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NO WHERE (WO)MAN

by Yehudi Simon & Kenneth Leigh

“Who’s Yehudi?”

“Yehudi?” I can remember my grandfather saying this whenever someone would ask, “Who did that?”

From “World Wide Words” on a page created September 21, 2002, I have excerpted the following:

The most common story ties it with the “Pepsodent” sponsored Bob Hope Radio Show on NBC which started in 1938. There was a running gag on the show, a catchphrase of supporting player Jerry Colonna, who would regularly ask, “Who’s Yehudi?”

The story goes that Yehudi Menuhin was to guest star on the show, but that Colonna didn’t know who he was, and went around asking the cast. This is supposed to have led to the running gag of his trying to identify Yehudi.

Part of the popularity of “Where’s Yehudi?” may have its roots in a song by Hughes Mearns in 1939, called “The Little Man Who Wasn’t There” just when the Colonna catchphrase was becoming well known:

As I was walking up the stair
I met a man who wasn’t there.
He wasn’t there again today.
I wish, I wish he’d stay away.

“Yehudi” was a common response in my family circle, one I still use today. In many ways, it’s reminiscent of “Kilroy was here!,” the drawing that was so popular during the Second World War. Maybe you recall what it looked like, a circle above a straight line, two

small circles for eyes, a large arc below the line for a nose and four little arcs above the line on either side of the head for fingers. The total was supposed to represent someone looking over a fence.

It too was a synonym for “the little man who wasn’t there.”

What Went Before

I was a bastard child, an only child, the product of a one night stand many years ago. I was brought up in a household dominated by females (my Mother, her lesbian lover, her lover’s daughter and Mother’s youngest sister), and I guess that’s what made me somewhat like I am today, although to be truthful, I don’t remember being as feminine then as I am now.

As a child growing up with a group of women, I wore girls’ clothes exclusively (Mother’s lover would have it no other way!), and the nuns at parochial school didn’t mind if one of their little students wore a girl’s uniform to school, and since I was quite small and frail as a small child, I was usually the teacher’s pet who could do no wrong, especially since I was an ass-kisser par excellence who never got “her” clothes dirty nor ever sassed a nun!

I was a straight A student in high school, graduating as valedictorian. A few days after my graduation, I laid my dresses aside and reported to The United States Military Academy for a four-year tour. For those of you who do not know what that is, does West Point jog your memory?

I was just a shade over seventeen when I entered West Point and a shade over twenty-one when I graduated as a second lieutenant of infantry. My first assignment was to the fiasco in Korea where I soon learned that a second loogie knows nothing, no matter that he has four years of schooling in military tactics behind him. Fortunately for me, I had a grizzled master sergeant who was a combat veteran from World War II who took pity on

me and taught me the ropes. I must have been a quick study because I survived without any more than two flesh wounds.

Back in the Z.I. (for those of you who hate acronyms, Z.I. means Zone of the Interior)(the States), I met a girl (sister of a fellow officer) and we were soon married. She wasn't too happy about me staying in The Service, but she could do little about it. Her family was all Army and I was just continuing the tradition. Besides, I was Regular Army too, a West Pointer, a lifer!

Within three years, we were the parents of two little ones, a boy (born first) and a girl born two years later. About that time I was posted to duty in Germany and my wife decided six months later that she wanted to go back home. She missed her Mommy!

It was while I was in Germany that I discovered certain fetishes and I quickly became fascinated with some of them.

I was still on the outside looking in, so to speak, because all I did was watch and not once took part in any of the goings on. I think deep down I still remembered being a girl growing up. Still, I never missed a chance to attend a happening...

Back to the States (Z.I.) and a tour in Georgia where I learned how to jump out of a perfectly good airplane and land without breaking my neck. I did get two or three sprained ankles out of the deal, but the wings looked good on my dress uniforms!

Then it was off to Japan for three years where I learned about Kabuki, the Japanese art of dance improvisation and female impersonation. I became a regular at several "clubs" where, once again, I was an observer and not a participant. I never thought about dressing myself!

Some of those boys were better looking women than many women I have known!

Along about that time, we (The Army) became "observers" in Viet Nam and I was one of the first "volunteers" to go. I say "volunteer," but the truth was, I wanted to go back to the Z.I. (States) and this was the quickest way to gain my ends.

I got to go back to the States (Z.I.) alright, I had made the mistake of getting "noticed" by the Big Brass Hats, and when a one, two, three or four star says "Jump," you leap up and ask, "How high, Sir?" Anyway, I was posted to The Pentagon where I was a glorified errand boy. The enlisted personnel did all the work. All the officers did was sign what the enlisted had typed up and placed before them.

Glorified pencil pushers, for the most part, that's what we were. Oh, not everyone was a leech. Some did actual work! I was not one of them.

You see, basically, I am a very lazy person. I always look for the easy way to do something so I won't have to do it over.

After about the fourth cup of coffee that I had to get for my sergeant (after all, she was doing all the work and didn't have time to go herself!), I "liberated" (stole) a coffee urn from the B.O.Q. (Bachelor Officer Quarters)(again, for those of you who do not like, etc., etc.) and that was the last cup I had to go looking for. Buying the coffee for the urn was a cheap price to pay when it saved me miles of walking every year!

Anyway, I was at The Pentagon for four years. It wasn't all a waste. I got promoted and became what I most hated, a Big Brass Hat myself with eagles on my shoulders. Had I agreed to stay past twenty, I would have earned at least one star and possibly two or three.

But, I was getting bad vibes from my wife along about then. She had refused point blank to accompany me to Japan and subsequently to D.C. (The Pentagon)(for those of you, etc., etc.).

She had purchased a home and had a decent job as a dental hygienist that she did not want to abandon at such a late date. She did not wish to disrupt the life she had forged without me, and made no bones about it.

Nor did she want our two kids to switch schools when they were so close to graduation and then have to switch back a few years later when I retired. I really couldn't blame her, and besides, I liked not having the responsibility of keeping up a house with its leaf raking, lawn mowing, painting, repairing and all the rest of those things that home-owners are faced with on a daily basis!

So, I stayed in Washington, declined extending my tour and was sent back to S.E.A. (South East Asia - Viet Nam)(for all of you who, etc., etc.) for my last year on active duty. Now, just because I was a big bird and lazy to boot, doesn't mean that I never got my hands dirty, because if you think that, you don't know me at all!

This time around, I was out in the field and I saw plenty of action, believe you me! There's nothing like someone shooting at you and trying to kill you to teach you to keep your head down! I should have learned that in Korea, and I did (had), but by the time my second Nam tour rolled around, I had forgotten much of what I had learned.

Anyway, I got shot. In the right shoulder.

Twice!

I almost lost the arm.

It took me over two years of intensive therapy to regain full usage, but by then, I was well past the twenty year mark and, according to the Army doctors, unfit for world-wide duty, so I took disability retirement.

Back with my wife, I discovered that she had an incurable cancer with less than six months to live. This was not good news. I had been looking forward to spending quality time with her to rebuild what we had had in the beginning.

It was not to be.

She cashed in her chips three weeks and two days after I got back.

So, there I was, a widower, a house that was paid for, a car that was paid for, and a house full of furnishings that were all paid for, and all I was stuck with all those damn responsibilities that went with ownership.

When the kids came home for her funeral, I offered them anything in the house, including the house, that they wanted, My son was in the USN (United States Navy)(again, for those of you who etc., etc.), having graduated from the Naval Academy at Annapolis and then been assigned to San Diego where he was in training as a submarine officer. He took a few small things, but not enough to stick in your eye! My daughter who had married a

USAF Academy graduate (United States Air Force)(again for those of you who, etc., etc.) officer and was then living in southern California, said that she would have liked the house, but couldn't, "right now."

So, I sold the damn thing. The taxes on the sale about killed me!

About that time, I answered the damn phone (it's no wonder I hate phones!) and it was my former boss, General Whittaker (only two stars), telling me that since I was "free" of all domestic encumbrances, I was being recalled to active duty as a special diplomatic courier. I protested, all to no avail. The day I sold the house and car and everything else, I flew back to Dulles International and reported in at Foggy Bottom where my former boss now worked for the State Department.

"OK, tell me, why me?" I asked. "There must be a thousand other guys just as qualified as me, even more so!"

"Yes, there probably are," he admitted. "But you see, I know you and I know that you can get a job done without mucking it up too bad."

Damn! That's what you get for being lazy and doing things the easy way! You get a reputation and it follows you forever!

So, I became a diplomatic courier, which means, among other things, that you never have to bother with customs or searches of your luggage, nor any of the other hassles other people do as a matter of course..

It wasn't a bad job. In fact, it had a lot going for it! I got to fly all over the world on Sam's dime and I met a lot of interesting people I would never have met otherwise. I got to stay in a lot of ritzy hotels that I could never afford on my own. And now that I was an eligible bachelor again, the women took to me like flies on a turd, they were all over me!

Now besides being lazy, I am a somewhat shy and reticent person. It usually takes me a while to warm up to others, and as a result, I have very few real friends.

Women who throw themselves at me scare the crap right out of me!

I soon learned to pick and choose.

And I rediscovered TV (TransVestism)(again for all you, etc., etc.) one night when my date revealed a teensy penis hidden in "her" panties. All at once, it hit me right between my myopic eyes.

I wanted to learn the art of female impersonation!

No, I wanted to be as feminine a female as I could be!

That is, without losing a certain part of my anatomy!

Back at Foggy Bottom, I begged off, telling the general that I was over-tired and stressed out after my late wife's funeral and my wounds from The Nam. So, I was put on a part-time courier basis where I only had to go on a mission twice a month instead of three times a week as I had been doing. That suited me because I had decided I wanted to go back to University and get a PhD in American History, then teach. But whether at high school level or college (university) level, or nothing at all, I hadn't decided.

From the day I quit Foggy Bottom (almost) I became a part-time female impersonator, dressing as often as possible!

For a time, I was an avid user of hotel and motel rooms where I could indulge my “new” hobby with a minimum of fuss, bother and discovery. My feminine wardrobe soon grew to ridiculous proportions. In fact, I now owned at least ten times more female clothes than I ever had male, and I had had at least twenty dress uniforms when I was still an Army officer! My “collection” now filled four huge suitcases and I would soon need a fifth!

I was accepted at college for their PhD candidates program. I had enrolled, put my feminine self into storage until such time as I was once more “independent,” found a place to live, and discovered the situation that is the basis for all of this, and...

And that’s how I wound up where I am for the telling of this story.

Chapter I

“And, that’s about it, Mr. Simon,” Mrs. Slater concluded. “If the conditions I have just outlined are acceptable, we have a deal.”

I had come about renting the vacant studio apartment in the reconverted gambrel roofed cow barn and during the course of our negotiations, had discovered that she was going on a tour of Europe, the near East and Africa on November first and would be gone until March of the following year except for several days at the end of December between the end of the first European trip and the beginning of the second, which included Athens and Cairo, Egypt, starting on January tenth.

When she returned in March, she and her younger



sister Laraine (my present landlady) were then taking a trip to Arizona to visit their older brother. They planned on returning sometime in late in April or early May. Indeed, it had been Laraine who had recommended the loft studio in the first place where I could have more room for visitors and much needed privacy.

Rooms and apartments were at a premium because of the college and a series of fires in some downtown buildings that had left many people homeless. These displaced persons had snapped up every available space for themselves. So, I had been forced to sacrifice privacy for immediacy and had settled for a college sponsored room in a private home.

Anyway, the studio was nice, but Ruth's counter offer was better by far! Since I would be needing a place to live until mid-May, and her house would be vacant anyway, she had suggested that I house-sit for her. Not only would I have complete usage and run of the place (she would pay all utilities plus basic phone charges - I would have to pay any incurred long distance phone charges), but she would pay me for my house-sitting services - \$1500.00 for the ten month period.

I had protested that it was much too much, but she had explained further that it would cost her a hundred dollars a week for a full-time house-watching service from The City just to check on the house once a day. On the other hand, I'd be there every single day and every night!

I had no intention of staying here that regularly.

You see, this kinky girl that I had met at a college seminar some months ago had invited me to stay over at Thanksgiving. And since she had her own apartment and it had only one bedroom, I was anticipating something more than a decent Thanksgiving dinner!

"Well, Ma'am," I had replied, weighing my words carefully, "I am NOT a celibate person by any means and I fully intend to entertain some rather charming young ladies who may or may not spend the night with me. So, as attractive as your offer might be, I'm afraid I shall have to pass it up for the greater freedom of my own place..." 'If I can find one!' I thought.

"Bosh!" she exclaimed. "Laraine told me about Miss Kline and Ms Brewer... no, the house would be infinitely more suitable since I do have the king-size water bed and the-ater-screen teevee..."

"But, that's your bedroom!" I exclaimed. "I would never dare to presume..."

"And why not? I shall be in Europe and the water bed is great sleeping, among other things," she added, laughing.

"You are absolutely sure you wouldn't care?" I was amazed,

"Use anything in the house - that's what it's for."

I grinned and and patted the delicate hand lying atop the counter. "Anything?" I teased insinuatingly.

She colored. "Yes, if the price is right... that too..." she laughed throatily. "Just because I'm almost sixty-eight and a widow, doesn't mean that I've forgotten how, nor that I'm dead!"