

A man in a dark suit is shown from the chest up, sitting in a leather chair. He is holding a cigar in his mouth, and a plume of smoke rises from it, drifting towards the top left of the frame. The background is a plain, light-colored wall. The overall mood is sophisticated and relaxed.

BUNGALOWS & MANCAVES

The Semi-Cool Adventures Of Hickey & Clyde
Philosophy with a Southern Twist

*Tom Hickey
& Rodney Pickel*



Bungalows & Mancaves reveals the world of Hickey and Clyde, where philosophical drinks are mixed with a southern twist and entertainment is provided by a talking guitar named Al. Tom Hicks, author of nine books and Rodney Pickel, author of two books, explore the wonderful world of space and time in a place called home. The semi-cool adventures include humor, food, and libations all wrapped up in a bundle called friendship.

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Tom Hicks and Rodney Pickel

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First Edition

Bummin' at the Bungalow

Everyone Needs a Nickname

I strolled up the ivy lined brick walkway in my bare feet arriving at the small front porch of the peaceful little bungalow where I live. *Everyone could use a place like this I thought to myself.* But who am I to think for anyone else? So then, speaking strictly for myself, I am the one they called Hickey back in my student days, a happy product of the *Dharma Bum* era followed by Woodstock. And four amazing decades later the Post Modernist version of me presently hangs out here in this pleasant little dwelling with my family whom I absolutely adore.

In this particular place, I am surrounded by living green flora and you can plop down in a comfortable chair and I will certainly mix you up a tasty drink and we can talk about this and that for hours on end like civilized beings. For we are blessed people and that's one of the things that blessed people do; they sit down together and talk endlessly or so it sometimes seems.

Life here is a run-on sentence; grammatically incorrect perhaps, but spiritually just peachy keen. I often think that politicians could take a lesson from this outlook.

How did I arrive here and what's the point? I am going to attempt to answer that question in literary speak so excuse any excesses and liberties I take with fact and fiction, time and space, grammar and spelling, original material versus someone else's stuff and above all,

proper drink mixology. Such a set of laws are for others and not for me. Clarity often comes in roundabout ways and through some very interesting people and circumstances irrespective of the normal rules that apply to us mortals, which leads me to believe that some short sighted ones invented that term in the first place. If I repeat myself, it is because I meant to and if things don't always make sense, maybe it's because things don't always make sense. In some of my other books I discovered what I thought might be errors only to realize that in the boo-boo there was a rip in the fabric of convention and so I took a new fresh look at the immensity of the commonplace or even the royal screw-up.

So the errors remain in my past work. I shall not look back over my shoulder at such imperfections anymore than I try to repair the holes in my old favorite jeans. They are there so there they are. I have never wanted people to arbitrarily agree with me but at least think about what I think or pretend to anyhow. I think that listening is at the heart of respect. Aretha says respect yourself. It makes good sense to me.

For openers, Kierkegaard has obviously influenced me. I like the way he thinks. It's not exactly rocket science or rocket surgery, for that matter. I guess you could say that I figure I will live life, *Søren's way*, in a complex dialogue of sort, for according to him "what the age needs is not a genius - it has had geniuses enough, but a martyr, who in order to teach men to obey would himself be obedient unto death. What the age needs is awakening. And therefore someday, not only my

writings but my whole life, all the intriguing mystery of the machine will be studied and studied. I never forget how God helps me and it is therefore my last wish that everything may be to His honor.” And to you atheists and agnostics, perhaps you can toast to truth, logic and reason and to the mystery of your machine as we cogitate together. Well said I think. It is easier to say, perhaps, than to do. But why not try?

While taking a trip, I was thinking about the mechanics of thinking and living those inspiring words I read from Kierkegaard’s Journal as I drove the pricey rental car from LA to that little spot where I had spent a few glorious days one summer decades ago. I stopped the yellow convertible at a vantage point to watch the sun set over the blue Pacific while I listened to my favorite tunes on my Walkman, an antique device to the latest generation. But it was an essential gadget at the time. I treasured mine.

“Excuse me Hickey.” I could hear Clyde’s voice bringing me back to what I usually call reality. “The sun doesn’t set, remember?”

I’m sorry, Clyde. I forgot to introduce you. Okay if we get to that and your question in a minute? Just let me finish my story.

“Okay, but you said the sun doesn’t actually set.”

You’re right Clyde. It officially doesn’t. So, I will rephrase my remark. I stopped the yellow convertible at a vantage point to witness the earth’s rotation in a way

that made the sun *appear* to set. Are you okay with that?

“Yep, it is easier to get older than it is to get wise, Hickey.”

Yes, indeed it is. I could almost hear the music playing once again and turned to see, in my mind’s eye, Baxter sitting in the seat next to me. My mind plays tricks on me and as I age, so do my eyes and ears. I knew he was long dead, that *Old English* sheepdog of my young adulthood, but here in a way, he was as big as life and as real as what appeared to the human eye to be a sunset, maybe even more so. I stroked him as I was fond of doing, and his fur was as soft as it had been when he was a puppy, the runt of the litter, the loner with blue piercing eyes and at that moment I knew unmistakably that in the world of doubt there was more than enough legroom in my vehicle for faith to endure.

All the pets I’ve had believed in my inherent goodness after all. They even seem to accept the human names I gave them. They didn’t much care what they were called. They knew who they were. I was the one with the identity problem. I was the flawed human.

“I once had a cat I named Cat. And his blood brother I called Dog. Later we got a little grey female and named her Mouse. I wonder if they were confused,” Clyde remarked.

Knowing the one who named them... I doubt it. (I was lying.) As you were, Clyde. Now where was I? Oh, yes....

So I sat there and thought about a few things like comfortable little bungalows and comfortable names; especially my old one, Hickey. Now, the first Hickey as far as I know was my grandfather; then along came my Dad, and then me. So I come from a long line of Hickeys. Now that is an odd sort of nickname but in my era, a nickname was important no matter how odd.

Clyde chimed in again. "My nickname is Clyde."

Yes, I know Clyde. That's why I call you that.

"I don't come from a long line of people named Clyde. My dad was Bud. He nicknamed my sister, Homer. Christopher is Catfish, James is Honyock and Mom was Red. Brian was Barney and Alan Curtis, our shortstop was Pecker."

I see. Everyone needs to know someone named Pecker. (All I could do was muster a sigh. It fazed him not.)

Anyway, folks, what is any kind of naming anyhow, except for something someone assumes to know you by and with that assumed identity, there always comes a story. The nickname begets a story about you and in the case of Clyde's shortstop, about Pecker.

Let's see. Here is a current version of mine and without a doubt a dollop of my philosophy that exists here at Hickey's little cottage where Kerouac's On the Road resides on the table by the wooden chair.

"Hey Hickey tell them that I don't have a table by a wooden chair. I used to have a wooden table and a wooden chair but they weren't next to each other. Are you afraid of wood? I'm not, but some people are. What do you think about that Hickey? By the way, when are you going to introduce me?"

Soon enough old friend but first, excuse me for a moment while I water the Zinnias and mist the ferns and commune in spirit with another friend of mine, St. Francis of Assisi, the patron saint of animals and ecology and gadflies like me.

"And what I'm I supposed to do while you're communing with nature and St. Augustine?"

Why don't you pour us each a pint of a hops and barley combination and then I will introduce you. And, by the way, it's St. Francis.

"I know. I was just joking. It was St. Augustine who said, 'Give me liberty or give me life.'"

Actually it was, "give me chastity and continence, but not quite yet," but that was pretty close, Clyde. Now where was I? Oh, yes. Fellow earthlings, welcome to *Hickey's Hideaway* and *Clyde's Getaway* where pirates and priests are both welcome. Now listen up. As I said I

do tend to stroll in and out of present tense and here and there geographically as well as cosmically so kindly don't hold that against me. Now that was a really good run-on sentence. Wasn't it?

Clyde looked up, at what it was-I do not know, and remarked, "Remember what Jimi Hendrix said, 'Knowledge speaks but wisdom listens.'"

Listen I always say. But my big mouth says differently.

And my old pal, Clyde, who has a tendency to interrupt as you now know, will join us along with his magic stick, an ancient guitar dubbed *A/* named after a great one himself, whom we will enlighten you about later if we decide we want to. Some things remain a mystery. There is more than an outside chance something will be left out. The strings of Clyde's instrument tell their own adventurous saga and teach us about life with their distinct melody. After all, isn't that why we are all here in a sense...to play our own song? I opt for the kazoo.



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