

JOTTINGS



Original jottings of Beau Nestor - 1964 - 2024

JOTTINGS

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Raving at the moon and street crazy rantings without literary merit, have become an expressive art form in the mind of this decaying, once lucid thinker.

Short term memory gaps increase with minimal concentration levels, so the great international novel has crumbled away to odd pages of insomniac notes, angry diatribes due to relentless frustration and cynical disposition brought about by you...

You never listened!

It's okay, I never wanted you to, I just needed to get rid of all this waste in one place.

To quote myself:

None of my works are to Impress you.

They are simply to Express me.



MY CHILDREN TAUGHT ME . . .

Love is giving. It is never demanding.

Love is not about enabling bad behavior, it is constant, regardless of the behavior.

Love is about disabling bad choices, not as punishment, simply as what is good for that person.

Love is unconditional, it never has a hook. "I could love you if..."

Love is genuinely wanting that person to feel good, regardless of the cost to self, and sometimes, seemingly at the cost of that person.

Love is showing that you have learned from that person, that what they have done for you is valid, worthwhile.

Love is doing the tough stuff, it's not about the easy stuff, just because it's fun or will score more points.

Love doesn't care about geographical proximity – it's border-less.

Love cannot see dividing lines – in Politics, Religion or any individuals personal choices.

Love is never Control. It never seeks to dominate, win or get its way.

The question is: How can I best be a friend forever? - Not how can I be a Best Friend Forever.

A child is born with an open door to Love, because parents open the door. The child can choose to demand that Love (which is selfish, and therefore unloving) or to return Love, which is selfless & therefore Loving.

A parent is ill-equipped to work this out, because they are blinded by Love.

A child goes through stages of development, that allow them to question where they are on the growth chart.

1/ Unconscious Incompetent – describes the newborn's reliance on the parent for everything.

Car Example – Don't know what it is, what it does, and they don't even realize they don't know.

2/ Conscious Incompetent – describes the child's realization that they need guidance for decisions.

Car Example - They realize it's a Mom and Dad thing and they can't do it.

3/ Conscious Competent – describes learned behavior that is not yet automatic.

Car Example – Learning to drive is tricky – so much to remember.

4/ Unconscious Competent – describes the automatic behavior of an adult.

Car Example – Get in the car and go... brain is on automatic.

The task of a parent is to open the gate between 2/ & 3/ above. To facilitate the growth, moving from the knowledge of the parent to the knowledge of the child.

What the child chooses to do with that knowledge, what topics remain in 3/ or move to 4/, has to be the decision of the child, not the parent.

The parent is responsible for offering choices, not for the child choosing.

Many children get stuck in a development stage and may need a shove to get them restarted. If the child realizes this themselves, they are already in stage 3/ and are totally responsible for getting themselves unstuck.

If they don't realize this, then a parental intervention may be required to move them from stage 2/ to stage 3/.

Love is not about taking away a single ounce of the other person's responsibility. Simply to point out that there are alternative doorways.



Fear is the Currency of Government.

If everyone is living in fear, they will pay their insurance premiums which are, in effect, Government Bonds.

If everyone is living in fear, they will hold and bear arms (to protect themselves against others that might go rogue).

If everyone is living in fear, the people will cease to assemble in public.

If everyone is living in fear, it is simple to sustain or enlist a military force, police force and security guards.

If the price is a Columbine or a Sandy Hook, then the fear strikes at the heart of the community.

If the people aren't living in enough fear, create an Iraq or Afghanistan war, the insurance bonds will pay for it.

When the country goes into more debt - create more fear - charge more insurance.

Ask yourself, How many insurance policies do you have? That's a measure of the fear you live in.

Auto and House insurance, Life insurance, Death Insurance, Debt Insurance, Travel Insurance, Medical Insurance, Extended Warranties, No Trespassing signs.

But perhaps you also have bought Alarms, Smoke Detectors, Motion Sensor lights, Surveillance Cameras...
.. All fear based.

(Just log the TV Ads over 2 hours of Prime Time to see what we are being defined as).

Ask yourself if you could walk home from Main Street at any time of the day or night – that is a measure of the fear you live in.

This is nothing more than the protection rackets of the 1920s – the governments figured it out.

If the people live in fear, they will pay a premium for 'protection' and look to their government to bully them out of it.

In 2024, Let's call our governments to account.

Ask them to switch to Productivity rather than Fear as the human motivating factor.

Read it, think about, come back to it – Share it.... we are all being used and abused.



MAKE AMERICA FLUSH AGAIN

Presidential Candidate magnate made fortune from the Throne:

A well known business tycoon; has been reported as having made his true business fortune from the sale of Toilet Plungers through outlets like Home Depot and Lowes.

As the owner of the world's largest toilet cistern empire, He has been cited as having purposely had cistern fittings produced to regularly fail, so that sales of his orange tanned plungers would soar.

Only the USA sells these plungers, as only the US is so full of "the problem that just won't go away".

Other countries simply don't have him as a candidate for any elections, and they certainly don't have a problem with the excrement staying around beyond its due date, said the British Home Secretary.

The European Union seems to have wiped up all of their mess of recent times, and they have no plans to import what is locally known as the Orange Spreader, a reference to the well known US mopping up procedures that are required in every US home on a weekly basis.

Local Sewerage authorities are in constant fear of the backlog ever coming down the sewers as they agree that the pipes are clogged with smears and innuendo, a possible reference to the ballot papers and How to Vote cards that are constantly straining the system.

With the largest septic tank usage in the world, the US was accused of burying the real problem in it's own backyard.

"America needs a better flushing mechanism, and someone needs to pull the plug on these tycoons", said a high ranking politician who refused to be named because of potential blow-back.

Pressure groups seem to be growing red in the face when interviewed during their weekly sit-in. "Something has got to give!" was the unanimous roar.

When questioned by a reporter, the candidate promised to "Make America Flush Again" if elected in November this year.



Perhaps Von Daniken and Tolkien were closer to reality than even they believed.

There is growing evidence (or at least studied speculation) that angels and demons as well as fairies, elves, goblins, nymphs and all the European and Scandinavian woodsy folklore guys, have been around all along.

The explanations of “Aliens”, now more correctly called “Non Human Intelligence” (NHI) may well have been based on the level of sophistication and language of the times. Our ancestors didn't have the scientific terminology to adequately define creatures that weren't prey or predators, so they used descriptive terms that fitted within their own realms.

My conjecture is that all these creatures that were obviously other worldly, and must have been sent by the gods, as there was no other method to describe them. They have so many characteristics in common around the world with vastly different cultures and epochs, showing “magical” abilities – because they were beyond our ancestors’ poor understanding of the physics that could be applied.

So, here is another conjecture.

Heaven is a primitive word for interdimensional.

Angels and fairies live with us (As NHIs), but in another dimension, that has portals, (Stargates, wormholes, white holes or whatever... that they have mastered while we were battling with the wheel, internal combustion and transistors.

Their evolutionary timeline appears to have started earlier or certainly accelerated long before we fell out of the trees.

I have only ever seen an NHI depicted with a wheel, when our ancestors painted a fiery chariot across the sky, but how else would our ancestors been able to describe a flying saucer? The wheel was not required for our heavenly brethren as their progression allowed them to move without machinery at all. Whether by a Quantum trick, mind power or technical advance, it would seem that Flying Saucers, Orbs, Tic-Tacs and even "Aerial Lobsters" may only be necessary when they travel on our plane.

Our physical world may rob the NHIs of much of their power, so their "Craft" is required as a shield against our toxic environment. It's natural that we should see their craft as being transport, because we have only used craft for transport – but perhaps crossing to our dimension robs them of their direct ability to move by 'thought'. A UFO may simply be a shield that is required to traverse dimensions.

So perhaps our perceived dimension of Earth, Sky and Sea are just the tip of the iceberg. Bringing the concept of Stargate out of fantasy and into reality, there may well be many different NHIs that cross our path, each providing the similarities of heavenly messengers, simply because they defy our understanding, yet provide a vast difference in their evolutionary capabilities.

Is it possible that we are living in a simulation? It continues to look more likely than not. Are we the guinea pigs of an NHI experiment or “video game”? Quite possibly. Have we been abandoned by the Game Players for long periods at a time... also, possibly.

Currently there are Orbs or Craft of some sort being spotted every day, and although that may be more to do with SmartPhone technology than simply increased traffic, it is obvious that craft that can instantly disappear could be even more furtive than they are – so why aren't they?

The UFO / UAP community is shrouded in Government secrecy, Off the books funding and outright denial of fact. Disclosure is underway, but apparently governments still have a '50 year plan', while the UFO / NHI community wants a one year plan.

Another aspect of all this allows us to question the existence of a Supreme Being. While different religions all have their own vision of God, many are derived from ancient manuscripts that were also reliant on their poor “knowledge” of physics. Perhaps the books of the Bible / Koran / Talmud etc come from parable style stories to assist the writers to explain to the peasants, using pictorial words that they could understand. Obviously there was no word for a Techno Wizard hiding behind a wall of mainframes conducting the universe like a giant game of the Sims... So the best way would be to distance the Creator where it would be impossible to question reality.

So, who or what is God?

UFO / NHI Disclosure would certainly threaten our current view of God. It would threaten our view of the bible and redefine the 7 days of Creation in disturbing ways.

In turn, World Economics would be in turmoil, as the hierarchy of God, Angels and Man would be redefined. We may even find that the realistic title for God may be Chief Scientist or Bertie from Betelgeuse.

In Catholicism, there is a hierarchy of Angels

Highest orders

Seraphim
Cherubim
Thrones

Middle orders

Dominions
Virtues
Powers

Lowest orders

Principalities
Archangels
Angels

Middle Earth has an even more complex hierarchy.

Tolkien created a vast hierarchy to support his books of fiction, but this has further supported the concept of unseen creatures being a part of our history and ancestry.

Likewise, all cultures and religions have a history of other worldly beings having a level of interaction with humans and often divided them into realms of good and evil.

There is also a dividing line in humans, between the lay and the clergy. The mysticism of Gurus, Yogis and Shaman is reflected in the New World religions, but is now becoming dominant in the Military - Industrial Complex with their refusal to allow the common man to understand the complexities of these mysterious creatures.

The US Government has announced (Jan 2024) that there are at least 5 and possibly up to 9 different NHI species that they are aware of, that are either present or visiting Earth. They all are vastly different to humans, biologically, and all possess abilities that are not possible for humans.



Design a building standard for an internal building fit-out that is lightweight, strong, easily assembled from pre-fabricated components, suitable for residential and commercial applications, includes lighting and power connections. High insulation, Low cost transport makes this system ideal for applications from Emergency Housing to Mining Towns and includes standard Office Fit-outs, Residential Additions, Factory Offices etc...

By creating a set of standardized components, with transport and installation are kept to a minimum, reducing an internal fit-out to less difficulty than home furniture assembly.

Local building exo-structural materials can be employed – brick, timber, stone, pre-fab concrete, mud-brick, adobe etc... as the smart technology is included in the fit-out.

Major Design Components:

WALLS:

Made of Fire Retardant Polystyrene Foam for Sound and Heat insulation.

Clad with semi-rigid ABS sheeting or Formica style, textured laminates ready for papering and painting.

Hung in a similar manner to sliding doors, then locked into place.

Movable by the tenant to create variable internal structures.

Carry electrical and lighting switches and connections within their frames.

Simple to cutout for access panels, windows etc...

FLOORS:

Superstructure carries mains power

Superstructure clips into multiple circuits equipped with circuit breakers.

Thermal/Sound Insulation and/or air heat venting built in to superstructure.

Standard flooring surfaces available

CEILINGS:

Lightweight construction allows for suspended ceiling construction.

Rigid superstructure allows for fixed construction

Made of Fire Resistant Expanded Polystyrene for thermal /sound insulation

Demountable construction allows for large access ways.

Low Voltage lighting grid included per panel.



- A Novel teaser...

Damn! 23!

One, two, three... he begins the labored task of figuring which color is missing.

The drool slides around his chin as he realizes it's a yellow one that has run away today. He looks in the folds of his dressing gown, but focus is getting a little tough as he hunts around with twisted fingers and inadequate touch. Peripheral neuropathy has taken his body by stealth. Sensations of touch, heat and cold have diminished to the point where fluffy chenille and a hard round pill send just about the same message to his brain. Frustrating!

A thought of youth and the pounding hooves of an ant, climbing a hair on his arm creating an avalanche of sensation – now, he's not sure if his arm is resting on the table or hovering in mid-air.

24 and yellow!

All is well on his pharmacological breakfast tray.

He still swallows them down without a drink, he always thought that people who saw him do that must have thought he was mad, but he had a plan and always did. One day the lump of pills will catch in his throat and he won't have the strength to cough them up. That will be his day.

He looks at the Aloe Vera plant, aptly named Horrie, and a thin smile creeps over one side of his asymmetrical face.

"Yes, Horrie, you get your breakfast too!" he mutters ritualistically.

He taps the joystick on his chair and he rolls quietly to the corner where the plant has been gasping for water, groping for light, for years. He bends over the plant and allows the accumulating drool to splatter on Horrie. The thin smile has an evil twist in it as he simply spits, "Suffer!" and turns away from it.

Horrie scratched him years ago and has been on rations ever since. "That'll teach the horrid little bastard" splutters the old man.

It must be August.

He can tell by the pieces left to complete. Each day for the last two years and two months, he has placed a single piece of a 1000 piece jigsaw into position.

Just one.

This time he is going anti-clockwise from the top left to the center.

Last time he went clockwise from the center to the outside. He has also gone straight up and down, but he can't remember where he started.

His old eyes stare at the jigsaw for an eternal two minutes before he catches sight of the errant piece. Today's task has been selected. He savors the moment guiltily and begins the hovering process that will get his hand into position to collect it. He swats his hand across his face to gather a little drool that will help the piece stick to his finger and then daubs his hand over the cardboard cutout, holding it until it lifts from the table.

Like a giant Victorian crane, his hand lurches across the puzzle with cargo suspended. The trick is to get his arm to stop, his hand to lower and the piece to dry and unstick simultaneously.

Snap! straight in – again!

That's five or six in a row – wait, what day is this – Friday? Yep! Six in a row he has managed to dribble into place.

His therapy complete for the day, he sits. And sits.

Someone named him Grumps a thousand years ago. It stuck. He has new friends now. There is a magpie that carols at the window. Such a beautiful melodious sound except when you are trying to sleep. In one of his moments of lucidity, Grumps had taught that dumb black and white warbler to count. Maggie would tap on the window, Grumps would tap back. Then Grumps would tap twice and refuse to tap again until the bird tapped twice. It took some time. Grumps had plenty of that and the bird wasn't exactly wearing a Rolex. They amused themselves for up to 30 minutes sometimes, tapping out a beat. Eventually, the bird always had somewhere else to be.

A kookaburra to swoop at, a scrap to be stolen from a patio up the road, a chick that was squawking, who knows.... who cares... they all have to be some other place. Lizzie came to visit on hot days. Lizzie would sit out on the patio absorbing that life giving infra red and gradually rise and lift off the pavement to say...OK, I'm cooked now, I can run if I have to. Lizzie was never really sociable - She just hung around while I acted as scarecrow, so the birds wouldn't attack her. Even the animal kingdom have figured out there can be a use for an old fart I guess. The kookaburras don't come round any more. I know they have had long standing border disputes with the magpies - but when meat came off the menu, they simply looked for richer friends.

Grumps had been top of his game - but that was years ago. Something happened and it all went away.

Little clouds part and memories start to seep in, but they are all hazy. The pressure of those days had been immense. He knew too much, he was happy to have it fade away. He knew too much about governments. Far too much. There was a time when he was able to decipher cryptic codes, regurgitate data from a jigsaw on a hard disk.

The Official Secrets Act.

Treason, murder and war were a consuming part of his life. It got to him. Parliamentary Ministers playing with the lives of nations from their mistresses boudoirs. Rebuilding lives and plots from poorly gathered data was bad enough, but finding that some of those people who were probably very guilty, had just disappeared, was too much. His skills were in high demand, but the price was his soul. Collateral damage like so many before and since. Used by the system - unforgiven by family - still watched by governments. Perhaps he had lost the plot and it was all in his imagination. The two largest US Defense Supply Corporations, Haliburton and Harris didn't seem to think so. They were jostling for his patents. They offered him the earth to come and work for them - or not work for the other. The Earth? More likely a world of pain. These days he simply forgets to remember, or maybe just forgot altogether.

Maggie will be back, she'll eat anything he eats. He'll save her a bit.

Time passes, inexorably. The jigsaw is nearing completion, again. One of the neighbors had some garden stones delivered last week - that must have been the rumbling he heard. The council worker that calls in each week got the computer started again.

So much earth shattering stuff to write. Still, he can get back onto Facebook and revamp his pseudo life on screen with all the other pseudo lives on screen. Should be fun for an hour or two.
Bored.

He wants to write, but writer's block wins again - oh well, another day.





I awake to my glasses playing Hall of the Mountain King followed by a weather report while they sit in the charger on the bedside table – Good, I know what to wear.

Hauling myself off to the shower, I step inside and the shower starts at my preferred body temperature, at my preferred pressure.

No wasted water or time in adjusting flow. The shower screen displays the headline news. I tap on a few of the more relevant stories and listen to the latest reports.

As always, my preferred Live Cams show a few of the major intersections that I'll be traveling on and give me a readout on traffic jams, and travel times.

Enough of that shower, but as I get out, the image reverses so that I see the screens as I dry off.

Back in my room, I start to get dressed and as I select my pants, a selection of my shirts show in the mirror – I select the pre-dress feature and see myself dressed in a variety of tops that are suitable for the day's weather conditions. Selection made, I get that shirt from the wardrobe, and immediately see the reminder for the correct belt, shoes and other accessories back on the mirror-screen.

An icon of my ViewBar flashes on screen and a familiar 'Pling' sound is heard from the charging dock on the bedside table. Great, the coffee is ready as always, sitting in my temperature controlled mug.

Another Pling is heard in my ear from the ViewBar – the overlay screen shows that it's Charlie – I take the call and see that he's nearly ready for me to pick him up – 'Hi Charlie – be there in 5'.

As it's going to be a sunny day, I know all the windows will switch to full solar feedback mode as I walk out the door – that'll keep the temperature lower inside and all those rays working for me – nice to make \$ 500 every month from the electricity company at last!

As I go out to the garage and approach the driver's door of my car, I hear a gentle klunk as the nudge bar charger retracts, the garage door opens and the driver's door pops open.

I drop my coffee cup into the heated cup-holder. My ProximAccess Chip synchs with BioMetrics and allows full access to the vehicle's functions. My ViewBar shows the image from the reversing cameras. Now that Solid State Disks are so inexpensive, my vehicle is programmed to keep the last month's Digital Video Files from all six external cameras as well as the TeleMetrics from the vehicle in case of an insurance claim.

The car clicks and then purrs gently as it rolls quietly from the garage.

The car's external sensors glow a warm green as the Heads Up Display shows the path behind.

In reality, there's no reason to look, as the car knows the best way out of the driveway and will find it's way to work via the most efficient route, today. As the vehicle leaves the driveway, the garage door closes, the house locks tight and the external house cameras come alive.

I touch the 'Work' icon on my 'Faves' list on the dashboard and the rest is automatic. An advertisement appears on the outside of my vehicle as the OLED screen comes to life. That will earn me extra fuel credits, so that I can swap out fuel cells more frequently.

I use this time to converse with family via the ViewBar. As vehicles are so automated, I can talk on the video phone while driving and even flip the ViewBar up to see the other party on the Heads Up Display. The trip to work involves a number of sets of traffic lights, a toll-way and a short distance from the off ramp to the office. The heads up display shows an icon to let us know we have crossed a traffic monitor point. These points are set at intersections and read the sensors built into the car.

Yes, Big Brother has arrived, they know who is driving, what alcohol level I have and whether my car is registered and has insurance paid up. We rarely see vehicles that are automatically disabled any more, but of course there is the odd person who speeds, but their cars are automatically disabled after ten seconds. The fleeing criminals can't get past the system either.

Apart from the fact that police have all got remote ignition disabling devices, the roads themselves will simply stop illegal usage. Few cars run on petroleum based products now, changeover hydrogen cells are readily available to boost the range of the electric powered cars. The taxes on petroleum products has made both the cars and the fuel quite out of the question for most people.

As steering, braking, acceleration and parking have all been taken over by the onboard computers, the driver rarely has to intervene unless asked to by the car. Voice controls normally work fine, but there is still a brake pedal and steering wheel that can override the computer. Acceleration has been taken away from the driver completely. Based on the old Cruise Control concept of 'Resume', the car accelerates at the optimal speed and maintains a safe distance between other traffic, courtesy of the cameras and proximity sensors. As the car takes the on ramp to the toll-way, another tiny icon shows on the heads up display, a charge has appeared and will continue to increase as I travel.

Imperceptibly, the suspension hardens slightly and the tire pressure is increased to provide a faster and more fuel efficient ride. The charges for these cars are different today than they were. All cars are priced on a standardized rate. There is no up-front fee for the vehicle, insurance or registration, or even drivers licence. A simple ID check solves all of that. You are required to keep a vehicle for a minimum of 2 years, but you must change over after 5 years. There are no maintenance charges like Servicing, Tires or Batteries.

These items are all built in to the 'per mile fee' for the particular vehicle you have chosen and the funds are deducted directly from your designated account per day. Simply put, the more you drive the vehicle, the more it costs, but if you don't drive often, you will pay almost nothing to own a car. Any parking, toll or traffic fines are simply charged to that account and your 'Points' are able to be increased or decreased, depending on your driving quality. As your driving quality increases, your licence automatically extends to allow you to park in better positions and to receive priority in vehicle servicing. All repairs are taken care of free, because all vehicles are driven according to manufacturers specifications and government requirements. All driving costs are known by the manufacturers up-front.

Vehicle manufacturing costs are much lower, because lighter weight materials are being used as the heavy engines of yesterday don't have to be hauled around. Small electric motors with solar boosters and fuels cells do the job adequately and, as all vehicles are computer equipped and aware of each other, there simply isn't the need for the extraordinary protective capsules that were present in the last generation of gasoline powered cars.

We slip quietly from the toll-way via the off ramp, another icon shows the toll paid as the suspension resets itself for the minor road we are taking. The car pulls into my designated car space and shows a reminder of those things that are in the car that I need to take into my workplace. As the door pops open, the vehicle begins its security shutdown procedure and sits quietly absorbing solar rays while I'm at work.

PLANNING A TRIP TO THE USA



PLANNING A TRIP TO THE USA

Originally posted: Thursday March 4, 2010.

The day before the flight from Sydney to L.A., we drove from our Gallery in Port Macquarie NSW, to stay overnight with our good friends on the Central Coast of NSW just an hour or so from Sydney airport. A pleasant enough drive, although the 4 hours in the car saw us both battling fatigue. The events of recent times had taken their toll.

We had the Gallery up for auction 3 weeks before we undertook this trip, the plan being that we would put the last of our possessions in storage and look at purchasing again on our return. The Real Estate Agent forgot to attend an Open House one weekend and then weather opened up for the week before the auction. Now when I say opened up – I'm serious. Torrential rain, steaming hot, intolerably sticky, life giving rain fell like a waterfall. Many roads were cut-off in the area and of course, virtually no-one came to inspect the property.

We called off the auction, knowing it had little chance of selling.

Along with the rain came a number of small leaks. All of these leaks were around the roofline and on closer inspection, we discovered that the box gutters had all but disappeared. Naturally we called in the roofing guy, then the guttering guy, then all of them. A couple showed up to say it was too hard, most didn't show. Some sheets of plastic, various adhesives and polyurethane filler, together with four days work and we had patched most of the holes ourselves.

Of course with all the inspection work, we discovered termites. The termite man came, dug out a few bits of wall and ceiling and announced a \$6-7000 cure. He started work, but needed a manhole to be cut in the ceiling. As we have a flat roof, there wasn't really any purpose in a manhole except as an inspection point for termites.

Our friend Rick from across the road is a qualified builder, and he was good enough to offer to supply and fit a manhole and cover. The next day, Rick is cutting out the manhole and discovered... asbestos. We cleaned up the area as best we could, stood under the hose to wash off and bundled up our clothes for disposal.

Of course, the whole of the property had been inspected for asbestos when we did renovations 3 years earlier, and after the boys in disposable overalls had been out and spent all our money, we were declared asbestos free. Not so.

It is now 2 days before we leave for the US, and the property has suspect guttering, damp internal wall studs and thousands of termites chowing down on soggy asbestos.

Hmmmm. The decision to abandon the place just got easier.

We felt fortunate to have the opportunity to travel back to the US, where Gayle was to negotiate her Australian Permanency and of course, where she would be able to catch up with her family that she hadn't seen for 12 months. An overnight stay and we would be in the US 15 hours later... wonderful stuff.

PLANNING A TRIP TO THE USA

Or was it???

We arrived on the Central Coast of NSW and stayed over with our friends who were also looking after our car in our absence. A pleasant evening preceded a planned mid morning run to the airport, to catch a plane due to leave at 3:10 pm. A text message came from the airline at 11:00 am as we were loading into the car...

'Your flight is now estimated to leave at 10 pm'.

This has implications... we have connecting flights that are to take us from LA to Chicago to Raleigh/Durham NC – our destination. We have a hotel booked for our arrival at Raleigh, and our car being delivered to the hotel...

Foolishly I got on the phone to discuss the situation with the airline, 'Qantas' before proceeding. After an hour and a half wait, I finally spoke to a human, and was advised I could be on an earlier flight, if I was at the gate lounge now. We weren't. We were calling from a home phone an hour and a half away from the airport. The decision to just go to the airport was still a no-brainer and so off we went to try to make up the lost time spent on the interminable 'help desk' phone call.

Arriving at the airport with our paperwork all ready, and our need to secure connections (or have them changed for us while we were in flight) seemed rational. After standing in ticketing queues to be told over and over that our flight was canceled, we finally got someone to listen. They decided the fastest way to get to LA was to catch a flight to Melbourne and leave from there, as Sydney Airport was under virtual lock-down due to a 'Medical Emergency'.

We made our way to the domestic flight terminal to board the Melbourne bound plane, only to be told.... it was delayed.

Obviously this meant that the chance of making the connection to the Melbourne – LA flight was going to be diminished. We sweated. An hour later we were told that the Melbourne to LA flight had also been delayed, so we had nothing to worry about.

But of course we did!

If that flight was delayed, then our LA connections would be missed...

So of course, our LA connections were missed.

After being searched, probed and prodded at both Sydney and Melbourne domestic terminals, we were really ready to sit for the next 15 hours on an A380 and sleep... but there was more to come...

PLANNING A TRIP TO THE USA

In order to catch a domestic flight from Sydney to Melbourne, we had to repack our carry on luggage to meet the domestic conditions. So after being refused entry to the International Departure Lounge, we returned to the Ticketing office, got in a queue – just one more time, and were handed a couple of plastic bags to place some of our heavier goods in – to spread the load. After re-arranging everything a number of times until we scored little tickets to say that we complied – we re-entered the Departure Lounge after boarding had started.

A swift charge through the Duty Free aisles and we arrived to find that, yes, the flight had been delayed one more time. This was an opportunity that the security staff couldn't turn up.

According to recent US regulation, anyone boarding a flight that is bound for the US has to be frisked by hand, and have every single item that is being carried aboard manually checked. They relished the idea of embarrassing people that had secreted away battery powered devices or other paraphernalia for their traveling pleasure.

I need to be honest here – I was carrying more than my own weight, (it seemed at least) in computers, cameras, lenses and of course, hard disk drives.

As a photographer and writer, my life exists in digital media, and while I have a backup in Australia, every time I travel, I have to carry more hard disks with more information than last time. This has led me to the cutting edge of technology, which as we all know is a moveable feast. My latest set of travel disks amounts to a group of 10 USB powered notebook drives that are 2 Tb in size, each.

These were all placed in individual small pouches which were then placed in... rolled up socks; a trick that has served me well over the years. Of course I was accused of attempting to smuggle items in concealed places, but that was not really the concern of the outgoing Transport Security Officers – they would simply pass the information on to US Customs so that I would be afforded a special greeting on my arrival.

We boarded the plane without incident, waited forever on the tarmac, and took off to LA. This 5 pm flight left at exactly 8 pm, and of course, we just knew that we would miss our connections. There was no chance of a 16 hour trip only taking 13 hours – so, we had the opportunity of wondering what would happen on our arrival in LA.

We missed our connections.

As all good travelers do, we dutifully filled out our Customs Declaration cards and of course our Immigration cards. I was traveling on a special Visa, known as Advanced Parole. Now before you start with the smart remarks..."Why would the Government want to have me paroled?" etc... I have heard them all. Needless to say, so had the US Customs and Border Patrol unit.

So, as we go through the Immigration turnstiles that allow people into the Baggage area and Customs Hall, lucky me gets singled out for some special treatment. My passport is confiscated as I am told to recover my luggage and return to the 'holding pen'. This area seemed similar to a church choir box, but has a large sign above it that states Interviews for Deportees and Admission Requests.

Obviously, my life was getting simpler.

PLANNING A TRIP TO THE USA

Gayle is hovering around making gentle squawking and grinding noises – a bit like R2D2 on low batteries, and is made to keep her distance. I have to fill out a few more forms, take those backwards and forwards between a few open offices – like nurses stations – and then they stare at me blankly asking what I am going to do next. By this time I am ready to fall asleep on them – but I remarked that when I got my passport back, I fully intended to travel to North Carolina and fall asleep there. That seemed to satisfy them, so they gave me back my passport and allowed me to proceed to Customs with Gayle and baggage.

Confused, tired, irritated and still wondering why I was singled out for a potential deportation decision, I blundered on through Customs. When the Customs Officer asked me what was in my bags, I'm sure I said something like "my stuff". he totally ignored me, looked at the ceiling and we both sailed through.

At last we were on US soil, had our baggage and were free to relax – except of course, we had no plane to catch, no hotel to stay in and we had already been up for 28 hours.

Back in Australia, when we were being advised to leave Australia from Melbourne instead of Sydney, Qantas staff had been very thorough in pointing out that they had no liability regarding our connections, as the bookings were not made with Qantas. They would get us to LA on the next available flight, and they then washed their hands of the whole problem. Maybe our travel insurance would cover their incompetence...?

This story was echoed down the line from Sydney to Melbourne to LA.

As Gayle is apt to do, she made a friend.

Gayle got chatting to a Qantas employee while I was in the holding pen, singing the praises of the US Government. Gayle had been assured that the problem would be rectified the best way possible.

We stumbled back to the Qantas booking office in LA, and asked about re-routing, lost connections and potential brain aneurysms.

They immediately responded with, let's book you into a hotel and get you on the next available connections to your destination – Raleigh/Durham airport. This was done at standard bureaucratic speed, but efficiently. We departed with a hotel booking number, three possible flight connections and directions to pick up the Hotel's Shuttle. I believe that Gayle actually attempted to smile for the first time in over 30 hours.

She should have waited...

Our connecting flight to NC left Delta's Terminal three hours ago. We checked – the only flight that we had heard of so far that hadn't been delayed.

Naturally, we weren't on it.

PLANNING A TRIP TO THE USA

Qantas had given us three options – 2 Delta flights and a US Airways flight. We actually opted for the latest flight – US Airways, because that would give us more time to relax at the hotel, before re-embarking on our quest. Oddly, we felt that we would like a break in the action, and alcohol was not a wise option at that stage. It's now 5 pm local time, we can go straight to the hotel and catch a flight at 11:30 at night that will fly across the country, depositing us in time for breakfast – because of time zones.

Out of the queue, out the door, along the road to the shuttle bay and wait. Twenty minutes later the right bus comes along and shuttles us off to the hotel, by 5:45 pm we are in the hotel foyer, along with... 60 other people that have had a similar disaster beset them. The hotel is running out of rooms, we are running out of patience, and the time is ticking. At 7 pm we have a key and finally entered our room. We dive for the showers – lay flat out on the bed for 20 minutes, and realize we are way too wired to possibly try to sleep, and if we did, we would be way too tired to possibly wake up in time for the flight.

We agreed, it was time to go down to the restaurant (free meal vouchers courtesy of Qantas) and try to get back on track. As we waited for our meals to be delivered, Gayle and I realized that this might be a ruse to get us out of the airport, while they hurriedly packed it up and flew it off somewhere. Yes, the jetlag, tiredness and general paranoia was settling in nicely. (It's not paranoia if they really are out to get you, is it?)

Still, trust your instincts... we ran upstairs at 8:20 pm and grabbed our bags. We found a shuttle about to depart for the airport and grabbed it. We decided to go to the Delta terminal for the earlier flight (just in case something went wrong) and jumped out ready to stand in a queue for the next 45 minute shuffle waiting to be served. Naturally, we are carrying too many bags, with too much stuff to jump anywhere – so in reality, we trudged.

The queues were long and disputed, people hopping from one line to another, and another hour was wasted. We got to the Associate on the counter and of course there was no such flight, no such destination and no record of us at all.

Whimpering didn't seem to be of any assistance, and we are well aware that shouting in an airport just provides a quick trip to Guantanamo Bay – so we stuck with whimpering. It's 9:05 pm – no problem, 11:30 pm flights don't board till 11 pm we should have plenty of time.

Just time to dash up to US Airways and maybe catch the last plane to Chicago, before it became the first plane to Chicago the next day – of course we have relinquished our hotel room, so we damn well better get out of here!

US Airways was in the far terminal, so we waited and caught a shuttle bus that connects to that terminal – no drama – dropped at the door at 9:20pm.

Once again in line, once again re-packing our bags to try to comply with a change of carry-on requirements, once more into the breach.... at 10:10 pm we were seen by a US Airways Associate that was very helpful. They didn't have a seat, they didn't have a plane going to Raleigh, or Chicago or anywhere else of any value, and they had never heard of us, but they were helpful. They didn't pretend to be able to solve the problem, they helped by just saying, 'NO, you aren't flying with US Air tonight'.

PLANNING A TRIP TO THE USA

Along with the whimpering came a small bleat for ...help...

I noticed that all of the US Airways flights had a different sequence of numbers than any on our schedule that had been given to us by Qantas 5 hours earlier. I asked – I was told that those were actually more like United Airlines numbers. I wondered... could Qantas possibly have made a mistake? Could they have simply put UA instead of US as a flight designator? Worth a try, because nothing else was working.

Where in the name of all that's good and holy is the United Counter??? Oh... back on the same terminal as Delta of course. We were advised to run – it was faster than the shuttle. Running seemed like a fun idea, we hadn't had a lot of exercise lately, and we were really in the peak of condition. The directions – along the street, down the alley, across the parking lot seemed perfectly reasonable and we had plenty of time, it was only 10:25 pm and this was LA airport – no drama going for a walk in the dark with all of our worldly possessions in tow.

We made it in plenty of time. We were in a queue at the United Airlines counter at 10:35 pm. We waited, we repacked some luggage, because we were getting out of practice, and realized that the sound all around us was not the planes taking off but the people in the queue whimpering. At precisely 11:00 pm we hit the counter, red-eyed, bedraggled, whimpering and beaten.

We were in the wrong line. Start again. You'll see....

The fact that we didn't have seats together for the flight from LA to Chicago was of no real concern, as a matter of fact, a woman offered to swap seats immediately we got on board. All was good. Time to sit back, doze in front of a movie and while away the three hour flight to Chicago. The minor wait on the tarmac was of no real concern because we had twenty minutes to get to our Raleigh connection in Chicago.

The 11:35 flight started to taxi out to the takeoff position at 12:10 am – we were 35 minutes late, and apparently, so the gossip in the aisles was saying, snow had slowed down all flights in and out of Chicago. Perhaps our Raleigh connection would be late also. Everything else had been. The movie came on, exhausted and at the verge of tears, we dozed and watched on and off.

The flight time was to be 3 hours 45 minutes, but of course the pilot would attempt to make up time. The flight took 3 hours 45 minutes arriving at 5:55 am local time. That gave us 40 minutes to clear this plane, run through approximately a mile and a quarter of Chicago Airport, be searched, repack our carry on, get boarding passes and hopefully have an opportunity to stand in a queue somewhere.

We romped it in!

Two oldsters hobbling and cuss squawking at those wonderful people that always seem to cross in front of you when you have picked up the most momentum, hollering "are you sure that's the right gate number?" at each other from time to time and generally clocking better times than most Olympic qualifiers....

PLANNING A TRIP TO THE USA

The plane was late.

See, this was a good thing. This was going to be the last flight of the trip and we had ceased caring. We couldn't miss it – we were there. In good time we were given the opportunity to board. This was a walk-up micro plane operated by Mesa Airlines for United Express for United Airlines – no more than 50 seats.

Only a two hour hop across the last time zone and we would be at our final airport for the month. How exhilarating to just imagine. The airport was warm although there was snow outside. We removed our jackets and put them in our hand luggage so they would be available when we finally left the air-conditioned world of air travel.

Because of the size of the plane ALL hand luggage was to be stored in the baggage section under the plane. We weren't informed, it was just taken from us as we walked across the tarmac. We were assured that we would be able to collect it on the tarmac at Raleigh. Damn – no time to repack, nowhere to repack to and my precious laptop, hard disks, lenses and cameras were being tossed like salad into the belly of this toy plane.

I nearly cried – 20,000 miles of lugging all that stuff around, and it was finally into the terminal abuse zone. Perhaps I would be lucky. We completed the final dash to the plane, in sleet and snow without our jackets – they had been taken along with our hand luggage.

We took our seats as we listened to the flight attendant arguing with one of the ground staff – the conversation was unintelligible, but the emotions were running high. I nearly asked if I could join in, I was so ready for an argument with just about anyone at the time.

The plane at least was warm.

We also noticed that there were only 15 or 20 seats filled. That's when we were all ordered off the plane, because they had forgotten to do their safety checks, (and they sure as hell didn't need us around to see their incompetence!).

We fought a near blizzard to get back across the tarmac, back into the departure lounge and... we stood in a queue – at least we had a chance to thaw out.

Thirty minutes later, after having deloused the plane or whatever they were doing, we were allowed to board again. During the icy dash to the plane, we noticed that all of our hand luggage that had been taken from us and put onto a trolley, was now sitting on the tarmac, in the snow, on the wet concrete. Imagine the feeling of the passengers watching their Gucci handbags turn into sludge – as I imagined my electronic life being sucked out of me.

PLANNING A TRIP TO THE USA

We were ordered into our seats and told to hurry up – hell, we had been waiting for an hour, watching our worldly possessions freeze or worse, get waterlogged and they wanted US to hurry up! Before the passengers could find their seats, the plane started its taxi. The attendant was openly aggressive to anyone that she could pick on for any reason. A seatbelt sash out of place seemed like a major disaster.

Gayle and I had been separated again, I think they understood that we were ready to start plotting something – but of course we were so totally overwhelmed that thinking processes had been removed to allow the last of our energy to be directed to the autonomic reflex system. We were stunned robots.

The plane landed in Raleigh. The hand luggage was placed on the tarmac for people to pick through. All of my precious digital ware was ice cold and strewn about inside the bag. The laptop fan now screeches occasionally and then flaps and whirs a lot. The computer only works for an hour at a time, then overheats and shuts down. One of the external hard disks – a 1 Terabyte drive jam packed with images, will never work again. I have backups, but they are under lock and key, 20,000 miles away.

We collected our checked luggage, and surprise, surprise – it had all arrived, battered, handles torn, but intact. We called for our free shuttle to the hotel, waited 15 minutes and arrived to see our car in the parking lot, waiting for us. So shiny and freshly detailed, by Gayle's loving brother, it was an old friend in a new suit – perfect! It was 10:10 am Sunday local time. Hotel checkout was at 10:00 am – naturally we forfeited our room, paid for another, and sat sobbing in the shower for an hour before attempting to sleep.

We had arrived.

Total travel time:

6 hours drive from Port Macquarie to Sydney

38 hours in airports and planes

Total 44 hours travel time.

A special Thank you to all the management and staff of Qantas International, Delta Airlines, US Airways, United Airlines and Mesa Airlines for making this trip so relaxing and uneventful and making this story possible.

QUANTUM CONSPIRACY



QUANTUM CONSPIRACY

In these days of Rabid Quantum Entanglement, Sneaky Dark Matter and Subversive Pentaquarks.... its good to know that Isaac Newton was right when he said: " When you split the Apple with an Arrow, Windows will Crash and Tesla cars will rot and as William Told, Autumn leaves, will fall."

Newton's Laws were typed out on this Quantum Machine by Schroedinger's Cat which may or may not have happened... and the weight of the tome is always greater than wait of the time in a uni-dimensional square full of energetic bucky balls.





I HAD THIS IDEA...

So I had this idea...

The purpose is to see the way that thinking progresses.

A simple thought, sentence or visual stimulant that takes root, like a germinating seed can be seen as the doorway to a changed life.

Often it may be the critical view of an Ad, a News Article or even a Facebook meme. It may be a knee jerk style of smartass answer to an online comment, usually restrained under breath, but still a prompt to respond to the underlying statement that has always been in my mind...

"There has to be a better way!"

Being a self styled critic has had remarkable social implications.

For the most part, people keep their distance, knowing that I'll respond to their statements with an "off the wall" answer, or slide off into an avalanche of partially researched historical thoughts on their idea - before they have had a chance to fully explore their own concept.

So they stay away, don't discuss or shutdown quickly when I overhear and immediately jump on my soapbox.

But the opposite also occurs.

When confronted with a difficult situation, a problem that needs solving or an impossible task, these same people jump in line, hopefully for the short version, but sometimes required to hear the full rant. They unknowingly realize that the same thing that I learned in my youth, also applies to them.

In every conversation, there is a jewel.

There is that sparkling takeaway that if discovered and nurtured, can change the course of the future. Sometimes that jewel is a keyword, sometimes a product, sometimes an element of timing, but there is always a jewel, and I've attempted to not only discover it, but to pass on this concept to others that I'm with.

I have walked out of a business meeting where the primary object has been a complete failure, but then rummaged through the words that were spoken to search for the jewel. It has rarely failed. If, instead of congratulating or commiserating the outcome, we look a little deeper and search for the jewel. It has been found in a picture on the wall, a single word uttered or a totally new aspect of what was expected. But, as always, I digress.

Some people forget to look for that jewel or they talk about the jewel back in the office or once they get home, but I always took it a step further. I have always had a Jewel Box. For many years, I used an Index Card Storage Box that had a bunch of Index Cards and I would write a sentence about the 'jewel' on a card and pop it into the box. Just enough information to rebuild the memory and the thoughts that went through my head at that time.

These days I will usually write myself a Text or Email and always file it under Projects Todo. These then get indexed in Folders and Subfolders until they pop back into interest - sometimes years later, sometimes a day later. Now, that ranting mind needs real Research to discover more about the jewel. Sometimes a picture from the web is enough, often Scholarly Articles from the back pages of the internet. Then comes Patent Searches, interested companies, manufacturers and potential markets. The legal issues that arise, the public blowback and the way to refine the jewel, so that it is a reality.

So, I had this idea...



AN IMMIGRANT'S THANKSGIVING

MY HOME TOO

An Immigrant's Thanksgiving

A long hard road to a foreign shore,
A long cold wait for an open door.
Traveling far to an unknown future,
Friends are missed and memories make tears,
We start a new life, confused and unsure.
It's my home too.

+++++

But now is the time to count our friends,
Now is the time to make amends,
Now is the time to build new bridges,
Now is the time to sing... Just sing.
It's my home too.

+++++

Traveling the nation from end to end
Crisscrossing states to see our best friends,
Meeting with family to share and spend,
Thanksgiving to all, Good will to mankind.
A time for acceptance and breaking of bread.
It's my home too.

++++

But now is the time to count our friends,
Now is the time to make amends,
Now is the time to build new bridges,
Now is the time to sing... Just sing.
It's my home too.

++++

Looking back from where I came
Hoping my old friends will feel the same,
Thinking of school friends who'll remember my name.
Toasting the old world, embracing the change.
It's my home too.
It's my home too.

Written as an immigrant, celebrating his eventual Green Card arrival.

While the card states that is a Permanent Residency Card, it must be renewed every ten years!
It is difficult for immigrants to build a life in a new country, without having the fear that they may be unceremoniously deprived of any rights, with seven days notice.

I personally sold up real estate overseas to make a new life, then waited for 6 years to be accepted, eating my assets, waiting to be able to legally purchase a property.
If I was forced to leave because of some arbitrary ruling, I would never have the equity or possibility of purchasing another property.

UPDATE:

After re-applying before my "10 year permanency" expired, I was granted an extension of 36 months, because they were behind on their paperwork. So I sit in limbo for another 36 months.

By that time I will be 79 years of age and wondering if I will be required to leave, to start a new life elsewhere.

Sometimes, immigration can be its own cruel and unusual punishment.
My story is not unusual. I married my US citizen wife in 2008.
I have been asked to leave twice and had to mount an appeal both times.

They suspected our marriage was fraudulent, so that I could stay in the country. That was 18 years ago, still together, across 40+ countries, while we waited for permission to re-apply for my residency, so that my wife could spend time with her children.

Immigrants all have to fight to be here in one way or another.
Some become frustrated at all the red tape and become angry.

I understand.



Now set to music, courtesy of AI

THE DAWNING OF THE DARK AGE

THE CIRCLE

Yesterday I dreamt I saw,
an enormous room, without a door
and a million people trapped within,
paying with their lives for a horrible sin.

The ceiling was black, the walls were red,
The people inside had a feeling of dread.
So in their subterranean life giving tomb,
they sat and watched and waited their doom.

The dim lights flickered off and on,
No-one knew what was going on.
A blue grey mist moved across the room
They knew that something would happen soon.

And then I saw appear, a door,
and on it was written one word - WAR.
Those convicts wanted to find a new life,
away from sorrow, hardship and strife.

Men first, they formed a queue,
Women and children followed too.
Lining up at the door with all they had,
To escape their cell before going mad.

They unlocked the door, turned off the lights,
Peered outside to see the sight
For now they knew that freedom was dearer,
And so the dawn of another era.

One by one they crept outside,
Away from the tomb where they'd had to hide.
They vowed to oppose anyone they saw,
who might force them back inside that door.

They met a man whose skin was black,
and slew him for fear he'd send them back.
For they thought that once they'd stepped outside,
Not another soul would be on their side.

THE CIRCLE

They plundered on and one night,
discovered a man whose skin was white,
But he believed in Peace and Love,
Wore a white robe, carried a dove.

So they killed him too for fear he might,
Estrange them of their inalienable right
to find greed, hate, power and war
and remain outside that war-tight door.

They traveled on across all nations,
Causing havoc, pestilence and deprivation.
Reaping a perverted harvest of fear,
enslaving nations without shedding a tear.

They met a man whose skin was yellow,
his body all bent and his cheeks were hollow.
With his dignity broken, he begged for bread,
from an army of captors that wanted him dead.

But the warriors played their almighty role,
and traded a tractor for his soul.
His self-respect? A packet of seed.
That's the story of a victor's greed.

With conscience sated and a treaty in hand,
they carried on to another land.
But they found a barren desert there,
A vast expanse, arid and bare.

It was so dry, they couldn't survive,
Not even an insect was still alive.
But still not realizing their ultimate fate,
they drilled a well to irrigate.

Out poured water, so they drilled more wells
and decided this was where they'd dwell.
But the wells dried up - then spewed forth oil,
killing the crops, polluting the soil.

Still they labored on through heat and drought,
trying to work their problems out.
With their livestock dying, and short on gold
They realized the oil just had to be sold.

They went abroad and learned to sell,
the black gold gushing from their well.
They found the worth of their trade,
by the hordes of enemies that they made.

As time went on and their knowledge grew,
they began to make machinery too.
They built factories out of concrete and steel
and monolith flats, austere and unreal.

To protect their cities, they built ships
and jet planes for reconnaissance trips.
They made guns, arms, mortars and tanks
and distributed them among their ranks.

But still they feared their enemies were stronger
(for they'd experienced peace much longer)
So they stepped up the factories' pace
Intent on winning the weapons race.

They learnt about bombs that explode in flames
But the mushroom cloud was their ultimate aim
So the scientists worked until they found,
they could melt the earth for miles around.

They tried it once and then could see,
the destructive power of nuclear energy.
The strength of an atom, far greater than man
could control the world and achieve their plan.

They bombed and slaughtered till they felt strong,
never realizing it might be wrong,
to fight for peace by active aggression
to lay waste nations in their possession.

THE CIRCLE

POEM - SONG

And so they traveled on until they saw,
in front of them, a mighty door.
Written on the door was one word - PEACE
and on the ground, a bunch of keys.

They unlocked the door, turned on the lights,
stepped inside and closed it tight.
for now they knew that peace was dearer,
and so, the dawn of another era.

THE CIRCLE
THE DAWNING OF THE DARK AGE
BY BEAU NESTOR JAN 1971



Americans eat out a lot.
Americans eat a lot.

Five generations of fast food have created endemic obesity. Diabetes is a 'when' more than an if. Food additives are an amazing substitute for food. A loaf of sliced bread will last for a month in the US without ever having tasted like bread, but also without ever growing mold. Give us this day our monthly bread!

I know many Americans that eat out more than 15 times a week – breakfast, lunch and dinner. The cost of these 'food substitute' meals is enormous, even though the price at the register may seem small. Many people purchase from the dollar menu – \$ 1 double cheeseburgers and a \$ 1 coffee, \$ 0.79 tacos and a large Pepsi the list goes on... The custom in the US is to tip whenever there is table service. Those costs are added to the direct consumer cost, but not really figured by anyone when they work out their budget. Pricing of many products is a hidden thing.

Cars are \$ 259 per month, houses are \$ 950 per month, with the real cost being obscured in paperwork somewhere. Consumer goods have a variable Sales Tax added at the register – except for gas.... (go figger!). We sit down at a small restaurant, order a cheese and ham sandwich and a coffee for a total of maybe \$ 5.00. Tax is added at 7.5 % at the register and then we struggle to work out the 15% + tip that is to be added to that. Some will leave a tip on the table, some will add it to the register total, some will pass a waiter a few \$ 1 notes and hope it covers it.

This is all because Americans know that the minimum wage for waiters is below the poverty line, and they are 'obligated' to give the waiter a tip to offset these pay rates.

I know of staff that are paid \$ 2.50 per hour by their 'employer' and survive on tips. Obviously the system works, because students (especially) are lining up for \$ 2.50 per hour jobs, betting that they will have a happy group of clients arrive that will tip (pay) them well.

To an outsider, this is classist, demeaning, exploitative, archaic and an echo of the slave trade. This defines the employee as one that has no job security, that has to take as much of a gamble on their earnings as the owner, but without any say in the marketing or running of that business.

To me, tipping is graft.

I say that because the definition of graft includes paying someone else's employees to receive special service. As a consumer, I am paying someone to serve me, more than the restaurant owner – where can an employee show loyalty in that equation?

How about this America....

Come clean about the pricing of everything. Add the Sales Tax, reasonable wages and the real cost of that meal all in together on the Menu, so the consumer is aware of the full price from the outset.

Ban tipping – full stop. No handouts to people, no creating classism, no fostering a system which is archaic and demeaning, just vote with your feet and only eat at those places that have an all inclusive menu.

The actual prices won't have to change – but the menus will have to be re-printed to show the real price. Just the way that the advertised price of gas is the actual price of gas.

I realize that you are used to the system and it seems to work. But that's the reason it seems to work, because it's always been done that way. It doesn't have to be done that way.

Disallow tipping – make it illegal across the country. We don't need to round up to save carrying a wad of change, we use credit cards. Be honest – charge the real price.

Of course, parts of Southern Europe do it worse... There can be seating taxes, footpath taxes, city taxes, cover charges, and gratuities all automatically added to the bill, and that's all for the owner - then you are supposed to leave an extra 15% (+) on the table for the waiter. Welcome to the \$ 19 coffee!!!

Is that the way to go America?



LOOKING FOR THE RIGHT DNA MATCHES...

Hominids roamed the forests, searching for tiny marsupial mice, sweet tasting fruit and anything else that was slow enough to be eaten.

Language wasn't their strong suit. Deeds were more important than words anyway and Tok, the leader of the group, bashed through the dense primeval forest, scaring away more critters than a hunter normally would. The forest was full of fresh life, with the scent of pine and cedar and ferns. It was rich with life and vibrant with energy.

He had filled his belly and filled his pelt with food for his family, he was on his way home to the cave-hut that he had put together.

Tok's feet were sore after walking for so long, his back ached, the forest floor felt hard and cold when he paused for breath.

Tok ran his fingers through his hair to tuck his dark locks behind his ears. Nervously, he scratched the back of his neck, the smooth skin on his arm and fingers, the feathers woven into the fabric of his tunic, his mind lost in the memories of his mate's touch.

As he neared his home, he caught a whiff of something strange in the air. It was a scent he had never smelled before, and it made him more vigilant than ever. He crept closer to his cave-hut, his instincts telling him to be cautious.

Peering through the bushes, he saw shapes moving inside his cave-hut. He worried that strangers had invaded his home. He had only been on this hunting trip over one night, and others in the small village would surely have protected his pregnant partner.

Tok entered their encampment and looked around for his mate Kira laying down on a bed of leaves and grass, on the far side of the hut. The tribeswomen were pointing at Kira and chattering... Something had changed. Tok pushed his way through the group and with the flickering light from the fire-brand he saw his partner, holding a new baby.

But as he looked down, Tok suddenly saw something that made his heart stop.

The baby was different.

The baby's skin was the color of mother's milk, the tufts of hair were unusually straight and the baby's eyes were a clear blue that reminded him of a bird he once saw. The old woman that was holding the baby, babbled a story of a large, dark shape that had blocked out the sun, casting a shadow over the forest encampment.

He had heard tales of these beasts from other tribes, but had never seen one himself. Tok knew that they were dangerous, their scales as hard as the flint he used for his spear and their breath as hot as fire. He had heard that not even the bravest warriors could take one down.

But as the tribe watched, the dragon swooped down and landed in the clearing. Tok's tribe scattered, some running for their lives, others picking up their weapons and preparing to fight. But Kira was approaching childbirth and stayed in the hut.

Some strange sort of witch doctor emerged from the belly of this huge dragon wearing a head-dress like no other, walked straight to the cave where Kira was hiding and there was a blinding flash like storm lightening. Kira's scream cut through the forest as this creature spoke to her.

Tok had heard that Dragons could roar, shriek and make clicking sounds around their young, but he had never heard of them speaking.

This dragon was huge and the tribesmen said it seemed metallic and rigid like the glint of an axe. The dragon had rows of square eyes that all had different colors and there seemed to be flickering images in each one.

"What do you want?" Kira pleaded, shaking with fear.

"I have come to offer you a deal," the Dragon-shaman replied. "I am in need of a strong warrior, and I believe you have what it takes to help me."

Kira was skeptical. She had heard stories of dragons tricking humans into serving them, only to betray them later. But she was also curious. What kind of deal could a dragon offer her?

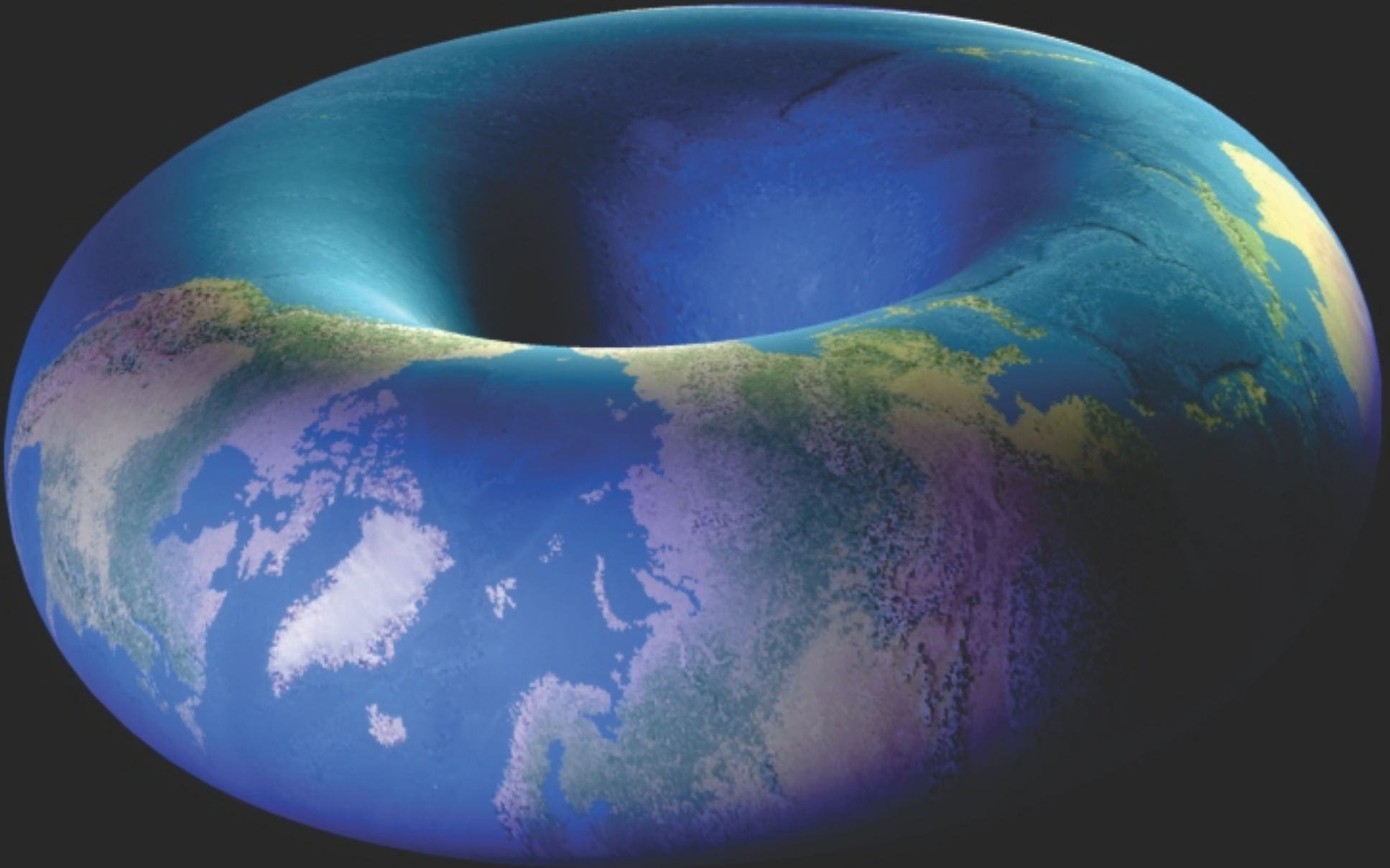
"What kind of deal?" Tok asked Kira, cautiously.

"I will make your child the strongest warrior in the land," the dragon had said. "I will give her the power to take down any foe, no matter how strong. In return, you must promise that she will have many children."

Kira had thought for a moment. She knew she couldn't trust the dragon-shaman, but the idea of being the mother of the strongest warrior in the land was too tempting to resist.

"I accept your deal," Kira said, her voice firm and steady.

WHAT IF WE DRILLED A HOLE THROUGH THE APPLE CORE?



If a 10 ft wide hole was dug all the way through the earth...

Like removing an apple core...

What would happen if you fell down that hole?

What if the hole was from North Pole to South Pole?

or from... Tropic of Cancer to Tropic of Capricorn..

or from... ?

If you fell down the hole, would you stop in the middle?

... or fall through and be ejected into space?

... be crushed by gravity before you went 5 miles?

... or would the Earth collapse before you got on your hiking boots?



BASED ON THE PRINCIPLES OF PHYSICS,
IT IS THEORETICALLY POSSIBLE FOR A PLANET
TO HAVE A DONUT SHAPED STRUCTURE.

A donut shaped planet, often referred to as a “Toroid Planet” could theoretically exist through a highly unusual cosmic process. It would likely result from an intricate interplay of gravitational forces, causing a planet to form in the shape of a torus.

However maintaining a stable orbit and preventing gravitational collapse would be challenging.

The planet’s surface gravity would be weaker at the equator and stronger at the poles, influencing its climate and geology.

Such a celestial body would be a fascinating yet most probably only a hypothetical addition to the diverse array of planetary shapes in the universe, stretching the limits of planetary science.

A toroidal planet is a hypothetical type of telluric exoplanet with a toroidal or doughnut shape. While no firm theoretical understanding as to how toroidal planets could form naturally is necessarily known, the shape itself is potentially quasistable, and is analogous to the physical parameters of a speculatively constructible mega-structure in self-suspension, such as a Dyson Ring, Ringworld, Stanford Torus or Bishop Ring.

WHAT IF WE DRILLED A HOLE THROUGH THE APPLE CORE?



Those confetti to coin size pieces of super thin plastic known as FlatJacks have been apparently been creeping into our lives and are set to change more than the original advertising tokens that they were designed for. A few games that use them, probably like the old Tazos that I remember my kids playing, and then, I expected they would fade as fads do.

About this time, thin film plastic batteries started to creep in to domestic use - in simple things like greeting cards etc...

The union of thin film batteries to FlatJacks had to happen, so now we have these tiny plastic pieces, glowing, talking and even moving.

Theses have invaded the whole of the ad industry, and of course, the spammers have got hold of them. Apart from the glowing and flashing disc with tiny messages on them, the moving ones can slide across tables, and because they are so sharp, they can even slide in under your skin, and run around glowing and flashing their messages being recharged by the electrical impulses under the skin. These have become the new tattoos and piercings all in one. With a tiny wristwatch style controller, they can be made to glow and pulse to the beat of music, assemble in color patterns and spell out messages under the skin.

I know they have a new medical application, because I woke from anesthetic with my body completely filled with them, running around flashing the required time and dosage of my pain medication.



The wonders of modern science!





EMPLOYERS

SUPPOSE YOU TRAINED YOUR STAFF AND THEY RESIGNED?

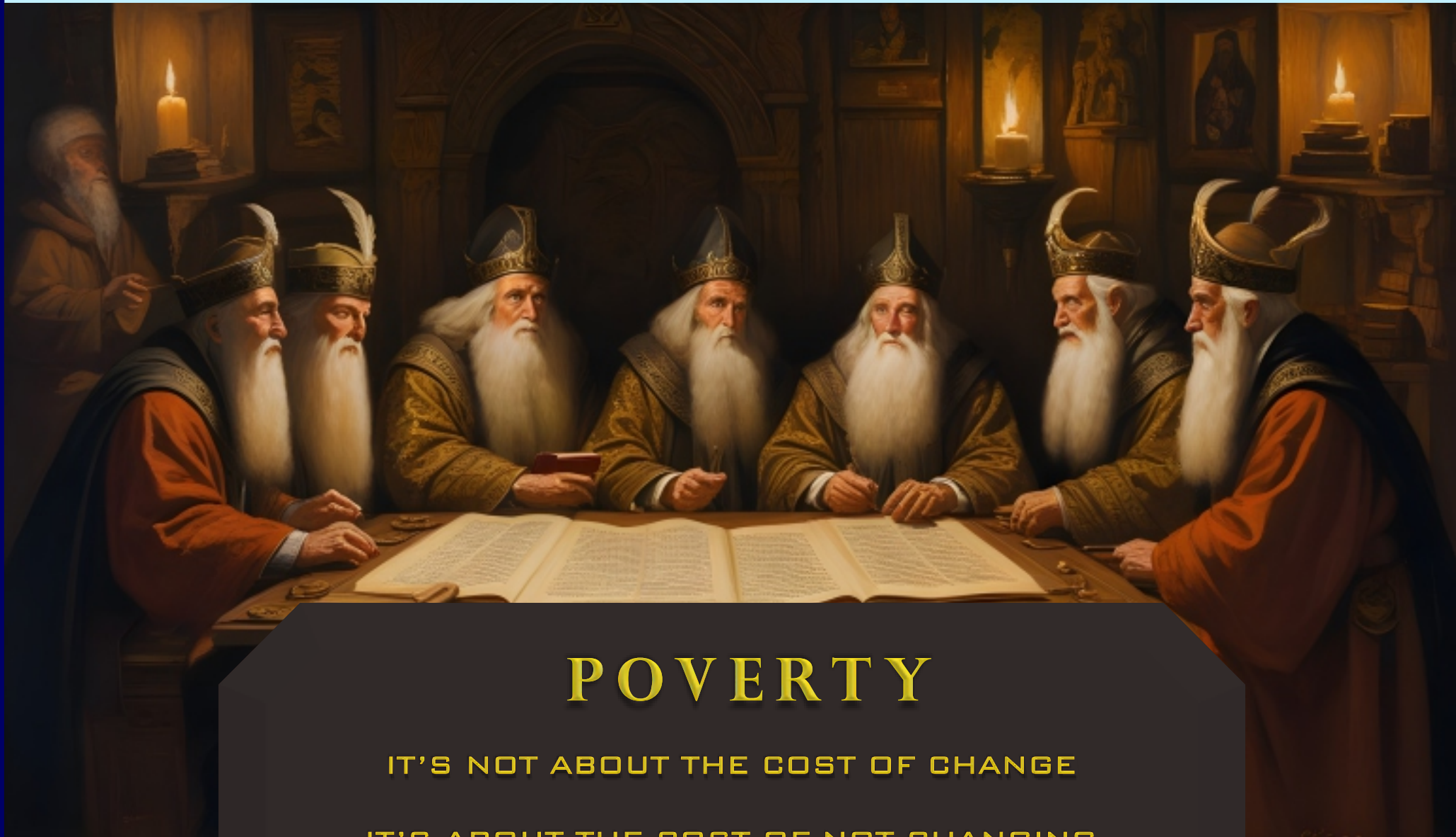
EVEN WORSE, WHAT IF YOU DIDN'T TRAIN THEM
AND THEY STAYED?



WISDOM

NEVER ABOUT WHAT WE KNOW...

IT'S ALL ABOUT WHEN WE SHARE



POVERTY

IT'S NOT ABOUT THE COST OF CHANGE

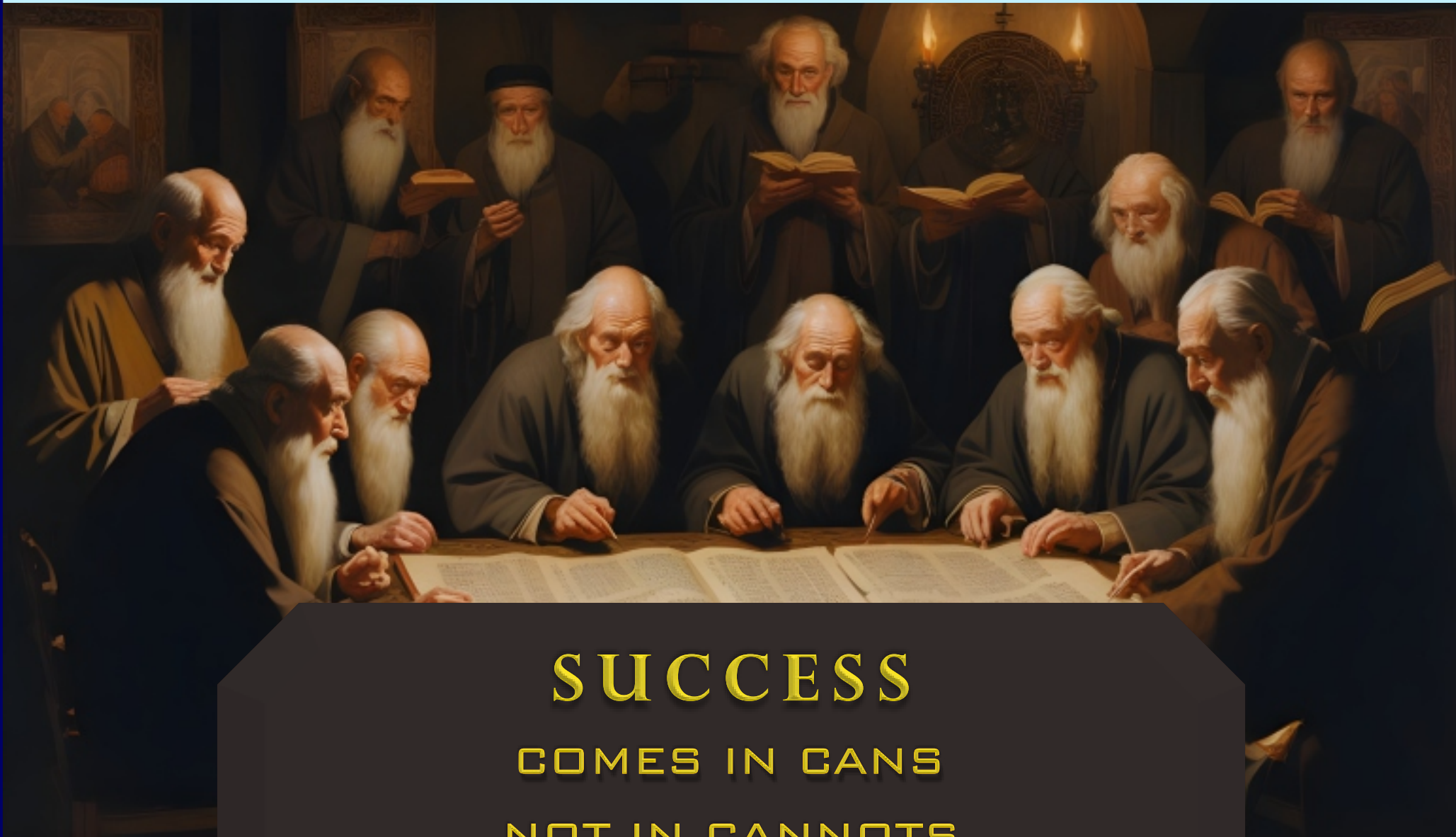
IT'S ABOUT THE COST OF NOT CHANGING



THE MAGIC FORMULA

SPEED - QUALITY - PRICE

CHOOSE ANY TWO



SUCCESS
COMES IN CANS
NOT IN CANNOTS

