taxonomist who is not. In this case, what appear to be disparities between the molecular and morphological taxonomies may just reflect the mistaken identifications.

Unfortunately, with bromeliads, we are still at a very rudimentary level of taxonomic knowledge. Even with all of the lavishly illustrated books and websites devoted to bromeliads, identifications at both the generic level and species level are still plagued with uncertainty – even among specialists who have worked for many years on the plants. Plant characteristics that actually allow confident recognition of species and genera have apparently not been found yet. Our knowledge on this front should improve as more basic taxonomic work on bromeliads is carried out in wild populations. However, until we reach a stage where we have more confidence in our identifications, there will always be a question whether the results of a molecular phylogenetic study actually say something meaningful about the evolution of bromeliads, or simply reflect our lack of ability to identify bromeliads correctly.

Garden Notes - June 2012

by Alan Herndon

For awhile it looked like we were heading back into a drought following the earlier than normal rains in April and May. June started out with two dry weeks (at the nursery, if not everywhere in the Miami region). With the temperatures reaching summer levels, this was enough to dry out everything out to the point where we once again started to see leaf curling in the bromeliads planted epiphytically outside the reach of our irrigation system. As if to make up for the deficit, we received several inches of rain over a 4 day period as the soon-to-be Tropical Storm Debbie formed to our west. Tropical disturbances, such as Debbie, always account for a large proportion of the rainfall we receive during the year, but this year we have still not seen our regular seasonal rainfall pattern established and the conditions between tropical disturbances become very dry, very quickly..

Among the members of the old *Gravisia* complex (now considered part of *Aechmea* subgenus *Aechmea*) we had *Aechmea lactifera*, *Aechmea mulfordii* (both red-leaved and green-leaved clones) and *Aechmea disjuncta* (both the large clone and the much larger clone) in flower. Among species in the subgenus *Platyaechmea*, we still had *Aechmea chantinii*, *Aechmea serrata*, *Aechmea dichlamydia*, *Aechmea tillandsioides* and *Aechmea zebrina* in bloom. Most species of *Aechmea* subgenus *Ortgiesia* are past their blooming season, but *Aechmea kertesziae* was seen in flower. New rosettes of *Aechmea alopecurus* began to flower in June. Most of the *Aechmea nudicaulis* cultivars are past bloom, but there was a mass blooming of *Aechmea nudicaulis* 'Telephone Hill' during the month. Two other species first seen in flower this month were *Aechmea bromeliifolia* and *Aechmea angustifolia*.

Alcantarea vinicolor finished blooming early in the month, while the two *Alcantarea glaziouana* continued to bloom through the month. *Alcantarea exserta* (Wally Berg clone) and a species of uncertain name from Moyna Prince began to bloom in June. *Alcantarea glaziouana* has white flower petals, while the other species have yellow petals.

Most species of *Billbergia* have finished their blooming season. We will have to wait for the return of cooler weather before seeing many of the short lived flowers again. However, it may be possible to induce a few plants to flower out of season. If you recall last year, we had *Billbergia* 'Hallelujah' producing flowers for several months after repotting several plants. This year, the clumps

were broken apart and repotted in May, and we were rewarded with a mass bloom during June. Being far past the normal blooming season, we assumed these plants would form clumps during the summer, and start to bloom next year. If you have a few clumps of fast-growing *Billbergia* hybrids, it would be interesting to separate and repot a few (blooming size) plants from a clump every month through the summer and see whether the repotted plants always respond with quick blooms.

Canistrum seidelianum and *Canistrum auratum* 'Vania' both bloomed in June. The latter is particularly interesting with its bright yellow flowers. However, it is a much smaller plant than *Canistrum seidelianum*, and will probably have a much shorter bloom life.

Edmundoa perplexa bloomed in June. This is the first time I have bloomed the species. The species name refers to the difficulties encountered when trying to establish generic boundaries within the group encompassing *Canistropsis*, *Canistrum*, *Edmundoa*, *Nidularium* and *Wittrockia* (not to mention a few *Aechmea* species that are uncomfortably close in appearance).

A plant I missed in May was *Hechtia glabra*. This is a spiny succulent adapted to desert conditions. It grows well here, but is certainly more interesting as a succulent than as a flowering plant. It continued to flower into June.

In addition to the apparently ever-blooming *Guzmania minor*, I had *Guzmania monostachya* flower this month. *Guzmania monostachya* is native to Florida, but the plants found in cultivation are usually from other countries because they look nicer.

There was quite a bit of flowering activity among the species of *Neoregelia* this month. Many species in flower last month continued to bloom into June. These included *Neoregelia correia-araujoi*, *Neoregelia johannis*, *Neoregelia carcharodon* and *Neoregelia compacta*. Several clones of *Neoregelia carolinae* bloomed along with *Neoregelia concentrica* 'Moonshine'. *Neoregelia angustifolia* also produced flowers during the month. This species, with its stiff usually red leaves and stolons between half and three quarters the length of the leaves, provides an attractive clump throughout the year. In bloom, the center of the rosette turns a much brighter red, but the leaves on this species do not flatten out as flowering approaches, so you have to look at them from directly above to see the inflorescence clearly. *Neoregelia burle-marxii* var.

burle-marxii began to flower in June. Among the smaller species, I noticed flowers in *Neoregelia sapatibensis*, *Neoregelia zaslowskyi*, *Neoregelia ampullacea* and *Neoregelia tristis*. *Neoregelia sapatibensis* is one of the species with stolons much longer than the leaf blades, so pups are completely separated from their parents.

Nidularium rutilians 'Sao Paulo' and *Nidularium longiflorum* were in flower this month. When not in bloom, *Nidularium longiflorum* can easily be mistaken for the closely related *Nidularium innocentii*. In bloom they are instantly distinguishable. *Nidularium innocentii* has flowers between some of the larger bracts that surround the inflorescence while in *Nidularium longiflorum*, all flowers sit in the center of the cup formed by the large bracts. Another species in flower this month appears to be *Nidularium purpureum* although the name tag was unfortunately lost.

Blooming continues at a frenzied level among the *Orthophytum* species. *Orthophytum roseum* continued to produce flowers in the first few days of the month, and *Orthophytum zanonii* kept blooming throughout. *Orthophytum alvimii*, *Orthophytum sucrei*, *Orthophytum rubiginosum*, *Orthophytum lymaniana*, *Orthophytum harleyi*, *Orthophytum disjunctum* and *Orthophytum lemei* continued to bloom through the month, with no sign of decreasing flower production any time soon.

Portea petropolitana extensa continued to bloom into June, but was done flowering before the month was out.

Among the species of *Tillandsia*, *Tillandsia vernicosa*, *Tillandsia brachycaulos* (the large clone), *Tillandsia rodriguezia* and *Tillandsia streptocarpa* continued in bloom from last month. Pouring salt in old wounds, yet another clone of *Tillandsia ionantha* (one of the large clones this time) produced flowers in what is now clearly summer. *Tillandsia* 'Victoria' also continued to bloom. New species seen in bloom were *Tillandsia rhodocephala*, *Tillandsia capitata*, *Tillandsia caput-medusae*, *Tillandsia nowackii* and *Tillandsia limbata*. *Tillandsia capitata* looks very similar to the large clone of *Tillandsia brachycaulos*, but the leaves on *capitata* appear to be covered with fine hair while the leaves of *brachycaulos* are smooth and shiny. The covering on the leaves of *capitata* also mute the colors of the inflorescence, relative to *brachycaulos*. *Tillandsia rhodocephala* is also similar in appearance, but is considerably larger and very silvery.

Despite lousy growing conditions, my *Vriesea* species are putting on an impressive display. *Vriesea warmingii*, *Vriesea erythroductylon* (the large clone), and *Vriesea malzini* continued to bloom in June. *Vriesea brusquensis*, *Vriesea simplex* (one of the species with a pendant inflorescence), *Vriesea inflata* and *Vriesea triangularis* began flowering this month.

Until we settle into a pattern with reliable rain very 2-3 days, keep a close eye on your plants. Remember how quickly they can dry out when we have a few dry, hot, sunny days. However, if you keep your plants properly watered, they will grow exceedingly rapidly during the next few months. Come cooler weather, your plants will be the wonder of your neighbors.

Happy growing.

**WEBSITES for
WORLD CONFERENCE**

A basic web page has been created:

wbcinfo.com

It also ties you into the BSI page for the same:

<http://www.bsi.org/events/2012/Orlando2012.html>

or

<http://fcbs.org/WBC2012.htm>

UPCOMING EVENTS

July 14, 2012

FCBS quarterly meeting
Hosted by BSSF

July 14-15, 2012

20th Annual Mango Festival
FTBG

<http://ftbg.org/Events/?date=07-2012&eventID=599>

August 5, 12, 19, 26 and September 5, 2012

Free Sundays at Fairchild

August 19-19, 2012

Seminole Bromeliad and Tropical Plant Society Sale
Sanford Garden Club
407-539-4314 for details

September 24th-30th

20th World Conference – Orlandiana '12
The Caribe Royal,
8101 World Center,

Orlando, FL 32821

Check out the BSI website
(<http://www.bsi.org/events/2012/Orlando2012.html>)
or the Florida Council Website for the latest
information.

<http://fcbs.org/>

October 6, 2012

Members' Plant Sale
FTBG
9:00 AM to 1:00 PM

October 13-14, 2012

Fall Plant and Orchid Sale
9AM - 5PM
Kanapaha Botanical Garden
4700 S.W. 58th Drive
Gainesville, FL 32608

November 9-11, 2012

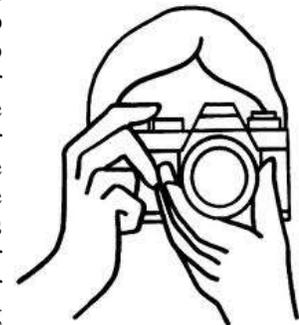
RAMBLE
FTBG
9:30 - 4:30

January 23-25, 2013

Tropical Plant Industry Exhibition
TPIE 2013 Show
1950 Eisenhower Blvd. at Port Everglades
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33316-4205

Photojournals of Yards

With the increasing size of our photo albums at our facebook pages, ideas sprung out to greater our photo history of the BSSF. The Society invites the plant and photo bugs to walk about their yard with digital camera and photojournal their yard. Delivery of the same can be made via email to your editor who then can put them onto the facebook pages or web page – or both. The result is garden tour without the oppressive heat. And, at meetings we could download the pages and keep on a table for slide show review for those interested in seeing the latest digitally embraced yard.



Come on – act now and be the first to take on this great opportunity.

MURDER IN CORBIN A

© by Robert Meyer

PREVIOUS CHAPTERS MAY BE SEEN IN
<http://www.bssf-miami.org/>

51.

When Rodriguez ran into the squad room, he saw Boss in the interrogation room speaking to an elderly man who was black and blue. Boss was not moving about in his typical agitated speaker way – at least not as he usually was when asking questions. Instead, he sat calmly and without either emotion or motion waited for responses from the old suspect.

“I do not have any idea of who took me, beat me and unloaded me.” Marin said. “I do not have any idea who would have done this to me. They asked only one thing from me which was a question that I could not answer – not out of secrecy or loyalty. I just did not have an answer.”

“What was that question?” Boss gently asked.

“Something about a code. But, I knew nothing about any code. They kept asking, and finally they just beat me to a pulp and threw me in the Overtown garbage this morning after a few days of allowing my swollen eyes to reopen.”

“Now, Marin – I am losing patience with you. You can be the guy who smuggled stuff in and out of the Americas over the past three decades and gained prominence for your illicit endeavors. You are sneaky and know sneaky people. Your efforts to tell everyone else in this room that you know nothing about a code and were beat up by a bunch of hoodlums who thought there was some correlation between you and some code, is . . . how do I say – hard to believe. Why? I will tell you. I have been a member of the BSSF for a few months. I know Linares. I hear things. And, she told me about you and your Code – that is code with a capital ‘C.’ And, so when you sit there and mumble out of your cracked teeth, broken jaw and swollen tongue that you are befuddled about people kicking you like a rag doll about some code which you know nothing about, I know better than to solemnly sigh in your sympathy to yer pains. So, do you want to give us another response to my last question?”

Marin, who had spent more hours and days and even months in prison than many of the most-tattooed villains of the streets, was not shaken by the small lieutenant’s statement. He knew that the statement was either true about Linares, or a mere bluff. But, Marin knew how much Linares knew – because he

was the one who had educated her about the Code, and done so in a limited fashion. Linares, on a very deliberate and intentional maneuver by Marin, knew about the Code, but nothing more. To know more would endanger his beloved ex-wife. And, like Linares, he still held a light in his heart for his former spouse. He wanted her safe, and would do nothing to deliver her to a fate which he must accept for himself. And, based upon this momentary review, Marin coolly looked at Boss and said, “I know you know that Linares thinks there is a Code. I know because I told her about the existence of a Code. But, the Code I mentioned to her is a fiction. It does not exist. But, let me tell you something else. I know other than Linares and me and you and maybe some others at the BSSF, no one knows about the Code. And, the fact that the bullies asked about something that only you and I and a few others know, I was right when I asked them to bring you to their lair to discuss what was happening. I know now who set the dogs on me. I now know that you are a dirty cop. I now know that you are not someone for Linares. And, when I tell her about how you had thugs beat me almost to death over the G.D, Code, I am sure that you will not be eating any more meals at her place.”

Boss was quick and bright. His full navigation through all the classic mystery novels of the 1950's and 1960's taught him all the tricks of the trade. And, he knew that immediate denial of Marin’s accusation was mandatory. Boss responded within a breadth of Marin’s accusation, “You are one paranoid punk Marin. You think like a teenager, but are a lizard skinned septarian. Wise up idiot. There is someone in the BSSF who killed two people, and probably is the cause of your misfortune. And, you must know what the common denominator is. So, you have two choices before you walk out and before you slander me. Either give us information to find this cancer in the society, or be a fool and allow there to be a next time – a next time when you meet these people and when you probably do not live.”

Upon finishing these words, Rodriguez opened the door and blurted out, “Boss, I need to speak to you. Our boy is MIA and people think he may even be dead.”

“Edgar ?” Marin asked.

“Yea.” Rodriguez said with a bit of a perplexed look at Marin when hearing his acknowledgment of the person.

Marin dropped his head and said, “Little lieutenant.

We need to talk.” At this time, Boss sat again and nodded to Rodriguez to stay in the room and close the door. And, when Rodriguez sat, Marin spoke quickly and efficiently about events which no one had discussed before Boss, Rodriguez or Marlene.

52.

While Boss, Rodriguez and a tape recorder sat during Marin’s one-man elocution of the death of the Code and birth of an apparent uprising amid the almost always calm society of bromeliad enthusiasts, Marlene sat at her desk thinking about things – all of them happy.

Her heart was jumping about like a young girl who got her first puppy. She inhaled the recitations that came across the moribund and often horrid accounts on the scanner as though they were nectar. A smile encircled her lower face with glee. Her requests for items from others came accompanied by the words “thank you” and “please.” Her eyes danced to those in her vision. Airs around her were enchanting. There was a glow about her.

Hank, the one clearly bachelor-for-life member of the squad who came out of the closet years ago, approached the effervescent Marlene and said, “Girl, you are aglow. What have we in our den – a lover or two lovers? You can tell Hank. And, if he is ever bad to you and you wish to throw him in the can, send him my way and maybe I can teach him what he needs to learn.”

Marlene, unlike Hank, kept her private life private. When others made assumptions of her heterosexuality, she did not correct them. Like with Rodriguez, she played the part of temptress to the opposite sex, and replied, “Hank, you know that I do not kiss and tell. But, I can tell you one thing. This one is pure prime. And this one will not be interested in your ways, no matter what happens. You are a good friend and great co-worker, but I cannot send this one to you as there is no interest by this one for you or people who like what you like. Are we still friends?”

“Oh, Marlene, you wonderfully naive little Cuban girl. I was pulling your leg. There is no need to feel for me. And, do not worry about Hank finding and gathering his own prey. I have a few caves on U.S. 1 that I frequent and have dragged out my conquests more often than not. But, your dear heart and concern are very much appreciated.”

Marlene was flabbergasted. Two people in about as many days had called her a naive Cuban girl. She knew she was Cuban, but the naive part really

infuriated her to her core. “Why do you think I am naive, Hank?”

Sometimes people ask you questions that you know can be easily answered, but which may defeat years of friendship in a moment’s time. Hank had been at such an impasse too many times in his life, and felt that he could not afford to do so again, especially as he cherished Marlene and his friendship with her. So, he did what anyone confronted with such a dilemma would do – he lied. “I used the term far too loosely. For, girl, you are bright, insightful, energetic, and extremely quick-witted, and those are all characteristics of someone who is *not* naive. Will you ever forgive me?”

At the completion of this lie, his eyes fixated on Marlene’s big brown lashes and awaited her response.

“Oh, Hank – you do know how to make a girl feel wonderful. Will you marry me, have my children and make me happy for the rest of my life?”

Without hesitation, Hank said, “No, no and no. Any other questions my Cubanita?”

They parted laughing and she walked past the conference room and looked into the glass panel to see what was happening. Boss and Rodriguez did not make eye contact with Marlene. This amazed her as Rodriguez had lasered her body on most any occasion she walked within 20 steps of his presence.

When Marlene returned to her chair, she sat down and saw a call was coming in. “Want to get fat and drunk and maybe have some wild sex tonight?” the caller asked.

“Sure, why not.” Marlene responded, knowing the voice on the other side was the one who had won her heart a few days ago.

Shirts for Sale

Contact Sandy Roth for the exclusive BSSF shirts adorned with the original art of Urszula Dudek. Price is right, look is good, and cause is priceless.

