



Jazz Impressions of America
Suite for Automobile and Tenor Saxophone

By Christopher Villiers

Author's Note

Jazz Impressions of America originally was written during fall 1978 and into early winter 1979 (with a few minor changes, edits, deletions and additions made thirty-seven years later).

It captures hundreds of actual events, chance encounters and overheard conversations. It was influenced by Richard Brautigan, prodigious quantities of free jazz and almost equal amounts of sinsemilla.

It was written in a time before cell phones, the internet, video games or iPads. The Shah was in power, and every monarch in the Middle East was known as A Friend of Democracy.

It seemed to mean something back then though it was never published.

Now that I'm older, I think it still means something. Perhaps, it may even get published.

Perhaps is an interesting word.

To my family,
Inspired by John Coltrane.

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In the middle of the Iranian desert, between Tehran and Isfahan, is a small café. It's just off the side of the road, a little blue-tiled building serving Koresh e Fessenjan, Chelo Kabab and mast, a yoghurt drink.

There's a neon sign out front. It says, "Drink Coca-Cola™."



“See America, 10 cents.” The red, white and blue sign was on a twenty-power pay telescope overlooking Puget Sound and the creosote pilings of the ferry terminal.

You could see the whole thing from there.



“You know, I threw up again last night,” she said.

“Well I had to carry you home.”

“You did not. I drove home.” An entire wall of her living room was lined from floor to ceiling with empty cases of beer bottles. Every can Olympia Beer™. All manufactured in their town. “Give me a cigarette,” she said.

He handed her a Marlboro™. She lit it with a 25¢ throw-away plastic lighter. “Since when have you started to smoke Marlboros™?”

“I don’t. I bought them at the Oyster House last night.”

“We weren’t at the Oyster House last night. You stole them from Bob at that party.”

“I didn’t steal them,” he said. “We were at the Oyster House. I had a salad and Long Island Blue Points. And you had ... what did you have?”

“Where did I put my shoes last night?”

“I think you put them under the bed.”

“I didn’t sleep on the bed last night. I slept here on the floor.”



They drove across the coast – looking for the perfect bottle of Leibfraumilch – in a red 1972 Pontiac™.

“I paid \$2.49 for this here. I only paid \$2.29 inland.”

“Plus tax,” she said.

“Yeah, you gotta remember the tax. That’s too much for a bottle of wine,” he said as he uncorked the fourth bottle. He had become a Leibraumilch expert in the course of one day.

“How is it?” she asked.

“Drier,” he said. “A little drier.”

“You know what we should do? We should cruise the country, buying Leibraumilch here and drinking it there, passing out this day and starting the next. And we find that perfect bottle of wine, I don’t know who but we’ll know it, and the price will be right.”



Only seventy-five miles to the Red Apple Rest™.



Cows in the field eating grass. Cars drive by without looking. The cows don't care.



Only one business thrives in Medford, Oregon, selling automobiles. Situated just over the California border, the town has more automobile dealers than citizens. New, used, almost new, like new, demonstrators with low mileage, factory air and new tires, foreign, domestic, imported, cars, trucks, vans, motorcycles with murals on the side and the police care with a souped-up Chrysler™ Hemi lighting up his Firestones™ on Main Street and racing '57 Chevy™ convertibles and brand new Porches™.

There are no crosswalks in Medford, and every restaurant is a drive-in, as is the dry cleaner.



“What I hate are those long trips. You just get desperate and tell the driver to pull over, and everyone knows you have to go to the bathroom,” she said.



The fact that his phone was bugged was the best-known secret in town

I used to deliver newspapers with his younger brother. Every Sunday morning, after our routes, we'd go over to his house and drink coffee and hot chocolate, play loud rock music on the stereo, and talk to the police on the telephone.

When you picked up the phone you could hear a tape recorder click on. I would get on one extension and he would use the phone in the kitchen, and we would talk to the police: "Hello, police? Would you get the hell off our phone? Fucking cops. You're not gonna get a line on any big dope sales because we know this phone is tapped and we won't conduct business over the phone, so go fuck yourselves." And then we would tell them dirty jokes, yell in the receive and sing Frank Zappa songs.

In that house, they answered the phone by saying, "Hello, our phone is bugged, so don't say anything about drugs, sex, or any other illegal and perverted vides," and then they'd talk about drugs and sex and other illegal and perverted vices. We spoke about two hours every Sunday morning with the local police department, we even called the officers by name.

After several years of having his phone bugged, he finally started his own business: a furniture store, got married and had a baby daughter. His business ran into financial trouble so his wife left him and he later shot himself through the head.



John Wayne killed the Japanese and rode off into the sunset on his horse. The lights came on and the popcorn machined closed.

“What’d ya think of the film?”

“It wasn’t that bad,” he said.



The sign was alone by the side of the highway. “Jesus is the answer,” it said. An American flag flew from it.



It was Lee Morgan's last set at New York's Slug's Saloon. He finished a song and put his trumpet down.

His wife came in and wouldn't let him play anymore.



CONVERSATION IN THE FRANKLIN HOUSE
OFFICE OF ERHARD SEMINAR TRAINING (EST)[™];
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

“**Y**ou know what I still don’t know. I still don’t know where the closing checking account balances are kept.”

“Oh, they’re in the kitchen,”

“Where?”

“In the top drawer, right next to the freezer.”



DOG FOOD COMMERCIAL

James Whitmore just came across as Mr. Heavy Duty Dog Food.



Whimpy's™ in London serves three types of hamburgers: the English burger, the American style burger, and the Texas burger.

Everyone orders the Texas burger because it's so American.



The police officer sat on his horse, wearing dark glasses and smoking a cigarette. “Why don’t you kids go out and get a job instead of smoking pot and coming to these damn rock concerts.”

I had just finished a five-day, forty-hour week of working sheet metal and he’s telling me to get a job. His horse smiled.



“**Y**ou know what the fuckin’ problem with this country is?” I was downtown, waiting for the Don’t Walk light to change to a Walk light.

“I’ll tell you what the problem is. It’s all right here in this newspaper.” He was from the United States Labor Party. Friends of mine claim he’s a CIA front so I was looking for the hidden microphone.

“We’re selling this country out to the communists. It says so right here in this paper. Tell me, did your father ever tell you he wanted you to have a better chance than he did? Well, that’s the American way. And the labor unions are ruining all that.”

I wanted to get across the street to catch a bus. “And not only that,” he said, “but this paper shows how the Congress and that damn liberal administration are trying to legalize all sorts of drugs to destroy the minds of youth.”



It was a perfectly good bicycle until he got wired on acid and rode it to the beach. He lost the brakes on a hill several miles from the beach and he lost the steering on the way home.

He sat on the sand with his portable radio and watched the people with their cars and dogs and wives and three-year-old children and portable barbecues, all dressed up in the latest swimwear, sunglasses and as much suntan oil as their bodies would hold. He watched them for a while, laughed at them, and rode his bike home.



They were discussing God while driving through Tacoma. “Do you know any devout atheists?” she said.

“Well, I’m kind of an atheist, but not a devout one.”

“I guess I’m kind of an atheist. I don’t know if I believe in God, but I do believe that there is something inside of you. I believe love is inside of you, and that’s God. And I believe love will prevail.”

“Yeah, I guess I believe the same,” he said.



He was the military statue in the town square. General Somebody. His body was made from bronze. They said he killed somebody – a German or a Japanese. He died two years later.



Hemingway put a gun to his head and shot off his face.



He sat on his bed with his leg in a cast. He hadn't shaved in three days and he was wearing an old Stetson. A saxophone lay between his legs. He had spent the last three days trying to reach the extremes of an alto sax.



“Monsieur, I know just what you want. I have a special American lunch.”

It was a small restaurant-café hidden in the side streets of Paris. He brought back a tuna fish sandwich and a hamburger with mushrooms cooked in a wine sauce.



The store was having a Fourth of July sale.

“DEVELOP YOUR CONSTITUTION!” read the advertisement.

“Get A ‘Patriotic’ 5-Gallon Safety GAS CAN.

“This will give you the spirit of independence! Imagine, an entire 5-gallons of gasoline waiting for you, and no line-up! Tested and approved by the UL and factory mutual systems, complies with Fed., O.S.H.A. regulations, non-explosive, automatic pressure relief!

“Reg. \$24.99. WHILE QUANTITIES LAST \$19.99.”



Really, the people just get in their cars and drive on Saturdays in California. They've put up giant mirrors at dangerous intersections so you don't have to slow down, and automobiles, not pedestrians, have the right-of-way.



ODE TO A TELEVISION COMERCIAL

It was a heavy mother-daughter conversation to help her through a psychological crisis: she needed Cascade™ to keep her glassware from spotting.



Driving to Monticello, New York, through the foothills and the Catskills, there are signs along the road advertising the Red Apple Rest™. “Only Forty-seven miles to the Red Apple Rest™.” The signs seemly appear every thirty-nine feet once you get north of New York City. “Only Forty-two and one half miles to the Red Apple Rest™.”

It’s just a little shack, selling fast food and the waitress asking if that’s for here or to go?



He used to work in the White House during Richard Nixon, but he got caught.

God spoke to him in prison so now he's got a million-seller with film rights.



My brother sits at the electric piano in my mother's room, composing music.

He invites everyone in to listen and then says, while sitting on the bed and playing, "No, I don't like that," and everyone leaves.



Teaching while working on a Ph.D. in chemistry at the University of California can be a frustrating job, so for relaxation Chuck puts on his Viking hat – complete with horns – his silk robe, his plastic sword and, while drinking Grand Marnier from a gold chalice, he blows bubbles with a 19¢ bubble wand. Currently, he’s working on a formula for fluorescent bubbles.

He grades papers in that costume and, even though he hasn’t yet, he’s thinking about appearing in class as an ermine-covered Viking blowing four-foot-long dayglow bubbles.



He was telling his daughter why Lucite paint lasts. “It has mica,” he says.

Mica: That’s a strange word.



It's all very easy. After five shaves, you throw it away and buy another. The razor costs less than a quarter.



There must be a mold that stamps them out from underneath the ground. They're all the same: A white brick front and a large neon sign that says Safeway™.



The pretty stewardess had already told us how to work the seat belts, the oxygen masks and the return-to-your-seat light in the bathroom. It was a cloudy day.

“If you look out your window, we are now crossing the Rocky Mountains,” the pilot said in a voice sounding like God. People stood up and leaned towards the windows. All you could see were clouds. Someone took a picture.



He's a Pearl Harbor survivor. Every December 7, he flies over the Statue of Liberty and drops roses in memoriam.

This year he plans to fly to Rome to get his roses blessed by the pope.



It was her third marriage. “I’m not going to sit around and have children and bake cookies,” she said. “I’ve already done that once.”



NUDIST CAMP

Really, it was the stupidest thing I've ever done; and it cost ten bucks too. They put us in an old Army barrack and we watched black-and-white porno films for two hours.

We didn't get to get naked until intermission. And then it was so cold outside that we quickly undressed and jumped in the hot tub, looked each other over, jumped out of the tub, dried and quickly got dressed.

Then we all ran back inside and watched films for two more hours.



It's just off the freeway: The Respectable Motel™.



A friend told me that he drove down to LA on too much beer and not enough dope to see Miles in concert. Miles came out and played scales for a half hour. His trumpet was muted and he held it with a handkerchief.

My friend wanted his money back.



The turtle races are held every Tuesday night in a bar in Los Angeles. The owner, dressed in a greed tuxedo, is the official track announcer: “And they’re off, Cocaine Sally from Slippery Rock Meadows is in the lead...”

The first turtle to travel thirty feet in any direction wins. People stand around and watch.



The old courthouse, where Dred Scott lost his case, still stands in St. Louis. A modern shopping center and The Ritz-Carlton™ are nearby. It's not very far away from Ferguson, Missouri.



When I was eight years old I went to camp. The camp was called Vietnam and was divided into north and south territories. I slept in the north and was a commie for a week, except I wore Superman pajamas instead of government-issued black ones.



It smelled like an Italian deli. They had hard roles, cheeses and potato salad. The man behind the counter in the dirty white apron was yelling at his wife who was fat and crying.

All I wanted was to buy a salami.



REST HOME

She sat in the corner, her wheelchair hugging the wall.
“Are you my daughter?” she said. “My daughter used to wear shoes like yours.”



People at airports are the same as people at bus stations, just richer. Transients all wanting to be somewhere else. But unlike bus stations, there are no condom machines in the bathroom, and people sleep in hotels instead of on park benches.



“Hello, you’re on the air.”

The phone rang during the midnight talk show and the operator interrupted: “That will be a dollar sixty-five please.”

“Hey, you’re calling long distance. Far out.”

“Yeah, I don’t have a phone in my house. I came out here to make this call, and I was stopped by a uniformed police officer with a gun and everything.”

They talked to the cop, but him on live FM radio, and assured him there was no trouble. “I’m just trying to keep the peace,” he said.

After the cop got in his car and drove away, the caller came back on the phone. “I just wanted to tell you,” he said, “that eight years ago, on my eighteenth birthday it was snowing in Seattle. I was in Seattle to register for the draft, but it was snowing so I couldn’t drive down there. A friend of mine had a shoebox full of dope and instead of registering for the draft, we got loaded and listened to your program. And I’ve been listening every night since.”



I was amazed to find out the distance between Hawaii and the mainland. On maps, it's always in a bordered-off triangle right off coast of California.



“**M**y family’s one of those drive-oriented families,” she said. “We just get in a car and drive off across the United States, you know.”



Homeless sleeping on steam grates on Constitution Avenue. It's warmer by the Departments of Labor and Commerce than by the White House or the Capitol.



The coffee-house poet gave Seattle its first bottomless recital.



Twenty years ago, before I was born, my parents were driving through the California desert. They stopped and bought gas at Hell, California, Population: 2. A gas station, a grocery store, and an old man and his wife. I've often wondered if Hell still exists.



“He’s a super New Yorker,” she said. **“He wanted to know how much did it cost to park.”**



They threw stones and swore in Farsi at the Yankee. I turned and tried to watch them but they ran away.



The three signs were planned in the middle of a coastal forest:

“WELCOME TO ITT RAYONIER™ TREE FARM...

“... WHERE CLEAR CUTTING AND FOREST
MANAGEMENT ...”

“... CREATE A NEW CROP *EVERY FIFTY YEARS.*”

It took six miles to complete the message.

“ITT. Aren’t they the people who make Wonder
Bread™?” somebody said.



I've always wondered what goes through the head of a man carrying a briefcase.



They bumped into each at the newsstand in the airport.

The company negotiator was buying gum for his flight back to the West Coast; the union representative was picking up a magazine before flying back to the national headquarters in D.C.

“When are we gonna get back together and settle this thing?” the company negotiator said.

“We’re gonna let them hang a while because the local president went against our recommendations,” the union representative said. “We want to make sure he feels the pain.

“Don’t worry, we’ll get back at you next year when we take you out on strike in Seattle.”

Then they headed toward their gates at different ends of the airport.



“Talent, One Mile,” said the road sign in Oregon.



He sat at the breakfast table drinking a cup of coffee,
smoking a cigarette and trying to assemble the *damn* sling
shot from the bottom of a box of cereal.



ROCK CONCERT

“When I get big, I’m gonna buy an electric guitar. When I get real big.” Then he ripped into an acoustic version of Sugar Mountain.

Never understood why they called it the Cow Palace.



There's a giant Sears™ store in Vancouver B.C. Your charge card is good up there.



The car has power steering and power brakes, an AM-FM eight-track stereo radio with factory air and a sixteen-speed windshield wiper.



It's the standard New York description of a little Italian dump with checkered tablecloths and the food ain't that bad: "You know the type of place," he said, "they serve breadsticks."



Only two miles to the Red Apple Rest™.



“It was one of those true-life adventures: I read it in *Reader’s Digest™*,” she said.



Driving down to San Francisco to see Neil Young in concert, with The Beatles on the tape deck for six straight hours. We drove from Seattle, all the way through Washington and Oregon and past Joe Bando's Mobile Homes™.



“That’s exactly where it happened. You should have seen it, a Camaro™ pullin’ a boat and a yellow Buick™. The boat skipped across three lanes and landed up there on that hill, and the whole side of the Buick™ got ripped out. Glass all over the place. It was great.”



Lost and looking for direction. It's just after midnight in Houston. The only business open at this hour has iron bars on the window and two gas pumps out front. The sign on the window says, "Liquor & Ammo." I decide to keep driving.



She was standing in front of the Pan Am™ building in Athens. “Take me with you,” she said.

She knew that I was an American.



We played football on a military compound in Iran. There was a guard at the corner of the field. He carried an M-16.



“Wonder what type of plane that is,” he asked me as we were driving along the freeway. The plane was painted military gray, long and graceful in its awkward plane-like manner. “It looks like a B-52,” I said.

It was rush hour and I slowed down to stare at it. Everybody else slowed down too.



There's an auto parts store in San Francisco. The front is painted fluorescent purple with a giant white dayglow shock absorber. The store next to it sells antiques. It's painted as a dayglow red-white-and-blue bicentennial flat.



We had a bomb shelter in the basement. My parents kept food supplies down there: Dried milk and Hormel™ canned corned beef hash for us to eat if the Russians ever attacked.

No one in my family likes canned corned beef hash.



It was your total ski resort town: A liquor store, a tow truck and a motel showing adult movies with closed circuit TV in every room.



It was the first time they had been in Wichita. The four of them jumped in a taxicab for downtown and started talking about where to eat dinner.

“Take us to a good barbecue place,” she said to the driver once they had decided.

The driver stopped the cab.

“All the barbecue places are in the Black part of town, and I don’t go there,” he said. “Get out!”

It took them 30 minutes to catch another cab back to their hotel.



Every Tuesday of second grade, I walked a mile and a half to be taught by nuns: I was taking classes in receiving my First Holy Communion.

I knew the secrets of the Catholic Church by the age of eight, but I forgot the Baltimore Catechism. I have forgotten why God made me.



The priest said it was the best food in San Francisco. It was a place serving shrimp sandwiches on Polk Street. Old men would try to hit on you if you went to the bathroom.



“Get some fake ID. There’s a great new group playing downtown.”

We got drunk, snuck into a tavern and listened to a group called Frog News. Nobody understood them so nobody liked it.



Six families live in a mud shack on the same block as the Tehran office of the Honeywell Computer Company™. The disco is across the street.



They're all standing outside the factory, in the rain, waiting for what everyone calls the garbage truck. The lunch bell rings at noon and Pavlov's dog abandon their jobs and rush outside to wait for the truck that is always 10 minutes late to bring them lukewarm sandwiches and 15¢ cups of coffee.

The driver wears a change maker around his waist.



882½ EAST PINE STREET

He lives in a fourth-floor walkup above a tavern and a Chinese diner.



All the Holiday Inn™ signs look the same coast to coast.
You can sleep in the same room every night and swim in
the pool after dinner.



Randy's a Seattle cop. A week before his wedding, they brought him to a topless bar, got him drunk, won his money in a game of pool and bought him a whore.



“Got new speakers and a ’sette deck in there. And it’s got Cragers™ all around and a new interior and handles beautifully. Driving down the freeway with headphones and The Rolling Stones on at eighty miles an hour. I’m gonna fix it up real good and I’m gonna sell it.”



“I love you,” I said

“I love you too,” she said.

The next week she went away with an older man. “Ours was a boy-girl relationship,” she told me, “but this one is a man-woman relationship.”

I still love her though.



Matt was my best friend. He moved away three years ago, and we never write.



They walked along an abandoned country road. Corn is growing in a field off to the side of the street. They hold hands and watch the sunset. They're both in their eighties.



There is something wonderful when new growth appears on fir trees in the spring. Delicate greens playing with the blue sun.



THE CITY THAT WORKS

“If I got a traffic ticket I would get it fixed because my dad’s a democrat,” she said.



The display manager of the department store wanted to change the color of Christmas.

He replaced the traditional green-and-red holly boughs with orange and black decorations. The whole place looked like Halloween.



The Midnight Roof Club meets on Wednesday nights on the rectory of the Holy Sacrament of Jesus Christ – Father Williams presiding. He blesses the beer and absolves it of its sins. The whole ceremony’s done in Latin, and then they get drunk.

Years later, it came out that Father Williams liked teenage boys.



“Lettermen’s jackets and going to Herfy’s™ and to the dance after the game; it’s an entire culture,” he said, talking about high-school football on Friday nights.



Halftime and I'm standing at the urinal with fifty people lined up behind me. I can't relax enough to pee.



He rode fifty miles on the back of a Harley Davidson™, without a helmet, just to go running naked through the woods.



PRESS CONFERENCE

The reporters file in, and each one is handed a prepared statement. A half hour later, the group's spokesperson comes into the room, sits at a table and reads the statement for the cameras.



Ronald Reagan says we need to lower taxes and have a strong defense. George McGovern says we need to lower taxes and have a strong defense. John Kennedy says we need to lower taxes and have a strong defense. Jimmy Carter says we need to lower taxes and have a strong defense. Richard Nixon says we need to lower taxes and have a strong defense.

Ronald Reagan is a conservative. George McGovern is a liberal. John Kennedy is dead.



They look like little houses all along the California coast.
Exxon™ hides their oil derricks in there.



She played trumpet in Duke Ellington's band but only lasted three days. The union forced her to retire because she was white.



They backed up the trucks and moved the factory from Oak Ridge to Salt Lake City. Two guys, with giant rolls of cellophane, wrapped up each work bench. Everything there was wrapped up: unfinished parts, tools, family photographs, yesterday's lunch.

“The union told us those trucks are empty,” one striker said as the two trucks drove through the picket line. “The company won't move the factory because the vice president comes from our state.”



Three guys with long hair standing in front of the American Express™ in Munich, waiting for money from home.”



Visiting the Queen Mary in Long Beach, California, to buy British things.



He went down to the local Transcendental Meditation™ office to check out the guaranteed free refresher courses.

“Is anybody flying in here?” he said.



JANUARY 20th

Twenty-five-year-old Republicans, in tuxedos and ball gowns, partying in the Metro stations and pedestrian tunnels around Arlington. Homeless sleep upstairs outside.

It probably looks much the same when Democrats win.



Eating Dial-a-Pizza at 2:30 in the morning.



It was the only Dixieland band with an electric bass in the entire street festival. The wind came up and knocked over their music stands.



SOCIOLOGY 271: INTRODUCTION TO SOCIAL DEVIANCY

No one wanted to go to the lecture, so we got stoned and went to class regardless.

The professor was nationally renowned for earning a Ph.D. for spending several two years in a L.A. gang to research his thesis. When he showed educational films, we brought popcorn.



Two trees, some sagebrush, and another tree about half a mile down the road but it's turning brown.

“Los Angeles National Forest” the sign said.



Yreka, California is a bicentennial community by its own admission.

My brother got mugged there once, checking into a roadside motel after midnight. He was jumped by a guy wielding a screwdriver. The cops knew him by name. He lived in empty hotel rooms and moved around every night.



BASEBALL GAME

Everyone faced the flag and sang the National Anthem. The words were written on the scoreboard, which also advertised Coke™ and Bar S Wieners™.



Twelve-year-olds on a city bus getting enough money together to score an ounce.



Waiting in the Tehran Airport for our flight out. Our plane has been delayed because the Shah is holding a military parade. For seven hours, I watch U.S.-built F-4s and F-5s landing and taking off. They're all fully loaded.



Macy's™ Thanksgiving Day Parade and ticker-tape parades for astronauts and championship baseball teams and Memorial Day parades with the local VFW lodge in flags and uniforms; most people are attracted by such things but I'm intrigued by funerals. I want to see what goes on under the green tent.



Tent Sale. Saturday Only. In front of the combination supermarket-discount house, in bins along the sidewalk, are lawn mowers and blouses and people rummaging through piles and cash registers and hot dog stands and everything is on sale reduced discounted for clearance must sell so we're offering prices never heard of before on famous-maker name-brand sweaters shirts athletic equipment everything must go.

There were no tents.



CHURCH WEDDING

They had only known each other for three months. She converted him to Christ and they got married.



We watched the John Coltrane record spin on the turntable and listened to the music that died before we could understand it.



He pushed the Up button for the elevator and the light went on. I pushed it too.



“Remember to send nine ninety-nine to Kitchen Helper™, and if your order is postmarked before midnight tonight, we’ll send you, absolutely free, the amazing three-in-one culinary tool just for taking advantage of this fabulous TV offer.”

I saw the commercial three nights in a row. It always comes on at 11:30



Knocking on doors, selling \$2.50 raffle tickets to the Boy Scouts Jamboree. If I sell enough tickets, I don't have to pay to get into the local Soap Box Derby.

“What does B.S.A. stand for?” said the guy who answered the door, pointing to the yellow embroidered letters above the pocket of my Cub Scouts uniform.

“Boy Scouts of America.”

“Oh, I thought it meant Bull Shit Artist,” he said. He bought a ticket.



The Federal Courthouse in Seattle, located on a hill above the city, is built of granite and marble.

There is a restaurant and a bookstore on the ground floor. The bookstore sells the normal variety: cigarettes and candy and both the city's dailies, *The Wall Street Journal*[™], *Time*[™], *Newsweek*[™] and *Playboy*[™]. There's also a boot shine in the lobby: An old black man shining the shoes of white lawyers and judges for a dollar.

The American flag is on display in each courtroom.



“The naked and stabbed body of an Oregon woman was found today in the Richland area. Police said she had been apparently murdered. Details next on City News 4™.”



The 747 touched down in Anchorage at 2 a.m. The sun was still up.



The Shakespearean Festival™ was being held downtown right on First Avenue, the local hangout for all Navy Surplus Stores™, free clinics, the Union Gospel Mission™, a handful of derelicts, a prostitute and fifteen police officers.

French China Girl™ was playing at the theater across the street from Shakespeare. *French China Girl™* and its sequel, *French China Girl Blue™*.



He stared out the window and watched all the cars drive by. “You know, there’s people in those things,” he said.



The people in Turkey think America is a movie where people go to drive-ins and ride motorcycles or move to the West Coast – out in California, Colorado and Texas – to shoot Indians and huddle stagecoaches together in a circle. They all practice shooting from the hip and recite Humphrey Bogart lines with Turkish accents. They want to come to America because the good guy wears a white hat and always wins.



Taking an automobile trip across the state. In every small town, in front of rows of similar houses jammed together with small patches of front lawns, are the campaign signs: “SIRHAM SMITH Judge – Position #2.”



As soon as I reached the Pacific, I wanted to turn around and drive to the other coast.

The mist was rising off the water as we walked barefoot in the sand. The sun, setting on the horizon, grew larger as it dropped below the clouds.



“I was thinking about birth,” he said. “Why me?”



“Kid, you’ve got a case if you think you’re gonna get a job as a garbage collector. They pay us twelve fifty an hour; nobody has quit in three years.”



They sat in front of the police station, watching traffic and passing a joint.



“No trespassing,” it said, **“FEDERAL GOVERNMENT.”**
It was just a small strip of grass on the side of the highway.



His parents were divorced so he lived with his father in a luxury apartment looking out over Spokane.

That day he sat with his feet on the window ledge, smoking dope and listening to music as President Carter's limousine drove by below.



The expensive hotel has “Hi Up There” painted on its roof. It’s located right on the water. There’s a bait shop in the lobby. You can fish from your window.



Old man Rockefeller gave out pennies in the park. I saw it on a TV show. “It was the Depression, everyone was starving, and he gave out pennies in the park.

“What a bastard,” my father said.



The 1964 New York World's Fair showed the beautiful world of the future.

General Motors™, IBM™, Bell™ telephone, Disney™, Westinghouse™, Sinclair Oil™ and the Ford Motor Company™ showed how much better things will be by the end of the century.

Nothing has changed.



Akbar lived in the basement. He was our apartment house manager in Tehran.

Akbar's job was to walk to the store a quarter mile away and pick up the tenants' groceries: A case or two of beer or a case of Coke™, a couple kilos of potatoes, some milk, pastries and usually a half a back of fresh shrimp. He carried them on his back and we gave him a 50¢ tip.



The quarterback got hurt. He was lying on the turf. The station switched to a beer commercial.



He gambles with the guys at the police station on Tuesday nights. He's friends with all the officers; they once gave him a place to stay for thirty days.



8/16/78. The Issaquah, Washington School Board today voted to remove *Catcher in the Rye* from classrooms because it is “amoral, irreligious, and part of a communist plot.”

One school official said, “*Catcher in the Rye* is full of shit.”



Leonard lived in Tokyo, Germany and in the Middle East. His father was an Air Force pilot who flew forty-seven missions over North Vietnam. When he retired, the entire family moved to Virginia and Leonard died of an overdose.



The Green Giant™ is going Chinese.



If you look hard enough, you'll actually notice that there is water to be found in the massive cement banks of the Los Angeles River.



Going down the freeway at fifty-five miles per hour, he stepped out onto the roof and crawled through the back window. He said he wanted to sit in the back seat.



He played trumped for pennies and quarters on a downtown street corner. He like to play White Christmas when it got hot in July.



I like to walk in cemeteries about a half an hour after Mother's and Father's Days are over, about six in the evening when the flowers have been laid and the parents forgotten for another year.



THE ALICE B. TOKLAS MEMORIAL BROWNIE CONTEST

As a public service, this station, in cooperation with the Advertising Council, is conducting the third annual Alice B. Toklas Memorial Brownie Contest. All entries will be judged on originality, flavor, content in the spirit of Alice B. Toklas' own brownie's and physical effects. The decisions of the judges are final.

I've often wonder what Alice B. Toklas' role was in contributing to the artistic growth of the Lost Generation in Paris. I've searched for clues in Hemingway and Joyce and Scott Fitzgerald, in the paintings of Picasso and in my set of new Britannica Encyclopedias™.

Alice B. Toklas didn't even write her own autobiography. Gertrude Stein did that. But I've found one clue as to her artistic contribution: she has been credited with the invention of the hashish brownie.

Contest void where prohibited by law.



The restaurant had everything we need, the sign out front told us” “BEER, FOOD & JuKE BOX.”

“I hope they’ve got some country music on that box.” We were all a little drunk, in the mood for a laugh and a country lyric: “You got the kind of body that was meant for lovin’, The kind that makes me feel more like a man.”

A truck driver and two young couples were in the restaurant drinking coffee. The food was terrible but the waitress was pretty.

We put our quarters in the machine and made our two selections each: Tommy Dorsey, Artie Shaw, Benny Goodman and *Kalamazoo*, *Begin the Beguine*, *In the Mood*, *Chattanooga Choo Choo* and Bunny Berigan singing *I Can’t Get Started*.



Little League mothers drinking beer and yelling at their sons for making an error in the first inning.



**“Is this your first time you’ve been to the circus kid?
Enjoy yourself. Buy a balloon.”**

The kid was fourteen.



They're selling Christmas trees in October and Santa won't even be around until the Macy's™ Day Thanksgiving Parade.



“**C**an I help ya find something?”

“No, I’m just looking.”



**“That’s just what I’m looking for. It’s traditional:
Halloween acid.**

“You dress up and walk around and you get weird.”



Are there industrial uses for pumpkin?



Only 500 ft. to the Red Apple Rest™.



Drunk and waiting for a bus at two in the morning,
discussing politics.

“My political party are the apathetics,” he said.



The houses of Renton, Washington look like they've been imported from Appalachia with torn curtains, tiny plots of grass, an old car out front and needing a coat of paint. In the middle of the houses is the Boeing Airplane Company™ where they make MX missiles, million dollar airliners and billion dollar profits.

The people of Renton fly the flag every 4th of July.



“Johnny had this ’49 Chevy™ – bought it only two-years-old – and one of the guys said, ‘Let’s go to Jew Town;’ so the gang hops in and drives down there and there’s this Jewish guy, you know, with the beard and that hat and his rabbi costume, and he was about four-foot-eight; so Johnny rolls down his window and yells: ‘Hey Rabbi, how do ya get to the Paramount?’”

He took a sip of wine and sliced his steak. “Hey, why don’t ya take another piece of meat or some more potatoes or something,” he said.

“Nah. Thanks anyway.”

“Sure you’re not hungry? All right! Anyway, Johnny wells out his window, ‘Hey Rabbi,’ at this little Jew guy. Just like that,” he said, cupping his hands around his mouth to pantomime Johnny. “‘Hey Rabbi.’ And you should’ve seen this Jewish guy runnin’ across the street in his Jew costume with his book and beads and that hat on his bald head. And he’s yelling, ‘What’d ya say?’ You see, he was deaf. So, he comes up to the car and puts his head in the window. And Johnny says, ‘Hey Rabbi, we want to know how to get to the Paramount.’”

He took another bite of steak – medium rare with mushrooms and some of the O.C. French Fried Onions™ you buy in the can – and he finished telling me the story: “‘Hey Rabbi,’ he said,” he said, chewing on this steak and cupping his mouth. “And Johnny rolled up the window on this guy’s beard, and he’s yelling, ‘You God Damn kids’ and all sorts of things in Hebrew, and the car’s going about ten miles an hour, so I take the cigarette lighter from the dash ... God, it was a beautiful car, you should have seen

it ... anyway, I take the cigarette lighter and set fire to this
guy's beard."



Turn back! You just missed the Red Apple Rest™.



Flying thirty-five hundred feet over an Alaskan glacier. In the distance, just off the coast, you can see fourteen oil wells.

They all have flames coming off the ends.



“**R**ich American want his change?” the cashier asked.



Two four-year-olds sitting on a sewer cap in the middle of the street, arguing. “Everybody’s got to have a mother.”

“Well, I don’t.”

They drew pictures on the asphalt with chalk. “You’ve got to have a mother.”

“Wanna bet? If you don’t believe me, ya can go ask my Dad.”

His mother left him when he was three days old. Nobody ever told him.



A friend and I were walking home through our neighborhood with tennis racquets in our hands when a cop stopped us and asked for our identifications.

“I’m looking for three kids on stingray bicycles,” he said.



The dentist was taking language classes in Tehran. He wanted to show how much he learned.

“I must to have to speak the English very well. I go America, no?” he said.



“**O**h, a whole field of dead people,” he said as they drove past the cemetery.



Columbus didn't find what he was looking for.

