

Another Steam Plume - Part 1

Written by Alex Baer

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Half-promised this would not happen again, trudging down these muddied and bloodied paths again, sledging through this sludge, examining the worst possible aspects and traits of human beings -- yet, here we are, we keep arriving here once again.

Geologists will tell you, in nature, steam plumes are necessary for relieving pressure building up inside something, that they keep things from exploding. Good enough. We'll run with that relief for the moment, and ignore the fact that those columns of super-heated steam are also signs of imminent danger right under us, just beneath our surfaces, where no-one can see.

It's been a month since Trayvon Martin was shot dead. Time has been slowly brewing, and time has come knocking again: Humanity's always so spring-loaded, so ready to offer up more symptomatic evidence of our ongoing levels of ignorance, syndromes of primate madness, cooked up fresh by propaganda, steamed and super-heated by Dark-Ages superstitions, chopped and formed into fear cakes, deep-fried in the larded, lauded, much-applauded puree of religion, topped with squirts of stupidity, served up in a spicy glaze, *aka*, twice-boiled-over, racism sauce.

You know, *racism*: Like the Montana federal judge caught sending around a heart-touching, according to him, cartoon, where President Obama's mother is telling him you're lucky you don't bark. You know, *racism*: the catcalls and hate that appear wherever the President and First Lady Michelle go, showing up somewhere to help out for charity -- the kind of moronic, rude, and insulting behavior that would have been met with expressions of horror and regret from the gathered crowds, gotten so many people locked up for a very long while, anyone dared to pull any such similar stunts on George and Laura.
Get real about that.

Tragedies, of course abound, surrounding us, hemming us in, pulling us down. This tragedy in Florida hit bottom hard, rebounded slowly, then launched itself up, grabbing air, going up, way up over the top. *How many such tales have been told in the deep south, involving an audience of just a few persons, around timeless campfires, shadowing grieverers of kin?* This tale rises up even in the mangled, twisted-up "Castle" laws, goes up and beyond the triple-sized insanity of "stand your ground" laws. This tale goes beyond race -- it heads and herds us right into simple fairness, into right-versus-wrong, into the halls of, and needs for, basic justice -- a fair and forthright deal.

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These sad stories always arrive huddled in chain-gang multiples. Where would you like the story to begin -- at the end, with a young Florida man gunned down? Maybe sooner-on in the tale, way back when, back when we were peeking out of the cave opening, trying to decide on an *if-or-not* showdown, taking in all the *us-and-not-us* considerations, maybe an *us-or-them* situation? No, it's definite, now, it will be

us-versus-them

, tooth and nail, hammer and tongs, how about there?

Maybe you'd settle for something in between, something equally surreal to consider, while hammering the steak tender, while using the salad tongs on your greens: The unhealed, always-rubbed-raw wounds and shames of racism, an oozing sore, the seeds and spores of that sore sown everywhere, always, it seems, on easiest display in the deep south, a sore-headed holdout zone for people who enjoyed owning people not *quite* like them, a place where the tireless bellows of the NRA, religion, and right-wing lunatics fan the flames brighter and higher all the time, time after time?

This sad story got its legs under itself slowly, then stayed up on them -- rickety at first -- then, much stronger, day by day, and is now up and around by itself now, starting to march strongly, all on its own. So many complex and simplistic reasons here, involving justice, race, and how much anyone can or will or should take here, in the land of the free, and the home of the brave.

There are so many other factors of unreasoned fear, knee-jerk hate, reptilian-brained false-alerts involving violations of exclusivity and classism...

Then, you add in an age difference, a man with a history of histrionics with unrelenting 9-1-1 calls, a slow-stalking-chase by a man inside a vehicle of a teen outdoors and up on the sidewalk, a murderous weapon unfairly matched against a sack of Skittles, emergency services telling Zimmerman to stand down, the man muttering racial epithets on 9-1-1's own tapes...

A gunpowder lynching, seems pretty clear.