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Dear diary, based on what I see in my country, I reviewed Plato's *Republic*. Book VIII. 2,400 years ago he outlined the decline that democracies follow; aristocracy into democracy and then timocracy. Then decline into oligarchy (rule by the richest) and lastly, the tragic collapse into outright tyranny.

I wake in America. Each dawn I recognize less of it. Our fine and noble government, loathed by despots and autocrats the world over, is being dismantled. An Enlightenment experiment over 250 years in the struggle and all the blood of all mankind is in this Republic. It's why so many want it destroyed. The good that we are to the world – defending new freedoms, dictators want it dead. They seek the second Dark Age (the first, after Rome fell circa 410). But us?

The world had feared us for one thing: United. A powerhouse of Liberty and Industry on earth not to be toyed with. It's why they divided our nation by its color. Nothing united can be taken down for a shameful whistle and gold-dust.

Now a man with gold-for-eyes is dismantling the sacrifices he played no part in. We were sold a doozie called *efficiency*. The way this is headed, following historical patterns, it seems the oligarchs will decide if the poorest get to eat and whether the war veteran gets his therapy. Seems unreal to say, the richest four horsemen bought our house out from under us, courtesy of the high bought-court.

So child, if you are reading me long after the last Corinthian column falls, these are the same men that sold-out Greece (*Alcibiades*) and the great Roman Republic: Dante's eighth circle is SRO with these mofo-types; more on the way.

So now the richest got the keys and for these distant men who shine like stars above the roiling Styx, there is no *enough*. By them, cruelty becomes beauty. Now you know the age as we're blowing right past Plato's oligarchical era.

Child, now begins, *state-of-panopticon*; a police state with the slow strangulation of Civil Liberties through constant surveillance of accounts and activities under commodified law, for those who disagree openly. The man with gold-for-eyes, by accessing every single person's treasure is predicate for total-control. *Understand?* Disagree or wear the wrong hat – no pay; no insurance; no disability; no health care; no home, no say. This is the banal administrative state. Power to delete your life's paperwork existence? Dump your entire life on line? Think Kafka's *The Trial*. K is worn down by anonymity-absolute inefficiency.

But child of tomorrow, we'd already seen this before. Old hat. There was nothing new in it. It follows the same worn out pattern; discontent about inflation. Then a populist fans the discontent with promises of lowering prices but first a scapegoat is required. A specific group for people to rally all their hatred on. And then persecution morphs into execution. For once that old *primal-brain* kicks in and the mass-amygdala of millions explodes, oh la la baby, we all are going back up into the distant canopy of when trees were the only kings on earth.

So it is in this hour I've looked at the history of fallen republics for a path forward. For it is certain the four horsemen bought the house. They did not buy us. Down here in the street and on the farm, we don't sell that easy. Well, we never did before. That was never our DNA.

I grew-up a foster child of the inner-city. Everybody knew everybody. All the kids knew each other. It was wonderful and safe because it was all of us. Now the streets are quiet and the blinds are drawn and we grow farther apart by fear. I don't really understand most of what I see, like it just kinda got away from us.

America needs a few block parties, for now is the hour for us to reengage with each other as we have done for hundreds of our nation's years. Resew and

heal the fabric. We don't hate each other. We've been taught differences to fear and to fear differences. Difference is our lifeblood.

I pray this though, someday soon, that we all might set a chair out front. Something that says to the stranger next door, 'I am here.' Then some evening, go big time risk, sit in that chair. Then big-big risk, look around and wave hello, like it used to be just a little while back. Who knows what could come; would talking over some coffee be some kind of trauma risk? I know we'd be healthier for it as communities and families. We're a torn flag needing mending back to united. But I see very few capable seamstresses out there who know any patterns of unity.

It's what made our strength beautiful and feared. That's why it had to be broken by a 1932 textbook index. Division-by-scapegoat. It's all been done before.

But even now, behind the locked doors and pulled blinds, we still belong to each other and are responsible for each other. That's how it was just a little while back. The only thing that has changed between us is what we've been told and taught to think about each other. Cable - ain't a dang word of love in any of it.

There is only one way back for us; we must heal the fabric, like emergency stat. It starts with a little courage, a chair on an evening and a wave 'hello.' It's simple but, man, it won't be easy. Lord, if we must fall, must we fall as strangers like when Babylon fell? Oh where is this hour's Patrick Henry and Thomas Paine?

This is just about my final diary entry. Signing-off. There's not much left to say and poetry, well, it can't carry this. Time to find my place in healing the fabric of us. I know how to sew. Good luck. You can always reach me at 415-Radio East. P.S. I should say, you're not obligated to wave to the stalker or when it just doesn't feel safe to say hello. Strange days now, these of quiet streets and blinds lowered.