“Paper is poverty,... it is only the ghost of money, and not money itself.” -Thomas Jefferson

“We don’t pay taxes. Only the little people pay taxes.” -Leona Helmsley

**Liberty Park, NYC**- If only Ms. Helmsley had a toenail of Jefferson’s eloquence I could have stayed home and slept today- instead of holding a sign protesting the death of the American Dream, facing east at a Halal truck parked in a plaza across the street with an orange cube, named in remembrance of the duty Ms. Helmsley’s husband felt bestowed upon him to tear down any hope I had for a future, with more aggression than David Hasselhoff on the Berlin Wall.

Could a tycoon of any trade ever have good intentions? Steve Jobs maybe, but I’m seeing all of my friends enslaved not by money, but by the pretty lights and angry birds of a handheld gadget. But at least Steve Jobs gave them the option of handing over their money- Wall St figured out an easier way. Yet before all of the bailouts and student loans and mortgage failures an internet did not exist. I couldn’t watch the Frat Party I was funding but still not invited to, and even more, I couldn’t see how amusing those bankers thought my misery was. And while the evil should have been assumed, with the option of ignorance, I could wish upon a burned out star that instead of orgies in the Hamptons, or blow-caine piled high as Himalayan peaks, maybe those Wall Street CEO’s were figuring out ways to make the economy work for me.

The problem now doesn’t appear to be that Wall St. has finally “crossed the line”, but more sinister than Scrooge McDuck, they are not even hiding how funny they find watching an unchained bull running through main street, tearing up fresh sod and maiming babies with hell
When did the American Dream actually die? Was it when Sitting Bull surrendered? When advertising was invented? When Arrested Development was canceled? I can’t turn to the hired hands of history for answers, the winners are trusted to write the story, and they usually have a lot to hide. And if I read any more Howard Zinn I’ll probably go sacrifice myself for all of those nice Jews showing solidarity across the street servicing Yom Kippur. Maybe the idea of the American Dream was just another false dichotomy designed to keep us confused enough to stay quiet. *Hard work amounts to some kind of success, if you fail it was YOUR ethic that wasn’t strong enough*. We were told it would work, our money was handed over in good faith. But this time, when we cashed in our cards the reward didn’t come. And that was enough to start a revolution.

These are soldiers living in Zuccotti Park. Students and adults looked at as organized crazies through the tinted windows of financial skyscrapers. Sneered at as direct enemies with one goal in mind- to put an axe through this great American system that carried the tiny district of Wall St so high to the peak of all plutocrats. The Lord’s of this district do not fear elections anymore. It matters none which candidate might take the throne. Of who will tame the bull. Of who will break it’s shackles. The White House could be renamed The Barn, or the Bullring. Wall Street has turned the capitol into a giant feeding trough for the super rich. But what they (and the white shirt police sergeants growling orders at their blue-collar minions) are quickly realizing is that even while owning the government and the media, they don’t stand a chance against 99% of the population.

I saw the proof of this at the exact moment I fell in love Wednesday night. Old Sitting Bull pulled some celestial strings, and we found ourselves taking the streets thanks to an Indian Summer committed to the cause.

The police blocked off Wall St. They stood like the Great Wall of China behind a metal fence. No female cops were making overtime at that hour, only 300lb Vin Diesels on a strict diet of hamburgers and steroids- horny for nothing but protest blood and violence. The cops
wouldn’t let us pass, but they had no shortage of insults and advice for us. Faggots. Spoiled. System Leechers. A particularly intelligent cop said, “even if there were 100,000 of you it wouldn’t change anything”. And when the crowd began to count down, and the only direction to charge was forward, I thought of my mother, and how it would be explained to her that through natural selection I’d ended up on the front lines, and some rabid pig had put a club through my skull.

There was no option of retreat and right before blast off SHE locked arms with me and screamed don’t let go. She was the first one to eat a can of mace and I took the ricochet. But as I went half-blind and looked for an exit she attacked like Cyber Sub-Zero, fists clenched, legs flailing, straight for the cop that had shot her. And she hit him. She hit the cop next to him too. I stood like an idiot while combat happened all around me and watched 90lbs go three rounds with an 8ft cop. Then we both got clubbed. I saw her again a minute later zip-tied and fried eyes screaming for help. I called for her name. She was blind but choked it out twice. And as she was tossed headfirst into the back of the paddy wagon I declared my love. Then I got hit again and her car disappear south down Broadway.

This revolution means something different to every single person in the park. But we all said peace to each other and screamed LOVE at the cops. After I watched HER take a beating for her commitment to America, and what it was supposed to stand for, I knew this movement would last forever. On that night they tried to put an arm on the crowd and the crowd grew bigger. Those who got abused didn’t go home. And their allies just keep pouring in. The press is confused. The president is confused. Our confidence is our weapon. And with no approval from the big guns we kicked this country back towards a right direction in weeks. The wind has changed. We’ve blown on to a track. Our wave will ride high. For Sitting Bull. For the old godless elephants- we have to succeed, this time there won’t be anyone left alive to try again “next time”.

xoxoxo
Scott Laudati