

ROARSHOCK PAGE

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Volume 9, Number 4

San Francisco

April 30, 2016

Volatility without fail ruffles and upsets the weeks of April, and thus has it been in 2016. On this the Eve of May, ROARSHOCK PAGE remembers that which has been lost and seeks what has yet to be found.

CALIFORNIA STREET SKETCHES APRIL FOOLS

On April 1, in the darkness before dawn, A.. A... stood in the deep shadows in Lafayette Park waiting for the first outbound 1-California trolleybus of the day. There were calls and chirps from the early birds out seeking worms. Something scurried across a park path which divided beds of bushes. As A.. A... peered into the dim space it scurried back across the path break and vanished again in bushes; some small gangly creature with long limbs, not a rat, or a mouse, not a cat; he could not identify what it was. The City was full of strange animals, feral and wild, and some years the veneer of civilization seemed a bit thin. Suddenly, the song birds dummed up as from the heights above, from the tall trees at the top of the park, came the "Who! Who!" of the boss owl who was dominate in that local link in the global food chain.

Seeing the lights from the 1, A.. A... stepped down onto the sidewalk and the bus stop in the middle of the park on the Sacramento Street side. He boarded the nearly empty coach, swiped his unregistered fare card, and settled into a seat. He exited at the gym on California Street and worked out for a couple of hours on weight machines and a rowing machine. He especially liked rowing and imagined scenarios of the virtual meters he crossed pulling at the oars. His dad had always been an athlete playing various sports, like soccer in afternoon pick up games in Oakland. His father had rowed competitively in whaleboat races. A.. A... one time walked down to the tip of the municipal pier at Aquatic Park which was the finish line of a whaleboat race from Alcatraz Island. It was an exceptionally hot afternoon. He watched the boats come in, Dad was in the third boat through. After the race there was a party on the green at the end of Van Ness. The City's premier local brewery had a team in the race and they brought kegs. It was a great party. A young man, who worked for his father, said to A.. A... "Your Dad has a really good memory."

After the workout he enjoyed meditation in the hot sauna and then the steam, and emerged from the gym fresh and famished. The 3-line trolleybus took him back downtown. He got off at Union Square and went on down to Geary to Lefty O'Doul's for some breakfast. Ham and eggs over easy with fried potatoes and wheat toast, plus a glass of water, two of the house signature Bloody Marys, and a bottomless cup of black coffee. So many memories for A.. A... of this Union Square area that went back all the way to his childhood and coming into the City with his mom and grandma to see holiday decorations and festivities. He had less clear hazy haloed memories of popping in to the Gold Dust Lounge around the corner very late for a night cap while a band of old dudes played funky old tunes. Another great anchor memory was being in the big department store (as an adult) with his grandma who raced from aisle to aisle while he followed her red coat as best he could leading his aged grandpa (who was nearly blind and deaf) and daughter Lil' B who was quite young. After this they retired to Lefty O'Doul's for refreshment, and Grandpa's hair nearly curled at the first sip of his draft Anchor Christmas Ale. Grandma and A.. A... went through the food line, and Lil' B was left alone with her Great Grandpa in that corner booth over there. She had been scared of the old man, which caused him distress, but on that occasion they bonded.

After a long breakfast, it was an easy walk down to the start of Market Street, California Street, and the Ferry Building where he could see by the clock that it was just a bit before noon. A.. A... could hear the bonging of bells, honking of horns, banging of drums before he turned into Justin Herman Plaza were large numbers of weirdos were gathering. San Francisco had always collected eccentrics from all directions, and this group informed the oldest counter culture traditions of the City, and thus of the Universe. This local April 1 tradition dated from the late 1970s as a parade around the (*cough, cough*) serious institutions of society, which were laughed at and mocked, and it was called [**drumroll**] the Saint Stupid's Day Parade. So here were gathered, in all their finery, an elite core of strange Bay Area people with Signs. There was even a guy there impersonating Emperor Norton. The Crack of Noon struck on the Ferry Building Clock. Old spiels were recited and everyone reminded of the unwritten rule (*What was that again? We'll have to get back to you on that one.*) and the parade commenced through the streets of San Francisco to

the sacred stations of stupidity to perform the necessary rituals. The parade sponsors, The First Church of the Last Laugh, claimed to be the world's fastest growing snack religion (you might already be a member) with 150% less dogma (*Wait. How could that be? How could 5 out of 4 people be wrong?*). The Church had only 1 Holey Day A Year and THIS WAS IT! The first stop was outside the Federal Reserve Bank where revelers returned the previous year's losing lottery tickets (*You want to get rich? Play the Lottery. And when you win give a 9th to the Church—who undercut the competition, which wants a 10th*). Amid chants of GO BACK TO WORK! and NO MORE CHANTING! (If it was a Leap Year, there might also be chants demanding FOUR MORE BEERS!), the parade rolled on to the 2nd station, the Tomb of Stupid appropriately located in the plaza at 101 California Street. The door of the tomb was given a good knock every time, but, so far, St. Stupid had never answered (*Man, if he opens that door one time, one of these years, weirdos are going to shit*). Onward the parade to Battery and Market and the Statue of the Bare Butt Mechanics. At this station the lug nuts that keep Old San Francisco connected to Phil Dirt San Francisco were tightened and then tested by making a Leap of Faith. All good, the parade continued to the sunken hollow for mandatory parade rest, and the recitation of hymns, hers, and its. The 5th Station of Stupid being the old "Sock Exchange" at Sansome and Pine, ever since the old temple of finance was converted to a gym it was also known, laughingly, as the Jock Exchange (*chortle, chortle*). The parade continued up to California at Kearny and perhaps the most sinister station, the black Banker's Heart. The crowd marched around this obsidian heart (everyone going the *wrong* way!), and then in a crescendo let fly their few remaining pennies which bounced satisfactorily off the heart. As the crowd flowed away back down California Street, ancient Chinese grandmas moved it to collect the pennies. The parade concluded back at Justin Herman Plaza with the recitation of the closing rituals. All in attendance having concluded their religious obligation for the year, they were reminded to return to that spot the following year, unless April 1 was a Saturday, or Sunday, in which case the parade would begin at the Pointy Building (Pyramid Building) and continue up Columbus past other shrines of stupidity, like the Church of Scientology and the Ghost of Clown Alley, and conclude with a great party either in Washington Square Park, or Joe DiMaggio Playground. A full year to prepare and be ready to appear again at the parade start, with knowledge that next year, of course, would be THE NEXT TO THE LAST PARADE, because this, just concluded, was THE LAST ONE.

— D. A. Wilson

<http://www.saintstupid.com/>

<http://roarshock.net/ssdparades.html>

GODS DON'T KILL PEOPLE, PEOPLE WITH GODS KILL PEOPLE

APRIL ALMANAC

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| 04/01 | 2016 | APRIL FOOLS DAY |
| | 2016 | 38th Annual St. Stupid's Day Parade, SF. |
| 04/04 | 1721 | Sir Robert Walpole became the first Prime Minister of the United Kingdom. |
| 04/06 | 1937 | Merle Haggard was born in Oildale, CA. |
| | 1973 | American League of Major League Baseball began using the Designated Hitter. |
| | 2016 | Merle Haggard died in Palo Cedro, CA. |
| 04/07 | 1938 | Edmund Gerald Brown Jr. (Jerry Brown) was born in San Francisco, California. |
| | 1991 | Brent Hunter Nettell was born. |
| | 2016 | NEW MOON |
| 04/08 | 1904 | Aleister Crowley transcribed the first chapter of <i>The Book of the Law</i> in Egypt. |
| 04/15 | 1924 | Rand McNally's first road atlas published. |
| 04/17 | 2016 | Lisbeth Roessler died, Pleasant Hill, CA. |
| 04/18 | 1906 | Great San Francisco Earthquake & Fire. |
| | 1958 | A United States federal court released poet Ezra Pound from an insane asylum. |
| 04/21 | 1926 | Queen Elizabeth II of the U.K. was born. |
| | 2016 | Musician Prince Rogers Nelson died. |
| 04/22 | 2016 | FULL PINK MOON |
| 04/23 | 1616 | William Shakespeare died. |
| 04/24 | 1953 | Winston Churchill was knighted by Queen Elizabeth II. |
| 04/26 | 1958 | Daniel C. Nettell was born. |
| 04/28 | 2016 | Casey Wilson, a German Shepherd dog, died at age 10, at the Top of the Hill in Martinez, California. |
| 04/30 | 2016 | WALPURGISNACHT |

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Calling for Contributions! ROARSHOCK PAGE invites submissions of art, photographs, poetry, and micro-prose, to be considered for inclusion in future issues.

ROARSHOCK PAGE, Volume 9, Number 5 will be available May 22, 2016.

ROARSHOCK PAGE

www.roarshock.net

Published by:

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