

European Journal

INTRODUCTION:

I am not a writer. But a few people have asked about the places I saw and what happened to me while I wandered around Europe with a pack on my back and very little money. I kept a journal (who doesn't?) which became increasingly difficult and boring to keep up. After censoring over half of it (of course), I have decided to print part of the rest to give you a vague idea as to what my days were like. I was thinking of rewriting it to make it more interesting for other people, but found I could not. The experiences are past, and now I am sitting in America, eating three square meals a day. I am not even able to comment on what my mind expressed two months ago when being nourished by one meal a day. There are some parts that are incoherent, and some that are boring. Please remember it was not written for other people. But stumble through it, and maybe it will encourage you to tear up your schedule, kick the walls that shelter you from the elements, and get the hell out and see the world. If you get possessed - do go! And talk to me, or Lee Hawley, or someone else that's gone, but don't, don't go out and buy Arthur Frommer's Europe on \$5 a Day!

Amsterdam
Sept. 20, 1971

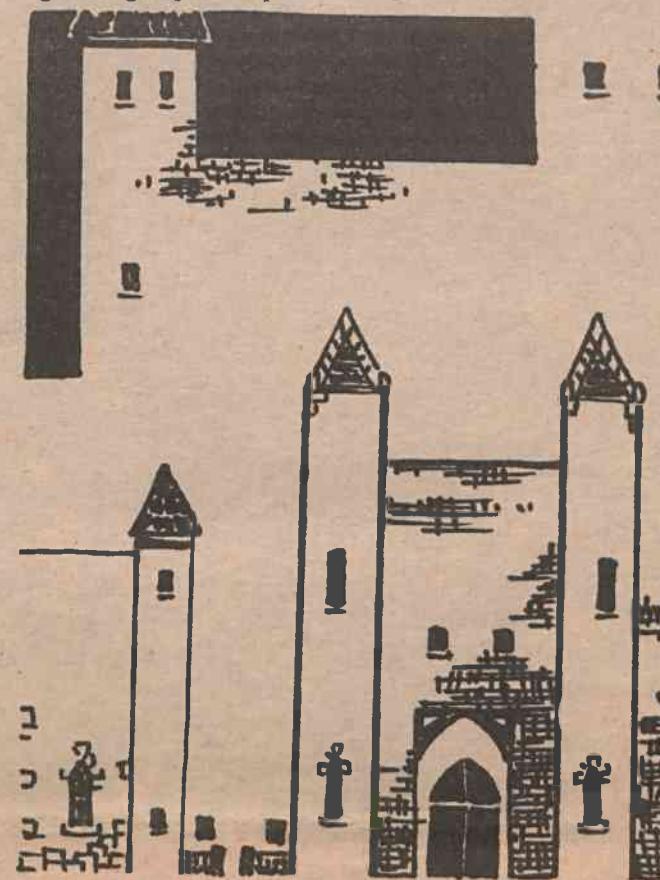
Was sitting desolately on the steps of the National Monument at Dam Square at the appointed time - 12 noon. Looked at all the strange, unfamiliar faces swimming in the streets below and seriously doubted if Bev and Wright would come. It seemed impossible that after all the long days I could see someone I knew. Was preparing my plans if they didn't show, and then crossing the street I saw them - first Wright's head bobbing along on top of the crowd, and then behind him my sister - my own bloody sister, all the way out in Amsterdam. Could not believe it. Jumped up and frantically waved my arms. Their mouths dropped and they came laughing towards me. There we were in the midst of noisy, chaotic Dam Square all of us in complete amazement. Took them to the Rijksmuseum - felt more at home this time. Love the "Night Watch." Also found another room of period costumes, shoes, and jewelry, and rooms gorgeously furnished - mostly 1700's. Have moved into the hostel here. After three nights sneaking into Den Behoulden finally got caught at one in the morning as they ran out of beds. Girl who found me was very nice and let me sleep on the floor. Thank goodness I had that guy's gorgeous sleeping bag. Am really getting worried about money. Have only \$30 left. Went into Wimpy's yesterday and got a meal and left without paying. Felt great! Went into a bar today and asked for free water and the guy at the bar treated me to a beer and a sandwich. Have discovered going to bars is the best way to get free drinks, food, and cigarettes. Finally have enough courage to walk into any bar. Have gotten to like it. Did all my laundry. Such a wonder to gaze on clean jeans. We're going to see the red-light district tonight. Ought to get some good references for acting.

Sept. 26, 1971
Priem, Germany

Things happen so quickly. Here we are in Germany already. To backtrack - the next day Bev and Wright and I rented bikes and rode through Amsterdam to a park. Riding bikes in the city was hell. I don't know how all those old people do it. Almost got run over. It was great riding though. Felt like I'd been living in Amsterdam for years. That night we went to the red-light district. The girls sit in the windows with their red light on and the bed in the

back. They didn't seem very aggressive. Some even seemed shy - maybe they were just worn out after the summer. Many of them were very pretty and young. What a street! Red lights gleaming on the dark, still waters; the smell of the canals pushing into the narrow, erotic alleys; rough shouts...murky whispers....Wednesday Bev and Wright decided to hitch with me to Heidelberg. Met early that morning by the bridge and finished off our bread and jam. As we were eating a woman came by and gave us her bag of sandwiches. They had meat in them...what a way to start the day! Got to the highway and lined up in back of about eight other people. Wright, who has never hitched before, wanted to know if I thought we'd get picked up. Had

Mentioned that he thought American wives wore out their husbands and the men got lines sooner. Said he found it was happening with him. He was working and working all the time and had problems at home, and suddenly he stopped his work and said, "For what?" - so he started taking vacations and enjoying himself and his family. He said there was a certain point where one must say, "this is enough - now I must enjoy", because there is only so much one can absorb at a time. He had boundless energy and had been disciplined like a German soldier. Bev and I tried to listen intelligently but the wine was really something so we let Wright do all the talking. After the wine he took us to a little restaurant and treated us to a huge meal. We each had a half of



to laugh. The three of us with our packs looked like an army. But we were in no hurry. Spent about two hours there. Guy ahead of us gave us a bottle of chocolate milk. How good it tasted. Finally hid Wright in some bushes and Bev and I hitched. A Mercedes-Benz breezes up and Wright hops out on cue and gathers up our ton of packs. The man was very nice and German. Had just seen Anne Frank's house before we left. It had made such a deep impression that I couldn't help wondering if the man was ashamed to be German. He let us off by the German border. Our next ride was a youngish German who ended up staying with us for two days. He was so insistent on showing us the beautiful parts of his Germany. Drove us down along the Rhine. The sun was setting and it was beautiful old towers and castles outlined against the dark blue sky. The little villages huddled into the sides of the hills among the vineyards were fascinating. It was wine festival time, and all the villages were celebrating. Our German friend stopped in one and took us in search of a party. We wound our way through a narrow street and found a barn where the farmer had put out a sign saying his wine was ready and everyone was welcome to taste the first batch. The open, gaily lit barn was filled with plump German women, their faces red and laughing. They were sitting in a circle with their arms linked, swaying side to side with a tall glass of wine in their hands, singing at the top of their lungs. They had tied napkins in their hair, and the ends were sticking straight out. We sat down and joined them, and were soon swaying and singing along with them. It was all so jovial and German. The wine was great but we had had nothing to eat all day. Our German host started telling us about himself. He's a doctor, and doing research work.

a pig on our plates. It was really delicious but I was so high I had to concentrate more on getting the pig to my mouth without jabbing my face with the fork. And then this man ordered more wine! All white, and he wouldn't let us leave the table until we had drunk it all. Finally got up and we wandered through the crowded little festive streets - Bev and I holding on to Wright so we wouldn't fall down. Bright lights and dancing and German songs all over the place. Left around ten and drove to Heidelberg. Couldn't find a place to sleep so we all ended up on the 12th floor of a student hotel, in the ping-pong room. Had to sleep on the floor - not very comfortable. Our German host had a doctor's convention to go to the next morning, but he didn't seem to mind the floor. I think he enjoyed the whole thing. Got up early the next morning and he decided not to go. "It's enough work. Time to enjoy. Come!" And with that he drove us to a count's palace in Schwetzingen, a little town near Heidelberg. The palace was magnificent - a pink mansion done in baroque style. In back were the gardens and the orchards. All the gods were there - huge white marble statues peering out from the trees, lounging on grassy knolls, or strolling through flowered water lilies. What a place to have a dance concert. We wandered on through the grounds and came upon a pavilion with Apollo under the arched roof, a circle of sphinxes guarding him with shoots of water coming out of their mouths. Nearby was the bath house, done in pink marble with walls made of gorgeous stones, and gold and marble cherubs flying across the gilded ceiling and perching on top of twirled pillars. What luxury! In the afternoon our friend left us ("This meeting I must attend") and we went to see the schloss or castle on top of the cliff. Tremendous view. Quite a feeling of power.

Movie:

T. R. Baskin

T. R. BASKIN with Candice Bergen
Peter Boyle & a cast of extras and small parts

(Voice of obnoxious disc-jockey type announcer)

Hey, it's time to play FORGOTTEN FILMS! (Fade up on music) Can you name the name of the film released in 1971 (that wonderful year!) about a small-town girl who runs away to the big city to find fame, fortune, and herself?!

Contestant: (nasal voice) Well, er, uh, well let's see, there's so many...

Ann: Well, if you can within the next ten seconds you'll win...

Contestant: Well now let's see. You say it's about a small town girl run off to the big city to find fame & fortune...hmmmm...kind of a unique plot...isn't it...uh...

Ann: Need a hint? Hungry? Want something cold and good?

Contestant: what?

Ann: maybe some ice cream??

Contestant: Ice cream? OH! A HINT!! I GET IT!!

Ann: And where do you buy ice cream? HMMMMMM???

Contestant: uh, uh, uh, the uh, ice cream store the uh...

Ann: Time's RUNNING OUT....5...4...3...

Contestant: I GOT IT!!! I GOT IT!! THE MAGNIFICENT OBSESSION!!!! THE LIFE STORY OF HOWARD JOHNSON!!! MAN OF A THOUSAND FLAVORS!

Ann: sorry.

Contestant: THE STRAWBERRY STATEMENT!?! CLOCKWORK ORANGE SHERBET!?!?

Ann: WRONG! the clue was Baskin, BASKIN-ROBBINS ICE CREAM, get it!?

Contestant. S-t.

Ann: And the name of the film? Why T.R. Baskin of course.

(fade out on music)

Candice laughs insanely and cries gut-tugging sobs in this new vehicle featuring none other than good ole Peter Boyle, playing his thing to the hilt as the SALESMAN FROM UTTICA! Yes, the gamut of emotions is run to the hilt by T.R. Baskin, who leaves Findley, or Friendly, or something that just reeks of good ole "small-town U.S.A." and moves to no, not New York this time, but CHICAGO! (fade up on music "Chicago, Chicago...") Where the taxi driver bilks her, the crowd pushes her around, the landlord overcharges her, the guy jilts her, the parents don't understand, the job doesn't care, and the skies are not cloudy all day.

Now, seriously, WE ALL KNOW that them there misterious people behind the scenes are only just USING this hackneyed old plot to say something fresh and exciting, RIGHT?! They want us to concentrate on the PEOPLE, THE FEELINGS, THE ACTING, THE SCENERY, AND what a modern, technological city can DO to a person, RIGHT?! They only USE this plot so the new, fresh angle will show up that much more stark and real..... RIGHT!!!!???????? well, yes. that's right. that's what they're doing.

Moving along to the acting now. I mean, MAN! This is a part! T.R. Baskin is a moving sidewalk to an Academy Award (all right, but it still means something to SOMEBODY...I think...) If just the right actress gets just the right emotion at just the precise moment; like when she talks to the elevator; or when she says "You're a shmuck." Or any one of a hundred little nuances. Overlook the fact the whole parts the now cliche "wise-cracking individualist vs. uptight world" of recent films. At least the part's BIG! It has a lot of LINES!!! You're ON STAGE a lot!! You get a great TELEPHONE SEQUENCE like in "Sterile Cuckoo!" A great part! No?

That's right. No. There is nothing fresh or inventive about this part or about the situation, or the way Candice Bergen plays it. The "funny lines" fall slowly (like from a cow) and it's just NERVE-WRACKING and slightly embarrassing to see spiffy Candice (whom I liked in "Getting Straight") unable to pull it off. Instead, she puts it on, and I'm out there in the audience clutching my fist (and within it, Hersheys) and screaming (mostly to myself) GO CANDICE! GO! pick it up!! It's good, but God, it could be ADEQUATE! It's all right, it's working here and there, but SO AM I to earn the money I paid to see you!! NOW COME ON, GOD DAMN IT!! At which point I was asked to step into the theatre manager's office, where two burly Norwegians sacked my Troy, so to speak. Anyway, scratching Father's Day off the calendar I resumed my seat only to find, yes, you guessed it, "Joe!" A little less radical this time playing "Mr. Middle America." In all fairness, the scene where he describes his dreams of retirement is probably the best in the movie. That's fair? Ah well. Also the dialogue throughout this part is quite good.

MY GOD! nobody TOUCHED in this movie. Energy was definitely there, they came so close at times, and that's what makes it all the worse. If it missed altogether I wouldn't be writing this review (that's silly, of course I would, it's my Journalism final). But, as in the aforementioned scene, it DID HIT THE MARK at times. Phooey.

Just a passing thought, but Candice Bergen does funny things with her face, kind of twitchy, spaz things. The things that when you look in your lap your wrist is bent and you're tugging your index finger slightly, and your body is moving from side to side. Weird things like that. Icky.

Back to the movie, and CHICAGO! The REAL VILLIAN of the film! Why modern technology and automation are to blame for the social unrest, violence, and disorder in our ever moving, fast paced, finely honed lives. And I promise if I am elected...blah, blah, blech.

Look. I'll spell it out. I-T-O-U-T. T.R. Baskin isn't a bad movie. T.R. Baskin isn't a good movie. It is in limbo, where a LOT of movies are. It's all right, but to me, that's bad. And finally, is it worth two fifty? All I can say is it would depend on how much you have in your pocket at the time. For, when you think about it, everything in life costs two fifty nowadays, since inflation brought it up from a buck. John Coggeshall

Met our friend for dinner - the last good meal we would have for a long time - and then he drove us to Nuremberg, his home town. Got there that night, and said good-bye to our friend. What luck it had been to run into him. He left us off at the hostel, which was located in an old castle at the top of a steep hill. We trudged up, exhausted. Next day went into the town. There's a huge ancient church in the center of town, with one of those old clocks on the tower. At noon twelve princes come out and bow to the King

sitting on his throne, while other little figures beat a gong. The whole thing took about five minutes. In front of the church is the market place. There were stalls and stalls of vegetables and fruit and china. It was like a colorful auction-everyone calling out and bumping into each other, and the fruit glistening in the sun. The women farmers selling their goods were incredible. Most of them were rather old and bowed, but like old tree trunks that get sturdier as they grow

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