

## **Joefiles 221**

Block & Warp America 2022

## **Omicron**

Was a bully  
Uninvited to the  
Party  
Spilling the good booze  
And smoking your greens  
As the moon hissed at the cats  
And Earth hummed like  
An ailing patient  
About to  
Get sucked up into the  
Hospital posing  
As a UFO in  
An  
Unreal charade  
Known  
As  
Now.

**I just passed a guy**

in late January  
in the deep morning cold  
with one headlight  
on his Volkswagen  
& wondered  
if his name was  
Jacob  
& if he was  
listening to  
Bob Dylan.

Hipster bowling party  
Is the new  
Incognito Illuminati party  
Where they decide if the  
Nickel dies and  
If the creator of Covid  
Is the  
New Jesus.

**Warp speed to yesterday**

Is what we are all

Doing now

As the Delorian readies to

Run out of gas and

The genie hiding in the backseat

Is ready to grant us 2017

Again to slay the orange monster

That wrought

The virus

On our Children's dreams.

**The farce**

of

The truth is that

It came

From

A well oiled lie

Microwaves by the priest

Who could never be

A reputable rabbi ..

**Show stopper**

Swept through town

To a bunch of

Novices that

Never knew

The future

Or

How the past can

Be easily erased

Away.

**The dream**

Is the only

Thing that needs to

Be

Salvaged if that flip house

Begins to sink

Into

The crocodile jaw....

**My childhood friend**

Bill Denny

Loved Billy Joel

And I think

The anthem

Only the Good Die Young

Is a fitting

Musical

Epitaph for

His glorious existence.



**Lately I have**

See a cascade of  
Strewn muffin bottoms  
all over the sidewalks  
As I peddle my two wheels  
Away from the mouth of sugar  
And into the tops of  
A deep,  
Dark,  
Glorious  
Space.

**My wife pointed up to the moon**

last night  
As it hung there  
With cold care  
& a big foggy circle  
around it  
& said that  
It means a storm  
is coming  
as we both  
Stopped in unison  
looking up into  
the unseasonably  
warm winter  
2022 night  
Hoping  
For  
Good times  
Like 2026.

## **The city bus**

has a  
digital message  
above it's entry  
that says  
'Face mask Required'  
here in these  
2022 times  
As everyone  
keeps their  
fingers crossed  
as tightly  
as possible in these  
Calmer days  
While the storm  
Comes about  
Like an evening reporter  
Spitting out  
Numbers  
Dresses in all red.

## **I interviewed a jazz musician**

From Iran  
the other day  
and asked him  
if the environment  
in his country  
groomed him  
for our Covid times  
and he said  
that America  
Had no idea  
and that's why  
this is so difficult  
for everyone  
because half of the world  
was already  
wearing a mask  
and dealing with situations that  
would be considered  
An out  
And  
Out  
war  
Much  
Like  
Now.

**Faded paper demos**

Is a

Band name

I'm going to hold

Onto

Once a get a handle

On my kalimba and

A good

Vibes

Cat.

**There's one particular bend**

in the road  
where large hunks  
of furniture are  
housed  
in the morning traffic  
That people are  
laughing about  
as the dirtied  
Urban interstate  
living room  
begins to get filled  
so everybody's good  
& crazy for  
tonight's  
Promised  
snow storm.

**The early morning woman**

with

the beat up SUV

has a

bumper sticker

on the left side

kinda torn up

Saying

'Jesus is coming back ... look busy'

As she wakes up from a

Light red light nap

And the sun

Sends out an

Invisible starburst

Into our

Tiny god dreams.

**Just saw a squirrel**

run over the  
longest wire of  
electrical tightrope  
along a four-lane street

and it was

The most amazing

I have seen in

A long time

As we gosh

over all of

these athletes

& their TV skills

As the one tiny animal

did some thing

No

Human could

Ever

Pull off.



### **The residual Christmas gift**

From my dad  
was cooking a  
Red Italian sauce  
on Christmas morning  
& now it's  
Become my  
Gift to give  
As the generation  
Pang of karma  
Beats a drum  
Louder  
Than a meatball  
Falling from that  
Upstairs place  
We  
Presume  
Is heaven.

### **The old timer in Westport**

last night  
on the eve of  
Christmas Eve  
Had a huge speaker  
strapped to his  
Shoulder  
All old school  
playing Van Halen's  
Panama  
at full 11 blast  
Telling Santa myths  
That everything  
Is both Ok  
And not well  
Here in  
Non-fiction  
Land.

**I don't make much money**

off of my  
Jazz Radio gig  
that I put a  
Whole lotta hours  
into every week  
but when I get  
little notes  
or CDs  
In the mail from  
Musicians I interview  
& realize they also  
Get paid scant  
As the humble torch of  
Jazz gets moved on  
From the ghosts of  
Dr. Barry Harris  
And Dr. Lonnie Smith  
Into  
The golden  
Goblet  
That is  
The true  
Meaning  
Of this  
Very existence.

## **The only thing that Donald Trump has done**

to this world  
is create  
a bunch of  
entitled white instigators  
and that will be  
his lasting legacy  
As everybody wonders  
about him running  
for office in 2024  
While I keep remembering  
that if I live long enough  
on this planet  
I'm going  
to read  
in the history books  
that we will finally  
flush them all down  
the toilet  
like something  
he is and  
we will forget  
That stench legacy  
As his bully instigator  
Swagger  
Is a reverberating reminder  
That he was one of the kids  
in the world  
that just wasn't ever  
Quite popular enough  
at school or  
didn't get what  
they wanted in life  
&  
Selfishly  
Took revenge  
out on all of us  
As  
He exits stage left  
With the nickname  
COVID24.



**The irony**

of all these  
January 6 so-called  
patriots saying  
that we needed  
to bring the  
government down  
is that I completely  
disagree with them  
but believe in my  
progressive bones  
That each and everyone  
of these  
government representatives  
need to be fired  
and scabs  
need to come in  
On a train  
with their  
renegade ways  
to bring  
this shit back to  
something that was  
like the year  
1998.

**First it was**

the Red X

then it was

A waffle house

& now it's Popeyes

and I'm not sure

what's gonna

be next

As it might be the churches

Or it might be your home

Or it might just be the whole street

In this little Grandview town

As everything starts

to fold up quicker

than an origami

around three in the morning

without any more booze

to drink down it's

little paper funnel.

## **I just caught Wonder Woman**

swishing  
down the street  
with a cigarette in her hand  
& all I could see  
was a sign of the bar  
in front of her  
As I looked at her eye  
As we blare on a virus  
for this modern world  
May have something deeper  
and just then  
I noticed out of the  
corner of my eyes  
Superman escaped  
in the sky  
As the bat signal light  
went out  
and the only thing  
that we can rely on now  
are the regular people  
and hope there's a  
little bit of  
heroism  
left.



**The squirrels are scurrying around**

trying to romance  
the other squirrels  
with big  
huge bags of leaves  
and acorns  
trying to make  
sultry sexy salads  
so they can keep  
fornicating and populating  
the world with  
their little Squirrley bodies  
and hopefully one way  
or another  
they can genetically opt up  
So they won't be getting  
hit all the time  
because for something  
That can jump and  
be as agile as that  
there's every  
reason to believe  
that through  
Darwinian miracles  
they can  
avoid a car tire.

**As the woman with the Whataburger Christmas sweater**

waited in line for

15 hours to get

a cheeseburger

and fries

and a shake

As somebody survived Covid

and someone else

found out they were pregnant

and someone else found out they beat cancer

and someone else found out they got a new job

and someone else found out

that a random Miracle

was running

down their street

getting ready to

run right into them

like a ghost

with pure common sense.

## **The white cross**

on top  
of the massive church  
Up on Main Street  
sits there  
each and every day  
taking in the sun  
& the rain  
& the clouds  
& the birds sitting on top  
letting it all out  
& the people  
walking by  
& the guards floating by  
& the ghosts running into each other  
& it just sits there  
unmoving watching  
the only thing  
that we can depend on  
that won't change  
in this world going like mad  
As that little right white cross  
on top of that temple  
on the church off Main Street  
just looks out there like  
a bird  
we can  
all  
depend on.

**The hip-hop artist**

farted into  
the microphone

&

somewhere,  
somehow  
along the way

it became

a

Smashing  
number one

Hit.

**After I got our Coco dog positioned**

in my boys room  
I went back  
To lay down  
In the  
warm bed furnace  
trying to remember  
what I was  
dreaming about  
because I knew  
it was good  
but I couldn't  
remember  
exactly what it was  
that I mentally  
went through  
In the catalog  
of what it could've been  
I realized I started  
thinking about things  
that I shouldn't  
and then I was asleep  
thinking about things  
that I should have  
& may never remember  
As the world of wind  
outside  
Drifting  
With the clouds  
like big pillows  
and a  
Damn good  
dodgeball match  
above.

**Nothing like**

an early  
December  
warm morning  
with Stella by Starlight  
Via Miles Davis  
going over  
the radio  
as one of  
the infamous  
big truck guys  
get right on my tail  
with the bright shining on  
& because  
I went down  
a few clicks  
below the upper  
speed limit reaches  
& he just couldn't  
handle it with his  
own blend of music  
& haircut  
& aggression  
gripping the wheel  
of life  
like it's going to get  
strangled  
at any point.

**All of the jazz musicians**

talk about  
their hope  
for the world  
being more open  
& receptive  
& appreciative of live music  
& I keep having flashbacks  
to the world  
9/11/01  
& hope that something  
is going to  
stick out of this  
long world a pandemic  
we've all lived through  
As like nothing  
anybody's ever  
experienced  
& they're is still  
no end in sight  
as the beginning  
starts looking  
like the actual  
Alpha of our  
entire  
earthly existence.

**As I slip through the digital game**

of solitaire  
on my phone  
I realized  
That back in my 20s  
I spent years  
sitting  
at the old window  
There off Westport Road  
looking into  
the inner city  
of dreams  
& hustle  
& smoking  
thousands of cigarettes  
while I slipped  
through that  
deck of cards  
like a magician  
trying to get  
the right track  
For the right crowd  
to respond  
to the bunny rabbit  
That would  
finally disappear  
for good.

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The beauty  
and confusion  
of interviewing  
so many  
wonderful jazz cars  
is that I have  
these little vignettes  
of story  
that circle in  
my brain  
but I  
can't quite remember  
exactly  
who said it



like the guy  
that said that he saw  
Dexter Gordon  
At the Village Vanguard  
when he returned  
from Europe  
and the other guy  
They told me that  
Haiti has the lowest  
suicide rate  
in the world  
& the other guy  
That told me  
that Ringo Starr  
always eats a  
baked potato  
in his green room  
before he goes out  
On stage  
&  
the other guy  
That was so motivated  
to get into jazz  
because he caught  
Jazz Lincoln Center with  
Wynton Marsalis  
when he was a kid  
& the stories  
go on  
and on  
and do a big  
yarn ball of jazz wonder  
& I think I'm OK  
with all of this  
because I would  
count all of  
these musicians  
Mutual friends  
& their stories  
Are absolute gems  
And now our  
Collective narrative  
on this walk through  
our shared reality.

**The old boy**

in the  
big orange hoodie  
just threw down a  
big black bag of trash  
next to an old recliner  
That looks quite worn out  
Yet may  
still had some life  
in it  
That he's named  
Beauty  
&  
he looks like  
That kind of guy  
As he stares  
towards the house  
thinking about  
hunting again  
this weekend  
As an invisible tear  
of missing that  
Old chair  
rolls down his cheek  
& I'm sure he's gonna  
name that one too  
and it might just  
be called  
Buttercup.

### **The nightly weather guys**

last night  
predicted doom  
& gloom  
for a high wind day today  
and I just stopped  
for a minute  
to film the clouds  
moving quickly by  
As the sounds of  
Cousin Mary  
by John Coltrane  
Swept in like  
Needed clatter  
through those  
wet parcels of  
upper blanket  
Made for music  
Like Coltrane was  
made for  
Most moments.

**I was just in a meeting**  
with a couple of  
work colleagues  
& they were talking  
about their therapist  
& one asked  
if the therapist  
was any good  
& the other said  
they didn't know  
when the other one  
said they didn't know either  
& I thought  
About my history of therapists  
and I don't know  
If any are any good either  
And it made me think  
Where is the real help  
If we don't  
Understand  
The good barometer?

**Probably**

one of the  
more graphic things  
I call somebody  
when they  
cut me off  
going down  
the road  
is a  
bag of  
bozo meat.

**Just when you think**

the teeth of the  
pandemic  
are starting to  
slowly go back up  
into the gums  
& things  
will get to a  
better place,  
a new evil  
variant comes out  
and runs around for  
A new name  
like Omni Cron  
Or Delta  
or whatever  
the next name  
is going to be  
& it's kind of  
like being a turtle  
right now  
As we all dip our  
head out a little bit  
& realize  
the sky is raining fire  
& slowly pull that head  
right back in  
As holy shit war  
Rages  
& our shell  
Is  
The  
Antidote of 2022.

**Not sure**

how those  
that won't  
get a shot  
In their arm  
to prevent a global pandemic  
From continuing  
can really believe  
That a homing device  
Is in the syrum  
As the smart phones  
Are out forever GPS  
on planet dummy  
Jammed into  
A conspiratorial Twinkie.