

Fighting The Juggernaut

“In those dark hours [for the French in World War One], that vision of France as a generous nation, of France as a project, of France promoting universal values, was the exact opposite of the egotism of a people who look after only their interests, because patriotism is the exact opposite of nationalism: nationalism is a betrayal of it.” – President Macron of France, flatulating on Armistice Day, November 11, 2018

“The beginning of any society is never charming or gentle.” – Franca Bettoia, as Ruth Collins, in “The Last Man on Earth,” 1964

“The Last Man on Earth” was a Vincent Price movie made in 1964. The year before the beginning of the end. In 1965, all of our restrictive immigration laws were dismantled, in accordance with ushering in a new era of civil rights, and, in many ways, I personally date all subsequent historical events using that milestone. Even in 1965, as a child, I understood that this was a watershed moment, and one ominous in its implications.

Few others had the same forebodings. America, people reasoned, was strong, invincible, and confident. With promises from politicians that the demographics and politics of the U.S. would remain unaltered, our nation’s gates were flung open to the world.

They lied, as the evidence of our own eyes verifies, and, forty years later, I entered the lobby of a local library and encountered an ancient woman diligently yanking down public notices from a bulletin board. When I asked what she was doing, she smiled, and said, in accented English, “These notices are written in ten different languages, translations paid for with my tax dollars. If someone had the right to put

them up on a public board, I have the same right to pull them down. Let them learn English, as I did." As I pondered the woman's response, she trundled out the door and down the street, away from the scene of her mischief.

She turned out to be Colette Berger, an immigrant herself, a woman who resided in a house whose roof was visible from my own residence. In our next encounter, I observed her at the supermarket, hiding Spanish language magazines behind English publications. Again, the smile of a disobedient child, and a quip: "If I'd wanted to live in Guatemala, I'd have gone to live there."

Over time, I learned she'd come from France after World War Two as a refugee. But there was much more to the story, as I learned in pieces over the years. She'd been born in a village near Reims in Northern France, and during the war was hired, along with her brother, as a train depot guard, guarding both cargo trains and German troop trains in a freight yard. She eventually revealed she'd been sufficiently trusted by the Germans to receive passes to travel on both German troop trains and truck convoys. She'd met a German soldier, had a baby by him, and then placed the baby for adoption when the end of the war culminated in her hasty emigration from Europe. "They weren't asking about civilians' motivations," she said. "The Maquis [the French Resistance] were lining people up against the walls and shooting them." She'd come to America, lost a young husband to cancer, struggled with poverty, lost a second child to a gulag called foster care, worked hard, bought a house, and survived in her old age by opening an illegal beauty parlor in her basement and an illegal rental cottage in her detached garage. Throughout our acquaintance, she continued to make veiled references to her activities during the war.

Finally, one day I stated flatly: "You, Colette, were on the wrong side."

She did not shrink from the comment. "Yes," she readily confessed. "The Germans' sins were considerable, but they would have ensured the West's survival in some recognizable form. No one else is going to do that now. I understood from the beginning what the Bolsheviks would do to Europe and the world if they won, and they have indeed won. They have repeatedly forced the West into a trajectory that can only lead to our extinction, a trajectory that has always left us with no other recourse but to fight back."

It was an Aha moment. She was not only an ideological renegade, like myself, but someone who was apparently willing to take genuine risks in order to act on her beliefs – risks ranging far beyond pulling down public bulletins. As I came to know Colette, she indeed turned out to be a one woman army, battling what we both perceived as the forces of darkness: a soupy and toxic Cultural Marxism manifested in the promotion of things like universalism, socialism, deracination, miscegenation, white guilt, social and moral decay, nihilism, multiculturalism, and a tsunami of other assaults on all things traditional. These things, Colette contended, were merely the incarnations of an effort to destabilize and deconstruct American society. She rejected without hesitation the notion that America, the world's last real bastion of freedom, was a nation in which patriotism should be primarily defined as a blind loyalty to democratic principles of government; she scoffed at the belief that loyalty to the American nation-state and culture was a form of bigotry and chauvinism. "To insist on such a thing," she said, "is to deny human nature itself." Erasing the latter two things, she argued, was a tragic insanity that would almost certainly and inevitably erase American democracy itself. That goal, she insisted, was our enemies' ultimate intent. "They plan nothing short of our destruction. That is what gives us the right and the duty to resist," she would say. We talked for endless hours about the reasons for America's constant accommodation of the poisons destroying its foundations, and

she summed it all up in two sentences: "Human beings, in general, are herd animals, driven by the need to conform, and white people, in particular, often deal in abstractions. It will be their epitaph, because the rest of the world deals in realities."

Colette's activism took many forms, and in much of it, I soon joined her. She manned petition tables, and lobbied for restrictionist immigration legislation, despite the irony of doing so in accented English. She campaigned for political candidates, gave them money she did not have to spend, spoke her mind with jaw-dropping frankness, wrote letters to newspapers, trolled websites, and engaged in other forms of soft sabotage. She trolled internet trolls, to locate their battles and fight in them. Once, while working on a job hiring panel, she refused to hand out the racial preference points that she and her colleagues had been instructed to give to nonwhite job applicants. She not only withheld the points she'd been asked to give, but went further and subtracted the points she knew her colleagues would obediently bestow. ("Bolshevist social engineering," she called it). She boycotted businesses that promoted social decay in the name of progressiveness, and she had six email accounts she used to badger political and cultural luminaries. She paid for books like "Alien Nation," "The Death of the West," and "Adios, America," and mailed them to prominent people, attempting to reshape social policy. She was dogged in her determination, and her battle motto was "We fight until we win." She never wavered in this resolve, despite a framed Whitaker Chambers quote on her office wall, to the effect that "We must fight simply because it is morally correct for us to fight. We must fight, even though it is virtually impossible to fight for a people who will not fight for themselves."

"These things are the best I can do," she said, "because I'm too old and too frightened to put dynamite under bridges." Because of the inherent danger in resisting the powers that

be, she in fact recommended covert and nonviolent sabotage: "There can be no full frontal assaults on the enemy until we have sufficient strength and a chance to win."

Despite her bravado, there was little evidence any of our activities made any impact. All of our efforts in sum were mere flailings against a goliath.

Colette regarded both the Democrats and the Republicans with an almost equal contempt, but when a specific act of violence against Republicans occurred in our neighborhood, it spurred her to greater action. The violence had been incited in the heart of a down and out person who had wandered up and down our neighborhood's commercial strip, where he'd absorbed a steady diet of messages discrediting the Trump administration's lawful election to power. Up and down that commercial avenue, trees and lamp poles were festooned with banners, signs, and even hand knitted messages urging the locals to "Resist Trump," "Fight the Power," and "Reject Hate." Goaded on, the derelict had "rejected hate" by engaging in some very enthusiastic violence. Rounding up me and a local sympathetic indigent, Andrew, whose loyalty and silence were contracted with a gift of banana bread, we spent one early Sunday morning by riding our bicycles in a swift B-line down the empty avenue, pulling down signs and banners, unravelling the knitted scarfs around tree trunks, and removing fliers. Colette's logic was the same as the logic she used when I first encountered her in the library: "If they have the right to put these messages up on public property, we have the same right to tear them down." Afterward, we celebrated gleefully with lumpy servings of her homemade clafoutis, submerged in cream. "Not a bad operation," she said, smiling with affection, "for a cowardly crone and two village idiots."

Whatever she may have thought of herself, Colette was no coward. On more than one occasion, I saw her on the receiving end of a progressive's kindness, which she had a knack for

quickly transforming into rage and contempt. One such encounter at a petition table ended with a wad of spit being deposited on her forehead. She remained tranquil in such encounters, strengthened by a moral certitude that I have only begun to acquire as America's situation has become more visibly dire. It was my honor to have fought in the opening skirmishes of our conflict with a tiny graying French woman, a woman who had fought her way through life, yet also found the strength to fight in the eternal battle against the massive forces of evil now arrayed against us. Three days before her death, anticipating it, I asked her how I could best honor her life. From her quick response, it was obvious she had expected the question. "You can remember me by continuing to fight," she said. "Do whatever you can, whenever you can. Resist – regardless of all of the might and scorn and fury that may oppose you – in every way in which you are capable of resisting. I will leave this life knowing that I and my village idiots, in just one Sunday morning spent tearing down banners, were worth ten thousand Marines who understand our fate and do nothing."

It was important for me to speak honestly, in the face of her approaching death. "We did not accomplish all of the things that we needed to accomplish," I said.

"It does not matter," she responded. "We will fight until we win."

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