

Encounter with a Good, if a Trifle Overeager, Samaritan

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(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. I’ve been outside working on solar stuff, near my car, at the curb. Equipment strewn about. Just then I’m sitting down, resting.
2. 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.
3. Watching from the sidelines, a bit stunned I ask her, in English, to return it.
4. 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.”
5. Politely, I demur, preferring to chase after my miscreant, now making her way at flank speed down “these mean streets.”
6. As I call out to her, Tub-thumper, standing near the curb, helpfully suggests she may not understand English.
7. 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.
8. Eventually, she relents and drops the dolly.
9. 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. He stopped purposely to warn me about leaving my car parked. Said next time, ticket?
2. 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.
3. 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" ...
4. 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.
5. (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 *Cantinflear*. 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. Moved and/or missing blue ballpoint pens, several over the last month or so.
2. 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 mebbe 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. A laptop
2. Three copies of my book
3. A folding table and chair
4. Two diaries, one of which, almost completely filled, contained entries covering last year
5. 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. Bungalow problem
2. Car problem
3. Kaiser Permanente problem
4. US Post Office problem
5. Phone problem
6. State of California benefits problem
7. IRS problem
8. Bank problem
9. eBay problem
10. State of California EDD problem
11. Theft problem
12. (Update: 3-15-22) To which I must now add my Law folder

And so, given that:

1. I am a paranoid schizophrenic (according to Irene, an MD), previously hospitalized, on permanent disability for over 20 years
2. I unilaterally stopped taking my meds years ago, to the muted dismay of my long-suffering doctors
3. 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. Financial.
2. Physical.
3. "Talking one down," i.e., the frequent, repetitive, unimaginative insults, frequent to the point of monotony.
4. Familial situation.
5. Elicited then bottled-up emotions.
6. Loss of loved-ones & (most) friends.
7. Worries about my health, legitimate or not.
8. Weird events.
9. Social isolation.
10. Sounds. Yes, sounds.
11. Tensions caused by my ambivalence about the likely nature of my "Masters"/"Friends"/My Side/The Gang I, willy-nilly, suspect I belong to.
12. Tensions caused by my uncertainty regarding outcomes.
13. 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. 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).
2. "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).
2. 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 on 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 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.

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 Collision	Synchronized Sounds	"Skits" & Provocations	Note
Monday	4	1	2	Home all day
Tuesday	15	11	7	Out
Wednesday	5	3	0	Home all day
Thursday	1	7	0	Home all day
Friday	3	5	0	Home all day
Saturday	3	10	0	Home mostly
Sunday	5	13	3	Home 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. 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.
2. Inability of print shop employees to follow explicit, simple instructions when a job is requested online.
3. 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. 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.
2. 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.
3. Went to bank for a deposit and check if I can close one of my three safe deposit boxes.
4. 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.
5. Continuing by bus, I stopped at my seamstress to drop off some clothes.
6. Thence to Costco, with me weathering the usual extravaganza. Left at 13:45PM.
7. 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."
8. To Lincoln Blvd. for a BBB #3 connecting to a Metro #33
9. Went to a long-time customer for some PC repair work. As I left his house, it began raining.
10. 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?
11. 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.
12. 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.
13. 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 20th 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 (ministre 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 a-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: “*Ye'r 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 *vorspeise* 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 *Ghegs*. 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, *Ghegs* 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.