

## **Our Twilight Zone / Outer Limits Marathon Weekend**

Did you ever have one of those days where it seems like you slept through some sort of earth changing event only to wake up and have everything seem different? That is what happened to us last Friday.

My wife and I spent most of the day around the house, just laying around and resting. About midafternoon we realized that we never had lunch so we decided to visit a Thai restaurant about half an hour away. The restaurant is located in Harrisburg, Oregon. Personally, I have never liked Harrisburg. It has been rumored that in or around Harrisburg there is a large Wiccan concentration. Just driving through the town, one feels the spiritual oppression. Add to that, that there is a large church there that strongly believes in "Replacement Theology," and it makes for one strange place.

We got to Harrisburg and found the Thai restaurant. There wasn't enough room to park in front of the establishment so I decided to park about 75 feet back, in front of a house. The people of the house were sitting in the front yard. I'm not used to driving my wife's little Honda so I brushed the curb with the tires and placed the transmission in neutral while I vented to myself about distances and such. I noticed the woman in the front yard approaching our car like she thought that we were going to park in front of her driveway, but when she saw that we were just making an adjustment she changed course and walked across the street. As we exited the car the homeowner's three dogs barked and my wife remarked that it was okay, meaning that she wasn't offended. The jerk who lived in the home answered, "no, it's not okay because I don't want my dogs on the sidewalk." I mumbled, "ever heard of leashes?" I guess that he didn't hear it. My wife felt the need to correct him about her intentions but I grabbed her hand and redirected her in the direction of the restaurant. I told her that talking to people like him was a waste of time, that he was just an ass and he wouldn't understand. We headed into the restaurant only to be greeted by a hostile waitress who didn't speak English well. She told us to sit anywhere but when we sat, she acted like she didn't like where we chose to sit. She gave us menu's and mumbled something as she walked away. She came back to take our order. My wife and I both like something called Pad Thai, so I ordered two Pad Thai's telling the waitress that my wife didn't want any spice and that I would have a 1 star, meaning just a little bit of hot. She mocked me, saying that 1 star is basically nothing. I let it slide but told my wife that the woman had just forfeited her tip. We ate and left.

My wife didn't want to walk back to the car so I agreed to pick her up closer to the restaurant. As I got to the car, I heard the jerk and his wife arguing about something and figured that these two were obviously what some might call, classic white trash. My wife and I are known to like dessert after a meal so we went to a place called Dari Mart. They have very good ice cream there. Some woman in a very large car was in front of us driving very slowly. I said to my wife, "I hope she's not going to Dari Mart, but guess what, she was. There were two cars to the right and this woman parked leaving one spot between her and those two cars. I pulled the Honda into that spot. While I had the door open and was getting out to exit the car the lady in the big car started to pull back out of her spot. I closed the door so that we wouldn't have an incident and got out of the car, only to realize that the woman had parked over two spots from me.

Things were starting to get to me and now that I'm a cogidy old man I express my feelings very easy and without regard to hurting feelings of people who piss me off. I got into the store ice cream line. I asked the woman what was wrong with people in her town that day. I told her about the Thai restaurant and the guy next door and then I told her that the small-town BS is exactly why I didn't ever consider moving to Harrisburg. Well, the real reason was and is that an old boss who abused me because of my Jewish ancestry lives in that town and attends the church I mentioned earlier. I thumb pointed to the woman from the big car who was waddling toward the front door and said, "don't even get me started on that one." I have to give credit to the woman working behind the counter. She agreed with me for the most part and she made me laugh. I asked her if she ever saw "Invasion of The Body Snatchers?" I said that people in her town were acting like the people after their human doppelgangers had been absorbed. She gave me the ice cream, I left the store and sat in the car with my wife where we ate our ice cream. So, about four spoonsful into my ice cream this woman (or a reasonable facsimile) walked from around the corner. I looked at my wife and remarked, "rode hard and put away wet." She had a glaze over her eyes. She was either on illicit drugs or she was mentally ill. She entered the store for all of five seconds and then came right back out, heading toward our car. I locked the doors right away. She walked past us and then walked down the street. I was now finished with my ice cream and asked my wife if she was okay if I drove and got us out of this episode of The Outer Limits, and/or Twilight Zone combination.

We arrived home and took a little snooze. Early in the evening, I suggested that perhaps we should head over to Sweet Home, to Safeway to get meat for the barbecue that we were putting on the next day. We hopped in the car and drove to Safeway Market. We were going to get out of the car when we noticed an older woman in a van that was trying to back out of her spot. As she backed out, I noticed that she was going to hit a pickup truck that was behind her.

Thank goodness the driver of the truck was in the truck. He backed up to make room for the old woman who would hit his truck if he hadn't been there. My wife and I looked at each other as if to ask the question if the Body Snatcher thing occurred in Sweet Home too. As we talked a gentleman in a gold colored Mercedes pulled into the spot next to us but facing out. He got out of his car and went into the store. As we talked about things my wife noticed that the Mercedes started to move forward. I told her that there was no way I was going to try to stop it. It rolled into an empty handicapped spot. I told my wife that it would be fun to call the police to report a car without disabled tags parked in a handicapped spot, but we didn't do it. We went into the store and we went up to the service desk to have the man paged so that he could move his car. My guess was that it was a manual transmission and the guy forgot to set the brake. He was paged twice but never came to the service desk. We looked for him in the store but never found him.

We found all that we needed for the next day and got into the express line. I noticed an old lady in front of me and she seemed to be waiting for someone. That, someone, was another woman that looked like she was ridden hard and put away wet. There are a lot of meth users and former meth users in this part of Oregon. I politely asked the younger woman if she would like to get in front of us to join her mother. She never answered but I moved out of the way anyway. She had two kids with her, one who was walking and the other in the basket. As they walked by the little narcissist in the basket said, "yeah, just get out of the way." I looked at him and told him that he was very rude. We got into the next line where we were attended to by a very nice young woman. I told her all about Harrisburg, the self-driving car and how rude that kid had been just a minute earlier. She remarked that it had been a strange day for her. As we walked away, I told her to beware of the Pod People. She laughed.

The next day I had to drive back to Sweet Home to get a couple of other things that we needed for that night. I prayed that things would be okay because the day before really had me aggravated. I picked up my three items and got into the fast serve aisle, behind a very nice older lady. As I stood there, I heard someone say, "Look out, I really need to get in here." I turned to find that it was the Pepsi guy who wanted to stock up one of the coolers that they keep at the end of each aisle. I didn't like his rude behavior so I answered him in German, saying "ya vol Mein Herr," in what must have been a little loud because people looked. The old lady noticed that I was upset. I told her that I was so tired of the younger people that have absolutely no social decorum, that they're rude and that they're only out for themselves, then I said, "It's that damn Millennial Generation, self-centered and narcissistic." The guy stood there and heard everything, but I really didn't care. The reason why people get away with bad behavior is that nobody ever

calls them out on it. I hope that the Pepsi guy went home that night and reflected on how much of an ass he had been. Maybe it will cause him to realize that he needs to change.

One more thing to reflect on is road safety, or the lack thereof these days. On three separate occasions, my wife and I together in either her car or my truck have almost been run off the road by people passing cars coming from the opposite direction. One woman decided that she would pass five or six cars causing me to flash my brights at her during the day to get her attention. It was a pretty close call. The real gem, however, happened this last Tuesday when we were heading to the store. We have to drive through a little town called Holley on our way to Sweet Home. The speed limit there is 45 mph and it is clearly a two-lane road (one each way) but for some reason some old woman decided that our lane was a turn lane, almost forcing us off the road. I've commented on Facebook that it seems that almost every day we read about a fatal accident on one of the small highways or on Interstate 5 here in Oregon. A couple of years ago we would read about such things maybe once a month or possibly every two weeks, but now it's every day, and sometimes there is more than one accident. What has changed in the past two years? The answer is simple, marijuana use was legalized. The idiots that used to be afraid to drive "high" now think that it is a right and it is taking a terrible toll. Add to that that one out of every three drivers that we have seen on I-5 are texting as they pass us or we pass them. AND, add to that that there are far too many truckers texting and talking on cell phones while driving. It's a zoo on the roads in Oregon.

Society has failed the tensile test. You've probably watched on television a documentary where they show stress tests on different materials. They will either press on or stretch materials to see what is called tensile strength. Basically, they see how many pounds of pressure or pounds of pull can be exerted on a material before it fails. Well, folks, society has finally come to the point where the metal of society has torn apart because it has been pulled too far. There are laws to keep things from being stretched too far but laws are only as good as the people who enforce the laws and those who prosecute the law breakers. We live in a totally lawless society, much worse than the lawless days of the 19th Century. It's time that people that it's okay to call out the pod people to let them know that their activities will not be tolerated. If you're not going to do it for yourself, then do it for your kids and grandkids. It might look like a battle that cannot be won, but if you educate one person that one person could influence many others. To quote some unknown person, "it's time to put up or shut-up." If you care then do something. If you don't care, or are a coward then don't say that you weren't warned while things were fixable.