

A Dubious Activity

CAPE HORN A Memoir

69 and still going.

My conceits compel me to this activity. I risk the condemnation of appearing 'autobiographical', a category of diminishment that I do not fully understand; and one, since I do not understand it, do not accept as the proper assessment of this activity.

I assume if it had not been for my father and his conceits I might never have engaged in this activity. Perhaps to be viewed as a curse rather than a calling.

Earlier this week, while working with the sawyer as he reduced last winter's blow downs into usable lumber, he had mentioned his growing up with the BOMB. He is 43 and still going. He was born in 1959, three years before atmospheric testing between the two megatonners was discontinued. Not old enough to live through the buildup, he awakened on the threshold of MAD. He is of Quaker persuasion, and thinks of himself as a loser.

His speaking of the BOMB led me back in my own thoughts and feelings during the time of the buildup.

I have previously reflected upon the beginnings through the sensations and perceptions of a twelve year old (Apropos Of Nothing). I was twelve years old when they detonated the two nuclear bombs, one over Hiroshima on August 6, 1945, and one over Nagasaki on August 9, 1945. On August 14, 1945, my brother's eleventh birthday, the enemy capitulated unconditionally.

Somehow, through MAD and other persuasions, we have escaped any other such attempt to so rectify the ills of civilization, 911 notwithstanding.

As a twelve year old I knew little of the enemy, the so-called Jap (or Nazi). I really did not know where Hiroshima and Nagasaki (or Dresden) were located. I was not aware of any of the repercussions of the War in which we were engaged. Geography came later in life. For that matter I barely knew anything about my own country, or why it should be defended. I was locked away in a Catholic Boarding Convent, living on rice pudding, salt cod, frankfurters and beans, not to mention the body of You Know Who. I knew nothing of nationalism, I knew little of history, and what I did know did not mean anything to me. History began with Biblical stuff, Christopher Columbus and the Pilgrims, and the Boston Tea Party, Paul Revere and the Minute Men, and 1776, and George Washington. And the Civil War, Abraham Lincoln. And taming of the West and the conquering of the savages, mostly by Movie Idols. And Jesus Christ was everywhere. To me that was a lot for my little head to comprehend. I learned most of that history in the

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classroom, the institution, full of its hidden agendas and biases, all heaped upon the impressionable and somewhat doltish thing I was. I also absorbed some of the hoopla from the Cinema, which has grown into the great media show of propaganda. It has taken me a whole lifetime to undo the tangle of prejudices, yeasayings, salutes, pledges, anthems, and associations that comprised the thoughtbanter of my youth. I should not diminish the effect that my 'peers' (and lovelies) had upon my ready acceptance of all of the above.

The thoughtbanter has never ceased; a lingering disease that knaws away at the truth of things. And my peers often possess fangs.

I could not on my own accord know what were the differences between us and them and why it was necessary to resort to MAD in order to live on this planet. What I was told seemed to make sense, only in that they were the bad guys and we were the good guys. Their badness seemed apparent; I was not as sure of our goodness as I was of their badness. The ideologies, in theory, were equivalent in my mind; two systems, or hierarchies, if you will, of governmental control of the masses.

To this day I can not understand what it is governments are all about. In 'my' country government has come to mean Administration, a series of Administrations of leaden bureaucracies, mired down in some kind of political swamp, that are constantly doing and undoing, saving and raping, raping and saving, waring and peacing, all the while maintaining what they call 'order', more through fear (Kent State as an example) than common sense (can't think of any examples), the latter of which cannot survive in a dog-eat-dog world. Even this description is much too crude and complicated to satisfy my need for explanation. I am inclined to the reasoning of Henry David Thoreau in Civil Disobedience as a resolution to man interfering with or dominating man.

The threat of the BOMB still exists, perhaps not so much from those who would use it as a deterrent, but from those who wish to cause harm, to avenge something in a mean, massive and seemingly lasting way. The good guys and the bad guys, each to themselves the righteous ones. Although the BOMB, that is, a nuclear detonation, serves only one purpose, and can only be considered amongst several of the last resorts to resolve anything unsuccessfully, which it cannot do without imperiling every other living thing, there are perhaps even more sinister threats of a more diabolical nature. The take-home lesson does not inspire one to regard human life as having any consequence. The planet appears as a dung heap of fornication with the biggest prick declared the

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winner. The winner gets to control the heap. Meanwhile, life continues terminal, to be replaced by the terminally insane ad infinitum. No apparent purpose.

One returns to the same starting material repeatedly, unable to fashion a better model.

The only true relief is death; yet we linger in a stupefied hope in which we invest nothing of ourselves, sometimes barely able to motivate ourselves beyond the rudimentary urges of the alimentary canal and sundry visceral promptings.

And we longingly look toward the heavens, or gaze upon the sea, seeking repose for our abandoned soul. Abandoned to a semi-conscious state, sometimes keenly aware of our aloneness.

And here I am pretending to Art. Something to live after me; such an incredible conceit. Perhaps I will survive in the archives; a very crowded place. I cannot aspire to the heavens about which I have heard much from people who feel assured of residence, most of with whom I would not care to associate in heaven as it is upon earth. A speck of dust in an archive then.

To return to the diabolical symbolism of the BOMB.

One imagines the human mind, such as it is, as he does his own, seeking truths, or perhaps bits of knowledge, concerning the Universe. This seeking seems to hold nothing sacred; that is, all is open to investigation. The world of science is full of observers and investigators of the phenomena of the Universe, seeking the secrets of matter, and the persuasions of life forms; and/or the interrelatedness and purposes of each or both. It is the nature of the human to pursue this curiosity, and to seek knowledge; it is part of his makeup, or evolution, and stir, if you will. This activity often does lead to a knowledge of the very secrets of matter; as often discovered accidentally as through theorizing, although the latter often leads one toward the former.

Man does not admonish himself, "Beware, this must not become general knowledge, that is, available to the masses", even though he knows man's other proclivities with regard to the use of certain knowledge. In other words, man's search for the truth often leads him down the road to the use of knowledge to dominate his look-a-likes. He has so evolved. The devil take the hindmost. Humans are devils. Diabolical devils.

Of course, man, or the devil, has shown repeatedly it is impossible to keep a secret, even upon the threat of death. Man has shown also it is impossible for man not to seek advantage. Of course, in all fairness, one cannot include all men in this assessment (the Meek. For example). Indeed, there are other seekers who do not bother with specific truths about the physical Universe in any great detail, and are easily satisfied with the

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rudimentary knowledge of the cornerstones of the physical universe, Earth Air Fire and Water. If Drummers are beating away out there, these latter Earth Air Fire and Water people may be listening to a beat that attunes itself to their ears alone; often inconsonant with others.

Unfortunately the Earth Air Fire and Water people become just as disadvantaged by the inner workings of the devil people as do all the others. This is so because, even though innocent of most of the devilry associated with this ascendant being, his sack of skin and bones is rather vulnerable, that is, as vulnerable as all others. Innocence offers absolutely no protection for this sacked formulation of living matter. Even the encasement of an armadillo would not offer any protection from the diabolical devil.

Since man has proven so diabolical, there are some of our look-a-likes who ponder this condition with grave misgivings. When the BOMB was developed in secret as an extension of the discovery of the inner workings of the physical Universe, it was done so to thwart the devil in man; but in so doing has also enhanced the devil in man. While the disclaiming scientist was turned into a patriot, the devil politician who appealed to the scientist's patriotism could envision advantages beyond that of the scientist. Some of those politicians became our representatives in government and often have evolved into the personification of evil, which they justify by claiming they have it on good authority that the rest of the world of man is evil, hence the imperative of further equalizing eviltry; hence the BOMB, and whatever other diabolical truth becomes revealed in the laboratory.

The largest obstacle to the use of the diabolical is how to use it without dialbolizing oneself. Heaven is often construed as the ultimate abode if all else goes awry. Failsafe rhetoric is meant to reassure us that it is out of our hands, that the ultimate equalizer will only come into play when the computer deems it so. We are doubly reassured when we are rhetoricized that it requires several actuators with unique keys and codes to set the computer into its ultimate solution mode.

We're workin' on it!

The new BOMB is classified as Sky High, as reaching the heavens. Heaven is very closely allied with HEAVE!; as are evil and devil. As are Dumb and Dubya; only something is missing; of course; and something is added, of course. (He was member of the National Guard, an organization that fired upon protesting (traitorous) students; therefore he was missing the real action.) (Killing traitorous students was a lot easier; the students did not have weapons, not even bows and arrows; but no better'n Gooks.

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Imagine, saying out loud that you are not willing to die for your country; Wah!, thet is punishable by death).

Could anything be stupider?

We're workin' on it!

Ponder it all with grave misgivings. It is already assumed the grave is the ultimate destination; although there are those who assert that heaven and hell are the ultimate destinations. We are still awaiting verification of the latter. So we are not too much involved in heaven or hell misgivings, but more in grave misgivings, even though there are those that insist they are going to heaven. Very often people forget to take their pill in the morning.

Since there will always be a surplus of bad guys there will always be a surplus of BOMBS and/or other diabolicals to deal with the bad guys.

Like the Doc said in the Church of Radiation where I went to receive the blessings of Paladium 103 to thwart the evil of prost(r)ate cancer: "That was almost boring." I was Blaskoed. The bad guy scene is almost boring, so why become fixated upon it?

Good and Bad become intimately entwined with the big conundrum, "What Is The Purpose Of Life?"

Some people quite easily arrive at the answer to that question, like: "The purpose of life is to sail around Cape Horn." That is a kind of 'mind-your-own-business' reply. Some people quite easily arrive at another answer, like: "The purpose of life is to get rid of the bad guys." That is a kind of busybody reply. Often this becomes viewed as one bad guy getting rid of another bad guy, and I don't mean gang warfare, as much as I do the Righteous Dumbya looking for some way to make his mark in hisdestroy. Shooting traitorous protesting students did not earn much in the way of rave reviews. Nowadays dissenters are labeled Little Baghdads by that same National Guardsman, who has risen to the highest position as the ultimate self-appointed disposer of bad guys.

Personally I believe if Dumbya was to sail around Cape Horn, he would do more to inspire the bad guys than bombing the shit out of them. Well, mor'n shit would be bombed outta them; it goes without saying. Whereas navigating Cape Horn in a Cape Horner would likely scare the shit outta Dumbya, humbling the former NATIONAL Guardsman, Drunk and Coker, thereby setting an example for the rest of us. (Only Turn Tedder could navigate Cape Horn in a Cape Horner without staining his underwear, and furthermore, his former spouse, Ms. Fondoo, was for not bombing the shit out of the bad guys.) Frankly I'd rather hear his (Dumbya's) ineloquent patter about having the shit scared out of himself in the Southern Ocean than I would his ineloquent

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bellicose other kind of shit regarding the bad guys who control all the OIL.

You just ain't going to get rid of the bad guys, whether as bad guys posing as good guys, or as bad guys posing as bad guys. Part of the process of replication assures there will always be a huge repository of bad guys: not that the purpose of life is to be construed solely as the reproduction of bad guys.

Our way of life as some kinda guys driving around in SUVs polluting the air, industrializing our dirt and our water supplies so we can ride around the planet in our SUVs hunting down the bad guys who would cut off our supply of SUV juice; well for Geezzzzuzzzz Christ forsake anyway, who'n the heck do we think we are? Bad Guys of course; GD typical hypocrites, or hypocrits. 'Juice (short for Justice) is in the interest of the stronger', so it is inscribed in the first afflatus of the ancient and estimable flossifer, Platinum.

We're workin' on it!

Dumbya, says that if we don't win this one, we will be walking. The nation with the largest, highest per capita fat will be walking. Now that is something I would like to see, all those pigs in a sack waddling down the Interstate. Easy targets. Probably should let them walk it off before you whack 'em so's they'd be easier to bury.

Pretty disgusting chatter I realize, but I'm not in the mood for apologies just now.

I am truly a maladjusted, sociopathic malcontent. I know I should have taken on Cape Horn. But the best I can do at this point is fly out of Myami, SF, LA on LAN to Santiago, then another Go to Punt Arena, then perhaps to Puertogo Willie, then swim the remainder of the way, none of which sounds particularly inviting (can't swim a stroke; dog paddle, but the mirror tells me I ain't one of those). But maybe if I gotGo Punt Arena, in walking the waterfront Avienda Costenera waving my arms in hopeless gestures, pointing in the direction of Cabo de Hornos, some well adjusted societal happycontent would understand perfectly my dilemma, recognizing all the symptoms, offering me a ride on his ark in the southern regions as salve for my aching soul.

And What The Fork Is Cape Horn? A Symbol Of Survival!

I live on the water now most of the time. My enchantments should follow easily, but do not. The reason they do not is because I am too close to the civilized world. 'Civilized' is a euphemism (euphy) for the occupation of the planet by begatted two-legged beasts. Proximity to this begatted presence becomes a trying, painful experience. One is often not a free-ranging spirit but a captive of the animal; no wall high enough or thick enough.

Am I ready to die here?

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I am doomed to never make peace with my look-a-likes. I want desperately to make peace with the Universe, with the planet, with nature, wildlife (what's left of it) within totally natural surroundings. But I am made-up thing, a concoction held prisoner in my form and by my content, a derivative presence, artificial, unoriginal, desirous of something unattainable; even more unattainable than she was when I was a young enthralled male thing.

As some of us grew older, we became more attainable, the attains and the attainees, both too desirous to keep up the pretense. With such knowledge I tell myself now I should have returned to the original unattainee; but 'they' (those rife with content) say you can't go backwards in time. Hence this lingering moroseness.

A state of soul. Cabo de Hornos, the ultimate thrill. The vital élan carried to heights yet unimagined; perhaps really having the shit literally frightened out of himself before drowning in a cold sea of indifference, not like dying amongst the civilized in that cold sea of indifference. Which would you choose? The deadly embrace of the southern ocean or the icy waters of human civilization?

Some will opine there is a crack running through the works; my works. I am condemned to disappointments, cast at my feet with disdain, from those who look like me. No I cannot adjust. I cannot deceive, I cannot be devious, or duplicitous, I cannot survive in a survivalist atmosphere. I do not want to be driven to the brink of equalizers in order to occupy my place in an aborted civilization. I am too idealistic to draw blood in order to preserve any part of this bedlam. I can wish and wish and wish certain ones an abrupt and timely end. I don't really care what they think about me, because I am doomed anyway; but if I could, by wishing, encourage their most expeditious departure, I would. Just as ineffectual as prayer in the noose of the lord; wishing, that is. If I knew I was about to croak painfully from some terminal illness, there wouldn't remain enough time to do in all those on the list before I made for Cabo de Hornos, my spiritual home, dying in the embrace of the elements.

In the civilized world it is utterly too easy to find enemies, all kinds of enemies; dying in the embrace of one's enemies; a crueller fate one could not imagine.

Sailing around Cape Horn, an ennobling act? A test of man against the vile elements thrust upon us? A defiant gesture? A ridiculous conceit? A thrilling ride, full of anxiety, and heightened awareness. Life placed on the line to awaken all its fiber, nerve, blood and guts, to take the meaning of survival to its extremes; to get high on the exhilaration of

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fear. The violence of the wind, its unmerciful thrashing of the vessel and the great urgings and upheavings of the ocean threatening to pitch one into the oblivion of the deep; the place we escaped long long ago; so long in fact our gills have atrophied, we have become unsuited to the environment we so boldly challenge. A death wish, or a longing to be chased by predators in an exhilarating dash at life. Firing at the beast bent on killing me as it charges! A romantic notion gleaned from the armchair? Something infinitely more desirable than just being another of the billions; imagine billions who will die over the next one hundred years to be replaced by even more billions which will perish for the want of something better to do over the following one hundred years? A Holding Action?

Holding Action? Somebody had conjectured it was the Reproductive Imperative; Simone, Anatomic Destiny; another, Fucking As A Preservative. And Cape Horn as the Ultimate Test. Some of this may still be true, even though a ride to the moon has eclipsed the Great Cape. But for the average Joseph or Josephine, the Horn still contains the sacred rite. Once done, falling upon the sword would seem natural, unless of course, one first had to complete a contractual obligation with a publisher. Geeezzzz, imagine such a thing, a contractual obligation with a publisher; what more could a person want?

Self-publish, Durchanek. A small conceit instead of a large one. The advantage of self-publishing is you can use everybody else's copyrighted material (albeit sharing) to enhance your blurb. Since nobody would be reading it until after your tenure here, there would be no one to answer for your culpability, and since no revenue would be forthcoming in any case, loss of royalties could not become an issue. One could argue that quoting another's slant on things would do as much to promote and generate royalties as would a bookstall that had lost interest as another prospective moneymaker came along. Since you would no longer be here, matters of dishonor that would stain your reputation would not be able to harm your conceits, since it could easily be proven you were not out to capitalize on someone else's stuff. Even though you did not round the cape in a howler, you can leave this life feeling you had done something for your conceits, however distinguished. And don't get too hung up on copyrighted material. As you well know, creative people are always borrowing the ancient's intellectual property without paying royalties. Not even as much a flower upon their grave.

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And the more of other people's stuff you used as filler the less autobiographical it would seem. Make it interesting, that is the objective, keep your audience awake; if the coffee doesn't, maybe what is on the coffee table will awaken an interest. Fleshing out with copyrighted material and sharing the script and the message is a noble endeavor; your discernment could be of extreme value to the whole human community, in a most altruistic and philanthropic way. Let all the middlemen, and parvenus, MIRIMAX and the Douglas's make the money; that's their destiny. Let them bargain for the TV and Movie rights. Settle for the pittance; its yours to create, Kenny, and for them to be parasites. They get to ride around in Mercedes, and dork all the lovelies, while you get to walk, and adjust to her aging decrepitudes. It all achieves a balance of its own.

Inside the cover it reads: Return to Henry Korn PLEASE -.

Fifty South To Fifty South.

I did not return it. I cannot take it with me to return to him in the after life.

Henry Korn was my neighbor until he died. Often we were at odds because of difficulties that arise between neighbors. We had hardly ever spoken, much less, had made any effort to recognize each other, so typical of urban life. The attorney I had consulted regarding my difficulties with Henry reassured me that 90% of his cases involved altercations between neighbors.

However, certain similar proclivities sometimes find a way toward a more convivial hoopla. When our sailboat appeared in our front yard for refurbishment, its presence under the blue plastic tarpaulined cover for several months was all too obvious; an eyesore to some. But to Henry, in his dotage, it brought memories and dreams of his youth, a youth wherein the carefree years found him sailing, before he was bound by the family Bakery Business, and marriage, and membership in all the social or country clubs, golfing, and Sunday Painting. Life passed expeditiously, or sailed by, without much notice. About the time the boat appeared, Henry, in his advanced years, had read Jonathan Livingston Seagull, awakening in himself his old dreams. He broke our years of silence to wander over as we were working away on our fiberglass bark. It should be mentioned that Charline is/was a trim very pretty lady with long reddish hair and a beautiful smile; almost as inviting as any boat to the boat fancier. He spoke of the Seagull story he had recently read. We gravitated to the sea stories we had read, as though we might have met on the quay, rather than on a city street, revealing not the least bit of animosity. His enthusiasm for Fifty South To Fifty South was imparted to me, whereupon its loan ensued.

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Of course I read the sea story with relish, starved as I was for rare substance of matters important and unattainable. I held onto the book for a while, savoring the pictorial part, fondling and admiring the unique thing it was.

Then suddenly Henry was felled by a terrible stroke that hospitalized him for a time, followed by a wheelchair to support a mostly paralyzed body, confusion, speechlessness, and shortly thereafter his final passage over the bar.

Henry, wherever you are, a treasure treasured by one who treasures treasures. And inseparable from you. A dream lived and shared. All vanities and conceits consigned to the deep.

Geezzzuuuuzzz Keeericetuh!, we were workin' on it.

I can't know how happy or fulfilled was Henry. Korn's Bakery was no longer in existence, and hadn't been for some time; most likely closed before my arrival in the city. Henry's wife Franny was to me a battleaxe who painted wildflowers. Henry became the secretary treasurer of the Country Club after the demise of the bakery. He got into painting somewhere along the way. He helped to found a local art center in a disused neighborhood denominational church; after he crossed the bar they named the gallery after him; the Henry Korn Gallery, where previously the Lord's Word had been spoken. He never did mention golf.

Later on his brother George who lived down the end of the same street above the highway in the trees told me that the University held the Korn family history in its archives. I haven't been there to investigate. I suppose I was as uninteresting to George as he was to me. George wore a funny little golfer's hat to cover his bald head (at least it made me laugh to myself). George was not a mixer in neighborhood affairs, but he was approached by me about his vote concerning major street improvements to which I was adamantly opposed. So I got to meet George who didn't want them either, because he lived at one end of the street where improving the whole street would not benefit him in the least. Besides he was considering an abode more fitting for his advancing years; since his wife had passed on, his, an anticlimactic occupation of the planet. I did not speak to George about the sea.

As a matter of fact I didn't ever think to ask Henry if he had wanted to sail around the famous Cape. One could not read 50 South to 50 South without dreaming; dreaming dreams beyond, beyond what we can know, knowing something that happens only through doing, doing that which accords the impulsive spirit, the spirit which knows no boundaries, boundaries which, when crossed, imperil the host, the host a hapless form of matter into which breath had been given, given to discover meaning and purpose, the purpose found in dreams, dreams that accord the

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boundlessness of that spirit which soars, soars above the terrible gravity of the Universe, the Universe, an eternity of cold indifferent friendlessness, friendlessness where mournful screams can be heard wailing against the immense darkneses, darkneses to which our meager palpitation has been consigned without remorse, a remorselessly cruel GAWD Damn It!

I think they have stopped workin' on it!

Whatcha mean? Since you were born they have invented the BOMB, chemical and biological agents of mass death, and delivery systems, plus night vision (if Cape Horn wasn't such a cold desolate abandoned place, you could see it in the dark). The acronym has replaced coherence; unimpeachable sources who divulge the truth on condition of anonymity have become the source of truth, and bullshit reigns paramount. The worse it gets, the more bullshit we get.

Sailing around Cape Horn, an ennobling act? A test of man against the vile elements thrust upon us? A defiant gesture? A ridiculous conceit? A thrilling ride, full of anxiety, and heightened awareness. Life placed on the line to awaken all its fiber, nerve, blood and guts, to take the meaning of survival to its extremes; to get high on the exhilaration of fear. The violence of the wind, its unmerciful thrashing of the vessel and its great urgings and upheavings of the ocean threatening to pitch one into the oblivion of the deep; the place we escaped long long ago; so long in fact our gills have atrophied, we have become unsuited to the environment we so boldly challenge. A death wish, or a longing to be chased by predators in an exhilarating dash at life. A romantic notion gleaned from the armchair, not unlike the chivalrous notions of the famed Don? Something infinitely more desirable than just being another of the billions; imagine billions who will die over the next one hundred years to be replaced by even more billions which will perish for the want of something better to do over the following one hundred years? A Holding Action? Imagine billions consuming Ding Dongs; just imagine some banker advising an entrepreneur to 'Begin Small', when there are trillions to be made with Ding Dongs. (Note: A Ding Dong is a symbol of consumption.)

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle!

To continue with the imaginings of billions, to become, to excuse the expression, assholes, more correctly, anuses, that will require wiping. After all the trees are gone, and all the recyclable paper products are gone, what are we to do; or more correctly, what are they to do? Washable asswipes (jobs for millions). We need them now! Can you imagine the amount of toilet paper and water that goes into this one single elementary odiferous act. Obviously, we need to stop shitting. Geeezzz its already so bad that

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the guys who are in the business of portable terlets, are dumping their foofoo down the manholes in the middle of the night.

Another aside.

When my daughter was six years old she was forced by the system to attend public school. I've told you before when she returned from her first day at school she walked into the house with the declaration "GAWD said!". She also drew the most unlikely stereotype of a house that every schoolchild draws with two stories, criss-cross windows and a chimney with smoke rising there from, the whole leaning to one side. I learned later that she encountered the little redhead snippety snubber who said "You ain't gonna be no friend of mine unless you are a Christian!". Later on, after Fundamentalist Christianization, friendships began to accrue, especially with regular attendance at the Faith Center. Ordinarily, most fundamentalists think their shit doesn't stink, so, when one of my daughter's best friends turned out to be the daughter of the portable terlet entrepreneur, there was the prooffoo foo. But it was indeed embarrassing when dad was caught-in-the-act of dumping. My daughter was not dismayed, just Christian. She met her mate for life in the environs of the Faith Center where he was looking for an easy mark for his bullshit. And a place for his wang. He was an embalmer, mortuary scientist, undertaker, cremator, and, he would have her believe, a counselor of the bereaved. He envisioned his own mortuary business complete with a funeral directorship; his first a small enterprise, Cremation Plus, using the family coach as a meat wagon, failed for want of corpus delecti (one man's meat another man's poison). His favorite line: 'Last one to let you down'. He turned out to be a good fundamentalist philanderer, promises unkept, opportunities seized, and a demoted body snatcher in a chain mortuary business, finally finding another mark with more, who was willing to pay for it (well, sort of), and a new home for his wang. Where was dad in all of this? Excommunicated to the sidelines, daughterless, as was to be proven by the accrual of time, and to add a further touch, granddaughterless; exposure to an infidel would be unthinkable, even worse than a philanderer (a philanderer is a philanthropic pecker). Very often children see through their parents humbuggery, and the rest of their failed promise, only to set out on a different course; one sometimes hopes for such things, just to be fair: of course I am speaking of the granddaughter, the daughter hopelessly abandoned.

One of the two certain things about this life is death, a lucrative opportunity. A spiffy logging truck would do better to create a good impression than the family station wagon. The

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sadnesses in life are finally relieved by death, the miserable smiles, whether Christian or infidel, captured on video to take along for the ride to Kieller's Woebegone.

Cape Horn is the only reasonable alternative. Where all the drivel that constitutes a life is wiped away.