

Home, Sweet Home: Dispatches from the Manchurian Candidate Factory, #15

Κύριε, ἐλέησον. (Lord, have mercy.)

My own opinion (borrowing from Richard Wolin) regarding the stuff I write: “Anecdotaly rich but analytically impoverished.”

Distribution: Book group, Adams Blvd./Cochran Ave. and Environs, Selected (wouldn't want to get me face bashed in) Tenants of my Apartment Complex, Relevant Organizations, Others.

Purpose: To Ridicule Few. To Amuse Many. To Inform All.

A reminder: because of frequent computer malfunctions, when I notice an egregious “printer's devil,” I'll **bold** it and add (sic). That'll bitch it.

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“Having gotten mixed-up in writing, I have been punished for my impudence;
Refractory, I have offended my era's mentality.
The accumulated calumnies could very well get the better of my carcass;
As useless as it may be, my voice will nevertheless survive in these pages.

— Lu Xun's autograph/poem (1933). My translation from the French

The others, at least, were ashamed of their depredations; but what's to be done with this one who's proud of them!

— Julien Benda, quoting from a story by Tolstoy. My translation

One can't well argue the honor and beauty of an act by referring to its usefulness.

— Montaigne

History: A conspiracy, not always among gentlemen, to defraud. (I can now freely attest to that.)

— Ambrose Bierce (possibly paraphrased)

The Cat Walks (Backward, Natch!):

When I came back from Europe, I remember Oscar Revey giving me the names of two therapists. The first turned me down in a hurry, saying he was booked up. The other was Victor Morton.

Rod Gorney, UCLA professor of psychiatry(?), was at one time a PC repair customer. I remember taking a ribbon cable from an unused(?) PC tower belonging to him without his permission. He eventually asked if I could recommend a house painter. I sent him Jon Howard who, after meeting him, told me professor Gorney seemed to want to talk without offering any work. The professor once also asked if he could have a copy of my medical file at Edelman Mental Health Center, I don't remember why. When I spoke of it to my psychiatrist there, Dr. Wolman, she strongly counseled against it. He and I were going to work together on a technical project, it came to nothing as I was unwilling to accept his terms and he would not respond to my counteroffers.

At the Brown Derby hotel in Denver, 1982(?), there overnight for an electronics show with the owner of Xentel, Brent Jaybush. Alone, having breakfast in the dining room, minding me own business I hear, from a nearby table, clearly: “What's wrong with that boy?” This from a well dressed woman sitting with a couple of equally well-dressed men. On my first(?) day at Encore Video in Hollywood, in 1990(?), talking with a colorist(?), another person present; from across an open sliding glass door, a woman, thirties perhaps, as she walks by, says loudly: “That's a nigger and a half.” At school, M.L., a fellow student, as I walk by says: “I smell nigger blood.” In none of these instances did I say anything either before or after. (Possible) “skits” more than evocative, no? And, *sub specie aeternitatis* (from the point of view of eternity, which is why they're in this section), informative as well. What kind of a place is this, anyhow? *Qu'est-que vous voulez, ça jette un froid*. (It can't help but have a chilling effect).

I was born an *ersatz* Frenchman (as was once, in retrospect, made clear to me). In due course, as wished by my father, I came here, an *ersatz* American. Shortly thereafter, I turned into an *ersatz* Negro. In certain circles, plans were (had been?) laid for me to become an *ersatz* terrorist/killer and/or gigolo. These schemes, however, eventually miscarried. Maybe now I can become a member of the Human Race *tout court* (candidate member, how about?).

La Rubrique des Gueules Cassées (A Section on War-wounded):

After a complaint of persistent symptoms to my Kaiser doctor, she ordered blood tests. They came back negative for white cells abnormal counts and other criteria. But, after a set of about a dozen allergy tests, I possibly have had a reaction to one substance: cockroach, with some sensitivity present. (Update: 1-28-23 My new doctor, previous one gone, says cockroach unlikely to be source of symptoms).

My complex: a circus. My bungalow: a veritable zoo. Consider the following infestations: 1) Cockroaches (2 successfully dealt with, years apart) 2) Lice 3) Bedbugs (3 here + 1 in Idaho) 4) A lizard 5) Mice (several) 6) Spiders (frequent) 7) Termites (reported to landlord) 8) Mold (the last 2 confirmed by inspection).

The Quotable Other, i.e., *L'Enfer, c'est les Autres* — Sartre (Hell is Other People):

(12-31-22) Late in the evening, the *Aktion* began with a distant siren: “*Pin-pon-pin-pon. Pin-pon-pin-pon*” (see below for an inadequate attempt at explanation – my wretched sense of humor again), soon followed by flashing lights which stopped nearby. I heard radios crackling and brief snatches of speech: “... four bungalows...”, “... I can see smoke coming out...”, “... a wall heater...”. Though this went on for some time before the hubbub died down, I could not bestir myself from my couch to have a look. As with so much else nowadays, a tempest in a chamber pot perhaps?

Sassenach and His Yankee Damyankee Tricks:

(12-16-22) When you think you've seen everything. At the Baldwin Hills library branch, near closing time. For my money, maybe the most disgusting *Aktion* ever. With parallels to my relations with Oscar Revey. A show in which, if I'm not very mistaken, a former customer named Crystal, previously homeless (I once saw her wandering up La Cienega, years ago, naked from the waist up), was today being “advised” (used and manipulated, really) in a public place by some kind of a monster disguised as a mental health or homeless specialist/advisor/coach; again, if I'm not very mistaken. During an almost one-sided conversation, in a loud, obviously fake voice, this monster acted out a polished parody of a Stepford Wife. Throughout the near-monologue, I noticed what I call “synthetic ideas of reference” galore. With the homeless young woman increasingly subdued as the conversation wore on, her voice almost inaudible by the time I left, a half hour later. And now for the tie-in. Walking home, reeling from this show, I hear a single word: “Framed!”, spoken with emphasis by a Spanish-speaking man walking toward me from a side street. And. Was. I. Spooked. Both during the performances and later. This is use of a mentally ill person to destabilize another. Foul a show as I've yet seen. We must track this poor woman down and free her from this, this, this disgusting state of bondage. The grossest, most gruesome sort of human rights violation; another case for the Hague, clearly. In Soviet times, *zeks* sometimes privately referred to a camp guard or *osobist* as an “Asmodeus.”

Juegos de Manos, Juegos de Villanos:

Speed Bumps on the Road to *Ragnarök*:

(12-??-22) She called from my bank, telling me of a fraud attempt with my debit card. Hearing it pronounced “Valmart,” I had to ask her to spell it before confirming I had not attempted two purchases at “Walmart” (the accent betraying a German connection, perhaps?). She then canceled my card. Why? In the past, I only had to deny the transaction was mine to continue using it. In this case, the unusual cancellation caused me some inconvenience as I was forced to take the bus to Inglewood that day and request a replacement after being told my second card, one I had not used in over a year, had also been canceled for unknown reasons. Then, a day or so later, grocery shopping at Costco and unsure if the cash I had on hand would be enough, I began placing my items in two piles on the conveyor belt, the essentials and the optional. The clerk, protesting loudly that I was making his job more difficult, actually began putting my items back in the cart. I had to object firmly and repeatedly before he relented. Illustrative.

The (pantry) demolition derby, a timeline:

(12-14-22) Was outside all day with pantry empty. Joe came at 5PM, I refused to let him in. Tiffany Anderson emails me that the police are coming.

(12-15-22) AFJ employee here, I leave after telling him to lock up when done.

Tiffany Anderson, here for start of demolition says: “But I sent you an email” plaintively(?) as I rush away for the day. I offer coffee to two workers. No, they were adamant. Tea only.

(12-16-22) Again, two workers here, demolishing the pantry.

She spoke! To me. Using my name. In a conversational tone, yet. Asking me to not put my fliers on her door anymore. Lady Lurk, let me assure you, henceforth, I shall sin no more.

Heading home with my find, I waited for the next #37 at Fairfax but, when I plaintively(?) asked him to lower ramp, he refused to let me board. With a smelly, bulky microwave oven on my dolly, two milk crates balanced on top, I can’t say I blame him for refusing to let me board. But, but, but why did he, at first, tell me to get on through the back door?

(12-18-22) Demolition work started at 9, by 11AM, it was all over. Blessed silence reigned again. As to what went on sandwiched between 9 and 11, here’s a sample: Until, in the afternoon as I rested on couch near an open window, Joe “5-o’clock shadow,” worker for AFJ Investment, dropped by for an extended bit of gibberish of the kind passing nowadays as conversation (not even the most threadbare sort of plausible deniability attempted anymore). I declare. With the word Nazi heard once and the phrase “black tape” repeated several times

(12-19-22) It’s approaching 3AM as I write this. My long-suffering landlord, Tiffany Anderson, requesting a visit by a City inspector, sent me a 24-hour notice yesterday morning while I was out, by email. Unable to read it until late that night, it was not until 2AM that I learned it is not legal. And so, after another email to LAHD, they must tired be tired of me by now, I decided to meet yet another attempt at an importunate landlord visit with a firm: “Oh, so sorry!” Those of you who have glanced at the glossary of my book will understand... It only took five minutes’ perusal of a YouTube video to learn more about the California Civil Code (CC 1954) as it applies to renter’s rights than Tiffany Anderson, in the real estate business much of her life, following in her parents’ footsteps and, I suspect, her grandparents’ as well. I’m an effing genius.

Came home after 5PM to find a worker still here. When I asked how much longer it would take and did not get an answer, I went shopping spending some time at the library with the usual *eine kleine Schrägemusik*™. Followed by a disturbing *Abendsegen* (evening blessing) as I headed home, walking on Westhaven. At Cloverdale, I noticed a paramedic pointing to her chest with rapid motions, nearby was a stretcher accompanied by one or more other paramedics. Her movements drew my attention while simultaneously, on the street, heading in my direction, I saw a silent procession of perhaps a few dozen people along with many children. No words were exchanged and I continued on my way.

Today as suggested by a Bet Tzedek paralegal, I filled out an intake form at the LA Bar Association web site, looking for a referral; trying, once again, to sue my landlord. (Update: 1-26-23) As of today, have seen neither hide nor hair of a legal referral.

Since January, 2022, I have tried to learn what the rules are on home office exemptions from LA City Planning Dept.’s Anacany Hurtado. After another attempt in December, 2022, I finally got a partial reply on Monday. A cut-and-pasted list of the conditions under which a business can be considered a home office. Replied the next day with a checklist listing status of each of the twenty points. fifteen of which I felt I satisfy, with four unclear to me. I asked for clarification; the twentieth point, a defect I’ve corrected: a sign on my mailbox mentioning the name of my business also business cards with my home address.

(12-20-22) It’s past 3AM, I’m still plotting, listening to some Bach on YouTube, my attention distracted by two lovely gowns worn by two equally lovely lead singers. Today, had a visit from City Inspector Avila accompanied by José Nava. At 5PM sharp. No written request posted 24 hours in advance and an attempted inspection outside working hours. I refused entry. Is someone begging for a lawsuit? Let me rephrase: is there anyone in all of Christendom *not* asking me to sue?

(12-21-22) Another red letter day, General Manager’s Hearing on case #800945. There to see and be seen... My watchword throughout shall be: “Comply, comply, though the frost lie heavy.” During the phone hearing, I heard a City Inspector say that the reason I had not heard back about home office exemptions all year is that I had contacted his office, Building and Safety, the wrong department. Having earlier made the silly mistake of contributing about two sentences, I did not compound this by adding more to the farrago, remaining silent. He also seemed to suggest that as long as I removed my dba Grounded Grid sign, and there were no solar panel in view, I could continue my business, falling under the radar, as it were. Also, according to my notes, he ordered a 20% reduction in my rent. Summary: I’m disappointed by my performance at this performance. Beforehand, I’d more or less decided to not speak, vowing to listen only. Instead, I spoke twice, dignifying this show with my active participation. A mistake.

A new record set. On Adams at Dunsmuir, seven, I counted ‘em. Seven westbound #37 buses wiv’ that dread scheduling conflict. Drat! Leaving me to stew in my own juices until some kind soul finally stopped for me.

(12-23-22) This morning, when told by José Nava that the City Building and Safety inspector would be over within ten minutes, I hurriedly left – my policy being to avoid AFJ Investment and company whenever possible. Coming back an hour later, I found him still waiting outside, inspector not having arrived yet. Without breaking stride, without a superfluous word, I continued on to the library, not returning until three, by which time there was no one.

Aren't I entitled to a document, official, from the City with names of the inspector who determined construction of pantry was illegal and of the official who signed off on the demolition order?

(12-27-22) Called Kaiser to request a new doctor after receiving a letter informing me mine is leaving January first. Letter also informed me I had been assigned to someone at an office on MLK Boulevard. The clerk I spoke with could not find a single doctor with an "open panel" at Kaiser/La Cienega, my usual hospital, though I was willing to take anyone available. It seems I now have no doctor as of next week. (Update: 1-3-23) Got a message about test results from my regular doctor through the Kaiser portal this morning, two days after I was told she would be gone. Was this letter, which I can no longer find, a false alarm of some kind? (Update: 1-26-23) Got message from KP portal that she is definitely leaving Kaiser/Cadillac.

(12-28-22) Matt Horns called tonight, not clear why as I'd not been able to reach him in months and couldn't get him to return calls. But he did bring up Susan Sherrod, a friend of Colette who once, under the watchful eye of an unidentified female witness, breastfed her son within feet of me as I worked on her computers. On hearing of this, Colette became upset. As for Matt, Colette once said he had been hospitalized by police, unconscious, with a cracked skull after intervening in a fight (there but for the ~~grace of God~~ 6th Fleet go I?). Goes to show one doesn't have to be Sherlock Holmes to figure when *Sassenach*TM is up to something. Also, I suspect strongly that someone is extorting money from my friend Matt.

email to Irene:

Hi Dear,

Was thinking about the Skype conversation we just had.

I will never (be able to) scrunch up my face, grit my teeth and say: "(fill in the blank here)". Some may say I use willpower to fight

We reject this allegation with the contempt it deserves!

And, as regards my diabetes, I say: Go. With. The. Flow. The hormonal flow, that is.

(signed)

der (ewige) Kampfmuzhik!

email to Irene, et al:

But as I sit writing this and for the last hour(?), as I've been moving stuff to my attic after the demolition of my pantry last week, on orders of the City, there's been the most unusual racket coming from a police helicopter circling overhead.

Occasionally, I wave. Just to be polite, you unnerstand...

Could this be some sort of a Police Aktion?

I declare!

(signed)

der (ewige) Kampfmuzhik!

Benelux: A Kushi, it's True, but a Nice One:

Wink-wink, Nudge-nudge:

When, at any hour of the day or night, I hear the demented roar of some car engine racing about, I've come to say, like my grandmother when she'd hear a thunderclap: "*C'est saint Pierre qui déménage*" (It's ~~Saint Peter~~ *Sassenach*TM moving out). And then there are the sirens and horns; whether police, fire or ambulance. At this point, I don't effing care; sirens where synchronization and, often enough, feedback are evident. In those moments, I sometimes think to myself: "*Pin-pon-pi-dou. Pin-pon-pi-dou.*" Before adding: "*Pompidou, vous ne tenez pas vos services en main*" (Think *Ben Barka* scandal. You know, that *deplorable* business). Obscure? Sure. With more than a whiff of desuetude? Sure. Yet still a serviceable anecdote. Most serviceable... Mwahahahahaha!

(12-28-22) Spent the day beginning to move stuff into my attic to the sounds of a helicopter circling above for *hours*. Later in the evening, Tyson's little boy crossed my path as I went outside to throw something away. Minutes later, I saw on the sidewalk, near stuff I'm donating, a pair of shoes. Not long after that, coming outside again I, once more, walked by this kid going in the other direction. At the sidewalk, I noticed the shoes were gone. Having read *Salammbô* and if this bit of street theater (*Aktion*, to use the modern term) really was a message, I think it Oh, so appropriate to say emphatically: "*Fides Punica!*"

(12-31-22) Sent the following email to Irene, et al:

Hi,

Went UPS to mail a package with nothing much out of the ordinary there. Afterwards, stopped at Trader Joe's where, on arrival, I was greeted by the wailing siren and horn of not just one fire truck but an ambulance as well, both stopping in front of the store; the ambulance sporting an American flag.

Now, I've been reliably anti-American all my life but still, this couldn't but have an effect...

Then, continuing by bus, I noticed a bunch of cops milling around at a bus stop where the driver lingered to pick up some passengers.

There's an explanation for all this, I'm sure.

(signed)

Brother Turnip

P.S. Will be calling to wish everyone a Happy New Year; assuming my phone and computer are in proper working order, that is.

Conclusions:

I was born an *ersatz* Frenchman (as was once, in retrospect, made clear to me). In due course, as wished by my father, I came here, an *ersatz* American. Shortly thereafter, I turned into an *ersatz* Negro. In certain circles, plans were (had been?) made for me to become an *ersatz* terrorist/killer and/or gigolo. These schemes, however, eventually miscarried. Maybe now I can become a member of the Human Race *tout court* (candidate member, how about?).

“... humility here: the resigned acceptance of past ghosts who will not disappear or find rest.” — Alberto Manguel on Ismail Kadare

When you choose to “turn and burn” a Colette Walczak: American, upper-middle class, educated (Master’s degree), white, from “deepest, darkest Indiana,” no criminal record, no antisocial habits, not much in the way of discernible political opinions either; should you ever be found out, you will instantly lose any support you might previously have had. Hers was likely a selection made at random with, therefore, a small upside but a major downside. In short, madness.

Goebbels said: “the essence of propaganda is repetition.” Einstein said something I interpret loosely as: “the essence of repetition is insanity.”

None of this multi-year torrent of ~~malarky~~ words on my part (some of it possibly even understandable) would be conceivable without, as I imagine it, the 6th Fleet and what I call the State of Israel/Palestine (among others) watching my back. Enabling me to “plead the sixth” (instead of the fifth), as it were... Thanks!

Having consistently avoided dealing with reality all my life, I now find (of course) it did not help... To my consternation though, I think it did not much hurt either. Given the state of affairs which currently obtains, my fate was unavoidable. Maybe the ancients were right after all. The Japanese with their notion of *Karma*. The Greeks with their *Moirai*: “*Clotho*, ‘*The Spinner*,’ *spun the thread of life from her distaff onto her spindle. At the moment of birth, she created the thread of a person’s lifetime* (think my hookup with Robert Seidenstein in Germany in 1971). *Lachesis*, ‘*The Drawer of Lots*,’ *measured each thread* (consider the timeline of events leading up to my arrest in 1973). *Finally Atropos*, ‘*The Unturning*,’ *cut each thread at the appointed length, setting the person’s death* (this last perhaps still a matter of some contention in my case).” — from mythologysource.com, Mike Greenberg, PhD.

How is it I, for decades, sleepwalked through successive minefields without ever coming to much harm? I wonder how, exactly; for I have no faith in that *baraka*.

Jews and blacks. A marriage maybe not exactly made in Heaven; in Langley, perhaps?

Six short notes (selected from among so many), illustrative of the (increasingly) obvious sinister farce this show has become:

1. During a visit, landlord Tiffany Anderson wanders, City inspector in tow, into my bedroom; apparently lost, she call out to me, asking for directions. To the kitchen. In a 550 sq. ft bungalow. With the kitchen visible from the front door. Lost our sense of direction, ‘ave we?
2. Fire department(?) puts in an extended appearance on the night of the 31st of December, 2022. But with no evident fire damage anywhere nearby when I check on the next day. Wrong address, perhaps?
3. Assigned a new doctor in an unsuitable location, the letter informing me of this inopportune change since lost, I call Kaiser member services and learn there are no doctors with “open panels” available at my usual hospital, a mile from where I live. Then, days later, calling again, I find there *are* doctors, I should merely have specified the Venice Boulevard building rather than the one on Cadillac/La Cienega. The two, no more than a hundred feet apart, connected by a parking lot and belonging to the same complex. My mistake, folks. (Update: 1-10-23. Maybe my usual doctor *is* still available as I’ve had messages from her; false alert, perhaps?) (Update: 1-29-23. Got a message from my new doctor)
4. An employee of my landlord, AFJ, Joe, and a City Inspector, Mr. Avila, both showing up at 5PM, on the dot, on separate days. The first intending to install a door, which work would have taken hours. The other, for good measure?
5. When I properly refuse the above-mentioned “Five O’clock Shadow” Joe entry; within minutes, by email, Tiffany Anderson threatens: “The time was served in a 24 hour notice. The police are currently on there (sic) way.” Attempted *coup de théâtre* or was she merely being theatrical?
6. Joe again, a few days later, standing under my open living room window as I nap, carrying on a disjointed conversation with another worker on the last day of the pantry demolition. A peculiar conversation in which I hear, in short order, randomly(?) inserted words: “Nazi,” “black tape.” That last phrase quickly repeated almost back-to-back several times. Not even a fig leaf anymore. A pity, really. Verisimilitude, please!

Please, don’t dignify this, my activity, as “writing,” still less as “creative writing.” A phrase I’ve heard slung about. Shooting fish in a barrel, more like (a-and, with some practice, I’ve gotten pretty good at it, too). I once tried to get the farcical aspect of this business across to Colette Walczak in a confused way and was promptly and tellingly put in my place by her for my troubles.

(signed)

*Vieux Nö!*TM (My Oh, so clever trilingual pun, back by ~~popular~~ my own demand) aka Soldier of (Day-Glo) Orange

P.S. To my beloved sisters, Irene and Colette (the latter dead of breast cancer in 2018): May our wordless tears, both yours and mine, eventually prove invincible.

P.P.S. ~~Rome~~ Röhm wasn’t ~~built~~ levelled in a day.