

another pSecret pSociety pshort pstory



AL on ARCATA by Mike Bozart (Agent 33) | June 2017

Al on Arcata

by Mike Bozart

© 2017 Mike Bozart

On a showery-from-remnants-of-Tropical-Storm-Cindy June (2017) morning in near-uptown Charlotte (NC, USA), I texted my late-40-something, dark-haired with some salty patches, suave, always-quick-with-a-quip Caucasian pal, Al Niño (Agent A~O). I wasn't sure of where he was on the globe at the moment.

Are you awake?

Fifty-nine minutes later, at 11:10 AM EDT, he replied.

Hey buddy! I'm awake now.

I tried to reply to his text with a call, but for some odd reason it just would not go through. Thus, I decided to send him a terse imperative-mood text.

Call me.

He rang me three minutes later. His slightly modified name came up on my phone's tiny screen.

"Hello, is this the amazing one?"

"Al Niño here – live – not a recording."

"Well, how lucky can we be?"

"You tell me, Mike van Tryke." [my art-name]

"Well, Al, maybe not so lucky. We're off by a minute."

"What do you mean, Michael?" *Oh boy, he's already on with that damn Michael shtick. He knows how it grates on me, and he relishes it.*

"Al, I texted you at 10:11, and you replied at 11:10."

"Yeah, so what? I was asleep. I was up late last night, thinking about my next life-changing invention, which I certainly won't share with you at this juncture, when I realized that of the seven days of the week, only Tuesday has seven letters." *Wow! I thought the same thing three nights ago, but I won't tell him. He would never believe me.*

"Woah! You're getting as bad as me, Al. Anyway, the texting times could have been 10:10 and 11:11 if I were quicker and you were slower by sixty seconds." *What in the world is he talking about now? / Zeros and ones: binary, too.*

“Yeah, well, there are pills for that, Michael. Please tell me that you are not still sweeping leaves off the back deck, raking them up, bagging them, then dumping them back on the deck, and – ” *Oh, brother.*

“No, no. That High Peak [near Etowah, NC, USA] daze is over and done. So, where are you?”

“Back home.” [a posh penthouse condo in lower Manhattan, New York City]

“So, how was Italy?”

“Nice. We had a fantastic fortnight in old Italia. [sic] We stayed mostly in the north, in the Lombardy region.”

“Ah, Al Milano.” [sic]

Al chuckled. “We did a day in Rome, and trust me, that was enough.” *Probably suffered a gaffe.*

“You weren’t a roamin’ Roman?” *Howcheeseball.*

“No, just a-roamin’ with ramen. Cup in hand, mon.” [sic] *Al’s already in not-so-rare form.*

“Did you get canaled in Venice?” *Tryke’s so comy.*

“No, we passed on Venice this go-round. Too many tourists this time of year.”

“How was the weather?”

“Splendid. It was your classic Mediterranean dry-season weather. Sunny, but not too hot. Low humidity. Nothing like Charlotte or New York City in June. How was the weather in coastal Humboldt?” [County, CA, USA]

“Great! Pleasantly cool and overcast for the most part. Misty mornings, but no rain. Castle weather, as we call it. Oh, speaking of Humboldt, I was wondering if I could ask you some questions about your time in Arcata.” *He’s recording for another short story. I’m sure his graphic depiction of me will be quite bizarre.*

“Sure, fire away, 33. [my psecret psociety agent no.] You’ve got ten minutes. I have a conference call at noon and must organize some notes beforehand.” *Organize some notes? On what? Maybe he’s already baked.*

“Ok, excellent. I have ten questions, A-tilde-Oh.”

Thank You for previewing this eBook

You can read the full version of this eBook in different formats:

- HTML (Free /Available to everyone)
- PDF / TXT (Available to V.I.P. members. Free Standard members can access up to 5 PDF/TXT eBooks per month each month)
- Epub & Mobipocket (Exclusive to V.I.P. members)

To download this full book, simply select the format you desire below

