

November 2025

Russian Hill Upholstery & Décor is still located in Nob Hill, not Russian Hill.

At the Warfield: Motion Picture Soundtrack and Say Anything, 12/5. Tape B, 12/12. Berner, 12/20. **At the Regency Ballroom:** Electric Guest with Snacktime, 12/7.



Luvcat plays *The Independent* on 12/13.

San Francisco International Airport has a museum called SFO Museum with numerous ongoing exhibits, including the history of the telephone. (sfomuseum.org).

NBC stuck with *Cheers* and *Seinfeld*, two sitcoms that had low ratings and eventually became smash hits. In 1983 they gave up on one called *Buffalo Bill* after 26 episodes. It may have never caught on, but if it did I think it could have gone down as one of the all time greats. It starred the late, great Dabney Coleman as an obnoxious TV talk show host in Buffalo, New York and had a solid supporting cast, including an early role for Geena Davis. The show was nominated for eleven Emmy Awards, and if you want to check it out you can find some of them on YouTube and a few other places. “Jerry Lewis Week” featured an unknown Jim Carrey and ranked number 69 on TV Guide’s list of greatest episodes. Just before his premature death, NBC entertainment president Brandon Tartikoff claimed in his memoirs that canceling *Buffalo Bill* was his biggest professional regret.

Accidents Will Happen

By Ace Backwards

I remember this one odd accident. I was walking across this crosswalk in Berkeley on Bancroft Avenue with a bunch of other people. About 40, 50 yards up the street this guy on a motorcycle had just taken a sharp left-hand turn on Telegraph Avenue and was barreling down Bancroft when he completely wiped out. He went flying off of his motorcycle and his motorcycle went skidding down Bancroft on its side. And Bancroft is a hilly street, so that motorcycle was skidding

toward us at a fast speed. Sparks and smoke were flying off the bike. Most of us got out of the way, except for this one Asian woman college student. She froze like a deer in the headlights. The motorcycle hit her full speed on her legs. She went flying in the air like a bowling pin. The ambulance came and took her away. She probably had two broken legs at the least. One second she’s standing there. The next second, everything has changed.

One night I was hitch-hiking from Berkeley to San Francisco and this guy in a beat-up old jalopy picked me up. He asked if I had money for gas. I told him if I had any dough I wouldn’t be hitching. He said he thought he had enough to get us across the Bay Bridge. So we’re driving across the Bay Bridge, and as we get about halfway across, right as we hit this hilly part of the bridge, his car dies. He revs the accelerator several times. But nothing. There’s no shoulder to pull over to. The car is sitting right there in the middle of traffic, so the other cars are all buzzing by us. The best he can do is put his red brake-lights on to alert the other cars. “Let’s get out of the car,” he said. “They’ve got these buzzers on the side of the bridge that you can use to call for a tow truck.”

So we walked over to the buzzer and buzzed it, and headed back to his car. We’re about 10 feet from his car when this other car comes barreling at his car and hits it in the back at full speed. KA-BLAMMO!!! It was like a rocket making a direct hit. The guy never saw it coming. We rushed over to the car. There was this Asian guy in the driver’s seat. His eyes were sort of sprocketing around in his head like he was half knocked-out. Probably from smacking his head against the dashboard. But at least there wasn’t much blood or anything. We stood there by his car, waiting for the tow truck.

I remember when I almost got this young woman killed. There was a bunch of us waiting at this crosswalk at the Bancroft and Telegraph intersection in Berkeley. The light was just about to turn green. So I started to take a step off the sidewalk into the street. But just before I did I noticed in the corner of my eye this huge AC Transit bus barreling down Bancroft right at me. The bus driver was in a crazy hurry for some reason, so he was rushing through the yellow light just before it turned red. Even worse, the bus was pulling right up to the curb to make its stop so it was headed directly at me. I pulled myself back to the curb in just the nick of time. But even worse (if that’s a word), this young woman who had been standing next to me, had seen me stepping into the street. So she started to step into the street. You know how it is when you’re at a crosswalk. A lot

of times you’re not paying attention to the red light. You just wait until everyone else starts to go and then you go along with them (there’s probably a message here about “Don’t follow leaders,” or maybe at least, “Follow Ace Backwards at your own peril.”). I shouted over at the woman, “STOP!!!!” She froze in an instant. And the bus went flying right by us. Inches from our faces. WOOOSHHH! You could feel that breeze. We stood there looking at each other, kind of stunned. Then we turned and crossed the street and went our separate ways.

It took me an entire long paragraph to describe something that basically took place in a split-second. And both of our lives could have been changed in that split-second. Sometimes, our destinies are measured out in fractions of inches. Accidents.

This is sort of my big philosophical leap of faith. The physical world is so intricately ordered. The earth revolving around the sun in this exact pattern. And the molecular level is so intricately ordered. All the molecules and electrons and protons and neutrons. It’s probably likely that the spiritual and moral levels are also equally ordered and structured. As opposed to random “accidents.” Even as they often seem sure as hell DON’T seem ordered.

A Mr. Richard List of Berkeley, California responds to the above essay by Ace:

Your analysis in the beginning of your piece about the randomness of it and so on is unique. You can donate your brain when you die to Harvard Brain Center. They need them to study and yours is extremely unusual.

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