Wonderful. We've managed to get through another set of political conventions.

Frankly, this is tantamount to celebrating a fleeting victory over jaundice, a temporary flare-up of malaria, or an ongoing resurgence in hemorrhoids.

If I didn't know better -- *and I'm not sure that I do, not anymore* -- I'd say someone slipped some blotter-paper acid, or mind-warping alien spores, into my preventively-medicated, yeast-enhanced beverage.

Of course, it could also be that the candidates themselves have divvied up the hallucinatory goods, right before each one got off their respective Gravy Trains, for their respective stops at Podiumville.

# # #

Flashback:

February 9th, or June 13, 2015, whenever - The Deal Is Struck

After a round of rock-paper-lunkhead, the two candidates shrugged, and agreed among themselves: Donald flipped back a raft of the brown acid -- yes, the one everyone was warned to stay away from in the 60s -- while Hilary downed a hefty pitcher of way-too-happy, super-smiley-faced Kool-Aid.

Ever since, Donald's people have been pumping the brown acid into his hyper-eager supporters' supplies of air, food, and beverages. Hillary's staff has meanwhile been been trying to overcome the enthralled throng queueing up for Bernie's Blues Brew, begging and pleading for supporters to help themselves to *her* Kool-Aid, instead, and drink some down -- one, twice,

three times for good measure.

And so it has gone, just as agreed and foretold by mystic with Magic-8-Balls: The Amazing Mister Braindamage versus The Serene Little Matchgirl emerge victorious, with Bernie's Brew watered down and slung aside, thrust on the heap of Valid Reasoning and Clear Choice.

Yes! We did it again! Everybody's a winner! We're Number One!

# # #

Donald has been dancing The Lunatic Tango, way up there on nosebleed steroids, in the stratos-Fear and way out there on the limb of incomplete utterances, ever since. Hillary is meanwhile content to limp and lope around, floating about, stifling gloating, free-styling on the backs of everything from ballet to barn-dance to ballroom and back again.

If Hillary could, she'd break out belly-dancing next, perhaps -- coiled snake included. The GOP would go nuts, and paint her as Evil Eve. If Donald could, he might try the Bunny Hop -- footed costume included. The Dems would go nuts, and paint him as the pampered child he is.

But, as far as words go? Well -- Donald has the *best* words, so he says. *(Have you ever noticed my, uh, hands? Good size. No problem. I guarantee it.)*

Hillary is never short of them, so she shows. *(Have you ever noticed how facile these are, my speeches? I dare you to stump me. I would demolish most people on*
Jeopardy
.)

# # #

Let us agree to a use new word for these uncharted times: ***Oyyow***. This word combines the very worst features of "Oy" and "Yow," in both connotation and denotation. In terms of magnitudes, it stretches like the Richter Scale, but it tips and snaps and lurches around like the Scales of Justice, after Lady Liberty and Madam Justice each have had a snootful, and are trying to help one another toward their destinations -- one blind drunk, and the other blindfolded, swinging around a double-edged sword, and a blazing torch, in the dark, staggering toward the gutter.

# # #

Yea, verily: In the Quadrennial Running of the Weevils, Hillary is the Not the Last, nor the Least, but is Clearly the Lesser of Them Thar Weevils. Punxsutawney Phil agrees. No arguments from the Easter Bunny, or Bugs. Yogi, Boo-Boo, Pooh, and Eeyore all remain mute -- it's all moot. Motion carries.

But, someone's really going to have to do something, someday, to tone down all the stupidity and violence in our cartoon reality, be they the candidates on down to their water-carriers, and over to the headless horse-crappers of the apocalypse, to the news correspondents and their sedan-chair carriers.

To recycle the old joke: I keep turning up the "brightness" on my screen, but nobody's getting any smarter -- not the People, not the process, and surely not the politicians.

But hey! Party on, dude! We got us two of them, even! Woo-Hoo! *Oyyem* and Oh, Goody!

We've survived another set of political conventions, as unconventional as each is and was, and will forever be, as we write our histories and comparisons of such things. These will remain at the pinnacle of unbelievability -- at least until nude dancing, live sex and the exploits of the torture and execution squads can be made whole on our Big Scream TeeVees at the next Conventions!

# # #

- *Let the mad hatter dance.*

- *Let the mad clapping commence.*
- *Let joy be unrestricted.*
- *Let us all be committed.*
- *In the Red Wars of Fantasy, Fallacy, and Feelings,*
- *There are no places for Blue Facts, only spots for those left Reeling,*
- *with minds ripped apart, souls scoured out, and hearts shredded and bleeding.*

# # #

Yea, verily, we have low-crawled through broken glass and barbed wire and we have miraculously found our holy champions once again, upright and intact: Centrist Compromise on the one hand, and Fascist Psychosis on the other.

On the one hand, we have a Holding Pattern, a Delaying Tactic, an attempt to stagnate and stifle needed change. On the other hand, we have a Monosyllabic Grunter, a Narcissistic Con-man, a Mussolini-mafioso-wannabe. Either way, no shots across the bow to Status Quo.

Some hands those are. Perhaps, after this election, Nine out of Ten Surgeons will urge the amputation of the one hand, before gangrene sets in and poisons the entire body politic.

I wouldn't bet on it, though. We've been establishing a chilling precedent every four years: Almost half the country is ready, at any moment, to voluntarily step into the wood chipper on Election Day.

The bigger the joke of a candidate, the worse the weasel who runs, the more idiotic and improbable the far right's suitor stepping forward, the more middle of the road we're delirious to be -- in the end.

Meanwhile, we love us some all-American sociopaths, and flirt so hard we jump into bed with them. Thankfully, morning comes, we look around, see who we went home with last night, and run screaming. Bad enough in human relations. No can do in elections. Even if there were still political mornings in America -- which there are not.

In 2008, for example, the margin of Sanity was 53-45, against McCain and Palin. In 2012, Insanity fought back, and was whittled down to 51-47 against Romney and Ryan. A terrifying number of polls currently show a 50-50 referendum, with Willful Ignorance unmindful of its doddering, drooling, and monstrously myopic vision.

Not Morning in America. Mourning.

# # #

I blame rightwingnut media for poisoning the minds of Americans with its open hostility and utter disregard for the facts, substituting harshly slanted propaganda for plain old information -- for substituting churned-out innuendo and invisible conspiracies in place of facts.

It used to be illegal to poison bodies. Maybe it still is, even in red states. Poisoning minds, however, via the use of repetitive propaganda, appears to be a *gimme* from the Constitution -- and *gimme* is just what the practitioners say, be they cloaked in Freedom of the Press or disguised as Members of Government pretending to do the People's work.

There will be no relief in the courts. The courts have already ruled there is no obligation to tell the truth in reporting the news. Score one for *info-torture-tainment*.

But, then, the Press is too busy right now, covering the Miss Potato Festival, or whatever, to abide by the Founders' wishes. It was so essential to the framers of the country that the Press was given rights above and beyond ordinary, everyday Americans, and protections and Constitutional charges afforded to members of no other industry.

But, The Potato Festival builds ratings, puts butts in seats. Truth has been unseated, out-advertised, out-monetized. Fluff and fabrication has been carefully weaponized. It has escaped its Petri dish at the think tanks, at the RNC, at the lobbyists offices, at Fox News, and

beneath the well-larded, quasi-topical weight of the Rushes and O'Reillys, and the hankering to giggle mindlessly with the brainless Hannitys.

Democracy, our main document says, depends upon an informed and engaged electorate in order for it to remain alive. In the war of ideas, Truth is losing out to "Don't Tread on Me!" flag-wavering gibberish and the plagues of Fear, Racism, Ignorance, and Self-Interest.

We have fallen to the modern electronic disease of ADHD with our gadgets, looking to them constantly for false expediencies, base elements, prurient interests, and sparkling distractions. We seek constant gratification for our continual curiosity of the banal, and we receive the empty calories of titillation and puff-pieces for our hungers.

We are neither informed nor engaged -- nor, some would say, are we now *allowed* to be. We may desire Truth, but we have no way to recognize it, as we are scarcely fed any. We rarely come across it -- how could we know it if it happens by?

Truth requires complex work to discover -- something we do not the time, training, or inclination to do in our lives. Those who seek advantage from keeping Truth prisoner have plenty of time, training, and inclination to do so, and they routinely do.

Much flag waving can be done on the energy it takes to uncover Truth, and so, many flags are waved. *Jingoists' Bingo* is popular here, as is *Racism at the Racetrack*, and *Pin the Tail on the Scapegoat.*
Meanwhile, let's all play another round of
How Much is that Narcissist in the Mirror?
.

# # #

Every four years, we work within a system of money and are stunned that money sets the tone, runs the dance, and pays the pipers.

Every four years, we break out the voter suppression tools, and get to work, re-slanting that level playing field which Wall Street has already heaved over to its current wild tilt.

Every four years, we complain about the electoral college, gerrymandering, and the entire election process.

Every four years, we cannot believe Americans would so actively take part in their own figurative executions, and partake in their own literal worst interests, by voting GOP.

And, every four years, an incredible amount of money changes hands on the auction block, and special interests beyond measure are served with all due haste, righteousness, and beaming smiles.

Bread and water, Bread and Circuses, Bread and Ink or Wine or Roses, or bottomless Oceans. No matter.

Let the Big Show blind us all.

And, if thine eyes offend thee, my good people, take The Donald's advice: *Hey, you pluck 'em out!*

# # #

Denouement:

We patriotic rubberneckers should not forget the blessings and benefit of distractions -- a rubber of bridge, say? Some RubberNinja? Another screening of "Rubber," about the homicidal tire? Hmmmm. Seems about right, that, for another run down the center of the Democratic highway.

Or else, we could once again try to avoid being murdered by Republican thrillseekers, trying to kill-us-dead by insisting we all watch yet another 3-D, back-to-back, double-bill running of "Duel" and "Christine" instead...

... *you know* -- like the past Ninety Months -- the last 2,730-ish days -- have been: The One-Note, Yes-Men, Talking-Points-Chorus & GOP Glee Club, holding the impossibly long, incredibly shallow note of " *Nooooooooooooooooooooo*" since January 20, 2009.

Jacob Marley is vindicated: He is alive and well -- *and as smug as a grump with a Trump*.

Today's Bonus:

From the geniuses at John's place at HBO, comes an ode to political campaigns hijacking music:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=32n4h0kn-88

The fun runs the length of the clip, but it really kicks in at 3:26...

(Now, if someone would only write a song about "Champions Living in the USA Getting Their Brains Sucked Out by Fox News and Feelings Over Facts," it really *would* be The End of the World As We Know It. Which would be fine with me, losing a world like that. Not that I'm Feeling Fine, mind you...)