

20240323 The Miscellaneous emails English (Preliminary Edit) v01

(Open) Letter to my Sister Irene (10-23-21).pdf
A charm offensive (of sorts).pdf
A visit to the Low-Countries or L'Epopée des 4 heures (aux Pays-Bas).pdf
Bataan Marches.pdf
Book Covers, Front & Back
Eine kleine Nachtmusik.pdf

Excavating the Naughty Past, 4-23-22.pdf
Goldilocks.pdf
Journey(s) into the Whirlwind
Kill me quick.pdf
Ladino Spoken Here (10-15-2021).pdf
Marking my Linen (10-28-2021).pdf
Memorial summary (6-15-21).pdf

Oh Bos(c)h!.pdf
Solitaire-Jeu de Patience (12-10-21).pdf
The Good Samaritan, 3-15-22.pdf
The repurposing of a medical term (8-26-21).pdf
Today's Excursion or Babylon-by-Bus.pdf
YAc masquerader, 8-26-21.pdf

(Open) Letter to my Sister Irene (10-23-21)

Irene,

Started on: 10/23/21 Sent: 10/24/21

Was thinking this evening about your predicament and how I have let you down.

I freely point out the self-centeredness I see in others but seem to scrupulously avoid commenting on or even noticing my own.

Your vulnerabilities, weaknesses and suffering have become mine; I see it now.

What you have lived and are still living is unthinkable. I simply do not have the courage or the strength to imagine, let alone endure, your life. Poor Colette put it this way, one evening at Christmas some years ago, as she "went about her appointed rounds" which included manipulating me to within an inch of my life that winter. She, referring to the prospects of my becoming the kind of creature she was, her eyes brimming with tears, said: "It would not be good for you." Indeed.

Today, I finished a book: The CIA as Organized Crime by Douglas Valentine. Much as with another book I read years ago: La Planète Dora by Yves Béon, a former inmate of the camp where the V-2 rockets were built (available in English); I had to pause at times. Both illustrate the similar characteristics of the two groups concerned: 1) Diabolical evil whose brutality rivals the contents of Flaubert's novel, Salamambo 2) Technical wizardry and 3) More than a dash of insanity.

This is, I believe, a fair summary of the atmosphere you have marinated in since your twenties, as did my other sister. And, like the proverbial frog boiling to death in a slowly heating pot, I failed to notice your increasing desperation. Only it was you, not I, simmering in that pot.

I have no excuses to present to you.

You once gave me, as a present, a candle with three wicks. To me the wicks, when lit, represented the three of us: maman, you and me. All that was left of our family after Father died. Now there are only the two lights, flickering.

Thank you. Thank you for all you have tried to do, all you have done and all you will continue to do for me. I owe you my life. I owe you what sanity I still possess. And more, I believe I owe you my freedom.

Count on my "Goodwill," won't you?

And may our tears eventually prove invincible.

Your loving brother.

A charm offensive (of sorts)

Email to Book email group (16 members) 8-30-2021

A charm offensive (of sorts), fraught with dangers

Hi,

It being well-known that desperate times call for desperate measures, I am making a last-ditch attempt at persuading my mail carrier to pickup outgoing mail I paid for (\$3.12 USD, Confirmation #: WEC399699126) and requested pickup of, last Friday. Today being Monday night.

I bought the requisite postage through the eBay shipping site, scheduling a pickup. When this did not happen on Saturday morning, I called my local post office and was assured it would be taken care of later that day. With the item still in my mailbox, I am anxiously wondering if there will be a so-called "prepayment penalty." A matter of some concern as funds are regrettably running low and, as illustrated in the next paragraph, these organizations can be quite strict in such matters.

Decades ago, I overheard a conversation in which someone in a senior position at a savings and loan located in a well-known, free-world country, speaking of an unpaid loan previously made to a certain

Mike Bilandic, had tacked on to the amount due an additional fee, referred to as a "prepayment penalty." I have ever since, lived in dread of this mighty "prepayment penalty," and wonder with some trepidation, if not outright alarm, whether this low, extortionate, un-american practice might not at some point be applied to me.

I have therefore taken the risk of being driven from the Charybdis of this "prepayment penalty" contraption to the Scylla of a possible Federal charge of attempted bribery of a Government employee by offering my mail carrier a (small, \$1.00 USD) inducement to pickup my mail soon, thus forestalling any potential penalties. See attached pictures.

May God have mercy on my soul.

P.S. Ignore the chamber pot-like device hanging from the red bungee cord. It is assuredly not a chamber pot, your eyes are clearly deceiving you if you think it is. This is merely a funds collection device, left outdoors, momentarily, to deodorize. In my opinion, Emperor Vespasian was quite wrong when he claimed: "Non olet pecu."

(signed)

el Descamisado (del Norte)

A brief visit to the Low Countries or L'Épopée des Quatre-Heures (aux Pays-Bas)

To Costco, Ho!

A lack of groceries and an uneventful ride, by bus and bicycle, brought me to Costco in Marina del Rey today (7-28-2021).

Opening Scene

Found a self-propelled cart to move me thorough my shopping expedition due to my hip problem. (These carts, much like the bump cars I used to enjoy

riding at fairs when I was a kid, nowadays don't make the same satisfying "Bump" when hit, though).

The Plot Thickens

In the checkout line, the customer ahead of me, sounding like a general issue tub-thumper, bantered awhile with the cashier. Until, that is, he uttered one word: "Veteran." For some reason, the poor Costco employee immediately stiffened, practically coming to attention. When it was my turn to pay, he (the cashier) proceeded to mount my electric cart ostensibly, he said, to guide it to its proper place, taking care, all the while, to make contact with my shoulder with his upper hip or groin as he was standing on the cart while I remained seated. After the dismount, ringing up my groceries, he, twice, put his hand on my shoulder at which point I, all passion patience spent, quietly let him know I did not like being touched. Needing to repeat myself as he apparently had not heard me the first time. All the while, having to caution the young woman placing my groceries back in the electric cart, that the heavier items did NOT belong on top of the eggs.

C'est ce qu'il faut? Che schifo!

Some particulars

Date: 07/27/2021

Time: 15:01

Operator #: 67

Name: Gary L

Transaction ID #: 120800001455....

Physical description: Male. Negro. Suspect. Approx. 40 y.o. Tallish. Medium build.

Summary: Yet another sample (among so, so many) of the ritual humiliation of the powerless by the powerless.

Aftermath

Afterwards, back outside the store was accosted by a young man seeming perhaps "at loose ends." As I was transferring my groceries to the bike I had

ridden to the store, he, after asking if I was done, presumably with the electric cart, insisted twice in wondering if I was through. I began replying in

mock "Spanglish," protesting that while I could not understand Spanish (though Hispanic, he spoke perfect English), I did speak "Spanglish." After a

further, brief, exchange, he left. Having loaded my groceries and preparing to ride off, I then found one of my tires was flat.

Dénouement

Braving the elements (the heat, my flat tire and the occasional, uncomprehending, bus driver), I eventually made my way home, slowly. Partly late,

partly distracted, partly tired; when I reached home, I thus missed a video appointment with a therapist later that day.

Connection

As to the initial reference to the "Low Countries," (les Pays-Bas) during my outing, I managed to score a piece of Gouda cheese, aged 20 months. Direct

from Holland. It said on the label: "Nutty yet and Robust."

(signed)

Bergie "Wag 'n Bietjie" Hawkins (Appropriate, ¿Que No?)

P.S.

Tonton and assorted impedimenta being so thick on the ground nowadays (whether in stores, on the bus or, indeed, in my neighborhood, that "Je ne sais

plus a quel sein me vouer." (Get it ?) A lousy pun, wot?

Bataan Marches

Bataan Marches

&

The "Propaganda of the Deed" (Those of a Certain Kidney Will Know What I Mean)

Started: 03/31/22 Edited: 04/21/22 05/05/22 05/07/22 05/17/22 05/18/22 05/21/22 05/25/22 05/30/22 06/04/22

06/05/22 06/10/22 06/21/22 06/24/22 06/26/22 06/29/22 07/05/22 07/06/22

(3-27-22) This note, addressed to several employees of Kaiser Permanente went out today:

From: Lawson B Hawkins

Sent: 03/27/2022

To: KEN SCOTT SIERS LCSW, L.C.S.W

Message body: Hi,

Just sent this morning the following message to Kaiser Member Services:

=====

Hi,

I wish to replace my psychiatrist right now. Am currently being seen by Dr. Talag at Wateridge.

During our last as well as previous very recent conversations, Dr. Talag made the following remarks, some of which I found disquieting, others puzzling. To wit:

1. She said it's best not to release psychiatry info as my landlord may use it against me
2. After I commented that I write about my life, finding parts of it humorous, Dr. Talag replied: 'The queen of England and prince both have problems'
3. She wrote in a message that it would be best to discuss my request to have my medical file released at our next appointment. As a result of my agreeing to this, transfer of my Kaiser file was delayed
4. Dr. Talag asked why I want my file to be released to lawyers
5. She also asked for the name of law firm the file is to go to

Thanks,

Lawson Bergendahl/Berg Hawkins

=====

Thanks,

Forgot which day it was last week, twice. Sigh...

Part 1: Bataan March #1

If I may wax lyrical for a moment. Last week, they had me coming and going, I tell you. Literally. Coming. And. Going. So, here goes: the Shenanigans of Sassenach™ or le Malin et ses Tours.(3-30-22) A red letter day, though not entirely auspicious, either in it's beginning or end. The Metro #90 bus to Montrose and Oceanview, according to Metro web site, the Glendale #33 Beeline" bus should have been available to

take me to Flintridge Bookstore. I could not find a single stop on Oceanview, (a temporary rerouting?) though I did see two #33s go by, heading south as I tried to walk to the bookstore. Giving up, I reversed direction and, on Honolulu, saw a #3 going west. I knocked on the door but the driver refused to open, signaling “no” with his index finger. I followed him on foot, hoping to find a stop nearby. Sometime later, giving up on this as well, I returned to Oceanview, then retracing my steps, I turned north to Foothill Blvd. Where I eventually got on a #3 to the bookstore. All in all, a walk of about 2 miles that day. Returning at about 4PM, on “Bee” bus #3 on Honolulu, a Hispanic woman, middle-aged, got on and sitting across from me, almost immediately said on her cell phone: “Irene can’t make it this summer.” Aside from this one remark, she spoke entirely in Spanish. There was, of course, further “Mood music” for the return trip.

Part 2: the Provocation will not be Televised: In Which I Thoroughly Disgrace Myself

On the way home, handing out a couple of my fliers, the last person to get one, a black man who sat next to me after a seat opened up, did take my flier but, as I spoke rather loudly, he seemed to take fright before quickly leaving, loudly exclaiming he was getting off before I blew up the bus. Put down the above episode (in part) to my cussedness and rigidity, both perhaps somewhat enhanced by the Bataan episode I had just undergone... Finally, as he pulled up to my stop, the driver neglected to allow for enough clearance with a garbage container at the curb, hitting it with a loud crash, startling yr. Friend and Humble Narrator™ in the process.

All in all, an ignominious episode. And equally, a good sign; for it implies that these Gentlemen of the Securitate™ will go to great lengths to avoid having to answer some troubling questions and respond to points I hope to raise. Eventually.

Remember the months-long show I called “the Cry of the Banshee”? Well that behavior stopped, and abruptly at that, as soon as I made an attempt at recording these peculiar goings-on, in an incident witnessed by my neighbor, Angel as he chose the very moment when I approached the source of these screams in the back building to come out of his bungalow, crossing my path in the process. Some months prior to that, I remember another attempt at recording the peculiar goings on at my local Trader Joe’s by video recording what I may have heard referred to elsewhere as “the Clearance Game.” Only to be reminded by a checkout clerk that, quote: “Trader Joe’s employees are not comfortable being recorded.” Obliging me to comply. (Update 7-7-22) I spoke too soon, there has been further Banshee-type activity – though on a much reduced scale, I’m happy to report.

(3-31-22) To the Baldwin Hills library branch to pick up a book; there I was told that I wouldn't be able to leave my fliers on the premises though, on asking the clerk, a young woman I believe I have dealt with before, she allowed as to how I could leave them on the sidewalk outside. Thence to the Staples near Crenshaw and Santa Rosalia Dr. On the way there: I overhear an incredibly loud, extended conversation, barely 2 feet from me. Going home, though, is when it got interesting. A kindly older woman, black, strikes up a conversation when she inquires about the scrolling sign I am wearing, a sign which has since gone missing. I hand her a flier and, during a brief conversation, she mentions a daughter with schizophrenia. Unexpectedly, the bus soon breaks down with passengers forced to exit to await another bus. On the sidewalk, she and I continue out conversation. I do a bit of show and tell, presenting the cardboard folder with facing pictures of my two “Sisters” as well as giving her my number. Another bus soon shows up, she boards it but, as I follow, the driver closes the doors before I can board.

(Added 6-10-22) About this episode, in which this woman seemed to suggest I tone it down, putting my over the top performance of a day earlier to a possibly manic episode; I now smell a whiff of the false flag about the whole thing. Seems to me someone may be throwing in as much of the kitchen sink as is seemly. (Possibly) tricksters all, if you ask me, both on that day and the previous one.

(4-1-22) The following is a direct copy of my notes, taken immediately after a call from an employee of Kaiser with no editing: 4/1/22 @ 4:59PM Minutes ago, I got a call from Kaiser, a woman wanted to discuss my grievance regarding [Dr.] Talag. I said I had none. She replied that whenever a patient changes psy. [psychiatrist], a grievance is automatically filed(?) I said it was not my intention to file [a] grievance, that I only wanted to change psy [psychiatrist]. She continued, saying do you want to change psy [psychiatrist] or remain with the one you have? I said I had already requested an apt.[appointment] & been given one for May. She asked: do you want to file a grievance & get a new psychiatrist? I replied no to the one and yes to the other. Finally, she stated there would be no grievance filed against [Dr.] Talag. I then said: “Is there anything else?” She replied no. I hung up.

Part 3: Bataan March #2. Coda: My 20+1 POD Books - Worthless!

(4-3-22) After shipping, sight unseen, a copy of the book from the set I picked up days ago, I happened to do my belated “due diligence” only to find the quality of pictures to be so poor that I had to give the eBay customer a refund. Later speaking with Grant, I ordered another 20 copies, asking him to make sure, this time, of the quality of pics.

(4-7-22) In the early afternoon, back to Flintridge Bookstore for the next test copy. After some trouble getting to Flintridge to pickup the test copy, I eventually made it back home. After, that is, being dumped by driver of Beeline bus #3 at Beeline stop #446 on San Fernando Rd. with the driver telling me to take the bus behind him. No further explanations offered. The time was about 9:20PM when I chanced to ask someone in a nearby store. Later, waiting at Grand and 6th for my Metro #37, I start laughing. That evening, on two occasions, I actually considered settling down for the night on one of the several bus benches I was occupying. Never have I seen the likes of this.

I eventually made it home, sometime before midnight...

(4-9-22) As I struggle to edit a schematic (computer anomalies), Lurk, fairly active today, bursts out laughing. The start of a more than usually peculiar episode. Speaking into her phone(?), I hear:

1. "Old, worn out." "... take care ... who?"
2. "He's a child molester, I can tell."
3. "They ruined my business!" This repeated many times with a strange voice, interspersed with bursts of laughter.
4. "Ruined my business I spent twelve years building." (In a strange voice interspersed with laughter).
5. Says something about the Russians.

She then walked out of her bungalow. During this strange outburst, there were several instances of sync.

(4-12-22) I notice:

1. Lurk walking down the walkway between our hedges, toward me one night. Moving from side to side like a drunk.
2. Maybe Brother Cantinflas also walking by with what looked like a limp.
3. Tyson's son (a kid about ten) also walks by, affecting a limp.

I say nothing and do not react.

Not just what I'm reading these days. Rather, books I've chosen to put under me pillow hoping against hope for osmosis to take place:

1. The Adventurous Simplicissimus, Jakob von Grimmelshausen. The story of a kid, a doofus in my opinion, caught up in the Thirty Years' War.
2. The Society of the Spectacle, Guy Debord. This one, I don't pretend to understand ("Frog fog" and all that). Which is all to the good as it's successor, Commentaries on The Society of the Spectacle, a restatement of the original book, which I did understand, frightened me so, I had to put it aside several times...3. The Princess Casamassima, Henry James. A cautionary tale (recommended to the Black Panthers in their salad days, by none other than James Baldwin) about a naive, politically active, young man who gets in over his head emotionally. Tragedy ensues, Natch.
4. Memoirs Found in a Bathtub, Stanisław Lem. A satire on the mentality of Certain Organs of State Security™. I described the book in a previous email; can't top those comments. Recommended to me by a (former) true friend; a decent, unusual and outstanding man by the name of Janusz Vaclav Hetman. Grateful, I am.
5. The Book of the Courtier, Baldassare Castiglione. One is never too old to learn, or so they say... According to Lewis Lapham, as regards our general sycophancy and suppleness of spine, the current age dwarfs all others as the patronage on hand far exceeds what was available to, say, Louis XIV, that piker.

(4-21-22) Reflecting on the day's events, I chanced on a phrase: "Lipstick on a pig informant provocateur." When applied to the neighbor I have come to call "Lurk," descriptive and evocative, no? Especially as the poor creature insistently called attention to herself much of the time I spent outside today.

And, on a not entirely unrelated note, I would here essay another of my peculiar attempts at wit; to wit: "Lipstick Lifshits on a Pig." Could this well-worn phrase (well-worn in its original form that is, a-and perhaps a bit too provocative in my adaptation) nicely encapsulate the situation Mr. Volodymyr Zelenskyy, currently tripping the light fantastic as head of that Ukraine, finds himself in? Слава Україні! I say.

(4-24-22) As I stood in the kitchen this afternoon, fixing lunch, reflecting; I repeated silently to myself a poem:

Mefre sika,
Sika ngye so.
Mefre n'tama,
N'tama ngye so.
Onipa ne asem.
(I call for silver,
Silver does not answer.
I call for gold,
Gold does not answer.

It is only mankind that matters.)

— West(?) African poem (spelling approximate)

Whereupon, in a mighty broadside lasting minutes, our very own Banshee, relatively quiet these many months, cut loose once again. With the usual high-decibel, undecipherable, sulfurous imprecations mixed with the occasional “Go!” or “Leave!” (Living) “Under the Volcano,” I am. Additionally, I believe the poor woman may also just have had a car accident.

When

Where

Count

Thursday, 4-28-22 Home all day18

Friday, 4-29-22On buses and at Kaiser Permanente, from about 7AM to 12PM. Home for rest of day84

Saturday, 4-30-22Home most of day, walked to and shopped at R-Ranch Market nearby30

Sunday, 5-1-22Home all day. Partly outside, on my steps, working & reading27

Monday, 5-2-22Home all day except for a walk to library, stopped at the R-Ranch Market on way home12

Tuesday, 5-3-22Home all day, partly outside on my steps, except for visit to library22

Wednesday, 5-4-22 Home all day except for a visit to Staples

23

Table 1: A Week’s (Subjective, Perceived) Count of Provocations and Harassment, Usually Tallied as They HappenName/Nickname

Activity/M.O.

“Brother Cantinflas” Incoherent and/or extended monologues. Sync.

Where

In my complex

All in my complexPeculiar, persistent appearances (coincidental encounters) & sounds just as I In my complex emerge from my bungalow. Frequent sync.

“Lurk,”

“Mademoiselle Cris

et Chuchotements,”

“that Outlandish

Creature”She seems educated, middle-class or above, unusual for this neighborhood.

Makes peculiar, persistent appearances (coincidental?), sometimes faint

sounds just as I emerge from my bungalow or sit outside. Sometimes

engages in incoherent screaming and arguments, uses senseless vulgarity.

This at any hour. Behavior I call the “Lunatic’s Pantomime.” “Leave!”

“Go!” are frequently heard. Sync often present.In my complex

“the Banshee”Incoherent, v. loud screams/arguments, usually late. “Leave!” “Go!” Sync.In my complex

Tyson and familyWas/am harassed by his 3 children. Brief recent public argument with him.In my complex

“Tub-thumper”Stentorian, bullying voice. Has embarrassed black neighbors (2 instances). To the south of

Once as someone brazenly attempted to steal an item from the sidewalk as I me

stood nearby.

Gadiel VelásquezTwice offered me cash to drive his daughters. Said: 1) I should meet with

Tub-thumper – a “nice man” according to him 2) For me not to complain

about state of my bungalow to landlord. ”They don’t fix anything.”In my complex

UnknownFrequent, very loud screams of several children w. occasional sync.Across street, S.

UnknownRandom, persistent hammering, ball-bouncing w. occasional sync.Across street, N.

UnknownPossible occasional sounds with sync.Across street, S.

“Drag Racers”Racing up and down Cochran Ave. (my street), Adams Blvd. and elsewhere; Unknown

gunning engines, very loud mufflers, sometimes setting off nearby car

alarm(s) in the process, resulting in momentary bedlam. Possibly many

different cars and motorcycles involved.

Table 2: The (West) Addams Adams Family™ in a Nutshell or Some of My Neighbors and a Sample of Their Activities

Our society has failed these people. Not only are our tax dollars(?) used to oppress enslave them, but, as I have

repeatedly experienced myself, such people reaching out to police, FBI, ACLU, etc. for help, advice and protection

must inevitably be confronted with the doubtful nature and even provenance of the individuals or organization

contacted. Consider these unfortunates to be what I call “informal outlaws.” These perpetrators/victims literally. Have.

No. Recourse.Date

Location

Reason

Method

Outcome

September 1988 Manhattan, sister's apt. Arrest in Santa Monica Jump

Rescued by police, 6

weeks in mental

hospital, no injuries

1994 Apt. on Alanreed Reason unknown Gas

Aborted, no injuries

1998 Apt. on Durango Problems with father Jump

Aborted, no injuries

1998 Apt. on Durango Became psychotic for reasons not

clear Jump from Extensive injuries, spent

freeway

6 months hospitalized.

overpass

Permanent disability.

2014 Bungalow on Cochran Became psychotic after suspected Gas

"intervention" by Colette Walczak

Table 3: List of My Five Suicide Attempts: The Wages of Synergy

Gas mysteriously cut

off. No injuries#

Type

Actual samples

1 Muzhik shaming A fellow once snarled "¡Cabrón!" at me in a low voice at the R-Ranch Market nearby. A frequent occurrence on buses too. Earlier, not exactly sure what the word meant, Baba Outrom, my former neighbor, once helpfully provided the translation in French.

2 Gay shaming "Gay," "fag," (repeatedly heard, on buses for the most part). Un "coulo," quoi. At the Wilshire branch of Broadway Federal, I once heard a woman, black, in the queue ahead of me, say to Manny, a teller: "Are you open down there?" The poor man visibly shook. Or consider (witnessed on 6-13-22) the young black man, very tall, sitting across from me on the 212 bus, legs splayed wide, languidly caressing the water bottle he held against his crotch.

3 Nigger shaming "¡Cálmate Mulata!" Shouted; shouted, by a young woman, employee of the Advance Food Market as I walked in. "We don't want to hit you, boy," said by a Metro bus driver recently.

Or (sometime during my "dark decades") the young man, a customer at a business on the Westside who, while following me to the exit, murmurs: "Uppity nigger."

4 Stigma shaming "Weird," "Odd," etc.

5 Jew shaming A small sample. "Jew!" Whispered at me. Gentlemen of the Securitate™: I mean, really...

6 Feigling shaming "Scared!" "Chicken!" etc.

7 Crazy shaming I can refer to myself in this way but you cain't! (I was told not use it for others by the leader of a support group for the crazy mentally challenged as I used the word to describe myself).

8 Pedophile shaming A no-brainer, I would have thought... And yet there has been surprisingly little of that, at least explicitly. Samples: 1) I remember witnessing a "skit" while visiting La Jolla with Irene. She and I were sitting near the bluffs when a child, couldn't have been more than six, walked to the edge, managed to climb up a low wall before balance herself on top. Irene, saying nothing, immediately walked two feet to her and pulled her off the edge. Hübsch, was? 2) There was also the woman, black, living south of me who, as I walked by, once said: "See that man, that man is "child-happy." 3) My nearest neighbor, long-suffering Lurk, has lately taken to shouting phrases like "child pornography" and "child molester" when near me. 4) Very loud brief screams of nearby children (some of whom seem to be well under ten years old), they sometimes seem to scream in synchronization with my movements while I'm in my bungalow. Likely effective as way to destabilize pedophiles. It

certainly has been the case with me and began to be used on me sometime in the last twelve months, I think.

Table 4: The Eightfold Way (of Shaming)

If the above table seems a bit raw and overly frank, e.g., use of the words “Culo,” “Fag,” “Nigger,” “Pedophile,” etc., when euphemisms might have sufficed; in this exposition of my frequent humiliation, consider that I’m merely adding fuel to a fire already lit. This is not merely a question of interest to me, mine, the Jewish communities here, the citizens of this place or elsewhere. These offenses to the dignity of man (that of the target(s) of these slurs or that of the “Automata inconvenienced by a soul,” forced to degrade themselves by behaving this way) touch on the very viability of the concept of Republic in our age.

Figure 1: Jose Padilla

goes to the dentist.(4-27-22) Finished a book on sleep, Why we Sleep by Matthew Walker, a sleep researcher. One section on

consequences of sleep deprivation caught my attention. I remember many occasions in the past when I have been so sleep deprived that a passenger in my car once commented on it as I was driving. Implications of a chronic lack of sleep range all across the health spectrum, including physical, emotional and psychological consequences; serious ones. These consequences kick in once one has passed a threshold of 15 hours without sleep. Until now, I have always assumed otherwise, especially as regards my general state. Not so, not so. This will bear thinking about.

“And one of the serial killers that attacks the neurons in the hippocampus is cortisol. The longer your cortisol stays elevated, the smaller and more vulnerable your hippocampus gets, which puts you at risk for depression. This is likely why chronic stress is associated with memory loss...”

— Prof. Robert Lustig from The Hacking of the American Mind

“Cortisol is known to adversely affect metabolism. People familiar with the mental health field know cortisol plays a huge role in a lot of mental disorders.”

— Dr. Chris Palmer, Assistant Prof. of Psychiatry at Harvard Medical School

I remind you, Gentle Reader™, that I once had my cortisol level measured at Kaiser on 08/20/2014 with the number coming in at 36.2 mcg/dL, a level considered high. Could there be method to this madness, i.e., the Play-Within-a-Play™ I feel I’ve been living in? Perhaps these long-standing, assorted phenomena, where things go “bump in the night,” among other quite varied sound effects, could also fall under the rubric of “Eine kleine schräge Musik” (A Little Weird Serenade, my rough translation). Quite insidiously disturbing, at times, wot? And me a paranoid schizophrenic, as I was repeating to myself last night, chuckling helplessly. A schizophrenic in dire need of ‘is beauty sleep, I am. It’s all a plot, I tell you...

"It's too simplistic to say that people start to believe what's written about them. But what happens is that you become a certain way to please people, to be liked, to be what's expected of you, to change yourself so that you become the best possible version of yourself for people who don't know you. And I think that's a terrible, pernicious thing." She adds, "In a way, I'd rather go into an interview and be disliked, and have unpleasant things written about me, than to have a wonderful, glowing article written that is in no way a reflection of who I am."

— Quote from the actress, Romola Garai, from Wikipedia

I must mention here that in the last week, the word “manic” has been mentioned twice. Once by a social worker at Kaiser, the second by the person who struck up a conversation on the bus, an incident I mentioned above.

“There are goals toward which we need to work,” she says. “The complete absence of slavery and human trafficking. An end to child labor...”

— Excerpts from a talk by the actress Julia Ormond

What I, mine, others and, potentially, you Gentle Reader™, have been subjected to is the activity of organized crime operating on an international scale. What’s more, this is not merely the work of a few “bad apples” or “bad” organizations, even. For this activity has been countenanced at every level of this society, including the cultural one. Maybe for decades. How can we ever get past this massive loss, including loss of prestige?

(5-5-22) Minutes ago, came across a delightful phrase from a book The Hacking of the American Mind by noted endocrinologist Robert Lustig: “A Few Fries Short of a Happy Meal.” A phrase signifying, to me at least, the futility if not self-defeating characteristic of certain endeavors (read his book in case my meaning is obscure). On reading this, I laughed for minutes. Now, where could I apply the phrase, the joke and the insight? Oh yes! How about to the paragraph just above this one, Eh?(5-10-22) At Costco today for my monthly shopping with the usual extravaganza attendant, Natch. Among the more

memorable moments: I asked an employee, an attractive young woman (lorsqu'il y a du monde au balcon, faut toujours se demander s'il n'est pas plutôt question de bas-le-con, Hein?) (I, umm, hesitate to translate, folks. I've got a reputation to mind, what?) I ran into near the supplements section, where I could find the Glucosamine+Chondroitin tablets, a supplement recently recommended by a doctor. After a moment's hesitation, she found them for me. I quickly proceeded to make my getaway as fast as my little feet could carry me...

(5-14-22) Lurk and Brother Cantinflas both very active as I sit outside sunning myself and working. Unusual in that much of the verbal traffic came from the other end of the line on Lurk's phone. By the way, I notice these two never speak to each other. Funny thing. Also, their respective conversations, never very plausible or coherent to begin with, seem to me to have become increasingly disjointed and outlandish.

(5-16-22) Today, Monday, I hurried to the bank to deposit \$20.28 in cash to cover an upcoming expense. Stopping at the R-Ranch Market near my bungalow on my way home, I found to my surprise, my debit card declined. Over a purchase of milk for \$1.89. Later that afternoon, I found it opportune to arrange to pickup a fairly large wooden solar panel stand I had been storing at a friend's for some time; intending to make a demonstration of it. I then made my way home with the unit, arriving later that night. An instance of the so-called "propaganda of the deed," wot?

(5-26-22) Beginning my applications for street selling permits, both in Santa Monica and Los Angeles.

(Added 7-7-22) Just got my Los Angeles street selling permit this morning.

First noticed and took pictures of a stain on a shirt hanging in bathroom. Eventually was able to obtain a police report.

(5-28-22) On Culver City bus #1, ID 7154 a man, Hispanic, is talking non-stop at back of bus: A sample of frequently used keywords:

1. Perro
2. Cabrón
3. Mulatto
4. Jew(?)
5. Good(?)
6. Go(?)

He stops talking as I begin writing this down. The man was talking this way from the moment he got on the bus.

Shopping at Trader Joe's in Culver City, I ask an employee direction to the toilets. He rapidly turns toward me and, inches from my face and, too close for comfort, give me directions. Later, at the checkout stand, as the clerk rings up my purchases:

A woman's voice nearby: "Are you a Jew?"

Clerk: "Would you like a bag?"

Me: (No answer)

(Clerk repeats himself).

Me: "I leave it up to you."

Clerk: "I'm not hearing an answer."

Me: (I insert my debit card before saying, "It's not working" as the card malfunctions. then turn away, not answering).

Another employee: (Walks over, says something to the clerk).

(Moment later, my card finally working, I load my purchases on the dolly and leave, thanking the clerk. According to receipt transaction #158684 this was on 5-28-22 at 11:43AM).

(Date unknown) Was sitting at curb while waiting for bus (probably the #37 westbound at Adams and Fairfax) when a woman, also waiting, says: "The bus is coming, maybe you should get up" (or something similar)." I did not reply, neither did I move. On the bus, moments later, the driver, a young Hispanic man, says to me: "We don't want to hit you, boy." I said nothing. And so, at the end of a somewhat mouvementé week; a week which left my poor head spinning – literally at times – I

must confess I'm hitting the turmeric pretty hard (on the advice of a Kaiser doctor, not that Frau Doktor, of course).

Whut kind of a place is this, anyhow?

Running into Tub-thumper's wife outside on the sidewalk, she volunteers: "It's hard for you, isn't it?" A leading question, you'll notice. My reply: "Not really, this place is more like Disneyland." A visible surprise momentarily flitted across her face.

Part 4: Bataan March #3

(5-29-22 sometime after 3:45PM) As I tried to get onboard Metro bus #212, with ID 5756, the driver closed his doors as I was getting on. I should consider myself lucky he chose not to drive off with me stuck in the doors. It's often the little things one is thankful for...

Attempting, fruitlessly, to buy a folding table for my upcoming sidewalk sales of books, I'm unable to contact the seller as my phone continually reboots. Reaching the agreed-on meeting place, he is not there. Eventually giving up, I

have to content with several buses not stopping, forcing me to bite the bullet and walk home.

(5-31-22) "The Microwave Hour," i.e., "Want me to warm it up a bit?" Around 8:30AM she, meaning the neighbor I nicknamed Lurk, who lives not 10 feet from me, came out with all guns blazing: a-screamin' an' a-hollerin' and, during an intermission, probably throwing and breaking a bottle against the side of my bungalow, leaving bits of glass scattered about (pictures taken and police report filed though later rejected) before resuming her rant. Among subjects touched:

1. "... Bitch..."
2. "... loud music ..."
3. "... I don't want to hear this every morning ..."
4. "... child pornography ..."
5. "... I'm recording this too ..."

As she vomits up this refuse, she walks by me twice. This goes on for some time, with the usual stream of more or less irrational complaints, obscenities and curses. Her behavior, since she moved in, I characterize as the Lunatic's Pantomime. Purpose, you ask? Why, I think this was "mood music" to prepare me for my video interview with my new Kaiser psychiatrist later that morning. Whence my categorization of this show as "the Microwave Hour." Not for the first time, either. I also think another neighbor, the one I call Brother Cantinflas, has been up to this as well, timing his running commentaries for some phone or video conversation of mine. Ah, the shenanigans of Sassenach™.

(6-1-22) Trying to speak with Kaiser Permanente management, not to complain, but for advice on how to dispel a palpable confusion on my part regarding the state of my health. I eventually ask for counseling from a social worker as mine is being transferred. Even that is proving to be a chore; as of 7-5-22, I still don't have any advice.

(6-3-22) Spectrum, my internet service provider, called to schedule a visit, reason being "the signal may not be strong enough." OK, whatever... A couple of days later, I called back to cancel this "visit."

(6-15-22) An unusual episode on the #33, eastbound. A man, likely on his phone (I cannot be sure as not once did I look in his direction), with an eerie, almost mechanical tone and cadence, with not even a veneer of plausibility to his speech, words hardly linked together, let alone sensible. In a conversation/monologue(?) lasting from Venice and Culver to La Brea, I noted the following words:

1. He begins with the word "Zodiac."
2. The word "Sagittarius" is repeated about 15 times in the course of this conversation.
3. "Security."
4. The word "Cancer" is used several times. Though I could hear him distinctly throughout, I have not the faintest idea of what he could have been talking about.

Possibly the most peculiar interlude I have overheard on buses to date.

(6-16-22) Ici, en ce moment, je me sent comme un Huron dans un salon. (Just now, I feel like a Huron Indian in a salon).

(6-17-22) In recent days, a noticeable increase in synchronization and feedback from:

1. Cars noisily revving their engines.
2. Police and/or ambulance sirens.
3. Children's high-pitched screams.
4. Sounds of cats(?).
5. Lurk.
6. Brother Cantinflas.
7. Power tools.
8. And, if one chooses to include "coincidental" walk-bys and sudden movements, neighbors in my complex and bus passengers.

(6-21-22) I could live this way, under these conditions for the rest of my life. With or without hope. And, in the past, I have.

(6-23-22) Was thinking yesterday, about a series of incidents related by Colette Walczak months before she died. Incidents culminating in what she said was a case of financial fraud. Some specifics:

1. Colette, an insomniac, would sometimes come to my bungalow, looking bedraggled, for a couple of days of rest. She frequently complained of noises coming from the house immediately to the east of her complex.
2. This house is jointly(?) owned by two Englishmen, possible building contractors.
3. One of them with a teenage daughter whose behavior Colette would complain about, mostly of her loud conversations on the phone, late at night, with her window open. More generally, Colette would complain about the noise coming from there. Though I will add that she also sometimes mention hearing her neighbors in apartment two through the wall often.

4. I once witnessed an incident in which one of the owners, speaking loudly (to his dog?) said repeatedly: "Get back inside!" as Colette and I walked up the stairs to her apartment. At that moment, Colette seemed rattled.

5. During her final illness, I noticed a sign, from the City of Santa Monica, taped to the door of that house, by then vacant, warning that the house was not to be sold as it's ownership was in limbo.

6. She once told me it had been bought by an Iranian-American who, paying cash, was unable to take possession due to fraud.

7. As of 6-27-2022, the house, at 1027 Ashland Avenue, still unoccupied, is scheduled for demolition with the current owner listed as: "1027 Ashland LLC."

8. Colette added that this was the sort of scam which can only be perpetrated in an all-cash transaction.

9. This fraud had to have taken place sometime before Colette's death in the fall of 2018.

Were any of the parties involved even in a position to complaint? How Colette came to know of this and to this level of detail, I do not know.

Continuing struggles with this Serene Republic™'s postal service. Mail pickup not always reliable and, regarding delivery, I find it peculiar that this year, two items from China, way late, showed up within two days of my making inquiries of the sellers. More of that ca' canny? Sigh... In an attempt at adding to the paper trail a-and for your enjoyment, Gentle Reader™, I include here a note I sent a few days ago to the USPS:

Hi,

For the third day (Saturday, Monday and today, Tuesday, June 21, 2022) my outgoing mail, for which I have paid postage through eBay, has not been picked up. I have seen your man (or woman) walk by, studiously ignore me, leave mail for others in my complex of 4 bungalows and 4 apartments and walk out again without having picked up mine. Currently there is a stack of 3 items on top of my mailbox. I suspect he even leaves incoming mail on my porch without inconveniencing himself to pickup my outgoing stuff.

Though I will say that today (to his credit?), the poor fellow looked a bit furtive as he walked by...

In your organization's favor, I will admit that this behavior speaks well of the unshakable, unswerving integrity of the Post Office employees of this, Our Serene Republic™. Well done! For, you see, my repeated offers of a bit of that lagniappe (for which acts I am aware I am courting possible Federal Charges of attempted bribery of a Federal Employee in the course of his duties. Ich gestehe!), i.e, the dollar bill I leave taped to the mailbox (pictures available) to help things along, you unnerstand, have only yielded disappointing results over the last several months.

I must protest!

Should your office prove unable, once again, to remedy this parlous, I say again, parlous, situation, I will have no alternative but to write a stiff note to the Times (of London, that is).

Thanks (again),

Bergendahl/Berg (as in Nuremberg)/Bergie Hawkins at 2626 S. Cochran Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90016

A-and, wonder of wonders, the next day, I believe, my outgoing mail was picked up. After the fact, therefore because of it? By the way, Ich gestehe! is German for, I confess!

(6-26-22) I now have the definite impression that people wait, either outside my field of view or wait for me to look toward them before they start walking or make some move, however slight, of a foot or a hand perhaps, in my general direction the moment I see them. Brother Cantinflas, this morning gave a nicely done demonstration. Sitting at my steps, sunning myself with eyes closed when, just as I opened my eyes, I immediately noticing him walking toward me from 10 feet away. And it hardly 8AM on a Sunday. I suspect he was standing there, motionless waiting for the exact moment to make his move. Or am I crazy? Over the last year or so, this sort of behavior has become a frequent occurrence, sometimes happening a dozen times a day, in my immediate neighborhood, on the street, in buses, etc. Yesterday had a visit from a customer I owe a refund to for a solar system component. Steven Hill, residing in Central America, is a curious case in that I have a feeling that when we first met, he was testing me. Feeling out the lay of the land to see if I had ever had involvement with underage girls, of all things. If I'm correct in this (I may not be), he certainly known more about me than I have ever told him, you can be sure of that. I now surmise that Mr. Hill may have wanted to confirm a vulnerability. Reason I say this is that, alone of all my solar customers, he is the only one to complain that the equipment (aside from batteries) I sold him went bad. Almost all of what I sold him, as I recall.

Thus the careful, initial probe on his part.

Part 5: Conclusions

An aside about types of blackmail:

1. ... the 'frame-up', this consisting of the engineering of a happening now that can be used as a basis of blackmail shortly. 2. ... 'pre-blackmail', where the victim is forced to continue in a course of action because

of the blackmailer's warning that any change will lead him to disclose facts making the change untenable... an actual case in which a policeman forces a prostitute to remain in her lucrative calling by systematically discrediting her attempts to obtain employment...

3. ... 'self-saving blackmail', perhaps the most important kind, where the blackmailer, by intent or in effect, avoids paying an earned penalty because enforcing payment would result in the creditor's discrediting.

4. ... 'full' or classic blackmail, the blackmailer obtaining payments by threatening to disclose facts about the individual's past or present which could utterly discredit his currently sustained identity... all full blackmail includes the self-saving kind, since the successful blackmailer, in addition to obtaining the blackmail, also avoids the penalty...

— Stigma, Erving Goffman, p.95

I've read of evil things done to mentally ill people but, as far as I know, never with the mentally ill. Consider: in Germany, beginning before 1942 and continuing until the end of the war in 1945, such citizens were, at times, disposed of in places such as the Landesheilanstalt Hadamar (Hadamar State Sanatorium) – crimes later punished by the Allies. Here, it seems, we've gone them one better (Yankee ingenuity and all that). Here, we mental defectives are actively sought out to be used (up-cycled?) for, at least in my case, less than saintly purposes. For confirmation, see (it's mentioned in my book) an interesting exchange I had with a machinist and weapons aficionado in the San Gabriel Valley in which he talked of something he called "oven cleaner." That obsolete, though still very much useful, phrase: "moral imbecile" comes to mind.

Question: "What is your opinion of the French revolution?"

Chou En-lai: "It's too soon to tell."

According to Simone Veil, former French Health Minister, a crucial, so far unsolved, problem is how a society is to deal with concentrations of power. Centuries ago, the Catholic Church presciently identified this and came up with a (partial) solution: forbidding consanguineous marriages as, over the long term, they would tend to lead to ever greater concentrations of wealth. On the other hand, in Arab societies, marriage between cousins has been a time-honored tradition; for precisely the opposite reason. Different places, different mores.

My job: to sweet talk the American people into rousing themselves from their couches, ungluing their eyeballs from that TV and, in so doing, saving This Serene Republic™...

Somewhere in the last few weeks, I came across a statement to the effect that while man's thinking tends to be linear, the world most emphatically is not. An example of this type of thinking: If you're fat, you must reduce your consumption of fats in order to loose weight as fat has more calories than carbs. Or, put in a shorter way, you must follow the popular and traditional mantra espoused by so many, including Frau Doktor Sarah Elizabeth Hooks, my long-suffering former MD at Kaiser Permanente: "Eat less, exercise more." Today, with the world facing a veritable tsunami of obesity and diabetes, do you suppose the root cause could have something to do with this sort of thinking? Linear thinking up against a body chemistry consisting, in major part, of interconnected, hormone-mediated, feedback loops. A system, not only non-linear but almost guaranteed, by virtue of its inherent complexity, to have chaotic features?

"Something unknown is doing we don't know what."

— Arthur Eddington

A staple of the mystifiers, those shy and mysterious creatures of the Securitate plaguing me; acts exemplified by the above quote.

There is a charming anecdote, maybe apocryphal, about the Danish physicist, Niels Bohr, in which a visitor, on noticing a horseshoe over the entrance to his house, said to him, "Surely you don't believe this superstitiousnonsense?" To which Bohr is said to have replied: "Of course not." Taken by surprise, the visitor asked, "So why do you keep it there?" Bohr: "They say it brings luck even if you don't believe in it." An attitude which somewhat parallels mine regarding anything touching This Serene Republic™.

Woolgathering on my couch one evening, I thought of a comment regarding my mysterious tribulations, a comment I once made to my therapist, Dr. Victor Morton, sometime during my dark decades: "It's just too pat." Would that I had

followed that lighting-clear insight to its logical conclusion. For, you see, I said this in about 1991-1992. Another such moment came the day I catastrophically parachuted back into my sister's life in Manhattan in 1988. As I sank into psychosis, I asked her point-blank if she were working for the Government, the resulting silence should have been deafening. Alas, it was not.

Ya wanna know what kinda place this is? Well, I can tell you. This is a country where a man by the name of Charles Ferguson, the Oscar-winning director of the documentary, Inside Job, a film about the last financial crisis; not content to rest on his laurels, decided to make another. This time, a film on the life of one Hillary Clinton. And, do you know, he himself now confesses to being unable to do so, people became reluctant to talk to him to the point where he was forced to drop the project. Whence my fears about being (metaphorically) buried alive with my book, message and any attendant files. Perhaps not a rational thought on my part, I really don't know. But, in light of the above anecdote, certainly understandable.

In the last several months, I have seen the neighbor I call Tub-thumper embarrass if not humiliate two of my black neighbors, Tyson among them.

An idea I call "bounding boxes." Assuming both major parties in this nasty business keep lists of persons of interest, whenever I'm out on errands, they could make a bounding box around each person on that list and me. Tracking each individual of whom there might be, say, a couple hundred thousand in Los Angeles, with a technique called "gait analysis." Now, were one of these "bounding boxes" (each of which may be set to perhaps a quarter mile square) to intersect mine, alarms would presumably go off someplace. Thus sparing manpower in the extensive "babysitting" effort I assume is involved here.

After repeated entreaties of my landlord, AFJ Investment, entreaties in which I warn of possible consequences of the likely presence of termites in my bungalow for the structure's integrity, I find the complete lack of response on the part of the owners passing strange. Since it has been suggested by my sister Irene that I should consider spending the rest of my life in this structure – an idea I am in agreement with – I have been wondering if I should now perhaps take unilateral steps. Not only have there been traces of termite activity around the kitchen window for years (signaled to City inspectors and by them to the landlord) but termites may also have appeared in the roof above my front steps. And, as I am not exactly anxious to find out what might happen should I ever leave Los Angeles or this bungalow (even temporarily), given my landlord's demonstrated irrationality, I think I may now have to look into fixing the problem at my own cost. Any thoughts?

A thought about Glenn Greenwald's comment on privacy, i.e., that there should be a rebuttable presumption of opacity regarding us, the people at the bottom, and the same rebuttable presumption of transparency at the top. I completely agree and if you don't, Gentle Reader™, ask yourself if you would allow a known confidence man to have access to every nook and cranny of your private life.

Q: How did I come to find myself in this mess?

A: Practically in a fit of absent-mindedness. (To borrow a phrase).

Q: Bergie, how did you come to take on dread Sassenach?

A: Anybody can make a mistake.

Q: Why don't you just leave? A: I don't want to go to jail. Do you take these Gentlemen (any of that lot) for choirboys? For an explanation, I refer

you to the letter I once received, mentioned in a previous email, informing me that the California Highway Patrol requests the honor of my presence in order that I may claim an unidentified item belonging to me (recidivist that I am. For shame), found in a stolen car abandoned in the San Geronio Pass. A-and what about that nun I once supposedly trifled with on Main Street; in broad daylight yet. Could she perhaps be induced to remember the unfortunate incident?

Irene: Regards to Tonton™.

Trusting I am still yr. Fair-haired Boy™, I remain:

(signed)

Mac Mahon

P.S. To my sister Irene: May our wordless tears, yours and mine, eventually prove invincible.

P.P.S. On one of the documents I provide law firms in my, thus far, fruitless quest for a bigger soapbox, I added the following quotes, the first at the start, the second at the very end. I hope they will not be grounds for me to be thought unworthy of consideration by the recipient(s)... The two quotes:

千里之行，始於足下 (A journey of a thousand li begins with but a single step).

What is life?

A little strife,

Where victories are vain.

Where those who conquer

Do not win.

Nor those receive who gain.

— Mao Tse-tung/Lao Tse

— Benjamin Disraeli

P.P.P.S. A vague thought about Humanity. A mixed bag, a very mixed bag, of course. But redeemed, most (though not all), by an act of one of my sisters (the dead one), years ago. An act I have already mentioned, no need to repeat myself.

P.P.P.P.S. I occasionally hear the epithet “Jew!” hurled in my general direction. Aside from the puzzling irony (people of that kidney thinking they can insult what they likely see as a black by calling him a Jew...), there is the unfortunate and anxious-making fact that to keep body and soul together, one such as I, in my *démêlées* with Certain Organs of State Security™, as I imagine it, must rely on what I call the State of Israel-Palestine. A country with whose policies I will have no truck and whose very people, with exceptions, I find difficult. Additionally, see my comment in a previous email about the criticism of this place, by which I mean the US, by the rap group Public Enemy. In fact, as I also said in that email, the situation here is likely far worse than even they could imagine. Tragic. Pitiful. Shameful, really.

P.P.P.P.P.S. In his days as journalist in San Francisco, Ambrose Bierce, a man possessing 100 times my vitriol and measly abilities; someone far more radical and pessimistic than me, because better informed, had to let it be known that he had been a sharpshooter in the Civil War and carried a pistol at all times. This seems to have sufficed to ensure his safety. As for me, carrying a piece simply wouldn't do. Quite the opposite, in fact. No, in order to ensure for myself some increment of safety, I must rely on, I imagine, the small army watching my back at all times. Progress this is not...*Reductio ad Absurdum: A Modest Experiment Exposing the Equally Modest Imagination of Certain Circles* Finding my fliers removed both from near my complex and the neighborhood, which I call the West Addams Adams Family™, wherever I put them up; I thought I would try and find out just how little of an irritant/stimulus it would take for whoever is doing this to cut it out. I now believe I have the answer: less than 1/16 of a sheet of paper is enough, apparently, to get me below the radar. As for proof, here goes:

Figure 2: The general layout. I have already discussed the bit of "Lit Crit" barely visible, graffiti scrawled in yellow. Before:

After (Next Day – Generally):

Figure 3: A full sheet of blank paper. April 16, 2022, 13:53PM

Figure 4: Sheet missing the next day, April 17, 2022, 16:07PM

Before:

Figure 5: A half sheet of blank paper. April 20, 2022, 8:28AM

Figure 6: Half sheet missing the next day, April 21, 2022, 11:22AM

Figure 7: A quarter sheet of blank paper. April 21, 2022, 11:24AM

Figure 8: Quarter sheet missing the next day, April 22, 2022, 10:39AM

Figure 9: Eighth of a sheet, placed there on April 22, 2022, 10:41AM

After:

Figure 10: Blank sheet missing the next day, April 23, 2022, 11:21AM

Figure 12: Sixteenth of a sheet, placed there on April 22, 2023, 11:33AM. Another POV evident, here.

Figure 11: Sixteenth of a sheet gone the next morning,

April 24, 2022, 14:10PM This space intentionally left blank as, for the life of me, I cannot find the last image in this series; intended to be proof of the threshold below which the relevant government agencies will not stoop (to conquer).

The setup I'm preparing for sales of the book on the streets of Santa Monica and Los Angeles. It includes a vertical, scrolling LED sign.

Figure 16: My stand

with scrolling LED display extended and the solar panel to power it. I'm applying for Santa Monica permits right now. Los Angeles permit applications to follow.

Figure 15: Side view of chair, a-and what a time I had procuring that! Lemme tell ya.

Figure 14: The 10 foot sign on which I'll scroll excerpts of my book; folded as though in preparation for the bus ride home...

Figure 13: The whole setup, ready to go.

Weight: 60+lb.

Eine kleine Nachtmusik

Eine Kleine "Nachtmusik" (A Little Serenade), wot?

Started: 11/04/21

The title derives from the increasingly frequent incidents involving my mysterious neighbor, "Lurk." Coming into her own, growing into the role as it were, she has lately become uncharacteristically vocal somewhat in the manner of late, lamented (?) Baba Outrom (another neighbor, also of dubious provenance who, for years, occupied the same bungalow). Consider. Instead of the customary faint, subtle, irritating and anxious-making sounds usually emanating from her door, doorknob or lock (her bungalow is directly across from mine, not ten feet away); sounds at times synchronized to my movements, things have progressed degenerated to the point where I no longer have to strain to hear. "Stuff and nonsense," heard loud and clear, leavened by the occasional hot-button word, are now *de mise* (reign); sentences I have come to call "synthetic ideas of reference." I will explain. I increasingly notice the use within earshot, by persons unknown, of words, things or names I have in the recent past come across, said or written. The phrase "ideas of reference" referring to a symptom of mental illness in which an individual suffers from delusions that others nearby are talking about him. As to my use of the word "synthetic," it suggests an unnatural, concerted effort the possible extent of which should not be neglected, An example from long ago. In a coffee shop I used to frequent, I once heard someone at a nearby table say: "He has a sister, she's a doctor, her name is Irene and she lives in Italy." Get it? Well, Gentle Reader™, the same sort of thing has been happening to me with increasing frequency lately. With the verbal output from "Lurk" decidedly taking this tone as well.

Last night's, almost routine by now, verbal show I call the "Five O'clock Follies" began quietly enough, before midnight just as I trundled off to bed, with occasional lulls before rising to a peak around 3AM with a torrent of words and abuse apparently directed at her roommate. "Lurk" then found it opportune to go to the sidewalk, shouting and yelling, to rouse the neighborhood. Which in turn brought in other participants, adding to the infernal chorus just outside my window. What exactly was going on, I confess, was not entirely clear to me; lying in my loft bed as I was, drowsy, trying to sleep. Neither was the ongoing discussion entirely coherent or rational, I suspect. Finally, after much back and forth, and as "rosy-fingered Dawn" was about to make it's appearance, the issue resolved itself (I have a feeling this is only temporary though) around 6AM.

Caught sight, finally, of "Miss Poon," that obscure object of desire recent contention with my sister Irene who thinks I may come to be seen as an "Afro-American Archie Bunker" in her words, i.e., a bigot of the Negro persuasion, should I persist in this sort of characterization. Well, "je persiste et je signe" (I double down). Yesterday afternoon, as I fiddled with solar stuff on my car just outside, "Miss Poon" wandered by, walking her dog. Spotting her as she lingered nearby, I immediately offered a copy of my book. Offer accepted wiv' alacrity; the young woman favoring me with that ole lingering "regard embrasé" (intense/fiery gaze) as I handed her the book. With the neighbor I now call "Πε μάλ'άκ'α" (sorry, no translation here), a silent witness to the scene from his perch on the lawn nearby. Now for the other shoe to drop. By which I mean, someone, anyone, to add a bit of "Tang" to my life, Eh?

In other news I, good soldier that I am (in the style of Schweik, it goes without saying), beg to report an unusual, unprecedented (though not unexpected), event this Tuesday night. On my way to the bank, leaving after 6:30PM, after having met with a customer, I stood for over an hour at the stop on Dunsmuir and Adams waiting, as five buses went by (in the other direction unfortunately). When one heading my way eventually appeared, almost an hour and a half had gone by. I, by then thoroughly engrossed in the book I had been reading to while away the time, neglected to notice the bus's approach. The event and my reaction both illustrating 無為 (wu wei or, action through inaction), Eh? Minutes later, I made my way home, postponing the trip to my bank.

Bref, bombardement diurne. (In summary, round-the-clock bombing).

Un écrivain qu'on voudrait peut-être voir écrire ailleurs. Que l'écrivain écrive ailleurs! Wot? (A scribbler one would perhaps rather see writing elsewhere. Let the scribbler/bad writer write elsewhere!) Funnier in the original. In WWII, the Russians used to say it really didn't take courage to get into a T-34 to fight Germans. No, what took courage was to get into another tank after yours had been hit. So you see, I have the advantage here; never having been hit, I don't know what it's like. (Call it cheap courage, a bit like cheap grace). And by the way, I read that of the 400,000 Soviets trained as tank crewmen during the war, 300,000 died in the war.

As I stepped out of my bungalow, moments ago, (writing this around 8AM this morning) I found the very first (unsolicited) review of my book, on one of the copies I handed out days ago, lying on my steps. Not a very favorable one, unfortunately. See attached pictures below. Unfeeling critics! Sigh... Ça promet! (Intimation of future events!) A thumbnail sketch of my family's trajectory, keeping in mind my grandfather, Booker Hawkins, was born a slave: From slavery to slavery in 3 generations. (To paraphrase another saying).

Somehow the Osibisa song Africa We Go Go found its way into my musical collection (as far as I know, I had not bought it), where it sat unplayed though not unnoticed for months. Days ago, in a fit of pique, I added these words to the name of the song: neanche tu sogno! (Italian for "in your dreams," I believe).

Thank you for your attention,

(signed)

il Serenissimo

P.S. To my sister Irene: May our tears eventually prove invincible.

Excavating the Naughty Past

or

Ersatzschokolade: A Chocolate Substitute

Started: 04/23/22 Edited: 04/24/22

Hi Folks,

As the latest addition to my crowded tenement, may I introduce: la fée (auxiliaire) du logis (the (other) good witch of the household – sarcasm implied). A vacuum cleaner robot I found nearby at the curb this morning. It came complete with the charging/docking station. My cost: \$0. See pic and attached brief video: Achtung! Putzfrau!.MP4 for a demo. This contraption which, so far, works well, should prove a vast improvement over my occasional, very occasional – say every 5 years or so, vacuuming. (Irene, stop mocking me!).

May I also introduce my latest addiction? Something I call Ersatzschokolade, not to be confused, of course, with that Panzerschokolade. Which I'm told has, in the not so distant past, been known to put the Bewegung in your Bewegungskrieg (so to speak). An entirely different matter altogether, that...

And, to perhaps put your minds (somewhat) at ease regarding (some of) my current proclivities, I will now reveal the recipe. It comes from an Australian, a card-carrying crazy (worse than me, fer sure), by the name of Sarah Wilson (look her up on YouTube regarding "Demon Sugar" as in: Le sucre et ses méfaits (Sugar and its ills)).

The recipe:

1. In a small glass bowl, put as many tablespoons of good coconut oil as will fit
2. Let the oil melt in a toaster oven at about 150 degrees, the process taking maybe 15 minutes
3. After which add about 6 heaping teaspoons of a good cocoa powder to the melted oil, stir the mixture thoroughly
4. Optionally add a dash of salt, mix it well
5. A sweetener may also be added to the mix (I don't)
6. Using a small scoop or ladle, pour little puddles of the resulting dark brown liquid into an ice cube tray
7. Freeze for several hours

The resulting cubes, when consumed frozen (attached picture, Ersatzschokolade.JPG) have the look and feel of

chocolate but without sugar. For me, there is also the added benefit of effortlessly upping my daily consumption of fats in order to be in ketosis while increasing my level of satiety.

In other news. Regarding the day-to-day verbal “blandishments” I’m subjected to, the talk is of: “Bringing an end to your anxiety.” “It’s not worth it, is it?” Etc, etc. Nowadays, convenience is all, apparently. Sassenach and I; we’re just not on the same wavelength are we, is my conclusion here.

Irene: Regards to le Malin™ (the Devil)

(signed)

MacMahon (Sorry, no translation available. You’ll ‘ave to do yer own ‘omework ‘ere)

P.S. To my sister Irene: May our wordless tears, yours and mine, eventually prove invincible.

P.P.S. Stay tuned for a reductio ad absurdum-type demonstration (série de photos à l’appui!) (pics for proof included) of the petty mentality of Certain Organs of State Security™(?), all in an upcoming email.

Mwahahahahaha! Figure 1: Ersatzschokolade, the final product

Figure 2: Ersatzschokolade in the making Figure 3: Kommentar überflüssig.

“Goldilocks Challenges” & a Rumor

Started: 03/24/22 Edited: 3-25-22

Hi Folks,

Thinking tonight about something I call “Goldilocks Challenges.” I think I have weathered two in my life.

1. My bout of diabetes, the kickoff for which was a “Vlaamsluecker-level” blood sugar count which landed me in the emergency room over a decade ago; an anecdote I relate in the About the Author page of my book.

Having reversed this potentially crippling disease, I believe I came out of it empowered (that TV word).

2. The other challenge being the subject of the book itself.

In order to qualify, a challenge must not be so trivial as to hardly tax the subject. Neither can it be so overwhelming that it destroying the individual or society. In order to be a “Goldilocks Challenge” the subject must be able to (possibly) rise to the occasion; in which case he may emerge from the ordeal a better person.

My extended brush with “Certain Organs of State Security™” has (so far, at least) been of this sort. Instead of turning me into what I call a “Terrorist of the Brummagem Variety™,” it has been the making of me, i.e., Kipling’s phrase: “We have had no end of a lesson: it will do us no end of good,” a phrase alluding to the Boer war, may apply at the personal as well as the national level.

Please take all this with more than a grain of salt as I am no more able to predict the future (my own, let alone a nation’s) than, curiously, I have been able to predict my own past...

Now, this next item is just between you and me, unnerstand? Rumor has it, this is just rumor, mind; that over at the Vatican, I am being considered for beatification (a step leading to sainthood as I’m sure you’re aware). I enclose a picture which could generate some buzz and help grease the skids, so to speak. By the way, if any of you are at all connected in those quarters, perhaps a word in the right ear... One never knows, Eh?

A-and, by the way, about the attached first picture. You may consider it a relic of the saint, avant la lettre, so to speak. Assuming there is a lively trade in relics of this kind, the chamber pot I hang from my porch awning every morning (see Figure 1) could be worth something someday. And as my long-suffering neighbor, poor old Tyson said years ago about a different, though not wholly unrelated topic: “anything for a buck.”

What I’m really angling for, though, is that Lenin Prize, or does that date damn me? Mum’s the word folks, I have enough of a rep as it is, wot? Though in a pinch, I just might settle for the Sièyès. Or mebbe one of them Darwin Awards. As a consolation prize (consolation for whom?), it might do nicely. A-and in the end, might even turn out to have been so much more appropriate...

In other news:

•Just learned from a social worker at Kaiser that evictions in Los Angeles have been suspended until the end of the year. My increasingly energetic, not to say frenetic, landlord, Tiffany Anderson can rest, for now.

•Having increasing difficulty using the phone for the simplest tasks. A recent sample (written on 3-26-22):

1. Calling the Legal Aid Foundation, I must expect to spend over two hours on hold and consider myself lucky to actually conclude any business.

2. Calling Home Depot, looking for a lousy metal rod takes me five calls on two phones before I give up for the day.

3. Calling Bobco Metal, I’ll now have to expect the number to vanish from my phone as I’m about to dial. 4. Calling Printing Palace three times in one day to give my credit card to pay for fliers to be printed from files I emailed the previous day, I find myself waiting for someone to answer the phone to take my credit

card. Each time without success.

It also seems Dread Sassenach™ has been doing a bit of unsolicited tidying up in my bungalow again. As a result, I can't seem to find anything (slight exaggeration, here). To be specific:

1. Some three 74LS14s, a type of chip I need for a project, missing
2. Three tiny magnets, needed for some work. I had carefully stuck them on a metal surface, gone
3. A manila folder in which I keep my appointment book and list my business transactions went missing. After looking around, I eventually found it inside another folder containing papers on my "Bungalow Problem," moved
4. A document I wrote and emailed the night a trickle of leaking water turned into a near-flood in my kitchen after a visit by AFJ Investment's handyman, Jose Nava; with pictures attached, a document which was stored in my computer and emailed to several people, missing
5. My homemade red night light which I keep at my side with the light turned off while I sleep. I sometimes use it if I get up during the night. I found it one morning on my desk, under the loft bed (see attached Figures 2 & 3). During the night, moved

Ah, the Shenanigans of Sassenach™.

Irene: regards to Le Malin™.

Trusting I remain yr. Fair-haired Boy™.

(signed)

Malvoisin/Mauvais Sujet

P.S. Irene: May our wordless tears, yours and mine, eventually prove invincible.

P.P.S. Irene: Be sure to remind Alberto to carry an umbrella at all times and in all places, there's always a chance of rain.

Figure 1: I hang it outside every morning, calling it "pendre la crémaillère." A future relic? Figure 2: My loft bed.

Figure 3: My desk underneath, picture taken some time ago, now considerably more crowded.

"Kill-Me-Quick"

Started on: 09/27/21. With edits: 10/03/21 10/05/21 10/12/21

This particular "Confection de Mauvais Gout" (Vulgar Treat) I call "Kill-Me-Quick"

Welcome to the land of bosh - as well, unfortunately, as that of Bosch; Hieronymus, that is. For an explanation, see the cover of my book.

On my way to Hermosa Beach to pickup an item the seller had previously neglected to hand over, I was initially stymied in my quest by the simple expedient of the driver of one of the series of buses I was required to take simply refusing to open the doors and pick me up. I had just missed my bus! As was helpfully pointed out by another waiting passenger soon after the driver had pulled away.

To-day, I was able to trigger a St. Vitus' dance of sorts in a couple of their "personnel," i.e., them as have made their peace wiv' Sassenach. But whereas I too can be made to dance (involuntarily) to 'is tune by the judicious placement of keywords in otherwise (I'm guessing) senseless conversations in Spanish more often than English. Today I, by means of the scrolling sign I wore at chest level, a sign flogging my book, am able to make my victimizers victims (?) dance much as gunslingers of the Far-West made the nearby hapless "dance" by threatening their extremities with doses of acute lead poisoning. In my case, nothing so cruel required. I merely "face the music," turn toward them, point my small scrolling sign in their general direction and wait for the inevitable reaction. They twist this way and that, at times even scurrying away, anything to avoid the terrible, terrible words as they scroll by on my eBay-bought blue LED sign: "I am Bergie, hear me bitch! Buy my book and make me rich. etc., etc., etc." Mwahahahaha!

And, in other news, they are getting ever prettier. Fer instance, take "Fräulein" verboten, mentioned in an earlier email, with Fräulein now in quotes as, apparently, the designation Fräulein is itself now verboten. Almost a self-referential proposition, wot? Makes complete sense, ¿que no? Where was I... Oh, yes, the Fräulein in question. Said Fräulein had her hair done recently, a-and don't for one minute think Your Friend and Humble Narrator™ didn't immediately notice. Instead of jet black, her normal color, it's now a light chestnut brown with, I believe they're called, highlights, or some such word. Nice, very nice. Damn your eyes, Fräulein. Why, even some of the other nearby passengers on my various buses today seemed to whisper: "Fräulein... Fräulein..." Or could there be a more prosaic explanation? As in: am I, in my (florid ?) mental condition again being trifled with by dread Sassenach? At any rate, be still my heart!

Tehran Market in Santa Monica, today (10-2-2021). She approached me, the poor woman (likely from that large and

not so mighty tribe of Desperadoes, I suspect), and began speaking in what sounded like Lesser Obfuscese, a language I command but imperfectly... After she switched to English, I learned she was merely inquiring as to whether I were in line. That interaction over, some minutes later, I found myself gingerly approaching her to see if she might perhaps have forgotten that I was ahead of her in the queue. At which she snapped: "the clerk is only letting me put my groceries on the counter. And you don't need to remind me." Properly chastened, I meekly returned to my place before finally completing my purchases.

Back on the street, reeling from that particular Aktion, I chanced to run into a young man who, briskly emerging from a nearby store, nearly colliding with me in the process, addressed me as "Brother." To which I instantly replied: "My regards to Sister Kamala." Forewarned is forearmed, wot?

Some time later, my Costco visit, generally the high point of these outings, went peaceably enough. The, by now, routine provocations notwithstanding; with me occasionally "brandishing" my LED sign where it might do the most good. Seeking visibility, I was. The more, the merrier, Eh? After checkout, as I was laboriously packing my quantity of groceries in the wheeled carrier I now bring for this purpose, having abandoned use of my bicycle, preparing for the trek home; one of the clerks, approaching, asked how I was. I instantly replied: "I'm alright, Jack." Before adding, "Your name is Jack, isn't it"? Betraying her puzzlement she at first said yes, before adding "my name is ..." At which

I, contrite, lamented: "I've been misinformed."

Later, on the way home by bus, I was made to endure a spot of poof-shaming, a practice practically unheard-of in this enlightened century. The poor creature involved must not have gotten the memo... I mean, really.

Remarquez le manège (notice the goings-on/the game)... Referring here to the increasingly frequent "coincidences," crossing of paths, veering in my direction, people suddenly emerging from nearby doors. Sometimes flagrant, sometimes subtle, at times (rarely) even shockingly physical; by people, young and old, known by me or not, well-disposed toward me or not, here and there. Not to mention the dreaded "manifest U-turn," a textbook example of which I was treated to this morning (10-12-2021). In the roadway as I walked back from my nearby car after checking on a solar panel, a woman chose that very moment to arrange to cross my path diagonally. But soft! In the middle of the road, just as we are close to crossing paths, she changes her mind, making a U-turn and heading back in the other direction for some obscure reason. Cars, too, with the squealing of their tires, can sometimes make for a spectacular road show as well.

Yesterday (10-4-2021), in another Aktion, this one inadvertently (?) illustrating the Chinese principle of "wu wei" (無為) or "action through inaction"; I called my local Toyota dealership, the one on Culver Blvd., looking for a quote on car repairs. To wit:

1. Replacement of airbags
2. Replacement of windshield
3. Refurbishing of seat belt tensioner
4. Replacement of turn indicators and plastic covers

One of the long-suffering (for this is not my first attempt) souls I spoke with initially suggested, with some alacrity, I take my custom to a body shop in Marina del Rey. Persisting in my quest; after a dropped connection, being put on hold(s), several transfers back and forth, and quite some confusion as to what I wanted and whether the dealership did this kind of work, I was eventually transferred to an extension which proved to be a recording inviting me to leave my name and number for a return call... In view of this, I will, when I call in future, immediately identify myself thus: "This is Bergendahl, but you can call me Bergie." This early identification may get me to the right department (voicemail again?) with less flottement, saving everyone's time, who knows?

Concerning the Los Angeles bus system, I have good news and I have bad news. First the good news. To-day (10-11-2021) I am pleased to report that no bus driver flipped me off. Not a one, I tell you. Now for the bad news, two or mebbe three (at the most) neglected to stop to pick me up. On one of my later rides, a fellow rider, also waiting for the bus, was kind enough to suggest (by example) that I use a flashing light to draw an oncoming driver's attention to my plight. Worth a try. Another Aktion of the "wu wei" variety. Quite effective, really. Earlier, as I began the day's journey, after having seen two pass me by, I decided to walk home from the nearby stop, pick up my cell phone as an aid in documenting (by taking pictures and acquiring time- and place-stamps) further such outrages committed upon my person, before returning to await the next bus.

Later, as I reached Matt's, my final destination, struggling to exit the bus with my backpack, the computer I was delivering strapped to a small dolly as well as my cane, the driver began closing the doors just as I was making my way out. Calling out that this was my stop, she replied, somewhat heatedly, "why did you not get off sooner, you must have seen the doors were closing"? My response was to pause near her (I was exiting through the front of the bus),

make a deep but silent bow and, without a further word, exit. I will say in her favor that she, too, neglected to flip me off. Not that any drivers have to date, I'm just saying.

Coming home after the day's travails, weary and cold, it being night by then, I sat at the front of a nearly empty bus when he began. Speaking (into a cell phone?), he (another passenger sitting in the back) started a series of barely audible uninterrupted monologues, some lasting many minutes over a period of about a half hour. Illustrating a phenomenon I first mentioned in my book: nearly subliminal noise. Speech (unlikely to have been a proper conversation) just below the threshold of audibility, certainly too low for me to make out any words, but unnerving just the same. With occasional sudden emphases (a somewhat louder word) timed to my movements, i.e., synchronization. It went on for most of the final leg of my return to the West Adams neighborhood. A high practitioner of this art, he was. Impressive. *En voila qui ne lésinent pas sur les moyens.* (They sure aren't skimping). "Kill-Me-Quick" was/is the nickname of a kind of South African beer; cheap, powerful and not always brewed with the right hygiene considerations uppermost. A bootleg product of township shebeens or beer halls, it apparently provided the requisite kick, perhaps making the general atmosphere somewhat bearable. And so, "... by a commodius vicus of recirculation..." we come to Bergie "Wag 'n Bietjie" 'awkins "... and environs."

— James Joyce, from *Finnegan's Wake* (Somewhat adapted by me)

I hope the above paragraph quite completely clears up any nagging misunderstandings you, Gentle Reader™, might have regarding the peculiar title of this piece of nonsense.

Regarding "That Hideous Strength," the infernal machinery I stumbled into/onto (?) so early in my life and have since attempted to document and expose a corner of. Perhaps it is not too early (too late?) to modestly propose a remedy, if I may make so bold. Maybe a process similar to that of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of post-apartheid South Africa would be salutary. Or perhaps something more along the lines of the denazification process in post-war Germany would be more appropriate...

I thought I might, at some point, begin a talk with a couple of jokes about that well-known power couple, the Ceaușescus. Say, the one about the rat found scurrying around at the 12th Party Congress (a particularly bloody affair, they say). Followed by a second joke, this one about an exchange between Nicolae and Elena, having a discussion in bed. Then on to the payload. One member of the firing squad which executed the pair reveals that ever since that day, he has had trouble with his conscience, trouble sleeping, even; and this for decades. Even though he himself was:

1. A trained soldier in the Romanian army
2. Only one of many who participated in the shooting and
3. The ones shot were, by all accounts, very, very bad people

In spite of this, the former soldier, apparently a decent, normal man; troubled by his involvement, strongly regrets participating. Given this, what conclusions can one reach concerning the gentlemen of the American Securitate? The ones ultimately responsible for my (and this place's) predicament? For this is likely not the first instance of such monstrous behavior on their part, I would wager. How do they sleep, I wonder? And can they be considered at all "normal"? *Mama Dracului!*

Finally, regarding the atmosphere on the "home front," i.e., my bungalow, a bit of Greek is in order here:

μαλάκας, adjective. /ma'lakas/ one who masturbates. Genitive singular form of *μαλάκα* (*maláka*). It has been described as "the most used Greek slang word." — from Wikipedia.

μαλακία, adjective. /ma-la-kia/ masturbation. Nonsense saying.

Subjected on a near-daily basis to the guffaws and immanent *μαλακία* of one of my next-door neighbors; the man I, for a time, called "Lord Haw-Haw II," I have settled on this convenient Greek catch-all mild insult (much like the Spanish-language generic, *cabrón*. Perhaps the Spanish word "*cantinflada*" applies here as well) as his new handle.

Ρε μαλάκα!

Thanks for your attention.

P.S. To my sister Irene: "May our tears prove invincible."

[Ladino Spoken Here? Ave Maria!](#)

Started on: 10/15/21 Updates: 10/18/21 10/20/21 10/22/21

It began with my call to AFJ Investment, my landlord, requesting a visit to fix a small leak from the kitchen water heater and repair a back door which no longer closed properly. A brief examination led the handyman who came Thursday afternoon to announce he would make a report. He left, however, without fixing anything. Later that evening, I found the leak had grown to the point where I was forced, every half hour, to empty a bowl I was forced to place under the leaking pipe. This throughout the entire night. Calls were made to AFJ (I got answering machines), to the DWP (not useful as I do not pay for water), even an emergency email sent to the City inspectors who had visited in previous weeks, an email in which I complained of the situation with pictures attached, at 2AM. None of it availed. At ten the next morning I, after more fruitless calls to the City and AFJ on my malfunctioning cell phone (I was forced to borrow a neighbor's) and somewhat in protest at the inexplicable behavior on the part of AFJ's Tiffany Anderson recently, dropped everything and betook myself to the beach for a much-needed respite. ¡Ya basta!

And, as to my landlady, poor Tiffany (what can be the matter?), I think I'll send her a stiff note.

That morning, on the way to the beach by bus, two passengers boarded the #33, sitting nearby. The couple spoke a language I had never before heard. Listening closely, I finally settled on Ladino, a

language related to Portuguese, with roots going back to the Middle Ages, a dialect spoken by Sephardic Jews. With the man talking all the while, the couple got off the bus as I did and, as there apparently was “unfinished business,” followed me on the next leg of my ride. After briefly sharing the bus bench with me, we all got on the other #33, the one to Santa Monica beach. As we ride, I hear the name Dixie mentioned, as in “Did you sleep with Dixie?” (Saaaay, I once knew a Dixie, personnel manager at Teledyne Controls in the late seventies). Forspeise, ja? Then, moments later, the pièce de résistance, “Maria.” Again moments later, “Maria,” possibly followed by another mention of the name. Maria was the first name of an aunt of mine, Maria Stein, sister of my mother, a beauty who married well; she’s briefly mentioned in the book. A bit gamey, this gambit.

On to the beach, my usual spot near Bicknell Avenue, where I was met by dueling madmen, among other bits of “entertainment.” The first near the sand where I had set up my folding chair. Several monologues of at least 15 minutes, uninterrupted, with many buttons pushed. The second, later, I had by then withdrawn to the bluffs to avoid the sun; he loudly, furiously, vociferously, speculating about a coming civil war as he sped by and charged the beach. Was the word “Jew” shouted near the end of this particular monologue or did I mishear? One wonders, is fear (the usual solvent) at work here or are we talking “payment in kind” for these two gentlemen?

(Regarding all of the above) Poor F**k**s. Suffering Humanity.

Bref, une journée chargée. But how will normal people find it in themselves to believe this, my latest farrago of elucubrations?

(10-16-21) Out on errands; waiting on Adams Boulevard, the third bus, by the grace of God, stopped for me. A-and, for the second day in a row, my luck held; that is to say, no bus driver gave me the finger. Although, I will let you in, Gentle Reader™, on a trick. Waiting for my very last bus, tired and hoping for a minimum of complications, I hit on an expedient: as the bus approached, within sight of the driver, I got down on my knees, joined my hands together, and sent up a prayer. And, as I boarded, apologized to the driver for my cheekiness, saying I had had a long day. Worked like a charm! Though

I’m not sure the driver took it that well. Another bit of street theater to add to my armamentarium. Yay! And, while I’m at it, thought up another bit of provocation, variant on what I now routinely do with the mailman from our Serene Republic’s Postal Service. I have resolved to occasionally begin waving a dollar bill as the bus approaches. Hey, as you may have noticed from today’s stunt, I’m not proud, a-and a little of that lagniappe might do the trick, as it seems to have done with the aforementioned Post Office. With the added benefit of not risking indictment on Federal charges of attempted bribery of a government employee (always a plus, I imagine). ¡Coño!

An occasional pattern, recently noticed. Possible heard more often lately. Faint refrains, barely audible (is a certain party become chary of saying “Jew” out loud?). A refrain accusing me of being Jewish. It’s peculiar that that lot (these gentlemen of the Securitate) would think someone of my estate could be insulted by being called a “Jew.” I mean, get real here...

An ugly story, the last fifty years of my life, no? The very saddest, ugliest part of which may have been perceptively touched on some years ago in a moment of anguish by my poor Colette Walczak. “Are your friends any better than my friends?” Quite so, quite so.

Over the weekend, a visit by Robby’s Rooter, 323-255-2346, the people who had contacted me during my afternoon at the beach, the previous Friday. People presumably sent for by the landlord, AFJ. The van pulled up to me as I was visiting my car, a surprise as I had no foreknowledge of the visit. The plumber eventually made his way to our complex, and after a curious manège involving shutting off the water, fruitlessly knocking on the manager’s door, walking this way and that and asking questions of me; when I asked if he had anything to do with me, curtly replied: “Never!” There was further meandering about the complex before he left, my leak still not fixed. Weird.

(10-20-21) On the bus. I change seats as someone gets off. Then, minutes later, slim, attractive (as far as I could tell, both were wearing masks) and heavily, heavily made up, the two of them boarded together. They sat nearby, perpendicular to me as we sped down Venice Boulevard, keeping up, all the while, a nearly uninterrupted patter. Both speaking an excellent English with a possible slight Iranian and/or French accent. A curious spectacle, somehow. Neither of these poor creatures could have been older than her twenties. Could they have both come direct from central casting? Ora pro nobis.

(10-21-21) Update to my kitchen flood. The handyman from AFJ, after a visit this Tuesday, pointed out that 1) The entire heater needs replacement and 2) That the water temperature was set too high, causing the safety relief valve to operate (as it should have). As to the thermostat having been incorrectly set: “it’s nufink to do wiv’ me, Guv,” I can assure you.

(10-22-21) It started around 3:30AM this morning. A certain remue-ménage (bustle, in English), emanating from the bungalow across from mine. The one occupied by the woman I have nicknamed “Lurk” in honor of the sitcom featuring the (West ?) Addams Family and that well-known, door-opening, very tall, peculiar fellow: “Lurch.” A fixture of the show, he never said much. At first, she made the standard, mostly faint noises, opening and closing the door and the like, sounds I have come to associate with that party. This time, though, a dialog soon began, eventually rising to what sounded like an argument. Words were exchanged. Words like “House.” “Don’t drive.” “Bitch,” etc. Capped off by a peremptory “Go!” from elsewhere, down the street. It all ended abruptly as I reluctantly got up at five. I am tempted to call this the “Five O’Clock Follies”? (Obscure but suggestive reference to the Vietnam war, here). Mebbe I’ll give Miss “Lurk” an additional nickname. How about Miss “Remue-Ménage,” a double-barreled name; promotion of sorts, wot? And now, if you’ll excuse me, I’ve probably got a bus to catch somewhere, i.e., mon public m’attend. Finally, to my (remaining) sister, Irene: “May our tears eventually prove invincible.”

Thank you for your attention,

Marking my Linen or Adventures in Provocation:

A Play in Two Acts

Started: 10/28/21 Modified: 10/29/21

Folks, I hardly know where to begin as I attempt to keep within the bounds of what propriety I may possess (which, as some of you know, is not necessarily all that much). Anyway, here goes.

Maintaining what have, so far, been fairly good relations with many neighbors, some of whom I have begun to call my (West) Addams Family, is proving a bit difficult, right now. With, in particular, events of last night suggesting a concerted attempt to sour said relations with a rank bit of provocation whose origins go back some months, thrown in as well.

Fasten your seat belts as some of the following bits of theater may put some of you off your feed. Bear with me, Gentle Reader™.

Cast of Characters

- ANGEL.....A neighbor for about a decade, in his early twenties, living in bungalow nearby. Our relations cordial, always.
- THE "BANSHEE"A recent arrival, young woman in her twenties, live upstairs in the back building. Equipped with a decent pair of lungs along with, perhaps, a certain lack of retenue; whence the moniker.
- THE "BANSHEE'S" ROOMMATE.....A silent partner.
- "LURK"A recent arrival, in her forties, she lives with her roommate in the bungalow directly across from mine. With retenue up the yin-yang, this one. One hardly ever hears her. Quiet as a church mouse, she is.
- "LURK'S" ROOMMATE
- 'X'.....A fiend. The villain of the piece. Traditionally, 'X' is known as the unknown quantity, though I have my suspicions as to who this is.
- BERGIE.....A Moor.
- FIRST NEIGHBOR
- SECOND NEIGHBOR
- THIRD NEIGHBOR ET AL.
- POLICEMAN.....Or one announcing himself as such.

Background

To my incredulity more than disgust, about a month ago, as part of my bungalow reorganization demanded by the City, going through a number of unused bed sheets, I came across one which had been used for a purpose other than that for which sheets are generally considered fit. The only possible explanation given the nature of what I had to clean. Call the author of this provocation 'X', the unknown quantity. In a foray into my bungalow, 'X' must have found it in him/herself (so to speak) to literally "mark my linen," as the happy ritish euphemism goes. Months later, with no reaction evident on my part, the other shoe drops. This is a phenomenon I encounter often, something I have come to call the "Greek chorus," where a point, previously made, is underlined, sometimes repeatedly. Rubbing it in, as it were. Some party is evidently hoping something, anything, will shake loose in this sorry affair. Provocation most foul!

Another bit of background. Whenever the "Banshee" and her roommate happen to pass me on their way out, regardless of the sometimes demented level of histrionics on display the previous night (a level at times causing me to wonder whether an ambulance or the police are called for. Not kidding), it is as though nothing unusual had happened. Regardless of the blood-curdling screams of the night before, the two usually, politely, one of them often with a blank look, as though she were a "Stepford wife," say hello before continuing on their way.

Act 1

The Events (Chronology not entirely accurate as I was in bed, trying to sleep, during most of it)

1. The "Banshee" cuts loose during the earlier evening with a preparatory verbal (?) barrage.
2. Minutes later, stepping outside, I try to make recording of her screams, but fail.
3. Just then I run into Angel, as he comes out of his bungalow. We exchange greetings as he makes his way out of the complex.
4. Minutes later, I cross the street to check the reach of the "Banshee's" voice which can still be heard from time to time.
5. More special effects from the "Banshee," continuing sporadically for some time.
6. I retire to my loft bed. After midnight (?), I begin to hear an argument between "Lurk" and her roommate. Unusual as the pair is always very quiet.
7. "Go!", "Leave!" "Drugs!" "You locked me out!"
8. "You wiped yourself/your ass (?) with my shirt" (Repeated by "Lurk" many times throughout the next hours as the argument continues.
9. More of this around 3AM. Followed by a pause.
10. Still more beginning at about 5AM.
11. Another voice, outside, is heard: "This is the police" (repeated several times).
12. Around 6AM, persistent, light knocks on the door of "Lurk's" bungalow . Then, as the day begins, silence descends.
13. Remaining mute throughout, I get up around 8:30AM, bemused.

Later that day, I went about the neighborhood trying to hand out free copies of my book, of which I have distributed about ten with only one refusal so far. Seeing a neighbor entering the complex next to mine, I approach and begin flogging my wares as he backs his car. Fruitlessly, as he would not even look in my direction. I, becoming increasingly upset, shout at him from outside, his electric gate remained open though I did not enter. "Can I give you a free copy of my book?", "Sir, may I come inside to hand you a copy of my book?", "My autobiography: *Schizophrenia Weaponized*, available for free!", "Hello!". After some minutes of this (what can the neighbors be thinking of my performance?), as he disappeared behind a building without so much as a glance in my direction, I gave up.

Act 2

(Update 10-29-2021) More "heart-rending shrieks, issuing from the formless void" this evening, courtesy of the "Banshee" and maybe her roommate but mostly the first. Later, in the night, long before I get up, another altercation wakes me. Once again between "Lurk" and her roommate. At one point he outside, pounding on the door, threatening: "I'm going to violate my parole!" (Slight chill runs down my back). She: "Outside!" (Repeated), then (possibly): "Leave!" (Possibly repeated). Back and forth accusations, at one point the roommate seems to bemoan "Lurk's" attitude: "Who do you think you are?" (Repeated). Several names of personalities follow. Then: "Michelle Obama?" "Barack Obama?", etc. "Do you think you are better than the rest of us?" Then, interjected: "You lived in a garage with a phone!" (Funny, that; as I listened to them while trying to get back to sleep, it came to me that I, too, had once lived in a garage and that I, too, had had a phone there)... Followed by more verbal back-and-forth. Eventually, as the day dawns, quiet.

Exeunt omnes.

Thank you for your attention,
(signed)
il Serenissimo

P.S. To my sister Irene: May our tears eventually prove invincible.

Memorial summary (6-15-21)

6-15-2021, late

The memorial for Halli, a former customer of mine, was held outdoors in a sort of shallow amphitheater, I got there late and sat near the back.

The host at the church in Silverlake, a man in his forties, facing the audience, did his level best, for some reason, to draw attention to himself during the proceedings by, among other stunts, going so far at one point as to vigorously, frenetically, even, kick while sitting down, swinging his leg to the beat of the music, I presume. A-and 'im a man of the cloth, I believe.

After several people had spoken in tribute to Halli, he briskly made to move the program along. I had to rush the stage to, as it were, insist on (though it was already rather dark...) my "place in the sun," wot? (Prepared to be British about

it, too, I was - though, of course, I didn't say so). Presumed-Man-of-the-Cloth then graciously yielded the microphone...

Introducing myself as Bergendahl, I related an anecdote I've been saving all these decades for just the right occasion. About meeting and conversing with stone Swedish gang members (black leather jackets, knife scars and all) on a bus in Los Angeles, long ago. The two speaking perfect English, English such as I have rarely heard spoken in this town. I said the interaction predisposed me to look on Scandinavian cultures kindly and that Halli, the man in whose name the memorial was being held, had not disappointed. I even got to throw in a bit of Swedish (not sure if I got the pronunciation right). Lastly, I added that, in my opinion, "Civilization is all."

I barely touched on my book, mentioning fliers and copies to be on display after the memorial. I then thanked everyone. And with that, said I had to go pee. Presumed-Man-of-the-Cloth being kind enough to point out the loo after I asked... Some pretty girls there; unfortunately, it seems they were all "taken," or is the right word "possessed"?

Afterwards, I sat, alone, watching and guessing at how many of the thirty or more present had made their peace with Tonton; with most avoiding eye contact during and after my (quite brief) moment at the podium, except them as wasn't...

As the gathering broke up, I helped the others present tidy up a bit.

Exeunt omnes.

The take? One copy sold, to the ex-wife (that kind soul) of (that equally kind soul) Haraldur Kristjánsson, dead of esophageal cancer in 2021.

(signed)

Bergendahl (in Los Angeles, natch!)

P.S. The book, Schizophrenia Weaponized: A False Flag Operation Aimed at the Jewish Peoples and the Republic, is available as advanced reader copies (ARC) for \$20.20 (as in twenty-twenty vision), in paperback. It runs about 260 pages with some BW 30 illustrations. I recommend those of you interested NOT order by mail as the USPS can be, perhaps, unreliable at times. Sigh...

Oh Bos(c)h!

In which your "Friend and Humble Narrator™" uses the biggest French word he knows

Started: 11/05/21 Edited: 11/06/21 11/07/21 11/08/21 11/12/21 11/13/21 11/16/21 11/18/21 11/20/21 11/23/21 11/25/21 11/28/21

bosh, noun, \ 'bāsh \: foolish talk or activity: nonsense — often used interjectionally.

— from Merriam-Webster

Bosch, proper noun, \ (bōsh, bōsh, bōs) \: Hieronymus 1450?-1516. Dutch painter whose largely religious works are characterized by grotesque, fantastic creatures mingling with human figures.

— from American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language

I approach the subjects of this email with quite mixed feelings, as reflected in the title and above definitions. An ongoing dark tragedy, though not without elements of slapstick.

A short but accurate summary of a Skype conversation with my sister Irene on Friday, November 5:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

She calls me delusional

Says that in the emails I send out, I am "raving and ranting," her words

She feels I need to be on medication for 2-3 years

Says I have other interests and should pursue them instead of this book

Says it was a "big mistake" to hand out copies of the book to my neighbors but does not elaborate. (Is she proposing that I sweep all of it, the bizarre events of the last decades, including the fact that my fingerprints are on several guns, under the carpet. Then to go "and sin no more")? My (simplistic?) idea, and it has been something of a fixation with me for decades, can be summed up in the words: "the more, the merrier," i.e., the more people know about this funny business, the better for (most of) us. I'm comfortable with this stance.

6. Claims people try to give me helpful advice, advice I don't follow

7. Said I'm not in good mental health

8. Touched on the insult I wrote about in a previous email, an insult scribbled on a copy of the book placed on my doorstep a few nights ago. She mentioned this act specifically, maybe to buttress the "case" she was attempting to make, without commenting on the wrongness of it

9. She hinted that, should I persist in this endeavor, there may be no more money forthcoming. Let me mention that Irene has over the last year, become an important source of money for me

10. Said I need an appointment immediately with both my psychiatrist and therapist

11. Said I am often agitated when we talk on Skype

12. Said I make bad decisions: 1) Spend money on my book 2) Mismanage my money

13. She objects strongly to phrases I use in the book. Specifically mentioning the following phrases on the back cover: 1) "I'm mentally ill" 2) "I was meant to kill" 3) "I want a scandal"

14. In her opinion, my book is "mostly delusional" (an actual, verbatim quote)

15. She began repeating herself, became increasingly agitated and loud, would not let me speak. Near the end of the conversation we were both shouting

Et, ce faisant, elle me racroche au nez. Saperlipopette! (And, in doing so, she hangs up as we speak. Goodness me!)

A point I will concede though, is her comment about my occasional agitation. I know. Thank you, Irene.

This is the very same person who, as I've previously related, once attempted to have me embezzle moneys from our father. Just so you, Gentle Reader™, are under no illusion as to the nature and methods of some of the elites we are saddled with, I will violate a confidence. Irene once hinted at her "original sin." There may be a term of art for this: a "Back," perhaps, a minor sin which, in this case, led to quite a precipitous slide. "Plastic," she whispered to me in a rare moment of candor during my first visit to Italy.

Keep in mind she, during previous decades, has repeatedly sent me badly needed money I could not have survived

without. Let me also thank her for the timely gift of a new suit of clothes in a package I received earlier this year as I was preparing in earnest the advanced reader copies (ARC) of my autobiography, Schizophrenia Weaponized. And, in

an email I received around that time, Irene used the word "Goodwill." Even one such as I, "Tio Tonto" (Uncle Doofus), as I sometimes style myself, can read between the lines. Quite a mixed bag, my sister, Eh? With the same judgment applying to my other sibling, Colette Walczak, needless to say.

If what I have just related is a sample of what was eventually achieved with the (initial) "chickenfeed" they had on Irene, that poor creature; what miracles could these "Gentlemen of the Securitate™" not have worked with me, had this operation turned out as planned? With an interest in underage girls and child pornography, income tax evasion and desultory bits of stock fraud thrown in for good measure, I would have been good to go (so to speak), Eh? I merely note.

Regarding a minor incident last week at Kaiser Permanente Hospital on Cadillac Avenue in West Los Angeles, I sent in a complaint Friday and received the following preliminary reply:

subject:Re: Medicare Grievance (KMM112366271V42142L0KM)

From:Grievance

Received:11/05/2021

To Lawson Hawkins (Viewed)

Case ID: 53202104

Message body:Hello Lawson,

Thank you for your concern regarding your visit to the West Los Angeles Radiology Department. At Kaiser Permanente, member satisfaction is one of our highest priorities. In order to ensure that your concern is properly addressed, we will be forwarding it to a case manager for review, investigation and response. Please know that it is our mission to consistently provide considerate and compassionate care that is of the highest quality. We are continuously exploring ways to improve the services we provide to our members and thank you for taking the time to communicate your experience with us. If you have any additional questions you may email or call Member Services at 1-800-443-0815 open 24 hours per day, 7 days per week, excluding holidays.

Thanks again for using our online services.

Sincerely,

Ginger R

Customer Service Representative

Kaiser Permanente Member Service Contact Center

Phone: 1-800-464-4000

First Name: LAWSON

Middle Initial: B

Last Name: HAWKINS

Person Filing Address: [Redacted]

Person Filing City: LOS ANGELES

Person Filing State: CA

Person Filing Zip Code: [Redacted]

Person Filing Daytime Phone: 000-000-0000

Person Filing Alternate Phone: {Redacted}

Email Address: [Redacted]

Best time to call: 9 a.m. to noon

Region: SCA

Person Filing Kaiser Member: Yes

Person Filing Region of Membership: SCA

MRN-HRN: {Redacted}

Relationship: Self

Department/location and medical facility where issue occurred [sic]: Kaiser Permanente on Cadillac in West Los Angeles,

MRI department, the trailer

Date issue occurred [sic]: 11/01/2021

Please describe the nature of the issue:I had just finished 2 MRIs for which I had an appointment at 8:30AM, Monday, Nov. 1, and was dressing, facing away from the person in question, when he abruptly, without saying a word, reached for the cord attached to the earplugs I was wearing and pulled on it, jerking both earplugs out of my ears. I was startled, briefly looked at him, said nothing and continued dressing. This took me by surprise as there had been no altercation or indication of anything wrong previously. I find his behavior to be more than inconsiderate. I find it to be objectionable. Indeed, I find his action strange. Perhaps he could be reminded that this sort of thing is not to be done. There was another person present, a woman handling the MRI procedures. She is in no way part of my complaint but may have witnessed the incident.

Descriptions -

He: A Black man, middle aged

She: A white woman, also middle aged, with a Slavic accent I am making this complaint today, Friday, Nov. 5.

There is no hurry in this. I want a paper trail for this unusual incident.

Thanks,

Bergendahl/Bergie

Please explain how you have tried to resolve this issue:

Did not mention it to the person in question either at the time or later. Wishing to avoid any confrontation and surprised as I was. Am only making a complaint today after thinking over the incident.

What would you consider a proper solution to your issue:

I leave this entirely up to your management.

Signature: LAWSON B HAWKINS

Signature Date: November 5, 2021

Date Submitted: 11/05/2021

Time Submitted: 11:59:06 AM PDT

End of Member Submission

The above reproduced verbatim except for some reformatting.

This is not the first instance of unwarranted, not to say outlandish, behavior I have experienced at Kaiser over the last decade. A short sample of events:

1. A male Asian pharmacist, name unknown. Several years ago, when I would visit the pharmacy, he would often greet me wordlessly from behind the counter with a military salute. I never responded but eventually chose to make a written complaint about this and other events to Kaiser management. There was no response.
2. A doctor. Several years ago, during visits with my doctor, Sarah Elizabeth Hooks, there were times when she would, in a low voice, make suggestions regarding my stance toward Colette Walczak, also suggesting other actions I should take in general. I have covered this, mentioning her by name, in my book.
3. A doctor. In an episode I can still scarcely believe happened, I was, without my knowledge, drugged before an appointment at the same Kaiser hospital. Ericka Marie Gair, the per diem optometrist [sic] who saw me about

a throat complaint, made several suggestive and sinister comments during that visit. The entire incident, mentioning her name, is thoroughly covered in my book.

I merely note.

This week, I'm at the checkout counter in the nearby Superior Market when, fumbling, I drop the cane I was using. The Mexican (?) guy behind me immediately says, apropos nothing, "¡Si!" And, as the cashier hands me my change I notice she has put the receipt on top. As I struggle to separate the bills underneath from the receipt, loose change sandwiched between the two tumbles to the floor. I am forced to kneel once again, scrambling to pickup my coins. A physically awkward moment for me as, encumbered by the cane, I also have a slight problem with dexterity.

"Brides of Sassenach." Another name for the poor unfortunates I run into often enough, creatures who seem to have made their peace with these "Gentlemen of the Securitate™." I refer to them, there have been several lately, as "MissPoon," "Miss Tang," "Fräulein Verboten" a-and dread "Fräulein Streng-Verboten." What is one to make of it when

one of them says, as she walks by: "You've got a big one"? An exact quote. Her name, you ask? "Deponent sayeth not." What should this suggest to me? What should this suggest about her predicament (she's a very decent, likeable person, by the way)? What should this suggest about the prevalent socio-cultural-political atmosphere of this place (maybe not a country; a Granfalloon, perhaps)? Along with several encounters related in previous emails there are two other such creatures who appear in my book: Caroline Taicher and "Swiss Miss," real name unknown. Like I said, I'm not fooling myself about the seductive potential of my brown eyes, Eh? Balding, eccentric, mentally ill, overweight, partly crippled, flatulent old man that I am. State-sponsored prostitution, anyone?

Just thought up another nickname for the Master(s) of that poor creature I called "A Fiend" in my previous email: Marking my Linen. And that word is Scheißminister (sorry, no translation here). Calling him/her "the Villain of the Piece" was clearly overdoing it, I see it now. That honor, too, belongs elsewhere, along with the nickname. The whole episode amounting to yet another striking "telegenic error."

Just after umm Toubib (our mother) died at 94, Irene sent me a picture of her caretaker, the North African woman present when maman fell out of bed, Irene then being on a visit to Holland. Maman was to die of the resulting head injuries a few weeks later. With this gesture, Irene implicitly appointed me "keeper of the flame."

A belated thought (years late) about Maureen Cyr, my social worker at the Edelman Mental Health Center in West Los Angeles. Over a decade ago, long before my "Epiphany," I had been talking to her freely about the sinister goings-on in my life without being able to make much sense of it. I remember her once asking: "are you afraid/frightened?" I see now she may have been trying to help. I also see this as evidence of wheels within wheels which leads me to ask who else over there knew. My immediate answer to Maureen, an answer which has stood the test of time: "I'm not sophisticated enough to know." And what of my sister's insistence on meeting her during a visit to this place around that time? It was during that encounter that I heard something which, even then, surprised me. In the visit, Irene asked Maureen for suggestions on how I could bypass the restriction on my income (an illegal act which she properly refused to reply to). At the time, I did not know what to make of this. With the passage of time, the following sequence suggests itself:

1. During a routine (for me) conversation, Maureen probes to see whether I am frightened by the strange events I have been relating. My answers possibly providing a certain mitigating context should I ever "act out."
2. Irene, on a visit here, surprisingly asks to accompany me to my next meeting with Maureen.
3. During the meeting, she attempts to get Maureen to commit an illegal act, namely advising us on how to circumvent Social Security rules. Or could this have been a subtle reminder to Maureen of a past indiscretion?
4. It was also during then, I think, that Irene gave me a debit card to use surreptitiously, we even tested it.
5. Sometime after these events, I am not sure exactly when, Maureen leaves the employ of the Edelman Mental Health Center. I never see her again.

Reinterpretation of past events in light of current knowledge is sometimes known as "walking the cat backward."

Question is, what bearing, if any, do the above paragraphs have on my one remaining sister's moral and mental states? And further, should I seriously consider the possibility that my feelings for this hapless criminal, possibly mentally ill to boot; I am referring here to my Beloved (that was the first word in the first email, now missing, she ever sent me), constitute my single greatest vulnerability (as was also the case with poor Colette Walczak) at this point? Regardless, I will endeavor to keep alive the memory of Colette and succor Irene, in whatever ways I can. So long as in so doing, my own standing in this monstrous, sinister and demented farce is not jeopardized. I'm worried sick about her.

You've no doubt heard the saying: "Shirt-sleeves to shirt-sleeves in three generations." Well, my family's trajectory is somewhat analogous. Keep in mind my grandfather, Booker Hawkins, was born a slave and that Irene seems to be in a scarcely better position today. So I say: "From slavery to slavery in three generations."

And now Irene (I really don't know what to make of you anymore. Though I do understand it's "complicated," as you recently said). Let me say one more word on the subject of our heated conversation of a few days ago; my very last on this particular subject. Maman. Tom. Colette. Period. Regarding the above paragraphs, another aside to you, Irene:

« Quelque critiques que puissent être la situation et les circonstances où vous vous trouvez, ne désespérez de rien ; c'est dans les occasions où tout est à craindre, qu'il ne faut rien craindre ; c'est lorsqu'on est environné de tous les dangers, qu'il n'en faut redouter aucun ; c'est lorsqu'on est sans aucune ressource, qu'il faut compter sur toutes ; c'est lorsqu'on est surpris, qu'il faut surprendre l'ennemi lui-même. »

— Sun Tse (L'Art de la guerre) (From Guy Debord's Comments on the Society of the Spectacle)

("However critical the situation and circumstances in which you find yourself, despair of nothing; it is on the occasions in which everything is to be feared that it is necessary to fear nothing; it is when one is surrounded by all the dangers that it is not necessary to dread any; it is when one is without resources that it is necessary to count on all of them; it is when one is surprised that it is necessary to surprise the enemy himself.")

— Sun Tzu, The Art of War) (From Guy Debord's Comments on the Society of the Spectacle)

Regarding today's shopping excursion on November 15, 2021. I can report the following. Heading home after an afternoon's shopping, a seemingly angry bus driver refuses to let me board, or was he merely "following orders"? As I approach, he closes the doors; trying to get his attention, I pound on them with my cane. They open and, with my cane, I point to the folding ramp, meaning I need him to actuate it, only for him to close the doors again. As they close, I manage to stick the tip of my cane inside. Noticing my cane trapped by the doors he relents, opening. Then yells at me: "How am I supposed to open up as I'm trying to pull up?" Yelling, he was. A-and I always thought only German bus drivers with their Wehrmacht-like caps and gray uniforms used the command voice nowadays. I back off. Doors now closed, he proceeds to move the bus forward a few feet; ever hopeful, I follow. Having caught up to it, the bus then speeds off, leaving me at the curb, all other passengers having boarded. In addition to the cane, I was at that moment weighed down with a backpack and a small wheeled carrier filled with groceries. Some specifics:

-
-
-
-

The bus: #720, an articulated express eastbound on Wilshire Blvd. at 6th St. in Santa Monica
The time: 3:08PM, Monday, November 15, 2021

The driver: Black, male, middle aged, fairly heavysset

The next #720 bus, ID #8736, came within minutes, I boarded without incident

That same day, on a later bus, the Three Graces put in an appearance. Veritable potential objects of cult-like veneration they were, i.e., cute. They clustered around me as I sat, minding my own business. Over the course of the next several minutes, surrounded by my groceries, they asked more than once: "Can I help you?" Each time, I replied with a quiet but firm: "Thank you, no." Writing this tonight, somehow I feel a bit ashamed and nauseous, just now. Oh, and despite my best efforts, I am so far unable to pay the fare on Santa Monica buses. The display aboard the bus today registering "Empty/Please recharge" or some such phrase as I tried to pay the forty cents fare with my card (Santa Monica buses no longer accept cash). This in spite of my having put twenty dollars worth of credit in my TAP account several weeks ago. (Update) I found out today, November 16, that the employee I spoke with over a week ago, had not transferred the credit.

On the morning of Tuesday, November 16, 2021, wishing to avoid a parking ticket, not that the meter reader comes around anymore, I went to start my car with the battery loaned each week by my neighbor. To my consternation the car started! But, as I was about to learn, cruel fate can be deceiving. Leaving the engine to idle, after a few minutes I returned and drove up the street to find a place on the Monday side. Ignoring a car which pulled out of a suitable spot as I drove up, I continued up the street, checking the car's behavior and taking advantage of my "luck" by letting the engine run a while as it had sat, unable to start, for months. A half a mile away, turning back, the engine unaccountably died. Unable to start it again and faced with the task of pushing it all the way back alone, I was lucky enough to soon find a couple of people who volunteered to help. The two later replaced by a pickup truck whose driver carefully nudged my Tercel back to its starting point in front of my bungalow. The moral of this story completely escapes me. Unless it is to underline the fact that my car, with the engine liable to both start and quit arbitrarily, is so unreliable as to put paid to the idea of my having it repaired anytime soon – assuming I can find a mechanic willing to take my (at this moment, non-existent) money, that is. Or, at any rate, before the root cause of this peculiar engine behavior has been determined. Later, that afternoon, I headed to the Kaiser Permanente hospital on Sunset Boulevard for a doctor's appointment. Apologized to everyone for being a half hour late. One of the first things Terterov, the neurosurgeon, cheerfully asked:

"Everything on the up-and-up?" Well, I wouldn't go so far as to say that, doc. In fact, since you ask, I think I'd like a second opinion, Eh? While yesterday, a man by the name of Julian Walsh, introducing himself as a manager in the radiology department of Kaiser on Cadillac, called. During a minutes-long conversation, I was eventually assured by Mr. Walsh that the employee I had complained of last week would be reminded that he is not, on any account, to yank on any more patients' earplug cords in order to dislodge them. Welcome and reassuring news, I'd say.

Today, November 20, 2021, I rode the bus again. Waiting at Adams and Dunsmuir, three westbound buses neglected to stop though, in all fairness, I confess that by the time the third bus (#37 bus, ID #4167, 12:26PM) which did stop to take on passengers, arrived, I was hopping mad and affected not to notice; the charade having taken over an hour.

Immediately after, I chose to walk the mile to my next connecting bus. Continuing this "stance" for the rest of the afternoon, whenever I had another bus to catch, I made sure to position myself facing away from, though clearly visible to, any oncoming bus. I would lean back against the pole holding the bus sign, pull out a book and with my cane displayed, read. A "stance" which, having proved itself to-day, I can now add to my armamentarium of street theater bits. Call it an "Autobus Aktion" of the well-known 無為 (wu wei) or, action through inaction variety – it sometimes pays to brush up on one's Taoism, you see. As an aside, I've been told by a professional in the mental health business, someone who knows me well, that I am a passive-aggressive type. One wonders to what extent the occult forces apparently at work here, in the LA Metro bus system, may also be a factor elsewhere.

I merely note.

I want my file. I want Father's file. Including all videos, audio, pictures, text as well as any additional data available. In their entirety. In order to immediately put them in the public domain, making them accessible to anyone interested. In their entirety. I also propose to eventually hand-carry complete copies of these files, along with other documents to several "relevant" embassies for a shot at permanent storage of this information and further dissemination to the general public. Call it an appropriate mix of a kind of samizdat + tamizdat. Appropriate for these times, that is.

My whole private life exposed in graphic, gruesome detail. For the whole world to see; and that, only if I'm lucky enough to eventually get my hands on these files. Consider the confluence of events and prevalent sociopolitical atmosphere this implies.

For me to accept a deal, a deal of any kind, from the place (I hesitate to call it a country) that is likely responsible for murder most foul and, what's more (it looks likely), murder unpunished – with no one of any significance to be exposed, let alone brought to account, would be tantamount to a degree of acquiescence and/or complicity in these acts; maybe even giving the whole business the whiff of a quid pro quo. Lending, in effect, the various arrangements, scams, atmospheres, complacencies, looking the other way, cowardice, cynicism and je-m'en-foutisme that have made it possible, whatever bits of respectability can still be scrapped together at this late date.

I've had it pretty easy, haven't I? Recently, since my "dark decades," that is. With a day job: regular, if long, hours consisting mainly of keeping my nose clean; attempting to depend less and less on fickle, vulnerable technologies; sidestepping the (mostly) transparent provocations of people, some of whom somewhat remind me of the creatures populating the last pages of Jack London's merciless novel, *The Iron Heel*. Putting up with the repetitive, monotonous, often halfhearted harassment by pitiful, debased individuals who probably overwhelmingly wish me well and desperately hope I am the savior who will (Somehow. How?) free them from an unending life of bondage and ever-deepening degradation. There are also the occasional, more direct but still relatively gentle, reminders by these Gentlemen of the Securitite™ of the urgency and seriousness of their own embarrassment and plight. I hope I am eventually offered a deal. From whatever quarter. I fervently hope so.

An ugly story, the last fifty years of my life, no? The very saddest, ugliest part of which may have been perceptively touched on in a moment of anguish (I remember it vividly) by poor Colette Walczak. "Are your friends any better than my friends?" she asked. Quite so, quite so. There is a great deal for us all to ponder in that short sentence. May I put in a word for a couple of books and a British soap? The eighties TV series, *Yes, Minister* followed by its

sequel, *Yes, Prime Minister* (excerpts available on YouTube). Stanislaw Lem's *Memoirs Found in a Bathtub* (recommended by my much esteemed, though former, friend, Janusz Hetman). Guy Debord's *Comments on the Society of the Spectacle*, available in PDF form at: <https://libcom.org/files/Comments%20on%20the%20Society%20of%20the%20Spectacle.pdf>. Its predecessor, *The Society of the Spectacle* in my opinion a worthless, because incomprehensible, book (to my simple peasant mind, at any rate). Comments on ..., altogether different, is quite a bracing tonic, though not necessarily recommended reading for the garden-variety paranoid schizophrenic I am... Today, November 24, by not picking up the mail I set out yesterday, this Serene Republic's Postal Service cleverly avoided the (mouse) trap I set out last night (see pics below). Canny, canny. Unless, of course, this is merely a straightforward case of ca' canny, Eh? A-and me hoping to catch the rat what's been entering me premises, nights. In other news, my bilingual blog: *Bergie's Blog: When Schizophrenia is Weaponized*, in French: "Les Potins de la Commère — un Blog en (Mauvais) Français: Quand la Schizophrénie est Arsenalisée" (The Gossip of a Tattletale — a Blog in (Rotten) French: When Schizophrenia is Weaponized) is will soon be available at BERGENDAHLHAWKINS.IS. The volume of material I now deal with daily warranting it. There may soon also be

an identical backup blog at BERGENDAHLHAWKINS.COM.

Sorry for the overlong email, I wanted to wait until the blog was up before distributing this brief note but, in the intervening days, events conspired. At the moment, I find myself unable to access Bergie's Blog for editing; and so this email goes out, regardless. Expect my blog to be up as soon as I figure out what is going on. This will therefore likely be the last of these emails, with further updates to be posted online, in near-realtime.

A luta continua!

(signed)

Bergendahl/Bergie

der ewige Kampfmużhik/il Serenissimo (the eye I of the hurricane)/Tio Tonto <= (My latest literary confection. TT or T2 or T2 for short. Like it?)

P.S. To my sister Irene: May our tears eventually prove invincible. And, as I wrote to Colette when I first learned of her cancer, Du Courage!

P.P.S. I miss my (former) friends, all of them. I miss my family.P.P.P.S. To my would-be Masters: the more you work to persuade me that my cause is hopeless, the more I note just how much effort you are willing to put into this charade (the play within a play, I call it) and thus how worried you must be. It's self-defeating, guys. Even I notice. Maybe you just can't see the forest for the B-trees... Another epigram!

Solitaire/Jeu de Patience

Started: 12/03/21 Edited: 12/08/21 12/09/21 12/10/21

Though, in the last fifty years of my peculiar life, there have been several instances of the type of events I will relate, the worst of all took place recently (I began writing this on 12-5-2021), it is listed first.

•(12-1-21) A child of about five, apparently the daughter of a man visiting Anna, a neighbor, walks by me for at least the second time in a day. Visibly frightened, this child leads a dog out of our complex while I am on the sidewalk, assembling a tricycle.

Noticing, I immediately see the obvious fear in her face. Turning away, I say nothing and continue my work. To give proper, additional focus to this bit of horror, for horror it is, I must remind you that I am known to have/have had an interest in underage girls. Given the obvious emotions of this child as it approached, it seems plausible that her father not only knew about me but that, furthermore (I speculate here, there are other possibilities), perhaps in order to afford some measure of protection to the kid should I attempt anything untoward, he must have sternly told her to avoid me even as he sent her in my direction. Think of the possible emotional injury to this poor creature, think of the actual moral injury to her father. The proper term for the type of people, by which I mean these Gentlemen of the Securitate™ and only them, individuals who will force a father to make his child go through this: Cannibals.

•A boy less than ten, son of a neighbor named Tyson, is now behaving oddly around me, something he never did before. I first noticed his changed behavior when, once, he gave me the finger from the sidewalk as I sat in my car. If I am not mistaken, he is harassing me. As are his siblings. My day-to-day life and environment baffle description, so uncommon is it. I am being harassed by a kid under ten...

•Gadiel Velasquez, a neighbor for several years thus likely to be aware of my unsavory reputation, recently offered me money to (regularly ?) drive his young daughters from school, offering me the use of his car as I do not have one right now. The first time he asked, I said I would get back to him. I did not. Days later, Gadiel again asked me. This time, I refused outright.

•In the past I have, a witness was present, seen a girl of about twelve years, someone I had never seen before, literally drape herself suggestively on the steps to my door as I approach my bungalow before she gets up and walks away without a word. I believe she is somehow related to a nearby neighbor but, as I cannot be absolutely sure, I will not mention his name.

•I have told the following story in my book available on eBay, Schizophrenia Weaponized. It bears retelling. Colette Walczak was my friend for over thirty five years, more of a sister, really. During the last year of her fight with breast cancer she once phoned me to say her niece was in town along with her parents. During our conversation she mentioned that the girl was thirteen and had "big boobs." After which she repeated herself before our conversation ended. These are not isolated instances, there is a pattern at work here. A pattern of behavior by these Gentlemen of the Securitate™. Of these many encounters, with all concerned living a horror to varying degrees, I have only cited a few stark, egregious violations of the dignity of the parents and the innocence of the child and ask: is this common practice and from what fevered imaginations do such ideas emerge?

Point is, once one begins cooperating with these Gentlemen of the Securitate™ questions may arise:

- Where does it end?
- What lies at the endpoint of this "journey"?
- At what point does one say: "This far and no further"?
- And, perhaps having belatedly come to the above decision, just how, exactly, does one stop cooperating?

The above bears thinking about if one reflects on the dire predicament of these poor creatures. By which I mean the parents forced to exploit their children in this way. These questions especially bear thinking about when one is offered the poisoned apple of "working" for these Gentlemen of the Securitate™, the security services, in exchange for their turning a blind eye to one's vulnerabilities. To sum up, instead of the usual arrangement by which any self-respecting cannibal kills his victim before cooking and eating him: these people seem not to trouble with this preliminary step; preferring instead to eat their victims alive, bit by bit, though it take a lifetime.

(12-2-21) David Nash, an acquaintance of Matt Horns I have done PC work for, calls. He leaves a message requesting help with his computer. Noteworthy are the two words at the end of the voicemail, a nearly incomprehensible (or was it merely garbled?) send-off: "Happy Holocaust" [sic]. Could I have misheard? This interlude comes complete with some plausible deniability inherently built-in as Mr. Nash is not always the most reliable of persons. In spite of this, I returned his call, perhaps not quite believing what I had just heard. A major weakness, really. There are times when I. Just. Don't. Want. To. Know. Somewhat typical of me.

And so, as I wrote on the back cover of my book:

I don't have to walk,
I won't run,
I don't need their money,
I want a scandal.

In the last month or so, I have sold (on eBay) and shipped stuff to:

-
-
-
-

Australia (a-and what a chore that was. When I first went to mail, the post office informed me they had no option to ship first class to that country. The nice man behind the counter even offered to show me what was on his computer screen when I betrayed my incredulity).

Hungary (went smoothly).

New Zealand (ditto).

Also sold a copy of my book (domestically) on eBay two days ago. Bought media mail postage online and scheduled a pickup at my mailbox. Regarding this particular transaction, I have good news and I have bad news. Good news is, tonight, 12-2-21, I got an email confirming that pickup did happen, USPS confirmation number: WEC416148132. Bad news is, since November 30, the mail carrier has not picked up my package sitting outside, though I have seen him twice. As to the phone conversation about this problem I had yesterday with my local post office, I prefer not to further impose on you just now, Gentle Reader™.

And now (written on 12-2-21), I find myself shipping twenty pieces of a used integrated circuit, something called a Xilinx XC2018, to a customer with a Chinese name. Where to exactly, I know not.

The incongruity of actually selling XC2018s, now-worthless computer chips, obsolete 20 years ago, to "Greater China" (could this be the actual destination?), caused me to break into loud, repeated, convulsive bursts of laughter for minutes tonight. I had tears in my eyes and laughed like a jackass as is sometimes my habit (Colette Walczak knew the laugh). And, as I was very loud and it was late (now past midnight, as I write this), I'm afraid my reputation around my apartment complex, not to mention the wider neighborhood, may conceivably suffer (I'm rather low on my supply of that gravitas, right now). Never have so few (namely me) laughed so hard, for so long, over so little. The punch line: "XC2018s to Greater China." Fokken priceless, too killing. Mwahahahahaha!

As I re-read the malarkey in the above paragraph, an idea! I may start giving away the rest of my stock of these damn XC2018s. To celebrate. Appropriate, no? On the bus for starters. A place where I seem to spend a lot of time these days (or is it the ever-present atmospheric that make it seem that way?). Yet another bit of street theater to add to my repertory.

I hope the above anecdote will not reflect too badly on me or my sanity.

Yesterday, after two months of fruitless maddening exchanges of emails and phone calls, the saga of my search for guidance from LADOT parking division came to an end. A kind soul in parking enforcement assured me I could, without violating City ordinances, permanently park my solar-powered tricycle near the sidewalk to provide my bungalow with electricity. A solar hot water heater, also on the tricycle, will complete the system. With the tricycle to be parked on the grass strip between the sidewalk and the curb when I am not riding it. Before hanging up, the operator, twice, also advised me to put a lock on it..

And so, late this morning I settle on the sidewalk outside our complex, preparing to assemble a frame for the solar panel my landlord is unwilling to allow on AFJ premises, forcing me to put it on the tricycle. As I carry things to the street, a procession of women begins, one after the other, many pushing prams. I even suspect one of them was making circuits around the block as I'm pretty sure I saw her several times that morning. With what seemed like metronome regularity, they came. With trajectories perfectly timed to intersect my path just as I walk out of the front gate. Uncanny. There must be some kind of marshaling yard somewhere nearby, no?

With striking frequency, this phenomenon happens. In public places, stores, on foot or bicycle, even on my street; with people I have known for years as much as with strangers. They can be close by or heading in my general direction from across the street. Regardless, they seem to head straight for me, with the nearby ones veering away at the last moment.

My firmly adopted tactic in situations where the other person is close and possibly on a collision course with me (increasingly frequent, in recent experience): to immediately come to a full stop, with my hands crossed in front of me, looking away, while I quietly wait for the other person to pass. A procedure at times taking several seconds, depending. If the person in question manages to bump into

me in the process, I sometimes quietly say: "Excuse me."

And then there are the ever-present refrains: "Go." "Leave." "Shit" (a recent innovation). "Stop." "iSi!" etc, sometimes whispered, sometimes shouted (from the rooftops?). Even more insidious and not unrelated, are what I call "synthetic ideas of reference." The phrase "ideas of reference" describes a symptom of mental illness in which a person thinks others are talking about him. An example of the synthetic variety should illustrate and give an idea of how widespread the practice is. An Iranian émigré, living in Los Angeles, lands in Tehran for a family visit. During routine questioning by a member of Iranian state security, he finds himself innocuously asked: "Do you still have that framed picture of the Shah on the right of your mantelpiece?" Nowadays, I get variations on that particular trick several times a day. And me a paranoid schizophrenic.

(12-7-21). Waiting at a bus stop, facing away from any oncoming buses in my, by now customary, posture I manage to miss two before relenting and graciously accepting to board a third which pulled up to me rather than stopping some distance away. Immediately, I notice an awful smell but sit down anyway. Moments later, the driver charges toward the back, shouting as she passes me: "Who brought this shit on the bus (or words similar)?" A passenger had apparently "marked his linen." With the bus smelling to high heaven, everyone soon exited, including the driver. Just outside the bus, close by, talking on her phone, she became very busy indeed until another bus pulled up. Shades of Scheißminister, mentioned in a previous email?

The next bus took me, without further incidents, to the post office on Washington Blvd. where I found, not completely to my surprise, two of my four packages unacceptable to the clerk. Amounting to a "wastage" of only some 50%, not too bad. Though for one of the two "refuseniks," if I may refer to my rejected packages thus, the reason given was not valid. Both in my opinion and that of eBay – where I

later complained. The post office clerk peremptorily claiming I had not paid enough postage though I tried to explain I had done so online and had benefited from a discount.

Later that afternoon, I managed to successfully retrieve several books I had reserved online from the Baldwin Hills branch of the LA public library. As you will see though, it was a ticklish business, a close-run thing indeed.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.

Arriving, I go directly to the shelves looking for mine.

Not finding them, I hand the clerk my card asking for their whereabouts.

She quickly returns with all four.

I hand over two books I am returning, she then gives me a receipt for the four.

Waiting, puzzled as to why I don't get my books, I ask.

She seems confused by my question, I quietly repeat myself, saying that I'm waiting for the four she pulled from the shelves.

7. After further explanation on my part, she reaches behind her, and processes the four in question, before handing them to me. Claiming momentary confusion, she was.

8. My head swimming, I quickly make good my escape.

(12-8-21) Another brief interlude as I work outside, near the sidewalk. Two workmen, maybe surveyors, stop not twenty feet from me with some equipment. As they go about their work, in the next minutes, their conversation includes the following phrases:

-

“Ten million dollars.” This phrase repeated at least twice, possibly more times.

“We'll take care of you.” Said twice or more.

“International Date Line.”

I somehow do not find credible the possibility that people can hold a coherent conversation using all of the above phrases within a span of a few tens of seconds. Sorry.

On the same day, I witnessed a textbook example of out-and-out provocation with, as bonus, an eyewitness. I have been outside much of the afternoon working when, at about 4:30PM, I note the following sequence of events in the voice recorder I often carry:

1. Creating the “atmosphere”: As I work on the sidewalk, I have been there for hours, putting together the solar-powered tricycle, I begin noticing someone across the street speaking in a voice which carries. “Synchronization” is exhibited, a commonplace event for me. This continues for some time. (“Synchronization” is where someone's movements immediately trigger sounds or voice from another person, see my book).
2. The “creator” leaves the scene: The source of this behavior leaves, there is silence.
3. The “witness” positions herself: At some point, a neighbor from my complex appears on the sidewalk, waiting. I do not notice her presence yet as she is behind me.
4. The “trigger-man“ appears, delivering the “payload”: A young man strolling by, soon appears. He pauses next to me and initiates a brief conversation as I work. His very first words: “Are you working?” or “Do you work?” I quietly ask him to repeat himself. We converse for a minute or so about my tricycle. After wishing me well, he leaves.
5. The “witness” silently observes: Sometime during this conversation, I first notice the young woman standing just outside my field of view. I don't know how long she has been there.

6. The “witness” leaves: As she waits, a car pulls up, loud rap music blaring. Lyrics repeatedly mentioning gangs. She gets in the car.

7. A parting shot: As she does so, I hear her say one word: “Leave” or “Go.” This young person is the daughter of Tyson, a long-term neighbor.

Today, 12-10-21, working outside near the street, I witnessed a variant on the above scenario. This time though, the “atmosphere” was in part created by the presence for a number of minutes of one or more police cars with the assistance of a nearby neighbor, a man I have nicknamed “Tub-thumper” on account of his occasional verbal broadsides and stentorian voice. None of the officers engaged me but I could hear, for some time, the characteristic crackle of a police radio and what sounded like the voice of a dispatcher, the officer(s) mostly conversing with “Tub-thumper.” Today's scene replicated the provocation of two days ago, literally point for point. Further details available upon request
Bref, un programme chargé. (In summary, quite a busy show.)

Sometime during the Ceaușescu years, a nation-wide joke contest is announced. With third prize of 100 Lei, second prize of 1000 Lei. First prize: fifteen years. Thank G*d we're Americans. ¿Qué no?

Watched another Stéphane Bern documentary, this one on Zola. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TUdnSX7DbnE> (in French). Did you know that in 19th century slang a “zola” could be a chamberpot? How fitting (for my purposes anyway, as I have one dangling all day from

a hook on my porch.

Rank provocation on my part, wot?). The word “Zola,” roughly the French equivalent of “potty mouth.” Bismark used to quip that G*d looked after drunks, fools and Americans. Well, I'm an American myself, a-and I don't drink... (could I be a twofer perhaps?). Maybe this helps explain how in G*d's name I've been able to sleepwalk through so many successive minefields over the last fifty years and emerge (relatively) unscathed. Or could another (partial) answer to this riddle lie in my pronounced eccentricities? I mean, really...

As to the title of this piece, “Solitaire/Jeu de Patience.” It hints at both my predicament (in English) and stance (in French). I have ended every friendship, some with people I have known for decades; they having made their peace with Sassenach and, in the process, become entirely too frantic in their trolling for my taste. I am therefore alone, quite alone. Recently, as suggested by a therapist at Kaiser, I joined video/phone peer support groups at the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) and something called the “Friendship Line.” As to the French translation of the word Solitaire: “Jeu de Patience” (Game of Patience), it refers to my stance, briefly mentioned above, regarding the increasingly frequent, at times distasteful in the extreme, provocations I must endure throughout the day.

Thanks for your attention,

(signed)
Bergendahl/Bergie (in LA, Natch!)
P.S. To Irene: May our wordless tears eventually prove invincible.
P.P.S. The message I sent the customer who ordered these darn chips:
New message to: [redacted]
To:
[redacted]
[redacted] Airport Way
Portland OR [redacted]
US

Hello,
Your order is much appreciated.
However, there may be a delay in shipping as I am having a slight problem of an unknown technical nature in dealing with the USPS web site when I attempt to schedule a pickup of the item.
A tracking number has been successfully issued by eBay: [redacted]
Thanks,
Bergendahl/Bergie (in Los Angeles)
P.P.P.S. When Sister #1 says to police as they try to prevent me killing myself at her studio in Manhattan: "I don't want to lose him," that buys a certain amount of loyalty. When Sister #2 says to me in my kitchen, with tears in her eyes, at a time when she was manipulating me to, among other things, get me to kill myself: "It would not be good for you," that too, buys a certain amount of loyalty. There are, of course, certain other conclusions one could draw from these two incidents... I will refrain.

Encounter with a Good, if a Trifle Overeager, Samaritan

Started: 12/13/21 Edited: 12/15/21 12/19/21 12/29/21 01/08/22 01/21/22 01/29/22 02/01/22 02/04/22 02/12/22 02/13/22 02/22/22 02/28/22 03/15/22
(12-5-21 to 2-12-22)

Began writing then correcting An Open Letter to a Cannibal

(12-13-21) Incident at "My Mailbox" on Le Brea – FedEx shipping

I had spent the previous hour manhandling a large cardboard box to pack an item I had just sold on eBay. He came in and, approaching, pulled out a small penknife, kindly offering to cut it (presumably referring to the cardboard I was working on). I remained silent, ignored him and continued working. After several increasingly loud entreaties on his part, he walked away and left me alone. Then this good Samaritan, changing his mind, came back moments later, insisting on cutting the cardboard for me. However, seeing I was still ignoring him and had turned away as I continued working, he said "Oh, you must know what you're doing" before finally leaving me alone. I should be more careful in future when someone, no matter how well-intentioned, approaches with a knife. To be sure, he was only offering to help; it's just that, purely as a practical matter, it's not smart to turn one's back on a man enthusiastically approaching while brandishing a knife. I even thanked him as I turned away... A potential ersatz cutpurse? Or something less? Bref, ça se corse!

(12/5/22) Bus #105, southbound on Fairfax, a passenger says something like "kill him." Hope to have this thing end while I still have some of my marbles.

(12-13-21) Incident on bus #5639 at 6PM, westbound on Adams at La Brea

It's not so much that I mind the driver's peremptory refusal to let me board bus with my dolly. I'm used to it by now, the Metro bus drivers with a Wehrmacht complex (see a previous email). I do as I'm told while the driver presumably does as he's told. After all, he didn't physically assault me, did 'e? A-and neither did 'e flip me off, did 'e. What rankles, though, is the randomness of it, this and other frequent "stimuli." After all, had I not managed to get on three buses with the dolly, carrying a large parcel with no complaints.

I've seen a picture of a peculiar contraption, it could belong to any of the world's security services, really. Shaped like a coffin, made to hold some poor unfortunate, it had holes in the sides and top. Their purpose, I think, was to allow a small stick to be briefly introduced into any of the apertures in order to poke the subject inside. The effect on the individual possibly would be of frequent, random stimuli, not necessarily painful, just unexpected.

(12-15-21) Incident at my local R-Ranch Market

¡Cabrón! He whispered wiv' a snarl. Not one to easily take offense, I assumed the position, i.e., stood perfectly still, hands folder in front, in a stance of quietude if not humility until the storm had (mostly) abated and I could proceed with my purchases. Not that my travails were at an end, no sirree. Eventually giving up on the possibility of getting out of the store in a timely fashion with what was left of my sanity, I pulled out a book and, when someone got in line behind, offered to let him go ahead of me if he were pressed for time. ¡Coño!

(12-16-21) Visit from City Housing inspector Tolentino

I was cited for violations including having a business without a permit and for "illegal construction." This last a whiteboard fastened to the wall which pivoted to the ceiling when not in use.

(12-17-21) At home, on the sidewalk, working on some solar stuff

The events:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.

I've been outside working on solar stuff, near my car, at the curb. Equipment strewn about. Just then I'm sitting down, resting.

As I watch from not ten feet away, she casually strolls by, pauses to examine my dolly and, wiv'out so much as a by your leave, makes off with it.

Watching from the sidelines, a bit stunned I ask her, in English, to return it.

Just then, my neighbor, you all know him by now, because of his booming voice, as "Tub-thumper." Intercepts me, offering a bowl of "freshly-made chicken soup."

Politely, I demur, preferring to chase after my miscreant, now making her way at flank speed down "these mean streets."

As I call out to her, Tub-thumper, standing near the curb, helpfully suggests she may not understand English.

After some moments in which consternation (on my part) alternates with ignoring the entreaties and comments of Tub-thumper, I manage to gather my wits about me and, rushing for my nearby cell phone, capture the moment for posterity.

Eventually, she relents and drops the dolly.

Making my way back to my equipment, I sidestep the importuning neighbor who, apparently, will still not take "No" for an answer.

All this, I remind you from a man recommended as someone "nice," someone I should talk to, by none other than Gadiel Velasquez, my long-suffering neighbor. Figure 1: The miscreant(?) caught fleeing. Though she quietly said

"Thank you" as I politely retrieved the dolly she had brazenly tried to steal. The neighbor I nicknamed "Tub-thumper," stands behind me, having just offered me a bowl of chicken soup. I passed. Picture shot on December 17, 2021 at about 4:15PM.

(12-18-21) At home

I believe I was openly, publicly taunted this morning... for being "good." In my own neighborhood, yet. Have. They. No. Shame?

Later on the same day

Outside packing my solar tinkering for the day, I began hearing her nearby, probably on her phone, sync was evident. A dozen feet away, she continued as I packed stuff. She was walking her dog and, as she walked by, she breathed more than said: "Leave." My evening blessing?

(12-21-21) As I stood guard at my car, on street-sweeping days, several encounters with parking enforcement over the course of a few weeks:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

He stopped purposely to warn me about leaving my car parked. Said next time, ticket?

I had an appointment at Kaiser on a street-sweeping day. Thankfully, I canceled it at last minute. Next day, she drove up, asking for explanations.

Was satisfied with my replies as well as very pleasant.

As I swept the curb, he silently walked up to my car. There ensued a pas-de-deux in which I distinctly felt I was getting a ticket. His first words: "Is this car stolen" ...

Today, 1-29-22, received in the mail a parking ticket dated 12-21-21, issued at 11:45AM. The citation mentioned "moved" which may explain why I never found a ticket on my windshield. As I have, since the accident on July 2, 2021, had a devil of a time getting the car to start, I wonder by what miracle of rare device this particular "move" occurred.

(Update: 2-1-22) Got another letter about this mysterious parking ticket.

(12-27-21) On the BBB #7, westbound on Pico Blvd.

"Though my mind shrinks from remembering... I will begin."

— Virgil

I hear a disabled man, possible name Victor, sitting in a wheelchair; he got on after me, chatting loudly with someone nearby. Before saying: "Narayan" or "Benefiel." She was a Pasadena-area MD in private practice, at Benefiel and Narayan, someone I saw once in the seventies for a general checkup. On an examination table, I got on my back, before opening my legs for a rectal exam. The doctor, her name was Malathi Narayan, as I recall, then abruptly ended the exam without giving a reason. There was no charge and I immediately left. A fine example of what I call "synthetic ideas of reference." To hear this embarrassing incident touched on, over forty years later is somewhat unnerving, needless to say.

(12-25-21) Finally spoke briefly with Irene by Skype today. At times, she comes across like an embittered automaton reciting the party line. An astonishing performance, part of an ongoing transformation mutation? I once heard it said that this, her tragedy, a tragedy which, had it spread to me, would have swiftly turned to inconceivable horror for the both of us, can happen to anyone. The following quote may show a more mature, realistic and humble understanding of her situation; and that of so, so many others.

"Can a man who's warm understand one who's freezing?"

— Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich

In a comment which somewhat dates her, sometime in 2021 Irene, during a Skype conversation, suggests I may come to be seen as an "Afro-American Archie Bunker."

A limited sample of sound effects available to these Gentlemen of the Securitate™ by their willing transducers/IO devices, by which I mean people:

-
-
-
-
-
-
-
-
-
-

Shuffling or scraping feet as someone walks nearby.

And always and ever, the ever-present refrain, nowadays whispered more than spoken: "Go." or "Stop." or "Leave." May I add that Alfred McCoy, author of *The Politics of Heroin in Southeast Asia*, felt it necessary, in the 1970s, to leave this place, removing himself to Australia for over a decade.

Someone sweeping nearby with a broom.

A peculiar, occasional series of cries, emanating from somewhere nearby, at times sounding like a small child screaming hysterically at random, at other times sounding more like a cat. Often showing signs of synchronization with some event in my bungalow.

A bit of light hammering within earshot; nothing too strenuous, mind.

The cry of the Banshee, preferably in the night. Loud, that one.

Cars and motorcycles noisily revving their engines nearby, at times for over ten minutes uninterruptedly.

Cars making elaborate and lengthy maneuvers, either parking nearby, sometimes making impossibly slow, awkward three-point turns.

People walking nearby then reversing course or else, just ahead of me, pausing, forcing me to go around or wait.

All part of the more Discrete Charms of the Securitate. I imagine they possess other, perhaps less discrete "Charms" as well.

I have given up both my damaged car (donated it to Meals-on-Wheels) and my driver's license, relying now on a State of California-issued senior citizen ID.

Stated reason to DMV "Que calma los nerves." I'm learning...

My sister, upon whose enemies confusion (this will increasingly bears repeating), once referred to me as the "Manchurian Candidate," putting in his place a somewhat forward waiter in a Century City restaurant, I believe it was. Bless her soul. Though it would be years before the message percolated through my rather impermeable skull... A-and in the spirit of the thing, how about yet another nickname for this (recovering ?) would-be, "demented assassin": Fou Mandchou? Eh? Mwahahahaha! ← (Demented cackle inserted 'ere).

They say one of the pillars of a technique of the former East German secret police, the Stasi, something called "Zersetzung," extensively defined in the book, had as an important objective making the victims' stories so outlandish as to forever ruin their credibility. Well Gentle Reader™, on reflecting, I think I may be reaching that point, so increasingly bizarre and outlandish has my day-to-day life become. Not only is humor failing me (Smart Alec that I am) but the descriptive power of words available to me is becoming inadequate.

(12-28-21) In the afternoon, on Motor Ave.

Partly hidden from view by a bus bench, he calmly urinated on the seats, leaving a stream to trickle down to the curb as I walked by on my way to a seamstress. Minutes later, headed back to catch my bus, he was still there. Shouting "Happy New Year!" Prudently, hoping to sidestep the Flak flaque, I briefly stepped into the street as I passed him.

Tonight, at my NAMILA (National Association on Mental Illness, Los Angeles) peer group video meeting, I introduced myself thus: "My name is Bergie Hawkins and I am crazy"! Leaving out the demented cackle, in the interest of that gravitas, of course. Stole the line from the movie *Flowers for Algernon*, I did. A film where a dullard played by Cliff Robertson is transformed into a genius by artificial means... In which film Robertson is heard to say: "My name is Charlie Gordon and I am stupid"! Couldn't resist, really.

(12-30-21)

My neighbor, two doors down, the one I have nicknamed "Tub-thumper," in the last couple of weeks has had two police visits. I was outside on both occasions. The only crime I could attest to was that of loitering. Loitering by the police, that is...

(1-3-22)

With all the psychological and technical razzle-dazzle and legerdemain going on hereabouts, I'm reminded of an anecdote in which an American oil

executive in the early part of the 20th century took a leadership-type from the Arabian peninsula for an airplane ride, perhaps hoping to overawe him to improve his own bargaining position. On landing, the oilman asking the Arab if he was impressed, received the following reply from the Primitive™ who, refusing to be overawed, said: “You mean this is impossible, not supposed to happen?”

(1-5-22)

A new word, along with a vivid, flagrant example of its use. The word is Cantinflar. Mexican idiom, I think, not Spanish in origin. Yesterday on the 212 bus line, northbound on La Brea. 25 minutes without a break. He, ostensibly talking into his cell phone in a loud voice, could not possibly have been carrying on a “normal” conversation, so disjointed were his sentences. Though perhaps not informative, evocative (at least to me). See “synthetic ideas of reference,” mentioned in a previous email.

At the Motor Ave. Post Office, mailing a registered letter to my long-suffering landlady, Tiffany Anderson of AFJ Investment. The word “Weird” breathed more than spoken.(1-7-22)

Tonight: watching a two hour interview on YouTube with the widder Hoxha. A treat...

(1-10-22)

At the DMV (I’m not the only one who’s a little slow sometimes). ... They say, when you go to Russia, you never know when you’re leaving. I say, when you go to the DMV, you also never know when you’re leaving.

Specificity and timing. Timing and specificity. Along with more than a bit of mystification. A long-time pattern in which an item, usually insignificant, is disturbed, taken or hidden. And, so I will immediately notice, the item is often one I have recently, perhaps in the previous day, handled. The following is a list of “pointless felonies,” burglaries in my bungalow covering the last few weeks/months, not meant to be comprehensive in any way:

- 1.
- 2.

Moved and/or missing blue ballpoint pens, several over the last month or so.

Missing cane, last seen on top of trash container between the bungalows.

3. Missing set of “Talking point” index cards I put together over a year ago.

4. Missing sparkling water bottle. One of four I had recently bought.

5. Missing small white handle fork.

6. Tape measure, red, moved. I looked for it sporadically for days before finding it (or one much like it, though not exactly) in a place I had not looked in.

7. Of three ice packs, part of a package of Serrano ham shipped from Costco, on my drying rack, I found two punctured a couple of days later.

8. Missing toilet paper.

9. Toilet paper restored.

10. Missing paper towels.

11. Moved wall transformer for solar power pack.

12. Unable to use 17” living room laptop since the morning of police “welfare check” though I have reinstalled OS twice. (Update: 3-15-22) The laptop works again.

13. Missing bookmarks of a design I hoped to pattern my own after.

14. A blanket hung on a hedge outside my bungalow found later that day with what looked like two red hand prints. I took pictures as I was washing it again, later showing the pics to one of the police officer who came by in the afternoon.

15. (2-22-22) In the afternoon, I hang two shirts on my porch to dry. Hours later, one of them is gone. As it was quite windy, the wind could have blown away, the coat hanger hanging loosely from a nail. The problem with this theory is that after spending some time looking for it throughout our complex, I found nothing.

16. Odd malfunctions of desktop computer (noticed even as I attempt to complete the above numbered list), malfunctions occasionally seen last year as I edited the book.

17. Small recently used items of trivial importance, moved. Not stolen, moved.

The above recent samples, representative of over a decade’s worth of capers by Certain Organs of State Security™, give fresh meaning to Lassalle’s phrase: “the night-watchman state.”

(1-15-22)

Doing my monthly shopping foray (I should maybe call it “running the gauntlet,” considering what else goes on in the buses), as I come out of the Tehran Market on Wilshire in Santa Monica. Heading for my bus, walking close to a storefront window, a couple, coming out of a nearby alley, turns the corner, he and I brush against each other. Our shoulders touching, we jostle each other a bit. I do not stop, then hear something like: “Hey, Sir!” “Hey!” Repeated a couple of times. Ignoring him, I continue toward the nearby bus stop at my walking pace. Moments later, feeling the dolly I am pulling halted, I turn around to see the man, his hand on one of the boxes, look at me and say: “Sorry? Sorry?” in a questioning tone. As though he is expecting an apology. As I face him, I quietly reply: “Oh?” Saying nothing else, I then look at him in a neutral manner. After a second, he desists, releasing my dolly. Free to go, I turn away and proceed to the bus stop. No other words exchanged.

(1-21-22) At home

Thefts inside my bungalow when I’m away. Thefts inside my bungalow when I’m home. And now, thefts outside my bungalow if I’m not there watching my stuff like a hawk. Away scant minutes, and. They. Cleaned. Me. Out. Took everything. Fifteen items I had brought to the sidewalk for a day’s work in warm sunshine, with a leisurely cup of coffee, perhaps also to show the flag. It likely took not even a minute, so brief was my absence. With Gadiel Velasquez, one of my neighbors, seen by me through my front window looking fixedly at my stuff moments before the theft (not accusing him, here). So it’s come to this, Gentlemen Desperadoes of the Securitate™ (whoever you are)? Naked, brazen, barefaced theft, literally daylight robbery. Later that morning, I reported to the Los Angeles central library the loss of one of their books, one of the morning’s casualties, Ruysbroek the Admirable. During the call, I thought I heard the librarian at the other end of the line chuckle softly. Above the raw criminality of it, above the shock value of it, above the shabbiness (an increasingly salient quality of this whole affair) of it; I marvel at the ineffable weirdness. One minute, on a quiet residential street, at 8AM, my stuff is there. Moments later, it’s all gone, including a 1950s library book about an obscure 14th century Flemish mystic. I declare.

I reported the theft on 1-21-22. A theft in which I lost:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

A laptop

Three copies of my book

A folding table and chair

Two diaries, one of which, almost completely filled, contained entries covering last year

About fifteen additional items What follows is a transcript of texts exchanged with the person who last saw my stuff, immediately I noticed the thefts:

(January 21, 2022, 8:16AM) Me: Hi Gadiel. I just saw you near the stuff on the table I placed outside. It is all missing. I was gone less than 5 minutes. Did you see anyone take it? Thanks.

(January 21, 2022, 8:18AM) Gadiel Velasquez: I went to pick my truck to take my kids to school

(January 21, 2022, 8:20AM) Gadiel Velasquez: I’ll see you in I beat

Now, as I prepare to file, refile or correct three complaints to police (# E22005451, # E22005447 and # E22005959), I think to myself: “another long march (though not through the institutions ...).”

On 1-19-22, I was the subject of a police “Welfare Check.” This as a result, according to the two officers who visited, of concerns voiced by a neighbor about the number of signs on and around my bungalow. I can well understand, seven signs is a bit peculiar, what? Seven signs, along with that chamber pot hanging from my porch awning plus the sign I updated and placed on the fence recently. The one called An

Open Letter to a Cannibal, in which I speak of some of the behavior of several neighbors in our complex. Mentioning them by name.

Though not ascribing responsibility to them. This may indeed be what “broke the camel’s back.” How else can one explain the fact that my original sign was on display most every day, for six months or more with only minor occasional damage?

In other news, I have also filed 3 police reports online regarding the theft of 2 cardboard signs on 2, back to back, consecutive days. The ones placed on the fence in 3 versions since last summer when I began advertising my book, Schizophrenia Weaponized, available on eBay, where the listing has been viewed 12,000 times. A book which you, along with most people on our street, have a preliminary copy of. I also reported a theft on 1-21-22, at 8AM, in which I lost a laptop, copies of my book, a table and chair. 15 items I setup near the curb where I was about to work, all stolen while I was momentarily in my bungalow.

As a result of the theft of two diaries (police complaint filed and accepted, report #220304892), one diary covering events of 2021 and nearly filled, the other, a log of calls, just started recently, I have decided to consider changing my approach to the emails I send out at infrequent intervals. In addition to the emails themselves, unchanged in content, I may now include a second attachment, in PDF form, containing scans of the contents of my handwritten diaries covering the previous period. Perusal optional. This may continue until my blog: “Bergie’s Blog”/“Les Potins de la Commère” becomes available and/or the situation has settled down somewhat...

SBD acronym Securitate Brain Damage™: A temporary affliction frequently bedeviling Kleinbeamter I deal with. While not fatal, the condition can lead to severe complications in the patient should it become chronic or the patient’s immune system prove defective. Prognosis is then generally thought to be poor. There is no known cure. Typical symptoms include:

-
-
-
-
-
-

Patient mumbling to the point of inaudibility.

Yelling or shouting at or near your Friend and Humble Narrator™, e.g., “¡Cálmate mulata!”, “Who let this shit on the bus? (shouted by a bus driver, storming by me, after a passenger, some poor unfortunate, had just(?) “marked his linen,” filling the bus with an overpowering stench), occasionally “Shrieks Echoing Through the Formless Void™”

The occasional officiousness, with a thoroughness sometimes bordering on the Teutonic.

Extreme confusion of the Kleinbeamter in question; characterized by an inability to remember things, hear, spell or carry out the most elementary actions. Often accompanied by visible agitation of unknown origin.

Addressing your Friend and Humble Narrator™ in a well-known foreign language, seemingly as a matter of course.

Expressing a steely and determined, occasionally vociferous, refusal, when innocently offered a sample of your Friend and Humble Narrator™’s agitprop, i.e., a copy of the An Open Letter to a Cannibal flier.

To summarize my present situation I will list the folders currently in my “Problems” pile:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.
- 11.
- 12.

Bungalow problem

Car problem

Kaiser Permanente problem

US Post Office problem

Phone problem

State of California benefits problem

IRS problem

Bank problem

eBay problem

State of California EDD problem

Theft problem

(Update: 3-15-22) To which I must now add my Law folder

And so, given that:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

I am a paranoid schizophrenic (according to Irene, an MD), previously hospitalized, on permanent disability for over 20 years

I unilaterally stopped taking my meds years ago, to the muted dismay of my long-suffering doctors

I am a notorious high-eccentric as well (don’t believe this last one? Ask any of my neighbors)

How am I able to juggle so many balls, more or less successfully? A puzzle for me, one of many.(1-24-22) At the Baldwin Hills branch of LA public library

Returning some books, pickup another and, in a fruitless quest, try to ensure I get a copy of Alan Watts’s The Wisdom of Insecurity soon. Do you know, the poor librarian adamantly refused to put me in the queue for one of the other copies. At one point telling me it was useless to try. Adding: that’s why the second copy I had reserved at home was an e-book edition (though I had requested hardcover). She then invited me to follow her to a terminal, telling me she would shepherd me through the process with my own card, guaranteeing she could do so faster since she was in her seventies and had the experience. A bit dubious of that last assertion, I courteously refused further “assistance,” gathered up what was left of my marbles and fled. Though on a more positive note I did take advantage of my extended wait (“urging on a tardy glacier,” I was) to flog my book to an unsuspecting patron buzzing hovering nearby. Later at home, I added my name to the queue for one of the other copies in a jiffy before heading over to LA County library’s site to find yet another copy. This episode, deplorable really, does have a happy ending. After noticing the copies I had reserved had mysteriously disappeared, I bought the slim volume online, it was delivered last week.

On the way home, put up my first flier, a copy of An Open Letter to a Cannibal, on a telephone pole (at an undisclosed location, in a well-known free-world country. Natch!).

Categories of stressors:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.
- 11.
- 12.
- 13.

Financial.
Physical.

“Talking one down,” i.e., the frequent, repetitive, unimaginative insults, frequent to the point of monotony.

Familial situation.

Elicited then bottled-up emotions.

Loss of loved-ones & (most) friends.

Worries about my health, legitimate or not.

Weird events.

Social isolation.

Sounds. Yes, sounds.

Tensions caused by my ambivalence about the likely nature of my “Masters”/“Friends”/My Side/The Gang I, willy-nilly, suspect I belong to.

Tensions caused by my uncertainty regarding outcomes.

A procession of pointless, petty betrayals by people, whether I know them or not. Could this be an attempt at cultivating my, by now, well documented paranoia?

14. Frequent “coincidences” where people, seemingly at random, emerge from doorways, their houses, cars, etc., just as I walk by. Or else, immediately I look in someone’s direction, they just happen to make some sudden movement, outside on the street, from a seat across from me on buses, on the walkway in my complex. Usually looking in some other direction, or at their cell phone, sometimes ostentatiously so.

I think I’ve noticed another consistent pattern. The raising of my emotional temperature with a bit of provocation just before a test. Two recent examples:

- 1.
- 2.

The provocation involving the Mexican woman who thought she could steal my dolly right out from under my eyes just as Tub-thumper kindly offered me a cup of chicken soup as I attempted to retrieve the dolly (see picture).

“Lurk” across the way from me, I also call her “the Apparition,” so striking is her appearance, causing an extended commotion this afternoon with the usual vehement, senseless vulgarities shouted right outside my open front door, minutes before I found, on my door, a 3-day notice to cure violation(s) or move out. It was under the emotional influence of those two events that I sent an email to AFJ Investment informing them that one of their complaints had been cured and asking for clarification on the other items.

(1-29-22) At home

Pictured in Figure 3 below, a bit of literary criticism emanating from a clearly (morally?) post-solvent and post-literate era. It appeared one morning, like mushrooms after a rain (much as with the dog excrement, lately to be found in unusual quantities on the lawn adjacent to my bungalow as well as on the hedge nearby. This last, neatly packed in a “dogie bag.” For some background to this, the “Excremental Vision” I call it, see the email of 10-28-2021, Marking my Linen. My stance: critics may cavil, so long as I am not ignored.

I have recently spoken with Tyson, a long-time and (I suspect) much put-upon neighbor in my complex, a conscientious family man; briefly telling him that I would back and support him and his family should it ever come to that. I then offered him my hand to shake – which he took. His wife, sitting in their car, next to him, was a witness. I mean every word I said.

About Gadiel Velasquez, a neighbor in my complex. A summary of recent interactions:

- 1.

I give him a copy of my autobiography (along with most others in my complex).

One night end of 2021, his wife walking by crying tells me he had a fall and was hospitalized. For 2 days, I drive her to Cedars Sinai, visiting him once myself.

3. In 2021 or 2022, he suggests I meet/speak with the neighbor I have nicknamed “Tub-thumper.” Quote: “He is a nice guy.” (I don’t take Gadiel up n his suggestion).

4. In 2021, he invites me to his church where I donate a PC to his pastor.

5. I give him a get-well card for his daughter on learning from him she is recovering from an operation.

6. Gadiel offers me money to drive his daughters from school. Offers twice. (Offer politely refused).

7. During 2021, after an accident disables my car, he regularly lends me a jumper battery on street-sweeping days.

8. Often would ask me to me move his truck(s) on street sweeping days.

9. Has me take him to nearby impound lot to get his car, ostensible because he does not have his driver’s license.

10. Soon thereafter, has me print something from his phone.

2.11. On the same day, I also print something for his wife.

12. In January, 2022, moments before over a dozen items are stolen from near sidewalk, I see Gadiel examining my things closely as I’m inside my bungalow.

13. In February, 2022, comes to me asking why I have a sign mentioning his name in connection with my Open Letter to a Cannibal on my front door.

Below, a table listing a week’s worth of “Funny Coincidences.” Seriously undercounted, this table may not mean much to you Gentle Reader™ but as with propaganda, repetition is the essence. Lemme tell ya.

Day

(Starting

2-7-2022)

Simultaneous

Presence or

Near CollisionSynchronized

Sounds“Skits”

&

ProvocationsNote

Monday412Home all day

Tuesday15117Out

Wednesday530Home all day

Thursday170Home all day

Friday350Home all day

Saturday3100Home mostly

Sunday5133Home all day

(2-15-22) At home

Found this morning that some papers from the folder I keep on my dealings with the Post Office branch on Washington Blvd. are missing. This as I filed another complaint, this time with the USPS Inspector General (complaint later rejected and forwarded to post office consumer complaint center), about incoming mail being delivered even as outgoing packages are not picked up; also mentioning incidents where I believe one or more signatures confirming

reception of a letter to the Hastings Law School in San Francisco were faked. Perhaps another of the several instances of “tidying up” by parties unknown. Although, this and other instances of removals of documents from my bungalow may be more for my consumption than any “practical purpose.”

Found the lock on my outer screen door strangely locked this morning as I went outside to hang the chamber pot (pendre la crémaillère, so to speak), something I do every morning. Strange, as I never bother to lock the outer door these days.

Though in the past I have experienced service so good that I went online to give two employees of the Wilshire branch commendations, a manager and employee, I must mention a series of recent ticklish situations happening at several Staples locations, including the one mentioned:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Repeated refusals by employees to give me receipts for stuff I have printed, even going so far as to refuse to charge me. This has happened at both this location and another Staples, the one (now closed) on Wilshire Blvd.

Inability of print shop employees to follow explicit, simple instructions when a job is requested online.

Have had to speak to manager in order to get a receipt for work done and paid for.

(2-16-22) In West Adams, Inglewood, Culver City and West LA

Running the gauntlet or: another run of the “Tokyo Express.”

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.
- 11.
- 12.
- 13.

The day started with a somewhat startling voicemail from Tiffany Anderson, my long-suffering landlord. Sometime around 9AM, she announced that there would be an inspection of my back door by Building and Safety to check if everything was to code. Adding that she was sorry this was on such short notice but that B & S is hard to get a hold of and that she could not tell me when the visit would take place but that it would be sometime today.

I immediately replied by email that I had errands and a customer to attend to and that I might therefore not be home, depending on whether it rained. As I was leaving, the slight rain having abated, she called out to me from her SUV parked just outside, asking if I had gotten her voicemail.

I replied that, yes, I had and that I had replied in an email. Adding that I might not be home, depending on rain. She repeated my phrase word for word. And with that I took off for a day’s errands and a visit to a customer in West LA.

Went to bank for a deposit and check if I can close one of my three safe deposit boxes.

From there to Venice Blvd. and points west where I stopped at Trader Joe’s with the usual show going on. Left TJ’s at 12:06PM.

Continuing by bus, I stopped at my seamstress to drop off some clothes.

Thence to Costco, with me weathering the usual extravaganza. Left at 13:45PM.

Notable was the warmth with which one of the checkout people repeatedly called me “Brother.” I evenly gave him the reply categorical: “You’re not my brother.” As is my wont. The preliminaries over, I showed him and the female Mexican-America checker a couple of cards I keep in my wallet. One with a famous saying by Martin Luther, the other a copy of some of Kant’s better known words. Fulsome praise immediately issued from my would-be brother. Another illustration of what I call “the Era of Good Feeling.”

To Lincoln Blvd. for a BBB #3 connecting to a Metro #33

Went to a long-time customer for some PC repair work. As I left his house, it began raining.

On Bundy, stop # 2561 cross street Pearl, at 5PM, The BBB # 14 did not stop. I waived he drove by, nodding his head in reply. “Era of Good Feeling,” wot?

The next #14 BBB did the same though he did beep twice as he approached. I, having my back turned to the oncoming bus, did not respond in time to board.

Deciding to forgo public transportation for the nonce, I chose to walk from just south of Pico to Venice Blvd. Not exactly the Bataan Death March, but still.

The shopping at the Mitsuwa supermarket went smoothly. Though by then it was 6:30PM.14. Surprisingly, the eastbound Venice Blvd. bus #33 did stop.

15. Metro bus # 105 on Venice at Cadillac, however, did not.

16. For my last bus, the #37 eastbound on Adams Blvd., though the driver kindly stopped to let me on (thank G*d), he did not condescend to let down the ramp for me to roll my dolly with 40lb of groceries until I suggested he move the bus forward a few feet. Which suggestion he followed.

17. The day ended with a bang of sorts. Finally home, somewhat the worse for wear, I find that though my outside metal screen door was closed (not locked though), the inside door was wide open and, as I purposely leave my lights on before I leave, people walking by had a good view of the inside and contents of my bungalow.

Do you know, as I trudged down Bundy to Venice Blvd. with my 40lb of groceries on the dolly and another few pounds in my backpack, the rain having stopped by then, the thought came to me: “I believe I’m the right guy for the job.” Barely inconvenienced, I was. I’m your Fair-haired Boy™, I tell you.

Bref, une journée chargée.

(2-16-22) At home

After more errands, came home today to a surprise. I found my groceries, the ones I had bought the previous day, all \$300+ of them, in danger of freezing. The unit having been left on. Question is, who’s the culprit, Eh? I have my suspicions as the thermometer I use to track things was not in the spot I had left it before leaving in the morning. I eventually found it buried in the wire basket at the top of my 3.5 cu ft unit. It seems that not only must injustice be done, it must also be seen (by the victim) to have been done.

With traditional slavery, the condition of the Slave, once the “parameters” have been established, is generally static and forever fixed. Unlike with our modern-day Sassenach™; where the condition of the Slave (a serf regardant, one might say), steadily worsens and once caught in the maws of Certain Organs of State Security™, the Slave’s ratio of victim to perpetrator steadily worsens. So that, though starting as mostly bamboozled victim, the victim increasingly acquires the characteristics of a snake. For confirmation, one has only to examine the careers of my two unlucky sisters, Colette Jose Walczak of Santa Monica and Irene Sophie Hawkins of Florence, Italy; or of that truly poor unfortunate, my neighbor Tyson, mentioned in my flier, An Open Letter to a Cannibal (or indeed, of several of the other families and individuals in my complex).

A Sam Goldwyn production. Known for his verbal gaffes he, according to an anecdote, once called out: ”Bon Voyage,” as he waived to employees assembled on the docks as a ship taking him on a cruise sailed away. On his return, he is supposed to have fired the lot. Malapropism, anyone? I sometimes say the same to people I see misbehaving, i.e., bus drivers who fail to stop. Though in my case, perhaps with a more sinister subtext.

At Colette’s apartment, years ago, as we both reminisced about our college years, I said: “They drove me out of Caltech with a cattle prod.” To which she replied: “Same here, only for me it was St. John’s,” the liberal arts college in New Mexico she had attended. Staring at each other for a moment, we broke into laughter before hugging for some time, still laughing helplessly.

General political situation here looks to me to be about as transparent as a food fight palace revolt in the Albanian politburo during Enver Hoxha’s salad days. Given my (admittedly haphazard) interest in history including that of the 20 th century; why then is it I am surprised, shocked, even, at what I have written?

During my “Dark Decades,” in my determination to reduce my area of conscience and perhaps leave behind something of my peculiar story, I never imagined

it would all be this easy. Maybe part of the reason lies in my gradual realization that, as Gertrude Stein once said on another topic, “There is no ‘there’ there,” i.e., if one hears something irritating (as I do on the bus among many other places, having given up my car, possibly permanently) on the radio; does one vent one’s frustration (frequent and sometimes great, in my case), by getting angry at the radio? And then there is the vague feeling that a certain level of support, a level perhaps not entirely negligible, is there; unseen by me yet ever-present... Lastly, perhaps most telling of all, as I was attempting to get across to a neighbor, the wife of “Tub-thumper,” who recently asked me the leading question, “It’s hard for you, isn’t it”? My reply: “Compared to elsewhere, this place is a Disneyland.” For there are countries where people adopting anything approaching my stance are immediately putting their fingernails at risk. For starters. Disneyland, this is; albeit a “Disneyland with the death penalty,” paraphrasing William Gibson’s judgment on another country. I imagine this is likely to continue to be the case; that Certain Organs of State Security™ will, in my case, continue to observe the niceties so long as the small army I feel is watching my back continues babysitting me. Still. This is also Disneyland in another sense, as well. Meaning that the atmosphere surrounding me is one of non-stop show and make-believe.

The doctrine of the “Fire Preemptive.” The Church, in its majesty, eventually hit on the perfect method for saving Christians from the (eternal, mind you) fires of hell. They implemented a program whereby an individual judged “at risk” was spared the eternal torments of hellfire in the hereafter by undergoing the ole’ “auto-da-fé” while still among the living. Thus exchanging eternal damnation and the unending pain of the attendant flames for a few minutes’ inconvenience. A neat solution to a pair of thorny problems: how to properly “herd cats” (a phrase used years ago by an acquaintance, Eric Rice, in an attempt to justify the methods of these Gentlemen of the Securitate™ - a bit of the old gleichschaltung, Eh?) while ensuring their eternal salvation into the bargain.

For those of you who have not read my book, let me mention that I was present at a restaurant in La Jolla when my sister Irene was threatened with gang rape by “Black men.” This said by people sitting at a nearby table. What’s more, I believe she suffers from a medical condition known as vaginismus. Partly motivated by the rancor understandably occasioned by memories such as this, I recently began distributing (near and far) a flier touching on a not entirely unrelated topic. Something called An Open Letter to a Cannibal.

The Republic of Salauds? → The Republic of Salò? → The Republic of Salammbô? (A possible regression?)

Finished Flaubert’s Salammbô: A nauseating farrago of horrors. I declare.

I know people who, having made their peace with Sassenach™, I could cite specific names, more than one in fact, have turned to religion for solace. I know others, again I could mention a name, who have turned to hard drugs. I imagine there are many such unfortunates. And even more perhaps, who would give everything to be in my shoes. Though I cannot prove it, I feel this. It therefore behooves me to not turn into a prima donna and, should the day ever come; especially, especially, to speak strongly, fervently, accurately, unflinchingly for these poor devils. One of my aims has been to make Irene Hawkins and Colette Walczak become household names. Repeating myself. I. Will. Do. What. I. Can. (Including speaking out for that poor man, my neighbor Tyson, as I recently said to him in front of his wife). Another such creature, I knew him somewhat, perhaps driven half mad by the stress of his estate, envious of my (relative) privilege, and with noticeable brain damage occasioned by the drugs he said he had been driven to; in a fit of envy once exploded at me, saying: “Do you think you are better than us?” No, not better, my brother, merely luckier... I have lots to say and my memory is good.

De Gaulle à Pompidou (ministère de l’Intérieur): “Vous ne tenez pas vos services en main” (A la conclusion de l’affaire Ben Barka).

I used to listen to the Blacks at Caltech talk about whites. sometimes surprised at what they said, at other times, disbelieving. Later though, I began to agree. I think now, from the vantage point of decades in this place, I would still criticize them. For a lack of specificity, a “shotgun approach,” so to speak and a paucity of imagination.

Old-fashioned and obsolete as I feel myself rapidly becoming, I find the term “politically incorrect” mealy-mouthed. It should be replaced by that manly, robust Soviet-era accusation: “Right Deviationist.” A phrase known to have made grown men, grown Russian men at that, tremble. A-and to tart it up a bit, at the risk of losing some meaning in the process, how about uttering this sentence of excommunication (today almost as much as then) in a Scottish(?) brogue. As in: “Yer a right deviationist, ye are, mate. Och! Look at ye.” (Rolling your Rs all the while).

When Harriet Beecher Stowe visited Abraham Lincoln at the White House, he is reputed to have said: “So this is the little lady that started this great big war.” A word on Omertà. My guess is that just as it was unrealistic for poor Colette Walczak to think her services would no longer be required once I had seen through at least some of the machinations surrounding my life; the Slave, once inducted into the infernal fraternity Colette had joined, can never hope to leave. So with the Master, I suspect. Once caught up in this web of sotto voce criminality, an individual, no matter how exalted the rank, becomes unable to opt out. This Omertà business may not just be for the Slave or the Mafia.

Finished a biography of Zola by Troyat: Lessons Learned: Not content with only protesting the injustices of the Third Republic, Zola deciding on a course of action which would bring him into a direct collision with the State. Thus, the celebrated newspaper piece which appeared in the newspaper L’Aurore n° 87 of January 13, 1898 in the form of an open letter to the president, Félix Faure, should be seen as rank provocation addressed to the State. A provocation the State was unable to ignore as Zola had committed the crime of Lèse État. The ensuing legal proceedings allowed a bit of sunshine, a well-known disinfectant, into the morass characterized by certain attitudes then prevalent in higher circles of the Third Republic.

Three mysteries I am now wondering about regarding my stay in Florence in 1995. Mystery the first: Why, oh why, was my stay made so unpleasant?

Beginning with the vorsepeise bit at Fiumicino airport, concisely retold in the book, in which, practically on stepping off the plane, I heard the only word of Italian I knew at the time. For, until then, I was sure I had made it to a haven. Curious. Mystery the second: Why, at some point in the seven months I spent with Irene and her husband, did I not have the presence of mind to call Father who was then in Orléans I think, and let him know I was stranded and needed help? He was never the sort of person one has to get along with before one could depend on him. Mystery the third: How on earth is it that I was allowed to return to this place, setting the stage for the ongoing fiasco? Was some bargain concluded? And if so, by whom and with whom? And what were the terms? As with the title of the album by Public Enemy: It Takes a Nation of Millions to Hold Us Back; I similarly hold that in my case it also takes a nation of millions ... to prop me up, that is. A-and that nation is not this place. Irony of ironies that it should have come to this. ¿Qué no? I imagine that I, your Friend and Humble Narrator™, am but the visible tip of the iceberg in this affair, Eh?

Been reading about them Ghags. Their main line of business for centuries having been grab-ass banditry, euphemistically known to me as “taking in each other’s laundry,” this may account for why, today, their country is the poorest in Europe. Though there may be compensations. Seems that among their diaspora, in the high schools of this place, when the Blacks attack, Ghags are the only ones crazy enough to fight back. A-and as I hear tell, this even holds for the Tosks. Imagine. As to you lot (in general): À mouton docile, loup glouton. It was ever thus. As a college professor, at a reputable university yet, once told me during a meandering conversation: “You can say that, I can’t.” So much for that vaunted freedom of speech.

When lightning flashes Blacks attack,

How admirable he who does not feel

Life is fleeting.

— Bashō (slightly adapted)

Could it be that not only am I at my most accurate when I’m most paranoid but that, equally, I’m at my most prescient when most offensive?

Reminiscing. I clearly find I have gotten more satisfactory service from police when in the role of criminal than as victim.

Glenn Greenwald once made the striking comment about this place that there is opacity at the top and transparency at the bottom (much as everywhere else).

Whereas the reverse should be the case: A “rebuttable presumption” (if I’m using the phrase correctly) that there should be transparency at the top and opacity at the bottom. I imagine that until this new state of affairs obtains, the nightmare I and others live will continue.

When we were still teenagers, during one of our frequent arguments, Father remarked to us both: “You two had better learn to get along with each other; each other is all you’ll ever have.”

Advice from my two sisters, once upon a time. From sister the one: “It would not be good for you” (said in my kitchen, one forlorn Christmas, as she pressured me to make my peace with these Gentlemen of the Securitate™) From sister the other: “Be yourself, everybody else is taken” (on a postcard. As with so much else; so much, oh, so gently, hinted at). Sound advice, I say.

In that frightful time, days I have described as Walpurgisnacht, Colette Jose Walczak, crying in my kitchen, said: “It would not be good for you.” Her exact words. Years later, a few days ago, in March of 2022, as I stood near the same spot in the kitchen, I thought: “With these words Colette redeemed herself entirely. Then, without a reason, I immediately added: “And with those words, also redeemed most, though not all, of Humanity as well.” This I still firmly believe. Though without understanding why... At times, I don’t even understand what I say, I’m so deep...

I hope I haven’t talked too much nonsense. Thanks for your attention. Trusting I remain yr. Fair-haired Boy™ (signed)

Fou Mandchou aka Mauvais Sujet

P.S. To Irene: May our wordless tears, yours and mine, eventually prove invincible.

P.P.S. In that bloodthirsty hymn, since expertly bowdlerized, the Marseillaise, one finds the words: “qu’un sang impure abreuve nos sillons,” (may an impure blood water our furrows). I always thought the word impure referred to the enemy’s blood. It’s actually more subtle and far-reaching than that. According to the internet, the word expresses the wish for the blood of commoners, French commoners as opposed to aristocrats, to be the one shed in repelling the invader. A break with the past as, for centuries, risking death on the battlefield had been much of the job description of European high elites. Whence the phrase by Hegel, one of my favorites: “History came to an end with the battle of Jena.” And so, to Passchendaele. Passchendaele: gateway to the 20th Century. Not much of an improvement, perhaps.

P.P.P.S. You will, I hope, excuse the occasional formatting errors cropping up in this note. I find the frequent correction of them a distraction, so choose to leave them be.

The re-purposing of a medical term and other stories (I will be brief, though, I’m afraid, a bit sententious)

Given the prevalence of the trick/technique known as a “False Flag Operation,” I think it justified to remind you, Gentle Reader™, of the term, “The Great Masquerader.” Another (of the many, I, in my intemperate fervor, am accumulating) name for the gentlemen of our very own Securitate.

Those of you with medical training will recognize the (hardly veiled) allusion... Yeech!

A-and what of its long-term impact on the body (politic)? Eh? Re-yeech!

In other news; as regards various and sundry violations of my person (again, being a trifle sententious ‘ere, wot?), I will merely note the following incidents (mostly today’s):

1. Kinetic activity (of a minor sort, I hasten to add) on a bus. Some specifics, please:

◦ Bus # 1923, just before 4:30PM, number 16 eastbound on 3rd St. on 8/26/2021

◦ A woman, older, Black, standing near the front, loudly complains to me that I am in front of the yellow line (I had just boarded), steps on my foot in the process. I reply with a placating peace sign, say little else, and move somewhat away, soon turning my back to her. Passengers nearby, insistently (?) offer me their seats which I politely refuse (I had my cane with me).

◦ Minutes later, the same woman, without warning and a not inconsiderable amount of treachery, kicks me twice from behind. I then move well away, refusing still more offers from passengers of a seat nearby...

◦ The driver soon stops the bus, (possibly) ejecting the woman in the process; before coming to me, asking if I’m OK. I reply in the affirmative.

◦ Later as I got off at my destination, I asked the driver whether he had witnessed the kicks. When he replied that he had, I further probed as to whether he could be identified by the time and bus ID number which I had previously jotted down. Again, the answer was yes.

2. Another bit of fracas, rather loud, again on a bus, this time as I headed home later that evening. More specifics:

◦ Bus # 5981, just before 7:30PM, number 212 southbound on La Brea on 8/26/2021

◦ Occasioned by, it would seem, a difference of opinion regarding the ownership of a cell phone, as the two Braves in question resolutely got on board...

◦ I myself, safely (?) ensconced in my seat back (see below), near the “front” (of the bus) had a fine view of the brief altercation.

3. Repeated, jerky movements of nearby passengers’ hands and feet – I, myself, (tentatively) diagnose incipient St. Vitus’. Murmurings, mutterings, faint but sinister sounds, discordant laughs with the occasional dark imprecation thrown in for good measure; all occasionally issuing from the bowels of the various buses I rode today. Constructs at times rising to the level of, in a phrase I recently learned from reading reviews of that fine film, THX1138, “sound montages.”

4. This hard on the heels of a previous loud disturbance I witnessed on another bus, a few days ago. A disturbance of a type known (to me, at least) as a “querelle de boustifaille.” An argument, ignited as I got off the bus, in which one of the parties remonstrated heatedly (they did exchange words but did not come to blows) with the other for not getting out of my way quickly enough when I excused myself as I tried to reach the exit...

Throughout, I was, one might say, sustained in my faith by a peculiar little book, once recommended by my (much lamented former) friend and gifted man, Janusz Hetman – that poor unfortunate; one among so many. The book in question, a nearly incomprehensible farrago of delusional rubbish: *Memoirs Found in a Bath tub* by Stanisław Lem, noted Polish Science Fiction writer, satirist and, so it would appear from the style of the volume, full-blown paranoid in the fullest Eastern European tradition. (At times) hilarious, absorbing and relevant, given the attendant atmospheric present lately. Eh? Recommended reading. Oddly, Los Angeles Public Library only has the French translation which I checked out, for the second time in decades, some weeks ago.

A couple of brief quotes may suffice to demonstrate a certain relevance here: “... l’Édifice ne ressemblait plus qu’à un abîme peuplé de fous isolés dans leur cellules.” (The Edifice no longer

resembled anything other than an abyss populated by madmen isolated in their cells.)

“... un ramassis d’horreurs et d’inepties.” (An heterogeneous assemblage of horrors and incompetence.)

- Stanisław Lem (*Memoirs Found in a Bath tub*, my translations)

Oh! And another item. From a YouTube video on nutrition, a subject close to my heart (and pancreas, I imagine) by Dr. Michael Eades, I learned last night that: “Books are not sold based on the quality of the book, they’re sold on the promotability of the author.” That faint, peculiar rustling some of you may have heard ‘round midnight yesterday was the sound of (a whole passel of) scales falling from my eyes... As a notorious idjit, who shall go unnamed here, said once: “Ahhhhh! Mais, fallait m’le dire!” (Why didn’t someone tell me).

Bref, un programme chargé, quoi? (A busy agenda, what?) (Can also mean a show or presentation packed with entertaining events – Good production values?).

(signed)

Un Petit Plaisantin

aka

Bergie “Wag ‘n Bietjie” ‘awkins (No, this I do not translate)

P.S. To Irene: “May our tears prove invincible.”

Today’s Excursion or “Babylon-by-Bus”

Started on 09/15/21. Finished on 09/23/21

Driven by hunger, I ventured out today. I exaggerate here; I merely had not eaten all day.

The visit to Costco was surprisingly uneventful (in itself ominous as, while there, I usually encounter “atmospherics” that would severely try the patience of Job. This does not make of me a jobnik, I don’t

care what you say, dammit), as was the trip home until, that is, the very last bus, the eastbound #37 on Adams Blvd. and Fairfax at around 7:30PM, 9-15-2021. Approaching the stop, I noticed a young woman walking abreast of me as I crossed Adams, she matched my speed and reached the curb just as I did. Sometime later, an overweight man coming from the same direction, sat down on the bench I stood near, and began occasionally muttering to himself. There were several others at the stop, also waiting. By then, it was dark and increasingly cold. After quite some time, a bus, it had to be my 37, appeared but made an unexpected right turn onto Fairfax instead of continuing eastbound to where several of us were waiting. Immediately, the peculiar man with histrionics on display, took off after it as did, more quietly, some of the others. Seemingly disappointed when the bus still did not stop (how could they expect to catch up to it?), they returned before beginning to trickle away with the peculiar man in the lead, loudly calling out to anyone within earshot that he was giving up... The young woman I had noticed earlier soon followed suit. Sensing something was possibly amiss: I. Stayed. Put. And, taking a leaf from Soviet-era Gulag zeks, began stuffing whatever paper I could find in my backpack down my shirt in an attempt at warding off the increasing cold (not kidding 'ere. Steadfast, I was). Sometime later, a bus, coming from the direction the earlier one had taken, miraculously rounded the corner and stopped, kindly consenting to pickup what was left of the, by now, cold and weary trade (what are some of these LA Metro bus drivers smoking?). There were, by then, only 2-3 of us left, the others having scattered to the four winds. The "clou de la soirée"? If I may express myself thus.

For over a year, I have kept a solar panel on the lawn outside my bungalow (see pictures in the attachment I sent a copy of to AFJ Investment). During most of this time, it was mounted on a bike trailer allowing it to be moved with ease and used as part of a solar-electric bike I am working on. Unfortunately, some months ago, the base was stolen, forcing me to lean the panel against the bungalow until I could figure out what to do. There were no complaints from the landlord until I lodged one with the City complaining of the inaction of AFJ Investment concerning low water flow in the bungalow. Tiffany Anderson, though she has visited my complex several times over the last year and had to have noticed the offending panel, chose to say nothing until the City became involved. The inspection, when it came, proved to be a letdown. While the inside of the bungalow passed muster, the inspector noticed the one solar panel I had left outside, the one actually connected to my solar electric system. A lively discussion ensued, partly fueled by my misunderstanding. I had assumed the original inspector had given me a pass on the active panel, merely requiring me to remove the three others (not connected) stacked up outside for lack of space. The second inspector was adamant: I was to remove this last panel as well.

When, a couple of days later, I spoke by phone with Tiffany Anderson, she confirmed the inspector's request, adding that the owner had requested immediate compliance. I asked for clarification and suggested other possibilities which would allow me to retain the panel as source of electricity. I also repeated what I had said to the inspector, that the panel was an essential part of my business. She was unimpressed, adding with some urgency that there was a three day notice requiring me to comply. Attimes she was so loud, I could not understand what she was saying and had to ask her to speak more quietly.

The next day, relating the incident to my sister, Irene repeatedly emphasized, again with quite some urgency, that my fulfilling the rental agreement for the bungalow *to the letter*, with advantages including an astonishingly low rent (nearby apartment are, I hear, going for five times what I pay) was crucial to my remaining in LA. I agreed. After all, this solar business is, by comparison, a sideshow. Later in our conversation, Irene volunteered an answer to my unasked question: "The landlord may be retaliating for your keeping the apartment in such poor shape." Puzzling. This from a woman who once, in a Skype conversation with me, courageously uttered the fateful (?) word CIA. Peccavi! The text of my reply to AFJ Investment's Tiffany Anderson (daughter of the owner(s) ?), sent by certified mail with signature confirmation, is included as another attachment. Irene seemed satisfied with it.

I am now tentatively exploring other avenues, checking with both AFJ Investment and the City of Los Angeles. Avenues including:

1. Mounting the solar panel on top of my car, parked nearby, to charge a battery pack in the car which, after charging, I will exchange with a second pack in my bungalow. There would then be no direct connection from the panel to the bungalow. With the panel to be removed and stored at home whenever I make use of the car. I call this "ping-pong diplomacy," mixing a technical term (ping-pong buffers – referring to the alternate use of two battery packs) with an attempt at humor, alluding to the "sensitivity" of the situation.
2. Parking a tricycle, solar powered (they are in the general category known as eBikes), on the street and using it to charge a battery pack during the day, swapping it in the evening for another in the bungalow. With, again, no electrical connection to my bungalow.
3. Mounting a planned solar water heater (a derivative of which has been proposed to a potential customer) on a electric wheelchair base or behind the aforementioned solar tricycle, the 50lb load occasionally being moved to my bungalow using the same base. The electric wheelchair base to be parked on the street nearby with, again, no physical connection to my bungalow.
4. This base would also serve to move other heavy objects such as batteries and the solar panel from car to bungalow and back daily as I am unable to lift much myself due to injuries sustained in various accident lately; accidents which may have left me in need of surgery. As Churchill is reputed to have said to his French counterparts (in his execrable French), sometime during the debacle "en quarante": "Ne m'obstaclez pas!"

Meanwhile termites are ravaging the property while I cannot interest poor Tiffany in the problem. Oh, and as of this morning (9-15-2021), I am told the City of Los Angeles does not have any record of the complaint which triggered this mess or of the findings of the housing inspectors.

In other news, my sister Irene reports that lately, on several occasions, when I call, my location is reported as coming from, variously, England, France or Germany. Likely concerned that I may have gone off my rocker once again and decided to spoof my location in an attempt to somehow ward off the ever-present evil spirits, Irene has expressed concern... A-and that's the best-case scenario. Another possibility which may have momentarily occurred to the poor woman is that I have finally thrown in the towel and left these fair shores for other climes. Perhaps (heavy, heavy irony here) ¿para luchar en otros frentes? As the phrase goes. Could this be Sassenach up to 'is Yankee tricks once again (if I may mix metaphors), do you suppose...

Coming home yesterday (9-21-2021), bus-weary, with only a few of the day's tasks accomplished, I chanced to stop by my local auto shop located a few yards from my bungalow. They know me over

there, sometimes even bringing me computer stuff to fix unbidden. I wanted to know if they could weld some fixtures to my car to ease the mounting of the solar panel I plan to install. With everyone busy, I soon sat down next to the office, near a corner of the shop. And sat. And sat. And sat. As I had had the foresight to bring a book, *The End of the Megamachine*, I was not unduly troubled... I even managed to get through about 6 pages, in Geeerman, before a kind soul eventually materialized, asking if I perhaps needed anything. I think I had previously noticed him walk by, pulling along a welding machine. Looking up from my book, I quietly replied I would consider his (kind ?) offer and get back to him. Adding: "Do you understand?" At which I walked away. He quickly followed, asking if I was there to pickup a Prius. Being a bit hard of hearing (likely due to the overly loud music I often play; after diagnosing tinnitus, some months ago, my doctor at Kaiser suggested I reduce both the volume and my consumption of coffee, suggestions I have since followed up to a point – but I digress), I neglected to answer. Outside on the street, sedately making my way toward my bungalow, he pursued me (perhaps hoping to rustle up some business – zélé, ce garçon). Asking if my car might be in need of repairs. My hearing unfortunately not having significantly improved in the intervening 30 seconds, I continued on my way; eventually making good my escape. Jesus. (Auto Repair and Body Shop) is the name of this business.

And this is "the belly of the beast" as my one-time friend, poor Subhash Sharma, once called America? Increasingly Nigeria-lite, more like.

A-and what of my plan for a private tilapia/vegetable aquaponics farm, Eh?

A fine kettle of fish, this.

In the early part of the night, as I try to sleep; A Thought: the next time one of these creatures of the Securitate nincompoop-provocateurs calls me "Brother," I have a ready retort: "Right on, Brother, a-and my regards to Sister Kamala." That'll bitch it, wot? Though I must confess, the Securitate certainly seems to have found the range... Eh? (See my categorization of myself as "The Brother from Another Planet" among other put-downs in my book).

P.S. To my sister Irene (upon whose enemies, confusion – this bears repeating): "May our tears prove invincible."

The re-purposing of a medical term and other stories (I will be brief, though, I'm afraid, a bit sententious)

Given the prevalence of the trick/technique known as a "False Flag Operation," I think it justified to reminded you, Gentle Reader™, of the term, "The Great Masquerader." Another (of the many, I, in my intemperate fervor, am accumulating) name for the gentlemen of our very own Securitate.

Those of you with medical training will recognize the (hardly veiled) allusion... Yeech!

A-and what of its long-term impact on the body (politic)? Eh? Re-yeech!

In other news; as regards various and sundry violations of my person (again, being a trifle sententious 'ere, wot?), I will merely note the following incidents (mostly today's):

1. Kinetic activity (of a minor sort, I hasten to add) on a bus. Some specifics, please:

◦ Bus # 1923, just before 4:30PM, number 16 eastbound on 3rd St. on 8/26/2021

◦ A woman, older, Black, standing near the front, loudly complains to me that I am in front of the yellow line (I had just boarded), steps on my foot in the process. I reply with a placating peace sign, say little else, and move somewhat away, soon turning my back to her. Passengers nearby, insistently (?) offer me their seats which I politely refuse (I had my cane with me).

◦ Minutes later, the same woman, without warning and a not inconsiderable amount of treachery, kicks me twice from behind. I then move well away, refusing still more offers from passengers of a seat nearby...

◦ The driver soon stops the bus, (possibly) ejecting the woman in the process; before coming to me, asking if I'm OK. I reply in the affirmative.

◦ Later as I got off at my destination, I asked the driver whether he had witnessed the kicks. When he replied that he had, I further probed as to whether he could be identified by the time and bus ID number which I had previously jotted down. Again, the answer was yes.

2. Another bit of fracas, rather loud, again on a bus, this time as I headed home later that evening. More specifics:

◦ Bus # 5981, just before 7:30PM, number 212 southbound on La Brea on 8/26/2021

◦ Occasioned by, it would seem, a difference of opinion regarding the ownership of a cell phone, as the two Bravoes in question resolutely got on board...

◦ I myself, safely (?) ensconced in my seat book (see below), near the "front" (of the bus) had a fine view of the brief altercation.

3. Repeated, jerky movements of nearby passengers' hands and feet – I, myself, (tentatively) diagnose incipient St. Vitus'. Murmurings, mutterings, faint but sinister sounds, discordant laughs with the occasional dark imprecation thrown in for good measure; all occasionally issuing from the bowels of the various buses I rode today. Constructs at times rising to the level of, in a phrase I recently learned from reading reviews of that fine film, THX1138, "sound montages."

4. This hard on the heels of a previous loud disturbance I witnessed on another bus, a few days ago. A disturbance of a type known (to me, at least) as a "querelle de boustifaille." An argument, ignited as I got off the bus, in which one of the parties remonstrated heatedly (they did exchange words but did not come to blows) with the other for not getting out of my way quickly enough when I excused myself as I tried to reach the exit...

Throughout, I was, one might say, sustained in my faith by a peculiar little book, once recommended by my (much lamented former) friend and gifted man, Janusz Hetman – that poor unfortunate; one among so many. The book in question, a nearly incomprehensible farrago of delusional rubbish: *Memoirs Found in a Bathtub* by Stanisław Lem, noted Polish Science Fiction writer, satirist and, so it would appear from the style of the volume, full-blown paranoiac in the fullest Eastern European tradition. (At times) hilarious, absorbing and relevant, given the attendant atmospheric present lately. Eh? Recommended reading. Oddly, Los Angeles Public Library only has the French translation which I checked out, for the second time in decades, some weeks ago.

A couple of brief quotes may suffice to demonstrate a certain relevance here: "... l'Édifice ne ressemblait plus qu'à un abîme peuplé de fous isolés dans leur cellules." (The Edifice no longer

resembled anything other than an abyss populated by madmen isolated in their cells.)

"... un ramassis d'horreurs et d'inepties." (An heterogeneous assemblage of horrors and incompetence.)

- Stanisław Lem (*Memoirs Found in a Bathtub*, my translations)

Oh! And another item. From a YouTube video on nutrition, a subject close to my heart (and pancreas, I imagine) by Dr. Michael Eades, I learned last night that: "Books are not sold based on the quality of the book, they're sold on the promotability of the author." That faint, peculiar rustling some of you may have heard 'round midnight yesterday was

the sound of (a whole passel of) scales falling from my eyes... As a notorious idjit, who shall go unnamed here, said once: "Ahhhhh ! Mais, fallait m'le dire !" (Why didn't someone tell me).

Bref, un programme chargé, quoi? (A busy agenda, what?) (Can also mean a show or presentation packed with entertaining events – Good production values?).

(signed)

Un Petit Plaisantin

aka

Bergie "Wag 'n Bietjie" 'awkins (No, this I do not translate)

P.S. To Irene: "May our tears prove invincible."