Cuba at the Crossroads Lesson 2

**Cuba**

The REALITY TOUR

1. CAME TO CUBA ALMOST WITHOUT PRECONCEPTIONS. FOR MOST AMERICANS, IT IS THE BLACK HOLE OF THE CARIBBEAN. HAVANA IS A DELICIOUSLY BEAUTIFUL, VITAL, SAD PLACE. IT IS SLOWLY FALLING INTO RUIN IN THE HOT TROPICAL SUN.

2. MCDONALD’S AND KENTUCKY FRIED CHICKEN ARE A GOOD IDEA, BUT THEY BRING BAD ARCHITECTURE WITH THEM. THEY ARE THE POINT OF THE SWORD. THEIR POSSIBLE ARRIVAL IS ONE OF MY GREATEST FEARS.

3. CUBAN ARCHITECT MIGUEL COYULA AND HIS GROUP FOR THE INTEGRAL DEVELOPMENT OF HAVANA HAVE BUILT A ONE-TO-ONE THOUSAND SCALE MODEL OF THE ENTIRE CITY.

4. SIDEWALK ENTREPRENEURS SELLING USED BIC LIGHTERS IN OLD HAVANA ARE NOT NECESSARILY ILLEGAL, BUT ALLOWED.

5. AMERICAN CARS FROM THE FIFTIES ABUNDANT IN HAVANA. THEY’RE USUALLY KEPT IN GOOD SHAPE, THOUGH QUITE A FEW APPEAR TO BE COVERED IN COATS OF HOUX PAINT.

6. WAITING FOR THE GUAGUA (THE BUS) IN OLD HAVANA... A ROOSTER CROWS OVER THE TRAFFIC NOISE.

7. DAVID IS A ROQUEIRO (ROCKER). HIS BAND IS CALLED COSA NOSTRA. THEY’RE UNABLE TO PERFORM THEIR ROCK AND ROLL, AT THE CROSSROADS OF THE POWER SHORTAGE.

8. PEOPLE GET KIND OF DISTURBED SOMETIMES WHEN WE’RE HAVING A CONCERT AND WE RELEASE ALL THIS ANGER AND HATRED WE FEEL.

9. THE ONLY MUSIC THE GOVERNMENT CAN MANIPULATE IS ROCK AND ROLL. OUR LYRICS ADDRESS THE FRUSTRATION AND TRAGEDY IN OUR MESS—WE FEEL A LOT OF CUBANS ARE NOT READY TO HEAR SUCH DECADE!
Lazo Lozely was a colonel in the Cuban army. He now manages a dollar store in Havana. He's still a die-hard revolutionist.

I'd like to emigrate to Canada. I like the cold. I've never seen snow.

Just a few blocks away, the Tropicana night club keeps the tourists happy.

Small, ratty dogs are everywhere. Cats seem to be feral and are usually seen only at night.

Cubism! Only 90 miles from U.S. shores!

José Puster says he's a painter of a Caribbean bidet painting. In my version of the Señoritas d'Avignon, I used all prostitutes of Little Havana.

American activist Catherine Murphy tells a current food shortage joke.

A bunch of Cubans say a steak and an egg in the road as they get closer, the egg starts to panic. "We better run, starch, " he says. The steak looks at the egg and says, "What do you mean, 'we'? You run, no one knows I want to look like any more!"
"LA CASA DE AL"
FORMER HOME OF GANGSTER
AL CAPONE. NOW A TOURIST
RESTAURANT IN VARENBERO. IT SITS
OPPOSITE A WALLED COMPOUND
ONCE OWNED BY DICTATOR
Fulgencio Batista.

BIG AL PAN RAM
FROM HIS BEACHFRONT
LOCATION IN THE 1920's.

TRADITIONAL YORUBAN DRESS
("THE CUBAN
GOVERNMENT
SEEMS TO BE
EXTREMELY
TRADITIONAL
OF RELIGION."

THESE WOMEN
ARE WEARING
CERTAIN COLORS
PRESCRIBED BY A
YORUBAN "GOD
FATHER".

NOT ALL FIFTIES CARS IN HAVANA
ARE IN WORKING CONDITION. THIS
HEAR WAS A 1959 PONTIAC bonneville.

THE FOUNTAIN AT THE ENTRANCE TO
THE TROPICANA
IS ENCLOSED
WITH FLAMBOYANTLY
MARBLE DANCERS...

BLACKOUTS
CAN HAPPEN
AT ANY TIME.
THEY'RE CALLED
"APAGONES",
("TURN-OFFS")
AND CAN RESULT IN CANCELED EVENTS
AND Spoiled FOOD.

Rabbi Joseph A. Eyrubach is in
Havana to distribute kosher
food to the Jewish community here.

No, unfortunately, there are no Jewish
DELIS in Havana.

As lives in West
Hartford, Connecticut, he hopes to
meet Fidel Castro next week & present
him with a menorah.

Very...uh...

...statuesque...

Sucked &
Fell in a
Mud Puddle
A Minute Later.
Elise Piazza Weisenbach
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