

January 2026

At the Warfield: Monolink, 2/28. Gogol Bordello, 3/6. Melvin Seals & JGB. 3/7.

This sure made my day: I ran into a guy named Clay who told me him and the regulars at Blooms Saloon in Potrero Hill like the Herald so much that he made a patch for his friend's motorcycle jacket that reads: Russian Hill Upholstery & Décor is still located in Nob Hill, not Russian Hill.

New in Haight Ashbury: New bar – Green Heron at 1601 Haight. New store – Further Clothing at 1580 Haight. New place where they banned the Herald and told me not to come back: Protocol Vintage at 1687 Haight.

Speaking of Haight Ashbury, I ran into Mark Lipman, the US National Beat Poet Laureate, 2024-2025, there a few months ago. He was traveling the continent in his bus and popped in for a bit. If you want to see what he's up to visit VagabondPoetryCaravan.Blogspot.com.

I was going to tell you all that if you want to buy former Dead Kennedys lead singer Jello Biafra's 1989 Toyota Celica GT Convertible, you could check out a video of him online giving his used car dealer spiel about it. He was pretty good at it – another Cal Worthington. He said he's selling it to fund his record label, Alternative Tentacles. Too late: he sold it for over \$30,000.

Hey all of you that showed up in U.N. Plaza to protest the removal of Nicolas Maduro from Venezuela – where were you when he was in power and torturing, imprisoning, starving and murdering his own people? Maybe I missed that. The Left really has a crush on evil dictators. (“No Kings”?)

“DEALING WITH THE COPS AND BEING DEALT WITH BY THE COPS”

**** A short story by me, Ace Backwards ****

I'm hanging out drinking beer and charging my cellphone at one of my favorite late-night hang-out spots on the Berkeley campus when it's raining. This little nook of space in the basement of Dwinelle Hall. I've been using it for years and I've never had any problems because it's usually deserted in the evenings, and especially deserted on the weekends. At least until now.

So around 9 o'clock I notice this cop car pulls up right outside (I'm in this little lobby area). And doesn't leave. So I'm starting to get a little nervous. Finally this cop — this young black woman — comes in and confronts me. “We got a complaint that you've been lodging in here.” So I just figured somebody had complained that some weirdo bum had been hanging out in the building (there's at least a dozen other

homeless people that regularly hole up in the building when it's raining — several of whom are a bit peculiar — and I probably got caught in the cross-fire). So I give her my ID card and she runs my name across the wire. And I figure after I'm cleared for not having any outstanding warrants she'll let me go.

But then, a SECOND cop car pulls up and a second cop comes into the building. It's this Asian cop who got really heavy with me this one night a couple years ago. So now I'm really squirming, thinking I might be in hot water (turns out he was very cool and friendly and didn't have an attitude towards me this time, thankfully). So he asks me a few questions. Then asks to see my cellphone. I give it to him. And he asks me several questions about my cellphone. Which is weird. So I'm trying to figure out what's going on. And then a THIRD cop car pulls up. So now I'm really thinking I'm screwed. He's a big young white guy. He enters the lobby and, as he approaches me, he puts on these blue plastic gloves. And I'm thinking: “Is he planning on doing a full body search here?” Like what the hell is going on? I was just sitting here minding my own business. And now all this. He asks me a few questions. Then he asks me about the jacket I'm wearing. Which is dark blue. “Is that jacket reversible?” he says. “I don't know, I've always worn it this way,” I says. “Could I take a photo of you with your jacket reversed?” he says. “Sure,” I says. The jacket is tan when it's reversed. The cop takes out a camera and takes a photo of me and my jacket. And then goes back outside to his cop car. So now I'm standing there in the lobby with the Asian cop and the black woman cop, feeling like a criminal. FBI's most wanted list. (I also have a 6-pack of beer by my stuff, hidden in a black bag, two beers already drunk, four to go — so they can bust me for public drinking and haul me off to jail at any moment if they spot that, or hit me with a \$250 “open container” ticket, so I am a bit nervous).

“Am I in trouble?” I ask the Asian cop, still perplexed by what's going on. “A student got her cellphone stolen and you match the description of the suspect,” said the cop. “White male, about 50, 6 foot, wearing a tan jacket, slightly balding.” (*That hurt.*)

“That would be me,” I said. (I'm realizing it's just one of those deals where I *was in the wrong place at the wrong time* - which can happen often when you live on the streets. Because you're usually in the wrong place at the wrong time when you live on the streets). The big white cop comes back in and says,

“Can I search through your backpack?”
“Sure,” I says.

He pulls everything out of my backpack one by one. Looks at it. And then puts it all back in my backpack one by one. “Can I search you?” he says. “Sure,” I says. “Is this how you do it?” I turn around and put my arms out by my side (I haven't had a lot of experience with this sort of thing, thankfully). “No. Put your hands behind your back.” I comply and he gives me the old frisk. Feels up all my body parts with his hands. Finds nothing. “Can I look through your bag, too?” “Sure,” I says. Now I figure I'm screwed. I got my 6-pack of beer in the bag. The cop looks at my 6-pack of beer. I says to the cop: “That's just my 6-pack of beer. I was going to drink it later. I surely wouldn't drink it here on campus property.” (I lie.)

“What kind of beer is it?” asks the Asian cop. “Racer 5,” I says. “That's good beer,” he says with a friendly smile. “7.5% alcohol content,” I says.

Now I'm really sweating it. If the cops notice the two empty beer bottles they can give me \$250 ticket or arrest me. Fortunately, I had put the bottle caps back on the two empties, and the bottles are dark, so it looked like a full, un-opened six-pack, as long as the cop doesn't look too closely at the bottles. After a bit more chit-chat the cops say: “Thank you for your cooperation.”

And the three cops leave. And get in their cop cars. And drive off. And I grab my stuff and get my ass out of there and off the campus as fast as I can. With a big sigh of relief. But humiliated too. It's embarrassing to be treated like a common criminal. And being frisked. Felt up. And being accused of a crime. But that's life on the streets. And I found some other spot to drink my remaining four bottles of beer. And lived happily ever after.

The End

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