

The Tale of Daniel Bonze – Frank Hill

Daniel Bonze sat in his study at his university, it was several hundred years since he was last here; if you measured the space-time interval. In actual fact, just two temporal hours had passed.

He was a Chrono-Historian and had returned from 1573 so that he could complete his notes on one or two interesting events of that year, namely the conclusion of the Ottoman – Venetian war which ceded Cyprus to the Ottoman Empire, the signing of the Warsaw Articles for religious freedom and the beating of the Spanish navy by Dutch rebels.

There were many more notable events that year, but his Chronosphere capsule alarm system had indicated that the shielding mechanism had developed a fault and he needed to return.

Unfortunately, as he was in the process of entering the abort code, the shielding failed and he was caught; seated at a control desk, floating on the ocean in the South Seas with cannon balls and musket fire whistling around him!

Hastily punching buttons and taking the odd second to look about him, he caught a glimpse of a gnarled red bearded individual staring in shocked surprise at the chap apparently floating just above the waves. Recovering his composure in a very short space of time, the individual raised a musket and with a shout fired at the apparition in front of him.

The musket ball hit the shell of the capsule and bounced away into the sea, the shell wasn't damaged as it is made of collapsed Chrystellium which is; so, he had been told, capable of withstanding a nuclear detonation. What it did do though, was set up a resonance throughout the capsule. As the pitch of the resonance rose Daniel experienced a growing nausea and head pain.

In front of him, the control console shook violently and alarm lights and sounders came urgently to life. Daniel gripped the console and managed to move his hands to the keyboard and punch in the 'Emergency Retrieval' code. A few seconds later the noise and the sea war vanished to be replaced by the tranquillity of the Chronosphere Capsule Hanger.

Daniel made his way up to his study and gratefully collapsed in to his chair and went over the recent events in his mind. He had been seen! That was a cardinal sin for a Chrono-Historian, a report would have been sent automatically to the Chrono-Board upon his return.

Before the inevitable summons to the Board, he needed to read the account of the south sea battle where Dutch rebels had beaten the mighty Spanish navy. Opening

up his desktop system, he punched in the search code for that year and the date of the battle.

Settling back in his chair he placed the Vidhelm on his head and pressed the start button. The main body of the text described exactly what he himself had observed; the Spanish were getting the upper hand; until a 'vision' appeared between the Dutch and Spanish flagships.

A Dutch sailor, startled by the sudden appearance, fired on the apparition, a moment or two later it disappeared with a resounding 'Whooshing' noise. Taking this as an omen that even 'The Devils Apparition' could be sent packing, the Dutch regained confidence and fought with renewed vigour and finally defeated the Spanish fleet.

"Oh! My Goodness! I changed history!" lamented Daniel, just then there was a loud and urgent knocking on the study door; "Daniel Bonze; open up, this the Chrono-Board!"

Ho Humm!