

Southwest - West South Central

Leaving The Deep South

We left Meridian and headed towards New Orleans. We could make the distance in under three hours, but it was as we would hesitate to leave Mississippi, to enter Louisiana. We would meet the Mississippi River again, we would enter a spectacular landscape, we would enter a city, mystical and legendary as only a handful of other cities around the world. And yet, we decided to have a stopover in Hattiesburg. We used Interstate 59, drove through a nice landscape, soft hill, smaller cities, and entered Hattiesburg.

"We're in Forrest County now."

"Yes?"

"Named after Nathan Bedford Forrest, a member of the first Ku Klux Klan."

"Well, it's the south of the USA. It's a part of their history - this would be no problem as such for me. A part of my ancestor's history are the concentration camps and the gas chambers. They cannot change it, they can keep the remembrance alive, but they can shape the present and therewith the future. It's unfair to pass judgment on someone because of a gone past, but everybody has to be responsible for the presence."

We looked for a place for a cup of coffee and ate a cake as well. It was a bit early, but the cakes looked too good. Thereafter we walked around downtown - yes, we hesitated, but then we continued our journey for today.

We reached Slidell and therewith Lake Pontchartrain. In older times I would have started now, to describe the situation, the landscape, what was so fascinating now, would have tried to illustrate the setting. Today? Google Earth for instance? Whatever, we decided not to take the direct way to New Orleans, but to drive to Mandeville. This gave us the opportunity to cross Lake Pontchartrain in its complete expansion. A wonderful drive over the enormous bridge, Lake Pontchartrain Causeway, we drove slowly, a bit like the Keys, a long distance over water. And then the city appeared, and it was spectacular to enter the city in this way - now we were there!

And what did we with the rest of the day? Well, the same as millions of tourists every year - Bourbon Street and French Quarter!

We stood up, we were in New Orleans now! So far it was the number one on my list of cities I should be in, before I would die - now I was there. It was overwhelming, but crushing. Yesterday we did what you have to. Spent an hour of time at the Hollywood Boulevard, have a look at the boring sign, and then start to discover the real Los Angeles. And New Orleans?

Alone the complex history, the hurricanes, what a joke it would be, to start to talk about music now? Tomorrow we would be guests at a local jazz radio station - alone the history of jazz in New Orleans filled books? Should we talk about Storyville, about "Pretty Baby"? There were so many unique things: The dialect, the kitchen, the art scene, the landscape, the altitude above sea level, or maybe better the depth? - but there was a problem!

Everybody said that Katrina had changed the city, not only in one way. Was I too late? Sixty percent of the inhabitants were Black or African American, after the hurricane the number of citizens dropped extremely. Now it had risen again, but they who had left the city not had come back. On one hand, as always, whites and blacks had their quarters, on the other hand the city looked relatively mixed?

Of course, Mardi Gras! Women showed their breasts, or should we talk about racism and carnival? In what an extreme way carnival was infiltrated by racism in this city? Hey, still we were in the

south, still we were in the USA! And yet, for many in the city, no matter of the color of their skin, about poor or rich, this weeks were a very special time - Rio de Janeiro? Should we visit the swamp land?

And now? Voodoo? Crime rates? Of course only in some quarters, others were very, very safe! I felt attracted and repelled, dejected, I knew that you had to stay in this city for a longer time, for a long time, a very, very long time, to have a chance to feel this city - we would have two days!

We stood in front of beautiful houses, the Big Easy, music everywhere, life everywhere, I felt electrified and scared, would liked it to talk with everyone, and feared to act like one of this fucking tourists. In Los Angeles I felt most comfortable in the parts everyone told you, as a tourist you should not go. Westlake or Skid Row, Crenshaw and South L.A., Paramount was interesting in a way. And New Orleans? Do not go there, only in large groups - yeah? Why, because they will kill you? Or because one could see, what it could mean to live in this city? Look, the nice L.A. porn movies, made in the nice big houses at the hills - what a fantastic view of Downtown L.A., the glass houses in its center! This L.A. was as real as the shit, you could see in the porn movies - in that way L.A. was not more, as a corrupt porn movie. But in the end, the city was so much more - and New Orleans? Two days?

I could tell nice stories now, about the fantastic things we did and experienced in the city - words on a sheet of paper, arbitrary in a very special way. The truth was that I had to struggle for breath, I felt the hands of the city around my neck. But this was okay, it was necessary, I liked it, I had to sit down, I had to cry.

My life was nothing, I would make a long, a very long video in which I would say nothing in the end, but I would have to make it. All this people in the city - it was in a way as in Boston and Baltimore, at the beginning of the tour, the journey. It was not really the midst of the tour, no six month anymore. But I had the feeling that today something new would begin - maybe only a fucking feeling, only a fucking feeling.

This was not my city, all this kitsch about the living in this city, fucking corrupt shit like "Pretty Baby". How beautiful was the life in this city as a whore, as a nigger in former times - and today? Yes, yes, I know! The music, yeah, the music! New Orleans Jazz in my ears, the lightness of the blues - you could see everything in a kitschy way. Sitting in the carriage, The Artificial Nigger, my brain whirled, Lazarus, Bowie, I'm in heaven, or was it hell? I felt to pieces, it was too much.....

I woke up in the hotel, not sure about, where I was. I still had some time to prepare for the show, what should I say? That it was an honor for me, to be here in this city? We had betrayed the ones who had died for us, now they died because of us. What should I say? That also in this city you could have the feeling that this nation, this government, this society betrayed you every single day? I felt sick.....

As I watched the show later, as always recorded for social media, I could not remember that I had stood on this stage. Some said, that it was a fucking good show.....

Things were different this morning - at least I had the feeling that it was so. I felt in a different way, today would be the next debate - should I be interested in? Yes, it was a part of my job, to be a stand up comedian. I felt weak, most likely because I was weak, I felt sad, most likely because this was a sad world. Yes, the marching band would play a funny tune, but only on their way back. Before they had played a sad tune, on their way there. And I?

Everything seemed so absurd, every day it became more and more absurd, as you hopelessly hoped that there had to be a limit for absurdity, knowing, that every new day learned you the opposite. The Big Easy, not that much easy. I looked forward to the afternoon, hoped that this maybe would change my mood. I felt anxious, but curious about the things outside. Like a youngster, curious about forbidden things, curious, but also anxious.

Louisiana had voted with nearly sixty percent for the sitting president - New Orleans and its county with over eighty percent for Clinton! Was there a county with more votes for Clinton - think so. But in a red state like Louisiana?

"Thanks that you both are joining us here at WTUL this afternoon, Peter and Caroline. Peter and his manager Caroline have arranged our today's program. What will be the first piece we will hear?"

"Well, this is New Orleans....."

I liked the show, tomorrow we would leave. Baton Rouge, the next legendary city, waited.

Baton Rouge at Mississippi River, now I felt in the "Heart of the South" - in a way even more than in New Orleans. The capital of Louisiana, the state's second largest city, more French as New Orleans? In a way Baton Rouge appeared as the little sister of New Orleans. Not that large, also a black majority, but not that much as the larger sister. Also blue, but not that extreme, of course also a lot of history, a lot of culture and arts, not to talk about music. We had a press appointment at "The Advocate", a newspaper, and the show in the evening.

"Does you know the most famous person born in this city?"

"Well, in this city many famous people are born? The most famous - a musician I would suppose.....a politician maybe?"

"Stormy Daniels is born in Baton Rouge."

"Wow, and I didn't was aware of it! As far as I'm aware of it, I saw never one of her "movies"."

"This answer would imply, that you have seen at least porn movies as such, even if not one with her?"

"I'm a single man - an old single man? Of course, I respect women and I never would watch porn movies. It's interesting that there's a female movement calling their movies "feminist porn movies". As so often, reality is never that easy, never that black and white."

Because of the press appointment we had not that much time to spent it in the city. Most of the time we were Downtown and in the north of the city, were also the venue for the evening was. I felt much more relaxed again, we had some nice conversations, I felt good to be in this city. No, no trivial look at the steamboats on the Mississippi, but the feeling that it would be no wasted time to stay for a longer time in this area. The local kitchen was fantastic!

"We welcome you at "The Advocate", Peter."

"Thanks for having me. "The Advocate" is Louisiana's largest newspaper with a separate edition for New Orleans. It's nice to be here."

"You were in New Orleans the last two days, today in Baton Rouge - you're impressions about Louisiana so far? Your first time here?"

"Yes, my first time in this state, in this region of the USA. Well, as always on tour. You have not really the time to get more than some weak impression about the city or the state you're in. Banal to say something like: A very French part of the USA! I have to confess, that I have my problems with the South."

"You're talking about this in your shows and your videos. You're mostly in the big cities?"

"Yes, of course. Louisiana is a deep red state, but East Baton Rouge Parish was pro Clinton, not to talk about Orleans Parish. Sometimes on our way from one city to the next, we have stopovers in smaller cities, we're driving through the countryside then. Yes, it would be very different to perform there. Once I saw a picture, made in the South. It showed a gate. On one side the Confederate flag, on the other side the swastika waved. I'm always afraid of, while be on the road in this part of our nation, to pass this gate. I would not know how I would react, how I would have to react."

I have to say that I saw this image a long time ago, but we also have not to forget the fact, that this side of the South still exists - but it's one side of the south! This means, that there's at least one other side. It would be inappropriate would I judge about the South. And if I would, then not with a few lines. A book maybe, but not with a few lines or pages."

"The debate?"

"Boring in a way. Always the same questions, always the same answers. Yes, some good moments, but not really interesting with twelve candidates onstage. But to say something: Elizabeth Warren has definitively a run and Bernie Sanders was much better after his health problems as before. Maybe the democrats should concentrate on the candidates who have at least a certain chance."

"To participate in the next debate will become harder?"

"Eight candidates have their ticket for the next debate already? Will be again a crowded stage."

"Another topic. The president's comments on the Kurds?"

"Everybody who has only a spark of decency in his or her body left, has to be nauseated by his disgusting words! We're talking about the lives of human beings, but for some they not count. It's a disaster for the Kurdish people, a shame for America!"

I was very aggressive at today's show! The next days, the next weeks? Yeah, the big cities were easy.....

A very short trip this morning, a very cold morning after a starry night, a sad morning, were we had to say goodbye. Never we would see the Mississippi River now again, deserts are waiting, high mountains as well. It was the feeling to left behind something very special. At the end of the week we would leave Louisiana as well, now I had finally the feeling that one part of the journey came to an end now, another, a doubtful, part of the journey would begin soon.

Lafayette, similar and different to the last cities. The center of the Acadian and Cajun culture, over two third of the population were White - Lafayette Parish, a deep red county.

"The Advocate" was also a newspaper for this city, but in general we had gotten no good press in the city. No press appointment, we had plenty of time till the show in the evening.

"Sad news, Peter."

"Yes?"

"In the news - Elijah Cummings, the representative from Maryland, has died."

"Really? He was on TV not long ago, as chairman."

"Yes. They said not that much about the circumstances, but maybe this is not the most important."

"No, the loss is the most important. But I have to confess, that I took notice of him in an acceptable way only during the last weeks and months."

"It's a long a distance from California to Maryland. Our time in Maryland?"

"Not long ago and yet so far away. Let us do some research about his life and his political work. Maybe this would be the best way we could honor this man. Without doubts he was a man full of dignity, a man with attitude and principles. It would be good to have more of this politicians, not less of them, not only in the USA, also in other countries....."

What should we do now? The swamp land, the zoo, Acadian Village - the French from Canada, the conservatives of today. The Cajun or the Creole culture? Also Louisiana was no subject for easy and simple answers. I felt sad about, that we would leave this area soon, it would had been very interesting to stay for longer. It would have given a lot to learn, a lot to experience. But we had to move on, but I had more and more the feeling, that this state was a state of importance, important for me. There would come a time, not this year, maybe not next year, maybe even not the year after next year. But one day I had to return, one day I had to stay for a longer time in this region, in this cities. And I had more than only a feeling that this would become a very crucial time for me. But

not now, not today - still two more cities in this state waited. We went back to the hotel, we had to prepare for the show.

"Wow, this is a day with not expected news. Pompeo has achieved a ceasefire for Syria? A press conference?"

"Let us hear what he has to say."

We listened, got more and more confused - what a farce was this!

"And?"

"That's a joke, or? Tell me that this was Saturday Night Live!"

"I fear that this was no comedy. Did you understand everything?"

"No, but what I have understood is, that Pompeo and Erdogan have decided what has to happen with the Kurdish people? Apart therefrom that one maybe should ask the Kurds, what is with Russia, with Assad?"

"The Kurds have five days now to withdraw? This means that they have to leave their cities? Where to? What a nonsense is this?"

"And if I'm not wrong, then the USA have to do it. Hey, we have betrayed them? Now we betray them for a second time? We not even have forces there anymore? What will Pompeo do? Sorry Kurds, but you have to leave now, please do us this favor. Yes, we have betrayed you, some of you had to die, but hey, isn't this a fantastic solution - what a shit is this!"

"Every day this White House farce gets more and more unbearable. But there is more and more hope also, that this construction of arrogance and disgustingness will tumble down soon."

"It would do this nation good, when some of this figures from the White House will spend some years in prison soon!"

I was in a fucking good mood this night! We all were silent for a minute, but then it was time for very distinct words!

No long trip from Lafayette to Alexandria in the morning, we arrived very early in the city, some miles on Interstate 49. Again a city of Cajun culture, Mardi Gras as holiday, but in difference to Lafayette nearly sixty percent of the inhabitants were Black or African American - Papides Parish was a deep red county.

We had no press appointment - mercifully! Of course the show in the evening, but until then we would have plenty of time, time to calm down somewhat. The last days had been exhausting.

Of course, Washington as always an abiding theme in the news - most disgusting? Of course the jerk who called himself a president - sometimes you have to let boys fight on the schoolyard? You fucking disgusting asshole, this was a fucking bloody war! People are dying! Oh yes, you were the one who could not serve - disgusting asshole!

Where would we spend our time? What a question! Bringhurst Park and the zoo, the Alexandria Zoological Park, of course - and it was a wonderful time!

Was it disgusting to enjoy your time, while others had to die - of course the "ceasefire" was worth nothing, but who had believed in? An American politician had pronounced it, who still believed in the word of an American politician?

It was nice to walk around in this smaller, but beautiful, zoo. And I dreamt about, that everyone could be here with us, seeing the kids smiling, we drank a coffee and ate a snack and had a good time - twenty-seven percent lived under the poverty line, nearly forty percent of the under eighteen.

A good show, I was somewhat absent-minded. Hope is a dangerous thing, a beloved singer of mine sings in one of her songs. I had the feeling that I could feel with her.....

We arrived in Shreveport around noon, now we were in the north-east corner of Louisiana. Tomorrow we would leave the state to enter Arkansas. Still at Red River as yesterday, and at Cross Lake. We had no press appointment, only the show in the evening.

"The developments in Washington are astonishing."

"At the moment everything leads to an impeachment. Mulvaney's statement was a stunner!"

"And his attempts now, to blame the press, as well. Hey, it's all taped?"

"This illustrates only, how much this guys are interested in the truth. Pride goes before a fall - would be good. Would be very good, should the fall come soon and the fall would be a very deep one."

We spent most of our time in the R.W. Norton Art Gallery. The paintings, the sculptures and rare books - the botanical garden of course. Also at Cross Lake.

"I feel sad, in a very strange way."

"Yes?"

"It's like leaving a person you've recently met. And you feel it deep inside, it's a mistake not to stay."

"Like in the New England States?"

"No, very different. I knew that I would like it, to be there. I mean, the New England States! But here, the South, Louisiana especially, it comes unexpected. Especially in this intense and deep way."

"Texas?"

"Yeah, that not helps, the following states as well."

"You were also anxious about the South?"

"Yes, but in a different way. I'm torn - El Paso or Dallas? And later? I look forward to the mountain states."

"Really?"

"Well, it will be winter then - a lot of snow. I'm not that much a fan of snow anymore. Yes, in my youth it was a lot of fun, but today, every year, I like the sun more and more. And yet, I hope it will be a winter with a lot of snow this year. There was a TV series, Longmire, the snowy mountains of Wyoming. I always thought, that one day I will be there, walking through the deep, deep snow."

"In not a month we will be in this region."

"Before our Christmas / New Year's break we will have finished also this leg of the tour."

"Yes, then only one will be left, the West Coast, home again. Sad about it?"

"Sad and glad. I'm scared for the future, have the feeling that this story will have no happy ending."

"Why?"

"I don't know why."

I talked about my feelings, about my inner turmoil. It was good to do so.

We were on our way to Little Rock, the capital and most populous city of Arkansas, with somewhat under two hundred thousand inhabitants, firstly using Interstate 49, Interstate 30 later. It was a somewhat longer drive today, we had a stopover in Texarkana, a twin city. One part in Arkansas, one part in Texas - we stayed in both parts, looking for a cup of coffee and a snack.

"We're in Arkansas now."

"And in Texas as well."

"Still sad about it, to leave Louisiana, the Deep South, behind you?"

"Yes, very much. I hope that I sound not arrogant, but I feel no relation to the coming cities and states, at least at the moment."

"The last cities had an impact on you?"

"Yes, unexpected, at least in that way, such intense. I think I will need some days."

"Shall we hit the road again?"

"Good idea."

We drove the rest of the distance and reached Little Rock, reached Arkansas River. He had needed a longer time, longer as expected. We would have not that much time for the city, the show waited. We stood at the bank of Arkansas River.

"This was Clinton ground."

"Yeah, a deep red state with some blue in it."

"They have a zoo."

"Yeah, with a wonderful historic carousel - we could visit the small nice house, the Clintons lived in?"

"You're joking, but that's good."

I had no real idea, my program for tonight? I did common stuff. Yeah, impeachment, Syria, such stuff. But I felt uneasy, not knowing what doing.....

A two and a half hours drive from Little Rock to Fort Smith, now we entered the West, the Wild West. Our second city in Arkansas, the second largest of the state with no ninety thousand inhabitants and our last city in Arkansas – states with no more inhabitants as Los Angeles, not to talk about New York. Two cities, that it was! Tomorrow we would be in Oklahoma, for a slightly longer time! This was a very short leg of the tour, mainly staying in Texas. But now we arrived in Fort Smith, interestingly located at Arkansas River.

"Better today?"

"Well, not really. This area is deep red in a deep red state. I feel uneasy to be honest."

"I omitted Harrison."

"Yeah, were're in a very White area now. The problem is, that also here it would be wrong to generalize, but on the other hand you cannot blind out some facts. One on hand I have the feeling I should stay for longer here, on the other hand I fear that it would become a disaster."

"I could cancel the show?"

"That would be fucking cowardly! Do you fear that we could have people in the audience who will try to disturb the show?"

"Would be not the first time?"

"Yeah, but always most of the audience comes to the show, because the are interested in the show. The audience reacts normally very cool - enough footage about such incidents in the Internet."

"You're reacting always very cool."

"It's still a free country, people still have a right to express their opinions. Nobody has to agree with me, but has to accept, that I will most probably disagree. And I'm the guy on the stage."

"Maybe....."

".....no, even in this county over twenty-five percent have voted for Clinton. Well, in the time of the fight of the Civil Rights Movement it would had been something very different. But today?"

"You're knowing the negative articles in the local press or some comments on social media?"

"Yes, of course. We have talked about it often enough. But what a joke it would be, would I be afraid for me, the little stand up comedian, what people should think about me who really are standing in the front line? I'm only a little joke-maker."

Yeah, not everybody agreed with me, but most of the audience were there to see the show. Tomorrow we would be in Oklahoma.

A very short distance from Fort Smith till Tulsa today, from Arkansas to Oklahoma. For a few days we would be in Oklahoma now, still we were at Arkansas River. A region of many lakes and hills, a green region, this also would change soon.

Tulsa, the second largest city in Oklahoma, a economically strong city, named "Oil Capital of the world", with an opera and a ballet company, a hot spot for Art Deco architecture. A who's who of architects - Frank Lloyd Wright among them, of course.

Not exactly two thirds of the inhabitants were White, around fifteen percent Black or African American, another approximately fifteen percent Hispanic or Latino.

"I think I'm more relaxed now."

"That's good."

"Do you think that the last shows weren't good?"

"Not at all. Mostly good comments on social media."

"We're still in the Bible Belt. And yet, I'm not sure if I wanna move on. Many things will change soon - I have my problems with this Evangelical Protestants, I will have problems with the Texan attitude, I will have problems with the prairie, I hope we will reach the mountains soon."

"We're no longer in Louisiana, and you were sad about it, to leave Louisiana behind - or?"

"Yes, that's true. But you know why. Definitely not because half of them is an Evangelical. The other half....."

"And Texas? A city like El Paso?"

"And Dallas? Two days in Dallas?"

"You're unhappy with my tour plan?"

"No, but I cannot understand this people here? Their president lies every time, it becomes every day worse and worse. Now even Moscow Mitch contradicts him and disgraces him, reveals his lies and this people here still would reelect him? I cannot deal with this!"

"Not everybody thinks so."

"Yes, this is an all red state, not only one blue spot in it? Hell would have to freeze over, and even then they would not change their mindset. But this are the people who are talking about values all the times, about our American values - where are our American values now? That we betray our allies now? That the world no longer trust us now? What has to happen that they would stand up? Hey, they carry around their Bibles, is this what Jesus has said, to support a liar, someone who has no scruples, no values, no moral, who preaches nothing than to hate! I've forgotten where I'm, Tulsa has it's own history, back in 1921!"

"I really not sure whether you should have a show tonight?"

"I have to, let us spent some time at the river. And then, hey, we're in Tulsa?"

"Yes?"

"BBQ as dinner before the show. You will see, a delicious local BBQ will calm me down."

Well, the BBQ was in fact very delicious - at least I was sated as I was onstage, sated by food. I lusted for the snowy mountains.

Oklahoma City, again an oil and gas city, back in the Great Plains, we arrived early coming from Tulsa. The city located in the center of Tornado Alley, but no tornado season now. We had not been in the towns during the hurricane, we would not be in the towns during the tornadoes.

The demographics very similar to other cities in this area. A White majority, some Black and African American citizens, and more and more Latinos. We headed towards the border - The Border. Not that much Asian Americans in this cities, would change at the coast again. Sometimes a remarkable number of so-called Native Americans in this cities.

Rich cities in this area - well, gas and oil! Nevertheless, the usual numbers of around fifteen till twenty-five percent of inhabitants who lived under the poverty line - American standard! Also the higher numbers among the under eighteen. But maybe someone should say about Oklahoma City that the map of "racial distribution" looked by far not that clearly structured as in many American cities. In a way it looked surprisingly colorful and mixed up, even with some (nearly) single-colored areas.

Oklahoma City, April 19, 1995, the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building - you not had to name his name. A sad day for the city, a sad day for the nation. Yes, 9/11, but we had to say it clearly and loud that most of such violence - also with Dayton and El Paso in mind - was committed by Americans, by young white American males! We looked at the Survivor Tree.....

And yet, you had not to ask, this was a city rich of art, nice places, many lakes and the North Canadian River. And despite the fact, that this state's counties were all red, a large city like Oklahoma City was not that red at all. Especially not in its core, different in the suburbs. We had a press appointment at "The Oklahoman", the largest newspaper in Oklahoma, the only daily for Oklahoma City - and of course the show in the evening.

"The impeachment nonsense? Can we talk about this?"

"Of course, I think that the GOP loses control finally now! What happens at the hearing right now is insane - this is the party who protects our values? This is the party who sticks deep in the ass of a liar, a person without moral! I think there will come a time that will be very hard for the GOP."

"But isn't it legal to ask for transparency?"

""To ask for" is nicely said. The point is that this is an inquiry, not more at the moment. What about not stonewalling the process? Now even the GOP no longer thinks now, that there was no quid pro quo, now they argue that it was no "real" quid pro quo? This becomes every day more and more absurd. The man in office is disgraceful - the GOP would run wild, if this would be a president from the Dems and the Dems would act in this way. This is hypocritical beyond everything that seemed possible, till this president set a foot in the White House!"

"But....."

".....sorry that I interrupt you! You know what sucks me the most?"

"No, I'm interested."

"That the GOP, people like you, are defending the president in any and every possible way now, whatever he's doing. But one minute after his fall, you will be the one who will tell the world that you never loved him! This is a disgusting behavior!"

I felt fucking good this evening! Disagreement? Of course, but everything else would had been disturbing - at least in this part of the States, in this state, even in Oklahoma City, even in the core if it, even in the northeast of the city.

Our second day in Oklahoma City, tomorrow we would have no show. Amarillo, Texas, would be our next aim. Tomorrow we would have time for some "sightseeing", later the trip to Amarillo. Today a press appointment at KWTW-DT, again a CBS affiliated TV station and as always the show in the evening. We decided to spent our time till the appointment at Lake Hefner, more precisely at the Stars and Stripes Park. Was nice there, late in the year but a sunny day. Families were around, had a picnic, children played on the playground. We walked around and enjoyed the fresh air, stood at the lakeside.

"No really, I feel much better now. It's a wonderful sight."

"Yes, it's a huge lake in the middle of the city. And it's not the only one, and not to forget the river!"

"I still cannot understand why this people here, here in this area, still stick with this asshole in office."

"Twenty-four hours Fox News for example?"

"Yes, but this is the point. In Oklahoma city every nation wide TV station has an affiliated station. Every newspaper, and not only the big nation wide ones, has an internet portal. It was never more easy to gain information than today. How absurd the show in Washington has to become? As Jacinda Ardern said at Amanpour: To be honest with you, I do not understand the United States."

"Yeah, some things are hard to understand."

"Yeah, Germany back in the 20s and 30s of the last century for instance."

We looked at the water, the melody of the children's voices in the ear. And as so often this feeling: Why this moment could not last forever, together with the water, this calm and cold place.

"She said, that she's concerned about you in a way. Some of your latest videos - and it were not that much in recent times - had an depressed undertone, if not more. She also told me, that you not reacted to her last e-mails?"

"I had some problems the last days, but I've found my mood again. It was strange in the Deep South, attracted and repelled in the same moment. I had to find my attitude for the next states. It would have been good to be longer in this southern states, it's like leaving a movie before its end, to start with a new one. You're now in a new movie, but your mind, your thoughts, are still with the previous one."

"But now you arrived in the new movie?"

"More or less. It was also difficult - a very short stay in Arkansas, a few days in Oklahoma now - all develops too fast in the moment. Not that I would say, that this states come me to mind firsthand, thinking about states in I which wanna be. But now I'm here - from tomorrow on in Texas."

"This is difficult ground for an artist like you. Texas?"

"Well, the same old story - or? Dallas is not El Paso. Soon I will be at the border."

"But no shows in Mexico?"

"No, not this time. At the end of the tour, Tijuana."

"You're looking forward to the border area?"

"Maybe you're knowing that I'm in love with Los Angeles? You're asking why? Every second Angelino is a Latino, not to forget the notable communities of African Americans and Asian Americans, Korea Town is no small neighborhood. This is L.A., the "White" L.A. is a lie. That's why I felt in love with the city."

"You expect the same in a city like El Paso?"

"I hope so, would be strange if not."

"And now, here, in Oklahoma City?"

"Don't understand me wrong. I have no problem therewith, should you define yourself as a conservative. But it started with Reagan, not to talk about the two Bushs. But then it became really bad with the Tea Party movement - and today we see the result. But as a conservative, with a conservative attitude, you cannot support this president - or? This betrays all your values - I do not understand this!"

Finally back in the ring! Texas could come! And the last show in Oklahoma City, the last show in Oklahoma? Not everyone was happy with my words, and this was fucking good and important so!

With the bible in your hand, the words of Jesus
You're looking at the nigger at the tree, enjoying the sight

Many things are possible, too many.....

We had spent some final hours in Oklahoma City, now we would enter Texas. It was no real long drive from Oklahoma City till Amarillo, but it was a journey from one world into another. We entered the Grassland, the Texas Panhandle. Oklahoma was conservative? Well, the Texas Panhandle could be seen as a definition of conservatism - counties with up to, even way over, ninety percent votes for the wonderful sitting president? Here you could find them. In this surrounding even Amarillo, Potter County, with somewhat over two thirds support for the man in office, looked like a left-wing city. But at the moment we were On the Road, Interstate 40.

"Everything changes now, not only the landscape, everything changes very much now."

"In a way this part of Texas is somewhat like the continuation of Oklahoma - only even more conservative. But Texas will change much during the next days. Maybe not the landscape, but the color and the people."

"You mean the demographics?"

"Yes, the end of Giant? This is a very inhomogeneous state."

"This is a very inhomogeneous nation."

"And in a way every part has its problematic, but also its beauty. At the moment in San Francisco or Los Angeles, in California? Again devastating wildfires. Tornado Alley, but no tornado season. A devastating hurricane, but we "missed" the disaster. And the time when we will be in California, the season will be over, we have nothing to fear. It looks like as everything was planned, but in the end nothing was planned. It only feels very strange - where is the dramatic in this plot?"

"It's a journey, with a beginning and an end. In between things are happening or not."

"Why you're stopping the car?"

"Come outside, look at the Grassland. In a way it looks like a sea, a sea of grass, a sea till the horizon. Leaves of Grass - I looked for the Heart of the South, maybe this is the insight? This nation, our nation, has many hearts, not only one. And this heart is one of its hearts. And even when I have my problems with this heart, have I to talk about my problems with my heart now? And even when I have my problems with this heart, it's still one of the hearts of this nation. And at the moment I feel like I have to accept this, everything else would be arrogant."

"What you're doing?"

"We have plenty of time. Let us sit down, we have something to eat and something to drink. Let us sit down in the grass, why not a little picnic in this sea of grass."

We had arrived late in the evening, of course we had a stopover at Cadillac Ranch, now we enjoyed our breakfast. No press conference, no time today for such stuff. We needed the hours till the show in the evening, we had a lot to do

"I'm totally excited. But I think you will stay cool, already you have seen the large one!"

"Even if this is "only" the second largest canyon in the US, I'm sure that also this smaller one will offer both of us breathtaking views."

"Yes, unfortunately today is a cloudy day. On the other hand, at midsummer? I think we have enough to eat and especially to drink?"

"Yes, but we will not cross through a deadly desert."

"But also the prairie, a canyon like this, can become dangerous."

"Yes, you've got your cell phone with you? I will have mine with me."

"Yeah, it's okay that you're laughing about me. You know, theoretically it's not that much difficult to visit the Grand Canyon from our home, but never did it. In fact, this will be for the first time that I visit such a place - saw them only from above so far, while flying."

"You will be fascinated about it."

And yes, I was! We drove around, stopped very often, it was simply astonishing. You felt small, I heard mustangs, dead mustangs and the grief of them who lived here in former times. But do not become pathetic, the life of those was no easy life, one tribe ousted another tribe - no, they lived not in a paradise. But compared with what came then? Genocide, why one should use another word? I had tears in my eyes, looked at the red soil, the red rocks, the sparse vegetation - Amarillo Zoo, no time therefor today, would they have buffaloes? A feeling of lightness captured me, a feeling telling me that I could fly, I only would have to let loose.

Only a few people out there today, often, for a longer time, you could get the feeling to be all alone. Wandering through this landscape alone, alone on this world. Well, such a landscape, an all-American icon, an endless list of movies, painting, poems, stories and novels. The old man with the beard was there again, I stood up and started to spin, spin around till I fell - I Sing the Body Electric!

"It's hard to be here at Palo Duro Canyon. It's like everything would be still there, everything and everyone what and who ever was at this place. It's arousing and frightening, I've the felling like I would watch a surrealistic movie scene, like I would be drugged. But the intoxicating substance is this landscape, you need nothing more. There're the first stars!"

"I think this are all planets so far. But this shows us that we should return. We will have hardly time to prepare for the show."

"I need no preparation anymore."

Caroline drove the car back. We drove directly to the venue. I had no motivation to talk about this petty Washington, neither about Mr. Schiff, nor about the asshole. In a thousand years? What a insignificant time span in a landscape formed during millions and billions of years!

I sat on the edge of the stage: Today I saw something, today I felt something, why we're not able.....

We left Amarillo to put out to sea, the sea was green and brown, the groundswell soft, on a somewhat windy day. Our course mainly straight ahead, some sharp turns - we reached our today's aim without any problems.

In a way we had crossed a very boring landscape, but fascinating in a strange way. Behind the steering wheel it was not easy to keep you concentration, music and conversation was needed. This landscape could be meditative and intoxicating, in a time without streets, only grassland till the horizon and far beyond.

Uniformly, from above irritating, very unreal looking, like a painting, but not like a real landscape, artificial, human made, with a ruler and a compass, clearly structured - so highly different compared with a mountain scenery. And again I drowned in this sea of grass.....

"We've arrived."

"What?"

"You dreamt away."

"I thought that we arrived already?"

"And then, sitting around in the car?"

"This landscape irritates me more and more - this is Lubbock?"

"Of course."

"Then we should think about, what to do till the show?"

Cotton Land - and the cotton is high. Water? In California the almond trees, here in this state the cotton. Water, a more and more rare natural resource in many states in the States. A carriage passes by - no, your daddy isn't rich, but ma is really good-looking.

"A very dry land."

"Yeah, some similarities with California."

"No wildfires."

"Still Tornado Alley."

"Would you like it, to live here?"

"Not sure, irritating, not really repelling, but definitively not attracting. It's so different. I mean, we were in the area of the Great Plain already before? But this here, now, I miss the ocean, I wish myself back to New Orleans - the upper East Coast?"

"The West Coast?"

"At the moment I've the feeling - you know, it would be not that much difficult to reach Los Angeles from Lubbock. But at the moment I've the feeling that there's a huge mountain range in between, a mountain range we will be never able to overcome. And what irritates me the most is, that this no problem for me, to see the big ocean never again."

"And yet, one day we will be there again, in Los Angeles. I even can tell you when."

"Yes, one day we will back again, it's only a matter of time."

Music Land - never was interested in Buddy Holly, was not my music. More and more I had the feeling to lose the ground under my feet - California burned again. Maybe we should think over how we treated nature, here and there.

Tomorrow we would have no show, but a long distance to drive. Even nonstop at least five hours, five hours the green sea. Then we would arrive at Dallas, better Dallas / Fort Worth. Still in Texas, but the landscape would have changed again. But today we were in Lubbock, and I became more and more insecure about my existence.

After the show I sat in the hotel room - sometimes you could not remember the driving to work in the morning, I could not remember the show, the time on the stage. Should I watch the footage? Why?

We had decided to use US Route 84 and Interstate 20 for our travel from Lubbock to Dallas. Somewhat under three hundred and fifty miles, at least five hours on the road, we planned one stopover in Abilene. We would let the Texas Panhandle behind us finally, but the landscape would not change that much during the first part of our today's travel. Also the color of the state would not change first off, till we would reach a blue isle, surrounded by a red vastness. We were not long at the road as we heard the sensational news, the wonderful president lets us know.

"And?"

"Well, what would one expect from this idiot? I think it would be wasted time to go into any details. Do you remember the way, President Barack Obama has announced the killing of Osama bin Laden? President Obama was presidential, the disgusting jerk acted like a disgusting jerk."

"Yeah, the man who shirked for duty praises the braveness of our soldiers. Have you seen the reactions of the military officers around him? They weren't happy about his stupid words."

"Yes, maybe his "base" should think about this, think about how much objection and even disrespect he gets from our military. This man has not the moral bedrock to salute our American banner!"

We arrived in Abilene.

Abilene, a city with nearly one hundred and twenty thousand inhabitants, proud of its long military history, till today. We looked for a place for a cup of coffee and a light snack.

"Would have been also a possible city for a show."

"Yeah, a lot of frontier-stuff in this city. You know, we occupied the empty prairie, what a heroic act! But maybe this is an unfair behavior towards the people who are living in this city today. From now on the landscape will change again, more trees, green hills - till Dallas much will have changed."

"What you're thinking about?"

"Dallas, it's like Miami. In a way I ask myself, why I should be in this city? Yes, in a few days I know it, but not now."

"Wow, and again two days - hope it will be okay for you."

"Sure. Dallas and Fort Worth, this is a huge urban center. And very different compared to the area we were the last days."

"You're talking about politics or the landscape?"

"Both, presumably about both."

"Shall we leave?"

"No, why, we made good time? This is no bad city. Let us walk around a bit, let us see what landmarks could be interesting for us."

For the next two hours we had a nice time in the city. Yeah, why no show in Abilene? Deep red, would have my problems in this city, would I live in this city - maybe I was the wrong part in this story?

No longer that monotonous to drive, more and more the landscape changed. Trees and green hills, far and then nearer, more water. Dallas would be surrounded by lakes, at least at a lake shore again. No longer cotton land, no longer the gas and the oil, arrived on a blue isles we would have been.

I still was confused, good to have no show this evening. And yet, I was curious about Dallas, about Fort Worth, about Arlington. What I felt more and more was, that in a way this journey would become pointless. Much too large this country was, much too diverse, much too inhomogeneous. You would need a life, and maybe that would not be enough, to see all the places, to feel all the places, not to talk about, to talk with all this people who were living in this country. And it was not about to understand everything, not to talk about to accept everything, it was about that you needed a basis to think about something, not to talk about it, to judge on something. But it was pointless, from on city to the other, from on state to the other, from one region to the other. And all in one year? What an absurd thought! Everything was questioned now!

We arrived in Dallas in the early evening. We checked in, refreshment, new clothes, we ate something in the hotel. Later we looked for a bar near by, sat at a small table with water and crackers on it and waited for our cocktails. No, this travel had become a journey now. I smiled and thought about that I was in Dallas now - strange pictures of a boring wasted childhood and fucking idiotic TV series. I smiled and could not await it, to walk out tomorrow.

We stepped out on the street, the big cities had us again. Even more, the Dallas/Fort Worth metropolitan area was the fourth largest in the United States. The door to the cotton and cattle, as well as to the oil later. A city of history.

November 22, 1963 - a motorcade on Elm Street, a moment that would change the history of the whole nation, even the whole world maybe. No necessity for conspiracy theories, the fact of the moment, the fact of the happened - a motel, a street, who would doubt about, that this was a violent nation? Oklahoma City not long ago, Dayton somewhat more in the past. El Paso not in the far future, Las Vegas waited also. But today we were in Dallas, were many dreams ended within a second.

A city with a citizenry which constituted of over forty percent by Latinos, nearly twenty-five percent by Black or African Americans. In a way like Los Angeles (less Black and African Americans but more Asian Americans) - the movies, the images in your mind? The Black Dallas? The Latino Dallas? Oh yeah, the White Dallas! TV always tells the truth! As so often, the center and the south of the city - the suburbs very different. In Los Angeles the north of the city and along the beaches, in Dallas the north of the city and around the lakes? One city, many worlds - your decision, which world should be yours.

Very high crime rates in this Texan city. Much higher than in Los Angeles, nearly as high as in Boston. A very prosperous city - have we to talk about the poverty line? As always, some parts of the city very dangerous, some very safe - it was on you, where you would go.

Maybe the opera or ballet? Maybe one of the many wonderful parks, Dallas Zoo or the Dallas Arboretum and Botanical Garden or Dallas World Aquarium or Stone Street Gardens? Or some sports, the Cotton Bowl and the Cowboys? Or better the Dallas Holocaust Museum/Center for Education & Tolerance? Tolerance in Dallas, Texas?

LGBTQ? San Francisco of course - well, California! One of the largest communities of the States in Dallas, Texas? Well, not everything is as it looks at first sight. Diversity, a key factor of this nation, but always also an initial point for violence from intolerant groups. Should I start to talk about today? No, soon there would be a better place to do so.

No long ago we were in Clinton City, this city could be seen as Bush City, at least in a way. But maybe this was not that important. Stevie Ray Vaughn was born in this city. As many fantastic musicians I knew him, had some music in mind - or was this a tune by Joe Bonamassa? One of this musicians, you "never found time" to listen to in a real, an intense, way.

Dennis Rodman raised up in the city - no talk about North Korea now, not necessary! I see him with the gun at the parking lot, I see him wearing the "91". I see him late at night, together with Jordan, Pippen and Divac, dunking (nearly) every free shot, outclassing the goodie two shoes! It was an innocent time, late at night. In my whole life - and this is no lie - I read one biography only. It was his!

I stood at the lake side, White Rock Creek, and looked at the water. So much was behind me, but the most difficult part was still ahead. More and more it became difficult, very tired at the moment. I dreamt about to sit in a plane, high up in the air, never to come down again. Died by a plane crash, not now, while flying over the ocean maybe.

The show later, why no real Tex-Mex BBQ for dinner? I had to find answers, in the next months, till the end of the tour. Still some months, everything developed fantastic. The tour since a long time sold out - every single show. Many requests for interviews, late night, even serious art programs. CBS was interested, my videos with more and more viewers, a bit like a pop star. I stood at the lakeside and looked at the water, a car park - Nipsey Hussel, too much images in mind.

California burned! More and more, even more worse than last year. Impeachment - this would become the plot for many books and movies, history became written in Washington, at The Hill. A happy ending? Well, American movies always had a happy ending - at least the corrupt and pathetic ones!

A good show - Dallas, one of this big cities!

We had decided to leave out Arlington and Fort Worth, despite the fact that both cities would had been interesting, to be in Dallas only.

"Ornette Coleman is born in Fort Worth. I heard his music in early years for the first time, it was interesting, different, in a way very attractive. But it would be way too much to say, that I understood in any way what I heard, that I could see how innovative such musicians were. It was

different to the normal stuff in radio or TV, like the movies I saw secretly in the night. But there was nobody who was even interested in jazz, not to talk about such music. It needed a very long time till I found my way to such music, most probably I'm still on my way."

"Many people had and have their problems with such innovative and progressive music."

""Free Jazz" is recorded in 1960! This record is older than I but still it sounds "futuristic". It's like with Lamborghini, whatever they are trying today, the first one, the Countach, is still the most futuristic and most thrilling one. This shows only how innovative this musicians were."

Yesterday we were at White Rock Creek, today we decided to spent our time at the much larger Lewisville Lake. And the name said it, actually we were no longer in Dallas, but in Lewisville. It was as always as a foreigner in such urban areas. It was hardly to say, were one city ended and another began. Very often it was more easy to decide were one neighborhood or quarter ended and the other began. And to be finally exact, we were at the LLELA Nature Preserve.

The Lewisville Lake Environmental Learning Area was a fantastic place to stay. It was a place, surrounded by millions, yet you had the feeling to be surrounded by nature only. Many animals and plants one could discover, different habitats - a wonderful place for kids. But also for an old guy like me it was a fantastic time, much one could have do. Canoeing for example, and many other activities. Everything you could forget at such a place, even the hustle in Washington and the fires in California.

"Tomorrow they will vote."

"Well, the Democrats have a solid majority. The only question will be, if there will be Democrats or Republicans who will vote in favor of the other side of the aisle."

"I hope that not much Democrats will be cowards. This has to be done, even if the outcome in Senate is unclear. Now Democrats and Republicans have to come clean. This is a moment of history, the future will look back and will judge about the voting behavior of each congresswoman and each congressman. There was a voting in the land of my ancestors - there would had been the possibility for each and everyone to vote nay. But some voted yea, history judged them."

Unfortunately our time ran out, the show waited. Still some more time in Texas, towards the blue border, towards El Paso. So often I looked back now, the passed months, the passed cities, states and regions. I thought about to start again, now that everything felt so different. But that would make no sense, at least not yet. I had to finish this journey first, then the next one would start automatically - till everything would come to an end.

I thought about, what it meant to die at the beginning of WWII. What a difference to die after the slaughtering had ended. Maybe it was more important in which time you have to die, rather than in which way you have to die? Was this a good time to die?

The second show in Dallas, I tried to talk about diversity and respect. So much became questioned now, I had no answers, only insecure feelings.

A short way from Dallas to Huston, from this large metropolitan area to the largest city of Texas. But what the most important was, was to be back at the water. For the last time we would be at the Gulf of Mexico, at least nearly. But it was a must to be at the water, we drove the remaining miles to Galverston Island. But it would be unfair to say nothing about Huston.

Of course, Huston and the space - or should I say Hollywood? An interesting city, over forty percent of the inhabitants were Latinos, over twenty-five percent Black or African American. An additional six percent were Asian Americans. But, still in America, the ethnic groups were nicely separated, at least in most of the city's area. A city of culture and arts, sports - an often told story now, one of the most deadliest large cities in the USA, but of course only in some neighborhoods.

At the beach, a somewhat cloudy and windy day, cold but good. There it was, the feeling, something was over now, something new had to begin. A few cities and also this leg of the tour

would be history. The last major part of the tour, then the Christmas/New Year's break, and then the last part - home game. Then nothing could happen anymore, then everything would be easy, back at the West Coast, back at the large and endless ocean. I had the feeling that everything has went wrong. We missed the hurricane, no tornado season, no fires anymore in the time we would be in California. Always we stayed on the safe side - what a dramatic story this could have been?

Only to be in California now, but we were here, Huston, now, after the hurricane season - Harvey, Galveston.....so, no dramatic story, no story about the struggle to survive, no story about the essence of live, a story about an doubting comedian.

But one thing was obvious, looking at the water, that things would change. The landscape would change dramatically, but not only this. I had no distinct idea about the upcoming, but things would be different. Sometimes we would have to travel very long distances in the near future, we would have not that much shows in the next leg of the tour. We would travel a lot, it was time to try to explore the beginning. But not to become an pathetic asshole, one of this so generous white hypocrites - please, another press photo with this poor street girl from Africa. Yes, it breaks my heart, sitting in my estate in the Hollywood Hills thinking about all this suffering in the world. No, this would never become a story about anybody else than me.

"The result of the vote - interested?"

"Not really, how much Dems?"

"Two."

"Yeah, they voted in the interest of the American people! How powerful it would had been to see united Democrats! The Republicans?"

"All voted against."

"Some of them criticized the president in a massive way, but okay, it never was a question that the Dems will win this vote."

I looked at the water, snow was also water, also in snow one could drown. It was cold, I started to freeze, soon it would be much colder. I had no real idea about the next months, why not simply writing a happy ending?

The show was not good, at least I felt so. Huston, as Dallas, not my world.

Austin, the capital of Texas, a short way from Houston. This was the region were the big cities in Texas could be found. Also Texas could be very different, it depended very much in which part you stayed. I would not say that the Panhandle made me fell comfortable, but this area with it's large cities gave me nothing. No, also in this cities one could live, but I had the feeling that I had to find something different.

Again I looked back, all began in the New England States, in a very naive way. It was nice there, but now I had saw so many places. Apart from that, that a major region still was missing, what would I answer, if somebody would offer me the possibility to live in the States wherever I wanna live? I had no idea!

In a way I got the feeling, that it would be wonderful to travel, to travel for the rest of my life, always other cities, states, regions, maybe even other countries, even other continents, till the day I would die - I would enjoy it. But in the same moment as I said it, it felt like lie! I dreamt about my little house at the beach, every morning I would stand up to look at the endless ocean while drinking my tea. Every morning she would ensure me, that she would be there to bestow me salvation if needed. I sipped at my cup of tea, sitting with Caroline at the lake side of Lady Bird Lake.

Two more cities, different cities, especially the last one. No, not because of this - or yes, of course also because of this. But this would become a moment, to pause for a moment. Something was

wrong, something with this nation and something with me. That maybe would not be that much a problem, but obviously both aspects were connected.

Also not for the first time, during the last weeks, I thought about to stop it. It would be simple, I would find an income in a different, maybe even much easier, way. But to surrender, that would be very un-American - a bit of irony and sarcasm!

The American Dream - does monsters do dreaming?

A short jump from Huston to San Antonio, but things changed now. Huston, somewhat over forty percent of the inhabitants were Latinos, in San Antonio over sixty percent, El Paso would be our next aim. I was happy that we would stay two days in this city!

Tomorrow we would have a press appointment, but today only the show. As said, only a few miles on the road today, therefore it was still early in the morning, everything was done, the check in and such things, we would have enough time to discover the city. We tried to plan the day.

"Any important information about San Antonio?"

"Well, Joan Crawford was born in the city."

"Really?"

"Yes, Ms. Lucille Fay LeSueur."

"Cool name, shall we hear some Blue Öyster Cult?"

"Do you think that she really was such a "dear" mother?"

"Always the same question. You have to decide in whom you believe. Without any question it was this time in Hollywood, where the facade was more important, than the real life of the stars."

"Does this has changed?"

Well, the decision was not that difficult - the Riverwalk, where else we should start to explore the city? And it was a shot in the bull's eye!

From the first moment one I felt relaxed, to walk along the river - okay, it was November. But also now it was wonderful to be here, in Summer? It was a very chilly morning, we had to wear thick jackets, but nevertheless I felt relieved, relieved because we were here now.

"Many museums and interesting places in this area."

"Yes, I think we will see not much more of the city today than this neighborhood."

"But I think this will be no disadvantage."

"On the contrary!"

Yes, so much was to discover in this area. The architecture only - a view from above was no mistake! But most beautiful was, to walk alongside the river under the trees - very Mediterranean, very Andalusian, the many small bridges, places which invited you to sit at the river, to have a coffee or a tea, looking at the other pedestrians - was this still the States?

Yes, also this was an aspect of this country, and some tried to drag this part of the nation through the mire today. And was the whole city like this place here? Well, as always, still the USA. Also this city had a problem with violence, especially with gang violence. Most of the murder victims were young men in the age of eighteen till twenty-five, Latinos and African Americans. And as always, crime (this kind of crime!) was affiliated to poverty.

We had a fantastic time, the whole time we stayed in this area. We met some interesting people, had some interesting conversations. We decided to end this wonderful day at the "Little Rhein Steak House". Not the cheapest place, but the food was very fantastic, and to be at the Rhein?

I felt much better onstage today. It was a very long and very satisfying show!

We would have not that much time for the city today. A press appointment - the San Antonio Express-News - in the afternoon and the show in the evening, but we thought about the history of this place.

"I think Texas is hardly to understand, especially the south of the state, without looking at this complex history."

"Yes, starting with the Payaya who lived in this area before any European saw this place. Then all this stages. Part of the Spanish Empire from 1769 till 1821, the Mexican Empire from 1821 till 1823, the United Mexican States from 1823 till 1836, the Republic of Texas from 1836 till 1846, the United States of America from 1846 till 1861, the Confederate States of America from 1861 till 1865 and finally again the United States of America from 1865 till the present time - what a history!"

"And all this wars, all this suffering and dead - for what reason? Often I thought about what kind of human one had to be, to send soldiers into a battle - of course, it's always in good cause! They had to start a war with the Mexicans, would it be bad would San Antonio be a Mexican city today? Power, the power to rule, to dominate, to build up an Empire, even when we all are knowing that nothing will last. Caesar, only a name, the person?"

"Do you think that the sitting president expects that history will see him as a "great" president?"

"Will depend on who will write the history book."

"Yeah, now we could start a philosophical argumentation. But what should we say, not written in many books? And yet, many questions and all the answers not very convincing."

We headed to our appointment.

"You like it in Texas?"

"Well, Texas can mean a lot. I would like it, to spend more time in this city. It's a very interesting city."

"You like the Latino culture in this city?"

"Los Angeles? What would be Los Angeles without the Latino influence? Well, of course, Koreatown or Crenshaw, but the white rest is more or less boring."

"Let us talk about some important political developments?"

"With pleasure."

"The democratic field shrinks - Beto O'Rourke?"

"Sad that he finished his campaign and sad for what a reason. Money, super PAC money - always money. It's stupid."

"One could say, that the amount of donations are showing the strength of the support?"

"The number of the donors or the amount of the donated money? Super PAC money is shit and unfair! Also a donor who donates you a million dollar has only one vote, like one who donates you a single dollar. And after your're elected? Who will knock at your door?"

"You're talking about Joe Biden?"

"Not about Elizabeth Warren and Bernie Sanders."

"Some of the latest polls in swing states are not in advantage to the Democrats, especially Florida should be alarming?"

"I look forward to the public hearings. Two possibilities: The Dems are destroying this president or they ensure his reelection."

"A risky business?"

"No, because everybody can see just right now, that this man is not only a racist, he's also a fucking criminal. If this will be not enough, if this man becomes reelected, then this would deliver the verdict, the verdict on our nation."

Again I was very satisfied with the very long and intense show! I looked forward to El Paso!

Five hundred and fifty miles, nearly eight hours of driving - nonstop. Our first very long road trip, others would follow soon. We had decided to split the distance in two parts, with a stopover in Fort Stockton, more or less in the middle of the to managing distance. Fort Stockton was also an interesting point, because the landscape would change in this area - San Antonio and El Paso, very different landscapes. At the beginning grass land, bushes and soft hills. At the end very dry land, brown soil and rugged mountains. San Antonio six hundred eighty feet above sea level, El Paso three thousand eight hundred feet over sea level. Very different conditions.

Also we would meet the next "American" river, the Rio Grande. At the beginning of the travel the river would be in still some distance, nearer and nearer we would come, the Rio Grande. From El Paso on till its mouth, till the Gulf of Mexico, the Rio Grande marked the border between the United States and Mexico. The river that floated through a city - on one side of the river El Paso, on the other side of the river Ciudad Juárez. We entered Interstate 10, the only road we would use this day.

"I've the feeling that this is a transition. I've the feeling that I have to change, I've the feeling that I am changing. But the fucking feeling is, that I've no idea what the result will be. Soft hills will transform to rugged mountains, the green bushes and the trees at the wayside will disappear, brown soil will appear. Nothing gold can stay - nothing can stay, not gold, not silver, even diamonds are not forever. Sometimes this fucking feeling grasps me, that everything is too late now, even when I wish sometimes it would be so, sometimes I'm freezing and I feel this awful fear - I would sell the devil everything.

The landscape starts to change, not much so far. But more and more it will change, not in the first half, but very much in the second half. Can you imagine that soon heavy snow will surround us? And yet, I've the feeling that I will like it. I would like it, would this journey never end, but it will end and I'm sad about it."

We reached Fort Stockton.

Fort Stockton, over seventy percent of the inhabitants were Latinos, we came nearer to the border. This was the land of the large cattle ranches - Rock Hudson and Elizabeth Taylor, a lot of truth in this movie, or?

"Wow, not long ago we were in Louisiana and looked at the architecture there. And now here, this very different, none the less very beautiful, houses. Let us look for a place where we can have lunch. I think that at such a place it should be a very easy task."

"Yes, with pleasure."

This was a very strange region in some ways. The counties were very large, like this county, Pecos County, with an overall population of a little more than fifteen thousand! - More than eight thousand of them lived in Fort Stockton. How much cattle in this county alone?

We found a very nice diner, Latinos were allowed to enter. The food was very delicious, the coffee hot. We sat for a while in the diner and looked outside, at the people walking by. How they had to feel, with a president who lets no doubt about, that for him they were no real Americans? Americans second class, lowlives and scum - how much our nice president liked it, to use such fucking words, words of a racist, words of a Fascist!

It was nice to sit here, looking at the people walking by, at the people who lived here, who made their living in this city. Soon we would be in El Paso, the safest city in the whole USA! No longer, because of a proud white fucking American!

We continued with our today's route, the landscape changed more and more now. In a way it became more and more surreal and intoxicating. Not for the first time I had this feeling now, but

this time it felt in a way real. A real surreal feeling - yeah, maybe I should drown in drugs. I looked at the landscape passing by, but we moved, not the landscape. A feeling of nausea conquered me, everything started to whirl, and I liked it. Caroline stopped the car and I heard that she talked with me. I felt the tears, tasted the salty taste on my lips. Why this all was so fucking? El Paso, the safest city in the USA - why this could not last? True Americans values - what a fuck! I puked, and it was nice to do so - blackout

El Paso, the safest city in the USA - no longer, or? No, still it was, at least no fucking white racist was in town. What would happen, when a Latino, a Mexican citizen even, would travel hundreds of miles, for many hours, to one of this nice and safe white neighborhoods, to kill as many Whites as possible? We all are knowing what would happen! Our fucking president and his Nazi friends would shout for revenge, all knew all the time that this kind of people all criminals, rapist and drug dealers were. Who said that we were all equal?

I stood in the Chihuahuan Desert, a desert also a kind of ocean was, and looked at the Franklin Mountains. I thought about to climb them, to stand on top, looking at the dry land. I felt comfortable here - no, no naive babble. Today nine, three women and six children, died an awful death in Mexico. And what was the message overall? That this happened regularly in Mexico, thirty-three thousand homicides in 2018 - twice as much as in the USA!

So often I had this feeling at the beginning, in the green New England States, that this would be a place to stay. And now here, surrounded by brown soil, inmidst a dry desert, so far away from every ocean, I had this feeling again. If my journey would end here, never I would be sad about it. And in a way a journey ended here, but only to begin with a new one.

I walked through a rose garden, obviously not the best time to do so! I walked through a garden in the desert, a desert garden. I walked through a place were I always liked it to be. Dying in a Walmart, strolling around in El Paso Municipal Rose Garden or the Chihuahuan Desert Gardens? Why not El Paso Zoo? Life was really a mess!

"Are you sure."

"Of course."

"You have not to perform this evening. Everybody would understand this."

"I would not understand this."

It was a quiet show, a show of dignity, a show amongst friends.

Jack

"I've heard it, Caroline told it me. I hope it's okay for you."

"Sure."

"You wanna continue?"

"Sure, not that much shows now, we will do a lot of traveling during the next weeks. And come on, it's a game without a risk. In a few weeks I will be home again - and the rest of the tour? Down the West Coast? Hey, this will become a very easy thing to do - Los Angeles at the end?"

"Are you really sure?"

"Yes, I'm a big star now."

"You've accepted CNN's offer?"

"No.....I've signed nothing so far. But hey, my own TV show? I think Los Angeles would be a nice

place therefor."

"Then I look forward to meet you again at Christmas."

"Yeah, the break will do me good."

West - Mountain

The Wild West

Today we had to manage again a longer distance, from El Paso, Texas till Santa Fe, New Mexico. But we decided not to use the Interstate 25, the shortest possible connection between the two cities. Instead we would use smaller roads, would make some stopovers. The first part of today's journey would lead us to Alamogordo, and from there to the White Sands National Monument. We entered the US Route 54, it was early in the morning.

No long distance, possible to drive in an hour and a little more, we needed longer, much longer. The street, dead-straight till the horizon and beyond, found no end. Sparse small bushes and dry brown land. Mountains appeared, came nearer till they dominated the sight. In a way, hardy to describe, I liked this land a lot. It felt like it were so common to me, felt like I would drive home, I stopped the car.

"You feel good?"

"Absolutely, look at this fantastic mountain scenery. Even in winter it's not that cold, but dry and dusty. I would like to stand on top of them. Soon we will see mountains covered deeply in snow."

"Also on this mountains one can see snow sometimes. And it's a chilly morning."

"But it will become a sunny day, as nearly all the days during the year in this area."

"Next Wednesday they have predicted a heavy storm with rain."

"Next Wednesday, we will be not here next Wednesday."

"No, let me think about it - we will be in Tuscon."

"But today we're here."

"Yes, shall we drive directly to White Sands?"

"No, let us have a cup of coffee in Alamogordo."

It was not the coffee as such, it was to be here, here in this city, sitting in this diner, hearing the other people, breathing the same air. We set for White Sands.

White Sands, it was incredible to be here. The white dunes, and it was so enormous! Your white footprints in the gypsum, really you felt like you would wander on an alien planet.

"It's a very strange place, to walk the whole day, in summer, till you break down, exhausted, to die. I've the feeling that I was never before at such a confusing place."

"Yes, you have to be very careful at such a place, not only at summer. You can lose yourself very easily in between this white waves."

"I would like to swim in this white sea. It's so hypnotizing!"

We spent around two or three hours between the whites dunes. I was sad to leave this place. We would head more and more to the north now, till we would be very near the Canadian border again - from Mexico to Canada. Mexico or Canada? I not would like to answer this question, but this would be dishonest. In both countries people lived, but only in one you had a stable political system, only in one you had the feeling of an underlying security.

Our next stage was a very short one, only a few miles, we reached the city of Carrizoro, a small town with a little over a thousand inhabitants. But not the city as such was our aim, to be honest, it was the spectacular landscape near the city.

"Isn't this crazy? Only a short time ago we walked on white ground, now the ground is black! And

again it appears like a foreign world."

"Yes, this is really a crazy region. One could it not better had designed. Next to the white waves made of gypsum, whiteness over many miles, this field of black boulder made of lava, again over many miles. Especially from above, it really looks so really crazy."

"And this is embedded in a landscape, that's already breathtaking, even without this two extreme places. One put it that way round. One of this two places would be fantastic, but this combination is simply unbelievable."

"And there would be so much more. The mountain areas for instance, but we will do this later. At the moment it would be too much."

"Yeah, I think we have to continue with our way?"

"Yes, we have to."

Now we had to drive for a longer time, according to the route planner you could do it in under three hours, we needed again longer, much longer till we reached our next aim on our way to Santa Fe, Santa Rosa.

Driving through this landscape, driving through Corona, Duran, Vaughn, Patura and Arabella - it was.....thrilling. Had not to drive now, looked left and right and saw at any time something that caught my attention - past it! We arrived in Santa Rosa.

"Again a strange place! Surrounded by desert, dry land, this city offers you several natural lakes."

"It's cool, or? I'm not sure about the Blue Hole."

"Too cold?"

"I fear yes."

"We should eat something. So far we had only the snacks we had in the car."

"Very good idea."

It was easy in this small city - no three thousand inhabitants - to find a cozy place to sit down. We took our time and enjoyed a very tasty late lunch, had time to enjoy another cup of coffee and a piece of cake thereafter.

"Now the last part for today."

"Yes, unfortunately. I would have liked it, would it had been possible to stay longer at today's stopovers, to say more about them, to look longer at them. But we have to move on. I don't know why, but New Orleans comes me to mind."

"A crazy day, definitively - unexpected, not planned, spontaneous. Not thought that it would come to this, at the beginning. First white, then black and now blue. What a colorful day!"

"Still the last part for today waits."

"Then let us move on."

The last miles for today, but again we used not the shortest way. We started with Interstate 40, but then we hit Route 84 in direction to Las Vegas - no, not this Las Vegas, Las Vegas in New Mexico. Before we reached the city, we hit Interstate 25 and used this road now, to head towards Santa Fe - why we did this? Look at a map!

The whole day the landscape was very flat - apart from some mountains at the beginning, in some distance. But this had changed now, the last part of today's travel, Interstate 25, led us through a hilly scenery, the foothills of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains. Again a very different landscape. So much happened today.

We reached Santa Fe long after sunset - we were tired. So much impressions today, so many totally different impressions today. It was obvious that this was only the beginning - longer journeys would wait. But for today it was enough. Tomorrow we would have some time for Santa Fe - the show in the evening of course. From time to time we had listened to the news - not much interested in we had been. But now we sat together, a glass of wine and a late, but light, dinner. We would find a bar later, tired but not interested in to lay down. Why this day should come to an end?

We woke up in Santa Fe, the capital of New Mexico, but with roughly eighty-five thousand inhabitants only the fourth-largest city in New Mexico. It was a very chilly morning, snow on the mountains. We looked out of the window, at the foot of the mountain, and enjoyed it to be inside, in the warmth of the hotel. Santa Fe, or better "La Villa Real de la Santa Fe de San Francisco de Asís", well known by tourists.

"The historic downtown could be our aim?"

"Isn't it strange, when you think about a city like Santa Fe you see always this typical Spanish / Mexican architecture. And it's not wrong, you will have no problem in this city, to find such architecture. But modern architecture? Only to think about the Santa Fe Opera and its architecture."

"And I think that everybody would expect, especially after the last cities in which we were, that most of the inhabitants are Latinos. But in fact no fifty percent are Latinos, they are the minority, so to say."

"And who would expect that in this city several Nobel laureates are living? And not because they are enjoying their retirement, but because they research at the Santa Fe Institute, the SFI."

"And also a city deeply connected to literature - reality differs often very much from your images in mind. Especially if they base on TV and novels only."

"You know what thoughts are occupying me the most at the moment?"

"The history of this region?"

"Yes, like at the very beginning, the New England States. But here everything is even more complex. For thousands of years indigenous cultures lived here. Then there's a Spanish time, a Mexican time, an American time - and often it's even more complex. If you would try to do justice to all this, you would have to study everything for a longer time, you would have to talk about so many things, but we jump from one city to the next.""

"No, in such a way it's impossible to see more than a surface, always in danger to talk stupid. But it is the only possibility we have at the moment. "

"What shall we do till the show now?"

"Maybe we should walk out, simple as that? Maybe we should simply drift around? This is a modern city, we have all possibilities of public transport for instance?"

We drifted through the city, saw much, maybe missed more, but it was satisfying and nice. We met people, enjoyed the good kitchen - it was so strange. The green hills at the beginning, the large lakes with the big cities, the swamp land, all this and so much more. The Rust Belt, the Sun Belt so far, the Bible Belt..... - it all puzzled more and more. Was it good, as it was today? Had the people who lived here, in this barren region a thousand years ago, a good life or a life full of deprivation? No easy question - or?

It was a difficult show, had the feeling that I had to change the way I performed. Onstage I saw a log cabin, surrounded by snow only, mile after mile only snow and woods. It was a relaxing feeling.

From Santa Fe to Albuquerque, the most populous city of New Mexico, back to the Rio Grande. Only a short trip today, more or less an hour on the street, we used Interstate 25 again. A short but interesting drive.

In a way the land was very flat, but with mountains in there. Sometimes only a single mountain, but especially towards the north they would form large mountain ranges in the end, but now we headed south again.

Around after half of the distance, in the area of Algodones, we met the Rio Grande again. The river would lead us to Albuquerque - what a spectacular landscape! In every moment you became aware that nature was above men, not vice versa! This landscape was formed by forces way beyond everything human. Or you could see it so: The forces of nature as such were very weak in a way,

but nature had time. A hundred years? A thousand years? A million years? A billion years? A trillion years? The timespan of a human life? Nature was way beyond everything human - and this landscape let no doubt about it! But as said, today's travel was a very short travel. We reached Albuquerque long before noon.

In a way Albuquerque was very identical to Santa Fe. Of course, Albuquerque was much larger, around five hundred sixty thousand inhabitants, but apart from this. The contrast of the historic core and the modern city as an example. And again a very chilly morning, this was desert highland. We were five thousand three hundred feet above sea level at the moment - not that often I was in that height before, especially not for a longer time. Our aim for the morning was the Indian Pueblo Cultural Center.

We spent a longer time there, had a very tasty lunch there. Always I was torn at such a place, thinking about the history - whose history? Assumed no Europeans would have invaded this continent, would they still live in the former way? Would they like it? But the problem was, nobody gave them the right to decide for themselves, the European foreigners forced them to change their way of living, if they not simply killed them because they were in their way. And aspects like gold - California - made things even worse. No, without any doubt, they would not live today in the way their forefathers have lived, but they had decided for their own, would there had been no European invasion.

Our first stop at the afternoon was at the Rio Grande. Well, "Grande"? Not here - sorry, had still the Mississippi River in mind! But it was nice to stand here, down at the river, as always. Also this river would carry me to the Gulf of Mexico, like the Mississippi River. I looked at the mountains in the background, why I had this fucking feeling that this would be my home place, that I would come from this place? The river, like the river I was used to play as a boy, the landscape so different, and yet so familiar. I always wished that my final rest would be the large ocean, why not a desert highland? I had to smile, my emotional life was a mess, more than usually.

But we had another aim for the afternoon, an addition to the morning - we arrived at the Petroglyph National Monument. We walked around and looked at the rock drawings, way older than this nation! The rangers were very helpful and competent, very instructive hours - contemplative hours. It was like it had been, walking on the white, and later the black soil not long ago. This was a very strange region.

I looked at animals, at graphics, at the creative legacy of a gone era - always connected to the history of this region. In a way this petroglyphs were not that old, some hundreds of years. At other places, caves especially, petroglyphs had been found tens of thousands of years old. But this was not the point, the point was that humans, from their origin till today, were always a creative species, a species of art. And this place was a wonderful prove of this fact.

Again I had my problems onstage. Washington, all this shit was in far distance. But this was an illusion in the end. But you could understand, that you could live at such a place, not interested in Europe, Asia, Africa or Washington. Why you should, surrounded by this vast landscape?

Albuquerque, not long ago we had looked at French based architecture, now at Spanish / Mexican / Pueblo - had no idea how to name it - based architecture. More and more the feeling conquered me, that I lose my feeling for home, had the feeling that no place and every place would be my home. I knew the place of my birth, the hospital I was born in. The place I would die? Not important, everywhere could be the place - an ocean of water, an ocean of sand, an ocean of snow. It would make no difference.

Albuquerque, a large city in poor New Mexico - we all knew New Mexico from movies. A city,

were no fourteen percent lived under the poverty line, slightly over seventeen percent of the under eighteen - no bad numbers for the USA! The International Balloon Fiesta, the largest event for hot-air balloons worldwide, was hosted in this city - yeah, often things were very different.

"Oh, the Balloon Fiesta is in October, we missed it!"

"I like aviation, like it to sit in a large aeroplane, preferably for many hours. But I never had the opposite experience. Glider or hot-air balloon, maybe this would be a very special experience. There's this blue ocean above us....."

The whole morning, and even some more hours, we spent at the Albuquerque Biological Park. Located near the Rio Grande and the historic core, the park included - among others - a botanic garden, an aquarium and of course a zoo. Not far away also the Sasebo Japanese Garden. Bored? Allow me such quite moments.

It was late in the year now, the sunset was early, earlier then the beginning of the show. Therefore we decided to drive into the mountains, the Sandia Mountains, mountains referred to watermelons, to watch sunset there. The mountains were fascinating, I liked their ruggedness, we wandered uphill and were somewhat exhausted as we arrived at our aim. We were very high up now, at least for a person like me. The sun shined, but it was cold, the view into the landscape was breathtaking. The city under us, the vastness of the desert highland, the river floating through a desert, all this colors illuminated by the setting sun - tears ran down my cheeks.

"I'm not sure, but I've the feeling that I'm happy in this moment. This landscape has something very special. Nearly you could have the feeling, that this is the place of an origin. If someone would say: At this place everything has begun!, I would have to agree, whatever this "beginning" would have been. This area has something mystical, but I fear that I start to babble. Also at this place one can be unhappy, also at this place crime is not unknown, also at this place nature is endangered. Nevertheless, I feel a strong relation to this place here."

More and more stars could be seen, some planets first, but of course the waxing moon dominated the scenery. Therefore it was not that dark, even not in the mountains, apart from the city. In fact the bright moon illuminated the environment, much more impressive all became because of this. I shuddered, not because of the coldness of the air. You only had to wear a warming jacket, but there was something, something far beyond this.

Let me try something different, this were my first words at the evening. The next two days we would be on the road.

Our longest distance so far, we had to manage today. But we would take our time, two days of driving we had planned. From Albuquerque, New Mexico to Tucson, Nevada. Four hundred and fifty miles, more or less eight hours of driving nonstop. But this was not our aim, our aim was a journey, today from Albuquerque till Las Cruces. This would be a slight detour, not using the NM 26, only Interstate 25 today and Interstate 10 tomorrow. Today we would travel with the Rio Grande, following the river till Las Cruces. A first stopover we planned in San Antonio - San Antonio, New Mexico!

We drove alongside the green band, marked and created by the Rio Grande. It was still this impressing landscape. Very flat in a way, but also with large mountains. Whereas, the nearer we came Las Cruces, the landscape became more hilly. I had the feeling that this landscape made me an addict. Feared, that this would change in a not so far time. The real big mountains - yeah, they attracted me in a never known way. But the in between, couldn't we omit at least the fucking Las Vegas?

"About what you're thinking?"

"I thought about the summers here. They are very hot. Not sure if this would be my weather. Fear

that it would be too hot for me."

"It's desert land, we're living much more in the north and not that far away the coast. A city like L.A. in summer? Nothing for me!"

"Yeah, not much shade there at this time. And behind the mountains in the desert? I definitively like it more in the north, especially in the summer months."

But it was November now and not that long and it would be December. We would spent some time at home, during Christmas and New Year, between this leg of the tour and the last leg of the tour. At home it would be very different, compared with this scenery - why not spending this time in this area? The car pulled up a softly hill, and down on the other side. We reached San Antonio.

This San Antonio was a very small city, no twenty thousand inhabitants, a bedroom community for the White Sands Missile Range, some agriculture. Not that far away from Trinity Site, the place of the detonation of the first nuclear bomb. Of course we entered the Owl Bar and Cafe.

"And?"

"A dry desert landscape with hills and mountains. And then a river that flows through this scenery. A green band, some agriculture, artificial watering of course. It feels, like as this landscape hasn't changed for thousands, maybe millions of years. I feel totally relaxed in this scenery, very strange. It's a desert area, not specially know therefore to be especially friendly to life."

"Maybe that's the reason why?"

"Maybe the reason is, that a desert area is not specially known as a very crowded place."

We hit the road again.

We drove only a very short distance, Elephant Butte was our next aim. No one thousand five hundred inhabitants and a gulf course - but that wasn't our point of interest. The lake was our aim, Elephant Butte Lake, a very large reservoir in the desert.

We looked at the enormous dam, unbelievable how much water was behind this barrier made of concrete - although, the reservoir looked not that much filled. But maybe this was only my impression, it was my first - and presumably last - time here, looking at the enormous amount of water, water in a dry desert.

"The next two "cities", you will like them."

"Why?"

""Truth or Consequences", that's a nice name for a city! And the next is Williamsburg."

"I think no country has more crazy town names as the United States. And yeah, Williamsburg? Williamsburg, New York? I not should get off the point too much!"

We passed another lake, Caballo Reservoir, and continued therewith to follow Rio Grande. Garfield, Salem, Radium Springs were cities on our way, till we reached Las Cruces.

Las Cruces was, with somewhat over a hundred thousand inhabitants, the second-largest city in New Mexico. And as most of the cities in this area, also this city was related to missiles and space. From the V2 till to the most advanced today's technology. Virgin Galactic had its headquarter in the city, to name only this fact. In a way it was a very Mexican city - Day of the Dead, a city rich of history, a very modern city - it was difficult to grasp this cities.

"Why we have no show in this city?"

"It not worked out. I found no venue in this city for this Sunday."

"I know an artist who would have no problems with this. She would look for a fitting plaza and would start to perform - whatever would happen then. But this not really mine. And to be honest, it is good to have not every day a show at the moment."

"We can thought about, what to do at the evening? The Las Cruces Symphony Orchestra performs tonight, they have a venue."

"No bad idea. And till then we should spend some time in the impressing mountains - was nice in Albuquerque, or not?"

"It was very nice. This are the Organ Mountains - let's do it!"

The mountains and the stars, planets and the moon - wonderful music in the end. Tomorrow we would be on the road again.

On the road again, the second part from Albuquerque, New Mexico to Tucson, Arizona - today from Las Cruces to Tucson. Again we had not the intention to master the distance as fast as possible, the intention was to drive through a landscape. We left Las Cruces very early. A cloudy morning, the temperature near the freezing point, the sun still behind the mountains.

Again this typical landscape in which we were the last days, but this would change somewhat during the day. Tucson somewhat less elevated than Las Cruces, but surrounded by more and higher mountains. We passed fascinating landmarks, rough mountains, vineyards even. But no longer a river, no longer the green band meandering through the desert. Green circles, snowy mountain tops, dry soil, sometimes white soil again, still this view absorbed me. From Albuquerque to Tucson, we detoured around the real large mountains, and not only the mountains - still too early for this. Tucson, the iconic cactus seen in so many movies? More and more clouds in a region known for sun at most of the days of the year, even a hint of rain, it seemed as nature tried to fool us.

My head ached, much. The last days had been a challenge, not on the stage, the stage was the easiest part of all. I assumed that this would continue, at least till we would be more north, would have left this desert region behind us, till the huge green mountains covered with lots of snow would await us. I had no idea why I reacted to this landscape in such a way. The beginning so familiar, the end would it be even more. Around the lakes, the flat land, the swamp land - yes, thoughts appeared in my mind. But now? My mind ran wild, I was totally insecure what my feelings were - not attracting, not repellent, but what?

I knelt down to touch the dry soil, the dry soil ran right through my fingers, and this was no metaphor for whatever, just the dry soil and my fingers. It was, like this region would lead you to the essence, the essence of - what?

We had a few stopovers in small cities, at impressive landmarks, Tucson would be in a way like Albuquerque, at least I hoped so. But how puzzling his cities were. From old relics of people who lived here long ago, to most recent rocket science within blocks. You could see your iconic cactus, you could look at grapevines, look at the results of modern agriculture, looking at soil that made the appearance to be untouched since a billion of years. Yes, this ground was an origin, this ground was Ground Zero, this ground was to dive into, to escape, to disappear, and my head seemed to burst.

We reached Tucson very late at night, long after sunset. Still a very cloudy day. Tomorrow a city, tomorrow a show, soon the public hearings, press appointment. But this would have been not our last long journey, the first, the next of them waited already. Los Angeles would be the final stage, but still many miles in between.

Tucson, the second largest city in Arizona, after our next aim Phoenix, with somewhat over half a million inhabitants. It was beautiful to awake in this city, more and more I liked it to be here in this area, this landscape. Think that I said it already - okay, it was mid November now. I would not be sure to say the same during the hot summer heat - I liked the sun every year more, but from a certain point on it became too hot for me.

But the landscape, still desert highland, the scenery, the city surrounded by mountains - and of course, the people. Not that I would start to say, that everything would be perfect here, but I felt - at least I had the feeling as I would feel - a certain mood here, and I liked this mood.

We would have a press appointment later, the show in the evening, but the morning we had for us - as well as the day tomorrow. We had decided to use the hours we had today - the press appointment late in the afternoon, now it was early in the morning - by driving around. Really? One could say: Well, you drove for the last two days? Our answer would be: Yes, but it was simply fantastic to drive through this region - still had not discovered what it was in the end, that captivated me that much here. And so we prepared, some snacks and enough to drink for the day - yeah, it was winter, but not become too sloppy! We had no distinct aim, the mountains of course, the smaller cities and towns - simply what "was" here.

And there it was, the dusty road with a blue white sky above. The dry soil, the iconic cactuses, the green bushes. In a moment I thought that it was a pity that I could not ride a horse, that would be "the thing"! Riding, far from the roads, that it would be! Does Caroline can ride a horse?, I thought. I not knew it, much what I not knew.

We spent fantastic hours in the mountains, walked around much. We had several stopovers in cities and towns, talked with people. In fact, in the end, we had to hurry up, to be not overly too late at our press appointment. We were too late, but as we told them why we had delayed, they appreciated it much.

"So you like it, to be here?"

"Yes, very much. But I have to say, that also other regions were impressive and inspiring, but at the moment it's different. I can not put it into words, not now, later maybe, with some distance."

"Very special times at the moment. Tomorrow the public hearings will start?"

"Yes, this will become very interesting. In a way we are knowing what the witnesses will say, but it will be very interesting to see in which way the Republicans will act."

"What do you expect?"

"I think that the more aggressive they will act, the more it will be not in their favor."

"Why?"

"The convinced Democrats are convinced about that the president has to be impeached. The convinced Republicans - not to talk about the president's "base" - are convinced about that the president did nothing wrong. It's a battle for the undecided and especially for the independent voters."

"Who will win this battle?"

"Who has to win this battle?"

"Has to?"

"We get more and more insights about, how corrupt and conscience-free this disgusting pack - with the president at top - acted and acts. Four more years of this would destroy each and every of our values."

"But why not waiting for the election?"

"Because this would indicate that this behavior would be acceptable. We have to make a very definite statement that this behavior is not acceptable. This people - with the president on top - have to face the courts. The American people have a right to get all the information."

"Do you think that former presidents acted more appropriate?"

"The Central America policy of the USA in the 70s? Iraq has weapons of mass destruction? There's a lot of dirt in the shadow of the White House. But because my neighbor is a swine, I can be a swine? If this is your sense of constitutionality?"

I had the feeling that it was long ago that I stood for the last time on a stage, but I liked it!

Not in the same time zone as the East Coast, but still in the morning, the public hearing began. It was not by accident that we were at a public place, not in our hotel, at a place for us alone. The hearing interested me as such, but also the reaction of the people. Maybe it was necessary to say

that Tucson, Pima County, was blue on the map. Not deeply blue, but blue. In a way you could say now, that the reactions of the people here would be not universally valid, but this would be true for every place. But for the people here their reactions would be valid and therefore their reactions were valid for me. It was not to discuss their reactions as such, but to see them in a certain way, it was to feel them.

We sat for hours, listened to the testimony of two brave men. It was obvious that the mood would had been different in the Texas Panhandle for instance. But again, this was not the point. We sat in a diner, people came in, people left, obvious we were the only one who watched the whole hearing at this place. But again this was not the point. We would have a lot of commentary on TV later, tomorrow we would have twenty-four hours of discussions about it, all the headlines in the news would tell you a story. Not the same of course, but a story.

There were some big moments, again it seemed that it became worse with every word and hour - and this was only the beginning! It hit me, a lot of information and feelings - soon I would be onstage again! Should I talk about first impression? I would need to think things over - in two days the next testimony? The strategy of the Democrats seemed to be clear - full speed ahead! And I agreed with this strategy!

I talked about the testimony onstage - of course, I had to! It seemed obvious that from now on this hearings would determine the discourse.

Only a jump today, from Tucson to Phoenix, from the second-most populous to the most populous city of Arizona. In a way not much changed therewith, dry land, cactuses and mountains. Well, the mountains higher now. Better, not only mountains but a mountain range to the east.

A city with a surprising amount of water, lakes of different sizes all around the city and two rivers, Salt River and Gila River. A city with over one and a half million inhabitants and a strong economy - the "Five C's": cotton, cattle, citrus, climate, and copper - the base of Phoenix's economy. All okay? An eldorado for golfers, every amenity you wished, this city would offer you. All okay? As in every American city.

This very large city, more or less thrice the size of Tuscon, appeared artificial to me, at least in this surrounding, in this landscape. This sea of low houses with some skyscrapers Downtown - the mountains in the background. This reminded me much of Los Angeles, also a at least somewhat artificial city. Nevertheless a city, it could be very interesting to stay in. Today we had no press appointment, tomorrow we would have one, tomorrow also the next public hearing. The show in the evening, but we would have some hours till then.

Arizona? The city had an aquarium, of course a zoo, but we started with the Desert Botanical Garden, to learn more about the flora of this region. Island pine, Mexican fencepost cactus, cardon cactus, acacia, eucalyptus, aloe, bougainvillea, oleander, lantana, bottlebrush, olive.....wow, a lot of new information, but interesting and fascinating. And then the queen of all, the giant saguaro - a real icon! It was nice to step back somewhat from the world outside for a moment, tomorrow it would be a day with many hours watching TV again.

After the flora the fauna. Of course not only the animals of the region one could see at the zoo, but they interested us most. It was interesting to see how diverse the fauna in this area was - many very special ones. Scorpions, tarantulas and other spiders. Of course also an icon of its own, coyotes or elegant bobcats. What animal you should name also? Rattle snacks you should not forget, mountain lions, and lovebirds of course. And there were so much more: Woodpeckers, owls and the wonderful condor - would I ever see one in the wild? And oh, I've forgotten lizards, the gila monster, the desert tortoise, frogs even and so much more! It was a fantastic time! We had still time for enjoying the local kitchen, a very nice dinner. Then it was time for the stage.

Sure, the hearing of yesterday, the hearing of tomorrow. I was happy to be here, in this part of the nation, at this time!

Again we had chosen a public place to watch the second day of the public hearings. In contrast to Tucson Phoenix was a red city, Maricopa County. But only a little bit, pink on the maps. Again it was my interest, not to sit in a hotel room or suchlike while watching the hearing, to be among other people was my interest. In the way you decided to watch super bowl in a sports bar. And what hours this became!

Was this president an idiot? Yes, but the dangerous variant of a hypocritical idiot. It would be an irony, would this president now impeached because of witness intimidation. But what strokes me the most was the witness, Marie Yovanovitch. She acted strong, but showed feelings. The Republicans had not chance to blame her, especially not after this stupid tweet. As Ambassador William Taylor, she showed without any doubts that she supported the president's Ukraine policy in principle, that she were not happy with Barack Obama's decisions. They showed that they were supporters of the president, that they thought that his Ukraine policy was good, to support them with weapons. But that made their critique and their allegations even more powerful.

"Is this the beginning of the end?"

"Would be good! The lame statements of the Republicans after the hearing? What shocks me is, that with every information all becomes more and more worse. And always there is "Rudi", the former bigmouth. Very quite at the moment. And the second disturbing fact, always Russia! Was Nancy Pelosi a prophet as she said: "All leads to Russia"? Russia started the conspiracy theory, Russia seems behind everything and "Rudi" and the criminal in office were willing to take their "stories" as granted. I've the feeling that there's something bigger behind this all - as if this would be not enough."

"It would be interesting to look back now, ten years in the future for example. I only hope that the people who are responsible for all this will be taken responsible for all this."

"Yes, this has to have consequences. If not, this would destroy everything this nation stands for - even when we can discuss whether this values are realized in reality. But after no consequences, we even would have no longer to discuss about them, our American values were dead then. Hey, some would be very happy then, the racists and Nazis would cheer and they would know then, why they have supported this criminal in office."

A long and belligerent show, felt good, had a good feeling while standing on the stage.

From Phoenix to Flagstaff, two hours - maybe a little more. But Flagstaff would be not our aim today, we would arrive in Flagstaff, but it was not the aim. No show this evening, no press appointment. We would drive, not the direct way, no distinct way. Looking at a map, two things became very fast aware, many national forests here in this area, and many (Indian) reservations. We would drive around, just drive around.

And yet, Washington was not to oust, after the show yesterday, the breaking news: David Holmes had confirmed the phone call between the wonderful president and Ambassador Sondland - wow! Even in the desert, even on top of the mountain, Washington was everywhere!

We started early, would arrive very late in Flagstaff. We would drive through dry land, uphill and downhill, would follow valleys, rivers even. Small towns and villages, we would stop whenever we would have to stop, we stopped often. Aliens in hometown - surrealistic feelings.

I had a lot of problems to control my feelings, this landscape so full of beauty, soaked with pain and suffering caused by a devastating history - but no one was able to roll back history. And today, why was today such a fucking time?

The fucking president talked about all the drug dealers and rapists from Mexico, sometimes about the black vermin that contaminated a place like Baltimore, but some people were even for him such un-interesting, that even this man not talked about them - how that had to feel? A CNN host said once, that this country has to talk about slavery in a very self-critical way. Otherwise it would be impossible for the nation to overcome racism - but sorry, didn't you miss something? Wasn't there something "before" slavery? On what this nation is build on? We drove through a wonderful landscape, soaked with pain and suffering - we reached Flagstaff very very late in night.

Now in Flagstaff, surrounded by real big mountains, the highest mountains of Arizona at least. The city of dark sky, with the Lowell Observatory, the place where Pluto and its moon Charon were discovered. A place of culture and art and so much more, not only the mountain peaks were covered with snow. A show tonight.

We had arrived very late last night, under the Milky Way and an ocean of stars. I stood at the window of my room now, looking at the snowy mountains, not knowing what to do. Yeah, there would be so many things one could do. But what would be of meaning, what would have "substance"? I had the impulse to climb the highest mountain, the one I looked at, not for the first time I had such an impulse. But I would fail, not used to do such things, especially not in winter, or at least late in the year. But maybe this was what I lusted for?

Tomorrow we would see one of the wonders of this planet - did I had mentioned the observatory? On Mars was a canyon, that would span the whole USA - everything on Earth was marginal compared with this canyon. And yet, more and more I pined for nature, to be alone with nature, to be a part of nature.

We visited the Barringer Meteor Crater, men and nature - again. Should we reconsider everything, could this been a solution? No solution would be, to continue with everything - would it be possible to find a balance? Maybe nature would become the factor that would cause a balance. Men vs. nature - an unequal duel.

"It's a very impressive sight."

"Yes, I'm totally uninterested in the shit that happens in Washington now. The next week, new hearings - who cares? I'm sick of it, I would like to escape all this. But the fucking point is, that this is impossible. If we would allow this people to destroy our nation, then it would be unimportant where you would live. You cannot escape all this, not on top of the highest mountain, inmidst the largest desert, inmidst the largest ocean. At no place you will be able to escape all this, and this is the fact that kills me."

A difficult show, I was not satisfied, full of questions, uncertainties, found no answers. Could I be a Messiah?

We left Flagstaff, the gate to the Grand Canyon, to reach Desert View Watchtower, the starting point of the journey of the next two days. Its end the journey would find in Temple Bar Marina at Lake Mead. Now was Monday morning, we would arrive very late on Tuesday. Wednesday we would be at Lake Mead, Thursday and Friday we would have shows in Las Vegas. From Flagstaff to Grand Canyon to Lake Mead to fucking Las Vegas - what a bloody irony!

In many "primitive" cultures they knew an initiations ritual, connected with walking, being in nature. Well, for the boys of course, to become men. But this was not the point for now. The point was, to do it - it was November, we would have a warm place for the nights. It was not the doing as such, to act as if, we had 2019 and this was Arizona, USA. It was the idea behind, the abstract mood. In a way, as you could be all alone at a well visited beach, it could be your own private beach, your 13th beach.

After the second-largest canyon, this now was the largest canyon of the USA - the largest worldwide? Had no idea - well, everything in the USA was the largest, best, most fantastic.....but even if not, should I ask the Almighty Internet?, standing at the canyon's edge, looking down, this had to be a moment of reconsidering things, this had to be a moment of making decisions. In this scenery, in the morning, when the snow crunches under your feet, myriads of stars above you, the waning moon, if not now, then, whenever?

I saw the condor above me in the sky, being free, for hours sailing without one beat of the wing. And yet, would this mighty bird not find its prey, the mighty bird would die. And one day will come, no longer mighty the bird will be, old then, near death. Yes, all you could mystify, all you could see in a corrupt way, or do you think the rabbit will like it, to be the condor's prey?

Torn between possibilities, an endless flow of emotions flooded my mind, the not knowing of the outcome of decisions, the burden of the knowing of the finiteness of your existence, looking at a place at your feet formed during millions of years, looking at the lights above you shining for billions of years - how meaningless all this human ambitions were. And yet, nothing more we humans had, not capable to do anything together, as one human kind.

Nevertheless, a question arose: What has to be your personal consequence out of this all? There had to be an answer - any answer would be an answer, the most fucking would be, to try to wriggle out of the engagement, to give none, no answer would be the most fucking answer of all! This two days were the days of questioning, by looking at the canyon below, by looking at the condor and the stars above. Tomorrow, at the lakeside, would be the day for a distinct answer. But one answer was there even now: It could not continue in this way!

A sudden sense of liberty - you sang it, but this could mean so much! True Faith - truth in an ocean of uncertainty, an ocean called the human life? The taste of a wild strawberry, growing at the edge of the forest - a childhood replaced by fear? But what, if even the childhood had been a place of fear? A gun on the table - it's your decision!

I stood in the desert and looked at the enormous water surface in front of me, the largest man-made lake in the USA. How many died, building Hoover Dam? And yet, the best days had passed, less and less water in it, only forty percent, less than in the second-largest one. Man vs. Nature - still an unequal fight.

The hearings yesterday, the hearings today, all the hearings. I'd lost the contact with it, knew only some facts, some braking news. Also today was no day to listen to it, for hours, Ambassador Sondland for example. This was a historic moment, following generations would look back at this days and weeks, while I stood on desert soil, looking at a vanishing water surface.

The last two days I had tried to get order into the mess of my feelings and thoughts - why this should be possible? In a chaotic world, a chaotic universe probably, why this should be possible? And yet, all this chaos had created the stars, the planets, the galaxies, and in the end life. As far as

we humans could understand it, some simple "laws" - laws of nature - were enough to create all this. Some simple laws, only a few, valid at every place and for all and everything, created a whole universe, from a nuclear particle till the complexity of human life and the ability to discover your self. And yet, the most complex creation of this process was not longer capable to follow this way? What a devastating irony that would be!

But this was the day to make decisions, not to ask questions, not to ponder. I stood in the desert and looked at the largest man-made lake in the USA, a water reservoir mainly for Las Vegas and the surrounding agriculture, who disappeared more and more - a metaphor? Wouldn't it be the first question to answer, if it was not from the beginning in the 30s a mistake, a stupidity, a kind of hubris, to build Hoover Dam - for a stupid place like Las Vegas, and green fields in the desert? And today, every year less water the river provided, every year more demand by the people? Yes, this all was a metaphor - no, it was much more, it was the fucking reality!

No, not the phony story from the noble "Indians" now, who lived in harmony with nature! Yes Mr. Young, Cortez was a bloody killer, but your description about the "native people" is a bit too naive, at least for me! But this makes nothing better today, if, then worse! Because today we have more knowledge and more possibilities - we could use them!

I could stand for hours, for days, weeks and years in the desert now, looking at the water, while it would become less and less. I could fill pages, book, libraries with my thoughts, but was it at the end not always one question one had to answer? And yet, why I should be able to answer a question, that stayed unanswered since the beginning of human culture?

A question is much more up to date today, as at the time firstly asked by Enrico Fermi in the 50s. Today we know, that alone in our galaxy there are hundreds of billions of planets, and on a not so small number of them life would be theoretically possible. Some of these planets are much older than ours - the question? Where are they? If this galaxy would host numerous planets - many older, much older than ours - planets that could harbor life, also intelligent life, then: Where are they? We not even would have to meet them, signals would be enough! But it seems that we would be alone. Why I ask this question? There is this one possible answer, this one fucking answer: Because intelligent life tends thereto to annihilate itself from a certain point on - the phase we're in at the moment! Should this be true, this would be the most devastating and awful answer one could find!

I stood in a desert and looked at a beautiful water surface and my task was it, to give me an answer. And I gave me one

Las Vegas, Mandalay Bay, but not 33rd floor Mr. Williams, only 32nd - we all knew why. I looked out of the window and we all knew what I saw, my tears were not enough, not enough tears in this whole fuckin' city as of yet. But hey, Sin City has no time to grief, no time this country has to change. Move on, the gambling has to continue, dream your dream of wealth, knowing that the casino will be the winner all the time in the end. Yeah Mandalay Bay, no time, no mood for monkey whores, a time to die, there was always a time to die.

Las Vegas known as a city, as not many others. Segregation always was different here, in former times as well as today. The "map of racial distribution"? Mixed up colors in a surprising way - seldom seen it in this way in the USA. No ten percent lived under the poverty line? Six percent of the under eighteen? Was this the place of the lived American Dream?

I stood at my window and looked at a place - at no place in the States more had to die as at this one. Ten minutes were enough, one old white man with over twenty rifles, that was enough. But be happy and gamble, life can be short, you never know when. Maybe you're listing to country music, looking at the young nice country girl next to you, and suddenly nothing is the same anymore. Let

me die and let her live, she only wanted to have a nice time. Wasn't there this idea, that actions have to have consequences? But when this action has no consequence, what kind of action than should cause a consequence? I stood at a window and looked at a place

Yeah, a time to be born, a time to die, a time to be consequence, a time to take responsibility, a time to decide. And then? I felt empty in a sense that everything would be possible from now on - in a sense, in an abstract way. I stood in front of a disgraceful president an spit in his face, maybe one would do this one time, it would be then also me. I would do it, would I stand face to face with him - I would have to do it! Throw your shoe when you see him - he not deserves it better. In any case, the last what he deserved was respect, disrespect was the only language he would understand.

The show in the evening, now in Nevada, in the largest city of the state? Only two blue counties in this state, nevertheless Clinton won this state. My stage not at the Las Vegas Strip of course, enough had their stages there. And yet, it was fucking good show, it was my show, and I had a lot to say. I would have to say a hell of a lot from now on!

The second day in Las Vegas, was not interested in this fucking Strip, fucking boring as the Strip in L.A. - apart from the nice hotel maybe, the Roxy and the Whisky a Go-Go today? To be fair, said it already before, this place was always a special place. Especially in the decades of racial segregation such a places had it's own rules - at least more or less. And today? You had to be very naive wasn't it obvious for you, that this was the place of the money - in that way a perfect illustration of the States. You're rich, you have and you're willing to spend a fucking lot of money? Be welcome! We will do everything for you that you have a nice stay! You've only some bucks? Well, be welcome also to spend your few bucks, but don't expect any specials.

Was it possible to do such a place justice? For many such a place meant home, a chance, for many it had been the perdition. Too much CSI? This was not my place, I felt repelled! A press appointment in the afternoon, the show in the evening.

"Do you feel good?"

"Yes, of course. It would be a very short trip to Los Angeles from here, to the coast."

"Yeah, but we will not take the direct way."

"Not quite, we will not take the direct way."

What should one do in Las Vegas, especially in the morning and afternoon? Why not spent some time in Paradise?

"Good breakfast!"

"Yeah, this is our second breakfast this morning. I will get fat like Elvis!"

"Unfortunately you cannot sing like Elvis."

"Well, Chuck Berry or Little Richard? Would you like it, to be my Priscilla then?"

"Honestly?"

"You started this Elvis thing."

"Actually you started with Elvis. But no, I wouldn't be interested in, to be anyone's Priscilla."

"Even not mine?"

"Not Priscilla!"

We had a nice time in Paradise. Nevada could offer you a lot, beyond the desert. And never forget: Las Vegas, the city of love and marriage, of hate and divorce!

"I welcome you at KLAS-TV, Peter."

"Thanks for having me, Janice."

"Greeting from - you're knowing, or?"

"Yeah. Greet her back, if you see her."

"You're ready for my show?"

"Of course."

"I could imagine that Las Vegas isn't your city?"

"Not exactly - you like it to be in this city?"

"Well, it's my job to be here. I have not the plan to work for the rest of my life for CBS in this city. By the way, you're also a member of the CBS family now?"

"Not finally. I've not signed the contract so far. I will do it after the tour, then I will have more time for such a thing."

"In which city they will produce the show?"

"It's not decided finally now."

"Shall we talk about the questions that I will ask you?"

"No, I hate this procedure. Ask your questions and I will answer them. Apart from this, at least some topics are very obvious, or? The hearings for example?"

"Of course, we have to talk about the hearings. Not because of the show but, do you're thinking that the Dems have done it well?"

"I would not concentrate on the Dems, I would concentrate on the disgusting behavior of the Republicans. This is the most awful and dangerous president we ever had in office, and they betray all their values to shield him? Could you imagine in which way the Republicans would behave, would this be a democratic president? Point your fingers on the Republicans, tell them that there will be a time after this president, tell them that you will not forget or even forgive their behavior. After every dictator there was a backlash, our time will come. And the longer it will last, the heavier the backlash will be."

"And till then?"

"Point with your fingers on them. They are the liars, the betrayers, the hypocrites. There will be a backlash, think about a figure like Kavanaugh? Is he safe? Tell him that he never will be safe - why? The next democratic president - and there will be a next democratic president! Why not some serious FBI investigations then? Maybe it will be interesting to hear the witnesses this time, to ask serious questions? Also he could be impeached - nothing is over now!"

"Do you see chances for this?"

"Look at the polls, the majority of the American people are sick of it, to see that all other industrial countries have public healthcare, free education, paid parental leave and more. At one point this will have consequences. The Republicans can delay it, but they cannot stop it!"

It was a fucking good show - why? Because I felt good, because I liked it, because I had the feeling to do something meaningful!

From Las Vegas to Salt Lake City, from Nevada till Utah - much would change now. But still we were in Las Vegas and had breakfast. A distance easily possible in a day, but we would need two of them.

"From Las Vegas to Salt Lake City, two days in the gambling city and soon two days in the Mormon city - I fear that you're not happy with this part of my planning of the tour."

"Well, it could be worst. No, also this city interests me, even if this city would be definitively not my first choice. But it's always a difference only to see something from afar, or be involved in it. You know what comes me to mind?"

"No."

"Bulls vs. Jazz, I liked it to see the Bulls playing, as they gave the moral crusaders from the lake a short shrift. Rodman was my man at this time, but this is long ago."

We finished our breakfast and hit the road.

Of course, we could use Interstate 15, and it was not excluded that we would use this road also, but

we had no distinct plan. Las Vegas, Saturday, early in the morning we had left the city - Salt Lake City, Sunday, very late in the night we would arrive in this city. In between? We would find places for a rest, to eat and drink something, we would find a place for the night. Hey, this wasn't the wilderness! Still the USA in the time of navs, smartphones and all this nice devices. What's behind the next mountain? Yeah, let's have a look, Google Earth will tell you!

And it was not our aim to drive directly from Nevada to Utah - Nevada, Utah, even Arizona again or till Colorado, we would drive around, no state borders interested us. Utah, an overall population of a few over three million! Los Angeles city was larger, even Brooklyn alone had not much fewer inhabitants - but six electoral votes!

We drove around, mountains and valleys, the flat land, snow more and more, a lot of salt. Many small cities and towns - I still had not forgotten this very little town, at the beginning of the tour. But this was different. Not the northern region near the Canadian border, not now, but soon again. Still a dry land, not so much green, no woods, not now, but soon again. Utah was definitely no easy state to live in, a very stony place, soon it would be December. A cold place, snow, but the real snowy mountains still waited.

I had the feeling that this was a strange region. More in the south there had been these cities that had affected me so much - and, maybe even more, the landscape. More to the north the real mountain range waited. More and more we would enter the Rocky Mountains, the Appalachian Mountains at the beginning. But here, it seemed like a transition, a strange unreal intermediate realm - I was torn! One part of me lusted to drive back, towards this other border. Another part of me lusted for the coming time - but here no part wanted to stay. We reached a very small town.

"It's strange here, even if this no longer a desert area, for me this is much more a desert. It was so wonderful, in the south. But I've lost this mood totally now."

"Sorry for the two days."

"That's okay, it's no longer 1875!"

"No, even in Salt Lake City time stood not still. They have a not so small LGBTQ community, you are knowing this?"

"Really? Okay, that I not expected. I can not imagine, to see men and women kissing each other in public transport in Salt Lake City? Okay, San Francisco, there it's something normal, but Salt Lake City?"

We continued with our trip.

But maybe this all was unfair, the days in the desert had led to a decision, the decision had been made now. Maybe it was this feeling: It's done now. In a way relieving, in a way it caused an emptiness. Maybe it was a kind of impatience, the impatience to see the high mountains, covered in heavy snow. So much I had seen now of America's beauty, the snowflake that drifted in the Rockies, still was missing. Did I love her? Well, did she love herself? At the moment she was torn apart, in a very awful way. Not that she ever was united, really united, always she was separated in parts. But this time it was in way that made you anxious, so much bleeding wounds she had now, too much? It would need a long time to heal all this wounds, would there be a time when everything would be too late. Some hoped so, it was their aim, to destroy her - my beautiful America, who should be the one to define your beauty?

The more we came nearer to Salt Lake City, the more the scenery became strange - of course, the Great Salt Lake. The largest lake of the USA, apart from the Great Lakes - very strange. Extremely salty, and yet the living place for millions of creatures. Often things became very different, when you were in touch with them. I was extremely tired now.

The last days had been very hard, not physically, but mentally. Nevertheless, I was also very happy and satisfied in a way. Yes, at the moment it was hard, but soon everything would change. And then there would be the Christmas/New Year's Break, another year would come to it's end. And then the easy final, simply along the western coast. We did it, the rest would be easy. And finally, a bright

future waited - welcome, next big TV star!

I looked out of the window of the car, it was pretty cold outside, very cloudy, snowfall not only one time this day. The street was wet, the sun very near to the horizon now, Salt Lake City in front of us. This time the two days travel was very different, compared with the last one, not long ago. We drove through a mountain scenery now, left and right, the city was on the other side. It would have been very easy to reach it, but why? The darkness now around us, on salty ground, the city was very near now, but why we should arrive? It was a game now, we would lose, as we finally saw the city's lights. Two days, two shows, press, then we would leave again - as always!

I stood at the window of the hotel and looked at the high and dark mountain side. Tomorrow we would have some time, I was nervous, thought I would have to move on, further and further, nipped at the cup of tea in my hand.

"You're very restless today, thought you were very tired?"

"I'm extremely tired, I will not be able to sleep. I would like to go back to the car, the next aim, and next, and the next - till I would arrive in Los Angeles."

"Are you tired of the tour?"

"On the contrary! But something happened. If I could I would start again, Boston again! But this will be not possible, it would be a lie. I wish that it would never end, and in the same time I desire nothing more, than to stand at the ocean again. Santa Monica, the beach and the pier - I will spend you an Italian ice cream in the pedestrian area there. Would you like it, to have a house in the Hollywood Hills?"

"No, I like it very much in Portland. Do you plan to move to Los Angeles?"

"No, it's a two hours flight."

"So, Los Angeles?"

"It would be the easiest alternative in the end - never I would give up Portland!"

"Maybe you should try to sleep a bit?"

"Maybe....."

*You don't ever have to be stronger than you really are
When you're lying in my arms, baby
(Ms. Elizabeth Woolridge Grant; California)*

Salt Lake City - yes, the Mormons. The Temple Square with the Salt Lake Temple, or the Salt Lake Tabernacle with the Mormon Tabernacle Choir - you had to talk about this. And yet, shouldn't you talk about the annual Utah Pride Festival, a LGBTQ festival, and many, many other annual festivals? The Dark Arts Festival for instance, a three days festival dedicated to goth? Parts of the Sundance Film Festival were hosted in Salt Lake City, as well as festivals like the Salty Horror Con & Film, Damn These Heels, and the Voice of the City FilmQuest? The annual fair of The Catholic Nuns of Carmelite Monastery? The annual Ganesh Festival of the Sri Ganesh Hindu Temple of Utah? And all the others? Diversity, a lot of diversity. Yes, in former times, but today? This county had voted blue, the next county to the east, Summit County - even bluer! Of course, the rest of the state was red. Deep, deep red often. Clinton had no chance of winning the state, but also because of an independent candidate who won over twenty percent of the votes - to be fair. But was important was, also a city like Salt Lake City, a state like Utah, was not easy to grasp. Especially not from outside, or in one or two days. And the Mormons?

When I ever have heard a simply silly and in an awful way racist story-telling from a religious group, then from the Mormons! No one second you have to discuss this! Disgusting and not acceptable - but especially it was that obvious that all this talking by Joseph Smith was simply a lie! A big hoax, from a criminal man - if you wanna become rich and powerful, found your own

religious group! Greetings from Scientology!

But what told you a lot, was polygamy! Yes, they dropped it - not all of them! - officially later, but only under pressure! And why polygamy? As always, a bunch of (old) white horny men! It was nice, when getting older and older, to get regularly new fresh meat to satisfy your desires, especially real young meat! That wasn't the reason? Oh, come on! Always the same story in such groups - get the young and fresh and form them like you wanna have them. Oh, I've forgotten, you need them for having babies, your babies. And the women? Why should one be interested in their needs? No new story, but the variant of the Mormons was a very disgusting one - the devils with the red/dark skin!

Would I have to talk about this in the evening? Of course! I finished my video about my feelings to be in Salt Lake City now, and uploaded it - would everybody like it? No, some would hate it. But why I should be interested in them, in their fucking comments? I would have done something wrong, if nobody would hate me for this video - especially in the USA today.

Utah, the Great Salt Lake, the mountains, the flat land, a scenery of bizarre beauty. No easy place to live, to be fair. We walked up high mountains, walked on salty ground - a bit like White Sands seen from above? The lake as such, no nice place, not like Lake Mead for instance. And yet, the lake ensured a vastness of life. But you had to be realistic, still the USA, still November 2019. No, not a place I could imagine living. And yet some did, how easy it would have been to judge about, a hundred years ago? No, it was not acceptable for me, the Mormon way. As all this groups, they put themselves before all the others, because they knew the holy truth. They judged about me, they judged about the young underage girl who had decided for an abortion, they judged about everything and everyone, because they owned the holy truth - a story so stupid and disgusting, but hey, it was the holy truth! Yes, this city was no longer only Mormon land. The demographics had changed, many lived in different realities, but.....yes, but!

What I had expected for the show? Had got some negative press in the forefront, comments on radio and social media. The video today had not made it better, but in a way? Should I hope for applause from people who are only capable to define themselves by suppressing others? This would had been disgusting! Say it loud and clear, too much was at stake at the moment! It was a fucking good show, it was a fucking fantastic audience! Why? I saw so many different people in the audience, at least something I had done right!

"You're satisfied with yesterday?"

"What do you mean? The day or the show?"

"Both."

"Yes, with both. I mean, I hate this symbol of intolerance at Sunset Boulevard in Los Angeles. But to see this symbol of placing yourself above others here in this city every day, that would be too much for me. Okay, also in this city other people are living, people who are open-minded, who are really interested in others, who really care about others and accepting their different way of living. But nevertheless, this is the state of the Mormons, and I will not accept their behavior. Yes, you can criticize this as intolerant, as un-American, but it would have been good, would there had been more intolerant people in Germany in the 30s, intolerant of Hitler and the fascists! To accept everything is stupid, to accept them who are accepting nothing but only their own convictions is self-destructive. I will not accept the Mormons and their racist and intolerant behavior."

"I fear that you will find not many friends in Utah."

"As long as the right persons are hating you, everything is fine!"

We spent some time in Hogle Zoo and Red Butte Garden and Arboretum. Okay, late November, but nevertheless we had a nice time. I looked at the people - would all of them be happy about my

thoughts about them? Of course not, but could it be an aim to become the all-American darling? That everybody would love you - and what would "everybody" mean? Every left-wing or right-wing radical, every communist, every racist, every white supremacist for instance? That could be no aim, that would be schizophrenic!

As always, it was nice to see the animals and plants, it was a very cold day. The mountains were beautiful, but we had to move on. Soon I would have my own TV show - everybody said that I would become a big nationwide star. I would earn a lot of money then, could buy me a big house, and a real fast car then. I would have a lot of real friends then, many chicks would love me then because I would be such a fascinating man. I would fit perfectly in this wonderful fucking Hollywood/TV wonderland!

"About what do you're thinking?"

"About my wonderful and bright future! Could you imagine living here in this city?"

"Not really. Even not with the next upcoming big TV stand-up comedy star. Still my heart belongs to Portland."

"In exactly three weeks we will drive home."

"You're counting the days?"

"No, I had a look at the tour plan this morning."

"Three weeks, so many weeks are left behind now. Still some time, but then a whole year will have passed. February till February, and then one year more. Everything is so different now."

I stood on a stage, said many things. I stood on a stage and heard the applause. I stood on a stage, soon I would do it in front of TV cameras. Would I get applause from the off then? Laughter, when ever needed, artificial as everything. I stood on a stage and it was a very good show. I stood on a stage and I was happy.

Salt Lake City behind us, Denver in front of us. We would not use Interstate 80, it would have been somewhat over 500 miles - manageable in a day. But again we would be two days on the road. The first day we would be in the area of the Uintah and Ouray Reservation, to hit Interstate 70 in the area of Grand Junction. In Grand Junction we would spend the night. The next day we would use Interstate 70 to reach Denver. The Uintah and Ouray Reservation?

No, it was not our aim to tell the people there, that we would identify us with their case, no act of solidarity with them, that we would be big friends of the "redskins". We did it for us, to be brutally honest. It was to be there, to see it, to feel it, to try to be aware of your own feelings. Yet not much people lived in this area, and more important, many of them were immigrants. The largest city in the "reservation" was Roosevelt, with seven thousand inhabitants. Just about a little over eight percent were "Native Americans", the rest came from outside.

It was interesting to learn something about the history of this place, in what a way this people, who lived here since a very long time, had been treated and often enough also had been cheated. Well, the powerful wrote the history, he always was in the right - a fucking reality, or? And yet, it seemed, as just now, right at this moment, time came to the point, that nature would fight back, would show the humans how defenseless and unnecessary they were, for this planet, for this universe. No, no famous words from the noble savage now - they also have fought wars against each other, or?

We drove through this barren landscape, in a way it was, as it had been more southwards. But in the end very different, at least I perceived this landscape very different. Empty roads and empty land, dry brown soil, scattered trees, a bright blue sky and a shining sun. And yet, it was a cold day, soon we would have December. In the night it was freezing, and also during the days it was not warm at all. Heavy rainfall yesterday, dry today, not that much snowfall in this region normally. Still I had this feeling that this was a region in between. Between the south that had touched me so much, and the north, I lusted for.

After the more or less flat land we had reached the mountain area behind that Grand Junction waited. It had become dark, not that much of the landscape we still could see, but an impressive night sky! We stopped and had a look - the hunter and his dogs, the Seven Sisters, another Milky Way millions of light years away, two beautiful clusters of sparkling gems and so much more. We reached Grand Junction.

Back at the Colorado River, we found our place to stay for the night. Tomorrow we would drive to Denver, then we would head north - but now we had to think over this day. We had to think over the origin of this nation, the birth of this nation. What a nation would you expect, built on such a history? The land of my ancestors? What a nation you would expect, founded on the dead bodies of millions who died on the battle fields and in the gas chambers? The old man in front of Wonder Bakery in Chinatown, L.A.? Maybe that could be an answer, maybe this could be a solution - maybe.

Today it was a straight journey, no detours. Interstate 70 led us directly to Denver, a short drive, already in Colorado now. A very interesting located city, at the end of the High Plains, at the beginning of the Rocky Mountains - or vice versa, if you like. We arrived early in the morning.

Was I happy to be in Denver? Not really, a true American city. Economically strong, a lot of culture, all time present in art, especially movies and TV, literature as well. Of course a clear structured city - as said, a true American city.

Have a good job, a nice income, it was nice to be in such a city then. I became more and more sick of all this - was Portland different? Nice bike lanes in nice neighborhoods, the American reality? I had watched TV while Caroline drove the car towards Denver. More and more I got the belief, that the Dems would screw it up a second time. The next billionaire on the run, always this stupid talking about the too left-wing candidates, again this talking that only a Centrist could win in 2020. Of course, as we saw in 2016!

Clinton won the state, a very divided state. Not exactly, but in the middle blue, at the borders, to the east and the west, red - Denver, as the big city of the state, of course blue. Nevertheless, I did not feel comfortable in this city, still I thought about this cities in the desert in the south. It was cold here, very cold in the nights, liked the mountain view. Could it be, that I had now even more problems to interact with other people - saw me such often now in midst a desert or on top of a mountain.

I had no motivation to explore Denver, even not the zoo or the botanical garden. A trip to the mountains - soon we would be in the mountains, the Rockies. And yet, the real Rockies, the real high mountains would be on the other side of the border. Another nice metaphor? No, again the stupid reality.

Still the country was divided, should the president become impeached - how decayed this country was, that this even could be a question? Another four years? Yeah, the real high mountains, the real Rockies, would be on the other side of the border.

We walked around for a while, found a nice and cozy place to have a hot tea. Of course one could live in this city as well as in all other cities of the world. It was never the question of where to live, always it was the question, in what a way you have to live, what opportunities your life offered you. Well, some felt like an alien at all possible places. It was a very nice cup of tea, black tea with a variation of nice spices, in the way of an Indian chai.

Today our first show in Denver, yesterday was Thanksgiving. You not ask whether we celebrated the day or not - or! Why one should celebrate a day of grievance? A day of endless lies? A story, as phoney as the story the Mormons are telling you, as racist as well? Why one should celebrate this

day?

It was interesting, who all sent you greetings and wished you a nice Thanksgiving Day. Maybe it would be better to talk about the dishonesty of this day, how disrespectful this celebration was for many - was someone interested in them and their feelings? Columbus Day? What a happy day as "we" discovered a "new" world that only waited to be settled. How nice it was, to build the history of a nation on such lies.

We had no distinct aims, not much happened in Washington at the moment - Thanksgiving Weekend - as well as not much happened in the city. "Happened" in the sense of that something important would happen, something of "substance".

We tried to omit the "necessary" things - today was Black Friday. No, we were not interested in to shop, tried to ignore all what happened around us. It was even more annoying than usually to watch TV, to listen to the radio, or even to read the newspaper. Yeah, what a wonderful long weekend - oh, forgotten to mention football!

I hated such days, not only since I had crossed the desert, since my youth. Everybody pretend to be happy, everybody had to be happy. And the final absurdity was this hypocrite image from the noble pilgrim, nice that the next day Black Friday was - in a way very fitting! And to be honest, those days would have been nerving days in every city for me. At least every city that celebrated those days, with other words, every "real" American city. And the show?

I would talk about this, it would be my Thanksgiving/Black Friday show. A show with a lot of celebration and commerce. Maybe I would celebrate some slightly different things, maybe I would sell some slightly different things, but I was sure that we would have a lot of fun, at least I would have a lot of fun. I also had made a video about this wonderful long weekend, it had a very similar effect like my video about the Mormon's state.

Yes, it was cool show. I, and most of my audience, had a lot of fun!

Our second day in Denver, we stood up early, had a long breakfast.

"Do you look forward to the mountains?"

"Absolutely!"

"But you have seen that, if you talk about to be inmidst the mountains, that this will be really true only at our very last day of this leg of the tour. At 17th, in Missoula, we will be really surrounded by the Rockies."

"Yes, in that way this is true. And it's also true, that the really high mountains are on the other side of the border. A show in Calgary or Vancouver would have been cool!"

"I had this in mind at the time as I planned the tour, but there were no real opportunities at this time."

"And now?"

"After your growing success and the shows in Canada at the beginning of the tour? Would be no problem anymore, but this would have meant to shorten the Christmas/New Year's break. I think we need this break now, I need it to be honest."

"I too, to be honest also. But it would be no problem as such now?"

"No, it would be easy now."

"What about some more shows in Canada after the official end of the tour? Alaska? Hawaii? Why not Puerto Rico?"

"Directly after the tour it would be inmidst the winter? It would be difficult for Canada and Alaska, to travel there. Even when we would consider traveling by plane, by car it would be impossible at all. I have also inquiries from South America, Europe and Asia now, not to forget Australia and New Zealand. I thought about to talk about this with you, when we're back in Portland. Don't forget

CBS, your TV show? In the future you will have many opportunities. You can ask for nearly every fee now, not to talk about when you're on air."

"That's not the point, as you know. But it would be cool, to travel to the other regions of the US as well, not to talk about other nations, continents even. Maybe we can plan the recordings of the show in a way, that we can plan some shorter tours in the future as well?"

"Should be possible without any doubt. "

"That would be cool! I have to be onstage, in the future maybe even more than now. It would be hard would this no longer possible. Would you accompany me also to other continents?"

"As long as I'm acceptable for you as manager still in the future? Maybe I will be not capable to fulfill your claims in the future anymore? Would be not the first time that a star becomes a big star and nothing is any longer good enough for him?"

"I hope that I will never develop in such a way. A sign therefor would be in any case, to be no longer satisfied with your work. But maybe you would accompany me also not as manager, or not only as manager?"

"Maybe."

We had a very nice day in Denver - don't laugh about me! Yes, Denver had a zoo and a botanical garden, and many other nice places as well. Much more than we could visit. Tomorrow the trip to Casper, Wyoming. A drive of somewhat over four hours, this time we would need only a day. But after Casper a four days long trip waited.

It was a very nice show, I was in a very special mood. I looked forward to New Year's Eve and New Year's Day. Maybe this year would end in a very special way, maybe the next year would begin in a very special way, maybe both!

We would be very conventional today, we would use Interstate 25 to drive from Denver to Casper. But we would have a stopover in Cheyenne.

Cheyenne and Casper were almost equally in size, Cheyenne had a few inhabitants more and was the capital of Wyoming, not far away located to Denver. Cheyenne had around sixty thousand inhabitants, Casper a few thousand less - the state as such had five hundred seventy thousand inhabitants, no state in the USA had fewer inhabitants. The state was deep red - well, one blue county even here, three electoral votes.

We would not enter the mountains, we would stay in the High Plains. Wyoming, only a few inhabitants, but a lot of land - the second-less population density after Alaska. A lot of empty land, not only today, also in former times before the Europeans came. It was hard to live in this area, especially because of the climate. Wyoming marked the transition from the Great Plains to the High Plains till the Rocky Mountains.

Today was a, for this region, warm day, warm for December. But even then it was cold, not to talk about the nights. Last night had showed the stars very well, therefore it was a very chilly morning, but the sun over the day provided at last some warmth, at least behind the windows of the car.

"Some snowfall is predicted for the night, but they also said that this year not half that much snowfall till now as in the previous years."

"I also thought that the land would be whiter. Of the course the mountains near Denver, but I mean this is not the Great Plains, this is the High Plains? Even the High Plains is at high altitude, as more or less the whole state."

"Climate change?"

"Maybe only a normal seasonal fluctuation? We should search for data."

We reached Cheyenne after a very short drive through flat land, for some time, at the beginning, with mountains to the left.

"Magic City of the Plains", "The Frontier City", a city of cowboys – we were in Wyoming now! A

history for the movies, with all you needed for a good western. Cheyenne, the railroad, sixty(!) brothels and many saloons, a general and a lot of cattle. Wow, this was the real America! Wow, I saw The Duke in front of me, riding on a horse with his rifle in his hand! Yeah, 2019 we had - since 1897 the annual Frontier Days, with three hundred thousand spectators? Lasting for a whole week, with bull riding, calf roping, barrel racing, steer wrestling, team roping, bronc riding, steer roping, bareback riding, and many others. Also many parades and a carnival - not my favorite interests in entertaining!

We walked around Lions Park, had a very good coffee and a piece of delicious cake - a nice little town. Many of the inhabitants were civil servants, a solid economy, living here? Not really - or? Would I have to buy me a horse then - stupid idea! But to be honest, I thought that this would be not my place, I was definitively no guy for this frontier stuff. We hit the road again.

Now we drove through flat land finally, with some soft hills. At the end, as we came nearer to Casper, the landscape became somewhat more hilly, but no real mountains. But you had not to forget, that we were already in a high altitude. In a way this landscape was boring, in a way interesting, in a way it could remind you at the days in the desert. But something was different. Nothing was surreal, nothing was hypnotizing, nothing inspired me, nothing happened at all! In a way it was only boring.

I knew that this was unfair in a way. Also this landscape had its beauty, and it was a beautiful landscape, but.....nothing happened. I thought back, walking over white soil, walking over black soil and then white soil again? The dry soil, the barren land, the small bushes, the iconic cactus - but here nothing happened. So many had happened now in the last months, maybe I was only exhausted, maybe too many images in my mind now, too many images, too much information? We arrived in Casper late in the evening, one day in Casper tomorrow we would be. Then four days on the road, four days in the nature and mountains of Wyoming.

We woke up in Casper, "The Oil City", this name told you enough. A violent history had this region, the region of the West. The fight against the "Indians", the discovery of enormous natural resources, the conquest of farmland, of pastureland. The people who had lived here before only "disturbed" the development of a new and proud nation - who came? Who was interested to come today?

I thought about the classic movies telling you from this time - corrupt shit! And then this other movies, telling you a different story, a dirty story, a violent story, no founding myth one could be proud about. And yet, often enough, this nation acted as if this would have been a wonderful time of exploring and settling of an empty continent. Well, some primitive savages, not more than a game to hunt. What a fucking lie as foundation myth!

Should you hate a city like Casper? And I said "a city", I said not the people who were living in Casper! I felt uncomfortable, no, this was not my comfort zone. I looked at the white Casper Mountain, looked at the white land. It was very cold today, last weekend a lot of snowfalls. Around twenty inches in the mountains, five to ten inches in and around Casper. Everything looked so quite this morning, I saw a man freezing to death in the snow. Too many movies, what a "reality" they told you? Casper, named as one of the best cities in the whole country to raise a family - over ninety percent of the inhabitants were White!

"It's very cold outside - or?"

"It's definitively below thirty degrees, I think even much colder."

"Something you would like to do till the show?"

"Staying in warm bed - the older I become, the more I hate the cold."

"We could have a walk alongside the river?"

"Yeah, but later - are you interested in breakfast today?"

"Not necessarily. We could have a walk later and having a late breakfast in the afternoon?"

"Sounds not that bad. Yeah, but now I should come to bed again - another hot tea for you?"
"Would like it."

We walked along the riverside, on the ground covered with white snow. It was such a quiet and peaceful scenery. We found a place for a late but long breakfast, later we had only a hot and tasty soup for dinner. Tomorrow we would start with our longest journey, for four days we would have no show. For four days we would be on the road, away from the people, at least as much as possible. Well, it was December now, not the time for camping or suchlike, at least for an old and easily cold man, that I had become nowadays.

Again I was somewhat absent-minded on the stage. Too many things to think about had happened, also the last days. Too many things afore of us. It was a standard show, not more, not less.

We left Casper, U.S. Route 26 was our road, Boysen Reservoir our first aim. Together with Ocean Lake, and many smaller lakes, the reservoir was the base for the agricultural areas in this region. Also marked the reservoir one of the borders of the Wind River Indian Reservation. In this area we would be today.

But again, we were not in this area to ensure the people living in this area, how much we would feel with them, that we would be "on their side" - raised in stable middle-class families. We were there because of us!

Somewhat over twenty-six thousand people lived in this large area, over seventy percent had no "Native American" ancestors. The median income was low, problems with crime, drugs especially, alcohol of course - a casino. I thought about "Longmire", the movie character who built the casino? At the beginning he appeared very negative to me, but later? Money for schools, history presented in their own way, in their own museums, money for the people living in the reservation - but was it that easy? You could attend a pow wow, you could buy a ticket - selling your culture or a way to present your culture? I thought that it would not depend on the pow wow as such, it would depend on the mindset of the spectator, on your attitude. We arrived at the reservoir.

Driven through the flat and dry land, nearly no vegetation also in summer, now covered in white, mountains in the background, it was interesting to reach this not small reservoir. Many small and larger lakes, also rivers, in this area. In fact, this was a surprisingly "wet" area for this region. We crossed the reservoir to reach the other side, to have a first stopover in the area of the reservoir's south end.

"It's very artificial here. The contrast of the desert and the water surface, the contrast of the dry soil and the agricultural areas. Now in winter this differences are disappearing more or less, but especially in summer they are extreme. It's still not my area."

"Yes, let's move on to Riverton? Let us eat and drink something?"

"And later to Ocean Lake?"

"Of course. We will drive through farmland from now on, farmland inmidst the dry dessert."

We reached Riverton, located at Wind River, around ten thousand inhabitants, more or less half the people who lived in this large area. It was nice, we stayed longer as we had thought, we ate good and drank good, in former times this was an important place for fur trading. Today this was farm land, we had not to talk about that this people had a hard time today, here in this "Indian Reservation".

"Interested in playing in the casino?"

"Not really, on the other hand more here in Riverton than in Las Vegas."

We spent some time in the casino, glamorous as a Martin Scorsese movie? I think even the Las Vegas casinos weren't as glamorous! We headed to Lake Ocean, still it was very cold. But it was beautiful to stand at the lake shore, it was a very beautiful lake. We spent also some time here at the lake, walked around, we were cold, but a warm place waited for us. Come on, this was also a

touristic area, no problem therewith to find a place for the night. Tomorrow we would continue to drive northwards, towards the next American natural monument.

We had spent the night in Crowheart, still surrounded by farmland. Crowheart was a very small town, one hundred and sixty-three inhabitants, Matthew Fox had spent his youth in this small town, should you be interested in. But we would hit the road again, would enter the mountains now. Still U.S. Route 26 was our road, Yellowstone National Park would be our final aim, but not today! We would leave U.S. Route 26 soon, would drive around, just driving around. Bridger-Teton National Forest mainly, but also Grand-Teton-Nationalpark and maybe even Shoshone National Forest. Today we would drive through real high mountains, in fact today more than we would do it in the following two days. Today was the mountain's day.

Well, it was December now and of course we would not use every small path, we would stay on the main roads. And the area in front of us was enormous, maybe "only" some miles in every direction, but in the end with its valleys and high mountains an enormous area to discover. We would risk nothing, but from time to time we would have a stopover, in a small town, at a river or a lake, at a place with a fantastic view, we would try to walk around somewhat. It was bitterly cold, at least for a guy like me.

The whole area was mainly nature, not many lived here - well, still we were in Wyoming, the least populated state of all, but by far not the smallest! In this state it was easy, to omit being among other people, especially in the mountains, especially in December. But we were no fools, knowing that this caused risks also. There was this man, freezing to death in this white ocean of snow.

We enjoyed our trip into the mountains and valleys very much. I thought about to be in this mountains, a hundred years ago. It was not easy and not without a risk even today, in a car, with modern means of communication - but a hundred years ago? On a horse maybe, with some provisions, with no possibility to inform someone in the case of an emergency - I saw a man freezing to death in a white ocean of snow.

It would be difficult to talk about all, it was difficult to decide where to go. Jackson Lake alone, or the high mountains of Bridger-Teton National Forest? It would have been easy to spend a whole day at only one of this places, much more days would have been possible. But it was also the driving, we drove till the early instating dusk and longer. Maybe somewhat silly in a way, but we both had the feeling that this trip never should end. But in the end we made our last stop for today, Colter Bay Village at Jackson Lake, a good starting point for tomorrow.

I stood at the window in a warm and cozy room. I looked at the lake, very dark outside. Some stars were visible through breaks in the clouds, heavy wind in this height obviously. On the other side of the lake the dark silhouettes of the high mountains. I asked myself why we could not simply appreciate it, that we got bestowed with our lives and all the possibilities we had today. I sat on a horse, snow up to my feet, it was nearly impossible for the horse to go on further - the vastness of the white ocean surrounded me.

We left Colter Bay Village early in the morning, used the John D. Rockefeller Jr. Parkway to enter the park. It was cold and snow fell, the whole day snow would fell. It was predicted that tomorrow it would be a mix of clouds and sunny spells, but today the whole day snow would fell. It was not our aim to go sightseeing, to visit the indispensable, to make the essential snap shoots. Two days in this white landscape was what we wanted to experience.

"We're very in the north now, but Portland is still somewhat more to the north."

"Yes, we're near to home now. Only a few days are left, and we will be home in Portland again."

"And then the rest of the tour then."

"Yes, but the rest of the tour will be different. These days are a kind of goodbye. A few shows are

left, many days on the road. Down the West Coast will be very different."

"Plans for the tour break, Christmas and the turn of the year?"

"You?"

"Only a few."

"We could spend some time together?"

"After all these months together?"

"Maybe because of this?"

"Yes, we should do so."

Yellowstone National Park, a volcano underneath, a supervolcano, a volcano that could devastate most of the USA with one eruption. Man versus nature - no good idea.

It was not easy to drive, not that we had no snowfall in Portland. Mt. Hood, Mt. Adams and not to forget Mt. St. Helens not far away, high mountains and volcanoes east to the city. But also the coast, the ocean, not far away in the west. This was a high plateau with high mountains around, even during the day the temperature was near the freezing point, in the night in any case below. In Portland it rained most of the days at the moment, too warm for snowfall.

Of course we spent time at the large Yellowstone Lake, the largest lake in such a height in the USA, and if I was not wrong, in the whole world. Many other, smaller, lakes in this area, in this interesting landscape. A landscape that was in some ways not that different to the landscape at home, in others very much of course, at least much more identical compared to landscapes we had traveled through in the past months. And yet, it would be different, to be at home again.

Things had changed, soon I would be the big star, nationwide in TV, maybe no longer alone at home? At home? A condo in Los Angeles, or a suite in a hotel? Why not at the Strip, watching the girls at the pool with my pair of binoculars, like Howard liked it to do? The tour would end in Los Angeles, driving by snowfall through the landscape of the Yellowstone Park and thinking of Los Angeles - no wild fires at the moment, or? The first night we would spend at Canyon Village, the second in Island Park, Idaho. From there it would be easy to reach Idaho Falls on Saturday for the next show.

The future is wide open, is said. And yes, this was true. But the problematic point was, that there were so many effects who influenced everything, that it was impossible to have at least a certain idea of this open future. Only to think about the development of the political climate in our country, not to talk about the outcome of the 2020 election. This country was in its whole history far from being perfect, but what happened in the present was without any example, at least in the USA. It had started with Sarah Palin and the Tea Party movement, the Tea Party? How ironic was it, not to say absurd, to name this movement after an incident, seen as the beginning of a free and independent USA? How independent we were today? Russia, Saudi Arabia, so many questions and concerns. Free elections in a free land? The land of the free, what else had to happen till the American people would stop this devastating development? The land of my ancestors? Learning from history? What an absurd thought!

The Yellowstone National Park, canyons and rivers, geysers and waterfalls. Driving around, no distinct aim, sometimes the best aim one could have. Hope, a dangerous thing? Not only for women, how often one could bear to become disappointed, how long one could bear this hypocritical theater, that had conquered Washington? But not only in our country, why in so many? In Europe and around the world? And in the same time we squandered our planet, the youth tried everything, but the old (politicians) were unwilling - or even more devastating, unable - for a change. Should I be a witness of the beginning of the end? In the 70s scientists started to warn about climate change, we would have had every possibility at this time. And in the 80s, the 90s, in the new millennium - but nothing happened! And now we were at the point that everything would be too late - what a devastating moment in history.

Snow everywhere, snow was wonderful. Snow sucked up the noise, but in the end it made no sense. Two possibilities: Trying to escape to another world - meaningless, only possible if one would give up himself. Facing up the world - the problem was this fucking world, it would be something that would drive you crazy. We reached Island Park, Idaho.

It was a short drive from Island Park to Idaho Falls, a small city of somewhat over sixty thousand inhabitants. We left the mountains finally and entered an area of flat farmland. Farmland, mainly in this now so known symmetrical shape, water in a dry land.

I felt relaxed, at least somewhat. It was done, a few shows, some driving, and I would be home again. But after all this traveling, what should "home" mean now? I had saw and found so many "homes" now, so many places worth to be there. Very different in many relations, but interesting to be there. Should I become this big star, should I become rich, I would not know where I should decide to live. Like a nomad would be a solution maybe.

Idaho Falls, a nice little city in the deep red Idaho, one could have a very nice walk alongside Snake River. A city that offered you a lot. Culture, a stable economy, a very low unemployment rate, many German based people lived in the city, nearly ninety percent were White, connected highly to nuclear power. Could not really imagine, living here. A zoo, but closed in the winter.

More and more I hoped for the break, I needed time for myself, soon the impeachment circus would start with the next round. It was a circus because it was a shame that you even had to discuss, whether this president had committed impeachable offenses or not. In the evening I would be on a stage again, talking about it, not many in this city liked me and my talking. Soon this would be different again, at the West Coast they liked my show, in L.A. or San Francisco. Was it more important to perform here or there? Performing in a surrounding that was not willing even to put the president's actions into question? Should you forget them, four electoral votes, concentrate yourself on the swing states. This would be the political thinking, should it be also mine, but? If someone was no longer willing to question things - the earth is flat! Take a ship and have a voyage to the earth's edge, show it to me! But why proving it, it's such a nice theory! What an argument you should have, was it not simply wasted time?

I would have a show this night, two more in Idaho, three in Montana - then back to Portland, Oregon. At the beginning of the tour I had totally different ideas about, to come back to the West Coast, not to talk about Los Angeles. No distinct ones, feelings, a mood, gone now. At the moment I had no idea about the continuation of the tour after the break. Impeachment, the primaries and caucuses would begin soon then, I had to ask a question - or? It was strange how things sometimes were developing when you give them free rein. Suddenly you were at a point where nothing was clear anymore except that it could not continue in this way. And yet, maybe this was the point, I had lusted for, for a very long time now!

Christmas time, should I better say Xmas? I not believed in it, another nice fairy tale. A new year, only another new day. A day as every other day. The absurdity of rituals and their meaning for a society, every society had their rituals. Some had no rituals, some were no member of a society. And this year, would this year be different?

It was an aggressive show, I was sick of this rotten GOP and their supporting of a disgusting president. There was no time anymore to be patient, there was no time anymore to be yielding, it was a time to say it distinctively, this country was on a way to become a rotten and corrupt right-wing dictatorship!

From Idaho Falls to Twin Falls, a day of waterfalls and bridges. And I had to say that to do this in, the beginning of, winter was much more interesting as in summer. We even had the time for a detour to the Craters of the Moon National Monument - again on black soil. Whereby, I had to confess that this part of today's journey maybe would have been more impressive in summer. On the other hand, the white and the visible black?

Again I felt more relaxed, something came to an end. Looking at the falling water in the cold winter air? It was a calming view, so much we had seen now in these months, all this pictures in my mind - it was overwhelming! I had problems not to lose myself in all this images. So many impressions and feelings, wonderful in a way, impressive in a way, questioning everything in a way, in a way intimidating. The day came nearer, where I had to make a very grave decision, and I had no idea how to do it.

Black and white, good and bad - how nice to have a simple world view. To know what's right and wrong, always and absolutely. On the other hand, not everything could be right. Whereby, some had no problems with the concentration camps, they argued that by far not that much Jews died there, as if this would be an argument after all. A world not capable anymore to agree in the most basic facts? A world unwilling to learn from history? A world destroying itself? A world with unbelievable possibilities, wasting them all? I looked at the water that fell, at the frozen water, I saw a face in the ice, but it was not mine.

There was this image of the hero, knowing that it would be his definitive death, but he defied the superior forces - does his dead is pointless? Maybe, maybe not. It would depend on the circumstances, in some circumstances his dead was totally pointless, maybe even counterproductive. In other circumstances his dead could be the turning point, would change everything - it's about the circumstances. Would it be possible that there were circumstances that would demand concentration camps to kill Jews? Be a writer, write a story, a story that would describe such circumstances - impossible? Or was it a blasphemy with my roots to have such thoughts?

Could it be to be on the wrong side? That one day you would wake up, realizing that all your opinions so far were wrong? Yes, it could be! Only one solution: Break it down to simplest level possible!

It was an even more aggressive show. Yeah, good unemployment rates, but every day alternative facts and lies. Every day our democracy suffered more, was endanger more - but hey, the Dow! I was very aggressive!

A short way to the capital of Idaho, Boise. With around two hundred and twenty-five thousand inhabitants also the most populous city of the state. Not that red as most of the state, but the county was easily won by the sitting president in 2016. We stood in front of a statue, the Anne Frank Human Rights Memorial.

"Isn't it in some ways ironic? This memorial in this city, in this state, in this nation today?"

"Well, 'human rights'? What rights for whom? It's easy to talk about the bad Nazis, about the victim Anne Frank, but then supporting such a disgusting and misanthropic president."

"The memorial never got vandalized till March 2017. Maybe a too strong interpretation, but after 2016?"

"At least it appears like a symbol. The graffiti were racist slurs against Jews and black people - hey, Latinos were missing?"

We stood in front of the memorial, human rights? This was the country of the free - yes? This was a nation on a very bad way. Not that one could see such developments not in other countries, in Europe and around the world, but in this country everything was so extremely frankly visible!

Every statistic yielded it, every statistic shouted it out - social disparity, social injustice! But hey, the unemployment rates? The stock markets? We had such a fantastic economy? What a shit you're talking!

Why then so many had to live on the streets in this country? Why one had to declare bankruptcy because of illness in this country? Why one needed two or three or four jobs to make a living in this country? Why a normal worker had no pay raise since decades - decades, also under democratic presidents - but also not the last years? How many such questions one had to ask?

But then there was this problem! Assume, that there would be a billionaires's class, and they would buy a party, name this party "GOP". But there would be another party, let's name this party "The Democrats". Well, this could mean, that we would have two forces struggling with each other. But what when one of these forces fails? Well, the one, the one bought by the billionaires, would function well, would do exactly that what the buyers would wish from "their" party. But the other party would fail, would not set a counterpoint? Bad for the non-billionaires! Why the fuck the Clinton Dems, the Centrists, name them as you wish, were not able or willing to set against the billionaires's puppets? For whatever reason, the result was devastating!

Why I should vote for Clinton, knowing that she would be nothing more than the Wall Street honey? Sorry, but Barack Obama? The rich got richer all the times, not only in the last three years! But now the gap became such unbearable huge - when this would cause a reaction? France? Look at the people in France? Would they accept this president or such social conditions? Not even public health care we had - this was one of the most prosperous sector of our economy? Together with the pharmaceutical companies? If this not told you enough!

But again, what should the individual do? I had heard many in 2016, saying that this two candidates would be the devil and the deep blue sea - a fucking selection! Okay, 2016 was history, but 2020? Again the same shit? Does some Democrats had announced to vote against the impeachment? Dems would vote for this disgusting president - what a fucking shit this would be, how devastating this would be! Man, if this not would radicalize you, what then? Hey, there was a radicalization, the right and the far right!

It was an extremely aggressive show, my last show in Idaho! I was sick of it to accept this shit, that some tried to destroy our democracy and others were not willing to stand against it united! I was sick of it, that white (old) (male) Christians who feared to lose control of "their" country were willing to do everything to thwart this, even destroying everything, even by betraying all their own values! I was fucking sick of it!

No show today, only on the road. There was a direct way from Twin Falls to Bozeman, from Idaho to Montana, but we were not interested in. The direct way would have meant to drive back the way we had come, but there was no way back, only a way ahead. We would cross or pass cities like Sun Valley, Stanley, Clayton, Challis, Elk Bend, Salmon, Gibbonsville, Wisdom, Wise River, Williamsburg, Cardwell, Three Forks and Manhattan. We would drive up passes and through valleys, would arrive in high flat agricultural land, after passing a huge mine. We would start very early in the morning and would arrive very late at night.

The last state before driving home. At the beginning of next year the last three states - well, still Alaska, Hawaii and Puerto Rico were missing. From the East Coast to the West Coast, from the North to the South, nearly we had crossed the country now. A country divided, not only in one sense. In a way this country was fragmented in a huge number of pieces, in a difficult to overlook manifoldness of variations. Poor and rich Whites, homeless Whites. Poor and rich African Americans, homeless African Americans. Right-wing Latinos and left-wing Asian Americans. Some were poor and some were rich. Some of the above mentioned believed in God, some not or not any longer. Some of the above mentioned were Democrats, some Republicans. Some of the above

mentioned were racists, some were philanthropists. Already now, not to talk if you would continue, a large number of possible variations! Some loved animals, others not.

Montana, now the snowy mountains were there, especially the last city. The next red state with a few blue spots, some not that red, but all in all an easy win for the president, three electoral votes, not much over a million inhabitants. But also this single million lived in diverse realities, to be a woman or a man? No, this country was splintered into a trillion little pieces. Only one common thing was left, to hate the president deeply, or to following him obedient! This was the only linking left!

The dividing was that deep, that it was even no longer possible to talk, to discuss, with each other. The impeachment? Two totally different stories, and totally meant TOTALLY! There was no common ground anymore, Kavanaugh was shocking, but this process was way more shocking. And a question raised, should a democracy accept misleading information like Fox News, haters like Hannity? Or should be the question: Is a democracy able to withstand such forces? Should it be really allowed to spread all lies - Facebook, Twitter and so on? The idea of a "fortified democracy"? Even they struggled, they stumbled!

But hey, in a few days I would be at the blue coast again. Then everything would be okay again, at the river, not that far away from the coast again. Everything so nice, so liberal. Poor people? Well, a bit over ten percent. Better and not so good neighborhoods? Well, maybe. Montana or Oregon - sorry, we all dreamt about to live in California! In San Francisco or L.A., where everything was so fine. San Francisco, maybe the most hypocritical city in the whole USA - and L.A.? The phoniness of this city would fit very good to our wonderful president! And wonderful Portland?

Feelings and emotions fought with each other while driving through snowy hills. Thoughts about death and that it would be okay now. Well, not became the big star then, but I saw that much now, more than I ever thought. I did more than I ever thought. Yes, this was the moment, from now on it would be no longer frightening, the Big Sleep. Now it had been done, would it be that, then it would be okay. Would it continue, also okay. At this moment I had reached the highest point, at this moment I was on the top of my mountain. It was done, everything else would be an encore. And why not becoming the big star, with his fucking nice real estate in the fucking Hollywood Hills?let the ocean wash it away.....

We woke up in Bozeman, Montana, the last state this year. A city of no fifty thousand inhabitants, nearly ninety-five percent Whites. Very flat, mountains to the east, again a high plateau. Bozeman was a known guest in TV series for some reasons, but also on the big screen, over twenty percent lived under the poverty line. A lot of culture and art, nice parks, spectacular mountains, not only one gulf course.

"Tomorrow in Billings, then the next and the last four days travel."

"Missoula then, for the final show."

"Wow, it happened so fast now. Next week we're back in Portland."

"And what we're doing now, here in Bozeman, till the show?"

We hadn't done much in the end. The last days had been very exhausting. We walked around the city, had a nice dinner, later a coffee and a cake. We followed the news, walked through a wonderful park under heavy snow, had a wonderful dinner. In Europe the "leaders of the world" gambled away the future of the young - not mine, I would die early enough. It was a wonderful December day.

The show was a quiet show, it was time to come down. Would this world have a future? Well,

difficult to say. What one would have answered, on the battlefield of a medieval war, WWI or WWII - in Dachau?

A very short distance today, from Bozeman to Billings, Interstate 90, most of the time alongside Yellowstone River. Billings, not the capital, but with nearly one hundred ten thousand inhabitants the most populous city of the state. In many ways the city was very similar to Bozeman, still in Montana? You could have a wonderful life here, you could have a fucking life here, yeah, you could. You could have a wonderful time at the zoo, ZooMontana, for instance. There was a funny aspect. As we did some research about the zoo we found that review:

Had a great time taking the kids to the zoo. It's nice to have a zoo in Montana. We lack so many things like this so not having to go out of state to see a tiger is pretty awesome. The presentation going on while we were there was very informative and engaging for the kids.

But please, don't be arrogant! This is not social media, and I not quoted it, to make fun of somebody or the people of Montana. I had tears in my eyes, reading it, looking at the children with their shining eyes, seeing the tiger.

Why it was not possible to create a society, where everybody got access? Access to education, access to knowledge, access to experiences, access to discovering something new, access to all what would be possible today - why not! Was it too arrogant to demand, that every child should have the possibility to see a tiger, in her or his own state? Obviously, obviously it was too much demanded for the wealthiest nation ever - what a fucking nonsense shit! Well, some parents needed private zoos and private tigers for their kids - stop this stupid and naive thinking, Peter!

I was happy about it, to be honest. Happy, that this was the second last show. Four more days of traveling now, the journey into the snowy mountains.

Into The Snowy Mountains

The last of our four-days travels, a last show, back to home. From Billing on we would head towards east, towards the plains, towards the Crow Reservation and the Northern Cheyenne Indian Reservation. From there we would drive even more east, near the South Dakota and later the North Dakota border. Broadus, Miles City, Baker or Wibau would be cities we would pass or drive through, maybe we would have stopovers in them. Thereafter norther to the Canadian border, the Fort Peck Indian Reservation and the Fort Belknap Indian Reservation, wonderful Forth Peck Lake in between them. A huge reservoir, the Missouri River, Forth Pack Dam. Westwards was our direction now, to the border of the state of Washington, towards the Rocky Mountains. But still the high plain was the landscape that would surround us, reaching the Blackfeet Indian Reservation. But then we would enter the Rocky Mountains, to cross a part of them, to reach a high plain again, to reach Flathead Lake and the Flathead Reservation. From there it would be only a short travel to reach Missoula, a city surrounded by high mountains, the last show, the birthplace of Brandon Byrant and a director I was very interested in in my youth, no longer, also artists weren't beyond criticism and also artists could follow stupid and idiotic ideas - better to honor Brandon Byrant!

There was this poem, still in my mind. Knew it only because a wonderful singer had told me about

it, a poem one could see in very different ways. Many saw it as "patriotic", especially people who defined themselves as patriots - whatever this should mean. For me it was interesting that the author - John Mitchum - explained in this poem why he loved America. He talked about a snowflake in the Rockies and the bright Nevada sky. He talked about all the landscapes and landmarks we had seen in the last months, or we would see in the following months. And I had to agree with John Mitchum, you had to love America for all this! But then, isn't it strange? His poem starts with the line:

You ask me why I love her? Well, give me time, and I'll explain...

And then he talked about American landscapes and American landmarks - and the American people and the American history? Why he not talked about the genocide this nation is based on? Why he not talked about slavery? Why he not talked about..... - why? Yes, I deeply agreed with John Mitchum that you can love America, that you have to love America, for everything he named, but there's more, much more formed this nation, than only its landscapes and landmarks.

On the road again - American road movies, American road novels, iconic not only for American novelists or directors, for European as well, worldwide. Driving through an endless landscape, where are the people? All is so passive, life is active, birth is activity, dying is active - the endless desert, made of water, sand or snow. But also the landscape is active, changes, but in time spans not graspable for the humans, only used to think in their small lifespans.

On the road again - would like it to know the aim, when I would arrive finally. Landscape passed by, houses, towns and small cities. Did we move? Moving in time? Back to the time ice formed this landscape, the time as ice set the landscape free again, all the people who lived in this landscape, during decades, centuries, millenniums, millions of years? Smiling faces and crying faces, tenderness and hate, it was difficult to bear all this, thinking about it. And today? The past was the past, the past had been written already, never again it would be possible to change the past. But the future, the future hadn't been written yet! And it was present that defined, that wrote, the future! At the moment you pulled the trigger it was too late, but till this very moment everything would be possible - the present decisions defined the future. Our future?

I was an old man now, my future would be a short one, even if I would become a very old man. But my future would be long enough - maybe - to experience the decision this nation had to make in less than a year. Long enough to wear summer clothes in winter finally - in my youth snow was everywhere, today only rain was left. Long enough to be a part of an uncertain future.

Again this question arose, should you be optimistic? Even if this president would get a second term, even if this failure regarding the climate change would continue? A soldier on a battlefield in WWI or WWII? A Jew or a Roma in Dachau or Treblinka? How optimistic he or she could be? And yet, some told about, that even in the shadow of the gas chambers there was a small place for hope and optimism, resistance even!

The landscape passed by as the time did. And yet, even that I had severe problems therewith to be optimistic, I hoped I would stay long enough to get at least some answers. I thought about how awful it had to be to die in Dachau at the "Golden Age" of the Nazis. How awful was it to die a day before this nightmare ended? How awful was it to die a day after the liberation? How awful was it to die?

From the high plains into the mountains, reaching a high plain again. All covered with snow, mostly cloudy weather, snowfall from time to time. Now finally a development came to an end, one more show, back at home. Looking at the snow covered mountain tops, nothing was clear anymore, despite the fact that all our acting was meaningless. Too nihilistic - in a way yes, but in the end a fact.

A high-lying pass, the car parked, up the mountain to the highest point, or down into the valley, not sure about which way I should pursue. The valley would be easy, you only had to let loose, the gravity would do the rest. Up the mountain would be difficult, dangerous and exhausting. But in the valley you would see nothing, on top of the mountain you would see everything. I knelt down and touched the snow, so wonderfully cold, and in your hand the cold snow transformed into crystal clear water. I stood up again and looked at the mountain top, never I would reach this point, but maybe it would be worth a try anyway. Always the alternative would be there, the valley, only let loose. So, why not trying to reach the mountain top, at least as long as you would have reached this final point, when nothing would be possible anymore, when nothing would make any sense anymore, when all dreams would be dead, why not searching for this point? Pathetic thoughts of a pathetic artist, thought in this wonderful scenery, surrounded by this regal mountains, covered in heavy snow. We reached Missoula late in the night.

We stood up very late, somewhat exhausted from the last four days. Missoula was a very interestingly located city, surrounded by high mountains, traversed by three rivers, a good starting point for the mountains and valleys in this area. We had no motivation to do something special, walked alongside the beautiful Clark Fork, had a late lunch and a light dinner. Tomorrow the House would impeach the president, I would talk about it during the show, that it was necessary to do so - Missoula and Missoula County, one of the few blue spots in Montana, of course the sitting president had won the state very easily.

In a year we would know the future of this country, a future not unimportant for me. Hey, I was a stand-up comedian, this was important for me! Four more years talking about this disgusting president? Or would then be the time, when talking was no longer enough, even for someone whose profession it was, to talk on a stage? But still it was a long time, still the Democrats could act in a more useful way this time, or they could do the same mistakes again. A very difficult year lay in front of us.

Tomorrow we would drive back to Portland, it was good to have a break, time to get new energy, time to come to terms with all what has happened during the last months, especially the last weeks. CBS would present me a first draft for a contract, was not in the mood to talk about such things - my manager maybe? My manager, so much more than a manager now, we would have to talk about that. But now it was time for the last show this year, the last show!

The last show, impeachment of course. As said, Missoula was a blue city, as the rest of the tour would be alongside the blue West Coast, alongside the ocean.

We stood up very early today, a long journey lay in front of us. Over five hundred miles, more than eight hours non-stop. No, today we had no time, today our aim was it, to reach our destination as fast as possible. Interstate 90 for a longer time, than U.S. Route 395 to reach Interstate 84. From Montana via Washington to Oregon. Interstate 84 would lead us, alongside the Columbia River, the border of Washington and Oregon, to Portland.

We talked not much during the driving, had some stopovers, lunch, snack, dinner, not talked much also then. It was not always easy to drive, the weather conditions were sometimes not the best, but

we came Portland nearer and nearer, and then we arrived in the city. And now?
"Shall we drive first to you or me? And the car? Should we park the car at your home or mine?"
"Maybe this is of no importance?"
"Maybe not."

Jack

Jack called as we were on our way to Portland, we just had passed Connell. I told him that we had managed around the first half of the distance now, the more difficult one. But that we still would need some hours, that I would call him after we would have arrived. I told him that everything was okay so far, that we both were very happy to be back in Portland soon again. He asked me about a spontaneous show in his little theater, of course I said yes. We talked about spending some time together - Christmas time, New Year, in a threesome. We talked about much more, we talked about the impeachment..

It would be good to be back in Portland again. To have some conversations with Jack. There were some topics, it would be good to talk about them with him, to talk about them with a friend.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

We were back home, Caroline and I had decided to spend the first days alone, we both had many things to think over. But we would meet at Christmas Eve, we both were not religious, we would spend the time together. We would go shopping, even when it was not the best day for shopping, later we would cook together and finally we would have dinner together.

But today I was just only in the city, my hometown, Portland. So many cities I had saw now, back in Portland now. Portland, a nice city, a wonderful city, but always the same in this country, you had to have the right "characteristics".

The president was impeached now, but the stage play was not over. A new act begun, with some of the old cast, with some new cast. Nancy still had a major role, Mitch was a major act now, Charles as well. The president was still not interested in to participate, he only was interested in to yammer behind the curtain. In a way it was a very stupid play, in a way it was a very important play. In any way it would be a play, written in history never to forget.

I walked alongside the Columbia River, I liked it to play at the river as a child, I liked it to be at the water. But those days were long gone, this innocent days, but innocent only because as a child you not realized the world as such. Only your childish world was innocent, your world at the river, at the water. The world as such? Born in 1965? The Cuban Missile Crises three years before had the potential to change the world, to change everything - I was not even born. In 1965 Lyndon B. Johnson bombed North Vietnam for the first time and changed therewith the world. The innocent world was not more than a childish illusion.

I walked alongside the Columbia River, people greeted me, I was a known person now - should I better say famous? Well, famous soon, nationwide in TV? Would I meet all this L.A. celebrities then, maybe as guest stars in my show? Would I be interested in, to get to know them? Chandler, bored by the Hollywood high society.

In the end it would be up to me, I would decide. A critic had written, that I would become the next Dave Chappelle - should I say that I never had a use for his comedy? But maybe this critic meant, that I will become the next comedian with a net worth over a hundred million? Maybe I should make a deal with Netflix? But much worse? Another critic wrote, that I would be the next Lenny Bruce - what a fuck!

Lenny Bruce, he risked everything, he never got a chance. He fought therefor that somebody like me was on safe ground today, that I could express my opinion on a stage without fearing to spend the night in a prison cell. No stage ban in any state - it was a mere joke, to compare me with Lenny Bruce. Yeah, Dave Chappelle maybe, maybe one of this other multimillionaire comedians, but

Lenny Bruce? He risked everything, and paid a fucking price for it! Lenny Bruce.....

Portland, my hometown, the City of Roses, would be the starting point of the last leg of the tour, but still some days till then. Today I would stay in the city, tomorrow Rockaway Beach would be my aim. At 23rd I would perform an unannounced show at Jack's little theater, it was not necessary to promote the show - mouth-to-mouth recommendation had filled the place easily within a day or so. Many people looked at me, some said hello, some addressed me, told me how much they liked my shows and the videos as well. Some asked me about my contract with CBS, if I would still perform live after I would have become a TV star, if I would stay in Portland, or if I would move to Los Angeles. Good questions, not all the time I had a distinct or certain answer.

My hometown Portland, of course a hub of liberalism, of course deep blue, whereas the rest of the state was not necessarily that blue, often even red. But Portland was a city of alternative lifestyles, a city of the individualists, non-conformists, a White city. In some ways like San Francisco, the Bay Area, but I had the feeling without the hypocritical element, represented by Silicon Valley for example. Should I mention that Portland had the highest number of strip clubs per capita in the USA? And hey, not this stupid ones, Portland offered you everything, full nudity, protected by the Oregon Supreme Court! Oh, and Portland was also known as a hub for child sex trafficking - wonderful liberal Portland!

I liked it to be at home again, Portland was no paradise, as no place on earth ever was or would be a paradise. *Heaven is a place on earth with you* - never felt this way, should I feel now in this way? At the theater I would meet Caroline for the first time again, since we had returned to Portland. I thought that I should ponder not too much today, maybe I should let it happen, whatever would happen. But my problem was.....me! I should think about it tomorrow, at the beach, at the water. Today I looked at the water of the Columbia River - should I have a trip to Washington, across the river? Vancouver would wait on the other side of the river.

I walked in the sand, it was a cloudy and windy day. It was a short trip from Portland to the beach, to the ocean. It was cold, drizzle, but maybe the best weather, trying to get some clear thoughts. But in the end it was not really my problem to get distinct thoughts, my problem was in the end, that I was not sure about - me. I was fifty-four now, used to live alone, not sure about whether I would be able to handle it, to be no longer alone. In a way it was nice thought, in a way it was frightening. I feared that I would disappoint her.

CBS had submitted me a first draft for a contract, they asked me about a meeting for further contract negotiations, I answered them that the contract was okay for me. They were surprised, asked me if I would have no interest in, to negotiate on my earnings. I told them, that I would earn more money with this contract, than I would plan to spend during the rest of my life. That I also would have a share in the exploitation rights, that I could demand any fee for live performances now, that I would like. They asked me if I would consider signing a contract with another company, was it always only all about the money?

Money was not my problem, at least as long as I would need no fucking ninety million dollar estate in the Hollywood Hills. I had bought a ring for Caroline - not such a ring! A nice garnet, not really expensive, an old ring. I liked colored stones, knew that Caroline liked them as well, searched about colored diamonds in the Internet. Red and black diamonds. Red because of the beautiful color, black as the perfect contradiction for all a diamond normally stood for. I found a wonderful necklace, made of red and black diamonds. In addition, fitting ear drops, a fitting bracelet, a fitting ring. As far as I could assess it, the two and a half million dollar were in fact a kind of a bargain. Maybe I should renegotiate? Maybe I should sign a more profitable contract - Netflix? Maybe Caroline was not interested in, that I would gift her such a present?

During the last months we had developed a relationship, but I was awfully insecure. I was insecure regarding everything, insecure about me. It was easy to be all alone, easy in a certain way. It was fucking in a certain way, but in another way it was very easy. It was very easy because there was only you! A cocktail in the bar, TV or not, all such things - only yourself you had to ask. But that was not the point to be honest. Living alone you started to develop your "special oddities", peculiarities you were not necessarily interested in, that others would know about them. Would I be able to change in a necessary way, able to engage with another person, with a woman in a serious relation? I had my doubts about this.

I walked in the sand, at the beach, alongside the ocean. Wasn't it absurd? I was a millionaire now, some in this country - and maybe not only in this country - worshiped me, others hated me. Both was a problem for me, to be honest again. I should be happy, enough money, there was a woman who could consider to live with me, people did know me now, millions, soon, if not already yet. Could you say, that I had it all now? And yet, we humans were strange creatures - what a name I should name now? Silvia Plath, who I wished to embrace years ago? Should I ask her if it was okay, that the gem was only a garnet and no red diamond? Or would this be disrespectful? I took a deep breath. Yes, I should be happy, happy to be no longer alone.

"Hi, Peter."

"Hi, Caroline."

"Prepared for the show?"

"Yeah, you're my manager?"

"Have not seen you the last days?"

"We will spend Christmas Eve together tomorrow?"

"Yes, at what time and where we should meet?"

"West Burnside Street, North Park Blocks at 9am? Enough places to buy things around there, we could have something for lunch in Old China Town?"

"Good idea, we could spend some time at Lan Su Chinese Garden?"

"Would be very nice with you. I think that we have to talk about our relation?"

"Yes, we have. But now you should concentrate on the show."

"It's only.....I fear that I never will be able to give you this crazy love. I still have no black motorcycle."

"We have spent several months on the road together, soon we will be on the road again. I think that you don't need a black motorcycle."

"Well, on the road together is one matter. It's crazy in a way, always from one city to the other, all the shows. But the ordinary daily life? I fear I would spoil it."

"I had also some thoughts. I'm used to having my freedom now, after my divorce. I thought about to ask you, if it would be okay for you, would I keep my own condo. I think we're old enough that there's no reason for hurrying up the things."

"Is this really what you're thinking? I'm only used to have my "freedom". It would be a major change for me. Many things will change soon, I thought that you would prefer it, to have some certainty about some matters."

"Well, sometime you have to trust someone, even if your experiences are not always the best."

"Or you're a sissy, and you avoid it all the time, to trust anyone."

"You have problems to trust me?"

"I have problems therewith, why you should trust me. But yes, I have a problem therewith to get involved with other people. At least from a certain point on."

"The show will begin soon. I think we should continue with this conversation tomorrow."

"Yeah, let us continue tomorrow."

A show in your hometown? I talked a lot about trust, whom you can trust and why and why there

can't be never an absolute security - the definition of trust.

We met at West Burnside Street/North Park Blocks at 9 am.

"You have distinct plans for our Christmas dinner? I have made some Christmas cookies."

"That's cool. I'm not that bad what cooking concerns, but baking is not my strength. Well, we're only two? Definitely no stuffed turkey or something like this."

"No, and nothing what needs hours to prepare. Something we can cook together without stress."

"I thought about a salad to start with, with seafood maybe. Then a soup, crème soup from parsley roots maybe. Meat or fish as main course?"

"A salad with seafood sounds good. I would tend to fish for the main course."

"Then fish for the main course. Dessert?"

"Your famous mousse au chocolat of course - or is it too late therefor?"

"No, we will start with the mousse, it will be no problem - then we can start to look around."

We started to walk through the streets, looking around for the things we would need for the dinner. Especially downtown Portland offered you a lot of fine opportunities for shopping. You could buy everything, especially everything out of the water. The rivers and the ocean only around the corner, Portland was a fantastic place to buy and eat fish and seafood. Of course you had all opportunities for buying organic food, lactose-free, or whatever you would need. There was only one problem, you had to be able to afford such food, and with an average worker's income you had not to think about such food. One of the mysteries of the United States: The more food was processed, the cheaper it was! It was much less expensive to buy oven ready meals, then to make the same food at home with fresh ingredients. Was bizarre in a way, but maybe you were able to find the solution for that by your own?

Two singles with a good income? Well, we could buy everything. And we could do it the easy way. We chose our food, but we not took it with us. After we had everything, some small things we had taken with us, we had an early and light lunch at Old Town Chinatown, afterwards we spent some time in Lan Su Chinese Garden. Then we fetched our food, ready for collection, in the shops and drove to Caroline's condo - the easy way! We arrived in the early afternoon at the condo.

"It was very nice in the garden, as always."

"Yes, it's very relaxing there."

"But you're appearing not that relaxed?"

"Well, it's only because - you know. Weird Portland, we're proud to be weird in Portland. And yes, it's cool in a way, but even here, in this city, in Portland - how many homeless people we have seen in the morning? Yeah, sure, it's Christmas time. We donate money, we're even helping for some hours in soup kitchens or so. Barack Obama, his Christmas posts on Facebook? We have not to talk about it, that it would be a relief would he still be our president and not this disgusting idiot in office. But also President Obama was not able, or maybe even not interested in, to start fundamental discussions about the future of our nation. Not to talk about, to push through long overdue reforms. Why AOC is that popular? Bernie Sanders and Elizabeth Warren together have much more support among the Democrats than Joe Biden? A majority of Americans is tired of hearing always the same nonsense, that the left-wingers would endanger our "freedom to choose". You no longer can choose then, buying expensive but healthy food, or the cheap and processed unhealthy shit! For the most Americans this freedom to choose never existed! We need profound and clear reforms, this nation decays more and more since the 70s and 80s. The GOP is a very good indicator for that."

"Should we begin with the mousse au chocolat?"

"Yes, then the mousse will have enough time to cool and get the right texture."

We made the mousse, then we prepared the rest of the dishes. Later we would finish a course, then we would eat it, to finish the next course then and so on. It was nice to do so and we had a lot of fun, the evening was much more relaxed than I thought - feared. We talked not again about - you know! I had the feeling that it was no longer important to do so, and that Caroline would feel in the

same way. I presented her my ring, she loved it very much. Her present was a picture - Da Vinci, Lady with an Ermine. Not the original of course! A smaller, but very nice, print in a wonderful fire-gilded frame - very beautiful. Late at night we ate the now perfect mousse au chocolat. We talked about the rest of the tour, about the time thereafter. I had decided to look for a condo in Los Angeles, it would be cheaper than to stay always in a hotel, a condo with enough space for two. It would be interesting to commute between Portland and Los Angeles, not only San Francisco lay in between. We talked about plans for a tour in Alaska, Hawaii and Puerto Rico - why not the Bahamas and more? South America, Europe and Japan would be no problem now, as well as Australia and New Zealand. I even had more and more fans in Africa, countries like Korea, Vietnam or India. Much would be possible now. It was already in the morning as this evening ended.

The last days we had spent together, tomorrow would be the last day of the year. We had been in the city, at the beach, in Vancouver, the back country, we had spent quite a lot of time together. We had made an appointment to be together at New Year's Eve - at Jack's Theater, Jack's annual little private New Year's Eve celebration. He invited only some closer friends, many but not all were artists, to have a nice time there, on the stage and in the hall. Musicians made music, artists performed their arts, many discussions, everybody brought along something to eat or to drink. Normally such a thing was nothing for me, but together with Caroline I could imagine that I would have also some fun in being there.

Christmas day we had stood up very late, a relaxed day, not that much happened. Boxing Day we had a nice time in the city and on the other side of the river, despite the not nice weather. It was warmer as normal, not that extreme as some days ago, but still no snow, only rain, a lot of rain. It was also predicted that the next two or three days the temperatures would rise again. Four and more degrees over the average, definitively no snow, only rain. But as our wonderful president knew it in his unlimited wisdom, climate change was nothing more than a Chinese hoax.

Between Christmas and New Year's Day we had decided to be somewhat more active, to start therewith to spend some time in Washington. The Gifford Pinchot National Forest was our aim, with the two characteristic mountains, Mt. Adams and Mt. St. Helens, the Mount St. Helens National Volcanic Monument. It was thought-provoking to see the mountain, the volcano, that what was left. Again an example therefore, that men vs. nature always knew only one result - how small all human looked like, compared to such a force? To tame nature, what a delusion of grandeur.

At Saturday we drove to Rockaway Beach, cold, cloudy, rain showers, but we had a nice time anyway. Whereby, to be exact, we stayed in the whole Tillamook Bay area. A wonderful landscape, even under such conditions, under such condition with a special charm, with a special charm not being alone at the bay. *Sittin' on the docks by the bay.....*

Finally yesterday we had decided to follow Columbia River to the ocean. The river delta was a very interesting area, no problem to spend a whole day there. And not to forget the ocean, Sunset Beach in the rain? We had a wonderful dinner in a small restaurant, seafood of fantastic quality. It became very late and we thought, that it would be the best not to return to Portland. We found a place to stay for the night in Uniontown. And today?

Tomorrow would be the last day of the year. Today, in the morning, after we had stood up late, had a long breakfast anyway, we drove over the Astoria-Mengler Bridge again. I liked it, crossing such long bridges. We would return to Portland today, again alongside the river, the Washington's riverside, would have a stopover in Longview, we would arrive late in Portland, definitively after dusk - at this cold, cloudy and rainy day.

Was there a special mood, in the time between the years? Normally I had spent this time working, normally I had spent this time alone. The last days had been very nice days, soon we would be on the road again, together. I looked forward to the coming cities, the coming states, Mexico. No, not everything would be fine, definitively not in Mexico. The days between the years, special days? No,

not for me. The days together with Caroline, those days were special days to me!

New Year's Eve in the Weird City, in Portland. The people were proud of their city, others considered as weird, they were proud of, to be weird people. Known as a liberal city in extreme, also Portland was an American city, a White city. As said, in some ways similar to San Francisco, known worldwide as the city of Beat, gays, flower people and hipsters. And Portland? Definitely not that hypocritical as San Francisco, Oregon not that hypocritical as California. But today we were not in San Francisco, or Los Angeles, today we were in Portland.

For me it was interesting, that also in such a city the common American reality could not be broken. The typical rate of people who lived under the poverty line for example. Also Portland had its "difficult" neighborhoods, also Portland had its losers. And one had not to ask much about them, no difference to other American cities. An iconic image? The surfers from the 60s and 70s at Hermosa Beach in Los Angeles? Did you ever have seen a black person, an Asian person, a Latino person on such a picture? Hey, Los Angeles, a city with seventy-five percent of non-white inhabitants? What a fucking story such a picture were telling you! But we stayed in Portland, in Oregon, but just in the USA.

We arrived at Jack's Theater, some of the others were already there, others would come later. I had undertook the "dessert part", Caroline had made some salads. Onstage already some action, a duo, very fitting to this city, sang and performed - they had their roots in the burlesque scene. The whole evening, till the next morning, the stage would be never empty from now on. Also I would perform from time to time, alone or together with others. As I said before, I was not that much attracted by such events. Yes, it was okay, to forget everything for a night, just to have fun - and those who would have no chance to have fun? A child, living in poverty - also in Portland? A woman, badly treated by her husband - also in Portland? How many mass shootings we would have in our proud nation during the next twenty-four hours? Why you should have fun under such circumstances?

A nice evening developed, I had many conversations. Some congratulated me for my contract with CBS, some talked about new media like Netflix and other streaming medias with me, some talked with me about my relationship with Caroline. They liked it, that I would not move to Los Angeles, would still have my principal residence in Portland, that Caroline and I would not cohabit, that we both needed our own personal free space. It was nice to perform, especially together with other artists, I was even a little bit capable to let loose, simply to let things happen. Onstage, as a comedian, this was no problem for me, but otherwise I had my problems therewith. The clock moved on, hour for hour.

Now it was time to count down, the last seconds of a fucking year. I never understood why this procedure, in the end this night was a night, not different to every other night. Today had been an ordinary day, tomorrow will be an ordinary day - three, two, one!

I felt somewhat at the wrong place, clinking glasses, wishing a Happy New Year, embracing, little kisses, smiling - I saw Caroline, and Caroline saw me.

"And, you have fun?"

"Yes, of course."

"Not really, or?"

"Well, I would like it more to be alone with you."

"I think Jack would have no problem therewith, if we would leave. Any special place in your mind?"

"No, only to be alone with you."

Portland, as every other city in the world, could be a wonderful place. We watched the fireworks, and it was nice. It was nice to watch it not alone. It was not that cold, and we decided to walk

around somewhat, the streets of Portland. Two days and the tour would continue, I looked forward to Friday. We would drive down the West Coast, a nice finish for the tour. An easy trip, as we looked at the water. No, not Columbia River, nor Willamette River, but Columbia Slough, Smith Lake and Bybee Lake. Daybreak, not earlier we were at home again - 24/7 also this night. We had a snack at a 7-Eleven and one of their very large coffees in the middle of the night. And not only the man behind the counter had to work. In Hospitals, the police, firefighters - many had to work tonight, as every night. As I said it, it was a night like every other night.....

We decided to stay in bed, the whole day - the rest of the day. Yesterday, better today in the morning, as we went to bed - it was already way after noon now. We had breakfast in the bed, we had looked what's in the fridge, some fast eggs, had found some bread. After the breakfast we were tired, time to sleep somewhat! But in the end we had a walk, found time for a late dinner, a food truck in the street. A very nice and productive first day of the new year!

Tomorrow the tour would continue - well, two shows here in Portland. Therefore we had not to travel, nevertheless I had to prepare myself. Newspapers, TV, sources like YouTube and more. Not that I would have not been interested in the news the last days, and in a way there were not that much breaking news in the end, some new developments in the Middle East, but it was another matter to know, that you would be onstage tomorrow again. Today I stayed mostly at home, alone, sometimes I had a short walk, a little shopping, a coffee outside.

The last days had been very nice days. Could this be my future? Some years earning some millions and then a relaxed retirement? Should this be my future? Would this be appropriate? I could buy me colored sunglasses, traveling around Africa, all this poor children who would make my heart aching. Smile little child, and don't forget the cameras!

Maybe there would be something more meaningful that I could do, not necessarily in front of cameras? Maybe it was somewhat silly to have such thoughts? Still I had not reached Los Angeles, still I had not signed the contract, still I had not earned millions, still I had not - these thoughts conquered my mind.

Tomorrow I would be on the stage again and I took a deep breath. Was this the time to start with uppers and downers? At least I felt some pressure, more and more pressure. On the other hand, sometimes it was not the worst to be old - nothing left to lose. But it was easy to say this - and I was no longer alone? Not that I tried to use Caroline as a scapegoat, but it was a difference whether you were alone or not. But on the other hand it was not to deny that Caroline stabilized my life. Without her I would have not been able to handle such an extensive tour - and I talked not only about her work as manager. But this was also a pressure, knowing that it would be very difficult for me, if not impossible, to manage the upcoming. I needed her, as manager, but much the more as a partner, as a stabilizing factor, as a guiding point.

Tomorrow the tour would enter its last leg, soon I would be in the car with Caroline again. Maybe I should concentrate on the next, maybe I should.....maybe I should - at least sometimes - not always ponder about everything, maybe I should - at least sometimes - let the things simply happen - maybe!

Jack

"Happy New Year, Peter."

"Happy New Year, Jack."

"The last leg now, soon a new part of the story of your life will begin."

"Yes, and everything looks very shiny."

"But?"

"We have to get rid of this president and the fucking people around him! Sooner or later this will end in a catastrophe, and the new development in the Middle East is showing that this catastrophe can happen very fast."

"You're feeling helpless?"

"To be honest, yes! Yes, there's this president, but the problem are the people around him, are people like Graham or McConnell. Harvey Weinstein would have not been capable to do the things he did, without all this people around him who helped him, supported him, or at least said nothing. A Hitler alone is only a crazy little man. They lied about Saddam Hussein, they lied about Afghanistan - and now Iran? And then, look at the American People - couldn't it be possible, that we would act more clever than the German people did it some decades before? Obviously not. Yes, I'm feeling helpless, fucking helpless!"

Laughing About Kings

Can art change the world? No!

Can art change people? Yes!

Can people change the world? Yes!

Then art can change the world - just not directly!

Laughing about kings, laughing about gods, laughing about everything, laughing about the gas chambers in Dachau and Auschwitz and Birkenau, laughing about everything - laughing about kings!

But still the question is unanswered, the essence of the human kind, and no answer seems to be possible. Unable to live in peace with each other, on the way to destroy planet earth - its basis for life - finally, living in total hubris.....not looks that good. And positive aspects? Fewer wars, fewer people are starving to death, fewer.....what a fucking progress? FEWER! And in ten or twenty years - if it will need that much time - and climate change will pressure people more and more? Australia at the moment?

Does Gandhi or Martin Luther King Jr. have changed the world? Yes? Really? India today? A city like Chicago or New Orleans and the daily reality of the African American people there? "Change" seems to be a very fragile thing!

To build something sometimes needs years of efforts, to destroy it sometimes needs seconds only. Are human beings as such all mentally ill? Well,.....

But what about the people who warned in the 70s and the 80s about a coming climate catastrophe if we continue in this way? What about the people who warned about Hitler, long before the German people elected him? The image from the lone voice in the wilderness? And the artist?

Art can change people and people can change the world. Greed, fear, lust.....can change people, people who will change the world. Could this be a hopeless race, or should we hope that there's the hedgehog named art, the tortoise named art? This leads to the second basic question, because the first is still unanswered.

Should one hope or despair? I saw an artist on a stage recently, another sings often about it - hope,

always hope, don't stop hoping. So many of these artists stopped one day, did what they did then!

I sit on a mountain top, looking at a world I do not understand. And yet, I'm a part of this world, like it or not. Tomorrow I will be on a stage again, will perform my show, will talk about a fucking president, about the dangers in the Middle East, about so many things. Laughing about kings, hope is not only a dangerous thing when you're a woman, change is a powerful thing. Silvia Plath, will I embrace one time?

West - Pacific

Home Again

The first show of the last leg of the tour in my hometown of Portland. I looked at the city, at the always snow covered Mt. Hood and Mt. St. Helens in the background. The city, mostly flat, built on lava, built by white supremacists, the city different to every other American city. Extremely liberal, very European, an ecological hot spot, no city had more strip clubs, marijuana shops at every corner, coffee shops with baristas looking like actors and coffee some say about, would have very special effects - what I should tell you about Portland? Nature everywhere, of course the largest wood inside a city - worldwide maybe - with around a hundred miles of paths, a very white city, a very young city, a very fast growing city, a city with raising rents and house prices - forget New York, forget San Francisco, forget Los Angeles, Portland is the city! Bikes everywhere, bike ways in a length that every European city would be jealous about, a cultural life in an enormous vastness, many cuisines..... - Portland, one had to be proud to be born in, one had to be happy to live in!

Was I happy? Well, a white artist with European roots with a good income? Maybe I would feel different as a black inhabitant who was no longer able to pay his rent, because his neighborhood became "developed"? Maybe I would feel different, not interested in marijuana, not interested in a chilling lifestyle, not interested in "sophisticated" culture, not interested in planting a tree (a big crime in Portland!), not interested in to embrace everybody because we all were one big community, maybe I would be sick of this "being weird as a self purpose". But I was this white artist with European roots with a good income.

The administration had decided to assassinate a high Iran military today - Qasem Soleimani. Enough to talk about for today, even if the show would last five or more hours. I was in no good mood, the last days had been so nice. I felt unable to cope with all what happened now, at the moment. It was easier to be alone, only your work. But it was wonderful to be no longer alone, I would be not able to handle the coming alone. It was confusing, I stood up very late today. Portland, this so different city. I should go to the nice and cozy shop around the corner, the barista would make me a fantastic coffee, I would sit down, would read a book - the city hosted the largest independent book store in the whole USA, a complete block large! Portland, I liked it to be at home.

The show was - of course - a fantastic show. I had not to think about in which way the audience would react, hearing my words. It was a long show with a lot of conversation after it, first at the venue, later in a bar. Would it had not been more Portland style to go to a strip club later, looking at the women?

Day two in Portland, in the afternoon I would have a TV interview at KOIN, a CBS affiliated TV station. But at the moment, I got up late, I tried to relax somewhat. The last night had been very

short, the first show of the last leg had been very long. I switched on the TV, opened the newspaper - of course all headlines dealt with the Iran. The question about how the Iran would react, about what does the actions of the president would mean to the American security. Not the best way to relax.

I was on my way to KION TV, was early enough for a coffee. Sure one of this cozy places Portland was famous for, of course a fantastic coffee, not cheap but fantastic. Same for the cake I ate. Tomorrow we would be on the road again, a trip in the morning to Kennewick, in the evening the show. The last two days Caroline and I spent not that much time together, the next two months we would be together all the time, and I looked forward to it. I arrived at KOIN TV.

"Well, we have to talk about the assassination of Qasem Soleimani. What are your feelings, your thoughts?"

"That this administration got insane finally. A symbol is the threat of bombing cultural places - this is the strategy of ISIS an Al-Qaida. This administration has no scruples anymore. Wasn't there someone in this administration whose major aim was a war with Iran? This administration has to be stopped."

"Wag the Dog?"

"I fear that it's worse than this. This people are ruthless, they have no problems with the death of people, they're only knowing their aims to enrich themselves and all their supporters - it's the most corrupt administration we ever have had."

"What's your biggest concern?"

"That we forget that there's an impeachment trial, that we forget that we have to vote out this president and his administration this year. There are many things we not have to forget."

"Wag the Dog?"

"As said, it worse than this. This whole administration, with the president on top, is a large machinery producing nothing more than lies and blurs. And the GOP became the henchman of the evil. This is since a longer time, but especially now, no question about being a Democrat or a Republican, it's a question about whether we're capable to keep our democracy or not."

"What's your message on the stage and now here?"

"I have no message! There're too much around here with their "messages"! I ask people to use their own heads, to use the Internet and media in a way, that you're listening to different opinions. Look what other countries are thinking, who is defending the president's action, who's critical. Think about who has been our allie, who has been our common enemy? Is it more important for us what the British PM, the German chancellor is saying? Or Mr. Putin and a Saudi Arabian prince? Think about it."

"Do you think that this will defeat the president this year?"

"Well, if not, then this country will fail, our democracy will fail."

"But do you think that this, using your own head, will convince only one from the president's base?"

"No, but maybe enough independents. It's a fight for the independents."

Another very long show. Well, it was my hometown, it was Portland!

Again on the road, again together on the road. A not so long drive today, from Portland to Kennewick, always alongside the Columbia River, we would be in Washington in the end. It felt very different now, not only for one reason. We were home again, the regions, the states of the last leg were known to us. In not only one or two cities we had been already before - in many aspects it was very different now.

We had decided to drive nonstop, maybe a short stop for a coffee and a snack, to change seats. Not,

that this region, the Columbia River, would not offer very interesting and beautiful landscape, only to name the change of landscape in the region of The Dalles, but we were interested in to reach Kennewick fast. But it was not our motivation to reach Kennewick fast because it would be important to reach Kennewick for a reason as fast as possible, it was only the feeling that the things had changed. Maybe it was only because it was the first day after the break, again together on the road.

Kennewick was interesting located at the confluence of Snake River and Columbia River - an area of agriculture, artificially irrigated of course. The city had somewhat over eighty thousand inhabitants, but formed a larger urban region with the cities of Pasco and Richland, Pasco on the other side of the river, in this area no longer marking the border of Oregon and Washington.

In many - all? - aspects, the city was a very normal American city of this size. Very white, and relatively conservative. Not only a few counties in Washington and Oregon were more or less red. Only because of the large cities Clinton could win in both states in 2016. Well, the West Coast was not that blue in all, as some thought. Even California had its red spots. Only because of the larger cities the Democrats could be sure about, to win the West Coast.

We arrived in the early afternoon in the city, checked in and had a nice late lunch. The weather of the last days, also here in Kennewick, had been very mixed. A lot of clouds, only a few sun rays, sometimes rain, sometimes a little snow - in the end a real lousy weather, and also today it was not better. Therefore we did not that much, but The World Trade Center Memorial Monument here in Kennewick felt like a must-have. We looked at this pillar of steel, showing the signs of its origin, looked at the flag on it.

"There was a time, even I could be proud looking at the flag. But today I feel a lot of sadness and its getting more and more difficult to be proud. We have a president, proud of announcing war crimes, happy to topple a region into an even more deeper crises as the crisis that had been already existed. It is difficult to look at this artifact and this flag today."

Despite of the weather we sat down on one of the benches. We spoke not a lot, sometimes words became meaningless, sometimes one had to become silent.

The show was strange in a way. A lot of to talk about, much too much. What was necessary, what not so important? Australia, the murder rates in Chicago or Boston in 2019? Difficult to tell - much too much.

We were on our way to Moscow, not Russia of course. Not for the first time it was funny to see this American town names, even the strangest ideas one could find realized in this country. In the end it was a sign for the origin of this nation, immigrants from around the world were assembled in this nation. And still the question about the people who already lived here stayed unanswered.

The distance from Kennewick to Moscow was shorter than the distance from Portland to Kennewick, and yet we would be on the road the whole day. One of the reasons was, that we would not use the fastest way, we would use smaller roads, we would follow Snake River as good as possible. At Almota we would leave the river for the rest of the distance, and we would cross the border to Idaho. In fact, Moscow was a city right behind the Washington-Idaho border, the western city limit marked the border. But it was a good layover for our travel to Spokane. But still we were on our travel, following Snake River.

At the beginning some agricultural used areas, then relatively flat grassland with soft hills, and finally the landscape became hillier. In all, it was dry land. From time to time we stopped and enjoyed the landscape, or man-made landmarks like Lower Monumental Dam, Little Goose Lock and Dam or Lower Granite Dam. In fact, we tried to cross the river as often as possible, using the

dams or bridges, just for fun.

The whole day we drove through empty land, from time to time some houses, some farms. The only somewhat larger city we drove through was Pullman, a city maybe two miles from Moscow, still in Washington, in fact somewhat larger than Moscow, somewhat over thirty thousand inhabitants and a blue city in a blue county - Moscow surprisingly also! We reached Moscow after dusk.

"Was a wonderful day."

"Yes, but I think it would have been better, not to follow the news - twenty-four hours Iran."

"It's unbelievable what this administration is doing. They are playing with the lives of thousands potentially - if a war would break out, with even much more lives."

"And that's the point. They cannot serve, but they have no scruples to send soldiers into death. It's easy to sit in the warm room and fighting a war, it's a bit different to be a soldier facing death. But hey, it will be an easy war, we're the United States of America! It was easy in Afghanistan, it was easy in Iraq, it will be easy in Iran - how long the people will be still willing to accept this lies? I think I should invest my coming millions in stocks of the arms industry."

"Well, maybe no bad idea, at least if you're interested in, to develop into one of this ruthless and unscrupulous money-grubbing assholes. As it's said, there's always someone who makes money with it, even with war."

"What's shocking is, that the Iranian people started to stand up against their government - and now? That reminds me of the Kurds in the Iraq and in Syria. All the time when the US should have supported oppositional groups, the US marooned them. It's shameful."

"The problem is, that the wrong feel ashamed. The ones who should feel this way are the ones who have no conscience, the ones who only are knowing greed."

"I think that the president jerked off, hearing that the assassination was successful. He was no good person, but killing never should become a sexual act - but we're talking about old white men."

"Yeah, maybe it would be better, would our next president be a woman. Maybe we should hand this world to the women - worse it hardly can become!"

We decided to walk around somewhat, to have dinner, to drink something. Not only I had problems this night to find sleep.

A day in Moscow, and in a way it felt like Moscow, Russia. Looking out of the window a white landscape opened up, everything was covered by snow, not only the mountain tops. It was cold, tender snowfall, according to the weather forecast the temperature would be clearly under the freezing point the whole day, the whole day snow would fall. It was nice to watch the falling snow, snowflakes in the Rockies - well, the Palouse region, the Columbia River Plateau.

"Should we go out? I would be up for walking around in the snow after breakfast."

"Sure, of course. Any distinct aim?"

Moscow was a city with no twenty-five thousand inhabitants, not really a large city. Nevertheless, the city was the home of the University of Idaho, offered you the Arboretum & Botanical Garden of the University, alongside with the Shattuck Arboretum. Of course several sports facilities, not to talk about the landscape, the near mountains, the valleys. Parks, festivals and fairs - the Lionel Hampton Jazz Festival next month for instance. Ninety percent white, over twenty percent under the poverty line. We walked around in the fresh snow - Main, Jackson, Washington Street. We had a late lunch in the "Breakfast Club".

"The movie?"

"Have no idea whether they named this place after the movie or not."

"Shall we ask?"

"No. Maybe, maybe not - who cares?"

Our orders arrived and the food was very delicious. We stayed longer as thought.

"We have still time till the show?"

"Tomorrow we will be on the road again, the whole day I assume. Let's be lazy today?"

"Means?"

"Back to the hotel, still some hours time till the show?"

"Hotel?"

"Warm bed?"

"Okay."

We took not the direct way back to the hotel, but still had some nice and warm hours.

The show was good. Moscow, the blue city. Not good were the worries about the irresponsible behavior of the bunch without any sense for responsibility in the White House. This was not so much a matter of being blue or red, a matter of feeling that playing with life was not acceptable.

From Moscow, Idaho to Spokane, Washington - no two hours one would need to manage the distance, even in winter. At least if you would take the direct way, not our way. Normally you would drive back to Pullman, then northward via Cofax and Rosalla directly to Spokane, through the relatively flat land. But we were interested in the mountains, not the direct way, would stay the whole day in Idaho, till we would reach Spokane in the end.

We would start with a real detour, would drive to the Dworshak Dam & Reservoir, would drive southwards. And it was a good decision to see this monument, a monument built in a time as they thought that this would be the solution for the future, that nature was there for the use of the humans, the latest news from Australia showed you the reality. But from now on we would head southwards - more or less.

We followed the reservoir somewhat into the mountains, we would try to use smaller streets, but would also follow the valleys. And you had to say that we would not really enter the Rockies, the real high mountains. But nevertheless it was nice to drive through this white landscape, today some sunshine, not long ago sand surrounded us, or white and black soil. We decided to listen not to the news today, listened to music, CDs, sometimes local radio. As we reached Fernwood, a few hundred residents, we decided to have a stopover. A few roads, scattered houses - farmland, nicely located at Saint Maries River. And well, Fernwood Mercantile Co. The shop offered everything what we needed, a clean restroom inclusive, hot coffee of course. And before you think stupid, have a look at their Facebook page!

As we continued with our today's trip, the landscape became flatter again, and we reached the second large water surface of the day, we reached the southern end of Coeur d'Alene Lake. The lake, a very large and interestingly formed lake, was in fact a lake and no reservoir. This natural mountain lake, at this end named Chatcolet Lake and Round Lake, was an artifact of the last ice age. Wonderful to look at, but heavily polluted, especially the sediments on the lake ground. Various aspect, but not as the last reason, lead from decades of mining in this area. It was maybe not the best to swim in the wonderful looking lake. We flowed the water, now named Harrison Slough, till we reached Coeur d'Alene.

Because of the location, the lake, the mountains, the city was a tourist's hot spot. Still in Idaho, but only a few miles away from Spokane, we decided to stay in Coeur d'Alene for some time, the night had fallen in, time for a dinner. Also Coeur d'Alene was no large city, somewhat over fifty thousand inhabitants, but it was of course no problem to find a place for a dinner. So we sat in a nice restaurant, enjoyed the very good meal and looked at the nightly lake.

"It had been a nice day."

"The day is still not over. A few miles on famous Interstate 90 and we have reached Spokane. So, there's no reason to hurry."

"No, in fact not. Shall we have a cocktail here or in Spokane?"

"One here, at ease. And the next one in Spokane, with even more ease."

"Sounds very compelling."

We had two in Coeur d'Alene, and Spokane.....

It was somewhat hard, and "somewhat" late, as we tried to stand up - we both were not that much used to alcohol. Not to talk about the two in Coeur d'Alene, two from the lighter side, but in Spokane we started to change to the heavy ones. There was this nice bar next to the hotel.....but why not, maybe you should not try all the time to control yourself all the time. And to say it clear, we both had definitely enough at the end, but we were still capable to walk back to the hotel and we found the room. Not without some problems, but in the end we managed it. Also it became a very long night, we drank not fast, and we had coffee in between. But as said, we both were definitely not used to such an amount of alcohol.

"It's nearly noon!"

"Yeah, it was after 4 am as we were back?"

"I think so."

"Let's have a shower."

We took a shower, made the matter somewhat better, but not really good. I switch on the TV - Iran of course, the plane crash, maybe a missile?

"I would like it to have a walk. The cold winter air would do me good. Maybe a park, maybe we could drive out of the city, some nature, some snow would be nice now?"

We asked the Internet and decided for Palisades Park, beyond the city limits, on the other side of Spokane River. Spokane was no small city, over two hundred thousand inhabitants, in so many aspects very typical for the US. Somewhat higher crime rates as normally in Washington, but of course only because of some areas of the city. A lot of culture and all the common stuff. But what I liked most on cities like Spokane, cities in this part of the US, very similar to the New England States, was, that you needed only a very short time and nature surrounded you! Real nature, such a kind of nature. Maybe a park only, maybe the riverside, maybe the mountains or a valley. And this also was valid for the whole metropolitan area from Spokane to Coeur d'Alene, the whole Spokane Valley.

In the next weeks this would change more and more, to find its final point in Los Angeles. Los Angeles, known as one of the cities with the fewest park areas at all. And this not dealt with the circumstance that a "park" in Los Angeles meant something very different from a park in Spokane. And also the famous palm trees helped not a lot, Los Angeles was without any doubt no green city. And outside the city? Well, the annual Californian bush fires, every year more severe, every year more threatening - Australia right now? But, and that I had also in mind while walking through the snow, under trees, covered with heavy snow, we would return to the landscape - more or less - that had hit me the most.

"Better now?"

"Definitely, much better. In fact I'm getting somewhat hungry."

"No bad idea. We will need at least an hour to return to the car. Then we should eat something."

"It's nice here - or?"

"It's not that far away from Portland? And not that much different?"

"That's true. But the people here not trying to be so different in such a compelled way as in Portland. I like Portland, but sometimes it's over-exaggerated and becomes stupid."

We returned to the car and found a nice restaurant in the city. Still some time till the show. We returned to the hotel, some time to relax, TV and newspapers, not so relaxing, I slept for an hour.

The show was a calm show, most probably innocent people had to die again, because of our incompetence to find peaceful solutions. Why our fucking administration and the leaders from Iran not faced each other? Eyeball to eyeball? They could use whatever they wanted - knives, guns, tanks, whatever. Oh, our president was not able to serve, but anyway, I would predict that they

would be not willing to kill each other - eyeball to eyeball. Drones and missiles, killing can be so easy!

Again no long distance today, only a few miles more than two hundred, from Spokane to Yakima. But of course we had still something to do in Spokane - the waterfalls! We spent the morning at the water, at the falls, and we were sure about, that they had to be much more beautiful in winter as in summer. Water was in fact a very special substance. The liquid water, the snow, the ice, the water fog - well, no steam, but some clouds in the sky.

Around noon we started with today's drive, straight through the Columbia Basin, a relatively flat high plain between the northern Rockies and the Cascade Range, a part of the Pacific Fire Ring. In that sense one could imagine our today's route as boring, and asking why for heaven's sake we would need that much time for two hundred miles, but maybe because of this? We would use most of the time Interstate 90, only at the end Interstate 82. We would make no detours, we would cross Columbia River.....okay, we would visit Wanapum Dam and Wanapum Lake, but this would not need hours. And yet, it would be dark till we would reach Yakima. Sometimes time was a very relative thing.

We had driven through dry land all the time, now here in Yakima we were surrounded by dry land. And yet, through the end of our today's trip we had seen a lot of farmland. A warm day today had been, too warm, but next week it will become significantly colder again. Next week it would snow again, new layers of white blankets would cover the landscape then. I liked this landscape, the whiteness, the brightness, it all seemed so clean and calm. Mountains in the far background, hilly also here. In my youth snow was everywhere, a lot of snow! But now less and less, even here, hotter and hotter every summer and winter. I thought about the desert in the south, the Californian summer. Unbearable more and more, advertising in TV for skin cancer treatment all the time.

Seattle, then we would heading south, but it dragged me to the north. Vancouver not that far away, Calgary somewhat more, Edmonton why not? Our time in Canada at the beginning of the tour? But it was somewhat stupid, thoughts while looking out of the hotel's window. In my youth I never froze, now more and more, older and older. Water, sand and snow? I was puzzled, endless woods. I turned around and looked at Caroline, it was good to have an anchor, a fiery beacon, somebody aside of you.

We woke up in Yakima, named after the "Natives" who had lived in this area before we came. Cities, rivers, lakes, mountains and much more became named after the "Natives", who had lived in those areas a long time afore. Does this pleased the "Natives", that we used their tribal names therefor?

Yakima was no so small city, over ninety thousand inhabitants, an arboretum and nice parks, located in a valley, rivers, mountains, interesting for tourists. Would you live in Yakima, there would be nothing you had to miss. It was way too hot today, it would cool down the next days, but today an ugly mixture of rain and snow. The Iranians had shot down the plane, how long the US had tried to cover up, that they had shot down a civilian Iranian airplane in 1988? Is it true that they never apologized? Well,.....

We had spent some time downtown, but I felt not that good today. Whom you should trust today, whom not? The news in the media, many statements - the democratic candidates? It was a hopeless effort to try to stay in contact with all developments, with all the news, all the stories - should I talk about Meghan and Harry this evening onstage? Obviously it was a very important story, all the time in the news.

I thought about my youth, were things at this time really easier, or was this only in the memory of an old man so? Of course, east and west. The good west and the bad east. Everything was clear structured. We knew who our allies were, and our enemies of course as well. But was it so? Korea, Vietnam.....McCarthy and Nixon.....first warnings about climate change in the 70s! Maybe most, and also me, simply not listened?

South America was far away in my youth, nevertheless also at this time people lived there. Those days, a dictator established his regime, a by the people elected president became killed - all for the best of the world. Similarities to today? Our president enabled the Russians to become the commanding force in the Middle East and the Europeans were a total failure. We walked along Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard, had a coffee and a cake, I felt somewhat better now. But still the problem, how to deal with today's flooding with news, and I had not started to talk about alternative facts, about misinformation, about lies.

It was not good, the way politics functioned in the US. Money was, as always, the overall measure. Many institutions like the electoral college, many procedures like the agonizingly slow process to find the candidates of the two parties, felt like outdated. Not to talk about the fact, that such procedures devoured hundreds of millions of dollar, not to say billions of dollar. Money was all in the US.

I talked much about credibility, why especially the evangelicals supported a man that was a notorious liar, had cheated his pregnant wife with a porn star, was this credible? But maybe this was the point why they loved each other so much - or was it the pure greed for power and influence?

No show today, from Yakima to Seattle. No long travel, easily manageable in two and a half hours, but we had the whole day - and a whole day was not nearly enough. We would use not the direct, the fast way, famous Interstate 90, we would, we would have to, visit Mt. Rainer. The highest mountain in the state of Washington, a sleeping volcano, for the last time active in 1854, maybe later also, part of the Cascade Range, a part of the Pacific Fire Ring. Sleeping, like Mt. St. Helens had slept for a long time.

Well, maybe was January not the best time for such a trip, but maybe the best, the mountain top always covered under heavy snow. And also here in Longmire, the starting point for our exploration of the the Mt. Rainer National Park, it was way too hot for January. Also here an ugly mix of rain and snow, and for the next days it was predicted that the temperatures even would raise. Of course we not planned to climb up Mt. Rainer, high more than fourteen thousand feet, we would spend our time near the mountain, looking at the impressive mountain, in the endless woods, the white woods, looking at this force that was only sleeping. We enjoyed our time, looking at this enormous rock, two little creatures impressed by nature. But in the end we had to leave, Seattle was our today's final aim.

"On what are you thinking? Hendrix?"

"Why Hendrix?"

"We're for nearly a year on the road together now, I think I know you somewhat now."

"Well, I have to disappoint you. Yes, Seattle, of course Jimi Hendrix. His music had a serious impact on me, even when I have to confess that I understood neither his music nor the artist he was. I was a white boy who lived in weird Portland? No, I definitively not understood him."

"Not on him, or?"

"Kurt? Was not my music, and he only lived in Seattle, had a million dollar estate there."

"He committed suicide there, and I not talked about him. You're knowing about whom I'm talking."

"Isn't it crazy that he and Courtney met for the first time in our weird Portland?"

"Yes, I know. The Satyricon Club - and?"

"Don't fear, and only because it's somewhat funny, but Bill Gates and Gordon Sondland are born in

Seattle."

"And Chris Cornell."

"Seriously? You're not imagining, finding me one morning, after a show in the evening, hanged in my hotel room?"

"Not in that way."

"Come on, no drugs, no alcohol, I'm a tea drinker as you know. I thought about Frances Farmer, maybe this brings you down?"

"Frances Farmer, really? I mean.....you saw the movie?"

""Frances"? Yeah, but as impressive as the movie is, and as true the rapes and humiliations in the psychiatric hospital most probably had happened, she never had a lobotomy."

"Was the rest not crappy enough for her?"

"Yes, of course. But at the end of the movie, when she's only this puppet anymore, when she shake hands, I cried. And yet, it was only dramatic Hollywood shit. This brings up the question, what's right, what's wrong. Some days ago, you saw people demonstrating in Iran, against the regime. A few days ago, you saw people demonstrating against the USA and for regime, some say that it would have been millions. Today you can see people who are demonstrating against the regime again, some say in many cities, many thousands - I always saw the same group of demonstrators in the news, during the whole day. Frances Farmer was a too self-confident woman for fucking Hollywood, not accepted her role as a beautiful moppet. *I can be smart when it's important, but most men don't like it* - what an iconic sentence. Frances Farmer was too smart as a woman, for Hollywood and for the men."

"*I'll get libeled if I say it.....if Harvey Weinstein invites you to a private party in the Four Seasons, don't go.* Also she was too smart for Hollywood."

"Maybe she killed Kurt?"

"Yeah, cocksure!"

It was night as we reached Seattle, this so fascinatingly located city. A lot of water, in a way recalling San Francisco, nearly at the ocean again, only a stone's throw to the Canadian border. The next two days we would be in Seattle, then back to Portland again, another two shows. In a way only then the last leg of the tour would begin, the last days only a kind of prelude. Around six weeks and this part of the story would be finished, a new chapter would begin. Being a millionaire in Los Angeles, what a wonderful prospect.

On the funeral of Chris Cornell his close friend Chester Bennington sang. How was it, to commit suicide in your million dollar estate near Los Angeles, Chester?

Seattle, a city so much could be said about, you would have to say about. Music alone, pages would have to be filled. From jazz to grunge, and this would be not enough. So many stories, so many stories wouldn't be nice stories, very sad stories, stories about so fantastically skilled artists, failed on life, not able to bear it longer. What a wonderfully located city!

Only to see in which way the water engulfed the city, and by far not only the city. So many islands, bays - it was thrilling. The ocean not that far away, and yet not really easy to reach. Large mountain massifs around the city, the Olympic Mountains alone, a major earthquake zone with a long history of earthquakes. It was always easy to reach water, to reach a mountain, to reach endless woods, to reach nature. And yet, also here, a very lousy weather, but Seattle was known for clouds, rainfall and storms.

So, what to say, Seattle and economy? Talking about Amazon, Starbucks or Boeing? About the high minimum wage? About architecture or culture and art, tourism? Oh, well, sports? "Racial composition", poverty, crime, homeless people - yes, of course, also in this city thousands of homeless people "lived". And then there was a zoo, Woodland Park Zoo. It was some time ago now, that we were in a zoo - therefore! We had decided to spend the day in the Woodland Park Zoo,

Woodland Park, Green Lake.

It was like catching a last breath before the last round would begin - I looked forward! Seattle was a wonderful city, wonderful as an American city could be, of course a blue city, a deep blue city, deep blue as King County - a doomed city? Underneath the danger waited, the mountains around, sleeping, but not dead, awaking maybe every day, the earth sometimes shaking, as the whole West Coast. Missing was the threat of the fires like in the south, in California, the volcanoes Oregon and Washington had - the lake, the park, the zoo, so wonderful.

As always in a zoo, it was calming looking at the animals - yeah, in corrals, aviaries and cages even. Looking at the faces of the children, was it now time, growing up while looking at the carousel, the colorful horses passing by? Iran and Washington, tomorrow the last debate, impeachment in the Senate soon, in a way I became sick of it! Why not staying in the zoo, forever in the endless woods - handing the world finally to them who will destroy it? All the children here in this wonderful zoo, the next years would decide their future - four more years such a policy in Washington, four more years of total failure regarding climate change? Worldwide this was to see, Europe wasn't better, only maybe not that brutal in a way, honest maybe the US only, if you like it, to name it in that way.

And yet, Seattle, Portland, San Francisco maybe. Why was it even in such cities not possible to handle it in a really different way? Portland, the Weird City, maybe not weird enough or weird in a wrong way? Well, San Francisco was a fucking dishonest city in every way - Seattle? Portland? The West Coast? AOC, was she a radical or simply not radical enough?

I looked in the gorilla's face and the gorilla looked in my face - the zoo, Seattle, awaited the next birth of a gorilla, soon it should happen. Was it better for the baby gorilla in a zoo, then in a rain forest, free, in nature, endangered by the humans? How long this nature still would exist, while walking through Woodland Park to reach Green Lake - to walk around Green Lake was a must, when staying in Seattle! And it was beautiful, very beautiful, some sun, no rain today. We had a wonderful first day in Seattle - had I to say that you could eat fantastically in this city?

Seattle, why I was in this strange mood, Ship Canal Bridge crossing Portage Bay on the way to tonight's venue? Really Kurt, your music was never mine, the lyrics I did not understand. Soundgarden, a video, a song, commercial stuff? Hendrix crashed my mind, being aware of, never I would be able, to write only one phrase comparable of one of his. But hey, I'm fifty-four now, and soon a year older. Maybe that's the price you're paying - who paid more?

Tonight's show was a "good" show. A lot of material, sure, the audience liked my words. It was an easy show, a long show. The rest would be easy, down the West Coast!

Today, our second day in Seattle, would be a very busy day - the last debate in front of the caucus in Iowa. It would be possible for us, at the West Coast, to watch it completely, even if I would have a show tonight. The show would begin when the debate would end - good timing! Because we would be at the venue very early this day, or maybe nearby in a café, to watch the whole debate for hours, we had decided to spend the time till then in the Carl S. English Jr. Botanical Garden, by far not the only botanical garden in Seattle, and in the Seattle Chinese Garden with its wonderful view on Seattle. And of course, Seattle had also a Japanese garden, Kubota Garden, and much, much more. Seattle, always water and always nature around you!

The Carl S. English Jr. Botanical Garden was no large botanical garden, in fact a more small one, at least compared to others we had visited during the tour. But it was a very nice place, wonderfully located at Salamon Bay, the Hiram M. Chittenden Locks, the ships nearby. It was possible to cross the bay via the lock, on the other side larger green areas. But for us the botanical garden was large enough, to saunter around, to have a nice time, to look at the water, the ships passing by. So far the day was very relaxing, the cold air, cloudy, but at least no rain, at least not till now. We looked at the

trees, even in winter nice to do, we had lunch nearby - Lockspot Cafe. We would have a longer distance to our second aim for today, the Seattle Chinese Garden, but the garden would be very near to the venue for today, therefore it was our today's second aim.

Also the Seattle Chinese Garden not really large, but again wonderful and surrounded by large green areas, parks - Seattle, a real green city. And what should I say, in the end this relaxing place was much larger than thought. Not in extent as such, but there were so many things to see, to discover, to contemplate, you could spend easily days at this place, only to miss the most! Different seasons? Would I live in Seattle, this place would have to be my aim again and again - we had only a few hours, soon the debate would begin. We had talked with the people from the venue, a café next door. We would watch the debate till the end, first in the café, the rest behind the stage. The show would begin at the moment the debate would end - the debate would be the major topic of the night. On the stage a monitor would stand, the audience was able to watch the debate also, the whole debate. But the audience and I would meet only after the debate was over, then we would talk about the debate - what ever would happen, would happen. We arrived at the café.

Coffee and lunch, we looked at our laptop. The debate begun, and it became a better debate, better as the previous ones - hey, they talked about foreign policy! The Sanders-Warren beef was disappointing! Why they not simply refused to talk about this topic onstage? This was something they had to talk about face to face - why this public comedy? I would have liked it, as president, as conservative! We walked to the venue, modern means of communication allowed us to stay in touch with the debate, also behind the stage. Then the debate was over and I entered the stage - a technician removed the monitor. The show?

It was an interesting show. I communicated with my audience, they communicated with me. It was a very long show, on the stage, later in the hall and lobby, only a few people left the venue after the official end of the show. It was a wonderful show, the second show in Seattle. Portland waited, and then the rest of the West Coast. Los Angeles waited, my million dollar contract waited - we had to get rid of this fucking president!

On our way home to Portland, to Oregon, no show today. An easy trip, no three hours via Interstate 5. We had spent some time at the water before we had left Seattle, had watched some seals, but we had the plan not to arrive late in Portland. It would be good, to be some hours in the city during daylight, Caroline and I would spend the evening apart from each other.

Again a day with a lot of news! The echo of the debate of course. Analyses around the clock. Then CNN showed cuttings from an interview they would send completely in the evening - Jake Tapper had interviewed Lev Parnas. Wow, his words had an explosive potential - but was he not one of the bad guys? One on Giuliani's henchmen, under charge? Was he became a traitor now? A whistleblower? Interesting, but one should be careful, Bolton would be much more interesting to hear. Why he not gave an interview? Whatever, still months till election day, this topic would accompany the president till election day and far beyond. And this was good so!

We reached Portland and we both drove to our homes. I made me a tea, switch on the TV, had a look at the Internet, newspapers - had I said something about a relaxing day? I put my coat on, also Portland had nice parks and a wonderful riverside!

Portland, in the evening a show. Impeachment would move to Senate today, a dignified ceremony

awaited us, a bit like they did it in Britain all the time. Witnesses or not? Impeached in Senate or not? Important or not? One-term president, this was the important goal! And if the Democrats would not be able to manage it this time, with a president that much under pressure, then everything would be too late! Should this relax you? Seeing Warren and Sanders yesterday? No, the Democrats had still the potential to screw it up for a second time!

I used the day to walk around. From time to time, sitting in a café or a restaurant, I checked the news. But I tried to enjoy the day - it was sunny day! Caroline and I would meet in the evening, at the venue. Tomorrow the second show, the another day to relax, then the last leg of the tour would begin finally. I took deep breath, felt a certain turmoil, what else the next weeks would happen?

I crossed the river to spend some time in Vancouver. The "real" Vancouver had been very near, Canada the better USA? Without any doubts, Canada could name itself a modern country, the States only with some major restrictions! Soon I would be a millionaire - living in Canada then? Why, I would be a rich white guy living in the States, for me the States would provide everything. Why I should live in a country where everybody was so awfully polite? Would this should mean that I would have to care about people who struggled? Would this mean that I would have to be interested in the fate of a veteran who had risked his life in Afghanistan or Iraq? What an absurd thought, I would be a white millionaire in Los Angeles, don't start to become silly!

I arrived at the venue, on of the largest in the city, we had changed venues, of course sold out since a long time anyway, Caroline awaited me.

"I think that you remember, that I could had not find a venue in Manhattan, not to talk about the Broadway?"

"Yeah, I can remember!"

"Look who's interested in, to book you as soon as possible."

She handed me the print of an email - I smiled and gave it back to her.

"At the moment I have no time to return to New York. And if, there're some wonderful venues in the other parts of the city. Can you send them my answer?"

"With pleasure, I'm your manager. And by the way. There's no late night, who's not interested in to have you."

"Now I have to finish the tour. The rest comes later. DeGeneres or Kimmel, the L.A. hosts?"

"Already fixed, after the end of the tour. Fallon would be interested? New York?"

"Jimmy Fallon was the first, you can fix a date after DeGeneres and Kimmel, but no shows please."

"Sure. And now good luck for the show!"

The show was very intense - I was surprised! First I thought that it would become a standard show, not bad but the common stuff. But then I felt different, it became a fucking good show! I felt prepared for the rest of the shows now!

The second day in Portland, the second day back home in the Weird City. Tomorrow we would have no show, tomorrow would be the day to say goodbye to this Portland, the next time I would be in The City Of Roses the city would be no longer the same, I would be no longer the same. But today was today.

I stood up late, some news, but I was not so much interested in them - I looked at Mt. Hood. I would spend the time till the show on Government Island, one of the places of my youth. Deer, salamanders, even bald eagles, American eagles, one could watch here. And then Columbia River, my whole life water attracted me. The shallow water at the east end of the isles, a wonderful place to play, a wonderful place to die.

Many memories overwhelmed me, walking around on the isle. A Colombian white-tailed deer ran away, a sixteen-year-old girl jumped of Colorado Street Bridge, a pileated woodpecker was to hear, why I could not hear them who were treated unfair?

A country at the crossroads, a nation that had to decide, the cruelty of history. The easiness in which one could manipulate the masses - Crowds and Power, Elisa Canetti? But when it was obvious, when it was written down, by far not only by this author, why it still functions that easy? Because humans not more than animals, lemmings? Or was it more a question of knowledge, knowing the down written words, was it more a question of education, the access to knowledge? What a question in a country where it was a matter of money, but not of intelligence, whether it would be possible to you to gain education. Education only for a certain class, always an appropriate instrument to secure you power. In a country where a white European founded elite feared more and more to become the minority, who felt, that it became more and more difficult to ensure their power.

I touched the water, the cold water, on its way to the ocean. The ocean was the aim, always, naturally. The shallow water at the east end, how wonderful this place had been.....

It was a sentimental show, I hated sentimentality. But it was time to say goodbye, and it was a sentimental goodbye.

I stood in front of Mill Ends Park and looked at it - a nice image for this weird and crazy city. The smallest park in the world, and it started with the action of one person, Dick Fagan. Often beautiful things started and became something important because someone began with it, without a specific aim. I touched a leaf and continued with my walk alongside Willamette River. My today's aim would be Kelley Point, still some miles to go. But I had time, the next four weeks in the car again, till we would reach Los Angeles. Los Angeles, the Los Angeles River a joke, the parks somewhat "different", the palm trees boring. I reached Kelly Point and sat on the wooden fence - a large ship headed to the harbor.

Very cloudy today, not really cold, the whole next week it should rain, the weather forecast had said. Heavy snow fall at the East Coast, the New England States. But we would head southwards, seventy-five degrees in Los Angeles today with some clouds? In winter southern California was a nice place, but in summer, during the fire season? Portland was in deed a fucking nice place to live!

I had to confess that I was tired from walking, I used public transport for the way home. Underway I bought some food, a quiet evening at home? Watched some soaps, nothing very thrilling. Whereby, Al Bundy with his "hot" Latina wife? As Umberto Eco had written, put enough clichés together and voilà, you're creating cult. His example was "Casablanca", mine "Modern Family".

I enjoyed my tea, had a nice evening, went to bed soon and could not sleep. I had this feeling, again, and it was fucking! This story will have no nice end, I started to panic, it was not good for me to be alone.....

We hit Interstate 5, the road that would lead us till Los Angeles, with a detour to San Francisco, but not today. Today our trip was very short, from Portland till Albany, still we would be more or less at home. The whole remaining way was very common to me, as the last days had been, Washington and Oregon, the states my career had begun. California was later, in fact I had hesitated, the Californian spirit not necessarily mine. But still in Oregon today, and also the next.

Because the distance was very short today, we had not to depart very early, the show in the evening.

But, it was important not to arrive too late! Not for the show, no, this was no problem! But for the carousel, better, the Historic Carousel & Museum in Albany! It was a must, of course! Often I was there, also in my youth - all this wonderful animals! All the passion of the people who ran this place, all the wonderful smiles of the children, it was wonderful to touch the wonderful animals.

It was a wonderful start of the final part of the tour. Albany, a smaller city with somewhat over fifty thousand inhabitants, a white city in a wonderful valley, a fine place to live - Weird Portland with its Roses? I liked it, that this was my native region, the region I was used to. And yet, so many other interesting places I had seen during the tour, some of them very disturbing. In a way the rest of the tour would be boring, it was not to expect that something unexpected would happen during the rest of the tour. Too familiar I was with it, down the West Coast, San Francisco and Los Angeles. And yet, I looked forward to the next weeks, the rest of the tour, the rest of this chapter.

The show was a good show, I felt good, did I?

Only a short hop from Albany to Eugene today, a hop to the south end of Willamette Valley. The next two days the landscape would be hillier, till Redding, also Eugene surrounded by some hills. The city was a medium-sized city, somewhat over one hundred and fifty thousand inhabitants, a city with an enormous offer concerning culture and art. It would be a very long list if one would try to list everything, from opera and ballet till alternative music and markets. Wineries - of course organic was no problem - a deep connection to the movies. Eugene, a city at the West Coast.

"In a way this city looks very common, but then - Rose McGowan spent her youth in the city."

"Rose McGowan and the West Coast, is there a city not related to her? As a teenage runaway in Portland, then Seattle was the next place, and later Los Angeles. Welcome at the West Coast!"

"San Francisco is missing?"

"Well, in Eugene also Courtney Love spent a part of her youth, born in San Francisco?"

"Yeah, welcome the West Coast! Should we mention Jack Herer and Eugene?"

We spent some time in Eugene - well, not cold but raining. The next days should become even warmer - January? - with rain all the days, in the whole region! Therefore we did not that much, but at least we walked around in the city- and by the way, today was a special day!

This Year January, 20th - Martin Luther King Day! A day to reflect about the state of the nation? A nation in a deep crisis, a nation on the brink, a nation on the way of destroying itself. I thought back, standing in front of the motel, looking at the balcony, hearing the shot - was it worth it? 1968, the situation today? The situation of the African Americans, the Black People, the Latinos, the Asian Americans? Would he be desperate, would he live today? Would he talk about non-violence, or would he raise his fist - in Chicago, Boston or New Orleans? Would he march through the streets, or would he had a gun in his hand - or some bullets in his back? Look at this old white desperate men in the Senate! They fear that their time is over, they feel that their time is over! Look at the proud diverse women on the other side of the aisle! They are the future, the only way to stop them would be by suppression and violence, breaking the rules and laws! Retention of power is everything, every mean is legal, they are knowing that America is a proud white religious nation, this has to be preserved, no matter with what means and in which way! Standing in front of a motel, looking at a balcony, I'm hearing a shot - the bullet penetrates my head.

On the stage I talked about this day. Eugene, Lane County, nearly as blue as Portland, Multnomah County - of course the audience liked my words. Why I was not in the Panhandle now, Oklahoma or Utah or Idaho? Soon in California, the larger and large cities, alongside the Interstate - does this made sense today?

Medford was our today's aim, still in Oregon, tomorrow we would enter California. Medford was located in an old volcanic area, still the Cascade Mountain Range. The city area relatively flat, a volcanic flow area, many mountains, lakes and other characteristics of the landscape around the city showed you the past, and in way also the future, of this area.

Medford, around half of the size of Eugene, had a notable Latino community of nearly fifteen percent - we headed southwards! Eugene famous for biking - Portland! - also in Medford it was nothing rare to see someone on a bike, in one of the wonderful parks, biking through the wonderful landscape. But as in Eugene, it rained! So we decided to drive directly to Upper Klamath Lake, before we checked in, we informed the hotel and it was okay, to have a look at the mountain top of Mount McLoughlin, covered with heavy snow, as long as the short day lasted. Mount McLoughlin, a real gem, a since a long time sleeping volcano, but sleeping forever?

Because of our detour, we reached Medford late. Not too late for the show of course, but too late to do something - and it still rained. Whereby, without any doubts, Medford would have been a place not only for one fine day, but why not coming back? So, we saw not much of the city, I had to prepare myself for the show - TV! Today the impeachment trial in Senate started - a stupid farce with a disgusting and decayed GOP! Moscow Mitch had his big day, hopefully the days of this old white men were counted! Hours of hypocritical words, so it was all okay what the president had done? - Welcome to the future of the United States!

It was an aggressive show, but hey! Okay, Medford and Jackson County of light pink color, but here in the hall, my audience? Still not Wyoming or Oklahoma - at the right time at the wrong place?

Today somewhat less than three hours on the road, of course still Interstate 5. We left Medford, we left the mountains, we left the volcanoes, we left Oregon. We entered California, we entered the Great Valley, the agricultural powerhouse of the USA! You ever ate an almond, somewhere in the world? There's a good chance therefore, that the tree from which the almond was, stands near to this Interstate! You ever ate a strawberrie in the states, an orange maybe? Welcome to The Valley, welcome to California!

Not only once, and especially also today, the Californians thought about to leave the United States, to become independent. A joke? Why? California is very good comparable with many European countries, in size, inhabitants, not to talk about economic strength! With other words, it would be easily possible for California to be a country alone, but it would be a major loss for the United States! Had we to talk about Silicon Valley, about the film industry, about music, about, that most vegetables you could eat in the USA were grown in this area? You're a wine drinker? The list could be endless!

As said, we left the volcano region now, not without a last look at a majestic gem like Mt. Shasta. Also sleeping, but breathing, fumaroles showed that deep inside the mountain was still alive, and the geologists knew that this mountain, this volcano, had a very violent past! But as said, we left this region now, and what region we entered? The volcanoes behind, the fires in front!

In July 2018 the Carr Fire impacted the whole county, Shasta County, seriously. In the area of Redding over a thousand buildings became destroyed, nearly forty thousand people had to leave their homes, six became killed - volcanoes in the north, fires in the south, earthquakes everywhere. Welcome to the West Coast!

The valley opened up while crossing Shasta Lake, an impressing to see reservoir - a few miles and some smaller cities and Redding was there. We reached the city around noon, a smaller city again, not a hundred thousand inhabitants. We had only one aim to be, till the show would need our

attention - what else it should be?

We had to be at the bend of Sacramento River, of course we crossed Sundial Bridge, not only once! And even that it was much too warm for January, even that it was again a cloudy and rainy day, we enjoyed our time under the trees, the garden, at the museum, and of course at the water very much. Redding, a place worth much more than only one day, not to talk about some hours at a rainy day!

It was a very satisfying show - you think: Hey, this is California! Well, Shasta County deep red - surprised! The asshole in office had won the county easily! The north of California was red, deep red sometimes. Tomorrow in Sacramento, then we would enter the blue California.....

From the beginning of the valley to the heart of the valley we drove today, from Redding to Sacramento, the capital city of the state of California. The heart, not because this city was the capital of California, not because the city was the center of the food production in California, but this city was the center of food processing in California - and we Americans liked processed food! I think that I had not to mention the cultural aspects of the city, the parks, the big cooperation domiciled in this city of a little more than five hundred thousand. Maybe the Sacramento River, maybe the Spanish and then the Mexican history of the city, maybe Old Sacramento with its many historic buildings, a hundred and fifty years old and older, maybe the Delta King Paddle Steamer, maybe that Sacramento was a center of the Californian gold rush, a part of the Californian Genocide - a long list of massacres can be found.....

About one one had to talk was the "racial composition" of the city. More to the south now, near San Francisco, the city was very diverse. A third European rooted Whites, nearly a third Latinos, nearly twenty percent Asian Americans, nearly fifty percent African Americans - one percent "Native" Americans. But more than that, in contrast to "normal" American cities, it was hard to define something like white or black neighborhoods, Sacramento was one of the "most well-integrated cities" in the USA - in the USA one had to say. Nevertheless, this city offered a different spirit than most American cities. It reminded me to the cities in Texas in way, not the Panhandle of course, both those in the south, near the border, those so safe in many ways! About San Francisco and Los Angeles we had to talk later on.

We spent our time in Discovery Park, at the confluence of Sacramento and American River. We heard Adam Schiff and the others - Schiff was impressive! Would this be enough? Not for an impeachment of course. For new witnesses and documents? I was doubtful, this GOP was decayed in a way, that you could have no hope anymore! Enough to convince enough independents? Hopefully!

Why a city like Sacramento - should I mention the number of people living under the poverty line, the crime rates - could not be a model for other cities in the USA? But a model for what? The Californian spirit, the Californian life-style?

See the handsome surfer boys, the beautiful girls looking at them - hey, they all are white? Look at the nice pictures from San Francisco and L.A. - hey, they are all white? Where are all this Asian Americans who are living in San Francisco, the Latinos living in L.A.? Why not a city like Sacramento stands for California, the Californian way? Because Chinese women were whores and Chinese men were opium dealer? Because Latino women were servants and Latino men mowed the lawn? And the African Americans, this former slaves? One percent "Native" Americans? Who should be interested in them? Yeah, the Californian Spirit, the Californian Way.....

It was a very satisfying show in front of a very diverse audience. Well, now in the blue part of the state!

Our second day in Sacramento, the last day for the democrats in Senate. Not the best weather today, but at least no rain, maybe a shower or two, but not more. So we decided to spent most of the day at Lake Tahoe, one of the most high-lying lakes in the USA, and the second deepest as well, located west of the Carson Range. So we drove through the valley till we reached the mountains, crossed them, to reach the lake. And even when the "old" days were over, that the lake and its surrounding has changed a lot over the time, the lake was a wonderful sight, surrounded by an impressive landscape.

We drove early, reached our aim long before noon, looked at the deep blue water, not expected to see the monster. But we saw something wonderful, experienced something wonderful, we had wonderful hours till we decided to cross the border, to have lunch in Carson City.

Back in Nevada, in its capital, a city of fifty-five thousand inhabitants. More than a movie, more than a image of the "Wild West"? 2020 we had? Whale Beach at Tahoe Lake, within the Carson City's city limits, was a nude beach - in Nevada, USA? We had a very good lunch in a very nice restaurant there.

The rest of our time we spent on this side of the lake - with our clothes on or not? It was January, a cloudy day? But nevertheless it was nice to be at this wonderful lake, in Nevada again. Tomorrow we would be at the ocean again, San Francisco waited. But today we enjoyed all this nature around us, enjoyed the wonderful deep blue water of the lake.

We were back in Sacramento right to the show. I entered the stage and spoke a lot. The audience applauded a lot. We all had a good time, thinking about the deep blue lake.

No one and a half hour, crossing the Oakland Bay Bridge, looking at the San Francisco skyline. Not by far the first time I saw this view, not the first time I would be on a stage in this city, another Dungeness crab at Fisherman's Wharf?

"You're so silent?"

"Too many memories, so much has changed since I was the last time here. In so many cities we were now, so many different places we have seen now - the city by the bay? I feel wrong in this city, I feel unsure, have no idea what we shall do till the show?"

"It's also not my first time in the city. I think there would be a lot, that we could do?"

"Of course, the nice little cafés in Little Italy, even when they call it North Beach. A coffee at Caffè Trieste - why not? Fantastic seafood everywhere? Ghirardelli I have not to mention - or? The Castro or the Mission District - let us check in and then let us decide."

San Francisco - did we wear flowers in the hair? Of course not, this fucking corrupt view on the state. San Francisco, only the fourth largest city of the state - be not confused by the bay area as such, the city as such was not that large. But what it had, was an extremely high per capita income, search for it and be impressed - Silicon Valley not far away. But the problem was that "per capita" not would tell you the truth. A homeless crisis in the city, seven thousand five hundred homeless people in the city - well, in L.A. forty-five thousand! - and Uber drivers who had to sleep in their cars. San Francisco was a fantastic example for the corruptness of the state.

A third of the inhabitants Asian Americans, mainly from China. San Francisco was the port for Chinese immigrants during history. Around fifteen percent of the inhabitants Latinos, six percent African Americans - adds up to over fifty percent? Where are they!

Not so much in the city, a "map of racial distribution" would help you to find them, but in the public view? San Francisco, a city of music - all bands were white? San Francisco, a city of movies - all actors, all stories, were white? San Francisco, the city of flower power - the hippie culture was (nearly) white, Height-Asbury very white? The Whites a minority in this city, why they dominated

the public discourse, arts, movies, music, and of course media? The American Dream - a "white" story?

We checked in, the news? CNN released a tape, Parnas and the president on it, a snippet, why not complete? Why Bolton not simply said what he had to say? No one could hinder him to give an interview? Well, that's politics, that's why so many were tired of it.

We walked down Market Street till the bay, the historic streetcars drove by. Seagulls and sea lions, the smell of the salty air, the bridge in the background, some sun's rays. No one jumped off the bridge, my view hit Angel Island, the hopes of so many, this city had underwent violent times. Not only the near complete destruction after the big earthquake and the fire, the gold rush, today? How much violence in this city today, and I not meant the crime rates, not the gangs. The city fucking rich in a way, but many - most - had to struggle to make their daily life.

Not the first time in this city, maybe not the last. The city of Beat, the city of the hills, the city of open mics, the city that offered gays a safe place. The first time I was in the city, I bought a model of the Golden Gate Bridge, made from copper wire by a homeless by the bay. I paid ten dollar, of course much too much. I should have given him a hundred, a thousand, a million dollar instead. Give me what you can give for it, he had said - the old impressive ferry, the steamer, the wonderful sailing ship. The City by the Bay, a nice little doll house for tourists, otherwise.....

I talked about responsibility, about to care. I talked about Sanders, at the moment leading Iowa and New Hampshire in a not predicted way. It was the first of four shows in San Francisco, still thought to be at the wrong place.

Our second day in San Francisco, a city that could be so wonderful. The Presidio of San Francisco, the Golden Gate Park with the Japanese Tea Garden and the San Francisco Botanical Garden, the zoo. Of course the harbor, the bay, the beach on the other side of the city, the ocean. All the hills, the landmarks, the sights - yes, San Francisco could be a wonderful city.

It stuck me all the time, the music connected with this city, hippies and gay people, literature and all the other arts. Yes, Jimi Hendrix in a way, but look at this "white" art. And then I see Otis Redding, see him sitting on the docks of the bay all day, remembering Georgia, singing about loneliness. That is a slightly different picture, no flowers in the hair! The City by the Bay, walking on the Golden Gate Bridge, looking down, seeing the water surface, so far away, so near, only some seconds.

Walking through the streets of San Francisco - what do you see? Walking up the hills, looking around, walking down again - what do you see? Well, I guess it would depend. Eating Cioppino for \$ 30 or more, or searching for food in a garbage can? Every third inhabitant of San Francisco is an Asian American, mostly from China - do you see them at the Wharf, at the tourist's places, between the skyscrapers? Do you see them in the line, at lunch break downtown, waiting to pick up their meals at hip food place? Do you hear their music, do see their books in San Francisco's famous book stores? Where are they, their culture, their art - and please, do not say Chinatown now!

Bernie Sanders, the man of the moment - will he really win in Iowa? New Hampshire? What would this mean for this nation, a city like San Francisco? Maybe nothing! A president alone will change nothing - Congress is needed. But even if the Democrats would win both chambers, would all Democrats follow Sanders - I would have my doubts. The fucking comments from Clinton recently made on Sanders - the Clinton Dems would be Sanders worst enemy, not the Republicans. A city like San Francisco illustrated in an irresistible and devastating way all the contradictions, all the lies, this country contained. Some called it "The American Way of Life" or "The American Dream", others felt simply cheated, conned, defrauded.

I talked a lot about the responsibility as an American to define what "American" should mean. To discuss it, openly and loud. Should "American" mean white and with European roots, or born in

America, living in America. If first, then everything was said! If the second, then this would include the possibility that one day the white European rooted population would be the minority, like in L.A. all the time. And then, what kind of movies will be made then, on Treasure Island, in Hollywood? The Grammys, the Oscars - the "American Art"?

The third day in San Francisco, not the first time in the city, neither I, nor Caroline. And we both shared a special place in the city. We entered Lands End Trail at its east end and had a nice walk till approximately half the distance. Then we had to use the turn-off down the hill, towards the ocean - Mile Rock Beach was our aim.

It was a cloudy morning, but it not rained, and we climbed about the rocks. It was fun, especially reaching the rocks in the water, the white waves hit them heavily - and in the background the Golden State Bridge, this rust-brown icon, beautiful and scary, attracting and repelling, swimming in the water. Not at this place, the ocean current at this place, at the entrance to the bay, even for very skilled swimmers not to handle. And still it was a cold and cloudy January day.

We had a lot of fun at this place, we both liked it to be there, sitting on our rocks, looking at Pyramid Rock. Closing your eyes, laying down, and hearing the waves, this attracting sound when the soft water hits the solid rock - and one day there will be no longer this solid rock, only the soft water will stay. I had the feeling that we could lay here the whole day!

A last look at the bridge and up the hill again. We continued our way till we reached the USS San Francisco Memorial. We stood there for a while, thought about what all this ship, its crew, had to suffer during its time. And yet, all the time since then, America was a nation at war. But what was most sad was, that we sent young women and men to risk their lives, and when they survived and came back? Many of them lived on the streets, every few minutes one committed suicide, many got no real treatment for their mental problems - thanks, richest country on earth ever!

It had become later as we had thought, used the bus to drive back to Market Street, to our hotel, some refreshment, had eaten nothing the whole day, had drank not enough. But we had still some time till the show, walked till The Castro and looked for a nice place to eat and to drink something - very good seafood! Later we sat in a nice place for a coffee and something sweet.

"Were you ever in one this shows?"

"Why I should, I'm not gay? And if I would be interested in, why in San Francisco, Portland would offer you enough?"

"I only was curious."

"Well, never was attracted by a man, think that they are a bit boring."

"Well said, man!"

"And you, The Castro is not only for gay men interesting?"

"You know, between us women it's a different matter. You not have these men's fantasies now?"

"No, and this the liberal West Coast. That's one of the things I like upon San Francisco, seeing men or women kissing each other in public transport or in parks, walking down the streets. Gives the city a nice mood."

We decided to walk around in this quarter, till I had to prepare for the show. Our third day in San Francisco came to its end - apart from the show, of course!

I was relatively relaxed on the stage today. The rocks and the water, the time in The Castro. I talked about socialist ideas - yeah, the Silicon Valley, the epitome of socialism!

Our last day in San Francisco, then we would be on the other side of the bay for two more shows,

and then at the southern end of the bay, for a last show in this area. Well, we were in the zoo..... One could ask, if there were no other interesting aims in this city, this area, than the zoo - especially because this was not my first time in the city, and of course not my first time in the San Francisco Zoo? Of course there would have been a lot of other interesting aims - why not crossing the bridge and visiting the beautiful houseboats in Sausalito? Angel Island and its past, Alcatraz Island and its past? Yeah, a nearly unimaginable amount of interesting aims this city and area offered you.

After the zoo we walked along Ocean Beach, till we reached the Golden State Park - today a day with some clouds and some sun's rays. We walked around in the park, sat at the lakes, enjoyed the "wilderness". It was nice, it was not that difficult to dive into this park, forgetting the city around you, even if the park was traversed by some larger streets. We ate and drank, we had a nice day - the president presented proudly his "peace plan". It was surreal to see this scene, appeared like a snippet from a bad movie, a movie of cliches. But this was the sad truth - yeah, two deal makers, two corrupt old white men.

The last show in San Francisco, a lot I had to say. Well, in this liberal hub, here this was an easy play. The next two days two universities, the young elite of our nation awaited me.

We crossed the Oakland Bay Bridge, to spend the day in Oakland till the show. Of course, we changed not the hotel, easy it was to cross the bay - and beautiful. In former times, in a way, it had been much more beautiful.

The Eureka started her powerful engine, the paddles started to move. She was so beautiful, and yet for most of the passengers on their benches only a mean for daily use, a mean to cross the bay. But for me this beauty was so much more, sitting on the benches alone, not hearing the engine, no paddle moving. I sat in car, high above the water, crossing the beautiful bridge.

We reached Yerba Buena Island, the tunnel, Treasure Island aside, and the bridge changed its shape. I liked the part we just had left behind, but this, more normal, part had also its beauty. Oakland ahead of you, mountains in the background, the large commercial ships in the bay, as we headed to West Oakland first.

A beautiful place in Oakland was always Lake Merritt to me. We passed the Children's Fairyland and entered the Lakeside Park with its wonderful parts. Too many to name them all, offering you bonsai, palms, rhododendron, cactus and more - and then this sight! The "Ghostbusters" building, the astonishing Bellevue-Staten Building - every time I liked it to see this surreal sight, should I buy me a condo there? Soon I would be a millionaire, could remind me, that I had seen a condo for sale there. Not a million dollar you had to pay to live in this crazy building, so near to the lake and the beautiful gardens - should I? We continued our way around the lake, passed The Pergola at Lake Merritt and the fountain, till we reached our starting point again.

"Now I'm really hungry, let's have a look for a restaurant."

"I know a nice one, not far away. The last time I was there, I had a very nice dinner at this place. A wonderful salad and a very tasty sorbet made from mandarins I ate there."

"That sounds very good. Later we can have a coffee, and then we have to watch the first question time in Senate, till the show."

The meal was wonderful, the farce in Senate hardly to bear! If not at least four Republicans would vote for new documents and witnesses after this tasteless play, then our democracy would be in real danger! The argumentation of the president's defenders became more and more silly - as said, hardly to bear! For this show I had enough to say, a lot of students, young people, would be there? I felt some fear!

Yeah, the show. From time to time we watched the questions live, and I commentated them -

Sanders' question was nice!

Again we crossed the bay, again the Oakland Bay Bridge, but this time not Oakland was our aim, but Berkeley. Berkeley, not so much a city, but the more a university - one of "the universities" in the country. The first time, in Portland, I heard from the University of California, Berkeley in the movie - "The Graduate". Elaine returns to Berkeley, to her studies, after Benjamin had confessed her his relation to her mother. What a wonderful kitschy moment when he follows her!

I was aware of, that this movie expanded not only in one way the possibilities of story telling in movies, but I asked myself: What, when Benjamin would have been black? Well, Benjamin returned to Southern California, Pasadena, from the East Coast, after he had graduated from college. Well, sounded not "that black". To make it short, I felt the movie totally corrupt! Anne Bancroft with a young black man in bed? Katharine Ross, the beautiful white student, kissing a black man? And the West Coast equivalent, Ali MacGraw would kiss a black man? Would Mr. Cool, Steve McQueen, had been still interested in then, to "own" her, after she would have had hot movie scenes with a black man? All this was so fucking corrupt, and today? I should not ponder about such things - we arrived in Berkeley.

"We still have some time till the show - the botanical garden of the university, or the Berkeley Rose Garden?"

"I'm in no good mood. This is my first time in Berkeley, and I'm not sure why it should be not the last time. Let's be at the bay till the show."

"Okay."

We spent some time at Aquatic Park, had a very nice and tasty dinner, I prepared for the show, more theater from Senate!

I was still not in a good mood, as I stood on the stage. There would have been so many other places where I would have preferred it, to be at this moment.

Still we stayed in our hotel at Market Street, today again no long drive. But not across the bay, alongside the bay today, till its southern end - San José, "The Capital of Silicon Valley". A population of over a million, the largest city in the north of California, after Los Angeles and San Diego in the south. Yeah, larger than famous San Francisco!

It all started with "The Valley" in the 60s and 70s, especially in the 80s and 90s the development accelerated, and today this city was the hub of the bay, no longer San Francisco. Whereby, many of them who worked in the valley still in San Francisco lived - every morning and evening a fleet of buses jammed the highways, to transport the commuters. San José, one of the most expensive places to live in the whole USA - you only have heard of Los Angeles or New York, San Francisco maybe? Of course, the median income extremely high, nevertheless nearly ten percent under the poverty line. And the "racial composition"? One third Latinos, not really less Asian Americans? Two third - surprised? I was, but what third would have the high paid jobs in the valley? A map of racial distribution needed?

Of course a city of culture and arts, breathtaking landmarks, wonderful parks, a city connected especially to music and writing. A city of universities and science, high-tech of course. A beautiful and clean city, I felt not really comfortable in. We drove the few miles through a valley till Santa Cruz and spent the day at the beach - a sunny day!

Would we see the vote today - more documents and witnesses? Maybe the vote, but obviously no documents and witnesses - the argumentation of the Republicans became such abstruse.....yeah,

this president should be allowed everything! But the discussions continued and it became obvious that I had to begin with the show. Caroline would give me sign, if the vote would have happened.

The show? I got a sign, the show lasted already since a longer time, and it was no surprise. I said some very distinct words, not everyone liked them - should I be interested in? No, this was not the end, but this GOP had gambled away every respect, especially figures like McConnell, Graham or Cruz!

Goodbye to the bay, back to Interstate 5, our detour came to an end. We crossed the bay a last time, a look back at the San Francisco skyline, the buildings, the hills, the bridge at the mouth of the bay. The tunnel, Treasure Island, goodbye to Oakland Bay Bridge. We crossed Oakland, San Leandro, used the 880 first - the 580 we hit not earlier than we passed Hayward, Castro Valley.

We crossed the beautiful mountains, Diablo Range, a short trip, a short detour to have a look at wonderful Mt. Diablo from afar, then we were again a part of "The Great (Californian) Valley". No longer in the Sacramento Valley area, no longer at Sacramento River, now the river was the San Joaquin River, in the San Joaquin Valley area we were now, in the middle of the valley, the Diablo Range in the west, the breathtaking Sierra Nevada in the east, Yosemite National Park would be not that far away. We arrived in Stockton.

Stockton, founded during the California Gold Rush, somewhat more than three hundred thousand inhabitants, surrounded by agricultural land, a lot of water there, the San Joaquin River Delta. Over forty percent Latinos, over twenty percent Asian Americans, over ten percent African Americans lived in Stockton. A poverty rate of nearly twenty percent, problems with crime, many negative aspects mentioned about this city. Bankrupt in 2012, the third oldest symphonic orchestra in California after Los Angeles and San Francisco, theaters, opera, several museums and galleries, a lot of festivals, not only one golf club, the birthplace of "The Fantastic Four". Stockton, a good place to live in?

As good as in any other city in the end - not for the first time this question in my mind. In a way it was always a question of your circumstances of living, to be able to make your living or not, to see a future for yourself or not. Today was a day with some clouds and some sun, too warm for the season, looking at the water of San Joaquin River.

The landscape started to change, around the bay everything was green, very green, now it started to change. Even here, at the delta, the green started to change, brown started to appear, the flora changed. This would become more and more visible, even when sometimes covered by artificial watering, the more we would head towards the south. You could love it, the kitschy Los Angeles palms, or you could be sad, to lose the deep green hills, with their white mountain tops - homesick? Portland? The New England States?

Today was Saturday, no puppet theater in Senate, but very near now to Iowa - who would make it? Should I commit myself to a candidate? Sanders' improvement was astonishing, leading the first two states with a big lead now. But would I live in Iowa, would I have to vote on Monday, would I know for whom I should vote? To be honest? I would be one of them, who still was undecided!

Sanders would be cool in a way, but he would have no chance in Washington, to push his health care plan through. And was his plan the best - I had my doubts! Biden? Would he be the one who could beat Trump - I had my doubts! Warren? Buttigieg? Klobuchar? Steyer even? The primary election in Oregon would be at the very end of the process, too late to have a real chance to change something substantial, if even anything at all!

I did something different today on the stage. I started a discussion about the candidates with the audience. The starting point was: If I would have to vote in Iowa next Monday, I would have no idea whom I should give my vote! It was a long and interesting evening.

A two hours drive today, from Stockton to Fresno - Fresno, not only the geographical heart of California. Somewhat over half a million inhabitants, the fifth-largest city in California, the largest inland city in California, surpassed Sacramento by some thousands.

We not used the Interstate 5 today, nor we would do it tomorrow, it was more useful to use the CA 99 route the next two days. After Bakersfield we would cross Interstate 5 for a last time, the coast at Santa Maria would be our aim then - but today Fresno was our aim.

We headed south, nearly fifty percent of the inhabitants were Latinos, a larger community of Asian Americans, also of African Americans - over twenty-five percent lived under the poverty line. A typical (southern) Californian city with a zoo and nice parks, culture and arts, homeless people, winners and losers, the Shinzen Japanese Gardens. For some reasons this city reminded me to San Francisco - well, no ocean, no bay, but high mountains, many lakes, the famous Yosemite National Park nearby? I missed Columbia River, Rockaway Beach.....

We started late from Stockton, arrived late in Fresno - no time to do something. We stayed in the hotel, had dinner - Sunday, not so much in the news. Iowa tomorrow, the fear that Sanders could win. CNN reported all the time about the concerns of the Moderates, the Clinton Dems. A long interview with Joe Biden's wife, talked about how burdened the talk about her son was. Well, of course, he got the job in Ukraine because of his high qualifications! Why not talking about Sanders, about his success by young voters, that he was able to create a movement - he said that he would support every other democratic nominee, if he would not become the nominee. That there was a higher aim, that the next president has to be a person of honor again. Biden, as far as I could see, never said this - the same fucking shit as in 2016? Maybe Elizabeth Warren would be good, why not Buttigieg - but Biden? Sunday, not so much in the news. A new terrorist attack in London, now no longer part of the EU.....

In the show I talked about that I would hope, that the Dems would act more clever this year, than in 2016. Every of the democratic candidates would be better than the contemporary one, that the Dems could only fail, if they again would fight against each other. This made him possible in 2016, this would give him a second term in 2020!

We reached Bakersfield, our last day in the valley, the agricultural powerhouse of California, the whole USA. For a last time we would pass the almond trees, this green isles on dry soil. But one should not forget the oil, energy production a big topic in Bakersfield, food processing of course, in this city of around three hundred and eighty thousand inhabitants, not surprisingly nearly one of two of them were Latinos.

We would have not that much time for the city, but this was not that problematic. For some reasons I knew this city very well, this part, the southern end of the Great Valley - today much would happen. The last day of the impeachment trial, but this would not interest me that much - much the more Iowa.

It would be interesting if we would know at least some results till the beginning of the show, it would be very interesting to see the performances of the candidates. Iowa not necessarily a very significant state, in many ways not very useful as a reference for other states. But we Americans always loved statistics - the last four winners in Iowa became the democratic nominee for presidency. It was all about expectations.

We looked for a place where we could eat and drink something, sit and follow the news. The caucuses started and it was somewhat disturbing to watch them. In Oregon we would hold a

primary, the whole West Coast hold primaries, the caucuses seemed somewhat strange to me. It was 2020, was it not possible to hold one primary in the whole country at one day, maybe a day that would enable as much as possible voters to participate? But this was not the American style, to make elections easy and for all accessible.

We sat and sat and waited - no results, not of one caucus! Problems, they had problems, but not specified them. It was a strange situation, I had planned that Iowa would be a major topic on the stage today - and now?

I had arranged with Caroline, that she would inform me, if something would be announced - I stood on the stage and waited and waited. It was a very weird show, enough topics, but hey, it was the first day of the Democratic primaries and caucuses? We waited - nothing! The show lasted till midnight - nothing! It was strange, no good start for this so important process.

Santa Barbara would be our today's aim, we would not use the fastest route, we would use a very interesting route. We would leave Bakersfield westwards, Taft would be the first city we would pass by, then Maricopa. Before Curyama we would change roads, now towards Ventucopa and Ventura. At Mira Monte we would change direction again, to reach the coastal line, for the final distance to Santa Barbara. As said, not the direct way, but a very beautiful way, crossing the valley at first, driving through mountains later, passing wonderful landmarks like Lake Casitas, a beautiful reservoir, hitting the coast at last.

A very sunny day, a day with a lot of politics. Still no result from Iowa, maybe later the day! Then the State of the Union, should someone expect something from this speech? We reached Santa Barbara after a somewhat longer trip.

Santa Barbara, a very "Spanish" city, we headed south. Not a hundred thousand inhabitants, wonderful sights. To be at the harbor was a wonderful thing to do, but we had also to follow the news - and the news always stuck at rewind.

Why all this talking about harm, harm for the candidates, harm for the Democrats, good for the Republicans? Obviously a technical problem, wouldn't it be possible to see this a little more relaxed? Biden uttered some doubts about the result - why this service for the fucking GOP? It was devastating to see this all!

We spent some time at the beach, unfortunately no time for the zoo. The speech would be over before the beginning of the show, would it be interesting what he would say? Tomorrow the impeachment trial would come to its end - why I had this feeling that the Democrats started again to act stupidly, and to do everything to help the president to get a second term? Maybe because they were not able not to play this stupid games, as in 2016, as it costs them the victory.

What a show! Still only some provisional result from Iowa, we showed footage from the speech. Buttigieg in the lead, they loved it in Santa Barbara to see this, also Sanders as number two. No handshake - many boos in the room, at the end Nancy's action - many cheers in the room. It was a very vivid show this night.

A short trip from Santa Barbara to Santa Clarita today, the Santa Clarita Valley. This morning we would do something not normal, at least for me, Caroline had convinced me. Six Flags Magic Mountain, for some magic words, for me mixed emotions.

"Okay, but let us start with something small and normal, something for little children."

"No panic, you will handle it - you really never rode the roller coaster?"

"Small fun rides at funfairs in my childhood, but also not many."

"Well, then I think it will become a very funny time here at this amusement park, at least for me."

"You not forget, that I have a show later?"

"I tell them that you're unwell, because you're only used to, to ride on the horses of carousels."

"Too kind, thank you!"

Well, what should I say. We started very low, improved, and very early Caroline rode the roller coasters alone. I decided, that it would be better for me, not to try all this crazy stuff. We ate something there, later we sat in a diner in Santa Clarita, coffee and cake and the notebook on the table.

Still no final results from Iowa, but more or less the result was fixed - Biden very weak. The last day of impeachment - who would await surprises? The CNN Town Hall at prime time - a lot to trace.

But hey, then this day provided surprises, here in Santa Clarita, more than only an amusement park. Somewhat over two hundred thousand inhabitants, under a third of them Latinos. In this area a very small city, next to the San Fernando Valley. Mostly a part of L.A., the San Fernando Valley alone hosted nearly two million inhabitants. But it was nice to be in Santa Clarita, between Los Angeles and The Great Valley, back at Interstate 5.

Mitt Romney caused a huge surprise - he opposed the great leader, the untouchable leader, the King of the GOP! He talked about faith, his faith, the man from Utah. Wow, finally one GOP member was brave enough to speak it out! But what interesting was, was, that this was maybe more devastating for the GOP, for the King, that only one but one and not four or five members spoke out the truth. This would mean for all the others, that they no longer could say later, that it would have been impossible for them to vote against the King, Mitt Romney was the living proof, that it would have been possible!

He would have to pay a price, it would be interesting to see in which way the GOP and the president would react. Did he play a game? Would the president fail at the end of the year, he could be the upcoming hero of the GOP. Was it offensive to think in this way? He had talked about his oath, about God, he had shown emotions - and all the other GOP members who had sworn the same oath? What would their God say?

In the show I talked a lot about Mitt Romney. About Buttigieg, Sanders, Warren and Biden. About invoking God and acting like the devil would stand at your side, an alluring devil named Trump!

*Let me please introduce myself
I'm a man of wealth and taste*

*Pleased to meet you
Hope you guessed my name, oh yeah
But what's puzzling you
Is the nature of my game, oh yeah, get down, baby*

*Just as every cop is a criminal
And all the sinners saints
As heads is tails
Just call me Lucifer*

*Cause I'm in need of some restraint
So if you meet me
Have some courtesy
Have some sympathy, and some taste*

*Use all your well-learned politesse
Or I'll lay your soul to waste, um yeah*

Tell me, sweetie, what's my name

(Sympathy For The Devil, The Rolling Stones)

The landscape changed dramatically as we drove the few miles from Santa Clarita to Lancaster and Palmdale. We let the Santa Clarita Valley behind us, passed the San Gabriel Mountains, into the desert, the Mojave Dessert. Again a desert - well, at the edge of the desert only. And yet, it was beginning of February, a sunny day and far away from being cold. Well, at least for one from Portland.

The area of Lancaster and Palmdale, connected to the heroes of the conquest of space - only to name Chuck Yeager or the Space Shuttle, SpaceShipOne. Oh, the B-1, B-2, F-117, F-35.....not to forget them! But also a very modern and in the future pointing area, green energy a normality in this cities. Of course, economically a strong area, a high median income, many who are lived under the poverty line. Not that much about culture and art, the area had the highest suicide rate in Los Angeles County, known as one of the most stressful places in California. Well, the Californian easiness.....

Interestingly Lancaster a birthplace of a very special musical experience. Frank Zappa and Don Van Vliet (Captain Beefheart) met at college in Lancaster - both created their own idea of music, both confused me in youth, both I could not understand, both, some of their behavior, one could see critical - Hot Rats, one my all-time favorites!

Still no final results from Iowa, not good for the candidates. Buttigieg's leadership was melting somewhat, but still a surprising performance from him. Yesterday and today a CNN Town Hall with all the candidates. What should they say? Some saw themselves as winner, nobody saw himself or herself as a loser. Biden performed not well, about what he was talking? It was one of this moment, when you're very unsure about, that he would be able to beat the sitting president - why the majority of the Democrats still thought this? But another problem appeared. Should this continue, that at least three or even four candidates would perform well, then it would be impossible for any candidate to get enough delegates for the Democratic National Convention - will again the superdelegates play a questionable role? That would hurt the whole process and would not lead thereto, that the Dems would be united this time! New Hampshire would become very thrilling now.

The show was in a way a very calm show. Yeah, Nancy and the mobster in office. The self-deception of these Senators from the Republicans: The president has learned his lesson - yeah, damn sure he did! Nevertheless, in a way it was a very calm show.

A small hop in the morning, from Lancaster to Victorville, still in the desert, the high plateau, still at its edge. We arrived early in Victorville, we had plans for the day. After we had checked in we sat the car, no modern means of technique with us, a normal cell phone for emergencies, of course food and enough to drink. We would drive around, the whole day till the show - not more, not less.

Back in the desert, so different to the landscape of my youth. And this desert was also different compared to the desert that had affected me so much. And yet, again I had this feeling of attraction. We saw dry lakes, mountains and valleys, empty land, flat land, dry land, brown land. What we not saw was untouched land. Even when having sometimes the feeling to be alone, alone on a dry planet, it not lasted long and you had to realized, that it was not so. And not only houses or an oncoming car, airfields, mines, oil production - the Mojave National Preserve was for hours our

place.

It was good not to hear the news for a day, no viruses, no disgraceful politicians, no news from the Middle East, from Europe. It was wonderful to touch the sand, to lay in it, to smell the air. It was a sunny day, for locals not hot, but I was from the north. I felt the temperatures as pleasant, I had to use sun milk even now, the sun higher at the sky in February, as I was used to in Portland. I looked at the plants, some animals were to see, the rocks and always the sand. I stood on top of the dune and looked into the landscape, why this dune not simply swallowed me, like a huge wave in the ocean? The loss of every feeling for time, only the position of the sun gave you a hint, a perfect setting for lying down and never standing up again. I thought about, I would ride with a horse through this desert, a hundred years ago or so, I would never be seen again then.

It was the sun that told us that we had to leave, unfortunately we had to leave. The temperatures started to drop fast, no longer it was nice to lay in the sand. Venus and the near full moon at the sky, the stars, the weakening Betelgeuse, the hunter and his dogs. A king, his wife, his daughter and the hero and the monster, all were there - and a majestic swan drown in the sand.

It was dark as we arrived in Victorville again. A smaller city, no special city, just a city of somewhat over a hundred thousand inhabitants in the Mojave Desert. Tomorrow we would cross the mountains again, the "civilization" would have us again. Fast we would reach the ocean, would come near to L.A., but only to head south finally. But we would come back.

I was not so in touch with the latest news this time on the stage, but enough I had to say. I talked about cowards and liars, about dignity and pride. I talked about politicians who were only interested in, to ensure their reelection, to keep their status, not avowing for their ideals, while at the same time praising about, how important it was, to avow for your ideals! It was absolutely disgusting to have to see this farce!

Only a few miles, the San Gabriel Mountains on one side, the San Bernardino Mountains on the other side, only a few miles from the desert to a region that was surprisingly rich of water for most of California. Now in the San Bernardino Valley, a very different sight to the last two days, densely populated, San Bernardino alone had somewhat over two hundred thousand inhabitants, sixty percent Latinos, fifteen percent African Americans. A city that was bankrupt for many years, from 2012 to 2017, struggled with high unemployment rates and poverty, was declared to the second poorest city after Detroit - welcome to Southern California, sometimes you should listen to the complete lyrics.

It rained, and that was no joke, it rained indeed, and not only a bit! We had thought about to explore the city, or driving around the mountains for a while, but the weather was a downer, and we decided to stay for a while in the hotel, watching the news, a very clever idea!

The president, what a surprise!, had learned his lesson and had started with a clean-up. The first of his "enemies" had been kicked out of the White House and had lost their jobs, others would follow - yes, brave Republican Senators, you fucking hypocritical bumlickers, he had learned his lesson very well! Sometimes I hoped that there would be "their" God and hell, Satan was definitively among us. But this was too narrowly considered, it was good that especially Elizabeth Warren brought up the topic of discrimination at the last democratic debate yesterday. The discrimination of the "black" and "brown" people - why not simply saying that racism was a firmly established in the "American" society? African Americans, Latinos, Asian Americans - did anybody talk about the so-called "Native Americans"? Women, poor people, non-believers, handicapped persons.....a very long list of groups, in this so open and free nation.

A bit less hate, that would be enough to ease a lot. But with haters like Hannity and the sitting

president this was hardly to achieve. But in the end they were not the problem, always the problem were the many opportunists, like the Republican Senators. If this nation should become destroyed, such people you could thank for, of them this nation had to get rid of!

It was a show in Southern California, in San Bernardino County Clinton had won with not a big lead, only light blue this county was. But here in the city? It was a good show, but in my thoughts I headed southwards.

A short jump from San Bernardino to Anaheim, now in Orange County, tomorrow we would be in Long Beach, Los Angeles County. But in a way all was one large city, the Los Angeles metropolitan area, Greater Los Angeles, nearly twenty million people lived in this area, in Anaheim alone over three hundred thousand people. For a person from outside it was often very difficult, if not impossible, to decide where one city ended, another began. Or the other way round, often neighborhoods within a city were more diverse, than the passage from one city to another. But today we were in Anaheim.

Anaheim, for me a part of my youth, the Rams in Anaheim, the Anaheim Stadium in Anaheim. But this was history, so much was history now, each day things came to an end, in sport and in all other areas. Sport and this region today, would it be allowed to talk about the darker sides of a dead hero? I not talked about the hotel, I talked about his attitude - inspiration for many in sport, but interestingly also in music, especially rap music. Always winning, always being the best - was this really the best idea to base your live on? Every race had always only one winner, if winner would mean the first who had reached the finish line. And all the others? But this was the American spirit, the gold medal, the championship ring, the Oscar is all! The runner-up is the first loser, maybe we should question this attitude.

We arrived before noon in Anaheim, had a longer breakfast in San Bernardino, had no hurry to drive the few miles till Anaheim. Not far from the ocean, the mountains in the background, also tomorrow we would stay in this hotel, Long Beach around the corner. Not interested in Fairyland, we decided to use public transport to spend some hours at Huntington State Beach. Well, to be fair, also today no sunny day, and tomorrow it should rain again. But the beach, the ocean, was also, especially, also a very nice place at such a day, at a stormy day the beach was a wonderful place. We walked along the water in the wet sand, enjoyed the refreshing ocean breeze, looked what all could be found, what the ocean had washed up. I took a wonderful stone and Caroline a strange looking piece of wood, we had dinner nearby. The whole day we were not really interested in the news - well, it was Sunday and the president had to hit his balls. How boring, how wonderful to spend your day at the beach.

During the show I was inattentive, thought about the next days, about the final days in Los Angeles. Soon this tour would find it's end, the final part of this story would begin.

Not the first time for both of us in Long Beach, therefore it was not so much a disappointment that it was such a rainy day. Rain in Southern California - maybe it should rain more. Every year the temperatures in California raised, every year less rain, every year more devastating fires, every year it was more difficult to fill the reservoirs for the summer. But hey, a pool behind the house still was a must in this area!

So, no RMS Queen Mary, no ShoreLine Aquatic Park, no beach, but the right weather for the Aquarium of the Pacific - always a good decision. And also today it was very interesting to walk around, looking at all the animals, but also the corals and more, to touch them, to be very close to

them. In such a moment one could mean that everything was perfect, that we would respect the environment and the planet. It was like standing at the beach and looking at this nice isles, with their nice palms - as long as you realized that this were artificial islands, there to produce oil!

As I said, it was for both of us not the first time in Long Beach, a city of nearly half a million inhabitants, forty percent of them Latinos. Each, African Americans and Asian Americans, over ten percent. Had we to talk about, which third of the inhabitants lived at the most expensive areas along the beaches? I don't think so, a high median income, twenty percent lived under the poverty line.

But Long Beach was more, a city of art, especially music in a wide range. Of course, you had to name Snoop Dogg, but his music never was really mine - the white boy from Portland. One of my today's favorite bands - Rival Sons - came from Long Beach. We felt hungry.

Long Beach could offer you interesting restaurants, and after a short discussion we decided to have lunch at Gypsy's Mediterranean Grill, very near to Belmont Pier, but a bit in the background. A very interesting menu, very interesting beverage - always a pleasure to eat at this place. As we had finished lunch the rain had stopped nearly, and we decided to have a walk alongside Los Angeles River, in this area it looked really like a river.

"Tomorrow no show, tomorrow we will cross the border."

"Did you stay in Mexico before?"

"No, not even in San Diego! And you?"

"No, and if I would travel to Mexico, definitively not to Tijuana!"

"I think that also Tijuana is more than only a whorehouse for Americans. Or you talked about, being a woman?"

"Well, as a woman it will be surely not easier in Tijuana. But what I meant was, even if I would be interested in the people, the culture, whatever, I would be an American in this city. And I would say, that the average American, especially the men, are only interested in sex while staying in Tijuana - and I would be an American."

"And we will have a show in this city. And I think that we will see that also this city has various faces - is it still the most dangerous city in the world?"

"I can remember an article from last year. Over thirty people had been killed during a time span of three days - no good sign."

"No, shall we return?"

"Yes, we should go to the venue. Then you can prepare for the show."

"I look forward to the next days."

"I also."

Not that much had happened in Washington, all eyes on New Hampshire. The Democrats should really start a discussion about, if this procedure was the best way, to decide who should become their nominee. And still it was all about the money.....

The show was good, California would be a part of Super Tuesday. I was still unsure, whom I should favor. But hey, I was from Oregon, we had still plenty of time to decide. Yes, there should be a serious discussion about this process.

We drove from Anaheim to Tijuana, somewhat more than three hours one should calculate by using Interstate 5, alongside the ocean. It could have been a very relaxing trip, interesting landscape, maybe a stopover underway, maybe lunch at the ocean, somewhat after noon in Tijuana, a night without a show in Tijuana. It could have been!

All these Senators from the wrong side of the aisle, dishonest till self-abnegation, and a president who ran mad once for all, no good basis for relaxed cruising around. First LTC Vindman and Ambassador Sondland - the man who donated him a million dollar! Now the meddling in the Roger Stone trial - a buddy of him! But hey, his base is crazy about him! Will there be enough Americans at the end of the year, still able to use their brains? Should New Hampshire bestow hope? Depended

on, which candidate you considered as the best to beat this relentless con in office. Warren surprisingly weak, Biden in a bad situation. Klobuchar surprisingly strong, and Sanders and Buttigieg head-on-head at the top. The next two states would become very interesting - Bloomberg unnecessary! Would he be able to become the next Hillary? Frightening thoughts! Nevertheless, we reached the border, this fucking border, and arrived in Tijuana.

"And now, we have an evening and a night in Tijuana?"

"Some "adult" entertainment, or a nice restaurant and a bar with music later - that's a difficult question."

"You know, many American cities can offer you in an awful way insights in, what "life" all can mean. A hundred million dollar estate in Malibu or the Hollywood hills, or a drug addict or a prostitute at Venice Beach at night - two young women arrived in the city, one became a big Hollywood star after she had given Harvey a blow job, the other became a porn star, if she was a lucky girl. But here in Tijuana?"

Sitting in a fine restaurant, eating a wonderful meal, a few corners and you could get everything for money, for good American dollars. In a nation with equal rights for men and women, equal education, not such an extreme gap between the poor and the rich, a social security system, support for the people who needed support and more - was it a coincident that in such societies prostitution was differently seen? Hardly likely - a society that produced winners non-stop, always produced a lot of losers. Like in a contest, one winner, many who didn't win.

Sitting in bar, listening to live music, not alone. How many people had been murdered in this city today, how many women had become raped, how many had committed suicide? Sitting in a bar with a good cocktail, listening to live music, not alone. Was it a story by Bukowski? In Mexico: Hey Mister, you wanna see me fucking my sister? It's only a few dollars! - Hey, I'm an American, I give you a few more and fuck your sister myself! Rich and poor, always the same story. Maybe I should go to a doctor, here in this city, he could give me a recipe that would blow away all my fucking thoughts.

Tijuana, a hilly city, surrounded by mountains, only a small part touched the ocean, over one and a half million people lived in this city. A city of crushing diversity - like L.A., only even rougher. You could get everything, culture and art, fine dining and little girls and boys, a perfect tourist's hot spot like the Philippines or Thailand. American pedophiles liked the city, as well as real American men who were repelled and offended by the #MeeToo movement, knowing that they could get a woman here in Tijuana for cheap money, a woman who they could treat like a woman has to be treated - treat her like a piece of shit!

It was hard to be in this city, walking down a nice boulevard, enjoying the fine sides of the city. Yes, you could enjoy this city as tourist, looking at this fucking Hollywood sign and thinking you would see Los Angeles. Walking around Westlake at night, homeless people everywhere, garbage in the backstreets, rats running at the street side - but hey, such a view, as well as Skid Row, is nothing for the tourists. And here, in Tijuana? Why a woman - or a man - was willing to accept it, to be treated in such a way, like a piece of shit? Why mothers let her children become prostitutes, talking about drugs? Who to blame? An American "tourist", or the Mexican government? Should you see it more globally?

We sat in a nice café, enjoyed a good cup of coffee and a cake, looked at an impressive mural painting. I knew one in Los Angeles, visible from the Metro, in Tijuana one could see many of them - did you understand them? Why we were willing to accept this? Because it was an easy thing to cross the border and being a real man again, fucking a woman who had no chance than to do what you want - a child even? In Sweden, in my youth a synonym for easy sex, prostitution was forbidden today. More important, in a case of violation not the prostitute became sentenced, but the prostitute's client! Maybe something to think about?

Tangier, the Beat Poet's dreamland, cheap boys and doctors willing to prescribe the right

"medicine" - I always felt this as hypocritical! Were they better, than someone who came into this city for cheap sex and good pills? But hey, they were artists - I had problems therewith to stay in this city!

I stood on top of Cerro Colorado and looked at the city down below. How many would get murdered in the city during my show tonight? How many raped? How many forced into prostitution? How many would escape into drugs, how many would end their lives? I shivered and staggered, why somebody could bear this? Was no life not better than such a life? I never could understand, why all these thousands of homeless people in Skid Row, only a few blocks from Downtown, not simply walked to Downtown, crying out that they no longer would accept this system - why? But there were so many things I could not understand - how pathetic such thoughts from a man, living in a country with such a president, with ancestors who had elected Adolf Hitler!

It was a very difficult show for me, why I was here in this country, why not in my country? We feared that a person like Sanders would be too revolutionary, as that an American majority could elect him? He would be president, not a wannabe dictator and king like the current one.

It was a very difficult show for me, what should I say the people in front of me.....

Our second day in Tijuana, at home a president, corrupt in a hard to believe way, in a hard to believe open way. Yeah Mexico, the drugs, the cartels, prostitution, human trafficking.....a thoroughly corrupt society and nation!

We had to protect our nation against this people who only were interested in to destroy our proud American nation. We needed a wall, no matters were the money would be from, we needed a wall to beat off the flood that tried to overflow our proud American nation.

The American nation, we had to be the blazing paragon for the world, the fiery beacon, the guiding point that showed the world the direction to a free and democratic future, to prosperity for everyone, as just recently the Palestinians.

Proud America, largest market for child pornography, California the center of the American porn industry, Los Angeles especially, always enough "supplies". A president who would liked it to see all in jail who dared to criticize him, and all above the law who kissed him the ass. A proud nation very near at the point, to become a failed state.

Was Mexico a failed state? It would be too easy to start now with a corrupt hymn of praise about the proud Mexican people, a lot was wrong in this country! The history of this nation, the interaction during history between the United States and Mexico? Here in this region - California, Texas, Arizona and New Mexico? How many candidates of the Democrats could tell the name of the Mexican president? Doing your homework?

Would it better as a Mexican to stay in Mexico, fighting for a better future of your country, or immigrating to the US and looking there for a better future? It was not allowed to ask such a question? Maybe the problem was not, to ask such a question, maybe the problem was, to answer such a question? At least to give a serious answer, an answer that would include the past and the present, that would include the Mexicans as well as the Americans? Yes, it was no problem to buy a woman in this city, a woman you could treat like a piece of shit - a child even. And yes, also Mexicans "used" these possibilities. But hey, we were the fiery beacon, the guiding point, we Americans came in this city and were the "heavy users" of this "offers" - nobody forced any American to travel to Tijuana because of sex and drugs! And the Mexican government? The Mexican society?

Why was Sweden so different to Mexico? Well, Sweden was also different to most of the other European countries. Why it was possible in this country, to prohibit prostitution, to pressure the prostitute's clients, but not the prostitutes? Was it necessary to talk about the relation between men

and women, about a male dominated society - a look at the Republicans in Congress? Was it necessary to talk about, to give everybody a fair share, education for all, support for people who needed support?

Was Sweden a paradise? No! Sexual self-determination? A difficult point - Prohibition? What would a woman say, would you ask her, if she would like it more, to live in a country with a society formed in a Swedish way, or an American way? You would not have to ask an American pedophile, or one of this old white Republican men - but you should ask the women and the children!

Still it was hard for me to stay in this city, every time I saw an American or a tourist from another country I asked myself: Why you are here? Walking around "Zone Norte" in the evening and night you had not to ask!

It was difficult for me to be on the stage, to look at my audience - yesterday a show in a "night club", today here? But hey, of course, my audience was different! Locals as well as tourists, at the beginning I talked about my wonderful president, that he grabbed again billions of dollar, designated for other intentions, to build his wall - hey, this Mexicans should pay for it! Well, such topics, Barr and such things. Then I talked about Tijuana and my feelings to be here in this city, as an American. It became a very long night.

We crossed the border, back in California, back in the United States, we arrived in San Diego. San Diego, the second-largest city in California, immediately after the border, nearly one and a half million inhabitants. Surprisingly no thirty percent of them were Latinos, in Los Angeles for example nearly one of two inhabitants was a Latino, in the safest city of the USA, El Paso, over eight of ten.

There was a time when I was surprised about the fact, that in many of these cities in California, Nevada, New Mexico or Texas so many Latinos lived - all immigrants? In a way you could ask why in this cities so many from Europe lived - you had to know the history of such places. And there was a lot of history you could get to know - the American present age, the Mexican period, the Spanish period, the time before the first immigrants had arrived, the time of the so-called "Native Americans".

So, it should be no surprise that in these cities so many Latinos lived - and those who lived here at first, they had to suffer all the time. During the Spanish period, but also during the Mexican period, and very much since the beginning of the American time, only to name their persecution during the Californian gold rush. Was it too much to say, that this ground had a very violent past, and today? The next two days we would be in San Diego.

I was tired about, to think about culture and art, about parks and zoos - of course, San Diego hosted a wonderful zoo. A huge harbor, for commerce as well as military, wonderful beaches - California! San Diego, the second-last city of the tour, after the weekend we would arrive in Los Angeles, we would have reached the final stage then. But this weekend we were in San Diego - what should we do?

I thought about the beginning of the tour, so much different it was it now, here in San Diego, under a clear blue sky, nice seventy degree and a mild breeze from the ocean. At the end of the month everything would have changed. I felt, that the political situation started to paralyze me, I do not felt an inspiring moment, but if such a moment would be necessary, than now! The political establishment was only interested in, to keep the status quo, whatever it would cost. And even if you could "understand" this behavior - not to accept it! - when looking at the Republicans, why the Democrats? Again the same shit as in 2016? Sanders too left, Sanders too left, Sanders too left - we need a moderate candidate, only then we can win the election! Yeah, as in 2016 with fucking Hillary! And do not start with the popular vote now, do not start with Russia now, her campaign was fucking, her behavior was arrogant, the Dems paid the price for their cowardice!

Again the same as in 2020? Only to think of "I-buy-me-an-election" Bloomberg - should this shit motivate young voters, Latinos, African Americans or women to vote for the Dems this time? But you would need them! Yes, Sanders would have a lot of trouble to realize his agenda in Washington, but at least he had ideas. Revolutionary ideas like, to offer the American people the same human rights which were a normality for all other inhabitants of industrialized nations. Would be tomorrow the primary in Oregon, I would not know whom I should give my vote. I think that I would stand in the polling location not knowing what I should do, and then I would vote for Sanders!

The show in the evening? I talked about, that I sometimes felt very helpless, and that I hated me therefore, thinking about the refugees from and displaced people in Syria for example. Within the next two weeks I would become a fucking millionaire!

Only a few miles from the mountain area to the beach, our second day in San Diego. Well, mountains maybe in exclamation marks, at least for someone from Portland, Oregon. Caroline and I started the day driving around the "mountains" and valleys. Then, by using small streets, we drove to the beach. And of course, not only within the city limits of San Diego. San Diego formed, as most often in the USA, with the surrounding cities a huge metropolitan area. Among others we drove through beautiful Rancho Del Rey, a part of Chula Vista, a city between San Diego and the border. At the end we sat at Silver Strand State Beach, between the ocean and the bay.

"Shall we visit the Midway?"

"Would be not the first time that we would visit a warship."

"But this would be a very special one, not for only one reason."

"And always this ambivalence, seeing such a ship. War? Yeah, animals maybe, but aren't we more? Look at the Midway, impressed by the possibility to build something like such a ship, built because of war. In a way impressive, in a way it saddens me, that we build such ships."

"The Midway was built during WWII, even if it was put in commission only after the war was over."

"Yeah, to fight against the Nazis. And its last mission was Dessert Storm, just about the oil, as today in Syria? In what a country we are living? They lied about Assad, the lied about Afghanistan, and today we have a president who's a notorious liar. What you should believe in, whom you should believe? This is a very confusing world, at least if you not decide for black or white."

"And the Midway?"

"Why not tomorrow morning? We have no show tomorrow, and we need no two and a half hour to Los Angeles - at least if we use Interstate 5 again."

"Okay, tomorrow morning we will visit the Midway."

We stayed for a longer time at the beach, used the Coronado Bridge to return to San Diego downtown, we had dinner in Little Italy.

"It's somewhat a shame, that we both stayed for the first time in San Diego, and we found no time for the Balboa Park area, all the interesting places there."

"Yes, we missed in a way everything. The zoo, the botanical garden, the Japanese garden, the art museum.....do you think that we would have at least some time therefor as well, before we would drive to Los Angeles?"

"Would depend on. When did you plan to arrive in Los Angeles?"

"I had no plans. By far not my first time in Los Angeles, and in the future I will be so often there?"

"Then let's spend tomorrow in San Diego as well, and let us drive to Los Angeles very late. Would be no problem at all."

"Then let's do it!"

I was more relaxed today as yesterday. Most of tomorrow we would still stay in San Diego. I talked most of the time about ambivalence, about a world full of colors and shades, about disgraceful and dangerous interests who tried to paint a world in black and white. While talking, I thought about, that often, not all the time, I saw a world, drowned in inky blackness.

We spent a wonderful third day in San Diego, at the morning on board of the Midway. It was strange to walk on the huge flight deck, even more inside the enormous ship. I thought about to be here during a battle, knowing that I wouldn't be able to bear it. Even to imagine it was hard to bear, all because of some crazed "political leaders" who thought, that the life of a "normal" human was an "object", unimportant in comparison to his "mission".

War based on religion, wars based on megalomaniacal ideologies, wars based on lies. I passed a homeless man on the street, on his cardboard sign only one word - veteran. Maybe he lied, but most probably not, this country had no problem therewith, to send soldiers into wars, based on lies, but was not willing to do everything to help those who came back, after they had done their "duty". Even not those who lived on the streets, even not those who were broken and often enough saw only one solution in the end, to take their own lives now. Maybe this illustrated very good, how disgraceful and hypocritical this nation had become - cheers to our brave president and the ideology her represented!

The afternoon we were in the area of Balboa Park. What a contrast it was, looking at art works, animals in cages, smiling children, or the landscaping in the Japanese garden. It was this feeling, how varying this world could be. And not only during history, in relation to different countries where one could live, at the end in relation to everything. I thought about a monk or a hermit, far away from "civilization" - were they the real wise men? And yet, also they lived still in this world, with all its consequences.

We would arrive in Los Angeles in the late evening or night, another chapter came to its end, at the beginning of a new year. One year on the road, one year from one city to the next. I was sad about it, that it would end now. A new year, a new chapter, and yet, nothing was written till now, not even outlined. Many things could happen during the next months, what would be at the end of the year? A moment of taking a deep breath and getting new hope, or a moment to despair finally? We arrived in Los Angeles, the City of Angels.

Los Angeles

Arrived in Los Angeles, the city that not existed. What should this mean - Los Angeles? The few mountains of glass downtown? A boring sign on private ground? An artificial boulevard for tourists? Malibu, Beverly Hills, Santa Monica or Long Beach? For many a synonym for Los Angeles, as well as Compton or Inglewood, but in fact not even a part of the City of Los Angeles? I knew a band from England, a video can be found from them on YouTube, performing in Anaheim - and what they are saying in this video? "Hey, this is the first time for us in Los Angeles!" - well, the Anaheim audience very much disagreed! And Dream Wife had to realize that Anaheim is no part of the City of Los Angeles, not even of Los Angeles County!

Los Angeles City, really very confusing city limits! I had decided for me, that it was not really interesting for me, to think all the time about it, driving along Santa Monica Boulevard for instance, from Chinatown to the ocean. So far it's L.A., but now I'm in Beverly Hills, now no longer, now I am in Los Angeles again, now no longer, now I'm in Santa Monica - that made no sense for me! I only saw this huge metropolitan area, Greater Los Angeles, Los Angeles Country, even with parts of

Orange County and more. Should it be important for me that Glendale and Burbank were independent cities, but the huge valley with Van Nuys, Sylmar or Canoga Park was a part of L.A. - oh, San Fernando was of course independent again. In that sense even a city like Azusa or even Ontario or San Bernardino - Malibu of course! - was a part of this not existing Los Angeles for me. But moreover, there was also nothing that could represent something like Los Angeles City as such - what should it be? Downtown - dead at night? Koreatown - vibrating at night? No, this city was a fake, for many reasons. One of it was, that this "city" was nothing more than a conglomeration of an endless amount of cities, suburbans, districts, quarters, neighborhoods, blocks, streets..... - search for Little Bangladesh if you like! Los Angeles was a vision, an illusion if you liked it more negative. And for me it was not important if a part, a quarter, a neighborhood.....in fact was a part of Los Angeles City, this whole area was Los Angeles for me, knowing that you could search for a lifetime, never you would find this city, this City of Angels.

"Would it be okay for you, that we would do, what I always do, at first, when I'm in this city?"

"No, why, what?"

"Well, we arrived very late at night, therefore we could not do, what I normally do at the evening, after I've arrived in the city. But we can do this this evening, if it would be okay for you?"

"Of course!"

"The order will be wrong then."

"No problem for me."

"Okay, then let us walk to the Metro Center at 7th Street."

"Downtown - which line?"

"Expo."

"Santa Monica?"

"Yes, the beach and the pier. This is always my first way at the first morning, when I'm in Los Angeles."

"Then let's do it."

We stood at the corner Lucas Avenue and 3rd Street, turned left to cross the freeway, to look at the L.A. skyline.

"In the evening you can see very often people here on the bridge, to take a picture of the skyline."

"You're not that much interested in it, or?"

"No, standing on this bridge, looking left and right? It's obvious to me then, that the more attracting side, the right side is. Downtown is so boring, especially at night. Downtown West instead?"

We passed the "landmarks" like the Westin Bonaventure Hotel and had a look at the beautiful Central Library till we reached 7th Street, the Metro Center.

"I have to recharge my TAP card first."

"Fine, not only you own one!"

"Yeah, it's also not your first time."

"No."

The Metro exited the tunnel, I saw a beautiful picture at the wall, the Staples Center on the other side, we talked not that much. A museum, a park, a rose garden - much we drove by, reached Crenshaw Boulevard.

"I know a very nice place to drink a very fine cup of tea at Crenshaw Boulevard."

"Well, you mean Mingles Tea Bar?"

"Oh,.....yes.....?"

"Good idea for the afternoon."

"Yes."

Downtown Santa Monica, we had reached the final stop. A short way and we would see the ocean again.

"An Italian ice cream right now, or later?"

"I think that we will spend some time in the pedestrian area later?"

"Of course!"

"Then you should walk to the beach and the pier now."

"You will not accompany me?"

"I've the feeling that it's something very private to you, to do this."

"That's right. Will you wait for me at Café Crêpe? But I fear that I will need a moment?"

"Okay for me. I will have a nice time."

Santa Monica Pier, looking at the ocean, looking at this vast surface of water. Thousands of miles of water, nothing as water, I shivered. Always this urge, to undress, to start to swim, as long as possible, to become one with this wonderful soft waves, forever. It was relaxing, looking at the water, hearing the waves, feeling the light breeze, knowing that one day this would be my final resting place - sooner or later.

Under water the world above you disappeared, all this noise, all this gravity, a lightness surrounded you now, unfamiliar sounds, muted, flattering, relieving for your ears. Floating under water like in space, the burden of breathing would be gone, the burden of pondering would be gone, the burden of being would be gone. But not now, not today, but one day.

We had a nice time in Santa Monica, ice cream, a light dinner, later a tea not far away from Inglewood Park Cemetery. It was early evening as we were back in our hotel, stood again at the corner.

"And this time, left again?"

"Why we should? Downtown L.A. is very boring, especially when the night falls in."

"Restaurants and bars?"

"Boring restaurants and boring bars. We should turn right, we should follow 3rd Street for a while."

"Let's do it!"

We sat on the patio, it was a balmy evening. Unfortunately we came too late for the soup of the day, sold out, but enough fine dishes on the menu, we enjoyed our meals, we enjoyed the presence of the other guests.

"This is the place where you always spend the first evening, after you've arrived in Los Angeles?"

"Yes, I did it the first time, and I enjoy it every time anew. I had searched on the Internet for a place to eat something, after my arrival. A place not far away from the motel, easy to reach, nothing special, only to eat something. I found this place, had no expectations, and I fell in love with this place immediately, with this whole area."

"Langer's is not that far away from here?"

"Yes, and without any doubts, their food is very good. But I hate this hecticness you have often there, it is more a place for the tourists. This here is a place to relax, it's a very cozy place."

"That's true, shall we go back to the motel?"

"Another coffee?"

"Why not, it's a nice evening."

"We can walk back later. And if we're hungry again, we will pass a fantastic food truck on the way back to the motel, fantastic tacos, opposite to the 7-Eleven, in front of the coin laundry. We can fetch a coffee at the 7-Eleven and eat the tacos in front of the laundry, some chairs on the sidewalk there."

"You love this neighborhood, or?"

"Yes, I always feel very safe and secure, while being here."

We still spent some time till we left the place, shared a coffee and three wonderful tacos at a pastor on the way back to the motel - Gus's Drive-In, my first real impression of Los Angeles, a wonderful Los Angeles presented itself to me at this evening.

The show, nearly forgotten overwhelmed by the feelings? The show was very nice, the show was

long. In a way I was happy to be back in this city, in a way I was sad. A nice day came to it's end, not far away the bad reality of the American dream could be seen.

Los Angeles had a heart, better not only one. But there was one part that meant most to me - before I stayed the first time in Los Angeles, I knew that a half of the inhabitants are Latinos. I thought, that I would have to search for this part of the city, not knowing that the motel I had choose, a part of this heart was! This heart was outlined on three sides by a freeway - Hollywood Freeway, Harbor Freeway and Santa Monica Freeway. The fourth side was marked by Western Avenue. A heart with two chambers, Hoover Street was the cardiac septum.

I was aware of, the large Koreatown dominated the one chamber, Chinatown lay outside this heart. By far not all Latinos lived in this region - it was a metaphor, the try to describe a feeling, to find a expression therefore, what this city meant to me. And yet, this heart changed very fast. The first time, walking in MacArthur park, the park was crowded with homeless people and their tents - it was a shocking view to me, so different from on the nice pictures. But not that the homeless people disturbed me, or that I would have felt disgusted by them, the afternoon of my first whole day in the city, after beautiful Santa Monica with its beach, pier and pedestrian area, it was the insight, that this was the brutal honest bad face of the American Dream. But in the next year, exactly a year later, as I stood at the park again, the police just removed the last homeless from the park. Now the park was like on the pictures, Westlake was designated to develop, new buildings were planned - no room for the homeless anymore in the park.

And another insight, looking at the homeless in Westlake, and other parts of the city as well. White men, also here in Westlake / Downtown West. No Latinos, Asian Americans as well. Women and children lived in the shelters, and the Latinos, the Asian Americans? A different culture, support for the "own" people, not letting them vegetate on the streets, a different culture? Searching for homeless people in Koreatown? It was puzzling to me, as well as to drive from Compton to Paramount, only crossing the Los Angeles River, from one world to another. Paramount, Latino - Mexican - ground. But so different, planted median strips like in Beverly Hills - Alondra Boulevard! A different world, not cheap to live here - or? At least much more expensive as in Westlake - or? I entered a market / restaurant / bakery - it was all in one, strange in a way. I sat at a large table with locals, like in a kitchen at home and ate my meal. I felt comfort, and dared not to start a conversation. Los Angeles could be much, you had to be open, forgetting these advise for tourists. Sure, this city had still a crime problem, a gang problem, Venice Beach at night? West Hollywood at night? Westlake at night, never I felt unsafe to walk around here in the night - maybe you had not to use every little backstreet, but this was not different in any other large city around the world.

"You like it, to be here, here in this area."

"Yes, it gives me a feeling of, to be at home. Silly, but I have it. I have a life-long membership in an Internet Café in Koreatown, okay it's at the edge of Koreatown."

"Which?"

"K-Town PC Cafe, but I wasn't there for a longer time now. I think the place has change quite a little since I was there for the last time - our hotel?"

"Yes?"

"The first time I stayed in the city it was Jerry's Motel, a classic motel from the 40s, if I'm not wrong. Everything changes."

"After you have signed your contract, a condo here in this area?"

"I think this would be arrogant. I'm not from here, I'm not a part of this community and I never will be. Angelino Heights would be cool."

"You would have to cross the freeway only and you would be here."

"Yes, and Echo and Elysian Park very near. Sunset Boulevard down the hill, to the stadium you

could walk. Very beautiful houses there."

"Not the Hollywood Hills, one of the canyons or Malibu?"

"Who's interested in the fucking hills and canyons - Malibu is boring."

"Most of the celebrities in L.A.?"

"Who's interested in those boring celebrities? Who's interested in this boring restaurants, bars and clubs? We had a fine day yesterday, or? And today? I'm not interested in their stupid parties, a self-regarding pack who thinks that they are knowing more than others, because they can act in front of a camera, have written a song or are show stars. They know nothing, not more than every other inhabitant of this city. Should I ever participate in a charity event, an event that costs a fucking lot of money, lobster and champagne for the noble guests, some alms for the supplicants, then I would know that I would be now also a part of this hypocritical part of the city - it would be the last day on a stage for me."

"Do you think that you will be able to stand firm?"

"I have to, and I have the feeling that, as long as you will be with me, that I have a good chance to do so."

"Maybe I will become weak? Maybe I want to be in the limelight all the time, on the red carpets?"

"We're not married, maybe you can hook a nice and rich celebrity? I would wish you the best."

"Being honest?"

"Yes."

"First, I'm still from Portland. And then, I enjoyed Gus's very much. What shall we do till the show?"

"We could spend some time in Echo Park? Dinner at the food truck or one of the other nice restaurants around here? There would be a lot we could do - Caesar's Salad with bananas and strawberries at Union Station? A short ride with the Metro, and we're in Chinatown, a short walk, and we're in Koreatown, this is a fucking cool place to be!"

We walked a bit, we rode with the Metro a bit, we had a fucking nice time. Yes, this city could be a nice place, this city could be a fucking place. Two jobs or three or four, rents and house prices not affordable for many. I stood in MacArthur park, Under the Bridge, when will I give my life away?

The show? Well, I was down on the West Coast now! But no Parliament, no hands up, you not had to speak Spanish with me - no music in me, I wasn't cool. I stood on the stage and talked, talked about the things important to me. It would be good to return to Portland for some days, as soon as possible.

Yes, Downtown L.A. we were today. And in fact, there were not so many places here, because of them it was interesting to be here. Of course the Central Library was one of these places, outside as well as inside. Often interesting exhibitions one could visit there, the wonderful atrium, the impressive rotunda as well - a gracile building surrounded by clumsy houses.

Not far away you could have a rest at Pershing Square, or why not walking up the Bunker Hill Steps. Especially at night it feels not like being in L.A. any longer - continue the way and enter the Art District, and maybe after that some time in Little Tokyo?

It would be stupid to say, that it was not interesting to be here, especially to enjoy the Art District - you could have a very nice time in Little Tokyo, especially in the evening. And I liked the art, nice restaurants and bakeries in Little Tokyo. But was it only me who saw thousands of people, living on the streets only a few blocks from here? Should you simply ignore it, suppress it, deny it, while looking at a wonderful picture, listening to wonderful music, enjoying a coffee or a tea and a fine cake, eating a tasty meal? Shouldn't you feel like a dishonest and disgraceful asshole, while doing it?

This part of L.A. showed me all the time the nonsense of our behavior. The hotels, banks and insurances, their glass buildings high up in the sky. In the morning the employees rushed to their workplaces, fast fetching a coffee at Starbucks, looking at this strange man, sitting(!) in front of the shop on one of this few cheap aluminum chairs reading the L.A. Times - Downtown you have no time to sit down! Well, in the evening, after work, when the bars filled - it bored me!

We walked around Little Tokyo, in fact a very small neighborhood. But it was nice, seeing the other people - well, in summer, when such a place was crowded with tourists? I was not in the best mood today. In fact, I had some problems today. We decided to go back, some rest till the show would do me good.

The show was not that good today. I was tired, was not sure about the coming. This city was a sick city, this nation was sick, I felt adrift.

Once I walked from the Diamond District, Downtown, along 7th Street, southwards. Very soon you will be in Old Downtown then, the city center you're knowing from the old movies. You will hit Broadway, look northwards, see the old and sad facades, wanly reflecting the stories from the past, stories from gangsters and private dicks, from movie stars and their sugar daddies, alluring platinum blond or arousing red-headed, stories of me who became millionaires over nights, men who lost everything in a second, inclusively their lives.

But I continued with walking, Los Angeles Street waited, waited to be crossed. Now everything changed, the glasshouses in your back, the old Los Angeles in your back. Now the brutal Los Angeles awaited you, the brutal face of the American Dream. But do not fear, 7th Street only marked one of the borders of Skid Row, technically seen you were not even inside Skid Row, using the right side of the road. 6th Street, 5th Street, if you would dare! Dare? Was it dangerous to be in Skid Row? They told the tourists: Never ever go to Skid Row! Why, because it was dangerous, were these men, sitting in their tents or on the sidewalks dangerous? The first time I was there was at night - at night in Skid Row as tourist! It was quiet, only a few cars, all tents were closed, only a very few people walked around. As I reached the northern end of Skid Row I sat down at a bus stop, to wait for a bus, to drive back, back to Downtown L.A. Sitting at this bus stop was one, if not the most, defining moment for me in L.A.

The next time I was there at daylight, it was hard to see in the faces of them who "lived" here - I couldn't bear it, felt like I would treat this people like animals in a zoo, looking at them. I turned right, walked into the Fashion District. Skid Row, should I say that it was the most tender place for me in L.A.? One could misunderstand this very much, but I had no better words to express my feelings. The people there were nothing less than dangerous, they were not interested in, to run into trouble. It was awful to see, how apathetic, broken, many of them seemed. I thought about to address them, but I did not dare. I feared, that it would be too much for me, to hear their stories. What a fucking nation this nation could be, Skid Row should be a must for tourists!

I pondered about to live in this city, a nice house in the hills, with a spectacular view on Downtown L.A.? Would be okay, Skid Row would lie behind the glass houses, I would not see it! And why I should go there, my L.A. would be on this side, in the north. The white L.A., the L.A. of the rich, the north and along the beaches, to the north and the south. Why I should be beyond Downtown, in the south of L.A.? Koreatown and Wilsher of course, but at the other side of Santa Monica Freeway, why I should be there?

L.A. struggled to solve the "problem" with the homeless people, Mr. Garcetti struggled with this "problem". They tried it with millions of dollar, program after program, but with every count it became more homeless people, not less. Wasn't it funny, to see all this?

How many Americans went bankrupt due to illness in a year? Half a million! "Bankrupt due to illness" - in other modern societies not even such a phrase existed, because they had a functioning health care system! And had we to talk about the veterans now? Only considering this two reasons which could easily cause in the United States, that you have to "live" on the streets - what should you expect from such a society? That they would be interested in, when you had problems with your work? When you had to raise children, maybe as a single mother or father? This was a fucking city to the core, because this was a fucking nation to the core!

Why we could not overcome, that money was everything? Bloomberg was a good illustration - why it was okay that he used his own money for political aims, to buy him into office? Why we thought that it was okay that this gave him an advantage? This would lead thereto, that only someone who would be a billionaire would have a chance to become the president of the United States - would we call this a democratic system? Would it be not less bad, if Bloomberg would become the next POTUS, than to keep the sitting president? The Democrats had a very interesting group of candidates, why not one of them?

From the sparkling diamonds to devastating poorness, only a few blocks, ten, maybe fifteen minutes of walking - why I was repelled by the diamond, why I could not stop to think about Skid Row? In the world of the sparkling jewelry everything seemed so artificial, Skid Row was real, the people there were real, their stories were real, maybe I should stop doing what I did, maybe I should walk to Skid Row, asking them about their stories, writing their stories down? Without doubt, their stories would be meaningful stories.

Again it was difficult on the stage. Not because I would have nothing to talk about. The Roger Stone sentence today for example, the behavior of our president. Democratic debates, the dying in Syria, racism in Germany, Russia prepared itself to meddle in 2020 again.....no, topics I had enough. Sitting in Angelino Heights? No, this nation needed fundamental reforms to become a modern nation, but this nation was on its way, to become finally a fucking oligarchy like Russia - Putin was very happy and proud about the achieved!

Angelino Heights, I always thought that this would be a nice place to live, a nice place in this city. Not the cheapest place to live in this city, but a very charming one with very nice houses. The gray one in West Kensington Road, but this was another story.

I really thought about, that it would be nice to live here, not the shortest way to the ocean, but down the hill was Sunset Boulevard. By car or by bus it was easy to reach the ocean, with this magical view at the end of the road. Elysian Park and the Dodgers Stadium, you could easily walk, to wonderful Echo Park as well. On the other side of the freeway Downtown West / Westlake, Chinatown as well as Koreatown also very near. The Metro was a problem, no good near linkage to the Metro system, no Metro station nearby. But nevertheless, Angelino Heights was always a place where I could consider living.

Not in Malibu, the Hollywood Hills or the canyons - okay, Santa Monica maybe, pedestrian area 3rd Street, but also this was a different story. Venice, Long Beach never. Crenshaw, Compton, Westlake - it would be not me. In the end it felt stupid to consider living in this city. My home was in Portland, Portland was my home. In Los Angeles I would work, it was easier and cheaper not always living in a hotel. Apart from the Château Marmont of course, but again this was a (very) different story.

"I like it to sit here in Echo Park, the statue in my back, the water fountain in front of me. And even when this is a small park, and even when Echo Park is different to our parks in Portland, I enjoy it always to sit here, when I'm in Los Angeles."

"I agree with you, it's nice to be in this little park. The nice water lilies and their story. But I have to

confess, that I miss all the foliage trees we have at home, the wonderful forests. Yes, the iconic palm trees, and in a way they are beautiful, but in the same moment they are very boring."

"Well, there are also some foliage trees around us?"

"Yes, here, but you know what I mean. Where's the lush green color that you can see at home at any corner? A lot of brown you can see here."

"Yes, endless woods, the high and snow covered volcanos, this kind of nature you will not find here, also not the fauna."

"And every year the water shortage becomes more severe, every year the fires become more destroying. Not to talk about the city climate in summer."

"I never thought about to live here all the time, to say goodbye to Portland. But when I sign the contract, then I have to be in the city during the production periods. Also Los Angeles has nice places, like this little park."

"Yeah, also nice places. I will not be that stupid to say, that in Portland you will find only nice places. But at least you have not to search for them, to find one."

"You're missing Portland?"

"Yes, and you?"

"Yeah, in any case. Yes, this city has also nice places, but I could hardly imagine, to live all my life in this city. Too many contradictions are clashing in this city in a very extreme way. I think you have to be, or to become, schizophrenic to survive in this city, or very cynical and hypocritical. It's okay to be here for a certain time, but it would be not my dream to live here for the rest of my life."

"Also not in this wonderful gray house?"

"Maybe in the way like the daughter did, with this magical garden behind the house."

I was happy as the show was over. Five more days, then I would sign the contract. With every day it seemed to be more absurd. It would be good to be back in Portland, walking through endless woods, while waiting till the next snowy sleeper would awake.

Chinatown, the original one in the area of today's Union Station, or this today's theater setting with the "famous" gate at former Little Italy? Or the blocks, the housing areas, beyond the Central Plaza and the restaurants there?

The original Chinatown, whores and opium, crime and danger. A district that had to vanish - or was it more a story about betrayal and speculation with building ground? A story about how the "Americans" treated the "Asians" at this time?

And the new Chinatown, built by Hollywood, this hot spot for tourists? What was Chinatown, the plaza and the restaurants or the blocks where the people lived? Had you ever saw a homeless in Chinatown, not to talk about a homeless with Chinese descent?

Firecracker Run and the parade later, a smiling Miss LA Chinatown - was this Chinatown? I liked it always to enter Wonder Bakery, right behind the famous gate, after I had bought me my L.A. Times at Union Station in the morning, after I had a coffee there and a salad and a first look into the newspaper, after I had used the Gold Line, to buy me a coffee and a cake, to sit down outside, to read my L.A. Times under the shadow of the famous gate.

One day it was different, I just opened my L.A. Times as an older Chinese man sat down at the next table - no coffee, no cake. I cannot remind me, in which way he addressed me, but as I answered him, he asked me if I would be from Germany - he had been for a longer time in Germany, the area of Heidelberg, after the war, in the 50s. A conversation began, as long as four hours. One situation was very difficult for me.

He asked me, if I would know the difference between the Germans and the Japanese - I said no. He told me, that the Germans had felt ashamed after WWII, that they had said sorry, that they had asked for forgiveness in a credible way - the Japanese never did so! I was baffled and had no idea how I should react, I felt helpless and over-challenged by this situation.

"Well, the coffee and the cake have been very tasty. Wonder Bakery offers you a very fine selection of cakes and cookie, even ice cream."

"Yes, it's one of this nice places in the city."

"Let us walk somewhat, down Broadway, to the parks and gardens."

"That's a good idea."

"A favorite restaurant for dinner later?"

"Many really good restaurants in this area - difficult to decide for one."

"We can decide later - let's have a walk."

We had a nice time in Chinatown, but was this the real Chinese life in Los Angeles? Also the Chinese community struggled, one of the poorest neighborhoods of Los Angeles Chinatown was. Okay, the time of the railway was over, the time of WWII and after also, but meant this that the time of prejudices and allegations was over - the corona virus? No, of course not!

We had a fantastic dinner, fantastic seafood, always a good choice here in Chinatown. As said, many fantastic restaurants in this area. What was the relation of a "normal white Angeleno" and Chinatown? Good restaurants, entertainment, exotic flair.....? How many of this white Los Angeles residents saw a resident of Chinatown as an equal inhabitant of Los Angeles, equal to himself as a white "Angeleno"? This nation had still a long way to go.

Today the caucuses in Nevada? Of course, this was the dominating topic of the show - especially because Sanders rocked this show! Okay, no final result, but always more than double the votes for Sanders as for the runner-up Biden? Yeah, not looked like that he was unelectable for moderates and minorities - on the contrary! Biden again colorless, all others in real trouble - Super Tuesday, then with Bloomberg?

Koreatown, no small neighborhood in L.A., not easy to understand as well. Maybe it sounded as I would be familiar with "K-Town", saying that I had a life-long membership in an internet café there, but I was not. Yes, you could read about the colorful and often violent past, about that only a third of the inhabitants were Asians, but every other a Latino - but what did this tell you?

Koreatown was hardly to understand for me, maybe I should say that the Asian mentality was hardly understandable for me. As Chinatown, this was no rich part of the city - on the contrary. But especially at night, with the shining neon signs, the streets looked so vibrant and busy. All these restaurants, some looked so strange, even for me. Well, I was not the guy for the bars and the clubs, for some the most thrilling aspect of Koreatown.

Even more than Chinatown, Koreatown appeared - was? - a city within the city. In a way every part, neighborhood, quarter.....of Los Angeles was a city for its own, but Koreatown appeared even in this context as different to me, even more separated, even more separated from the rest of the city. But maybe this was only an expression of my incapability to understand Koreatown.

I liked it to walk around here in the night. It was a strange feeling, one could forget to be in California, in the States. Sitting in a restaurant, (nearly) only Asian people around you, a menu difficult to understand, the fun to order something and awaiting what it will be. Maybe I should say, that hot food was not really mine!

And if I felt in Westlake, walking around there in the night, that I was not from this place, that this was not my ground, much the more I had this feeling in Koreatown. Or was it the desire to can say, that there was a place, a place I could say from, that this was my home, my home, a place I felt comfort and safe, a place where I could get at any time, any moment, for any reason a shelter, a place I could hide, hide from the world outside?

Wilshire Boulevard, from MacArthur Park on, a sequence of landmarks, parks, hotels, museums,

entertainment. Walking down Wilshire Boulevard, up the hill, through Koreatown and further on, a feeling of sadness spread out. Not because of Fairfax Avenue, further on, but because all of these memories of a gone past. Westlake, vague memories of a bright past, a rotten sign near a Metro Station - Wilshire Boulevard, mentioned in a sad vintage song. Corrupted memories of a so never occurred past? What had been Los Angeles ever, than transfigured, glorified narrations of never in reality happened movies? *Dreaming away your life* - a nice motto for this city.

Sanders had declassified all other candidates, even the runner-up Biden! In such a large field winning nearly every second vote, that you could only describe as a trashing victory! South Carolina next, then Super Tuesday? Sanders for president? In which way the Centrists, the so-called Moderates, the Clinton Dems, would react? As in 2016, cheating with the Super Delegates? As in 2016, handing over the victory to the Republicans? Too early for speculations, but there was this fear.....

Sure, Sanders was again the number one topic of the show. Biden too weak, Buttigieg had underperformed, not to talk about Warren and Klobuchar. Bloomberg still on shopping tour and such a coward, not to show up in the first four states! I had my worries, thinking about the Democratic National Convention in July. The Dems had all chances this time.....

The "black" Los Angeles - Crenshaw and Leimert Park, South L.A.? Compton and even Inglewood no longer, not like some decades ago. No ten percent of Los Angeles City were Black or African Americans, not different in Los Angeles County. And yet, there was a certain image of Los Angeles, the city as well as the county, shaped by "black life". And I thought not so much of Rodney King or N.W.A., I thought about eating some soul food at Crenshaw Boulevard, or drinking a wonderful small pot of leaf tea there. No longer we lived in the 80s or 90s.

But what should that mean, living in the new 20s? What had changed in the last thirty or forty years? What had changed, after the first black American president? Avoid South L.A., still an advice for the tourists, enjoy the boring boulevard and try to catch a glimpse of the fucking sign! Do not try to see the real L.A., be respectful and be satisfied with the facade, like all the wonderful illusions in those wonderful Hollywood movies, honor the perfect L.A.!

Walking around, looking at the people - hey, surprised that also this parts of Los Angeles, the city as well as the county, aren't those, where the rich and famous lived? Not really, or? Being among Blacks, and Latinos as well? Once I drove in a bus, down Crenshaw Boulevard, a young couple opposite to me. She was pretty young, her boots, the tight and short dress, very sexy - it was early afternoon? What was their aim, what mine? I would leave the city again, inside a big plane, they would stay.

Imaginations about the Crenshaw Blues, about Make Up - imaginations of a silly old white man, but more he had not anymore. Writing about a young couple in Crenshaw, about their life there, in this city? What a joke that would have been? Never someone looked at me because of the color of my skin, never someone judged upon me because the color of my skin. Never I had this experience, experiences were what shaped us. I had a good skin color, and by the way not the worst gender - looking at the young girl in her boots and her dress.....

Ancestry - you, your neighbor, the couple from the other side of the street? Otiose, if all would point to one common moment in time? - Slave, slave, slave, slave! Awful, if knowing that you're still today for many only.....? - Slave, slave, slave, slave! Well, maybe a drug dealer, a rapist and a murderer - I had no idea about such feelings and experiences!

A tribute for a legend today, a legend in L.A., nationwide, worldwide. And yet, I had my problems therewith. Why the helicopter started, others stayed on the ground? Two more young girls died, a

mother also - how many ten thousands mourned for them, how many speeches were held? And the others who had died?

Yes, he was the legend, yes, for many he was a role model - always be the best, always you have to win? #MeeToo? Maybe I was unfair, yes, I was unfair, at least in a way, but.....criticizing a legend was difficult, but a dead legend? Obviously I was the wrong guy to talk about such topics, maybe I should talk about other things.

Harvey Weinstein, would it be good to see him in jail, would it be good to see him dying in jail? A broken man who needed a walking aid? And all the broken women, destroyed by a ruthless man, not able to show any sign of regret? See a Nazi in Nuremberg, is it important if he regrets? Is it important, if he's old and feeble now? Is it important, if he will die in jail now? Does this salvages only one of the millions, who died on the battle fields, the concentration camps, the gas chambers? Cosmetics after it has happened? Thinking about prevention, about mechanisms which made it possible to act fast, not after decades, reacting when it happened? How long the rumors wafted through Los Angeles, Harvey Weinstein and the Four Seasons - of course, also at the hotel they had no idea, a hotel with such a long "tradition"? Money and power, the two American religions, the Golden Calf a nation danced around.

The show? Would it be possible to name Koby Bryant and Harvey Weinstein in one sentence? A fucking disgraceful old white man and a black basketball legend? No, this would have honored Weinstein, this would have insulted Bryant. But was it not important to see no one as untouchable? But who should be my aim, the black basketball legend or the fucking disgraceful old white man - old white man?

There's this boring Los Angeles, the Los Angeles for the tourists, the Los Angeles for the Whites, the Los Angeles for the rich, the Los Angeles from the movies, the corrupt Los Angeles, this stupid facade that they are trying to sell you as Los Angeles.

Walking down the Hollywood Boulevard, looking at boring stars, chatted up by the fascistic so-called "church" from the other Boulevard, all this tourist's shit, not an hour there, repelled by the seen, not worth one more word!

This could it be, but should you say more? The stupidity of the image that this artificial world tried to sell you, and then the fucking reality? But the point was, that all this was so obvious, and even if not obvious, so often thematized in songs, novels, movies even.

The story of Marilyn Monroe as a metaphor, or Natalie Wood? It was not so, that Harvey Weinstein did something that was not common to this Hollywood glamour world, common for the actresses. Yeah, all this places, the Four Seasons, the Chateau Marmont, keep silence, how many had to be silent for so many times? And today, was it different today? Kevin Spacey (gay), and Asia Argento (woman) became accused, a structural problem about dependence (power) and people who used their status to dominate others - well, there was this man in Washington.....but as said, the strange point was, that this happened since decades and longer, everybody could know everything, all this open secrets, all this rumors and stories floating through the city - wow, why accepting this shit?

And this was also a point, Harvey has harassed you, or even more? How many women? Women who all knew, that they were not the first, but more on, would be not the last? Why not sending information to the press? Why not being a whistleblower? It would have harmed your own career? Was it allowed - for an old white man - to ask, to what extent this silent women had loaded guilt on their shoulders?

Yes, sorry, I was the man in this story, but wasn't it in a way the same, as that what the Republicans in Senate did today - doing everything to ensure your power (your career), even if you betray all your beliefs?

I thought about whether it was pathetic to say this. Well, not forgotten "I Fucked My Way Up To The Top", not my words. I not said, that everybody had to stand up, not immediately. But someone, at some time? And now, what had changed? Seeing it from outside, not much! The "industry" (music, movies) functioned as well as before, in the same way as before. I saw no changes, only heard words, cheap words spoken out during glamorous events on shining stages. Oh yes, Harvey is sentenced now, another charge in L.A. waited - what a triumph! Tell me, who's the new Weinstein in town today? Look at this Grammy and Oscar shit and ask yourself, do you really think there will be a change? Tell me, who's the new Weinstein in town!

On the stage we followed the debate, as it started. Yeah, what a serious danger this Sanders was - was there a man in Washington? Sanders had a big lead in California, Super Tuesday. Strange, all this comments on TV, all this attacks on the stage - Sanders was not electable for the moderate Democrats? But who the fuck had elected him in the last three states? Why he led the national poll? This would change if there were no longer so many "moderate" candidates on the stage? Then wait, then you have nothing to fear, why you were so nervous, even more as in 2016?

The last show, the tour was over, a year on the road was over. Time to look back, or time to look ahead - not knowing, how the next days would be? Free fallin' - no problem with a parachute or a safety net below you, but was there one? I wasn't sure, felt light like a feather wafting in the wind, all weight was gone, only lightness remained, dissolving in time.

I sit in the famous hall of Union Station, no not the Amtrak restaurant, not the Amtrak bar, not in one of the leather arm chairs for Amtrak travelers, I sit in Café Crêpe, have bought me my L.A. Times at the station, a triple Americano on the table, waiting for my Caesar's Salad with the small bowl of bananas and strawberries right on top of it. It's my morning routine, being here in Los Angeles. And only to say it, also the Eggs Benedict are fantastic here.

I'm walking in the zoo, passing by the giraffes, my eyes are crossing those of a young giraffe, we both stand still, looking at each other. Her soft facial features, the large dark eyes, not to talk about the dramatic black eyelashes.....for minutes long we're looking into the eyes of the other. But then I turn, I leave with tears in my eyes. Will I see you ever again?

Beautiful horses delighting my eyes, and even if they only take the same way all the time, I would be happy to be one of them - or the rabbit, or the goat? Whatever, I would carry a smiling child, would bestow a happy and lighthearted time.

I sit in the sand, the colorful lights spinning slowly around afore the darkening sky. The sun touches this ocean, ninety seconds later she has drowned, and I still sit in the sand. One day, only the traces in the sand will still tell about me.

A last time on the stage, thankful about all that I had. Tomorrow everything would change, nothing would be anymore as it was. Should I be happy, should I be sad? I closed my eyes and felt the drowning sun - ninety seconds, not more. How long, and I would drown?

Yeah, now it had happened, the tour was over now, the contract was signed. Soon I would be on air, the next days some late-night shows to promote my own TV show. Difficult to buy a condo at Angelino Heights, some for rent, but that wouldn't be economic for a longer time. Some houses

were offered, a million or more one would have to pay. But this was no matter of a short-dated decision - it had not to be Angelino Heights by all means.

Jimmy Kimmel and Ellen DeGeneres the next days, a short return to Portland thereafter. Then to the other coast, Jimmy Fallon and Trevor Noah. I looked forward, meeting Trevor Noah. Back to Portland, then the new part would finally begin.

No show tonight, no show tomorrow, no show the day after tomorrow - it was a very strange feeling. So much topics, the coronavirus, the inability of this dumbass president, South Carolina and Super Tuesday, so much more. Sure, I could make a video, but I liked it, I needed it, to stand in front of my audience!

Caroline and I discussed plans for new tours - Canada and Alaska, Europe and Asia, South America? Much would be possible now, but first of all we had to concentrate on the start of the TV production now.

I was nervous, why I should be nervous? What bad should happen, whatever would happen? It was the uncertainty, the last year had been fantastic. Now everything would change, it was the change that made me nervous, the uncertainty about the upcoming, even when there was absolutely no indication therefore, that the future could be bad - on the contrary!

We sat on the patio of Gus's Drive-In, it was somewhat cold, we wore our coats, enjoyed the hot meal and the hot coffee.

"What do you think, was it right to do so?"

"Well, they are giving you a lot of liberties, they made a lot of concessions. You have a lot of artistic freedom, to an extent that is not really common - concerns?"

"No, Barbara argued very much in favor of me. She was a very important factor therein, that CBS gives me this much control about the show. It's only that I've the feeling, that I betray something."

"It will be on you, you not have to become one of this assimilated TV comedians - it will be on you. Don't change, that would be my advice. If there's one concern your audience has, then that, that you would become one of this TV puppets. Even if you would "fail" on TV, you have "your" audience. We have talked about it, look at the number of hits that your videos have at social media. TV is no longer the only possibility."

"You're right, I should be more relaxed. We can see in which way the TV show will develop. I can make a video whenever I wanna do so. We have the right to go on tour. Yes, it's on me, I have so many possibilities, I only have to use them!"

"Any plans for the rest of the evening?"

"Sitting here and drinking another coffee."

"No bad idea - can you bring also an orange juice along?"

"You mean that I have to go?"

"Of course!"

What, if you could overview the whole world at once? What would you see, what would be your general impression?

Jimmy Kimmel Live!

"A fantastic years lies behind you, a one-year tour through the whole USA, every show sold out, and now you've signed a two years contract for a TV show at CBS - looks very good for you at moment, Peter?"

"Yeah, all could be good, would we live in country that wouldn't be led by a wannabe dictator."

"Let us talk about politics later, let us talk about your success first. A year ago you were not unknown, especially not on social media. But now you're one of the most discussed stand-up comedians in the country, if not the most discussed. You're still very active on social media, your

videos made during the tour are already legendary, much footage showing you onstage one can find on social media. But now you will have a nationwide TV show, what will change?"

"I hope not that much in general. Sure, the show in TV can not be made like the live shows on stage. The for me most severe difference will be, that I have a given time-frame now. Onstage my show lasts sometimes only one and a half hour, sometimes way over four hours. This depends on various factors, but the interaction between me and the audience is always a very important one. Now I have a certain time - not less, not more. My problem will be, that I have to concentrate on a few topics, and I have to plan the show at least till a certain degree."

"But you have a full hour, and if I understand you right, then it will be not the common format with a succession of sketches?"

"An hour is nothing for me. As said, a normal show is at least one and a half hour, and then it was a very short show for me. No, it will be more or less the same what I do all the time. The difference is, that I cannot simply start with a topic, to drift then through the evening and the possible subjects."

"But you will perform in front of a live audience here in Los Angeles?"

"Yes, and we will see to what a degree it will be still possible for me to interact with the audience, but we have to see."

"It will be a weekly show - reflecting the past week?"

"Yes and no. We will record the show in the late afternoon or early evening - later would be better. It will broadcast the same day at the late evening. I'm used acting very spontaneously, I will decide as late as possible what all I will take into the show - but of course I have the time-frame now."

"You will move to Los Angeles?"

"No. I look for a condo or so, but our main residence will be – in any case - Portland also in the future. We have decided to use a hotel at the beginning, we will commute between Portland and Los Angeles."

"We?"

"My manager Caroline and I."

"You're known, and often criticized therefor, that you find very frank words on the stage - to say it in that way. Do you have to slow down somewhat now? Are there regulations between you and CBS?"

"Well, if you wanna have me, than you get me! CBS asked me and I agreed, but I'm the person I'm - maybe I have to omit one or two words, but I will have no problems therewith, that everybody will exactly understand what I mean. Should I get feedback from my audience that knows me, that I make concessions, that I change, then I will stop with this shows. This is a part of my contract, this is contractually agreed, that I can stop the show. CBS has also the right to stop the show at any point, should they think that I would act inappropriately. It's a try, both sides have to learn and to see, in which way everything will develop."

"So, we can expect to see also in TV the Peter, known from the live shows?"

"Yes, of course. And of course, you can see me also in the future live on the stage. If this would be impossible now, I would not have signed the contract."

"New tours? In the US or abroad?"

"We're still in the process of planning. But both has to be possible."

"But no distinct planning so far?"

"No."

"When we will see the first show?"

"As fast as possible. I was one year on tour now, had the opportunity to comment the developments in our country nearly daily. Today the election in South Carolina - I have no show. The coronavirus - I have no show. The unbelievable disgusting words from the president's jr. - I have no show. Yes, I can make a video, but I need the direct feedback of my audience. I hope to be onstage as soon as possible again."

"Thanks for your time, Peter."

"It was a pleasure for me to be your guest, Jimmy."

The Ellen DeGeneres Show

"You've said, that you're unhappy therewith, to have no show at the moment? But in the future, working for TV, it will be difficult for you to have live shows, at least except from the West Coast, Los Angeles or Portland for instance?"

"There're some considerations to go on tour and use some of the shows for TV. We would announce them before, because, of course, they would of have a more rigid structure than my normal shows. But in the end it would be like in Los Angeles, only at another place. It would be more difficult to record the show, would depend on the city, the country maybe, the location. But CBS sees no fundamental problems."

"Wow, that could be very interesting. Even in other countries?"

"Yeah, especially this could be very attractive. There're lots of requests from Europe and Asia, but South America also. We have many discussions at the moment what would be possible, what not. These discussions are very productive and I detect possibilities now, that I've not seen so far."

"And CBS would produce this? I mean, that this would mean much higher production costs?"

"Well, CBS is also interested in to sell the show, Europe and Asia are very interesting markets. Shows in these countries wouldn't be the worst for CBS. It's not planned to make a very long world tour. More something like flying visits, a certain area, one or two, maybe three countries, some shows. Two weeks maybe, then back for some time - but nothing is determined so far."

"Sounds very interesting, really, I'm a bit jealous. You will return to Portland now, then the East Coast waits?"

"Yes, a short stopover in Portland, then some late-night in New York."

"A show in New York?"

"Is not planned."

"Your next live performance?"

"Let me return to Portland first, then we will see. Today is Super Tuesday, I'm a bit sad that I have no show tonight. Would be cool, onstage, watching what happens, together with the audience - yeah, you cannot have everything."

"Are you sure that you have no show tonight? You're known therefore, to make surprise shows?"

"Definitively not! I will spend the evening in front of the TV, seeing what will happen."

"You're from Oregon, it's not your day. But for us in California - your predictions?"

"Well, California seems to be an easy thing - Bernie Sanders of course. A lot has happened the last days, I think it can become a very surprising night. I fear only, that the Dems are on their way again, to act dumb. Yes, you can criticize Sanders for example for his dogmatism, but to say that he would be not able to unite the democratic voters, that he will have no chance to defeat our beloved man in office, is simply stupid! I have enough contact to people in Europe, they are shaking their heads! Sanders talks about universal health care - we have it? Sanders talks about free and better education - we have it? Sanders talks about stricter gun laws - we have it? They do not understand why Sanders is called a revolutionary, a radical, because he talks only about things that are common in every European country! Yes, Sanders would have a lot of problems in Washington - with the Dems! - but we need progress in this country, not again the next Obamacare stopgap!"

"I look forward to your show. It will be interesting to see in which way a TV audience will react to your show."

"Let me say this Ellen. Who's interested in, can find a lot of footage about me in social media, and this is what one can expect of me, seeing me in TV."

Portland

Our first day home in Portland, yesterday was Super Tuesday, tomorrow we would be in Portland as well. Then New York would be our aim, Jimmy Fallon and Trevor Noah. But today we were in

Portland, at home.

Yesterday was Super Tuesday, and today? It was strange to see, in what a way the "liberal media" reacted - had I missed something? They reacted as everything would have been done now, as we would have a new POTUS - Joe Biden!

Joe Biden as POTUS? Why not! Joe Biden in the White House would be an incredible improvement, compared with this low point president of today. But was there not still a Bernie Sanders, this awfully radical anarchist who demanded things, totally commonplace to people in Europe for instance? And even if you would neglect Bernie Sanders, wasn't there an election at the end of the year? 2016 at the horizon? I would have a lot to talk about this, later this evening.

"You know, it's nearly like a hysteria to me, seeing CNN for example. It's nearly as they would celebrate, that the worst disaster had been avoided. This is no clever behavior when thinking about the young voters, the Latino voters, the Asian voters, and others. Everybody is needed to stop the progressing destruction of or democracy."

"Yes, and even if Biden has performed very well yesterday, Sanders is still in the race. Sure, there are aspects that argue against Sanders, but also Biden has his weak points. Why are the Dems not capable to do this in a fair process? Listening to some of the statements by O'Rourke, Klobuchar and Buttigieg was really hard. Did they talk about the disgusting president or about Bernie Sanders?"

"It's stupid to mark someone as a danger, as a threat for our nation, and then you ask for the support of his supporters? I do not say, that Sanders has to become the nominee of the Democrats, but it would be clever to do it not in the same stupid way as in 2016. What would be, if we would have a president Joe Biden, and all what he would do is a rake up of the Obama years? The people are hungry for real change, they want to have a health care system like in other modern societies, they want to see progress in gun laws, in fighting against racism. Joe Biden? One should not underestimate him, but Sanders appears better here, fighting for decades for these aims."

"Washington is one thing, but the first step would be defeating the man in office. I think that it would only mobilize democratic voters, would the president denounce Sanders as a dangerous socialist, as a communist even, we....."

".....wow, breaking news, Bloomberg stops his campaign and endorses Biden!"

"Bad news for Sanders, or maybe not that bad? Now we have a very easy structure, Biden versus Sanders. If Warren would not stop her campaign now, it would be stupid."

"Definitively, from now on we should have a head-to-head competition. From now on it will become very interesting, very interesting in which way Biden will behave, the Centrists - the Clinton Dems - will behave. But without any doubts, Biden has the momentum on his side now."

"What would be good, and what's possible now, would be, that one of the candidates will reach at least 1.991 delegates. That would take off the problematic of the superdelegates in any case."

"Yes, that would be good. But nevertheless, also the process of nomination has to be fair. To play the game now, we have to do everything to prevent the possible nominee Sanders, this awful dangerous radical, would be devastating. This would make it difficult for supporters of Sanders, especially the young voters, to vote for Biden in the presidential race later, as well as for independent voters. We would have the same situation as in 2016, we are knowing the outcome!"

"Let's hope that it will be better this time, but I agree, you can have doubts about this!"

Jack

"Hi, Jack."

"Hi Peter, back in town?"

"Yes, unfortunately only for a short time. But enough time for a show in your little theater."

"Yeah, you've not forgotten me and my little theater?"

"No, for this venue I will have time all the time. The virus has reached Oregon now, do you think this will affect the show?"

"Not from my side, not from the side of the audience I would say. The hall will be jam-packed."

"Have you heard, our wonderful president has donated a hundred thousand bucks? How wonderful this man is! His new budget cuts over three billions in health care matters - what a wonderful and generous man he is! How are you?"

"Very good, I cannot complain. I run the theater in which your career begun, the people like it to be here."

"Well, you're one of these persons without them no artist would have any chance to develop and to find his audience. You know that I would be always happy to give you a job. And I know that you would have the opportunity now, to run a larger theater now, or more theaters. But you're one of these characters who will die in their little theaters, a place that not only helped me a lot. I'm happy to be here tonight, and I'm happy that I will be in Portland most of the time, Los Angeles will be only my workplace."

"I think that this would do you good. But I fear, that this Los Angeles will soak you more and more up, that you get more and more assimilated, that one day you will be a one of them in their nice estates in the hills and the valleys, of course with a beach house in Malibu. You would be not the first, succumbed to the artificial Hollywood glamour, the phony sparkling of the L.A. celebrity life."

"Well, I'm from weird Portland? As long as I have honest friends in this weird city, as long as Caroline will be at my side, as long as I will be on this stage from time to time, until then I have no fears. Should the day come, the last day on this stage, and should I be not a very old man then, at the end of my career, then it would be the time, when everything would went wrong. Do me a favor?"

"Sure."

"Should this day come, kick my ass. And if this would not help, tell everybody that I have become now one of this hypocritical fucking celebrity assholes, who deliver trite speeches, after posing on the red carpets, before celebrating boisterous after-show-parties. I hope that I will never decay in such a way. I think the Portlanders would show me their disregard, if it would come to this."

"Yeah, in Portland yes. In L.A., I'm not sure?"

"That's one of the reasons, why I never would leave this city forever. And L.A.? The day when I no longer would like it sitting on the patio of Gus's, the day I would find no place there anymore, the day I would no longer walking down 7th Street and crossing Los Angeles Street, the day - yes, the Portlanders would let me feel what they would think about me, it's good to have a home."

"It's time for the stage - your home crowd is waiting."

It was a wonderful show, I felt totally safe, totally in good hands, felt at home - it was more like a happening or so? Many from the audience I knew, after the show something to drink was fast organized, we sat together for a very long time in the hall and the lobby. It felt not like a goodbye, whereby I felt somewhat nervous.

Portland

Walking around in Portland, alongside the Columbia River, the border to Washington State, the hot spot of the coronavirus in the USA. Did I have concerns, fears? Not really, not about my person. I was young enough, not ill, no risk group, but I lived in this country. It was obvious that much more people were infected, simple arithmetic regarding the death toll. But how you should find infected people without testing, how should test without tests? It was this government, this incapable, pathetic and phony president, that was what I feared.

It was bad, when it was not possible to you, to trust your own government - modern times, not only in the United States. Tomorrow we would fly to New York, flying, normal I was a fan of flying, of aviation. New York, millions of people, closely together, not only in the subway. I had no real

motivation to fly to New York, to promote my TV show. Well, Jimmy Fallon, he was the first of the major late-night shows for me. And then I had an invitation from Trevor Noah, the Trevor Noah. You needed a good analysis of the current situation of a certain development in the USA? Well, listening Trevor Noah was always a good decision.

We had a duel between Joe Biden and Bernie Sanders now, between two old white men - what an unsatisfying way to find your nominee. The primary in Oregon would be undertaken at May 19th - wow, I never would have the chance to vote for Buttigieg or Warren, most probable the race was more or less decided, till I would be on the row to vote - this made no sense to me! Why was it not possible in the States to hold an election at one day for the whole USA, at a Sunday or a holiday, with polling stations open the whole day, with the possibility for early voting? Or, to say it in another way: Why was it not possible to hold an election in the USA in the same way, as in every other modern society? Because this was the USA, because this was the greatest democracy, that earth had ever seen? No talking about gerrymandering and such things now.

Portland was a fucking cool place, looking at the trees and the white mountains at the horizon. New York, why one would like to be there? The ultimate planning of the TV show came to its end, we would start soon with a longer special, to see what the reaction of the TV audience would be. Back from New York I would have a few days to be in Portland, then for a longer time in L.A. At the beginning, for the first show, maybe also the second and third, we would need more time, more preparation. Later, when everything would be well-attuned, it would be possible to do it in a shorter time. Two or three days in Los Angeles for the show, then back to Portland till the next week's show. I hoped that this would function, to be more time in Portland than in Los Angeles.

I would make regular live shows along the West Coast, a first European tour was in planning. Great Britain, France and Germany maybe. Two weeks or so, maybe ten shows or so. The western of Canada and Alaska would be cool, South America of course. But first of all we had to start with the TV show now, everything else would depend on the development of this shows.

I walked to the next bus station to drive back downtown. Caroline and I spent the evening alone, tomorrow we would meet at the airport to fly to New York together, in the evening Jimmy Fallon. I would have dinner at one of the many restaurants in this area, maybe a cocktail in a bar later. I was torn, forward-looking to the work for TV and in Los Angeles, but I feared that the impact on my life so far could be too much for me. I decided to eat a pizza, a small salad as starter, a tiramisu and an espresso to end the meal.

The Tonight Show

"My next guest - I'm happy that he's here tonight again. Around a year ago, he was the first time here, well known in social media. But now he's here again, after a one-year tour through the United States, after signing a million dollar contract at CBS, welcome with me the next super star of stand-up comedy, welcome with me the unique Peter Maurer!"

"Hello Jimmy, thank for inviting me again."

"You had an amazing year, one year on the road, from East Coast to West Coast, every single show sold out! Already a star at social media, now a broad TV audience will get to know you - excited?"

"Well, in a way I will do nothing new, only that you can see it from now on not only live or in the Internet, now you can also switch on your TV."

"You will have a weekly show, one hour long. It will be recorded during the day in front of a live audience and will be broadcast in the evening - hey, that's like we do it?"

"More or less yes. We will record the show in a theater in Los Angeles, I will be on a stage in front of an audience. I will have a kind of script, a plan what I will do, but it's not all totally planned."

"So, there's a kind of improvisatory element in it?"

"Yes. The audience is not only a facade, they are encouraged to react spontaneously, as in my normal live shows."

"Will the show be recorded in one take?"

"Yes, no cuts, no breaks."

"No commercial breaks?"

"Not during the show."

"Are you sure about your contract?"

"Yes, absolutely!"

"But say, something would go totally wrong?"

"Sure, the show will not be broadcasted live. Therefore we could start again, if something would go totally wrong. But also only to a certain extent, because we have to finish the recording till a certain time. Otherwise we would have nothing to broadcast in the evening. In the next days we will start with preparative shows. At the beginning only with me on the stage and an audience, I have to get the feeling therefore, to have exactly fifty-five minutes - not more, but also not less. Then we will start with recordings - you know, they will show them to a test TV audience."

"Yeah, that's TV, a slightly different world than touring around and performing live onstage."

"Your early years or your time at Saturday Night Live, Jimmy?"

"Let's not talk about me and my career. Let's talk about you, it's more interesting. Your well known for your aggressive style, your references to Lenny Bruce, I think one can say, that you're one of the harshest critic of our president?"

"Well, I not compare myself to Lenny Bruce. He risked a lot, and he paid a lot, for his fight for freedom of speech and art. I see our democracy under attack, it's no time for nice words anymore."

"One can say that it's no surprise that you're no admirer of our president, you're from Portland? But you're criticizing the Democratic Party as well in a very harsh way."

"The Democrats have all chances to end this devastating time, but not in doing the same stupidities as in 2016. Four more years and this democracy will be killed, and the Democrats will have burdened themselves with guilt. United Dems, and this nightmare will be over."

"You're no fan of Hillary Clinton and what she represents, this is no secret - you support Sanders?"

"First of all, with all respect, it's nice to have the choice between Biden and Sanders now, two white old men - was this not different at the beginning? Honestly? I would be happier, would neither Biden nor Sanders still in the race, but all the others. Seriously, the next president will be - in any case! - again a white man beyond his seventies, shall I be happy about this? We need fundamental change, we need this change in the White House, but also in Congress, the House and Senate, also in the states. The Dems in the House give some hope."

"Do you fear that you will be noticed more now, especially in the traditional media, that it will become more difficult for you now, your daily life for example?"

"I'm not sure what you refer to?"

"Do you fear attacks from right-wing media now, especially in TV?"

"Well, I'm used to social media? And if the question is, whether I would appreciate it, that Fox or even the president would do some advertising for me? Why not!"

"I wish you the best for your show, Peter. When we can see you for the first time in TV?"

"Thursday, March 26th will be the first time with a two and a half hour special. From then on, every Thursday on CBS."

"Good luck, Peter. I hope I can welcome you soon again."

"Would be a pleasure to me, Jimmy."

The Daily Show

"It's a pleasure and an honor to me being your guest, Trevor."

"Nice words from the new star of stand-up comedy, Peter."

"No, I mean this quite honest. I said it before, it's maybe strange, maybe it's a good description of

our country, but often, if you wish a good analysis, if you wish a compressed assessment regarding a development or what happens in the States right now, then it's often the best to switch on Comedy Central watching The Daily Show. You have the skill to get to the heart of something in a very short time and with a clearly understandable language - I'm really impressed."

"Thanks for your words, Peter. But I have to say, that I feel pity for the so-called mainstream media. You're a serious and professional journalist - in which way you should react to our president? I think it's much easier to do this with comedy?"

"Yeah, I have to confess, would I have to make an interview with one from the president's bunch, it would be hard for me not to become emotional. But what I meant regarding your person, apart from your impressive life history and what all you did, was, that you have no problems to bring topics like gun violence in the USA to the point, within ten minutes or so! You need no panel of experts and endless discussions, you need some minutes and some for everybody understandable words, that's all, that's impressive! You should become a politician!"

"Some say this about you?"

"Who said this? I'm much too emotional. It would be impossible to me, to shake hands with Putin, Erdogan, a Saudi prince or our nice president. The president's fine son and his bullshit about the coronavirus? Would I have stood beside him, well.....maybe he should meet one time an elephant without a gun!"

"Let me say this, as someone used to such animals, in nature. Elephants can be very calm and tender animals, but do not annoy them, this is no good idea! Du hast deutsche Vorfahren, sollen wir uns etwas auf Deutsch unterhalten?"

"Oh, I don't think so, I'm not Sandra Bullock. Ich fürchte das Du kannst die Sprache meiner Vorfahren besser als ich. Should we try Afrikaans or Zulu?"

"You speak Afrikaans and Zulu!"

"No.....how many languages you're speaking?"

"Only a few. You know that I envy you sometimes and that I'm very curious about the reviews of your TV show?"

"You mean, if there will be more than two or three shows?"

"I fear that your style will be too much for some viewers?"

"I have to hear the shit and the lies our president utters every day, therefore.....do you think that Biden will become the nominee?"

"Sorry, but I'm the host, this should be my question?"

"I'm a Portlander, I can vote when everything will be over. Who's interested in my opinion. Please allow me one question."

"Okay, one."

"Do you feel helpless sometimes?"

"Yes."

Portland

Back in Portland, much happened these days. The next little Super Tuesday, and the results. The coronavirus and the idiotic president and our insufficient health care system. Dropping oil prices, dropping stock markets, a president with no ideas and plans. Well, the big business man, the deal maker, was a crying helpless child at the moment when we would have needed leadership - this was the result, when you voted bigmouths into office, in a crisis you could forget them!

And the Democrats? They had "their" Joe now, the man who would fix up everything again, the man who would bestow us a bright future - why we not worshiped him? The Dems were cool, in 2016 they gifted us the first female president, now the personified savior! Bernie? The Dems, two white old men, that was the result in the end - what a joke! Wasted chances, so many were there at the beginning. I feared, that this would have dire consequences.

Tomorrow I would be for a first and longer time in Los Angeles - preparations and tests for the first TV show. Two weeks, two weeks in Los Angeles, two weeks till the first show - one and a half hour? I would have material for four or five at least! Was it a mistake to do it? My contract allowed me much, even to go on tour. I would have to find a balance between the open live shows and the restricted TV shows. The live shows for the real audience and the TV shows to get real famous and real rich at the end of the day? The water flowed by and I knew, as long as I would be here regularly, sitting here, walking around here, so long it could be not that worse. Would one day the question arise, Los Angeles or Portland, nothing could go wrong, as long as I would look at the natural riversides of Colombia River, the flowing water here. But would I see the artificial "riversides" of Los Angeles River, made of concrete, with this rivulet therein, then I would know, that it would be too late. Water was always something special to me, a friend.

So it was now this moment, to say goodbye, to say hello - something came to an end, something began. It had been a wonderful year, not everything perfect, but surprisingly productive. In a way I feared the next year, the time till February 2021. A lot changed, every day new developments, fast, always faster - had I become old? The Middle East, the Turkish-Greece border, the war between Saudi Arabia and Russia, all the developments in the States - how relieving it would have been, closing your eyes and never open them again. Yes, I was an old man now, tired of the always same stupid old story, called history. Maybe there should be a virus, killing them all, but that story I had written already!

No real idea of the future, only of the devastating present. Doubts about the meaningfulness of "the markets", the wonderful global economic system, the addiction of making as much money as possible. Nice thoughts, lovely millionaire. But hey, I was far away from the hundreds of millions some of my comedy colleagues had made, not to talk about the billions, especially from some musicians and sportsperson. Happy nice world!

Some could not afford to stay at home for a day, even if they showed symptoms of the virus - and they could get no test, because this fucking richest nation on earth ever was not capable, to provide their inhabitants a functioning health care system and at least some worker rights! I should walk home, slowly, Los Angeles waited, tomorrow we would fly southwards, tomorrow something new would begin, I felt like a helpless child.....

Lenny Bruce
Leonard Alfred Schneider (October 13, 1925 – August 3, 1966)

I had just finished my first year on this fucking planet as he died - what a trivial beginning of this text! But what should I do?

In which way this story should develop? Peter and Caroline could marry, maybe happy, maybe not. Peter could become a drug addict, why not suicide in the Hollywood Hills? He could become the first US stand-up comedian, not only some hundreds of millions net worth, but a billion or more, like some of his colleagues from sports and music. Wow, real dramatic stories would be possible!

But why this effort, why not talking about the real lives? Standing in the center of L.A., you only have to look around! Why trying to write a great, a dramatic, a thrilling, a masterpiece of novel? Look around, there's this fucking reality!

I type the words as they come, not reflecting on them, not planing any writing. Everything is an action in time, not repeatable, it happens and then its gone, a head overcrowded with words, images, sounds and feelings, stored there since decades. Sometimes I think the best for me and my writing would be to become an alcoholic - at least - or better a drug addict - you know, would be more authentic then! And of course, suicide at Santa Monica Beach, swimming towards the setting sun!

Lenny Bruce, had he a good life, a fucking life, was he a great artist or only a disgusting asshole?

Well, with such a president in office, the answer should be at least for an American very easy! Fuck a porn star while your wife is pregnant or has given birth recently - but hey, he's a man, a real man, a deal maker! And Lenny Bruce, his wife, the stripper, his marriage - hey, stuff for Elizabeth! - his other relations to women? Should I travel to L.A., or maybe to SF, finding a meth whore who would marry the old German, to be able to live in the USA, to become an American even, would this be better than sitting in protected Germany, at my desk, at my PC, looking out of the window, the sun shines somewhat today, you're knowing the view?

Yesterday at the reading I felt not comfort, I felt like an alien, three musicians in my text, all committed suicide, fitted not very well to the other texts! What's your function as artist, to entertain the people? Well, if you see yourself as an entertainer, then of course - Let me entertain you, Robbie Williams. That's okay, if this is what you wish for. But why entertaining the people, like political cabaret in Germany - always left-wing - that ensures the left-wing audience that they are the good ones, are they? Why not replacing audiences, why not the left-wingers at a Nazi event and the right-wingers in a political cabaret? I fear that not only some would like what they would see and hear - from both sides!

I'm not interested in, to talk about Lenny Bruce's life - read a Wikipedia article, YouTube offers you original footage, watch the movie "Lenny" or why not "All That Jazz". This tells you everything you have to know about his life, like the view out of a window. Let this text end as it has begun - trivial! But maybe this is the essence of it, everything is trivial, even the arousing showbiz, even in a Bob Fosse movie.

There's this life, everything would be easy, would there be only you, or would we function like nuclear particles. No talking about quantum physics now, we should not talk about scientific subjects we not really understand. Fact is, that we have laws of nature, the law of gravity for instance, and these laws are distinct. The famous apple not falls only sometimes to earth, all the apples do this all the time. But human beings? The night sky is easy to understand, but the humans on earth? Is life a mistake in the universe, too complex, too many possibilities to interact, too complex to be handled by us humans, too complex to be understood? We fail because of our own complexity, we're over-challenged by this situation?

But we don't like this, we react! And this world is the product of this reaction. Obviously we're not capable to live together in a meaningful way, earth would look different then! Maybe it would be the best, sitting on the mountain top and looking at the world down there. Writing cynical texts, about this fucking stupid humans, about yourself in the end.

Lenny Bruce or Hunter S. Thompson? I've the fucking feeling I will end like Hunter S. Thompson, only without having made something one could compare to his. In both I see similarities, but not with me. Would I be happy, would I have lived their lives? Not sure, some would sing about me then, would even make movies about me, but would make this this fucking world better or more bearable?

I think I should stop now, no gun in the drawer like Thompson or like the Peter in the first hard-boiled series. And still it's better so, knowing that sometimes I would use it. So I have to wait, it's a fucking long travel till Santa Monica Beach!