

The Parable of the Gong

There was once a young Discordian called Golden Rod. Early in his illumination, he wondered what season his country was in.

Perhaps it was in the season of Discord, on the cusp of Bureaucracy. Surely, Order was rising to noxious levels.

Or perhaps it was already Bureaucracy, on the cusp of Aftermath. Surely, Disorder was rising to obnoxious levels.

So in his quest for An Answer, Golden Rod sought out the Discordian monk Nopants. Nopants dwelled in a basement because it would be obscene for him to go outside. Golden Rod freed himself from his leggings and descended the stairs. Below, Nopants sat on a cushion in a gross lotus position.

"My wise friend Nopants, I have come to ask you a question," said Golden Rod, "What is Bureaucracy?"

"In India," said Nopants, "they tie elephants to trees using thin cords. An elephant could easily snap the cord, yet they remain tethered in place. Why do you think this is?"

Golden Rod itched himself and shrugged.

"When the elephant is young," intoned Nopants, "she is too weak to break the cord. She tries, but eventually she gives up. When the elephant grows up, she does not try to escape her puny bonds because she believes she will fail."

"So the cord isn't the thing keeping the elephant in place," said Golden Rod. He squinted at Nopants, "That's very interesting, but what does that have to do with Bureaucracy?"

"Bureaucracy," said Nopants, "is waiting for a red traffic light in the middle of the night when no one is coming."

Across space and time, a gong sounded.

Golden Rod left the basement and returned to the real world, thoroughly- confused. As he drove home, he ran five red lights. His mirth rose with each light. By the end of

the voyage he was giggling like a ninny at his newfound freedom.

Years went by and Golden Rod continued drive towards Aftermath. He ignored stop signs, blew through red lights, and opened his moon roof despite danger of falling rocks.

"Sweet Merciful Ass!" cried out Bung-Fu the Fool as he clawed at the dashboard. "You're gonna get us both killed!"

"Nonsense! I am self-emancipated from these mundane traffic laws," cackled Golden Rod. "I am a harbinger of Aftermath!"

"Do you always drive like this?" said Bung-Fu as he buckled his seat belt. Golden Rod nodded. "Always."

Meanwhile, the monk Nopants was wheeling his gong across the street towards his basement. He patiently waited for the light to turn red, then pushed the ponderous percussive instrument upon the pavement.

The collision made the exact sound of enlightenment