

Georg Aeberhard • Klosterplatz 15 • CH- 4500 Solothurn
+41(0)78 9091921

One Day
by Georg Aeberhard

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One Day

A foreword

I wrote "One Day" three and half years after separation, two and half after divorce, two after falling in love (unhappily), a year after falling in love yet another time (happily). I've come back to the manuscript now in 2018 to check the links which are supposed to make it "multimedial". When you wander off on a link, please, come back using your browser's return in the menu line (<, shows the previous page).

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 2013

One day in the life of a retired, divorced man living by himself in the Old Town of Solothurn with his heart out of rhythm (pulse constantly plus or minus 100/s)

Shaking off the nocturnal stiffness, and having managed - slowly, slowly - to get out of my bed, the daily routine starts with a pill. I throw the first one of eight into my wide open mouth and flush it down with a swig of water. It is the pill that keeps me going, a pill that is called "a pill in the pocket" if you live under arterial fibrillation (who cares...).

I open the window facing south first, the one into the main street. I hear and then see that the street is again full of small trucks and camionnettes which have brought in workmen to the different construction and reconstruction sites. Here it is; the old town section where for example almost three hundred years old pharmacy "Zur Schlange" is being converted into a fancy smartphone outlet.

I start the coffee machine, switch on the computer, set up the pot to heat up the milk for the morning coffee, café au lait, and I leave the apartment door slightly open so that someone would hear and smell the smoldering milk in case I should not return from the ground floor where the mail boxes are. Taking the lift down to fetch my daily "Neue Zürcher Zeitung", hoping not to meet the well selected young and beautiful assistants of the dentist, just to spare them the look at my still unwashed "me", hair not combed yet, dressed in probably not very apetizing bathrobe, though a brand manufactured by "Jockey" (would they care?...). It's about half past seven. The girls come in around this time. I rush through the corridor, not having to face anyone. What a pity, it is a lasting dilemma between shame and a potential visual delight.

Back in my one room apartment, I make myself the first cup of coffee and sit down in front of my laptop which actually has its fixed place on a special desk close to the window. There are no new e-mails and nothing special in Facebook, except for my friend's music clips recommendations which I enjoy and share. This morning I find this one "Lonnie Johnson - Another Night To Cry":

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n8fyb9vpIc0>

(come back here, please! don't get lost in the web)

My friend T. lives in Berkeley, California, and since he came to the US in 1965 he has been keeping track of the Americana music in all its genres; he is a respectable connoisseur of its roots.

I drink my second cup of coffee and munch two slices of bread, one with jam, the other with cheese, while reading the newspaper. Finished, there is another pill, and later on two more. After breakfast, no more pills to take until the evening, right before dinner but then no less than three of them. Unless I run into some unexpected stress and have to calm down courtesy of the reliable effects of a tranquilizer pill. ("Don't leave home without it!" said the TV commercial for American Express in the seventies.) The problem with tranquilizers though is the side effect of one's increasing amnesia...

Now I should decide if I am going to do some bodily exercise or not. I switch on the stereo in the sleeping corner: 3rd Movement From Symphony No. 7 In A Major Op. 92 by Ludwig van Beethoven. It has just started and the music fills my one room apartment with the bathtub situated freely in its space. Today I decide to take bath first and to postpone the pressing decision to exercise or not. The bathtub filled, I slip deep into the water, up to my earlobes, and stay like that for at least quarter of an hour. I have acquired this hundred years old cast-iron piece on lion paws in an auction on e-bay, right after I had moved into my place. It has become the center piece of my living quarters. Lying in the bath, facing the window going north, through some rustling tree branches, I can see the sky. The moment for general meditation has come. Today the sky is blue, inspiring some action... After the bath I put on a plain cotton kimono, which next to running around naked, is my favorite attire.

What do I have to do today? I have only one appointment: my daughter is supposed to come by to pick up special medications I ordered from Spain to help her manage the chronic gastric inflammation which has been tormenting her since last October; for almost a year now. On Monday we went to see a Brazilian voodoo healer who recommended to include Umebashi in the diet, Umebashi being a dried, salted plum known to the Chinese and Japanese people for 3000 years.

I don't feel like doing any fitness exercises this morning, the pressing decision is finally resolved. I substitute the unpopular gymnastics with laundry: let's change the bed sheets, long overdue. Doing it, I start to sweat.

Now, what next? I am drawn to the laptop. I am incapable of writing anything by myself these days – which would be writing about life coincidences - instead I am re-reading (for the fifth time maybe?) the mystery THE GALTON CASE by Ross McDonald, writing down special, original wordings and checking words and phrases I either don't know or am unsure of their exact meaning. Today I have learned the meaning of the following words:

caduceus
exert
iffy
muumuu
oodles
rut
shamus
unctuous
vag

I am sure you know them all. Also, I have transcribed the two sentences by which I was impressed most:

"He invited violence, as certain other people invite friendship."

and

"His real interest was dirt for dirt's own sake."

Then I remembered my daughter and went to the website to find the information about the Umebashi plum to have it ready for her:

The ume plant has been part of Japanese culture for centuries. Umeboshi was first brought to Japan around 1500 years ago as a medicine made from the ume fruit. The effectiveness of Umeboshi has been documented in Chinese medicine books as far back as 3000 years ago. Its use first became popular among priests and samurai warriors after the 12th century.

During the war period of the 15th and 16th centuries, samurai warriors held Umeboshi in high esteem, carrying it to revive themselves, even from the brink of death. At this point Umeboshi was still considered as a medicine only. It was not until the 17th century that individual families began to make Umeboshi in their home.

Umeboshi finally started to appear on the dining table in the 19th century. At the time, it was customary to pour green tea over Umeboshi and "kombu" seaweed for use as a revitalizing tonic. Today Umeboshi is considered a traditional Japanese pickle and is used as an ingredient for rice balls or eaten with a bowl of rice.

Farther details if interested:

<http://muso-intl.com/Pickles/Umeboshi/index.html>

(come back here, please! don't get lost in the web)

Having the printouts ready, I made a pile of all the things my daughter is going to take with her. I look out of the window and finally decide to get dressed. I feel the desire to walk in the sun, and I get ready to go out, to make it at last to the Jesuit church in order to light a candle for my long deceased father on the occasion of the anniversary of his birthday. But first I have to solve the question of what to have for lunch, at home. I take some lentils from the kitchen cupboard and let them soak, so that in an hour I can cook them for ten minutes only, and mix them with the leftover vegetables I steamed the day before. I like lentils, my father liked them too; he used to pour in some pickle.

Outside, the sun really is warming up and I approach the Jesuit church on the Main Street. Unfortunately, I spot a large group of men entering the Baroque church, and I instinctively turn around and walk back. I go to the bookstore where I am looked upon as a regular customer. Since they also serve beverages, and since it is already past 11 AM, I decide to have a beer. I order the beer with Judith, the student worker at the counter today, and I am going to sit outside, taking the local newspaper with me to be locally up to date... But actually, mostly I enjoy watching the passers by. Out of the corner of my eye I catch C., my ex-wife, approaching on her electro-bicycle. My first instinct is to burry my head in the newspaper, but it's too late. As a matter of fact, we have something to discuss anyway: On Saturday, our son is moving out, and has to be helped.

C. starts to talk about Facebook, she says she goes to look at my activities frequently, and I respond, that's fine, I am keeping everything public. Behind her, Cornelia passes by, sending me a joyful smile. She has a small thrift store in town where I stop from time to time for a coffee, or to buy or exchange DVDs. Cornelia is probably near forty, nice lady, dark hair, sensual mouth, all body parts the right proportions, dark eyes with a promising spark in them. But I don't like how she dresses. She lacks natural elegance, her fashion style is rather on the cheap side, incongruous. But the basic reciprocal sympathy-empathy is there, the kind of nourishment any lost soul needs dearly.

While I have smiled back at the passing Cornelia, my ex-wife mentions four minutes long clip I did about the town not long ago. It is special for our ex-family because it is edited to music by Josef Vejvanovsky, a Bohemian baroque composer to whose music our twins were christened. The clip shows a Sunday morning in our Old town, never leaving its walls:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nWOxILdF8Yo>

(come back here, please! don't get lost in the web)

I start to feel uncomfortable and decide to leave. After I have deposited the empty glass and the beer bottle inside, I come out and see my ex-mother-in-law talking to her daughter. Well, I have to join them. Having cheek kissed each

other, my ex-mother-in-law - just having turned 88 years old - thanks me for my "funny" birthday card which she has apparently enjoyed. Her doggie, a brown Cavalier-King-Charles-Spaniel, tries to climb up my leg. Finally I find some excuse to withdraw (the lentils!).

The lentils are fine, mixed with the vegetables, and after adding some sour cream, I have a private feast.

I check my e-mails and Facebook. My friend in the USA keeps a blog and I check that also. Today he is taking up the subject of names, called

The Name Game

"Everybody knows that TB Curtis was born as Bernie Schwartz, Judy Garland as Frances Ethel Gumm, and Elvis Costello as Declan Patrick MacManus, Ringo Starr as Richard Starkey. Benjamin Black is the nom de plume of literary writer John Banville when he stoops down to writing criminal mysteries. Prince is the artist's actual first name, as is Madonna. Keith Richards was at the beginning of his career Keith Richard. Something to do with a dispute with his father. Keith Moon's birth name was Keith Moon. Did those who did change their names change their names legally? Kirk Douglas, who had two previous names, probably did, because his son is also named Douglas (Michael). Bob Dylan's son is Jacob Dylan, not Jacob Zimmerman.

Everybody knows that you love me baby
Everybody knows that you really do
Everybody knows that you've been faithful
Ah give or take a night or two
Everybody knows you've been discreet
But there were so many people you just had to meet
Without your clothes
And everybody knows
(Leonard Cohen - birth name Leonard Cohen.)

What interests me today are minor changes to family names. There was a televangelist (TV evangelist) named Jim Baker who conducted his televised sermons and (primarily) money appeals with his wife Tammy Faye Baker, who had been born as Tamara Faye LaValley, and died as Tamara Faye Messner, after divorcing Jim and remarrying, which all happened following a scandal, collapse of their 'ministry', and criminal conviction and jailing of Jim on mail fraud charges. But wait, Jim's family name was 'Baker' but he changed it by adding a second 'k' (before or after the first 'k', that is the question?), and so, both he and Tammy Faye were appearing on TV's religious PTL Club ('Praise The Lord') channel as the Bakkers! What's up with that? I once knew a rock musician who added a second 's' in the middle of his last name, then years or decades later dropped it, and having discovered his roots changed his first

name to an ethnic sounding version of it, so that he was no longer a Jerry.

There have been instances of artists' names being inadvertently misspelled by their agents, managers or publishers, and they stayed that way. (I can't recall the examples when I need to cite them.)

Look up "The Name Game" novelty pop record by Shirley Ellis on YouTube. It went to number 3 on the Billboard Top 100 in 1964."

Yes, I did so. And there was also the name of my friend TB:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-7NEYSKRJzA>
(come back here, please! don't get lost in the web)

Also, I write an e-mail to my friend in California, mentioning one of the sentences I came across reading THE GALTON CASE by Ross McDonald:
Today's special: At the beginning of Chapter 7 the main character says: **I hate coincidences.**

Cheers

JirkaTB

PS Do you have an answer from the "developer"?

This question relates to the e-mails I sent to my friend between Dec 12, 2004 and March 27, 2010 which I lost when my system crashed, and which I would like to re read. There are about fifty of them, and my friend is trying to find a way to send them to me "packed" as one bunch.

Siesta.

Waking up at about 2 30 PM, I feel like some fruit and I grab a nectarine bought two days ago. But the fruit is already rotting from the bottom. Bad luck. I have a yoghurt.

I am waiting for my daughter, finishing with today's newspaper. When she is almost half an hour late, I call her. Combox. But soon she calls back and wheezing she tells me she cannot make it, she has a date...

"OK. When can I give you the things?"

"Well... Maybe on Saturday. I'll be home at 2, when you come to move J.'s stuff."

"OK."

It's about four o'clock. I am frustrated. But I remember that I wanted to light a candle for my father. I dress, still summer fashion, and walk over to the church. Inside there are no tourists, but this time there is an electro-motored lift platform with two people on it taking pictures around one of the secondary altars. On top, somewhere, someone is drilling some holes into something. I do

overcome these worldly obstacles and light three candles: for my father whom I have not ever seen since 1968; for my son who is going to go to live on his own, not even having finished his apprenticeship yet; for my daughter haunted by misfortune, accidents, and follow up psychic troubles.

When I am leaving this restless place, I see some leaflets with rosary prayers, and decide to take them for my son. Lately, after having gone through mortal agony in a fire in hotel on Mallorca, my son started to question me about religion and asked for a bible in Czech. What happened? The night before his departure, at two o'clock in the morning, he was woken up by his friends, screaming in the corridor, to leave, the place was on fire. J. jumped out of bed and ran to the door. He opened it but couldn't see anything anymore. The air was filled with black poisonous smoke. He called after his friends but didn't get any answer. He decided to go back and take a refuge on the balcony. His room was on the third floor. My son didn't tell me any details what happened afterwards, only that he was rescued. He must have prayed there for his life.

After the church visit I cannot go home yet. I know I will not be able to do anything decent at all, and so I take a walk by the river, on its rive gauche. In front of the Landhaus-Kaffee Dragoljub, the Flying Joymaker, the Serb, the graduated father, as he calls himself, is waving at me, calling me by my pseudonym "Aeberhard". I am urged to sit down at his table, together with his friend Esther and her daughter. Dragoljub has an identity card as a traveling street vendor. He also plays bouzuki here in town. The conversation is erratic, going from high German to Swiss dialect. Before leaving, I mention to him a concert of five guitars I have discovered on the web:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3PTSUUiU9XiY>

(come back here, please! don't get lost in the web)

I take off once again down Main Street, pass the bookstore with its outdoor cafe, towards my alley. A few steps farther on I see TB standing in the street, smoking. He tells me that he has shared my Vejvanovsky clip with his friends, and that people like it very much, starting to pass it on as well. (Afterwards, at home, I was able to check it and I saw that it made a jump of about 40 viewings that day.)

I switch the subject, telling him about a woman in our small, provincial town, a music performer we both know, although we are not friends with her really. But we follow her activities in the web. I ask him what kind of trouble is this very nice specimen of femininity going through since she has placed questions like these on her Facebook page: "Who am I? Where do I go? And with whom?" We both would like to get close to her but we are too inhibited and certainly no possible lovers or anything like that. But since she is a musician, I thought she might perform some music to my clips, make name for herself...

Back home. The last three pills for today, afterwards my supper. I switch on the radio, and while I am warming up the rest of the lentils I listen to the never changing "news" of misery and injustice, in this main block now filled with background information by reporters from all over the world.

After supper I read the first section of the German liberal weekly "DIE ZEIT", the other sections I separate and set aside for coming days to last until next Thursday.

Back to the laptop. An e-mail from overseas informs me about the non-progress with the lost e-mails (Why do I persist on having them? What do I hope to recover or even discover?).

J.,

No answer from the Indian whiz-kid. But his script for some reason runs every day, every day fails, and sends me a log, which tells me the reason for failure: it chokes on some attachment. That's how software is written nowadays - to deal with ideal conditions, otherwise to flop. I will forward these e-mails to you one by one.

Cheers,

T.

Still on the laptop, I send a short message to my friend in Bern:
"M. dear, I'm signing off now. If not later on, I wish you "good nite", till tomorrow, J. :*"

And now what? I still have two DVDs. I pick the one from Argentina which got the Oscar as a best foreign film:

The Secret in Their Eyes is a 2009 Argentine crime thriller film directed, produced and edited by Juan José Campanella and written by Eduardo Sacheri and Campanella, based on Sacheri's novel *La pregunta de sus ojos*

In 1999, retired Argentinian federal justice agent Benjamín Espósito is writing a novel, using an old closed case as the source material. That case is the brutal rape and murder of Liliana Coloto. In addition to seeing the extreme grief of the victim's husband Ricardo Morales, Benjamín, his assistant Pablo Sandoval, and newly hired department chief Irene Menéndez-Hastings were personally affected by the case as Benjamín and Pablo tracked the killer, hence the reason why the unsatisfactory ending to the case has always bothered him. Despite the department already having two other suspects, Benjamín and Pablo ultimately were certain that a man named Isidoro Gómez is the real killer. Although he is aware that historical accuracy is not paramount for the novel, the process of revisiting the case is more an issue of closure for him. He tries to speak to the key players in the case, most specifically Irene,

who still works in the justice department and who he has always been attracted to but never pursued due to the differences in their ages and social classes. The other issue is that Gómez is still at large, no one aware if he is alive or dead. But as Pablo at the time mentioned that passion is one thing that cannot be changed in behavior, Benjamín learns now that that premise still holds true. Written by Huggo

So I watched the film. It didn't grab me at first, it seemed too artificially set for my taste; the costumes (too fancy), the photography (too commercial, TV commercial like), the style of music (syrupy). But later on, I was drawn in, and when there is the scene when the evil guy threatens the main characters in the elevator of the ministry of justice, I was shaken. In a nutshell - and in the scene before explicitly – you realize what it means to live in a military dictatorship or any type of totalitarian system. Afterwards the book "The Crime of Julian Wells" by Thomas H. Cook came to my mind.

During the screening I heard the beep announcing a short message on my handy. I waited until the end of the film. It said: "Good night. My dearest, I'm tired, I'm going to bed. Sleep well, kiss, M."

I make myself whisky on the rocks to calm down. On the laptop for the last time today. I am going through Facebook entries and one takes me to Fleetwood Mac:

Christine McVie YOU MAKE LOVING FUN

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xwQGAa3dKsY>

(come back here, please! don't get lost in the web)

Also, an e-mail from Kickstarter comes in. One of the projects to be crowd funded is about dreams...

SHADOW | Community of Dreamers

By hunter lee soik

95% of dreams flee our memory before we even get out of bed.

In trying to better understand our dreams, Hunter Lee Soik is attempting to build the world's largest dream database, a place for us to record and remember our dreams,
so we can better understand our waking life.

I put it on my Facebook page under "what's on your mind", asking:
Is this the way to go? I do wonder...

<http://www.kickstarter.com/projects/hunterleesoik/shadow-community-of-dreamers?ref=live>

2018: I'm checking this link, wondering if the project SHADOW got on its way and find out that it was a scam. Here a remark by one of the backers:

Oh, Hunter doesn't like when I post how to get ahold of him so

he is held accountable for the \$82,000 he stole from his
backers and uses to travel? :'(

I see, not the project got on its way but Hunter himself; see Instagram: [https://
www.instagram.com/hunterleesoik/](https://www.instagram.com/hunterleesoik/)

(come back here, please! don't get lost in the web)

The laptop is shut down. I hear the church bell sounding midnight. In bed I continue to read THE GALSTON CASE:

"... And they got tight and danced on the golden asphalt of delight."

* * * * *