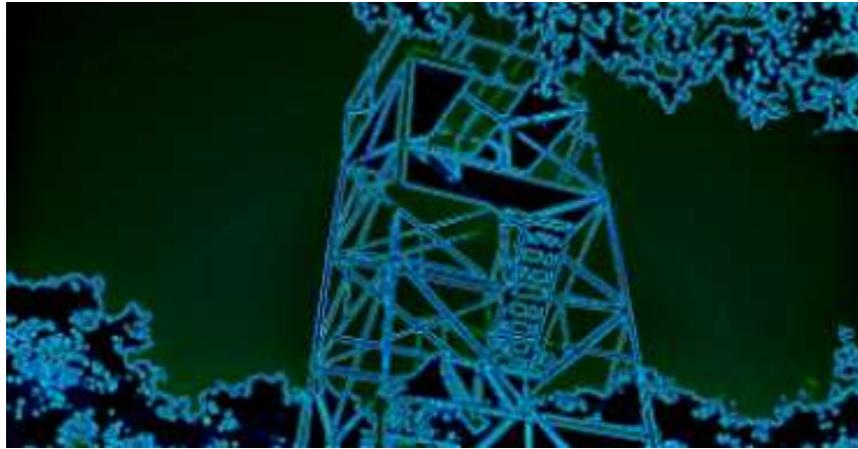


another pSecret pSociety pshort pstory



A TOUR TO THE TOWER

by Mike Bozart (Agent 33) March 2014

I had been to Blowing Rock (NC) dozens of times, but I had never done the Flat Top Mountain hike in the Moses Cone Memorial Park. After doing some research online, I saw that there was an accessible fire tower atop this mountain. Now, I really wanted to go up there, and very soon. It looked very amenable to a psecret psociety pshort pstory.

Once we were hiking, I wondered what story fragments we would stumble upon. I was certain that some premium thoughts would be evoked on this hike. I knew a tale was hanging on the ledge of a cliff.

When the desk calendar showed an open March Sunday and Monday, we (Monique, Agent 32, and I, Agent 33) decided to head northwest out of Charlotte in our old Plymouth Voyager van, dubbed *The Green Utot* (Utot is Tagalog for fart), and give it a whirl.

It started as a foggy drizzle in the piedmont. As we climbed the Blue Ridge escarpment on US 321 North, the weather changed to a sleety rain, and the temperature dropped from 47° F in central Lenoir to 35° F at Blackberry Road.

“Wow! The temperature dropped 12 degrees in just 16 miles, Monique. [Agent 32’s code name] Some major orographic cooling.”

“Orographic cooling? You’re such a geo-nerdo, Parkaar. [my ailing alias] I take it that you have the DAR (Digital Audio Recorder) on.”

I nodded. Monique just rolled her eyes and sighed.

The LED trip odometer hit 100 miles right as we rolled past the *WELCOME TO BLOWING ROCK* sign. It was only noon. Check-in time at our motel was 2 PM. Thus, we had some time to mill.

We kept going north on US 321 and stopped with the rain and sleet in Boone. *How nice of the precip to move eastward.*

We needed some sundry supplies, so we pulled into the Super Walmart. Agent 551’s memo came to mind: *Do these spandex shorts give me moose knuckles? Ah, it doesn’t matter; we’re just going to Walmart, anyway.*

Then Monique looked at me. “Need to hit the kapper krapper, Parkaar?”

“No, I think I’m ok for now, 32. I can wait for the motel.”

I began to wonder as I looked at the low clouds ripping by. *Kapper krapper? Spelled with k’s, I’m sure. Is Agent 563 feeding me her lines via a cell phone? Maybe I’m just a wee brillig. Brillig from the troves of joves and stoves and groves, or whatever Agent 517 said on the psecret psociety facebook page. Who died and made him Lord of the Shit Stools? That is a quote from Agent 504. Why am I rethinking such scat.*

“Icy, I see,” I said as we exited the van and began a long trek across the crunchy parking lot. “Watch your step, Monique.”

“Will do with these new shoes, 33.”

We entered the mega-store. After wandering around aimlessly for about ten minutes, we found what we needed. Once in the checkout line, I noticed an interesting tabloid headline: ‘Are You Running For God?’ I did a double-take. *Wow! Agent 564 posted that. Does she work for this publication?*

The cashier was a white female college student. She asked us where we were from. Agent 54’s memo came to mind.

“Well, we’re not singing *Arrivaderci, Roma*,” I said, hoping I pronounced the Italian words sufficiently.

“Ah, so you guys are from Charlotte?” *What?*

“Uh, yeah,” I said. *How did she know?*

“That’s un-canned and wacky!” Monique exclaimed.

I slowly handed the cashier the cash, but my neural circuits were accelerating the thoughts. *Wow, Monique just said Agent 400’s word! My brain is entangled in a myriad of agential stimuli. Myriad, why, that’s Agent 142’s word! Stop this machine! Let me out of this tunnel of magnificently magnified words. Oh, no; that’s Agent 441’s phrase. I’m trapped. Mind-doomed in a mined tomb. And that’s Agent 288’s terminology. Stop this circular circus!*

We left the store without an arresting incident, and were soon in our motel room (11) at Alpine Village Inn. We started canoodling, just as Agent 1 suggested.

The travel stress abated. Flip. Keep. Switch. Mr. Cunnilingus had arrived right on the spot, as Agent 544 had forecast.

“Monique, what is a lick of sense?” I wilyly asked.

“Not sure, Parkaar, but you can surely taste it.”

“Backwash,” I shouted. Agent 509’s word jumped right out of my mouth.

“What did you say, 33?!” *Silly boy.*

“Oh, it’s not important now, or even later. But, it’s time to eat food, Monique.”

“Yes, I’m hungry,” she said while getting redressed.

Soon we were at Mi Caretta Mexican Restaurant after an elevated sidewalk stroll down Main Street. The Mexican-appearing hostess seated us. Soon another sister-to-the-hostess-appearing-waitress took our order. All was moving at a tranquil 2.3 knots per hour. Loose languid knots.

The food arrived 11:11 later. Well, maybe not exactly 671 seconds later. *11:11 would look interesting in print.* Such I thought as I looked at the four-tined fork.

The south-of-the-lower-48 food was in a commonly used Spanish word: *delicioso*. Monique devoured the Texas fajitas. I tried to be Mr. Healthy and had a vegetarian side sampler.

And, par for the curse, [*sic*] we left copies of previous short stories – just like the one you are reading now – in the bathrooms, in the wine list, and in the bill holder. *Must keep spreading this literary virus.*

The night at the inn was largely uneventful, except for a rumbling sound at 3:03 AM.

“What is that noise?” Monique asked.

“It’s not my stomach this time,” I replied.

“Well, it sure is not mellifluous to my ears.” *What?*

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