

Water Hammer



by agent 33 of psecret psociety

a pshort pstory by Mike Bozart (agent 33) | May 2014

I'll never forget the conversation that I conveniently and surreptitiously overheard – and, yes, recorded – at a now-defunct little, dingy, jaundice-yellow-paint-a-faded, hole-in-the-wooden-lapboard-wall-sided watering hole on Judah Street in the ever-foggy Outer Sunset district of San Francisco.

It was back in the early spring of 1992. It must have been about 7:00 PM when I sidled on in for a cold dark beer. Yeah, yeah, that was the name: Sidle on N. A clever play on words with the N standing for the N Muni streetcar line that ran past the front door – the olive-colored front door that no one ever cared (or dared?) to close.

I remember looking at that tilted small poster on the cracked wall. Some purple-costumed loon billing himself as *Mysterieau of San Francisco*. Ah, but that is another story. (*Mysterieau of San Francisco* is a novella by yours truly.)

Well, without further ado, here's the verbatim transcript from that micro-cassette. *Hmmm ... where is that PLAY button? Oh, there it is.* <click>

[the sound of the city tram passing, clacking down the old, in-the-street, standard-gauge tracks]

Jim: "John, how do you think your court case will go? Are you going to win?"

[the sound of a glass being set down on a wooden table]

John: "I don't know, Jim; I don't want to jinx it, but I feel pretty good about it, I guess. At least my lawyer says not to worry."

Jim: "Your lawyer says not to worry. Ha! Keep your hand on your wallet, sport."

[Jim laughs for a few seconds]

John: "Yeah, I know, Jim; I should probably worry. Hey, speaking of lawyers, I've got to tell you about the most bizarre conversation that I have overheard in some time."

Jim: "Ok, shoot. Let's have it."

John: "Well, I was down in the Lower Haight having lunch by myself in a tiny Chinese restaurant about two weeks ago."

Jim: "Ok, sounds very believable so far. Continue."

John: "And trust me, Jim; I wasn't eavesdropping, but the joint is so small that you just can't avoid overhearing conversations in there, especially if you're eating alone."

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