

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 μιλιάκα” (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?

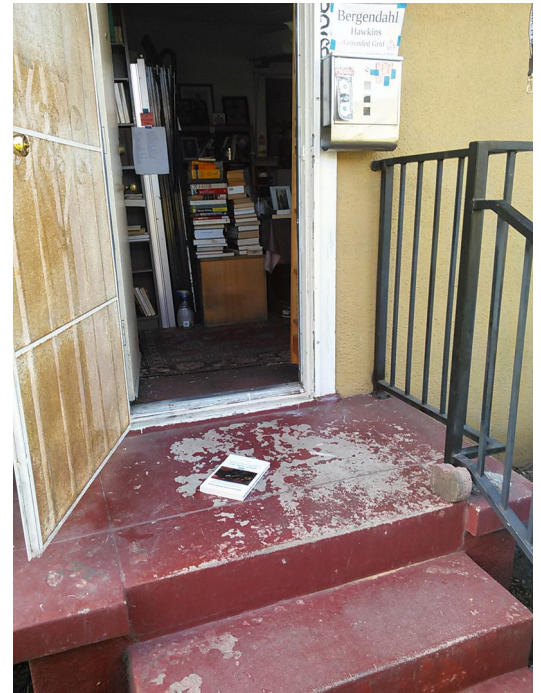
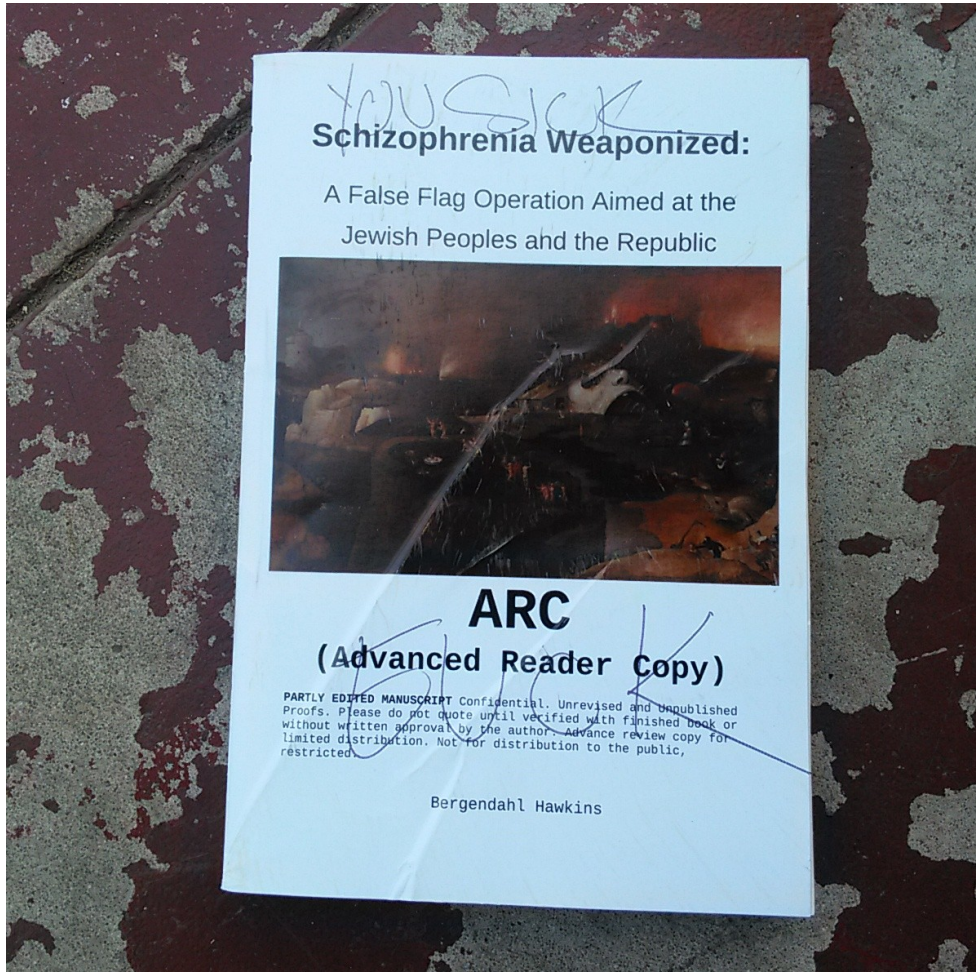
In other news I, good soldier that I am (in the style of Schweik, it goes without saying), beg to report an unusual, unprecedented (though not unexpected), event this Tuesday night. On my way to the bank, leaving after 6:30PM, after having met with a customer, I stood for over an hour at the stop on 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.