

Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

They Write by Night, “Trump in Hell” — in this episode’s poem and, elsewhere, in life

Suzanne Lummis · Wednesday, January 6th, 2021

Noir Now: Power and Corruption

Sometimes that “sweet smell of success” might be the scent you follow, follow... hither and — what comes next? oh yeah — *thither*, and never arrive at its source. Or else you find it, you seize it, *it’s yours* — everything you ever wanted, but . . . Somehow, it’s not as sweet as you imagined.

Take the guy who was till recently one of the most powerful men in the world, or at least he occupied one of the world’s most powerful positions. And he was rich as fk, still is, inherited millions to start with — then, mostly ill-gotten gains. Ill-gotten or shady. Or just plain smarmy. Faux high-class with a low-brow heart, that’s him. Now, he is not happy — no joy in that guy, no laughter, just impotent rage and self-pity. A dose of paranoia. Metaphorically speaking, he’s a pile of rotten fruit pulp.

The *Sweet Smell of Success* is also a 1957 movie with Burt Lancaster and Tony Curtis, mostly written by the left-leaning playwright, Clifford Odets. Fabulous jazz score, composed by Elmer Bernstein and played by the Chico Hamilton Quintet. I woulda liked to have sent a little love their way, but we get dinged if we use movie music. Those damn algorithms. They ding us and they won’t listen to reason. Anyway, here’s the story — there’s this hugely successful man and this other one who’s scrambling after success, playing the game. They get what they deserve. But not what they wanted.

The *Sweet Smell of Success*, yeah—it’s a picture for our times. ‘Cause corruption and greed — for money, for power — never go outta style. And some people never learn.

This episode of *They Write by Night* offers the promise of Sweetness but, even better, it delivers *SALT* — the debut of poet Christopher Buckley’s new literary journal.

– Suzanne Lummis

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z_0mvR7ztaI&feature=youtu.be

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