

I have a secret and I can't talk about it for thirty-seven more days.

I can only discuss this matter with those directly involved. I can't tell my ex-lover who remains one of my best friends. I can't tell one of my best friends who I suspect would like to be my lover. I can't tell any of my contemporaries or younger friends. I have to keep my big trap shut.

So I largely avoid people. I go to a lot of movies...more plot-oriented movies than I usually go to. I kill time on social media where I rarely have to say anything.

The stupid American president blathers on about his anti-Mexican wall. I was recently in Berlin...Checkpoint Charlie is now a tourist trap for Christ's sake. The world now seems divided between ruthless strongmen and the remains of neo-liberal free trade.

Meanwhile one of my neighbour's turds seems stuck to the shared toilet. I express disgust and then realize it's not probably his fault. Shit gets stuck... that's why it's shit.

There are thirty three days left until I am permitted to reveal my big secret.

Today is also the eleventh day of the year. The Big Revelation Day is the forty-fourth day of the year. Those double repeat numbers of course end with the mythical ninety-nine.

I still have to mind my big trap with my ex-lovers and best friends and working associates. Not to mention my landlord and my grocer and my bank tellers.

I don't have to worry about spilling the beans to my psychiatrist because I don't have a psychiatrist.

I must be especially careful with my hairdresser because he and I are both consummate gossips. Hair and barber salons are prime locations for both delightful and malicious gossip; and gossip foes make the world go round whether fortunately or catastrophically.

Well, it's the twenty-ninth day for which I must maintain absolute silence with regards to the big secret.

I did phone a former intimate associate this afternoon and I was momentarily tempted to blab, but I resisted. Actually, resistance wasn't difficult since the gentleman was himself in a bubbly mood.

I've been killing time reading... always lots to read. I think I've exhausted the movie option...I can only watch so many plot oriented movies because there are only so many plots available.

In fact, there really is only one plot. Will the suspense be resolved or not. Will it be gratifying or disappointing? Not even perplexing, but disappointing... as in obvious. I myself am suspended with my big secret. When it is finally revealed, will people be happy or angry? Most likely, people will email or text me and tell me what I've already known for thirty-seven days. Will the secret be all over Social and other media and therefore finally telling people will be anti-climatic?

Twenty five more days of keeping mum.

There are several others who must keep a parallel secret. Of course, I don't know who these mysterious others are, so maximum security is definitely in effect.

I have to stay close to home as I have to be on deck as the powers that be are frequently sending me sudden and significant requests.

I would love to do nothing more than to travel to some other part of the globe where I do not know a single soul and thus would be able to indulge in basic and extravagant pleasures without there being the slightest temptation to divulge my secret. I could even make new friends with whom I could discuss completely irrelevant subjects.

So I stay home and take in the local and international soap operas. The President of the United States might well indeed be a Russian agent. What the fuck is this all about? In the original cold war, the Russians and the Americans were enemies. Canada of course blindly seconded the Americans. And then locally there is a social media controversy involving a gentleman who does not use social media let alone the general internet.

Believe it or not, there are still people like that in the world and many of them are perfectly sane and sound. Still, I can't imagine joining their club, unless I get myself excommunicated.

And then what?

**Lev Davidovich Landau** (22 January 1908 – 1 April 1968) was a [Soviet physicist](#) who made fundamental contributions to many areas of [theoretical physics](#).<sup>[1]</sup> His accomplishments include the independent co-discovery of the [density matrix](#) method<sup>[2]</sup> in [quantum mechanics](#) (alongside [John von Neumann](#)), the quantum mechanical theory of [diamagnetism](#), the theory of [superfluidity](#), the theory of [second-order phase transitions](#), the [Ginzburg–Landau theory of superconductivity](#), the theory of [Fermi liquid](#), the explanation of [Landau damping in plasma physics](#), the [Landau pole in quantum electrodynamics](#), the two-component theory of [neutrinos](#), and Landau's equations for *S* matrix singularities.<sup>[3]</sup> He received the 1962 [Nobel Prize in Physics](#) for his development of a mathematical theory of [superfluidity](#) that accounts for the properties of [liquid helium II](#) at a temperature below 2.17 [K](#) (−270.98 [°C](#)).<sup>[4]</sup> (Wiki page)

‘Lev’ is one of those authoritative signifiers. Lev Landau, Lev Manovich the new media post-cinema guru, Leviticus, Levi Strauss, Levitation, Chroma-Key, Green Screen, analogue technologies. Science and physics, as well as physique. Up until about age eleven I was very good in math and science. Then I became oriented toward language and music. Are language and music compatible? Well, there are a few examples indicating yes and all too many indicating no. And then there is mathematics, in relation to painting sculpture music and language. My father, who was a scientist, despised Bach. He loved the classics and opera except Wagner and later modernists; and to him Bach wasn't music it was mathematics. Most music is mathematical in its structures, except for free jazz and unregulated chanting.

Science and art are probably more integrated than ever previously. And meanwhile, I am counting the days that I must preserve this serious top secret.

On Day 19 I was surprised that Google didn't offer a little Robbie Burns painting or pastiche. After all, Day 22 allowed me to wake up with Lev Landau. Surely a Russian scientist and a Scottish poet could be cordial working neighbours. Both the modernist scientist and the rigorous poet mix the irrational and the rational. Both arguable believe that nonsense is in fact the ultimate sense.

And again it is so bloody cold out and this weather pattern is supposed to remain stuck until at least Day Twelve. I venture outside as infrequently as possible. Fewer neighbours and citizens I might betray confidence to due to laziness or absent-mindedness.

Eliminating possibilities for small talk does indeed make it easier when it comes to engaging in big talk.

The local national and international all become intertwined and rather blurry. Is a terrible dictator about to be replaced by a different terrible dictator? Is the world at large still hinged on the binarism of totalitarian versus authoritarian? Does the Canadian Ambassador to China still have a drinking problem? Is that why he and so many others are terrible at maintaining secrets?

And meanwhile I struggle to maintain mine. Eighteen more days.

It's the end of January and an extreme cold alert seems to be permanently in place. I'm sure the weather is doing me a favour...discouraging me from going out and blabbing my big secret. But during this kind of weather, people spend even more time on social media, so the weatherperson's master plan is arguably unproductive.

The weather is a significant component of the daily news. For a change, the big news today was local rather than international. The tabloids and regular analogue press were predicting a big event with regards to the upcoming trial of the landscape gardener accused of eight murders of men all associated with what remains of Toronto's gay village. Well, now there will be no trial. Bruce MacArthur pleaded guilty to all eight charges.

Was this because he knew there was no fucking chance of his lawyer convincing any jury that the cops might have arrested the wrong man after all these years? Was there no hotshot lawyer committed to having the obviously guilty declared innocent? Is the serial killer admitting to the eight murders because there are other bodies yet to be discovered or unearthed?

All but one of MacArthur's victims were refugees, newcomers, or homeless. Four were South Asian. Two were Middle Eastern. Some of these men were closeted and were living double lives. All but one had limited income. Many of them were reported missing, over a period beginning in 2010, but their bodies were not found until MacArthur's arrest.

Sentencing should occur shortly after MacArthur's confession. The victims' biological and non-biological families get an opportunity to speak. The cops could have had this guy a long time earlier than they finally did.

I have twelve more days for which I must preserve or repress my secret; and on the morning of this twelfth day GOOGLE reminds me that this is the first day of Black History Month. I scan the image pertaining to the activist Sojourner Truth and then Google her name.

**Sojourner Truth** (*/soʊˈdʒɔːrnər ˈtruːθ/*; born **Isabella (Belle) Baumfree**; c. 1797 – November 26, 1883) was an *African-American abolitionist and women's rights* activist. Truth was born into *slavery* in *Swartekill, Ulster County, New York*, but escaped with her infant daughter to freedom in 1826. After going to court to recover her son in 1828, she became the first black woman to win such a case against a white man. She gave herself the name Sojourner Truth in 1843 after she became convinced that God had called her to leave the city and go into the countryside "testifying the hope that was in her".

I appreciate the opportunity to learn more about somebody who has previously been a name that I did not contextualize. I also think about calendars...how art galleries programme artists for Black History Month or Gay Pride Month or whatever month week or day. I think about calendars and why should this month be this particular group or entity's or community's month and not the whole bloody year and then the years to come. And who is designating who is an important enough group or entity or community to deserve their own special day week or month?

I think of governments, who make such designations. I think of people who dislike governments or central governments. I think of Sojourner Truth and how she is hardly just a historical figure. In the United States and other countries including Canada, states' rights has long been a code for letting state governments go their own way with regards to issues as diverse as racial equity, reproductive rights, employment equity with regards to gender and sexual preference, and more. So many libertarians who decry state or provincial intervention in all economic matters are social conservatives on top of being racists.

I rant about all this and more in a teatime conversation with one of my oldest and dearest friends. I almost blurt out my secret, as it does involve the government. Many secrets are government-related, as the government is supposed to be open but of course is highly and selectively secretive.

I do not kill my waiting time by watching television. I have not had home television for nearly eight years now. When it was time to overhaul my cable hook-up, I used that opportunity to withdraw from television.

One might ask why I don't stream programmes that I would like to watch. Of course that's a perfectly logical and valid question, but I don't.

No television simply means more reading and more listening to music. These activities are not essentially oppositional except that they don't easily co-exist temporally.

I don't miss my nightly or Sunday morning Coronation Street fix. When people talk about that programme now I hear them mentioning specific characters and I wonder for a minute why is that character still on the programme and then I realize that the specific character or characters are played by terrible actors who would difficulty finding other roles with either programmnes or in the film industry.

I've heard of an American pseudo-academic libertarian named George Gilder who thought that the Internet would spell the ending of popular culture. Of course, he was completely wrong. Well, ninety-nine percent wrong. I do think there are people who are publicly anti-social and dismissive of popular culture who have on-line avatars or alter-egos and who kill time on Social Media talking about soap operas of both the tele-visual and neighborhood or 'community' varieties.

I think I know somebody like that. He used to be my friend and now he doesn't speak to me or to pretty much everybody else in the world.

This morning Google informed me that today is the 129<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Quebec's Winter Carnival. So I guess next year it will be the 130<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

In Toronto, it is certainly winter. Record snowfall last week. Then serious melting and an ice storm. And I have five more days for which I must maintain my top secret.

Last night I went out to an opening and saw a long time friend who I haven't seen for a while. He asked me what I was working on and it has become more and more difficult to tell people that I am in between things or just making some noodlings that may or may not evolve into a larger project.

What has been hitting me is that my secret will be revealed to the general public before I get to reveal it to anybody. It will be in the media, which means the social media. Is there actually any other kind of media in the 21<sup>st</sup> century?

I think about my old friend who has never used social media and thus has been unable to publicly apologize for a serious mistake that he made. I think about how people think this or that incident must be accurate since it is on social media. I think about how irony and nuances in general get lost.

And my secret will be on social media and it will no longer be my secret.

Two more days and then the classified secret will be revealed. A big announcement will certainly be made.

The other evening I attended an artist's posthumous exhibition opening or reception. Selections from the artist's body of work were evenly mounted throughout the gallery and classified according to year of execution. There was also a video of the artist eloquently speaking about his different phases. This event was very well done and so preferable to generic public memorials where speakers always seem to be competing against each other.

Well, my secret could indeed become cacophonous. Who are the others who have been selected to carry this secret? I have been curious about this question as I'm sure they have

been too. And the list will quickly be copied and parroted all over social media. There will be trolls as well as friends.

I must say I'm looking forward to The Big Revelation. This will be my revenge on all those imbeciles who filed me away years ago. It will be proof that I actually did have a life, and that I am in fact a champion. Not the champion, but a champion. Which is synonymous with a winner.