

# Tom Turtle at Luby's



channeling Martin Short\*

Heigh-ho my Hearties, 'tis I, Tom Turtle, back again from salty seas and sultry climes with tales of derring-do, peppered with astonishing wit and great perception.

As just one example of such high adventure, me and my party were recently at the famous Luby's in Glendale when Steve Martin asked if he could join us. He was alone and looking a little ragged, so we let him skootch in between Raven and Latka. Poor man, you would hardly recognize him, he has gained about 50 pounds since we all last saw him on *America's Most Wanted*, where he couldn't quit talking about the Zelenskyyy hot tub incident, despite the court order. Steve let us know his pronouns were his, her, and *its*, heavy on the *its*, and his interrogatives were "why not?" So that's fun.

We were very fortunate that there was just the one mass shooting while we were eating, so our luncheon was hardly affected. Even luckier that the FBI just happened to already be on premises performing a drill, so they were able to suppress the shooter with minimal loss of life and limb. In fact, I think of our party we only lost the Associated Press cameraman and Israeli interpreter.

Steve had been in "high dudgeon" all morning, as he he put it, since he had just discovered why he had not been invited to the King's coronation. Apparently his claiming to have been born a poor black child



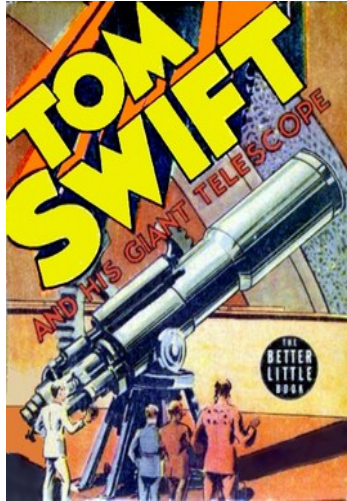
in rural Mississippi had rankled Camila Parker-Bowles, Duchess of Dracularia, back in the day and she had never forgiven him for it, she knowing full well as she did that he was from Alabama. Steve was also miffed that Chevy Chase was now claiming to have invented the whole arrow-through-the-head gag, taking credit for it on *Morning Joe* while groping Willie Geist under the table. Of course this just reminds us of how Chevy said in the *Playboy* interview that Willie could light his Christmas Tree anytime. Steve told us an interesting story about how Geist means ghost in German and Willie means bratwurst.



Other than that, Steve seemed to be in pretty good spirits, though he does appear to be having some difficulty adjusting to the new wardrobe. He couldn't quit playing with his bra-strings, which can be distracting or even confusing, especially when he is trying to convince you he just missed being cast in the new Stallone movie.

At that point in our luncheon Steve saw someone he knew across the room and motioned Steven Spielberg over, whom he introduced to us as Mr. Mount-Song. Ling-ling asked if he was Chinese, but Steven just explained that was his name in German. Everything was German that day, for some reason. Mr. Mount-Song was in a filthy trenchcoat and crushed hat, wearing dark sunglasses, and had clearly been drinking all morning. Turns out he had just been evicted by his homeowners association for not paying the hedge-clipping fees to Kato Kaelin. Kato had hired Johnny Cochran's stepson and together they had tossed Mr. Mount-Song out of his house. He was now squatting in Usher's abandoned gazebo. Meanwhile Kato had moved from the cabana into the mansion, where he was hosting the lesser-known cast of the Manson family and a ragtag band of illegal aliens who had all walked up from Tierra del Fuego, some of them on stilts. Word was they were plotting against Cedric the Entertainer's grotto next door.

But Mr. Mount-Song was in even deeper doo-doo, since the screenwriter's guild had discovered he had lifted the plots for all his movies from old H. Rider Haggard novels and Tom Swift books and cut off his residuals. Turns out *Raiders of the Lost Ark* was a transparent re-write of Haggard's *She*, while *ET* was lifted verbatim from *Tom Swift and His Giant Telescope*.



It was at this point I realized our waitress was Meryl Streep, in character (method acting!) and researching a part for an upcoming international spy thriller/action adventure biopic set at Luby's. I hadn't recognized her because she had an outrageous Kazakh accent, one that made Borat sound like Keanu doing a Chrysler commercial. Meryl wouldn't drop the disguise for a moment, but the *maitre d'* explained it to us. Luby's Glendale was to be the home-base of a cabal of time traveling super-spies, who could fly in kaleidoscope wormholes to any other Luby's in the world. If you think that is a stretch, I remind you of something you may not know: Luby's was founded in . . . 1947, year one of the CIA. It now has 6133 employees. Nuff said. A wink's as good as a nod and all that.

Disney has budgeted 300 million + 100 billion for promotion, sure they have a next-generation series of hits on their hands with this one. And why should they not, with a cast that includes Will Smith, Alec Baldwin, Jon Lovitz, Brooke Shields, Giovanni Ribisi, and the rest of the secondary cast of *Friends*. Nicki Swift has informed us that the girl from *The Facts of Life* is also in talks.

Always quick on my toes, I asked Nicki if she was related to Tom Swift, and as it turns out they *are*. Nicki is of course the twin second-cousin of Taylor Swift, four times removed, through her maiden aunt Shirley and half-uncle Ramone. In that line they are consanguineous with Eddie Murphy, who descends in direct line from Motep, High King of the Proto-Hittites. Same for Tom Swift, as we learn in the Sixth Series episode "The Sonic Breach".

True story: Gene Kelly was scheduled to direct a Tom Swift film in 1968 and they built a million-dollar zeppelin for it. But at the last minute the movie was scrapped. Wiki now claims that the zeppelin was sold to a theme park, but that is just a cover story. Actually it was gilded and used in *The Golden Compass*, afterwards being auctioned to NASA, who is using it to transport triffids on the hidden Venusian moon *Gladys*. It takes a turtle to know these things.

Hearing the commotion at our table, Governor Gavin Newsom sidled over from his 2-top to borrow some hair-gel and see if anyone had some taxes they weren't using. He nodded knowingly to Steve Martin, who was by then covered in gravy, and Mr. Mount-Song, who was having dry white toast and scanning Bulwer-Lytton's novels at Gutenberg.org for new ideas. I saw that he was reading *Vril*, but I doubt he will pursue that since he only deals in fiction. More likely we will see another modernization of *Zanoni*.

By then everyone at Luby's was feeling so glum they decided to hire Ricky Gervais to come over from table 12 and roast them, but even that didn't help. Ricky was just telling the truth and that wasn't really doing the trick. "Too close for comfort", you know. So they quickly staged another mass shooting in the parking lot and had Ricky appear to be taken out by snipers, blaming it on an old squabble between the owners of Luby's and ISIS. While the real Ricky was whisked away to Moldova, where they set him up as a casino capo and whippet breeder. John Malkovich is scheduled to play him in the movie, which Mr. Mount-Song has already penciled in on a napkin. So that's something to look forward to.

I remain

in a pile  
upon a log  
over the water  
third from the bottom  
secreting my own hard shell  
Tom Turtle

\*Of course Martin has since legally changed his name to Martin Tall, and would like everyone to know he is now identifying as extremely youthful and tall, to the point of being gangly. He asks that I stress the word *gangly*.