

SUNDAY BUST

I was ready for an adventure, we had talked about it a lot, Bob and I, up on the mountain, and then I found myself in the middle of one of the greatest adventures of all time, getting busted for pot. I almost chose Route 95, then switched to Highway 1 it was quicker ha ha. Mr. Robert (Bob) Tippet gave me one look and I sensed something was up my ears got hot and my voice was barely audible. He asked me to shut off the motor he wanted to have a look around and he went right into my pack to find the green tin of dope I could not believe my eyes, time slowed, it was a ritual I was observing. He fingered every item, commenting on its function: "Oh yes, this is the pipe for hashish, eh? What's this? A nice sized hunk of hash? What's this? Do you smoke it? Marijuana, you say?" All very casual, friendly, paternal, and inexorable. All with a slightly kinky smile, as though he were suppressing glee and exuberance.

Mr. Tippet is a dried-up wizened bureaucrat with spectacles and a long pointed nose. He requested that his assistant search the rest of the car and informed me that I was under arrest and told me my rights. He did this in an offhand manner, as though he had forgotten that part of the ritual. I thought of the casual discussion Bob and I had had about traveling through customs--he mentioned that he had been asked how much money he was carrying, but he had never been searched. Of course, he did not have homemade seat-covers and rugs on the floor of his VW.

Mr. Tippet took me into the customs building, a round, plaster, plastic, orange-curtained, royal blue paneled room, where I sat, smoking, listening to him and his assistant inspect in detail the contents of the tin and my purse and my pack. Tippet spent a lot of time inspecting my bag full of vitamins and wrote down, at my dictation, that they were C, B, E, multiple vitamin and mineral, and calcium. He held the B, it looked suspicious, and later chopped it in half to make sure it was legitimate. He smelled every one. He opened a capsule of vitamin C and said, "Now tell me this, [REDACTED] is this really vitamin C or is it something else?"

I told him vitamin C, one gram, and after a discussion with the assistant about what illegal drug I might have put in the C capsules, he decided that it was apparently, indeed, vitamin C. He located the bottles of patchouli oil, he could not have been happier, his contempt and classification of me as a hippie was completed by the possession of patchouli, he said, "Oh yes, patchouli, I guess you all use that."

I said, "I use it occasionally, I like bitter smells."

He said, "I should hope you only use it occasionally, strong stuff, I guess you use it for something else, too?" Implying, I suppose, that either you could get high off it or that it was a kind of hippie identifier. He did give me a cup of coffee and I sat there. The assistant offered me the information that I would be spending the night in Creston, and brought to trial Monday. A night in jail, an adventure at that.

The assistant and Mr. Tippet had a long talk about the probable weight of the marijuana, they were convinced it was a couple of ounces at least, were very surprised and disappointed when the scale read less than an ounce. They discussed the possibility of a broken scale. Another item Tippet was fascinated with was the pipe cleaner. He brought it over to me and entered into a discussion of the uses of each part: "This one is for tamping it down, eh?"

I ignored him, I had already told him I'd never used it, but he kept wildly fantasizing. He did concede, "Yes, it does look new." The baggie filled with seeds was yet another object which especially titillated him. I told him I never used them, eventually threw them away, but of course he didn't buy that, said only "But they do grow, someone could grow them."

Mr. Tippet had missed the mescaline in the matchbox, I was only responding to his questions and so did not mention it. At one point he came over and leered: "We may or may not send for a matron to search you COMPLETELY, depending on whether we feel you are concealing any more drugs, so why don't you tell me if you have any more?" I had already given him the two and a half joints in my purse, so then I told him about the mescaline. Later, as he added that to the report, he asked me to spell mescaline for him, at first I thought he had said masculine but then I realized what he meant. He was either slightly deaf or liked to hear me repeat myself and so the spelling of mescaline was prolonged.

At all points in his interrogation he asked editorially for details: who was I visiting, where was I planning to stay in British Columbia, what was Max's ~~relation~~ relation to me, who was my friend in Vancouver. At that last question I stated that I did not feel who was my friend in Vancouver was relevant to my case. He agreed, pouting in a way, and said it was on the form, he had to ask. He seemed very disappointed that I would not tell all. His eyebrows raised when he found out I had a Master of Arts in Music and was a teacher at the university level in California.

At this point, Mr. Good, the immigration official from Kingsgate, appeared. He small-talked with Mr. Tippet in a way which confirmed my analysis of Tippet, that he was a horribly stupid, slow, inept, very minor official, totally committed to his paperwork, who was a rabidly patriotic Canadian citizen, who needed to be humored on an infantile level, complimented for the correct way he had filled out the forms, and joked with about the special pay he would receive for the higher ranking duties he had fulfilled in arresting me.

Another thing, as Tippet left me to wait for the interview with Good, he offered me a book to pass the time -- Night of the Grizzlies by Jack Olson. I just read it yesterday, at Bob's eager suggestion. It is about adventure and horror, terror and inexorability. Very apt. I told Tippet that it was horrifying and terrorizing to read it; he stopped suddenly from walking away to blurt: "But it's good," as though his literary taste had been attacked, as though horror and terror were what he liked an awful lot. The Closet Queen and Clark

Kent oh my God.

As I sat looking at Olson's book, remembering the descriptions of grizzly eating young girl, I was trying to run an estimate on Mr. Good. He was clearly intelligent, and more than a little condescending to Mr. Tippet without Tippet being aware of this; and so I felt a certain degree of relief. The worst -- dealing with Tippet -- was over.

Mr. Good interviewed me, to determine if Tippet's recommendation for deportation should be effected. It was. I am arrested for moral tergitude and am likely to use, sell, distribute, or grow illegal drugs, and therefore must live the next two years free from crime before I can request permission from the Minister to enter Canada as a visitor. So it goes. (Ah loves ya Kurt Vonnegut, yer pullin me through this one.)

When Good was finished he took me out to the Royal Canadian Policeman who was waiting to transport me to the Creston jail. I got my toothbrush and Thomas Mann from the car; said car would wait for me at the customs building in Rykerts, and I sat beside the cop in the front seat of the patrol car; no handcuffs. This cop was about 35, cute, a wee bit pudgy, and tough. I didn't say anything, I was enjoying the 70 mph ride I was getting, thinking about how different it would be to be driving my own car, The White Goose, into British Columbia. He started a casual conversation about my home and my work, which I didn't mind, but when he asked me how much I used the stuff I told him I'd rather not discuss it. He replied, almost offended, that my

answers would not be used as evidence, he was just curious. He discussed the fascinating point that Americans of highly respected professions keep getting busted for pot, it seems only degenerates smoke grass in Canada, he couldn't quite figure it out. I told him about the class-cutting usage of marijuana, and of the fact that it is not a crime to smoke it in Ann Arbor, Michigan, also that many states have made possession a misdemeanor and some cities merely levy a small fine with no arrest. He was surprised, but said, "Well, I don't have anything against the stuff, and I've never tried it, because as long as it's against the law I won't have anything to do with it." I said, "You've got a point there."

We pulled into the jail, a homey light brown wooden building, where I was introduced to Gert, the matron who would take charge of me. Obese, maternal, sweet, folksy Gert. All right, a woman helps. Together we identified the contents of my purse for the record. She missed my gum stimulator, I'll use it in the dark so they won't know I have it. It's probably a lethal weapon; perhaps I could commit suicide with it, who knows? Then she took me into a private room, explaining that a light frisk was necessary. She took the worn-out fuse for my car radio that was in the right pocket of my jeans, and left me the dirty kleenex in the left-hand pocket of my sweater.

The cop fingerprinted me, remarking that everyone assumed he got a kick holding on to women's hands; he denied this.

Then he and Gert and an unnamed attendant argued whether I have black or brown hair. The consensus was positively black, but when I insisted that my passport and driver's license said brown, and indeed if one looked at it in the light that it was brown, he grudgingly changed the record to brown. They discussed it further even after he changed it.

I tried calling Ma and Pa, but they weren't home, the operator kept trying every 20 minutes, so then I went to the bathroom with Gert, of course I couldn't crap, but I brushed my teeth and washed up. She asked me in there if I liked sweet corn, she was going to bring me my dinner soon.

Then I was led to my cell, shit-green just like the house on Dahlia Street in Solana Beach, they'll lock me in the bunk area later, now I have the free use of the entire space. I sat on the floor near the toilet leaning against the shower wall, just having finished the corn (very sweet indeed), the tomato, the canned peas and half a plum (they're sour). When I told Bob that the first thing I would eat was vegetables after a week of grains up in the look-out tower, I didn't quite see it this way. I left the slabs of baloney, the stale roll, and most of the potatoes. When the cop brought me the dinner he seemed surprised that I had made myself so comfortable on the floor, also I think he was interested that I was so busy writing, but I presume in some naiveté that my thoughts are still for my eyes only. Mitchell, Standes, Nixon, and me, cha cha cha.

I can hear their talk from my cell. The cop had to ask advice on how to spell marijuana. Ha ha.

Every time the phone rings my stomach drops. I dread talking to Ma I know she'll be OK but still to have to tell her and ask for still more money makes me sick. I am afraid of crying I have avoided that magnificently and DO NOT want to break down. It is ALL RIGHT I'm in the hands of the law (sign at the jailhouse office: IF YOU DON'T LIKE THE LAW, TRY ASKING A HIPPIY FOR HELP).

Gert, of course, in her maternal way, was disappointed that I didn't finish all her dinner, she was pleased that I liked the corn. Now I shall have a shower and read Mann and Mailer until Ma calls. Mann and Mailer offer me comfort. I feel high, and very warm, my blood must be circulating very well. I'd love to be able to smoke a joint, to pass away the hours high. Cha cha cha.

I found on my pants and sweater many golden hairs belonging to Bob which cheered me up in the warmest way: a connection.

After waiting three hours to talk to Ma, I decided to try Aunt Helen. She was cool, fine in fact; the only editorial comments made were "When will you kids ever learn?" and "Are ya nervous?" She said she would find Ma and have her call me. I slept from midnight to 3 am, then woke up to realize that a cop had come in and they had not wakened me. Ma had called while I was half asleep, when the cop was out, and so I could not talk to her, but I could hear half the conversation, and I could feel her ovarian power sending me hope and humor. So at 3 am I called her and we had a great talk. She had absolutely



no editorializing to offer, this was an adventure which touched her, involved her, she was once again in the vibrant position of aiding her child and so she was filled with juice wanted to know all the details, I could see her smiling, relishing, I love her for that. She did mention that Pa was not taking it too well, which means he's in a fury of frustration at being so far away from Daughter-in-Trouble and also appalled that his seed now has a criminal record. Oh Pa.

I could sense Ma's involvement with the entire process leading to my release; bitching that Canadian banks open at 10 am, which means that she can do nothing until noon Chicago time. An entire morning to wait to do the job; champing at the bit. She told me how Aunt Helen had called them at the bridge party, how all their friends were insatiably curious about what was so urgent, about how she had borrowed \$500 cash from Jonah in the hopes that she could wire it to Creston quickly but that Western Union is on strike, isn't that a pistol? She asked me if I were in shock and I replied well it is quite an adventure.

\*\*\*\*\*

It is 10 am. Monday. I have been up since 6:30, finishing Mailer's Cannibals and Christians, feeling that the dialogue in search of definitions for soul, spirit and form to be very appropos. Feeling the discussion of the coming of the plague to be very real. Sitting in the cell feeling the plague invade my spirit. I finish the book, eat a breakfast of Wheaties with virtually no sugar, stale toast and coffee. I fall asleep

for a while, then wake up filled with dread. The court does open at 9:30 am, but there are four cases ahead of me. Perhaps my case will not be heard till afternoon how can I endure the wait. I am also very paranoid about the mescaline. The customs official, Tippet, noted the possession of mescaline and hashish, but here at the Creston jail the talk has been about marijuana only. An officer did come in with my vitamins, and seemed to believe my identification, but I was scared. The talk of a \$300 to \$600 fine for possession of marijuana was one thing, but I did not know the status of mescaline or hash in Canadian law; perhaps I was a felon after all. I thought possibly that Tippet had left out the other drugs in his report, confiscating them for his own surreptitious experimentation, in which case the page in this diary which speaks of the mescaline was dangerous to me. I tore it out of the notebook and concealed it in my kleenex container. I thought of wrapping it in the Kleenex plastic wrapper and inserting it up my vagina, but figured that they would miss the plastic and search me again.

So it was 10 am, I asked for my toothbrush, toothpaste, and comb. There was a new cop on duty -- Officer Crassan -- he was brusque and demeaning. Finally when I asked him when he thought I would be brought to trial then he warmed up a little. His attitude was very different from the cops of the previous evening: they had had a sense of humor and humanity about them. This one made me cry.

I laid down to wait for my trial; reading was out, I was not able to plunge into *The Magic Mountain* an hour after being so moved by Mailer and also I was too scared to read. To my surprise, ten minutes later a dark-haired cop who had a lot of sympathy in his eyes took me into the courtroom. I had to stand in the witness box, my legs were shaking violently I was near tears my eyes were low. The judge was late 50-ish, Waspish, sternish, and officious. The cop read Tippet's report, which stated that after smelling marijuana in my car he had made a search and located one ounce of marijuana (cannabis), one and a half grams of a dark brown substance believed to be hashish, and two aluminum foil containers holding what was believed to be mescaline. Also found were two hash pipes, five packages of cigarette papers, a pipe cleaner and two roach clips. (Personally, I think that he only had a psychic smell--I had smoked half a pack of Kent's since the last half a joint south of the border.) The report further stated that I had been very cooperative in informing the officials of the existence and identity of the mescaline.

The judge sighed. He opened with a lament of "how a person with obviously some breeding blah blah blah." Then he allowed me to waive analysis of the marijuana, which would have kept me in jail for possibly a week. He asked me my birthdate, birthplace, and occupation. When I told him I had taught music at the university level in California he shook his head. He asked me for how long I had smoked the stuff. When I said four years, occasionally, he said, "Young lady, I see you going downhill, you may not, but I see you going downhill." I lied,

it's been eight years. I figured if he heard eight years it was hopeless. I pled guilty and had nothing further to say. I had an impulse to speak [REDACTED] of the conflicting research done and the growing belief that marijuana was not addictive and did no harm, but I had no serious thought of speaking out. He would have gleaned more evidences of my intelligence and breeding and might have become incensed enough to raise the fine.

He said he could not comprehend how a person like myself, obviously well-educated, could fall into such a mire. Those were not his words exactly, I can't remember them, I was too scared. He reminded me that I was going to be deported from Canada and forbidden entry for two years, and then he fined me \$300. Really, with the mescaline and the hash I was prepared for \$800 or a thousand, I was so relieved then to be able to send \$200 back to Ma. Jesus, so that's when I cried, after the trial, back in the cell, waiting for the call from the bank.

\*\*\*\*\*

on the shit-green wall; dated 10 July 1973:

#### The Joint

The sun is shining blue  
 and so am I  
 A joint would make it fine  
 and oh so high  
 What is the question of this  
 and who and why  
 Hell, I guess we will hide  
 and stay high

The question is not in the smoking  
 But in people's values imposed  
without knowing

also:

KEEP YOUR HEAD -- AUG 73 -- ALL THEY WANT IS YOUR MONEY

\*\*\*\*\*

It's really cute: Officer Crassan (which is pronounced like it once was Croissant) is the pig who was so rude to me this morning. After a frustrating wait of five hours for my money, he escorted me to the National Bank of Canada, Creston, where his pregnant wife, Mrs. Crassan, was the teller who handed me my freedom money.

This particular wait, the wait for the money, is worth describing. There were waits within waits. I expected the money to arrive around noon. At ten minutes to 2, I asked Mr. Crassan if I could phone the bank in Seattle that was transferring the funds. He said, "Sure, you can make as many collect phone calls as you want -- do you mind waiting ten minutes?" DO YOU MIND, that killed me. After waiting 15 minutes I rapped on the door again and the kind, dark-haired officer let me out.

Yes the Seattle bank did get a call from Chicago this morning but no the money had not been transferred because the Chicago bank did not have a test code, which insures that the caller is indeed a bank manager. So the money was being wired. Western Union is on strike. So I called Ma and she said she would have her bank go through a bank that did have a test code and get things moving. She told me to pull myself together and sounded annoyed that I had intruded again on her. Not trusting this system to work in the two hours I had before the Creston banks

closed for the day, and not being able to conceive of another night in the cell, I called my friend's home in Vancouver, amazed her sister with bits of my tale, and was told she would transfer funds to Creston immediately. Each step of this process was interrupted by crying hysteria locked inside the cell.

Pretty soon a call came from the Creston bank--the Chicago money had arrived. So, a ride to the bank in the sun, in the outside. Now back to the cell. Crassan told me in the patrol car that I had to be deported through Kingsgate and then "Take a bus ha ha to Rykerts," where my car was waiting. I mentioned this to the dark-haired officer, who seemed surprised, asked me who told me this information and then told Crassan if I entered through Rykerts I could leave through Rykerts. Crassan muttered something about having to get an immigration official over there; he was a bully who was disappointed that he couldn't make life any more difficult for me. Now I wait, they said maybe a half hour, I could have been in Seattle hours ago were it not (again) for the petty bureaucrats. Bureaucracy, that machine of Christians who have no sentience. I wait I wait.

BATSHEVA PUNSKOVSKY

August 27, 1973  
Creston, B.C.

No portion of this may be used  
or copied without the author's  
permission.