

Mad Shoe Tours

(A Jim Voyage)

Mustard and dastardly, the cactus blooms this morning. Can the woodpecker dip its wick in cellophane? Must canopies be opened wide in order for carpet orders to be fulfilled?

These questions entered the warped and woolied mind of Sylvan Woods on his first day of Balkan psychotherapy. He lay, prone and prostrate, high in the Stredna Gora mountains of Bulgaria, on the hill above Koprivshtitsa, as Molly MacQuire, queen of the asymptotes, sat at his side spooning great globs of Balkan psychotherapy into his pus-filled ear. "Can't you see a turnip is not a tulip?" she said, dropping his candle lit pants. "I suggest you bottle your anger, dump it in the garbage, then prepare yourself a garbage lunch; ingest the enzymes within your stomach, and letting the fruit percolate throughout your intestines, watering its way out your beautiful behind, then the anger will whitewash your brain, making you a better person. There is no need to take it out directly on your tourists. An indirect approach is needed. Give up the idea of crashing the bus or letting it drive off the mountain cliff without you. Killing others will never free you from the fetters of self-denigration."

She remained at Sylvan's side as the tree-covered panorama of Balkan mountains assailed his stalwart brain. Little Balkan children ran in front of him shouting, "I am a little Bulgarian! I speak Bulgarian better than ." Their taunting "Ha, ha, ha, ha!" sang out in 7/8 ruchenitza rhythm.

"It has been a long road to get here," our hero confessed. "I've still got a long way to go." He growled a deep, masculine growl, grunted in true male form, gripped his manly organ, and jumped onto a mental tulip image floating by. "How can I win the battle to bring tourists to Bulgaria, or any place else for that matter, as long as evil Slaven Papapowitz still exists? How can I defeat that slimy dirty, disgusting devil

incarnate?"

Molly, trained in stroke analysis, pressed his daffodil. In a breathless voice she whispered. "Tell me about it."

Sylvan's tongue wagged. "Cockmutter!" he exclaimed. "I cannot tolerate that Russian bore! He's an animal – and totally boaring!"

Who was Sylvan talking about? None, more or less, than the infamous head corporate CEO of the Dumpy, Blasphemous, and Bombershnitz Tour Company, DBB Tours – bald and bearded, Slaven Papapowitz!

Slaven, whose parents, after hearing he would give up the prestige of his doctor's degree and start a tour company, buried themselves under the Hudson River. From their posthumous perch on a subaqueous rock just north of Tarrytown, they could watch their son destroy all their hopes. Who was this sterling bent-brain Slaven, whose stem lineage descended from Central Asian horse-Tartar apes, quarter-Mongolian father types who raided medieval China to steal Ghengis Khan's ostrich feathers, and whose Shamanistic mother, Popobackgammon, had once reputedly shouted from the rooftop of her yurt, "A bane on both your houses?"

"And what of Linda? Why should I bring such a cesspool into my mind? it?"

Sylvan leaned his head inward, forward, backwards, and sideways before it came to rest on the broad lap of his female psychobabblist. Her thighs brought a short respite from the pounding in his brain. The sun shone high in the Koprivshitsa sky; the rain had ended, and all the worms had come out to smile.

Molly bent forward, placed her sensual lips on the inner bella-bellum of Sylvan's right ear, adjusted her fallopian tubes, and said, "It is probably best to give up thinking about your audience. Instead, go straight to God."

Sylvan sat up fast. His eyes flashed right and left. He searched the sky for a morning star. "Why would I do that?"

"That is for you to find out. I am, after all, only a flash image of the inner you. I

cannot say who you are, where you are going, or why. My job description is simply to reflect. However, I will throw in one personal opinion or two – after all, you aren't paying full fee for this therapy – “

“There you go again, Molly, worrying about money. By now you should be able to reach beyond your materialistic concerns and get with the spiritual program. You graduated Shaman School of Ural-Altaic Therapy over four years ago.”

“Get off my case, Sylvan,” Molly hissed. “Just look at the mountains and shut up.”

Sylvan slipped back into his own mind, where he saw the stars of former lives. He perceived the sun setting in the universe, changed mental directions, and instead focused on the dawn and creation of this new day.

“Perhaps you're right. Giving up thoughts of pleasing the audience can help me. And going straight to God is also a good idea, if I could only find Him. Anyway, the search would certainly get my mind off that manipulating, scheming slob and worm incarnate Slaven Papapowitz. He haunts my waking and sleeping hours. How can I get him out of my mind?”

A good question indeed. Slaven's propellers had been cutting into Sylvan for years, upending his liver and creating warts on his pancreas. It had been the subject of countless doctor's visits: analysts, optometrists, osteometrists, psychometrists, bibliologists, bacteriologists, arthropologists, anthracites, peepeesites, virginophiles, and proctologists had taken ringside seats to observe this psychic phenomenon.

Sylvan felt a cold coming on. The very thought of Slaven's competitive slobbering caused noxious viruses to raise their ugly heads and Sylvan's lungs to fill with puck.

Imagination had created his cold; imagination could cure it. He needed a blast of hot fresh air spiking its way straight down into the cellar of his being, ripping the cold from his loins and lungs, and tossing it, full blown with its cauliflower head of steam, straight in the Galapagos Bay, just behind the Mayflower poll besides his Pilgrims

Progress.

Now theres was a book he hankered to read! And he had the Bulgarian translation. Why not start soon?

Just before the final flash-flood of cold and sniffles vanished, Sylvan popped a rectitude pill. Fixed atti-tudes and all kinds of other tudes jumping back and forth, flew in all directions before creating the perfect setting for tourism.

“Indeed,” said Sylvan, “I may have no direction, but I care not. My job is to travel directionless as an inspiration to others. Who cares about the known, anyway? My path is to strike the boulders in dark passages of twisting gut-rot subterranean illumination. Now that’s a cause!

“Who can raise the dance bar so high? Moses himself? Well, I didn’t see him on this last Bulgarian trip unless, of course, he was that little man in pajamas caast irrying his squeegee board down the hill.

Who can cook a goose standing up? Linda, no doubt. There is a character I’ll not stand next to for a year. I hate her guts. She betrayed me with tomato soup. Hate, hate, hate!

Monday, October 16, 2000

After the morning of intellectual heroism, can Syvlan return to the low road again? Never, never, never! His inner realmpot boiled; tempests swirled in his teapot of dome affairs, sipulating and whimpolating in potato form. An FBI investigation of intestinal viruses was taking place.

His dipstick second string psychoanalyst, Margaret Meadstick, has no objections. What, two psychoanalysts! Are you crazy, man? Isn’t one enough?

Sylvan sat down in his armchair. He faced his mind directly. “Absolutely not,” he answered looking straight into himself. “I am not monolithic. I stoop not to the mere acuiescence and acceptance of having only one miserable mind. Who ever heard

of such a silliness. No, indeed, I have many minds. Each needs its own analyst. So far I have discovered only two. Margaret lives in Connecticut. Her therapy style is more animal and clinically deprived than that of Molly. Margaret lives in a can just south of Milford. But more about her later.

Tuesday, October 17, 2000

Why did Hadrian build his wall between England and Scotland? Was it really to avoid psychoanalysis? Blocking can be such a problem. Sylvan knew this intimately and especially during his third psychiatric visit with the renown Dr. John Doolittle Dudley Pewterfine Tuliphead Turniptwisting Dunderbuss von Tweederhoffer und One Nile Virus. Dr. John, known to his colleagues in the professional community as Dr. DDPTTDVTUONV, had received his University of Manfred doctoral degree on the Alsace-Lorraine border town of Lobotomy-on-Rhein.

Wednesday, October 18, 2000

Well versed as a neophyte, John of Scotchdom signified his role as harbinger of new mode. He strode across the plains of Seville as a true civilian.

What of civil rights? And Sevillian rights? Was not every Sevillian a private civilian? Didn't they serve in the army, fighting wars of attrition with microscopic enemies, using miniature and distant Giraldo towers as weapons of lancing power? What other rights must they have?

These questions Sylvan asked as he lay upon his wasp bed. Petulant fever raged. This red virus, the bane of Black Plague tourism, had struck him dumb in the kitskkes. What could he do? Madmen Spaniards! How did Spain get in his brain? Where was Bulgaria? How did the Cyrillic alphabet even fit into a Latin linguistic Spanish mode? Did Don Quixote ever ride a horse at midnight?

Thursday, October 19, 2000

“No. no!” Sylvan screamed. “Too much dillerwhats in the coffee!”

Words poured through his fingers. He lifted the computer keyboard from his back pocket, grabbed the first sewer can he could find on the Plovdiv street, and started writing like mad. He had no direction whatsoever. Warm-ups filled the hour. He wanted to get back on track even though he had no idea which track to get on. But any unknown track would be good enough. Trackless lands are exciting especially if you find a hot dog stand along the way. Worst is to be stuck on old trails, walking in footsteps already stepped upon. Looking at the footprints beneath, you find only your own! You have walked this road before. All is known, boring, dull, and lifeless. You can't get off yesterday's track. How do you step out of quicksand when it is you have created it yourself?

Sylvan kept writing. He let the words pour. It didn't matter which direction they went, what they said, whether they made sense or not. Who cares about comprehensibility? The only important thing was to arrive at the source, the fount of all creation. Once you stood in that whirlwind, sun and heat could scar you no longer. The permanent white center, blowing you into timelessness, scattering your bones helter skelter, creating torrents of floating steel girders and cranes flying unabashed, banishing coffins, whitewashing the backside hides of former lives. At last a goal in sight! Reach the present in a flash.

Not yet, not yet. . . but closer, indeed.

Saturday, October 21, 2000

Sylvan thought about duty. Did he have a duty to write the journal of his life even if and when he had absolutely no interest in doing so?

Hmm, what a question. Knowing that the power inherent is a question is much greater than the flaccid dumpware located in its answer, he continued his pursuit: What was duty? Did he have one? And if he did, could, should, must he follow it? Anyone trained in the art of psychoanalysis knew that words like “should” and “must” belong

in the dung heap. No true free person follows the routes of should and must. No, they are free to chose their destiny; blithe spirits in the wind, they continue to pollute the airwaves with their fervent cries of freedom and the herculean descent into the land of "Don't Bug Me."

And yet, Sylvan was driven by an unknown force. He felt he had to write, had to produce, create, bumble and tumble across the desert plains of miracle creation. What was this calling? Did a calling reveal itself as a duty in disguise? Calling is a good word; duty is a bad word, and this according to his master mistress Madre, the impeccably groomed Madre Gansa of the Pestilential Bible written during the Bubonic Plague periods of the Ostrogothic third century. Ah, that was a time. Bishop Weisenthal (?) had just translated the bible into Gothic, and, even though, to his knowledge, no bubonic plague existed, why not throw it in just for fun. And where were these lose ends coming from? No doubt, the diluted undersection of his brain. Deep down, hidden within these hind quarters, Sylvan knew that was why he had to write. He had to explore the dark pus of his underbelly. That was the duty brought to light.

So, there was a duty beyond the Ostrogoths, and one even beyond the Visigoths whose medieval fifth-century bumbblings brought them to Spain. Let the Vandal attack and then create Andalusia. Who cares, anyway? The important thing was to eliminate wastes from the body by performing the ablutions, washing yourself in the waters of words, letting the fires leaping from the back seat burn off the orange peels of lassitude and, in the polluting fire, create exhausts to fill the world.

The important thing was to babble on. No wonder the pillars of Babble On in the land of Babylonia rose so high above the desert.