

The story of our combative, snake-oiled times: There are antidotes, and there are *antidotes*.

Well, we also have vaccines to help us skirt -- or brace for -- the worst of what the world can chuck at us. There are all sorts of ways to avoid focus on one thing and pull attention onto another, as flashy magicians, petty pick-pockets, and pokerfaced charlatans all know.

But there are always ingenious methods to pull us back from permanently swallowing The Really Big Lies, too: truth serum, hypnotic therapy, anti-psychotic medications, cult deprogramming methodologies, and so on. Sometimes, even logic comes bubbling up to the surface in the drowning and airless front lines of public thought and reason, but not often.

Usually, we ask fire to fight fire, and ramp up to meet the lathering blather of the moment. But, really, we are free to choose our own weapons in any exchange of ideas, or in any attempt to highlight the utter nonsense of arguments presented to us as reasoned and reasonable notions.

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- Yes: *□ The arrow chosen from the quiver depends on the nature of the foe, as well as the nature of the archer. □ The nature of tool selection also depends upon the archer being somewhat conscious: □ Back-fires seldom start themselves in helpful spots, no more than games of pin-the-tail-on-the-non-denominational-animal help locate murderers.*

- *Circumstances hardly ever favor long-term extremes of any kind. □ (That all things in moderation quote
you may have been fed along the path of life is not only a preface to healthy living precepts by our founders -- it's a principle of the universe, and is supported by that noticeable bulge in the bell curve of nearly any measure.)*

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It is 2016, as we reckon things, and it is of some surprise that we find ourselves fortunate to live

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Written by Alex Baer

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in this era, able to coldly observe a downright rarity: the opening death throes of an extremist entity.

- In actuality, they are *terrorists to American principles*, when you come right down to it. And, here they are, starting to choke, shrivel, and die, without -- *get this*

--

without the use of any opposing force.

The entity will instead succumb by virtue of an overload of its own vitriol, choking on its own bile, and not be slayed by the hand of an opposing or colliding energy.

There may yet be multiple victors, but, beyond all doubt, there will be one unmistakable loser. (It will be interesting to see how long the vanquished will remain a corpse, before attempts are made to resuscitate, reanimate, and rededicate it.)

No, in this odd and unusual situation, the boxer -- if you'll allow the analogy -- will stand in the ring, alone, and the boxer will, incredibly, knock himself out, without an opponent in sight, and slump bloodied to the canvas, comatose.

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In this corner, weighing in at 30 percent or so of the American voting public, boasting a deadly right uppercut...

- "The single most important thing we want to achieve is for President Obama to be a one-term president." -- *Mitch McConnell, October 29, 2010*

... a murderous right cross:

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- "We're going to do everything -- and I mean everything we can do -- to kill it [Obama's agenda], to stop it, to slow it down, whatever we can." -- *John Boehner, former House Speaker, October, 2010*

... a lethal left jab:

- "We certainly will have a vote on proceeding to a bil to repeal Obamacare... We're certainly gonna keep our commitment to the American people to make every effort we can to repeal it." -- *Mitch McConnell, incoming Senate Majority Leader, December 8, 2014 (in the first of 60 attempts to repeal all or a part of the Affordable Care Act)*

... a vicious left hook:

- "... [the] vacancy should not be filled until we have a new President." -- *Mitch McConnell, within an hour of the death of Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia, February 13, 2016*

... and a dazzling right cross:

- "Congress... has every right not to confirm someone." -- *House Speaker Paul Ryan, February 16, 2016, in support of McConnell's call to openly reject*

any and all

Supreme Court nominees submitted by President Obama, saying Senate Republicans are

justified"

in

not

holding a vote on

any

candidates put forth

... but, *Republicanus Massivus* appears to have accidentally let its drawers slide down around its ankles, while pummeling itself rapidly in the face, and has crumpled to the canvas -- uncovered, guard down, completely exposed, unconscious.

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- *This match is brought to you by Forked-Tongue Brand Snake-Bite Cure-All and Hair Reviver Tonic -- the only snake-bite remedy that comes ready with its very own snake and faux crocodile snake holster! ☐ Now, you no longer have to wait for a so-called good reason to pop your cork and take a hot slug of cool, refreshing "feel better" to fend off truth in the world around you -- with Forked-Tongue, you can have Reality your way, 24 hours a day!*

*

Meanwhile, back in the shrinking world of Actual Real Life, we're joining our story already in progress:

So, it is 2016 as we reckon things...

What possible member of the U.S. government would dare tell a sitting U.S. President, under the cover of this member's supposed role, that this very same President should abandon and forego a ***specific Constitutional duty which is clearly mandated and instructed?***

- I'm thinking a very, very, scared one. *A stupid one. ☐ A tone deaf one. ☐ One with no imagination. ☐ One with absolutely no idea of how ripple effects work, how anything other than the shortest-term goals work.*

- I'm thinking a very, very panicked one.

- I'm thinking one who has orchestrated more than 60 Congressional votes to repeal the Affordable Care Act, the first attempt to provide health care for many more Americans who likely would have gone without any care whatever.

- I'm thinking someone who is willing to waste millions upon millions upon millions of dollars -- and six years -- voting against a beginning health care attempt for regular Americans.

- I'm thinking someone who organized those votes against health care for regular Americans, all while he enjoyed perfectly top-notch health care subsidized by those very same Americans.

- I'm thinking someone who has spent nearly eight years as a public servant, and supposed national leader, doing little else but playing petty power games of gridlocking, log-jamming, foot-dragging, and nay-saying -- games one may expect of a pouty two-year-old, not from a

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national leader -- and then doing absolutely nothing to help the country and its people move forward toward a better life.

- I'm thinking someone who is a member of a party -- a party which has a long and enduring record of doing absolutely nothing for the everyday American, and demonizing those who do.

- I'm thinking of a party which plays to emotions like fear and hate, and tries to bury thinking and fact.

- I'm thinking a party of chest-beaters who are always ready to run off to war, and who could care less about any peace of mind for the country and its people.

- I'm thinking of a party which is more concerned by far with accomplishing the **wants** of its One-Percentile masters than in tending to the

needs

of 99-Percent of its citizens.

- I'm thinking that such a party -- the Republican Party, aka the Grotesque Oafish Pissants Party -- have finally landed a clear death-blow to themselves, one heard 'round the world... one which cannot be camouflaged or pretended away, not even among the most faithful of GOP supplicants.

Finally, and once and for all, the gauzy curtains are all pulled down, and we are free to look behind them, and see the team operating the controls -- *all the controls, so many, and such a huge stadium, this room!* -- and see for ourselves all the mechanisms at work... see all the exposed goals now out in the open.... read all the candid emotions on each conniver's face.

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Those who understand know exactly why it is that this moment has come as such a shock to the faithful, to the true believers. Those who understand will do what they can, and try to catch those who start to fall, and will try to be kind to them, knowing that such breakthrough moments of truth can stagger even the strongest mind, let alone those who are using their for the very first time in decades.

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Sidebar: Somehow, I maintain room in my mind to be astonished that we have not yet heard

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from Kim Davis via the witheringly logical, incisively judicial minds of Fox News, and the dull thump of TV media stars in general, as to the nature of the Constitutional duties of Presidents to nominate candidates for vacant Supreme Court posts.

But, then again, I am also astonished that Kim Davis hasn't also set arbitrary *No Service Moments* and/or *No Soup for You Days* at her county job, in government, as a public servant, based on spontaneous, random factors she fails to announce in advance -- notions which may flit across her mind, such as:

- *Today is No Blue Clothing Day.* [hands on hips, shouting] *Do you understand me?*
- *You have to be this tall* [motions with hands] *to get gummint help today.*
- *Nope -- too many vowels in that name, come back* [spins wheel] *on the 3rd.*
- [Closes eyes; rests hand on forehead] *No, no, no. ☐ Just no. ☐ Go away. ☐ Go! ☐ Git!*
- *This is a no-mumbling-and-accent line, here. ☐ You were just mumbling. ☐ With an accent!*

- *Are you Hindu or something, or a regular person?* [Looks person up and down, frowning]

It must be great fun to be a whimsical county clerk in Kentucky!

Every day can be a wonderful test of imagination, humor, patience, and exploring boundaries and then pushing right on past them, no matter what!

Gee, wouldn't it be great to run ALL businesses like this!

And even better to choose Supreme Court Justices this way, too!

And Presidents!

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Back at the solo boxing match, the only questions at this point which matter are few.

- Is there a referee in the ring?
- Is the crowd watching this solo bout?
- If so, does the crowd know what it all means -- do they realize the history they've seen here? Can they feel Time and Era grind and pivot underfoot, in great, gnashing growls of stone gears and bedrock wheels? Can they feel and hear the massive creak and scrape of Karma set in motion?
 - Is the crowd interested, informed, engaged, willing to vote their many *confusions and displeasures* visited on them by their professional trickster party kin?
 - Or was the crowd just in the mood for blood, itching for a fight, and happy no matter who goes down for the count?

Or worse -- has the crowd already found a brand new place for its focus, or has it been ensnared again by one of the old hatreds, by one of the old lies, by one of the old bait-and-switch herrings, red as a mid-August sunrise, after a boiling, burnt-blood red of a searing summer sunset?

*

The questions I ask, they sizzle and itch inside my skull.

Gotta stop that, I tell myself, again.

*

Some in the boxing-match crowd carry a book, be it in mind or pocket. Some fans live by superstitions, some live by rote, others live thinking the book is holy and offers protection, (even though it requires no action, just occasional skimming-over). Some even know this one phrase

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from inside its pages: *By their Works shall ye know them.*

For myself, I am perfectly content to go with any obvious and logical truth -- this one, for example, or another one, very similar to this this one, which is: *There is no Doubt Remover like the actions of fools.*

- The only known antidotes to Truth are denial and distraction, of course.

Unfortunately, just as the party in question is brilliant at supplying its own knockout blows, exposing its own defensive holes, and showing off its own monstrous plans, it remains equally superb in shielding the news of its own demise from those who say they were part of the crowd that day, or anywhere in the periphery of camp.

- The referee, *even if found*, would tell you there was no K-O that day. *Never happened. Never had a match here, not on that day...*

Remains to be seen how many in the crowd will come away thinking they saw one *helluva* good fight that day. Or will later on become convinced by others that they did so.

Doubt Remover comes with no guarantees, you see -- especially not for those who will not see. (Or those already blinded by this snappy, well-marketed schnapps from the snake-bite still, way up on the Hill.)

Hurray, hurray -- Get your Forked-Tongue! ☐ Only two dollars a bottle, or ten dollars for two bottles! ☐ Cures any thinking from the scalp right on down to the insides -- just pour it on, wet down your skull, and let the protective potion seep down inside...

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Resources:

* Attributed to everyone under the sun, including Lincoln, Twain, Confucius, Shakespeare, and even Proverbs: *Better to remain silent and be thought a fool, than speak and remove all doubt.*

* Attributed to everyone under the sun, including my Mom: *You have two ears and one mouth; try to use them in the same ratio.*

Bonus:

Keeping in mind that ALL combative snake-oil peddlers are able to create their own snake-bites, as well as their own elixirs, here is an exceptionally fine example of a sternly humorous critique via Mark Twain -- one which should be leveled at the GOP and every one of its nefarious members by every sane American: <http://boingboing.net/2010/01/27/letter-from-mark-twa.html>