

The Happy Clown

I.) At The Dawn Of Becoming A Star

The Last Joke

"Wow Peter, you're the man! They lay at your feet! You had the total control of them, you....."

".....come down, Jack. It was a show."

"Yeah, it was a show. But what a show it was! They totally freaked out! Listen, they still laughing, your joke at the close of the show? Man, this joke is a killer!"

"Yeah, a joke about a clown."

"Yeah, he's a clown, he's our first clown! We need people like you!"

"For what?"

"Why you're in this fucking mood? Listen! Nobody at the moment hits the point in a way like you! At the end, when you bring the thing with the toilet brush and the toilet paper with the face of our beloved first clown on it? It's unbelievable how dry you bring the punch line! Man, I've heard it not for the first time, but I've still tears in my eyes....."

"Be happy about it."

"Come on, this is your special time. I know that the pressure....."

".....don't worry, I will not forget you."

"You will. We all know that this was your last performance in my little theater. But nevertheless, it was one of the highlights of all time in my small house. I'm not allowed to buy me that stuff - and we all wait then: Why? And then you in your matchless way: Because my poo has it prohibited me - and then this short moment, this dramatic break, when we all are unsure whether we should start to applaud or not. Your grin, everybody understands - hey folks, that was not everything: My poo refuses to get in contact with this....."

".....Jack! I will not forget you! Yes, maybe this was my last performance here, but I will never forget what you did for me. There will be other ways to support you. And first, we have to see how the things will develop."

"Jimmy Fallon? You will perform at Jimmy Fallon? We all know, everybody say it, that this will be your nation wide breakthrough! You will become a star! Everybody wants to book you then, you can ask for every fee you want - you will get your own TV show.....Hollywood waits at the end of the rainbow....."

"You know that I'm not interested in this fucking Hollywood, this fucking L.A. shit."

"Hey, be a bit more optimistic and be happy about your success. We need people like you, today more then ever."

"Yeah, and the fucking audience is happy and laughs. How many of this idiots in the house have elected him? Yeah, they are laughing about him - we should fear him. He and his bunch destroys our nation, our community and we laugh - very good strategy. We're the happy clowns who entertain the people with their nice little clownery while they destroy our nation. You know how much I adore Charles Chaplin, but, does he defeated Hitler with "The Great Dictator"? I don't think so! The people who died fighting against the Germans? The people who tried to kill him? See all the people who march on the streets, see Mueller? See people like Elizabeth Warren or Bernie Sanders? They laugh - yes, how funny! It would be better they would march!"

"Assumed that it's meaningless what you do. Can you tell me then, why such people like our wonderful president, why dictators around the world not only fight against a free press, against freedom of expression, but also against independent art. Why are artists around the world victims of suppression? Because they are nothing than stupid clowns? Maybe you're a harlequin, we need them very much today. Aristotle - maybe he should have written about the comedy. And if he did it, this book would be one of the greatest loses in human history. There will be a time after this, and you will be a part of this change."

"Yeah, you're a Jew?"

"You know this, and I know that your parents immigrated to the USA after WW II."

"There was a time after Hitler - millions had to pay the price. How about the thought that one of the early assassinations would have been successful? As a Jew?"

"Hitler? Antisemitism was a fashion in Europe at this time. Hitler? Only a name, a name that defined an illness."

"And our wonderful president?"

"The Germans have elected Hitler, we've elected him - no revolution, no putsch, only free elections. No discussion about Russia and the electoral college now - you know what I mean."

"You know that I don't know what I would have done, would I have lived in Germany after '33."

"Would we have lived in Germany at this time, there would have been a great possibility that you would have killed me. But we live today and in this country and I see what you do today. And what you do today is important."

"I'm dubious about this....."

The End-Of-The-Year Review Show

"Hello Peter, nice that you have still time for me and our modest local newspaper."

"Apart from that your "modest local newspaper" is read in the whole state and beyond, you're the one who was the first who wrote an article about me, hello Caroline!"

"That's right, but a lot has happened during the last two years. With every show you became more and more known. And now? Your "End-Of-The-Year Review Show" was your final breakthrough - nationwide you attracted attention now."

"Please, don't start with Jimmy Fallon now!"

"Why not? A dream comes true now - or not?"

"Yes, a dream comes true in a world of a nightmare. Not exactly, whereof I've dreamt."

"But maybe we need people like you now more than ever? Can I start with my interview?"

"Yes, sure."

"Two years ago you started in our city with open mic performances. Did you expect that only two years later you're on the cusp of becoming a nation wide star?"

"It's difficult to "expect" something in this business. I hoped for, to have my breakthrough one time. But you can plan nothing in this business."

"It's not the first time that we sit together and talk with each other. But nevertheless the question: When did you have the feeling that your art has, say "substance"? When did you feel for the first time that you became a "serious" artist?"

"At the beginning of last year. I saw progress and I decided to try it. I decided to accept a low-paying job, but a job that gave me the opportunity to plan my performances more easily. A job that gave me more time for my artistic development."

"So you took a risk?"

"That's relative. I earned still enough to make my living. Also it would have been possible for me all the time, to look for a better-paid job again. Therefore, the "risk" was a very relative one."

"But you lost money - at least at the beginning?"

"Yes, that's true. But you have to decide what's more important for you. You cannot have everything - well, at least when you're, or maybe your parents, aren't rich."

"You think of somebody special?"

"No, that should be no critique. But think about, many, classic European writers for instance. They simply had the time for writing because they hadn't to work. A farmer or a working man or woman simply had not the time to write novels. Also you would have to talk about education and access to art now. But maybe that would be too much for our interview."

"Yes, I fear so. Back to the beginning of last year?"

"Yeah, sure."

"Last year you performed three different shows. The first was a....."decent result"?"

"Yes, I got some very positive reactions. The first articles about me, people like you became aware of me. Nevertheless, I performed very often in front of not more than fifteen people."

"A hard time?"

"A very hard time. I knew that this show wasn't perfect. But I thought, that the show wasn't that bad at all. But.....no real audience!"

"You came up with a new show very fast then."

"Yes, but it was not only because of the modest feedback on the first show. So much happened in our country and I felt that I was no longer up to date."

"And now it started! You got more and more commitments, the halls got bigger and bigger."

"Yes, but also people like you, people who supported me, have their share of this development."

"Thanks, but in the end you are the one on the stage. And then: "The End-Of-The-Year Review Show"! I have to confess, one of the best stand-up comedy performances I've ever saw - the reaction of the audience was fantastic!"

"Yes, all shows were sold out. I performed all the times in larger halls, but all the time full house! It was a kind of fantasy."

"And now, at the beginning of this year?"

"Have we to talk about Jimmy Fallon now?"

"I think so - and about your new show. You've a title for it already?"

"With what I shall start now?"

"The new show?"

"Yes, the new show. I will no longer work with a fixed script. In this times we have so much and so fast developments. I will work with a basis framework. But with what I will fill this framework, I will decide always at the latest possible moment."

"You have a title?"

"Only a working title - "Happy Country"."

"In February you will perform at Jimmy Fallon's show - nervous?"

"No, not in that sense. I can only win."

"A new show, nationwide - not nervous?"

"I've reached more, than I could hope for. Everything is a gift now. So many try it, but so few reach that, what they would have had deserved."

"That's a point we've talked about often. You started to perform with forty-nine - others retire in this age."

"Yeah, I waited too long. So much the more everything is a gift for me now."

"I wish you the best for you future, Peter."

"Thank you very much, Caroline! I will perform at some open mic events this month - I will try some things. If you're interested.....?"

"In any case!"

"I would have a question to you."

"Yes?"

"So far I did everything alone. But now everything becomes bigger and bigger - too big for me alone. Although that I earn enough money with my art now, that I have no longer to work in my normal job. Everything becomes too big for me alone now."

"You need a management?"

"Not a "management". But someone who would help me with the scheduling and such things. If you would know someone?"

"I will have an open ear....."

Thoughts Of A Doubting Person

I'm on a stage, but I don't wanna entertain - isn't that schizophrenic?
But why I'm onstage then?
Yeah, why?
I don't know what I should expect, that I can expect - isn't that schizophrenic?
But why I wanna be an artist then?
Yeah, why?

A vicious circle?

A Picture Of Kurt Cobain

You know this picture of Kurt Cobain, sitting on the hood of a car together with David Grohl and Krist Novoselic, pointing a rifle into his mouth? Well,.....

Well, Nirvana was no longer already, some say Kurt Cobain far beyond his zenith. Well, even if, why not singing in a glitter suit in Las Vegas, while someone kills dozens and injures hundreds?

Could you imagine Kurt Cobain and Amy Winehouse together in a retired home? You laugh? It's no joke - be happy that they are dead and bestow you the fucking stories about the dead artists and heroes you need because of your fucking boring bourgeois existence. Be happy and smile.....

Jack

"You here, in my little theater?"
"Thanks for the warm welcome, Jack."
"Hey, come here Peter! Give me a hug. - Why you're here? Not because of the show - or?"
"Tap dance? Have heard that they are really fantastic."
"They are - why you're here?"
"You always had a knack for finding new talents - I need an advice."
"Maybe I can help you?"
"You know that Jimmy Fallon is near."
"Yes, soon the whole nation will see your talent."
"I would need someone who would support me - help me, everything becomes bigger and bigger."
"I've said it to you often enough. You cannot handle everything by your own. We have more than one artists agency in the city."
"Yes, but.....I asked Caroline."
"That she should become your manager?"
"Yeah, I would trust her."
"She loves her work at the newspaper - you asked her?"
"Not directly....."
"Do it!"
"I would trust you."
"Oh Peter, I've my little theater. As you said it, I'm the one who finds the new talents. That's my part - thanks for your inquiry."
"Yeah.....you think that it would be possible that Caroline would say yes?"

"Ask her? And if not, look for an agent! I can give you some names."

"Thanks Jack, it's good to know to have friends."

"You know that you can knock at my door in the dead of the night."

"Yes, and I'm grateful for that."

"I'm a Jew - forgotten? And you? You are a German. Wouldn't it be a sad time, when a Jew would help a German no longer?"

"Yeah, that would be a very sad time."

Caroline

"It's me, Peter. I call you because - can you remember, we talked about that I would need someone for scheduling and so?"

"Yes, you need a manager. But apart from the known names and agencies I have nothing for you."

"Yeah, I would like to ask you.....would you become my manager?"

"Well.....I wasn't sure about, if I have to understand your question the last time in that way. I have to confess that I thought about it, in case that this would have been your intention."

"And?"

"I'm not sure if I would be a good manager. We have enough professional agencies and agents in the city. It should be no problem to find someone. I mean you're one step away to become a big star - who wouldn't be interested in, to become your manager?"

"You talk about the money?"

"Well, we should not be naive? Seinfeld.....Chappelle.....all others? They are no poor people anymore. There's a lot of money around it."

"Yeah, but I would need somebody in whom I can trust. It's not about the money."

"No, I know that money was never a reason for you, to enter a stage. I'm not sure whether I would like all the bustle.....you know what I mean."

"I understand, it's okay."

"No, I would like it in a way, but we all know this stories. Would it be okay for you, that I would stay at the newspaper, but would do some things for you? To support you somewhat, to make the things a bit easier for you? And then we could see in which way things developing?"

"That would be cool - really. Would you accompany me to Jimmy Fallon? I mean, a story right from the source?"

"With pleasure!"

The Human's Empathy

Yeah, laughing is important, but it would need more. Empathy is important, but it would need more. Deeds change the world, not feelings and emotions. One could say that feelings and emotions are the basis of deeds - but only in the case that deeds take place. And that's the problem.

Look at them, they laugh at the correct moments. See, how courteous and well-behaved they clap their hands and spend you the deserved applause. They feel good after it - well, they belong to the good ones. And you bestow them this feeling, this knowledge. Therefore they bestow you with their benevolence - what a nice circle, be happy and die.

But be honest, what would you expect? Endless suffering all around the world - children dying, wars and hunger, expulsion and flee, we all know the pictures - give them their moments to feel good. They will make you rich and famous - supply them with their moments of empathy.

Consternation expressed by laughing, but not by deeds - how easy this is. So let us laugh, let us

applaud, let us feel good. And all this naive who act? Yeah well, have you ever see them laughing? No? Isn't that an answer? Do they maintain our society, our order? They change the world? But they don't laugh, they can't be good people! What, they aren't able to laugh any longer, seeing this world? Then they have no real empathy - laugh and die!

Jimmy Fallon

I sit in my chair, looking at the TV - again "play". Jimmy Fallon good as always, funny guests and at the end some stand-up comedy. Definitely the next comedy star, now the first time in nation wide TV, his new upcoming tour sells fantastic, blah-blah-blah.....

Hey, what should I say! This guy is fantastic! The audience screams with laughter, they nearly freak out - hey, this is no rock 'n' roll star! This is only a fucking stand-up comedian! And believe me, I know him!

Caroline works for me now - she enjoyed Jimmy Fallon totally. The tour massively expanded yet, larger venues now, nearly every evening sold out now - Caroline has a lot to do now. Press and TV asking for interviews, other late night shows - yeah, Jimmy Fallon was great!

He became aware of me because a friend had told him about me. Thanks friend, maybe I can do something for you one day. I look out of the window and maybe you will not believe me, but I see a rainbow and Caroline enters the room.

"Again!"

"Hey, this is my final breakthrough. You remember the beginnings - open mic?"

"Yeah."

"You were there, you were always interested in this scene."

"Many of our biggest stars have begun with open mic performances. I always thought about who maybe will become a star."

"And now you found your answer?"

"Did you found your answer?"

"I would be happy, would I know the question - is something?"

"We should talk about the beginning of the tour, the requests for interviews and especially further TV appearances."

"Yeah, we should. Can we start with it tomorrow?"

"Are you sure?"

"Believe me, I'm a professional now! I'm on the spot, exactly when it has to be! Look at him, fucking good performance - or?"

"Absolutely, are you interested in some reviews?"

"Why? I guess, that they are all absolutely fantastic."

"Well, depends a bit....."

"Yeah, I hope that the fucking right wing press is not happy about my show."

"No, not at all! You get a lot of bad comments in social media now - it's extreme what some write."

"You're interested in this shit?"

"You not?"

"Would such people react in another way, then I would do something wrong. To be everybody's darling means to be everybody's fool - I hope they hate me."

"But also some liberal media is not happy with your style. They think you're too aggressive."

"How aggressive is the try to destroy our nation? How aggressive is it to destroy lives and families because your an egomaniac? How aggressive is it to ransack the "ordinary" people to get some more billions? Such media is as liberal as Hillary - fuck them!"

"You not have to convince me, I hope you know this. But I fear that this is only the beginning and that the tour will make it not better. The New York Times criticizes your style in a short article for instance."

"As I said it. They hyped Hillary and neglected Sanders - very liberal! Hey, they really wrote about me? Wow, I'm in the New York Times now."

"Tomorrow?"

"Tomorrow - I will be in a better mood then."

Look at this sweet little bastard, how funny he is - well, maybe he should be a bit more aggressive. I think he will become a very big star, will he become happy? Once there was a stand-up comedian.....

Plannings

"Hi Peter, I've pondered on the tour. Jimmy Fallon boosted everything. I think about a tour through whole America, divided in the five regions, always with a pause between them. Many requests for interviews - press, radio, TV. We could connect many things. But I would need some time for the planing."

"Wow, you're taking your new job very seriously. What's your idea."

"To start with the Northeast, this part I have to plan in detail before we can begin. For the other parts I would have more time then. Then the Midwest, not that much response from there at the moment. The Southeast and the Southwest next. Especially the Southeast will be difficult for you, not that much friends of such performing there. Finally the West. I think we should start in the north to end the whole tour in San Francisco and Los Angeles - what do you think?"

"What's your time schedule?"

"It would depend whether you're only interested in the big cities or not. At the moment we have different opportunities."

"No, not only the big cities. Well, use your opportunity! You would accompany me?"

"I have to, as your manager?"

"How long would be okay for you, to be on tour?"

"As you said it: Use the opportunity! It can be your final road to success."

"Then plan the beginning. Yes, to start with the Northeast would be good. A very liberal region, interesting cities and places to perform. Strong and important liberal media, should be an easy start for me. Then it would become more difficult - and California at the end! Very clever arrangement."

"I do my best."

"Can you give me the planning for the Northeast, when you're ready?"

"Sure."

"How long you will need - roughly."

"I can use your old planning as basis, therefor it should take not that long. In the Northeast you had already planned many performances."

"Inform me when you've finished the first part."

A Benchmark For Art

What would be a benchmark for art? To put it in a nutshell: To think about, that there would be any benchmark for art, is simply a stupid thought.

Success - that would be a joke! Easy to find an example therefore, that you can have an enormous success with total rubbish - social media!

The verdict of experts - say, literary critics in relation to literature? That joke wouldn't be lesser a joke than the joke before! Apart therefrom, that they disagree with each other, why they should be something like Pythia? An example? Houellebecq? Should I read him now? Why? Because some think that his last book is fantastic literature, because some think it's right-wing fantasy shit from an impotent sex-driven white old man, because the book is number one of the bestseller lists? What

about, reading articles about the plot, about the statements of the author.....to render your own verdict - knowing that it could be wrong?

To speed the things up again: You will find no benchmark for art. On one hand that would be no problem - why it should be a problem? On the other hand, it's a problem for the artist - at least when he's no self-satisfied asshole.

You're creating something - is it good? Who should answer this question? A runner achieves a certain time - he can easily decide how good his time is (compared to the times of others). But an artist?

I stand on a stage and an audience applauds, maybe freaks out. I'm a great artist now? Do you want total war.....

Plannings

"Okay, I can give you an update now. I've planned the Northeast nearly completely now. More precise. New England everything is fixed, Middle Atlantic I still have to fix some interviews in TV, radio and press. But maybe I should give you the basic information first."

"Yes, would be good."

"The tour will begin at February 26th, so we have a bit more then two weeks till then. Because you had started already with fixing shows, interviews and suchlike, two weeks will be enough till you have your first show. We will begin in Boston as you had planned it. I only added a second show. The tour will end - so far - at February the 26th next year in Los Angeles. It's a mix of larger and smaller venues. I've planned shows in all five regions, not in Alaska, Hawaii and Puerto Rico. The distances would be too long for this tour, maybe as addition at the end? So far everything is fine for you?"

"Yes, sounds a bit like a monster. But it would be stupid not to do it, when you have the opportunity thereto - the cities?"

"This is the list with the cities in the New England States. On the PC you can find a folder "Tour 2019/2020" with all details. I will update the data constantly. As I said, we will start in Boston with two shows, 26th and 27th. We will arrive in Boston a day earlier, time for an interview for the Boston Globe at the morning and two TV appearances in the afternoon and in the evening. This will be the official starting shot for the tour. Oh, in the afternoon at 7 News and in the evening at CBS Boston. In the followup I have planned, and still plan, various interviews for newspapers, also appearances on the radio and TV - for details see the file. As you can see on the list, we will continue with Providence after Boston. Then Plymouth, Springfield, Worcester, Portland, Brunswick, Augusta, Medway, West Forks, Pittsburg, Berlin, Conway, Littleton, Montpelier, Burlington, Schenectady, Albany, Pittsfield, Hartford, Middletown and New Haven. At the end of this part we will return to Boston for another two shows. This is the first part of the tour. As you can see, sometimes we have two days time till the next performance. As regeneration or maybe for additional shows. So far?"

"How many cities?"

"Twenty-two cities, Middle Atlantic will be just as dense as New England - and of course New York! We have to talk about the late-night shows. Jimmy Fallon would be too early for a second appearance. I fixed The Daily Show and also Stephen Colbert. Seth Meyers and John Oliver are a bit more passive, but I think that's not a disadvantage. "

"Wow, cool – the press?"

"From the top five the New York Post has been asking for an interview, the Wall Street Journal is not interesting for us - I guess!"

"Definitely not! The other three?"

"They will report about your performances when you're in the city, but so far they are not interested in an interview. I have planned four shows in different parts of the city, in very different venues. Okay, no Manhattan, no Broadway so far."

"That's no problem - Brooklyn, Queens, Bronx and Staten Island?"

"Nearly! No Staten Island."

"Two times?"

"Brooklyn of course – or better, Brooklyn and Coney Island."

"Okay, why not! You're my Coney Island Queen then."

"Thanks, the late night shows?"

"Yeah, Trevor Noah is cool! He's fantastic! What schedule we have in New York?"

"New York is very important for us. We will stay a whole week in the city. We start with The Daily Show, your first show will be the next evening in Queens. This will give us a final push. Stephen Colbert is between the first two and the second two shows."

"Sounds good. The other regions?"

"I stick with New York for a second. The local press is very interested in you, also the local TV stations. Especially in Brooklyn and the Bronx. We will have some TV appearances, also interviews. The Bronx News or the Queens Chronicle for example. Oh, and not to forget, the local radio!"

"As long as you stay on top of the things - I'm a bit confused now."

"Yeah, I have to ask you something."

"You need help?"

"Yeah, it would be good."

"You know somebody?"

"Yes, a friend of mine. You wanna meet her?"

"No, I think you know best with whom you can work with."

"Then I would have a special."

"I'm all ear!"

"An interlude between New England and Middle Atlantic."

"Yes....."

"I arranged a short Canada tour. Montreal, Ottawa, Kingston, Toronto, Mississauga and Hamilton."

"Wow, you're astonishing! But this will be a very busy beginning of the tour - the other regions?"

"Midwest, Southeast and Southwest will be not that crowded with performances - at least not so far. The last part will be very busy again. Well, the Mountain States not that much, but the Pacific States."

"A hard beginning and a hard final."

"Yeah, at the end we will have a lot of fixed dates again."

"Kimmel and DeGeneres?"

"Yeah, newspapers, radio, TV and a number of shows."

"The bay area and the Los Angeles area?"

"Three shows in the bay area, four shows in the Los Angeles area."

"Wow, that's a real final. Can you give me some details?"

"The finish will be Sacramento, San Francisco, Berkeley and San Jose. Then the way down south with Fresno and Bakersfield for example, till San Diego. I thought you would like to have a show in Tijuana?"

"Oh yeah! And then the Los Angeles area?"

"Yes. We will stay there for over a week. This gives us the opportunity to add some more shows, if needed."

"Wow, I think I should study your file very carefully now. Do you think it will become a success?"

"I think it will become a triumph!"

Jack

"Jack?"

"Yes."

"I'm frightened."

"You fear the success?"

"I would like it, I would like it would the people like my art."

"They will."

"No, how many will listen? They will be interested in me, but I'm only the artist, I'm not the art."

"It's difficult for the people to separate this, especially when standing on a stage."

"I think it's easy. There's the art - forget the artist. The artist is a person like you and me, with the same rights and the same obligations, the same hopes and the same fears. But the art is something special, the art is the measurement, the art is the artist's expression, the art is what the artist unveils, the artist as person should stay veiled, as every person has the right to veil oneself."

"You know that it not functions in this way."

"As I said, I'm frightened."

"Jack?"

"Yes."

"Do you think we're on a war?"

"You're talking about life and the world?"

"Yes."

"It's a constant war."

"I not wanna fight - would it be cowardly not to fight, simply living your life?"

"And then? You're white, European rooted and not poor, even when not rich. Yeah, live you're little fucking life, you would not harm anybody, only the ones who would need your help in their wars. I am the Jew and you're the German - how many died to "liberate" your ancestors? How many fought a war to end the Holocaust?"

"Yeah, but always fighting wars as answer?"

"Today's wars are different, fought with money and political power, commodities and tariffs, with access to education - well, sometimes still with weapons. But our primary killing weapons are the guns we can buy easily in shops. And then there's a very special war, your war, the war that you have to fight."

"The war with words?"

"Yes, look at this world today? Yes, there're still wars fought with arms, but most wars are wars fought with words. How many lies during the first two years - thousands! SOTU - dozens! You cannot argue with them, you only can argue against them - that's your war, the war that you have to fight!"

"I fear I will not be strong enough."

"You're weak, but you're not alone. And what would be the alternative? Yes, I'm the Jew."

"Would you lead me to war?"

"You're the German - why I should be necessary thereto, to lead you to war?"

"Yeah iconic soul, never I will know your name....."

"Jack?"

"Yes."

"We never can know, whether that what we regard as the reality is the reality or not - that's true, without any doubt."

"Yes."

"Why then should it be possible to fight for something? Maybe we would fight for something wrong, for an illusion, for a fake, a lie? Wouldn't it be better in this situation not to fight?"

"When someone tells you that somebody is less than you, that he has not the same rights, that he has to be treated differently - you know what I mean?"

"Sure."

"Raise your voice as you did it, and as do it. Sharpen your voice, some will not love it, but some will. Look at them who not like it, look at them who like it, and then decide. Look at them who hate you, look at them who love you, and then decide."

"And the reality?"

"Is an illusion."

"And our lives?"

"Who knows, also an illusion maybe. Maybe only a dream, but a dream we can influence. We're not only passengers on a drifting vessel - do it, whatever it will pay!"

"That's what I fear, that's what frightens me, what it will pay."

"Jack?"

"Yes."

"I don't wanna entertain."

"The people wanna be entertained."

"Isn't it strange? We wanna be critical, we wanna criticize, but don't forget the punch line. They wanna laugh, but wanna they be questioned? Is the goal, to question yourself? Or is the goal, to listen to your own prejudices? It's easy to laugh about the fucking president, knowing to be on the right side. It's not that easy, to laugh about the own fucking behavior - especially it's not entertaining. Laugh about the harbinger, as long as his words strike the others. Kill him, if he dares to point his words on you!"

"Yeah, everything is a big fucking show."

"All That Jazz - his death! Yeah, everything is only a fucking lousy show. But I refuse to be a part of this lousy show - I not wanna entertain the people!"

"But you're telling jokes?"

"I would wish, they would suffocate by their own laughing, triggered by my words. And at the end, there would be only dead bodies in the theater - and silence."

"But this will not happen. They will laugh, more and more they will laugh."

"The more they will laugh, the less they will listen to my words. And at the end, it will be meaningless what words I will say. They will laugh in any case - the words will have no meaning anymore then. The happy clown will be a sad clown then. And everybody is happy now, except of the clown."

"That's how it functions."

"I don't wanna entertain - I wanna change something!"

"Burning crosses, the strange fruit of the Southern poplar trees - things can change."

"Because of what?"

"I have a dream - words can be very powerful!"

"I have a dream.....how weak my words are....."

The Artist As Whore

Let's play a game: Take a dictionary and look up for "whore". Then read the article, the different paragraphs (there should be some), and replace the word "whore" with "artist". What does you mean? Will this function? Try it!

Okay, sure, you have to use your imagination a bit - seeing what words like "sexual act", "short skirts" or suchlike would mean then. But.....it functions - or?

The artist sells himself, he stands on a stage - even if only in a metaphorical way - and people can gape at him. And when he acts appropriate and pleasing, the audience will reward him. But if he acts inappropriate and unpleasing, then the audience will punish him.

Is this histrionic thinking, a bit self-pityingly, a bit pathetic? Maybe a question, only can be answered when you're in this situation? What would I have done in Germany after '33? Who would be arrogant enough to answer this question?

II.) Becoming A Star

Jack

"And? Prepared?"

"Well, what does this should mean, "prepared"?"

"The people are very curious about it, to see you live. A very interesting time for a stand-up comedian!"

"Yeah, I can change my program every day. National emergency and the lawsuits against it, Cohen, Mueller, his disgrace in Korea - wow, every day something new."

"Yeah, who would be able to say what will be the topics of your program at the end of your tour."

"Well, one year. Theoretically something about the primaries - but who knows. Yeah, enough stuff for years, during a few months! I would prefer it, wouldn't we have such a situation. Can you remember the time when we had a man in office, and not every day such a hustle?"

"Vague, but I think you're right. There was a time, when we had a President and a First Lady and not every day such a hustle and bustle. I think at this time they made politics in Washington, not a big show for their "followers", and to bulge their pockets."

"There's this saying: A good time for comedians is always a bad time for the people. This is a fantastic time for comedians....."

"Yeah, that's right. Boston?"

"Boston, the Northeast, will be a home game. If it would not function there, then it would function at no place. Yeah, starting there and ending in California. At least the beginning and the end should be an easy home run."

"Yeah, the Midwest and the South will be a bit more thrilling for you."

"Depends on. We will perform mainly in the larger cities there. I think it would be more difficult in the countryside."

"You know that you will be a star at the end of the tour - I mean a real big one?"

"Too many tell me this."

Northeast - New England States

Boston

We arrived in Boston in the morning, as planned, at the 25th of February 2019 - now the tour began. It began with a well-planned day - we would have no time for tourist's activities. The hotel, the Boston Globe, 7 News and CBS Boston would be our metronome - and it's cadence was very fast.

"I fear we will not see that much of Boston."

"Not the next three days. But we will have one day in the city, till we have to drive to Plymouth."

"Yeah, but I fear that at this day, I will be not in the mood for too much sightseeing. Apart from that, it's a bit of a shame - one day Boston?"

"We will return to Boston and then we will have a bit more time - our hotel."

The taxi, that we used to drive from the airport to our hotel, stopped. One of this moments, when I was happy not to be a musician. I needed nothing onstage - thought back to the 70s, when rock groups started therewith to need large semi trucks for their equipment. One, then two or three of them. Some groups had everything triplicate. One complete stage for the evening, one for the next gig under construction, one from the last gig in dismantling - unbelievable! Yeah, I needed nothing - maybe a mic!

"And?"

"Looks in reality even nicer than at the pictures."

It was a smaller hotel, I didn't liked this large international hotels. I liked it overseeable - not to say, familiar. We checked in and reached our rooms.

"We still have some time till our meeting with the reporter from the Boston Globe. Shall we walk around a bit?"

"Yeah, why not. Apart from that, that it's a bit cold, it's a sunny day and hey, welcome to New England!"

We walked not that much - it was really cold! Yes, the sun was very nice, but nevertheless it was much colder, than I was used to in the last days. And we walked by a nice looking café, the people inside smiled, the cakes looked very tasty. Therefore we decided to have a small breakfast inside this nice looking place.

"Sad? It seems that nobody recognizes you?"

"Well, first time in this region. Let's see, when we return in six weeks?"

"Oh, I think many screaming groupies will wait in front of the hotel then!"

"I hope this will never happen! I'm no rock star and I have no endeavor to become one. No, this is not my aim."

"Nice place here."

"Yeah, Boston. Art and intellectuality, very liberal, but also based on a strong believe in God. More American history than in this city, you hardly will find anywhere else. And more, this area was the beginning of everything - but the beginning of what? Shall we ask the so called "Native Americans", the only real Americans? And today? Yes, a very rich city, rich in money and political influence. But also this city has it's not so "nice" neighborhoods - also "losers" in this city, losers produced by the system. Boston, definitively no city for an easy living, not with a normal paycheck."

"Yeah, the two sides of the American Dream - I think we have to leave. We should not leave the reporter waiting."

We entered the lobby of the hotel as the woman behind the reception desk gave us a sign. A very good looking woman in a short dress, with a coat over one arm, a briefcase on the floor, stood in front of the reception and had a conversation with the woman behind the desk.

"Mr. Maurer, this is a reporter from the Boston Globe who said, that she has an appointment with you."

"Oh yes, we were out for a short walk after the flight. Sorry, that we're late."

"Oh no, as I just said to the receptionist, I'm too early. Therefore, if you should need some time to go to your rooms first, I will wait for you."

"What does you think, Caroline? It would be fine for me to begin right now?"

"Sure, shall I be present?"

"Of course, you're my manager!"

"Okay, then let's begin?"

"Where would it be pleasant for you? But at first I should introduce myself - I'm Karen Walsh, I direct the arts section of the Boston Globe."

"I'm impressed! I expected a volunteer!"

"Well, at least since your appearance at Jimmy Fallon you're in the focus. And for us in Boston it's very special. You will begin your tour here, but in six weeks you will return. Still some tickets for the first two shows are left, I think in six weeks the situation will be very different."

"We will see - a coffee in the restaurant?"

"Yes, sounds good."

We entered the small but very nice restaurant and took a seat at a small table.

"Is it okay for you that I record the conversation? It's therefor, that I quote you correctly later."

"Yes, of course."

"It's your first time in Boston?"

"Yes. It's my first time in the New England States."

"Really? I fear you missed something so far."

"Well, I have to say, that I'm not that much into such temperatures."

"Well, this time it's extreme. After a too hot summer, it's even for Boston very cold this February."

"Yeah, my home state? But I think you meant it more abstract. Yes, the Northeast is - for many reasons - an interesting area for me."

"Interesting to begin your tour?"

"Yes, to begin at the East Coast and to end at the West Coast. To begin at the north and to end at the south. Two blue areas with a lot of red in between - to say it in that way."

"You've started very late therewith to perform, had various jobs before, and in only a few years you reached a level others dream their whole life about - what's your secret?"

"Do you allow me to say, that I think that this is a stupid question? Success - success is a moody bastard. Who would be arrogant enough to say, that the best have the most success? Who would be arrogant enough to say, that success is the proof for quality? I think that as an artist - successful or not - you have to come to the point where you realize, that there's something that will answer you nothing - success."

"At least you reach more and more people, and this people are very interested in your art?"

"Kim Kardashian reaches more people with her ass, as I will ever reach. But maybe her ass is more art than my stand-up comedy."

"Maybe more artificial - you have an interesting way to perform. I've read, that you have a kind of framework for this tour. But that you're deciding very shortly in front of the performance, about the topics you will present onstage then."

"Well, who would be able to say what next week will be? Politics in this country has become to a merry-go-round. You have no idea about what will come next - the horse or a swan? Maybe a fire truck? The gags I plan for the next two days, will be shelf warmer in six weeks. Washington in six weeks? I would dare no prediction!"

"But isn't it a very exciting time for a stand-up comedian?"

"I think it's a fucking time for the people. Look at our trade deficit - it grows! Look at our national debt - it grows! Look at the wealth of the richest - it grows! Look at the worker's income - it declines! Nice to make stand-up comedy, fucking to be a working person."

"You find harsh words about this development - I've read an article where you talked about Lenny Bruce?"

"Lenny Bruce - he really risked something. I would be happy would I have his courage."

"I fear, that you will be not that much welcome at every city during your tour, as in Boston and the New England States."

"Maybe, but this situation is by far not comparable to the situation of Lenny Bruce. I will not perform in Harrison to say it in that way, but maybe I should? At least I would not have to ask about, whether there're some niggers here tonight - none in Harrison, obviously."

"Do you think that your art should have limits?"

"Do you think that the behavior of our presidents should have limits? The acting of conservative representatives in Washington? The conservative media? I fear that to make friendly overtures to them, would be the wrong answer. I have German roots as you maybe know. There was this thinking among Jews: Certainly it will not become that worse - millions died in the gas chambers. Obviously it was a misjudgment, obviously it would had been better to react in other ways."

"Shall this be a demand for action?"

"I'm only a stand-up comedian."

Caroline and I decided to stay in the restaurant for lunch after the interview. Unfortunately Karen had not time to stay with us, she had to write the article for the e-paper. We had around two hours time till we would drive with a taxi to 7 News for the recording of the interview. In their arts program in the night they would broadcast a report about me and the beginning of the tour. They would use parts of the interview therefor.

"And, what do you think? Karen is a nice woman - or?"

"Well, first I wanna read her article, before I say something."

"Hey, she's obviously a fan of you. Seriously, I don't think that it will take long and the last tickets are sold. I mean, the initially planned venues would have been sold out since a long time."

"Yes, everything is larger now. I think I will spend some time in my room till we leave."

"Yes, I will do the same."

7 News, make-up room, preparations for the interview. A young woman entered the room.

"Hi, my name is Trish. I will be your interview partner. After the make-up is finished we can start with the preparing talk. See you later, Peter."

"See you later, Trish."

So I sat and waited till the make-up artist had finished her work, for the next step with Trish.

"That's fine, Peter. Is this your first time on television?"

"No, local TV. In the evening I will be at CBS here in Boston."

"Wow, live?"

"Yes."

"Okay, this here is much less stressful for you. As you know, we've produced a short documentary about you. This interview will be a part of it, better I say, some parts of this interview will be a part of the documentary. You have no stress, we can interrupt the interview at any time, we can make more than one take, if you're not satisfied with your answer. This is a list of my questions. You can take your time to read them first and to prepare your answers."

"I think we can begin, it's not the first time for me."

"Well, I will not ask the standard questions about your career and so on. Because this we will shown in the documentary. I have prepared some questions about your show and about politics?"

"Fine, go ahead."

"Okay, let's try it. As I said, this is only a recording. You can always say, which footage you allow us to use for the documentary."

"Fine, go ahead."

"You're a stand-up comedian, and well, you're very political. Some say, that your way to express things is too aggressive. On the other hand, with your style you won over a fast growing audience. I think, it's not too much said, that Jimmy Fallon was the final breakthrough for you - so far you were best known in social media and the Internet. Do you think that you're too aggressive?"

"Aggressiveness against whom? If I would start to offend you with words now, everybody would be shocked by it, quite rightly! You gave me no reason therefor. But if you would offend me, if you would work with assumptions and lies? Then it would be okay that I would react in an appropriate way - or? Short and crisp? To be aggressive against an aggressor? Yes!"

"Some say, that we're in a war. Do you agree with them?"

"Some are interested in, that a war would break out. A war that would destroy our nation. Some work hard on it and I think it's important to speak this out, and to point a finger at them."

"To speak it out with harsh words?"

"To say it with unmistakable words. Call a murderer a murderer, this can't be a mistake. Call a racist a racist, this can't be a mistake."

"Is it that easy?"

"Well, the dead body on the ground, the man in front of, with a bloody knife in his hand? The man

with the knife hated the man on the ground. Is he the murderer? Maybe not, maybe yes - what would be a final proof? When he stabs you down also? When somebody stirs up hatred against immigrants, against handicapped persons, against women, against people who have other political ideas, against a free press - would you call this person a racist? Maybe when he puts you into a concentration camp, when you have to realize that this country is no democracy anymore? Back to the man with the knife? Yes, maybe he's not guilty, but still we're a democracy."

"So, you think that our country is threatened in a very dangerous way?"

"I think that this nation was never threatened that much in its whole history than today. Still our democracy functions, but this can change very fast."

"Some say that you only criticize conservatives."

"I criticize the Clinton wing as well, I think that the "Third Way" is the wrong way. This is also a part of my program."

"And also a part of the criticism, that you leave no doubt about your political believes."

"Well, if this is a reason to criticize someone, then criticize me!"

"And the critique, that you simply surf on the wave?"

"I voted for Bernie Sanders, not for Hillary Clinton. I was very disappointed about what happened at this time - and this disappointment was a part of my program then. It was the time that I began seriously to think about to try to become a professional stand-up comedian - I had only a very small audience at this time."

"Yes, we will show some early footage. Do you think that you can change things with your art?"

"At least it's better than sitting at home and to be dissatisfied with everything. Or do you mean: Would it gave better things to do, than to perform on a stage? Yes, shout it out loud on the streets."

"But you decided for the stage."

"Yes. I decided for the stage."

Caroline and I had a light dinner, but I had not that much appetite - I was very nervous. My first live appearance where I had to give an interview. Sure, a few words with Jimmy Fallon after my performance in his show, but that had been different. The main part was my performance, the small talk thereafter more or less trivial. This time I would be a guest in a cultural broadcast, CBS, to talk about my tour, about me and my "message". Very sophisticated, not sure about whether they would be my audience, whether this would be my place.

"Nervous?"

"Yeah, more and more."

"You know that they have talked about your show very positive in the forefront."

"Yes, sure, but I don't know whether I can fulfill their claim."

"Why not?"

"You know the guests they normally have?"

"Yes, of course. But you can see this as an honoring that they have invited you."

"International movie stars, Nobel Prize winners in literature were there, Pulitzer Prize winners, and so on. In the last program their guest was a jazz pianist. The whole world thinks that she's the best of our time. And I'm a relatively unknown stand-up comedian who makes the people laugh? I fear that the people will not laugh about my jokes, but about me."

"I'm a bit surprised. Why so much doubts about yourself now? You know that the audience loves your show, the way you perform."

"A show is not the problem, to make jokes is not the problem."

"You fear that you have to talk about yourself?"

"They are known therefor, not to stick with the standard questions. They are known for their very direct way to ask, to ask very clever questions."

"Do you think that this would be a too big step for you?"

"It's a fantastic opportunity, and by the way it's too late, but I fear I have stage fright. To step out,

into the limelight, to stand in front of the people, telling them things, that's easy. But I don't like it to talk about me - yeah, this standard questions: Boston is a nice city, or? Yes, absolutely! You have a big success right now, your feelings? I'm overwhelmed, I have to thank my fans, for everything they made possible!"

"I think that nobody expects this from you. Especially not tonight. I think it will become a wonderful evening. You will see, they will be fair with you. I fear that the hard days will come later."

"Yes, you're right. But yes, this is something new to me. I will be their only guest, not a few minutes small talk, thirty minutes qualified questions - and I? I hope I can give qualified answers - they not have invited me to roast me!"

"No, as they said in their invitation. They are very interested in your art, they are very interested in to present you to their audience, they are very interested in to get to know you. Be yourself and nothing can go awry!"

"I think this is the only possibility I have. It's good to know that you're by my side."

We arrived at CBS Boston, everything bigger than in the afternoon. Again in the make-up room, then a first meeting.

"Hello, I'm Barbara. I'm your host for tonight. As you maybe know, we have different hosts. Between host and guest exists normally a relation, the first time I saw you is nearly a year ago."

"Wow, was it by chance?"

"No, I got a hint from a friend and I became curious. First I followed you in social media, watched videos on YouTube and so. I'm very happy that we meet now and that I can ask you some questions."

"That's a bit of a surprise now, that you know me that good. But maybe that's no disadvantage. You will be in the audience tomorrow or the day after?"

"Of course, tomorrow. Our goal, the goal of this program, is it to present our audience artists from whom we think that they are interesting. We're not interested in gossip or suchlike. Our claim is to inform our audience, to give them some insights, a basis to decide whether this artist is maybe interesting for them. Our audience is very open and always interested in, to get to now new artists. It's your time now, you reach the public attention now, no longer only in social media. It's a good time to have you here, especially because you will be back in six weeks."

"Thanks for your words. I have to confess that I'm a bit nervous."

"It would be strange if not. But you have not to try to behave like an old stager. Be yourself, you're here because we think that you're very special artist, we invited you to support you, not to embarrass you."

"Thanks again. Still a bit time?"

"Yes, try to relax."

"Ladies and gentleman, CBS Boston welcomes you with its arts program, my name is Barbara. We live in troubled times and not only one time this was a topic in this program. Artists of various genres feel it as their obligation, not to be quiet. Sure, their ways are differently - and our today's artist? When he stands on the stage, the people laugh. When he stands on the stage, he lets no doubts about his believes. When he stands on the stage, the people listen to him - more and more. So far he was a kind of insiders' tip, so far he was most of all known in social media, but this changes now. Last month at Jimmy Fallon, tomorrow he starts with his nation wide tour. A tour that will begin tomorrow in Boston, and will end in twelve months in Los Angeles. Not only I think that this is the beginning of a great career. I'm happy to welcome the stand-up comedian Peter Maurer tonight. Welcome, Peter!"

"Thanks for this warm welcome, Barbara. It's a pleasure to me to be here. Many fantastic artists were guests in this program, I feel a bit.....uneasy."

"You not have to. One of our endeavors is, not only to present well known artists, but also artists who stand at the beginning of their career. But what I say? You're a known artist already, you performed around the country, you have a huge fan base in the Internet. Now the wide public waits for you. Let me begin with my first question."

"With pleasure."

"For many you're the shooting star of stand-up comedy. But as said before, you're already a well known name in the comedy scene. Let us begin with your basis, your paragons. You're mentioning very often in interviews, but also in your performances, Lenny Bruce. Is he your paragon?"

"No, I would not say "paragon". We live in another time today, at least it's a different situation. What I mean is, that he had to struggle with many difficulties. This was a different time, let us hope that this will not come back."

"Some say, that you remind them to Lenny Bruce. His genius in combination with his aggressiveness....."

".....and his tendency to destroying himself? Sorry, that I interrupted you."

"This is okay. Do you think that one can say that he was ahead of his time?"

"I think that we have to thank and honor him therefor, that he fought for us, that a person like I has not to fear today, to become arrested because of telling the truth. He has fought for this and he has payed the price therefor. Today this achievement is endangered, that we lose this gift for that he, and many others, has fought."

"Do you think that the right of free speech is endangered?"

"When a president calls the free press the biggest threat of our nation? When facts are nothing and lies everything? Yes, I think so."

"Still you can perform, you not become arrested, you have no stage ban."

"Even Lenny Bruce was not officially banned in that many cases, it functioned more subtle. And yes, this region, the coasts - south and central will be a bit different."

"Do you think you will have problems in this regions with your style to perform? You let no doubts about your political opinions. You will also perform in very red states."

"I will perform in all states, apart from Alaska, Hawaii and Puerto Rico. I think this is important and I have to do this. But I have to confess, that I will omit some hot spots. I said it in that way: I will not perform in Harrison."

"If someone is interested in your art, he can find many footage in the Internet. Some videos are from you, some are fan made."

"Can I say something thereto?"

"Sure."

"For me it's always okay, when the audience makes videos and puts them in the Internet. It's promotion for me."

"And what we can see because of that is, that not one show is as the other. You will perform the next two days in Boston. It would be normal to you, that the shows will be not the same."

"Well, this depends somewhat what will happen in the US and the world. Today even the news from yesterday, even the news from the morning, are old news the next day or in the evening. My advantage is, that I need nothing. I have to start to talk only, I can react to everything all the time. I should use this advantage."

"You're - and this is again a similarity to Lenny Bruce - acting very spontaneously onstage. You like it to work with, and to react to the audience. Your venues become larger now. Do you fear that you maybe will lose the direct contact with the audience?"

"I'm still not playing in the very large venues. But you're right. The time when I performed in front of a few or only some people? I'm not interested in the very large venues. I would prefer it instead to perform more often."

"Still a few tickets are available for the next two days - or?"

"We're sold out for the next two days as far as I know."

"But you will be back in six weeks for another two shows."

"Yes, still tickets are available for this two shows."

"Do you fear that everything becomes bigger and bigger now?"

"It's not that long ago, that I asked Caroline for helping me, to become my manager. But very fast it became too much for her alone, she has two assistants now. Yes, everything grows very fast now. But is this not that, from what we artists dream? I not started with stand-up comedy, to be a part of open mic shows my whole life. Open mic is fantastic, but you dream of getting more."

"To get more, to reach more people, to.....what are your aims?"

"Aims?"

"Your political statements are unmistakable. Do you think that you can influence people?"

"Whom? The people who come to my shows? I don't think that that much conservatives will be there. Maybe the Internet is more interesting? Maybe it would be more useful to march on the streets?"

"But you don't think, that you can't influence things?"

"Say, that nobody would do what I do - that would be dangerous. On the other hand, you have to be realistic. I will change nothing, not I'm alone. What I mean is, that maybe my doing is not the most relevant - my doing is not the most relevant. But it's the way that I found, to express myself."

"And you express yourself in a way of which some think is too aggressive."

"I think it no time for ambiguity, time for nice texts waiting to be interpreted. It's time for unmistakable words. I think we live in a very dangerous time today, our living together is endangered - more then ever. We need a unmistakable answer to this threat."

"Laughing?"

"Yeah, that's a difficult question. Laughing has two sides. Positive is it, to laugh about something, showing that nothing is untouchable. How often it was, and is, forbidden to laugh about something. Laughing about kings - yes, laughter can be a strong weapon. But then there's this other side. Our president is a joke, a clown? This can lead thereto, that you underestimate things and persons. Many laughed about Hitler - the result was horrible. Yeah, laughing is a double-edged sword."

"Your audience? Do you think they are aware about this?"

"I hope so. I hope that they realize that I see our president as a serious threat. But I know also, that he hates it, when someone laughs about him. Do you saw his reaction in Europe, as they laughed about him, when he made this speech? He was totally irritated - I not expected this reaction, he said. Yes, show him that he's a laughingstock. But be aware, that he's nevertheless a big threat for our nation and for all who wanna live in a free society."

"You have German ancestors - as our president. How important is this for you?"

"At least that important, that I'm aware of the German history. You can learn therefrom!"

"You're also interested in the European developments - and in worldwide developments - and you include all this developments into your program. Do you think, that you expect sometimes too much from your audience?"

"No, because everything leads to the same. Nationalism in Europe, nationalism in the USA - it's about nationalism. Yes, I know what you mean, but the world is huge and complex. It not helps, to imitate this right-wing prophets. Everything is easy and clear - white is good, black is bad. The Latinos are the curse, like the Jews were it in Germany. You not should imitate them."

"Well, unfortunately I have to say that our time runs out. As I said, you will return to Boston in six weeks. Therefore there's still a chance for our audience to see you live on stage. In which cities you will perform next?"

"After Boston in Plymouth, Springfield, Worcester, Portland and Brunswick. On my webpage you can find all information about the tour plan."

"You will have some performances in Canada also."

"Yes. Between the New England States and Middle Atlantic I will be in Canada for some shows. Montreal, Ottawa and Toronto for instance."

"Peter, I wish you the best for you tour and I'm sure that this was not the last time that you was our guest."

"Thanks, Barbara."

"Well done, Peter! You were very professional."

"Really? I've the feeling that it was not that good."

"It was good! And I'm sure that it will last not long, and also the shows in six weeks will be sold out."

"Yeah, that's the commercial success. But how important is this? I mean, in this times? I should be happy, but happy about what? If we should be not able to end this farce in our country, this.....I bore you with this."

"Absolutely not - quite the contrary! I fear you have a strict time plan the next days?"

"More or less - but in six weeks I would have a bit more time. To be honest?"

"Yes."

"I would like to start the tour first, to get some impressions how good it functions and so on."

"I'm too pushy - that's one of my weaknesses. But it would be a pleasure for me to meet you again in six weeks?"

"Would be a pleasure for me also. I hope you not misinterpret my behavior?"

"No, you mentioned the "stars" before? Well, it's something nice to see somebody who's not.....would you call me, when you're in the city again?"

"Of course."

Back in the hotel, Caroline and I decided to drink something at the hotel bar before - I would find no sleep tonight anyway.

"That was a flirt!"

"Come on, I'm only a small stand-up comedian."

"Well, today maybe, but tomorrow? I think, that she's interested in to stay in touch with you?"

"For what reason?"

"Well,.....okay, seriously! You're on the cusp of becoming a great star, not only a star. And don't start an argumentation with me about that now. We both know this. She's a part of the art business, it's good to have connections to the upcoming stars."

"That sounds not that nice now?"

"It's her job - or? You're also a part of the art business. Like all the musicians, actors, writers....."

Boston Onstage

"How do you feel?"

"Good, very good! I'm happy that it will start this evening."

"Plans till then?"

"After the breakfast we could walk around a bit? We could use the time to see a bit more of the city - we would have time till late afternoon. Then I want to go to the theater, I would like it to have some time to visit the stage and the auditorium, to get some impressions - the sound check later."

"Sure. Sightseeing?"

"No, I like it more, especially when I'm for the first time in a new city, just to walk around. We could use public transport to drive to another part of the city?"

"But we should not forget time."

"We can use a taxi if necessary."

"Okay, then let us finish our breakfast and then let us get some impressions of the city."

"Fine."

Boston, two rivers, the harbor, the islands, the bay and an ocean behind. A lot of water, water that I loved. Without any doubt was Boston a place where you could expect to live. I thought about, that we would stay at very different places during the tour, places dry, without any sign of water, desert all around you. This would be not my places, not a place where I could expect to live. But here? A bit cold, at least now, at the end of February, but in summer? And spring and fall?

Well, standing here in the city, at the waterside, not that much green around you. Some green areas, some parks, but you would have not drive too long to leave the urban area, to reach the green land. I looked forward - yes, the beginning now, the next days, and the days before we would be in Boston again were crammed of performances. But the days in between? Often we would need one whole day to reach the next city, if not two. Yes of course, later, in the desert - one or two days? But here, a day driving through hills and woods? Yes, this was an area one could imagine to live for the rest of his life.

"What you're thinking about?"

"You know how much I like the water. And even that this is only the small ocean that awaits you here, it's nice too see it."

"Yes, a bit cold, not to say very cold."

"Yes, maybe the tour plan is a bit stupid?"

"To start here, at winter?"

"And to be in summer at the very hot places? To end again at a coast, again in winter? Vice versa would have been maybe better!"

"Well, that's too late now. But I think this place is also in Winter a nice place - at least this extreme cold snap is over."

"Yeah, I feared already by preparing for the tour that we would be here, freezing to death. But even this normal temperatures are somewhat cold - how about something hot to drink?"

"Very fine idea!"

We looked for a nice place to sit, hot tea and something sweet.

"Can you imagine to be homeless, here, in this city? Hard enough at home, but here? How many died the last weeks?"

"Will you talk about it later?"

"Not in that way. But hey, we're sitting here, enjoying our hot tea and the cookies? Sure, we worked hard for it, we live the American Dream! Too bad, that this dream has more than one side."

The next day, the first morning after the first show of the tour. Caroline and I sat together, we talked not that much. Now it had begun, I read the newspaper, the cell phone rang.

"It's Barbara!"

I would have to talk about her grinning later.

"Yes Barbara, Peter at the phone. - Really? - Yes, you liked it. - Fine, yes, thank you. - Yes, I also look forward. - Bye, Barbara."

I handed the cell phone back to Caroline.

"Was pretty short - your conversation?"

"Well, she only wanted to congratulate me for the first show."

"And?"

"She said that she also works for print media and that she will write about me and my fantastic show."

"And?"

"That she looks forward to my return. She has a ticket for the show at 18th."

"Our last show in Boston and this area? The first and the last show - you have an appointment with her? I ask this only as your manager."

"You can ask this as Caroline. No, but I think it will be not stupid to meet her again when we return to Boston."

"No, and sorry that I tease you a bit."

"That's okay. I think it's difficult to say, how one should behave towards a person like Barbara. Without any doubt she has a lot of influence and of course it's in my interest that persons like she are reporting about me. I think as a man many things are more easy - does Boston has a Four Seasons?"

The day after the second show, some say that the second show is the most difficult. Whatever, also sold out, also a "triumph". Tomorrow we would drive to Plymouth, for the next show in the evening - and therewith the tour would have begun finally. But today was a day simply to let pass by, a day of no thoughts and no thinking. The rays of the sun, the scent of the salty water, a day that gave you the feeling that this day would last forever, a day to pass by.

I thought about all this cities who would come, still sitting in the first. The distances in space and time. How many thousands of miles, three hundred and sixty-five days, how many cities, stages, shows? How many interviews, TV appearances, people to shake hands? And at the end - the new absolute star of stand-up comedy, please welcome with me.....

"I'm getting a bit hungry - and you?"

"Yeah, some seafood?"

"Always a good choices at a place like this."

"Shall we walk back to the small restaurant that we passed?"

"It looked very cozy."

"Then let us go there."

We walked back to the small restaurant and ate some very delicious dishes. And funnily? They recognized me in the restaurant! Well, at home, but Boston was not a that small city? The first time I was here, the first two shows, and already some fans. No, I liked it, I was an artist, I needed an audience, it was important for me that people would know me. Could it become too much? Sure! Boston, the liberal Boston - a deep red city? Maybe it would be not that nice there, to be recognized in a restaurant, after you would have talked about this fucking and disgusting today's president the evening before? The alternative? Not to perform in such cities, regions, states? That would be cowardly and also there people with different opinions lived - and much the more? How easy is it, to tell a believer that you're a believer too? But to tell the believer, that you believe in something else, not to say, that you believe not at all?

"What do you think? When should we hit the road tomorrow?"

"Only some miles till Plymouth - would be nice to have a bit time."

"Plymouth Rock?"

"Well, to honor our Pilgrim Fathers? Maybe we should honor the ones who curse the day they landed, the day on that all their suffering begun? But maybe that's a bit naive, naive in not only one way. This song of Neil Young, "Cortez The Killer"? *Hate was just a legend / And war was never known* - well, you know how much his music means to me, but that's a bit too simple! It's a wonderful song, and it's good that he says it, that Cortez was a fucking and greedy killer! But that not means that his victims were all saints - reality and life is a bit more complex."

"And now? Plymouth Rock?"

"Why not? Isn't it the point, what you feel in such a moment? And they who came? How many left their countries because of persecution, poverty, because of their believe, because they could no longer see a future in their countries? But also this is too simple - the gold rush in Alaska or California, the "empty" land with only some buffaloes and Indians in it, the right of the stronger - life is never as easy as a few lines."

"After the breakfast?"

"Yes, Plymouth Rock waits for us."

The First Round

A short and easy trip to Plymouth, a nice little town. We had no press event in the city and some time - the Mayflower? Yeah, why not. Massasoit? Yeah, history was never easy and one-dimensional. In retrospective everything seems obvious and easy to grasp, in retrospective you can easily reflect about the decisions people have made - the decisions of today? The Mayflower, the statue of Massasoit - symbols for what? The interpretational sovereignty about all that, about Thanksgiving Day, about the reality of the living of the first settlers, the Tea Party? Maybe the insight that some sources are not the best sources? Information about Pocahontas? Maybe Hollywood and our smart president aren't the best sources, nor the incorruptible far-right media? But it would be a very short stay, some hours at the harbor, a show, a night - Providence waits, Providence, Rhode Island.

Providence, Rhode Island. Again one of this cities full of history, the history of the first settlers. We would have two shows here, arrived after the short trip from Plymouth to Providence. The Providence Journal waited, another press event. We arrived at the newspaper.

"You had two sold-out shows in Boston, and one in Plymouth yesterday. Now two shows in Providence - are tickets left?"

"As far as I know, a very few."

"I think you have not saw something of our wonderful city so far?"

"No, tomorrow we will have some time."

"We?"

"Caroline, my manager, and I."

"Your will perform at Worcester the 4th and 5th?"

"Yes, also there only a very few tickets are left."

"How do you feel after the first three shows?"

"It was a very positive beginning. It's a bit cold at the moment and the road conditions are a bit critical for us sometimes. But I think this will be more relevant when we will travel more to the north."

"How far to the north you will travel?"

"I think Medway will be the most northern city, if I'm not wrong now?"

"But the main area at the moment is Massachusetts, Rhode Island and Connecticut?"

"Yes, the larger cities there. Often I have two shows in this cities, like in Providence now and afterwards in Worcester."

"You said that the beginning of the tour was satisfying so far?"

"Yes, I have to confess that it was not by chance to begin with the tour in the New England States. Many similarities to my home state, also a liberal basic attitude."

"Yes, dark blue - as the whole West Coast. And there you will end your tour?"

"Yes, more precise in Los Angeles. This gives me the feeling that the beginning and the end will be easy."

"At least more easy than the in between - or?"

"Well the point is, that in our time today a year is a very long time. I will end this tour in February 2020. One could say, that not that much will happen till then. In February 2020 the democrats will just have finished with their official debates, then they will begin with their primaries and caucuses. We will be still faraway from the presidential election. But who would be able to say, who will be our president in the White House then? What will happen during the next twelve months in

Washington? Everything became absolutely unpredictable - a very dangerous situation in our time!"

"A very unpredictable president?"

"Absolutely! The problem is, that he has no convictions - a word from Fox & Friends is enough, or a request from one of his political buddies and he tosses everything overboard, no matter what he said before or how he acted before. This man has absolutely no backbone, he's the absolute opportunist and he loves to be surrounded by opportunists and bootlickers. This is no basis for solid politics."

"No, absolutely not. Do you think that the democrats act clever at the moment?"

"I think it will be interesting to see, who all will run for the democrats. And then of course, how the nomination process will be handled this time."

"You're talking about Clinton / Sanders?"

"Of course. We not have to blame the Russians. The democratic campaign, the Clinton campaign, was an absolute disaster. I hope that they will act better this time."

"You fear that not?"

"We still can remember the last time? This arrogant behavior on the democratic side? We cannot lose this election! Unfortunately they have lost the election!"

"You as a stand-up comedian? What's your part in this process?"

"To talk about it, on the stage and on occasions like this."

"You think this will help?"

"It's what I can do. This and to vote, this and to express my support for certain candidates."

"Some say, that artists should not express their political opinions?"

"You cannot force an artist to express his or her political opinions. But what a joke is that, that you tell someone, that he's not allowed to speak out his opinions? It's one of this right-wing stupidities - as long as the artist expresses left-wing opinions, of course."

"We not have to talk about your political opinions, you express them in a very distinct way. But people feel also sometimes rebuffed from your show, or parts of it."

"Why I should talk about the Mormons and their ideas here in Providence? It would make more sense in Utah - at least I think so. Why I should talk in Utah about the Pilgrim Fathers, shouldn't I talk about them here, in the New England States? Sure, it would be easier to make jokes about the Mormons here, but what sense would that had?"

"As a result of that, the audience has to be aware of, that watching you will be not the comfort zone."

"As said, I would see it as cowardly to say here something about the Californians, I have to do this in California. The problematic about charter schools? A very good topic in Los Angeles!"

"Then good luck for the shows her in Providence and all the other shows on your tour."

"Thank you!"

"And, you still like it here, the New England States?"

"Yeah, it's a nice area here. I look forward to travel more north. No two hundred thousand inhabitants, but the third largest city of the New England States? You need not long from Downtown to enjoy nature."

"Yes, that's true. Everything a bit smaller, a bit more human sized."

"The show yesterday was sold out?"

"Yes. The last tickets they sold at the box office. Tonight no tickets are left, I have asked."

"What shall we do? Walking around a bit, till we have to go to the theater for the second show in Providence?"

"Yes, would like it."

Again a short trip from Providence to Worcester - away from the coast now. Nevertheless a nice surrounding, nevertheless a nice city. The second largest of the New England States with a lot of green. The second show in Providence was a large success - I had to reenter the stage two times. No tickets were left for the two shows here in Worcester, but I also looked forward to the 11th. A day without a show, we would have a lot of time to reach Manchester, our next aim, now heading towards north. But first Worcester and a interview in the local radio.

"Unfortunately we have to say to our listeners that both of your shows are totally sold out."

"Yes. Next month I will be in Springfield, maybe this will be an opportunity."

"This is your first time in this region?"

"Yes, but I have to say that I hope that it will be not the last time. Well, the temperatures at the moment....."

"Come back in summer?"

"This year no chance, but we will see what next year will be."

"The whole year, till February 2020, you will be on tour."

"Yes, all states except Hawaii, Alaska and Puerto Rico."

"And Canada!"

"Yes, after the New England States I will perform in six Canadian cities."

"Your first time in a foreign country?"

"Yes, in California I will perform in San Diego and then for a short trip to Tijuana."

"You're starting with the largest cities in the New England States. What do you expect in the smaller cities?"

"I think I will find my audience also there. So far the ticket sales are very good."

"This means that you should not wait too long, if you're interested in to see one of your shows?"

"Yes, the tour plan you can find on my webpage."

"And if someone not knows you good enough, enough footage one can find on the Internet?"

"Yes, I have no problems therewith that the audience makes videos and uploads them. You can find them easily. But as I change my program constantly every show is more or less different."

"At the moment you talk - apart from the abiding theme - a lot about the democratic candidates. But you also involve the places, even cities, in which you are in your program. Something specific about Worcester?"

"Not Worcester as city, but this region, the region of the first colonies, the first settlers, the beginning of this nation."

"A beginning you see not only in a bright light?"

"No, but this would be a bit strange - or? It's sometimes a bit strange how we define "nation" and "inhabitants". I mean, I belong to the white European based population. But this is not the only population in this country, and now it's no longer the majority. Sure, still the economic and political power lies there. But how much they fear to lose also this - the developments in Washington have a reason."

"And the democrats?"

"This is an open question to me....."

The day after the first show in Worcester. We decided to spend the day, till we would have to go to the theater, at one of the many lakes that surrounded Worcester. We decided for Coes Reservoir, Columbus Park.

"One show more and then we have time to pause for a moment. Shall we stay in Worcester tomorrow or drive to Manchester immediately?"

"It's very nice here, but I would prefer it to drive to Manchester tomorrow. We have the whole day then. It's not a that long distance, but the distances become larger now. I think also Manchester will offer some nice places."

"I think also. And Manchester is not that small anyway."

"Then I think the show this evening, sleep in, late breakfast and then a relaxed drive till Manchester. We can use the interstates, this should be no problem."

"Sounds very good. It would be early enough to reach Manchester in the evening."

March 6th, no show today. We stood up late, early enough still to get breakfast, but we were not in a hurry. We left the city in direction Leominster, passed Wachusett Reservoir.

"Wow, very huge."

"Much larger than you can see it from the road. I have saw it on the map. A short detour and we could visit a botanical garden?"

"Not at the moment. We not even have visited the zoo in Boston!"

"Yes, we have to catch up on this when we're back in Boston again."

"I would prefer it to reach Lowell for a break."

"Sure."

"Leominster and Lowell are also not that small cities - or?"

"No, you ask why we have no shows there?"

"In a way."

"Well, I thought you wanna reach Los Angeles in February next year?"

"Yeah, that's true. But I have to confess that I like this region more and more. It's a few days now that we're here and it's winter and it's cold, but nevertheless I like it. What a difference will be a state like Kansas or Nevada."

"Or the Deep South?"

"Yes, or the Deep South."

We reached Lowell and decided for a break at Haggetts Pond. Before, we had bought some food and enjoyed it now to eat it.

"I have seen Derry and Londonderry on the map?"

"Yes, we will pass them."

"Yes, but isn't it interesting, all this European city names in this region. Especially - because of the history obviously - you sometimes I have the feeling to be in England."

"In some days we will be in Berlin!"

"Yeah, what a career! Yesterday in Boston, today in Manchester, tomorrow in Berlin!"

"Shall we continue our trip?"

"Yes, Manchester waits!"

Continuing

We reached Manchester late afternoon, time to be in the city and having a nice dinner. Manchester, just over one hundred thousand inhabitants, but the largest city in New Hampshire? I thought about Los Angeles - a suburban would have more inhabitants! But this was one of the nice aspects here, and all the green and the many lakes. Manchester was no exception - Massabesic Lake, really a huge lake. Okay, soon in Toronto, and later in Cleveland, Detroit, Chicago and Milwaukee - the Great Lakes? I really thought about, if this could be a place to get old. Definitely no city like Los Angeles or New York! Yeah, the cold winters, but maybe this was not that worse, maybe also this could have some nice aspects. Sitting at home, a hot tea and a slice of cake - and a fucking nation, choking on greed.

Tomorrow an interview for the local newspaper, in the evening the show. Then Portland, Brunswick and Augusta, then we would reach our northernmost point - Medway. From then on the distances will become larger, always one or two days between the shows - long distances? The real large distances would come later, this region was a bit like a doll house, compared with other regions - but a very comforting and cozy doll house. Everything beautiful here? No. Cities with high crime

rates here? Yes, even if not so many. Homeless and poor people here? Yes, of course! Still in the USA.....

The New Hampshire Union Leader, printed in Manchester. I sat there together with Caroline and Tom, the editor in chief.

"I have read that you like our region, the New England States?"

"Yes, it's nice to be here, apart from the cold."

"It's not that different to the area where you from?"

"No. But nevertheless you see and feel it, that this region is more in the north. But I like it really, I like it, that you have a lot of nature around you, even in the larger cities. You not have to drive that long to be in nature, and I mean with nature something green. In the end also a desert is nature. But not so much, what I would prefer."

"But you will be also in the desert states during your tour?"

"Yes, also there people live! Maybe when you're grew up there, but I have to confess that this is no place where I could expect to live. Maybe this is a bit stupid to say this so - the Great Plains?"

"I definitively can not think about, to live at another place like this. But I'm a bit biased. I have heard that all your shows are sold out now?"

"No, that's not true! I mean, the tour will still last some more months!"

"But I meant the shows in our region?"

"Oh, yes! The next shows are all sold out now."

"You're present in social media for a longer time now and you have a all the time growing fan base. Jimmy Fallon was a good promotion for you, but after all, are you surprised about your current success?"

"Well, we sell already tickets for our last show in Los Angeles - February 2020? Yes, in a way I'm surprised. I mean, you hope for this as an artist, but maybe you also fear it. I planned a tour already before, but now everything became larger and larger. More cities, more and larger venues. But on the other side, I'm still far away from being the "big star"."

"Why?"

"For example no Broadway in New York."

"Well, New York is New York! And I have the feeling that they will regret it bitterly when you're in the city. New York?"

"The end of May I will be there."

"You caused some discussions with some of your statements concerning the Pilgrim Fathers and the "birth" of our nation. Provocation is a part of your show?"

"I not would call it provocation. "The Birth of a Nation" - Griffith or Parker? You can tell a story in many different ways, you can lie in many different ways. But you can also try to find the truth, at least as much as possible. The only problem for white people like we are will be, that we maybe will find a truth that flatters us not that much? But hey, why not being a bit hypocritical?"

"Some say that you only see the negative aspects?"

"I don't think so. You can find enough footage about my shows on the Internet, form your own opinion."

"And obviously many think, that your show is fantastic - the success is yours."

"Success tells nothing - there's this man who won an election....."

Manchester to Portland, a longer distance and we had to get up early, at least earlier as I liked it. The show yesterday was a big success and the show tonight in Portland would be a big success. Again back to the coast, but I not saw that much of the landscape, I dozed a lot! Portland, not a hundred thousand inhabitants and the largest city of Main - you had to love it! But unfortunately no

time for the harbor, no time for the interesting islands, no time for the big water - no time for nothing.

"I hope that it's not too stressful for you, that I planned Portland right after Manchester?"

"No, it's okay. This is it, to be on tour - no real time for nothing."

"It's only a stone's throw till Brunswick tomorrow, if this helps you."

"We will drive along the coast?"

"More or less."

"I will enjoy it!"

It was an easy ride from Portland to Brunswick - and a nice one, alongside the beautiful ocean. We even had some time for a stop and in Brunswick we had some time to visit some of the historic buildings. But it was still a pity, not to have more time for the wonderful coastline, all this nice islands, only seen from afar. I had to come back on time, not for performing, but to experience the wonderful landscape.

Also the trip from Brunswick to Augusta was easy. Augusta, our smallest city, at least so far. No twenty thousand inhabitants - beautiful Maine. Nicely located at Kennebec River, this was also the smallest venue, at least so far. But I liked it to perform there, the direct contact to the audience - full house! After the show we spent some time together with some of the staff and some visitors of the show - it was a very nice evening. Tomorrow no show, we would reach our most northern point - Medway, even a "bit" smaller than Augusta, then in Massachusetts.

Our trip from Augusta till Medway was a very nice one. We drove through Waterville, a city the size of Augusta, and through Bangor, much larger than Augusta, to reach the very small Medway - less than one thousand and five hundred inhabitants! A town, wonderfully located at Penobscot River.

"I know that we will top this, but how you found Medway?"

"Well, I thought about how far north we should go. Well, Waterville is very near to Augusta, and in Bangor I found no venue for the possible time. I saw Medway, very good situated at the Interstate 95 and I thought: Why not! I even found a venue - well, it's more a diner or a cafe."

"You're cool! As in the beginning - how many tickets we have sold?"

"Well, totally sold out! Over a hundred!"

"A diner?"

"Oh, not all will have a seat, but so many were interested to see you, that they decided to offer standing places! They told me, that they not thought that so many from Milinocket would come"

"Okay, I only hope that they know who I'm."

"Also that far in the north, nearly in Canada, they have Internet. Believe me, they know who you are and they are very delighted about that you come."

"And I'm very delighted about that we have this smaller venues now, and for the next two weeks."

A Bit More Time

Medway, a wonderful nice little town, wonderfully the junction of the two branches of the Penobscot River - and of course Dolby Pond! But very cold, but very warm inside! The show was pure fun, no stage, no spotlights, only the audience and I, I among the audience!

I thought about the big cities that would come, the real big ones. Sure, a big city, a wide range of cultural offers, many amenities - on the other hand.....

I often thought about it, how would it be, to live at such a place, alone for yourself. And compared with other places even this place was dense populated. I could not imagine to live my whole life at such a place, even when I had to confess that it was very calming to be here.....

At the next day we enjoyed our breakfast and talked about the next days, two days no show now, well maybe one should better say, four days no show.

"Now your tour plan gets very interesting!"

"Well, I saw two possibilities to drive to Pittsburg. All the way back, or the more direct way."

"A bit risky, using small roads in winter?"

"We have more then two days to reach West Forks."

"We will not sleep in the car?"

"No, today we will drive till Greenville. Wonderfully located at Moosehead Lake. We will spend the night there."

"And then the remaining distance till West Forks tomorrow?"

"No!"

"Well?"

"Okay, yes. But I have asked. The road conditions are not bad at the moment. Today we will have a snug ride till Greenville. We will arrive there when we arrive. We will stay the night, and tomorrow we can spend some time at the lake. The remaining miles till West Forks are no problem. When we depart at late afternoon from here and we will be in West Forks in the evening. A night in West Forks, in the evening of the next day the show, another night in West Forks and then till Pittsburgh. We have a whole day to drive from West Forks till Pittsburg - your show there is at 17th!"

"Okay, not to grumble. But I see two problems. First we have to drive at night time - maybe not the best idea? And then, yes we have a lot of time now, but from West Forks till Pittsburg in one day?"

"As I said, I have asked. The roads we will use are save at the moment and you know that I'm a cool-headed driver. Also some towns in between, especially between West Forks and Pittsburg - we have time?"

"That's right, we should enjoy this. It will change soon again. And you know what it would mean for you, to kill the new stand-up comedy star in a car accident or letting him freeze to death?"

The trip from Medway till Greenville was in fact easy, even when we needed some hours. But the landscape was fantastic - and we had time! We used for some time the Horseback Millinocket Road and made regular stops. Then we used some smaller roads to reach Greenville - but Caroline was in fact a real cool driver. We reached Greenville somewhat later then expected, but very relaxed.

"Good time for dinner."

"Yes, and maybe something for relaxation?"

"I'm not averse!"

It was a fine first day without a show. For tomorrow we decided to get up early, to have a fine breakfast and to spend some time at the lake, a very cold day at the lake!

"This is a real large lake."

"The largest in Maine as far as I know."

"Really? And Maine and this whole region has so many lakes and ponds. They are all have been formed during the ice age, as far as I know."

"Yes, that's also what I know. They have a marine museum here."

"Okay!"

We spent some nice hours in Greenville, but then we had to leave. The "city" of West Forks waited - and an interesting trip there.

Well, only a few miles till West Forks, but some very interesting ones.

"Well, not all roads in such a good condition!"

"Oh, come on. We have arrived in the "city" - West Forks!"

"Well, I have some problems to spot the "city", but.....how many inhabitants?"

"Sixty, according to the 2010 census - maybe some more today?"

"Can you explain me again how you arranged a show here?"

"I thought about the best way to drive from Medway to Pittsburg."

"The next "big city", that awaits us."

"Well, compared to West Forks! First I thought not about to arrange a show between Medway and Pittsburg. But then I detected by chance, that you have a fan in West Forks! Hey, they have a hotel and a restaurant. We will spend the night in the hotel and tomorrow the restaurant will be the location for the show. I know rumors, that the whole town will be there!"

"You're crazy, and you know how much I will enjoy this show!"

"I think so."

After the a bit rough trip to West Forks, we had decided yesterday evening to go to bed early, right after the dinner, to be fit again today. Breakfast at Grandview Lodging, lunch and dinner, as yesterday, at Rachael's Place. We met some people of West Forks, walked around a bit, enjoyed the landscape, and nearly the whole town was in the restaurant for the show. Well, also here not necessarily everyone liked my show. But again it was very nice to perform in such a way. A bit I became sad.....

"Today we have to manage a longer distance."

"Yes, but the show in Pittsburg is tomorrow. If we will not reach Pittsburg today, than we can spend the night in one of the towns, between West Forks and Pittsburg. We still would have the morning and the afternoon of tomorrow, to reach Pittsburg."

"Yeah, that's right. No reason to hurry."

In fact we needed a long time to reach Pittsburg, but we made regular breaks, in Eustis for example. It was dark as we reached the next of our "big cities" - I enjoyed it more and more, knowing that it would not last for much longer now.

Even when Pittsburg had no thousand inhabitants - the largest city in this area - it was a hot spot for winter sport, fishing, hunting and more. And of course there was lake, a wonderful lake, Lake Francis. We spent the day at the lake, walked around in the snow - most snow of the last days. Should I become a fan of snow?

Compared with the last days, this time it was a real large venue, and many of the audience were tourists. Yeah, more and more we headed back to the larger cities. West Forks - sixty inhabitants, Greater Los Angeles - twenty-five million inhabitants! What does one should enjoy more? I became more and more the feeling that this was the wrong direction!

From now on traveling became easy again. Even when our next destination - Berlin - was some miles away. But from now on, we could use the comfortable overland routes again. And we had again a day without a show, time to relax, time to enjoy the wonderful landscape. Berlin, New Hampshire. Again over ten thousand inhabitants, welcome back to civilization.

In fact Berlin was a very beautiful city, maybe a bit too beautiful. More and more I felt like dropped out of time. Again a river that ran through the city - Androscoggin River - and a lot of woods around the city. Again a place of tourism, again a place one could imagine to live.....
A good show, a good audience, sold out of course, dropped out of time.....

A short and easy trip, from Berlin to Conway. No show today - we had a lot of time. We walked around a lot, visited the nice houses - as nearly in all such cities in this region the population was nearly one hundred percent white. And again it was a very beautiful city, maybe too beautiful - sure that you're still in the States?
More and more the feeling that I should be in the larger cities again. This all was too nice, too perfect, or was I the problem?

Conway, sold out, fantastic audience, all as always. I had the feeling that a nightmare would grasp me - where was the exit? Where was one of these cities, with their fucking crime rates, with their homeless peoples, where are they?

No show today. Conway - Littleton, what a nice and easy trip. I could no longer view this pretty and clean cities with their nice houses. And of course there was a wonderful lake - Moore Reservoir - and lot of woods.....

Littleton, sold out, fantastic.....why I felt that exhausted? Every two days a show? How long should this still last?

Heading towards Montpelier, today no show, the capital of Vermont, beautiful Vermont. Of course, the smallest capitol of any state, everything so nice and beautiful here, so human. But not long, soon the cities would become larger again. Would this be the solution?

Before The Final

"We have to talk now, you know this!"
"Give me a few days."
"That's what you're saying since some days now, when I wanna talk with you."
"It will be better soon, in a few days."
"Are you sure?"
"Yes."

"And why you're in this mood?"

"Don't know - it's a bit like this would be the setting of "Desperate Housewives", "Mad Man" or this would be Stepford."

"Everything too clean for you?"

"Too clean for the USA."

"Maybe this is the prototype region of the USA?"

"Yeah, of course. Very white, very green, very perfect. Maybe this is simply too much for me. Looks like a suburban hell to me."

"But you would like it, to live here, at least you said it."

"Hey, I'm a white European based man with liberal ideas - I would fit perfectly into this setting."

"Yeah, you would really like it, to live here."

"Yeah, I would like it, to live here."

Montpelier, again a nice city, with a nice river - Winooski River - and a lot of green! I felt somewhat better after the conversation with Caroline - this all felt simply so unreal. Forward-looking to the coming? How different other states will be, how different the regions of this country are. How different the circumstances of life, while waiting to enter the stage, to perform, here in Montpelier.....

A very short trip, a few hours in the morning of the next day, brought us from Montpelier to Burlington, to the next large and beautiful lake - Lake Champlain. I felt it, that there would be a time when I would miss this rivers and lakes very much - and all this wonderful woods. Burlington, again the cities became larger - somewhat over forty thousand inhabitants. I had an appointment at the local radio, in the evening the show.

"As I announced it before the news, Peter and his manager Caroline have joined us now. Hello Peter, hello Caroline!"

"Hello Steve, also hello to the listeners."

"Also from my side."

"Well Peter, you're on tour now for somewhat more than a month - so far it couldn't be better, or?"

"Well Steve, all shows were sold out so far, and also for tonight are no tickets left. Yes, so far it could not be better."

"So far you were one of this internet phenomena. Now more and more the general media notices you. Do you notice the difference?"

"I'm sitting here? As you said, more and more the general media notices me. This means for me, that I have more and more appointments with newspapers or radio stations, as just now."

"And this expands the sphere of people you can reach, obviously?"

"Yes, of course!"

"Jimmy Fallon?"

"Well, Jimmy Fallon was very important - I mean he is Jimmy Fallon!"

"I've heard, that a friend of him recommended you to him?"

"Yes, that's true. This friend, I have no idea who it was, was in the audience of one of my shows. He liked what he saw and realized that I was very well known in social media. He thought, that I would fit Jimmy Fallon's show very good and showed Jimmy Fallon some footage of me from the Internet. Jimmy Fallon was enthusiastic about what he saw - and that it was!"

"This are the stories, but you were already well known before Jimmy Fallon. I think we should not forget this. Let's talk about your "inspirations", your biggest "inspiration", the "inspiration" that will never run dry."

"I hope one day this "inspiration" will be history."

"We all hope so! What do you think about his latest idea? I think the national emergency was hard, but the Golan Heights?"

"The sad point is, and this is not funny at all, that people have to die. You not have to think about it, that this will intensify the conflict - if it will not cause a new war. But this is not important, the lives of this people are not important. What important is, is, that his buddy Netanjahu wins his election - who cares about some human lives in such a moment?"

"Yes, some collateral damage you always have. Well, you could name this inhuman. But for such leaders, this is no measure. The Mueller report, a disappointment for you?"

"I not think that an impeachment would be a good idea. This would make him to a martyr. No, I think the best way to get rid of him would be, to defeat him in 2020. I think this should be the aim. This would be humiliating for him!"

"This would require a unified Democratic Party!"

"Yes, this time they should find a better way."

"Half an hour till the show begins. How do you feel?"

"Much better now. This were strange days - or? I've the feeling as they would never have been. Do you remember the day in Greenville, at the wonderful lake. Or the "town" of West Forks? Sometimes everything is like a dream to me, I mean the things that have happened. I not remember them as such, I only can see me. I cannot remind me of the singer on the stage. I only can see me. I only can see me, the man who looks at the singer on the stage."

The next day, again a very short distance to drive in the morning – Middlebury. Again a somewhat smaller city, but of course with a nice river - Otter Creek! And of course a very, very green city with nice houses. We had some time before we had to go to the venue for this evening and therefore we spent some time at the river.

"A nice place to live."

"Shall this be a test?"

"Well....."

"I feel better now, much better. But you know, as much as I like it here, as much I have to think about it."

"Being a white, European descended, liberal man?"

"Yes."

"The problem?"

"I would fit into this city. But what would be, would be my skin dark? What would be, would I be a Latino or of Asian descent? What would be, would my ancestors be the ones, who owned this land in former time? I'm not sure if would I feel then in the same way as I do now - obviously not!"

Middlebury, sold out as always, as always a fantastic show. The next two days we would have no show, we would come nearer to the coast again, back to the larger cities, back to Boston. But first a short detour to the State of New York, two cities, two shows. Three weeks and we would be back in Boston, but first the State of New York, the smaller Pittsfield and the larger cities from Springfield till Stamford.

Two days no show, we decided to leave Middlebury in the morning to reach Schenectady as early as possible. Better to say, Schenectady and Albany because both cities were separated by only a few miles, surrounded by two rivers. Schenectady and Mohawk River, Albany and Hudson River, whereby Mohawk River flowed not far away from Albany into Hudson River.

We would stay the whole time in Schenectady. The two days without a show, the 30th for the show in Schenectady and the 31st for the show in Albany. But of course, we would use all four days to explore both cities as well as the surrounding country. At 31st in Albany I would have another press appointment. April 1st, again no show, we would continue our travel to reach Pittsfield, back in Massachusetts.

Both cities - and also Troy, situated very near to Albany - had many similarities. Very interesting architecture, wonderful landscape, many cultural offers, very good restaurants - to say it simple, you could imagine to live here.

All three had a relative large African American population - nearly thirty percent in Albany. The whole area underwent periods of large immigration, always a strong industrial area, of course also tourism.

We had two very nice and calming days - no, also here you could find the shady sides of life. Also here not all flowers were roses, not everything was a flower. But nevertheless, life was different here, thought about the hectic life in the big cities. Soon I would be in New York, for the first time, never felt any impulse to be in this city. Los Angeles would be the final city of the tour, maybe the other way round would had been better? To start in Los Angeles and to end in Boston? And then? Looking for a place to.....

"Hello, daydreamer....."

"Oh, sorry, I was at another place."

"Would you tell me something about this place?"

"It's was no specific place, I meant it more metaphorical. It's just the beginning of our tour, we not even have reached Boston again! But I have the felling, that this tour will change me - I'm puzzled. I would love it, to stay here. I would love it, to get more impressions about all this cities, about the people who live here. Our home at the other coast? I nearly have forgotten it? Is there a home there, or is it just an illusion? I have the felling that I lived my whole life here - I fear a bit some other regions, but I think this is nonsense only!"

"Don't know, have some feelings, not that far away from yours....."

We got up early to have an easy breakfast and some hours for us, till the show in the evening. We visited VIA Aquarium and had an early dinner at Ferrari's. A nice time in a nice city.

Schenectady, an interesting city as the whole region was an interesting region. Only sixty percent white population, but thirty percent African American population and nearly fifty percent Hispanic. Very marginal Asian Americans and Native Americans. The white population? Italian, Irish, German, Polish, French.....a reflection of history.

Yes, the Pilgrim Fathers, but also waves of immigration from east Europe, migration from people of color from the south - less Asians. Large waves of immigration of Asian people via San Francisco, at the West Coast. Our country, so different the different regions, but also the regions different in itself. The few large cities in this region, many smaller cities and towns, many small towns embedded in this landscape, often in this emptiness. Was this diversity not surprising, looking at a map? The New England States compared with the rest of the country? And yet, even in this small part so much diversity. Sure, no Chicago, no Los Angeles, no Miami as examples. But nevertheless, even this small part showed the richness of this country - diversity.

"You look so thoughtful?"

"I don't know. Well, still nearly three weeks till our last show in Boston, but I have the feeling that I will miss this, especially the impressions of the last days, after we traveled northern."

"Yes, but Canada waits and then Middle Atlantic. I know that you're not that happy about New York, but don't you think that not also interesting impressions will wait there? And in the end we will be back at the West Coast."

"I have the feeling I should stay here. The West Coast, it seems to me that this would describe a foreign land, a land that's not mine, not mine anymore."

"I'm sure that you will also like cities like Baltimore, Philadelphia or Pittsburgh. And I'm sure we will find also there our West Forks."

"Yeah, you're maybe right."

A wonderful show in the evening for wonderful people. Tomorrow, only a few miles onwards, the next show in Albany.

The next day, the "Albany Times-Union", the next interview for a newspaper. The same questions as ever. But this was not meant offensively - for them it was the one interview with me, for me it was one of many interviews. They asked me their questions and I answered them. And still, even when this was the other coast, one could say that this was home ground for me.

Caroline and I spend some time at Hudson River - tomorrow we planned to spend the whole day at Troy and the area where Mohawk and Hudson River met. But today we had to remember, that we would have to go to the theater later. Nevertheless it was nice at the river, and again I had to think about that in some months - the Great Plains, the desert areas? The sound of the water.....

Sold out, an enthusiastic audience - a triumph, the media wrote.....

We spent the most of our time at Van Schaick Island and Peebles Island State Park. Today no show. Tomorrow morning we would drive to Pittsfield, for the next show.

The park was wonderful. A bit sad I was, that it was that early in the year. One or two months later? At midsummer or fall? We visited the Historic Preservation and were impressed. But most impressing was the way that Mohawk River found to meet with Hudson River. The many branches of the river, the many small islands, the weirs.....memories - memoria

Mohawk River, the people who gave the river its name? The people who lived at this places, till they came across the water? Today most of them lived in reservations or in own towns. Very much adapted to the society in many ways - preserving an own culture? I thought about that I would have no show in a reservation - states, towns and cities with a large population of so-called "Native Americans"? Percentage or population? Population? California of course, and L.A. of course! And then, you could spent weeks and month in the city and state, seeing not one "Native American"! Oh, and the State of New York and New York City? The same as before! "Indians" in TV, media, movies, music industry, literature – daily life? I thought about states like New Mexico, Oklahoma or South Dakota. But now, now I was here, and I not expected, to experience the living of the people, the people who were here already before "we" came.

It was a short and easy trip from Schenectady till Pittsfield. We arrived early, so that we had a bit time for us, despite of that we would have a radio interview right in front of the show. But unfortunately not enough time for Onata and Pontoosuc Lake. Again a nearly all white city, but this was not Harrison, no sundown town. Or does I only not saw it - not only one country club with golf course in this city with a population of under forty-five thousand inhabitants.

More and more I regretted it, not to have time to stay, at least some time, not from one city to the other. But I was on tour, not on holiday. But wasn't it stupid, senseless, as a performer, not to have enough time to face up to all this? I started to think about, whether all this had meaning, whether I should stop it, to do so, as if I would know something. And then? Yield the floor to the liars and pretenders?

"What do you think about our president's latest initiative, closing the Mexican border cause of a security problem?"

"I'm not sure if you still have to comment his shit - at least in a region like this. The most that crosses the Mexican border? Not criminals or drugs, but workers and goods. Hey, he's a business man? He's an idiot, a dangerous idiot. It's only a show for his supporters, we should not walk right into his trap."

"But you talk onstage about such topics."

"For such a topic I would prefer it, to perform in a city, on both sides of the Mexican border. But at the moment I'm here, way apart from the Mexican border. But yes, I will talk about it in the evening."

"So far your tour is a fantastic success. To what you're looking forward most?"

"This is only the beginning. Still some weeks in this region, then Canada. And then, so much is still waiting - I have no idea about the coming. Even this short time was so full of impressions - I have no idea about the upcoming."

Sold out, successful, fantastic.....

No show today, and a fine trip to Springfield. Now on the way back again to the large cities, for a last and intensive part on our way back to Boston. Seven cities, six interviews and twelve shows in the next twelve days - not much time for sightseeing. But today at least a bit time.

We stopped in Blandford for lunch. A town with a population of somewhat more than one thousand inhabitants, but with a nine hole golf course and a small ski resort. We had time today, no reason to hurry. The next days would be very stressful, but today we had time.

The Final

We arrived yesterday, late in the afternoon, in Springfield and decided to do nothing for the rest of the day. Today a very busy time would begin, we began it with a cozy breakfast. We would have an appointment at "The Republican" later, a local newspaper, and our first show in Springfield in the evening. In between, we would maybe have some time to get some impressions of the city, but not that much, and definitively not, neither today nor tomorrow, for the amusement park. This was a pity, Springfield seemed to be an interesting city for many reasons.

Again a larger city with over one hundred and fifty thousand inhabitants. No sixty percent of them were white, over twenty percent African American, and nearly forty percent Hispanics, mostly Puerto Rican. A demographic structure that you not found that often in this region. The restaurants and the night life would be interesting, but unfortunately I would be onstage myself.

Therefore we decided to start slowly and to see how much time we would have after "The Republican".

"One of the determining topics of today, is the plan of our president to close the Mexican border. Your opinion?"

"Hot air, not more. He will never close the border, because he knows exactly, that this is impossible. It's for his followers, they need such stories."

"Another topic. As you maybe know, we're focused on local matters. You're from the other coast. Did you found time to get insights in our local life?"

"Yes and no, what means no in the end. I have not the time, that I wish that I would have. One city follows the other. For me it's important to stay in touch with the developments in our country, not only the political developments. I read two newspapers every day and watch news channels. But

because I try to involve local topics in my show, I'm also interested in local concerns. But very often my interests are more historically based."

"About the Pilgrim Fathers for instance?"

"Yes, but I have to confess, that I have not the time for details."

"Do you like our lifestyle - as someone from the West Coast?"

"Well, a lot of things are very equal. What should I mention? Gay marriage is no problem here - I mean this is "The Republican". Nevertheless you endorsed the democratic candidates for presidency all the time."

"Apart from that, that this newspaper has a very long history, we endorsed John McCain as an example."

"I thought Barack Obama?"

"We endorsed John McCain in 2008, but Barack Obama in 2012."

"Well, maybe that is a good image therefore, why this region is a very interesting region."

"You will be in this area for the next two weeks, to depart then for Canada - you're interested in, to come back one day?"

"Canada, it will be my first time in Canada, as it was my first time here. I hope so, it would be nice to be here again one time, but with much more time."

"Your tour will end in February 2020 in Los Angeles - how about holidays thereafter in our wonderful states?"

"That's a compelling offer!"

We had a few hours time till we had to go to the venue for this evening. We decided to spend this hours at a place that was recommended to us: Loomis Lakeside at Reeds Landing - a very good recommendation.

The water and the trees, not that sunny today and cold, but nevertheless it was very nice at this place. Tomorrow we would have some more time. Therefore we decided to get up early tomorrow, to have some hours more then, to explore the city. But now we enjoyed this hours, at the water and the trees.

A fantastic show with a fantastic audience. A very good beginning this busy days.....

It was a bit stupid, to try to explore a city within some hours, especially when you had a fixed event in the evening, especially when you would be the one on the stage. But we had no other choice, therefore we tried to see at least downtown and some more neighborhoods, and of course Connecticut River. Yes, the museums, the jazzy city, so much would be there. But on the other side, shouldn't you be happy, to have the opportunity to do a voyage like these? One year, nearly the whole United States, so many cities, regions, landscapes. We were a bit sad about, that we not used the first evening in the city, the evening without a show, to get some impressions of the nightlife - this had been our last chance for the next days. After Stamford, back in Boston, would be our next chance.

At least we managed it at the end, to spend some time to visit the Springfield Museums - not all of course. And even the two art museums were too much for our limited time. Nevertheless, it was a nice and inspiring time.

Again a fantastic show, again a fantastic audience. Time to come down somewhat?

Again it was a very short trip, alongside the Connecticut River. We arrived early, had a nice lunch in a Caribbean restaurant, and an appointment at the local newspaper, the Hartford Courant.

"I not know if you know, that we're considered as the oldest newspaper in the whole USA?"

"Really? No, this is new to me. But without any doubt is this a region with a long tradition, the birthplace of our nation."

"Yes, but a city like Hartford has changed a lot during the time."

"A very large African American community lives in this city, as well as an even larger Puerto Rican community, this I know. Some similarities with Springfield?"

"Yes, this city offers a diverse appearance. Unfortunately we have also high crime rates in the city - we're among the top twenty."

"Like every larger city, often the problems are more or less the same."

"Yes, also no paradise here. Still a part of the USA."

"But this is a very liberal city, a very large majority for the democrats."

"Yes, but this not means that we can elude from nationwide developments. You have not seen so much from the city so far, or?"

"No, the hotel and a nice Caribbean restaurant for lunch so far. Tomorrow we will spend some time, to get at least some impressions of the city."

"Any distinct plans?"

"This is always difficult, only some hours. The arts museum downtown maybe?"

"It's the oldest in the US - Stowe? Twain?"

"In this city everything is the oldest? Stowe? Twain? Always the same, you would need much more time."

Till the show we spent some time at Bushnell Park, the oldest publicly funded park in the USA - well, Hartford was one of the oldest cities in the country with the second oldest.....and so on. And the settlements of the people who lived here before?

It was a cool show with a cool audience! Well, in a city with such a population? Over eighty percent African American or Hispanic?

We tried to visit at least some of the impressive buildings - only to mention the State Capitol. But in the end we stranded in Pratt Street. We had a nice Irish lunch there, drank Guinness, and enjoyed our time. So much more would have waited for us, but the last fantastic evening motivated me to make it even better tonight. I was a bit disappointed about, that it was not possible for me to include more local topics. Sure, I could have read the local newspaper, local TV stations, local radio. But this would have been not real, I would have had no real knowledge about the topics, it would have been insincere. And then, there were so much topics you had to talk about. Our nation had to decide about, which way it wanna go the next years - and not only the next years. Still the direction of the last years, back to what had been before, or maybe something new - in a city like Hartford not so much a question.

Hartford, after the Civil War for several decades the richest city in the USA - of course a superlative! Hartford, today one of the poorest cities in the USA. And the Hartford metropolitan area? The area where the white population lives? Suddenly one of the richest areas in per capita income - welcome to the USA!

A wonderful show that I enjoyed very much. A warmly audience and I was thankful, to perform for them.....

Again a very short trip, more or less alongside Connecticut River on its way to the ocean. But we

would not reach the ocean yet, not now, later. But what a difference to our time in the north, the region near the Canadian border? What should one prefer? I had no idea! This small part of this large nation and already so much different impressions.

Middletown, again a smaller city, so much could be said about it, so much you could see, so much you could do. O'Rourke's Diner? A must, Irish kitchen. Or maybe one of the nice Italian restaurants? Talking about the problems of the city? Enjoying the green areas - Tibetan kitchen? It was heartbreaking - yesterday Hartford, tomorrow Waterbury, today Middletown - a fucking curse and a privilege in one!

A nice show, a nice audience, a nice evening.....

We let Connecticut River behind us, to reach the much smaller Naugatuck River, to reach Waterbury. Around the size of Hartford, it also had a very diverse population. Irish and Italian of course, Puerto Rican of course. But also Albanian, Cape Verdean, Dominican, Brazilian, Jamaican, Lithuanian, Portuguese.....communities - and a large Jewish community. We had an appointment at the local radio, at WATR, right in front of the show - "Benson and Harf". He, Guy Benson, a conservative, a Fox News contributor. She, Marie Harf, a democrat, who worked formerly for Barack Obama, now for Fox News. A very interesting combination!

"Thanks therefor, that you accepted our invitation."

"Thanks for your invitation. But why should I have refuse your invitation?"

"Well, this is Fox?"

"I see no problem therein."

"Maybe some of our listeners have a problem with you?"

"I think so. But nobody forces them to watch my show."

"But maybe some think that it's beyond nice taste, how you're entitling our president in your shows?"

"Well, wasn't there something with "grabbing pussies" - you as a woman, Marie?"

"Our listeners know what I think about this. You're a left-winger, how far to the left you see yourself?"

"At least more than you - at least I would not work for Fox News....."

".....but you have accepted our invitation....."

".....also Fox listeners have the right to get to know that there is more than the "right" truth."

"And of course, you as a lefty knows the truth."

"At least I know that a man like the one in the White House is simply disgusting, and is the reason why our former allies are laughing about us now!"

"I think that our fantastic president makes our nation great again."

"Have we to talk about Munich? You told your listeners what happened as Vice President Pence delivered the greetings of our wonderful president at the Munich Security Conference? Not? Maybe you should tell your listeners, what an embarrassment this was for our country!"

"Maybe we see this a bit different....."

".....so, you informed you listeners about this? Not? No surprise. But fortunately we have independent sources, where also your listeners can inform themselves about what has happened in Munich."

"Old news, why not talking about today's politics?"

"No problem."

"AOC and her "Green New Deal"?"

"Maybe even someone like you can pronounce her name, but maybe that's too much for you. Whatever, you asked a question?"

"I think so!"

"Well, yes, Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez.....and yes, her Green New Deal.....yeah!"

"Maybe I should help my colleague. Her plan is ridiculous! What do you think about it?"

"Maybe her plan is somewhat to ambiguous. Ten years is a very short time, but maybe one could discuss this. But this would require that you would take divergent opinions seriously, very difficult for Fox."

"You not take the elected POTUS seriously! Your argumentation is ridiculous!"

"This man makes jokes about handicapped people, this man separates toddlers from their mothers - I would be ashamed, would I support this lousy man!"

"I think I have....."

"Sorry Marie, but I fear that our time runs out! It was nice to have you here, Mr. Maurer. I think that our listeners have heard enough from you now!"

The show in Waterbury? Were Fox News listeners in the audience? I hoped so, it would be good.....

Back at the coast, back at the ocean - New Haven! Standing at the beach, looking at the endless water - okay, the smaller of the oceans, the larger one I would see again at the end of the tour. And in between? Well, the Gulf of Mexico - but.....

I knew that I would miss this very much, and even if other landscapes had their beauty - months without an ocean? I keeled down and touched the sand, the salty smell of the ocean's breeze, the sound of the waves - why not simply staying here, why not simply dying here.....

The New Haven Register waited, the today's show waited, other cities waited, other shows. What a melancholic mood, the ocean in front of me, the city behind me. New Haven, also this city had its problems today, with so many beautiful Gothic houses. People from around the world lived in this city, offered their food - Malaysian, Ethiopian, Spanish, Belgian, French, Greek, Latin American, Mexican, Italian, Thai, Chinese, Japanese, Vietnamese, Korean, Indian, Jamaican, Cuban, Peruvian, Syrian/Lebanese, Turkish cuisine.....not needed to mention cuisines like Italian or Irish or..... - or? And yet, crime rates.....

"Yes that's true, The New Haven Register had a turbulent history, as this whole area had a turbulent history. And also today there're enough turbulence."

"In particular?"

"The opioid crisis for instance."

"Many cities like New Haven, many northeastern cities, share this problem with New Haven."

"Yes, but we have problems to get a grip on this problem. Maybe also economically."

"Yes I know, Purdue Pharma in Stamford is one of the companies that is sued. This will be a topic of my show in Stamford, after Bridgeport my next aim after New Haven."

"Yes, and now we have discussions regarding the lawsuits - but maybe this is no longer of importance."

"I've read it, Purdue possibly will file for bankruptcy."

"Yes, bankruptcy? They earned billions with the death of hundred thousands, and now they make off - totally legally! The owners and shareholders are happy and the cities and communities have to solve the problems they have caused - not to talk about the expenses."

"Yes, the American concept: Some earn billions, some have to spend billions."

"I would correct you: A few earn billions and many have to spend billions."

"Maybe you should become a performer?"

"I have my place here, at this newspaper. Any special topics related to the city this evening?"

"Yale of course. Already the list with names of presidents and vice presidents is not short. Bill and Hillary met at Yale for instance."

"And not to forget the Bush family!"

"Yeah, and the Black Panther trials. This city, this region is full of history."
"This here are our oldest cities, the places of the first settlements, here our history has begun."
"Yes, our history has begun here. For others their history has ended here....."

I was not sure, but I had the feeling that this show had a special mood - but maybe this was only an illusion. Many students in the audience, no surprise. The venue for this evening was near Yale University. Tomorrow the venue would be in Wooster Square, New Haven's Little Italy. We would spent the day there, we had to eat an "apizza"!

New Haven, America's first planned city - too much "first" in this region.
"We have not to stay in the Italian neighborhood, if you not like?"
"You know how much I like the Italian lifestyle. And it would be hard not to eat an apizza."
"We could go to Louis' Lunch, it's said that they have invented the hamburger in 1900, and the steak sandwich."
"In this city there would be so much places you could go to. Let us stay here."
"Where you wanna eat your apizza - Pepe's?"
"Would be no mistake I think. But I think also, that we could eat one at another place as well."
""A few" other places one can find here, I guess."
"How about a fine espresso, to begin the day here in Little Italy? We can see later where we will eat our apizza?"
"Good idea, let us be a bit Italian, let us be a bit relaxed."
We walked around a lot, Wooster Square but also New Heaven Green, we spent a lot of time by sitting on benches, and even when it was not really a warm day, the sun shined and bestowed us some nice moments.

A show with a very cheerful audience. It was cool to interact with the audience, the audience was cool!

A very few miles in the morning to the next seaport city – Bridgeport. A city, again with a relatively high African American population, again with a huge democratic majority, with high taxes and the place where the Frisbee was invented - more or less the same like in the last days. And of course various cuisines, interesting architecture, beaches and an ocean. Plainly said, a place one could consider to live at.

We had a meeting at the Connecticut Post in the afternoon, before the show in the evening.

"The first part of your tour comes slowly to an end now. What will be the strongest impression of the New England States, that you will take with you?"

"Yes, Stamford follows Bridgeport and then back to Boston. The first two months of the tour will be over then. They began in Boston and they will end in Boston. The strongest impression? I have no idea where I should begin, too many impressions during this two months."

"Nothing special?"

"Everything was special - I mean, to name something would mean to withhold so much. The people, the landscape, the history, the liberalism, the problems.....I have the feeling, that I know much more about this region now, only to realize that I know nothing. The larger cities in this area, the small ones northern and along the Canadian border? I'm a bit sad that my journey has to continue - maybe it sounds unreliable and dishonest, but.....I have the feeling the the best part of the journey comes to an end now. Everything what will come now, will be.....I hope I will say this not in every region."

"Could it be that you're fallen in love with our region?"

"I think that's too much said. It's like, I would have seen a beautiful woman, only for a very short moment, not even sure how she really looked. But you have the deep feeling that you should follow her, that she was something very special. But then you no longer can see her, find her again, she's disappeared and you're very sad. That's the feeling I have in the moment."

"But you can come back, after the end of your tour, to see the woman again."

"Yes, but maybe that would be a mistake, maybe....."

"Maybe she would be not the beautiful woman that you thought to see?"

"Yeah, sometimes your imagination outflanks reality."

"And our states?"

"Well, sometimes you have to give things a chance."

"So you will come back?"

"I have to."

"Some words about politics?"

"Yes."

"This region is, even today, closely related to Great Britain as well as to Ireland. Some words about the Brexit?"

"It's sad, it's sad that Europe not finds a way to stay closer together. Nationalism is no meaningful way, we have to stay together. The sad thing is, as in our country, that there are always a few agitators and many follow them like a flock of sheep. They would follow them to the slaughterhouses, and often enough they did it. Always the same story?"

A fantastic show, a fantastic audience, melancholy.....

We decided to spend the most time we had at the zoo. Well, not the largest zoo, but nicely located and very nice to spend your time there. A nonprofit institution with many nice places to stay and to be astonished.

Zoos, I loved them always. In every city I tried to visit the zoo, if possible - Boston waited. I always loved it, to see the animals - yes, the cages. But in such moments I was a child, only seeing the astonishing animals from around the world. And of course the plants, and the buildings. The greenhouses, very often architectural icons, to walk in them, to see the plants, to feel the different climates, the sun through the glass - butterfly houses?

We walked around and were delighted in, what the people who were running the zoo, bestowed us. It was very hard to say, what was the most interesting animal, what the most astonishing plant - so many different impressions everywhere. And the children who enjoyed their day at the zoo, I would have liked it, to be one of them - sitting on one of the horses or zebras, spinning around on the merry-go-round.

A beautiful show with beautiful people.....

Again a very short drive, this time to Stamford, our last aim before the return to Boston. Nearly at New York now, Long Island very near. Again a very beautiful city, green and water. But today we had not much time for this, an appointment at "The Advocate", the local newspaper, and in the evening the show.

"Shall we talk about the Sacklers first?"

"It's okay with me."

"In your program you've talk about the opioid crisis already before, but without any doubt it will be

a major topic tonight and tomorrow - your two shows in Stamford?"

"Yes, of course. I mean, you cause a crisis that kills tenth of thousands, not to talk about the addicted persons, you make billions in cash, you sleep very well in the night with this knowledge, and then you mercifully offer some millions as redemption – this is disgraceful. Their profit belongs to their victims, you have to name them as what they are - villains."

"Do you think, that they have to give away their money, their profit?"

"I think, that they have to finance the costs of their doing. The profits for them, the costs for the others - no thanks. And they live a life as super rich people, playing patrons of the arts, living as respected family. They are murderers, and you have to say this. But let me add this. This crisis is also a failure of our health care system. Profit is the only measure, not the health of the people. This has to end."

"Universal health care?"

"Of course."

"A word to our president's plan to send immigrants to democratic cities?"

"Again on of this jabber for his supporters. You should ignore it."

"And the new DCCC rules?"

"The democrats should start therewith to concentrate on their aim, to win the election in 2020. I've a bad feeling that they will screw it again - but this time it would be a real disaster."

"Germany in the 20s - you have German roots?"

"This is not Weimar, for many reasons. But this not means that our democracy - if we still have a democracy and not an oligarchy - is not endangered."

"Who is your favorite democratic candidate?"

"Difficult at the moment. The debates will be very interesting. Sanders would have deserved it, without any doubt. A younger candidate? Difficult at the moment - still the question about Biden."

"A woman?"

"I think this is a discriminatory question - I really mean this! Sure, I understand the discussions, but for me it's not important whether the candidate is a woman, or not. For me is important whether the candidate can beat the mobster in office, or not."

"But you think, that also a woman could do this?"

"If she acts differently as Hillary Clinton did it, yes. She lost the voting not because she's a woman, she lost the voting because her campaign was a disaster. And she was arrogant and a wall street puppet. The democrats have to stop this man in office - his message is only greed and hate. The democrats have to offer a different America, a different America for workers, for immigrants, for vets.....an America that cares."

A difficult show with some very difficult topics.

We spent our time till the show in the area of Cummings Park, Czekik Marina Park, Kosciuszko Park - and Woodland Cemetery. Many nice yachts one could see there, playing golf on one of the golf courses? On one hand obviously a very rich city, on the other hand? It was strange, the city created not the same impression as the cities of the last days, tiredness? Boston would be the next - and then Canada. Signs of wear and tear? To much of this cities in a too fast succession? Would Canada be different - Canada would be different.

I had the feeling that it was good that the first part of the tour came to an end now. Canada - well, Boston beforehand. But Canada was in my mind, the polite Canadians, with a good health care system, worker rights, but also there no roads paved with gold.

I was happy as the time went by, as we had to go to the venue for this evening, that it was time to enter the stage.

A show, an audience, not my best performance of the last time, I fear.

Boston Again

We had the whole day to drive from Stamford to Boston, therefore we were in no hurry. A longer break in the city of New London, roughly in the middle of the route from Stamford and Boston. Eugene O'Neill and the Lyman Allyn Museum waited, and the River Thames. We had a look at the "Eagle", a wonderful sailing ship and a nice example therefore, that "life" can be very strange. Who would think, that this proud Coast Guard ship had been built by the Nazis as "Horst Wessel", the composer of the "Horst-Wessel-Lied"? Yes, and now it was a proud sight here in New London, on the River Thames!

It was late in the evening as we reached Boston. A cocktail in a bar, but then we decided that we should go to bed. The next two days the next two shows, tomorrow also the next interview. I found no sleep, now the first part was over. I thought about the upcoming months, the upcoming regions. Again this feeling that it would be a mistake to continue, again this insight that also this part of the USA was a part of the USA. Yes, all this liberalism, all this nice communities, all this nice golf courses and nice entrepreneurial families like the Stacklers. It was short after 6am as I looked at the alarm clock for the last time.

We stood up early as normally and also Caroline had found not much sleep the last night. She was excited to be again in Boston, this time for a longer time, and looked forward to Canada. After the breakfast we just walked a bit till we drove to "The Boston Globe", for the second time.

"Nice to have you here again, Peter."

"Nice to meet you again, Karen."

"It couldn't be better - or? Each and every show sold out, press articles, TV interviews, radio shows.....this is your time!"

"Well, this are the New England States - if not here, where else? But yes, the response is overwhelming."

"Soon you will be in Canada for some shows, and then New York. You look forward to this?"

"My first time in Canada. So far I know Canada only from TV. Therefore I'm very excited. New York? I'm not from a small town, but I'm no fan of such large cities."

"Boston has just under seven hundred thousand inhabitants, somewhat, but not much more, than your hometown. You like cities of that size more?"

"Yes, I think they are more human sized, more humane."

"So, Boston could be also a city for you?"

"Well, at home it's somewhat warmer. But yes, Boston is a very interesting city. After the two shows we will stay for an additional two days in the city. Then we have time to explore the city - Caroline and I."

"Shall we talk about our nice president?"

"Don't turn this good mood into a bad mood!"

"Yes, he's always a reason to get bad tempered."

"Well, only to think about Saudi Arabia and the Yemen? We have a bipartisan resolution, and our president? Not the veto per se is the problem, but his reasoning: *This resolution is an unnecessary, dangerous attempt to weaken my constitutional authorities, endangering the lives of American citizens and brave service members, both today and in the future* - what a shit is this? Yes, we have checks and balances! We have the Congress! And no, you're no dictator or autocrat! When will the GOP wake up? Never, I fear. Would be good when the democrats would wake up!"

A fantastic show and a great audience! Tomorrow the next one!

The day after the first of our last two shows in New England, time for easy going. We spent the whole day, till we had to prepare for the show in the evening, downtown, at the water. Of course, we visited the New England Aquarium and touched the rays, the starfish and the sharks. We watched the seals, their funny playing, and also the penguins - and of course also the wonderfully colorful fish. Nice and relaxed hours, in a nice and relaxed city. And always the salty scent, the ocean's breeze, even when this was a bay.

Tomorrow we would have the whole day - and certainly the zoo would be one of our aims. Apart from that, we had no distinct planes - it was wonderful to know, that also tomorrow we would be still in this city, and also the day after!

But then the time for this day came to an end and we prepared for tonight's show.

The last show in New England - was it only I, who was melancholic?

Quite a lot of time we spent in the zoo, the second in a short time, and again a wonderful time. Not the largest zoo I knew, but quite a very beautiful one. We took our time, sauntered from part to part, the clouds in the sky not disturbed us - quite a nice time we had in this beautiful zoo. What was the most wonderful, the butterflies or the gorillas? Everything was beautiful and astonishing, seen with the eyes of a child.

After the many hours in the zoo, with two breaks, something to drink and eat, we decided to stay in this area for the rest of the day. "In this area" meant the neighborhoods in the north and in the east of Franklin Park, till down to the south - the "black" Boston. Around twenty-five percent of the inhabitants of Boston were African Americans, most of them lived in this area and you had not to ask, whether this was one of the richer or poorer areas of Boston. Over twenty percent of Boston's inhabitants lived under the poverty line - one of the faces of a city like Boston.

Boston - your first thoughts? Tea Party and Ireland - or? Apart from the fact that this city had also a large Hispanic community, it also had a manifold African American history. Too diverse, much to diverse to discover it in some hours, but at least we tried to get some impressions of this side of Boston as well.

For this day we had planned to see the Irish side of Boston - not very difficult! The Irish community was still the largest in Boston, names to name? The Kennedy family, if you like? But this was not that much what interests us today. We spent our time by walking through the streets of Charlestown, the traditional pubs and the nice restaurants. We visited the USS Constitution, as well as the USS Cassin Young. A very different face of Boston, till today in many ways dominated by the Irish. Later the day we had a meeting with Barbara, this time a private meeting.

"Nice that we three are together again. The first part of your tour is over now."

"Yes, the first part is over now. Tomorrow we will fly to Canada. It's a bit strange that it's over now, and that we will leave this region. On the other hand we look forward to Canada."

"I hear pain of parting?"

"Yes, somewhat."

"I hope you had the opportunity to get some more impressions about our city now, and that you will come back."

"Yeah, at least some impressions. But in the end, this city is like as most of the larger cities in this

country. Nicely separated in ethnic groups, nicely separated in rich and poor - on one hand very rich and very nice and on the other hand poor and not that nice. Yes of course, the massive Irish influence? But the African Americans, the Hispanics, the Asian Americans? The Irish define this city, but especially they rule this city - and this is not metaphorically meant."

"And the nice large cities in your home state, your home town? Is it better there - without the Irish?"

"No, definitely not. I look forward to the Canadian cities, maybe they are different?"

"Do you believe this?"

"No, not really. Also there, as far as I know, you have skyrocketing prices on the property market, like in this city, like at home. But at least they have a functioning health care system, better worker rights and more. And they are polite people."

"Yeah, maybe they have more capitalism there then we?"

"I don't think so. I'm very tensed to be there."

"All your shows in Canada are sold out. I've seen it, visiting your webpage."

"Yes."

"Surprised? You will include Canadian topics?"

"Maybe somewhat. But I have an urge thereto, to say sorry. To say sorry therefor that I'm an American, and that not all Americans are such ruthless bastards like the man in office. I hope that they are in fact polite people."

"I think that the Canadians know, that not all Americans are supporters of the man in office."

"I've the feeling, that you can assure other people that not often enough."

"At least it's no mistake to do so. Can I ask you something else? It's a more private question?"

"Yes."

"The last time as we talked, for the interview, I had the feeling that you're unhappy, with your being as a stand-up comedian? But maybe this is an over interpretation?"

"Yes and no. Would nobody do what I do, then this would be no good. On the other hand, stand-up comedy has its limits. And this limits are sometimes hard to bare."

"What limits you see?"

"Complex coherences. You cannot talk as a stand-up comedian about complex coherences."

"But maybe this is not your.....let me say "function"?"

"Yes, sure. You can say, that this is the task of a newspaper article, or a political magazine in TV. But hey, this is the USA! Our best political commentators are our talk show hosts. Yes, this is maybe overblown, but you know what I mean. Everything in the US is a show, even a political magazine is a show - I'm a show man."

"Nobody hinders you to write a political article for instance. CBS Boston would be happy to have you as an political commentator."

"No, not as commentator - look how complex the political structures are. See the White House today. See who all has an office there. See who is linked with whom - you wanna investigate this? Only a very few newspapers or TV stations are capable to do this in this country today. But it would be necessary to inform the people about all this, but this would need people who are interested in to get informed - it's a vicious circle!"

"Maybe that's your "function"? To create interest by the people? You talk about all this - sure you have not the time for details or underlying structures. But when you tell you audience something about the Mueller report, when you demask Barr, then the people maybe get motivated, to ask for more information about what happens here."

"Yes, maybe. But I would like it to do more - I even have not the time to march!"

"But you're inspiring others to march - my offer was seriously meant."

"CBS Boston? I have not the time for such a work, not for serious inquiries."

"But you can deal with words, you have media presence. Take your time and think it over. How about a report about Canada? Your experiences in Canada?"

"I think about it. How about a glass of wine with ocean view?"

"With pleasure."

The next day, during breakfast, I talked with Caroline about Barbara's offer.

"I'm not sure about CBS."

"As Barbara said as we drank wine. It would be the task to find a format, that would fit for you and CBS."

"Yes, but definitively not something like a reality show about my tour."

"She definitively not has something like that in her mind! No, I think she is really interested in, to win you over for CBS Boston. I think you would have many possibilities. At least you should stay in contact with Barbara further on, to discuss this."

"Well, it would be interesting for me. It would give me - maybe - more possibilities to express myself. Yes, I should keep the contact with Barbara."

"We have still some things to do, and then our flight will not wait."

"Yes, let's sell the car."

Caroline had arranged it, that we had bought a car after our arrival in Boston. Now the dealer bought it back - of course not for the same price. But in the end it was cheaper than to rent a car. In Canada we would use the train. It was an easy way of traveling between the Canadian cities. In fact we would use the train till Buffalo, till we would be back in the USA. There we would buy a car again, also this was already arranged by Caroline.

Boston Logan International Airport, we still had some time till boarding. A coffee, something sweet, the next part of the tour would begin now.

"I think it would be interesting, CBS Boston? Media presence - priceless!"

"Yes, but we would need a format that would be possible for us. Or do you want, that there would be media people with us on tour?"

"No, that would kill the tour. Whatever it would be, it has to be possible for us two to do it."

"You have an idea?"

"Self-made videos - in the way I did it at the beginning?"

"Your first videos for social media?"

"Yes, it's relatively easy today. But it has to be different - no stand-up comedy."

"Yeah.....in the way of YouTube videos? You know....."

".....no, no, I'm no young hipster. It's for CBS?"

"As Barbara said: Take your time."

"Yes, we have not to rush things."

We entered the plane, took our seats and enjoyed the flight - Canada waited, Montreal waited!

"I've followed you on social media, congratulations for this fantastic first part of your tour."

"Thanks, Jack. Yes, so far it was fantastic."

"How do you feel?"

"Good.....I've no reason of not feeling good."

"You know what I mean."

"Yes, I know what you mean. CBS Boston has made me an offer."

"An offer?"

"Yes, for some kind of program. Nothing specific so far, but I have some ideas. I have to think it over."

"Sounds interesting."

"Yes, it would give me the opportunity to do something different as well, than to be a stand-up comedian. But CBS Boston? Soon I will leave this region. Sure, I could keep in touch with CBS Boston, not that difficult today?"

"And CBS Boston is not that far away from CBS. I said it to you, soon you will have your own TV

show."

"I'm not interested in, that it will be stand-up comedy. As I said it, I've some ideas, but nothing definite yet."

"I not meant CBS Boston, I looked ahead on the near future."

"Yes, things are developing very fantastic. But this was New England, now Canada, then Middle Atlantic? So far everything is easy. I'm not that sure about the succeeding regions."

"Even there tickets are getting rare, and this months in advance!"

"Yes, but I fear that the media coverage will be not that nice there."

"At least in some parts and in some media. I fear also, that they will be not that happy to have you at a place, where twenty-four hours no other news channel runs except Fox News. But maybe that's the challenge for you."

"At least it would be cowardly not to go there. And as you said, the ticket sale works out well, even there. Even there, not everybody is a blindfold conservative."

"And again a challenge. It's easy, to perform in front of liberals. You're telling them what they think, you give them self-affirmation. That's an easy doing. But to do it in front of people, who are no convinced liberals, that's something different. Think about Lenny?"

"Yeah, this would be interesting, would I become banned! But even in the real conservative states this is not that easy nowadays. At least not in a way as it was possible in his days."

"Yes. He was one of them, who bestowed us our right of free speech. But nowadays it darkens again. We will see what will happen, when you will perform there. But now, Canada!"

"Yes, Canada! I think Canada will be more a home play, than many of the coming American states."

Canada

We arrived at "Aéroport international Pierre-Elliott-Trudeau de Montréal" in the morning and it was an easy travel to our hotel. We had a meeting at CTV News in the early afternoon - welcome to Canada.

Montreal, situated on isles, surrounded by water, with a tippie peak in the midst - what else do you wanted? A mostly French speaking population, many Italians - sounded to good!

"Hello, Peter. We heartily welcome you here in Montreal, in Canada."

"Thank you very much, Zoe."

"You've just arrived here in Canada in the morning together with your manager Caroline, who his here with us in the studio. I think that you both have not seen that much of Montreal so far?"

"No, not really. Today is no show, so I think we will spend some time out then. But the next days will become busy."

"You will perform eight shows in six different Canadian cities in the next days - all are sold out. Surprised about this response? This is your first time here and your show is - mainly? - about American topics."

"Yes, all shows in Canada are sold out, as all so far and also the rest of the shows in the Northeast of America. Yes, I'm surprised and I am a bit unsure about what I should talk. I mean, you have not elected this idiot in office."

"I've read that you've said, that you think that you should say sorry for him to the Canadian people. I don't think that you've elected him?"

"No, definitively not. But I have to say, that the alternative was also no thriller. The problem is, that the world laughs about us now, that the world sees now, that the proud US are not even capable to provide their people a useful health care system - you have to be ashamed about that. On the other hand the White House acts, like they would be the center of the world and everything else would be meaningless - again you have to be ashamed about that."

"And Canada? Do you think we do it better?"

"This is a rhetorical question - or? How many murders you have in this city, with more than one million inhabitants?"

"One point seven million to be exact - twenty-six."

"Twenty-six? A month? That's not that good, but not that bad."

"Twenty-six a year! Not in a month?"

"You're kidding me? Most large cities in the US would be happy to reach this number in a month - the worst cities reach this in a bad fortnight!"

"This is Canada?"

"Yeah, this is Canada - most people speak French here, or?"

"Well, at home yes. But most inhabitants are bilingual or multilingual - French and English at least."

"And the third language?"

"Italian."

"Sure, Italian of course. It's nearly relieving that a city like Montreal has at least some problems - prices on the house market as far as I know as an example."

"Yes, that's true. But I think, and this is not offensively meant, that most Americans would be happy to have the problems of the Canadians."

"That's definitively true - hey, Mr. Trudeau has some problems as well!"

"Yes, also we have political scandals."

"How does the Canadians would react, would your Prime Minister do only one thing, that our president has done or said - constantly?"

"He would be no longer Prime Minister."

Zoe invited us, together with some of her colleagues, to a nice restaurant. And the rest of the evening we spent together in a sports bar - ice hockey of course!

The next days would become hard, therefore we stood up early to have at least some time for a relaxed breakfast. In fact it was not easy to do so, because the last evening had become a long one - or should I say that the last night was a short one? But come on, it was a very nice evening with very nice people - just Canadians!

But today and tomorrow? Each afternoon an interview with a newspaper, at the evening the show. We had to drive longer distances, because not everything - the hotel, the buildings of the newspapers and the venues, I would perform at two different venues - were located closely together. But then we would have one day to discover Montreal at least somewhat, before we would drive to Ottawa the next morning. At Ottawa we would have again a stressful day. But now Montreal, and our first interview with a newspaper, the Montreal Gazette.

"This evening your first show in Canada ever - sold out! Your feelings?"

"Well, I'm still not sure about the program. Apart from that, that I do a lot spontaneous, I'm still not sure about my opener. But this is not that much something in particular. Sometimes I change my mind while entering the stage."

"You're a performer who needs an audience, who needs the feedback from the audience?"

"Yes, the worst thing for me is, to hear nothing from the audience. You know that onstage you cannot see the audience, you have to hear it. The more feedback I get, the better for me."

"And with feedback you not only mean laughter. You like it, when the audience shouts and comments, and it's not the worst for you, to hear negative comments?"

"I'm not interested in, to provoke my audience - that's not my style. But that not means that everybody has to like everything I say. Yes, critical comments are okay. I like it to react on them. But again, it's not my style to provoke the audience, or that I would try to make somebody looking like a fool."

"But it can happen?"

"Yes, but then it's his own fault, not mine. The point is, that I try to grapple with the audience - it's

inspiring to me, and it's not excluded that the audience shows me my limits."

"This is a point that your audience loves very much about your shows. On the Internet you can find a lot of footage about this interaction. This makes every show unique."

"Yes and no. It really depends on the audience. If the audience is quite and you get absolutely no feedback, then the only thing you can do is, to reel off your program. This are the not so nice evenings."

"And this evening, what are your expectations of the Canadian audience?"

"I'm not sure about it. Well, to be honest, I love it to perform in neighborhoods with an African American or Latino majority. This evenings are always very lively. It's difficult for me to assess the Canadian audience."

"Then I think I can reassure you. This French, Italian, Irish, English mix, together with all this African, Arabian, Latino and Asian input, will love you."

My first Canadian show - they loved me and I loved them!

It was very hard to stand up this morning - again an invitation, again a long - but very nice - evening, and a too short night. The hotel was kind enough to provide us a late breakfast, and we were on our way to the next newspaper, the francophone "Le Journal de Montréal".

"You not speak French - or?"

"No, unfortunately not. I'm a typical American, one who thinks that the others have to speak English. And if not, than it's their fault."

"Happily we in Montreal speak English!"

"And I fear a better English than we Americans - is it true that your Prime Minister is able to form complete and correct sentences?"

"Oh yes, semantically and syntactically correct sentences."

"Wow, unbelievable!"

"You also had a president who was capable of to do so."

"Yes, we had! I'm no believer, but I would thank God if we would have one again, in the end of 2020. Sometimes I think - at least I can understand all of them who do it - if it wouldn't better to immigrate to Canada. Canada is no Paradise, but it offers you a lot of freedom, but also a social safety net. A government that cares about everybody - wow! In America we think that this is either a myth or the communistic hell!"

"Yes, sometimes it's somewhat difficult for us Canadians to understand what happens in the USA."

"Say it frankly, you Canadians are laughing about us."

"Well, would it be that....."

"I understand. The world laughs about us, the world fears us, fears that we're causing unmanageable damage - only to think about climate change. The world discusses about consequences and our government is full of deniers - it's a shame, to be an American today!"

"Your yesterday's show can be found on the Internet. It caused some very harsh reactions in the USA?"

"If this people who write such comments, not would write such comments about my show yesterday, than I would have done something wrong. This is a very fine illustration of the state of our nation - I feel ashamed!"

A fucking good show with a fucking good audience!

Montreal in one day? Maybe as a Japanese tourist - you know what I mean. It was a pity to have not

more time for such a city, and it was also a pity that no ice hockey match took place at this evening. We tried not to try too much, we tried to feel the city's vibe. Not that much different as such a city in the USA at first sight, but then so different. The mood was different, the people were different. Yes, Montreal a very busy city as well, but a Canadian city. The story, that you bump into a Canadian? That he apologizes? They do it!

Mont-Royal of course, some time in Little Italy, and of course we saw some churches and also one of the basilicas. And I asked myself, why I felt at home always, so far away from home. And I feared, that this feeling not would last, that it would change, not tomorrow, maybe not the day after tomorrow, but it would. "

"It's a wonderful city."

"Yes, a wonderful vibe in this city. And yet, also in this city you can be unhappy, also in this city your life can turn dark."

"But at least you have some real chances here, not only the talking about an alleged dream - have you ever heard that somebody talked about a Canadian Dream?"

"No, but maybe this is a sign therefore that this dream exists - not in words, but in reality."

"And what about the ones who fail? The ones whose dreams not come true, even when they are not only delusions and empty promises?"

"Yes, what's with them - them who not find their place? At least it's not the same as at home, when nobody cares about them, not even when the streets are crowded with tents."

"Yes, some will never find their place....."

We needed no two hours by train to reach Ottawa, Canada's capitol. Today would be busy again, in the evening the show, an interview at A-Channel before it. Tomorrow we would have a day in Ottawa, then Kingston would be our next aim.

"Two shows in Montreal, today you will perform in our town. One of your topics is the large democratic field of candidates. Now it again has become a bit larger, Joe Biden has acceded the field. I think that this will be one of the topic of tonight's show?"

"Of course, it has to be a topic of tonight's show."

"Because not all of us can be there, would you tell us some of your opinions about Joe Biden's decision?"

"I think that it's a mistake in not only one way. Maybe for many democrats this is something to feel comfortable, but I think it's a risk for the democrats."

"In all polls he's ahead of the current president. I have a poll from yesterday, the 26th. Biden leads by six?"

"Who's interested in this? Election day is the day, so much time till then. I have my doubts that he would be the best opponent."

"Whom you would prefer?"

"Not really sure at the moment, but why I should? Not even the debates have begone, not to talk about the primaries and caucuses - and then the Democratic National Convention?"

"Already now, no twenty-four hours after Biden's announcement, concerns about the superdelegates in social media. But rules have changed?"

"Yes, but only for the first ballot. The superdelegates still have a lot of power. It's no secret, that the moderates would not like it, having Sanders or Warren as nominee."

"You mean that the superdelegates could interfere again in the way they did it in relation to Sanders versus Clinton?"

"If yes, this would be a kick in the teeth of the left-wing and therefore for young and progressive voters. Not the best basis to win the presidential race. Not the best basis to motivate voting blocks, one will need to win, to win this time."

"You think that the superdelegates are a danger for the democrats?"

"Depends on their behavior. Last time it was devastating!"

A complex show for a highly educated audience – tomorrow some sightseeing.

Our day in Ottawa, the Canadian capital - we concentrated on the National Museum of Canada. Canadian art? Neither of us had a real idea about it, therefore it was an interesting time in the gallery. Apart from that, that the gallery also hosted many impressive and significant works of European and American art, it was always interesting to dive into an unknown world - unknown? Well, sometimes you knew your neighbor less well as somebody else. And yet, many looked very familiar - painted in an impressionist style for example. But should this be surprising or not simply obviously? And yet, more and more we got the feeling to do something wrong, something stupid. We decided to spend the rest of our time in this city in the Canadian Museum of History.

An easy two hours trip and we reached Kingston in the early afternoon. Much smaller than Ottawa, but typical Canadian. Clean, wonderful architecture, universities, beautiful landscapes. We had no meeting for an interview today, the show in the evening, tomorrow a day for ourselves. We thought about a sports event - but what kind of sport? Ice hockey? Sure, always a cool thing, this super fast game, here at its birthplace. But even this smaller town? How about curling? Canada one of the leading countries - so far I saw it only on TV. Rugby - very powerful! Sailing? Well,.....? Well, it was difficult, but we decided for curling, tomorrow evening.

After we had reached the hotel, after refreshing, we decided for the waterfront, now that we had arrived at Lake Ontario. Point Pleasant - could you wish more? Especially when this was a really pleasant place? The vastness of the water, even here at the lake's end - would had been wonderful to have time to explore all the isles.....

"It's nice here in Canada - or?"

"Yeah, not thought that you could enhance the coziness of the New England States. But this here? And even here - you saw the homeless man on the street?"

"Yes, of course. But isn't it a characterization of this country? Yes, we've saw a homeless - "a homeless"? How many homeless live on the streets, and they live on the street in the literal sense of the word, in our home town? In the States? What is more commonplace there, than to see a homeless on the street? What characterizes our nation more than this sight?"

"I totally can understand that today the USA is no longer an aim for European immigrants. That they see Canada more and more as the more interesting aim. A country that gives you many possibilities as well, but not abandons you, when you need support. A country that not supports only the rich, the ones who would not need support. I can understand that the Canadians are the happier people!"

"And the ones with higher life spans, less infant mortality - why you have so often the feeling to come from a third world country when you're abroad?"

"Maybe because the US is - at least in some areas - not more than a third world country?"

"I fear I have to agree."

An interested audience - becomes this a to-ask-for-forgiveness tour?

It had became a long, very long, evening. It was hard to stand up, for both of us, just in time for a short breakfast. I would not say that we were fit for exploring the city - we had tickets for curling in

the afternoon? We decided only to spent some time at Navy Bay, to walk around a bit, at the lake shore. Well, lake? Sure a lake, but standing at its shore, Wolf Island in front of you? Wasn't sure about it, one or two miles till the island, something around one and a half? You could have the imagination that this was a sea - and this was the end of the lake! Toronto? Tomorrow? I took a deep breath and felt better - had the impulse to undress, to swim to the isle. But even for a skilled swimmer this would not be that easy - but I had the feeling that it would be wonderful, all this water around me.....

Curling? Had saw it a few times in TV - Olympics? We watched two women's teams, playing against each other - could remember a TV comment. That the Canadian national team would be the last women's team wearing skirts while playing. Well, regimentation of sportswear - I thought about beach volleyball.....? Sport was business, everything else would be a lie - and it had to sell! And the match? It was a tournament with many games, and because not involved in the details, we missed some. But many games were very close and more and more we were involved in the special dramatics of this sport. In the end we were a bit sad, that we would have not that much opportunities again, to watch curling live. Would we live here, in this country, this would had been an interesting alternative to spend an afternoon.

We still had a bit time to visit at least one or two landmarks. Then, after dinner, we decided to go to bed somewhat earlier today. Toronto waited, Mississauga and Hamilton. Four days, four shows, two press meetings. But then we would have some days to discover the area around Toronto and Hamilton, before we would return to the States again.

From Kingston to Toronto it was a somewhat larger distance, but the train needed not more than two and a half hours for the trip. We would stay in Toronto for all the time, till we would leave Canada, also for the shows in Mississauga and Hamilton. We arrived shortly before noon, CBC Toronto waited for an interview in the forefront of the show this evening.

"A lot of hustle in the States at the moment. Barr, the hearing, the accusations.....?"

"Yes, the next chapter in the puppet show. Who not got it till now.....it's tiring, but you have to say it and to show it again and again, what a corrupt sty this whole bunch of bootlickers is. And Barr is a very prominent example of them."

"Do you have hope that this will change soon?"

"If this not changes in 2020, then I think you will face a lot of new immigrants."

"From the States?"

"Yes!"

"Because we welcome all immigrants in Canada, we also would welcome you."

"Thanks, it can be that I will hark back to this."

"At any time."

"Is it true, that nearly fifty percentage of the inhabitants of Toronto are foreign born, and that this rate stays constant?"

"Yes, the highest rate in the world after Miami - Miami has more than we."

"Yes, but in Miami it's because of the Cubans - here? You also have such a huge foreign community?"

"No, that's interesting. Toronto is one of most diverse cities of the world. You can find all nationalities in this city, you can hear all languages in this city. It's estimated that around one hundred thousand new immigrants are arriving in Greater Toronto every year."

"One hundred thousand immigrants every year? Allow me this question, but does this not causes problems?"

"You think about crime rates and ethnic conflicts?"

"To be honest, yes."

"We're known as one of the safest major cities in North America. But to be fair, compared with cities like Montreal....."

".....sorry that I interrupt you, but Montreal? What's your homicide rate?"

"The rate declined and was low for many years. But due to two fatal incidents, it raised again now."

"That's a pity - much?"

"Ninety-five homicides last year."

"Under one hundred?"

"Previously we had under sixty homicides over a long period."

"Los Angeles is proud that they have achieved it, to have under three hundred homicides the last years! And Los Angeles is by far not the worst city in this context! I think, you Canadians are really different. A major American city with less than one hundred homicides - I will do a research whether this city exists or not. And prior to this you had under sixty for a long time?"

"Yes, and we hope that this year we will reach this number again. But as I said, compared to Montreal.....we have to work on it."

"Would you allow me a question?"

"With pleasure."

"Why you're able to this? I mean, yes, compared with Montreal? Montreal, this city is like a fairy tale to me as American. A such diverse city, people from around the world, every year so many newcomers? How do you manage this?"

"This is difficult to answer - an image, a metaphor?"

"Yes."

"Our emergency services are able to respond in one hundred and fifty languages. Maybe it helps to accept other people in their differences."

I asked my audience at this evening from what countries they came and what languages they spoke – the list would be very long.....

Next day, next show and also the next interview. This time for a newspaper, the "Toronto Star".

"Even when you talked yesterday in a TV interview about it, I have to broach it. Attorney General - shall we call this man "Attorney General"? - Barr. Now he refuses his cooperation? Is this the beginning of the end - and whose end?"

"I hope all the time, at all these incidences, that this will be an eye-opener for some more people. This man has to serve the people, the people of the USA - Colbert named it ass-covering. Yes, his only interest is it, covering the president's ass! He's not interested in his constitutional role, to mind the interests of the American people. Whose end? We need a strong democratic presidential nominee and a distinct vote in 2020. And then it will be the time for the judiciary, for a legal evaluation of this time."

"So you think, that at the moment the democrats should not hope for Mueller or the Deutsche Bank?"

"No, it's important to keep these things rolling. But in the end we will have a presidential campaign in 2020. Say, that the democrats would be successful with an impeachment and this grifter in office would be history. And then they lose in 2020 and this rotten GOP would provide the next POTUS? This would be a disaster! Not our president is the real problem, this decayed GOP is the problem, these brownnosers are the problem!"

"You hope for an overwhelming victory of the democrats in 2020?"

"This would help our country. We need time to think some things over."

"Who do you think would have the best chances of all these democratic candidates - as far as you can say this today?"

"Very difficult indeed. Maybe it will be interesting to see what constellations you would have at the end? Sanders as president and Warren as vice president, or vice versa - only to throw something in the ring? Constellations of young candidates? The democrats have so many chances this time, if they screw it up again this time.....please, not again!"

"Can we Canadians help you?"

"Yes, of course! You have public health care for all?"

"Yes, of course."

"You're a communistic state?"

"No, of course not!"

"Please, tell this the American people! Let them know that the Canadians live healthier, that they live longer, that the child death rate is lower - that the Canadians as society are much happier people like the people in the US - tell them!"

"Why do you think does it functions, that so many Americans still believe in this myths, that nowhere it's better than in the US, that the American way is the only way - and so on?"

"Maybe it would help would more Americans spend some time in Canada - but what? The average American has no vacation in the first year, later he can be happy when he reaches two weeks in the end. Many days he needs for Christmas, because they are no holidays for us. Many Americans fear to lose their jobs when in vacation, especially for longer. Tell me, how shall the average American manage it, to travel even to a neighborhood state like Canada?"

"Well, I have to confess that also in Canada we have not that much vacation - at least compared to the Europeans. My daughter works in Germany - well, five weeks vacation and many holidays?"

"And they have a strong economy, despite this! Does Canadians fear to lose their jobs when they go on vacation?"

"Of course not! As worker you have rights!"

"Happy Canada - I think it's better that we're not starting with talking about education now. It's sometimes really frustrating to be an American."

A happy show in happy Canada - not to become pathetic now, but I started more and more to fear the summertime.....

Today, this evening, the show in Mississauga, but of course we not changed hotels and stayed in our hotel in Toronto. Mississauga formed, together with Toronto and several other cities like Hamilton, the "Golden Horseshoe", the metropolitan area named as "Great Toronto Area". It was easy to drive from Toronto to Mississauga, which boarded Toronto, even to Hamilton, somewhat further away from Toronto. We decided to drive early and to spent some time in Streetsville, a neighborhood in Mississauga, to visit the architecture there - and of course the Mississauga Civic Center. At the end we even found some time to spent it at the lake shore, looking at the surface of the water spreading till the horizon.

I closed my eyes and thought about what you needed to be happy and satisfied, to be calm. I thought about the coast at the west, the central regions and the southern parts. The next common mother tongue, after English, in Mississauga, Canada? French? No. Italian? No. German? No. Guess! Well, it's Urdu, followed by Polish.

Was diversity a key for happiness? Well, say you would live together with others in a way, in a way you loved it, to live in this way. And then others would come, and the things would change, would you have to love this circumstance? Reality, never an easy answer! Should we ask the Mississaugas, after they had sold this land? Did they know what would come? Would they like it, to live today in the exact way like their forefathers did it? Reality, never an easy answer.

A thoughtful evening.....

Because we came back late the last night, we decided to drive a bit later to Hamilton. Therefore we had not that much time to spent there, till the show would begin. But this was not that much a disadvantage. This would be our last show in Canada, also Canada would be past then. We would have some days time after, to discover this area somewhat, before traveling back to the States, to our next venue in Buffalo, USA.

We wandered around somewhat at the harbor, we looked at the ships, heard the seagulls and inhaled the cold and fresh air.....

The second farewell show, after Boston, and as sad as the Boston show.....

Our decision for the first of our days with no show was, to spend this day in Mississauga. We had tickets for the Mississauga Chiefs - this time no curling, but ice hockey. Hey, Canada? Till the game begun we walked for a loner time along Credit River, till we got hungry and ate something. A Persian restaurant was our choice - they offered a fantastic lunch buffet and we both ate much too much. But now sports, better ice hockey. Ice hockey, the fastest team sport in the world - nothing for sissies! In fact I liked it, I liked the behavior of the players. Take soccer as an example. All the time they laid in the grass and yammered. All the time they tried to cheat the referee, a very unsporting behavior if you ask me. Ice hockey was very different from that - as said, ice hockey players were no sissies!

The game was - as typical for an ice hockey game - very exciting. One could say: Hey, the Chiefs were in lead from the first third on, in the third they leaded five to two! Well but yes again, we were not talking about soccer, we were talking about the fastest team sport in the world! From offense to defense in a fraction of a second - from the chance to make a goal to get a goal in two or three seconds! Yeah, the fastest! And it happened - five to three, six minutes to go! That meant backing your team - of course we cheered for Mississauga! And it helped! Mississauga shorthanded, but they made the six to three, only two minutes to go! That had to be the decision!

Well, one could say now that ice hockey is also a very hard sport, not to say a brutal sport sometimes. And also in this game there were some confrontations between players, not only fought out with the puck. But I liked this open aggressiveness much more, than this covered underhandedness in soccer. And than at the end, the tribute for the players of the game, the handshakes..... - I simply liked it!

"Some of the players looked very handsome."

"Well, with all their equipment and the helmets? You not see that much of them."

"Oh come on. The Chiefs' goalie? Player of the game of the Chiefs - definitively! You not saw her long blond hair? And as she removed her helmet after the game? You not tell me that you not saw her blue eyes on the display board....."

Today we would be in Hamilton, tomorrow in Toronto, to leave the city the next day, at Tuesday, to heading back to the States. But today in Hamilton, a city that had something in common with Mississauga. Mississauga was divided in two parts, as well as Hamilton. But not ethnicity or wealth was the dividing factor - nature was it! Mississauga was divided by the Credit River and its green band, Hamilton - much more - by the Niagara Escarpment and its green band. You were on one side of the city, or the other. You could see the one part of the city, or the other. Only on top of the escarpment you could see both parts at the same time.

It was interesting to walk around here, soon we would be at it's most prominent part, the Niagara

Falls itself. But even this here was only a very small part of the escarpment - it was new to me how huge this formation was in fact. Yeah nature, and we were so small. And of course we tried to see at least some of the waterfalls in the city. But at the end of the day we stood again at the lake's shore and looked at its water.

"Isn't it strange? Compared with the other lakes, this is a pretty small one."

"Yes, the real large lakes are still waiting. But even here, water till the horizon."

"Unfortunately a bit too cold to swim."

"Yes, this is a bit more easy at home."

"Can you imagine to be here in the deep winter?"

"Never tried ice skating. Maybe I would be good in it?"

"Or driving around with a dog sled?"

"They don't say "driving around" - or?"

"No, I don't think so!"

"What do you liked most today?"

"The botanical garden was beautiful. Maybe not the best season and as always we had not enough time. But nevertheless, it was wonderful."

"Yes, sometimes I hope to get old - real old. Then I would sit in a park, looking at the birds and plants and that would be all I would do. Maybe a bit of writing, but only maybe."

"Here in Hamilton?"

"Why not, it's a sanctuary city....."

Our last day in Canada - well, more or less. A whole day for Toronto? Well, famous museums and architecture, parks and a zoo, sports events and cultural events - it was hopeless! Tomorrow we would start very early to Niagara Falls, the city Niagara Falls, the Canadian city Niagara Falls.

We tried to see at least some, but it was not that satisfying, tiredness and sadness grasped us. Tomorrow we would stand at the border, Canada and the USA, on one hand so alike, on the other hand so different. We would have no problems, to stand on the one or other side, but what side would be the more.....maybe the wrong question. Tomorrow we would leave Lake Ontario on our way to the larger Lake Erik. But the real large lakes would come later.

We arrived early in Niagara Falls, the Canadian city Niagara Falls. We would stay in a hotel overnight, to continue with our travel to Buffalo the next morning. But today? The Niagara Falls - what else on should do here?

We had the complete tourist's program - nothing was kitsch enough for us. And what should I say, it was a funny day. And an impressive day - although I had heard that the falls could be even much more impressive. A not that small amount of water was used for generating electricity in the hydroelectric power plant. Nevertheless, it was impressive to see the falls, and as the night fell in? The illumination was indescribably kitschy, as we stood together and I think not only I had tears in my eyes.....

Northeast - Middle Atlantic

Towards New York

Back in the USA again - our train arrived at Exchange Street Station. Well, not one of this iconic

buildings for that Buffalo was famous for, somewhat smaller as we thought. We took a taxi to a car dealer to get our new car - Caroline had bought it via the internet. It would be our mean of transportation for the rest of the tour. Sure, in this area you could use trains or even buses, and in New York we would park the car and would use taxis and other public transport. But in other regions it would be difficult, if not impossible, to travel without a car. As we reached the hotel with our new car we checked in, a short refreshment, and at least a bit Buffalo we wanted to see. We had decided in the forefront to visit the zoo, the Buffalo Zoo, a very old and wonderful zoo.

As always it was wonderful to see the various animals as well as the various plants. I could understand that that much visitors visited this zoo each year. Again I felt like a child, looking at the large animals and at the small ones. And the plants – sure, it would be nice to visit the zoo in the deep winter also. Maybe a bit cold for the large cats then, but nice for the polar bears? Not interesting for the exotic animals in their terrariums, no problem for the otters. Plants of the winter and plants of the summer - every season had its plants and animals.

To visit the zoo gave us also the opportunity to visit at least one of Franklin Loyd Wright's buildings in Buffalo. Tomorrow the next interval with many shows and interviews would begin, till we would reach New York at the end of the month. Nearly exactly three months after the beginning of the tour we would reach New York - a (first) highlight? Not for me, the zoo was a highlight, but not New York.

Back in the USA, yesterday we had arrived, today our first interview, back again. "The Buffalo News" waited, in the evening our first US show after Canada.

"You were in Canada for some shows, your experiences? And your feelings to be back in the States again?"

"Well, as always we had not the time one should have. It would had been good to have more time for visiting the cities, for getting impressions about the daily live. But nevertheless, it was interesting to be in Canada."

"The nice and polite Canadians?"

"Absolutely! You know, they not lock up children of immigrants in cages? It's strange, but they welcome immigrants, they see not only murderers, drug dealer and rapists in them? Strange, isn't it?"

"I think that not all Americans support our today's administration in Washington?"

"Not all, but much too much. His base would follow him into hell, as well as figures like McConnell and Graham. He's simply disgusting, but obviously this is no problem for many Americans. What I know is, that the Canadians would not tolerate such a behavior for one minute."

"Canada a paradise?"

"No, no paradise. But a place were they deal with problems in another way. A place were every inhabitant has rights - a right for health care for instance, worker rights. Crime rates in Canada? Can you imagine that you would have a car chase in Canada and the police officers would fire seventy-six times on the suspect, even the driver of the police car shoots, while driving, through his own windshield? That they kill the suspect with nine bullets?"

"But we should say, that the two police officers have to face severe prosecution now."

"My point is, that this can happen in this country - in Canada? No, Canada is no paradise, but I think their way to handle problems and challenges is much better than ours."

"Maybe they face other challenges?"

"Toronto was impressive. Inform yourself, be a bit interested, read a Wikipedia article if you like, inform yourself how many immigrants alone in this region are arriving every year. No, they do it better, that's a simple truth."

"But now you're back in the States again. Your program today? Reflections about Canada and the US?"

"Canada has to be a topic! I cannot stay there, see this cities, talk with this people and then, back in the States, this would be no topic. Sure I will talk about my impressions and experiences in Canada tonight."

"You were two weeks in Canada. On one hand not that long, on the other hand much has happened in the US during this time. No lack on topics I think - apart from your experiences in Canada?"

"Much too much topics! Very often it's difficult to decide about what you not wanna talk. My show lasts normally at least two hours, sometimes I've the feeling that four or five hours wouldn't be enough."

"I've heard that this depends very much on how the audience interacts with you."

"Yes, the shows in Canada were all very long. One time, in a smaller venue, we simply switched the light on, sat together and talked for many hours - was a fantastic "show"!"

"The venue here is also a smaller one - you like this smaller venues?"

"Absolutely! You feel the audience, their reactions, you get a direct feedback - that's why I'm making this."

It became a long show, a very long show!

We drove from Buffalo to Rochester in the morning, back to Lake Ontario. An interview at 13WHAM, the local TV station, and the show were pending. Therefore, as too often, we would have no time for the city. At least we had a glimpse at the High Falls as we drove by and we saw some iconic buildings of Rochester - from afar. Tomorrow we would drive to Syracuse for the next interview and the next show. But then we would have at least one day for us.

"Yesterday was your first show back in the US in Buffalo. Today you will perform in our city, the wonderful city of Rochester. Some impressions?"

"About Rochester?"

"Yes."

"Well, I have to confess that I have not saw that much of the city till now. Back at Lake Ontario again, only at the other shore. But I had not even the time for the lake shore so far."

"Yeah, the tour stress. Always in another city, but at the end you not have seen much - many artists have told me that."

"Well, it's tour time, no holidays. But at Sunday we have a whole day to spend it at Oneida Lake."

"In between you will perform in Syracuse?"

"Yes, tomorrow Syracuse."

"And today, any plans before you have to go onstage? A nice dinner?"

"Yes, always a light dinner for the show - therefore, definitively no Garbage Plate!"

The second show after the return. I've dreamt about Canada in the night.....

We used Highway 20 to drive from Rochester to Syracuse - we had some short stops at the wonderful lakes alongside this route, like Seneca Lake and Cayuga Lake. I wasn't sure about it, but the shape of the lakes and their orientation suggested that all this lakes were formed together during the ice age. Because of our dawdling we reached Syracuse somewhat later and we had to hurry a bit to reach the "Syracuse New Time", our today's press appointment.

"Welcome at the Syracuse New Time, Peter."

"Thanks for your invitation."

"You arrived in the morning?"

"Well, we had some rests at the nice lakes alongside Highway 20. Therefore we needed a bit longer to arrive here."

"This city lies at a wonderful lake?"

"Yes, I know. And we had planned to arrive earlier, but....."

"Well, I can understand you. The lakes in this region are all very beautiful. You have a show tomorrow?"

"No, our next show will be at Monday in Utica."

"Then you can spend the day tomorrow at Onondaga Lake?"

"Well, Oneida Lake lies halfway to Utica....."

"Yeah, also Oneida Lake is very beautiful. But you will miss a lot. Syracuse is famous for its architecture, many interesting museums and cultural places - you love jazz music?"

"Yes, and I know that this is a jazzy city. But it's always the same, no time for such things."

"Let's talk about politics. Some of your major topics for tonight?"

"If I change nothing then Saudi Arabia, "the case is closed" and the GOP's behavior as such."

"China?"

"Maybe, I have always some topics in my mind. It depends on my feelings and the reactions of the audience, about what I will talk."

"What are your plans till the show?"

"As always a light dinner and some time for relaxing - do you can recommend a restaurant not that far away?"

"How about an invitation?"

"With pleasure!"

The third show after the return. Canada, still so near and yet so far. It was a very good show, with a fantastic audience.

We had decided to drive till Verona Beach, a small village at Oneida Lake - a fascinating landscape awaited us. Oneida Lake in front of you, the Verona Beach State Park to your left, the Fish Creek and the Pools Brook - a part of the Erie Channel - to your right. On the other side of the river(s) Sylvan Beach. The Pools Brook bolt-upright, the Fish Creek bizarrely winded - and the Lake? I had looked up and found out that the lakes at Highway 20 were called Finger Lakes, and were in fact formed by ice, as well as Oneida Lake. Oneida Lake was a large lake, twenty-one miles long and five miles wide, but in an average only twenty-two feet deep.

We decided to charter a boat to spend most of the day on the lake, on the water. We had food and drinks with us and it was a sunny day with only some clouds, not much disturbing they were.

"From now on we're heading towards New York - from tomorrow on."

"Yes, but there're still some cities and shows in between."

"You know how much?"

"Ten or eleven I think."

"No day without a show from now on - straightforward till New York!"

"Allentown, after the show in Allentown we will have a day without a show."

"Are you sure?"

"I've planned the tour? I hope that I have still the overviews of everything."

"I'm sure about that. Allentown.....which day?"

"The seventeenth."

"Then we have five shows in a row now."

"Yes, then the one day without a show and a further six shows in a row."

"And then we're in New York."

"Yes."

"Then I think we should enjoy this day."

"I think we do it already - at least if we stop therewith to talk about the tour and New York."

"Yeah, you're right. Should I try to catch a fish?"

"I think we have enough to eat. Swimming?"

"Well, the sun shines and the lake is not deep and therefore not that cold, but are you sure?"

"You're a pussy!"

After our nice day at Oneida Lake, apart from the hours on the lake we had spent time driving along the bizarre windings of Fish Creek, we arrived in Utica in the late morning. We followed more or less Pools Brook and had a short stop in Rome. Yesterday we had a short stop in Vienna, today in Rome. Unfortunately we had no time for Verona - interesting town names in this area, interesting to see one of the pillars of this nation. Sad, that at this time this was of no importance any more.

Because we had no appointment with the press today, we had some time for us till the show in the evening - well, a city with a zoo? Of course, this was by far not the largest zoo, but a very nice one - and old, over a hundred years. They offered up-close and personnel encounters with animals like lions, camels, goats and their famous red pandas. It was nice to be a child, before you had to enter the stage in the evening again.

But as nice as the city could seem, at the Mohawk River, with Buffalo and now Utica we were deep in the Rust Belt now. The economic decline in the 80s and 90s was no to overseen - yeah, in such a city one could see a lot. You could start now, asking about: Hey, where's this new great-again-America now, this "man" has promised? But this would be too cheep, too easy! Sure, the man in the House was never interested in this people, he only told them this, when he was interested in their votes. And the Dems?

Yes, Hilary Clinton had won the State of New York - or should you better say, she had won in New York city? The state was very red in 2016, not much blue, sure, the big city! Oneida county voted 57.8% for "him", only 36.7% for "her" - should you blame the people therefore? Maybe you could understand them, the people in the smaller cities, not in the metropolis New York, the "ordinary" people with the "ordinary" problems - yeah, and 2020?

It was a thoughtful show and I hoped for, but was not sure about, that I was a fair person on the stage.

Norwich was our next aim on our way from Utica till Binghamton. Of course, it would had been possible to drive from Utica directly till Binghamton, but it was nice to have shows in such small cities also. Norwich, named after the city in England and not the only one Norwich in this region, was a small city with a little over seven thousand inhabitants. Very nicely encompassed by two rivers, the Chenango River and the Canasawacta Creek, the city offered some very beautiful houses and buildings. But we decided to spent our time till the show with something different today, by visiting the Northeast Classic Car Museum. We both were not that much affected by cars as such, at least not by modern cars, but we both liked it to look at the wonderful styling of classic cars. And this museum, in such a small city, offered a lot of wonderful classic cars, but also trucks and much more. We learned a lot about the car manufacturer Franklin and his cars - this museum had the largest collection of cars from this manufacturer, luxury cars made in this region. Yeah, before the Great Depression.....

A show in a small theater hall which I enjoyed very much.

We drove alongside the Chenango River from Norwich to Binghamton, where this river joined the Susquehanna River. Binghamton was again a somewhat larger city, with nearly fifty thousand inhabitants, and we had an appointment at BTV-6. BTV-6 operated on Binghamton University, and was first off only available for the students. But via live stream on their webpage their program was also available outside the university.

"I've saw your show in Utica on the Internet - a fantastic time for comedians, a very bad for the people, you've said this in an interview. I've the feeling that the times become better and better for comedians?"

"Yeah, we're drifting towards the.....yeah, abyss? Towards the decision? Balton prepares himself for the next war, the ultra conservatives and religious are preparing themselves for the last stand, which will be fought in the Supreme Court. Several development are there, which will lead either into a disaster or to a new beginning - be positive or negative?"

"And you, you're still on the stage?"

"Yeah, I'm! I hope for, that this is no mistake. You asked me, whether I feel in a positive or negative way?"

"Yes."

"My mood changes constantly. I have to be informed, this means that I have to read various newspapers, watching TV, I follow various pages on Facebook and more. Important events like hearings or important debates I try to watch live. This all helps you not really to get into a good and positive mood. Especially not in the last days."

"You mentioned it. The Iran, Alabama and more. But you're trying to talk about the figures behind all this in your shows. In Utica you quoted religious fundamentalists in a way that everybody thought you would talk about the IS - till you named the sources. All quotes were from Americans, living in the US! You will perform in Alabama, or Georgia?"

"Sure. I think I have to! And I think that it would be good, would I have shows just now there, in Alabama. I think not that I could change something - the interests behind all this, the Supreme Court, Roe v. Wade, is obvious. But I think we're now at a point where everybody has to decide on which side he or she wants to stand. The time of waiting and seeing is over - it's time to choose. I hope that enough will choose the side of freedom and liberty, but I think that's not sure."

"Do you hope that you can be a part therein to motivate people thereto?"

"I think not that I can motivate people to something, I'm not that important. But maybe I can support them a little bit after their decision - as well as they support me."

I wasn't sure whether I could support them, but they supported me.

From Binghamton to Scranton, another typical Rust Belt city. A proud history - the "Electric City" - and the decline in the 70s and 80s, bankrupt in 2012! And yet, a recovery, relatively cheap living costs, again many cultural possibilities - signs of a bright future?

We tried to visit at least some of the landmarks, watched a football game, had a nice dinner. Joe Biden was born in the city, as well as Hillary Clinton's father - and many other notable persons. I thought about, how would it be, living in this city - the huge sign of the Westlake Theater in Los Angeles came me to mind? All this past splendor, no homeless people in the park anymore.

And again this feeling overcame me, was this region mine? I feared the months, leaving this part of the USA. But maybe this was a very arrogant behavior? And being back at home, at the other coast? It felt like another world now, why I should be ever interested in to return?

The steam loco rolled by with its wild snorting, the white steam enveloped everything. Close your eyes and dream from a lost time. Pretend and lie, about this so wonderful and glorious time.....

A strange show, strange for me, had difficulties to concentrate, was mentally absent - sorry for that!

From Scranton to Allentown through the typical landscape of this region - valleys and hills, green hills and many rivers and lakes, agriculture. Tomorrow we would have a whole day to spend it in the city, therefore we decided that our meeting at the local newspaper, "The Morning Call", and the show in the evening should be our only activities for the day.

"Welcome to the city that hid Liberty Bell, Peter."

"Thanks Ken, it's nice to be here. And of course we will visit Liberty Bell Museum tomorrow, when we have no show."

"You're smiling?"

"You smiled also?"

"I like it, striking up a conversation in this way with people from other towns."

"You're interested in their reactions?"

"Yes, because of course this is the city of Liberty Bell, but this city is more than Liberty Bell. But I think our topic is not Allentown."

"More or less, also Allentown is a part of this nation."

"That's true, and sometimes we're not that much happy about it - in the one way or other."

"Pennsylvania voted red in 2016 - in opposition to Virginia and the states more northern."

"Yes, one can say that with Pennsylvania the red America begins. Whereas Lehigh County, our county, has voted blue. Pittsburgh and its county, three other counties and this corner of Pennsylvania have voted blue. Especially Philadelphia county where our president achieved only fifteen percent of the votes. But yes, overall this state is red."

"But with only 0.7 percent advantage. The candidate of the Green Party alone achieved 0.8 percent of the votes, not to talk about the other candidates. We would need a multi party system."

"And popular vote?"

"Yes."

"And the concerns of the smaller states?"

"Yes, sometimes it's difficult to impart this American specialties and sensitivities - especially when talking with foreign people. Nevertheless, we have to reform our electoral system."

"Does you see any chances therefore?"

"First of all it would depend on the person in the White House. Even the moderate democrats are satisfied with the given system, despite the fact that it's most of the time their disadvantage. Okay, Hillary weeps and cries, that she has get three million more votes. But did she anything to overcome this system? Is there a political initiative launched by her? No, of course not! Oh, I've forgotten the bad Russians, who are guilty of all! To answer your question? With the right person in office and long lasting patience - maybe!"

"What will be the major topics of this evening? I guess Iran and the Barr / Mueller complex?"

"Iran in any case. Barr, Mueller maybe. Maybe not as a major topic. I've intended to talk about the last days here, my impressions. But as always, it's a decision made in the moment while entering the stage - and often during the show."

"But not about Allentown - or? You just arrived a few hours ago in the city?"

"Apart from that, that I always try to read something in the run-up, while traveling to a new city, not about a specific city, but about the Rust Belt, about the counties of the last days, since I'm back in the States, about the people who live here."

"Can you give me a hint?"

"That I can understand them."

A blue city in which I talked about, that I could understand the people who have voted red - a blue city, where I had the feeling that the people understood me.

Allentown was for many reasons a special town, not because of Liberty Bell. The city had a very large Hispanic population, mostly from Puerto Rico - over forty percent. Also a significant black population, over ten percent. Reminded me of Los Angeles, only not that much Asian-Americans. The city had the typical history, had suffered the typical decline, also especially in the 90s. But then, in 2016, the city got the attribute "national success story"! Yet still, nearly twenty percent lived below the poverty line and ten percent were unemployed - always the coin had two faces. We spent the evening in the Miller Symphony Hall.

Middletown was our next aim, the second Middletown on the tour, after Middletown in Connecticut. It was interesting and educational to have a look at the town names in Middle Atlantic. But in a way this was relevant for the whole USA. The (lower) west coast? "Los" and "San" could tell you much, but you had to listen.

Middletown in New York was a smaller city, in a way a "normal" city, nothing special. Now we came closer to the Hudson River, in the Hudson Valley, near a river, Wallkill River, and surrounded by some lakes. With a small airport and of course a country club and golf course, and the oldest, still operating, harness racing track.

After the somewhat longer drive till Middletown, we decided to do something different, something very dangerous, today. At least dangerous for me, onstage in the evening. We started with Clemson Bros. Brewery, to continue with Equilibrium Brewery - very hard for me! Apart from that, that I drank not much alcohol in general, I was definitively no beer drinker! But we had a lot of fun, and with good and substantial food in between and some coffees thereafter I had the hope, that it would function and the audience would not realize, with what I had spent my afternoon and early evening.

A small town, with friendly people - some welcomed me onstage by shouting, that they not had thought that I would capable to enter the stage tonight!

A short trip brought us from Middletown to Poughkeepsie - now we had reached the Hudson River. A very green city awaited us, a city worth to visit, a city with a diverse and interesting population. But unfortunately we had an appointment at the Poughkeepsie Journal and the show in the evening. Therefore we would have not the time the city would have deserved.

"Welcome here in our historic headquarter, Peter."

"Thanks for your invitation, Tamara. I've read, that this is one of the oldest, still running, newspapers nationwide."

"The oldest in New York state, the second oldest nationwide. This newspaper witnessed a lot of history, very bright and very dark times, light and hard days - as again in this days."

"Yeah, sometimes I talk about that I would be interested in, to look back at this time, one of these days in the future. But everything escalated in the last days. The thought that Bolton tries everything to start a war with Iran, and our president is the hope that this will not happen? That's scary!"

"What do you think would happen, if we would start a war with Iran?"

"Maybe Saudi Arabia will do it? Vietnam?"

"You're talking about a new protest movement?"

"War against Iran, war against the poor, war against immigrants, war against the sick, war against women - how many wars this country needs?"

"The resistance against this government increases more and more?"

"Would this war begin, would Roe v. Wade fall, will this development of increasing aggression from the president and the interest groups behind him continue, then I'm not sure about the next one and a half years."

"A new civil rights movement?"

"Would be not the worst!"

Driving alongside the Hudson River we reached Newburgh, which was a somewhat smaller city than Poughkeepsie. A very strong population of Latinos and African Americans, severe problems with poverty and unemployment - twenty-five percent lived under the poverty line - and severe problems with crime. Even if the crime rate had declined in the recent years, still the city was labeled as one of the most dangerous places in the USA. We arrived at late morning in Newburgh.

In first sight the city made the impression as a nice city, a very green city, at the river, with parks and nice lakes and the mandatory golf course. But this was the USA - even Los Angeles could be a beautiful city, maybe not in Skid Row, but at other places.....

We had an appointment at Newburgh News, a local TV station. Therefore we would not have the possibility to spent much time in the city, especially not in the evening when I would be onstage. But I mentioned Los Angeles, one was true, you would need time to understand the city and you should see her at night, why not Skid Row at night?

"You're feelings at the moment?"

"Like loosing ground, like hovering, as I would be in a daze. It's the feeling that every moment the unimaginable could happen. I close my eyes and see them marching, with their torches and banners. They're showing their greet and they're singing their songs, they're shouting their slogans. And I'm standing at the side of the the road, looking."

We had dinner at "Akasaka", a Japanese restaurant and looked at the Hudson River. One of the most dangerous places in the USA in our backs.

A very spontaneous and lively show, a show which I enjoyed very much.

The driving from Newburgh till Clifton was a bit more stressful as the travels of the last days, not to talk about Canada or New England. We entered the greater New York area now, with all its consequences. Fortunately we had no press meeting and therefore no hurry. We reached our hotel at the early afternoon, enough time till the show in the evening would begin.

As always in this urban centers, one could hardly see any city limits. The city limits of Clifton? Have a look at a map and be surprised - I only mention the golf course!

We decided to spent some time in Rifle Camp Park, beyond the city limits in Woodland Park, and Great Notch Reservoir. Nice relaxing hours, crowned by a nice dinner at Al-Basha, a Lebanese restaurant. The big city was near now.

A good show with a good audience, but I felt somewhat tensed.

Only a stone's throw from Clifton to Newark, we not changed hotels. But nevertheless we drove early to Newark to spent some time in the city. Newark, a larger city, or a decayed city? A hundred years ago the city had twice as much inhabitants, also this city had it's struggles in the past. And

today? Over the half of the inhabitants were African Americans, nearly thirty percent Hispanics or Latinos. Even when the average income was not bad, twenty-five percent lived under the poverty line. And even when the crime rate had declined over the years, after the city was named as the "most dangerous city in the nation" in 1996, even today the crime rates were very high. And yet, the city could be a very wonderful and beautiful city, walking in Weequahic Park, at Weequahic Lake, or in Branch Brook Park, under the cherry trees, in the largest collection of cherry trees in the whole United States.

"It's beautiful here - or?"

"Yes, even if we're somewhat to late to see the trees blooming."

"Wow, can you imagine how beautiful this would be?"

"I've seen some pictures. The different tree's blossoms have different colors. Therefore it's not only an ocean of pink or white blossoms, they also have very different shades from tree to tree - breathtaking!"

"In such a moment it's hard to believe that this place is supposed to be such a dangerous place."

"That's why I'm no fan of this large urban areas."

"Well the west coast, especially the south?"

"Yes, L.A. has its problems with violence and San Francisco's cute surface for the tourists? But we are still on this side of the Hudson and I have problems with it already."

"Maybe you should be a bit more open-hearted?"

"I have not the feeling that you're that much impatience to enter the big city?"

"No, I could definitively live without this experience. But maybe the city will surprising me?"

"The hecticness, the traffic, the rudeness of the New Yorker? Or do you think that this are cliches only?"

"I fear not. But sometimes I've the feeling, that this is more a talking about Manhattan, than about New York. I mean downtown Los Angeles, the Hollywood Boulevard, is not Los Angeles?"

"Maybe. We have no show in Manhattan, therefore....."

"But two late nights?"

"And some time for us. Yes, we should visit Manhattan also, but I cannot assume that I will like it."

"Nor can I! But Central Park?"

"I tend more to the botanical garden and the zoo."

"You mean the Bronx?"

"Yeah, and Coney Island maybe."

I was not that much relaxed tonight, but the audience cheered a lot

Again we not changed the hotel for the show in Elizabeth. The short distance was easy to drive, at least in the early morning. Elizabeth, a name and a town, a town which was part of history and art. What should one say, the time in '51 / '52? Things happen or happen not and sometimes things happen, everybody would say that they were not possible. Three crashed planes, one city, a few weeks? Mickey Spillane raised up in Elizabeth but not lived there in the early 50s. Many novels and more were related to this town.

Today was the last show before we would enter the big city. But not tomorrow, the next two days, the weekend, we would spent in this area. At Monday we would drive to New York, would move into a hotel room in Brooklyn. In New York we would use public transport and taxis for transportation, that was easier. The Daily Show at Monday.

But today we were in Elizabeth and we walked alongside Elizabeth River, through various parks and saw many charming places. We had dinner at a steak house on our way.

No clear mind today, but a lovely audience.

A cozy weekend in anticipation of New York. Today our only plan was to do nothing. We spent a lot of time at Hackensack River, drove around a bit, drank coffee and ate cake, and not one moment I was interested in our fucking president. Tomorrow I would have to prepare for the Daily Show, but not today. Dinner we had in Arlington, the night we spent in a bar in Passaic.

Today I had to prepare for New York, for the late night shows, my shows, but not in the hotel. I liked it to be outside while thinking about my program, to plan something, to be among the people. We decided for Turtle Back Zoo and the South Mountain Reservation. It was very wonderful there, and it was very nice and productive to spent my time there and to discuss the next days with Caroline.

"I've received a message from Barbara."

"Oh, and?"

"Again the same. That the people liked our videos that we've made in Canada very much, and that everybody is sad about, that we've not continued therewith since we're in the States again."

"And?"

"About my decision."

"Your decision?"

"She has asked me, if I would be interested in to make some more videos in and about New York."

"Why you not told me, that she has asked you?"

"I'm not sure about it - I'm no YouTuber or something like that."

"On the other hand it was fun to do it, and it was not that much effort to make them?"

"Yeah, and many watched them online. Let us think about it."

"Okay."

Jack

"New York waits on you, how do you feel?"

"Better now, Jack. Tomorrow the Daily Show, Trevor Noah.....I feel better now."

"A good man."

"A fantastic man! I think besides him, I will look like a school boy."

"I don't think that he's interested in this?"

"No, but you know what I mean. He's a full time professional! He's fantastic, five times a week!"

"Yeah, people like him play in an own league, people like you!"

"Come on, I cannot compare myself with him."

"Why, how many shows you had in the last months?"

"Not counted them."

"And now New York?"

"Yeah, but I'm not that much interested in New York. I look forward to cities like Philadelphia, Baltimore or Pittsburgh."

"The South? Central?"

"I'm not sure, but New York bores me, the South thrills me in a way. I'm not sure that I will like it there, I fear that I will hate it, but I'm excited about to be there - New York feels like a necessary evil."

"One week, you will be good!"

"You think so? This week, especially the late night shows, can boost my popularity extremely. On

the other hand I can screw up a lot."
"Be yourself, the people will love you."
"They should not love me, they should love my words."

New York

We arrived at our hotel at Bedford Avenue, Brooklyn. A very special street, near Prospect Park with the Prospect Park Lake and the Prospect Park Zoo.

Brooklyn, the borough of the musicians? Yeah, Jay-Z was born there, but that was not what I meant. So often, when talking or reading about musicians it will lead you to Brooklyn - born in Brooklyn, lived in Brooklyn, died in Brooklyn.

Brooklyn, a borough? Over two and a half million inhabitants? A borough?

Brooklyn - not today. In the late afternoon - at 5:45pm - the taping of "The Daily Show" would happen, at Manhattan, Hell's Kitchen, 733 11th Avenue, between 51st and 52nd Street. We would leave the hotel early to be not too late, of course we had to be there long before the taping would start.

We decided to use the subway, it was not that complicated to get from our hotel in Brooklyn to the studio in Manhattan. And it was said, that the subway trains were by far not longer that dirty and dangerous as in the 70s or 80s.

"And?"

"Not bad, it's not horrible, but I know better subways."

"You look somewhat strained."

"Yes. I'm not sure....."

"Hey, Jimmy Fallon? You were fantastic?"

"Yeah, Jimmy Fallon? I don't know why, but.....it's the Daily Show?"

"I thought this would calm you. It's more or less a home game for you."

"Yes, but then you have to win."

"And you will!"

"Tonight I have a very special guest, and I'm very happy that he's here with us tonight. Tomorrow he will perform for the first time in our city, but.....as his three others shows in New York, this show is completely sold out. Please welcome with me one of the best, if not the best, stand-up comedians of our country, welcome with me Peter Maurer!"

"Hello Peter, it's really cool to have you here!"

"Thanks, Trevor. It's nice to be here."

"I'm a big fan of you, and I'm proud to have tickets for one of your shows. As the audience knows I talk with my guests a bit prior to the show. We had a long conversation about comedy, laughing and how to deal with this very serious times in which we're in the moment. I was impressed by your thoughts!"

"You embarrass me, Trevor. I know that you can do what I do. But I also know that I could not do what you do. Therefore, we have not to talk about who's who's fan."

"You know, when I look at the numbers, how often a video of my show is viewed at YouTube and how often a video from one of your shows is viewed? You're still at the beginning of a one year tour through whole America - nearly the complete tour is now sold out? Not long and you play in the league of the most popular pop stars on YouTube? But much more?"

"Yes?"

"You have a huge fan base, linked with your webpage and other activities on social media. You've made videos about your time in Canada for CBS Boston? They were watched millions of times

now, CBS will broadcast them nationwide soon. If not still now, we have not to talk about that you are on your way to become the most important stand-up comedian in the whole country."

"I would have not only one or two names in mind I would set far above me. Popularity? Yes.....was also a topic of our conversation."

"That's true. Let us talk about the state of our nation today. Sometimes it's hard to laugh in this nation today?"

"Yeah, sometimes you have the feeling that you have to cry and to be ashamed. And sometimes you simply have to do so. But on the other hand it's very encouraging then, to see people marching on the streets, people who stand up, to see politicians who are not only interested in to line their own pockets, and the pockets of their buddies. This helps you to continue."

"How do you feel at the moment? Do the Dems have a chance to end all this?"

"Sure they have! The question will be, whether they will use their chance this time or not. I have not the time to see all your shows, but I saw one with Pete Buttigieg. Apart that your questioning was very profound, he is one of this chances. The Dems have a fantastic field of candidates this time, I look forward to the debates and to see how the established Democratic Party will handle it this time."

"Pete Buttigieg is a good key word. He's very calm and very based, you onstage very often very aggressive?"

"I think we need both. There's not this one royal road - no problem talking about stand-up comedy. Sure, at one point the Dems have to decide, but not now. Still nearly two months till even the first of twelve debates?"

"Do you fear a war with Iran?"

"Every time I see John Bolton near our weak-minded president."

"Thanks Peter, that you were here with us tonight."

"Thanks Trevor, for inviting me."

We had a dinner with Trevor Noah and a very long conversation.

Because we came back late the last night, we decided to take it slow this morning. After the dinner we walked to Prospect Park to see at least some of the park, the lake, the zoo and the botanical garden, to ride the carousel. In fact our schedule was so heavily filled with interviews, TV, radio and my shows - we would have no actual time to see even a small part of this city. But this was okay and not absolutely unwanted.

This city was simply too big for me. And yet, on the other hand the city was very small. Much more than in other cities you could see the phenomenon of separation. Not only rich or poor, white or black or Asian, religious separation. Queens, where we would have an interview at the Queens Chronicle in the late afternoon, as an example. The second largest borough of New York, one of the most diverse places in the whole USA - if not the most diverse. Way over a hundred languages one could hear here, not from tourists spoken, spoken by the inhabitants. And the inhabitants? New Yorker? No! Inhabitants of Queens? No! The neighborhood was the key element and the neighborhoods were very diverse - a borough with nearly two and a half million inhabitants? Too large for me!

We ate at the zoo and walked back to the hotel to refresh and to order a taxi that would drive us to Queens. First the interview, later in the evening my first show in New York, in Queens, in Flushing, near Flushing Meadows.....

We arrived at Woodhaven Boulevard, Rego Park - only a few miles, but a long time after our leave of the hotel. The Queens Chronicle was one of this free weekly newspapers, typically for New York? It had several different local issues for different neighborhoods. Not the New York Times, but some hundred thousand readers - a small local newspaper for New York standards!

The interview was not that profound and it took not that much time. But this should not sound arrogant or haughty, this was in fact a free weekly paper for a borough - not more, not less. And maybe I should say that we enjoyed our time there, together with friendly people.

"Could you recommend us a place for an early dinner?"

"Well, any preferences?"

"Don't know? Something not too starchy."

"Do you like German food and beer?"

"No, no alcohol and I fear the food will be very substantial there?"

"They have light meals also and of course non-alcoholic beverages."

"Why not?"

"I give you the address, it's Manor Oktoberfest. I would recommend you the Sauerbraten, but it's not that much a light dish."

"I'm sure that we will find something to eat there - thanks for the recommendation!"

We decided for two Reuben sandwiches. One with pastrami, the other with corned beef. But of course both with their famous self-made potato salad which tasted in fact fantastic!

Because we had still some time till we should arrive at the theater we decided to do something somewhat stupid, but it was on our way. First the Queens Zoo, a short glimpse at the Unisphere and the Fountain of the Planets and finally the Queens Botanical Garden! Don't ask about the meaningfulness of our doing, but we had a lot of fun.....

A good show with a very interesting audience!

So much one should say about the Bronx, so less I could! Paul Newman? Violence, poorness, gangs, drugs - still today. Heterogeneousness, maybe the best word - even from block to block, not to talk about from neighborhood to neighborhood, not to talk about from East-West-South and so on.

We had an appointment at Bronx News, another of this New York weeklies, this time for the Bronx. Also this paper was no New York Times, not necessarily pro Dems, even when the Bronx was pro Dems in any case.

We arrived early in the Bronx, our appointment was in the morning and we were happy as we got over with it. And also this should not sound too arrogant, maybe the New York Times was arrogant, at least in some ways - tomorrow Stephen Colbert?

The Bronx - African Americans as we knew from movies and TV. And of course many Latinos - gangs and violence! And the many art projects for instance? In my case the "off-off-Broadway" theaters? I decided that, would I be ever in this city for vacation, I never would set foot on Manhattan. Every other borough, but not Manhattan! Definitely the Bronx, but not Manhattan!

For a moment we thought about to see at least some of the Bronx, but then we accepted it, that this would be only to provide us an alibi. We visited Bronx Zoo and the New York Botanical Garden - and even this was a joke!

One of my best shows ever, and one of my longest, with a fantastic interacting audience - thanks for that!

Back to Manhattan for "The Late Show" with Stephen Colbert - and again I was very nervous. Another of this top professionals, I was not absolutely happy with my appearances at "The Daily Show". Yes, I got very good comments, but I felt that this "ten minutes questioning and answering game" was not mine. I loved it to be onstage, to improvise, to interact with the audience, to.....I was no show man in the way of an entertainer, no, I was definitely no entertainer.

"I had time before the show to watch at least some parts of your yesterday's show in the Bronx - way over three hours you were onstage! The footage is online for only some hours now, but you will reach the one million hits soon - maybe you have reached them already right now?"

"I'm not sure, Stephen. But in any case, the reaction to this show is incredible."

"But maybe we should say, that every average video of one of your shows reaches in any case over a million hits, only not in such a short time?"

"The Internet was always important for me. But it's not that long ago that I was fascinated about, to have a thousand hits, that I filled small venues. Especially with Jimmy Fallon and this tour everything becomes bigger and bigger."

"Is it true that you will have no Broadway show, not even off-Broadway?"

"No, no show in Manhattan. We found no fitting venue for the time in question."

"You meant with this, that none of the Manhattan theaters was interested in a show with you?"

"Well, this is Manhattan. Everybody is interested in to perform here, every week the world of showbiz is presented here. That's okay for me, I've four shows in the city."

"Luck for them who have tickets for the remaining two shows in Brooklyn and Coney Island. Shall we talk about our president?"

"If I understand the reaction of the audience right, than they feel like me, that your get more and more sick of him. But this is a danger, especially at the moment. And don't forget this figures in the background. In some cases their are much more dangerous than him."

"Obviously you talk about John Bolton?"

"At the moment he's an extremely dangerous man. He lied and cheated not only once to start a war - and now? Do we learn nothing? In my view this man is a cold-blooded murderer - that's the simple truth!"

"Some say that, would the White House start a war, this would tear our nation apart?"

"Apart from the question who can start such a war, I hope the people would refuse to do so. No American, but also no Iranian, should die, only because the president wants to please his Saudi Arabian buddies and because one man is horny about to bomb the Iran! Yes, I think this decision would have the potential to harm our society in a very severe way."

"Was nice to have you on my show, Peter. And all the best for the rest of your tour."

"Thanks for the invitation, Stephen."

Sure, they needed not the whole day for the taping of "The Late Show". In the morning we crossed the Brooklyn Bridge to spend some time in Lower Manhattan, it was a question of decency. Some time in Battery Park, lunch in Little Italy.

The evening we spent mainly in Harlem. We listened to fantastic musicians and had a very good dinner.

Today Brooklyn, today an interview at Radio Free Brooklyn, right before our show in Williamsburg. In the morning we had an appointment at Green-Wood Cemetery, used the northern gate of course, before we walked to Prospect Park again, to spent once more some time there. The zoo, the lake, the botanic garden and the carousel - we were a bit tired, tomorrow we would be in the south of Brooklyn.

In the late afternoon we drove to Wiliamsburg, used a taxi and the driver played a CD, a compilation of a song contest. A young woman sang a nice song about her earrings that she had to pawn. He told us, that he had saw her several times live on stage, in her early days, as she was the Brooklyn Baby, the Queen of New York and Coney Island, in her open mic days. But now she was gone, no longer the young woman from the Wiliamsburg Live Songwriter Competition in 2006.

At Radio Free Brooklyn, Caroline and I participated in a two hours radio show. We had given them two lists with song titles we would like to hear. Between the titles we talked about them, why we

had chosen them, what we loved about them - such things. And of course about politics. We had a nice time there, and unfortunately the two hours were over much too fast - but we had to go to the venue, my live audience waited.

Again a very satisfying show, a fantastic audience. Well, did I start to love this city, at least some of the boroughs?

Coney Island - thousands of thoughts in my mind. Will I ever see her again? Will I ever meet her? Will I ever.....

Coney Island - of course more than a tourist's hot spot, much more. And much could - should - have said, but.....

Coney Island - we decided to be the most touristic tourists ever! At the beach in the sun, all the amusement parks, the aquarium of course, we lined up in front of the hot bars and restaurants - and more than one time we sat on one of these wonderful wooden horses.

And what should I say? There was a certain feeling, a feeling of sadness that also this part of the tour would come to an end now. Sure, tomorrow we would have a whole day, maybe even two. But what should one do, with one or two days in such a city? Whatever, today we were two tourists, enjoying their day at Coney Island! At least till we had to prepare for the show in the evening.

The last show in New York - a sad show? No, but even when I was surprised about it, and even when I still was no fan of this city, I would have liked it to be longer here. The audience was wonderful.....

Unfortunately we have had no show in Staten Island - maybe the next time? But it would have been a shame, not to use our day without a show, to spend this day in Staten Island, the so much green Staten Island.

Large, but with much lesser inhabitants than the other boroughs, large parks, a botanical garden and of course a zoo. Staten Island Zoo was a must - who wanted to miss all the rattlesnakes? A very large Italian community, but in the end more or less the whole world one could meet also here, in Staten Island.

"And, what do you think? NY?"

"Well, apart from that this city is still too large for me, apart from that, that most of the inhabitants here do not live in New York, even not in one of the boroughs, they live in their neighborhoods, sometimes in their blocks, apart from all that - can you remember this very small town far in the north?"

"Yeah. You would like it more to live there, than in New York - or?"

"Well, it was a very, very small town. But yes, would I have to choose between these two towns, I would not choose New York."

"Neither would I."

Jack

"I've watched all your New York videos - as good as the ones from Canada. You should become a documentary filmmaker!"

"Come on Jack, I only tried to talk about a city of which I have no idea from."

"Maybe this is the secret why the people like them? I mean, the spontaneity in them. They are

documents of a moment, unique, never they can be repeated. And you never pretended as if you would be a New York insider."

"But you've not seen the last of the New York videos - Staten Island!"

"Oh, you both were in Staten Island today?"

"Yes. We're still not sure what to do with tomorrow - we will see."

"Will you continue with the videos this time?"

"Not sure, it's fun on one hand, but I'm not sure if this is really mine."

"As long as we have not to watch you while drinking a cup of coffee or eating an ice, everything is okay. No, really, the videos are very emotional - continue with them!"

"Let's see."

After New York

We decided to leave the city early, but not to drive to Trenton directly - now in our own car again - but to make a stopover in Middletown Township. Mostly we were interested in, to spent some time at Sandy Hook.

Sandy Hook – we had had no show there. Nearby in Newtown, there we had had one. Sandy Hook, only a name with such different associations - fun, beach and sun or boundless brutality.

We rode with our bicycles, visited the landmarks - of course the lighthouse, still shining like a fiery beacon. But most of our time we spent at the beaches, a sunny day, the sand and the water. As it darkened we were back in our hotel for some hours of sleep. At home we could see the wonderful sunsets, while the sun drowned in the ocean. Tomorrow we would see how the sun would come back, rising again from the water. But only tomorrow, for today we had done enough.

We stood up very early, back to Sandy Hook, back to the beach, to trace the sun's rising. It was impressive to see the first of the sun's rays, long before the sun itself appeared. And then everything happened very fast, as you can easily calculate for yourself, around two minutes later the sun was to seen in her complete beauty. Whereas the beautiful stars, as well as Jupiter and Saturn, were no longer to see. After this beautiful moment we entered our car and drove to Trenton.

Trenton a city, the capitol of New Jersey, at the Delaware River, the border between New Jersey and Pennsylvania. A large African American and Latino population, a very high poverty rate, a critical crime rate, with the so familiar history, the economic decline of the formerly so proud city in the 70s and 80s - Ford, Carter and of course Reagan.....

We had decided to visit the Grounds For Sculpture, outside the city limits, and Van Sciver Lake, on the other side of the Delaware River in Pennsylvania.

I had a crisis, now again one city after the other - Philadelphia, Baltimore, Washington and Pittsburgh - what a row of names. But it seemed as it would be unimportant in which city you were - all the time the same?

Trenton had elected Hillary Clinton with over ninety percent, as well as Barack Obama four years prior to that. But don't worry, also Trenton had a country club and a golf course.....

I was not concentrated, diverted, a relatively short show, not sure whether the audience noticed it or not.

Trenton to Philadelphia, only some short miles - Philadelphia? Talking about its history, about all

this national monuments? About music and sound? About the "blackness" of the city? About income and crime, about the places where the black people lived, about the places where the white people lived, about the places where the Latinos and Hispanics lived - about what?

Philadelphia, snuggled to Delaware River and the smaller Schuylkill River - I looked that much forward to be in this city, but now? We arrived later as thought in the city, we had a press appointment at the Philadelphia Inquirer in the later afternoon, the show in the evening - no time for nothing in the end.

The press appointment was.....boring? I was in no good mood, had some health problems, had slept bad in the night, some headache.....Philadelphia? Another city in an endless row of cities, not more.

By my standards a short show - I said sorry to the audience.

Better this morning, but not good - after the breakfast my only thought was Fairmont Park and Philadelphia Zoo. Apart from that, that this was a very wonderful and special zoo, the first real zoo in the States at all, I needed to be there. Nothing was good at the moment, not that I talked about the fucking White House which I would see soon, neither about the big city behind me, I simply had the feeling that it all would make no sense at all, I simply felt like a puppet on a string, like a jumping jack, saying clever things, useless in the end.

It was wonderful in the zoo, the animals so near, so many large and small animals, dangerous and tame ones, flamboyant and inconspicuous - not only one Philly-style food truck we visited. We even had some time for the Please Touch Museum and of course the carousel.

At late afternoon we were at WCAU, local TV, for an interview. I don't think that they realized my mood - all the animals, all the perceptions, the young boy on the carousel.....

Over two hours show, standard, but better than yesterday, but not good. Old jokes, the asshole in England, very cheap laughter.....

A time to recover your breath, to calm down a bit, a short distance from Philadelphia to the much smaller Wilmington - nevertheless the most populous city in Delaware. Along the Delaware River, which opened up now more and more, two more rivers and much of green - Wilmington.

Also this city, as so many in this part of the nation, had a very long and diverse history - very different to my coast. But who should narrate this history - always the victors are narrating the history, this history about violence and suppression till our days?

Nearly sixty percent of the inhabitants were African Americans, twenty-five percent lived under the poverty line - North, East or West? Happy Valley, The Highlands and The Flats - very nice neighborhoods, many nice and wonderful houses one could see there. Save havens in one of the most dangerous cities in the USA? The homicide rate declined in 2018? Yeah, not every day a shooting and death, not to talk about other severe crimes. But this was the USA - Virginia?

Wilmington, the center of financial and insurance companies in Delaware. The Kalmar Nyckel and Bob Marley, arts and culture and notable people - Joe Biden and Clifford Brown? I would had liked it to have more time to spent in the city than we had till the show in the evening.....

But of course we found some time for Brandywine Zoo, a smaller, but nevertheless very beautiful zoo. The animals in their cages, always something sad, always it calms me down and I loved it to be in a zoo. A contradiction? Maybe? But not more a contradiction, than to be still alive in this world.

An aggressive show, I felt back again, an interacting audience, over three hours.....

Passing Odessa, Middletown and Smyrna we reached Dover, Dover in Delaware. A small city with somewhat more than thirty-five thousand inhabitants, the second largest city in Delaware and its capitol. A speedway - Dover International Speedway- and an air force base. Several golf courses nearby, country clubs, and a wonderful landscape. Of course we spent the time we had, between the arrival and the show, at the beach, at the wildlife areas, in wetlands and at ponds. What a contrast to New York, only a few days ago!

A strong African American Population, over forty percent, many governmental jobs, but also a solid industry. Eleven percent lived under the poverty line, not much for such a city. What kind of city? From next month on we would be in the Midwest region, some things would change then. Still I felt very comfort here, feared that this would change, maybe it was only a stupid apprehension? Also there people lived, people with all there thoughts and concerns.

We decided to stay here also tomorrow, as long as possible, till we would have to leave for Lancaster, a somewhat longer trip.

The show was very interesting, a very mixed audience, not everybody like everything I said, but this was okay. I felt very good after the show!

We had decided to stay this day without a show in Dover, to leave in the evening, to reach Lancaster in the night. We would be in this area - Lancaster, Harrisburg, York - the next three days, but would have also press appointments every day. Whatever, today we would be in Dover.

Yesterday we spent the whole time at or near the beach, today our aim was St. Jones River. We followed the windings, Silver Lake, and all the wonderful islands.

"All this nice houses with their front gardens, perfectly cut lawns and garages. Would you like it, to live in one?"

"Could imagine worse things. But behind the nice front doors, not everything is nice there."

"Yeah, and behind the doors of a block in Manhattan or the Bronx? If you would have to decide, to be unhappy in Manhattan or in Dover, were you would prefer it to be unhappy?"

"Dover."

We had a very nice time here, here in Dover. A relaxed day with nice food in nice restaurants, nice coffees while looking at the lake, a wonderful warm sunny summer day. We not spoke a lot while driving to Lancaster.

We reached Lancaster late at night, stood up late in the morning. It rained, not a motivational push to walk around somewhat, we had a very late breakfast and waited till it would be time to drive to our press appointment at LNP, the most important newspaper in this area.

So we not visited Central Market, the oldest continuously running farmers' market in the USA, nor Fulton Opera House, the oldest continuously running theater in the USA, nor one of the other - historic - landmarks. As always, a lot of history in this city - for one day the capitol of the United States!

"So, you still have no favorite democratic candidate?"

"No, not really. I look forward to the coming debates."

"Sanders Biden?"

"Sanders' town hall was fantastic - you know which town hall I mean?"

"FOX of course!"

"Of course! But also some other candidates are interesting."

"Biden?"

"I think he will run into problems at the debates. But maybe he will be better than I expect it? I'm very interested in the performance of the young candidates."

"Bouttigieg?"

"Maybe he will be a surprise? Harris and Klobuchar?"

"Warren?"

"Warren and Sanders - this would be a very interesting pair, or Sanders and Bouttigieg? Still too many candidates, too many possibilities. To see Sanders and the dummy together in a television debate? This would be interesting. In 2016 you endorsed Hillary Clinton - or?"

"Yes, as president."

"Bad luck in this area."

"Well, Lancaster city votes more for Democrats, whereas Lancaster County as a whole is republican. But don't forget Pennsylvania as a whole. For decades always the democratic presidential candidate won the state. In 2016 Clinton lost the state by 0.72%, that was a shock!"

"Or a stupid campaign - or a very clever campaign?"

A standard show, not bad, nothing special.

From Lancaster to Harrisburg, only a puddle jump. We passed Middletown and reached the city at Susquehanna River, a very notable river. A city, the capitol of Pennsylvania, with a state capitol that looked like the St. Peter's Basilisk in Rome, named as one of the best cities in the country to live in, with a majority of African American citizens, with a very notable German community. Harrisburg - my generation? Three Mile Island, protests, doubts - past days.....

We had a press appointment at WHP, a CBS affiliated TV station in Harrisburg - Robb Hanrahan was our host.

"At Thursday you will celebrate your fifty-fourth birthday, your wishes for that day?"

"Well Robb, I not wanna sound kitschy, but I hope that we will still live in peace, at least that we're not involved in another war."

"Yes, Iran?"

"The problem is, that there are forces who lust for this war, in Saudi Arabia as well as in the States. And we know what will happen now, something will happen and this war will be "unavoidable" then. You can remember Colin Powell?"

"Of course. Proofs will be presented, and we all know how they will be produced. Do you have hope that this time it will be different?"

"No, to be honest. But I hope that the American people will stand up then. If not, everything is too late."

"So you think that this war will happen?"

"The Iran? The Europeans? China and Russia? I know that the Saudis and our government are working towards this point. It has not to be a necessity, but.....Saddam has weapons of mass destruction - always the same story. Germany only defended itself, as they attacked Poland in 1939 - always the same story!"

A cool show at a cool place, felt much better now – thanks to the audience!

Again only a puddle jump to York, our next aim in Pennsylvania. In many aspects a very typical Pennsylvanian city. The demographics, the city's history, the landscape, the landmarks. The many historic houses and places in the city, we had some time before we had our appointment at WSBA, a

local radio station, to visit at least some of them.

"Any wishes for tomorrow?"

"It's a nice region here, but I look forward to Baltimore. Let us depart early tomorrow. Tomorrow we have the whole day for us, then the two shows in Baltimore, the press appointments and then another day without a show. Baltimore.....!"

"And then Washington?"

"I don't know - Washington? It's like with New York, no real interest in it."

"We should go to WSBA now."

We talked about my birthday tomorrow and of course about politics and Pennsylvania. Interestingly Susquehanna River was a political border. Lancaster and Harrisburg on the other side of the river, this county, had voted blue. York on the this side of the river and this county - as most of the counties in Pennsylvania - red. Still some blue spots on the map, but not for that much longer.

A very good show, a very good audience - Maryland waited.....

*Get my sister Sandy
And my little brother Ray
Buy a big old wagon
Gonna haul us all away*

*Livin' in the country
Where the mountain's high
Never comin' back here
'Til the day I die*

*Oh, Baltimore
Man, it's hard just to live
Oh, Baltimore
Man, it's hard just to live, just to live
(Randy Newman; Baltimore)*

Once I read a comment to this song on YouTube, written by a Baltimore citizen.

He said (quoted from memory):

Yeah Mr. Newman, you left the city, but we stayed, and we made this city a wonderful city again.

Baltimore, today was my birthday. Baltimore, the city of monuments, historic buildings, a city of pure history, but also an artistic city, parks and gardens, water everywhere. Over sixty percent of the population were African Americans in this city of endless neighborhoods - but we knew all, who lived in the nice neighborhoods at the bay, or? Everything nicely separated also in this city, in Baltimore, USA. A tourist's hot spot, quite rightly! Millions and millions every year, in this cultural, educated, sophisticated city. A very high suicide rate, especially among the blacks. Poverty, especially among the blacks. High crime rates, but only in the neighborhoods of the poor. More and more homeless people, especially among the young. Birthday in Baltimore, at the bay with wonderful seafood specialties - memories, San Francisco. Stroll around in wonderful parks, visit impressive museums and landmarks, the aquarium of course, some sports maybe, of course an arts event at the evening - Baltimore, you could spend a life in this city, you could die in this city.

"And? You were so excited about, to be in this city."

"Yeah, my first time. And yet I feel so close to this city. It's a bit like Boston, many images, but what does this should mean? A low payed job, maybe two or three of them, you never had a chance for good education, born in the wrong neighborhood..... - sitting in a restaurant, looking at the bay, eating a crab, drinking a glass of wine, we need a substantial change. Shall I walk out and press a hundred dollar bill into a homeless's hand? What does this would change? Nothing, this would change nothing!"

"2020?"

"We need another political system, we need a multi party system. We need popular vote - oil tankers are burning? What a nice coincident that just in this moment oil tankers are burning and that we all know that the evil Iran did it! A nation built on greed, racism and violence - "Birth of a Nation", Griffith was right, you only have to understand the movie in the right way."

"You're very melancholic today, Peter."

"Money suffocates this nation, but we have none for health care, education for all - this is a wonderful and rich city, one in five lives under the poverty line, every year more homeless people, and this in this fucking rich country? It's insane!"

"Does the young people give you at least some hope?"

"I fear the old ones, I fear this old white men, wonderfully represented by the GOP, them I fear because history tells you always their winning."

"And the civil rights movement for example?"

"I fear that it will be no problem to find a neighborhood in this city where they would laugh about you now - sorry!"

"It's okay, it would be in fact no problem. You're hating birthdays, I know it."

"Yeah, I hate birthdays. Everybody is funny and you have to be funny, but maybe I not wanna be funny at the moment....."

This morning we decided to visit a special landmark in Baltimore, the USS Constellation! Whenever possible I liked it to visit zoos and botanical gardens, but also old sailing ships.

It was not the time to talk about the controversy about the identity, it was the time to be impressed, not forgetting that this was a battle ship. But seeing such a ship, being on deck, closing your eyes and you heard the wind in the sails, the commands shouted, the horror of the battle, the suffering of the wounded. The proud ship under full sails in midst the endless ocean..... - no, far too romantic! The hard and dangerous work, the food on board, water, often enough bad or terse, scurvy, not the only fear and suffering on long journey - but still, standing on board with closed eyes I would wish, couldn't I be surrounded by water, only by water when opening them again?

At the late evening, before the show, we had an appointment at "The Baltimore Sun", the largest newspaper in Maryland.

"A major topic in your last shows was the Iran?"

"Yes, of course. The liar in Washington knows that it was Iran who attacked the oil tankers - wait a moment, the liar? I see Colin Powell as he announced the world that Saddam Hussein has mass destruction weapons, and that the world has to react. The Saudis, no longer is it enough for them to fight a proxy war with the Iran? We all know what buddies the orange monkey and the Saudis are."

"But it's not excluded that the Iran did it?"

"No, but there's no prove either. But maybe we can ask for whom this attacks are more favorable? Should the Iran behind it, they would be totally nuts. The Saudis? They have no problem in killing a reporter in an embassy. They have no problem in executing a woman by stoning because she asks for basic human rights. Yeah, they and their buddies in Washington, for them this incident is a fantastic gift!"

"Do you fear that the president would send troupes to the Iran?"

"What frightens me is, that he can do it and that nobody can hinder him by doing so."

It was a bellicose show with an active audience, I liked it!

The morning and afternoon we spent at Druid Hill Park and - of course - the zoo, The Maryland Zoo in Baltimore. A wonderful day at Druid Lake, with the animals and some disc golf - yes, also we played golf from time to time, like in the Golden Gate Park. But also this nice time advanced, and we had to say goodbye to the lake, the animals and the rest of the wonderful park. CBS Baltimore waited for an interview.

"Barbara has told me that I should greet you from her."

"Thanks, that's nice. Greet her from me in return, please."

"Of course. We're enjoying it very much at CBS Baltimore, that you're still continuing with your videos."

"You're broadcasting them also?"

"Yes, to be fair not at prime time, but we have a stable audience share for your videos - well, not that many as at your YouTube channel."

"I have not in every city the time to make one, only from time to time. But I have to confess that it's nice to make them. It's something different and they are in fact spontaneous and improvised."

"And Baltimore?"

"Of course Baltimore. But we're still in the city, also tomorrow. We will drive to Washington at 17th."

"Then I look forward to the video."

We continued to talk, now also the Saudis were sure that the Iran had attacked the oil tankers - what a surprise! In a few days I would be in the center of power - had no idea about what I would do, standing in front of the White House, thinking about that maybe "he" would be insight of it.

Another aggressive show, but this was no time for whispering, this was a time for shouting - and the audience shouted together with me!

Our last day in Baltimore, soon we would be in Erie and therewith at Lake Erie again, around fifty miles from Buffalo away, only a shore away from Canada. I thought back to Philadelphia, to my unfair behavior. Baltimore, all the problems and peculiarities of American cities, also in this city, but only thinking about Chicago or the end of the tour in Los Angeles? Cities that were no longer, or had changed very much like New Orleans after Katrina? Miami, why I should go to Miami? Utah or Texas?

Ironically we spent the day for the greater part outside Baltimore, at Loch Raven Reservoir, walking on the trails. Ruins and amazing beautiful sights, you could forget the city, you could forget all the cities, thought about the Rocky Mountains, the snow flakes, thought about "America, Why I love Her", about John Mitchum and John Wayne.

The evening we spent at Pigtown, at Mobtown Ballroom.

The capital of the United States of America, now I was in it, part of it. Clinton got over ninety percent of the votes in 2016 (282,830), the man in the White House under five percent (12,723), a dark blue city. Also in some ways a black city, at least on side of the city, as the whole region. The east black, the west white - we Americans loved clear structured things, Washington D.C. was no

exception.

We arrived in the city after the short trip from Baltimore. After the refreshment we stood in front of it, The White House - was he in? Wasn't more the question, how long he would still be in? Or, how much harm and destruction he had done, before he had to leave? Some protesters were there, they expressed their mind. We had an appointment at the Washington Post later. The Washington Post, The Post, every word more would be unnecessary. Or should one talk about the past and today, about Bezos?

On the steps of Lincoln Memorial I closed my eyes and saw a huge crowd and heard a speech, but I saw none after I had opened them again. Maybe it would had been more important than ever to see one, but who would have been the one who would held the speech? And what would had been his words? Still time for dreaming? Malcolm X?

I was impressed by "The Post" and somewhat intimidated - this building breathed history, in this house professionals worked and did their jobs every day. Today fake news and a national threat, I felt honored to be invited by them. We talked about today's crisis - a nearly endless topic. We talked about how one should react on this situation, the danger for our democracy. Hoping that one day it would be over, that it would get not that terrible - we agreed therein that this strategy never had functioned. We talked about the disunity of the Democrats, that by no later than the end of their official debates they had to stand united behind their candidate - hopefully elected in a fair process this time. The 2016 campaign had been a disaster, they had to blame themselves, not the voters in states like Pennsylvania. It was a very instructive time for me, felt like a school boy listening its teacher telling about fascinating things.

"All this people who are working here every day, who are so important for our nation, for our democracy. Not to talk about the people who do this under the threat of their lives."

"Sometimes I have the feeling that we're not far away from such a situation."

"Yes, we have to be very careful now."

I felt insecure while performing today's show. Talked about Washington, would this affect something?

The Smithsonian National Zoological Park - what a name! A name that indicated first of all, that the admission was free! Free admission like in all Smithsonian museums, and also the zoo. And the zoo was a large zoo with many animals in beautiful compounds - yes, I know.....

But it showed also what zoos can be, very educating places, places where you could learn a lot, where one could get many impressions and food for thoughts - and with a carousel with a many different and fancy animals.

"They offer sleepovers?"

"That's also new for me - unfortunately we have the hotel and I fear it's too late for a reservation now."

"Sleeping with lions?"

"Or Cheetahs and elephants?"

"I think, that should we come to this city again....."

".....then this should be our hotel!"

We had a press appointment at WJLA-TV in the late afternoon.

"It's a very demanding time. A show of me lasts at least two hours, often much more. But even then you not know how to begin and how to end. There're so many topics - okay, the obvious topics, but

there are so many more. It's very difficult for me at the moment, to be honest, to follow all this, to use it for my show."

"You're doing a lot spontaneously and by interacting with the audience?"

"Yes, that true. But very often, during the show I have thoughts like: Don't forget to talk about this, don't forget to talk about that - very often after the show I think about all the things I've not talked about."

"You also try to include local topics - Washington?"

"Washington? A whole week, a show every evening, would not be enough to talk about all this what comes me to mind when I hear Washington DC. Senate and House of Representatives, Supreme Court and White House, the cabinet and the office of the President - the political Washington. Only about this one could talk for days. And the Washington of the people who live here? Oh, and the NGOs and lobbyists? The man or woman who goes to work in the morning to earn money for the daily living? This city belongs not to a state, this city has a very special status, this is a very special city, special in a very special way, not in the way as New York, Chicago, New Orleans, San Francisco or Los Angeles are special cities. This is the political heart of our country, but in the same moment it's very weak, alongside of the fifty hearts who are beating in the states. I think that this Washington is very hard to understand, to grasp, to permeate. No easy place for someone from outside."

A long show, a show where I tried to talk about me, my uncertainties, my fears and concerns. A thoughtful show, a calm show with an interesting, very mixed, audience.

A day in Washington - what should one do? The National Mall of course! Alone the Smithsonian National Museums of..... were too much for one day, but at least we tried to get as much impressions as possible. The National Museum of Art or the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum - much too much for one day. But okay, we were not here for holiday, we were here because of the tour and we had the privileged to see all this, even when it was only for a slight moment.

"At the end of the next week this part of the tour will be finished. It's stupid, I know, but I've the feeling that the best part will be over then."

"You fear the Midwest?"

"More the South, the mountain area of the West region? This here is not that much different from our home, but.....never was interested in the desert, nor the Plains. Think about newspapers like The Washington Post, The New York Times or The L.A. Times. Yes, they're reporting about their home state, but they report first of all about America, more, they even report about the world. In many of the coming states they only know their state. Sometimes they are Americans, but not that often and loved. The rest of the world?"

"Wyoming is larger than the UK, but has no six hundred thousand inhabitants - London alone has over three million inhabitants. This people have a very different live experience."

"Yeah, but I'm not sure if I can deal with it. Maybe I'm only biased."

"We will continue with our traveling in the area of the Great Lakes."

"That's true and I will enjoy it. Still that much water around us, but.....from Maryland to Texas? At least at the end of the movie she loved fucking Texas....."

At the evening, as we were both very tired, we spent at least some time at Potomac River. We had a nice dinner in a restaurant and waited with a glass of wine till the sun had disappeared and Jupiter shined brighter and brighter.

Back To The Lake

From Washington to Hagerstown, from the middle towards the northern border of Maryland. Not thought that much about it, not talked that much about it since my tour started, but at a place like this, at a location like this, it was impossible not to think about it - the Civil War.

Like every civil war it was a very bloody war, a war without limits, a war without consideration. The reason? Many books were written about it, discussed the different aspects of this war. The North and the South - I had not to say whereto my heart belonged to, but maybe this would be a too easy way of viewing it? Soon I would have enough time to think about the South, but the North? Everything good there? No slaves, they fought for their liberty? Eric Burdon came me to mind - they trained me as a fighter pilot, the spend millions for it, then they told me: We have not asked for you! And in that time, black soldiers as cannon fodder - WWII? Always the same story?

As every war also this war had produced its heroes. Heroes for the North, heroes for the South - which heroes should be my heroes? Maybe them who were against all this wars? Too easy? Sure, but who has the chutzpah to say that all this would be an easy topic - too many of course, especially today again.

Hagerstown, with around forty thousand inhabitants one of the large city in the State of Maryland, somewhat larger than the capitol Annapolis. A commercial center, a touristic center, a prosperous city. Of course with nearly twenty percent of inhabitants who lived under the poverty line, homeless people under bridges one could see also in this city. A green city, with an interesting landscape, nice places, not only the Hagerstown City Park.

We arrived after an easy drive, passed Frederick and Middletown, in Hagerstown, spent some time in the parks, had dinner and lunch and prepared us for the show in the evening. Now we were on our way for the last big city in this part of the US - Pittsburgh. And then back at Lake Erie. Around four months on tour now, a third of the time, but still we had traveled only through a small part of the country. So many land laid still in front of us. Soon the distances between the cities would become larger, more time on the streets, even less time for the cities.

A good show with an interested audience. Maybe my thoughts were not absolutely focused.

Because the distance between Hagerstown and Altoona was somewhat longer, better to say that there was no direct connection between this two cities via the interstates, we decided to use the day without a show to have a relaxed journey. We decided to drive to Bedford, in the middle between Hagerstown and Altoona, to spend some time there, to arrive in Altoona in the evening.

The travel was very interesting, the landscape was very interesting. The valleys and hills, the parallel valleys, obviously all formed during the last ice age, like the Finger Lakes. A lot of forest, a lot of trees and green. We arrived in Bedford, now in Pennsylvania again.

With no three thousand inhabitants Bedford was obviously a small city. Nevertheless a place with a lot of history. The liberation of Fort Bedford, the springs and their impact only to name this. A town with a stable economic bases, an over ninety-five percent white population and only twelve percent of the population lived under the poverty line. Nevertheless the population declined since a longer time now, the big cities expanded every year.

The town had its country club and a, smaller, gulf course - of course. Nice cafes and restaurants, places to rest for some time, to enjoy a glass of wine, only a few blocks to the next woods - you had to visit Fort Bedford. We loved our time here, away from the hecticness, but that was an easy talk, only to spent a day with no work in the town. We were a bit sad, as we had to hit the road again, but Altoona waited.

Altoona, again one of this typical rust belt cities, with the typical history. A smaller town, somewhat over forty-five thousand inhabitants, nearly all white, a strong German community, but also strong Irish and Italian communities. A railroad city, not only because of the Horseshoe Curve, surrounded by mountains. Despite of its smallness many diverse neighborhoods, many historic buildings, interesting landmarks and landscapes. The typical near twenty percent of inhabitants who lived under the poverty line, but nowadays also a solid economic basis, a pedestrian orientated city development, not that natural for the US, a city divided in two large parts, divided by the railroad.

We arrived and spent some time in the mountains till we stayed for some time, till the show, in the city. Altoona, one of this cities where you could expect to live for the rest of your live. Well, no ocean, but wasn't a forest not also a kind of ocean - the Rockies?

We met friendly people - Blair County, a strong majority voted against Clinton. Their fault, or Ms. Clinton's fault? One should take this people serious, the today's man in office definitively was not interested in their concerns and fears.

Our next aim would be Pittsburgh, tomorrow no show. We thought about to stay at least till afternoon in Altoona to drive to Pittsburgh somewhat later.

As expected not everybody agreed with all that I said. But this was not only "okay", this was necessary, this was a necessity for democracy.

We stood up later as normally, had a long breakfast and just walked around in the city. For some time I had the feeling that we would go back later, back to our small but nice house, somewhere here in Altoona. And I was sure that I would had missed nothing, if we would had done so.

Sometimes I had this naive moments, the thinking about simply live a life - a job, a house or an apartment, maybe not alone. I would be only interested in the local news, the sports events, about what happens in the city. But this would not function, this never had functioned. The Great Depression, WWII, the decline of the 70s and 80s, the last two and a half years. No, also Altoona was no isle in an endless ocean.

We left Altoona in the late afternoon, had no hurry to reach Pittsburgh, not because Pittsburgh would be no interesting aim, of course not. But we enjoyed the driving through this landscape. Maybe we hoped that this drive would last forever, but we would reach Pittsburgh, sooner or later.

Pittsburgh, a longer time ago I had asked in a forum about aims in the Northeast of the USA. One of the recommendations was Pittsburgh, the city of the three rivers. And now, now I would be soon in this city - Pittsburgh? The Penguins and the Steelers, outstanding architecture - old and new, a cultural city, a very European city with its own unique dialect - many inhabitants with German, but also Irish and Italian, roots. We arrived in the late afternoon and had dinner in one of the fantastic restaurants for which Pittsburgh was famous for.

A city of three rivers, Monongahela River and Allegheny River formed the Ohio River and divided the city thereby in three parts. Alone this formed an interesting city. And the gardens.....

"How about visiting the rose garden in Pittsburgh?"

"I like rose gardens, L.A. or Stuttgart - but there's a problem therewith, here in Pittsburgh."

"Oh, I thought I've read something about a rose garden?"

"The problem is, that you haven't read anything about "a" rose garden. This city has more than one rose garden, at least two!"

"Wow, sure, the botanical garden at Wednesday will be a must. I thought a smaller one, a rose garden, as attunement. Would it be possible to visit both of them?"

"We can try?"

"Then let's start with the first, and then let's see. Our appointment at the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette is not until late afternoon."

We started with the first rose garden, the Rose Garden at Renziehausen Park, because the garden was in larger distance to our hotel and our appointment at North Shore Drive. It was very wonderful there, even when the weather was not the best. But to see the roses was wonderful enough. It happened as it had to happen, we spent a long time in this wonderful garden and park. Therefore we had not that much time left for the second rose garden - the Rose Garden – on our way to North Shore Drive.

"Also very beautiful."

"Yes, and on the other side is the Walled Garden."

"Maybe we can have a short look?"

"I think we still have a moment. I hope that the traffic will be not too dense."

"As far as I know many of this small gardens and parks, all around in this part of the US, were formerly privately owned by rich people."

"Yes, a bit like many parks in Europe. In former times they were only for the aristocracy, today everyone can walk around in them."

"And our aristocracy are the rich - some similarities."

We arrived in 358 North Shore Drive.

"We're close to the first democratic debate. What do you expect?"

"Not that much. The first and second debate will see a lot of candidates, every candidate will have only a few minutes to speak - I don't think that we will see any surprises. The first and second debate are meant to reduce the field of candidates. I think with the third debate it will start to get interesting."

"Does you have a favorite candidate?"

"Still time to decide - no, not really."

"You're a registered democratic voter?"

"Yes, and I feel good in Pittsburgh."

"Pennsylvania voted red."

"Pittsburgh is still blue and Clinton lost Pennsylvania by under one percent. I'm sure Pennsylvania will become blue in 2020 again – twenty electoral votes!"

"Are you sure?"

"As sure as possible. I think that they have understood now, that all this chatter from the liar in office, that he would be interested in the people, especially also the people in the rust belt, that this were all lies."

"And Clinton was interested in them?"

"That's the point! This time there will be no arrogant Clinton!"

"The man from Vermont? I think that he's simply too left-wing for the majority of voters."

"As long as they believe everything a newspaper like the Post-Gazette writes."

"An innuendo to 2018?"

"Was not meant as one. But I think that Rob Rogers would have had deserved the Pulitzer Price this year. This should not mean that Darrin Bell not has deserved the price - congratulations, everybody who not joins the club of liars and bootlickers, has deserved our tribute."

"You're not that much found of our newspaper."

"You had fantastic moments, but others you have to see in a critical light. It will be interested to see what you will write about the upcoming debates and the candidates, especially in some months."

More or less a home play? A long exhausting show, but a very fantastic feeling!

Of course, the Pittsburgh Zoo & PPG Aquarium! A smaller zoo, a very calming zoo - Water's Edge was very interesting, as well as the plants. And of course also the carousel.

It was as always, spending time in a zoo, walking around and looking at the animals. Were they happy, were they sad - how sad was a dog? A large bird in an aviary? A reptile in a terrarium? A polar bear in the summer's sun? And yet I loved it to be here, sad about that the Kid's Kingdom was not mine anymore.

We walked along Highland Park Reservoir and Carnegie Lake and had even some time for the Highland Park Swimming Pool. But then we had to pack our things for the next press appointment - WTAE-TV.

Again we talked about the democratic candidates, especially Biden and Sanders. Sure, it was the predominant topic at the moment - and a dead man and his little child. All this suffering at the Mexican border, at the camps, not only one time called concentration camps by the critiques - Texas, it would still last some months, till I would be there. And then?

I hoped for Sanders, would he get a fair chance this time? Who would be able to defeat this liar, somebody who was able to speak out things. At the moment many candidates made many campaign pledges - very costly ones. Twenty candidates, too much?

Now a very interesting time would begin, maybe not this time, but soon. If I should bet money, then I would have no idea on whom I should bet. Maybe tomorrow we would be involved in a new war, an impeachment? Biden, always unpredictable - Sanders this time no underdog. A woman as president, a president from a minority? A young president, an old president - the field was such diverse that it was very difficult to get a clear impression.

But one thing was obvious, would this all not lead into a democratic win, then a very dark time would begin. For the US, but in the same way for the rest of the world.

Again a very long and exhausting show with a fantastic audience. Two more shows and this part would be also over.

The Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens, one of the most beautiful places I ever had seen! The fascinating architecture alone, but inside! All the smells, all the colors, all the shapes, all the different climates - it was arousing to be here! All the details, places to rest, stairways - a place designed with love. Bonsai and ferns, palm trees and orchids - would I live in this city, then I would try to be here as often as possible. And I was sure, even after many visits, I would see always something that would be new to me.

"What does you loved most so far?"

"The butterflies maybe - I have absolutely no idea! This place is so overwhelming - see, how long we're here already! And what does we have seen so far, less than the half - and all this arrangements and details? Would I ever marry, this would be a wonderful place to do so."

"Maybe it will happen one day?"

"I'm old now, have lived too long alone. Would be maybe a stupid idea."

"At least you've found a place therefor now."

"Yes, at least a place."

After the many hours in the botanical garden we walked around in Schenley Park, enjoyed the balmy summer's evening air, and thought about what we could do with the rest of the day.

"I've read that Pittsburgh has the most bars per capita in the nation. Should not be difficult to find

one."

"I would like to eat something before, something light. A salad or so?"

"Good idea, the debate?"

"No interest to see it live. Tomorrow we cannot see it live either, I'm onstage then."

"That's true."

We ended up in a bar called "Speakeasy" - they described themselves as: *A sophisticated social lounge that whisks patrons back to the Pittsburgh of the 1920s*. And well, you really could feel in this way. Of course, the menu was dignified and very classic, like the bar as such - I liked it! But we drank not that much, already after the first cocktail I felt the alcohol, after the second I had to ask for a coffee.....

From Pittsburgh to Meadville, a somewhat longer drive. We started a bit too late, the drive was somewhat stressful and we reached Meadville later as we thought. Nevertheless it was a drive through an impressing landscape, passed wonderful lakes, a lot of farmland. The landscape became softer now, heading towards the great lake, a lot of green, in a few months we would be surrounded by sand. Smaller towns besides our path, I looked out of the window and dreamt about.....

We reached Meadville late, checked in, refreshed, dinner, no time for some extra activities. We had to go to the theater, the show waited. But we decided to spent tomorrow morning in the city, Erie was in no large distance.

"Your first impression about the first debate?"

"Lame!"

The first debate was no interesting topic for the show, I talked a longer time about a two-year-old girl and her father and why I felt ashamed to be.....

After the breakfast, we walked around in the city. In a way like so many of this smaller cities in this region. A nearly overall white - decreasing - population, somewhat over twenty percent lived under the poverty line, a lot of history, a lot of landmarks, many historic buildings. Sharon Stone was born in Meadville - not sure about whether this was important or not, Meghan Allen? The zipper?

We spent some time at French Creek, a lot of woods, but then we had to leave. It was easy to reach Erie, again at Lake Erie, through the soft landscape.

"The second debate was somewhat more entertaining as the fist one, or?"

"Yeah, Harris was a surprise! Sanders was aggressive and honest, call the idiot a liar and said frankly that he would raise taxes for the middle class and Biden had many problems - do you have a new poll?"

"Two. Warren beats Sanders now. Biden under pressure now - will be interesting to see how he will act now. Warren seems to be the winner at the moment, Biden the loser."

"Harris?"

"Surprisingly not better as before?"

"That's really surprising, still under ten percent?"

"Yes. Maybe it will need more time till it will cause effects?"

"At least she has set the marks in the first round. She's a serious competitor now."

We reached Erie and our first way was to the lake shore and Presque Isle State Park. Simply breathtaking, no show today! Till sunset we spent the time at the beach, in the water, and tried to

forget everything. But how, tomorrow was the next show? I had to watch the first two debates in full now, reactions in the press and late night - later we were in Little Italy.

"The zoo is not far away from here."

"Yeah, maybe tomorrow? No press appointment?"

"Yeah, why not. On Sunday, when we shall drive to Cleveland?"

"Late, I would like to spent some more time at the lake before we continue."

"Also Cleveland - and Toledo and Detroit - are cities at the lake?"

"Yes, but Erie is the smaller city - let us spent some more time at the state park?"

"With pleasure."

Tomorrow would be the last show in this region, the next region waited, the Midwest region, to start with the north part of it. Not that much would change at the beginning, but then more and more? So far everything was more or less common for me, but from now on? Maybe some surprises waited - nice surprises! Maybe some fears would come true? It was the unpredictability that caused my discomfort. But maybe that was the challenge? Just to do it - easily said, but.....

Erie Zoo - no, I got not tired of visiting zoos - was a small but very nice one. One could see the whole zoo, without to hurry, in a few hours - cool for the kids, as well as the carousel. They offered many specials and education programs - coming to your classroom, for instance. The smaller size of the zoo gave us the opportunity also to stroll about Glenwood Park, alongside Mill Creek.

"Some say that Sanders was one of the losers of the first debate?"

"I also cannot see this in this way. Sure, it's a different situation for him as four years ago, but I definitively see him not as a "looser"?"

"And only a few words about Warren? I think she would deserve much more attention."

"Harris vs. Biden - sure, this was the highlight of the first debate. Buttigieg gets a good press?"

"Yeah, he was not bad. But what disturbs me is, that commentators act as if the race would be over now. Sure, this was the first round, but many more will follow. Biden is not out of the race, not now. And Harris has not won the National Convention yet. Of course, if we would see some names not that much longer would be no surprise, but apart from that - at least I think so - it's still an open race."

"Yes, I agree with you. But I think that Sanders will get a problem therewith, that he not accepts any kind of a private sector in health care. Even European countries, at least often, have different sectors."

"Without any doubts he would have no chance to get with this through in Washington - Vermont? Yes, this is a disadvantage, to present plans everybody knows about that they will have never a chance to get realized. Warren / Harris?"

"Biden?"

"Many democrats like him, but I fear this whole process now, all this coming months will be too much for him - advantage for Sanders, it's his second time. Warren / Harris? A cool thought - or?"

"Ms. President and Ms. Vice President - I think this would do this nation very good!"

"The more I think about it.....but you know the saying: You have to safeguard the proportional representation."

"Yeah, two men are okay, but two women would be against the rules! The more I think about it I would wish me this situation! Can you imagine how this would be for the "womanizer" in office?"

"I imagine that he would try to kiss Kamala Harris or.....you know.....to grab her?"

"Wow, that I would like to see! A TV debate between him and her?"

"A somewhat different situation than with Clinton. Should we hope for Harris?"

"At least I would say: Round one for Harris!"

"With this I can agree. I look forward to Detroit!"
"Absolutely!"

Sure that Kamala Harris was a topic of the show, also the other candidates. Also that I thought that the democrats - if clever enough this time - could cause the man in office a lot of problems in 2020! I had seen not only one person on stage who could do so, I had seen some - but not all of them.....

"Back to the State Park?"

"Yes, but we will make a stopover."

"Okay? You've always interesting things in petto.....well,.....?"

"Wait!"

We drove to the lake shore, but not used Peninsula Drive to reach the state park, we reached the harbor.

"Steamboat or sailing ship first?"

"That's an interesting question - steamboat?"

"Okay!"

The steamboat, the Victorian Princess, was a smaller one, at least compared to the Eureka in San Francisco, but was owned by the Victorian Princess Cruise Line. Therefore one could cruising around the lake with this nice ship, what we did. A very informative trip.

"And now the sailing ship?"

"Of course!"

Not that the steamboat was not interesting, it was very interesting in fact and to be on it on the lake, but the sailing ship? Also this one was not the largest one, the last we had seen had been much larger, but it was a mere beauty, lying in the water. The USS Niagara, the Brig, the Flagship - however you would name her, what a beautiful sight!

"The bowsprit is very long - or?"

"Maybe it will appear different when we're nearer to it?"

"Maybe. I guess that we cannot.....as....."

"No, no. But in fact the ship sails regularly on the lake. It's not only a museums ship. I'm not sure, whether it would be possible to be on board in principle."

"Wow, I never was on board of such a ship under sails. I think this maybe should be something I should do one time. Hey, I can cook? Maybe someone needs a ship's cook? On long journey, for months nothing than water, I think this would be something very special for me."

"And now?"

"State park?"

"Yes, but we can go this way."

"Our car....."

".....we will rent bikes and use the bike trail....."

Sitting in the sand near the lighthouse, looking at the water and the sun, drowning in it.....

The Artist's Suicide

How often does an artist commits suicide? By every work of art I would say....

Yeah, sure, now you would have to talk about the definition of "artist" and "art". But I think that's not productive - put it that way round. An artist is a person who commits suicide every time he creates something - something you can name art then.

Art has to have - at least for me - an individual, personal, component. Taylor Swift? Trash a

boyfriend and then sing about it - yes, this functions! But maybe the problem is, that this is not the individual, personal, component that I've meant.

Peter Paul Rubens "Die Folgen des Krieges" (The Consequences of War) is definitively an art work, a very special one - Raymond Chandler "The Long Goodbye" as well.

The artist as part of his work, not separable, without him this work of art could not exist. Taylor Swift? I have the feeling that her music could be done by many, I have not the feeling that she commits suicide while standing on the stage.

"The Prestige" – suicide every time, when performing the trick. Maybe the highest form of art - at least with a wonder machine constructed by genius Tesla. Otherwise everything is maybe more figuratively meant.....

Jack

"The next part of your journey is over now."

"Yes, but many are still waiting."

"What do you think?"

"I don't know. At the moment I feel empty, at the moment I see all this that lays still in front of me. At the moment I feel tired, at the moment I ask myself "why"."

"Cleveland is the next city that is waiting, another city at the lake, as the following cities."

"Yes, for a moment in Cleveland, for a moment there. I cannot imagine that I will do this for the rest of this year and the beginning of the next. I would like to stay, at least as long as I could feel the cities, at least somewhat. On the other hand I fear that there will be a time where I will be happy to leave the city again, to leave the region again. On the other hand I think that maybe I will discover many unpredictable things and will meet many friendly and interesting people. People with the Confederate flag and the Nazi flag in their front gardens."

"You're a free person. You can go there, you not have to go there."

"I would be a coward wouldn't I do it. How many risked their lives, how many risk their lives, every day, everywhere in this nation and this world. The little black schoolgirl on her way to the "white" school. She did the steps and changed history - don't spit in her face."

"And you have one benefit."

"Yes?"

"You know the travel's final stop."

"Yeah, I know the city, the city of Los Angeles, or better the Los Angeles area. But that's all I know, too much that I don't know."

"A beach is waiting."

"Yeah, some say that I will become a big star - and then? Also a boring house in the Hollywood Hills or another of this fucking canyons? One at Malibu at the beach with nice neighbors, maybe real celebrities? Angelino Heights? This is a fucking city as all of this cities of dreams are fucking. I would like to live in Nowhere, only hearing the soft sound of the swell."

"Dream your dreams."

"Therefor I have to close my eyes."

Midwest - East North Central

Along The Great Lakes

We drove in the morning from Erie till Cleveland - the distances became larger. Because we had an press appointment in the afternoon, and the show in the evening, we would have no time for the city as such. Tomorrow we would have no show, but what this would mean? Cleveland by far not the largest city we were so far, but a city so rich in everything. The Cavaliers, only an aspect of an aspect. A city full of art, full of music, full of literature, full of movies, full of jazz. A city with an African American majority, a prosperous city in one way, a city with over twenty-five percent who lived under the poverty line on the other way. A city with high crime rates, of course only in some districts, of course where the poorer inhabitants lived, you know who lived there. Of course a wonderful botanical garden, of course a nice zoo, not talking about wonderful museums, the famous Cleveland kitchen, countless landmarks and a beautiful river - and of course the lake. I was in a fucking mood, in the hotel, in my room, looking at the shower, thinking about that I had to prepare for the interview at WEWS-TV. I had no motivation to talk about Kamala Harris - yes, she did well, yes, she's the shouting star at the moment, yes, the latest polls, yes, yes, fucking yes!

"Upside down - maybe that's the best description?"

"This time is a time of brutalization, empathy seems to be a foreign word. What happened at the border, in the camps, how we treat our next - it's a fucking time."

"A time of big egos?"

"Big egos with small dicks maybe. They only have big mouths, they only can suppress others, they only can be destructive, they have not the guts to be creative. They always use the easy way, pointing with the finger on others. It's always the same fucking story, this makes it so sad."

"But maybe this time will end soon?"

"First of all, even when it will end one time, it will not end soon, not before 2021 I fear. And then, this is not written in stone. The Dems can make a lot of things wrong, and we're knowing that they are able to it. Sanders, Warren and Harris, thereto Buttigieg, Booker, O'Rourke and Castro and Klobuchar, this eight should argue it out between themselves."

"You forgot Biden?"

"No. I know that many Dems are loving him, and you have to respect him of course, but I think that his candidacy is not beneficial for the Democratic Party."

"You fear that he would lose in a way as Clinton has lost?"

"Not in the same way but with the same result. We need some of the swing states back, we need Florida. Ninety percent in California or New York City not helps you in the case of our electoral system. We need states like Pennsylvania blue again. Maybe I'm underestimating Biden, but I can not see that he would be capable of it."

"Harris just a hype?"

"Will depend on the next debates."

"Sanders?"

"I do not know who will become the nominee in the end, but I've the feeling that it will be again not Sanders."

A show with an endless list of topics, even over three hours were not enough.

The last night's show was such intense, I stood up late, Caroline already waited since a longer time in the hotel lobby.

"Breakfast? You still would have some time?"

"Did you had breakfast?"

"Yes, I thought it would be better to let you sleep."

"Yes, this was good so. Maybe a coffee and a toast or so, scrambled eggs? Shall we undertake something?"

"Well, zoo? Botanical garden? Only to name this?"

"Have no idea. The last night was very intense. At the moment this city crushes me - in a positive sense. I feel like a child in a candy shop not knowing what to choose for the money that I have. But my money is time and I have definitely not enough of it. Have saw a picture of the frozen Lake Erie, would like to see it. Shall we drive to Toledo right now?"

"I've reserved no hotel for tonight there. I would have to find on first, but this should be possible."

"No, no circumstances. Can we spend some time at the beach? I would like to swim."

"Sure we can."

"is it really okay for you? I mean this city would offer so much?"

"Sure it's okay for me. We can later decide whether we will have some activities in the evening or not."

We drove to Edgewater Park Beach and spent the day there. It was good to feel the water around me, the city behind me. I thought about swimming till Canada how wide was the lake? Thirty miles I guessed - maybe fifteen miles till the boarder in midst the lake? No chance for me, but maybe that would be the interesting point at it?

At the evening we had a fine dinner, the fine Cleveland kitchen. But then I felt tired again and I had to go to sleep - a pity in such a city.

"Maybe you can do something alone?"

"Maybe I will walk around a bit, till I get tired as well. I have to be fit tomorrow to drive and you have to be fit for the interview and the show."

"Till tomorrow, have a nice sleep."

"You as well."

It was a long drive, in distance as well in time, a stressful drive toward a stressful day. We arrived in Toledo, at Moumee River, only another city which would become not more than a name. Population, ethnic diversity, history, crime, industry, art.....why I should be interested in, I would see nothing at all of it? A zoo and aquarium with a famous bridge - okay? The "map of racial distribution" looked like the one in every larger American city, rich and poor, black and white - always the same. WXTS-FM waited.

"We're very proud to welcome you at Toledo Public Schools at WXTS-FM, Mr. Maurer."

"Thanks for your invitation, Clara. I have to confess that the day so far was very stressful, but I have the feeling that this will change now."

"I hope so, jazz can change a lot."

"That's true, but I would expand this to music in general. Nevertheless, it's cool that this is a jazz radio station."

"And therefore we will play some jazz in the next two hours, jazz titles that our today's guest has chosen. We will talk about the titles, about jazz, about music as such. But of course we will also talk about your tonight's show and politics. With wich title we will begin?"

"On one hand it was easy, on the other very difficult. Chet Baker of course, but "Almost Blue" or "My Funny Valentine"? And as always when dealing with jazz - which recording."

"Before you're telling us your decision - Chet Baker, obviously a very special musician for you?"

"Yes. It's this combination of his voice and the voice of his trumpet, it's this combination of this so gifted person and this awful destructive side, there is this young hansom man and this from life scarred old man. "My Funny Valentine", the song which we will begin. There's this recording with the so young Chet Baker, what a recording! And then the same song with the old scarred Chet Baker, maybe even more beautiful. Soon he will die, and whatever the reason was therefor - a suicide, an accident, a murder - should we be happy? Happy that at the end of his life he found the way back on the famous jazz stages, or should we be sad that this was only for a short time, the time till he died. I don't know it, the only thing I know is that I have to cry while hearing that song, no matter if I hear the young or the old musician. It's heartbreaking in any way."

Again a very intense and long show in front of a young, hope giving audience.

Only a shorter distance between Toledo and Detroit, but an interview in the afternoon – Detroit Free Press - and the show in the evening, tomorrow no day without a show - Lansing waited.....also this city would remain as a name only.

Had we to talk about the "Big Three", about Motown? Or about that this was a decaying city, a city with less and less inhabitants - over one million had left this city! A "black" city today - interested in the city limits? Do not use a normal map, use the "map of racial distribution"! The "blacks" are living - nearly - exactly within the city limits, the white people in the areas around the city - that's America! Had we talk about that this was a poor city? A third under the poverty line, of course one of the highest homicide rates in the whole country, in the world.....

Sure, impressing sky scrapers, landmarks, historic buildings, a lot of art and sports. Like in L.A., walk between the high buildings Downtown, forget that only a few blocks away thousands of homeless people are "living" in Skid Row. But well, we would have no time for the city.....

"Yes, unfortunately we're in the city only for today. We will continue the tour in Lansing tomorrow - unfortunately this was not avoidable."

"Sounds as you would have liked it, to have more time to stay in the city?"

"Yes - or maybe not? Detroit is one of this cities, one of this cities which can tip you over the edge. Cool as long as you're looking at the skyline, but this is only the facade - oh, the suburbs are very nice. Should the development of the last decades continue - and there are no signs that it will not - than it will not last long and Detroit will be only a small town. This was once a proud and prosperous city, today it's a place to be ashamed about. Not about the people who live in this city, but about a government who's not interested in such developments. This city is a good image for our country."

"Today is Independence Day?"

"Yeah, there was a time when this was a day of celebrating, a day of picnicking, today it's a day of tanks and fighter jets and fucking speeches. But also this illustrates very good the state of our nation."

"A special show tonight at this special day?"

"Today we're no longer an independent nation, today we're endangered to become an autocracy once for all. Maybe this is a day to.....in my youth this day was a happy celebrating day, today it's a fucking day!"

"Many protesters on the streets?"

"In a city like Detroit maybe, the rest of Michigan?"

"The man in office won Michigan by an advantage of only point three percent! This can change very easily in 2020."

"Yes, Michigan was also one of this states which Clinton has given away by arrogance. In 2012 Michigan was blue - and Romney is from Michigan! Sixteen electoral votes to have or to have not, Pennsylvania? This is the way you have to lose elections."

"Michigan in 2020? What does you think?"

"For whom we should hope for? Harris? Warren or Sanders? They all should be able to do it better than Clinton - should we be hopeful?"

"Biden?"

"Not sure about Biden, he talks too often about the past, the good old days as we had a fantastic president. But this time is gone, I fear that he has not realized this."

"But the Democrats see him as the person that offers hope."

"Yes, the registered democratic voters maybe - I thought that the Dems wanna win the next election?"

One of the best shows ever, one of the best audiences ever, within the city limits. I had to come back, this was not enough, why the Broadway in New York when you could can get this!

From Detroit to Lansing, the capital of Michigan, but by far not the most populated city of the state. Another of this typical smaller American cities in this region? A mainly white population, a rich city, many good jobs, a substantial cultural life, a nice little zoo, country club and golf courses. Interesting power plants - not only in London, also here. The city of birth of Magic Johnson.

Or should we talk about Malcolm X and his family, after they had moved to Lansing? About the Black Legion, about the disgraceful racism of this time - of this time? - also, and maybe especially, in this part of the USA?

No longer at the lakes, for some time we would be more in the interior, but we would return to the lakes. But also water in this city and wonderful parks alongside of Sycamore Creek, Red Cedar River and Grand River. Shubel Park or Scott Woods Park - yes, a very nice and very green city. We had an appointment at WITL-FM in the late afternoon, a country music radio station.

"Not that I would know no country music, but I have to confess that this is not the music that I hear most."

"We here at WITL think that this is simply the best music."

"We have listened the station while driving to Lansing and at the hotel. Some of the songs sounded very interesting - it's as always. On one hand it's important with which music you raised up, on the other hand there's too much what's interesting. Alone music, not to talk about other art forms. I for instance like it very much to listen to jazz music live, whereas I'm listening very seldom to jazz music in the car. I've the feeling that it would be the same with country music. But my coast is not that much famous for country."

"No, all this indie / alternative stuff, heavy metal and rap - this more your kind of music. We love pure and honest music here."

"With the terms 'pure and honest' I have some problems. But I see this music as a music very much connected to the people here. And I think I'm clever enough to realize that country can mean a lot. Jazz is not only jazz. There's a huge difference between New Orleans jazz and free jazz - and a moment later the difference is very marginal. I'm no expert for country music, but it would be a very surprise if this would be different, when having a deeper look at country music. I mean Hank Williams is not Johnny Cash or Garth Brooks - or maybe yes? Dolly Parton, The Eagles and country rock? Shania Twain or Carrie Underwood - Taylor Swift? You can see jazz as a huge universe, but country music as well - simply because you can say this about every kind of music. Classical music, rock music or even pop - all are huge universes."

"Interested to discover the universe of country music somewhat more?"

"Of course, why not!"

"Then you're at the right place, maybe we will find surprising music for you."

"I'm looking forward to your selection."

"And between the songs we can talk about your shows and your political opinions."

"With pleasure, Lansing voted blue in 2016. I hope that the Dems will find a candidate who will be able to convince whole Michigan in 2020 to become blue again."

Tonight's show? Yesterday at the same location one could be at a country music concert. Some told me that nearly the same people were there than tonight. I'm not sure about yesterday, but my audience was a fantastic audience.

We left Michigan and entered Indiana as we drove from Lansing to Fort Wayne. Today no show, tomorrow no press appointment, only the show, this gave us a moment to take a deep breath. We had only to follow Interstate 69, a very easy trip, and we decided to stop at Coldwater. A small city, somewhat over ten thousand inhabitants, but a very interesting landscape. The Cold Water River formed a series of larger, but shallow, lakes there and we had decided to spend some time at them.

"Oh, that I have overseen!"

"What?"

"Coldwater has an opera house?"

"You're kidding me!"

"No, but this is not all - look at that!"

"Wow, this looks outstanding. Can we get more information?"

"Yes, the house has its own Wikipedia article - a very interesting history."

We decided to visit the Tibbits Opera House in Coldwater with its fantastic Second Empire architectural facade. We even could get a look inside - a wonderful stage.

"A pity that this is no venue for a show of mine. Would be wonderful to perform in this house."

"I've made a notice, maybe on the next tour?"

"You're the manager and the tour guide."

But then we had to continue with our travel. At the border of Michigan and Indiana awaited us a whole bunch of lakes.

"In this area you never have a long way to the next lake."

"Definitively not. I think they all are more or less very shallow - ice age relics I think."

"Yes, I think so too. This area looks very much like some areas in Canada - the many lakes."

"We're still not that far away from Canada. Soon we will be very near again."

"Near, but not there. Maybe we should plan more shows in Canada the next time - do you think that I will have shows on other continents one time?"

"Europe would be cool! London, Paris or Rome?"

"Hey, I've German roots - Berlin of course!"

"Berlin, okay! Madrid? East Europe?"

"Why not the whole world? Tokyo, or Delhi?"

"Why not the whole world.....?"

We reached Fort Wayne in the early evening. Still some time to walk around a bit, to get a few impressions of the city, to ask for a restaurant and later for a bar.

"You're kidding me? I'm just enjoying my breakfast."

"Come on, not that long ago we rode bikes and had a lot of fun."

"That's right, but it was a short ride and it ended at a beach?"

"Also this city has three rivers, nice parks along the rivers and nice bike trails. Come on, we have no press appointment today, only the show in the evening. The weather is ideal for biking."

"It's not because of your remark yesterday?"

"Remark?"

"That I would be not in best shape at the moment? Okay, I gained some weight, but.....one, maybe two hours, but not more - okay?"

"We can start very relaxed, just along the rivers. We can have a rest whenever you want one, we can use public transport to return, if necessary?"

"Okay, why not. And of course you're right. Not the healthiest life-style at the moment - why I eat that much salad and vegetables?"

"And sweet things, nuts, the things while looking TV or YouTube, while reading the newspapers - things like these?"

"I have to do a lot of research?"

"And you have to eat while doing?"

"No, of course not. Along the rivers is good, no rises, I hate rises."

We had a very nice time, discovered many wonderful places, found time for some landmarks, and I had to agree that I was not in my best shape. The many hours on the road, from one hotel to the other, I had to be careful. L.A. at the end of the tour? Not interested in to arrive there with massive overweight.

Had I to say something about Fort Wayne, a city with two hundred and fifty thousand inhabitants located in the Rust Belt around the Great Lakes? I don't think so.

Not that much a very long show, but a good show, an intense show!

Columbus Ohio, the capitol of Ohio and the largest city of Ohio. We arrived in the city after a journey passing large lakes - Grand Lake and Indian Lake - driving through an interesting landscape, through a lot of farm land. It was a relaxed journey.

Columbus Ohio, no dying city, a prosperous city, a city with a strongly increasing population, a lower poverty rate, with mainly white citizens but an increasing rate of Asian citizens, a lot of industry and jobs for civil servants, a green city, a bike city, a very famous zoo and aquarium, high in culture and sports, named as one of the best places to live in the US, a city for a day.

"You need a Honda?"

"Why?"

"You should have a closer look outside."

"We're not in Columbus yet - or?"

"Of course not, but only some miles are left. This is Pottersburg and we're just passing Honda of America!"

"Where is Pottersburg?"

"I think the few houses to the left are Pottersburg."

"Wow, Honda is far larger than Pottersburg!"

A short time later we arrived in Columbus.

"We have still some time till our meeting at "The Columbus Dispatch". Shall we undertake something?"

"Not enough time for something like the zoo - a real pity! But I have German roots and this is German Village and the park next to our hotel is the Friedrich von Schiller Park - we have to, or?"

"Of course we have to!"

We spent some time at Schiller Park, a very beautiful park where we met Mr. Schiller and thought about fishing.

"That would be also a very nice stage for the show tonight."

"That's true, maybe the next time. Do only I think that this is a very German park?"

"You mean, very clean and well structured?"

"Yeah, something like that."

"No, I think that we have a major problem in our country today. In the White House we have a bunch of ruthless religious fundamentalists who are trying to destroy everything this nation is build on. And it's not important if we talk about Christian, Jewish or Muslim fundamentalists, they are all the same. They are anti-democratic, they are against freedom and liberty, against pluralism, against freedom of expression, they are simply against everything that not agrees with them totally. This is not the idea of the United States!"

"Do you think that this threat is a severe one?"

"Very much! At the moment checks and balances rescues us, but this can change very fast. I have German roots, but thing about Italy and Mussolini, or Spain and Franco? We have to fight for democracy now, or it's too late!"

"Ohio once was blue, in 2016, voted for Obama?"

"Yes, also Ohio is a state that Clinton has wasted - another eighteen electoral votes. Sure, Columbus in one of the sparse blue spots in the red sea of Ohio, but this has to change again - it has to!"

"If not?"

"Then I fear that we will lose our nation."

An aggressive show in German Village. I asked whether someone in the hall had experienced WWII in Germany and to my surprise I heard more than one time: Yes. I heard someone saying: Yes, in a concentration camp.....

A short trip from Columbus to Dayton, the origin of flying, the Wright brothers built their plane in Dayton. And also we had to pay homage to this fact and spent our time that we had in front of the show at Eastwood Metro Park, Eastwood Lake and of course the National Museum of the US Air Force.

"What makes me sad is the fact that most planes are military planes, that so much progress is affiliated to military, affiliated to the idea to find better, more effective, ways of killing. That's sad."

"Yeah, only to imagine what humans could achieve would there no need to all this military efforts. We should explore the universe, should work for better living conditions for all, rather than to wage wars. All this refugees who are absconding from war - no wars would make so many things much more easy."

"We're wasting a lot of money for killing each other - so much this country could blossom without spending all this money for military."

"We even have not enough money - or willingness? - to support those who fought for this nation. How many homeless vets, how many vets committing suicide every year? That's disgraceful, but illustrates very good what's wrong with this nation."

We spoke not that much while looking at the planes, we both dwelt on own thoughts.

"I'm not sure why, but would it be possible to have at least a short stop at the Scared Heart Church?"

"Why not?"

"A very interesting architecture."

Apart from the standard topics I talked about the wasted possibilities of the human kind this evening. That much would be possible - a wasted life, a wasted planet, and the universe? Would this be the only life-bearing planet in the universe, or would be all life-bearing planets in the universe the same, than this universe would be definitively a wasted universe.

Again only a short trip - Cincinnati? The city at Ohio River, the city at the border of slavery and liberty, a city long time in my mind - the old Edward G. Robinson and the young Steve McQueen. Steamboats, a long history and a bright present, at least compared to other cities in this area. Also for this city the time of highest population was long ago, nevertheless an interesting place to live, at least if you were not black and a motorist. But maybe this was unfair - the "racial distribution"? The city looked more mixed up, not that clear separated, at least on a map. Mixed feelings while looking at the crime rates. Cincinnati - only a movie or the real today's live of the people?

"I'm pissed off somewhat!"

"This is a tour."

"Yeah, sure, and in that sense it's okay. But then I'm annoyed about this situation. Look at this city, how much one could discover in it! A huge river and steamboats, a zoo and a botanical garden, a fascinating cultural life, kitchens and bars - but most of all?"

"The people who live here, I would guess."

"Yes! I mean all this cities in which we were so far, all this cities in which we will be, in all of this cities people are living. I would enjoy it, to be among them, to see what they are doing, to be at least for some time with them. What should I say about a city like Cincinnati? You could live here for a very long time and still discovering new things."

"We have no show tomorrow. It's again a short trip to Indianapolis and we planned it for Friday. You wished to stay one day in this city."

"Yes, but what will we do? Zoo and botanical garden? The Ohio River? Arnold's Bar and Grill? Hyde Park and the observatory? Of course, all would be wonderful and nice, but I've the feeling that it would be meaningless."

"You would like it to stay here?"

"I'm somewhat disturbed. All this cities so far, in all of them it would had been nice to stay at least for a somewhat longer time, not to say a much longer time."

"We're still in the area around the Great Lakes?"

"Yes, I'm aware of this."

"Be welcomed at WSTR-TV, Peter."

"Thanks for your invitation, Alicia."

"In your yesterday's show - you can find footage of it in the Internet - you talked a lot about the White House, the people there, you called them religious fundamentalists and fanatics. Harsh words, too harsh maybe?"

"One idea of this nation was to respect other people, to respect their way of living, to respect their beliefs. This people are respecting nothing, they are only interested in their own convictions."

"But you have the right to stand for your convictions?"

"As a president you have to be the president of all Americans - or you're no president at all. This man, and the bunch around him, is no president. At the moment the USA has no president, only a narcissistic ruthless man in the Oval Office."

"But many Americans see him as their president?"

"Not in Cincinnati, not in Hamilton County. It was a convincing victory for Clinton here."

"But not in Ohio! But what would interests me more, is the question whom you elected in 2016?"

"Not the idiot of course!"

"But maybe you voted not at all? For many Dems she was not electable."

"I voted for her, but not with that much fun. The Democrats were stupid the last time, I hope they will be more clever this time."

"And if not?"

"I'm sure that many who would give him their vote, would damn this later. But than it would be too late."

"But be honest. As he was elected many talked about that the end of time would come now - and? Our economy prospers, our word has again an importance in the world - no bad developments, or?"

"They laugh about him, the ambassador of Great Britain wrote only what all our former allies are thinking about us - all of them are hopping that this farce will come to an end soon."

"No hunger this morning?"

"Not much. I'm kinda powerless this morning."

"Bad patch?"

"You know, they have a nice zoo and botanical garden. But then they have also a botanical garden with butterflies. They have beautiful steamboats and beautiful landscapes. Famous architecture, famous cultural life, famous kitchens - everything famous. A city connected to jazz, a city of hope for a free life. I've the feeling that I would talk about New Orleans at the moment. Well, no ocean but a large river - we could see the moon and the stars tonight. But, will I ever see one of this cities?"

I mean in real, not only for a short moment, shallow, like I would be in great distance?"

"Maybe we should do something different today?"

"The problem is, that I would enjoy all the things we could do. But hey, you should have at least a week or better two - only to get some deeper impressions of such a city. Have I mentioned all the cities we missed - Ann Arbor, why we had no show in Ann Arbor?"

"Would had been possible as such, but....."

".....sorry, I meant this metaphorically. I only have the feeling that I go wrong, that I miss very much by seeing a lot. Maybe it's simply too much, too many impressions - do you remember this very small town at the beginning of the tour?"

"Yeah, the city's name?"

"Sorry, had to think about it. The point is, that we were there - but is this true, that we were there? I even cannot remember the city's name!"

"It would be easy to find out - a look at the tour plan would be enough. But I know what you mean. I would have liked it, to stay for a longer time in the area of Boston for example."

"Really?"

"Yes, was very nice there."

"Canada?"

"Canada in any case! Canada was pretty cool!"

"Only a bit cold!"

"The wind maybe, but the people were very warm-hearted."

"And even in Canada we have a housing crisis and more. Would you move to Canada if our beloved president would become a two term president?"

"A very good question....."

We walked around in the city the whole day, talked with people everywhere about this and that. We met butterflies and at the night we looked at the moon, stars and distant galaxies.

A very short distance from Cincinnati to Indianapolis, but we were in no hurry, we even had a stopover in Brookville, better to say at Brookville Reservoir. We spent a longer time there, enjoyed the water and the calmness, the many trees, the fresh air and the scents in it. Therefore we reached Indianapolis not before the early evening, but early enough to have no hurry because of the show in the evening.

I had no relations to Indianapolis, very different to Cincinnati. But this should not mean that Indianapolis would be a less interesting city. Okay, the Indy 500 weren't it for me, even that I had watched the race from time to time. Kurt Vonnegut? Slaughterhouse Five I had read as a young man and was very impressed by it. And even knowing what Vonnegut has said about his relation to Indianapolis, I couldn't see it.

We had dinner on the way to tonight's venue, we would use tomorrow to drive to Chicago, back at the Great Lakes at Saturday again! Two shows, two press appointments, at least some time for the city.

I had problems to concentrate - Chicago, back at the lakes! Born north, south or west? Sometimes it was fucking to live here!

From Indianapolis to Chicago, a whole day time for this longer trip, no show today. One one hand I was excited to arrive in Chicago - Chicago! Was it stupid to confess, that the first that came me always in mind by hearing the word "Chicago", music was? Maybe, maybe not. The point was, that I was excited to arrive in Chicago, but yet, we were in no hurry, had planned to have an easy ride -

we would arrive whenever we would arrive - it was like a child who's excited about that something special would happen, but knowing that the anticipation of it something very special was, to stall the event!

We had decided to have a stopover in Lafayette, a somewhat longer stopover. Lafayette, nearer till Indianapolis than to Chicago, was no small city, nearly seventy thousand inhabitants, at Wabash River, a city with an increasing population. It seemed that for a city with such a population, that a surprisingly high number of people were born in this city who were connected to the movies. Louise Fazenda, Karen Black and of course Sidney Pollack - only to name them. But this was not our intention, our intention was it, to spent some time in this area, with no special aim, no park, no museums, only to be in this city for some time. And this was, what we did!

We walked around in the city, we visited a museum, spent some time in a park, had lunch, drank a coffee, talked with people - nothing special, nothing exciting. And because still some miles till Chicago waited, it would be only a flightier encounter, nevertheless it was a very nice encounter.

"A nice place."

"Yes. One of this smaller, but very prosperous, cities in this area."

"A very white city - is this offending to say this?"

"Always this question about, in which way you wanna live. Change or no change, keeping the status quo, what's impossible at all. It's strange, thought about it recently, the Amish? We had nearly no contact to them, not in Pennsylvania, not in Ohio, nor here in Indiana. And I have German roots, I could talk German with them, at least insofar as I'm able to speak German."

"I think that the Amish are not in fact our "target audience"?"

"The Amish are a group who are facing the problem, to decide how much change they are willing to accept, how much change they can handle as a group. Cellphones yes, but driving in horse-drawn carriages? Does this would make sense?"

"And a city like Lafayette?"

"Say, that in ten years in this city would live twenty percent African Americans and twenty percent Asian Americans. The European rooted population would be still in the majority. Would the city be "worse" then? Of course not, but without any doubt the city would be a different one. And some are anxious about this, some wanna keep a status quo, that can't be preserved, simply because change is a major rule of everything in the universe, of everything on earth. I think the problem is simply the speed, too many changes in a too short time, too many are unable to cope with all this changes."

"Sympathy?"

"With the people who are over-challenged?"

"Yes."

"At least in a way. I hate the demagogues who make use of this. But I'm also sad about, that some never learn from history, how often we have to pass through the same historic developments?"

"Some say that everything is an eternal circulation."

"That would be devastating, shouldn't we humans not able to be more, than to be passengers of ourselves."

Now we were in Chicago, we had arrived in the late evening yesterday. Later we would have an appointment at the Chicago Tribune, the most widely read newspaper in the Chicago area. But at the moment we had breakfast.

"Now we're in Chicago - south of the channel!"

"Yes, but still very near to the channel. And it's only a short distance to the Tribune and the venue for today's show."

"Chinatown in between?"

"Or some time at a beach?"

"Northerly Island - also a planetarium is there?"

"How about Dearborn Park and some time at the river. Later dinner - Chinatown - and then Northerly Island with planetarium and beach?"

"Sounds not that bad!"

Our first day in Chicago - well, the river, a park, the planetarium and a beach? Not that much Chicago, could be a city of many.

"The Chicago Tribune is known to be economically conservative!"

"We endorsed Barack Obama?"

"Well, the Obama family lives in Chicago and Michelle Obama is born in Chicago - a bit of local patriotism?"

"We're talking about politics?"

"Yeah, but in 2016 you were somewhat cowardly - or?"

"Because we endorsed neither the democratic nor the conservative candidate?"

"Yes, that's exactly what I meant! You endorsed the candidate of the Libertarian Party, Gary Johnson, who had not the slightest chance to win."

"Maybe we were not happy with both of the other candidates?"

"Who was happy with them, with this choice? But now we have the result that we have - maybe it would had been better to support Clinton, even when it was very difficult to do so?"

"Maybe yes."

"And in 2020? Would the Tribune endorse Sanders or Warren?"

"Maybe this will never be a question?"

"You would prefer Biden, or?"

"Maybe Harris?"

"Well, Kamala Harris and Chicago - well, she's from the West Coast?"

"From the bay area to the Great Lakes - why not."

"Yeah, Harris and Chicago, a very interesting combination."

Hyde Park, the place of the today's show, a place of diversity and liberalism. And so was the audience, the audience of a very long and intense show - a good beginning for Chicago!

Chicago, tomorrow we would explore Chicago, today we would have an appointment at WMAQ-TV in the afternoon and the show in the evening. We decided to spent our time in the beautiful Humboldt Park by then - another Chicago would await us tomorrow.

New York at the East Coast and Los Angeles at the West Coast - art, literature, movies, music.....Chicago?

"Chandler, Bradbury, Dick, Hemingway.....Chicago, birth place of literature?"

"Well, not all of them are actually born in Chicago."

"Okay, some in suburbs - to be accurate. But isn't interesting how much this city is connected with literature, but of course also with movies and other art forms - jazz!"

"Yes, should one have the task to make a list with important cities of art in the USA, then I fear that Chicago would be not among the cities at the top."

"Yeah, there're other lists on which Chicago will be at the top."

"And maybe not wrongfully, but the point is, that Chicago is also a city of art. Maybe more than New York and Los Angeles."

"Colorful rivers - living in this city?"

"As in every other city - you can be happy, you can be unhappy. Well, the lake, but maybe in a city at one of the lakes who's somewhat smaller."

"The few houses at the car factory - can you imagine to live on a farm in the area of the Great Plains?"

"Absolutely not - was it Honda?"

"Not sure at the moment - I think so?"

"You see so much, but you also forget so much."

"This president is a racist, it's as simple as that."

"I not wanna defend him....."

".....then you should not do it! I know that this man has problems with women. I know that this man has problems with people of color. But saying to four American women that they should go back to "their" countries? What an idiot you have to be, to say such a sentence? I can tell you, a racist idiot! At the moment I hope that Kamala Harris would become the democratic nominee, would be interesting to see her with him. She would not had to talk with him, like she did with Biden. I don't think that you're a racist - this time she simply could say: You Sir, I know that you're a racist!"

"Does you think that she would have a chance vs. the office-holder?"

"Well, what should I say? Yes we can, but this time with a woman as president!"

The second show in Chicago - and the last. This could not be the last, I had to come back!

A day in Chicago, a day to be interested. No, no zoo today, no botanical garden. No museum, no architecture, no landmarks or beaches. We had a meeting with a social worker.

"This part of Chicago is known as one of the neighborhoods with the highest crime rates. Do you think that it would be clever to walk around here, alone as someone not belonging to this neighborhood?"

"I think it's like everywhere, that it would depend very much on your behavior."

"I've made the experience that neighborhoods marked as "not recommendable for tourists" not necessarily are more dangerous for tourists as other neighborhoods, this are the neighborhoods which the tourists shall not see."

"Sure, but again, it also depends on your behavior. The people who are living here are no animals, this is no zoo were you're going to see some underprivileged people, to make some selfies with them."

"That's true. Such a "tourist's like" behavior would suck me extremely, would I live here. But what I meant was - I'm not that familiar with Chicago, let me talk about Los Angeles. Skid Row - every guidebook will tell you, that this is a no-go area for tourists. Why? Is this area dangerous? I think that this is a very safe place in the end, the thousands of homeless people in this area are not interested in trouble. Well, it's no "beautiful" area, it's not the fucking boring Hollywood Boulevard, but it tells you much the more about the US. Or Westlake? I like it, to walk around there, to be among the people there, I feel safe there. Well, in the middle of the night in a back street? But this I would not do in Hollywood either."

"It's pretty much depending on your behavior. But you should not underestimate the risks. And well, you're a man, you both are a couple. Everything would be different, if we would talk about a single woman, I think we should be that fair."

"Okay, that's true, but that's true everywhere at any time. But we have to talk about the reasons for this situation, and therefore we have not to make many studies."

"No, the "why" is very simple. The problem is that it seems that nobody feels responsible therefore, to change this."

"We need protection for everyone, we need a government that cares for everyone, not only for rich and super rich people. You have to give the people an access to good education, to health care, political participation. But as long as you're telling this people, that they are second-class citizens, that they are lazy people because they are poor people, that they not deserve better, who should be surprised then, that they are not interested in the governmental rules, the laws, when you have to have the feeling that this government spits you in the face every day - and this president lets no

doubts about, what he thinks about this people!"

"As Mitt Romney said as presidential candidate in 2012: *My job is not to worry about those people [who pay no income tax]*. But our today's president tops this without any effort. To say "go back" to American women of color, to women born in the USA? How insane is this?"

"An his supporters are shouting "Send Her Back!" at rallies."

""Lock her up" - she's still not locked. But with this behavior you can win elections."

"That's the point, and the people who are living here in this neighborhoods? Will they elect in 2020?"

"I have not to tell you how difficult it's here in the States to vote. I've heard that in other countries you get invitations for elections? This sounds like a fairy tale for the people here - and Illinois is by far not the worst state. Gerrymandering is an instrument of suppression of the poor and colored."

"Yes, in Europe you get invitations for elections, automatically, you have to do nothing. Rob every hope from a person, then you have a person who has nothing to loose anymore. "

We continued our way, talked with people, were in a soup kitchen, talked with people. What a country, yes, homeless people you could find in many countries - poor people as well. But here, in this country? Bankruptcy caused by illness - was this a third world country? Veterans not seldom among the homeless - the fought for this country and that was the acknowledgment therefore. A wonderful example for the phoniness of this country. I was no supporter of wars, but this behavior was disgraceful.

What does one expected from this people, this poor people, this colored people? Work hard, you only have to work hard, and the American Dream can be yours - this hypocritical American Dream! Does anyone still believed in this lie, in this nightmare? The vast richness of some based on the poorness of many - in earlier times you had slaves for this, in former times you called this the Roman Empire and their leaders were send from the gods. Hail Caesar, hail fucking number 45., hail to you!

But again, the people living here, struggling every day to manage their lives? Especially the young ones, seeing that their parents never got a chance, how hard they even tried? This was no perspective for a young person, this was no perspective at all. But hey, we had private jails and they made only money when good filled! A white guy commented a severe crime - why sending him to jail? Hey, you had ten poor and / or colored persons who had committed a much less severe crime - why not sending them to jail instead with very hard sentences? Everybody knew it, also the young people living here - a very good start in your life.

I'm walking through Skid Row - all this homeless people, what should I do? Should I give one of them a hundred dollar bill - and then? Hey, I'm a rich enough to travel overseas, I could do it - and then? No, it's a governmental task, and yes fucking Romney, as a president you have to worry about everyone - but sorry, you're only a fucking conservative, and yes, compared with today you're yet again nearly sympathetic, but only nearly!

Tuesday July 16th, 7:05pm Wrigley Field, Chicago Cubs vs. Cincinnati Reds - we were there. A contrast to the hours before, a reason to be ashamed?

Wrigley Field in Chicago - American literature and baseball - Robert Coover? Baseball as a metaphor for life, as a metaphor for America - a "Field of Dreams"?

The Cubs won with four runs, Reds had three runs. The first inning was the inning of the Reds, but then they achieved no further home run and the Cubs, no home run in the first inning, could win the game in the tenth inning. For three hours an interesting game.

The rest of the evening we spent in a jazz bar - Chicago, a very jazzy city. Fantastic musicians, thought about their skills, their passion, their musicality. I had no feeling for the rhythm, I could only listen to the music, closing my eyes and envy the musicians. Yes, I envied them, very much I envied them and I dreamt about to be one of them, being onstage, with an instrument or with my voice, capable to express myself, capable to express my feelings. But I was not capable thereto, and

I tried that it was not too obvious, that all the time tears ran down my cheeks.

We left Chicago, drove through the suburbs, headed towards Rockford. It had been hard to leave many cities, but this time it was very hard. I had to come back, it would be not okay not to come back - it was only a feeling, but it was a feeling.

Without difficulties we reached Rockford, a show tonight, an interview at the "Rockford Register Star", the major newspaper in this area. Somewhat time before the interview, somewhat time to see a little bit of the in fact very green city at Rock River.

Anderson Japanese Gardens was our aim after we had arrived in the city, after a refreshing shower, after a quick lunch. After the interview, in front of the show, we had somewhat time for the Klehm Arboretum & Botanic Garden - I needed the calmness, I needed the water, I needed the feeling to be surrounded by nature only.

It was a short drive from Chicago to Rockford, but it was a journey into another world. Nevertheless, for many with whom we had talked yesterday, a journey they will never be able to make. Never they would stand in front of the waterfall, contemplating the water's sound and the scents of the plants - I felt like an asshole.

"We have to talk about it, I think it's impossible not to talk about it. In your shows you're letting no doubt about that you think that our president is a racist?"

"I rather would say that he's a hypocritical and fucking racist. He's a fascist, because he uses racism and the fear of the people to manipulate them. Imagine he would talk about Jews - I see Adolf Hitler in front of me then!"

"Very hard words - you both have German roots?"

"Yes, but we're on opposite sides."

"Do you think that the reaction of the women, that the reaction of the Democratic Party, is clever?"

"Impeachment is nonsense, he has too many brown-noses in Washington. The replies of the women are very good. It not helps, you have to defeat him in 2020."

"Till then?"

"We, the American people, have elected him - it was no revolt."

"As the saying says: You've made your bed, now you must lie in it?"

"All would be okay, if we would learn something thereout, but I fear this will be too naive."

Over three hours show tonight, but.....

*Que Sera, Sera
Whatever will be, will be
The future's not ours to see
Que Sera, Sera
What will be, will be
(Doris Day)*

Back to the Great Lakes, back to Lake Michigan, from Rockford to Milwaukee, driving through a landscape with many smaller lakes. Milwaukee, not that much affected by the economic decline as many other cities in the rust belt, a city of breweries, a city with a majority of Black or African American citizens, a very high rate of poverty, many homeless people, very high crime rates, full of culture and art, fantastic museums, named as an extremely segregated city, rated as "worst city for black Americans", with good filled prisons, wonderful rivers, parks and beaches - Milwaukee, a city in the United States of America.

We had a show tonight, but an appointment at the "Milwaukee Journal Sentinel" beforehand, the largest newspaper in Wisconsin.

"Shall we do something?"

"Not sure, I'm in this mood."

"Still Chicago in your mind?"

""Go Back!" - we, the whites, robbed them from Africa - "Go Back!"!"

"Some see politics as a privilege of the white, of old white men. It's hard for them to see women in politics, especially if they are young and not nicely white. Have you seen this bunch of white conservative women on CNN?"

"You mean them, who could not understand, that someone sees the president's words as racialistic?"

"Yes! The ones who will, in any case, elect him in 2020 again."

"Maybe I should ask them if I can grab their pussies?"

"But see a city like Milwaukee! Yes, the safe and nice neighborhoods of the sophisticated whites - and all the others? Yes, this city offers fantastic architecture - very cool when you're living in a fucking decayed block or on the street! The problem for me is not, that it's suchlike, the problem for me is, that it's okay in that way! Why I should be interested in them who have nothing? Hey, wouldn't that mean that I would have to give them something, something from my hard earned billionaires money? Why I should give them something, why? This is fucking, this is pure capitalism, this is the face of greed!"

North Division - a very long show with interesting conversations after it. Give a poor man a hundred dollar bill, nothing has changed in the end. Give a poor man a "real" opportunity, everything can change - give him nothing and tell him lazy.....

Again a day without a show, time to leave Milwaukee, time to reach Green Bay. For a longer time more or less alongside Lake Michigan, to leave the lake then, to greet the lake again at Green Bay. From one city to the other, but yet into another world. Green Bay - home of the Packers - was very different, compared to Milwaukee. Not that much affected by the economic crises of the past, nearly eighty percent white inhabitants, only ten percent under the poverty line, a slightly increasing population, ready for the future - but we were only on our way to the city.

We passed Port Washington and Belgium, but decided that this would be too early for a stopover - even Oostburg. We decided for the larger Sheboygan, nearly half the distance between Milwaukee and Green Bay.

"And, what does my travel guide says?"

"In many fields Sheboygan seems to be very similar to Green Bay."

"And the differences?"

"Sheboygan is famous for their bratwurst?"

"Wow, I had German parents?"

"Okay, but maybe this is more interesting and definitively it's a more serious topic. In Sheboygan many Hmong and Hmong Americans live, many of them live in Wisconsin."

"Never had contact to them, all knowledge I have is from books or TV."

"Me either."

"How many are living in this city?"

"Around five thousand, a little over a tenth of the population."

"That should be motivation enough to stay here, to have a closer look."

Had I to start a history lesson now? Why, everyone interested in was able to read about it by its own? A history about war, about a proxy war, about using people, not be interested in them

afterwards, about the face of US foreign policy. Well, today a war memorial, today accepted, accepted as immigrants, accepted as Americans?

We visited the war memorial and had a very good late lunch, we were unsure about it. Many of the Hmong became Americans, everyone said that they integrated themselves very good to the community, served the community very well - but why they had to immigrate?

We found no answer, we had to leave. Still some miles till Green Bay and we were late, arrived in the late evening in Green Bay. The city by the bay, at Fox River, where the river met the lake.

We stood up early, had a large breakfast, planned to stay for a longer time at the Bay Beach Wildlife Sanctuary, at one of the Great Lakes for the last time, at a water surface till the horizon, from now on we would travel to the interior.

It was wonderful to walk around here, at this wildlife sanctuary, and again I had problems therewith to imagine the time in the Great Plains and even more the time in the desert areas. But now we walked under green trees, a nice breeze from the lake, a warm and sunny day with some clouds and no rain - a moment that could stay forever. We enjoyed the plants and of course the many birds, the water around us, the waterfalls.

"Wow, that was beautiful - are you interested in the amusement park?"

"Not really, think it's more for the kids. I would enjoy it now to walk along the lake shore for a last time."

"That would be beautiful."

We had a very long walk, but our time ran out more and more - we had to leave.

"We have to go back to the hotel, we have to prepare for the show."

"Yes, you're right. No time for the botanical garden, the distance is too large."

"Yes, but between the hotel and the theater is St. Francis Xavier Cathedral, very near to the theater, only three blocks. Maybe we can visit the cathedral?"

"Good idea, but I have to say that I would have enjoyed it, to be together with you in the "Lusthaus"!"

"I would say that this is a hot spot for weddings? And maybe I should remind you of the fact that you're already knowing the location for your wedding?"

"Yes, I can remember. But still I have no bride."

We headed back to the hotel, ate something and prepared for the evening. St. Francis Xavier Cathedral - yes, you could understand that such a building impressed people who were religious. Also I was impressed, impressed by the architectural effort, by the craftsmanship, by the impression of the building. On the other hand? If it would be necessary to build such buildings for an god, to worship him, what kind of a god this has to be?

Meyer Theater, our venue for tonight. In a way not a very long show, you needed not much words to describe the disgustingness of the last days and the fucking "game" in the Middle East. It was an intense show.

Today was a stressful day, the distance between Green Bay and Madison was somewhat larger, there was no direct connection between the two cities, we had to say goodbye to the Great Lakes, but arrived very fast at the next - in fact not really small - lake, Lake Winnebago, but had no time for this enormous lake. We had to move on, passed other, smaller, lakes, to arrive in a city outstandingly located - a city between two lakes, Lake Mendota - the larger one - and Lake Monona - the smaller one. Extraordinary!

But not only the two lakes, much larger than the city, also the many parks and green areas, of course

a zoo and a botanical garden, of course many bike trails, of course! One of this typical cities in this area, full of culture, full of music - one of my favorite bands had formed in this city, Garbage. An opera house, a symphonic orchestra, Frank Lloyd Wright also in this city as in many cities in this area - what all should one list? The negative aspects?

To be fair, I was fascinated by the location of the city, wherever you were in this city, it would be a short way to a lakeside, even if it would be the "small" Lake Wingra or the again large Lake Waubesa. But we arrived very late in the city, no good traffic, enough time to prepare for the show, for a light dinner, but not for more. Fortunately we had no show tomorrow, whereby the distance to La Crosse was also no very small one. But we would have at least some time to stay in this city, we could depart late, could arrive in the middle of the night in La Crosse, to meet for the first time "The River" - The Mississippi River.

It was not my best show, not really concentrated, talked about the expectable, nothing special this evening - I was somewhat disappointed, disappointed about me!

We had decided to spend the morning and the afternoon in Madison and to use the evening to drive to La Crosse. We would arrive in the late night, but we would have the morning and afternoon tomorrow, to see at least some of La Crosse and the "Ol' Man River", the "Proud Mary", "Rollin' On The River" - Randy Newman "Louisiana 1927". Not that much Mark Twain, was not absolutely sure why - don't be a liar! But still we were in Madison.

It was very hard to decide, what to do with your time in the city, and we had not that much of it. For instance we sat for a while on the end of one of the landing stages at Burrows Park and looked at the lake, we swam a bit.

Again I had this feeling that all this was pointless, from one city in another, some quick facts, some buildings, some parks, some landmarks, some history - hey, the next city waited! On the other hand, how does it should function in a different fashion? Yes, you could stay for longer in a city - say, five weeks in Los Angeles, to have a long list thereafter of the things you not had seen. Not to talk about all the people who lived there! For a moment I wished that I would have no longer a home, my home would be the city in which I would be for the moment, from one city to the other, from one show to the other, for the rest of my life. How often I would be then in Madison, in La Crosse, in all of this cities I wasn't as yet, the cities away from our trail.

We had a very nice time in Madison, we had to leave and I felt that I never would be in this wonderful city again.

It was a longer distance till La Crosse, a somewhat tiring journey, through soft hills, farm land, had a stopover in New Lisbon, at New Lisbon Lake. Tomorrow would be our last show in this part of the US, the next area waited, the second part of the Midwest.

La Crosse were located in a very spectacular landscape, the Mississippi formed a huge area of marshland, formed Lake Onalaska, there was the Black River and Lock And Dam No. 7. Steamboats, well we were at the Mississippi, at the border of Wisconsin and Minnesota, but many miles away from the Deep South. I looked at the stream and thought about to enter a vessel, the river would took me away till I would reach Baton Rouge and a short time later New Orleans. But so I would have to wait, two months or three months, then I would be there either, in the Southwest, in October and November.

We tried to see a lot of the fantastic landscape, of the river, the landscape the river had formed. It was my first time that I stood at the Mississippi, the most famous river in the US? Well, the

Colorado River, maybe the Yukon River? Okay, the Yukon River, the Gold Rush, Jack London.....the Colorado River? But the Mississippi, could any other river compete with the Mississippi? Alone talking about music, not to talk about literature and movies. The Mississippi was the all-American River, there was no doubt about it.

Tomorrow we would cross the border to start a new part of the journey, we came near the first half of it. I had the feeling that the journey could not continue in this way, that the journey would not continue in this way, I was confused and could find no clear thoughts. All what happened in the country at the moment - could one believe that this could have an happy ending? I had my problems with it! Would it only be the man in office and his greedy and power-hungry bunch. But to see how the Republicans in Washington acted - like a pack of rabid wolves. I could not believe that they would accept an election defeat in 2020. Would it be possible that this country was on its way to wage a new civil war? I shook my head and felt the cold of the water, never lose the believe in the Happy Ending!

Again a standard show - I had my problems at the moment to concentrate, had my problems therewith to be at least somewhat optimistic.

Jack

"Hi, this is Jack, does I disturb you?"

"Hi, no, we're on our way to Rochester - Caroline is driving at the moment."

"The next leg of your tour?"

"Yes, now the Great Plains are waiting. So far we were only at the edge of it, now we will travel into its interior."

"Sounds not that optimistic?"

"We will have not that much shows there - compared with the extend of this states. The distances will become larger, the cities will become smaller, much lesser populated are this states, a lot of empty land."

"Will you have shows in Indian reservations, some very large ones are in this states?"

"No, not really. Mobridge lies at the border of the Cheyenne River Reservation for example. We have the day after no show - maybe....."

"You're not interested in?"

"Sure I'm! But I fear, that it would sound somehow insincere. We will see and not to forget, after this part we will see the East Coast again."

"Yes, be welcomed in Florida!"

"You're knowing that I like Mr. Petty's music very much - Southern Accents?"

"I'm looking forward to your next videos - had some concerns by seeing the last ones?"

"Was not in the best mood the last days, but I think it will go better now again."

"Your videos are very popular now, it seems that they will become more popular than your shows - no, what's better than a sold out tour?"

"But you're not that wrong. CBS in every city is interested in an interview, they have asked about a TV show after the tour is finished."

"Yeah, as I had said it at the beginning. You will become a star, you will get your own TV show....."

".....and fucking Hollywood waits at the end of the rainbow?"

"You will have to pay a price."

"But maybe I'm not interested in? Maybe I'm satisfied with it, to be on tour, as just right now?"

"Maybe you're satisfied with it, but maybe others are not?"

"Maybe....."

"Maybe this will be not your decision at the end?"

"Maybe."

Midwest - West North Central

Traveling To The Interior, The Great Plains

At the beginning of our drive from La Crosse till Rochester there still were some soft hills, but even they disappeared more and more. Smooth farmland till the horizon, most of the time we used Interstate 90. No city we passed, St. Charles with no four thousand inhabitants was near, Dover with seven hundred and thirty-five inhabitants? We had a stopover at the Amish Market Square, at the Amish Ovens Restaurant, enjoyed their tasty dishes and reached Rochester finally.

"We still have sometime before we have to prepare for the show?"

"Don't know? This is a very green city - or?"

"Oh yes, many parks, many bike and pedestrian paths."

"I don't know, the area around the Silver Lake looks very nice, but.....let us stay here."

"In the hotel?"

"Yes, let us continue with watching the Mueller testimony."

Sure, the Mueller testimony was the major topic of today's show, also the prompt reactions to it. I started a discussion with the audience about it and how the Dems should react now. It was a very interesting evening!

Minneapolis was our next aim, back to the Mississippi, only one name I had in mind - Prince, of course. Well, Bob Dylan, but Prince was the name. But in the end, I never was that much a "fan" of Prince, but he was always very impressing, without any doubts a fantastic musician! At no time I could understand all this hustle about Michael Jackson? Prince, he was the fantastic musician - or? Have we talk about believe now, have we talk about his wish to be accepted by other musicians - why we should. I listen to the audio file of his last concert and have to cry, why in such a way - and not only he? A man and a piano, what a presence! Going home.....

But of course, Minneapolis was more, much more, too much more! Minneapolis, a very German and Scandinavian city - I simply was overwhelmed by this city, every further word would be like a joke only! We had a press appointment at the "Star Tribune", the newspaper with the widest circulation in Minnesota.

"We have to talk about yesterday, I think?"

"Of course we have to!"

"You're summary?"

"I think we can stick with the essence - Mueller would charge him if he would not be president, and if there would be no Barr. And: You can charge him after his presidency - an interesting statement, or?"

"Yes, this is a very interesting information - especially for our president. An impeachment?"

"No, it's the task for the Dems now, to defeat him in the next election. If they fail again.....then fuck them! Afterwards we can start with the juridical workup of the last four years."

"It will become a dirty campaigning time?"

"It will top everything we have seen so far. The pack in the White House knows very well what they have to lose. They will have no scruples, it will become a very dirty time."

"What should the Dems do, what the electorate?"

"The Dems should not try to fight with this liar, they should not try to convince the fanatics. The Dems should try to convince all them, who still have an own mind, to convince them of, that this is the most important election of all time. A problem that I see is, that the Dems start again to talk

about meaningless things! It's stupid to answer the fucking wall with: Tear down all walls! Both is stupid, talk about meaningful things in a very clear language."

"Some points?"

"For example climate change, but be honest! We need immigration, but we cannot be the shelter for everyone! But the most?"

"Yes?"

"We have to become a modern society - the world is shaking its head while looking at us. We're the only industrialized country in the world with no public health care, a worse education system, no worker rights and more. In the US a woman has to work immediately again, after she has given birth? In all European countries she - and also he - can stay home for a longer time, but not in the US? And not to forget, she gets payed during this time! We have to speak it out, in many areas the US is a country of the Third World - speak it out!"

I felt very angry tonight, I was very aggressive, had a fantastic audience! My longest show ever? Not sure, have to check it!

Our second day in Minneapolis. Tomorrow we would travel to Duluth, back to the Great Lakes, to Lake Superior. I had this overlooked totally as we left Green Bay, as I thought that this would be our goodbye from the Great Lakes. All the more I was happy now, that we would see the lakes - or one of them - again. But we would drive to Duluth in the late evening, the day we would spent in Minneapolis. Today we had an appointment with WCCO-TV in the afternoon and of course the show in the evening. This morning, and the time till the appointment, we would spent in the other part of the "Twin Cities", St. Paul.

St. Paul, where the Minnesota River flowed into the Mississippi River - but this was not our aim. Our aim had to be Como Park Zoo & Conservatory, had to be the Marjorie McNeely Conservatory - and of course the carousel.

"I'm always fascinated about such constructions, a good combination of the old part and the modern parts."

"Again a good place for a wedding? I fear you should start therewith in the near future."

"Yeah, would be no bad idea. I think this could be a fantastic place for wedding number three?"

We spent a lot of time in the glasshouses, but also around, in the Japanese Garden for example. I was totally impressed to stand in the middle, looking up to the enormous glass dome, surrounded by palm trees. But even more, the side wings! The beauty of the flowers, the beauty of the arrangements, was crushing. We sat down on a bench and I could not stop to cry.....

"Can we also talk about you yesterdays's show and your videos?"

"Yes, sure, and you're CBS owned - or?"

"Yes, and by the way - I think you now it?"

"Yes, give her back my greetings."

"Of course. The show yesterday, since this morning online?"

"Yes?"

"Over four hours? It was one of this shows, you're famous for. A show where in the end everything becomes blurred. Who's on the stage, who's the audience? From a certain point on there was no longer a stage and a house, from a certain point on everything was everything and everybody could be the artist and everybody could be the audience. It was more like a "happening" at the end?"

"The term "happening" is difficult because a happening can be more or less everything and nothing. But I like it, when the audience becomes active. This can be shouts, but I also like it, to converse with the audience, why not discussing with them? There are very interesting people in the audience, many of them have more to say than I. A single mother of three or four can tell you a lot, a homeless

person can tell you a lot, a person who fears to lose his or her worse paid job can tell you a lot - always there're people in the audience who have so much more to tell than I."

"Maybe we should say, that at all your shows there are a certain number of tickets reserved for people who cannot afford one - they can get one for free."

"Yes, of course not every ticket can be for free. The theater has costs, I have costs, but we do something very un-American. We not try to make as much money as possible."

"A word about the videos?"

"Yes, you have a question?"

"Well, in the last time I had the feeling - and not only I, as the comments are showing - that you have some "problems"?"

"Yes, from time to time I have some "problems". A few hours ago I was at a place, so outstanding beautiful, a place man made, artificial, but this place was of an overwhelming beauty. I would wish, that every human could see such a place, could enjoy such a place, could be at such a place. But this is only fucking naive thinking of a boring and stupid old man - yes, sometimes I have some "problems"."

A day in Minneapolis - while driving we listened to the music of Prince. We drove from one part of Minneapolis to another, stopped spontaneously, talked with people about many topics. Some knew me, others not, but many talked with us, was interested in their words. Well, Minneapolis, Hennepin County, was blue, dark blue, not much blue areas in Minnesota. Therefore it was not that difficult to hear critical words about the president and his policy, however even more about the daily life in this country. Of course, it depended on the neighborhood, the white majority earned a good deal more in average as the minorities, nevertheless a very blue city.

Yes, in every larger city in every nation one could see the different areas, income, nationality, origin.....but in the States everything was shown you in a very brutal - should I say honest - way. We had to leave.

We used Interstate 35 and had halfway a stopover in Hinckley. The landscape became more hilly again, many woods. We reached Duluth shortly before midnight, not long after midnight we stood at the lakeside of Lake Superior, better Saint Louise Bay.

Today we stood up later as normal, but nevertheless we had not slept much. We had sat at the lakeside for a longer time, had talked and looked at the stars. Tomorrow a longer trip would await us, from Duluth till Grand Forks, over two hundred and fifty miles. We were at the port, looked at the large ships, the ships coming and the ones who left the harbor with unknown aims.

"Why the people have always the same thoughts, the wish, to be on board of one of this ships with an unknown aim. I mean, in the end they never do it."

"Some did it, most of us not."

"Most of us are always only looking, most of us are not willing in the end, to take the risk."

"Shall we try to find an Lake Superior agate?"

"Would be cool in a way, but I fear we have not that much time left."

"Not means that we cannot try it?"

"That's true - for me a ring and you?"

"Maybe a necklace? Something from the same stone for both of us, would be nice."

"Yeah, would be nice."

We found none. But we bought a ring and a necklace and the dealer assured us, that both gems were from the same stone.

"Now we both have a memento of Duluth and the Great Lakes."

"Yes, and it's a pity that we have to leave Duluth very early tomorrow. Such a small city, but they even have a professional ballet company and a symphony orchestra? Not to talk about all the other cultural aspects of the city, and not only the cultural aspects?"

"I think that they share the symphony orchestra with Superior, but it's fantastic how much this area offers."

"But also poor people here. Why we're not capable to make - for instance - culture accessible for everyone? But hey, we're not interested in to provide good education to everyone! Yeah, look at this humans, the human's humanity is a very strange thing. Again I've this feeling that I should stay here, that I should not continue with this travel, I fear the coming."

The show happened, I felt like in a dream, nothing felt real, the whole time I thought about the things that happened, the words that got spoken - like a druggie without drugs, like an alcoholic without alcohol, like a dreamer in an endless dream

As planned we started right after the breakfast from beautiful Duluth to Grand Forks - two hundred and eighty-eight miles, more or less six hours pure travel time. But we planned at least two stopovers, no need to hurry.

We would travel through or pass several Indian reservations, would enter the Great Plains again. Most of the way we would use U.S. Highway 2, the first stopover we planned in Bena, in the middle of the Leech Lake Indian Reservation, at Lake Winnibigoshish.

"And, what does my travel guide knows?"

"Well, somewhat over one hundred people live in this town, seventy percent are Native Americans. Very low income, nearly sixty percent are living under the poverty line, ninety-five percent of the under eighteen."

We entered the "Big Winnie General Store" for a coffee, a snack and to have a rest.

"I'm depressed, thought often about it how it would feel, to be an African American, knowing that your ancestors were slaves, knowing the "black history" in this country. But as a so-called "Native American"? Knowing, that this whole continent once was your land? And then, the knowing, that what's gone will never come back, what has happened, will never become undo again. I have not the slightest idea how I would react to this."

"Building an Indian casino? Yeah, everything changes, but it's different when someone forces you to change, to change in a way, you not wanna change. And all the cruelty in the name of progress and in the name of the superior race."

"You know, on one hand I would like to talk with the people who are living here, but then I have no idea what I should say. Tomorrow the next round of the debates begins, maybe they will talk about African Americans, maybe they will talk about Latinos and Hispanics, but never they will talk about the people who lived here before."

"Well, two and a half million "Indians" live in the States today, why should a politician be interested in them, even when they all would vote?"

"The Germans - at least most of them - will not deny the Jewish Genocide, the Holocaust. What happened in this country was also a genocide, but we not say it, we not confess it. A nation built on the attempt, to annihilate those who lived here before - what should I say?"

We continued our travel, passed White Earth Reservation and in more distance Red Lake Reservation, again the Great Plains. We had a second stopover in Fosston, a nice little town with one and a half thousand inhabitants and a golf club at Ouff Lake and a municipal airport. As we reached Grand Forks we not talked much, it was very late, we checked in.

"A few more miles and we would reach Winnipeg."

"Strange, I had this thought also."

Grand Forks, located at Red River, the border of Minnesota and North Dakota, was with somewhat over fifty thousand inhabitants the third largest city of North Dakota, after Fargo and Bismark, the two cities we would have a show at next. Also this city had for example a symphonic orchestra and a professional ballet company, respectively was the headquarter of the North Dakota Ballet Company.

But we would not see much of the city, had arrived very late in the night, stood up very late, had a show in the evening and an appointment at KFJM, a local radio station. But we found some time to spent at the confluence of Red Lake River and Red River.

"A nice little town."

"Yeah, one can have everything here."

"I look forward to the show at the Empire Arts Center."

"Hard to believe that this one of the largest cities in North Dakota."

"Fargo tomorrow is the largest - or?"

"Yes, somewhat over a hundred thousand inhabitants."

"Everything is very different now. The landscape, the cities.....the people?"

"Well, apart from two blue spots and this not so red counties at the border, North Dakota is a dark red state."

"Yeah, unthinkable to believe that a Democrat ever will win North Dakota."

"Sanders or Warren campaigning in North Dakota?"

"Harris?"

"AOC?"

"Maybe she will become president one time, and North Dakota will become blue!"

"Yeah, the frozen hell!"

We headed off to our appointment.

"You're knowing that we're also airing Catholic program?"

"And that this is red land."

"Well, this county not that much, but yes, this state supports our president."

"Still?"

"Why not, he keeps his promises and develops our country."

"You would be also happy when he would shoot dead a man on Times Square?"

"Don't be silly....."

".....I know, only men's chatter. But be honest, you're really happy with this man?"

"You're not starting with this talking now, that he's a racist?"

"I think it's better to name him a Nazi, I think that this fits better."

"Well, we have free speech in this country."

"Still we have, but this can change very fast."

"The candidates of the Democrats, tonight the first part of the second round of the debates - do you think that one of them would be able to defeat our president?"

"At least five or six of them and this is the reason why this coward in office fears the next presidential campaign."

"Do you really think that a socialist like Sanders would be able to defeat the president?"

"Of course! Sanders would grill him, he would have also no chance versus Biden or Warren. Harris would roast him. Maybe not in North Dakota, but in the important swing states."

"Do you think that all visitors tonight will like your show?"

"This is not important. I'm not on the stage that everybody likes me. This is not the reason why I'm on the stage."

Not my best show, not the most interacting audience, but I had some interesting conversations

afterwards.

From Grand Forks to Fargo - a short and easy trip, the Coen brothers? They never filmed in Fargo, but we were there now. The most populous city in North Dakota, the two hundred and twenty-second most populous city in the USA - you needed more information about North Dakota?

A travel alongside Red River, alongside the border of North Dakota and Minnesota, a city somewhat like Los Angeles. Prairie Rose with seventy-three inhabitants was the Beverly Hills of Fargo, and Frontier with two hundred and fourteen inhabitants its Santa Monica. You know what I mean!

Well, a prosperous city, low unemployment rate, somewhat more than ten percent lived under the poverty line - could it be that the many inhabitants with German and Norwegian roots were a reason therefore?

We arrived before midday in Fargo, the show in the evening and an appointment at KPPP-LP, a local radio station prior to that. We would have a few hours to visit the city somewhat, but not the time for a closer look. Tomorrow no show, but we would need some hours to reach our next aim, Bismarck.

We spent some time at Red River, had a look at the twenty-one houses of Prairie Rose and some of the neighborhoods of Fargo. Yeah, this was a German city, all the houses that nicely arranged! From above the city looked nicely, like a Lego city, the rows of houses in the housing areas, every area with its own scheme, interrupted by the industrial areas. Had I to say, that this city was a very clean city?

"I welcome you at KPPP-LP, Peter."

"Thanks for your invitation, Janis."

"Well, yesterday you performed in Grand Forks during the first part of the debate, today here in Fargo, during the second part of the debate. You had time to see yesterday's debate in the meantime?"

"Well, normally this is no problem - YouTube for instance. But I fear CNN has a problem therewith to share it on social media - was much better the last time? But yes, I've found the footage."

"Your impressions?"

"Warren and Sanders dominated the evening. Elizabeth Warren gets better and better in the polls. Sanders seems to be stable now again."

"Joe Biden?"

"He still leads all polls. But I'm not sure whether he would be the best contender for the man in office or not."

"You fear that.....?"

"He's too much related to this old political style. He talks too much about Obama. He reminds too much of Hillary Clinton. I think we would need a more progressive and more aggressive challenger."

"Sanders?"

"Or Warren. I think both of them could do it. They worked very good as a team yesterday."

"President and Vice President?"

"That would be an interesting move from the Dems' side!"

"Kamala Harris?"

"Will be interesting to see how she acts tonight. I think she should not try to do the same as last month."

"Not attacking Biden?"

"Not in the same way at least. I see a problem therein that only Sanders and Warren have a clear structured program. Joe Biden sticks too much with the past, at least for me. But all the other candidates have only ideas, maybe very interesting ideas, but no program."

"This is a red state. Do you think that you can convince people in North Dakota with your show, to vote for the democratic nominee the next time?"

"Every voter has the right for his or her own decision. But, and this is my point, you have to bear the consequences of your decision. At the moment our former allies not trust us any longer - if this is what you wish? I could continue now, but it's your decision, but you have face the consequences of your decision - that's what I'm saying."

"What does your gut say? Our next president?"

"Elizabeth Warren, a woman in office would be good, would be a real new start!"

I talked a lot about responsibility this evening, responsibility for our nation, for our planet, for our children - for other people.

Before we started our trip to Bismarck, we had a long breakfast while watching last night's debate.

"What do you think?"

"No good night for Harris, no good night for Biden - but I cannot see that Booker, Gabbard or Gillibrand will have a real chance."

"Neither O'Rourke or Klobuchar. At the moment the Dems are producing losers, they should start to produce winners. Especially they have to shrink the field of candidates. On the Republican's side we have one figure who's in the media every day, on the Dems' side we have twenty plus candidates and every one of them seeks for media coverage. This will not function."

"Absolutely. In Huston all candidates have to share one stage. It would be good to have five candidates, this would give them the possibility for longer statements during the debates and more media coverage."

"You also have the feeling that the Dems are again on the way to spoil it?"

"If this meaningless ritual will continue - yes! They have to start to take this seriously. It's not enough to produce nice statements, they have to start to fight with their opponent, and their opponent is the man in the White House. There would be so much to talk about - CNN did a lousy job, in that respect I agree with our nice president!"

"Also the first debate in Miami, the moderation of the first debate was no good either! But I agree with you, the last two nights were absolutely disappointing!"

"Should we start?"

"Yeah, is a longer drive today."

We started with our today's journey.

On one side it was an easy trip, always using Interstate 94, two hundred miles, one could do it in no three hours. On the other side it was a boring trip, always straight on, through endless fields till the horizon, maybe a soft mound, the only alternation. And it was a trip from one river to the other, from Red River to Missouri River - and even when it was not necessary, we decided to have a stopover in Jamestown, at James River, roughly in the middle between Fargo and Bismarck.

A city with fifteen thousand inhabitants and therewith still one of the largest cities in North Dakota. The city with the world largest buffalo monument - yeah, The Buffalo City, The Pride of the Prairie! But this time was long gone, the time of the endless herds of buffaloes! And yet, we visited the National Buffalo Museum and looked at the buffaloes there - and the real buffaloes? I saw a man on a horse, fighting with a buffalo. I saw a man, killing hundreds of buffaloes only because to still his lust for killing. Sometimes I felt only fucking, sometimes I had only my tears to offer. Jamestown, over fifty percent of the inhabitants had German roots, most of them came from Russia to the US, to settle the empty and wild continent - we continued our travel.

We reached Bismarck at 6pm.

"Shall we undertake something?"

"Not sure, I'm in no good mood."

"We have time tomorrow, no press appointment?"

"They have a zoo here?"

"Yes, the Dakota Zoo."

"With prideful buffaloes, I guess."

"Yes, it would not surprise me."

We spent some time at the river, not that far away from the zoo and the amusement park, at Sermota Park. We finished the day with a nice dinner and a cocktail in a bar.

Bismarck, the second most populous city in North Dakota, a fast growing city, somewhat over seventy thousand inhabitants, over ninety percent white, over fifty-five percent with German roots, no ten percent lived under the poverty line - no longer in the Rust Belt! A city with many parks, endless bike trails, a city you would love to live in. Sure, a widespread cultural life - oh yeah, George Armstrong Custer before.....what a nice tourist's attraction!

We spent a long time in the zoo - and yes, also at the buffaloes, or the American Bison if you like. And yes, it was nice to be there, I enjoyed it very much, time to forget the shit outside. But then we had to leave, the show waited, the audience waited.

A long show, said some sentences not everybody in the audience loved. But hey, I never was an entertainer, if you wished to be entertained, then prefer on of this comedians with their shallow jokes, not hurting or offending somebody - Lenny Bruce, do never forget him!

Today we had to drive from Bismarck to Mobridge, from North Dakota to South Dakota, but we were not sure about the route, as we had breakfast. We could use the ND 6 / SD 63 route. Fast, easy - boring? Or we could use the smaller roads more or less alongside Missouri River - much more interesting? Without any doubt we would need much more time.

"We're leaving immediately after the breakfast - or?"

"Yes, I think so. Look, alongside the Missouri River would give us the possibility for an stopover at Fort Yates. It's more or less in the middle and it's fantastically located on an isle in Missouri River."

"Looks very interesting! Look how broad the river is there!"

"Yes, and also interesting?"

"Yes?"

"Fort Yates is the tribal headquarters of the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe. Oh, but look at that, in 1970 the population was over a thousand residents, in 2010 no two hundred still lived there?"

"Sounds not good, but maybe it would be interesting to be there anyway?"

"I think so also - it's around 11am now. We have plenty of time to reach Mobridge - along the Missouri?"

"Of course!"

"Let us say goodbye to the staff."

We looked for the woman who had prepared the good tasting breakfast for us and found her in her small kitchen - weeping bitterly.....

"What happened? Can we help you?"

"You not heard it?"

"No?"

"There was a shooting in El Paso, at the local Walmart. Many are dead or wounded - I've relatives who are living there. They always go shopping at Saturday, I cannot reach them by phone....."

We left late, used the short route - it was a fucking day with every hour more dead and wounded!

Disgusting words from a disgusting president - and now? How about this argumentation? Would have been there armed customers in the Walmart, then it would have been possible for them, to kill the attacker, before he would have been able to kill others, at least not as many - assault weapons for everyone!

It was a fucking day and I was happy to have no show tonight. But tomorrow, tomorrow a show, tomorrow a press appointment at the local newspaper - and? Always the same questions, always the same words, always nothing happened. Money, always money, always this civil society was unable to get rid of this bought politicians, bought by the money of rich interest groups - we cried a lot.....

We stood up and walked to the breakfast room - a TV was running and of course the mood was in low spirit. We looked at the screen to get new information, they talked about Dayton? A couple looked at us.

"You not heard it?"

"No what happened?"

"Another mass shooting in Dayton, no thirteen hours after El Paso. late at night."

"Come on! We went to bed somewhat after midnight - it was a long and fucking day yesterday? Not again - California was a week ago, or?"

"Yes. They killed the attacker within thirty seconds - police was near by."

"Wow, then not much happened?"

"He killed nine and wounded many."

"In under thirty seconds?"

"He was good armed!"

We looked at the screen, no longer interested in our breakfast. Obviously he had an assault weapon and a magazine with a hundred rounds, with a bulletproof vest - in many countries soldiers would be happy to have such an "equipment"! What a fucking beginning for a day after a fucking yesterday!

We upset all our plans, looked TV all the time, till we had our press appointment at the Mobridge Tribune, the local newspaper.

"It's a bad day to have you here with us at Mobridge Tribune, Peter."

"Yes? And about what we're talking now? About that we feel with the victims and their relatives? Should we pray for them?"

"You're very agree, what I can understand....."

".....really? You've voted for this fucking president?"

"I'm not sure....."

".....but I'm sure! South Dakota has voted with a large majority for this awful man. This county with a three-quarters majority for this liar? Isn't it now time to assume responsibility?"

"Isn't this too easy, to blame the president for what has happened? We have mass shootings since a long time, also under democratic presidents?"

"Last week, yesterday, today.....he wanted to kill as many Hispanics as possible? Oh, Mexicans are drug dealers, Mexicans are rapists, send them back to their countries, to their fucking neighborhoods - no, this president is the most innocent man in the whole world!"

"He will held a speech tomorrow?"

"Wow, the liar in office will held a speech? Some false tears, some chatter - who thinks that this man is interested in some dead Latinos and Mexicans in El Paso, some dead people in Dayton?"

"Sorry, but I think that we not have a president who....."

".....you're remembering one of his rallies? When he asked: What should we do with them? - He talked about immigrants - do you remind the shout from the floor?"

"No?"

"Shoot them!"
"Come on, that....."
"...that happened, I provide you the footage if you need it!"
"Okay, and our president's reaction?"
"He grinned!"

I was in a fucking mood, no good mood to enter a stage - or maybe the best mood one could have in this moment? Sometimes I yelled at the audience, sometimes I cried, sometimes I asked myself why I did what I did. Sometimes I would have been happy, simply to close my eyes forever.

We drove from Mobridge to Watertown, another two hundred miles, left the Missouri River. Watertown, a city nicely located between Pelican Lake and Lake Kampeska, a city a little more than twenty thousand inhabitants, the fifth largest city in South Dakota, a city with a nice zoo.

"About what you're thinking?"
"Dayton of course?"
"As we were there, we were in this quarter as well - or?"
"I think that we were in this street as well, but not in this bar."
"We will be also in El Paso, during the end of the year."
"Yes, will the city be different then?"
"I hope not, was that much interested in this area, the border to Mexico. But now it's a strange feeling. Not long ago we were in the city of the one mass shooting - not that long, and we will be in the city of the other mass shooting."
"It's difficult to think of anything else."
"Yes, very difficult. But what makes it hard, is this fucking speech of the president in the morning. What makes it hard, is the acting of the republican politicians. What makes it hard, is that everybody sees the fucking influence of the NRA right now again. You know after Sandy Hook?"
"To arm teachers and to train them by the NRA - the NRA's solution of the problem?"
"Yes, more guns! Always more guns, this is shit!"
"Will something change this time?"
"All probability tells you: No!"
"And that's the most severe burden at the moment."

Again I was happy to have no show tonight!

We had breakfast, but not that much appetite, waited for the president's speech.
"What do you think that he will say?"
"I'm not sure whether this is interesting or not, what he will saying. I mean, he's the big liar and pretender?"
"Yeah, I also think that it will be wasted time, to invest too many time in his words. It would be important now, that the people no longer would accept the behavior in Washington. We have to change our political system, we have to get rid of the big money."
"Definitively we have to get rid of this president - you knew that Walmart is the largest gun dealer in the US?"
"No, is this irony or a satire?"
"Have heard it on TV, but also that they stopped to sell assault weapons, and not to persons under twenty-one."
"Yeah,....."

We decided to spend some time at Pelican Lake.

"Not the zoo?"

"No. Animals in cages wouldn't be not, what I should see now."

"The president will hold his speech now - shall we watch?"

"Sure."

We sat down at the lakeside and watched "ours" president's speech.

"What fucking words were this? He's such a disgusting person!"

"Forget him! It's important now, what the democratic candidates are saying, how they are acting."

We continued with our walking at the lakeside, but stayed in touch with the news.

"Wow! O'Rourke, Booker and Buttigieg made very distinct statements! "His speech was shit" - what a fucking cool statement in a live interview! I only can hope that the Dems will keep this clearness and this power. They have to grill McConnell now, now or never! If this time it will have no consequences, than never!"

"But I feel not good. Shall we really hope, that this time we have reached the turning point?"

"I think that the next days will be very important, the days till the weekend. Next week we will see whether this was only a flash in the pan - as always - or if the fire has started this time."

We headed back to our hotel, the show waited!

I talked a lot about responsibility, about truthfulness, even about religion and God's words and the words of his son. I wasn't really sure whether my words would have meaning, but at least I tried.

Today we had a busy day, first the travel from Watertown to Sioux Falls. Not that much a long travel, more again a boring travel, always on the same street, always straight ahead through flat farm land. We had a very short stop at Brookings, in fact the fourth largest city in the state, but we had no show there. We had to do something there, but not that much time. Sioux Falls waited, of course the show in the evening, but also an appointment at KRSD, a local radio station.

Sioux Falls, the most populous city in South Dakota, over one hundred and fifty thousand inhabitants. Unfortunately we would have not much time to see the city, but in the end we managed it, to be at least a short time at Fawick Park, to look at Michelangelo, and at Beadle Park and Big Sioux River.

"It's very relaxing to be here with you."

"You're not interested in, to talk about politics?"

"Not much at least. At the moment I'm delighted about, that this is a classic music radio and you invited me to mold the program of the next two hours."

"Okay, then let us begin with our program and your first piece of music - some remarks about this first piece?"

"It's the most beautiful piece of music I know - and not only I'm fascinated about it. I think it should be the piece of music played while my funeral."

In fact I was very relaxed this evening, but this made me only more belligerent. But I was calmer, acted more considered, more structured. I thought about, which of the shows of the last days was my best. Maybe each of it in its own way, because a result of my feelings at that very moment?

Today we had an easy ride, always using Interstate 29, from Sioux Falls to Omaha, Nebraska. But

not Omaha was the major aim of today, this was the city in the middle of them, Sioux Falls in Iowa. We arrived there still in the morning, back at the Missouri, and headed towards our first aim, the Sioux City Public Museum.

We spent two hours there, looked at the exhibits and had some conversations. But then we left the place to walk the short distance to our second aim of the day, the Sioux City Art Center.

"I had a few problems in the museum."

"I also, but in the end it only showed the reality."

"Yes, but so often the question has to be, the reality of whom?"

"Definitively not that of the Sioux!"

Also at Sioux City Art Center we spent around two hours, stood in front of pictures of Salvador Dalí, Käthe Kollwitz, James Abbott McNeill Whistler and many more.

"We have still time for more, the Sergeant Floyd River Museum is not far from here?"

"Sounds good."

"We could also eat something there?"

"Also this would be very good."

"I'm hungry as well."

As we continued with our travel we used Jackson Street, a detour, back to Interstate 29. We had to see the beautiful Victorian houses, especially the John Peirce Mansion.

It was late in the evening as we reached Omaha, as we reached Nebraska. The largest city of the state with somewhat less than half a million inhabitants. Because we would have some time tomorrow, a day without a press appointment, and especially the day after tomorrow, when we would have only a shorter travel to Des Moines, we decided for no further activities for today. Instead we stayed at the hotel and watched TV.

"This footage from the hospital is unbelievable!"

"Yes! No victim wanted to see him - and his reaction? Making stupid comments about O'Rourke? What a fucking shit is this!"

"You have to understand this misunderstood man! He is so polite and interested in the victims, especially the Latino victims in El Paso who are flooding our country, and what does the people are doing? They demonstrate against him? This he has not deserved!"

"No, he would have deserved it, to get kicked out of office!"

Omaha, a city between two rivers. In the east the Missouri River, in the west the Elkhorn River - or the much larger Platte River, if you would like to see it so. A more or less typical city in this region, with one exception: The "Omaha's Henry Doorly Zoo and Aquarium"! Some called this zoo the "world's best zoo"! Sure, I had to visit this zoo, and not only today from after the breakfast till the show, but also tomorrow, a day without a show!

This was a zoo of superlatives! The largest cat complex in North America! The world's largest nocturnal exhibit and indoor swamp! One of the world's largest indoor rainforests! One of the world's largest indoor deserts! The largest glazed geodesic dome in the world! Enough? A wonderful carousel as well!

It was Friday and we spent hours in this zoo, only to accept that also with tomorrow we would have not enough time, to appreciate this wonderful zoo. We came to the conclusion that this was a zoo, simply too large, too manifold, for a short visit. It would be cool to live in this city, to have the possibility to visit this zoo more often, especially in different seasons. Thus we concentrated today on some of the attractions, to visit the others tomorrow. But as said, even thus it would be not possible to appreciate this zoo in its full extent.

As we reached the hotel again, we had to be somewhat in a hurry, preparing for the show. I switched on the TV to get the latest news - during our visit in the zoo we were not interested in, what happened out in the world - no good idea!

"Wow, what a cool timing for fucking ICE raids! If I would be a Latino, seeing this children crying.....well, you already have told them and the African Americans and the other minorities, how you see them!"

"Look at that, a video at YouTube - our wonderful and diplomatic president in the hospital in Dayton. You have to see this!"

"Wow, I've the feeling that he was not that happy in the hospital."

"A comment is saying that none of the victims agreed to talk with him!"

"Then you have to bully O'Rourke! Wow, they are smart. Not interested in to become a part of his campaigning - now its also on TV."

"Very cool! Also in El Paso they were not interested in, to talk with him! If I would be a Latino, especially one of the victims, I had also no interest in, to talk with him. Maybe I would be interested in, to spit in his face!"

The last days I had some problems, but now I started to feel better. Not everyone liked my jokes about the joke from New York, but I liked it, to make them! And I had the feeling that in the background, at a table far behind, a man sat. And yes, there were some niggers here tonight.....

After breakfast we headed to the zoo and aquarium for the second time, to stay their till the closing time at 5pm. The distance between Omaha and Des Moines was only somewhat more than a hundred miles, we would have no problem to arrive their at the early evening. Therefore, no reason to hurry.

Again it was wonderful to stay at the zoo, again the feeling that this zoo was in a way maybe too large. At least too large for a traveler, for someone who not lived in this city, or someone who not stayed in this city at least for a somewhat longer time. We visited the main attractions that we had not visited yesterday, but tried also to have time for the not so prominent parts of the zoo. The aquarium was on our list for today, and only for this we needed a longer time. But as often, the inconspicuous animals and plants kept our attention and gave us great pleasure. What should one say, it was a beautiful time, a time in another world, a world were children laughed and not cried, people smiled and not suffered by grieve, a world with a wonderful carousel and animals in cages.

But we had to leave, the zoo closed, and we hit the road to Des Moines. It was an easy and fast trip, mainly on Interstate 80, again through endless farm land, through soft hills, away from Missouri River, again in Iowa. Des Moines, located at Des Moines River and Saylorville Lake, with somewhat over two hundred thousand inhabitants the most populous city of Iowa and its capital. We reached the city around 8pm, checked in, looked for a place for a small dinner and a cup of coffee, to think about the last days.

"I've the feeling that everything becomes more and more devastating."

"Yes, it's more and more difficult, to create a meaningful program. This is a time to occupy the streets, otherwise nothing will change, otherwise all will be, as it was all the times before."

"I thought about the civil rights movement, about the protests against Vietnam. It was the people on the streets who changed the things, not the politicians in Washington! JFK, this bearer of hope, and his acting towards Sammy Davis Jr.? Well, interracial marriage was still forbidden in 31 states at this time, but in the end also JFK was only a racist - well, this small black guy with this wonderful blond Swedish actress? Does not all this beautiful women belonged to Mr. President?"

"Yes, this was a time of bigotry. And when future generations will look back at this time, then I hope, that this will be their only verdict, that this time is a time of bigotry as well. I have the fear, that this can become very easily the beginning of something much more worse. The Nazis already salute to our president with their shouting "Heil Donald Duck!" and the Hitler salute. I hope, that they will remain they only ones, who will do so!"

We stood up early, even when we planned to stay also the next day in Des Moines. Tomorrow we would have no show, but we both had the feeling that it would be good to slow down somewhat before the last - and more stressful - part of this part of the tour would begin. And even when we had visited this large zoo, aquarium and botanical garden the last days, also today our aim would be the zoo in Des Moines - the Blank Park Zoo - and the botanical garden - the Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden. Also this botanical garden had a very interesting dome, and nearby was the Robert D. Ray Asian Gardens and Pavilion. For tomorrow we planned a cultural program with visual arts, and ballet in the evening.

It was a tough time, every day more and more fucking news. Everything about Jeffrey Epstein! A president who posted - again! - conspiracy theories! After this devastating mass shooting in El Paso Texas decided to loosening gun laws - loosening! To not becoming totally crazy, I needed time away from all this!

Every day all this news from the media, most of the days a show with all this topics, often press appointments, talking about all this topics - I needed time without all this shit! And as often a zoo or a botanical garden was the right place to do so. To be among the animals and plants was wonderful, as well to be together with the other visitors, especially the children, so interested, so curious about everything. On our way from the zoo to the botanical garden we even had some time for a stop at Water Works Park - we had to spend some more time in this area, also Raccoon River Park, tomorrow!

The show? Des Moines, one of the very few blue spots in Iowa. Des Moines, a white majority, but in the end a very diverse city. It was a good show, a long show, but in the end not enough time, to talk about all, about what one should have to talk.

We started our day at Walnut Woods State Park and Raccoon River Park, both located in West Des Moines to be accurate, both very beautiful. Both traversed by Raccoon River, both a place of many lakes, who lead us to Waterworks Park, of course also a place of not only the river, but many lakes as well. It was a very nice walk that found its end in a series of small parks and gardens, among them the Better Homes and Gardens Test Garden and the Pappajohn Sculpture Park - LOVE!

"Wow, that was a beginning of the day! Now I'm really hungry, even after the good breakfast!"

"I'm also! Let us see where we can eat and drink something!"

Okay, in the end it was no problem, alone in Locust Street there were many opportunities, not to talk from the attaching blocks. After the late lunch we used public transport to master the distance to our next aim, again a park, the Greenwood / Ashworth Park, but also the Des Moines Art Center. Well, we had to use the bus who headed downwards Grand Avenue.....

The works of Noah Doely "irritated" me much, but also the other current exhibitions were interesting, not to talk about the permanent exhibition.

"That was a lot of art now."

"Yeah, and the highlight still will follow."

"You're knowing, that I have not that much use of dance as an art form. Although that I know how much passion and suffering it needs to reach such a level of professionalism. Especially ballet. It looks so elegant, so light and easy, but it's such a hard work and such a strain of the body, especially for the women. How many of them have to quite their careers because their bodies aren't longer capable to bare the strain. Is modern ballet less brutal for the body than classic ballet?"

We went back to our hotel, refreshed, and dressed for the evening. Had a nice dinner before the performance and a cocktail in a bar thereafter. The Nutcracker, the young dancers? Dreaming about a career on the stage, dreams from the applause of the audience. How many of them could

understand their feelings? I couldn't!

After the relaxed day yesterday, the next days would become more stressful, the last days of this part of the tour. In the morning the trip from Des Moines to Kansas City, from Iowa to Missouri, back to Missouri River. An easy travel, always Interstate 35, straight away, farm land and the soft hills. We reached Kansas City still in the morning.

We had an appointment later at KCPT, a local TV station, and of course the show in the evening. Till then we would spent some time in the city, this fast growing city with a notable African American community - of course living mainly in "their" neighborhoods - and also a larger Latino community. But we would have no distinct plans, just walking around, looking for some fountains, looking for the boulevards and the feeling of the "Paris of the Plains". The American Jazz Museum would be a must for us, during the two days in the city - unfortunately we would have no time at the evenings for the uncountable jazz clubs and venues in the city - but now we just walked around.

"A very interesting city."

"Yes, a very jazzy city!"

"Charlie Parker is a son of this city."

"Ben Webster and so many others also."

"Robert Altman, his movies were very important for me in my youth. Especially "McCabe & Mrs. Miller", which I saw in a very young age secretly in TV, late at night. A very different image of the "Wild West", a very different image of the value of life - the young man on the bridge! The last shot!"

We arrived at KCPT in the late afternoon.

"Is it by coincidence that your three venues in Missouri - Kansas City, Columbia and St. Louis - are the three blue spots in the red ocean of Missouri?"

"No, this was not the reason. Kansas City and St. Louis are the far most populous cities in Missouri. Columbia lies nearly exactly between this two cities and is the fifth largest city of Missouri. Springfield and Independence have more inhabitants as Columbia, but Springfield is located in a very different part of Missouri and Independence is part of Greater Kansas City."

"But sometimes you're also performing in very small cities, not to say in small towns?"

"We have scheduled for every region in America a certain time, more or less the same. The states of the Grate Plains are much lesser populated then the New England States for example. The distances between the cities are larger, all is much more sprawled. Therefore we cannot have shows in that much cities in this states as in denser populated states - we're concentrating more on the large cities in such states. In fact, this is our only show in Kansas - you understand? In Nebraska the situation was not much different. This states are too large and too less populated for more shows in the time we have. We have to cover the whole USA in a year - and we will be not in Alaska, Hawaii and Puerto Rico!"

"Your impressions of Kansas City so far?"

"A city worth to stay much longer with any doubts. It's the problem that we have no time for real, deeper, impressions. But we have this problem in every city. We will have tomorrow some more hours to discover Kansas City, but this is a totally insufficient period."

"Your comment about the state of the nation?"

"We have a lot to loose at the moment. I know how much approval the man in the White House got in Missouri in 2016. But I would hope that more and more conservative voters are realizing, that this man have to become history. I predict that in the very moment, when he will be history, all this figures in Washington will tell you: We never were happy with this guy, very good that he's gone now, and such statements more. But now, now they have not the guts to tell the conservative voters that this man is a perversion of conservatism! Conservative values? This man spits on each of them, this man is a disgraceful disaster - especially for conservatives! Get rid of him as fast as possible,

nominate an alternative conservative candidate for 2020 - is this the best politician the conservative community can offer? That would be a disgrace!"

I felt very good this night, the audience was fantastic - East Side!

Again we spent our time till today's press appointment by just walking around. Mainly at Missouri River, the confluence of Kansas River and Missouri River, but also downtown, River Market. Our press appointment at "The Kansas City Star", the newspaper connected with Ernest Hemingway, was early in afternoon. This would give us time, between the press appointment and the show, to enjoy one of this barbecues for which Kansas City was so famous. But now we walked alongside the river.

"Two more cities and we're heading towards south."

"Yes. But as you have seen maybe, I added Kentucky to the next part of the tour, even when this state not belongs to the South Atlantic region. This will expand this part somewhat, and will shorten the actual East South Central region."

"Yes, I've seen it. But Kentucky lies between Missouri, where we're now and will have our last show of this part in St. Louis, and West Virginia, where we will have our first show in the new region in Charleston. Therefore it makes sense to include Kentucky in this part of the tour."

"In fact our first aim after St. Louis is not even a Kentucky city! It's Evansville, and Evansville is in Indiana!"

"Oh, back to Indiana for one show! And then, soon, we will be at the coast again!"

"Well, not that fast, but we will follow the East Coast for some time. And then, there's the Gulf of Mexico as well."

"Yes, soon we will be surrounded by water again."

We continued with our walking, also in the city, on our way to 1729 Grand Boulevard. And yes, we saw fountains and understood the reference to Paris - San Francisco? Grand Boulevard, we had reached our aim for the afternoon.

"It obvious that all this follows a plan. I'm not saying that everything is planned, what has happened during the last weeks - the mass shootings were of course not planned! But they fit very good to their agenda."

"This region is a very rural region, a very conservative region - forget Kansas City! Do you think that this is the place to express such conspiracy theories?"

"I'm not the president? This is no conspiracy theory. What I'm talking about is, that this administration uses the fears of the people for their purposes. But maybe one should think about, if fear is the best adviser?"

"About what fear you're talking?"

"Ken Cuccinelli's quote of the poem on the Statue of Liberty? His wrong quoting? His....."

".....would you allow me to interrupt you?"

"Of course."

"He said, that he has not quoted the inscription."

"Unfortunately he has forgotten to tell this the TV viewers? It looked like a quote, you should be very careful with such things - or? The point is, that he said quote "give me your tired, your poor who can stand on their own two feet and who will not become a public charge", unquote. This is absolutely not what's written on the Statue of Liberty. The exact text is:

*Not like the brazen giant of Greek fame,
With conquering limbs astride from land to land;
Here at our sea-washed, sunset gates shall stand
A mighty woman with a torch, whose flame*

*Is the imprisoned lightning, and her name
Mother of Exiles. From her beacon-hand
Glows world-wide welcome; her mild eyes command
The air-bridged harbor that twin cities frame.*

*"Keep, ancient lands, your storied pomp!" cries she
With silent lips. "Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me,
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!"*

This sounds totally different - or? And I cannot find any indication about, that this lines are addressed to Europeans only, as Mr. Cuccinelli is thinking. *Glows world-wide welcome* - is it possible that Mr. Cuccinelli, an official of the president, is trying to fool us?"

"And what's the plan behind all this?"

"To tell the minorities, especially the Latinos and Hispanics, that they are no longer welcomed in the USA. That we not wanna have more non-whites in this country, that we not wanna have more people from non-European countries in this country, that this is a white European country. Let me say this.

This whole region, the Great Plains if you like, is, apart from some larger cities, a region of white European immigrants. Many Irish, German and Italian immigrants. But also many immigrants from East European countries. They have developed a certain lifestyle - and I talk not about that they are more conservative than the rest of the country. I talk about their life in smaller cities and communities, I talk about their religious life and more. Do they wanna keep this lifestyle? Yes, and this is okay. They only problem is, that the circumstances of life are changing constantly - think about social media or our today's means of communication. Now an interesting question? Say the people in Missouri are thinking that they wanna stick with their way of living - who endangers this? Maybe a surprising answer? Not that much the Latino and Hispanic immigrants, who mainly will live in larger cities and states like California or Texas. But I know that this president and this administration will destroy their way of living, because they will destroy this country's values and basis. Why?

At the moment they destroy nearly everything. The world stumbles at the moment, this nation stumbles. Who is working on your fields? Whom ICE arrested in Mississippi? We have trillions - yes, trillions - to give the super rich and the big companies for stock back-buying? How much support the farmers in this state have gotten from Washington in the last two years? How much they suffer because of the trade wars? Hey, we can win them easily - you stupid bigmouth, you're fighting with Asians? Have we not much experiences about, how tough they are and how much they can suffer? But yes, we can win this trade wars very easily! And the farmers in this state? Can they win the trade wars easily as well?

I said it yesterday on TV. Vote conservative - I'm definitively no conservative - but do not vote for this liar, pretender, criminal in the White House. Do not get fooled by him! You need a better candidate - with this candidate you will lose in 2020! This would be in my sense? In a way yes, but the problem is, that we have August 2019 at the moment! The next inauguration will be in January 2021! I fear that till then this man will have harmed our nation, maybe the world, that much, that it will be too late. Get rid of this man, don't tell me that the conservatives have no better options!"

I tried to get in conversation with the audience, to discuss with them. It functioned very well! It was an interesting evening for me, and I think for the audience also - Downtown this time!

A short trip to Columbia this morning, no press appointment, only the show in the evening, back at Missouri River. Columbia was an extremely fast growing city, doubled its population in only a few decades. But also a city in which nearly twenty percent lived under the poverty line. A city of music - again a very jazzy city, St. Louis would be our next aim! - but also other styles of music, art as such, a very cultural city. We both felt.....no, not exhausted, but.....strange? Many cities we had seen now, many others would follow, whereby it had become August, soon this year would end and the new one would begin and our tour would end - and then?

Not long and even Florida would be history, we would be on our way back to home then, to our coast. The deserts, the mountains, the other ocean - and then? We had an invitation from John Oliver, Last Week Tonight. Back to New York - we were a thousand miles away? This part of the tour would end this Sunday, on 18th, a day without a show. We could fly from St. Louis to New York in the morning, the taping would be at 6:15pm - no real problem. The next show would be at Monday in Evansville, Evansville had a local airport. They had offered us that they would arrange everything, also that our car would be in Evansville on Monday. An alternative would be, to fly back to St. Louis in the same evening or the next morning. In Evansville we would have only the show, we would need around three hours driving from St. Louis till Evansville - would be also possible. Wow, that much trouble only to having me on the show? This was not the only request, but this would be my first time together with John Oliver? I had agreed.....

But today we were in Columbia, today we tried to relax - difficult with all this fucking shit that happened in Washington every day! Why he not simply said, that he hated people of color, that he hated women, that he hated Muslims, that he hated people who disagreed with him? Muslim women of color who disagreed with him - what a combination! Sure that he had to stir up hatred against them!

We walked around in the city, not that much in the even greener outskirts, a nice lunch and later a nice dinner - coffee and a cake in between. I felt somewhat like dropped out of time, everything around me appeared like a movie, like as I would stand right in front of the large movie screen of the cinema.

I was very absent this night, but I think the audience not realized it - be professional!

We drove from Columbia to St. Louis in the morning, a short travel, somewhat more than a hundred miles, but we needed some time anyway, till we reached our aim, our hotel, till we reached Old North St. Louis.

We would be two days in the city, the last city of this part of the tour, back at Mississippi River, still at Missouri River. We would see not much of the city, two press appointments, two shows and at Sunday, the day without a show thereafter, we would fly to New York. We had decided to return to St. Louis, to drive to Evansville at Monday - we wanted to drive the whole distance of the tour by ourselves. Yes, Canada, but that had been something different.

Two times some hours, what should one do in such a city? Of course there was the world famous zoo, the wonderful botanical garden, the wonderful parks, had we to talk about music, about jazz even, about culture as such?

Should we talk about a city that has lost a major part of its inhabitants during the last decades? The city that was number one in the statistic of murder and nonnegligent manslaughter? Nearly fifty percent of the inhabitants were black - the white people lived in the outskirts and suburban areas already long ago. Okay, not the white inhabitants which were poor, like in our part of the city.

Always this fucking feeling, the Mississippi to your right, the Missouri to your left, where would I live? White and a good income? The merging water, it would meet the ocean, would become one with it. I envied the water, dreamt about that it would take me away with it - we had a press appointment at the "St. Louis Post-Dispatch" in the late afternoon, the only daily newspaper in the city of St. Louis.

"You have a population of bald eagles in this area as far as I know?"

"Yes, a winter population."

"Not for much longer if this fucking administration will be allowed to destroy our nation any longer."

"I think that you will have no problems in St. Louis to find people who will agree with you."

"I only can hope that the farmers here more and more will see, how much this administration harms them, in which way they fool them, that this administration is in fact absolutely not interested in them - apart from their votes in 2020."

"You're blaming them for their voting behavior in 2016?"

"It was even hard for me as a Dem to vote for Hillary Clinton, but.....it's this democratic arrogance, and I fear I see this stupidity now again."

"The discussions about Biden, Warren and Sanders?"

"Yes, the Dems have still nearly a year time - the National Convention is in July 2020! We have seen only two debates so far? Now they are starting to cry because the candidates of the "middle" will have no chance? That Hickenlooper has resigned? At no moment he had even the slightest chance to become the nominee! If the Dems will not fight against this disgraceful president united, forget their arrogance, starting to be interested in the people, then we will have a "smiling third" in the end. And then this country, as it still is, will be no longer."

The show was good, maybe it was even a very good show. But not for the first time I doubted about my doing.

It was a long evening, or better a long night - or better to say short night? Whatever, it was not that easy to stand up this morning, but we would have a press appointment later, at KMOV, a local TV station, and the show in the evening. So, if would like to see at least somewhat more of the city, then now or never.

We decided to spent as much time as possible at Forest Park, and by far not only because of the zoo. So much interesting places one could find in this large park - you could spent days in it without thinking one second about, what doing next. And therefore it was hopeless for us, with this few hours we had, but we wanted to have at least some short impressions about as much of the landmarks in this wonderful park as possible. But as always, by far too fast our time was over and we had to leave.

"It's a pity that we have to leave."

"Yes, the zoo alone - wonderful that the zoo is for free!"

"And you have a place for your next wedding - number three or four? I've lost the track!"

"Still the first would be my favorite. Well, number two was also fantastic. I never thought about marriage."

"Never?"

"Never so far."

After a short stop at our hotel we reached KMOV.

"Hello Peter, it's nice that you're here with us today."

"Thanks for having me."

"Greetings from Barbara, she hopes to see you soon again."

"Well, thanks. I'm not aware of that we would have an appointment? Whatever, greet her also from my side, if you see or talk with her the next time. It's always a pleasure to be a guest at a CBS affiliated TV station."

"This evening the second show in our city. I've heard that the last one yesterday was fantastic - no footage so far in social media?"

"At least not from us, we hadn't time so far. As you maybe know, it's okay for me when the audience takes pictures or makes videos."

"The show was in Old North St. Louis, also your hotel in in this neighborhood?"

"Yes, no long distances then."

"I've heard that you're preferring small simple hotels or motels? Tomorrow you will be a guest of John Oliver in New York?"

"Yes, we will fly Sunday morning to New York and will return Monday morning to St. Louis. You are asking about the hotel?"

"It's that you have the image that you're a person not interested in luxury, that you like it very common? Simple hotels, normal restaurants - like everybody else?"

"Well, I'm not that superstar! Yes, the tour is sold out, but we have also many expenses. Not that I say with this, that we don't have a surplus, but I'm still no millionaire!"

"I've only heard that they have offered you a first class flight and an international top hotel in New York and you declined?"

"Wow, CBS knows everything! First, I don't like this large hotels. I like this small hotels or motels, with pleasure a guesthouse. Then it's a two and a half hour flight - I need a seat, that's all."

"Old North St. Louis? Why not another quarter?"

"We had our first show there."

"And tonight in Compton Heights?"

"Yes, and Sunday I will be in New York. By the way, our hotel is in 57th Street - a nice one."

"Near the CBS Broadcast Center in Hell's Kitchen I guess?"

"Yes, only a few blocks away. I think it's good in New York to have short ways."

"Definitively. Your second time in New York - your impressions about St. Louis? You have visited the Gateway Arch?"

"No, the wrong metaphor."

"Correct me if I'm wrong, I was not there yesterday, I will be in the audience tonight. But a friend of mine was and he told me that you talked a lot about the next election. He said that the Dems should make you to their campaign manager?"

"Everybody knows, at least could know, that I'm no Republican. But even if I would be one, this president has to become history. I've seen a group of conservative women in TV, they will elect this disgusting man again - in any case! Sorry, but this is a betrayal of every republican value. This shows how far the GOP and the Republicans have decayed - this reminds of the darkest moments in human history. Everybody who wants to live in an America with at least some values, has to have to take position - this administration has to go!"

"Tonight, what does the audience can expect tonight?"

"Still some hours till the beginning. I act spontaneously - in this country you have no idea at the moment, what all can happen in a few hours."

Again a good show - I think. Now the next part was history, now we would heading southwards.....

We departed from Saint Louis Lambert International Airport at 8:05am and arrived at LaGuardia Airport in New York at 11:30am, no big thing so far. We had to drive some miles till Manhattan, till Hell's Kitchen - a car awaited us at the airport.

"How long does we will need?"

"No rush hour now, we can make it under an hour."

"Can?"

"Well, that's New York?"

"How long would the subway need?"

"An hour."

"Not faster.....?"

"No, and this is New York. Sure that you would like it, to use the subway?"

"Not our first time in New York, would be not our first time of using the subway."

We took a place in the air conditioned SUV and leaned back. Well, maybe it was the best choice in this case. At least it was the most easy one for us. We needed not much longer than an hour till we reached the hotel.

"Not 10 o'clock? We would have still some time, till we have to leave for the show?"

"Central Park is around the corner?"

Well, "around the corner" in New York - this was not my city! The architecture was not mine, the hecticness was not mine, tomorrow we would back in St. Louis, this still so French city, and would continue with the tour. We walked around in Victorian Gardens Amusement Park and alongside The Pond.

"The zoo is around the corner?"

"Yeah, but we have not that much time left. We have to drive to the show soon - I hate all this preparations for this TV appearances."

We left, preparations in the hotel, a driver waited already, the preparations in forefront of the show, make-up room, nice talk with John Oliver - not my world! I liked it to grab the mic, to enter the stage, starting to talk, waiting for the resonance of the audience - this was shit! No, not this show was shit, John Oliver and his colleagues were very important, but this was not my world. Some nice talking, of course about the idiot, that it would be. And of course this TV appearance would be not bad for me - be professional.

Always this world of show has confused me: Hey Peter, nice to have you here again - when you were here the last time? Handshakes, hugging, cool poses for the audience - this was America, everything had to be a good show, nothing else was interesting. Could it be, that we had deserved this fucking president?

The show was good, we talked about the idiot, about gun laws, about immigrants, about a totally sold out tour, about a possible TV show. I would have new "fans" now, maybe the next time in the city the Broadway - should I say, that I was not interested in this fucking Broadway?

After the show we had a dinner with John Oliver, later a drink in a bar with him. As so often, this people were so much above me! Every day, every week a show in TV, millions looked at you - every time some only waited, that you would say or do something, that they could destroy you. In a way they appeared to me like soldiers at the front line - you had to pay respect to them. And yet, this was not my world!

Late in night we sat together in the hotel, neither of us could find sleep - maybe later in the plane?

"I'm not sure about the show for CBS?"

"Then you would become an absolute star once for all, without any doubts."

"Dave Chappelle or Eddie Murphy, to name only this two? Yeah, their shows and movies? But you know? How fucking cool it would had been to see them onstage before that? At the time, when they were only fucking stand-up comedians in fucking clubs?"

"You have not to sign the contract with CBS."

"No, also others are interested in."

Jack

"The next leg of your tour is over"

"Yes, we're on the airport. We're waiting for our flight back till St. Louis."

"Have seen John Oliver yesterday - you were good."

"Yeah, thanks. You're knowing that such TV appearances are not really mine."

"I know. But it's good that you're not trying to pretend, that you would be someone else. The audience feels, that you're yourself."

"But I feel not, as I would be myself in such situations. I dislike it, to talk about myself. I say

onstage what I have to say."

"And in your videos."

"Yeah, the videos. In the last time I've made some more. A bit like a diary now. Maybe as a very old man I will watch them again - I think I will laugh about them then, laugh about me."

"But I guess it will be a mild smiling, a smile full of tenderness - CBS?"

"Do I have a choice? You know, would they allow me to say the same as I say onstage? Of course not! But then it would be a lie, I would be a liar then, a liar like the man in office. You have to name him as that, what he is. Everything else would be a lie!"

"You know that not everybody likes this. Some of your statements get highly discussed."

"I hope so, discussions are that what we need the most at the moment - I think that this is still also your attitude."

"Sure, and I look forward to the time when you're back again. But now the South first."

"Well, it's more the West Coast for the beginning - Florida!"

"Greetings to the old ladies with their little doggies!"

Southeast - South Atlantic

Towards The South

Back in St. Louis, better on our way from St. Louis to Evansville, Evansville in Indiana. Evansville, north of Ohio River and therefore in Indiana and not in Kentucky, was the next city of our way towards West Virginia, towards the coast, southwards.

It was no real long trip from St. Louis till Evansville, always Interstate 64, but after New York nevertheless a tough ride. We both had slept somewhat in the plane - a two hours forty minutes flight? Back in St. Louis, back in our hotel we both had enjoyed it, a long time under a hot shower. We had departed at 6:05am in New York and had arrived at 7:45am in St. Louis - roughly an hour till the hotel, half an hour under the shower, another hour and a half in the bed, fast breakfast, road - in the evening we would have the show.

We arrived in Evansville short after 4pm - we had needed much longer, as you normally would need. We had a stopover in Mount Vernon, this was all what I could tell about this city. Fortunately no press appointment, we tried to find some sleep till we would have to prepare for the show. Tomorrow it would be a short drive till Bowling Green, but yesterday and today were hard days.

After we had slept somewhat we felt better, especially after a relaxed and light dinner. It was a shame that we would have no time for Evansville - only to name Mesker Park Zoo and Botanic Garden, fantastic architecture - the libraries - or the cultural live.

"We will miss the Germania Männerchor Volksfest in the historic Germania Männerchor building on the city's west side, it takes place every August!"

"Well.....oh, the festival includes also food and drinking. Not only music, but also dancing and many residents with German ancestry will wear historic German attire?"

"Unfortunately we have a show....."

Till the show I was fit again, talked about the president's economical skills - our economy runs fantastic, but the Fed has to act - and much more. I was very satisfied with the show - long discussions with the audience till way after midnight!

Only somewhat over a hundred miles, the distance between Evansville and Bowling Green, the place of the legendary Bowling Green massacre. A city with somewhat under seventy thousand

inhabitants - the third most-populous city in Kentucky. As we arrived, it was early afternoon, enough time to do something till the show in the evening.

"What shall we do till the show?"

"The National Corvette Museum?"

"That's a joke - or?"

"The early ones are looking not that bad?"

"Yeah, in the 60s maybe."

We spent some time therewith to look at cars, but also to be at Limestone Lake, Hudson Grove Park and Barren River.

"And, was a nice afternoon?"

"Yeah, some say that I will become famous?"

"You're famous."

"I mean really famous and fucking rich!"

"And then?"

"Maybe I should collect Corvette cars then?"

"Two or three from the beautiful ones would be enough for me."

"Have I said something about, that I would buy you.....?"

"More or less....."

I felt relaxed, a somewhat strange feeling considering all the things that happened around me. I had some fun in saying provocative things - some liked it, some not. I liked it!

From Evansville till Louisville, a very short trip. But nevertheless we stood up early, even after the long conversations the last night, to start early, after a fine breakfast, to arrive early in Louisville, to have time for the city before we would have a press appointment at "The Courier-Journal", the newspaper with the highest circulation in Kentucky - and of course the show in the evening.

"I really look forward to Louisville. I often have the feeling that we should come back again one time, but this time I've the feeling we simply should stay."

"Yes, this is a city, so much in it. A strong African American community, a so rich independent culture - have no idea what I should enumerate!"

"Gus Van Sant is a son of the city. "Drugstore Cowboy" and "My Private Idaho" were two movies which were very important for me. Not that I will say that I understood them really, but such movies showed me that there is more. More in art, more in life."

"And our venue for the two shows?"

"Yes I'm very proud of, to perform at the Muhammad Ali Center. No, also him I not understood, but I think that this was not the thing. The people for whom he fought understood him, that was more important. What would be, would he be still alive, still the "trash-talking" man, what would he say about our country today. Whatever, I'm sure that he would find very distinct words to describe the situation."

"Some call him the first rapper."

"I was not aware about this side of him, but this only illustrates my lack of knowledge about so many things."

"We're soon in the city. Something that we should do in any case?"

"The Belle of Louisville, I would like it, to see the Belle of Louisville at first."

We were around the river, Ohio River, sometimes in Kentucky, sometimes in Indiana, and saw the steamboats rolling. Ladies in wonderful dresses and gentleman in stiff garments, was Mark Twain around? Yeah, this nice old time, as the nation prospered, after the destroying of the native culture, on the backs of the slaves. The Artificial Nigger grins at you, but don't panic, you're the white guy! We had our appointment.

"This time is so absurd! Can you imagine, if we would have a democratic president and he would act in such a way? Can you imagine how the Republicans would act then? But we're accepting this more and more, we're used to it more and more - were is the outcry of our politicians, were is the outcry of the media, were is the outcry of the people? It's over, this man has not deserved it, to be treated with respect! On the contrary, to treat this man with respect, would be to become one of his partners in crime, the crime of destroying our nation."

"But our economy is very stable."

"Under President Obama we had better numbers, his numbers are weaker than the years before - maybe you should tell this your readers?"

"But our president has a very good approval rates."

"I'm not sure which polls you're knowing, but all - all! - polls are devastating for him, especially those from Fox News?"

"He has a very strong approval in states like Kentucky."

"Oh, I'm sure that he will win Kentucky. But in the end this will be of no importance. This is our electoral system. It's as unimportant as that the Dems will win California. The Dems have only to win back a few swing states, states who have voted for Barack Obama twice, maybe Florida? Who will be interested in, in the end, what the people in Kentucky or Missouri are thinking? Maybe you should write about this, and that popular vote is no evil thing?"

"Our president is interested in the Kentucky people."

"Lie to yourself - that's why farmers have no problems at the moment, no steel worker loses his job at the moment, no coal miner as well. Hey, they plan further tax cuts for the richest - that will help Kentucky!"

"But Clinton was interested in the Kentucky people?"

"Absolutely not, at least not as long as they were not at Wall Street. But maybe this time there are better candidates on the side of the Democrats?"

"You mean those socialists and communists?"

"As I said, in the end nobody will be interested in the opinion of the people of Kentucky. Maybe we should change the system?"

"And? We still have some time till the show?"

"The bars are already open."

"An Old Fashioned?"

"Of course! In this city?"

"Pendennis Club?"

"I don't think that the would accept us! And even if, I thought more about a bar in the Portland area or so?"

"Good idea!"

Louisville - Jefferson County - beside Lexington - Fayette County - the only blue spot in Kentucky. Was I interested in the opinion of the people here? A four hours show!

Our second day in Louisville, maybe boring for someone else, but not for me, the Louisville Zoo. Not the largest zoo, but a very beautiful one. And as always it was wonderful to spent time in it, also in the Louisville Nature Center around the corner. It was beautiful being among the animals, looking at the carousel, to be among the trees. Later we would have an appointment at WLKY, again a CBS affiliated TV station, and of course the show in the evening.

"The snow leopards were very impressing, and now to walk around in this forest in-midst the city."

"It's hot for this time of the year. Yesterday it was very cloudy."

"Summer comes to it's end now, more and more."

"I'm happy the we will be not in the desert areas in summer. Where will we be next summer?"

"At home maybe?"

"Maybe?"

Our appointment waited.

"I think that he's got nuts once for all now! First he dissed Jewish Americans, now he's the chosen one! Someone has to stop this man, the GOP has to get the job done! It's unbelievable, when I meet a foreign person, then I'm totally ashamed about this situation. What does this man has to do, that the normal conservative voter draws consequences?"

"Shooting someone to death? Obviously that would not help either, I fear."

"Only to think about, that the democrats would screw this up for a second time - I only hope that I will see him one day yammering because he's kicked out of office after the first term."

"You're knowing what would happen then!"

"I hope that courts would have a lot to do then!"

The show was long and intense. Why all this was possible, who should have a look into the mirror?

It was a very short trip today, Louisville to Lexington, not much more than an hour to drive. Therefore we made a stopover in Frankfort.

Despite the fact that Frankfort was, with its somewhat over twenty-five thousand inhabitants, only the fourteenth most populous city in Kentucky, it was the capital of the state. We spent some time in this green city, visited the capital building, walked around downtown - the nice houses, the pedestrian area, shops, café and restaurants, alongside Kentucky River and were at Frankfort Cemetery at the end. Then we hit the road again. We arrived in Lexington at around two o'clock. We would have no press appointment, only the show in the evening and tomorrow would be day without a show.

"Now we're in the horseman's heaven finally."

"Yeah, "Horse Capital of the World"? That's really a nice name for this city."

"Especially.....there are some cities in Europe like Vienna? In France or Italy? But hey, we're Americans, everything is the best and greatest in our country!"

"But you have to confess that Kentucky and horses?"

"You're sad about it, that we not could not visit the Kentucky Derby?"

"Maybe I would have won a fucking lot of money!"

"Yeah, I think that also Lexington should have a race track - or?"

"Let's see.....Keenland, at least one. Interested?"

"No, not really. Never was interested in horses. But they are beautiful creatures, liked the heavy horses all the time more - but, you're the girl?"

"Yes, all the girls love horses, ballet and violins or pianos - hey, you're a macho now?"

"Not really, or? Then I should settle my horse to ride westwards?"

We spent a very nice time in Lexington till the show. It was Friday, the weekend would begin and maybe two days - after an unbelievable week - with not every day the daily presidential shit - oh, G7 this weekend! It began to get really stressful, this presidential garbage every day. But the most stupid would be, to let him doing, without opposing him!

Again a show with many discussions thereafter. A local newspaper had published an article that criticized me very hefty - how much sense it made, to perform in front of democratic voters, in front of fanatic supporters of the president? Would I have any impact? Tomorrow we would have no show.

Today we had no show - breakfast, and then we would say goodbye to Lexington. The aim of our, somewhat longer, today's travel would be Charleston, from Kentucky to West Virginia, finally to the aim of this part of the tour, the South Atlantic region. But we planned to have a stopover in Huntington.

We left the Great Plains more and more now, the landscape became more and more hillier, many woods around us. We enjoyed the ride. A mild day, some clouds, blue sky, sunny summer sun's rays. A voice sang about the last white days of summer, about the sadness of summer, that they could not stay - but not today. We reached Huntington.

Huntington at Ohio River, at the border of Kentucky, West Virginia and Ohio. With its nearly fifty thousand inhabitants the second most populous cities in West Virginia, after Charleston. A city with wonderful parks, a stable economy, nearly ninety percent of the inhabitants were white, nearly twenty-five percent lived under the poverty line, with (strong) increasing crime rates. We had lunch, a very tasty lunch.

"Would you like it, to live in this city?"

"Well, it's with any doubts a nice city, the location is very interesting, the landscape is beautiful. Yes, I think so. But as so often, mixed emotions."

"The crime rates?"

"Maybe you should tell the tourists that a city like St. Louis or New Orleans has - by far - a much higher murder rate than Chicago or Los Angeles? We're knowing this American cities, it depends always in which part you're living. The same here. It can be nice in this city, sitting in a restaurant, looking at the river, looking at Ohio, enjoying your good lunch. But this has not to be in this way, in this city, in every city."

"Should we hit the road again?"

"Maybe better. "

And the voice sang about the moon and changes, about strawberries and a white mustang, about beaches and so much more, as we reached Charleston in the late afternoon, the capital of West Virginia. The weather had changed, very cloudy now, it started to rain.

"Not so nice, to spend time in the city?"

"No, not really. Why not staying in the hotel? Let us watch TV - but no news channel!"

"No, no news. Maybe it will be better, somewhat later? We have a press appointment tomorrow, but we're in the city already. We will have some time tomorrow, to explore the city somewhat."

"The weather?"

"Should be better. We would have also at Monday some time to stay in the city, if we like it to do so?"

"Let us stay in the hotel."

The weather not got better.

We spent time outside the city, at Elk River, at Coonskin Park, enjoyed it to walk through the woods on natural trails. Later we would have an appointment at WCHS-TV, a local ABC affiliated TV station, and of course the show in the evening. But at the moment we enjoyed it, to be in nature, hearing the water, feeling the trees's shade.

We discover a ford in the river, many stones there. I liked it as young boy to play at such places, for hours with a friend. We put out our shoes and crossed the river.

"And now, back again?"

"We could walk around on this side of the river for some time?"

"But we have to cross the river again - our car is on the other side?"

"I would like it now, to walk around in the water and swim in the river."

"Why not?"

"No swimsuit?"

"Well,....."

"I fear this is not California and not the 70s?"

"Let us head back, we have an appointment."

We left the nice place, back to city.

"I feel exhausted now, really exhausted. All the time this presidential shit - now he's in France? Maybe they are interested in to buy him?"

"I fear that they wouldn't take him for free."

"Yeah, nobody wants him, but we have elected him. There's this theory that the Republicans are sure about, that he will lose the 2020 elections. That this would be their plan, to get rid of him, to renew the GOP then. But this would be a cool plan - like Hillary in 2016! On the other hand would this be a perfect illustration of the cowardice of the GOP. Let the others do the dirty job - are this the guys, who are telling you always, how proud they are in our soldiers? Yeah, it's easy to be proud, when others fight for you!"

"Do you think that this GOP will be able to admit only one time, that this president is unacceptable?"

"No, they are hoping that the Dems will do the job, and that they can start afterwards to chatter about, how hard this time for them was. And the fuck is? We all have to hope that the Dems will do the job for them!"

"Biden, Warren or Sanders - do you see another candidate who will have chances?"

"Not in the moment. I can understand - in a way - the complains from other candidates about the procedures, but then you have to have the guts to start with changes. Always this complains about the electoral college, about that donations are everything - but then changing this? This would lead to a candidate like Sanders, Warren maybe, Biden definitively not."

"Do you think that Sanders could bring real change?"

"Sanders is Sanders, he would be president. We still have a congress for instance and checks and balances."

"Assumed that Sanders would have the majority in both houses?"

"Then we still would have a conservative dominated Supreme Court for instance."

"Also concerning the Supreme Court some candidates presented new ideas?"

"Yes, ideas and plans - Dems are very good in this! Obama had both houses at the beginning - and? Dems are very good therein to block themselves. And still the Supreme Court? We have to talk about the reality and not about nice ideas."

"Would you have a solution?"

"The civil rights movement? Why they changed things? Because they waited till Washington would do something? Or was it, because they went out, showed presence on the streets, that they raised their voices, not stepped back as the establishment tried to silence them? We need the Americans on the streets, otherwise nothing, at least nothing substantial, will change. Gun laws - it's a joke, or? Climate change - it's a joke, or? It's a joke what our government is doing - the American people have to show, that they are demanding for real changes! And would we have at this moment a president in office, who has ideas and visions, the guts to face the NRA for example, then real chances can happen."

We had thought about our plans for today, no press appointment, no show, but a longer drive to Roanoke, Virginia. We would have a show there tomorrow, but also no press appointment. So we decided not to take the most direct way to Roanoke, but that we should enjoy the landscape as much as possible.

The city of Roanoke was connected with the Blue Ridge Mountains, and it would had been a shame not to visit this mountain area. Therefore we decided not to try to reach Roanoke as fast as possible. On the contrary, we would detouring somewhat, to spent more time driving through the mountains.

But first we stood up early, had a somewhat longer breakfast and started with the tour. Our first leg of the tour was from Charleston to Lewisburg, always Interstate 64, still in West Virginia, somewhat over a hundred miles. Lewisville lay at foot of the mountains, from now on we would enjoy the mountain scenery.

"Only a few days ago we were deep in the Great Plains, now we're here at the foot of the mountains."

"Does you like this scenery more?"

"Spontaneously - yes, definitively yes! But then I have to say that also the Great Plains have their own beauty - I hardly can tell."

"Not that long and we will be at the ocean again."

"Come on, that's unfair now! Nothing can match with the ocean, with a large water surface till the horizon - at least for me. But also this is a wonderful scenery."

From Lewisburg it was only a short drive till our first aim for today, Covington in the middle of the mountains, now we were in Virginia. Covington, a city with nearly six thousand inhabitants, a decreasing number. Covington, a nice little town surrounded by beautiful mountains - not a place for tourism? We walked around in the city, looked at the shop windows and decided for a restaurant, to have an early lunch - or a second breakfast?

"Again one of this small cities among the mountains - reminds me of the beginning of the tour."

"Again a place one could imagine to live in?"

"Every year less inhabitants, such cities have a major problem. Often they have one or two major employers. It's always a disaster for such cities if this employer - or one of them - closes. It's one thing to stay in such a city for a certain time, it would be another to live in this city, say as a retired person. But the point is, how is it to work in such a city, to live your daily life in such a city. But on the other hand, in one of this very large cities, with all the traffic, with all the hecticness? I've the feeling that Covington would be not the worst place to live in."

From Covington on it would had been very easy to reach Roanoke - at the maximum an one hour ride. But we had other plans. Up to the George Washington and Jefferson National Forest, down to Interstate 77 we drove. We drove along the valleys, stopped whenever it came us into mind, walked around, up and down, enjoyed the landscape as intense as possible. We reached Roanoke at 6pm.

"Wow, I'm very sweaty now."

"I also, but we still have enough time."

"This was a very wonderful day. It's long ago that we were this active!"

"That's true - and the day is not over now."

We both had a long shower, dressed up carefully, and looked forward to the coming.

"It's cool that we got tickets."

"Yes. As far as I know it, has the Roanoke Youth Symphony Orchestra a very good reputation."

It became the very impressive finish of a very impressive day.

We began our day as usual, we stood up not too late and had a nice breakfast. Roanoke? The Mill Mountain area of course. The star, the discovery center, the wildflower garden, the zoo and of course the park as such - one could spent much more than some hours in this area! But unfortunately we had only some hours, but we tried to make the best out of it. We started with the star - nicer than the fucking boring Hollywood sign - walked around a bit, then the Mill Mountain Wildflower Garden. It was absolutely beautiful to walk around here, looking at all this different flowers and plants - some butterflies delighted us as well. A nice work of the Mill Mountain Garden Club! Then the Mill Mountain Discovery Center was our next aim. In fact one building, the place provided a lot of information about flora and fauna.

"Maybe it would had been better to start with this place?"

"Well, all the different places here form one larger very interesting place, where you can learn a lot about plant and animals, where you can see them also. I think in the end it's not so important where

you start. But I think it will be good to schedule enough time to see all the places - or you stay for longer and you have the opportunity to come more than once."

We continued with the zoo, one of this smaller, but nonetheless very beautiful, zoos. Especially for smaller children a very nice zoo, where they could watch all the animals and not only some of them.

"Look at that, that would be something for us!"

"Breakfast with the animals - yes, that sounds really nice. All these zoos have fantastic ideas, especially for the young. Unfortunately only on the third Sunday of the month."

"Yes, always our problem. You could do so many interesting things at all these places, all these cities, if you would have more time. At least if your personal circumstances of life are allowing you to do so."

We decided to leave the mountain area, the park. Still some time till the show, still an aim I would like to visit, the Virginia Museum of Transportation. Of course, not enough time - the rail collection alone! Not to talk about the cars, the planes, even a small exhibition with ship models.

"You're not that technique freak, or have I overlooked this so far?"

"Not the first time, that we're in such a museum?"

"No, but it was very important for you to spend at least some time here?"

"I like to look at them. No, the technical aspects are not that important for me. Look at these locomotives, these cars and planes. Someone has built them, someone has used them, aren't they simply beautiful?"

"Beautiful and powerful. Such a huge locomotive? These planes, some of them are not looking very trustworthy. Look at this one. An engine, some metal sheets, some rivets, that's more or less all - or?"

"Yes, and nonetheless such a plane marks a moment in the history of aviation. But I agree with you, used to fly with these modern passenger airplanes - I'm not sure if I would be brave enough to fly with all these planes."

A good show in Roanoke, Virginia. Virginia, the more you drove to the shore, the bluer the state became. Obama won Virginia, Clinton lost the state - 2020?

A very short trip today, alongside the Blue Ridge Mountains, from Roanoke to Lynchburg. Therefore we had decided to make a detour - no press appointment, only the show in the evening - to spend some time at Smith Mountain Lake. A fantastic scenery with an endless number of bays - looked like a fractal, a Mandelbrot set maybe - or a Julia set? Anyway, it was a fantastic lake, a fantastic area, and it was not possible for us to explore even a small part of it. But what we saw was awesome, a word I'm very seldom using.

We sat on a bench and looked at the water, the nice leaf trees around us. Children played not far away on a playground, a light breeze on a sunny day - it was still morning, we both closed our eyes.

We reached Lynchburg at later afternoon, we had "wasted" a lot of time, not so much time left for Lynchburg. The city at James River with its seven hills like Rome - and San Francisco of course. Many parks and green areas, many nature around this economically strong city, with a very strong African American population, low unemployment rates, low costs of living. Nevertheless, sixteen percent lived under the poverty line, twenty-five percent of the children - a strong increasing population. Lynchburg and eugenics.....

We spent our time at Old City Cemetery, contemplated the antique roses, but not forgot the museums.

"Unfortunately the peak of the blooming is over, but still many wonderful and impressive flowers can be seen."

"It's interesting to see these old varieties of roses. Some are more than four hundred years old!"

"I think that I've read something about a rose bush in Germany, from which is said, that the bush is

a thousand years old."

"Wow, a thousand years ago? That's Europe, also we could think in such a way, but we like it to say, that "our" history began in the early 17th century."

"Yeah, it's the question about how you define "American" history. And today, how you define who an "American" citizen is. And who should become an "American" citizen in the future."

A good show, a show about important topics. Very important today!

Again also a very short drive today, alongside the mountains, not a hundred miles. But today no detour, we were interested in to arrive in Charlottesville early - not only for one reason.

We would have an press appointment at "The Daily Progress" the main local newspaper and of course the show in the evening. After the breakfast we needed roughly one and a half hour to reach our aim.

"Now we're in Charlottesville."

"Yes, a city with a long and diverse history. The time of Jefferson and all the tracks of him in the city. The time of racial segregation, what happened here not long ago."

"And what a difference. A few days ago, we were in cities where two third voted for the sitting president, now we have reached the area and the cities, where two third voted for Clinton in 2016."

"And not only in 2016. Charlottesville is blue since decades, and it's getting bluer with every term. Clinton got more votes than Obama in Charlottesville! That not happened in many places."

"And yet - or maybe because of this? - became Charlottesville the place of this cowardly murder by a white supremacist. Look at Virginia, at the border to Kentucky deep red, towards the ocean it gets more and more blue. And even when it looks not so, at the first moment looking at a map of the Virginia election results in 2016, Clinton won Virginia. She even performed better than Obama in this state, won the state with a bigger lead."

We had to visit the historic landmarks of Charlottesville, had to visit the corner Water Street and 4th Street.

"Nice to have you here, Peter."

"Thanks for having me, Sandra."

"You had some time to explore Charlottesville?"

"Yes, we arrived early in Charlottesville. It's a very interesting city, you feel it everywhere that it's a young city, the university of course, but not only the university. A lot of art in this city, a lot of culture - I mean, this is a city with no fifty thousand inhabitants? But also a city that had to undergo its dark moments. But what moves me all the times is, now again in El Paso and Dayton, and even today with this fucking racist in office, that the people who are living in this cities are standing together in such wonderful ways."

"Otherwise you would have to give up - and that's no alternative!"

"Yes, nevertheless it's impressing and awe-inspiring to see this. And what's the message that the people should see? Weapons are no solution, weapons are always the cause of problems. Standing together and to extend others your hand, that's a solution."

"No easy in our time - what do you think about Joe Walsh?"

"A very good musicians - I mean, The Eagles?"

"You know whom I meant."

"Of course. Shall we believe him? At least he speaks out interesting things - he opposes the racist in office by saying that he's no longer a racist? I think we have to see and wait, how it will develop. Interesting for me is, that we see the idiot's problems with Fox, more and more opposition within the GOP? But it's too early, still he's not endangered among the conservative voters. But it's better than nothing and things can develop very fast."

"Your biggest concerns at the moment?"

"The G7 was, as always, a place of nice words, but not more. And then the hurricane."

"We're far away here in Virginia?"

"Yes, but soon I will be there. So much you had to say. The difference between the situation that the hurricane would hit Puerto Rico and now, that the hurricane will hit Florida. But Puerto Rico is Puerto Rico - and Florida? Mar-a-Lago, we have to suffer with our president! It's okay that Puerto Rico has not interested him, that he now is very interested in the people of Florida - Florida was a major element in his success in 2016? And the media always plays his game, that maybe is the saddest part of it!"

A home game at the university - tomorrow Richmond!

Richmond, nearly at the coast again - tomorrow! A short distance, a short drive from Charlottesville, another of this historic American cities, the capital of the state, over two hundred and twenty thousand inhabitants. But yet there were some facts, maybe puzzling for such an old city in this region. Slightly over fifty percent of the inhabitants were Black or African Americans, not that often in this region. The crime rates were very low, even if they rose somewhat in the last years, as in many (larger) American cities. Twenty-five percent lived under the poverty line, nearly forty percent of the children - Richmond, a economically very strong city. As always. Crime, poverty.....such aspects concentrated on some areas of the city - as always.

Richmond, as one of the oldest cities in the States, provided a huge amount of historic landmarks, many monuments which looked in different directions, many museums, many reminders of the civil war. A city full of music, visual art, literature, theaters, ballet, symphonic music, opera - not even able to name it all. Was it still necessary to name place like the Japanese Garden at Maymont, of course the Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden or Byrd Park - Belle Isle or Brown's Island? The Carpenter Theater would be the place for us tonight.

We stayed mainly in the area of Manchester and Church Hill, talked with people, but as always a doubtful matter. At least I felt not really good in doing so. Tomorrow I would be in another city, soon in another state, soon at another coast again. But they would still live in this city - we walked alongside James River.

This was even more a home play as yesterday! Fifteen percent of this city's inhabitants had voted for the man in office, eighty percent for Clinton!

The short jump from Richmond till Norfolk, now finally at the ocean again. A city in many reasons very identical with Charlottesville and Richmond, but then so different - a naval city. We would have a press appointment later, and of course the show in the evening. But we would have no show tomorrow, and again no large distance to drive. This would give us tomorrow time for the city as such. Today the harbor, the coast, the ocean, was our only aim.

"The city has a fascinating shape, it's interspersed by water. And then you have the ocean - what a city!"

"You enjoyed the tour?"

"They said, that it's the world's largest naval station - well, impressive ships."

"But it would be better we would not need them."

"Yeah, that would be much better - the beach?"

"Yeah."

We spent the rest of our time till the press appointment at "The Virginian-Pilot", Virginia's largest daily newspaper, at the beach. It was a not so hot day, but that was okay.

"It's wonderful to be here. The breeze, the smell, the wind - the water!"

"And a hurricane on its way."

"Not here."

"But we will head down south in its direction. Also they are not sure about the path of the hurricane. It can become difficult for us in the next days as well."

"I don't think that we're in danger, but it's obvious that we will be in places right after the hurricane was there."

"That at least."

"You know what we should do tomorrow, early in the morning?"

"No?"

"Driving over the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel."

"You wanna visit the other side of the bay? Looks also very impressive."

"No, just across the bridge - then back again."

"A bit like the Keys."

"Yes, and we will have no time for the Keys."

I listen to the sound of the waves, it's like someone would hold me in her arms and would comfort me, would bestow me liberty.

"No impact in Puerto Rico this time."

"No. But that would had devastating, especially with a president who don't gives a damn shit on the people of Puerto Rico. He's now very concerned about Florida, this are more the people our president likes."

"Some say that the hurricane maybe will move on northwards?"

"We will see. We have no hurricanes at the western coast."

"You've said that you've visited the naval base, the USS Maryland as well?"

"No, at least not till now. I've always mixed emotions, while doing such things."

"Why?"

"Well, ISIS for example. You cannot talk with them, no diplomacy. But what when war creates the next problems? I mean, we will draw back maybe, but this whole region is still very unstable. The tries of us Americans to solve problems with wars were not very successful after WWII."

"Obviously many inhabitants in this city are directly or indirectly attached to the military. Does military, wars and such topics will be a part of tonight's show?"

"At least I will talk about, that I had a tour at the base today. At the beginning I always try to get a feeling about, what topics are interesting for the audience, I'm interested in their reactions. I like it to talk about topics who are up to date, we have a lot of them! But then also about topics connected to the city in which I am. Say it in that way: To make a joke about a republican in this city? Make the same joke at the border to Kentucky? In this city nearly forty-five percent of the inhabitants are African Americans - talking about Hispanics, but not about black people in this city? In Los Angeles nearly fifty percent of the inhabitants are Latinos, African Americans and Asian Americans add up to another twenty-two percent - why one should be interested in this white European based minority in Los Angeles?"

"That's a good question."

I talked about the military and about wars. I talked about, that I would become crazy in a war zone, that I would not be able to handle, to bare such a situation. The idea to kill someone, the idea that the person next to me gets killed - to get killed as a solution? But in a country, where every visit to a concert, every shopping tour, every moment on the street could end in an awful blood shed – Labor Day Weekend

We were still in Norfolk as we heard it.

"Not again, not again in Texas, not again so soon!"

"And this are only the shootings which are making it into the nation wide media?"

"Texas, the NRA told them to weaken - fuck, to weaken! - their gun laws! Already Texas has lax gun laws - or? According to the NRA this would have to be a fantastic save state!"

"But we need weapons who are allowing us to kill dozens within minutes, to kill dozens without having to reload. We're Americans!"

"Let us drive to Raleigh."

"Why, do you think it would be better in North Carolina?"

"Maybe in Florida, maybe it would be better would the hurricane wash away all this shit - Travis?"

"Rocky Mount?"

"What should we do here? Visiting the zoo or the botanical garden? In the evening some culture? Ballet or a classic concert - a sports event maybe?"

"And in Raleigh - I mean, it's no long drive drive?"

"Let us drive along the coast, as near as possible, as long as possible. Let us stop from time to time, I need the ocean now, the ocean will calm me down now - *You took my sadness out of context.....*"

We arrived in Raleigh very late at night, long after dark

We stood up not early today, in Raleigh, the capital of North Carolina. Later we would have a press appointment at "The News & Observer", the second largest newspaper in the state, and of course the show.

"What a fucking day yesterday - the ocean was beautiful."

"Tomorrow we will be at the ocean again."

"Yes, but then we will stay inland again. It seems that we will miss the hurricane."

"But at the hurricane moves very slowly now, it's still very unclear what will happen the next days."

"Apart from the Bahamas, bad for them that the hurricane takes a rest directly above them."

"Yes, the northern islands will see heavy damage - I hope that not many have to die."

"The burning ship?"

"L.A.?"

"Yes."

"Thirty-five are missing - it looks like as there is not much of hope."

"Strange or, not much talking about Odessa anymore? The world moves on and other bad things are happening."

"We would have time?"

"The William B. Umstead State Park. I think it will be possible to rent bikes."

"Really?"

"Yes, I would enjoy it now to ride around, fast, till I'm exhausted. I have to do something, too much thinking at the moment."

We were on our way for hours, tomorrow I would have sore muscles, but that would be okay. A long shower and I felt much better, better but not really good. The newspaper waited.

"The point is, that we talk about the hurricane now, about the tragedy in California, about the Brexit and the developments in London maybe. And our insane president and his efforts to destroy our democracy? It's very difficult today, to focus on the real important, or maybe we have to realize that we live in a time were so many live-threatening things are happening - the Amazon?"

"Do you think that there's a strategy behind all this - confuse the people by an overwhelming amount of news, lies, tweets, misinformation?"

"I think that we should have media, not snatching at each of the president's bones. Still the media coverage of climate change is a joke, any pop song is more important!"

"But the hurricane is a real important topic, or do you are criticizing the media coverage of the hurricane as well?"

"It's the strongest storm of this year - world wide! The damage will mount up to many millions, if not billions. And hopefully no one will die. But the Amazon still burns? Without the Amazon climate will change dramatically. Which topic is more important? The hurricane of course, Americans are affected directly - who's interested in indigenous people killed in the Amazon every day? Yes, the hurricane is important, but maybe the Amazon is more important?"

The hurricane was no topic in today's show. Knowing, that this city was at least one time struck very hard by a tornado.

From Raleigh till Wilmington, back at the ocean again. But it was not only the ocean, also the landscape, formed by Cape Fear River and Brunswick River, looked very interesting. We arrived in the city around 11am, after a relaxed drive.

"It seems, as that the hurricane will affect South, even North Carolina, in the next days. A good chance therefore that the hurricane will make landfall here."

"But we will stay in Charlotte and Atlanta at this time, far away from the coast. The northern part of the Bahamas undergoes devastating destruction now. Five dead people so far, but they fear that at the end the number will be higher."

"We have to see how near the hurricane will come the Floridian coast, we will be there the week after next."

"And next week we will be in North Carolina, at the end of the week at the ocean again."

"Do you think that we have to cancel shows? I ask not because of the money, but I'm not sure if the people are interested in hearing me, in such a situation?"

"I think that we have to wait and see, how much damage the hurricane will cause. Without any doubts the hurricane will become much weaker during the next days."

"Is it only a feeling, so much worse happened in the last weeks, in the last week?"

"I'm not sure about."

We had plenty of time till the show. We checked the news often - hurricane and Brexit, Hong Kong and a burning ship. We spent time at the ocean, a fantastic landscape, wonderful isles. On one isle they died, on one isle they were deeply moved from the beauty of the water. We visited the USS North Carolina - yes, a battleship! An enormous body of steel, a body of strange and disturbing beauty. A monument of death, a monument of mankind's insanity, a monument of a time when things seemed so easy and clear - who's the enemy, why we had to fight, for what we died. A time that seemed so long ago - only present now, in some vintage songs.

It was one of this shows, felt like I would be an automate, the world on one side, I'm on the other side, behind the Looking-Glass.

No show today, breakfast.

"What shall we do? Staying here for some more time? Leaving for Charlotte right now? It's a longer distance today, non-stop at least three and a half hours."

"The hurricane moves again now, but still far away. It seems as if the destruction in the Bahamas is devastating, we will drive inland."

"Yeah, strange, or? It looks like constructed. In the next days the hurricane will affect this area and we will be in Charlotte and Atlanta. And then, after the hurricane was there we will drive down the eastern coast till Miami. I'm not sure, how this days will be."

"The hurricane will definitively not landfall in Florida, they say now. North Carolina is in more danger now, even when the hurricane will weaken then."

"Then it seems as if the Bahamas will be most badly affected this time. Then everything is not that bad, no Americans are affected - hey, Mar-a-Largo is safe now!"

"And we? What shall we do now?"

"Let us drive, let us drive into the interior, into the safe haven, let us hear some music. Maybe some wind, some dark clouds, that will be all what we have to fear - appears really very constructed."

We left Wilmington that prepared itself for the coming, followed the street and reached Laurinburg, the county seat of Scotland County, still North Carolina, nearly sixteen thousand inhabitants.

"Wow, we needed over two hours for this part of the trip!"

"It's okay I think? We're in no hurry, we have time to cruise around slowly, slowly like the rhythm of the music we're hearing."

We found a nice place for a cup of coffee, Main Street in Laurinburg, we needed another hour for this part of the trip, then we hit the street again. It seemed, as if the street would be endlessly, as time would not move on, yet the sun approached the horizon more and more, as we not reached the city - I had a confusing dream.

"Will you continue with sleeping in the car, or do you accompany me into the hotel?"

"Charlotte?"

"Yes, we're there."

"What time?"

"4pm, we needed a long time."

"I thought that it would dawn already."

"With closed, or half-closed, eyes maybe."

We checked in, still a long time till the night, the hurricane headed towards north. No danger for Florida, some wind and rain - the two Carolinas? But we were in Charlotte now, away from the coast - it became more and more obvious how extreme the disaster in the Bahamas was, more and more dead people.

"I don't know, I'm not in the mood - the city has no zoo. A bar, some cocktails? We have not to get up early tomorrow?"

"Yeah, neither I. But nice parks and botanical gardens?"

"Not today."

We walked around downtown, looked at shop windows, ate something, and looked for a bar where we could wait until this day would end.

Charlotte, the county seat of Mecklenburg County, the most populous city in North Carolina with nearly nine hundred thousand inhabitants. A strong economy, a city with an extremely rising population, over a third of the inhabitants were African Americans, nearly fifteen percent Latinos, only ten percent lived under the poverty line.

We would have a press appointment later, The Charlotte Observer, one of the largest newspaper in North and South Carolina, with a declining circulation, nothing special for an American newspaper. And of course the show in the evening.

But now we sat at the breakfast table, very late, not that much interested in the food, more for the coffee.

"Wow, I'm getting old. Never was used to drink much alcohol, but I feel like I would have been dead drunken yesterday, like after a night without any sleep."

"Well, it helps not that much to be younger. But always looking at the news, the Internet? And you had three or four cocktails?"

"Not sure, but more than normal, especially this hard ones. No, in the end it was difficult to find some sleep this night. Now that it's obvious what the hurricane affected in the Bahamas. I think that we will see more and more devastating pictures during the day."

"Shall we do something till the press appointment?"

"The city is famous for its wonderful parks - the NASCAR Hall of Fame maybe?"

"You're kidding me?"

"You were interested in the Corvettes?"

"Let us be in the Little Sugar Creek Greenway for a while. I think the fresh air will be good for both of us."

"There to I have to agree to."

We spent some time in this area till we had to leave, our appointment waited. But till then it was nice to walk along the small stream, in this again very green city.

"I have not to ask, you have seen the latest pictures from the Bahamas. Twenty-five dead people now, but so many are missing. They say, that it will last years till the northern isles will recover, maybe some towns are gone forever. Okay, natural disasters are happening, and my point is not to discuss the climate change now - but wait three or four days, the Bahamas will be forgotten then! But my point is, that even now it's more important to discuss "Alabama case"? How often you wanna repeat it, that this president is a narcissist, a liar and so on? But that's the world of media."

"But do you think, that we should not report about the president and his behavior?"

"It sounds always as that we would have to be surprised about it. But who would expect anything else than such a behavior - by the way, the Amazon is still burning, or?"

"It difficult to keep up with all the news all the time. I think also you have this problem, or?"

"The last time that I talked about the Amazon was two days ago, I had no show yesterday."

"Okay, but....."

".....no, there is a point. In the show I have sections when I talk in a quick way about many up to date topics. I'm interested in the feedback from the audience, sometimes I ask directly about their feelings related to special topics, sometimes I ask about what would interest them most, sometimes I focus on their interests then, sometimes I talk about topics they are not so interested in, but I. Two days ago I talked for around twenty minutes about the Amazon, about the Brazilian president and related topics - there's footage in the Internet. Yes, I also talked about the hurricane, I even mentioned Alabama in an accessory sentence, but I talked very long about the people in the Bahamas and my feelings, while seeing the pictures. I'm interested in the people, I'm interested in my feelings and try to share them in this way. I try to get support by doing so, to see, that I'm not alone with my feelings."

I talked about the Amazon again, about the US media coverage of a young Swedish woman in New York, about a burning ship, about so many things. I mentioned "him" in a side note, talked about the responsibility of the Dems, that "he" would become a historic side note as soon as possible - I talked about me.

It was hard to stand up this day, not because of a long night, not because of a night with no sleep, because of the next day with new pictures and news.

Charleston was most affected yesterday - at the end of next week we would be there. But the hurricane not hit the land, therefore the damage was not that devastating. Also the hurricane was weaker now, as a few days before. Today the hurricane would pass Wilmington, very near, but no landfall was expected. Nevertheless, heavy rain, enormous winds, even tornadoes were anticipated! We had left Wilmington two days ago.....

But now we were in Charlotte, no danger here, we would continue with our way through the safe hinterlands. Today a press appointment at WSOC-TV, an ABC-affiliated TV station, and of course the show in the evening.

It was difficult to decide what we should do with our time till the appointment. Would I ever be again in this city? But it was hard to concentrate on anything, the show yesterday lasted for way over four hours. Charlotte and the county, one of the bluest spots in this swing state with many red

spots.

We decided to leave the city, to search for nature, sometimes so wonderful, sometimes so cruel. We decided for Mountain Island Lake, a tour at the Historic Latta Plantation inclusive.

"Thirty dead people now. It's hard to see the totally destroyed areas. So many people are still missing - it's awful. But now it's time to help the Bahamians."

"The pictures from Wilmington?"

"Strange, I was there two days ago. I see streets I walked along - and now? The tornadoes are puzzling, was not aware that this can happen? Well, it's not comparable to what happened in the Bahamas, but it's devastating enough."

"Our president?"

"Consider that we would have a real political leader, one like the last one? In which way he would react - not in such a way obviously! He would show real compassion, he would at the head of the aid programs. But those days are over, let us hope therefore that this days will come back soon again. A swing state like North Carolina will play a major role in this."

"I think also the Democratic Party, better to say their nominee?"

"Yes, of course! They have a special responsibility now, but I have the feeling that they are aware of this - at least at the moment."

"What should we hope for?"

"In relation to.....?"

"2020?"

"I hope that we will have a nominee with ideas, with courage to speak out, with the ability to win over people, to motivate people to vote."

"A name?"

"Elizabeth Warren, at least at the moment she shows how you can establish a basis for a win."

"And the hurricane?"

"Well, maybe that we should realize that we're not the ones who are able to control nature, compared with nature we're only a grain of dust in the wind. Earth not needs us, but we need earth."

The show? The theater were I'd performed two days ago was damaged now, I'd called them. Days, hours, minutes, seconds - life could be fucking!

A short distance between Charlotte and Greenville, from North to South Carolina. We left Charlotte early, reached Greenville early, even when we made an unnecessary stopover in Spartanburg.

"Home of the The Marshall Tucker Band."

"Maybe they sat here also, drinking a coffee? We could ask?"

"Maybe not, I don't know that much about their music - did I own a record of them? Crosby, Stills & Nash, with or without Young, was mine when talking about such music - and Neil Young of course."

"The wrong coast or? Such music?"

"A lot of guitars - never was a surf guy. Not then, not today."

We drank our coffees, ate our cakes, looked out of the window of the diner.

"A show here would be cool also."

"Well, it's a very short distance to Greenville."

"What I meant is, that there would be so many places to perform, so many places worth a stay, worth to be discovered."

"Unfortunately we cannot have a show in every city."

"But in each of this cities people live, in each of this cities there are feelings, emotions, dreams, fears, hopes and expectations. Each of this cities has its own beauty."

"And the next one will be Greenville."

We drove the remaining distance and reached Greenville before 12 noon.

"Lunch?"

"We could go directly to Cleveland Park and eat something there?"

"At the zoo?"

"Or before?"

"I'm hungry, I would prefer it to eat something before it."

"Why not starting with a walk through the park. I'm sure that we will find a nice place to eat something?"

"Okay."

It was nice to walk around in this very beautiful park, to eat something, the animals and plants. The death toll was over forty now, more and more it was obvious that this would change the northern isles for a very long time, if not forever. Oh, and there was this aside. The hurricane hit the poor the most, them, who had in fact lost everything they had owned.

It was a difficult show, the hurricane was no threat anymore, the US was the lucky one this time, the Bahamas not.

We reached Atlanta, the capital of Georgia, early, after a short drive alongside the mountains. Of course the show tonight, but also a press appointment at "The Atlanta Journal-Constitution", the only major daily newspaper in the area of Greater Atlanta.

Atlanta, of course a city of arts and culture, museums and parks, wonderful architecture. A city with a majority of Black or African Americans, of course - mainly - clearly separated from the white minority, the most populous city in Georgia with nearly half a million citizens.

Of course a botanical garden as well as a zoo, an aquarium - a city of sports. The city of Martin Luther King Jr., Spike Lee, Steven Soderberg, André 3000 and others. What should one do in such a city?

"Let us stick to the south, let us just walk around, I would like to be among the people who live here."

"Sure, will be no problem to have a good time in this area."

"Yeah, a good time in a bad neighborhood - you know what I mean with this?"

"Yes, of course. A city with high crime rates and a high poverty rate - goes very well together always. You know about what I'm talking - or?"

"Yes, of course - unfortunately, in this city with a strong economy."

We walked around, talked, listened, had lunch, a coffee and a cake later, talked and listened. I felt not good, privileged I was, had many opportunities in my life, so many many only could dream of. I tried to listen carefully, but had no idea what to answer.

"The point is, that Charleston and Wilmington are affected - yes! And it's difficult for me. In one city I was a few days ago, in the other city I will be soon. But seeing the affected isles? And then to see, that people have to left a ship again, a ship that headed for the USA, because they have no visa? They have lost everything, everybody fears that the death toll will be devastating at the end, nobody can live on this isles anymore at the moment, maybe never in some cases, some towns are maybe gone forever - and we? We're demanding for visas? That's a cruel joke, or?

But hey, we're the nation that cares, cares for nobody. The rich are interested to get richer - anything else? Well, would the hurricane have hit Miami - my God, Mar-a-Largo! The president would be there and everything would be done to help - but hey, he's not interested in Puerto Rico, why he should be interested in the Bahamas? He has no golf course or an estate there? Stupid question. If, then the whole world would know it now, and we all would suffer with him - I cannot bear this disgusting asshole any longer!"

A very aggressive show tonight, in this blue isle surrounded by a red sea.

Our second day in Atlanta, still felt no motivation for the zoo or the botanical garden, our asshole president talked about very bad people who lived on the Bahamas, and that he will not let people into the States who have no papers. Well, nice idea! You've survived the most destructive hurricane of the whole year - but hey, you have to have your papers with you!

We have had breakfast in our small hotel, then we drove through the streets, loud music, slow rhythms, slow driving. From time to time we stopped, drank something, ate something, talked a bit. We sat in a park for a while - like the man at the dock by the bay.

The show in the evening of course, WSB-TV in between. But still we had time, maybe too much time. Time moved away, time that would never come back, but was it wasted time, driving slowly while listening to the slow rhythms?

"People died, people are suffering, and this motherfucker talks about rapists and drug dealers. Oh, I have forgotten, this people aren't civilized white Americans with European ancestors - was my mistake! If this man not faces lawsuits after his term in office, then this country is even more decayed than I thought of. Can you imagine how this nigger in office would have reacted? Hey, he would have shown compassion and it would have been a must for him to help in every possible and none-bureaucratic way. But this days are gone, now we have to fear the rapists and drug dealers from the Bahamas - the murderers in Dayton and El Paso were whites, or? Las Vegas?"

Another aggressive show, I lusted for the ocean, the calming sound of the waves - Charleston.

We needed two and a half hours to drive from Atlanta to Augusta, our today's aim. Somewhat nearer to the coast, but for the next days we would not come closer to the coast. Charleston at Saturday would bring us back to the coast.

No press appointment today, the show in the evening, plenty of time till then. Augusta at Savannah River, the border to South Carolina, still in Georgia - would one have to talk about golf? Golf, what a boring sport! Well, a must for the rich and privileged obviously, but I never would be interested to waste my time with this dull activity. Therefore, let us forget golf.

Augusta, two third of the inhabitants were Black or African Americans. A city with a strong economy - sixteen percent lived under the poverty line. Not that much for a large or larger American city - Augusta, the second-most populous city in Georgia, after Atlanta, with its nearly two hundred thousand inhabitants. The city of Laurence Fishburn - and James Brown of course!

"James Brown, was not that much my music."

"Not?"

"Maybe because I was not black and proud? I was white and very insecure about everything. Sure, his "classics", but.....would it be bad to say, that I had always the feeling, that he's a fantastic musician, but that humanly he was.....well, it was not okay.....the way he behaved.....other musicians, women?"

"Would be not the first and not the last "star" who has deficits in this respect."

"Yeah, but what to do? Accepting it because it's the big star, or being consequent? And then, whom you should trust. Michael Jackson? Never was interested in his music - Prince! - but who's telling you the truth about him? What is the truth about Michael Jackson? At least I would be very careful to render a verdict. On the other hand, also a "star" cannot stand above the law - it's difficult."

"People judge about you?"

"Yes, but often it functions in that way. They like what I'm saying, then I'm the good guy. They do

not like what I'm saying, then I'm the bad guy. But maybe I can say things, in them you would agree with me, but nevertheless I'm nothing more than a fucking asshole - and vice versa. The world is not that easy!"

We decided to drive around again, today with some faster rhythms. To stop from time to time, to drink something from time to time, to eat something from time to time, to talk, but foremost to listen. And even when I was no Sex Machine I liked it very much - stay on the scene, never was a good dancer.

The show was fucking cool, the audience was fucking cool. And again I got the feeling that this would not stay like this. But fuck, who was interested in it, in such a night!

A very short trip today, from Augusta to Columbia, from Georgia back to South Carolina again. Now we were in the capital of South Carolina, the state's second largest city with a little more than one hundred and thirty thousand inhabitants. As many cities in the last time, a city with a strong Black or African American population, even if they not made up the majority in this city. A city with a solid economy, somewhat more than twenty percent lived under the poverty line, a city with comprehensive cultural offers, the in the meantime to us so familiar historic architecture, many landmarks, parks, a city of sports. Of course a zoo and a botanical garden - tomorrow we would have no show. Today we had a press appointment at the second largest newspaper in South Carolina, "The State", and of course the show in the evening.

"Let us be in the city tomorrow, let us spending our time till the press appointment at Lake Murray."

"Why not, looks very beautiful."

"Another of this very picturesque lakes - formed during the ice age it seems?"

"Ask the Internet?"

We drove to the very end of Shull Island, at least as far as possible, and stood at the lakeside.

"A very beautiful scenery, in two days we will stand at the big water again."

"But maybe it will be not that nice there?"

"Because of the hurricane?"

"Yes."

"Well, in the end they were very lucky. The eye of the hurricane came not near to the coast at this time. Not that I wanna sound stupid, but compared with what could happen? I think that Wilmington is much more affected by the hurricane, even when the hurricane was weaker at this time, but much nearer to the coast."

"We will see soon....."

We looked at the water - two thousand five hundred people were missing in the Bahamas. The only hope at the moment was, that on the list there would be many people, who were evacuated already. On the other hand it was obvious that many dead bodies would never be found, because taken by the sea.

Surrounded by water completely, I closed my eyes and dived into another world, drowned in it. But I? I had only to open my eyes again, some would open them never again. We hit the road again.

"The situation in Washington - Bolton?"

"I'm no longer interested in this shit! Get away with fucking names, we have to start with concentrating on the overall aim, to get rid of this disgusting man in office, together with his whole bunch."

"But....."

".....sorry to interrupt you, but is it important if Pompeo or not? Foreign policy was a disaster the last three years - with or without Bolton. And it will be a disaster in the future - with or without Pompeo. Let us to fight therefore, that this disaster will end as soon as possible."

"The debate tomorrow?"

"At least all candidates are on one stage this time. But I agree with Bernie Sanders that this format is not very useful. As he said: They ask you a very complex question and then you get thirty seconds to answer it, that makes no real sense. I think that he hit the point with this statement. I fear that this events are not very useful."

"The CNN Presidential Town Halls?"

"At least much better. The audience asks the questions and the candidates have more time to answer them. But always only one candidate is onstage at a given time. This not makes it possible that they start a debate. Sorry that I say this, but we all are knowing that we have thee big names - Biden, Sanders and Warren. Okay, Harris and Buttigieg have between four and eight percent in the polls, but all other candidates are not able to reach even five percent in any poll. We need a smaller field, that would give the promising candidates more possibilities."

"Five candidates?"

"Would be better, and maybe more time at all."

"And the other candidates?"

"We have a very good paragon – John Hickenlooper! They all are in the focus at the moment - more or less. All had their moments. Why not focusing on Senate or the House of Representatives now? Why not running for governor? We need a strong democratic majority on every political level. I think that this would make much more sense."

A good show, talked about my thoughts and feeling, we talked for a long time after the show - in deed, a very good show.

We were still in Columbia, tomorrow we would have a very short drive to Florence, a smaller city on our way to the coast again. No show today, no press appointment, plenty of time. Well, yes, again.....but sometimes it was simply relieving to be a child again.

"The debate tonight? Shall we watch it live?"

"Well, we have not to do it - tomorrow while driving to Florence?"

"We will need no three hours for this few miles?"

"We could cross Lake Marion - there? We could have a stopover in Santee?"

"That would not really be the direct way, but why not?"

"Oh, look, it's a reservoir. Maybe we can cross the bridge and visit the dam as well?"

"If we would depart early in the morning, a very short drive to the lake - no problem to spend some time there and still reach Florence early."

"Then let us doing this tomorrow - this evening?"

"In what you're interested in?"

"We're still in Columbia. Let's us stay for some time longer with the animals and plants - I don't know why, but I would like it, to drive around for some time, to visit some of the historic houses. Some very beautiful ones in this city?"

"And later?"

"Your decision."

"A bar with live music?"

"Also a city of music, Columbia."

We left Columbia early, headed directly to the coast, directly towards Charleston. But not Charleston was our aim, not today, but tomorrow, today we followed Interstate 26 only till the crossing with Interstate 95, Santee and Lake Marion was our first aim for today. A very short drive, approximately thirty miles, we reached Santee.

"Well, the debate so far?"

"Better than the last one - health care will be one of the major topics in any case."

"Yeah, good to see them on one stage. You know, the opening statements?"

"Harris did it again - I would say."

"Yeah, she's good in doing such things, but.....will this be enough? Yang?"

"I don't think that this will give him a boost. This will not function in the USA."

"But I think we can jump later. We will hear the same statements than ever. Sanders and Warren against Biden and his health care plans. In the news they talked most about Julián Castro's attack on Biden and Beto O'Rourke's statement about guns issues."

"We will not watch it in complete?"

"More or less yes. It's better to see it by your own, to build up your own mind. But their agendas as such will be no surprises. It's more about, who will perform how "good". But we're in Santee now and at the lake, let us watch the rest later when we'll be on the road again."

Well, Santee. Seven hundred and forty inhabitants, the Interstate and an 18 hole golf course - more? Yes, the reservoir! We drank a coffee, a lot of accommodation options in the city, then we decided to cross the lake. Very cool was, that parallel to the bridge we used, the new bridge for the Interstate, the old bridge still existed - used now for fishing!

"Hey, why we are driving? We could have walked?"

"Yes, and on the other side? Walking to the dam and then to Florence?"

"Okay....."

I enjoyed it, to cross the Francis Marion Bridge - well, of course, it was no large bridge, only a few hundred yards, we needed not a really long time to cross it, we not drove very fast. On the other side of the lake it was not that easy to reach the dam, we had to drive a few additional miles, but then we had reached the dam.

"Wow, this houses are not looking that cheep!"

"Yeah, with nice little boats."

We walked around, and hell yes, this was a fucking nice area to have a nice little house and a nice little boat. The lake, the water, the nice trees and flowers. Birds singing and butterflies and dragon flies flying, the sun is shining and a wonderful scent fulfills the air - we decided to continue our travel, to continue watching the debate.

The next part of the today's travel was not really longer than the first one. We had spent some time at the lake, but we reached Florence any the less early. We watched not the complete debate, especially at the end, at the end of today's travel and the debate, we jumped more and more. We reached our hotel, checked in and ate something, we talked.

"Well, at the end in the spin room?"

"I don't know - come on! O'Rourke took up position and immediately the reflexes are there."

"And Castro? I mean he was not wrong, Biden said "buy in!"

"What do you think will happen, when such a thing would happen in a debate Biden vs. the idiot? The idiot and the Republicans would roast Biden. Compared with this was Castro a nice man."

"I've more and more the feeling that Biden should quit, he's not fit for the job - sorry to say this that distinct."

"But I think you're right! I've the feeling that the Dems will goof it again. Warren was a real ray of hope."

"Absolutely! I hope that her positive development will continue. I think that she would be a very good president, a real counter point compared with the disgusting man whom we have at the moment. Warren and Buttigieg as vice president?"

"Sounds interesting, but would she be good enough to withstand what would come, during the presidential campaign?"

"The Republicans would do everything the discredit her, the man in office would laugh about her - hey, she's a woman! The presidential base would laugh about her, but without any doubts she would be able to win back Florida and enough swing states."

"Her agenda regarding health care?"

"I think that could become a problem for her."

We walked around in Florence, a nice little town of somewhat under forty thousand inhabitants, nearly fifty percent Black or African Americans, an economically strong city, especially because of its health sector.

"The city's shape because of the rivers is very interesting."

"Yes, unfortunately we have not enough time. Would be interesting to explore all this."

"Also the area of Great Pee Dee River seems to be very interesting. But it's too far away for us."

So we stayed in the city, but as said, also the city was very interesting.

Of course I talked about the debate in the show, also, and not for the first time, about the phenomenon that Biden's lead had its basis on the broad support by African American voters.

Normally one would need around two and a half hours from Florence to Charleston, using Route 52, driving nonstop. But we could not resist the temptation to leave the 52 at Lake Moultrie. Such we could see the Little Hellhole Bay area, and could drive through the Francis Marion National Forrest. Also it was even more spectacular, as it had been anyway, to enter the city from this direction. Sure, we would arrive therewith later in Charleston, would have no chance finally to see anything of this very interesting city, the oldest and largest city in South Carolina, "The Holy City". A press appointment at WCBD later - an ABC affiliated TV station - and of course the show in the evening.

"Wow, what a spectacular city with all the rivers and isles!"

"I fear I made a mistake by only one show, only one day in this city. Especially with the press appointment we will see nearly nothing of the city."

"Yeah, a jazzy city, a very cultural city, a city of theaters and museums. To visit only some of this enormous widespread offer of museums? From paintings to various architectures, from considerations on slavery to air craft carriers - this all this city offers you."

"And we have no time."

"No, we have no time. We will head very fast southwards now. In a few days we will be in Miami."

We tried to get at least as much impressions as possible from the city, while driving to the hotel, later to the press appointment. But it was without any hope, every moment something caught your eye, only to disappear as fast as appeared. The city was in a way a lucky city, the hurricane passed the city far enough from the coast, so that the impact was not that severe. Wilmington, more northern, was harder affected by the hurricane, not to talk about the Bahamas of course. The pictures one could see, and yet, one ethnic group started to blame another ethnic group, the guilt for a natural disaster? Humans could be such blind, even in such moments. We arrived at WCBD-TV.

"Don't understand me wrong, but it started in the ABC spin room right after the debate. One could had the feeling that O'Rourke had said something blasphemous and that Castro had acted like a disgusting man. But please, Biden talked nonsense, not only once. Yes, he's the man who, together with Barack Obama, served the country very well. But he's like a boxer who's not able to stop fighting. All this stories ended very tragic - and sorry, one of this tragedies could be a second term for the liar and enemy of democracy in the white house. The centrists, the New Dems, the Clinton Dems, they had their chance and they failed miserably - but self-criticism? Why, if one can blame the Russians?"

"But Warren and Sanders are very far left, O'Rourke scares gun owners, and Castro attacked an honorable politician, like the man in office would do it - do you think that with this behavior you can win?"

"We all are knowing that Sanders would have defeated Clinton in the primaries, that they have cheated him. We all are knowing that Clinton screwed it. But we also are knowing that a black man became president - a nigger! Maybe we should think about what the important points are? Give the people an idea for a future, call it "vision" if you like it. Biden is an old man, the man in office

would roast him."

"Whom would you give the best chances?"

"The absurd situation for me is, that the Dems have not only one, but some very interesting and potential candidates. But Biden is definitively none of them, as well as Yang and Castro. Also Klobuchar not. Sanders seemed to very tired yesterday, not only because of his voice. But we had ten women and men on the stage!"

"Elizabeth Warren?"

"Look at the development of her approval rates - slowly but constantly and now faster and faster. She's like a back marker in a car race, position after position she gets - let us see who will be on the winner's podium at the end."

Sure, also today I talked about the debate. Give me dime and I foretell you the future!

From one oldest city to the next, from South Carolina to Georgia again, from Charleston to Savannah. Again another of this cities, so typical for this region, economically strong, a city of theaters and art as such, a strong Black and African American population, over thirty percent of the under eighteen lived under the poverty line. Again a city of churches and historic landmarks, wonderful parks and club scenes - like the last city we had stayed, a city that struggled with crime. The city of Stacy Keach - well, the series was not that good compared with the books that I've read all more than one time. But more the city of Flannery O'Connor, The Artificial Nigger, stories I've read long ago.

As in Charleston, a city and landscape shaped by rivers, by water, by isles and marsh land. We used our time to drive around - Whitemarsh Island, Talahi Island, Wilmington Island, Cockspur Island and finally Tybee Island. There we stood in the sand and looked at the endless water - time for swimming? As always in such moments I was unsure about what to do, felt this strange tingling, my feet wetted in the sand.

Because it was a very short drive today, no press appointment, we had a lot of time today. Therefore we decided, after some time at the beach, to drive back, to take the opportunity to see some more of this city, as we had seen of Charleston.

We spent some time at the Historic District, looked at the wonderful houses, a longer time in the Eastside and Baldwin Park, the Savannah African Art Museum. A little surprise, this very interesting museum to find here. But the sun moved deeper and deeper and we had to prepare for the show. Soon we would be down to the south, Miami?

"Oh, we have a day without a show before and after Miami?"

"Yes, thought that it would do us good, to have a bit time at our most southern point of our itinerary."

"Had forgotten this, thought we would have not much time there - what will we do with all this time, in Miami?"

"We could spend time visiting the Everglades?"

"Even Key West?"

"Maybe? Why not?"

"At the least I should spend some time in Delray Beach."

A good show, a long show, but still I had my problems with the Dems - don't screw it up again!

A two hours ride from Savannah to Jacksonville - now we had done it, we had reached Florida! And we had reached the most populous city in Florida, one of the largest cities in the USA, a very important harbor, also for the military.

"The first city of our tour with a significant Hispanic population."

"Yes, we're heading southwards."

"And apart from the areas around Springfield, Eastside / Mid-Westside, it seems that the city has a surprisingly mixed population - have seen enough other examples during our travel."

"It's also a German and Irish city, as well as an English one."

"Yes, it seems that this city could offer you some very interesting insights. Unfortunately our usual problem with time - tomorrow we will be in Orlando and we will have a press appointment there - fortunately not here today."

"But after Orlando we will have a day without a show, and also now we have some hours to be in the city."

As said, an important harbor, economically strong, the usual problems, the financial branch - Deutsche Bank. Any try now, to talk about arts, about music, theaters and all that stuff? Would be pointless, would be a mere joke!

"Ray Charles lived in this city, after school."

"Well, this is a real city of music - Lynyrd Skynyrd?"

"Well, I stick with Neil Young, that's for sure. At this time his songs definitively were much more important - even when you can talk about imbalance regarding the lyrics. But how imbalanced is a lynched nigger at a tree - Strange Fruit?"

"And Ray Charles?"

"Not that long ago I had the pleasure to listen to a tribute - an evening with only his songs, very impressing."

Also this city was shaped by water, but in a different way then the last ones. St. Johns River, long, lazy, broad, especially in the Jacksonville area. We had to see some of this fantastic landscape, till our show Downtown, it was a must!

Again a long show, still much to much topics and every day more of them. I would wish time would become St. Johns River - broad, slow and calming.

A short way today, from Jacksonville to Orlando, to "The Beautiful City", to this Sun Belt hot spot, to this city, one of the worst tourist's cities in the whole USA.

June 12, 2016? Would you have to talk about this day? That, as always, nothing happened thereafter? That it's no longer the worst incident, and that also after the newest "record holder" nothing has changed? That also this time nothing will change? At least as long as there will be no general change? I was tired and sick of it!

More south, a larger Hispanic population now, many from Puerto Rico, larger than in Jacksonville, but also a stronger Black or African American Population. The city looked not that mixed as Jacksonville, especially concerning the Black population, known for its liberalism with a large LGBT community.

Many cities in one? One for the tourists with all this fucking boring amusement parks, one for the citizens? Well, talking about Los Angeles, Berlin, Paris, London.....now? A strong economy, high-tech, tourism of course, endless art venues and museums. As always, or? It was on you, which of the cities you would like to see.

"Jack Kerouac lived in Orlando, you're knowing this?"

"Ahhh....not in mind at the moment. I think that I've read it once, but had it not in mind at the moment."

"He even wrote here in this city."

"Really? Well, Kerouac and a city? We all are knowing the answer."

"San Francisco of course, the Jack Kerouac Alley - New York maybe. Sometimes things are not as they seem."

We would not see much of the city, at least not today. The press appointment at the "Orlando

Sentinel", the primary newspaper of Orlando and the region, was in a few hours. Also the few hours between the appointment and the show would not give us much possibilities. But tomorrow we had no show, we would had to decide whether we should stay in the city for some time longer, or if we should drive towards Miami right in the next morning.

"And now, an amusement park?"

"That's not seriously meant - or?"

"Well, we should do typical things in the cities we're staying - well, this is Orlando?"

"Then let us rest at one of the lakes? The city is streaked by lakes of various sizes - larger lakes at the city limits."

"Nice idea!"

We followed Hansel Avenue - one lake after the other, left and right, we had a lot of stopovers.

"It was a strong statement, the way you did it, that you would not endorse the current president for re-election."

"We endorsed Hilary Clinton in 2016 and Barack Obama in 2008."

"And 2012? You're known as a conservative newspaper."

"What does this should mean today? Should this mean, that you have to follow such a president into the abyss? Still we're not forced into line."

"Well, we even see that Fox has more and more problems with him - well, forget demagogues like Hannity. One of the conservative rivals?"

"Do you really think that one of them will have a chance to become the conservative nominee? I think that they are bringing themselves into position, for the time after this president."

"Would you endorse Sanders or Warren? I mean, to label Clinton as left would be hard for me to do? But Sanders and Warren?"

"Let us see, still plenty of time."

"Biden?"

"Well,....."

A good show, I felt somewhat exhausted, had some problems to concentrate. Simply too much topics.....

"We have to expect, that we will need at least four hours for the drive from Orlando to Miami."

"We have no press appointment tomorrow, only the show. We have no show after the second day in Miami - plenty of time for Miami."

"Would depend on what we would do. Also for the drive from Miami to Tampa we have to expect four hours at least."

"Let us drive to Miami right now. We will be in Miami at around 1pm. We have to drive to the hotel, check in, all that. We still would have some hours to do something then - Delray Beach maybe?"

"Sounds good so far."

"Tomorrow the Keys or the Everglades - nobody says that we have to drive till Key West, for example. The show in the evening. The day after tomorrow we can spend in the city. The press appointment, the show. The next day no show, we should reach Tampa, would make it easier. On the other hand, we're flexible - your thoughts?"

"Let us drive to Miami now, we should have a stopover. Then we can see what we still can do in Miami. Tomorrow I would like it, to see the Everglades, the show in the evening. The next day the city, press appointment and show. And then? Why not a day driving. First the Keys. Only driving over water - back and then to Tampa? Would be a lot of miles this day, but we can alternate as always?"

"Okay, then let us start. Will you start driving? I search for a good place for a stopover then?"

"Let's do it!"

Our first decision was not to head as fast as possible to the coast. We would use Route 192 first, but as said, not the coast would be our aim. We would switch to Route 441, we would follow the street till we would reach Okeechobee, the city and the lake. There we would have a stopover - we needed roughly two hours for this part of the trip.

"I have to confess that the landscape here in Florida is very interesting and impressing. Unfortunately I have only some basic knowledge about the geology of Florida."

"Sorry, but I cannot help you. We could ask the almighty Internet?"

"Later, now we should enjoy this fantastic lake - it's a real huge lake!"

Okeechobee itself was a small city with somewhat over five thousand inhabitants. We had a coffee and a good lunch there, but then we were interested in to explore the lake.

We stood at the waterside, huge fields of reed in this flat landscape, water till the horizon. It was a colder day, a windy day, some drizzle. But it was refreshing, even when shivered somewhat, the cold breeze was wonderful.

"What you're thinking about?"

"So often I had this feeling now, just staying, no longer moving. I would sit here every day, looking at the water and waiting - that it would be, who would need more?"

"Yeah, they have a Walmart Supercenter here, we passed by - who needs more?"

"They no longer sell guns - or only some?"

"You would need guns?"

"Hunting ducks maybe? Maybe I would come to the idea that too much fucking Hispanics live in our wonderful Florida? That it would be, to become a Floridian."

"You're no longer satisfied in to be a Californian?"

"California? The longer the tour lasts, and ironically the nearer we come California therewith again, the more I lose all my memories about California. Sometimes I think that I wasn't ever there - well, the tour will end in Los Angeles."

We continued with our today's journey. Now we headed to the coast, we reached Interstate 95, the street that led us directly to Delray Beach.

"In Miami a lot is "Delray". Streets, restaurants and churches. Yes, if you have Cuban friends. Delray becomes Del Ray, and Del Ray becomes Del Rey - while looking at the artists, living in this city, the drug addicts, while thinking about your own addiction."

"But you also can look at the tattoos, you're not understanding - sitting with your younger sister at the beach, fancying about the Cuban men while sipping a Cherry Cola lime."

"Should we buy some Yayo, a kilo maybe, before we're heading towards Key West?"

"I think that it's getting a bit too exaggerated now! But yeah, nice innuendos, even when a bit trivial in the end - let us go to the beach."

"Why not, still the sun shines - somewhat. Unfortunately the wrong coast, no sunset."

"But I think that dusk is also a nice time here, to look at the ocean. You have to get up early, then you can enjoy sunrise at the beach, at this coast."

"I prefer sunset, more romantic!"

"Then I hope that we will be soon at the West Coast again."

We enjoyed our time at the beach - okay, at the end it was really cold. We drove the rest of the miles and reached Miami long after sunset, but it would have been a nice day.

Our first day in Miami - well, Miami? Okay, maybe not nice but honest? Las Vegas maybe, but then definitively Miami, the cities, I had absolutely no motivation to visit! Yes, also Las Vegas was on the tour plan - it was a tour, no holiday tour. And maybe, who would know? But you definitively had to forget this Miami Vice shit - how old I was? No press appointment, only the show in the evening. Tomorrow we would have one - TV - and the show. Enough time then to be in the city -

today the Everglades!

No school lessons about the Everglades now - we enjoyed our time very much. And yet, as so often, in one moment such wonderful, in the next all saddens you only the more. All was endangered, the fish poisoned - not for children and pregnant women! Ruthless exploitation everywhere, why destroying this place? Show this the tourists in a nature-friendly way, not the fucking amusement parks in Orlando! Yeah, too much wished - Climate Conference in New York, a young woman from Sweden, pupils on the streets worldwide? A fucking asshole as president, a ruthless money-hungry swine, not interested in the future - hey, you have children? Oh, I understand, you have rich children, the poor will suffer the most. But what's funny? If the global economy will crash, and it will if millions will lose their basis of life, then also your fucking money is worthless! But to what price? Yes, we enjoyed our time, exploring the Everglades.

I talked about tomorrow, millions of pupils would march, maybe millions of adults would join them - and then? What would I do tomorrow?

There we were now, Miami! Well, Boston or Chicago, Baltimore or why not.....but Miami? But honestly, there should be a Miami I would like - but in a few hours? What would you do in Los Angeles in a few hours? Sitting in Union Station, morning, enjoying your Caesar Salad with bananas and strawberries, Triple Americano and L.A. Times - nope! The same later, China Town in front of Wonder Bakery with coffee and cake - nope! Walking through Downtown West and Westlake, MacArthur Park - probably not! Sitting in an Internet cafe in Koreatown in the evening, life-long membership now - nope! Standing corner Los Angeles Street and 7th Street, crying - absolutely definitively not! But what the hell, this is L.A., not fucking Hollywood Boulevard, or the shitty sign! And Miami?

Also here - mostly - clearly structured. Everybody knew his or her neighborhood. The "capital" of the Hispanics - immigrated after Castro. Yeah, the rich ones! A fantastic strong economy, twenty seven percent lived under the poverty line - the capital of banks (after New York). Orlando the city of amusement parks, Miami the city of cruising, "Cruise Capital of the World" - what a wonderful nickname!

Pink flamingos always fascinated me - a singer sings in one of her wonderful songs. Always black swans attracted me, after I had saw the first one in London. Miami, what a shit!

"Till the press appointment at CBS, what shall we do?"

"We're in Little Havana already - let us walk around and pass our time here."

We walked along Miami River, some time we enjoyed Sewell Park, ate delicious seafood. I had my problems to be here I had to confess, thought about that I should travel to Cuba one day - Cuba? Some say, that all the people are very happy there, despite the deprivations and the poorness. Others say, that it's a good place to fuck an exotic beauty - very cheep and if you like it, also very young. CBS Miami!

"Thanks, greet her back."

"So, you've visited the Everglades yesterday?"

"Yes, was very interesting."

"And today?"

"Little Havana - well, it's Miami? Many Hispanics are liveing in this city - they outnumber all other ethnic groups."

"Yes, this place is characterized by Hispanic life. I think you know this from cities like Los Angeles - you will be in El Paso as well?"

"Yes, El Paso as well. But I think that there's a difference between the Latinos in Los Angeles and the Hispanics in Miami. It starts with history. Rich Hispanics immigrated to Miami, to the USA, after Castro gained power. This has also political aspects. California, and also Texas, is very

different. You would have to talk about the Spanish colonization, about the independence of Mexico, that California was a part of Mexico then. The Mexican-American War, the background of it. That California was now a part of the US, and then the gold rush and the annihilation of the native people. All this is a complex and long story, but the point is, as a first step, that many Latinos live in California, because this was first a Spanish and later a Mexican territory. And then we have to talk about the immigrants. They dream the American Dream, this are not the wealthy from Mexico, Venezuela or Guatemala. It's not my point, that you will not find similarities, but I think that you cannot see Florida and California in the same way."

"And the Hispanic Miami?"

"The first time, as I left my motel in Los Angeles, Downtown West, I walked down the street to eat something, I entered Gus's Drive In. From the first moment I loved it to be in this part of Los Angeles, but still after a now longer time that I spent in this city, I would not that presumptuous that I would say, that I would understand their daily living now. It's one thing to be in the city as a white tourist, another, to be a Latino who lives in this city every day - ICE, the fucking president, this and much more, they have to bear a lot."

"Miami?"

"I'm not sure, not enough time, there are so many other places one could see. All this fucking tourists, with their ships, making pictures from silly flamingos - I know there's a different Miami, there has to be different Miami, but I will have not the time to discover it."

We spent the hours between the appointment and the show at the beach, the city in the rear, looking at the water. In every city people are living, not for the first time I had this thought. But what meant "living"? I had the impulse to swim, felt overwhelmed by my feelings, had problems to control them. Caroline held my hand, had not to look to know, that she had tears in her eyes as well.

I looked at the audience before the show - whom I would expect in this city? No simple answers, only fucking questions. It became a very long show, thereafter I was happy that we could leave the city now. Arrogant? Unfair? Blame my emotions if you like.....

The Florida Keys, later the trip to Tampa, but first the Keys. We would arrive very late in Tampa, but this was of no importance, important was now and in first of all, to drive over the water.

"Would you undertake the way to Key West, I would undertake the way back?"

"Sure."

I leant back, felt the air stream and looked at the water, the water that more and more became a blue bulk, molt with the blue sky - I became more and more dozy. I closed my eyes, but now the water and the salty air were even more present. I had the feeling, that I only had to reach out, I would touch the water then, the water would flow through my fingers, I would become one with the blue bulk - we stopped.

"We're more or less half way Key West. We planned a stopover?"

"Yeah, sure, we have plenty of time today. I think I've slept."

We stepped out, had no idea which of the isles this was - would this had been important? We walked a bit, we would sit in the car for a long time today. I closed my eyes again, a wonderful feeling appeared in me, I felt dizzy, I felt like there would be no world any longer, I would drift weightlessly in the infinity of space - yeah, why ever opening your eyes again.....

"I could stand here forever."

"At the moment it looks more like you have some problems not to fall."

"Yeah, reality sucks all the time."

We continued with our travel and I closed my eyes again, lost the feeling for time, this wonderful salty taste - I fell to sleep.....

"We have reached Key West."

"Wow, now I have seen nearly nothing."

"Well, you will drive back. Then it would be good to keep the eyes open."

"Yes!"

Key West - Hemingway, Williams and Capote. Hemingway the most - or? We walked to Fort Zachery, many people at the beach and in the water, stood on the large stones.

"It's always wonderful, water till the horizon. I've always the feeling that the horizon, the line between the blue water and the blue sky would absorb me. I feel it, that my task would be to swim to this point, like chasing the end of the rainbow."

"Would you like it, to live here?"

"No, too much people, too much tourists. Yes, the Keys are beautiful, the Keys are fascinating, how they developed, their history is interesting, Florida, the whole state is fascinating in a way, but I've the feeling that this would be not my world. I know that's stupid, but I have no real use for all this."

We drove back, this time with me at the steering wheel. Now I saw more of the bridges and the isles, this time it was different. It was beautiful to see all this, but in a way it was boring. We reached our starting point again.

"And now the way to Tampa."

"We should have a stopover in Fort Meyers."

"So many impressions right now. And still a longer trip waits. Let us having the drive, only the drive."

The endless blue, up in the sky, deep in the water, deep inside.

We reached Tampa very late at night. A day on the road, a day of wonderful impressions, a day questioning everything. I was in a very strange mood, sitting in my hotel room, not knowing what to do.

I stood under the shower, the water run down my body, and I felt protected. The warmth that comforted me, under water you no longer had to hear all this noise, under water everything was subdued, all was easier to bear.

Tampa, nicely located at (Old) Tampa Bay, across from St. Petersburg. Both, our hotel and the venue for the evening, were located at the smaller McKay Bay, therefore we decided to spent some time at "The Florida Aquarium" as well as the "McKay Bay Nature Park".

"I cannot help myself, but I get no relation to Florida. Yes, also this city is interesting, a lot one could say about it, but I feel nothing."

"Maybe it would help to stay longer?"

"This would be interesting in any case, whereas I'm not sure what this would yield. Sure, you would have time for real insights, for a deeper look, you could explore places, but I'm not sure what the overall result would be. At the moment I simply have no emotional relation to all this, I fear that there would come a time I would hate it. But I think this is trash-talking."

"No relation to the Hispanic culture, the Cuban life?"

"Not really. Always this music was not really mine, this attitude to life. Maybe it's really rubbish what I'm talking, but I see a huge difference between "Latino" and "Hispanic". And as much as I'm attracted to "Latino", as much I have no use for "Hispanic". A singer I love very much always spent her holidays, together with her parents and her younger sister, in Miami. She talks often about her Cuban friends at this time, she's a lot of Delray. Maybe all would be different, would I have some Cuban friends?"

"So, the Sun Belt is not yours?"

"It feels like that. The Rust Belt was much more inspiring, was much nearer to me. I'm curious to see how all will continue. But the last days, the days in Florida, were the first time, the first state.....I think it's rubbish that I'm talking."

A strange show, was lost in thoughts all the time, the bygone months and the coming months - I had the feeling that this was a moment of transition.

Back in Gainesville, the place where it all has started
Yeah Mr. Petty, and now it has ended.

We drove from Tampa to Gainesville, a two hours drive, this city would be different, still in Florida. Southern Accents - was never sure if I got it, was convinced that not. Nevertheless, I liked it all the time to listen to this Southerner, liked his voice very much, and also the great musicians always around him. The 30th Anniversary Concert in Gainesville, still one of the greatest moments in music for me. The dance with Mary Jane, you're running down your dream and sure, I would like it, to be king - and Mike Campbell blows away your mind constantly!

"Yeah, this is a real city of music!"

"Don Felder."

"You had to name Stephen Stills, even if not born in the city."

"So many names and groups - who would be longer interested in New York or Los Angeles?"

"And still I have my problems with this southern thinking, this southern world."

*It's good to get high and never come down
It's good to be king of your own little town*

*And when your bulldog barks and your canary sings
You're out there with winners, it's good to be king*

"And what should we do now, here in Gainesville?"

"Listening, what else? Listen to him, listen the words, the fantastic tunes, the fantastic instrumentalists. Yes, his voice, his words, but when the piano starts to play, then his guitar playing, the drums, and then it starts - if this not blows away your mind? And then the final discontinuity, suddenly again this calmness - I've not the words to describe my feelings! Yeah, it would be good, to be king"

For the rest of the day, till the show, we just listened - what else one should do in Gainesville, Florida? Two young boys running down the street.....

Two more shows, two more cities, then we would leave Florida, another part of the tour would find it's end - and then? I feared, to be honest, feared the next months, the second part of the Southeast and the Southwest. And the West, the mountain area? I would have to go through it, behind that would be my region again. I felt nervous, unfortunately I was no king, and never I would be one.....

It was no good show, was nervous, distracted, absentminded - too much shit around me in this world!

On our way to leave Florida we arrived in Tallahassee, our second last stop in Florida. Now we left this interesting Floridian landscape more and more, towards the next American region. The cities started to change, less Hispanic, more African American citizens again, no amusements parks, no cruising tourists anymore. Summer was over now, rain fell, leaves got colored, winter came nearer.

Especially the evenings were cold now, the nights. And on a day like today, also the sun behind the rain clouds could not warm you.

"I've headache and the weather is not good, I would prefer it to stay in the hotel till the show. But if you like it, do something."

"Not that much motivated. The last days were exhausting days. Some interesting cities are awaiting us."

"Yes, music lays in front of us, but I have my doubts that it will be my music."

We both stayed in the hotel. It was nicer to sit around with a cup of hot tea, watching TV. Great Britain, 11 justices ruled in an unanimous way - they protected democracy! The Supreme Court in the USA? Seven judges, a party political instrument - and Kavanaugh, the faked investigations, was the metaphor for it.

Again no good show today, could not concentrate. Sure, I talked about the UK, about the stupid speech at the UN, about the whistleblower. Why I talked not about the beautiful discolored leaves at the trees in the streets of Tallahassee?

We arrived in Pensacola.

*Do you think I'm crazy
'Cause I'm going to Pensacola*

No not really, Ms. Grant. And also I felt not crazy, to be in the city now - fan of flying. But the time was crazy, in Britain as well as in the USA. But in Britain you had at least the feeling, that there were forms of institutions, who could be able to prevent the country from sinking into chaos totally. But in the US?

"Now also Nancy Pelosi joined the impeachment train."

"Sure, the new developments are serious, but the timing is stupid."

"And there's a great danger for the Democrats. The elections will come faster, if nothing extremely will pop up, the impeachment process can last without any problem two years. And Biden is under extreme pressure now - we all are knowing his problems with his son. At the moment I would feel more comfort to be a Brit."

At the moment it felt like everything would slip away, that, even when the Democrats would be successful - either with the impeachment or the presidential election -, that this country would be the loser in the end. Our society, our democracy, would be the loser in the end. Elizabeth Warren as hope? In more and more polls she was ahead of Joe Biden, more and more she became the leading figure of the Democrats, in her patient way. Would it be possible for her, as the next POTUS, to reunify this country again, at least as much as it was unified before this dark age?

We had no mood and head to explore the city. We sat in the hotel and watched TV news channels, or was it again more useful to watch late night shows and comedy? It was obvious that this would be a crucial moment in our history, a moment that would show how decayed our political and legal system was - I had no good feeling!

The show? The last show in Florida, the last show in this part of the US. I would had said that it was good so, that it was good, to start with something new, especially in this moment, but.....the upcoming? Tomorrow the next show, the next city, the Deep South.

Jack

"Crucial times."

"Yeah, now the country has to show, if it's still a democracy, if it's still the country of the free - not discussing now how much this was valid in the past."

"How do you feel?"

"Not that good, I'm anxious, sometimes I feel close to panic."

"Still there are all chances, the Democrats had to try it now, we would need people on the streets now."

"But what should one do? Our democracy is under fire, our planet is near the collapse, we still have a joke as health care system - so much more! An angry sixteen-year-old woman has to blame the leaders of the world - in what a world we are living? I knew times, where politicians had ideas, visions, dreams - and fuck, they fought for them! They even risked their political careers for their convictions. Some had to resign, some were too much ahead of their time, some could cause real progress, but all could leave with raised heads. How much time we still need, to realize, that extremes are never productive, that they are always destructive?"

"You're talking about 2016? How much self-conquest it took it you, to elect Clinton? And you're a convinced Democrat?"

"Yeah, we would need a better political system, a multi party system, popular vote and more. But I fear, that it will be too late now - or should we have the hope, that this could be just the beginning? I have my problems with this, to be honest!"

Is it the end of America?

No, oh

It's only the beginning

If we hold on to hope

(Elizabeth Grant; When The World Was At War We Kept Dancing)

Southeast - East South Central

Into The Deep South

We drove from Pensacola to Mobile, from Florida to Alabama, from the Gulf of Mexico to the Mobile Bay. A lot of water around us now. A very short trip, impeachment all around us.

A fascinating landscape opened up, mostly formed by Mobile and Tensaw River, a fascinating river delta. A so typical city for this southern region introduced itself, this mixture of old impressive houses - one could see the black servants serving their masters and mistresses - and modern skyscrapers which marked an economic center. Mardi Gras was there now, as well as the Southern Bells in their fine dresses, battleships, museums, parks and fountains, sports as well.

Beautiful Miss America 1951, Yolande Margaret Betbeze Fox, was born in Mobile, as well as "The Racist Killer" who, among others, attempted to murder Larry Flint because the Hustler showed interracial couples. Mobile, a city as puzzling as life.

"Let us spend time at the harbor. Let us see the ships who are coming in, and especially those who are leaving."

"Yes, that's a good idea. No that much will happen concerning the impeachment at the moment. I only hope that the Democrats will be strong enough this time, you can hear hesitant voices on the democratic side just by now."

"The problem is, that they decide not on basis of the facts, they decide on the basis what will be the best strategy to become reelected."

"But this would be a moment now, to show backbone, not the time for political strategies."

"Too much wished, at least from some politicians - and I talk about Democrats!"

We had a very beautiful time at the harbor, looked at various ships, small and large ones, some were build to connect, some were build to destroy - in a way beautiful were all of them.

The first show, a new leg of the tour in a very deep red state - except of a blue line, but this we would hit tomorrow. Today I was very insecure, talked a lot about impeachment, many disagreed with me!

A somewhat longer distance today, from Mobile to Montgomery, the capital of Alabama and its second largest city. Therefore we had a stopover in the town of Evergreen, where we took a rest for a cup of coffee and a snack.

"It starts to become interesting in Washington."

"It seems as the Democrats would take it this time very serious. Adam Schiff is in the focus now. It will be interesting how he will act the next days."

"Yes, but it's Friday. The next two days nothing will happen. Monday will become interesting, the next week will become very interesting."

"One person will have to do a lot over the next days."

"You mean the twitter man? Yes, he will have a busy time!"

We continued with our travel and reached Montgomery in the early afternoon. We would have no time for the city as such, the Montgomery Advertiser, the local newspaper, waited.

"A very interesting time seems to await us."

"Still only an inquiry - on the other hand? What would happen if the Democrats would not pull it through this time? This would hurt the party and especially all their candidates very extremely. Now they have begun it, now they have to bring it to an end."

"Do you think that it was a mistake to start with the inquiry?"

"They had to do it! Everyone who's not hypocritical knows, that this president has to be impeached now! The Democrats have to push it forward now. But they have to act united - I fear that this can be a critical point."

"At the moment the majority of the Americans is against an impeachment?"

"If the Democrats would have accepted this behavior, then it would have been the best to nominate no candidate, to bestow him a second term. The Democrats have to act, everything else would be a surrender!"

Alabama, a deep red state as such, but with some blue counties - Alabama's "Black Belt". Montgomery County was one of them, as well as our next aim - the large cities were blue, the rest of the state red, deep red!

I felt better today, talked again about the impeachment, also today not everyone shared my opinion. But as I said, this county was blue again.

No long drive from Montgomery to Birmingham, the largest city of Alabama with somewhat over two hundred thousand inhabitants. You should talk about the Civil Rights Movement now, "Bombingham", about four black girls, about the KKK - or should you better talk about today?

Nearly two third of the inhabitants were Black or African Americans, somewhat over one third white - over twenty-five percent lived under the poverty line. And even in this city black and white were nicely separated! A very jazzy city, only to name Lionel Hampton and Sun Ra. We had an

appointment at "The Birmingham News", the only daily newspaper in the city.

"We have to talk about the impeachment!"

"Sure, this topic dominates everything at the moment - of course it's so! With every word from the president, with every statement from one of his defenders, you get more and more the feeling that it is happening, this time it happens! It's very different to Mueller, you feel it, there's much more and it will come to light! Listen to the rubbish his defenders are talking - not to talk about Giuliani. But even his most loyal defenders are not able, to bring up one serious attempt to defend him - every time things are getting worse, for the president as well as for the defender!"

"Yes, one could have the impression that the Democrats have to wait only, everything will happen by itself."

"But the Democrats have to push forward. Obviously they have found a fantastic starting point, but they have to stick at it - they have him at the hook, but he's not finally defeated!"

The show was in the Alabama Theater - impeachment? Not that much contradiction today.....

An easy trip from Birmingham to Huntsville, nicely located at Tennessee River, near the southern end of the Appalachian Mountains, Alabama's fourth largest city with around one hundred and eighty thousand inhabitants. Madison County, a not so red county in the deep red north of the state of Alabama.

"The Rocket City", for military as well as for science. Wernher von Braun lived in the city for twenty years - a city of biotech today as well. We had no press appointment today, only the show in the evening, therefore some time to spent in the city. A city of beautiful park and different historic districts? Well, we had to visit the U.S. Space & Rocket Center foremost, but tried to see at least some of the historic neighborhoods as well.

"These rockets are very impressive. Would you dare to travel with this into space, even to the moon?"

"The pioneers who did this were without doubts brave men, and later women as well - think about the Challenger?"

"You've German ancestors. Wernher von Braun, also a pioneer?"

"He's a difficult person. Yes, what he did in the States, but in Germany? Not only the V2 as such, but he knew about the forced laborer, about their suffering, Mittelbau Dora for instance. He was a darling of the Nazis and at least he accepted it, if not more. I think that it would be disgraceful in the face of all who died there in Peenemünde, not to talk about it. At least he's a doubtful person."

We spent a longer time there, but found at least some time for the oldest parts of the city later as well. Of course we stayed in touch with the news all the time. It was Sunday, no time normally for much news from Washington. But this were no normal times! Suddenly a majority supported the impeachment inquiry, Giuliani was more and more in focus, even more and more Republican voters were interested to get at least more information about what happened in the White House - enough news for a whole week! And the president tweeted and tweeted, and his bulldogs were trying to veil things with obscure allegations and a lot of barking. But they made the things only more worse for the president - about what I should talk tonight?

Impeachment, sure I talked also tonight mostly about this topic. It had to happen, I had interesting discussions after the show. Yes, he had his fanatic base, but not everybody in this country, in a state like Alabama, was a fanatic!

A wonderful travel alongside Tennessee River, a wonderful mountain scenery at your side, crossing the border to Tennessee, from one dark red state to the next dark red state, a travel to Chattanooga,

Hamilton County, not that dark red like Knoxville, the aim of tomorrow.

Chattanooga, the fourth largest city in Tennessee, no talking about Glen Miller now. A press appointment at the Times Free Press, Chattanooga's only daily newspaper, and the show in the evening.

Also in Chattanooga the "old" was present, but also the new. Spectacular modern architecture as a symbol, museums and other cultural places. Of course a city of separation as well, but not more as elsewhere. I had the feeling that I would forfeit something, this city would demand for a longer stay. I hadn't this feeling the last days, at least not that much, but now it was there, again. The river, the mountains, the city, the people. Yeah, this was no California, but.....

We tried to see at least some of the city, to get at least some impressions - do justice to the city? Do justice to the people?

"If you not get the feeling now, that this president crossed a line, then I have no idea what else has to happen?"

"You're talking about the tweets from the weekend?"

"Well, to label Adam Schiff as a traitor? Oh, I've forgotten, this president is above law! This president demands for blind obedience, he not accepts other opinions or critique. And then? When he gets impeached, there will be a new Civil War? He's acting like a dictator, are we no longer a democracy? This behavior is no longer acceptable, this man has to go!"

"Do you think that the impeachment will have a chance in the end?"

"The extreme reactions are showing very clearly that the Democrats have hit the point. If this behavior will not credit consequences, than this is the sign that this country is beyond the line. What would we expect from the next president - no matter from which side of the aisle. We have to defeat our values, the Republicans are no longer able to do so - or? There are signs, maybe it's not too late?"

"A state like Tennessee?"

"It's okay to be conservative, but this president is no conservative, this president is a racist, a women hater, a money-grabber, he spits on our constitution. Maybe it's hard for a typical Tennessee resident, but this is no matter of being a Democrat or a Conservative, this is a matter of a free country or a dictatorship - you have to decide."

"You have hope?"

"As I said it. If not under this circumstances, then never. And if never, then this country will die. Impeachment or voting him out, whatever will be faster!"

A long show, many discussions and I could understand, that this was a difficult situation for someone who saw himself as a conservative. But only a few thousands had to change their minds.....

A very short drive from Chattanooga to Knoxville, the third largest city in Tennessee with nearly one hundred and eighty thousand inhabitants. We drove through a landscape, obviously formed by ice, alongside the Tennessee River, passed by beautiful lakes. We were in no hurry, no press appointment today, only the show, from time to time we had a stopover to enjoy the view.

Of course we stayed with the news, it seemed as both sides would use this Monday to bring themselves in position. The one side talked about their plans, about not to be interested in wasting any time, to force the things, to concentrate on the essential. The other side talked about denial, about to delay the things, they tried to open up the case as much as possible, to make the things more complex and difficult. It would be interesting to see during the next days, which side would be able to dominate the discourse. But today was a day of preparation.

We arrived in Knoxville in the afternoon, enough time till the show would begin.

"Cold today."

"Well, the summer is over now and we're moving further north with every day at the moment - and it's cloudy today."

"At least no rain. The mountainsides are looking very beautiful, I think they will become very colorful within the next weeks."

"Yes, very impressive. The mountains and the valleys, the parallel valleys, without any doubts glaciers formed this landscape. It reminds very much of the beginning of the tour, much more northern."

"This enormous mountain range extends more or less to the area where we started. You ever wandered? I've the Appalachian trail in mind."

"No, never. Never was attracted by the mountains, at least not much. They are looking wonderful, but always the sea attracted me more. Also the cold, at some height even in the summer. I have this pictures in mind, mountaineers who are freezing to death, I think there would be nicer ways to die."

"Luckily we have not to freeze to death today, we can enjoy the city."

We walked mostly along the riverside, had a very tasty dinner, a very tasty Tennessee BBQ, at "Calhoun's On The River".

I felt somewhat relieved, sure that I talked long about the impeachment, but also about other topics. One could feel the tension, everybody felt that this would become a very special week.

We decided to stay in Knoxville, no press appointment today, no show today. We would drive to Nashville in the evening, nonstop we would need no longer as three hours for the distance - maybe a stopover in between for a cup of coffee and a snack.

We started the day with a longer breakfast, and of course with the TV on. Nancy Pelosi and Adam Schiff would held a press conference later, would be interesting to see it live. The president would held a press conference also, later, in the afternoon - why one should be interested in? What kind of shit one should await, after the shit that he had twittered during the whole weekend? But Pelosi / Schiff would be very interesting - and than this mysterious urgent briefing in the evening? Had the potential to become a very interesting day.

After the breakfast we decided to leave the city, to stay for some time at one of this many artificial lakes in this area. We decided for Douglas Lake, an impoundment of French Broad River and absolutely fantastic looking!

"Where exactly should we go to, the whole lake looks very fantastic?"

"I think it would be good to use this road here, alongside the lake. Look, here for instance is a park, the Dandridge Municipal Park? In Dandridge we could have lunch also?"

"Yes, I think that would be a good plan. We could visit the dam wall first and than we can see. The park looks very interesting."

"Than let's head out."

We drove the few miles to the lake, to the dam wall first.

"An interesting sight from here, standing in front of the dam wall. Imagine, all the water that's behind this wall?"

"Yes, the dam wall as such is not that large, at least compared with all the water behind it. The reservoir behind is very vast."

"And I think we should explore the reservoir now!"

"Let's do it!"

We started to drive alongside the lake, but only for a short time.

"This are this very interesting isles, and this is this enormous sandbar - if it's correct to name it so."

"Around the corner should be the lighthouse. And I think we could reach the isles with an boat?"

"Possibly, but I fear we have not that much time. The park?"

"Yes."

But again we drove a short distance only, till we reached the next breathtaking part of the lake.

"Look, how rugged this part of the lake-shore is. Looks like the fjords in Norway – okay, maybe somewhat smaller. And the roads, are this public roads, or only for the people who life there?"

"Not sure? A house there, at the water in the woods?"

"Yeah, looks like a wonderful place to live. Shall we drive to Dandridge now? The press conference starts soon and we could have a cup of coffee?"

"No bad idea."

We drove the remaining short distance till we reached Dandridge.

"Look, the city calls itself the second oldest of Tennessee and the population is fast rising."

"Well, if I would have the means? I would ponder about a nice house here at the lake."

"Maybe a trailer? We have passed not only one camping site."

"Well, camping?"

"Not tell me now, that you're too old for it, or something like that? But one year on tour?"

"Let us talk about it after the tour."

We looked around and found Asian Cafe, ordered, and looked at the screen of the laptop.

"And?"

"If this should be the way the Democrats will act the next weeks, than maybe this farce of presidency will come to a sudden end. This was a very strong message for all Democrats, for all independents. And the Republicans know now, that this time they will act in a consequent way. It would be a strange dramaturgy, if the White House would try to obstruct the inquiry, and in the end this would be the reason for an impeachment!"

"As Adam Schiff named Nixon's name - well, this was a very distinct announcement!"

"Yes, both, Pelosi as well as Schiff, acted very strong. This was a very strong first day of an interesting week. If they can stay this strong, than they will get him! Now they have so many opportunities, don't forget the elections - they need no impeachment! It would be enough, if the president would become inelectable for most independents, and that some Republican voters would not vote. At the moment the Democrats are in a key position. I hope they will use this momentum."

"And the White House, the president, Barr, Giuliani and Pompeo are under strong fire now. It would be enough, if only one of them would lose his nerves. Everything would implode then!"

The rest of the time we spent at the park - it was wonderful! The president? Nah, we had better things to do! Later, as we were on our way to Nashville, as the "urgent briefing" came to an end? We both were puzzled - what the hell was this? Please Dems, do not start with such strange things! Bury it immediately, if this is it and concentrate on the important. A very strange day came to an end as we reached Nashville. Tomorrow we would have a press appointment and the show in the evening. What would be the main topic of the show? Well.....could you tell me, what will happen during the next twenty hours?

We had arrived in the late evening yesterday, today we sat at breakfast and thought about today. Later we would have a press appointment at "The Tenassan", the local daily newspaper, of course the show in the evening.

"Now we're in Nashville."

"Yeah, and I have no idea what I should say now. Nashville, of course music, but not really mine. I have absolutely no relation to this city - I think Memphis will be even harder. New Orleans for example? Yes, even when it's maybe only a thing for tourists today - Bourbon Street and French Quarter? But at least you feel a connection - Nashville, I feel nothing."

"Would I have knew this, I would have arranged only one show in Nashville - also in Memphis we will have two."

"You feel a connection with this two cities?"

"Well, I always thought that it would be interesting for me, to visit this cities one time. They represent a strong and important part of the American culture. Sure, New York and Los Angeles and some other such cities. But I think that also this area contributes its part to the American culture."

"I would not question this. It's only a part of our culture, that's not so familiar to me. But maybe you can introduce me somewhat, you have some ideas for a program till our press appointment?"

"I would have some ideas....."

"Then, take me by the hand and help me understand....."

We spent some very interesting hours till the show in the city. No, Nashville was never a jazzy city, and I had not to love everything, but also this city was not homogeneous. North Nashville or South Nashville - why not Bellevue? And I had a very good guide - whereby, we did nothing special. We walked around and had our eyes open - many interesting things one could see. Nashville? Would I ever hit to the idea to visit Nashville? So many cities would come me to mind - Nashville? But maybe this would be the point? Why not Nashville? Because everybody there listens to country music only, 24/7? Because everybody goes to church there, every Sunday? Nashville, why not Nashville? We had our press appointment.

"Because this is the blue spot of Tennessee?"

"Well, this is one of the few blue spots of Tennessee. Memphis is the bluer city. But also in this cities many have problems therewith to impeach our president - not to talk about the rest of Tennessee."

"But what would have been the alternative? I think that he's one of this men, who never learned in their childhood that there are borders, limits, that also other people have rights. Maybe he has to learn this as a president now."

"But it's a risk for the Democrats?"

"Again, what would have been the alternative? I not expect that Tennessee will vote blue in 2020, but sorry, if you consider yourself as conservative and religious? Why then you can vote for this man? This man is nothing of this, this man is simply disgraceful."

"Please consider that Bill Clinton won Tennessee two times?"

"That's a long time ago."

"Not have to mean, that it can't be that again so. The right candidate from the left?"

"You have a name?"

"No, I fear that I not knowing more about the future than you."

I had a lot of thoughts in mind, during the show, here in the north of Nashville - we planned to visit the zoo tomorrow.

We visited the zoo, the Nashville Zoo at Grasmere. And no, it never would become boring, to visit a zoo! Not the historic farm, not the bears, not the birds, not the antelopes, not the giraffes, not even the flamingos, not here - not the carousel of course!

We walked around and enjoyed our time, no news now, the Soaring Eagle was cool! We drank and ate something, later we would have a press appointment at WSMV, a local NBC affiliated TV station - the show in the evening. But not now.

"Should we have a look at the news, to stay up to date with the developments in Washington?"

"Not now, now we have more important things to do - what should be more important now, than the carousel? I will have a look at the news while we driving to the appointment."

"Okay."

"Not that much will happen at the moment. The Dems have started with the inquiry now. But I do not expect any breathtaking surprises in this early stage. It will be interesting, to see how nervous the Republicans will become in the next week. Also, if someone else will give more insights in the

proceedings in the White House."

"A new whistleblower?"

"Everything starts all the times with one person, who raises his or her voice. Not all the times this results anything, but think about MeeToo? Courtney Love named Weinstein, but nothing happened - Courtney Love had to pay the price for her courage. But then another woman raised her voice, and this time it was the beginning of something large. We have to see. Mueller yielded no tangible result, this time it seems to be different. Let's see what will happen during the weekend and at the beginning of next week."

We continued with our visit - the animals, the plants, the being in another world. I felt privileged, not everyone had this possibilities. I enjoyed my candy.....

"Thrilling times for an stand-up comedian?"

"Thrilling times for all of us, I would say. I'm not sure about, what history will tell about this our time. But I hope it will be the story of a one term president, maybe about a president who not even finished one term."

"But there's a risk for the Democrats. What, when they will bestow the sitting president a second term with their action?"

"Never forget, the Dems are needing only a few thousands votes more in a few swing states - they not even need to win the popular vote! If this will be not possible for them, under this circumstances, then it would be a joke - and a bloody disaster!"

"So, you're in an upbeat mood?"

"You have to! Should this man get a second term - it would be the end of this country! The interesting fact is that, on Republican side, we have an interesting development. Yes, there are some Republicans who yell out laud for the president. Then we have a few who are opposing him publicly. But the majority stays calm, and this is very interesting! Let us see, what will happen over the weekend, the next week - everything can happen now!"

Again I had too much in my mind, the blue Nashville? Discussions after the show, agreement and contradiction. But there was a broad consensus about, that his behavior was no longer acceptable, if it ever was so!

Today we had no show, of course no press conference either. Tomorrow we would have a show in Jackson, a distance somewhat over two hours nonstop driving. We had decided to leave Nashville in the morning, to spent a day without Washington at the "Land Between the Lakes National Recreation Area". And of course the two lakes, Kentucky Lake and Lake Barkley - one part of the this area were in Tennessee, the other part in Kentucky.

"Not a bit sad to leave the city?"

"Well, let me say it so: Grand Ole Opry, feelin' alright."

We spent the whole day at the recreation area, and the area around it. We enjoyed the planetarium, spotted some bison but no elks, therefor some other animals, walked along the lakesides, enjoyed the time in the woods. It was good to spent some time without Washington, too much happened, not that happened what should happen - Mitt Romney? It was impossible to follow all this, you only could imagine what happened behind the closed doors. In one way it was obvious that the Dems had hit the point. On the other side, only to think about the Dems who not followed the inquiry? The disappointing aspect was, that most of them hesitated because they feared about, not to become reelected. Was the personal political career more important than the nation's future? And what a sign it would have been, seeing united Democrats? Yes, one could make critical remarks about the political establishment in Washington!

The sun already started to set, as we headed towards Jackson - Johnny Cash and June Carter were singing on the radio.....

We had arrived in the late evening in Jackson, now we sat at the table and had breakfast.

"Jackson? Halfway African American, halfway White - are we now in the deepest south? Can you see the cotton fields in the summer sun? How long is it, since the last KKK-cross burned, since the last nigger was lynched? Not that long ago, or - and today?"

"You're not very happy to here?"

"I think it's no question of happiness, I feel uneasy. It's no question of to be wanna here, but a question of not to being cowardly. Also in this city and the cities around there are people living, and they are not all the same. But I feel somewhat uneasy to perform here, but I would feel much more uneasy, would I have to perform for a bunch of Hollywood celebrities."

We walked around Muse Park, near Lane College and Jackson State Community College, it was a cold and cloudy day. But we enjoyed the refreshing air, had a coffee and snack for lunch and later a dinner in a small restaurant.

I still felt uneasy, but it was my inability to open up - Caroline was much better in it. I had always huge problems therewith, to get involved with something or somebody. Maybe that sounded stupid, but it was so.

A good show, a very good show - I was surprised. No, definitively not only applause, but it was a very good show. Also the conversations thereafter.

It was a very short distance from Jackson to Memphis, therefore we decided to spent much of the day in the area of the Hatchie National Wildlife Refuge, in the area of Hatchie River and Bear Creek, an enormous band of woods. In Washington happened what you had to expect. The Republicans, the White House, did everything to obstruct the inquiry - an interesting, but in a way also boring, situation. And? A second whistleblower with first hand information was on the table now. But most news were about speculations, about what maybe could be or not. I was interested in facts.

I still though about Nashville, thought about the coming Memphis. With Florida I have had my problems, but now I felt like at the wrong place and had the fear, that this would be my emotional state for a longer time. Yeah, in the end I would be at the coast again. In the end I would be home again. But in between?

We walked along the riverside, the water whispered in our ears. Under the trees it was nice to be, birds sang and dragonflies showed their skills. No noise from the cities disturbed us, not much other people we saw. I thought about, why doing this, wouldn't it be better to just live a life? Yeah, maybe, but never on a stage again? I felt at the wrong place.....

We reached Memphis very late at night.

We woke up in Memphis, I was in a much better mood today, then in the last days. Memphis, the second largest city in Tennessee, the largest at Mississippi River - yes, back again at the Mississippi! The city with a long blues tradition, the city in which Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. died. A city, deep in the south, a cotton history, a history of slavery, a city so full of music that it would be stupid to name any name, a city of crime, a city with a serious gang problem, a city of culture, by far not only music - you had to stop it, it was without meaning to continue!

"I feel much better today."

"Good to hear."

"Its good that we have no press appointment today, we have so much to do today, till the show in the evening."

"With what we wanna begin?"

""I've Been to the Mountaintop" - with what else?"

Memphis today, nearly two thirds of the residents were Afro American - the city, not the surrounding area! We stood in front of the Lorraine Motel, in front of the National Civil Rights Museum, and had tears in our eyes - did he really have seen the Promised Land? And Walter Bailey and Jacqueline Smith and.....many names would be there one would have to talk about.

But the past was the past, important not to forget, but impossible to change. But the present day, based on the past, this was the day that would create the future. And what was the situation of this day, in this city, this state, the States? Which situation? Ours, standing in front of this place, or the situation of those, for them who this place had a very different meaning, as for us two Whites?

The city struggled with gang violence, around twenty percent lived under the poverty line, around thirty percent of the under eighteen - no shocking numbers for an American city like this. And yet, maybe numbers to ponder on them.

We walked around and said nothing - what should we say at such a place? Who we would have been in this story, the story of this place and many others? We had not thought about Rosa Parks while staying in Montgomery, some days ago. But again, who we would have been in this story? Definitely not the strong and courageously woman who refused and changed the world therewith. Definitely not the man who died for his convictions. Hard to say, where we would have stood, but as said, our skin was white.

"And now, after this impressions, hardly to describe? What shall we do now, till the show?"

"Let us go to the river, it's just around the corner. There's a queen there, the "American Queen". And even when she's not really from the time, I would like to see here, maybe we even can spend some time on her."

We saw her and could spent some time on her.

I felt back again! Could I handle it now, to be in this part of the nation? It became as different as I feared it. The beginning, the New England States, not to talk about Canada. But also the Rust Belt, even the Great Plains. But then the Sun Belt, and now the Deep South - I had feared it, this time, beyond the comfort zone. But now a feeling arose, maybe I would be able to handle it? A long show, a satisfying show in Memphis, Tennessee!

Had been a short night, the last night. We talked long with people from the audience, now we had breakfast. Today we would have a press appointment at WREG, a CBS affiliated TV station in Memphis - of course the show in the evening. But now we thought about, what we could do till the press appointment.

"Germantown?"

"Well,....."

"For a time time in Arkansas?"

"I think we should stay on this side of the river. We will be in Arkansas soon enough. Let's have some snugly days for the rest of this leg of the tour. This day in Tennessee, and then the few days in Mississippi, as the final of this part of the tour. Then New Orleans waits, and the rest of the South. Then everything will change again, till we will reach the mountain states."

"An then we will cross the mountains and the coastal states will have us again, we will be home again."

"Yeah, in a way I lust for this day, in a way this thought makes me sad. But hey, we're short after halftime - a many cities are still waiting for us."

We decided to stay at the river, at Mississippi River again. One had to confess, this river had a magical side. And even we would be in the State of Mississippi tomorrow and the next days, we would no longer see the Mississippi River, till we would be at the coast again. The river marked the border of Mississippi state to the other states, but we would not follow the border - unfortunately. Nevertheless, we had seen the river for several times now, the next time would be the last time, when the river would merge with the sea. We left the city somewhat, the area where Wolf River became a part of Mississippi River, where a fascinating landscape of water and isles opened up.

"Only to explore this impressive area you would need days. To cruise the Mississippi River from its beginning to its end, I think this would be a life-long impression, a life-long journey."

"Wow, I think you're starting to transform into a southerner?"

"I talk about the water, the landscape maybe. Still I have my problems with the southern....."attitude"? But yes, the more you know about the people, the more you can say about them. And we're jumping from one city to the other only, from one state to the other. That's no good basis to judge about others."

We left the place to head to our press appointment.

"You're thinking that we're seeing the last days of this president?"

"It would be good so. Everything becomes to a bad comedy show once for all now. His betrayal of the Kurdish people? Has nothing to do with his two towers in Ankara - or? Even the GOP is upset about his behavior now. This has to end now, or it will end inevitably in a disaster."

"Joe Biden attacks the president now?"

"The Democrats as such should be more aggressive. It's good that Joe Biden reacts in this way, even when I think that not everything was okay. But what a difference? You can criticize the father who tried to help his son in this way - how much money the son gat? The Republicans are upset about, that his son gat fifty grand a month? The president's kids are shoveling millions every month - but hey, that is okay, they are money-grubbing conservatives!"

"Do you think that Bernie Sanders still has a chance to become president?"

"First, I'm very happy that he recovered, that he's at home again. I fear that he will stop his campaign soon or later - sad that it has happen in that way then. Elizabeth Warren is on top of the polls now, her progress in the last weeks is fascinating. It will be interesting to see in which way the president will react to this. A smear campaign against her will not help him, this only would motivate the Dems and would raise the approval for her among the independents. The next debate will be very interesting - hopefully with a Bernie Sanders on the stage."

"This is the south, do you think that the people here will change their mind and would accept an impeachment or would support a democratic candidate?"

"We still have the electoral college. The Democrats should be focused on their clientele, that they will vote this time. Further on they have to fight for the votes of the independents - this would be enough. They need the majority in the electoral college, they need some swing states, they not need the Deep South!"

Again a very good and long show. Tomorrow no show, I felt belligerent, I looked forward to the next shows!

Today we would have to drive from Memphis, Tennessee to Jackson, Mississippi only. For a day trip, no show today, a moderate distance,. You had to expect a three hours drive, nonstop of course. But we would have time, therefore we planned to have a stopover in Grenada, at Grenada Lake.

"It would be also possible for us to follow Mississippi River, till we would hit Interstate 20. The road would lead us directly to Jackson?"

"Yes.....it would be a much longer distance - but we would have the time? At least if we would not do much more the whole day, then driving. But I fear this would not allow us to enjoy the river."

"Yeah, that's true. And we will see the river soon again."

We started our today's journey by using Interstate 55, accompanied by large artificial lakes to the left and to the right - also Lake Grenada would be an artificial lake. It was an interesting landscape, we could drive slowly, we had no reason to hurry, we could look left and right. We passed small cities, farmland, a lot of green - this would change soon. Soft hills we traveled through, had a view at Enid Lake - would be also a place worth to stay. I felt a deep calmness arising, this part of the travel sitting on the passenger seat. I closed my eyes, thoughts wafted through my mind, why this was not the reality?

A fucking president who sold allies for personal profit, all knew that this would cost many lives. Some soft protest from European countries, they also were not able, not willing, to articulate clear words - Turkey, a NATO member? And all the times people had to die - awful, how much we were used to this!

But the dying was far away - did we would need another 9/11 to understand that this was a fucking policy? And if it would happen, how we would react? More power for Homeland Security? Why not starting with a more meaningful and sustainable policy? Why this were only stupid dreams? I heard the birds singing, the birds in the tall green trees by the wayside. I opened my eyes and looked at the straight road, why does this road not continued forever.....

"We're there, we have reached Grenada. A cup of coffee and a snack before we explore the lakeside?"

"Yeah, a very good idea. I dozed off somewhat."

We looked for a place for a coffee and a snack, we found a very nice one and had a look at the cities history. In 1830 the Europeans expelled the Choctaw who lived in this area in a violent way - the European settlers needed ground! In 1836 the city of Grenada was founded, today a nice little city with an almost fifty-fifty population of Blacks and Whites - a few so-called Native Americans also lived in the city. Not to blame this city as such, this was simply a part of the American history.

We enjoyed our time at the lake very much. It was wonderful to be here, to forget your burdensome thoughts. But as always, at a river, at a lakeside, among animals and plants, we had to leave again, this wonderful place. It was on me now, to drive, to drive down the almost straight road till we reached Jackson in the evening. We would have dinner, maybe a glass of wine, maybe a cocktail or two. We would have an easy and comfort night - no bombs, no fleeing, no dying.

The whole day we were not interested in the news, now at the hotel we switch on the TV. Two suspects had been arrested, two men who stood in relation to Rudy Giuliani, who were involved in illegal financial transactions. Why this shit could not just be over? I looked back, the Obama years? We watched the CNN Town Hall, LGBTQ rights. Elizabeth Warren was astonishing - again! Could we hope for eight Warren years?

We sat at the table and had our fine breakfast in Jackson, Mississippi. The state capital and also the state's most populous city, with somewhat over one hundred and sixty thousand inhabitants. A colorful history: The Choctaw, slavery, the Civil Rights Movement, two dead students in the aftermath of Ohio, devastation by storms, James Graig Anderson, Chokwe Lumumba - named as one of the most friendly cities in the USA, as the "Most Radical City on the Planet". Just history, the history as many cities in this region shared it with Jackson.

Nearly eighty percent of the inhabitants were Black or African American, no twenty percent White. Twenty-four percent lived under the poverty line, thirty-four percent of the under eighteen. A severe problem with crime. Of course, every ethnic group had its place. And yet also a city of culture and art. Ballet and opera, museums and parks - and also Jackson was a city of music. And the city was a

part of a divided state. Not exactly, but: The west was blue and the east was red. Jackson, Hinds County, voted with an over two third majority for Clinton! The county to the east, Rankin County, in the same amount for the sitting president. Jackson, the city, was located at the border to Rankin County. This side, or the other side of the river, Pearl River - Democrat or Republican, only a river apart.

We had no press appointment, had some time for the city. We were mainly in the Farish Street Historic District and looked at the houses their. Nearly all of them were historic, some as old as nearly two hundred years. But it was also the history of the district, the meaning for the people who lived there, who were living in this area today. And again, it was easy to walk around there, two whites from the West Coast - growing up in Mississippi? Well, would not lastly depend on the color of your skin - bad that this was still a matter of discussion.

It was a vibrant show - well, I was on the right side of the river!

*The name of this tune is Mississippi Goddam
And I mean every word of it*

*You don't have to live next to me
Just give me my equality
Everybody knows about Mississippi
Everybody knows about Alabama
Everybody knows about Mississippi Goddam*

That's it!

(Nina Simone, Mississippi Goddam)

We drove from Jackson to Meridian in the morning, a very short drive, our last city of this leg of the show, our last in Mississippi. As always in the last time, one could tell the same story again and again, especially connected with the 60s. The names changed, the rest stood the same. But also, that things could change, one could tell. But how real was this change, how deep was this change? Only on the surface, but deep inside?

Over sixty percent of the inhabitants of Meridian were Black of African American, thirty-five percent White. Nearly thirty percent lived under the poverty line, somewhat over forty percent of the under eighteen.

Of course, also this city a city of culture, not to talk about music. The birthplace of the "Father of Country Music", Jimmie Rodgers. Wonderful parks - a city one could live in. We decided to spent our time till the show in downtown Meridian, the various historic districts. Different styles from different periods - all of them wonderful to see. And we were in Highland Park, not only, but first and foremost, because of the outstanding Dentzel Carousel.

"Another part of the tour is over now."

"Yes, and I'm not sure, whether I should be happy or sad. Florida was the rock bottom for me, all this tourist's shit - Miami! And I look forward to the end of the tour in Los Angeles - what an irony! But at the moment I feel melancholic, what a strange circumstance. I mean, hey, New Orleans is waiting, and not only this city - but now I'm afraid of, what's coming thereafter. It would be a liar, would I say, that I felt comfort the last days, but the last states - not Florida - I would like to stay for

longer. I'm not saying, that I would start to like this states, that I would start to understand this states, but I've the feeling that I have overseen something, something worth to give a chance. The last cities we were, tomorrow we have no show?"

"Shall we stay in the city tomorrow? We could drive to New Orleans in the evening?"

"And then? Let us drive to New Orleans in the morning. One more day would be a meaningless day. Is there something like the "Heart of the South"?"

"Burning crosses and afflicting music - a cliché from the past? The Southern Bell in her wonderful dress, her negro slave serves her some refreshing beverage? And today? Farmers who struggling, who fight to survive? Workers in bad payed jobs - or two or three?"

"I would like to say, that I would like it, to dive into this "southern world". But I'm afraid of, what would happen - maybe I'm only a coward. In the end I'm helpless, I'm at a loss, I have no idea - at the beginning, at the New England States, all was so easy, even later, but now? I'm knowing that I know nothing - yeah, burning crosses and beautiful women in huge dresses. White supremacists and the Confederate flag, no plain thoughts anymore....."

It was no bad show, the audience applauded, was satisfied. It was one of this shows, were I had the feeling, I would stand right behind me, looking at me, thinking about the things I do.

Jack

Jack had called me, we were on our way to New Orleans. I had no idea about, what I should say to him. He asked about, why we made so seldom videos now - also many "fans" of the videos, also CBS, had asked this. I had more and more the problem what to say - not about Washington, about the travel, the journey, the cities in we were. Sidney Poitier stood in front of me and slapped me, I was the old embittered man.....