

Now, Where Was I?



Your Narrator apologizes for the radio silence and the inexcusable five month interval since last I set font to pixel. Mea maxima. I don't know about the rest of you, but it has been kind of a crazy year living in the bubble out from which we have barely poked our masked little heads.

Our life in seclusion has been damn near idyllic. I have Stanwyck and the dogs and an abundance of books and music, and best of all, time to engage them all. But the view from the fishbowl has been terrifying. My position of privilege has never been so starkly lit as I compare my little acre of heaven against the outrages and suffering that mark our world.

I let the blog drop because it felt hopeless and impotent and sadly performative to catalog the atrocities of the wider world as if I had something unique to offer. Everything was being said. Beyond a few notebooks filled with my random scribbles and bemoanments, I have had few words.

(Literally. One of the knock on effects of last year's mad scientist adventure has been a touch of brain fog that manifests most upsettingly as an inability to call up words. For a while this was a real problem, but things are getting better. Still, just last week I was unable to remember what kind of tree we had planted in the back yard. It was right there in front of me. I stared at it forever. Absolutely no idea. Finally, after two days, it came to me during my nightly session of angst: crepe myrtle. How obscure.)

Nightly session of angst, you ask?

Yup. Regular as dawn, only earlier. I'm generally good for an hour or two of dread terror between 3-6 a.m. This is the time when the protective bubble disappears and the full horror of our situation becomes undeniable. So many people are dying, killed by the state either through direct violence or intentional neglect. People are losing loved ones, jobs, businesses. We witness the slow accretion of autocratic power consolidation and the emergence of an American Taliban in firm control of the federal judiciary.

Our kids are navigating a moment where their whole lives should open ahead of them in wondrous possibility. What is their world going to look like? Will we continue – even accelerate – our descent into tribalized enmity? Will we spend the next XX many years worrying about pandemics and theo- and autocratic repression?

Will we continue to be governed by a two-bit grifter from Queens, an incurious lard sack in diapers who refers to himself unironically as a “perfect physical specimen”?

It is no exaggeration that the current regime has been almost preternaturally incompetent and indifferent towards its citizens – at least when it has not been intentionally and efficiently cruel, as with the immigration nightmare. It has been hard to bear witness to this tumbling train wreck, especially since the GOP Senate gave the man* a pass on conspiring with foreign governments to rig an election.

Once the GOP stamped his get out of impeachment free card, there has been no institutional lever available to stop his impulsive rampages. The judiciary is larded through with enough Federalist stooges to protect him and the DOJ has been effectively co-opted as his personal law firm. All the outraged “I demand...” or “I stand against...” sputterings in the world are as spitballs in the wind. Cable news and the

interwebs are chockablock with that performative nonsense. And whenever I sat down to write a blog post, it seemed that was all I had to offer, too.

So. Silence.

But today is the hinge day, the pivot. The day we start to resume our nation's imperfect march to greater inclusion and decency, to a commonwealth rooted in mutual respect.

Or not.

Last night's recitation of terrors were all about today. As have been, largely, the catechisms of the past several months. I find it no more probable today that Cheetolini will win than I did four years ago. But it happened then and it could happen again.

Even if Biden wins resoundingly, I lie awake wondering if trump will actually leave. The man faces serious legal and financial consequence the second he reverts to private citizenship. The shield of the presidency is all that stands between him and utter ruin. And some of the characters holding his loan notes do not look kindly upon failure to pay. Putin is not some contractor in Bayonne for whom a strongly worded letter from the latest version of Roy Cohn might act as deterrent to aggressive collection methods.

I worry, in the wee dark hours, that our locked and loaded swath of cosplay Rambos and Gravy Seal warriors have talked themselves into believing that their violent fantasies are not only justified, but spiritually ordained. The violence has already bubbled over. The USA isn't Rwanda or Northern Ireland or Beirut, but neither were those places. Until they were.

I toss and punch my pillow at the fact that a good portion of our community still sneers at COVID prevention as either foolish or a Satanic infringement on their God-given right to...well, that last bit is unclear, as inchoate pronouncements

of Constitutional principles – mostly imaginary – are the stock in trade of folks who can say with a straight face that trump is a man* of integrity who makes and keeps promises.

I twitch myself to sleep despairing that even if we replace the chump, at least 35-40% of our friends and families will continue to fervently believe that Joe Biden is a closet commie, or a pedophile, or a stooge for China or Ukraine or whatever other projection trump flings his way. That without trump, our nation is doomed.

What to do with that kind of madness? What to do when people still believe that the economy is better under trump than Obama? What to do with people hepped up on guns and Fox news and Qanon?

No matter how long I stare at the dark ceiling, I find no answer. I can only grab at a slim reed of hope. And that hope is this: Biden will win, Dems will take both houses of Congress. The new administration will work diligently to reverse the decline engendered by the GOP extremists, much as Obama had to do after Bush the Lesser.

For all Obama accomplished, his 'look forward not back' approach to the malfeasance of the Bush years gave license to the more extravagant depredations of the trump regime. I hope that we will see a thorough house cleaning investigation that calls to account those who have used their connections and power to enrich themselves.

I hope the Democrats will govern aggressively and fairly to remediate at least some of the damage done to our institutions and our common wealth.

I hope beyond hope that we will not have to find out what a second trump term will do to our nation.

And then, having thrashed about for a couple of hours in the darkness, I sleep a fitful couple of hours before I awaken

again in my beautiful little bubble, with my best friend and two doggos all abed and safe.

As I warned, I do not have much to say that is not already out there. At best, many of you will nod along in recognition. At worst, I'm just the bloggy equivalent of a cable news gabbler striving to keep you watching til the next commercial.

Hope it helps at least a little.