

Cafe Society March 3, 2022

On this rainy morning the cafe's staff were playing music not from their regular playlist. They were playing Samuel Barber's Adagio For Strings. This was one of Anthony's favourite compositions although it was of course hopelessly associated with the second world war and then all consequent wars.

At the adjacent table there were two men who Anthony quickly realized were theatre actors. He realized that they were en route to a rehearsal at an iconic theatre located just about a block away and then slightly north.

So it's almost the same cast as Howard's last production. I mean, here we are again. Well you must've noticed that he tends to use the same actors all the time.

For sure and for sure. And here we are again.

I might be too busy for Howard next year, of things work out.

Lucky you, Richard. Lucky you.

Look, Jeff. If you feel so negative about Howard then why did you sign on for this production?

Three guesses and the first three don't count.

Most actors took whatever they could get, which made them like other freelancers. Anthony realized that the two actors were discussing a man they called Howard but whom he recognized as John. Perhaps the director had changed his name? Perhaps John's middle name was Howard? Whatever.

The server delivered the pancakes and a pitcher of water. The two actors were both eating eggs over easy. Anthony could not of course eat eggs.

Howard's okay to work for, Jeff. He's not obtrusive.

But if you ask him a question he gives you the runaround. I've given up trying.

I guess I don't have any questions for Howard. What you get is what you get.

I disagree, Richard.

Barber's Adagio now gave way to Albinoni's Adagio in G minor. All these adagios. Anthony guessed this unusual playlist had to be war-related.

We agree to disagree. Mind you, I think Howard is a barely closeted militarist. He's like Oliver Stone...says he's anti-war but he's utterly dependent upon the continued existence of war. War is a given...it's unavoidable.

Yes, I agree here, Richard. You see, I think Howard's real subject isn't history..it's masculinity.

Do you think Howard is queer?

Oh no, not at all. I don't think he's interested in women which is not at all the same thing as being queer...in the homosexual sense of that adjective.

The parts of this play that ring true for me aren't about the buffoon politicians. I think of the scenes with the soldiers... all little deer in the headlights...all pawns for the incompetent politicians.

Agreed and agreed. I mean, what does Howard do when he's not directing or writing? Sports, man. He's a closeted jock.

Albinioni now gave way to Screaming Trees or Smashing Pumpkins or Pearl Jam or one of those bands. Anthony was tempted to request the Barber again. The two actors finished up and paid their tab. There would doubtlessly be coffee and pastries at the theatre.

Actors are strange, Anthony muttered to himself. They do have agency, but then only slightly.