

# ROARSHOCK PAGE

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**A**t this moment late in a year of absurd drama in political realms against an anguished background of man-made and natural disasters, let us remember those in need and consider what small things we can do to ease the world's pain. At this time of the dead, even more than usual, we can consult our ancestors and friends gone before who comfort us when we, the living, remember. ROARSHOCK PAGE remembers.

## AMSTERDAM AMAZEMENTS

Where I am in the puzzle, or circle of rings of canals in the grand Dutch city, or time, other than to be mostly certain it's sometime in the 21<sup>st</sup> century in Vondelpark from many places, walking paths in the open air, watching water birds in the canals and lakes, and local people taking their exercise, walking their dogs and exchanging local news with neighbors. Also in Vondelpark are many philosophical vistas which open up as one looks, or at least they do for me. Vondelpark holds the out parameters of my geographical knowledge of Amsterdam (while also an inner knowledge of the whole experience I had on the ground of Europe), while in the Centrum I found puzzles and questions, games and a rich tapestry of glass beads reflecting many levels of ritual and symbol and timeless human traditions of the universe which are old stories told new.

Excitement, always, at arrival at Centraal Station for me, and usually in some far-out state of being from a long train ride and earlier adventures. Stepping out under the great sky and the heart of Amsterdam lays there before me and I hurry along through the noise and bustling crowds, note trams running everywhere, and buses and endless bicycles. I can and must find whatever room I booked and hope for a suitable refuge from the outside while I am here. So situated, and always on the lookout for the Cats of Amsterdam, I can get lost in the Centrum, depending on my mood, and sometime know I will arrive back at my room.

Arrive tired and funky from a delayed night train (an extra two hours on the track at Arnhem) after an already grueling ride through the night on a 2<sup>nd</sup> Class train. An altered state is was and is the result for me every time, or wherever time. The Centrum changed, some subtle psychic shift from the narrow buildings with their hoists in the rafters, and/or I changed along with the old worn

wooden shops which are/were configured differently, but the sign above the door says In Business since 1690. My processes adapt in Amsterdam with each draught of Belgian ale. When overtook by a fever, but having refuge in a modern hotel, a clean secure room with private bath, when stepping directly outside my being engulfed in the ancient mall, where shopping major global brands goes on every day until night, but genuine ancient and local shops, bars and cafes were/are also going on all the time. It was hard to learn what to eat the fever time and every time. So much fast food everywhere. On one block near the Dam is/was all in a row McDork's, Bugger King, Spudwaves, and the local automat FEBO. Yes, I wanted to enter that FEBO universe and drop coins into the machine to release the weird looking food product behind the glass door in the little box in a wall of glass doored cubbies displaying weird food for a few coins. Though so intrigued, I am never drunk enough to give it a try. I certainly wasn't stoned enough. It just does not seem plausible to me that the FEBO cheeseburger for €2 out of the wall can/could be very good. Sitting out front of Bierproeflokaal In De Wildeman and a local gentleman kindly offers English conversation. "You have a wonderful town." I declare. "It is not my town." he replies, "I do not own the town. I am fortunate enough to live here in Amsterdam." "I am fortunate to rent some time here in Amsterdam." We understand. Wow around here there are sure lots of bakeries selling sweets! Too bad I eat few sweets! Some bakeries also have panini and other sandwiches, so that remains possible. Lots of stands to get frites — big paper cones of Belgian fries dripping plain and flavored mayonnaise. I ate a lot of burgers. Living on that and a bunch of really good Belgian beers, and lots of coffee too. But the time there lasted longer and beyond that seemed to stretch out into long days of quiet exploration. For weeks I had been living the road life in Europe and it was the tired time of the trip, and I was feeling homesick and hungry, and a bit wobbly. I walked around down to old Zeedijk 1 and found In 't Aepjen. The door was open and a guy behind the bar was polishing glasses, but it was otherwise empty. "Bar open?" I asked from outside. "Not yet." the man replied. So I continued along the old street, and am feeling that I had better eat anyway first before I drank. I am being a bit more relaxed because now that I am in Chinatown and here ahead on the right Wing Kee with ducks and barbequed pigs in the window. It looks dark and empty when I peek inside and

ask if they are open. "Always open for you!" the man exclaims, and the lady leads me to a table. As I sit down I recall and pre-call that I came in here before years earlier and again years hence under quite similar circumstances. I am slurping up my little bowl of won ton soup and sipping green tea as other people start coming into the restaurant. They are all Chinese. Food comes around and the guests and the staff all talk loudly in Chinese. By the time I finish my duck and vegetable noodles I was and am right back on my balance, directed and grounded. The same result every time, but one of the things the seeds have shown is the flowing together of times, flowing together of my time in Amsterdam. So fortified, I buzzed my 72 hour transit card on boarding a tram and listened to the artificial voice — which always sounds to me like a friendly Dutch grandpa — call out the stops. I tagged out when exiting the tram, as Grandpa Voice instructs in both Dutch and English, then go/went up a side street, down a tree-lined path, and again as now as before find me in Vondelpark.

On the shore at Vondelpark where a wide canal separates the park from the neighborhood beyond. I was/am trying to find the exact same tree I sat by before long ago. Although I was close, I cannot say absolutely for sure it was the tree, because there were/are changes to both the external and my internal landscapes over the proceeding and subsequent decade. That location with its ducks and geese on the water remains close enough to my being to ever remind me of my open connection with the continent of Europe. Where I was sitting on the ground by a big tree — one of several along the shore — and a long limb extended out towards the water at a place where the park border canal widened out into a big pool with backyards of fancy houses on the far shore. In one of those yards a stone statue of a maid stood with her hand raised to her forehead shading her eyes as she gazed back across the water to the park. She was quite an enchanting sight, except when, instead, there was a statue of a pink elephant in the yard. Fresh fungus tumbled in the tummy yielding gas and indigestion. Hasn't this been outlawed? Sitting by the tree at the water's edge holding on to the man-claimed Dutch soil inside mind too large for head that would not all contain mind. This was not fun. This is not a party. Why I sign on all the time for the full ancestor and descendant memory trip? Every time? *Welcome to Europe for re-birth, death, and re-birth cycles of many varied seasons. You always opt for the full journey. Ho, ho. The voice of the park laughing inside belly. Boom! Shoot gas out ass! Ha, ha. Ho, ho.* Dogs run up with friendly universal dog greetings. We Greet You, from the Dogs of Amsterdam... The Wisdom of Europe mushroom mythology poured through with damp earth, but how and what to write about that? Through the mists across the water the goddess statue regards him/me from her shaded eyes.

— D. A. Wilson

## NOVEMBER ALMANAC

11/01	2016	FEAST OF ALL SAINTS
	2016	EL DIA DE LOS MUERTOS (DAY OF THE INNOCENTS)
11/02	2016	THE DAY OF THE DEAD (EL DIA DE MUERTOS)
11/03	1493	Christopher Columbus first saw the island of Dominica in the Caribbean Sea.
	1783	American Continental Army disbanded.
11/05	1912	Woodrow Wilson was elected president of the United States.
11/08	1602	The Bodleian Library at the University of Oxford was opened to the public.
	1892	New Orleans general strike began.
11/10	1983	Bill Gates introduced Windows 1.0.
11/12	1936	The San Francisco–Oakland Bay Bridge was opened to vehicle traffic.
11/13	2015	Coordinated terrorist attacks in Paris killed 130 people and injured 368 others.
11/14	2016	FULL MOON
11/16	1938	LSD first synthesized by Albert Hofmann at the Sandoz Laboratories in Basel.
11/18	1865	Mark Twain's "The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County" was published in the <i>New York Saturday Press</i> .
11/23	1940	Romania officially joined Axis powers.
11/24	2016	U.S. THANKSGIVING DAY
11/25	885	A Viking fleet sailed up the Seine River.
11/29	2016	NEW MOON
11/30	1999	Anti-globalization protesters demonstrated against a World Trade Organization meeting in Seattle (N30/Battle of Seattle).

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Calling for Contributions! ROARSHOCK PAGE invites submissions of art, photographs, poetry, and micro-prose, to be considered for inclusion in future issues.

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Roarshock

North Beach Station

P.O. Box 330108

San Francisco, CA 94133-0108

[roarshock@aol.com](mailto:roarshock@aol.com)

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