
Country Philosopher

Call on me anytime

BY AMOS ARTHUR HOLMES



There are times we are placed in positions where it becomes impossible to cope. We are asked to perform various tasks that require qualities we do not possess.

Such a thing happened to me last week when the Director of the St. Mary's Arts Forum called me on the phone.

"Amos, this is Charlie Hewitt. You will be pleased to know that I have selected you to be on the publication board at the Arts Forum. We will meet tonight and we desperately need your fresh outlook and creativity."

I thought that Mr. Hewitt had gotten the wrong number. Maybe there was another Amos Holmes living in the county. What in the hell did I know about art? I had been quite good with crayons but that had been years ago. I do wonderful things on the walls of men's toilets but can one really call this art?

At first I thought of refusing the honor. I knew that my contribution would border on zilch and the whole thing could be very embarrassing. But then I thought about the prestige involved in being associated with the Arts Forum and I decided to give it a try.

Tuesday night I went over to the Forum. I was met at the door by this strange figure that remotely resembled a human being. The face was covered

with an indescribable amount of hair, the pants were smeared with a thousand streaks of paint, and the smell of wine was overpowering.

"I'm Charlie Hewitt" said the strange figure.

So this was the great Charlie Hewitt. You could tell he was an artist because he had a palette hanging around his neck and a paint brush sticking from his navel.

There were three other people in the room and Charlie introduced me. "Amos, I would like for you to meet Gerald Pannick."

I shook hands with this handsome young man, and said, "Gerald, it certainly is a pleasure meeting you."

"I am a poet" cried Gerald, "And I wrote this poem in honor of your coming here today....."

Placid hearts that greet
the shadow's morbid fresco
Lips softly parted
tender love...
to rupture in the storm...

Gerald looked very pleased with himself and I wanted to run the hell out of that room. These people were dangerous and could be detrimental to my health.

Charlie then introduced me to Jane Perkinson and Timmie Daugherty. Both of these gals were beautiful and

built like you know what. Maybe this meeting wasn't going to be as bad as I thought it was going to be. At least the presence of these two females gave thought to stimulating possibilities.

Charlie stood up, and said, "We are gathered here today to kick around some fresh ideas. I have an open mind and will be receptive to any creative suggestion."

"Why don't we" said Gerald, "do a book of my poetry?"

"We've done two of your books already" replied Charlie, "Are there anymore suggestions?"

"Let's do something on ghost stories" spoke up Jane Perkinson.

"Excellent idea" shouted Charlie, "Timmie, could you go home tonight and write a book about ghost stories?"

"I'm awfully sorry" said Timmie, "I'm in the midst of painting a humorous mural for the Taj Mahal and I'm just about to take my bar exams...and...of course...I'm doing that bust of Commissioner Millison...and....."

"Right on" cried Charlie, "To hell with ghost stories. I didn't like the idea in the first place."

Both Timmie and Jane had their skirts hiked up about six hundred inches above their knees and I was certainly having creative thoughts. Charlie was drinking his second bottle of wine and Gerald was shouting one of

his poems....

The crow spoke loudly
the dying word
Useless striving
Voiceless pleading
to still the wilted rose

"Next week" said Charlie, "I want 1600 local artists to do a huge mural that when laid flat will cover the Chesapeake Bay. What do you people think of that?"

"Wonderful idea" cried Jane.

"Simply fabulous" cried Timmie.

I thought Charlie's idea might impede shipping on Chesapeake Bay but I didn't say anything. I had a feeling that these people were now going to ask me for my creative contribution. This would be the time that Amos Arthur became a valuable member of the Arts Forum.

Charlie stuffed the wine bottle in his hip pocket, plucked a few moths from his mustache, and led me over to the door. When I was outside (completely baffled) Charlie said, "I can't begin to tell you how pleased I am that you could come. Your input...your creativity...has been an inspiration to all of us. What would art be without people like you? And I want...from the bottom of my heart...to thank you for the brilliant suggestions that will most assuredly bring good things to the Arts Forum."

"You're welcome" I mumbled.