



Tom Pacheco

Singer/Songwriter

I had an odd dream... and we were all in it together...

I dreamt that we woke up to find ourselves in a strange world of the 21st Century with a real and uncomfortable feeling that we are all looking into the dark, open throat of a bloody abyss; passengers on a runaway train with a deranged engineer at the helm, hurtling along toward a cataclysmic wreck that our collective third eye of intuition knows is not only inevitable upon this track but perhaps imminent...

I dreamt we found ourselves on a trembling blue-green planet ruled by soulless corporations without the accountability of law or human conscience. We saw war and terrorism breaking holes through dams of culture that have thusfar kept the waters of darkness from flooding civilization with chaos and anarchy... Ancient parchment scrolls were unraveling across the sky and blotting out the open sunlight of rational thought as fundamentalisms of all kinds rained down a sleet of platitudes, tribal postures, ignorance and stupefying superstition. We marveled at how a glean of dull reflection magnified the profiles of churches, mosques, synagogues and shrines on the horizon as it obscured the face of creation...

I dreamt we saw the young people of America joining the military and its reserves because they saw it as their only chance to finance an education and avoid a future of endless years in low wage jobs at Slavemart and Burgerserf. Shaped for a career as cannon fodder in whichever war a corporately-controlled congress pitches them into, children- reformed as efficient killers- aim the high-tech weaponry they were trained to use after thousands of hours of priming with the Kill and Maim' video games that filled their childhood playtime...

I dreamt we saw nature counterattacking the odds of a genetic dice game with a chain reaction of plagues and mutant viruses as we powered our SUVs under factory-fouled clouds and the pulsing common air of Earth, now owned by global companies which fill it with electromagnetic signals that vibrate unnoticed within the membranes and cellular structure of our brains and bodies... And I dreamt that these same companies which now own the very spectrum bands of existence were seizing, for their own profit, all of the other necessities of life from the commonwealth of earthly birth; seeds, land and even the basic element of water, so that, very soon, all those who wish to remain alive can do so only by paying their toll...

I dreamt that cannabis, a measureless resource for renewable energy, clothing fiber, medicinal benefit, construction material and so much else, was declared illegal as pharmaceutical giants, in cahoots with "regulatory" agencies, endlessly advertize new drugs that are tested for safety by the same manufacturers that profit from them, sometimes with deadly results...

I dreamt that this strange world was run by shamelessly corrupt politicians more concerned with amassing personal wealth than ruling their countries with wisdom and care as a glowing tube mass hypnotized, paralyzed, distracted, misinformed and isolated us from each other 24 hours a day, 7 days a week...

I dreamt that a corporate vise of vicious control squeezed all references of peace, brotherhood and sanity out of the music they packaged for their privatized airwaves as the fascist-threatening voice of Woody Guthrie drifted away on the evening breeze...

In my dream, both parents in a typical modern-family home spent increasingly long hours at their jobs as children were abandoned to the mind-sucking tube and rooms filled with plastic gadgets while elder family members were sent off to old age homes to wither away and die alone... Everywhere there was a sense of psychic lostness; a cold, sad rain in every heart. Outside, on a perfectly beautiful day in July, we could not feel any sense of real joy within- as though a grey veil of uncertainty, unease and deep loneliness had been drawn down between us and a lovely sun, orange butterflies and the pink and blue wild flowers we could once count on to lift our spirit and shine in our soul...

I dreamt that a blinding fear was amplified on an invisible wind that swirled into nervous eyes which, in turn, squinted their focus upon the innocuous person next to them on the subway, projecting a nuclear bomb into his suitcase and a sociopathic iciness into his serial killer's heart...or was he a harmless soul, down on his luck, with a nervous tick afflicting his eye and arousing suspicion. Meanwhile, in this dream, a government that secretly hates their freedoms under the Constitution picks away at the people's rights with paper bills bound in iron bars, demanding that they sacrifice their liberties and their children's future for the alleged safety of their benign protection...

I dreamt that words like "reform" in this tortured land were codes for other words like "pillage." Paychecks and pensions, in this global nightmare, dwindled and vanished- much as the supposedly untouchable Social Security trust fund has been increasingly looted in our own world by successive administrations since the early 1980's to the point where the real "boom" of the Babyboom generation is poised to become the collapse of the entire social security system...

And, in that waking moment as we glimpsed the shadows of this nightmare leeching into a real world wherein our ancestors have suffered and died to achieve even small measures of relief from the deceitful tyrannies of the greedy and the powerful, I heard people ask "Why don't you write lots of happy songs? Surely that will help!" And I heard myself reply that I refused to fiddle the light fantastic as Rome burned or dance to the sucking sound of my uncle's job disappearing into China or India in a corporate shellgame designed by leaders with "multinational" masters bent upon destroying national economies, including our own, to build a global corporate empire in their own long-calculated vision of a "Slave New World."

I wish I could live in a world where I would never have to write a dark song again. But, I'd have to be an ostrich, burying my head in the sand to avoid a nightmarish tornado. Till the last breath I breathe in the real world, I expect to be out there on the barricades, fighting and hoping for a "rebel spring" to bring a resurrection of the ideals and dignity of a true yearning for freedom deeper than the symbols meant to represent it and a kindness and wisdom of spirit to serve as a beacon to a world tortured by cruelty and deception. I love my country too much to do anything less.

-Tom Pacheco