

# Ring Report Ring #170 “The Bev and Alouise Bergeron Ring” SAM #99

August 30, 2023 | Archived Famulus



## August 2023

President Ryan Stiner called the meeting to order with 24 people attending. He announced all the local magic attractions in the tourist areas and upcoming touring shows. We also got reports about the summer national magic conventions. The meeting featured a raffle of several effects and a bargain table with effects being sold.

The monthly show began with an excellent presentation by Dr. Ken Schreibman showing a smaller version of his optical illusions lecture, all neatly contained in a small wooden box. He used a cellphone camera and LCD TV monitor, so his demonstration was visible to the entire room. A standout was a wooden version of Paul Curry's Triangle where a matrix of square wooden blocks can be arranged to absorb extra blocks but remain the same size.

Mark Fitzgerald, our long-time member and popular local performer at the Hard Rock Café, showed a bill change with a mismade bill. He had a recently acquired a smoke watch and explained the usefulness of it in his close-up work.

Dan Stapleton did his own adaptation of Matrix Poker. It was an enhanced version of an Alan Wakeling and Jim Steinmeyer effect. Dan made two written predictions and put them in his wallet and laid it on the table. A 25-playing card square was formed face down from a five-by-five arrangement. On the backs of the cards were the numbers 1 through 25. 5 spectators were asked to remove a card from each row. When the cards were turned over, they matched the 5 cards that Dan had predicted in writing. The numbers of the randomly selected numbers, on the back of

the cards, were added, and the matched the amount of money in Dan's wallet, that Dan had previously predicted.

Greg Solomon showed some cute novelty items and then did the "Monkey in the Middle" card trick where a spectator's selected card is placed in the middle of the deck and appears between two cards.

Bob Swaddling had a delightful mental effect where a spectator counts down cards to a number that represents a time of the day when something significant happened in their life. Bob had a stopwatch on the table and when it was opened, the hour matched, and the color of the significant card had a different color back.

Dennis Phillips showed his version of the Boretti Sensor Box. He made it himself. A billiard ball is placed inside the box out as a spectator faces the other direction so they can not see what is in the box. They reach through a slot and feel what is inside as he verbally describes softness, and they feel a pom- pom like sponge ball. This is repeated with several other items, such as a nail that feels like rope and a dry rag that feels wet. This was a sensory illusion using touch rather than sight or sound.

Closing out the show was Mike Berlant who had a red back and blue back deck. Both he and a spectator selected one card in their deck and put it in the other deck. When fanned, both cards were the same. Mike then did an impromptu and fun exhibition of several one-balloon animals. He is a local realtor and explained how he gets great opportunities to hand out his business card when making balloon animals for families that he meets.

Dennis Phillips



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**Meeting policy:**

**Face masks, if you wear one, will not be ridiculed. We are respectful that some people may be immunocompromised.**

**Stay prepared, healthy, and informed about current Public Health issues and contagious outbreaks.**

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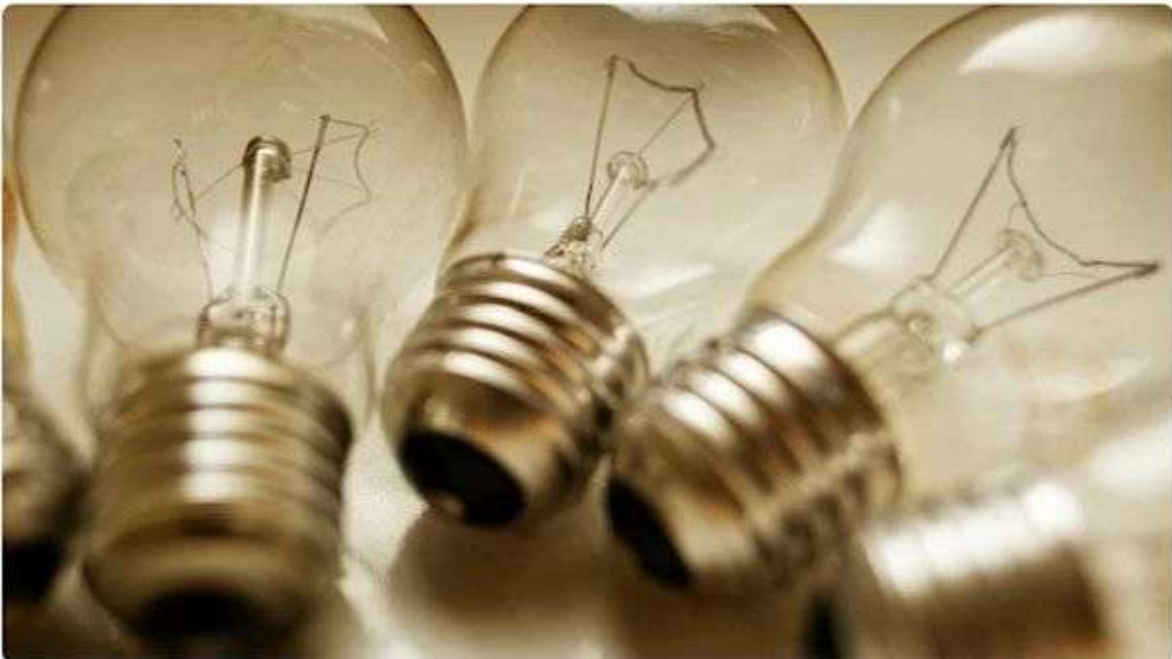
## **Dennis Deliberations ... Ring # 170, Assembly #99**

### **“The Bev and Alouise Bergeron Ring”**

Verschlimmbesserung is a German noun word *for an attempted improvement that only makes things worse*. To prevent this, in English we say, “Don’ fix it if it ain’t broke”.

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Magic is a bit dimmer today!



## **Ban on incandescent light bulbs**

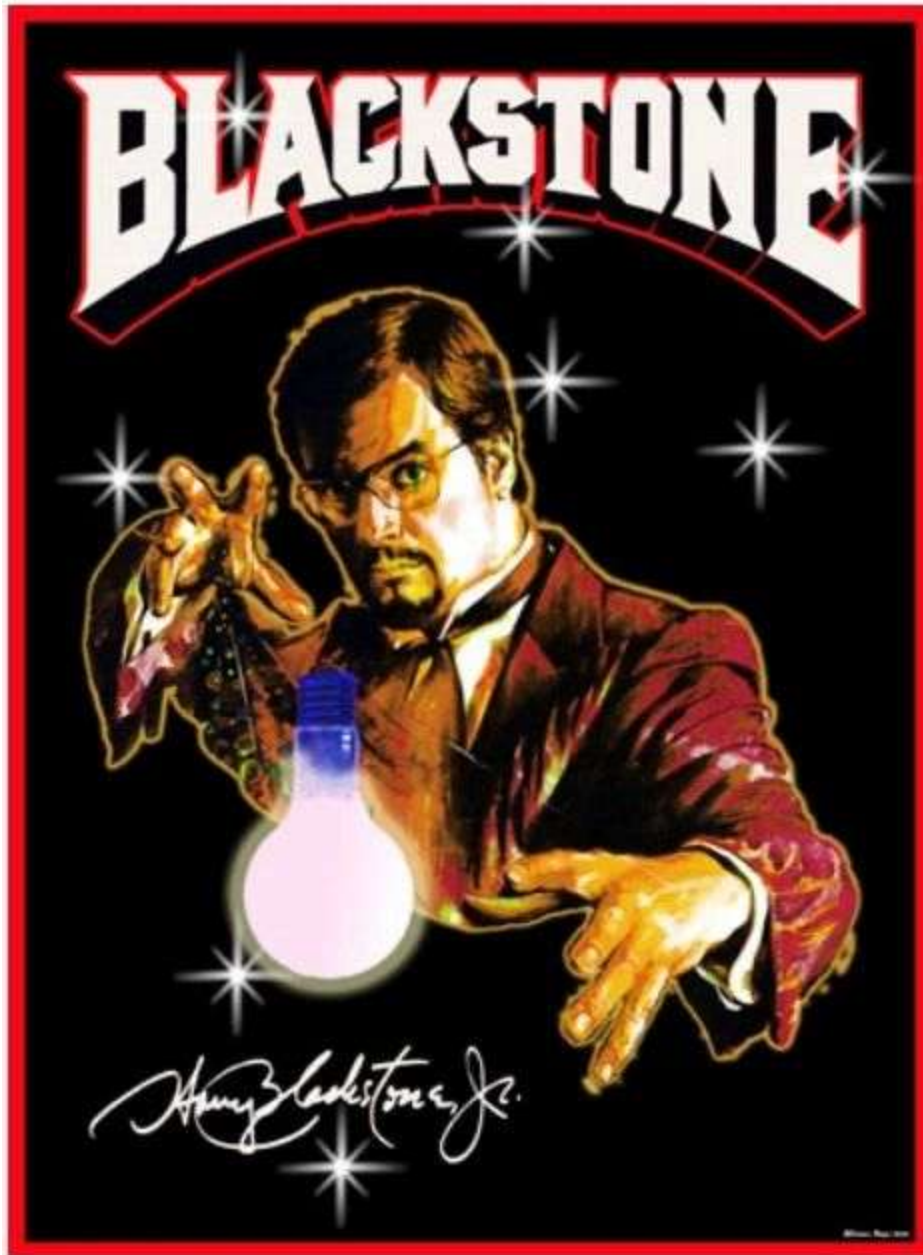
Luckily, this gentleman went to that “Great Incandescent Lightbulb in the Sky” before his act was banned...



Likewise with Father and Son







The ban was circumvented after a partial 1980's ban by allowing "rough service" bulbs and "decorator bulbs".

I guess almost all of that is expiring. Some appliance bulbs ( heat lamps, ovens and refrigerators) are still allowed.

Little girls can no longer get bulbs for their E-Z bake oven toys.

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Here is a great version of the classic “Wizzy Dizzy Milk” by the late Paul Daniels.

The effect originated in Edwin Hooper’s Supreme Magic in England and was also made by Abbott Magic in the 1960s.

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"Warren and Annabelle's Magic" , a popular magic showplace has been totally destroyed by the devastating wildfires that raced through the city of Lahaina on Maui Island, Hawaii.

So far, we have not heard of any injury to the magic performers.







Here's the website for the theater: (Before the wildfire destruction)

<https://warrenandannabelles.com/>

We can only hope that Warren Gibson will choose to rebuild it.



**Who's on Stage**

We have some of the best close-up magicians and comedy magicians in the country. These world-class performers are simply not to be missed.

You'll see performers like close-up magician, John Shryock, performer at The Magic Castle in Hollywood, and former magician at Caesars Magical Empire at Caesars Palace in Las Vegas, or see international and national award-winning close-up magician, John George, who performs at The Magic Castle and has performed at various Hollywood red carpet movie premiers.

Get ready for laughs with Dana Daniels and his psychic bird, Dwayne. Dana has been awarded Comedy Magician of the Year... twice, and also performs at The Magic Castle. Or get the chance to see Chris Blackmore, a hilarious comedy magician, who's performed over 6000 shows at Disney and is a much sought-after entertainer for Fortune 500 companies.

We're excited to announce that Maui-born close-up magician, David Kuraya, has joined the lineup at **Warren & Annabelle's Magic!** He's one of Hawaii's most popular entertainers and was the magician for Tony Robbins' recent seminar on Maui.

See who's going to be on stage



Warren Gibson, creator and founder of **Warren & Annabelle's Magic!** dreamt of creating a special place for the best-of-the-best close-up magicians and comedy-magicians to perform. Over 23 years ago, he chose Maui to open one of the only close-up magic theaters in the United States.

Warren is a highly renowned showman and one of the country's premier sleight-of-hand magicians and entertainers. He's performed more than 10,000 shows in his Lahaina, Maui theater.

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It has been 6 years since Celeste Evans left us:

She appeared at Dan Stapleton's "Magic History Conference" for an award and interview.

**Celeste Evans was a trailblazing female magician who toured the world.**

**THE CANADIAN PRESS**

CASSANDRA SZKLARSKI, reporter

**PUBLISHED AUGUST 2, 2017**



**Celeste Evans was a rare female magician who launched a globe-trotting career in a field dominated by men. Toronto-based magician Julie Eng says Ms. Evans 'cut the path' for women in magic today.**

Canadian magician Celeste Evans, a headstrong entertainer whose trailblazing career took her around the world during an era that largely discouraged such female independence, died in 2017.

The B.C.-born illusionist was largely self-taught and loved to perform, despite facing huge hurdles in an industry dominated by men, said her daughter Evanna Brening from her home in North Carolina.

Ms. Brening said her mother died of old age on July 25, 2017, in Charlotte, N.C. She was 85.

"She was completely something different," said the 47-year-old Ms. Brening, who joined her mother onstage once she learned to juggle at the age of 7.

"When we would go to the conventions, we would tell the young kids: 'Find your niche, don't be somebody else, find out who you are and create a character around that.' And that's what my mother did, she created a character around what God gave her."

A curvy brunette with Jane Russell looks, Ms. Evans offered a uniquely feminine take on a craft that generally relegated women to the sidelines. She began seriously training in the late forties and performing in the early fifties.

And it didn't take long to establish a globe-trotting career that was in part, Ms. Brening admitted, fueled by her good looks and penchant for racy Rockette-style costumes.

"The women before her were more [often] wearing men's suit jackets or these big dresses where they can still hide things. Then my mom comes along and the magicians to this day do not know where she hid her birds. She produced eight to 12 doves wearing a strapless, sleeveless gown."

Toronto-based magician Julie Eng said she grew up hearing about Ms. Evans as a kid in Victoria. She met her for the first time in 2010 at a magic conference in Chicago.

Ms. Eng, who was ushered into performing by her magician father, said she couldn't help but be inspired by Ms. Evans.

"She was astounding to me. She's a stunning lady and she was very confident, very feminine, very strong and yet incredibly elegant and really held her own," said Ms. Eng, also executive director of the arts organization Magicana.

"Women in magic today is nothing like it was for her. She cut the path."

Ms. Evans was born in White Rock, B.C., on Dec. 31, 1931.

She caught the magic bug at the age of 9 when she came across a couple of boys doing tricks at the beach.

They were throwing knots into silks that would then disappear and she immediately wanted to try it herself. But they dismissed her.

"So, she said to them, 'I will learn magic and I will become famous for this,'" Ms. Brening said.

"For years [afterward] they had always tried to get her to be their assistant and she vowed at that time, 'I will never be your assistant, I will never be anybody's assistant.' And she never was."

Ms. Evans bought a magic book by selling berries to tourists. She made her own props and mastered the knot trick. It would become her opening trick for some 60 years, Ms. Brening said.

"She still could do that trick even days before she died," Ms. Brening added.

As her career grew, Ms. Evans moved to Vancouver, then Montreal, then Toronto and then New York. It was there she reinvented herself as a svelte performer who would mix glamour with magic, shedding 40 pounds so she could shimmy into dazzling costumes for a stage show unlike any other, Ms. Brening said.

Over the course of her career, she would entertain loggers in Alaska, Canadian troops in Korea and audiences at Playboy clubs in Chicago, as well as touring throughout Asia. Ms. Brening said she performed for kings and queens and headlined her own Las Vegas show in 1962.

It wasn't easy. Discrimination came from fellow male magicians, some of whom resented her success, Ms. Brening added.

"So the rumors started flying about her, just nasty, nasty rumors. She had to overcome that."

Ms. Evans wed her booking agent in December 1962, but married life did not slow her down, Ms. Brening said.

She continued performing during her first pregnancy and was onstage the day before she went into premature labor.

Ms. Brening arrived a year later via caesarean section and just two weeks later, Ms. Evans was back performing with a girdle holding in staples that ran down her stomach.

Ms. Brening credited her mother with instilling in her a confidence to tackle anything she desired.

"If somebody told her, 'You can't do it,' she'd prove them wrong," said Ms. Brening, who became a nurse who performs the odd magic trick for her patients.

"She changed the face of magic for women today. There were women magicians before her, but none like her."

Ms. Evans was predeceased by her first husband, Harry Breyn, and second husband, Herbert E. Mitchell. She leaves Ms. Brening; son Evan Breyn; and two grandchildren.

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## **Mentalism Chair Steal**

Effect: A large 8 by 11 manila enveloped is seen hanging high above the stage. The magician has a large marker board and asks a volunteer to come on stage and go on a dream vacation. The volunteer then pulls the imaginary facts from their head. "The vacation costs \$9,238. The airline was Jet Blue, and the trip was to Jamaica and Margot Robbie was on the



same flight...”) These are all made up by the spectator and no one else could possibly know.

After six or more “facts” are told in the imaginary story, the magician asks for a chair to be brought out because the envelope is above his reach. He brings down the envelope and opens it and hands the large sheet of poster paper, inside, to the volunteer. The volunteer reads the story the magician had written earlier, and it completely matches the volunteer’s imaginary story.

Secret: This is the classic mentalism prediction method where an assistant backstage fills in the specific details, with a felt tip pen, as the volunteer is making up the story. The folded paper story is then secretly introduced into the envelope or box or chest or plastic tube.

My contribution is that I simply steal the prepared folded paper off the back of the chair that I use to climb up to reach the large, suspended envelope. Unlike previous versions, I do not switch the envelopes.

I originally created for someone who wanted to have a hanging chest and lower it and pull out the envelope. I accomplished this without the usual expensive trick table and expensive trick chest.

The box was a regular office file box and the envelope inside was empty. I added a holder on the back of a metal folding chair.



When the chest was lowered, it was placed on the chair and the large envelope removed. It was a simple matter of holding the envelope against the front of the chair back and stealing off the prepared packet.

You do not have to use a chest; you can just have the large envelope suspended high up on a ribbon with a paper clamp.

Here is the packet waiting in the holder on the back of the chair.



The holder is made from plywood and an aluminum strip, and it attaches magnetically to the back of most metal folding chairs. It can also be stuck on the back of almost any chair with duct tape.

In fact, I have even improvised a holder with tape and poster board in an emergency.



Here is what the “steal” looks like from the rear. You place the manila envelope against the front of the back of the upright back of the chair and clip the paper in your fingers and then keeping it behind the envelope as you open the envelope and pull it down from the back as if you are appearing to pulling out of the envelope. Make sure the open flap is to the front, so the audience does not see you are pulling it off the back.



The envelope covers the steal.







Then I realized that this whole routine could be done “Confabulation” (Koran-Shaxon) style where the magician himself prepares the paper behind a 12 by 18-inch marker board by double writing the story facts on the board and in the blank spots in the story as the volunteer is making up answers.

The chair is folded behind the nightclub table and leaning against the table. When getting the folded chair from behind the table, the board is held vertically and momentarily rested on the nightclub tabletop, it covers you moving the packet from the back of the board and allows the magician to load the back of the chair.

The chair is then brought out, by the magician and opened to stand on to reach the hanging envelope.

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Dan Stapleton says it is Tony King, his friend...real name Liebel.

Here is an expanded Demo reel by Magik Markus from Poland

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O5Mdbc9EKcE>

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**Here are a few of the all-time comedy classics.**

*“Give me your hand. No, the clean one, oh it was the clean one!”*

Although the construction of this joke is funny it is often delivered by magicians too young to be able to pull it off and at best it sounds smarmy and arrogant. I have never really seen this one work but then anyone who has mastered comedy is likely to leave it well alone.

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*“Make your mind go blank...oh that was quick!”*

This is a very old line but timed correctly can get a great response if the comic persona fits the gag. Often used by mind readers and although I have seen it fail miserably for some it is “a banker”.

\*

*“It was my fault I picked you!”*

Used by the magician when something fails or appears to fail. The line is delivered to the audience about the volunteer. If the dynamic is right the joke can sail but the relationship between the helper and the magician has to be just right and all too often it comes across

as arrogant or just plain confusing. I watched one magician use this line night after night with no reaction; I couldn't understand why he didn't drop it.

\*

*"It's very rude to ask a woman her age...how much do you weigh?"*

I have to confess there was a time when I used this joke and it got a huge reaction. I have dropped it to try and keep my integrity, but it is a very clever line when used correctly. It is very important not to deliver the line to a woman who is on stage, they are far too vulnerable, and it will come across as cruel, even if the woman is a professional model. It is a joke best delivered to an imaginary woman in the fourth row. Creating the motivation for such a line is down to scripting. This joke may not read funny but when it works the laughter is like a gunshot going off.

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*"Take them out of the box first."*

Often used during the performance of an incredibly clever trick called the invisible deck. The volunteer is asked to catch an imaginary deck of cards. He or she is then asked to shuffle them and once the helpless volunteer starts the magician chips in, "take them out of the box first". It would be wonderful if the volunteer in a moment of psychopathic rage turned to the magician and hit him squarely on the chin. I have seen this line delivered one hundred times at least and it is yet to happen, but we can hope. The reason I object to this line so much is as follows. The trick is an easy one to perform yet completely baffling, leaving our magician credited with skills and thinking which is not his own. Our volunteer is asked to catch an imaginary deck, (please are we in nursery?) he is then asked to shuffle the imaginary deck (apparently, we are in nursery!) The volunteer has two choices, one is to tell the magician he is an immature idiot and leave the stage, and the other is to accept his fate and join in with this ridiculous charade as his friends watch on, filming it on their phones for YouTube. As soon as our volunteer agrees to join in the magician slaps him down with the oldest put down line in the book. Yes, this joke can work but surely, we can do better.

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*"Where are you from...I'm sorry...no I heard you the first time I'm just sorry."*

So the magician asks his new friend and assistant onto the stage and during the normal comedy banter of asking their name, profession etc., they ask where the person is from. "Apopka" they reply. The magician retorts, "sorry". The unsuspecting helper repeats themselves, "Apopka", probably a little louder and with some irritation. The magician then

tops it with, "No I heard it the first time, I'm just sorry!" Wayne Dobson a very successful and funny magician made this line work consistently, but it needs a level of maturity to get it right. For example, if your helper tells you they live in Bay Hill or Winter Park , responding with, "I'm sorry" doesn't really work. Equally, well if most of your audience is from Apopka and you respond in this way you are hardly likely to make friends.

*"This is a permanent marker, it had permanent marker written on the side until it rubbed off."*

So many magicians use it and I've never seen it get a laugh. Need to try harder.

\*

*"Wanna see the fastest card trick in the world? "(magician doesn't move)" Wanna see it again?"*

(This is old, but a lot of people haven't heard of it.) OK for table hopping, One of my favorite patter lines....perfect in coin tricks.

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*"There are 3 types of people in this world...those who can count and those who can't."*

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*"I take this length of rope which is about a foot longer than ropes of the same length I bet your thinking at this time."*

\*

*"Would you like to see me do this balloon sculpture backward?" (Turn around).*

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*"I am one of the best Magicians in the country. All of the really good Magicians live in the city."*

\*

*"How many of you believe in telekinesis? Raise MY hand!"*

\*

*"I have kleptomania. But when it gets bad, I take something for it."*

\*

*“How do you make a blond’s eyes light up - shine a torch into her ear. Now, what’s black and blue and lies in the gutter - A magician who tells blond jokes.”*

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Here are the instructions for a Chinese “knock off” version of the “Automatic Tying Shoelaces” that was popularized by David Blaine on one of his early TV Specials.

The translator has marginal Chinese to English translating skills, or they are using a very poor computer translation program.

My guess is that they were trying to directly translate Mandarin Chinese to English by just looking up the literal meaning of the individual Chinese pictographic characters.

(some of the characters are at the left part of the page)

The limited Chinese that I learned was the Cantonese Dialect from a part time job that I had in college, handling the marketing and promotion for a Chinese restaurant chain in suburban Washington, DC.

If you read what is unintentionally hilarious, the “library of exposed pipe” should be in English, “the reel” and the “under the base tube” should be “under your trouser legs”.

I think the errors are obvious if you have some understanding of the Chinese characters, syntax, and idiom.

Prop.  
Tied with laces take-up device

Teaching:

1 performers shoes with white shoes.

2 shoelaces away for props buckle belt, the  
props.wo laces from his pants pulled feet,  
shoes have tied Good shoes into pants.

Only two props shoes With looks like a loo  
se shoelace. The

3 show, pretended not to notice the shoela  
ce things, etc. To be reminded of the mo  
ment, can do a very mysterious expression.

4 feet shake a few shoe laces, and then  
across the pants Click on the button spring  
buckle, exposed lace will receive Shrink  
inside warehouse, shoelaces shrink back

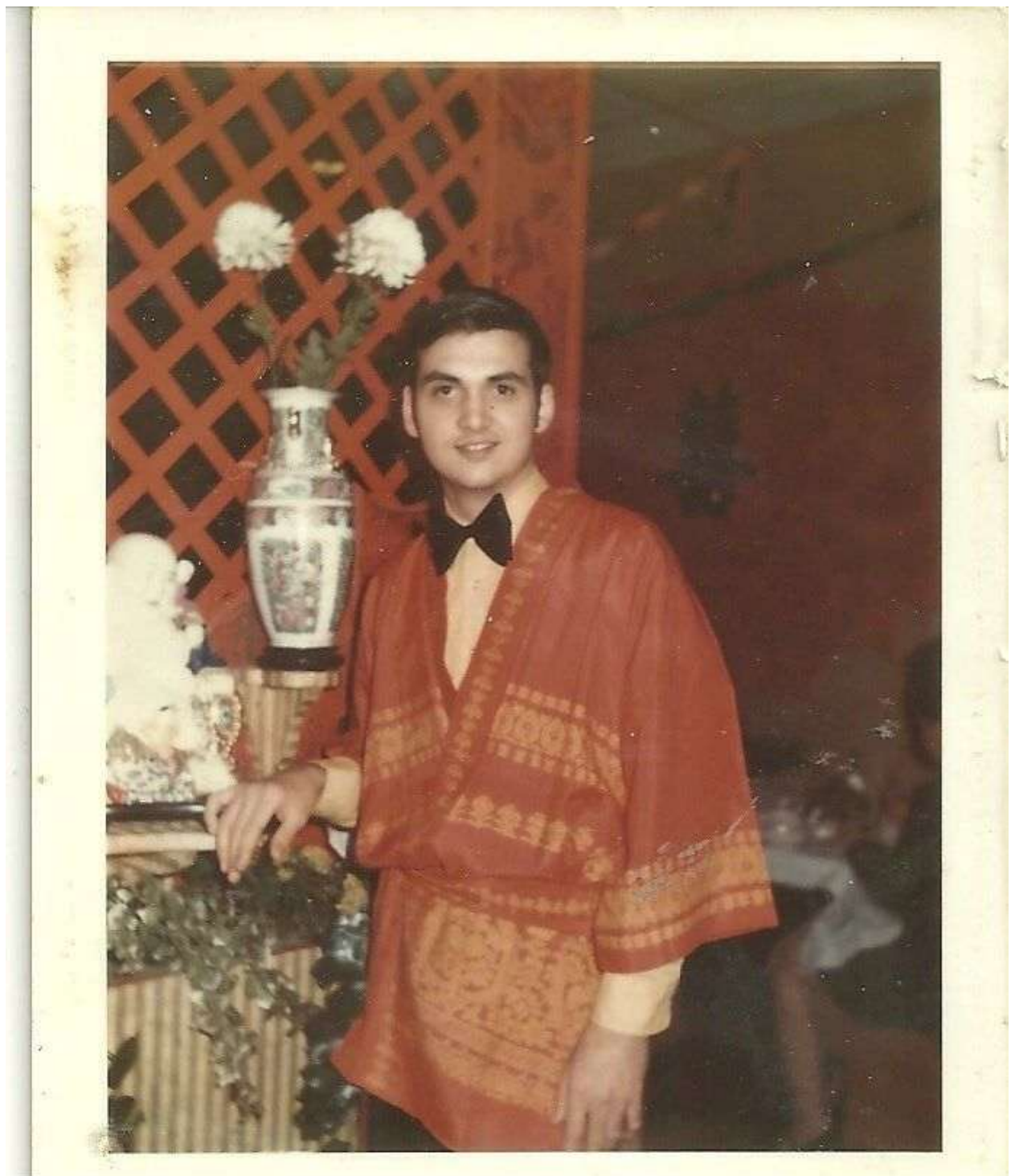
at the same time pulling a Under the base  
tube, to fasten shoelaces before from a libr  
ary of exposed pipe, To shoelaces. After the

5 show, shoelaces can completely to the au  
dience to check, not Will there be any flaw.

MADE IN CHINA



Here I am 55 years ago coordinating the Chinese New Year Promotion at the “Golden Pavilion” Restaurant.



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## **A TALE OF 3 Magicians: THE STUDENT, The EGO, and THE PRO**

**(from the Internet)**

Your act just got rejected by Penn & Teller Fool Us. How do you feel?

Student: Darn. Oh well! I sort of expect rejection, partly because I'm just a newbie and partly because my material is a bit tentative and derivative of magicians I idolize. But I know rejection is a part of the game, so I'll press on!

Ego: Hell! This is bad. This is horrible. My every attempt to get on Fool Us is a referendum on whether I'm any good as a performer. So, of course, any rejection makes me feel awful. Apparently, I'm a worse magician than I thought. I'm definitely worse than so-and-so, who got on P&T. In fact, now that I'm thinking about so-and-so, I feel even worse.

Pro: What was that? I didn't really notice any rejection because I was too busy having fun actually working on seven new things.

You got rejected ten times in a row. How do you feel?

Student: Yikes! This is pretty bad. I feel deflated and demoralized. Should I keep performing? Ugh. What should I do? I might need a break.

Ego: This is unbearable. It just proves what I was afraid of all along: I'm a fraud, and I'm no good at this. My cognitive dissonance is kicking in hard, because I had this self-image of "magician," but no one likes my act, least of all me.

Pro: Hmm. Interesting. One rejection isn't that meaningful, and could always be statistical noise. On the other hand, ten rejections in a row — especially from the same place — could mean that my act is uncalibrated to my goal of getting on P&T Fool Us.

This could be a blessing since it will let me look closely at why I'm getting rejected, and what I can do about it. I'll get some outside perspective on my material from friends, coaches or mentors, et cetera. This will help me stay objective. I won't abandon my goal of getting on P&T, but I will come up with new angles to get there. I think this will make me stronger in the long run.

Success! You got on Penn & Teller Fool Us! Some gatekeeper liked something you did. How do you feel?

Student: Wow! Awesome. I didn't expect that. But this is great. I must be improving.

Ego: Yes! Finally, some validation. I guess I'm a good magician after all. I'm definitely better than that other magician, so-and-so. Let me dwell on that for a minute and feel superior. My happiness about this accomplishment will be fleeting, however, because I'm already worried that I'm a fraud who won't be able to repeat this one success. Dammit, now I'm sad again.

Pro: Okay, great. Of course, I'm happy about this. I'll pause and feel some gratitude. If it's a big success, I'll celebrate it with friends. Then I'll get back to work.

What do you think about "making it" as a magician and becoming a big success?

Student: Wow, making it would be crazy! If and when I make it as a magician, I'll cross the bridge from amateur to big shot. Then I'll be a professional who won't make mistakes or get rejected or do anything bad ever again. People who "make it" are mysterious and intimidating to me.

Ego: Oh my god. I'm obsessed with "making it." It's all I think about. I hope that one day I make it. But secretly I worry that I'm not good enough, or that I'll never get lucky enough. To me, the world is divided into two camps: bad magicians who won't make it (most), and good magicians who will make it (very few). My artistic life is a constant, mind-numbing reassessment of which camp I'm in.

Pro: "Making it?" Not really sure what that is. Does that mean there's some possible moment when I transition from an imperfect magician to a perfect magician? Yeah, I don't think that's real. Improvement, discovery, learning — these things never end.

Yes, there may come a time when the amount of money I make from magic, or the number of people enjoying my stuff, passes some mental tipping point. That would be nice. But when that happens it's just a lagging indicator of the work I put in for years. Of course, that "work" will be a lot of fun and most of it won't feel like work at all.

Imagine that you have a "crazy writing idea," e.g. a dialogue where three hypothetical magicians (Student, Ego, and Pro) answer some questions about getting on P&T Fool Us. Should you write it?

Student: Hmm, that sounds interesting! I might write that, but I'd prefer if someone else wrote it. I'm still not that good!

Ego: No! I couldn't write that. I'm not good enough to write that kind of thing. Only a magician who has "made it" should be allowed to talk philosophically about magic itself. Besides, someone might call me out for being not good enough, and then everyone will know that I'm a fraud.

Pro: Do I want to write this dialogue? Yes. So, I'll write it. There are no rules on stone tablets about who can write what. When I have an idea that moves me but I hesitate, it's that asshole Ego (sorry, bud, no offense!) using fear to manipulate me into taking the easy way out. Maybe it'll be fun to write this dialogue. Or maybe I'll learn something. Let's find out.

Dennis