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"Dr. Crapluck"

or

"How I Learned to Start Worrying and Hate the Birds"

by

Rudy Gehshan

Everything I am about to tell you is based on true events.
And it all proves one thing.

I am in open warfare with the Avian race.

I have been since childhood. My first arch-nemesis was a little bird. In fact, his name should be written with Caps as The Little Bird, and he was the bane of my early existence. Like most children I would fill my days with the crucial work of smashing, ripping, hiding, and drawing over things. All of which

I know was done in the utmost secrecy. But at the end of every day my father would come home, sit me down, and scold me for whatever mischief I had gotten myself into. How did he know? Because, as he explained solemnly after each time I asked, "a little bird" told him.

How I hated that bird. Nothing I did seem to escape his watchful eye. And the most infuriating thing was the fact that although he could obviously see me just fine thank you very much, I never saw a single feather of his yellow body. (Don't ask me how I know he was yellow without having seen him, I just know). All I wanted was to see the Little Bird, so I could wring his little neck.

Eventually the little, yellow horror's orwellian reign came to an end. It was timed with my realizing that the damned creature was not as observant of events that my mother could not easily discover. But that is unimportant. The point is that in this war the birds fired the first shot.

What followed was a long, peaceful neutrality.

Actually not true. If this is to be a factual, honest account of this conflict, I must owe up to my share of the evil that drives it.

My crimes were nothing specific, more the result of not having any respect for our bird-brained "friends". Example. Back in grade 8, I remember reading an ad in the back of an issue of Popular Science. It was selling plans for a sonic stunner, a

device that generated directed sound waves with a frequency that could immobilize the mental processes of living things. Special mention was made of being able to knock out birds. This specific detail amused me greatly, as I laughed at the image of making a stunner powerful enough to fire wide into the air, and passing pigeons and gulls suddenly seizing up and falling like bricks. Actually, it still is funny. I really was not too fair to the birds.

And I ate them. Eat them actually. One of my favorite dishes, as my mom can attest, is bird. Quails to be exact, though we always called it birds when I was growing. My mom makes a huge grilled batch of them, and my brothers and I will pack into ourselves as many of the suckers as we can. It's such a joy to rip the tender flesh and crunch those bones. Wonderfully primal.

So my slate is not clean. I recognize how my behavior was, and is, careless and brutish. But know this. It was not me who made the lukewarm war turn hot. It was their bombings.

It began the summer of 2002. My brother was visiting Montreal for the season, having an internship. One bright beautiful day we were walking home up Guy Street. A funny thread of conversation had just finished up, and I looked away from him in the direction we were traveling, when I suddenly felt a light smack on the back of my head. Now like most siblings we were accustomed to various forms of unexpected violence exchanged

between ourselves as demonstration of familial camaraderie. So I responded appropriately and smacked him a good one on his head.

"What the fuck," he said. "Why'd you hit me?"

"Um ... because you hit me?"

"No I didn't, you freak."

I was confused, and more disturbingly, my head felt really warm on the exact area where the smack had first hit. I reached back to touch the spot where the stinging had began.

It should be known that many of the skirmishes of this war have taken the form of common, dramatic film cliches. You know the sequence where a character in the movie slowly touches an area he can't see well, and then slowly brings back his hand into his field of vision only to find his fingers coated with something horrific that makes him scream? In the event I am retelling, I am the character, and the "something horrific" was bird shit.

I laughed it off. Well I did after rushing home and taking a shower. Thrice. But afterward I found the incident quite droll. I mean what were the chances, wasn't it hilarious when I believed my brother hit me, I screamed like a girl etc, etc. And, like my brother said, being crapped on by birds was a sign of good fortune. Ha ha, ha ha, ha. I did not know then that this was but the first volley of a barrage.

The next bombing happened soon after, and where the last movie cliché was one of horror, this time it would be a

reenactment of a romantic comedy. My girl was teaching me to inline skate and as I was learning, me putting on the gear was a big to-do that took quite some time. As I finally finished up, I was sitting down and she was kneeling over me helping me tighten my blades. Such a perfect picture, to smiling youths sharing an affectionate moment in time. All so perfectly ruined by a brilliant shot (shit?) landing between us right dead on my crotch. It was shocking not because of the damage done; no harm really because I was wearing track pants over shorts. But the precision placement of the "package" with such a tight little window of opportunity ... it was a clear indication of my opponent's skill and to cause such embarrassment was by no means a random act. Still, we laughed it off, and it was said again: it's a sign of luck.

After that incident though, the game returned to its roots of a phantom menace haunting my every move. I would frequently return to my car to discover a fresh message left no doubt as a warning. Sure, it happens to all cars. Everybody gets nailed mostly on and around the driver's seat, right? The strangely biased distribution was one thing. The more interesting detail is that analysis of the splash vectors of the stains allows one to project paths for the bombs and determine where they were suppose to hit. Simple coincidence that all projections intersect at my previously violated crotch? Is it just ... luck?

Okay, at this point you are thinking this is all quite

funny. Look at Rudy, look at Rudy being shat on. Look at Rudy the paranoid delusional bird-hating jerk. Yes, the probability of all this happening is slim, but it does exist. How can sweet, innocent, stupid birds coordinate a massive un-going campaign against one inconsequential human being? To be honest, up until yesterday, May 8th 2004, for it was all just amusing anecdotes to be told over dinner. For yesterday, it happened one time too many.

We were at the Biodome, showing my girl's cousin and her friend one of the tourist attractions of Montreal. The biodome is designed to maintain and recreate various ecosystems including the wild-life that inhabits it. This of course means birds as well. We had reached the area of the St. Laurent river and looked upon a huge pool of water with all kinds of gulls, ducks, and other birds flying and nesting about. Of course, it was only then that it occurs to me that I was in any danger.

I casually mentioned my fear to my girl. She has borne witness to some of the previous events that transpired, and agreed that, having safely passed through the rainforest and Laurentien system without incident, we should move on before we pressed my luck further. That's when I turn around and, like a movie, time slo-moed to deliver the full impact of my fate literally flying straight at me.

The gull's wings beat majestically as it came in low, beady black eyes glinting, and I swear a smirk curling the sides of

its beak. I closed my eyes and shifted back and off to the side to try to escape, but a man can only change his destiny so much. All it did was move me aside enough for the gull's present to hit my left leg and shoe instead. As the gull passed a half-arms-length overhead I realized its intended targeted had been, again, my abused genitalia. I laughed as usual, but this time it was so I would not cry. And it was all I could do not to scream as the mocking lie was stated again: "It's a sign of good luck, Rudy. A sign of good luck."

I'm feeling lucky, alright. I'm feeling so lucky that I'm making my way through back issues of Popular Science. So lucky that I'm sure assembling a Super Sonic Stunner will be no great challenge.

I can already taste the meat and bones of their defeat.

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