

The Manuscript

As they were approaching the dorm, Theresa asked if she could read Mr. D.'s manuscript. "I'll hand it to you as soon as we get inside." Lydia inquired if the pages were loose leaved; Catherine indicating they were. "I would like to follow along after Theresa gets started. How long is it?"

"Thirty pages, with picture files."

"We should be able to finish that this evening."

"Wonderful. Maybe we could discuss it tomorrow morning before we see Mr. D.; and maybe offer him a critique. I have already said some things to him. He didn't seem defensive."

"I won't prejudice your outlook by making any particular comments before you read it."

"By the way, it is very nice that you want to do this."

"The chances that anyone of three of us would have ever encountered the 'essay' for the lack of another word, and even if we had, would we have read it?, comes to mind."

"I try to imagine what would have happened to the manuscript; any of Mr. D. manuscripts. It makes me wonder how many people slave away in their garrets. How many indeed?"

"I will say this, I feel privileged."

Once inside, Catherine produced the manuscript. Theresa eagerly relieved her of it. She hugged her sister, bidding her good night as she rushed off to their accommodations.

Lydia and Catherine remained behind for a short while discussing college life. Lydia revealed that she does not have a male interest as yet. But she indicated that Theresa has a boy friend, whom she met during the Easter break. "He seems kind of nurdy, but don't mention that to Tess."

Theresa curled up in a sofa, and set out to read:

God Bless America

2005

In the course of human events, we often become party to things that are beyond our ability to comprehend, effect or control.

Because we believe (we are led to believe) that we are peoples living in an advanced stage of civilization. We are taught to believe in certain assumptions regarding rules, manners, decorum, trust, even love, in our basic relationship to our look-a-likes.

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Additionally, if we make the effort to become the least bit informed, we are apprised of the devastating effects of War, as they have occurred in the last century; and the potential for total devastation that has become part and parcel of the all-out war machine, and the war mentality; (civilized violence).

When our own advanced country becomes the implementer of such devastation, we not only feel betrayed in what we have been led to believe, and in our assumptions with regard to those beliefs, we feel an apprehension that rests solely with man; not with the elements. We learn to fear man more than we could ever fear natural occurrences.

Why is that?

Because we also learn that man does things with intent to harm, to control, to dominate, and to destroy; all with violence, and without discrimination; directed both at his fellow man and the fauna and flora found within his home.

Yes!, there are times of peace, when man does not overtly do these awful, appalling things. When it seems he can be content to dream and even build his dream, all with good feelings, with hard diligent labor, and with seeming concern for his fellow man, and fellow creatures.

But man is unreliable. Man in large part is a selfish animal. When man is left to his own devices he develops cunning and other survival skills. By nature he is anarchistic; not law-abiding; only his own law, the law of the jungle; the strong over the weak.

When war comes, all the worst of the survival instinct, so capable of the most diabolical invention, is laid bare, for which no man wishes to be held accountable, no animal wishes to be held accountable.

When National Security is threatened, whether imaginary, or real, all the rules of our civilization, imaginary, though it is, are violated, even disregarded. George Bush, Karl Rove, John Ashcroft, Alberto Gonzales, Donald Rumsfeld, Wolfritz, Condoleezza Rice (no relation to Donna, who was all Heart)), Ridge, DeLay, Gingrich, Perle, Hatch, Frist (hopefully the Last), Dicky Chenny, Scooter Libby, and Horiuchi, know what to doo doo. Pore Colin Powelless.

**The unanimous Declaration of the thirteen united States of America
Act of Confederation of The United States of America.**

We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for common defense, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and Posterity, do ordain the Constitution for The United States of America.

A lot of people in AMERICA are afraid.
A lot of people in AMERICA are arrogant.
A lot of people in AMERICA are brutal.
A lot of people in AMERICA are ignorant.
A lot of people in AMERICA are intolerant.
A lot of people in AMERICA are terror fried.
A lot of people in AMERICA are victims.
A lot of people in AMERICA have too much freedom.

To reduce any amount of confusion, AMERICA refers to the United States. To reduce confusion even further, when the man who continually utters that phrase (**GBA**), not unlike his father before him, (George [not the father of our country] [not the one who couldn't tell a lie]), when he is being neglected by the Blessings of God, like all brutal dictators, a bunker lies beneath the White House, to which he may retreat, beyond the reach of the devils. He may also fly about in the Heavens in Air Force ONE.

I was born, raised and educated in the United States Of America. At the time of this writing I would prefer to be elsewhere. Being elsewhere would reduce my exposure to the fear, arrogance, brutality, ignorance, intolerance, terror, and victimization I feel when I am in the United States; **State sponsored terror!**

When I was a mere youth, being schooled, both publicly and parochially, I was being inculcated (hammered) with a certain set of values that were meant to be the backbone of our virtuous country. In Public School, the flag waved in Algebra class, in Latin class, in English class, in History class, in the Gym, and on the grounds.

If one did not remove his hat, did not stand at attention, place his hand over his heart, salute the flag, and recite the pledge, he was immediately reprimanded, with a helluva lot of dirty looks, by all those around him/her. One did not oppose or question this basic act. Even though it was not that important, it was nonetheless a subservient gesture, and did not reflect the freedom to choose, about which we so often heard was a basic right, a right protected by the Constitution of the United States (of America).

Let me make it clear, I was mostly a conformist in those days, mostly out of fear; I want to make it clear that it was not out of love of country. All that yammering in the classroom was intended to mold us into something not well understood. Saluting and conforming were amongst its chief objectives. Teaching us to read and write were useful things in the overall picture; and may have been a well-intentioned imposition upon all the youth of the nation.

Even though there was intended to be a separation between Church and State, we often heard the word God in the school and

in the classroom, even had it stamped on our currency, In God We Trust. We also participated in the sing along **God Bless America**.

When the mandatory schooling was over, we were turned loose into society, and expected to make something of ourselves, as well as earn our keep. When our nation was attacked we were expected to defend it. When I was a child, our nation joined forces with other nations to end the reign of some truly bad guys. When the bad guys had been subdued, our nation helped the knocked down peoples (by us and their leaders) of those nations, to get back on their feet. Our nation was one of the good guys (with vested interests). We conducted those famous war-crimes show trials assigning personal guilt to those who had hidden behind their flag in committing horrendous acts, as well as assigning guilt to the actual perpetrators. **The bell is ringing again.**

Then the world in general became exposed to another ideology. Its main focus began with the workers (proletariat) of the world, seeking to get them to unite against the oligarchs who ruled them, enslaved them, employed (exploited) them for a pittance, exposed them to danger, hunger, want, and dire poverty. That was putting a good face on it. Our leaders took exception to this new Godless ideology because it threatened to influence, and even control, all the other nations of the world, a state of affairs very threatening to our assumed hegemony, and threatening to *'our way of life'*. Imagine the **people** taking over corporations, sharing the profits, providing nutrition, housing and health care for every individual; **Holy Shit, what a scary thing!**

As a young man, I was one of those sought after as cannon fodder intended to be used in the fight against the new aggressive ideology. In my time, Korea was a designated battleground, as our nation confronted the new ideology. My service career is unremarkable in this regard. I was not patriotic; I did not understand the whole involvement. I do remember, while in the military, seeing and hearing in the barracks, on television, the McCarthy hearings. At that time of my life my mind was primarily preoccupied with the opposite sex, something else I did not understand.

In those days, I could only rely upon my survival instincts. I enlisted in the US Navy in order to avoid the draft (In those days I didn't have the privilege to vote, but I did have the privilege to die for causes associated with We The People). I chose a field that, in the end, did well enough, enabling me to avoid the front lines; as a matter of fact, to get me posted overseas on the other side of the globe. After the Korean debacle had ended, I was stationed in America in a place where the military chickenshit began to bear down upon me. It was time to leave. I asked to be released.

In hindsight, my instincts had engineered me toward the innate objective of survival. At this juncture I do not feel any particular need to justify my actions. I do not feel any particular need to be vindicated. It was my experience, undertaken by myself, not encouraged by anyone. I do not brag about it; I was very fearful of the military. The Korean War had ended, there was no further need for my services. There was a mutual parting. I was free to go on with my life, such as it was; and such as it turned out to be.

There were times I would have altercations with patriots who would defend the actions of our country against the new ideology. One must remember that the threats of the new ideology became a rallying cry for our nation, right or wrong. The new ideology was the new bad guy. Our nation still regarded itself as the good guy. However, the situation was more complicated than that.

As a matter of fact, life in the United States became very complicated.

I have learned I needed to forget everything I was taught. I have needed to start over again, by educating myself. I shall acknowledge that I did extract one thing from those early years; a sense of idealism, and a lot of expectations; both misplaced; both unrealistic. However that may be, I still gravitate to the hypothetical 'If Only', because it seems both plausible and possible; because, somewhere deep inside me I yearn for it to become a reality.

This autobiographical excursion is meant to create some kind of reference for what else I might have to say. I don't want to pop off with one opinion or another. I want what I say to be grounded in a plausible reality.

I want to use words like justice, fairness, equity, because these words shoulder concepts that mean a great deal to me. I suppose most of us carry within us a concept of an ideal state where each of these words fulfills a certain criterion.

Underneath all the words and their implementation is the rationale (or reasoning) that invents them and assures their validity, their purposefulness, and their meaning; and significance in also assuring a stable well ordered community of man.

In my own mind these certain words shaped into basic concepts are devoid of politics, of local perturbations. They exist in themselves as inviolable, by anyone. So that all individuals, all nations, all peoples, and all locals, and all faiths, creeds, and beliefs, can know of their existence, and trust in their inviolable nature.

Do I speak of the unattainable? As long as men are free to become arbitrary with respect to the basic concepts, reserving certain prerogatives unto themselves, some things will always be in jeopardy, and rarely attainable.

I wish to continue with the ongoing reality, where most of these idealities turned out to be proof of unpatriotic leanings. The new bad guys remained as bad guys for some time. Open confrontation with them took the form of **MAD**. Altercations took place on other peoples territory, like Korea; Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Nicaragua, Chile, Angola, Cuba, and Kent State, to name a few.

Then these bad guys were gone of their own accord, riven by internal failures. We crowed about their demise, claiming that we were the ones who destroyed them. We outlasted them; we forced them to squander their wherewithal.

It didn't take us long to come up with another bad guy. These guys are going to be harder to destroy; and there are others waiting in the wings. **Pretty soon our number will come up.**

So **God Bless America.**

We're gonna need sumthin'.

The vicious cowboy at the helm is STEERING the nation on a course towards the precipice. He's taking on the Muslims (terrorists). He's gonna get that OIL. He's taking on Flag Burning, he's taking on Abortion; he's taking on Gay Rights; he's putting on Prayer in The Schools; he's violating the Constitution; he's raiding Social Security, and he's taking on Freedom. He's gonna make all the courts after his own image, and load the Supreme Court with Justices (?) that support his agenda. He is creating terror at home and abroad. When the cowboy was governor of the nation's most brutal state, he approved 152 executions (9 of whom are still innocent); **he's got the habit.**

Someone had said that we deserved whut we got. I don't know how they meant that, but let me guess. My guess is that helluva lot of people are basically stupid (uninformed). They only know they are supposed to support the leader; you do that by shoving the flag in everybody's face. If they don't salute, you tell them they are unpatriotic, or worse, they are traitors. A traitor is worse than the emeny. That's about it. Not much to go on.

So, you hafta figure.

God Bless America

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This blessing is so huge, in the shape of a hot iron, jerked right out of the branding fahr. They say our leader, the Commander-in-Chief, is a coward; but worse than a coward, a bully. Here are some of the indicators; things to watch for:

Love It Or Leave It
Anti Abort
No Stem Cell
On Your Knees In School
No Flag Desecration
Gays Are History (Toast)
Lasso The Alaska Wilderness
Social Security Sucks
No Mercy For Bad Dudes
Axil Of Evis
Terror! Terror! Terror!
Attack Iraq (IRAN) PBS NEA ACLU
Gotta Git Thet Petroleum
God Bless Americar

The Compassionate Conservative

"Please, don't kill me."

Read My Lips

And Don't Forget:

There Ought To Be Limits To Freedom

Gott That? Way to go. Meanest Prez ever. Jus' what we need! And they ventured to guess that he was intelligent. Some kind of gent anyway. Another had classified him a moron. Lost her job.

There have been others before him, most notably within the same oligarchy. They had Bonzo, Pearl, Gangbang, Chinny, Meeese, Bayker, Noxoff, ennobled Kissassfinger, Hatchet, Hide, Helm, BushSr., Earlich, Halter, Noth, Slott, Dullest, Whinebugger, and all them new Buggers, Chinny (him again?) DustBinCraft, Riceroni, Smidge, Bumstead, Powerless, Wolfblitz; Gonezilla; Geezus, Fallwell, Gawd, and King Fahdd, The Shah,. And Saddam, uv coarse. Leave anybody out?

SUV OIL GREED

Now that's some headline. Go on with your story.

IRAN HAS NUKE

How about that one. That came from Powerless as he was going out the door. Sounds pretty contentious to me. Get ready for another

PreemptiveStrike

That was right after The People's Republic Of China made a lifetime Bullions of Yuan/Rial deall with IRAN for GollyGee, Erl for Honey; that's Beesness! Yup!, time for a little preemption; excuse please, not a little, but a lotta preempting.

ARMAGEDDON

(God Bless America)

Looks pretty bad, with one point two billion (1,200,000,000) PRC's and damnear one billion (1,000,000,000) Muslims. That's a rough two billion (2,000,000,000) lined up agin' a measly one quarter billion (290,000,000). Like simple math, that even that idiotdubyer in the linen closet should figure; outnumbered damnear eight to one (8 to 1). Pretty rough alright. Can't nuke 'em all without

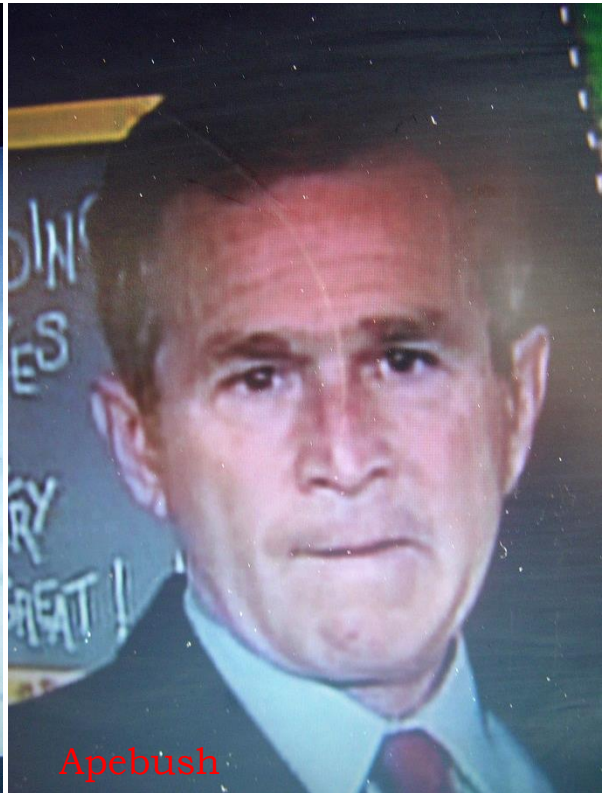
ARMAGEDDON

And there's the forgotten Ruskie who've come up with a doooooomsday nuke. That should help with their tirade balance.

What the fuck is wrong with the human race?



Bushape



Apebush

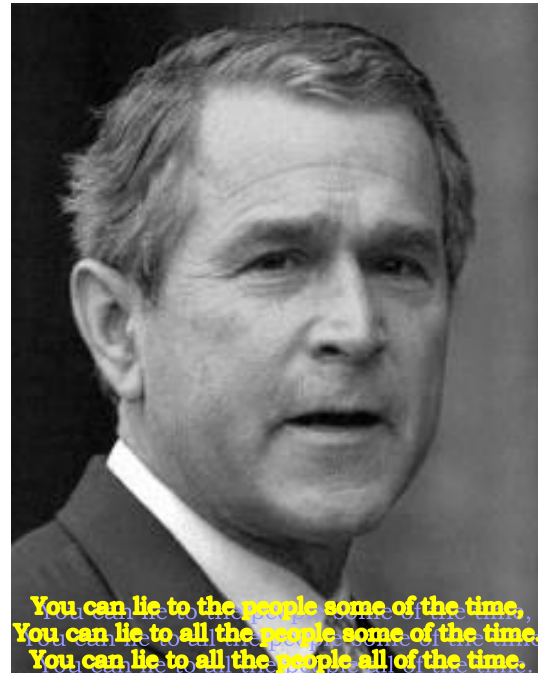
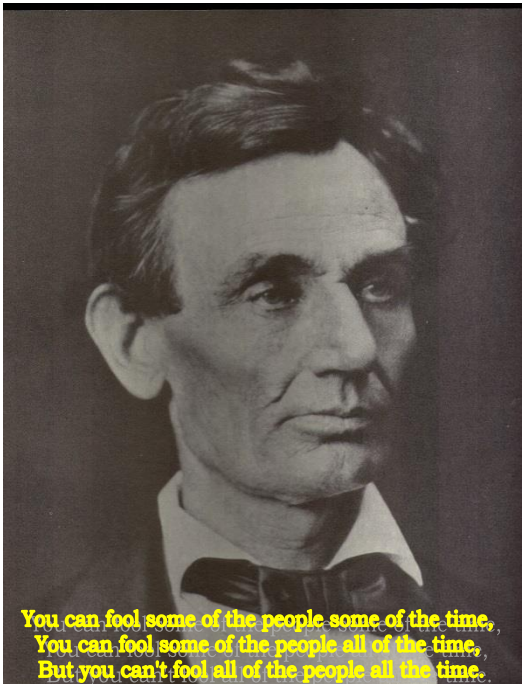
This is part of what is wrong!!!

A lot of people the world over are afraid because these Apebushes' are on the loose. It has been our custom to view the Bushapes as lesser than ourselves. In the Apebush world, it is an ill conceived notion that we descended from the Bushapes. A bit of terminological inexactitude; in reality, we have ascended from the Bushapes. Even that notion is intolerable to the Apebushes'. To the Apebush, evolution sucks. To the Apebush, we is the handiwork of the Almighty.

What!!!!???

You mean to say, or is it mean to intimate that Gosh Awmighty didn't get all the pieces in the right place? OH!, all the pieces on the right? Far Right? So he got it Right, after all? Killer Instinct and all.

The Compassionate Conservative



Which of these two?

Collateral Damage, to coin another phrase.



Leave No Child Behind

I know you are moved by what you see on this page.

I thought it would be worth mentioning to all those acquiescent flag wavers, my own Congressman amongst them. Ugly vivid stuff. But this nation is remote from it all, as it was in Vietnam, or even closer, in Nicaragua. If we wait patiently; it came to Expansionist Nazi Germany, Expansionist Fascist Italy, and Expansionist Dictatorial Japan. It will come to Expansionist Belligerent United States Of America. Mark these words. If you thought the Oklahoma City Bombing, or the Bash on the World Trade Center were horrors, imagine the above in every city street in the nation.

I have learned that Bullshit attracts flies; not much else. Watch your back; that ain't bullshit. This nation has to take its licks; that

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ain't bullshit. There is one possible redemption, not coming from Gawd, or the White House, but from the **United States Congress**.

Time to **Impeach**

Yeah, you think this is a lotta bullshit! Well, think again! Take a long look. And yet another, and yet another!



There isn't the least bit of difference between these two.

Our replacement attorney general professes to believe that the Geneva Conventions are 'quaint'. DustBinCraft's Understudy.

With that attitude emanating from the Capitol of the 'most powerful nation on this earth', we are going to require more than Homeland Security and Gott Mit Uns to stave off the vengeance of the world. ~Six Billion (6,400,000,000) against two hundred and ninety three million (293,000,000). Twenty-one point eight to one [21.8 to 1) Our (Your) nation does not stand a chance. Not without:

ARMAGEDDON

So you still want to be righteous?

I debate with myself. Where did humanity take a wrong turn? Or is it as Sigmund Freud clearly stated in Civilization And Its

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Discontents that it is 'fatefully inevitable' that the greatest suffering in this world will be brought about by mankind, *gratuitously*.



September 11, 2001 Photo © 2001 Bill Biggart



Yeso

Tough Love



It would be rare, those who did not recognize some of the images exhibited in this document. Our earth-home has not become a safer place after all these centuries of civilization (civilized violence). It seems instead 'inevitably' the same, but even more diabolical than in our last reckoning. More diabolical because mankind has learned little or nothing, and persists in this bestial urge to dominate; and what he cannot dominate, he will bring to ruin. What of those who are dominated; do they feel safe in some womb?

All of this is happening in my lifetime.

MAD had gone away for awhile. Except for a few assholes Atmospheric Testing had been ended. Even without contraptions like the A and H, and other members of the alphabet, Bombs, upwards of 100 megatons, the nuclear power plants were self-destructing at an alarming rate, and the 'fallout' (the cows were hot). Can't forget Depleted Uranium (DU).

We cannot go back. We have ventured too far out into this desert; this land for no man; no life. For those who do not believe in anything more than this life on this planet, there are those who have made of it Hell, a righteous Hell, claiming it is their divine right to make of this planet - Hell; whether by Gawd or Allahlah. If you do not believe in the beyond you are doomed to the Hell they have made of this earth. Armageddon and Jihad join forces to make of this home a torture filled prison. Do something, CHINA!

I'm writing of real people. This is not a fiction.



"For some time now, the inequalities that are embedded into the American system have bothered me. As they are becoming progressively worse and it is clear that the government's priorities are not bettering the quality of life for all of its people, but rather on expanding its own power, I can no longer, in good conscience, salute the flag.

The war America will soon be entering in has reinforced my beliefs, while further angering me. I am aware that this is a time of fear for many Americans, and the media has done a fine job of maintaining that fear and riling up people's emotions. However, amidst this fear people have lost sight of the fact that Bush's plan for "maintaining our safety" will cause many innocent people, women and children, mothers and babies, to die overseas. Furthermore, going to war will likely provoke more violence in this country.

It does not bother me that so many Americans oppose me. If anyone looked deeper than the headlines they would find that my arguments are true. Besides, whether or not people agree with me is irrelevant. It is my right as an American to stand for my beliefs the way others have done against me. Being patriotic cannot simply be an empty slogan. Patriotism can be shown in many ways, but those who choose to do so by saluting the flag should recognize that the American flag stands for individuality and freedom. Therefore, any true patriot must acknowledge and respect my right to be different."

Listen Up!



"Our Way Of Life"

"There ought to be Limits To Freedom"

(I didn't mean that the way it sounded. I intend to spread Freedom all over the world. We'll find out, with time, what I mean.)

Campaign Rhetoric 101



One hears the phrase often enough without knowing what it means. Its some kind of brassy assumption as to what *Our Way Of Life* might be.

Toni Smith may have a glassy-eyed view of things, but is her '*Our Way Of Life*' based on some kind of false information? Could any declaration of belief be any plainer? Could there be more heart? What is she lacking? The right kind of slogan?

Not a yea-sayer. Fifty lashes on a turned back.

Being righteous about '*Our Way Of Life*' on our planet, with our resources and our rate of converting our planet into a (our) 'standard of living' and our rate of consumption, without any concern for the morrow, in terms of environmental overload, depletion of resources, and creation of mountainous waste, all through the exploitation of labor, is downright criminal. You know, it doesn't seem right, '*Our Way Of Life*'. The 'Standard Of Living' index. What is that? Jesse Jackson talked of the Misery Index. Where's the fit fella?

Many of us, deep down, recognize it as a 'crook'. A pile. But for the rest, the 'true-believers', it's what comes naturally, and is ours for the taking; our inheritance, by divine right.

There may be a 'standard of living' that applies (naturally) to certain elements of our society, but most assuredly it is not a uniform standard applied to all of the people all of the time. It will never be, because it isn't in us to provide it. First of all, we are not embarrassed by the glaring disparities; we are not embarrassed by the glaring disparities because we have no heart. Every dadblasted citizen of this country has the right to be poor; we will fight to (the death) protect their right to be poor. We will not allow any terrorist to threaten our right to be poor, to not care, and to have no heart.

Yeah! What right do I have to use 'our' and 'we'? When I say 'we are not all of (us) in this together (all of the time)' it is clear that I am not speaking for everyone. There are only some of us that are 'all in this together (some of the time)'

'We' are sometimes a very 'tolerant' nation. Although we tolerate the 'Misery Index' we look down upon the unfortunate; and what our government has identified as 'social retards'. You know that kind of assessment has to come from someone with no heart.

'*Our Way Of Life*' is nothing to brag about. It may not even be better than anybody else's way of life. In some way it's a helluva lot worse, because we tout the whole thing, raising expectations; but we don't deliver. They say it's because there are no delivery vehicles. There are only delivery systems for nuclear weapons; gotta put your delivery where it counts. I'm sure that needs to be rephrased. Taxation without representation; Congress!?! Who?!

'Threat to Our Way Of Life'. If there truly is a 'way of life', the biggest threat to it lives in the White House. With all this righteous rant about the 'only kind of marriage', rearranging social security, greasing the rail for the rich, prohibiting abortion, pushing prayer in schools, creationism, intelligent design, flag burning, patriotism, 'if you aint with us you're against us', Love It Or Leave It; Axle Of Evis, Iraq Attack, Alfred Quaeda, (rape) the north slope, grandfather the pollution, Down with PBS ACLU EPA DEQ NAACP, women's rights, gay rights, minority rights, civil rights, and too much freedom. You wanna right, you gotta earn it. You don't automatically qualify for a right, or to *'Our Way Of Life'*. You have a right to death if you don't 'get it'. You gotta pass the test. First, you gotta get what you can anyway you can, then you have to build a fence (razor wire) around it, and get yourself a Rotwieller, then an automatic assault weapon, a bazooka, a stinger missile, and a microwave. Fight back because the terrorists are gonna blind your pilot with a laser beam; he's your pilot, not mine; and he's already blind. I refuse to fly with him. He's threatened to send his thugs after me because I am an insurgent, an insurrectionist, a subversive, a seditionist, a malingerer, a shit dauber, an anarchist (conspirator), soft on atheism, an evolutionist, a human being with a mind of his own who loudly proclaims: 'straighten up, and fly right'.

Words, words, words. They say 'a picture is worth a thousand words'. What do you think? Is there an offense intended?

It's a federal offense.



Despite all the disparities to be found in *'Our Way Of Life'*, even obvious to the man in the street, but somehow missed or avoided by all those in our government (it is our government, is it not), and whether or not it is shameful that *'Our Way Of Life'* is not a right, but something that is wrested from the planet, and from one's fellow; despite the ironies, the hypocrisy, the cynicism, the unchristian (Is that Jesus who is being invoked here?) take, the righteous ignorance, righteous spigotry, and right wing proclamations about what is and what isn't; has it ever occurred to anyone to ask, what it is that outsiders do not like about us? About *'Our (holy) Way of Life'*

Holier than thou.

Can't it be so obvious?

There I go using 'us' again as though I was part of the 'us'.

I am condemned to the association; I cannot work myself free of it. I am not an anomaly. It occurs to me that all this beatification

and sanctification has been eaten away and crudded up with a couple of centuries of acid rain. Well, its like acid rain, in the deterioration that is apparent. Can it be restored to its former glory?

Not by government! Maybe not by 'we the people'.

Our forefathers might not have conceived of '*Our Way Of Life*'.

The Western World's mantra of Bible thumping from the Popes, to Martin Luther, Kink James, Gideon, American Standard Revised, Reverend Moon, Jimmy Baker (and Tammy and Jessica), Jimmy Swaggart, Pat Robertson, Jerry Falwell, Billy Graham, Dubya.

Sorry folks. Anyone have a toothpick?

I'll bet you thought I was getting off the subject in this rant. That I was diluting the effect of the pictures and the big **RED** words. What follows is the repetitive phase of this document.

There isn't any doubt in my mind that the emphasis must be made that, as a nation, a nation with a human conscience, one that goes beyond the phony bullshit emanating from that arrogant bully who resides in the Immaculate House, that as a nation, of 'we the people', taking our cue from Toni Smith, we must prevail upon The United States Congress (the Foxes) to Impeach the bugger (the chicken [Dubya]). It is a truth that is self-evident. The Consent Of The Governed has never been so meaningfully or severely challenged. It is clear that 'we the people' has been usurped into a private agenda constructed of abuses toward a singular effort and Object of despotism, whereof it has become the RIGHT and DUTY of 'we the people' to remove the despot.

Some will argue long and hard that the governed consented through the electoral process, that the governed assented to despotism. A coalition of the willing. The governed were taken aback midstream, riding about in their SUVs, Jesus hanging from the mirror, with rising fuel costs. Presented with the alternative of walking instead of riding, the governed assented to theft of Oil. They softened the blow to their conscience by imagining they were trading (exporting) the precious commodity of Democracy to a bunch of backward (and evil, hedonistic) people (imagine 69 virgins as a reward). They argued with themselves, 'you can't pull the rug out from under the troops fighting for (stealing) Oil and establishing Democracy with a new and different governor who wasn't promising these things'.

But let's do arithmetic once again. There are ~293,000,000 of us in this country. ~60,000,000 voted to elect the current leader.

That's ~20% of the population. ~80% of the population did not vote for the leader. Can you imagine 80% of 'we the people' being in the minority. That's even worse than, in the old days, not so long ago, when the distaff side was considered a minority, along with all the other minorities. By the way, the distaff side is still unratified (146,500,000 plus). Our Democracy is a bit threadbare, here and there. Pretty soon it will be in rags. **We're workin' on it.**

In the Federalist Papers, a man who became our Fourth leader, James Madison, was very concerned about the rule of the majority, that is, the apparent disenfranchisement of the 'minority'. He was also concerned with the tyranny of a very vocal minority; each in themselves testing the fabric of his nation. This concern is ever with us to this very day. It must be understood that the disparities between ~146,500,000 + 1 (ratified females) and the ~60,000,000 are very great. 2.4 times. Ordinarily we can ride through this disparity business, but there comes a time when it poses a very real threat, not only to '*our way of life*', but to our nation, and to our life and limb; actually worse than terrorism. Nazism. Despotism. Do we truly want ~80% of the nation to be disenfranchised, whether or not they voted, or whether or not they were ineligible to vote (too young (only 10 % of ages 18 thru 24 voted; 90% too demoralized to vote), too old, too something or other, like too criminal or too black, too anarchistic, too subversive, too socialistic, too stupid, social retards, too cynical, **too sick at heart**). Shouldn't this glaring disparity be cause enough for us to change the way we conduct business, the business of Democracy?

Do we actually want that 80% to be forced into the destructive agenda of that arrogant bully in the Immaculate House?

I believe most of 'we the people' suspect '*our way of life*' is in tatters. They simply don't want to face up to the reality. They don't know what to do to reclaim something that may never have existed, except only in the human heart. When they have an opportunity to make even a superficial change, they become fearful that even more will be lost to them, less to reclaim. So if an asshole comes along who says 'stay the course' we try to do that, mostly out of fear of change. Rather than follow our intuition, and our heart, we succumb to the basest rhetoric that promises more of the same. We become victims of our own cowardice, our insecurities. Since we do nothing to substantively improve '*our way of life*', it deteriorates even further. **Listen up Congress!**

All the frontiers are gone, literally gobbled up. The planet earth is replete with 'humanity', that pious and righteous animal, most of whom seek the beyond as the only and final fulfillment, this planet,

a mere waystation, or subdued hellhole, on the way to the promised land, it matters not whether you are Christian or Muslim.

If you assume this to be a blast against our leader, you would be only partially correct. It is a slam against all of us who do not make the effort to be informed. All of those who choose to be conned by the colossal extravagance (waste of monetary resource) of the high-priced media, rather than exercise their right to inquire, to seek the truth. To sort the truth from the lies. (\$880,000,000.00 spent in the last election to advertise and sell two status quo blokes).

To succumb, surrender to the persuasions of a complicit and cynical media; to allow convenience to hamper the proper access to ones mental processes, regardless of their limitation; to seal off, blockade the flow of truth, by setting up obstacles, by sticking ones head in the sand, by becoming willing, acquiescent, gullible, almost begging to be led down the garden path, out of pure laziness and convenience, all salted and sweetened with Jesus, and God Bless America; how can you stand for it?

Some have ventured the opinion that we deserve what we got. Yeah! maybe we have created a yardstick by which we are to be measured. How does that grab yuh? Different when you think of it that way? You want to be known as a bully, as a tough guy? Tough on terrorism, tough on evil, tough on crime? You want to be known as an ignoramus? You don't care. Oh! You do care. You believe you did the right thing. No doubts at all. The right man for the job? Willing to go on the front lines, are you? Is he? For Oil? To take on Fundamentalist Islam? Spread Democracy? By whose right? Divine Right?

Do you realize how bad this sounds coming from the most, what should one say, 'advanced', I had thought of 'civilized', most what, nation 'on earth'. Are we actually 'most' anything? Think about it for a moment, what are we? There I go again using that generic 'we'. How do we measure what we are? How do we measure the 60,000,000 people who voted for this administration? How do we measure the 230,000,000 who did not vote for this administration? If this administration was so great, why didn't at least 120,000,000 vote for it? 120,000,000 to Zip?

Why? It's a free country? But does he know that? Does he respect that? Look what he did when he lost the election. imagine what he will do with a win.

The man is clearly a menace. Before he is through he will have undermined every tenet of decency that has become a trademark of our own self-image. He will squander that decency. We will hear that "Peace With Honor" claptrap again. A chickenshit world will

award Condolisa BarleyCorn the Piece Prize (some piece of work, that); after the 'insurgents' had humiliated the 'magnanimous' occupiers by driving them out, as had the 'gooks' the same bunch of occupiers earlier. The chickenshit world awarded the Piece Prize then to the Kissassinger then in the reign; instead of the worthy opponent (posthumously) who humiliated him and his ilk, the lousy occupiers. When some day our great land becomes occupied, and we get a taste of an occupier, not so magnanimous, but one who feels the sting, and who might leave after being insurged against, we will cry foul when we are not awarded the Prize. In a chicken shit world of that's what you get, the prize goes to the guy who got defeated.

Guess who gets to do the fighting? Whose blood gets smeared all over the crust of this cold hard planet? While the oligarchs reign, and compete for the prize. You and I.

Oh!, so you think me warped, biased, unbalanced, treacherous, maybe a sociopath, a person who wants to bring the man down. Part of what you think has some merit. Yes! I want an end to something I find grossly inhuman, without even defining what 'human' is. Its what I feel inside when that swaggering arrogant double-breasted, double-talking bully opens his mouth. That response partly defines what it is to be 'human'. Sick!, it is 'human' to feel that sickness. A mixture of fear, and desperate desire to have it out with him, to challenge him to get out from behind his fortress, 'say that to my face, you sumbitch'. I'm an old man; I would probably lose in a direct physical confrontation with the arrogant bully; I've lost some of those confrontations before, even when much younger, when not prepared for the down dirty stuff that comes when the other party senses defeat. But early on I won a few of those down dirty ones. So, one can never tell. I would be willing to risk defeat to raise the courage level of the onlookers, those who would realize the bully is not invulnerable, that he could be bloodied by a determined foe, even an old man. I would hope to lower his threshold of arrogance. Maybe even yammer at him about a little humility. But I suspect he is a coward, like they say, not about to risk anything. One thing I know about him, he understands this kind of talk.

Its our decency that he is willing to risk for some narrow objective. The people of Texas are still recovering from his rampage as governor; some governor. Somebody was pretty slow on the draw.

A lot of people in AMERICA are afraid.
A lot of people in AMERICA are arrogant.

*Leaving Port
Saving The World*

*Setting Sail
Requires Courage*

A lot of people in AMERICA are brutal.
A lot of people in AMERICA are ignorant.
A lot of people in AMERICA are intolerant.
A lot of people in AMERICA are terror fried.
A lot of people in AMERICA are victims.
A lot of people in AMERICA have too much freedom.

God Bless America

Tyranny Liberty Freedom

Don't you get sick of it?

We, a close associate of mine and I, and some of our friends, were discussing this last night. The general conclusion seemed to be the only way this kind of horseshit is able flourish is for 'we the people' to stumble about in a profound state of ignorance, apathy, and indifference.

OR

We have to get rid of the evil terrorist that lives on the Potomac near the cherry tree. The guy on Prozac. The Guy who had the \$30,000,000 Ball. The guy who AWOLed the National Guard. Who Texecuted Karla Faye. The Who Who ran all over the country on Easter Weekend, instead hunting for eggs, was trying to save the life of a dead woman, trying to Chivao it up our bums . Who Who Who. The one Who Who Who won't talk to the Motherfuckers, the who need to know so they can tell the rest of us about Lay (an egg) and ENRON; and the sneaky Rover; because we don't know and we would like to know. The Who Who Who turns my stomach.

I can't understand what has happened to my country. Perhaps its all my fault, because I let others run the world while I earned my living, and tried to live my life. Now I find myself in this awful mess, this terrible predicament. It's like the Vietnam era. I was sick then too. Sick because I felt so impotent, so fucking useless.

"There are many things that have happened behind closed doors, in the name of National Security. It has come to our attention through various means that National Security is not the

only issue involved. 'Security' only partially defines our activities behind closed doors.

"Hegemony, control of natural resources, vested interests, are all part of the definition. Security in the area of exploitation of labor, of resources; and protection of the corporate 'right' to do both.

"When the indigenous peoples of the land rise up against these exploiters, they have been branded 'leftists' or Reds. Reds are bad for business. Our military aid to the 'security forces' has made it possible for the ground to run Red with the blood of indigenous peoples. Chile, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Guatemala. Panama, Granada, Haiti, Dominican Republic, Bolivia, Columbia, and Kent State. Lately we have been after Venezuela. The Western Hemisphere is our turf, from Monroe to Reagan/Bush.

"I think it is important that we never forget Vietnam; as we ought never forget Hiroshima. By the time its over, we ain't gonna fergit Iraq.

"None of us could have been able to prevent what happened on August 6, 1945. Harry S. Truman gave the order. Harry S. Truman was a little man from Missouri. He had been a haberdasher before he became the man who decided. He was in the driver's seat, bucking along.

"Something that was completely preventable followed; it was his decision to make; it is certain a bucking Prez made a mistake.

"Dumb Harry decided to give Indochina back to France, as a colony, after the Japanese surrendered; he sent advisors and money. Sorta like we took back the Philippines after the boot; and England tried to reclaim its loses after Brouhaha #II; and these guys, dumb Harry included, gave away eastern Europe to Joe. Go figure. We watched anyway. Détente.

"Then Dwight Eisenhower, when the French were chased out of Vietnam, decided that the USA had an interest in the natural resources of Indochina; so if'n the commies were allowed to win an election in Vietnam the natural resources and the rest of Southeast Asia would (according to his Sec. of State Dulles) fall to the commie (yaller peril) so our Dwight failed to support the Geneva accords (elections) that woulda seen Ho Chi Minh become president.

"Instead he supported a divided Vietnam, some for them, some for us. Then JFK kinda went along with the gag, sending more advisors to bolster the us side of the argument. Then LBJ, the Great Society president, along with the whiz kid, got us into more than an advisory role. Then the 'new' Dick Nixon/Kissinger upped the ante by bombing Cambodia, after tellin' us he was gonna get us outta there (not in a hurry, as it turned out). When the Nobel

committee promised Kissinger the Peace Prize, (defeat with honor), the horrible mess came to an end (only somewhat). Ho Chi Minh was dead by then. Cambodia fell to the Khmer Rouge, all of Vietnam was unified under home rule; sorta socialistic, and they got to keep their natural resources for their own use. Cambodia, well what can you say about Cambodia? It joined the WTO. After **countless casualties, (body bags: 58,000 of us and 1.3 million of them gooks)** transported into the great hereafter, and a shitload of **Agent Orange**, the Vietnamese won the right to self-determination, and Hanky-Panky got a certificate to hank on to his wall (the good lives after them). Somewhere amidst it all, the Militia got to practice insurrection, dissent control at Kent State, by order of the governor of that backward state, Ohio. Pax Americana. Now enshrined as Homeland Security with the consent of Congress (the Yahoos), who supported the Vietnamization of IRAQ. Instead of a Gulf Of Tonkin, it was suspicious looking truck. Another Secretary Of State, Colin Powelless, took the bait; and the fall. Look where we're at, folks.

He shouldn't be running our country; that's all. Its all so wrong. Utterly wrong. The years that will be required to repair only some of the damage he will have caused.

How can I tell you about how small this little creature is, this thing, were its clothes stripped from it, would be so fucking innocuously ordinary, indistinguishable from any other ordinary being in the lineup. Yes!, even Abe would have looked awkward, probably with his hands folded in front of his crotch, like Dubya.

Yes! I fear this creature because it lacks intelligence, it lacks the something required to separate it from the rash of visceral activity that destroys the equanimity I require. Always fomenting, stirring up the masses; terrorizing them, almost with glee, because it means Control, a Power Trip, God; I am God, I am God, I am God

How I fear this Thing! More than I ever feared anyone. He takes pleasure in my fear. Sum Bish! Dirty Sum Bish! God Damned Dirty Sum Bish!

God Damned America

At this juncture I am forced to inquire: Is this the best we can do? 20% of the population has elected the class bully the class president. A scoundrel draped in the school colors spouting the word of God.

I've got to say 'it turns my stomach'.

I want to feel good about my country, even though I don't do a damned thing to make it a better place.

Yes!, I write, I write what you have read here, trying to relieve myself of the gut ache.

Why could we not find someone of stature to be the person who would preside over us, instead of this colossal idiot? This throwback, this anachronism. The Texecutioner, this shoot from the hip cowboy. The swaggering smirky Born Again bully. How could this happen?

When they asked him about his adviser and close associate and his connection to the BIG Corporation (ENDRUN) that had fleeced its investors, before going bust, he screamed at them to get the 'motherfuckers outta here'. The mf's were members of that elite First Amendment group who have the right to know so that they can tell the rest of us who also have the right to know about any malfeasance coming from the highest office in the school, whether its cum stains on a dress or collusion between the Principal and Corps, who pay his other salary.

They put him on Prozac after that little outburst.

Its ironical that the former National Guard AWOL officer is sending the Guard to bash the Baathists, because he's running out of volunteers to fight his dirty war for Haliburton and Brown and Root, and for the guzzling SUV's, the mainstay of our country's thriving economy; 'our way of life'.

Now, there's a guy that is full of hate. Who, me?

He might be. But most of all he is sick, sick in the gut, sick at heart. Whether he likes it or not, it is his school too. But if only it wasn't. If he could be part of somebody else's school. A disinterested somebody in someone's else's school. Which school? Aren't all schools alike in what they do and what they become? Not all. At least, not all, all of the time. But we're not like that all the time, are we?

It is so disappointing, that somebody better could not have come to the fore. We have been mired so long, too long, in this sick kind of sick world, a miasma or quagmire from which we seem never to be able to rise. Buried beneath a mountain of moola.

It was and is ours to do with, and look what we are doing with it. No. She was ours to do with and REGARD! What we did with her. Ravished. Anybody could do something like that could do anything. Its all done so a real honest to bejeezzuzzz nobody could wrangle its way into becoming somebody. Raping her, to become a fat cat so's somebody can Lord it over everybody. How could that have ever become a family value?

My lord and master? Your lord and master? A Family Value? Not spelled correctly: Familiar Value! Up Yours!

Yes! You can do something about it, you can do something about the shame you feel. Impeach It! There are others ways. They have been tried too, with better results. Two failed impeachments. One resignation with full pardon. Four successes the other way. They say you can't impeach nobody for doing its job. Of course, if Congress had the balls, it damned well could impeach it for doing its job, to show the world it had some balls. Doing things the other way showed that somebody had the balls.

I'd rather see the impeachment work. To show somebody with testicles, man or woman, had the testicles, if for no other reason. So I wouldn't have to feel so sick all the time. The impeachers told me they couldn't do it because the other guy would be even worse. Well Impeach it too, you have two testicles, don'tchu?!

Lets get a nobody that gives a damn and is content to remain a nobody in the service of everbuddy. Lets get a nobody that will lift us outta this reeking quagmire. Where even the Least amongst us will feel like somebody because he/she is going to a school where it practices what it preaches.

Impreach the usurper, the raper, the squanderer of life liberty and the pursuit. He hasn't done his time on the front lines. Remove him from his elevated throne. His bravado is needed in the trenches. Impeach him and force him to do community service on the front lines, using his miserable carcass as a shield for his fallow countrymen. Pardon me!

Dreamer! As if Congress ever had any nuts. Yea-Sayers, Bunch of patsies. Pretending. Flag wavers, worried about that fat paycheck; and not being able to sit at the right hand of God.

Did you ever have the feeling that its outta yore hands?
Get on yore feet, an' run like hail!

What troubles me most is that you appear not at all bothered by any of this. You allow those at the helm to cynically instill fear into the people with their red alerts, in their attempt to control them.

The foregoing is an indictment of America and its leaders for crimes against humanity. 'Our Way Of Life' is a way of life that consumes the life forces of other beings in order to further its own life. By doing this, we earn the same for ourselves. **Do as you would be done by. Does this ring true? Is it prophetic?**

*Leaving Port
Saving The World*

*Setting Sail
Requires Courage*



Mission Accomplished!

GO HOME !!!

Perhaps fifteen minutes after Theresa had begun reading, Lydia appeared to also begin reading, Theresa handing the beginning to her sister, then laying the subsequent pages upon low table placed in front of the stuffed chairs.

“How is it?”

“Stimulating!; thought provoking!” She thought to herself, ‘startlingly provocative’, with the enlarged red text emblazoned at the very beginning.

Lydia also began to read. Yes! already defensive of the ‘homeland’. But for her sister’s sake she felt she needed to keep an open mind, even though she would welcome a chance to humiliate her sister’s ‘infatuation’.

“But as she read on; like Theresa, she could not turn aside the challenge to her as a person. The work was addressing her directly. As it did everyone else. It immediately called upon an awareness of our assumptions, as Americans. She could barely argue the premise.

As she read on, her stronger negative feelings concerning Mr. D. began to abate. She was caught up in the sense of the polemic. She began to resonate within it, to feel its persuasions, its message.

Theresa, for her part, was totally engrossed, not even thinking of who or what; gobbling up the message, the words, the hard edge. When she got to the comparison between the Pieta and the dead or injured child, she was beginning to feel the impact of this man, when she came to the Toni Smith part, she began perhaps to feel the things for Mr. D. that Catherine doubtlessly felt. She could imagine the meshing of their minds. God Bless America was posed as a dubious example for all of mankind. Her nation was found wanting; and not entirely original; more like a throwback; hardly exemplary. Although his words directed at the president frightened her in a way that she felt earned him a retribution he would not be able to survive; and how that would devastate Catherine. But strangely enough she felt herself following the emotion, the rancor behind the jibes, finding comfort in them. This president needed to be challenged on all fronts. The nation needed to get its act together, to do a better job; to make a serious effort to find a leader that sought the higher plain. Congress needed to shed its boy scout uniforms.

After they had read the work, and studied the images, Catherine was anxious to hear their reaction, their appraisal.

“I’m eager to hear what did you think?”

Theresa, first to respond, ventured, “A lot happening there Kitty; I do identify with the sentiments. I realize that I am being called upon to do something. I fear the consequences for him for what he writes, if it should ever become public. But in sensing that fear, I also recognize my own fear of the consequences of doing something, and other consequences of doing nothing. All the more, must I marvel at Toni’s action.

“What are the consequences if I do nothing?”

“I do think that Mr. D. makes the point that this mish mash of our government is doing a great disservice to our assumed and cherished beliefs. That we cannot stand idly by as those beliefs are usurped and trashed by the likes of the present administration, and a gutless congress. I feel they stand deservedly mocked.

“Kate, it seems like the Nuremberg/Vietnam thing all over again.”

Lydia, holding up her hands, interrupted, as Catherine was about to speak, “Such rancor, such rancor. I think of how a Václav Havel has written of the task before him; always using a reasoned approach, always aware of the obstacles, but never abandoning his greatest ally, reason. Never leaping to invective; never disparaging his opponents, however much they were opposed to him. Always challenging them to reason with him, toward the higher objective.

“I know Mr. D.’s objective is the same, but where is the Cool? Such inflammatory invective. What it stirs in me is perhaps not what was intended.

“Perhaps there isn’t any polite language to be used in this situation; but even regard how Toni said her thing; how steady and cool she is.”

Catherine now, in turn, raising her hands, responded to her sisters’ comments.

“I have felt what each of you have felt. But I also feel the desperate need to relieve the pain; and for me, that is an important part of what he feels compelled to release, and expects to achieve, however inexpressible; and how ever much it fails for him; and fails all of us.

“I find myself feeling anxious for him, as do you Tess, and as you do, I would feel anxious for myself. We are all afraid of the consequences of speaking out; as they did in Nazi Germany.

“I find myself agreeing with you Lyd, when you argue for a more reasoned approach. But I have come to the conclusion there is no reasoning with this current administration.”

Lydia, not to be hushed, interrupts again, “But, is not what he is doing, self-defeating; he is sneering at the public he wishes to enlist?”

“Lyd, he is saying that if we are apathetic enough to be negligent with regard to our rights, then we get what we deserve; and what we deserve is what we deserve. The holy chalice is not made of gold, but some base metal.”

“Whew!, Kate, aren’t you being overly dramatic? Don’t you believe our institutions can withstand this little prick?”

“A lot of little pricks coming out of the woodwork. All of whom feel they have got it made. Wave the flag, and cast the rest of humanity in concrete.”

“You are being dramatic.”

Theresa jumps into the altercation, “I’m sorry Lyd, but I must agree with Kitty. We are beyond a reasoned approach. Any government that would even consider abridging our rights; which are ours, after all; any government that would take powers unto itself that were not granted to it by the public, is something to cause great concern. It is the use of the power centralized in the government, by using arms against the people; it is arms, implicitly or explicitly, not reason that is used, to deny anyone his or her rights, and to gain entry into your private space; its totalitarianism at our doorstep. This was an administration that yammered about lessening the interference by government into lives. Liars!

“An enormous backward step, both historically, and in violation of all we hold dear.”

“How would you control terrorism, both of you? Take your time answering”

“You are being hostile Lyd. I don’t find that very constructive.

“We are confronted with something that frightens us as much or more than any act of terrorism.

“I am not diminishing the one in relation to the other; both are not good. But when our government institutes its own brand of terror, it affects us all, patriot and non patriot alike.

“However I feel it is remiss of you, all of us, not to examine the probable cause of these acts of terrorism.

“By saying this, I do not mean that we, as a nation, are subject to receive our just deserts, but there are individuals in our nation who deserve to be removed from their positions of influence (and not incidentally, trust) for their lack of diplomacy, their lack of even handedness, for their clandestine activities. Those individuals who reside in our country, who take everything they can and give nothing in return; and by this I mean they operate in a free country as they would in a fascist country, as a power elite; democracy is an inconvenience to them (There ought to be limits to freedom); a country based in law is an inconvenience to them. Because what they do, once it becomes known, is immediately challenged.

“We are being ruled, not governed, ruled by small, selfish, arrogant people, not governing by consent of the governed. How small, we are learning day by day, much to our horror; to our terror, I should add with emphasis, without being dramatic.

“They take away our freedoms because they are an inconvenience to them. They require our unified consent to this awful thing they do; they need us as a phalanx, as cannon-fodder; they will not ask for it; they will take it.”

“Gosh, sis, I’m sorry I gave you the impression I am in favor of the usurpations you suggest. I am not.

“But I believe the question still stands; what are we to do to prevent terrorism?”

“I maintain we must look for the root cause.

“We might begin by examining our arrogant diplomacy, our hidden agendas, our 'spheres of influence'. and our devious grasping for resources, for alliances, for control.

“We make much of free this and free that; like free market economy, free trade; freedoms for export; all goddamit, hypocritically. Not that others don’t drive a hard bargain. But often we do not bargain; we wield the big stick. We relentlessly threaten not to do business unless we get some kind of allegiance.

“I’ll tell you, there are resentments, justifiable resentments that are the result. When we mix politics with business, we have asked for something extra in the bargain; it comes with a price tag; and, by god, we will pay for it.

“We have paid for it, and we will continue to pay for it. As a nation, we pay, as a nation we pay for everything our government does or does not do in our name. We pay, mostly through the nose. Yes!, indiscriminately.

“We are partly responsible; not the three of us yet, but by implication; once we know or suspect things are amiss, we must do something. There are those in government who know, but are too concerned for their own welfare; their status quo comforts, got it made, don’t stir the pot, don’t upset the apple cart, attitude, they go along; wave the flag (as though it meant something – hah!); they are your Nuremberg candidates. They right now share the responsibility of Yes!, the onset of this thing; first, the arrogant diplomacy, then the response to the response.

“You know where that will get us – In Hell! That is where we are headed, unless we all do something together, NOW! To oppose this trend. Then ask forgiveness, make restitution, even without the hope of these being acknowledged; but because it is the right thing to do. We can hope we will eventually restore something of value and decency to this ‘was it ever a’ great nation. We might join the

rest of the brotherhood (sisterhood) of nations in a different capacity.

“God damn it, we have no other alternative.”

“Wow, sis, you are a convert.”

“Lydia, that was not nice”. Theresa ventured.

“Hey. you two, this is only an exercise, not something intended to pit us against one another.

“Every single one of us must, and should deal with this problem. ‘Eternal Vigilance!’

“Mr. D. cannot find it in himself to compromise his feelings in the matter. I do find myself agreeing with him. I believe we cannot dramatize the situation enough.

“Surely Mr. D. is made a certain way, thinks a certain way. Maybe he is wrong, maybe he is right. Whichever, it’s a call to shed our blearyeyed hoopla for a more realistic appraisal of things as they are, or as Mr. Rumsfeld claims ‘it is what it is’. Who says?

“I have attempted to deal with the problem in another way; but also through writing. I make believe that I am looking at a larger picture, the ‘we are all in this together’ picture’, a ‘what do we want’ picture? Of course, ‘what I want’ picture.

“I believe in what I write, the way I write it. But when I read Mr. D., I feel more keenly the sense of urgency that I also feel, but keep under control. I realize that I am not yielding to the same imperatives as he. I am more cautious, not inflammatory; perhaps I am less certain in my approach; I want a more solid foundation. Do I want to say I am fearful of doing things in the way he does? Perhaps. Since I respond to what he writes, or he depicts, affirmatively, in essence, I am validating him. There isn’t any question of his sincerity; and his desperation. I might question a few details that lessen the impact, but I am all for the impact. I feel it is necessary. A challenge to us all. A get up off our asses and open our eyes challenge.”

“I am challenged, Kate”, exclaims Theresa.

“It’s a free country; each to his own.” Lydia retorts.

“How much longer free, Lydia?”

After The Sister’s Departure

For most of his life William had regarded ‘life’ as a darkness into which occasionally a light would shine. A light which he had mistaken for knowledge or revelation.

But in truth the illumination radiated as a aura from those whom he had cared for the most. Catherine was such a light.

While he might be thoroughly convinced that he could know nothing of purpose, it was possible to believe that one could experience things that validated existence. Being with Catherine validated existence.

But to assume that Catherine was something distinctly more than an aura and a validation; that is to claim that the purpose of one's life was to meet Catherine is to delve into a larger, even more unfathomable question of 'destiny'. To thus say that the purpose of life is to serve out one's destiny.

Was William indeed destined to meet Catherine? Had he lived this long only to fulfill this meeting?

If one accepts the premise, does he then proceed to claim that in serving destiny, thus acquiring purpose, that one has gained knowledge? In answering the call does he also serve truth? Is it the truth of things then that he was destined to learn and express, that the purpose of his life was, to meet this girl, to love her, to thus learn from that love the meaning of life; and to declare life relevant because of her?

Or to say that, without Catherine, his life had no meaning, no purpose, no destiny, and no relevance; that the signal fact of his existence would be viewed as stillborn. Life without life. To go through the motions, to complete the cycle in death, as though never having lived.

Would it not be patently unfair to his long-abiding wife to make such a claim?

Well, of course, us philosophers will never have an end to this kind of speculation.

If you have determined your life does not sustain itself as one more affirmation of the status quo; if all the little goodies for which you labor and enslave yourself do not produce the desired effect or fulfill their promise, as perhaps they will not and should not, then most likely you will be ailing and in need of some palliative or change of venue.

Waiting for the afterlife, I must insist, cannot and will not provide adequate succor or salvation. It simply cannot be, for surely there is no afterlife. Leaving mockery and blasphemy aside; Oh, Yes, surely dreams are the stuff of life. If one should dream, as his dream, the afterlife, perhaps he imagines he is thus sustained in this life. If one should dream, as his dream, not some passive issuance awaiting a deliverance, but as something his whole being desires and requires, beyond a waiting for that expiration, then before expiration one must first recognize and submit to respiration; one must live and be alive in order to expire or perish. The dead cannot die. To submit to a premature death as a gambit to curry favor with some imaginary deity who, or which, would

selfishly request your subservience to its will rather than seek your own fulfillment (a living to the fullest) seems more akin to some ugly despot, whom you would be advised to abandon - since you do have a choice. In any case one might as well not be born as to become, with life, an empty gambit. Or to state the proposition yet another way, one might as well not be born as to not become. The dead cannot die, and permanent death cannot be construed as eternal life.

He argues, but does not persuade. Will more of the same rhetoric persuade what one's inner self already instinctively knows to be the only way?

The time was rapidly approaching when our protagonists would part for a time; or, for ever. They had yet not spoken of what was to be. They had taken Theresa and Lydia to the air terminal. Catherine was somewhat subdued, at the departure; once again severing that which binds one's heart.

Catherine was relieved that the heat of her discussion with her sisters regarding Mr. D's, manuscript did not surface, that they held their tongues, especially Lydia. They instead acknowledged the challenge to them, to everyone.

The forthcoming departure of William had not yet gained her attention. But as they were driving back to the city, Catherine was beginning to return to the reality of the day.

"What's next Mr. D.? Takeout over to the river park?"

"We need to talk."

"That seems to be the thing to do."

"Did you enjoy the girls?"

"Very much. Like you, lots of hope there for the species."

"I suspect you are not telling the truth, because I already know you feel there is no hope for the species."

"Perhaps I should be serious. If there ever was a hope for the species, I believe I would find it in the three of you.

"Truly speaking, your sister's are refreshing; particularly Theresa. She is so responsive, and such an enthusiast; lots of energy; she sparkles.

"Lydia is much more ponderous, and deliberate. I want to say an icy beauty, but realize underneath that exterior there might be a warm sensitive and perceptive individual. In some measure, each of your sister's might be regarded as the extremes of you. You sort of overlap when you are together.

"I imagine it must be harder for Theresa when you are not there; dealing with this older reserved, precise, what some would call 'anal' sister."

"Mr. D. I think Lydia responded to you, more than she does

many others. You have some of the same no-nonsense qualities, which she respects. She might be a semanticist, seeking precise meanings, without being ‘anal’, a characterization that would hurt her, coming from you. You are not necessarily a semanticist, but you do seek definition of terms. Words mean a great deal to you as expressive entities, and as means towards coherence and clarity. I think Lydia will loosen up as life begins to demand it of her.”

“I think when she was made, she was honed too fine. Not made for this world. Everything about her is almost too perfect. Doubtlessly her physical beauty is extraordinary.

“I wonder what might have been the case if she had been an only child, or maybe the older sister. With you as the older, and the model child, without assuming more than you were, only another person, but beautiful, brilliant and accomplished, as a matter of course; you have tempered what might have become a haughtiness in her.

“I’m probably wrong. Perhaps it is a matter of genetics with all three of you; something soft in the underbelly. Something that touches life and humanity, humanity with a big ‘H’.

“Oddly I offer little criticism of Theresa. Truly a marvel. Is there anyone who could not to warm to her?

“One might wonder, ‘what is it she knows that we don’t?’; she seems to carry it off so well, infusing a self into everything she says or does. Not careless, not over confident; and quick to recover from slights to herself, or slights proffered to others. No ill-feelings, no grudges, no desire for revenge, or to score, or get even.

“Whereas Lydia is far more prone to exact a penalty for error and indiscretion.

“It might be said the one is already formed, whereas the other is always formative.”

“Interesting; perhaps that is so.

“I do not worry about Lydia. I do feel compassion for her, because I sense she isn’t as secure inside as Tess; or me, for example. She seems to lose control in a way that neither Tess nor I do. But she does not become depressed; she too recovers her equanimity, which I imagine is by virtue of her intelligence; ‘this is silly’ she might realize. ‘Is anything that important?’ she might ask of herself.

“I believe her feelings are always genuine; she would never feign an emotional response.

“Noting your assessment of formed and formative, I would be inclined to say that Tess is ‘natural’; she is what she is at any given moment. That is not to say that Lydia is unnatural; its that she does the head over the heart thing as a reflex. She is a head person by design. Tess is a heart person; she believes the heart

has intelligence.”

“Yes!, I would agree, that states it correctly; Tess believes the heart has intelligence. She trusts the heart. You also trust the heart; but you also delight in the life of the mind, which also leads you on; your ‘natural’ curiosity leads you to create, to make discoveries, to seek truths that are not self-evident; the brain engages the heart; and the heart earnestly seeks the assistance of the mind, listener, and the comprehender of things; watcher-over of the heart.

“But you know these are only apparent manifestations of difference, where there are also many manifestations of likeness, of being alike. You three relate intuitively to each other; in a way you could never relate to others. You know each other intimately in a way you will never know others.”

“Mr. D., I want to know you intimately.

“We’re here; what shall we do for takeout? Did you like what we had last week?”

“Yes!”

“I don’t have my thermos, but they do have Styrofoam cups, with caps; so I’ll get some tea.

“I don’t suppose you want to come in with me.”

“You suppose correctly.”

“Party pooper!”

Catherine didn’t press the issue; but made a face.

At the park, William prepared, and set another fire alight. While Catherine removed the vittles from a bag to open their containers and set them on the table.

Twilight was rapidly descending into dusk. They had a little over two hours before Catherine needed to leave.

“Let’s eat while its still mostly hot.”

William sat on the bench facing the fire; as Catherine came to sit along side him.

They sat eating in silence. Both were building up to the moment of truth, each avoiding its implications. How could one speak of the impending separation?

Catherine felt it her responsibility to speak, to prevent William from blowing it. She felt capable of handling the moments that would follow. She knew from the beginning this moment would arrive; she had bargained for and gained the time she had sought. So much happened in that time that was essentially irrevocable. She knew she could not ask for more time. She knew also that she must get on with her other commitments.

“Mr. D., I want to say something to you that will assure you that I have been serious in my relating to you. This has not been

an interlude, a flirtation, a capricious involvement.

“We, each of us, have discovered worlds in each other, which we intend to explore further when time and tide allow.

“You have bargained with me, and kept your bargain; one in which I have gained so very much, which I can neither qualify nor quantify.

“We crossed the river together, finding upon the other side some of what we had expected, also more than we had expected.

“I know I am correct in the use of ‘we’; the ‘you’ and the ‘I’; those two separate entities have become ‘we’.

“I love you Mr. D.; and I love ‘we’.

“You will be on your way tomorrow. These are our last moments together for the foreseeable future. It will not be our last time together. We will be in constant communication via e-mail, and when the occasion demands it, by telephone; and as a promise to you, if things grow unbearable, I will come.

“You will have returned to your place, and I will resume my place.

“You, Mr. D., will be my heart’s constant companion. I know my heart is safe in your hands; and my darling man, your heart is safe in mine. I so vow it now, and forever.

“So, be of some cheer as I say these few things to you.”

“I do so declare my love for you. I cannot begin to tell you how you have impacted my life. As yet I do not know. When I am alone in my retreat, I will begin to know. Then I will test the breadth of the language we speak; or try to speak. Already I use a much used, and much abused, word ‘love’ to say I ‘love’ you. How ridiculous! Its like the sublime bumper sticker, ‘I ♥ My Cat’. Or carve our initials in some holy place with an arrow ↙ through them. An arrow delivered through one’s awkward defenses, and shabby pretenses. Yes! delivered at what one is, not what one seems.

“Alas, lovely woman, I am smitten. I can say no less, but desire to say much, much, more.”

Catherine rose to stand facing him. “Hold me!”

William rose to embrace her. They stood close for a long time.

They kissed longingly and fervently.

“It will be alright, Mr. D.” Catherine softly spoke into his ear; “It will be alright.”

She placed her hand on the back of his head, stroking gently, while William combed his fingers through her hair, raising a hand full of it to his nostrils to sense her fragrance, to hopefully cast her into his memory.

“Before I forget, I have something for you in my purse.”

Catherine withdrew to get her purse, looking more like a small book, than some expected shape of a thing so designated.

*Leaving Port
Saving The World*

*Setting Sail
Requires Courage*

Reaching inside she brought forth a 4x6 photograph of herself. An exquisitely beautiful portrait. “My father took this last summer.”

“Wonderful, I shall treasure it.

“As I was sniffing your hair, I was thinking of the hopelessness of trying to remember a smell, which I treasure also. Then one thinks how impossible to remember a touch, or the sound of a voice or a footstep. All fades so fast. There I will be trying to recall, to evoke, all from a photograph. As futile as all the other senses, the eyes will focus on the ‘daguerreotype’. Grains of silver nitrate exposed to the light as it shone upon your radiant beauty for an instant in time. Fixed.

Looking intently at the photo by the firelight, he says:

“I imagine your father’s heart aches when he thinks of you.

“I’m willing to wager, he made several portraits; not only one.”

“Mr. D. you are my poet; my very own precious poet.”

Catherine embraced him again, and kissed him again fervently, passionately.

