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Rockt Bob
plays
Sunset Boulevard

cjfitzjames

Book Three in the Los Angeles Mysterium trilogy

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Foreword

In the first book 'A Breeze on La Brea', the heroine, Lisette Nice, a young actress working her secret dayjob as The Famous Fellatrix, lands a small role playing opposite the Sexiest Man in the World, an aging alcoholic actor struggling to stay sober risking fortune, reputation and, it transpires, his life, to direct an ill-written movie in the northern wilderness. It goes badly wrong. Aided by a feral tomcat, her Hollywood friends the Great Sex Doctor Doll and Cornelius Gunsmoke, Lisette sets it right.

In the second book, 'The Hollywood Freeway Battle Stallion' Lisette, five blockbuster movies later, is an International Movie Star. Fearing for her safety, and rather than worry her dying husband, she commissions a dangerous but good man from her old life as the Famous Fellatrix to help her, and discovers an aged horse who seemingly, impossibly, has been in historical cavalry charges; a battered friendly old chap she uses in her latest movie only to find the source of her talent out of this world.

This, the third book, '*Rocket Bob plays Sunset Boulevard*', set in wartime LA in the near future, is now in draft. Lisette, a long-dead cult hero with billions of followers, returns. Sunset Boulevard, franchised, stretches from Pacific to Atlantic. Lisette appears with Walt Disney, Salvador Dali, Gerry Brown and Carl Jung to direct friendly California agriweapons fight off a Chinese invasion. And 'once-human' Rocket Bob, an ex-kid's space ride pilot-musician, saves CA, the remaining Free World Democracy.

About the Author

An Angelino-Englishman, cjFitzjames was born in Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwickshire, England. During long hospitalization as child lived in imagination; no school until almost nine, could neither read nor write, had vision of destiny in desert: visited Sahara age 23, *not*; discovered Mojave in 1978, based in LA since; dyslectic; after art school became addicted to surrealism, cinema, actresses; after film school in London, wrote advertising & TV drama, indie in Hollywood. Naturalized American. Philosophical mission: chasing the subversive aesthetic in contemporary art, cinema and literature inspired by literary heroes of youth: Henry Miller, Carlos Casteneda, Terry Southern, & J.P.Donlevy.

Back to the Cactus Factory

The Cactus Factory was quiet.

Uncle Victor sat in the darkness of his office looking out across the motionless production line. The lone Saguaro towered over the expanse of deserted machine tools and bare work benches. Uncle Victor counted thirty-two motes of dust refracted in the narrow shaft of sunlight falling through the titanium rafters; a dust-free environment, it had been three days since the line stopped moving and filtration powered down, so a few wayward motes were acceptable.

It had been nineteen days Uncle Victor told himself, since the final batch of Saguaros had been armed for deployment; power was at a premium in wartime so a few wayward motes were acceptable; just. It took two minutes for the shaft of light to creep to over the cold steel tabletop to the soft, pale green skin of the remaining Saguaro, complete except for its mica spike tips; the perfect anti-infantry device Victor wished it hadn't been necessary to deploy. The little Chinagirls hadn't stood a chance. He had seen recon video. Thousands floating belly up like dead herrings clogging the marinas lining the coast from Oregon to Baja. The gull squadrons were efficient, always hungry; the beaches were almost clear again; tourism could continue. Victor began to reminisce about the days before green weapons. He looked around. He could remember the Skunk Works from that fateful first interview. He had taken the metrolink up through Soledad Canyon to Palmdale and Lancaster, the 'home of aviation'. It had been fifty years ago but he could still see the cute little skunk logos painted on the giant structures sitting in limitless acres of Joshua trees on the high desert. The Mojave was a special, he knew that; eternal; its intrinsic energy seeping across eons of time.

The invaders used Twentieth Century military concepts so the sexy Chinagirl marines coming out of the surf had long been predicted. Disney Defense Division had efficiently taken care of corporate business to protect the Continental Consumer Base, the populus inhabiting the Southband from shiny Pacific beaches to glorious Gulfcoast shore; three thousand miles of condensed bright-lights big-city digital-virtual luxury-living interspersed with idyllic counties of cute suburbia. The asia blue water invasion fleet had been long-expected...

The Coast Guard cutters were tame for the most part, speed orcas that started at Sea World two hundred years ago. Uncle Victor shrugged. War wasn't fair. All the invaders wanted was their money back, claiming a collection mission of old debts; repayment of trillions in government treasury bonds; at least, that was their excuse, but they hadn't expected their mighty carrier battle groups to be so easily stopped by the Coast Guard. **The invasion was expected.** The conflict had started years before when the Southband had suddenly gone organic and stopped importing handmade technology and domestic appliances. The invaders had been forced into an economic introspection that led to military expansion. Now they exported their wares to the third world and needed to cash from the international investments their bankers had made fifty years before but that government no longer existed to honor treasury bonds.

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Green Weapons

The Southband had bought out developing Virtual organic buying complete domestic home organix systems instead; hey nothing could compare to virtual sensuality courtesy of the Cactus Factory. They had been rightfully resentful, They fully realized they had been sold old 20th Century bill of goods and virtual but the big black-and-white orcas had been real enough coming in so quickly to immobilize the battlegroups. Uncle Victor had seen the Warshow. and been very impressed. Now the whole fleet drifted listlessly on the tides with the friendly coast guard dolphins appearing on the hour to do a few tricks to remind them of their presence. They weren't going anywhere.

Uncle Victor remembered those who had scoffed and laughed at Green Weapons and hoped the invader's ocean-going tugs made it from the South China Sea in time before the battle group drifted into the three-mile limit. The invaders would be dead. All it would take would be a few dark clouds of blue Scrub Jays; singularly the cheeky little birds could take your eyes out but knew who thier friends were; if you had a current Southband credit card you were safe.

The latest jays had cardreader psyches.

If your account was a few months out of date your card was still a passport to safety.

Led by new militarized Sea Crows the jays had devastated the marine infantry. The

little china girls hadn't stood a chance. Their body armor impervious to 50mm machine gun fire but not fierce little burrowing birds. The saguaros had taken care of the ones that made it up the beach. Uncle Victor was in a reflective mood. The last thing he had been expecting was a visitor, but he was pleased to see me. I had known him when he was alive. We had been good friends and he remembered me fondly. Uncle Victor is an organic cartoonbot. He had started out as a human, a talented cell animator in the old days of movies, and like the saguaro Disney had taken his best features and character strengths in his final year and animated them well. Animating molecules

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Dog Dick

"Iggy, you old dog dick, how are you?"

Uncle Victor was pleased to see me. I was impressed, flattered Victor knew I was still in business, but fearful. Disney obviously knew about his memories of me stashed in his brain. Despite his subtly comic appearance Uncle Victor is a popular, highly efficient and shrewd execubot. Disney wouldn't have left traces of me in his mind if I was completely redundant. Perhaps there was hope for me after all, perhaps Disney had plans for me. I had been out of work for over twenty years moonlighting here and there to pay the bills. I had met the original Victor when I had taken a drawing class five years before he died. We had ben good friends. Now lookalike Uncle Victorbot gave me a hug. He knew my work, knew all about my latest gig to make ends meet. *I find lost dogs. Track 'em down. I'm a private dog detective.*

"So tell me Iggy, how the fuck are you?"

"I'm good Victor," I told him. "And you are looking pretty good yourself."

"That right? Take a longer look at me Iggy. I'm a fucking robot for fucksake." His eyes sparkled with mischief. "What are you doing here. There's a fucking war on for fucksake. Perhaps I shouldn't have told you that. You know, this being the Happiest Place on Earth and all that crap. But you know these things. Wanna cuppa coffee?"

I looked at him with mixed emotions as he made coffee. Cartoonbots are obvious non-humans. Early on Disney Animated Organics had discovered if they caricatured facial features and bodily proportions it made their robots emotionally non-threatening, enhancing

the notion that they were harmless, had nothing to hide, thus could be more efficient in their varied job functions. Disney Cartoonbots cornered the blossoming organic lifeforms market. Uncle Victor is an obvious organic, not 'a laughable' but subtly designed to make you gently smile, I believed his benevolence intrinsic. He seemed exactly as I remembered him. You can't clone soul so the saying goes but seemingly Disney had done it with Uncle Victor. He is an authentic. That is, based on a human prototype. As he prepared coffee a wispy strand of hair fell across his dappled pate into his eyes exactly as I remembered; yep, they still sparkled with the same old mischief *plus* he had made no move to call security. I was safe. "We go back a long way

iggy," he said. "We had some good times back there at the ol' Skunk Works."

I looked back to that time of gainful employment with warmth, we had worked together concepts across the southwest the nesting woodpecker had managed half inch chipped his beak. replace the titanium with an organic-grown loader. he was hired on at the Cactus Factory. "Pity you died though Victor."

"They got the best of me feels like like," he said, patting his chest. "And this heart is strong. Now, how can I help you Iggy?"

Uncle Victor had invented the Sea Crow in his final years at the Cactus Factory. He told me all about it conversationally one morning we had breakfast at his favorite café a few months before he died. He described a sleek black body and bright yellow legs with big webbed feet. A perfect compact night reconnaissance bot for the Navy. Land on water. Hang out, rest up. Do a little fishing. Victor loved crows. He had been chronically sick for years and in periods of ordered bedrest spent time at the window watching the noisy flock that lived in his neighborhood. "They are the best flyers," he had told me.

"I've got an assignment," I told him, tasting my coffee, "out of West Hollywood."

"Which one?" he asked flatly, sipping coffee. There are fortyone West Hollywoods in the Southband interspersed along the full-length of Sunset Boulevard from LA to Florida.

"The original," I told him. "Ours, from one of the big agencies up on the Strip." I had his interest. Sunset stretched across the continent running two blocks below Santa Monica Boulevard, the old Route Sixty-six, but instead of heading north at Memphis with SMB up to Chicago and the rustband, Sunset cut east to New Orleans then headed south. It was the

top real estate franchise in the country, and the Strip the pinnacle. Buying a franchises cost nig bucks ran high.. "It's a bit out of my league. A talking dog job."

"Talking dog you say, what breed, what model?" Uncle Victor asked, chugging his coffee. And talking dogs cost a small fortune.

"Yorkshire terrier," I said. "Cute little bitch."

"Stolen or lost?" Uncle Victor asked, openly curious as the coffee kicked in.

"Dunno," I nodded. For the past one hundred years talking dog movies had been a popular and profitable source of revenue to Disney. then, come the first publicity of canine organics out of the Cactus Factory with the first military and law enforcement canines, Disney Petbots hit the market shortly thereafter. Talking Dogs made perfect marketing sense. The first were limited vocabulary models. Child liscences where expensive. Being a pet parent was a phrase that originated. Petbots were Perfect lonely people exotic custom pets and. when Disney had

The missing dog in question belonged to a Ruling Celeb in Hollywood, a politician rumored to have Sacramento under his thumb. I had the case report. Almost on staff, the Yorkie had been privvy to many a closed meeting and must know secrets. Nobody knew she was a talker. She kept quiet. Posing as a yappy little lap dog. Talk they could also comprehend listening who knew what she had heard sitting it out in the Hollywood Hills. It is just. Lesser Hollywoods - far more expensive code. Southband cities to afford a Hollywood Hills franchise. Talking dog movies had always been popular when Disney had This one was politician.organics - the wealthy the world over moved to the Southband.The Southband - the Happiest Place on EarthWho could argue. Disney Defence kept it that way. They said it was the happiest place on earth and who was to know otherwise? I knew. The people at TIA knew. There was a war on.

2

The Southband - the Happiest Place on Earth

The Intellectual Arts agency had used me before.

Twenty years ago it had been my dream that they would sign me as one of their clients. I'd had creative aspirations back then and the artists they represented were all under

contract at Disney, Universal, all of major players. They put the big ideas together, the big deals. I had been ambitious then. Idealistic. Believed in Meritocracy. Believed in the currency of ideas. The only merit was in the deal - and that had very little to do with talent or art of contingency. It was knowing who to take the idea too. Or something. Wars came and wars went. permanent there had been a war somewhere. I liked modern history. t had been an open War Culture since Geo. W. Bush invaded Iraq. Hot wars cold wars people suffered Little things. Protect the consumer base. Consumers never got killed. They were protected.

Few consumers

There was a connection. There was no point in stealing the organics. They were innocent as the day they came popping out of the pod.

This was hardware.

Victor was an uncle-class.

hey said it was the happiest place on earth and who was to know otherwise? Dreamers the world over wanted to live here.

Days were when citizenship was a problem. Immigration, both legal and illegal s

That was before Corporate America. And the country became an economy.

It took me three weeks/days to find the lost dog. The trail led to the gulf coast through endless developments of Code factories . Then back west.

I like New Mexico. So it wasn't a chore.

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Ducktruckster

Bigrigs are not allowed on Sunset Boulevard. Cruising the Strip is an Official Leisure Passtime. A big business on the weekend when ride vouchers cost a premium. Hollywood franchise vehicles are allowed. Limos, grip trucks and the occassional honey wagon, portable toilets and This was a Peterbilt hauling gallons of the the honey wagon real McCoy. The duck was a union driver. He would have liked to call himeself a union man but he was a duck. Gambling, up front in the cab the duck got lonely.

Passing through Phoenix the duck spotted the Yorkie sitting on a bus bench. He had stopped at the red light on Vine Street. It was a quiet Wednesday afternoon. He had been on a hundred miles of LA and the - his Dinstinct clicked feintly. He looked around. There were no clowns, characters. The little dog. He opened the passenger side cab window and leaned over and called quietly. "Need a ride."

Scrubby looked up. The big friendly yellow duck cartoonbot behind the steering wheel looked harmles enough. She didn't bother to answer instead jumped

"Thank you sir. Where are you headed.

"Skidmark, Texas."

No, there can't be such a place.

They got as far as Albatuky before they parted ways. Skidmark Flody Brothers Dog finding is a respectable enough occupation. Lost or stolen dogs usually. Nothing suspicious gave me time to reflect.

D

This part of Texas is California bother. Longest thinnest was still the California Panhandle.

"Iggy, what are you doing out here?"

Uncle Victor didn't seem to surprised to see me. I thought he might have been in touch with his identical twin. The original was low on guile. He might have been modified

how've you been, it must be five years." The was the same tinge of sadness I had see a month earler meeting Uncle Victor in West Hollywood. Despite the strangeness I still felt the old wearwth of freindhship towards him.

"I was alive then." The same flat reposnse he had used three weeks ago in West Hollywood.

That I could get out - I couldn't stop myself asking "But you are alive now Victor."

"What is it like being a robot Victor?"

"Like being extremely old, only in perfect health."

I still have to take care of myself of course.

"I've been good Victor. Same as ever. Life at the beach. Venice. Just like it was.

"I don't suppose you saw a sea crow did you Iggy?" in the wild." back then, when they were wild, before they were militarized; Victor had died just as his invention had first flown. Yes, I told him. They were testing 'em. A few of the early models had more of crow in 'em will of their own and took off to live with the pelicans at the Marina. The colony

I used to watch them. Wheeling around

Strangely they did okay with the cormorants. Sleek dark birds. They had to feed on land

And looked a bit comical with their long yellow legs. Victor smiled.

"So tell me Iggy, what are you doing in Albaturky?"

I'd heard the locals talk about Albuquerque locals talk about their hometown. "Oh, I got in yesterday. I'm looking for a Yorkshireterrier."

"How long have you been here Victor?" He didn'y answer "I'm looking for a dog. A lost dog.

"Talking dog?"

I had a strange Déjà vu The same stream of conciousness we had shared in West Hollywood.

6

Hot Dogs and Cat Burgers

I like dogs Victor said, going off script.

"I know," I said, remembering our strolls along the boardwalk with his dingo-bouvier cross. "Rastus was a good ol' boy."

Victor murmoured."Until he took the throat out of that pesky LAPD canine unit. He would have never done that to a German Shepard. Those genetically modified giant beagles are fucking stupid. Why the cops had to switch is still beyond me."

I remembered reports of the incident. It had drawn a crowd on the boardwalk. Rastus had been unfairly provoked by the PDK9. Not only had he removed the beagle's throat, but also the neck. In shock, the beagle shook convulsively and its head rolled away. The crowd had thought it hilarious, a stunt, but then came the blood. Before the human half of the unit could get his gun out Rastus pounced. He grabbed he officers wrist in his vicelike jaw

without even breaking the skin; Victor had done a good job; at 120 lbs, Rastus was a gentle giant when it came to humans but the 160lb policedog hadn't stood a chance. Getting the dingo seed.

The crowd crowded the cop. Rastus was innocent. They'd seen it all. It was self-defence. Such was life at Venice Beach. It had gone full circle. In the hurried years boardwalk historic 1970 pagodas even the Lafayette coffshop outside of the halfsphere ended at the beach

"It broke my heart to see him go." Victor was muttering about beagles being a fucking stupid breed. Rastus had been sentenced to six months rehab at UCLA. But he died. Mysteriously. UCLA had been notorious for ther animal experiemnsts since the

Start it could have been that incident that brought Victor to the attention of the Cactus Factory. His time at skunk works. Animation was still quite new skunk works started his work at the Cactus Factory.

Maybe it was

I do

I didn't ask how the little terrier had made it to New Mexico from LA.

The southband

I had been here before.

It had been a long time ago when I discovered Sunset Boulevard. I had been a young man. To a great extent Sunset had meant bright lights big city. I hadlived a block away from Schwabes drugstore.

There is only so much

If it works don't fix it.

Night

Start at the Ocean

It had changed

The following morning I showed up at Del Mar Circle. A trailer park on the outside of town surrounding a small, decorative lake. The street number matched the Pet Store sales receipt hardcopy I clutched in my hand.

She had showed up at the pet store out back. Sitting in pet carrier. I was impressed. A new identity

The elderly lady that opened the door I showed her my ID.

"We got a rodent problem. We saw this TV show on the Dog Channel. The histories of terriers.

"We got a schnauser,

"Why didn't you get a cat?" I asked.

"Dander." he said. "Allergies."

Couldn't afford a cat.

Would need some accomplices Hard muscle

"You are not a Schnauser." I said. The wirey little dark gray terrier looked up at me with big doleful brown eyes. "Good do," I continued, peering at her closely clipped hair Hard muscle.. "Very clever disguise. Way off from your flowing peaches and cream locks." The soft eyes changed, narrowed. "Suits you too.." Hey, look, I said nervously. "I gotta tell you, I'm not a beastiperve."

"I know that mister," the little dog said. "I can smell one a mile off."

It is always surreal when a talking dog replies for the first time.

Guess they must have some good doggie gyms

"Ride up front with me."

"Thanks," she said. "They do. I always wanted to get cut and buffed. A showdog life on the silk cushion is tolerable, and I was very fond of xxxxxxxxxx but it was that fucking pink ribbon bow top-knot that finally did me in. I wanted to find out what being a Yorkshire Terrier was really about."

We carried on chatting. I realized I was dealing with a teenage girl. Albeit one with a taste for blood, albeit rodent, albeit . I am not sure I fully believed her story didn't want to piss her off. Yorkies are unusually fast. One bite and this one could take out a calf muscle. "Hey, I don't bite humans" she said as if reading my mind and offered me something to eat. Dog food had come a long way, again she read my mind. Same high standard

"Yes, I've come to take you home."

"No biggie, I won't give you any trouble. I've run away before.

Usually when I was on heat. Homones you know. Find the love of my life Spayed. No. I'm a pet investent. breeding

Cal your parents and tell them you are safe.

Parents, pet parents, don't give me that crap. They own me.

Take your time.

Machines that would help them

Almost servants Lab butlers where

Genetic

Genetically modified foods

Started food

Her small brain had the clout of a human

Up in the northband

The repubs

Rocket Bob

Rocket Bob was taking a snooze, a controlled snooze he reminded himself half opening an eye to catch the clock on his nightstand. He had ten minutes of of luxurious doze before blast off and intended to enjoy 'em. It was a beautiful morning. He could hear the birds raging joyously in their dawn chorus and the countdown was on.

Rocket Bob had done a lot of bad shit in his time but he had never nuked anyone before.

It had all started

Rocket Bob in Beans for Breakfast

Kids loved Rocket Bob. The world over playing Rocket Bob was the perfect excuse for fart noise making fart noise

the Rocket Bob toy

9

Berni the Pervbot

The glittering permaglass walls of Fortress New York was a pretty site but didn't compare to the soft physicality of the Los Angeles Hemisphere; the L.A. half-bubble was the eighth wonder of the world shimmering lightly like filmy menbrane impression that it was breathing, live; fine blue sky The dome was mathmatically ccccc but didn't look it. The organics Lifestyle was possibility. Secret suspension ; weather, the winds that

The rental skimmed along

My office was 1950s moderne. I had bought the code from a furniture emporium specializng in historic digital decor

The cedar walls prefect. They were a copy of a magnates walk-in closet in Hearst Castle

The ionizer put a touch of scented aromatic timber on the air. I put the dog down, and she began sniffing around.

"Nice." she said. "Norwegian wood, with a hint of Cedar. Sorry, I forgot, is it safe to talk?"

"I had flipped the Light from Some of the furniture was real. Turn off the power an empty room with three chairs, but they were mine; a Le Courbusier, an Eames and a 1903 Rennie Mackintosh ladderback.

I lay back in the leather to think it all through. Uncle Victor would help me. I didn't have access to production numbers but Disney had been successful with Uncle Victor. He was obviously a part of a defence contract and a conservative estimate would mean that he had been deployed at least twenty times in various facilities requiring his considerable skills and administrative experience in organic weapon systems.

The case was in turnaround. The team had moved on.

The celeb who own scrubby. I now had a dog.

Her master murdered, suddenly I had a dog.

I knew I had to find Berni the Computer Perve.

Re: Floss.as in candy.....

TO: 1 recipient
Show Details

A weird day here Norm.
I had an idea about ten years ago:
The US Presidential Election,
After all the hoopla and the New Leader of the Free World sworn in,
the old president takes him aside and tells him he has one important
duty left to perform.

A secret introduction -
new pres taken into secret room to meet his new bosses, who really
rules the world: (God, aliens etc).

Sent: Wednesday, July 11, 2012 2:39 PM
Subject: Floss.as in candy.....

The truth is that Political Beings are lightweight
They are not thinkers,creative,problem solvers,...own no peacefully
Possible path...a

Waste of time and space...posturing little prats....all of
themWORLDWIDE.....GOD HELP USIDIOTS ARE
DRIVING THE PLANETS DESTINY.....ALL OF THEM.....
I am APOLITICAL.....
POLOTICS ARE INSULTING THEY ARE PETTY...BABIES OF
BUISNESS.....A WHOLE BLIGHT ING PLAGUE OF
SOUND.....
LIVE SILENCE.....
SPARTAN SIMPLICITY
LESS LIVES....
ENOUGH IS ENOUGH ...
Whatever we have we wish to share...
EVERY PAIN IS FELT BY ALL true ..bla

Agents had power

They ran

It had started when

Drool School

Walt was impeccably turned out. I had expected that. Other than that, I had cooled my jets on expectations. His original studio location on Hyperion

"Jimmy, I've read all about you."

I had obviously been scrutinized.

"I would like to introduce yo to the greatest artist of the Twentieth Century." He said, and left it at that. "Please follow me

He lead me along the glass corridor connecting the firs; the old man sitting in the straight backed chair had nodded off, his doze hardly interrupting ; the pallette on the table beside him was the canvas on the easel in front of him was nearing completion. It was tightly renebred. I was familiar with the work of Salvadore Dali. It was all about metaphysics. Sexual mysticyism Sexual atomic Religious It was a long cigarette holder.

"This the lad you were telling me about Walt?" The accent was Catalan, or French; Dali had woken up and was looking at me

The cheetah shrugged apologetically.

"It doesn't talk," Salvadore said. "I'm a purist. The cheetah I had in London in 1957 when I was alive. It was him or an ocelot.

Alive?

"Life is bigger than mere man."

"Why me? Why not. You are a productive, responsible citizen.

Obama

Glovestone Stanly.

When we really took over.

After the election

Moral Fiber

That is what it is about. We can't be isolationist. We need to set an example in the world again, have people look up to us.

I'm with Jane on this. The mid-terms bowled me over - had America gone nuts voting in the Tea Party? Or was it something more sinister - you are well aware of my predilection for conspiracy theories but taking a positive angle on that, reining my imagination in on my curiosity it became obvious to me that I really haven't got much of an idea of who Americans really are nowadays. Point being, I don't think they do either. It is like they have slowly been robbed of their identity by the corporate system this past thirty years. They believe(d) they could thrive with hard work but hard work per se is no longer required - labor has moved off-shore - and all of the rebellious and subversive characteristics that drove earlier generations of immigrants to come here have been 'bred out of them' via mass-media social conditioning to become consumers. I guess American Exceptionalism can now only mean Supreme Military Domination? Sadly I do think Romney does have all the media and financial wherewithals to press the right public buttons to win.

Pilbeam liked living in Ocean Park. He had a place on Third and Ashland with a great view of the water; the horizon spread across the sets of windows of his sitting room, sleeping room and kitchen, its sharp line fuzzed here and there by distant surface shipping; distantly, the melancholic hoot of the foghorn echoed through the grey June Gloom sitting on the water a thousand feet below. At moments like this, Pilbeam was glad of his First Sea Lords paycheck, he loved living here in the penthouse

The coffee came through thick and strong

Coast Guard

Los Angeles dome

The view inland

1st Sea Lord

'We joined the Navy to see the world, and what did we see, we saw the sea.' It was one of Pilbeam's favorite songs drawn from antiquity that he kept in his collection of sea shanties shower; water hitting with synchronicity drool school played them to get himself in the mood for war. Pilbeam had been a submarine commander since he fourteen years old. Admittedly it had only been a deepsea divecraft operating a permanent recce loop in an obscure Pacific drift squadron but as green weapons went it was a start. He had developed an affinity with his fish refusing to believe it was just a tiny brained septopod with intelligence - instead of commanding the creature he became its friend, or its twin brother - he knew that when it died it would be replaced by but he spend as much time as he could down there with it -

Venice Beach had been the epicenter of bathing beauties for two hundred years and Pilbeam like to look but he never turned off his fish. Duty check in half light of he saw it - would have missed missed it, not looking for it - it was a clockwork, a mechanical device made of cartilage organics, it would have slipped through; he turned and decided to follow alerting control. He kept his fish well fed and had enough energy onboard to cruise at maximum speed for thirty minutes assessing the situation calling in a combat remedial: there were enough sharks around here to innocently make a meal of it. It took fifteen minutes for a USN Seasnake to make a pass releasing a shark wing. Taking another fifteen minutes they had come in in loose formation that would have not aroused suspicion eating anything that seemed edible along the way finally intersecting. Pilbeam watched them zig-zag through the murk the wing commander casually taking the clockwork in swallow turned on his tail and returned to patrol.

It hadn't been combat, so wasn't strictly a combat remedial; but they had taken him seriously.

Liked the way he thinks. Just a kid.. stealthfish . hey, he might be cadet but saw himself as a submarine commander.

Join the military

The swooper arrived and held position outside; a schoolbus-yellow metrochecker decked out like a mid-20th Century Hudson emblazoned FlySafeLAVetsCabco - and the cabbie was a geezoid named Catfish; grizzled, mustacioed, an 82nd Airborne Skyranger vet, and Pilbeams driver of choice. Just as Catfish knew surferkid Pilbeam was king submariner Pilbeam knew Catfish was no slouch if it came to a firefight. The ex-Sergeant Major of the Armored 11th Skyranger that had stolen the three remaing serviceable troop carriers from the Palm Springs Air Museum, and singlehandely taken out an panzer corporate - that had been fifty years ago. Catfish was too useful to die. They had put him out to pasture with a street legl antique 1911 Military Colt .45 keeping being a geezoid was pleasant enough.

A nice safe job

A pfc in the code factories

Way to go

Truth?" whar was that

The gop politicoans

maquette

The Northband keep their people poor. Do it with anger.

Self righuous

They neither seemed concerned about the war. Eventually I interjected

We keep our people busy

The secret dog colony was at the end of a dirt road.

The wheeler

A the sentry howled a warning. It could have been a coyote

But Scrubby froze

"Stay back.

"Who goes there?"

K9-human marriages were extremely frowned upon

Wednesday, June 4, 2014:

The Gai Berni

The gai Bernard was in his box. Lightly snoozing was how he put it. It was pleasant in the darkness, air stirring slightly every three minutes when he took a short shallow breath. Sometimes he thought he could see motes of dust flicker but knew it was a fiction instilled to make him believe he was human. Then the sinking feeling when he realized he was not. That was artificial too. The sad sinking, from his vast experience of life he knew

Berni ing a 'g' class artificia intelligence

was a priviledge of existence. He reached for his cock. It was an indulgence he allowed himself once a month. It took several seconds to fire up his muscles

He knew himself

He loved his cock. All men do. All of his other organs

Everything else had failed him but not his cock. Not his balls.

They had been indestructable.

He knew he could get hard

Berni was a pervbot.

He wasn't captive he could come ot of his box any time he wished. But there was nothing he could do. He was only happy when he was working. There was no point in coming out. He had seens things as a human that would have

He was terrified - the small light slowly began - it grew

He wanted a drink; he always wanted a drink.

He wasn't strictly artificial. He could recall with clarity detail of his childhood in Birmingham.

Tuscaloosa

He hadn't been interested in the Crimson Tide.
The only sport Berni had had was sport fucking.
He had been in his late eighties when he dies and now Gai Berni was a thirtyfive year-old
man in his prime, his young prime he hastened to add to himself

It was the year Sunset Boulevard came through Alabama. The machines laying the strip

He had checked it out the original the Roxy, the Rainbow.

He opened the lid of his box. The air hissed as seals parted.

There was a face looking down at him.
"Corny." He said, "What the fuck are you doing here?"

Hello Bern. Good to see you too.

I thought maybe you might be hungry.

The Original Pantry - 9th and Fig?

Give me a couple of hours to get my testicles online."
I laughed. Dry filth

I left him to it. He got out of his box.

There was a narrow ceiling to floor mirror.

His chamber

That night at the roadhouse

Garter belt under her jeans

Gai Berni right

Cut the gai

I don't want anyone knowing I'm gai.

I was wrong you know.

I sold your painting.

I used to fuck with you.

I wouldn't be here right now if it wasn't for you.

You were my best friend.

That bollox, everyone was your best friend.

McDickle had locked himself in the bathroom. Big Charley was drinking again and Wee Charley was sharpening knives in the kitchen. McDickle felt safe. He had reinforced the bathroom door only the week before in the eventuality of an occasion like this after a narrow escape when Big Charley had become sexually confused after too much mead. It had been the honey that made him do it he pleaded the next morning, made him become so sweet; he had been secretly sweet on McDickle for months he finally admitted losing all inhibition draining the last drops of mead from the stone jar lifting his kilt to wipe his mouth exposing himself his eyes falling to his naked crotch. McDickle got an big eyeful. nodding his head in miscomprehension Big Charley grinning proudly his monster caber waving proof adoration McDickle misleading, was a sensitive lad. A camp lad flirting underestandable to midread
Effeminate flattery

Gathering his McDickle sniffed disdain and pushed out of the dining nook where Big Chardly had trapped him "Here, come sit on my lap; McDickle pushed past him
. Och, I know you like me McDickle. Sit my lap and I'll tell you a secret whisper made a grab
With a flick of his wrist he rapped the back of his finger tips a sharp slap on Big Charley's blooming stalk; Big Charley yelped: "You've gone splintered my spindle ye spiteful wretch, you know I wouldn't hurt you spin you a tender the tender
Bottle of vodka
The following morning remorse
"I keep telling you Charley, girls do like you. You'll find one. Nay, I've given up McDickle m'dear.

Glint of lust This time Big Charley had bought home a small barrel of strong black beer. McDickle could hear him banging around clang pots in the kitchen bursts of song
Topped up the tub with hot water
Wil you be coming out of there McDickle now he was in the yard between the apartments; there was a tapping on the window.
Big Charly had climbed the tree

"I keep telling you Charley, girls do like you. You'll find one.

"You are the girl for me McDickle.

"Now that is boring Charley, you can do much better than that."

Big Charley was a poet
crooning bassoon voice

The cops arrive someone would call them soon if the
Loosing his footing in the wet branches Charley fell out of the tree
McDickle opened the window and looked down hoping the wet leaves and mud had broken
his fall

McDickle put it down to spring fever.

"Orchid might let you have some Charley."

Orchid had been very generous with all the boys except McDickle
The rythic thudding meant Wee Charly has the knives sharp enough to penetrate McDickles
dartboard. At least he didn't use the door. He realized it was an obtuse way of warning Big
Charly to keep his distance. Respect

The were police below, but no sign of Big Charley. He had made his escape. McDickle had
heard the front foor close Wee Charley would deal with it refreshed the innocent

Reflected Glory

It's been a strange month since the news of Richard's impending departure from us all
arrived. I must admit it was a great shock. I had fully expected

I have yet to directly hear from him

"He wouldn't do that. He is pure hearted." Rosie was adamant.

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