Are We There Yet?

by Anne Emerson, November 21, 2026

Dear Readers -

I have, perhaps, half an hour to change an email string into a posting on my website. It will, therefore, be somewhat disjointed. If I get help and enthusiasm, I may finish my various writings; I know some of them need editing and/or peer review, but it's not something I want to do if no-one is paying attention. Thanks in advance for what you can do. The first section below is taken from my posting on November 19, 2026.

PS - About the siren on the River Kent in Arnside, Westmoreland, England. WE called it a Hooter. But a warning sign by any other name is still a warning sign.

Where I wrote, below, "Now you are dead," I forgot to add, "and so is your father, because he jumped in to save you."

So let me tell you THAT story, as an adult looking back. All that I understood at the time was that a boy had gotten caught in the tidal bore and that his father had jumped in after him. When the bodies were found, the whole village went into shock. There were, perhaps, a few days when everyone hoped they would be found alive.

I don't remember WHEN the siren was installed. I don't think it was present when we first started going up to Arnside. I suspect that my father might have been the person to suggest that it BE installed. I assume that it was installed (whomever thought of it) after that happened. It's one thing for teenagers to lark about and get in trouble. It's another for a loving father to jump in after a small child.

ARE WE THERE YET?

Annie

On Wednesday, November 18, 2026 at 06:09:03 AM EST, caemerson6 wrote:

Dear All -

Forwarding to you. What I didn't say, in the below, was that my Jewish friends, Joan Stiebel and Nannette Hoffman, stuck by me when others abandoned me after life got to be too much for me. Eventually Nannette got dementia. I phoned her one day from Northern Virginia, just because, and she wanted me to come for dinner that evening. I don't remember what I said, but it must have been already late in the afternoon, and it was about three hours from there to Newport News so I couldn't come.

I didn't want to keep having conversations like that, so I didn't call anymore. Then, I wasn't told when she passed. Of course, I regret how that turned out, and it got me thinking about dementia and how important it is for the people around someone to be able to support them. That is one reason I took the dementia training here where I live.

New stuff is on the next page – I expand on the "local" solution above, to suggest that we can all do something local that may help the international situation:

About the Cosmos Club (exclusive club in Washington, DC) and, in particular, Paul Horecky. HE was a lawyer who had worked at the Nuremburg Trials. The outcomes of the Nuremberg Trials may have been unsatisfying to some. There were perhaps loose ends; some people may perhaps not have received proper justice. After that, Paul lived in the DC area and worked at the Library of Congress. He must have been a luminary, because only luminaries belong to the Cosmos Club. I expect it was "men only," and women only got to go by invitation. That was probably in the late 1990s. It's hard to remember, exactly.

I suppose it has changed now, but that reminds me of a club at Oxford University in England, which was men only. It was called Parsons Pleasure, and one could see the back of it from the river. The protocol was that women were supposed to get out of a punt (a boat steered with a pole) and walk round it, while the men punted on by. Well, yours truly didn't think much of that.

But when I realized what it was, as I punted by in the company of some fellow students, I thought better of my choice to stay in the punt. The men were naked! (I might have been given hints to that effect, but when I saw it, all the same, I wished I had got out and walked round.) There's a joke about it. When a woman sees the men naked on the riverbank, most of them cover their privates with the bowler hats which they are, of course, all wearing. One Smart Alec (British term for anybody who thinks he is clever) covers his face with his hat. "Around here, I am known by my face, not by my privates," he says. If you don't like British humor, you won't like that one. It's actually quite sophisticated. With two fell swoops, he skewers his friends for their modesty, given that it IS a nudist club, and the observers for their voyeurism.

Back to the general narrative here - that being, surprisingly, Annie as "forensic psychologist"! Or, as "psychological profiler." THAT was a job mostly done by colleagues of my husband's. The Pesky A.I. (which may or may not be an AI algorithm gone rogue) has been directing Annie's attention to things like political assassinations. "Murder mysteries" are a thing in England. We like an intellectual puzzle. I never CAN figure out whodunnit in something like an Agatha Christie novel, but I sometimes do a little better in real life!

In real life, the problem with the "fringe element" is that they tell lies. They learn to game the system every which way. I expect that law enforcement REALLY doesn't like smart liars. I suspect some of them have been trying to figure out whether I am mostly a smart liar or mostly a smart woman, in that regard. I have broken ranks with my husband because I don't like that his work was "classified." I started ratting on his colleagues, basically. People didn't like that!

He has worked at the highest levels of international relations. IF we realize that the world is in a bit of a pickle (British understatement), then he and I might be important to the people trying to dial down international hostilities. HE is a peace-lover who knows a lot about foreign leaders and clandestine methods, simply because he worked with those people. I am interested in

foreign cultures, but I didn't get a job in my field, so I have gone in other directions. ONE more thing, before I close.

Until what is called the first OPEC oil price shock in 1973, the Middle East was a backwater in terms of Western academic interest. It just so happens that the students entering the Oriental Institute at Oxford in 1974 to study "Oriental Studies (Arabic)" were the first students for whom the Wehr dictionary was rushed into print; the program had probably at least doubled in size; many of them were likely motivated to work with the consequences of the oil shock. Suddenly there was money, right? Conflict! Opportunity! The International Stage! For me, it was totally a coincidence.

Fast forward four years. In 1978, therefore, Professor John Q. Adams REALLY wanted me in his program at the University of Maryland, College Park, presumably because I had that Middle East background. He had it in mind for me to explore the migrations going on in the Gulf, looking for work in the oil fields. THEN, I found the Algerian census; and Algeria had rejected Western advisors in favor of ones from the Soviet Union. But in the meantime, my first child had been born and I was not going to be getting results quickly enough. (I imagine.) Where that might have gone, I won't elaborate at present, but my head is quite buzzing with it.

Excerpts from another email: -

Summary - when the "club" thinks we don't belong, they find ways to humiliate us until we go away. Case in point - The Cosmos Club in Washington DC. Exclusive "power" club. I have been twice, once as Dad's guest and once as Paul Horecky's guest. On the first occasion (with Dad) I was about to go in the front door, when I was told that ladies have to use a different entrance. I was not about to say what I thought of that, but I thought it. On the second occasion, with Paul Horecky (my mother-in-law's manfriend after her first husband died), either they had changed that rule, or I was prepared for it and followed the rules. I don't remember having been upset at using the ladies' entrance on that occasion. I looked around a lot more than I had done on the first occasion. The women were beautiful! One was, in particular. She reminded me of Marv Humphrey's wife. I heard that the Humphreys died in a murder-suicide. HE was a superstar and SHE was beautiful.

When we had had dinner with them, many years prior, it seemed to be expected that the ladies would go off somewhere after dinner and the men would talk business. Since "business" had to do with my husband's thesis on nuclear weapons, and I had worked on it with him, I stuck around with the men and held my own among them. 

Excerpts from other emails: -

Yes, there's a difference between ignorance and stupidity. But some people get upset if you call them ignorant! Catch-22. And yes, if one person knows something that they think everyone else ought to know, they will make fun of the person who doesn't know. Facts and figures are the easy ones in that regard! Cultural norms are way more complicated…

Our family was very good in some things; very bad in others. Most notably, we accepted Dad's "superior" intellectual worldview, and ignored Mum's considerable artistic and creative talents. Mum, for her part, rather sneered at my early efforts to draw! Dad was more patient with beginners. But he didn't like me taking his chisel and using it as a screwdriver once! (I didn't know the difference.)…

My twin sister was one of the people I told about the six-year-old who shot his teacher. Local to Newport News, Virginia, just down the road from here. It made the news headlines over there in England, too…

I bought a copy of Professor Graham Schweig's book about the Dance of Divine Love! I might have been one of very few non-library purchasers of such a scholarly translation from the Sanskrit!...

(I have several more books by Indian, er, South Asian, scholars. They are interested in the relationship between “Field Theory,” meditation, and what Swiss psychiatrist Carl Jung calls the Collective Unconscious. Jung was writing in the shadow of Nazism and the global conflict between authoritarianism and freedom. There’s one South Asian book about The Akashic Field. There’s another that translates an early text that may rival Buddhism as a worldview.)

I would like to say more, but I am missing the news. WHRO+ is the streaming platform for our local public television station. I recommend it. Their mission is more educational than profit-driven. They often ask the traditional type of expert, but they are starting to broaden the kinds of people and programs that they offer.

Are we there yet? Even the “little person” can do something. Please ask around for ideas. If your contacts don’t know what you can do, you are invited to explore this website further. Eventually, our sister site will have more contributors and will be less obviously scholarly.