Days of Miracle and Wonder



One of the activities that keeps me off the street and out of trouble is serving as a mentor to up and coming entrepreneurs at the Domi Station incubator in Tallahassee. This is purely volunteer work where I listen to people pitch their ideas and then tell them a million ways they could do it better. Most people appreciate it; some, not so much. Either way, this was their chance to throw rocks my way.

The 1 Million Cups series is a Kauffman Foundation initiative based on the notion that entrepreneurs discover solutions and create networks over a million cups of coffee. Every Wednesday, in dozens of cities, one person stands up and throws a pitch to a crowd of caffeine-fueled colleagues, peers, and the occasional VIP. Today was my turn on the mound.

Your Narrator delivered a scintillating, finely woven tale, peppered with witty asides and penetrating insights. Jaws dropped. Grown men wept. In the distance, a coyote howled. It was amazing. No, really.

But you readers have to make do with the short version. Basically, I was asking for financial support to chase down an amazing story. Essentially, to chase a miracle.

There are several strands at play, like Southern agricultural economics and the role of the peanut in the politics of social justice, largely centered around this man’s story.



George Washington Carver

It’s a story about how African-American farmers, instructed by an African-American researcher, upended the cotton-based economics of the agrarian South by embracing the humble peanut at the beginning of the last century. It’s about how that switch regenerated the soil depleted by cotton (an extremely extractive crop that turns soil to dust) and offered a pathway to self-reliance to people who were still toiling under a de facto continuation of slavery. It’s about the discovery of the superb nutritional qualities of the ground nut, the lowly goober pea, which eventually found its way onto everyone’s pantry shelf in the form of peanut butter and other products, not to mention taking a central place in African-American foodways traditions.

It’s also about a small town, Fitzgerald Georgia, population 9053, a long-time peanut center, which has a new factory for peanut processing that employs around 80-90 people. And how most of the employees are convicted felons searching for a pathway back into mainstream life.

But more than anything, it’s about this little guy.



This child is in the final stages of Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM), the leading cause of death of children in the world. One every 8 seconds, around 5 million deaths per year. The kids who survive are typically developmentally challenged – saddled with poor motor, cognitive, immune functions – for the rest of their lives. Entire generations of future problem solvers, leaders, entrepreneurs, doctors, &c., are left hollowed out. There are many reasons that sub-Saharan Africa is plagued by social and political crisis. This is one of the chief contributing factors.

The worst thing about it…this suffering is easily preventable. Absolutely curable and reversible.

This is the miracle part. And we’re back to the peanut.



Miracle and wonder

The boy on the right is the boy on the left after five weeks of treatment with Ready to Use Therapeutic Food (RUTF), a high-protein, vitamin-fortified peanut paste. At a cost of a little more than a dollar a day, RUTF will reverse the symptoms of SAM and place a young child on a path to normal physical and mental development. The treatment efficacy is in the 95% range. Miracle and wonder.

There are a handful of companies in the world that make this stuff according to a formula prescribed by the UN. One of them is in Fitzgerald, GA, population 9053.



Miracle Nutrition

Mana is a non-profit that is committed to eliminating SAM. It also takes seriously an opportunity to provide stimulus to an economically suffering part of rural South Georgia, and to provide job opportunities for ex-cons looking for reintegration.

It's a big job, and like most important missions, it is underfunded. Mana reaches around one-third of the kids in need. Upping that figure takes money. (One of the stories that I dread, and that is inevitable, is how just a few miles from where we distribute Mana is another camp that will not be served.)

So they had a bright idea: create a for-profit company that leverages the existing peanut processing facility to manufacture a high-quality consumer product that can fund the

famine relief mission.



Funding the Miracle

So Good Spread was born, an effort to harness a chunk of the $2Billion/year peanut butter industry in service to a larger good. We hear an awful lot about Social Entrepreneurship these days, and when it’s touted by the oil companies and such, it’s easy to get cynical. But these folks are the real deal.

Next month, October, Mana/Good Spread is loading up a plane for delivery to Uganda, which recently received around 750,000 refugees from the civil strife in South Sudan. This is on top of a multi-year drought and crop failure cycle that has already stressed the Ugandan food infrastructure to the breaking point. Not to mention an earlier influx of refugees. The situation is dire.

And Your Narrator has been offered a seat on the plane and in the back of the truck. This will mean 8-10 days on the ground in Uganda, sitting in on meetings with governmental and NGO actors, and visiting the camps and relief agencies. What I’ve related so far is the tip of the iceberg on this story. I want to dig deeper and bring this story home. There is already

interest from a few publications, and my pitch this morning has led to potential contacts at some other notable vehicles. My gut instinct is that this story has potential for full book length treatment. It is that big.

But this project will take money, way more than I have. I'll need travel expenses to Africa, as well as resources to pursue story lines in Fitzgerald, Tuskeegee, and other significant locations.

So I'm asking straight out: please donate to this project. We are not going the Kickstarter/GoFundMe route, or directly to granting orgs and foundations, because the trip is coming up so quickly. Direct action, and pleading, is necessary. We are setting up a donation channel through the Domi Education Fund, which will make your contribute tax-deductible. I'm putting up a PayPal link at the top of this page. Please use it. Tell your friends. If you know any philanthropists, tell them.

IMPORTANT: (UPDATED)
The PayPal link leads to a donation form where you can place a tax-deductible donation to Domi Education, which is administering the funds.
If you prefer to donate via check, please remit to:
Domi Education
914 Railroad Ave
Tallahassee, FL 32310.

I need to raise about $4000 to put me on that plane (and the one that comes back!), and around $5000-6000 beyond that to cover research expenses and development. If I get anywhere close to $4k, I'm on the plane and I'll worry about the rest later. Any donations beyond those amounts will go to Mana.

And if you want to skip my project and just give directly to Mana, angels will smile and blow trumpets. I'm good with that. Do whatever feels right.

But since I really want to bring this story home, I'm turning

to my network of faithful readers and pals to do the one thing I do worst: ask for help.

Whaddya say?



Yes or No, But….



How do you solve a problem like The Donald?

From my perspective, the answer is simple: turn out the vote and beat that sociopathic charlatan like a tin drum. Send him scurrying back into the fever swamp that spawned him. Be gone, beast.

But for my Republican friends (stop laughing) and relatives, it is a little trickier. Talking to these folks – in a respectful and civil way (why are you laughing? Stop!) – presents an opportunity for us to find a little common ground

Some of them – call them the #EverTrump crowd – see Big Orange as the answer to their prayers, a knight in Cheetos-colored armor. For them, it's simple. And I got nothing except to say, "Nice weather we're having." Common ground enough.

Then there are the folks Josh Marshall tagged as the "Yes, but…" brigade, people who realize Mister Spray Tan is a disaster on legs, but are going to vote for him anyway. Folks like Paul Ryan and Mitch McConnell, who daily have to spin like tops to distance themselves from Trump's latest nonsense, but still, their support remains unwavering. Rubio. Priebus. McCain. The list goes on. Profiles in triangulating cowardice, they want it both ways: principled opposition to the scourge of Gold Star moms everywhere, but a clean heart about withholding their vote for the only living, non-orange person who might actually become President, the Hildebeast. These are the folks who calculate that party over country is a winning bet. For them, I got nothing beyond a suggestion to check out the latest escapades of Mallard Fillmore. And this: history will not be kind to you. Nice weather, by the way.

Then there are those who know el Trumpo is a know-nothing martinet and a fool, but a lifetime of GOP voting leaves them constitutionally incapable of pulling the lever for the pant-suited she-demon. The "No, but…" brigade. JEB!? I'm looking at you. If you're in this gaggle, stay with me, because I want you to find your way to the fourth possible path, the one less traveled by.

Here is where I praise Republicans who realize that a Trump presidency would inflict incalculable damage on our Nation, who cannot imagine having to explain to their descendants how they could have supported – even indirectly – the election of

a vulgar grifter. People who know that they are going to take fire from other Republicans, know they'll hear cries of "Traitor!" People who know they are sacrificing future opportunities in the party they have called home for a lifetime. The #NoButs brigade.

We can also call them Patriots.

I recently struck up a friendship with a long-time member of the conservative GOP establishment. (STOP laughing!) Last time we spoke, X was firmly in the "No, but…' camp, unable to see how she could overcome a lifetime of Clinton-aversion. But today I discover that she has very publicly and definitively joined the #NoButs brigade, proclaiming that if the race is close, she will vote for Hillary Clinton.

I cannot tell you how much I admire her courage. She could have kept quiet and nobody would have known. Except her. And this was a big splash, a very public conversion driven by conscience and rational analysis.
This is what decency looks like. I hope this opens the floodgates.

And I hope those trying to have it both ways realize that, as my Uncle Herschel used to say, "Roll in pig mud, boy, and you get stink on ya."

I'm not asking that every Republican become a Democrat or vote a straight Dem ticket. I am asking – no, pleading, really – that the people who identify as reasonable Republicans cut the charade of "Yes/No, but…" and take a simple stand. Proclaim your support for Hillary Clinton as the next President of the United States. #NoButs

You can vote straight GOP down the ticket from there. You can pledge to do everything you can to ensure that she is a one-term President. As a member of the loyal opposition, you can commit to struggling against any of her policies that strike you as wrong.

What you cannot do – if you want to honestly see yourself as a principled conservative and Patriot – is to sit this out, to let your silence serve as tacit approval of a tiny-fingered, Cheetos-tinted lunatic assuming the power of the Presidency.

Just join the ranks of the sane and repeat after my new pal, who proclaimed, “This is a time when country has to take priority over political parties. Donald Trump cannot be elected president.”
Now that’s some common ground we should be able to agree on.

(Out of respect for her reputation, I won’t quote my pal by name.
She’s getting grief enough without being pegged as a friend of mine.)

It’s Getting There



Shadows are falling and I’ve been here all day
It’s too hot to sleep, time is running away
Feel like my soul has turned into steel
I’ve still got the scars that the sun didn’t heal
There’s not even room enough to be anywhere
It’s not dark yet, but it’s getting there
– Bob

I’d love to take a cavalier tone here, deliver a wry slice

of the buffoonery that is He, Trump<fn>™ Charlie Pierce</fn>. The man is comedy gold, a walking punch line, from his barely concealed groping of Ivanka, to his hair and skin color, to his inability to let go a grudge, to his Mussolini-esque lip pursing. <fn>Someone wearing my eyeglasses emphasized this last tic during last Mardi Gras. It was yooge. Way ahead of the curve.</fn>



The Writer as Trump, Friend of da Jieuxs – Photo by Ryan Hodgson-Rigsbee

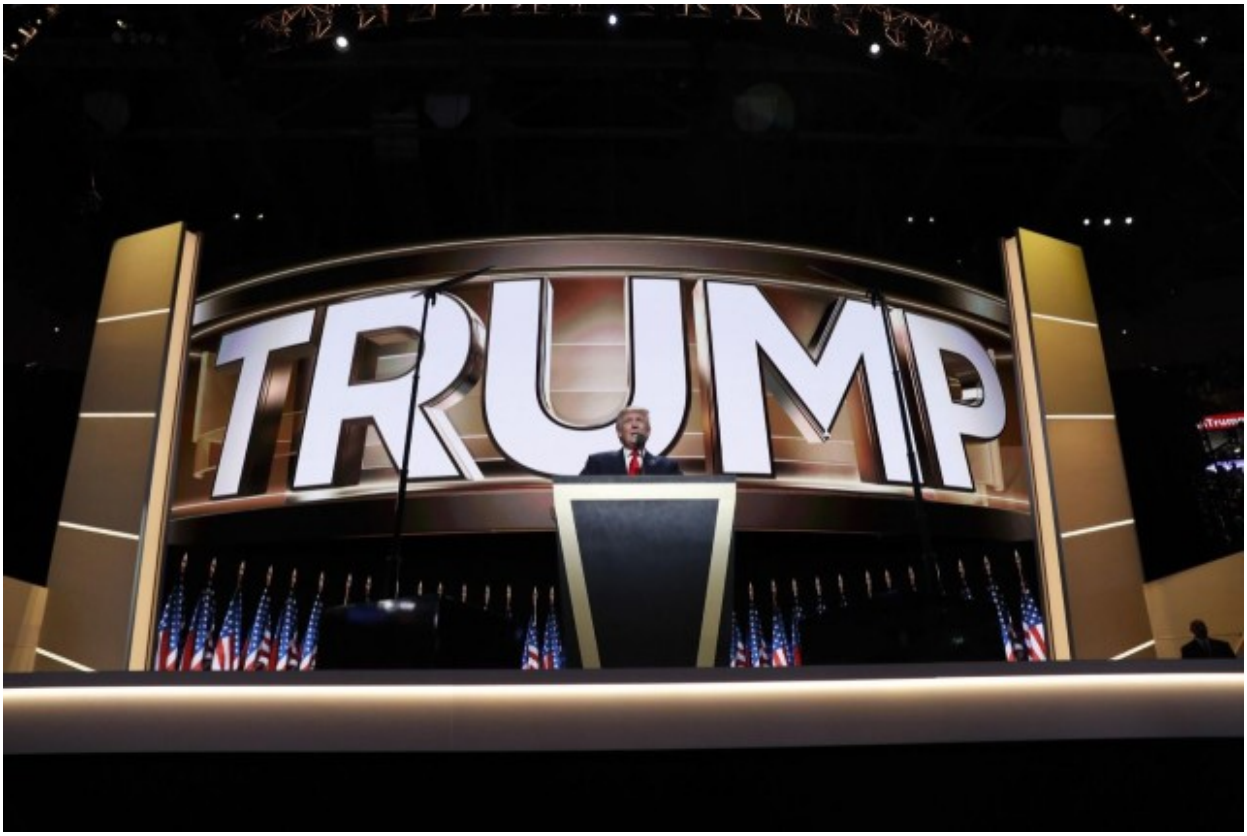
But mocking Trump is just not enough. Things are just a tad too dire. Face it: one of two people has a non-zero chance of becoming the nation's 45th president. Neither is named Jill or Gary.<fn>Get over it.</fn> Given the peculiarities of American electoral politics, one of them is named Trump.

I feel like I'm watching some unholy mashup of *Seven Days in May*, *Manchurian Candidate,* and *The Man in the High Castle.* It can't happen here? This time, I wonder.

His acceptance speech in Cleveland was … was … well, what the

hell was that, anyway? He began by saying this:

> *Friends, delegates and fellow Americans: I humbly and gratefully accept your nomination for the presidency of the United States.*



Humble

It was touted ahead of time as hewing to the model of Nixon's 1968 acceptance. (My favorite Nixon scholar, Rick Perlstein, explains here how badly Trump missed the mark.) Trump knows that his only hope for winning is to amplify and exaggerate our fears, to scare enough people into welcoming authoritarian rule to save us from threats at home and abroad, threats to our "way of life" and "our values". Like Nixon in '68, the litany of horror Trump describes is impressively dire. But unlike Nixon's list, it is largely fictional. A few examples: crime is down, cop killings are down, employment is up, ACA is working well, and so on. Our scorched Thunderdome? He pretty much just made it up.

Fact checkers at work on Trump’s ravings

Even more telling, Nixon understood and acknowledged that these were problems that we would have to solve “together”. Trump had a slightly different perspective:

> *I ALONE CAN FIX IT.*

This theme came around several times, and it is perhaps the most telling component of the whole crazed diatribe. Trump sees himself as a messianic figure, an authoritarian genius who will cure everything that ails us simply by being his awesome self.

> *On January 20th of 2017, the day after I take the oath of office, Americans will finally wake up in a country where the laws of the United States are enforced.*

Because right now, and as far as memory can serve, America is a charred hellscape where chaos reigns supreme. And only one man can save us.



More humility, with a hearty dash of spittle-flecked anger

He yelled. He balled his fists. His face contorted and reddened. He started loud and got louder, more angry.

And then he lowered his tone and said this:

> *I AM YOUR VOICE.*

I truly lost my bearings at this point. Is he a con artist, delivering his practiced patter to sting an easy mark? Is it all an act, or does this guy truly believe our world is in the depths of hell and he is the only man who can save us.

It doesn't really matter. We now have a know-nothing narcissist within hailing distance of the Oval Office. He is clearly unqualified, and unhinged. Whether he's running a long con or is "just" a demented egomaniac (not that these are mutually exclusive), this is dangerous territory

It's unlikely, but this tiny fingered schmuck could win. He starts with a reliable ~40% of the vote, people who love them some authoritarianism, along with folks whose tribal affiliation to Republicanism means they just have to vote for him. On the other side, Clinton has a reliable ~40% base who love them some Democratic tribalism. And as always, that leaves the mushy middle of 20 million or so people who are unsure, undecided. These are, for the most part, what the political profession calls low information voters.<fn>Actually, that label applies to a huge portion of the dedicated party folks, too. On both sides.</fn> People who will make up their minds based on their feelings. Who would you rather have a beer with?

A few hours ago, a candidate for state representative knocked on my door.<fn>Really! This is not some Thomas Friedman cab driver gimmick.</fn> Nice guy, friendly. Republican, and in a town this size, basically a neighbor. We got to talking Trump.

He’s not a happy guy on this, says there’s no way he can vote for a “looney”, and is pretty sad about the state of his party.<fn>He also had unkind things to say about Little Marco Rubio. I liked him even more then.</fn> I asked him if he would vote for Hillary. He kind of shook his head and said, no, he didn’t think he could do it.

I asked him if, knowing that Trump is a dangerous nut, and that one of two people was going to be President, and that Florida is a tight state electorally, he didn’t think it was his responsibility to do what he could to keep the nut out of office. He was remarkably open to the idea when phrased that way.

I had the same conversation with my fab daughter this morning, a disappointed Bernster who “just isn’t feeling Hillary”. I get it. It’s her first election, and she wants it to be a righteous experience. And I get that many Bernie supporters are disappointed and feeling left out. Been there.

Much has been said about prominent GOPers refusing to attend the convention. Several big name Republicans have announced that they will absolutely not vote for Trump, but like my new pal and state house candidate, they can’t bring themselves to vote for Clinton. And much is made of their integrity, their principled opposition.

I say bullshit. How bad does it have to get to renounce your party’s presidential nominee? Pretty fucking terrible, that’s how. Yet that’s not terrible enough to actually do something to keep him out of the office you already admit that he is unqualified for? What more do you need?

Republicans have a shitty choice, but it has a silver lining. I’m looking for prominent Republicans – come on JEB! – to take a stand and say, “This guy is dangerous, he does not represent the values of our party or our country, and I am voting for his opponent. In four years, I will campaign hard to re-take

the White House from Hillary Clinton, but for now, she is the only viable choice."

This is the way to rebuild a sober and rational party. I know too many Republicans who acknowledge that the party has become extremist. They want it to change. Here's their chance to chase to tea partiers, the white supremacists, the obstructionists, the bomb throwers.

For Hillary-averse voters who consider themselves liberal, or progressive, or leftist syndicalist whatevers, it's time to suck it up and support Clinton. Proclaim loudly that Trump is just too dangerous, but dammit Clinton, we're gonna bulldog you and hold your feet to the fire. Find another Bernie to primary her in 2020 if she let's you down too badly.

I get that there are people who really, really, *really* do not like Hillary Clinton. Personally, I'm fine with her; it feels like a continuation of Obama, and I can't get too outraged over that. I'm fairly certain she will disappoint and outrage me at some point, just like every other president in my lifetime.<fn>Some way more than others, natch.</fn>

But I'm comfortable with that because I know it is inevitable. For some folks, the idea of voting the lesser of two evils is too much to bear, and a principled purity vote is more emotionally satisfying. Or maybe you're thinking of staying home, like your crestfallen GOP counterparts who didn't get they nominee the wanted. Above it all.

Whether you're a disappointed progressive or an disappointed conservative, let me say with utmost respect:

> *Fuck your feelings. Use your head.*

Trump is a clear danger. We cannot afford to indulge in preening and moral purity this year. The stakes are too high. Vote, goddamit. And don't waste it.

(Full Disclosure: I voted Bernie in the primary, fwiw. And I like Tim Kaine just fine.)

A Nice Gooey Cluster



It sure is clustery.

I've been a gavel-to-gavel convention junkie since 1972. I admit that most of the time it is tedious, pretentious, and a towering load of bullshit. The joke that "politics is show business for ugly people" has been around as long as I can remember, and my enjoyment comes from my uber-geeky obsession with US history and politics. Growing up under the Nixon raj was like living in a Shakespearean tragedy, so I've always found it damned entertaining and compelling. Mea culpa.

Conventions are tightly scripted reality shows, a cross between *Survivor* and those cheesy behind-the-athlete vignettes that have made the Olympics all but unwatchable. Predictable, cliched kitsch with an occasional surprise twist. But sometimes, the machinery breaks down and the mask comes off to reveal the reptile aliens underneath. It happened in '68 and '72 with the Democrats, and in '64 and '76 for the Republicans. It reveals much about the national id and the undercurrents of tension and conflict that are behind the events that we always scratch our heads over and think, "how

could such a thing happen?” here.

This year’s Republican National Convention has been a parade of reptile aliens. It almost beggars analysis.

What can you say when the speaker who displayed the greatest integrity (maybe the only speaker who displayed *any* integrity) was a charmless theocrat from Texas who frightens his own children?



No, Daddy, no! Icky Daddy.

What can you say when the convention attendees act as though they are in a remake of *The Crucible*?



The delegation from Mississippi. Burn the witch!

I could go on, and I have. I ‘ve twitterized to excess this week, one-liner *bon mots* flowing like cheap wine. The spectacle is perfect for it. Moose and squirrel. Quisling taint lickers like Walker, Christie, and Little Marco. The weaponization of grief. The cynical intonation of MLK in defense of state’s rights. Rudy Nosferatu.



A verb, a noun, 9-11.

What this week’s spectacle does not lend itself to is any kind of extended, coherent analysis. It is simply too fractured, a broken mirror reflection of what at least 40% of our nation perceives as reality, with so many overlapping fault lines as to defy focus. And that, truly, may be the point.

It may be that the splintered, kaleidoscopic texture of the past three nights was intentional. So many shiny objects! So many “did you see that?” diversions! And such a cavalcade of stars! Duck Dynasty! Chachi! GE Smith!

It’s every bit as dazzling as the 4 a.m. shift on the old Jerry Lewis Telethons. Yeah, I watched that, too, every year. Why? Well, it was one night when the electric picture radio box had more than a test pattern after midnight, and it was a holiday, and if you were lucky, some hapless Vegas crooner would lose his toupee mid-song, or Jerry would doze off or start hallucinating and babbling and crying. Just like this year’s RNC.



~~Actual photo of Chris Christie thinking "My god, what have I done?"~~ Jerry Lewis at 4 a.m.

Horrific displays of stiff Caucasian dancing and call-and-response insanity? Stagecraft gone awry? Valium-addled rantings, video screens and microphones misfiring, speakers crying? Messrs. K and H assure the public their production will be second to none. I love it.

When I go to a concert and the wheels start to come off, I get a thrill. How will everybody respond? Sometimes, the recovery takes the performance to a level nobody had imagined, pure magic. Other times, recovery is rough, but respectable. And sometimes, nothing can be done, everybody just has to pretend things are okay, while the band plays *Waltzing Matilda*. Onward to death and glory!

I've pretty much avoided writing about He, Trump, aka The Donald, The Short Fingered Vulgarian, &c. It all pretty much gets written without my help. The rest of the GOP clown car? So much protoplasm, so little substance. The entire campaign was like watching a circus camp for incontinent toddlers, like watching a stubborn remnant refusing to go away no matter how

many times you flush. Fascinating, but more than a little revolting. Just not terribly interesting to write about.

Plus, also, too, it's easy to get distracted by trivialities like i) Natasha's plagiarized speech or ii) whether a professional gasbag did or did not give a Nazi salute to Trump.<fn>i) Who cares? and ii) No, she didn't. Just stop.</fn> Why do the Trump lads look like understudies in an off-off-Broadway production of *American Psycho*?<fn>Because Patrick Bateman is a role model. Duh.</fn> Will Tiffany ever get her Daddy's attention?<fn>Tragically, no.</fn> Does Marcocito's suit retain its shape through a wire frame or by hot gas inflation?<fn>Bet on the gas.</fn>

One almost forgets that the reason this shitshow is happening at all is because one of our two choices for president is a litigation happy megalomaniac who lies as easily as most people fart. A grandstander who has no qualifications, a grifter, a phony, a narcissistic horror. He knows nothing of policy, or how governance works, or even the basic facts of America's role in the world. He's the drunk uncle at Thanksgiving, the sot at the end of the bar that everybody moves away from. A barking mad street ranter waving pamphlets and yelling "I've got evidence!"

You may hate her, and her policies, but Hillary is at least qualified to serve. Lawyer. Senator. Secretary of State. You gotta go back to Madison for that kind of resume cred. Trump? It's laughable on its face. A sane electorate would not elect this guy King of Cartoons. And the polls say he's pretty much a snowball in hell.

But it's not enough to let me sleep soundly. I've seen elections go wrong before. It *can* happen here.

For a generation or three that has grown up with the electric picture machine, Trump is a familiar amalgam of years of iconic representation. He's Ralph Cramden and Fred Flintstone

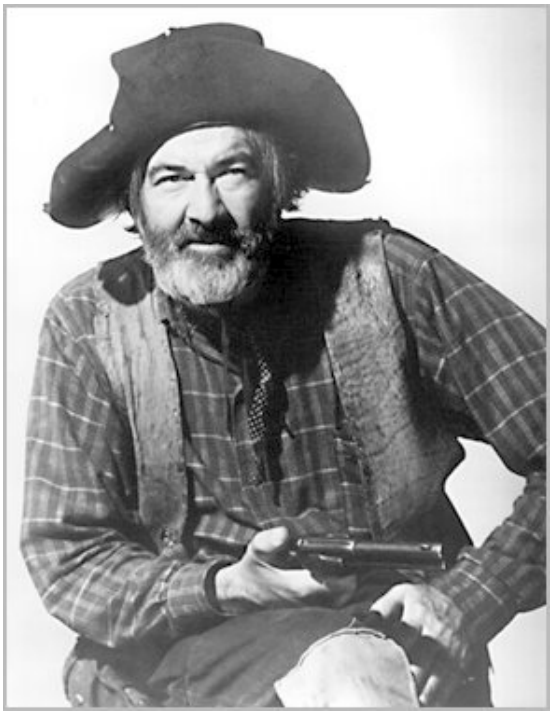
and Archie and the predators of the reality show circuit. He's *Lifestyles of the Rich and Famous* and a towering member of the glitterati club. He's been in your home, in one form or another, for decades. <fn>Hilary has been the star of a reality show for 25 years, too. She's inevitably cast as the villain.</fn> He's *Dallas* and *Falcon Crest* and *All My Children*. Especially *All My Children*.

Back in the days of Reagan<fn>He ruined everything, you know. You can look it up.</fn> and *Flock of Haircuts*, one of my guilty pleasures was this daily soaper. It was overwrit and overwrought, pretty plainly terrible in every measurable way. But it knew the future. Erica Kane, played by Susan Lucci for 41 years<fn>Respect!!!!</fn>, was a centerpiece character, a "celebrity" who was "famous" and who had legions of "fans", but who never seemed to actually do anything to become famous. She was simply famous for being famous. This is decades ahead of a Kardashian or a *Housewives of…* scenario.

This, my friends, was Philip K Dick level prognosticating. It's no accident that a considerable percentage of the convention speakers gained their fame through reality teevee.<fn>Plus a few grifters from the pyramid marketing realm, a little celebrity subset of its own. But I digress.</fn>

These day, celebrity *qua* celebrity is so commonplace as to be unremarkable. Viral videos, reality shows, all that. It means that anybody can be famous, qualifications be damned. And here's a goodly chunk of the Trump appeal: anybody, by damn, can be president!

> *"So what that he don't know NATO from NAFTA…he's got common sense, dalgurnit, and he's ain't beholden. Why, he's just like me! Now hold my beer and watch me shoot this skeeter offa ma nose!"*



An actual Trump delegate.
No, really.

There is an unmovable base that thinks that what is going on in one of the only two parties that matter<fn>Get over it, Greens and Libturds.</fn> is fine and fucking dandy, a really good direction for our commonwealth to pursue with fanatical vigor. Trump has tapped into something deep and toxic, and he is not shy about letting the beast out to play. He knows how to cultivate the resentment and fear that motivates a big portion of our population. Higher angels? What do their Q ratings look like? Losers.

On top of that, there is another significant percentage of people who will stroke their chins thoughtfully and say, oh yes, certainly, that Trump fellow is a bit rough around the edges, but oh my fucking god that Hilary Clinton, at least Trump didn't {hide emails, smuggle cocaine, kill Vincent Foster, help Bill rape women, &c.} AND SHE IS EVIL AND SHE MUST BE STOPPED. People who, more in sorrow than in anger, will vote to Make America Great Again.

<fn>Sure and okay, Hilary and the Dems have a solid 40% to start with, too, a base that marches just as obediently.

Tribal markers and all that. I’m not blind to the faults of the other side, I’ll be watching their shitshow just as closely. I imagine there will be plenty of high-larity and contumely to share.</fn>

Here’s where shit gets real.<fn>as the young people say, via emoji, apparently, but whatevs</fn>Despite the fact that, by any reasonable measure, there is only one major party candidate that is fit to occupy the office of presidency, this is actually a competitive race. There are purportedly “reasonable” people (looking at you JEB!) who refuse to say, “Country above party! This is a nightmare. Wake up!” It ain’t gonna happen, the tribal markers are too sharp.

As with the last several elections, it comes down to what are quaintly known as “low information” voters. People of the land. The common clay of America.



You know….morons.

Here’s where it can go all wrong. In 2000, there was the idea going around that Bush would be someone you’d rather have a beer with. He was a regular guy, just like me! Already you can see the effort to cast Trump and his spawn as salt of the earth jes’ folk, with Hilary as the epitome of elitism.

Ah, but he’s a businessman. A celebrity businessman. A *rich*<fn>Perhaps.</fn> celebrity businessman. Trifecta jackpot! The cult of the business titan works in his favor, even as we are asked to think of him as a regular guy. And he’s rich, just like I could be if it weren’t for that Obama fella. In a Kardashianized world, simply being rich and famous is qualification enough. The details will get cleaned up in post-production.

Give him points: he’s the savviest manipulator of the media monkeys we’ve ever seen. A bona fee-day organ grinder with a chain attached to all their nose rings. He played his opponents and the party grandees like a tent full of chumps at the carnival. The Trump Rollicking Medicine Show rolls on, and we can only hope that enough people will see the con and outnumber the marks. There’s no guarantee, so step right up…

I’ll tune in again tonight, a chump at the edge of my seat waiting to see what kind of weaponized resentments he will offer to a crowd that looks all too ready to roll some tumbrels and pitch some forks. I’ll curse and tweet and go to bed ennervated and distressed, hooked on this year’s reality teevee spectacle. The ratings will be boffo.