

Thoughts From HEART

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2300 HRS:

PART IV FINDING MY PLACE

To be a MINORITY IS, AMONG MANY OTHER THINGS, TO LIVE AS A SORT OF CULTURAL VAMPIRE; FORCE ONE IS BY BAD LUCK AT BIRTH, TO SUBSIST ON THE POPULAR LIKEBLOOD OF A MAJORITY WHICH BOGARTS, IF ONLY BY SHEER FORCE OF NUMBERS THE AIRWAVES, BANDWIDTHS, MUSEUMS, AND PERFORMANCE HALLS. IT'S TO SEARCH ^{HUNGER} FOR YOUR GROUP'S FACE IN THE ZEITGEIST'S MIRROR AND RARELY FIND IT—THEME. WE AT THE MARGINS HUNGER FOR GLIMPSES OF OURSELVES IN THE ~~THE~~ CULTURAL VIEWFINDER, FOR PROOF THAT WE LEAVE FOOTPRINTS IN THE EARTH, FOOTPRINTS THAT WILL STILL BE VISIBLE IN MILLENNIA TO COME WHEN ARCHAEOLOGIST, EVEN EXTRATERRESTRIALS, COMB THROUGH AMERICA'S MYRIAD SCIENTIFIC CULTURAL AND ARTISTIC LAYERS TO FIGURE OUT WHO, WHAT, AND WHY THE HELL WE WERE HERE. HOW WE LONG TO SEE OUR FOOTPRINTS EMBEDDED IN AMBER AND ^{NOT} JUST IN THE SHIPPIES, MOMENTARY SANDS OF FADS LIKE NOVELTY RAP,

Barbershop movies, and gauche clothing lines. That search, subconscious thought it may be—and more necessary because of it—is not even primarily for the positive images that Blacks so justifiably demands to offset America's insatiable preference for encountering us via inner-city perp walks and welfare statistics. ^{"BENS"} Black and Jewish for no reason at all. We could not be simply the new neighbor in Cleveland Heights, Ohio—we had to be the new Black Jewish neighbor. — My mother could not, just be the new lawyer in the firm—but the "white Jewish woman who had Black children." It was a perp walk of a different kind. Not wanting her children to attend public school—we were enrolled in Catholic school, due to fact our father's side of the family were such. We were not just two children attending Catholic school—but two Black Jewish children attending "their" school—for we were not permitted to attend Hebrew school—my first encounter with Bens called a "Christ killer" and my last—after engaging those on the playground: ^{BENS} Black and Jewish for no reason at all. Cultural encounters they are called. Whenever Sammy Davis Jr. or Diana Ross was on TV in the 1960's, the streets of Black America were deserted, just as they were during America's landing on the moon, both paradigm

Shifting, Fish-out-of-water Events that changed American life as one knew it - changed even my white Jewish cousin after we finally met. Being Black and Jewish for no reason at all. My cousin and I talked honestly about race; it was part of the glue that bonded us. I loved her, in part, because she was not the kind of white Jew who saw race as the most significant aspect of our relationship or kinship if you will. We talked openly about my mother's, her aunt, interracial marriage to my father - which had caused her family to disown her - as well as us!!!! [Black and Jewish for no reason at all.] "The-UNBRIDGEABLE-GAP-we-called-it." But when we look to the TORAH, we find that Moses' marriage to "Zipporah", was a interracial-and-interfaith one, but yet he was God's messenger and so was Joseph who married a Egyptian woman. So we made a pact never to become strangers - we were family - and no matter what happens - we would always be in each other's lives. We called it, "FAMILY" Her - [redacted] - sister's were a little upset with her; but nevertheless she defended me, "No body has the choice of who their parents are" - THE TORAH speaks of many love stories, love comes in all colors - faith - and culture - love sees not color; we fall in love with whom we choose: HE'S FAMILY

AND I LOVE him AND ACCEPT him FOR HIM - HE'S OUR
COUSIN - OUR FIRST COUSIN - ACCEPT IT OR NOT, YOU OR
OUR FAMILY CAN'T CHANGE THE FACT - HE'S FAMILY AND
I'M GOING TO LOVE him AND TREAT him AS SUCH. AND
AS THE TORAH SAYS - "DO NOT OPPRESS THE STRANGER -
FOR YE ONCE WAS ALSO A STRANGER IN THE LAND OF
[REDACTED] EGYPT" - . ALL MY COUSINS WERE WOMEN
LIKE MY SISTERS - I WAS THE ONLY MALE CHILD - SO
I GROW UP AROUND WOMEN WHO BELIEVED THAT MEN HAD
RUINED THEIR LIVES. THEREFORE, IN ROMANCE, I HAVE
ALWAYS PROCEEDED WITH SUSPICION. IN FRIENDSHIPS,
I HAVE TAKEN RISKS, BEEN VULNERABLE, ASKED TO
KNOW AND BE KNOWN. AS A RESULT, IT HAS BEEN
IN FRIENDSHIP THAT I LEARNED THE PLEASURES AND
DANGERS OF INTIMACY: THE PLEASURES OF LOVING
OPENLY AND RECKLESSLY; THE DANGERS OF HAVING IT
END BEFORE YOU ARE READY. BUT MY COUSIN WAS SOMEWHAT
DIFFERENT. SHE HAD LEFTIST CONNECTIONS AND FEMINIST
POLITICS, BUT SHE WAS ALWAYS OR TRIED TO BE CIVIL
WHEN ENGAGED IN SUBJECTS. MY EXPERIENCE WITH
RELATIONSHIPS HAS TAUGHT ME TWO THINGS: ONE - EVEN
MINOR FRIENDSHIPS AND OR RELATIONSHIPS CAN END IN WAYS
THAT ARE DEVASTATING. TWO: AT THE MOMENT WHEN
SOMEONE MAKES THE PROMISE THAT THEY WILL NEVER,
EVER BETRAY YOU - PARTICULARLY WHEN YOU SEE THE CARCASSES
OF MULTIPLE, RASHLY ABORTED FRIENDSHIPS AND OR RELATIONSHIPS
RIGHT BEHIND THEM - AT THAT VERY MOMENT, YOU
SHOULD CONSIDER YOURSELF "BETRAYED"