

PENICILLIN

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LONDON

**Troy's nutsack
destroys another
precious ancient
monument**



Troy Francis prepares to spend a penny in the Trevi Fountain



THE TALENTED MR NUTSACK

By Troy Francis

Ghosts chase me on the Amalfi Coast as they chase me everywhere else these days. Is it an unavoidable part of growing older that one is ceaselessly tormented by shadows from the past?

Rome - beautiful, cluttered and chaotic. But the trains run well. One thing Georgia Meloni presumably won't have to fix as she embarks on her premiership. We take a high-speed engine down to Napoli (one

hour in business class); and then a private car with a driver whisks us over to Positano.

Positano - a much-Instagrammed place, and no wonder, since it's undeniably beautiful. Different-coloured houses - pinks, greens, blues, creams - ice the side of the mountains that slope all the way down to the beach, and the sea. It looks iconic - the backdrop to so many duckface selfies - but whoever thought it would be a good idea to build a whole town on the side of a sharp slope, I wonder?

Our hotel (The Hotel Royal Positano) is situated towards the top of the incline. This is both good and bad: good, because it affords a magnificent view of the coast, and of the brightly lit skyline after dark; and bad, because the walk to and from the beach, up and down a series of viciously-steep staircases, is - let's just say - *a very rigorous workout for the glutes*.

The hotel itself is like the rest of Italy - friendly, antique, and an epicentre of elegant if slightly shabby disorder. Two buildings (minimum) shoved together on a vicious incline, for the first two days it was almost impossible to get our bearings and find our room again (it was room 917, and it was on the Second Floor. Figure that out . . .). And when we did find the room, the key was a miniature Italian operative diva, refusing steadfastly to turn the lock - to even budge it by a millimetre - without at least twenty minutes of gentle coaxing first.

When you have finally descended all the way down to ground level, you will find a pretty - if somewhat stoney - beach rimmed with busy upscale bars and restaurants. These establishments are - even in late September - stuffed full of a mixture of well-heeled older couples and well-heeled bright young things in search of some final summertime pleasures and social media footage.

At a beach bar I watch a man in his late sixties, his sagging face and prominent eye bags signs of a life well-lived, enjoying a cigarette and a glass of beer. The cut of his clothes suggests wealth. The faraway look in his eyes suggests a life of decadent pleasures. Now he stands watching the feast of bikini-clad youth before him, and for a moment I am envious. *If only the ageing process, already speeding ahead like a runaway train for me, would go even faster!*









Because my natural domain - as far as I can tell - is that of the ruined and debauched ageing bachelor with a twinkle in his eye and stories to tell (for the price of a drink). Youth does not - and never has - become me.

I wear a white linen, double-breasted jacket for most of the trip, even (especially?) in the sea. Positano is made for white linen. Subconsciously I think I had always intended to come here, and that was why I invested so heavily in Hawes and Curtis linen back in the spring. Clothes, vacations and sex are the only three things worth spending serious money on.

I am strongly influenced, of course, by *The Talented Mr Ripley*, the wonderful 1999 movie starring Matt Damon, Jude Law and Gwyneth Paltrow (long before the vagina-scented candles) and directed by Anthony Minghella. The film - a somewhat creepy psychological thriller - is too complex to discuss in any detail here, but suffice to say it was shot on the Amalfi coast, and features gorgeous scenery and some great outfits. As Ernst Graf knows only too well, it has always been my desire to dress like Jude Law on his way by air to Zurich: on this trip I may have compromised on location, but the spirit of my intent remained intact.

Three days of endless fun in the sun? Not quite . . .

I wasn't expecting a visit from you this time, but you turned up anyway. Always unpredictable. Have you ever had one of those dreams where someone comes to you, and it's so vivid that when you wake up it really feels as if you've physically been in their presence? Well, that's how it was. I emerged from what felt like the REM phase of sleep and I could still hear you talking to me. I could still - or so I imagined, feel your skin beneath my hand. And then you faded away. But the feeling - the feeling of you having been there with me - was as strong as if it had really happened. So much so that in my mind - and in my heart - it *had* really happened. You had been there. And so everything after that weekend was a disappointment. Because Positano without you is pretty, but empty. Like everywhere else. A picture postcard vista that is as slender and disposable as cardboard. I felt you that morning, and when you went away my appetite for one of the most beautiful coastlines in Europe dissipated, and I longed instead for the gloom of the city, my natural habitat.

MY SECRET LIFE

By An Anonymous Author

1888

VOLUME II

CHAPTER III continued

The glove shop.—Louise fatigues me.—Fred on the scent.—A cigar shop.—Three into one.—A clap.—Serious reflexions.—The sisters disappear.

I began going about elsewhere, sleeping with Louise at times; but she was always pestering me about being in the family way, which annoyed me; and wanted such a lot of ballocking, that that annoyed me also. My cousin Fred wanted me to go to Paris with him, Louise said I was going to forsake her. One night after dining with her, coming out we met my cousin Fred, nothing put him off, and he would walk with us. The next day he said in his old unchaste way, which some years in India had not improved, "So that is the woman your mother says she fears has got hold of you." It was the first time I had heard that my mother had any such suspicion, for although she had spoken to me about my wildness, she had never referred to a woman; but she had told my aunt, who told my cousin my mother was awfully astonished. For that six years I had shagged all our servants under her very nose, yet she had not the faintest suspicion of it, my pranks now coming to her ears, shocked her extremely. I told Fred that I had had Louise's first, to which he replied that he should like to rattle his stones against her arse. "Is she a good fuck? Where does she live?" I did not mean his stones to knock against her arse as long as mine did, I replied. "Oh! you are fond of her then?" "No, but I preferred her to myself." "Lord, what does it matter?" said he, "white women are scarce in India, there was one that all in my regiment were fond of, there was not an officer who did not stroke her, none of us minded; we say 'the more a cunt's buttered, the better it grinds.'" I did not see it in that light, so with the remark from him that she was a damned fine piece, we parted.



11499 B ROTARY PHOTO. E.C. MISS LILY ELSIE.

FOULSHAM & MANFIELD

Two or three days afterwards he spoke of her again, said he knew where she lived, so I thought he was hunting after her which annoyed me; not seeing that if he had got into her, I could have left her with good excuse.

I had tried to learn from Louise if she knew where Camille went all day, but could learn nothing, one night in bed with her however, whilst handling each other's privates, and under the sympathy generated by the rub of my fingers on her clitoris; she on my solemn promise of secrecy, told me that an old friend of Camille's had opened a glove and lace shop in O. f..d street. I saw a small shop, there was a Frenchman in it whose face I seemed to know. I waited near it one night, and saw Camille leave the shop closely veiled, and take the best way towards G..d.n sq..e. Madame Boileau was like an oyster, I could get nothing out of her, although she took my money. I was sure that Camille went to the shop daily, or nearly so, and as no man came to the house, suppose she got her cunt plugged in the shop parlour.

Afterwards Fred talked so much about Louise that I said I kept her. "There are two there, do you keep both?" "Yes." "Then you are a fool, you can't be sure of one woman's cunt if you are not with her always, but two together are sure to make a couple of whores,—no wonder your tin goes so fast."

Meanwhile I went out with him of a night, and we had different women. One night three of us went to a cigar-shop kept by two women just by ——— it was not an unusual thing then for two to have a cigar-shop, with a big sofa in a back parlour, one keeping shop whilst the other fucked. From talking we got to business without intending it. Fred began joking the girls, we went into the back parlour, and had wine, one asked my cousin if he did not want to lie down and rest himself. He said "yes," but wanted warmth to his belly when he rested. "You may have my belly to warm you," said she. "What here?" "Oh! they can wait," said the girl, "and your quiet friend can find his tongue with my sister" (the other girl). I had not spoken, being at times timid at first with a woman, and especially a gay one.

We said jokingly that we had no money. "I will take you all for a sovereign," said she, "and the one who I say is the best poke shall give me another half-sovereign." It was agreed, we tossed up for the order of the fucking, two went outside while the other had his pleasure. My turn came last, the excitement in thinking of what was going on made me in such a state, that I was no sooner up her than I spent; when I went out

the other girl said. "You have been in a hurry." My cousin was pronounced the best fucker. Whilst the strumming was going on in the parlour, people bought cigars, and tobacco—for it was really sold there,—little did they guess the fun going on behind that rod curtain of the shop-parlour.

A night or so after I slept with Louise, I felt uneasy in the tip of my prick, and saw unmistakably that it was the clap. It was not Louise's gift, for great was her surprise when I saw her twice afterwards, and never attempted to have her. She was annoyed, and said she supposed I had another friend, and put herself in such luscious attitudes that I got a cock-stand, and could scarcely resist putting it up her, but saying I was ill went away. Fred said he should go to Paris without me, I was to join him in a fortnight. What with being indifferent to Louise, annoyed with her randiness, her vulgarity, and temper, being in fact tired of her and the expense, and now having the clap, I determined to break off; so wrote to Camille to meet me.

I told her I had the clap. "I thought there was something wrong," said she, "but Louise I can swear has never had any other man than you, take her to any doctor you like." Then she told me, that in three weeks she meant to leave England, and Louise must do the best she could, she had taken means to bring on the girl's courses, would I send her back to France, or must she go gay in London.

I could not bear the idea of the girl being gay, so agreed to give her money to take her abroad with her, and she accepted. By her advice I wrote to Louise, said I had the clap, and feared I had given it to her, that she would not forgive me I was sure, and so never meant to see her again.

I sent a cheque to Louise, it passed through my bankers, and suppose the girl had it. Then went to Paris, my illness kept to me, so returned to London, got a little better, longed for Louise, stood opposite the house one night, nearly crossed over to have her, but resisted, and seeing a nice woman in Regent street went home with her. I was so impatient, that I pushed her to the side of the bed directly I was in the room, felt for her cunt, and spent in her in a minute, she had not taken her bonnet off. My spending hurt me, my doctor had told me I could go with a woman without fear of injuring her, but that for my own sake I had better abstain. She got up, and took off her bonnet, to see if lying down had hurt it. "I'll have you again," said I. "Let me wash, you've spent such

a lot, it's all running down my thighs." Again I fucked her; and next morning my ailment came back. My doctor said it served me right.

Shortly after "lodgings to let" was posted up in Camille's windows, on calling, Madame Boileau came to the door. The two women had left, the shop in Oxford street was shut up, and I never heard of the women afterwards.

I am astonished now, that I was wheedled out of so much money for a French virgin. How I could have done much that I did makes me now laugh, I must have been very green, and Camille very cunning; but I was also rich, and generous, which accounts for much. I see now how largely I was humbugged, but cannot explain or reason about it. I am telling facts as they occurred, as far as I recollect them, it is all I can do. Certainly I had a splendid full-grown virgin for my money, the toughest virginity I yet have taken, a regular cock-bender, and had an uninterrupted honey-moon. Camille was a most superior harlot, genteel, clever, and voluptuous, such as are not usually found; with her and her findings I had a year's enjoyment, leaving me lav, blaze, and a half-cured clap. What with women, horses, carriages, cards, dinners, and other items, I was a few thousands poorer than at the beginning of my acquaintance with Camille.

It's my fate to have sisters,—how curious I—and thrice to have had the clap, and yet not three-and-twenty,—how hard!

I was very much used up, and needed rest for body and mind; never had I been so much so before. Up to the time of getting my fortune want of money curbed my lascivious tastes, and although I had servant after servant in my mother's house, the difficulties of getting them gave me frequent rests, and prevented me generally from exhausting myself; perhaps I got just enough fucking to keep me in health.

The year's rioting with Camille and her troupe would have tried a strong man; I never counted them, but think, that in that year I must have poked something like sixty, or seventy different women, I poked everyone of Camille's acquaintances, I am sure,—so it was time I had a rest.

TO BE CONTINUED

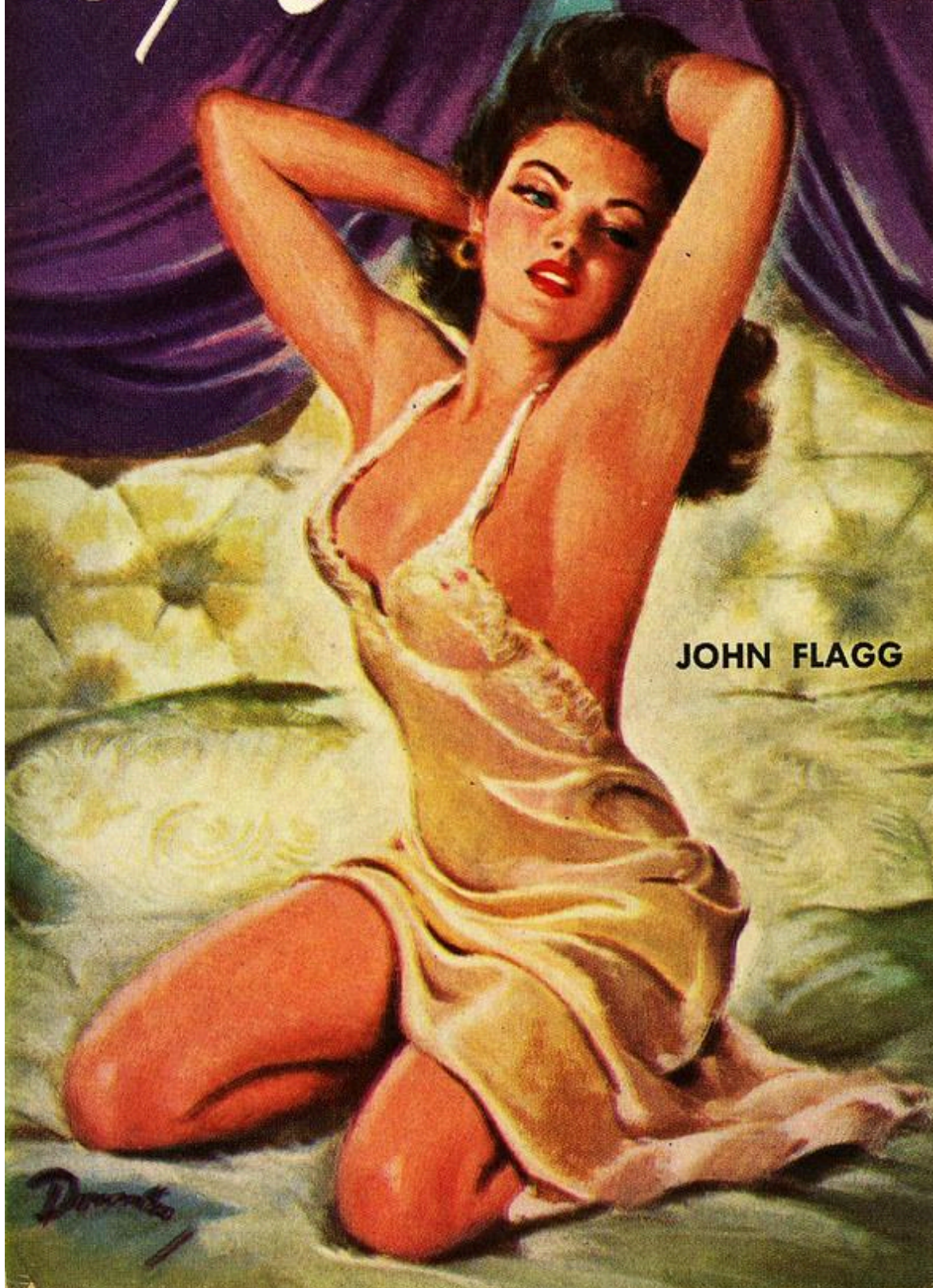
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Mystery! Women! Murder! An Oriental
Puzzle for Special Agent, Gil Denby

The Persian Cat

JOHN FLAGG



THE PERSIAN CAT

by John Flagg

(1950)

Reviewed by D for Doom

The Persian Cat is a 1950 spy novel by John Flagg. This was a pseudonym used by American writer John Gearon (1911-1993).

This was an interesting transitional period for spy fiction which at this time was dominated by writers like Victor Canning. Within a few years Ian Fleming would change the rules of the game, upping the ante when it came to sex, violence and glamour. 1950 was also a time when the Cold War had not yet come to dominate the world of the spy novel. In 1950 the bad guys were still the Nazis. The war was over but that made no difference. Nazis were still the favoured bad guys in both spy novels and spy movies. *The Persian Cat* falls into that category - a story in which the Second World War looms over everything.

The novel is set in the late 1940s. Gil Denby is an American, presumably in his thirties. He did cloak-and-dagger work during the war but his experiences have left him cynical and bitter. Much of the bitterness is over Dorothy. He has daydreams about killing her.

Denby is now for sale to the highest bidder. In this case that's the French. They want him to bait a trap for a woman named Claire Fayne. They believe she was responsible for the deaths of several members of the Resistance (the French Resistance was an absolute obsession with thriller writers at this time). His job is to persuade her to enter French territory where she can be arrested. It may be necessary for him to seduce her. They are in fact setting him up as the male equivalent of a honey trap.

Claire Fayne is living in Tehran. She is the mistress of a man, Edmund Marlan. Marlan has extensive business interests, none of them particularly honest. He was a wartime profiteer. He is ageing, clever and very dangerous.

A female French agent named Gaby will be assisting Denby in Tehran. She has already been sharing his bed.

Right from the start Denby finds himself out of his depth. He is followed everywhere but he has no idea by whom. It's likely that a number of persons and organisations have taken a keen interest in his presence in Iran. The British Secret Service, in the person of a man named Berkeley, is definitely interested. Denby thought he would be the one doing the manipulating but he finds that he is dancing to the tune of a number of dangerous puppet masters. And he starts to think that his cover (he's supposed to be buying rugs for a Chicago department store) might be very threadbare indeed.

In fact it's possible that everybody in Tehran knows more about what's going on than Gil Denby.

Denby is doing the job for money but he has his own reasons for hating women like Claire Fayne. Those reasons have to do with Dorothy.

This novel offers as much paranoia as any spy fiction fan could hope for. Denby doesn't know whom to trust. Maybe everybody is out to get him.

There's plenty of action as well. Not as much action as you'll find in spy novels after Ian Fleming came along, but plenty of action by 1950 spy novel standards.

Gil Denby is no James Bond. He's a character straight out of American hardboiled/noir fiction. He's a cynical loser with a chip on his shoulder. He hasn't lost all his idealism but what little remains is sadly frayed around the edges. He doesn't trust women. When he does trust a woman, or when he does regain some of his idealism, life comes along and kicks him in the guts.

I have no idea how authentic or inauthentic the Tehran setting is but it doesn't matter. This is not the real world, it's spy fiction world. However inaccurate it might be, the setting provides a perfect background for a story about a drifter like Denby and it gives the book the touch of exoticism that readers at that time craved.

This is a story of betrayals in the past and betrayals in the present and Denby starts to think he may become guilty of betrayal as well, or at least complicit in betrayal. Betrayals in the world of espionage can of course be personal or professional and the book tends to suggest that personal betrayals are worse. Gil Denby certainly feels that way. He's been betrayed in love before and he really feels that there's nothing worse. And when he thinks he might betray love he has to do some serious re-evaluating.

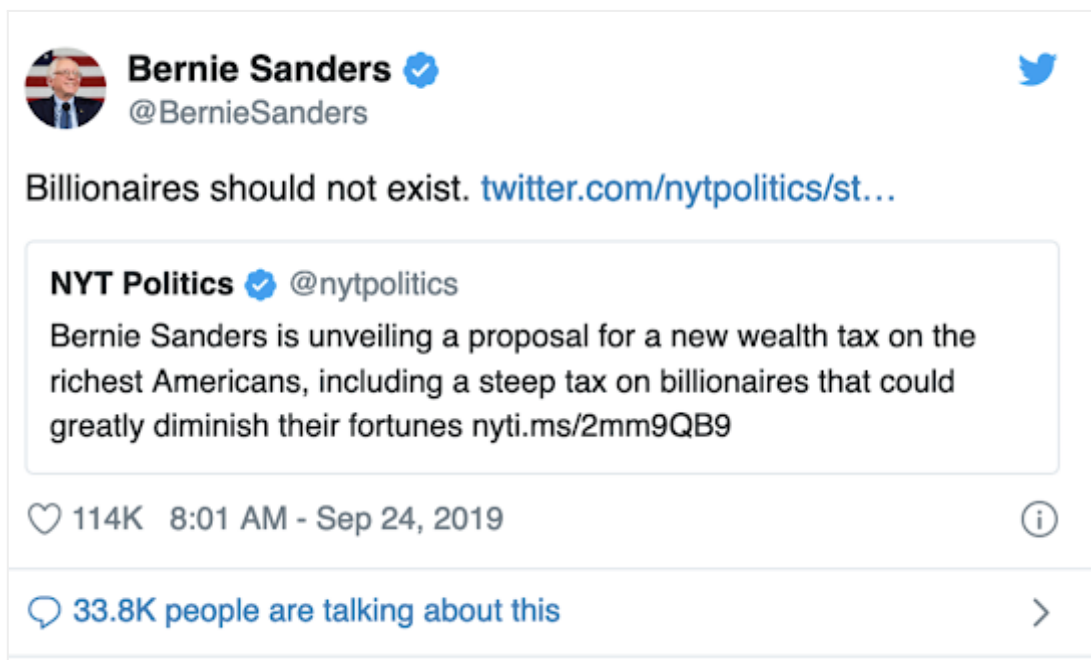
The plot twists are quite satisfactory. There's some effective atmosphere and it's all pretty entertaining. I enjoyed it enough to go looking for more of Flagg's spy novels. Stark House have re-issued quite a few of his books so availability is not an issue. *The Persian Cat* has been re-issued in their excellent Black Gat Books range. Highly recommended.

WHY WE NEED BILLIONAIRES

By Drive by Curiosity

In recent days a funny twitter dispute happened (cnbc). Senator Bernie Sanders complained that the extremely wealthy don't pay their fair share of taxes and Tesla's CEO Elon Musk responded by tweeting "I didn't know that you are still alive" and continued with "Bernie is a taker not a maker". In the following days Musk started selling tons of his Tesla shares which will cause him a huge tax bill.

Sen. Sander's aversion against billionaires is well known:



(cnn.com)

Bernie is wrong. America's rise was driven by inventors & entrepreneurs who often became billionaires (in today's money). America benefited from Samuel Slater, who developed a cotton spinning machine in the 18th century and from Oliver Evans, who created a flour mill. Steel magnate Andrew Carnegie & Cornelius Vanderbilt created a network of railroads which had an important role in the development of the vast nation. In the early 1920s Henry Ford, who was obsessed with driving production costs lower, made cars affordable for the masses and so created a huge industry and wealth for the whole nation. The banker JP Morgan used his own huge

fortune and his enormous influence on Wall Street to hinder the bank panic from 1907 to evolve into a full-fledged depression.

Yes, billionaires amassed fortunes, but we, the society, gained as well. Prof. Nordhaus, winner of the Economics Nobel Prize in 2018, wrote in his 2004 paper "Schumpeterian Profits in the American Economy: Theory and Measurement": "Only a minuscule fraction of the social returns from technological advances over the 1948-2001 period was captured by producers, indicating that most of the benefits of technological change are passed on to consumers rather than captured by producers." (aier.org). According to Nordhaus "producers, on average, capture a mere 2.2% of the total benefits of their successful introduction into markets of technological advances. A whopping 97.8 % of those benefits are enjoyed by people each of whom as a consumer did nothing other than exercise his right to spend his money on those options that he judges best for himself".

Today millions of Americans benefit from Sam Walton, who founded Walmart in 1962, by being able to purchase a lot of things for very low prices, especially people with a tight budget are better off thanks to him. Millions of Germans - and some Americans & British - buy cheap things at the supermarket chains Aldi Nord & Aldi Süd, founded & owned by brothers Karl and Theo Albrecht. Millions enjoy the comfort to have a huge variety of goods delivered fast & cheap to their homes - thanks to Jeff Bezos & Amazon. Bezos' obsession with customer service, low costs & prices forces the whole retail industry to get more efficient and customer friendly. It takes only a few clicks to make a purchase that will arrive at their home in about a day in most cases. The Amazon effect is making the economy more efficient & flexible. Many startups & established companies use Amazon's cloud computing services (AWS) for processing & storing information. Bezos' Amazon also started cloud computing which reduces the costs of managing corporations, researching complicated topics and multiple other complex tasks considerably. Thanks to the cloud, new ideas can spread faster, which is encouraging discoveries and inventions.

Google founders Larry Page & Sergey Brin became billionaires by offering online search, maps & other services for free. More than two billion people are using Zuckerberg's Facebook to communicate with their friends & relatives worldwide without paying any cent. All these billionaire entrepreneurs made their fortunes because they had ideas, took risks and worked hard - and they deliver a huge service to society.

Sanders, Warren & Co. claim that the billionaire's wealth would be in better hands when they take it away (wealth & capital gains taxes). Does the government really know how to use money better than these billionaires? Gates, Musk, Bezos & Co. have a proven talent for finding and investing in successful technologies & businesses. What business experience do Warren, Sanders & their bureaucrats have?



(twitter)

Elon Musk doesn't get a salary, he is paid in Tesla stocks which made him a billionaire and the car company can keep the money and invests in its business. Nike co-founder Phil Knight's recalls in his memoir: "Any dollar that wasn't nailed down I was plowing directly back into the business" (realclearmarkets).

Elon Musk invests a part of his wealth also in his "Boring Company" which builds tunnel boring machines. He wants to dig a network of cheap tunnels which are optimized for electric vehicles. Musk also plans to implement Hyperloop - a high-speed transportation system (reduced-pressure tubes in which pressurized capsules ride on an air cushion driven by linear induction motors and air compressors). All these projects will make transportation much cheaper & environmentally friendly - creating another tailwind for the global economy.

Bill Gates invests a part of his fortune in a series of startups including Grail, a life sciences company working to develop technology that could spot cancer before it's incurable; Varentec, which develops products for electrical grid systems, including a software platform that lets cities more easily manage how power flows & EtaGena, a startup producing ultra-efficient generators that supply power for companies, buildings, and microgrids.

Jeff Bezos puts his private money into a variety of start-ups including EverFi, an online education and certification firm; Unity Biotechnology, a life-extension research firm hoping to slow or stop the process of aging; Juno Therapeutics, which aims to develop a pipeline of cancer immunotherapy drugs & Plenty, an indoor vertical farming company that uses less space and fewer resources to grow fresh produce year-round.

Bezos, Elon Musk & Richard Branson, the British owner of the Virgin Group, are also developing independently from each other rockets for space flights (Virgin Galactic, SpaceX, Blue Origin). The three billionaires aim to make space travel affordable by making rockets reusable. They do a service for

the whole world by risking their private money for space flights which may give humanity some day more chances to survive.

The investments by Musk & Co. are supporting the world and humanity by fostering innovation, reducing global warming through sustainable energy production and consumption, fighting cancer, supporting education and much more.

If their money would be taken by the government it would get into the hands of bureaucrats which are less efficient & competent. Transferring money to the government often leads to waste, inefficiency & corruption as you can see in New York City where building a subway costs far more than elsewhere the world ([marginalrevolution](#)).

The majority of US cultural institutions depend on charities financed by billionaires. At the end of 19th century people who had built great fortunes - like Henry Clay Frick, John D. Rockefeller & J.P. Morgan - began to found or endow museums, concert halls, orchestras, colleges, hospitals, and libraries in astonishing numbers in every major city ([driveby](#)). The billionaire Carnegie - one of these donators - wrote that "a man who dies rich, dies disgraced" and gave away nearly his entire fortune. Cultural landmarks like Manhattan's Carnegie Hall are financed by philanthropists. If you visit New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art - or any other huge American museum - you might notice that most of the displayed art works are donated by some wealthy families or individuals ([google](#)). Even their running costs (administration etc) are partly financed by donations. Most American universities and hospitals are also funded by donations ([forbes](#)). The Rockefeller Foundation, based on the oil profits amassed by the Rockefeller family, has been supporting science, education, culture & health care for decades. Industrialist Peter Cooper initiated New York's "The Cooper Union", which is still the only major college in the US which charges no tuition and John Jacob Astor founded the Astor Library, the core of the New York Public Library, the largest privately financed library in the world. Where would America be without billionaires?

In 2017 Americans gave over \$400 billion to charitable causes with the largest growth in contributions coming from foundations created by major philanthropists (i.e. the ultra-rich). Warren Buffett and Bill Gates developed "The Giving Pledge" in 2010 to encourage the world's wealthiest individuals to give away more than half of their wealth to charitable causes. To date more than 204 individuals and families have pledged to donate over \$500 Billion. Bill & Melanie Gates declared that they are willing to give half their wealth to vetted charities of his choosing.

Do Sanders, Warren & Co. really know how to spend this money more beneficially for society?

Billionaires like Musk, Bezos, Gates are making the world a better place. The government should not try to stop them.

Ernst Graf's

FREE LIFE

Oktoberfest has begun, which I always find thrilling, although I would not dream of setting foot in Munich while it is still going. That is my idea of hell on Earth.

Circumstances did once compel me to go to Munich during the festival and I hated it, it was no longer the city I recognised and loved. I got out of Munich again as soon as I was able. However, I celebrate it as a symbol of a time of year, when the hideous summer is finally over, and the Witching Months are once more upon us, when the dark nights draw in early, and cover of darkness gives one free rein again to resume one's nefarious illicit activities. It is time when once more I can: Travel. Although, as I said, not until October 7, when the blasted thing has finished.

All I want to do is get on that train to Europe, so then the agony and the sadness of the end of my relationship with — can flood my system, and I can drown in it, and gorge on it like a mother eating her own placenta. As soon as that Eurostar starts to pull out of St Pancras bound for Brussels, and that ICE pulls out of Gare du Midi bound for Munich, then the dam will burst, the floodgates will open, and I can luxuriate in that exquisite despair once again. Then I will arrive in the cold icy air of the mountains of Munich, and weeping in cold stoveless rooms I will write like Nietzsche with blue hands in my little notebooks.

I can't believe it. Today is the 11TH anniversary of meeting Lotta & Sophia in Vienna (a brief but painful interlude soon to be recounted in my second book, Lotta, shortly to be published on Amazon!). They must be 29 now, probably settled down, married with kids. To me though they will always be 18-year-old Swedish girls with the most magnificent preternaturally large bosoms, like frozen forever in time, preserved forever in amber. By God, this is why I travel!

I don't mind working every night, as there is absolutely nowhere in London I want to go and absolutely nothing I want to do. Better to work every hour God gives in order to save the money for my next expedition, back to the ice, and the high mountains. Back South. You wonder why did Shackleton keep going back South, despite most of his expeditions having no clear aim, until you discover he lived with his wife in Torquay and then you understand everything.

London is for work, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, to save the money for my travels. I want to resume travelling again and again and again. The more nights I work the less time I have to waste money on my days off wandering lost around London searching in angry frustration for anything worthwhile to do, searching in vain for anything that might provoke me into any priapic excitement whatsoever. To put it bluntly, it is now impossible to get an erection in London. There is nowhere I can go where I know I am going to get turned on. And to get turned on was always the only point of going outside the door.

As soon as Oktoberfest ends (6th) then Berlin's Festival of Lights begins, 9th to 20th October. I must admit that is a massive temptation, though financially all travel is nigh on impossible till the end of November. I could go but I would not have a sous to spend. How I love Berlin for doing things like this.

Now that I am mostly working day shifts I try to get the first train at 05:30, what my parents always called the milk train, so it is still pitch dark when I leave home, and I can imagine I am still on the "sheer threshold of the night". I feel so happy then, travelling when it is still dark, when most people are still fast asleep. I put my earphones in and have reduced my songs to just those tracks that I want to be in the BBC4 Arena documentary of my life when they get round to making it. There will be lots of film of European cities at night, scenery rushing by outside train windows, some actor reading passages from my books, and lots of strippers dancing to my favourite stripper tracks, Chanson d'Amour, Tallulah, Strict Machine We Are Glitter Mix. "You're making yourself out to be very special aren't you" my therapist always used to say to me, in a tone which suggested she didn't think I should. You want to make us think we are not special? And that is supposed to make our lives happier? It is only my sense of my specialness that has kept me alive and given me the strength to keep going.

I do not waste any time in London anymore. I am happy coming straight home from work every night. There is nothing here anymore for me. What is the point throwing any more of my money away on the thin gruel of London when I can soon enjoy the rich broth of Europe? I have booked my hotels and train tickets. As usual I experience a profound sense of depression and shame and misery, wasting all that money that I cannot afford for the fleeting illicit and sleazy thrills that travelling may or may not provide. But I just have to go and get it over with and get it out of my system, like going to the toilet to shit or piss it's just something you have to do every so often, like writing, expelling the poison from your body so it does not poison you. I do not want a flat of my own to take girls back to anymore. The only girl I want is — and I can visit her whenever I want (haha). I want now just to carry on living cheaply (relatively) with —, and saving as much money as I can to travel repeatedly, again and again, and to help — as much as I can. I have no more ambition in life than this. Oh, of course to publish my books and become famous, so BBC4 will make that Arena documentary about me of course, but that is just a means to an end, to provide me with more money to travel and to help —. Eventually then I can be reunited with — and we can spend the rest of our life living together. I want nothing else and no one else.

I am in that aching period now, between booking my holiday and actually going.

I first discovered trains as a means of truancy, and thus they have remained, irrevocably linked in my mind with the idea of escape. They are the vehicles of romance and adventure, a lifeline promising relief from dullness. I have woven a network of fantasy around the very concept of the train, so wide that the actuality of the journey can rarely outweigh the overall sense of glamour and daring which rail-travel has in my head. Myths begin naturally and then are moulded and sculptured and treasured until they grow out of all proportion to the initial grain of truth. My own love of the railways hovers now somewhere between the improbable and the insane. Sometimes, as I squeeze my way through grime and empty beer cans, past over-stressed commuters or over-wrought shoppers or over-sexed hikers, and the trains are late and the loos blocked and the buffet closed, I stand in wonder at the lengths to which I will go to foster my dream. This dream is of travel and romance, and of romantic travel. I have spent years in seemingly purposeless drifting, but I believe that when I search it is for a moment when time stands still – the pause in the ballet leap, the volatile thrill of perfection. Travelling is like flirting with life. It's like saying, 'I would stay and love you, but I have to go; this is my station.' For the rootless and the restless, and the just plain curious, it is a way of being inside the kaleidoscope, but with a way out and a flexible timetable.

From *Off the Rails* by Lisa St Aubin de Teran

Living in London is not living, it is just working and waiting to live. Living only starts when my Eurostar starts to pull out of St Pancras towards the Continent.

—'s arms offer me consolation until I can travel again. When I am with her I think about travelling; when I travel I think about being with her. It was ever thus. This is the oscillation of my life. The ridiculous pendulum swing. But I have to keep that pendulum swinging, as that provides the electricity that fuels the whole mechanism. From boom to bust, but what magnificent busts. From —'s loving arms to the cold icy air of the mountains. I need it all, I need them both. Being so far away from her will be painful, but even now thought of that pain is exciting. Travelling then is more than anything masochism? The kid biting down on the loose tooth to feel the pain and taste the blood?

TO BE CONTINUED



A SWEET SONG TO STRANGE GIRLS & SAUCY COMPANY

By Matt FreeMatt



My memory has turned into a slowly fading, two dimensional picture. I remember the painful experiences as immense torture, but I reflect on the best times as a catalyst for a feeling that words can not describe. I believe that a certain set of people were able to help salvage me from what felt like a divine joke. The set of people I am talking about are strange girls and saucy company.

Any man is entitled to question my “horizontal ethics” when he notices that I exclude the sexual partners I had during my tumultuous times. Not only do my former partners deserve their own discussion, they shouldn’t be honored like those that deserve my sweet song. It is a different set of notes sung that warm the encroaching cold contained in certain subsections of my heart.

It pains me to mentally walk back to my friend’s apartment where we eventually found ourselves in a Bacchanalian sacrifice at times. We found frivolities and we also found pain in those confines. I would race my motorcycle in ecstasy, gunning the engine, and setting off car alarms. My friends found themselves with burns of an unknown nature. We never knew what to do with our perceived pain. I

found comfort there due to it being the one place where my presence was never questioned.

Like a creature of repetition, I can remember myself walking through the screen door into the apartment. I had dropped off my shoes and I was looking forward to sitting down after a long trip there. None of my fellow sailors were around yet. I was puzzled to smell something delicious cooking. I was even more surprised to see a slender brunette with mannerly breasts.

Her smile was the most surprising thing in that moment. She blessed me with a greeting that was slathered with a sexy accent. I had felt like I had been sucked into a fantasy of sorts. I walked around the corner to see what she was cooking. The nimble creature showed me as I put my arms around her. I never knew what came into me. It must have been her little black panties and her joyous rump.

I had thought I walked into someone else's apartment until I saw two other strangers walk through the doors. One was a lithe blonde with a genteel smile. The other was a sassy, short blonde with an equally comical voice. I had joy listening to their odd stories and their equally bizarre story of how they found themselves in our backwater. I also enjoyed tan skin and ears that were worthy of being nibbled. I am sure that alcohol found its way to us as easily as sobriety did.

Two of those three ladies disappeared after our merriment. The tall blonde had a brief love affair with a dear friend, the sadness being connected to their lives slipping away, out of grasp. The brunette that evoked rapt feelings in me with her smile went home after tap dancing with a devil not of my creation. The saddest of them all was the sassy, comical one. The worst of them all became disgusted of our pain and smashed the future that belonged to a boy of the purest heart. I loved the times that we shared, but it is all in a rear view.

I had been pondering the other day the times that seem to be slipping by. I hearkened back to one of my own life's Thompsonian high water marks, which was a Superbowl XXXVIII party at a friend's apartment. It was months before I was scheduled to be discharged from the military. I was largely sober in spirit and within the boundaries of safe driving. I had already seen a few of my closest shipmates leave for their final dispositions. My newer shipmates were great company, but I felt like an older brother at a fraternity function. One of my younger "brothers" brought me out of my funk when he introduced me to a photogenic beauty that graced his arm. I wasn't sure what to call her besides "Honey".

Honey was not only beautiful, but smart and intellectual. She could fire off on all cylinders and exchange commentary with multiple people. Honey was magnetic. She was a cheerleader for a major university. She was also an honors student in a special program. I felt an unnatural warmth from her, more than what my pants could generate. Our time together was short. She went on to better things and she was dumped by my misled shipmate.

I felt like that piece of my history was capped off by a strange event, which was Janet Jackson's breast exposure. We all yelled like we were in a mental hospital doing experimental therapy. It was a high point that gave birth to one of the longest car rides in my life. I heard the saddest of covers that reminded me of the strange girls and sauciest of company. It took years to remember those bittersweet times...

ENDNOTES

Your Editor Ernst Graf—A cultured man with a passion for opera & European pornography [Marquis de Vaccine "Lord of the Omegaverse" Ω, ω \(@ernstgraf\) / Twitter](#).

DforDoom—Cult movies, classic movies, horror, cult tv of the 60s and 70s, vintage genre fiction <https://princeplanetmovies.blogspot.com> and [Classic Movie Ramblings](#) and [Vintage Pop Fictions](#)

Drive by Curiosity—Economist, Optimist, Blogger, Husband, New Yorker, Creator of unique content. Twitter <https://twitter.com/DrGem2015> and blog [DriveByCuriosity](#)

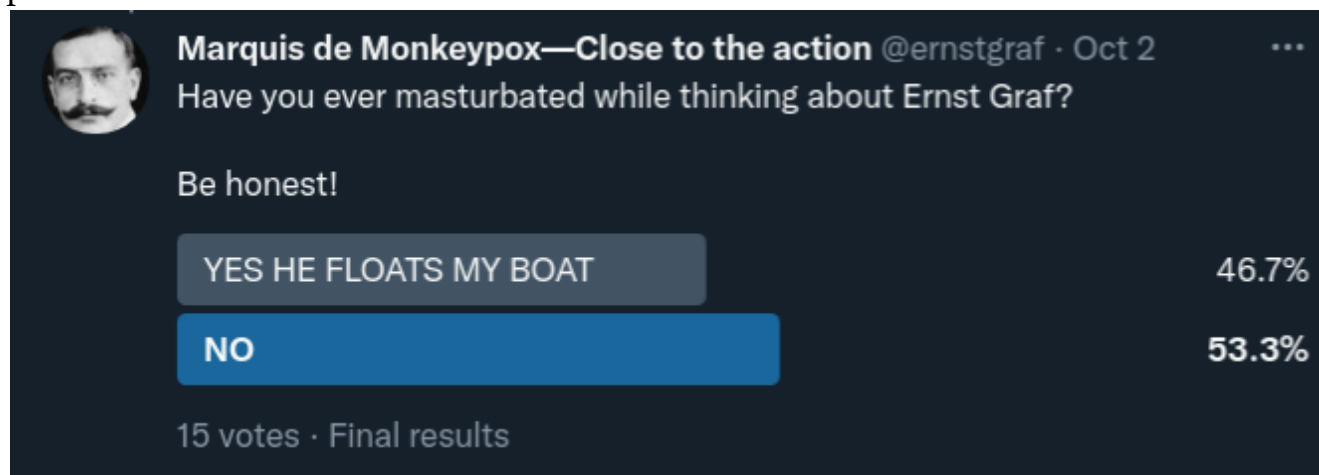
Valtesse de la Bigne—I will tell you about my sulphurous adventures in this modern Paris which dreams of stupor and which pays to enjoy galore in the arms of prostitutes <https://twitter.com/ValtesseB>

Troy Francis—Troy Francis is a writer and also a coach who helps high value men achieve success in their dating lives. Find him at <http://realtroyfrancis.com>, YouTube [Troy Francis - YouTube](#) & on Twitter [Troy Francis \(@RealTroyFrancis\) / Twitter](#)

Matt FreeMatt—Lead shill for the FreeMatt Podcast. Loves beauty in many things. Somalia's #1 libertarian personality. Matt's ethos is expounded in this video [Intro to the website](#) & on his always interesting Mogadishu Matt blog [Mogadishu Matt](#) & <https://twitter.com/freemattpodcast> on Twitter.

COVER: Troy Francis in Rome

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IF

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Ernst Graf





Showing your sex, spreading your thighs and opening your lips is taking power over men. This drooling eye which suddenly looks at them, quivers, contracts and spreads its supremacy, leaving them lifeless. Pale children praying not to succumb to this sweet Anasyrma.

Valtesse de la Bigne