

**another pSecret pSociety pshort pstory**



**Trinidad Head** by Mike Bozart (Agent 33) | JUNE 2017

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by Mike Bozart

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The date was June 4, 2017 and the temperature was 50° (Fahrenheit; 10° Celsius). After walking just .4 miles (.64 km) under an overcast sky from the Trinidad (CA, USA) RTS (Redwood Transit System) bus stop on Main Street (next to a Chevron gasoline station), Monique (Agent 32) and I (Agent 33) arrived at a 5-star panorama of Trinidad Bay on Edwards Street (at Hector Street) that was postcard material to the max. Anchored fishing boats and erosion-defying sea stacks speckled the harbor. Yes, it was a Humboldt County Chamber of Commerce enticement all the way to Pilot Rock. Beyond that, well, it was hard to see. We savored this breathtaking scene for a few minutes, availing the wooden bench between two restaurant signs.

“It’s like a living nautical oil painting,” I told Monique. *Hubby loves this place.*

“It’s magnificent,” she replied. *Indeed.*

We then made our descent to the middle-aged-female-Eurekan-recommended Seascape Restaurant for a Sunday brunch. The mixed-race hostess seated us at a table that had a view of Little Head, a towering angular chunk of metamorphosed gabbro.

Monique noticed me studying the monolith as we waited for our waiter. “You want to climb that, don’t you, Parkaar?” [my ailing alias] *I just know he does. He’s almost 53, but thinks he’s 23.*

“Well, it does look tempting, Agent 32.” *He’s recording. / Frank [deceased Agent 107] would do it. I know he would.*

“I wouldn’t advise it,” our short-blonde-haired, left-eared, early-20-something, assumed college student, wry-grinning waiter suddenly said as he approached on my right. “It’s even steeper and more dangerous than it looks, guys. That old rock stays damp; it’s always slippery. A dude fell off it last year and got cracked-up pretty bad. If you want to do some hiking with spectacular views, do Trinidad Head, instead. It has an awesome looping trail that is much safer.” *Trinidad? Hmmm ... That’s Spanish for Trinity: The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. And, this holey toast. Sure could go for a pint of 8 Ball Stout. Wholly Lost Coast. Ah, yes, they’ve got it! Boss begs to boast. They have seafood chowder, too. Gus got the ghost. Looks like a largely liquid*

*early lunch for me. Mark marked the most. Wonder what Monique wants. / Yey! They have fried shrimp and scallops.*

“Thanks for the warning and sage advice,” I said as I put my menu down. *Ground or rubbed? Round or grubbed?*

“No problem,” he replied. “So, where are you guys from?”

“Charlotte,” Monique blurted.

“Woah!” he exclaimed. “North Carolina. You guys are far, far away from home.”

“Twenty-nine hundred miles,” [4,667 km] I affirmed. “We’ve been staying in Eureka for the past two nights.”

“Ah, Tweakerville,” [*sic*] he announced. *Huh?*

Monique looked puzzled. “What is a tweaker?”

“A meth-head,” [methamphetamine addict] the knit-shirted waiter answered. “Speed freaks.”

“Oh, yes, we saw plenty of them in Old Town,” I added.

“They’re like cockroaches – so creepy and so freaking annoying,” Monique opined.

“But, unlike cockroaches, they come at you instead of fleeing,” I clarified.

“Yeah, the nonstop bummerama [*sic*] can be quite a drag,” he synopsisized. *Bummerama? / Nice neologism. A writer?*

“Bummerama – that’s funny,” Monique chimed. *Bummerazzi.*

“Most of them are opioid addicts as well,” he disclosed.

“They usually just harm each other. They’re always getting into stupid arguments and fights with themselves. This is why I haven’t gone to Old Town in years.”

“It sure seems to have potential, though,” I suggested.

“My Native American friend’s dad grew up in Eureka,” [23 miles (37 km) south of Trinidad] he stated as he gazed at my UNCC (University of North Carolina at Charlotte) 49ers patch on my green polyester shirt. “He said that Old Town has sucked for four decades. ‘Maybe it gets better next year’ is the semi-official mantra.” *Semi-official mantra? Yeah, he’s a writer, too. Choose your words wisely.*

We finally ordered our drinks and food. While waiting for our waiter's return, I slipped a *Gold* card (a cardstock coupon for a free download of my risqué, noir-esque, 2013 e-novel *Gold, a summer story*) through a slit in the wooden wall planks. *Wonder when someone discovers it. A decade from now? Two? Will this place still even be here? Will a tsunami have washed it away? Will I be dead? Fifty-fifty odds. R-I-P, Mr. Zappa.*

Monique looked at me and shook her head. "Delayed discovery may be fine if you have time, but you don't, Parkaaroni Wankeroni." [sic] *She's already on her game.*

"I know, I know, I know. I'll leave the waiter one with the tip, asawa." [wife in Tagalog and Cebuano]

Our drinks soon arrived. Monique had her now-becoming-customary Sprite<sup>®</sup> with ice. My chilled porter was almost as good as off the tap at the brewpub on 4<sup>th</sup> Street (US 101 South) between H and G Streets in downtown Eureka.

"This is really nice, isn't it, mahal?" [love in Tagalog] I asked my raven-haired pinay (Filipina) wife.

"I really love this cool weather with no scorching sun, bana. [husband in Cebuano] Great pick, 33!"

"Yeah, I like it, too. Nice castle weather – the kind we crave."

A Latino family of four were sitting at the table across the aisle. Their exuberant young boy squirmed up to the window sill to see something. He then pointed and muttered something in Spanish. Then his dad plucked him from the table and reseated him. *Wonder what he saw. Was it that column of seagulls? / Bana is spacing out.*

Our food arrived nine minutes later. The creamy soup was tasty. Monique devoured her breaded seafood.

The energetic waiter returned just as we finished eating. "Anything else? Maybe some dessert?"

"All good here," I answered.

"No more for me," Monique replied.

"Well, enjoy your day. You guys just up here for pleasure?"

"We're on a mission – a nebular mission," I told him.

“Have you heard of psecret psociety?” Monique asked him. “It’s spelled with silent p’s. I’m Agent 32 and he’s Agent 33.” *Announcing Ernie the electronic earwig would be too much. Yeah, let it go.*

The 5’-8” (172.72 cm) waiter looked confused. “No, I haven’t.”

“Trust me, man; it’s not important,” I said with a half-laugh.

He smiled and walked away with an uncertain-about-these-two look. *Leave no coast unscathed. / Maybe I shouldn’t have mentioned psecret psociety and agent numbers. Maybe he now thinks that we’re part of something unsavory.*

Once outside the modest restaurant, we ventured out on the almost-vacant concrete fishing pier known as Trinidad Wharf. Monique took some pics of the slate-blue bay, capturing Prisoner Rock and the more distant Flat Rock. Then she wanted to position me for a snapshot.

“Move to your right a little, Parkaar. I want to get one of you in front of Little Head.” *Avoid thinking with the little head.*

After she snapped the photo, I pointed to the verdant Trinidad Head, which was only 200 feet (61 meters) across a small cove. “Well, mahal, that’s the waiter-suggested hiking area.” *Kind of looks like a piece of Ireland. / Looks very strenuous.*

“We’re going to the top of that?!” Monique looked horrified.

“No, the very top is off-limits to interloping interlocutors like us. The tossed-down-belt trail winds around at mid-girth.” *He said that for the recorder.*

“Ok then, lead the way, Art Z. Sportzee.” *She said that for the recorder.*

We walked back up Bay Street to Lighthouse Road. There we made a left onto a narrow, vehicle-restricted, paved lane that passed by a loose-sand parking lot in front of a sparsely occupied, northwest-facing, finely ground, gray beach. After walking 700 feet (213 meters) and rising about a hundred feet (30 meters), there was a sharp turn to the left. To the right a hiking trail began. We took it. *Well, here goes. Hope we don’t have any health issues. / Are there poisonous snakes on this rock? Sure hope not.*

The flora was mostly maritime chaparral. The often dense, hedge-like, mainly manzanita shrubbery was up to eight feet (2.56 meters) tall. We soon rounded the northeast corner of the massive domed prominence. And then, boy oh boy, the NNW wind was howling. It must have been about 30 MPH (48 km/h).

We took a break. Soon we were being passed by a late-50-something couple. The Amerasian-appearing man was in jeans and sweatshirt. The Caucasian woman was in a pink jogging outfit. We exchanged nods and waves. *Wonder what their story is. Probably won't see them ever again. / They seem nice.*

Two minutes later we started scaling the first switchback. We took another short break in the upper hairpin bend. *Whew! Haven't hiked like this in ages, and my body is letting me know. / Hope Monique doesn't faint. Don't rush her. We're on no schedule. The whole day is open. At least until the last bus to Arcata. [15 miles (24 km) south] 4:29? Damn! Forgot to bring a water bottle for her.*

The well-worn trail leveled out after that. We then came upon a spur trail. However, Monique wasn't interested in making the hike longer. Thus, we continued on the loop trail, passing under an arch in the lush canopy.

The next flora feature was what can best be described as a cave in the thicket. It was off to our left. I peered inside, half expecting to see a homeless person in the dark chamber. But, no one was in there. *This would be an interesting place to throw down a sleeping bag and spend a night. Some surreal thoughts would surely ensue. / I bet he's thinking of sleeping in there. No freaking way!*

I looked back at Monique.

"The answer is No!" *She read my mind.*

"Not even a nap, mahal?"

"No. Final answer."

I grinned at her. *Why does he want to sleep in there? Who knows what dangerous animals live in there? Kano loko. [crazy American' in Filipino]*

In a few minutes we were looking at a carved-into-a-square-wooden-post sign for another spur off to the right. Eleven

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