

A CALLING: LOVE'S LABOURS LOST: MIXING UP THE MEDICINE AFFAIRS

GERARD SARNAT, MD

Johnny's in the basement

Mixing up the medicine

I'm on the pavement

Thinking about the government

-- Bob Dylan, Subterranean Homesick Blues

1. Nikola Tesla haiku [2]*

Beavering away
by day, genius with a touch
of night in his mien.

Sometimes larky or
grumpily lugubrious, he
outstranged Edison.

*thanks to Lane, Anthony. "What Would Nikola Tesla Make of a MacBook?" *The New Yorker*, August 21, 2020. <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2020/08/31/what-would-nikola-tesla-make-of-a-macbook>

2. BAKERS DOZEN PLUS ONE PATHOLOGIA

i. Garden Of Carnage*

Power rangers dive deep though the riddle of Douglas-fir bloom and burn.
Garter snakes' twin ruby tongues seek out canned heat from my offsprings' semen.
Tyger-eyed angels inject seed capital to fashion a killer app.
Blakean blink I rub slaughterhouse lard on indolent sons' chapped lips.
Hordes of orange zebra moths mate on our thumbs: zenithed, we must find release.
Umbrella struts glide east; six-on-a-postage-stamp saucers stare us down.
Rushdie's Butterfly Girl, enmeshed in gossamer mist, reinvents me.
Bald pony-tailed paunchy GP, I'm reborn a slick urologist.
Her algal robes dribble blood from the alter toward the Klamath vortex.

*thanks to the *New England Journal of Medicine* 379, no. 18 (November 1, 2018).

ii. Gospel Truth Regarding Chocoholics Anonymous Saint Matthew Mewl

Whereas perhaps two prestigious scientific journals concluded
dark (but neither white nor milk) chocolates are swell for you,
lowering bloody pressure & supplying anti-oxidant molecules,
this doctor took it as license to binge until out of the blue
I became humungous which moi unshrewdly poopoos
after which untimely snafu can-do statuesque shrew
of a wife called me a fat yahoo, staged a coup
then branded around my mouth debut tattoos
well as new wazoo ones that read, *Andrew*
should only be fed organic homebrewed
licorice once a full or crescent moon
+/- a few Good & Plenty, thank you.

iii. Elderhood haiku

Not a disease, but
renders us vulnerable;
immunologic.

iv. Subdural Hematoma haiku

“Ailes has two speeds: attack and destroy.”
-- fellow remorseless rightwing provocateur Lee Atwater

If fair and balanced,
why would Rog die from brain clots
post Fox's last fall?

v. Sunny Side Up haiku

Universal blood
type of stellar dawn destars
morning's firmament.

vi. Mixing Music, Medicine

"I sat on a rug biding my time
Drinking her wine.
We talked until two and then she said
It's time for bed"*

*but from everything recently seen
plus read, you and your carpet
have bad Norwegian scabies,
so, cad, let's sleep separately.*

*Beatles' Norwegian Wood (This Bird Has Flown)

vii. Not “Norwegian Woods”

Buddha found suffering at the root;
Jesus lived it through his electric kindling crucifixion.
If there's god(s), s/he's way more than *Yahweh* and *Allah*,
even beyond nature...

The bell rings. We open our lids.
A lotus-kneed smiling Scandinavian begins a dharmette:
before I can focus on him, an Asian perches on the stairs,
blocking my chair's sight line.

Adding insult to injury,
she drops her clodhopper shoes, shattering the silence.
At first, seeds of upsetness pour out,
outraged someone so Eastern could be so oblivious, so insensitive.

Should I tap her right shoulder,
fingers gently pleading, Please move a bit to the left?
Then my skittish practice seems to kicks in,
making me aware of the gratuitous story I'm building.

Realizing the irony of my ruthless expectation —
that a yellow-skinned lady is more *sangha*-atuned
than a WASP or a Jew
-- I laugh at myself.

And decide to just close my eyes again,
relax back into the blond's teaching about craving.
A staged invasion of love and compassion
suddenly lifts me above his most intelligent design.

Beyond fundamentalist virgin births,
resurrections, excommunications;
further than atheist quarks
and Darwinian quirks.

On a middle path rather than extreme.
Momentarily not missing the forest for the trees.
Deep inside, a fleeting white light shines.
I do my best to bless all sentient beings.

viii. Acromegalic Gigantism haiku

Post growth spurt, success
story's international
stage, fam left behind

globe-trotting China
to US — Wei has seven
foot six-inch reasons.

ix. Hemolacria*

I cried blood entering Colma,
the confounding company town
which was zoned just for burial biz,
which is relevant,
since we were going there to witness
our friend being put to rest
underground.

On the way, back of a black limo
occupied by loved ones,
I wondered out loud
if there may exist similar villages
where all your births take place
and absolutely everyone's required
to pour forth tears of pure joy

*thanks to Di Maria, Alessandra, and Fausto Famà. "Hemolacria — Crying Blood." *New England Journal of Medicine* 379, no. 18 (November 1, 2018): 1766–1766.

xi. Burton Lines*

A 39-year-old man is brought to my emergency room
from a local international airport.

He reported feeling very ill after the ingestion
of thirty packs of opium weighing fifty grams each.

The mule admitted this was his fifteenth trip
for a drug cartel which paid good money post delivery.

On inspection, this gent had gray gingival abnormalities
-- the classic sign I read about way back in med school of

chronic poisoning by lead that turned out to contaminate
what was seen on CAT and which eventually passed.

*thanks to Helmich, Friederike, and Guntram Lock. "Burton's Line from Chronic Lead Intoxication" and Zamani, Nasim, and Hossein Hassanian-Moghaddam. "Ingestion of Lead-Contaminated Packs of Opium." *New England Journal of Medicine* 379, no. 19 (November 8, 2018): 1861–1861.

xii. Yes We Have No Fava Beans Threshold

Leathery green pods maturing
toward blackish-brown

this boychick avoids sumptuous
seedlings that leak milk

which if ingested would lead
to broken red-blood cells

and quite possibly my death.
Such being the exact case

I must obsess over what restaurants
might call broad, bell, tic

or horse beans like a plague to
manage G6PD deficiency.

My fragile hemocyte cell walls
are subject to hemolysis

from fever plus pharmaceuticals,
including one preventing

malaria -- I came within hours
of starting Primaquine

planning to accompany a son
on his New Guinea trip

to do fieldwork: the diagnosis
of Glucose-6-Phosphate

mutation was made the day
we planned to start Rx

for kyboshed adventure travel –
would have ended badly.

Neither daughter has the gene,
so no family “favism.”



xiii. Ace In The Who Who Do You Love Hole?

Trying to sanitize my brutal childhood, Pops, who was addicted to reds, hospitalized me for what Mom billed as angry measles -- but I collapsed the remove by calling their nimbus out as a dark cloud of depression.

Generically known sertraline has for 16 years since boomed on the market with brand names from Actiser to Zoloft which is always in the top 5 SSRIs also prescribed to treat OCD, PTSD, PMDD

among a range of acronyms. Newer more expensive drugs now topping the list bloomed then were touted for fewer side effects from psychiatric (e.g., suicide) to weight gain to knock-on arousal/orgasm disorders.

However subgroups variously situated on the a/sexual spectrum -- including other *sub rosa* so-called family men who ostensibly no longer want or more likely aren't getting any -- still rank soothing big Z #1.

3. EMPLOYED BY THE SHORT HAIRS [4]

i. Now Howz That Worked Out?

After medical school then post-doc training, figuring I knew the rules & could turn body dials to be truly healthy plus fit, I picked odd jobs largely based on lunchbreak exertion possibilities plus if there also were showering capabilities which eventuated in 1st running on hard concrete that I soon abandoned in favor of apparent idyllic jogs with buddies bottom of San Francisco Bay; though since Alviso's below sea level, when rain overran banks, previous flood sandbags actually asbestos-packed, led to realizations we'd damaged our lungs each time exercising there so I changed to going up-down hills leading to compression syndromes eventuating in vertebrae crushed into chalk/ my two hip replacements -- thusly suggesting this guru still had some work to do.

ii. Milk Of Human Kindness: Heartless Work Place

- thanks to *Sweet Tree*

Having sex in the designated
lactation break room
filthy with bodily waste

is our perfect aperitif
before ominous last happy hour
where soapy glasses clink

after next round of layoffs
are announced by some boss
who following 3:34 AM phone call

congratulates herself
for tailgating an ambulance
with flashing lights but no siren

to show up at Eisenhower Hospital's
emergency department just as ex-
employee's cardiac monitor stops.

iii. International Anonymous' *Nifty-Fifty** Underground Works New York Subways: Nattering Nabobs Of Negativism

Pantom parody: patchouili/ paprika-ed plainclothes police packing pistols
plus peacockoid pearly prosecutors perennially peruse parallel platforms and proximate pavilions
pancaked with plentiful possibly-paired purposeful proficient pickpocket paladins with previous perhaps playfully parosoled
paperboy patterns pilfering pudgy people's pastries or purses or phones
planning potential prodigious personal profit from prosaic pawnshops before post parade pissass
palookas're paddocked then painfully peddle parabolic pleas of penitent patriotic pabulum pre-prison.

*Wilson, Michael. "International Pickpockets Ride New York's Subway, Pilfering and Profiting." *The New York Times*, January 27, 2019, sec. New York. <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/01/27/nyregion/pickpockets-nyc-crime.html>.

4. SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY VERSUS SCIENTOLOGY? [7]

i. Bouts Of Muse Risk-Taking

“A good poet is someone who manages, in a lifetime of standing out in thunderstorms, to be struck by lightning five or six times; a dozen or two dozen times and he is great.”

-- Randall Jarrell

So I've climbed more high mountains,
lain flat next to trees in open fields,
rode bi or motorcycles,
taken baths outside
during storms
trying to get hit by claps of inspiration.

ii. Chemistry

An MD who never did much pre-med,
I hated not some but all laboratories
which almost bored me to death.

On the other hand, when it comes to
organic chem of composing poems,
Gerard Sarnat tends to be all in.

Do you put that word Blue front of Bird,
or doesn't it matter? What a difference
a methyl group, or two, can make.

iii. M/analytics

Opinionist's loud vibes entered the room before I do.

Should we empty-nested divorced boomers
take that slow road
millennials are going on --
fewer dates, having less sex and marrying later if at all?

Do they know something about love this mid-septuagenarian doesn't?

iv. Physics Of Climate Change [In]justice haiku

While scarcer water
entropy states go down now,
more fires plow uphill.

v. May Kansasan Not Rest In Peace -- David Koch, 1944-23August2019

Humungous carbon footprint profits
funding tons of climate change denial
and fake science

David and still Charles
build paid "AstroTurf" artificial grassroot

vi. Grandkids Home-Schooled Physics haiku

Sheltered in place – their
stairs 'lectric smart waiter makes
my manual plumb dumb.



vii. Existential Final Frontier?

In a galaxy not far, far away...
about 430 million years or so ago
plants colonized our then bare earth
creating land rich in food and resources
as fish evolved from ancestral vertebrates
in the sea. It was another ~30 million years
before these creatures crawl out of warm water
to begin their evolutionary lineage we barely sit
atop of today—while human-caused climate changes
threaten all too many species devolved into rising oceans.