

## UNREAL . . . BUT TRUE #4

In the early days at TRAVEL AUTO BAG ... I encountered many things for the first time! Few expected the boss's son to survive the first year! The fact that I knew little, was to my advantage. I had lots of ideas and was free to try them all, because I knew no better! On this occasion ... I was unprepared for an encounter of biblical proportions.

My feet were comfortably resting on my roll-top desk, leaning back as I sipped languorously from a morning coffee ... hoping not to be disturbed by the nasty business of phone calls. In those days "Chock-Full-O-Nuts" was a gourmet Cuppa Joe and a glazed doughnut was the "Breakfast of Champions!" Despite my morning bliss ... I sensed the presence of a man standing impatiently in front of my desk. He had floated and was glaring at me indignantly.

He was trim, in his 40's with fine clothes, a handsome face and a shaved head! Not so common, back in the day. He stood silently as he observed my java bliss with amusement. My reaction not quick enough ... he raged to a rolling boil at my insolence. He spoke with an Eastern European accent, which only served to emphasize the authoritarian tone. With hands on hip, he commanded "I am having an important party and I must have some kind of portable rack, to hang my guest's coats. It is my understanding that you have such a thing. Is that not so, young man? Are you going to help me ... in a reclining position?"

It was the time of year when DeMille's "The Ten Commandments" overwhelmed the "TV Guide" and I had just seen it for the 20th time! Kind of bored with Chuck Heston's chest thumping as Moses ... the only thing that amused me were the decadent revelers and the golden calf. Edward G Robinson was a lot more interesting than Moses, after all, he had been "Little Caesar." Chuck, just arriving at his glory, was previously known as the UCLA quarterback ... certainly a "stretch" to be thought of as a biblical Jewish prophet. I always felt a little sorry for the pharaoh, even though he was portrayed as a jerk. Moses really did a number on him. I guess Joe College could complete the "long one."

Wait a minute ... pharaoh? That's Ramses II standing in front of my desk ... you know ... what's his name? I snapped to attention and tried to be helpful. Ramses was pleased. Standing straight as an arrow, hands still on hip, Ramses harrumphed and chastised the peasant in front of him. "You could have offered me a sip of your coffee and I wouldn't say no to a piece of that Kruller!" A German pastry, no doubt.

I lifted my cup to offer a sip ... his eyes widened like saucers, he smiled and turned his head." I suppose the pharaoh did not have his "taster" with him. "Well ... will you show me this device?" With his hands still on hip "Looks like just the thing ... I must have it in my brownstone tomorrow ... it must be taken out of its box and it must be set up!"

"We can do that, sir." "Good ...

"Then let it be written, let it be done."

When finished our transaction, he swiveled and strode out the door. He was a large

presence and I wondered how Moses, with his scruffy beard, curly gray hair, and a large stick was able to make such a man appear foolish, while wearing my old bathrobe? The plagues and all the hocus-pocus? No way "baldy" would have gone for it. Ramses would have been the perfect Captain of the Enterprise ... but, I don't think he ever recovered from the mental thumping he got from Moses. His swan song was a black-shirted gunslinger with a Hungarian accent! From a resplendent pharaoh to a gun-toting robot with one black shirt, a bent cigar and a license to kill!