

Time and Again

by Phillip W. Weiss

I'm just a regular guy. I live my life, do my things, interact with others, go about my business, voice my opinions (some call me opinionated, an approbation I accept with honor) and generally live a decent if not totally wholesome life (if living a wholesome life is possible). I'm getting on in years. I was raised in modest surroundings, while growing up had hordes of friends with whom I played ball and went to ball games. I did my military service (back then people took military service seriously), got a job, made money, traveled, socialized and kept engaged with life. I had girlfriends but never got married; I never wanted to. Relationships came and went and became part of my personal history. On that subject, I have no regrets. Now every lady I ever knew, ever made love to, ever shared a meal with, ever travel with, ever did anything with are either old or deceased which brings me to the subject of this story.

Time has a way of repeating itself. Not with the individual but as a collective experience that transcends generational bounds. For example, the narratives that emerge from sports. Fans in an escalating state of frenzy rooting for their team to win it all, treating it as if this has never happened before. Or a war breaks out and the world is shocked as if that had never happened before. Or the drama of personal relationships, especially those widely publicized, treated like it is something new or unique and thus worthy of attention and hype. Or the

hype surrounding a new movie, play, song or whatever, as if none of that has ever happened before, as if each generation is fitted with blinkers that block out history.

Well, I do my best to remind those youngsters that the path they are now traveling is a path that I and many others have traveled before. The teams they root for now are the same teams I rooted for decades ago, with stars who were known around the world and are now forgotten. For I was once young and gave no thought to the fact that one day I would be old and that what I treated as so special and unique would fade into nothingness brought on by time.

So to the entire present generation, I say this: enjoy it while you can, savor the hype, strut around like peacocks, eat, drink, be merry, fight your wars, protect the peace, treat every second like it is special because it won't last. That may sound like a stupid platitude to be scoffed at and rejected, mere self-serving garbage from those who had their chance, are too old to matter and are jealous because the party has passed them by. That's right. The party has passed us by. But what time did to me is what it does to every person, bridging a generational divide that is as wide as the widest canyons and as fathomless as the deepest oceans, yet connecting us as each generation relives what came before, the connection obscured by the very same canyons and very same oceans that make the connection seem unreal and too far away to matter.