

Taking on the Borg

By Carl Nelson

In his latest book of short sketches, *Goodbye America. It Was Great While it Lasted*, Armando Simon tries to nail that blob of Wokeness /Marxism /Feminism which infests our culture like amoebic dysentery, sapping the vigor, lurching on our wealth, and which pinches off into another entity – spreading the madness – wherever you nail it. The book's second selection, "Her Repressed Memories" exemplifies this path. A father pays for his daughter to attend a college in order that she gets a degree in some field that she likes and which will return her



a living. Instead she has her consciousness raised. When he visits there is an argument. He returns home very depressed that the school seems to be training her to hate men, everything they do, and himself in particular – all the while feeding her bogus learning. His daughter, because of the disagreement with her father begins seeing a psychologist. Following a sort of forensic psychological tour of her repressed memory led by her progressive psychologist, "in the early beginning of the next semester, Amy dropped the bombshell. She publicly accused

her father of having repeatedly raped her as a child." The father takes the issue to court and wins, partly by proving that he was out of town at the times his daughter claimed the abuse occurred. But the marriage and family are no more. They've been rendered scorched earth – and then salted. An

extremely hateful feminism has killed one family.

Simon is very good at marshalling an effective volley of persuasive fact and incidence, and I regard him as the Victor Davis Hanson of the New English Review crowd. It's easy to applaud his use of factual and historical rejoinders to the bevy of wokeisms, feminist and economic idiocies blathered throughout the sketches. Surely many of us share the author's characters' exasperation in dealing with these mental zombies. And despair, as it seems a person (even the people we hold closest) can literally be led down the path into mental illness by having their perceptions twisted beyond all belief. It's as if they've fallen from a Chinese prison camp.

Armando is a retired Cuban-American psychologist and historian. So he knows his material and takes it personally. He writes with a gathering rage. Whenever I opened the book, the disdain the author has for many of the characters figuratively dribbled off the page to puddle by my feet. But then I'd pick it back up again if only to catch the next installment of how things could be worse.

It's a disdain we've all developed. Nevertheless, after too much disdain, I'd have to close the book and resettle myself at a later time to read further. Armando is a very readable author. He's clear, vigorous, and covers things which happen. You won't find someone here who lingers over his Madeleine (Proust). Which, in a way, is too bad.

I'd greatly enjoyed a previous fictional book, *A Prison Mosaic*, by the author. One episode in this collection of prison-related stories will stay with me forever. It involved the gray, monotonous, lockstep of prison life. Daily the prisoners are marched past a barred window within their grim walls in which they catch a passing glimpse of outside sunlight where it lands on a bit of ground at the base of the airshaft. A convict on whimsy saves a bit of money with which to buy a package of sunflower seeds. Figuring there's a chance

that a few of them have escaped processing and will sprout, he tosses the handful of them out the window. It's a small miracle when they sprout seedlings whose growth the prisoners follow avidly each day as they are marched past. It's such a tender moment in a harsh and bleak existence.

In short, this latter effort by our author could use a Madeleine, or two, to linger over. Left to my own proclivities, I'd probably start by leavening the title with a line from the book: *Banging at One's Front Door is Never a Good Sign*. If a neighbor I agree with were to explain to me what I already hold to be true, I doubt I would enjoy it. This is probably what dry humor was invented to leaven; so that allies can enjoy sympathies through wry banter.

Even (or, perhaps, especially) the harshest accounts need this. Granted, the Left's exclusive capture of the high moral ground makes generation of authentic sympathy near impossible. Perhaps this is one of the Left's most effective weapons. Removing the possibility of natural affection from the armamentarium of their opposition, (by replacing it with a political simulacrum), certainly is the tactical move of an Evil Genius. Separating people from the ability to love generates such rage as to make them hard to endure... justified though their rage is. Surely the Left are the masters of "blaming the victim" – while making claims to the opposite. So I think perhaps a fiery rage is best left to sell itself.

I remember the advice of a very shrewd realtor who sold our home many years ago. We were walking her through our home, emphasizing especially the best features she should be sure the prospects not miss. She said, "No. It's the very best aspects you must pretend to have missed. You let the customer find them. This makes these features theirs. (And the close follows naturally.)"

An author who presses his point too much removes the agency from their reader. I would advise this author to lead the

reader to close the deal.