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Frontiersman

Facing the truth, however great the cost.

February 2010

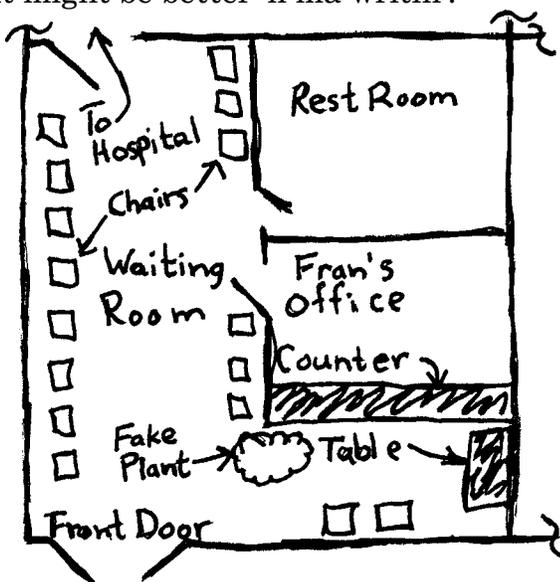
Fran and the Dirty Trickster

Fiction by Sam Aurelius Milam III

Ah don't usually got much 'gainst hospitals but sometimes things happen. One day ah went ta tha local hospital, they call it a medical service center now, hifalutin' snobs, ta see somebody ah knew that was sick there.

Tha receptionist was workin' on some papers an' didn't wanna be bothered. Ah tried ta ast 'er how ta find ma friend an' she jus' got uppity. Told me ta sit down an' wait. Ah checked her name tag. It said Fran. Hello, Fran, I thought.

Tha little part o' tha waitin' room that stuck out in front o' Fran's office had two chairs by tha front window. Ah sat in one of 'em an' waited. Ta ma right they was a little table with some magazines on it. Fran's office had a high counter between me an' her. It was tall nuff fer people ta stand at but she couldn't see over it ta nobody that wuz sittin' in a chair. They was a big fake plant on tha floor ta ma left, at tha end o' Fran's counter. Most people in tha main part o' tha waitin' room, 'round tha corner, couldn't see past it ta where tha little table wuz sittin'. In case that don't make no sense, I drew a picture. Ah don't draw too good but it might be better 'n ma writin'.



Fran coulda answered ma question in 'bout 15 seconds but she made me sit 'til she was done with her papers. Ah don't like bullies, even tha female kind. 'specially tha female kind. Since she made me sit an' wait ah put tha time ta good use. Tha little table ta ma right was outa site o' most people 'cept fer somebody sittin' where ah was. I spent tha time figgerin' out ah real good use fer tha little table.

Over tha next coupla weeks, ah started 'cumulatin' tha stuff ah'd need fer ma prank, an' started puttin' it together. Like always, ah got it a piece at a time all over tha county. Wouldn't nobody ever figger out ah bought it all fer tha same reason. Lot o' tha stuff came in plastic so ah didn' git no fingerprints on it. Some of it didn't an' ah had ta clean them things. Ah did alla ma work in rubber gloves, an' got new ones ever time ah changed 'em. Didn't want nothin' ta git from ma hands ta tha gloves ta ma work.

Ah got some wood dowels an' cut 'em tha right length an' painted 'em sorta dark red. Mixed tha color maself. Ya gotta see it ta know what ah mean. Ah got a cheap clock an' some batteries and some wires. Jus ta look at tha painted dowels wouldn't nobody mistake 'em fer dynamite but with it all taped together with plastic tape ya could see it good enough to know what it looked like but not good enough ta know it wuz fake. Ah figgered them bomb squad goons wuz gonna take it real serious, at least fer a while. Ah decided ta git fancy, which can be a bad idea, but ah couldn't resist tha fun. Ah already had tha batteries anyway so ah built a little blinkin' red light. They always got somethin' like that on tha bombs on tha TV an' ah figgered a blinkin' red light 'ld put a real scare into them bomb squad goons. Hell, it looked so good even ah was almost afraid ta touch it. Last thing ah did was ta tape on a little note, "Ta Fran, fer bein' a bitch." Ah wrote it left-handed an' upside down, wearin rubber gloves. Ah don't think ah left no handwritin' clues that 'ud lead 'em back ta me.

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Ah got some o' tha kinda makup that actors use an' a afro kind of wig. Thought ah'd disguise maself. That's 'cause they had cameras in the waitin' room at tha hospital. Went ta tha Goodwill an' bought a old suit an' a shirt. Got 'em too big fer me. Got some bubble wrap an' fixed it inside tha shirt. With ma wig an' makup an' tha padded suit ah looked like a big black guy that wuz mostly muscle. Ah'm white, skinny, an' baldheaded. Nobody'd ever know it wuz me. Don't like ta blame no black folks fer ma pranks but it seemed like a good disguise so that's what ah did. So march aroun' me with picket signs.

Got a big briefcase an' cut tha bottom out an' took out tha little numbers fer tha lock right under tha handle. Ah put some string 'round ma fake bomb. Ah could put tha fake bomb in tha briefcase, poke tha string through where ah'd took out tha numbers, shut tha briefcase, an' pick up tha briefcase with ma finger hooked through tha loop o' string. Holdin' tha string ah could carry tha briefcase aroun' an' nobody'd ever know they was a fake bomb in it. Ah practiced with ma makeup an' tha suit fer several days, carryin' tha briefcase 'round tha house, sittin' it down an' pickin' it up again without tha string, lettin' tha fake bomb out through tha bottom o' tha briefcase. Ah practiced mostly on things that wuz 'bout tha same height as tha little table by Fran's counter. Ever time ah saw maself in a mirror ah had ta laugh. Looked like some NAACP lawyer. Ah went out an' got some wire rim glasses, jus' fer laughs.

While ah'd been buildin' tha fake bomb, ah figgered out a good way ta git rid o' tha scraps, pieces o' dowel, tha buckets with tha rest o' tha paint, tha brush, and all o' tha other little stuff that 'ud be left when ah wuz done. Right acrost tha street they wuz a house where a deputy DA lived. Tha guy was a thug. Everbody knew he lied, lost evidence, faked evidence, anything he could do ta git a conviction. Hell, he bragged 'bout it at parties after he'd had 'nuff ta drink. Didn't care if somebody'd done somethin' 'er not, just wanted ta put guys in jail. Had 'is eye on tha DA's job. Ah'd had ma eye on him but ah hadn't figgered out nuthin' ta do 'bout 'em. Then ah figgered out sumpthin'. Him an' ma scraps wuz jus' made fer each other. Ah started cumulatin' tha scraps in a big plastic bag.

All tha time ah was workin' on ma prank, ah kept goin' over ta tha hospital, mostly just walkin' aroun' an' eatin' in tha cafeteria. Ah noticed that nobody paid me no mind. Ah just walked through tha waitin' room into tha hospital, long as it was visitin' hours, ah might as well o' been invisible. Ah even went several times in ma disguise, carryin' ma briefcase. Nobody ever looked at me twice. So when tha day o' tha prank came, ah put on ma makeup an' ma wig, walked in wearin' ma business suit an' carryin' ma briefcase, an' asked Fran fer help. She didn't even look at me, jus' tol' me ta sign in an' wait. New deal. Ya hadta sign in 'fore ya could wait. Real service upgrade. Ah sat ma briefcase on tha little table, made a few fake passes at the sign-in paper, didn't touch nothin, didn't look at tha camera, picked up tha briefcase, lifted it off tha fake bomb, an' walked out. Fran wouldn't know me from Adam.

Ah went home an' turned on tha TV. Somebody musta spotted ma fake bomb right quick 'cause it wuz all over tha TV by tha time ah got home. They wuz a news crew showin' tha whole thing. They was people standin' 'round all over tha place. Ah loved it when they talked ta Fran. Naturally they did that, with her name on tha bomb. She was all tears, couldn't understand why nobody'd be mad at her. Ah saw some people in hospital uniforms make funny faces in tha background when she said that. Ah had ta laugh. But it got even better. Tha cops cleared everbody way back an' them bomb squad goons came tippytoein' out with a big box that they carried like it had grandma's best china. After they put it in their big van, the lady reporter busted through tha police line an' collered one o' tha bomb squad goons. She ast him 'bout tha bomb. He looked like he wuz real important. Said it wuz a real professional job, probly done by Al Kada. Ah laughed 'til ma belly hurt. But tha best wuz still ta come. They took tha box ta a big empty lot they had outa town, where they practiced bomb stuff, an' let tha news crew watch from a distance while they 'sploded tha thing. Wasn't ma fake bomb, went off like Oklahoma City. Timmy woulda loved 'em fakin' it like that. Made me laugh 'til ah almos' passed out. Ah sure miss Timmy.

Them bomb squad goons mighta been able ta strut some stuff 'bout tha bomb they 'sploded, saved tha hospital from gittin' blowed up, →

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but they knew ma bomb wuz fake. They jus' wasn' tellin' nobody an' they didn't know who ah wuz. Ah figgered they'd be huntin' fer me, ta git me outa circulation 'fore ah could spill tha beans. Probly shoot me while ah wuz tryin' ta 'scape. Ha ha. They knew how ma fake bomb wuz built an' they might find some clues no matter how careful ah'd been. They knew what ta look fer. So, soon's tha fun on tha TV wuz over, ah cooked up a big batch o' bacon, ate some of it an' put tha rest in ma big plastic bag with ma leftover bomb parts. Ah dumped some bacon grease on tha outside o' tha bag. Early next mornin', 'fore sunup, ah went over ta tha deputy DA's house an' left tha bag by his house, on tha side away from his driveway. Then ah sat on a bar stool in ma front room an' watched through tha window 'til he left fer work. When he wuz gone, they hadn't been no dogs messin' 'round so ah went along tha block an' opened a few gates fer yards that had dogs in 'em. Didn't take 'em long ta find tha bacon. Purty soon, they wuz trash all over tha deputy DA's front yard, most of it left over from makin' a fake bomb. Next, ah got one o' ma spare cell phones, got several that ah ain't never used, "acquired" 'em, as they say, drove acrost town an' called 911. Told 'em they wuz 'nother bomb over there, gave 'em tha address. Threw tha cell phone in tha river an' drove home.

By tha time ah got back, tha street wuz fulla cops. They wuz all over tha deputy DA's house like ticks on a dog. They took all tha trash away in a van. Ah heard later, on tha news, that they 'rested tha deputy DA at work, right outa his office. Wish ah coulda seen that. Ah don't know what they'll charge 'im with, maybe nothin'. Ah don't 'spect my phony evidence'll 'mount ta much, onst they look at it careful. Even if it did, he'd probly git off, crooked as tha courts is, but it was worth a little extra trouble ta have 'im hauled away in handcuffs. Might make it harder fer 'im ta git that DA job. An', it wuz a good way ta git rid o' tha scraps.

Ah figgered that since the little county hospital 'ad become ah Al Kada target, the homeland security crap wuz gonna git pretty deep around town. An' them bomb squad goons was 'nother problem. They'd be gunnin' fer me. It wuz time fer me ta leave. I made sure tha rent an' utilities wuz paid ahead, just so's nobody'd think ah wuz leavin'. Ah hired tha kid next door ta collect ma newspapers fer me, and mow tha yard. Told 'em ah'd be gone a coupla months. Left payment with 'is folks, ta give 'em later. I set some timers ta turn things on an' off in the house. Then ah loaded ma stuff inta tha Hummer an' hit tha road. It wasn't ma best prank ever, but it was fun. Yaaaa-hoooo! The Dirty Trickster riiiiides again! ☞

America the Beautiful

Music by Samuel Ward
Words by Katharine Lee Bates

O beautiful for spacious skies,
For amber waves of grain,
For purple mountain majesties
Above the fruited plain!

America! America!
God shed his grace on thee
And crown thy good with brotherhood
From sea to shining sea!

∞

America the Dutiful

Music by Samuel Ward
Words by Sam Aurelius Milam III

The government controls the skies,
And regulates the grain,
We bow before Their Majesties
The despotism's plain!

America! America!
You've lost your liberty
From neighborhood to neighborhood
From sea to shining sea!

☞

Stray Thoughts

Sam Aurelius Milam III

Better Standards — I get tired of hearing people gloat that this is the best country in the world. Is it better than Afghanistan? Is it better than Brazil? Is it better than China? It doesn't have to be very good to be better than the sorry examples found elsewhere around the world. I use a higher standard of comparison. Compared to the fundamental principles of liberty, this country is just another police state. ☞

Old Timer's Lore

Overheard by Sam Aurelius Milam III

Premenstrual Syndrome — Why do they call it PMS? Because Mad Cow Disease was already taken.

Perfect Legs — Feet at one end, pussy at the other. ♂

Don't get mad at me. I didn't make 'em up. I just heard 'em somewhere. Of course, I did think that they were funny enough to put them in the newsletter. So sue me. — editor

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Nation in Distress

Just because you do not take an interest
in politics doesn't mean politics won't
take an interest in you!

—Pericles (430 B.C.)

Acknowledgments

My thanks to the following: SantaClara Bob;
Lady Jan the Voluptuous; my mother; and
Dewey and Betty. —editor

Court Quotes

From *Humor in the Court* and *More Humor in the Court*,
by Mary Louise Gilman, editor of the *National Shorthand Re-*
porter. Forwarded by Don G.

Q: Did you blow your horn or anything?

A: After the accident?

Q: Before the accident.

A: Sure, I played for 10 years. I even went to
school for it. ∞

Funny One-Liner

Original Source Unknown. Forwarded by Don G.

Two silkworms who were in a race ended up
in a tie. ∞

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Random Act of Stupidity

Original Source Unknown. Forwarded by Don G.

I recently saw a distraught young lady weep-
ing beside her car.

“Do you need some help?” I asked.

She replied, “I knew I should have replaced
the battery to this remote door unlocker. Now I
can't get into my car. Do you think they (point-
ing to a distant convenient store) would have a
battery to fit this?”

“Hmmm, I dunno. Do you have an alarm
too?” I asked.

“No, just this remote thingy,” she answered,
handing it and the car keys to me.

As I took the key and manually unlocked the
door, I replied, “Why don't you drive over there
and check about the batteries. It's a long
walk.” ∞

Submissions — I solicit letters, articles, and cartoons
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—Sam Aurelius Milam III, editor

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