

Cafe Society March 7th

Anthony was awakened early by a fire engine rushing past his building. Then the fire engine stopped somewhere obviously not far from the building.

Some of his neighbours were also awakened and then frantically getting dressed. The building superintendent was reassuring people that the fire was a couple of blocks away and that it was unlikely to spread as far as their building.

Anthony was at least reassured that his building wasn't going to burn down. But where the hell was the fire? And why had there been a fire?

The superintendent exchanged reassuring banalities with the tenants and then Anthony asked him what did he know.

'It's further west on the other side of the street. It's just past the stop light.'

Anthony swallowed.

"It's that cafe on the corner and then the next two buildings west. A cannabis outlet and I forget what else."

His favourite convenient cafe was burning down. How did the fire get started? And why?

The superintendent smirked. 'Russian owners. You figure it out.'

"What?'

The superintendent now moved onto other building tenants. Russian owners? The superintendent was full of shit. The cafe was a Chinese restaurant with Vietnamese owners.

But did the people managing the cafe own the building? Were they renters? If so, from whom?

What was in the units above the cafe? Apartments? What and who were in those apartments?

Anthony scowled. The building superintendent was prone to stupid conspiracy theories. He was after all an anti-vaxxer. The superintendent was an acid head who'd watched Dr. Strangelove a few too many times.

Anthony decided to return to his unit and go back to bed. If there were more sirens they would be reinforcements, but there was no need to be evacuating the building.

No need to panic, Anthony wanted to scream. He wanted to scream *Moratorium on Stupid Russian Conspiracy Theories!*.

But he didn't.