

Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

They Write by Night, Enemies Foreign and Domestic

Suzanne Lummis · Tuesday, March 25th, 2025

Noir = dark, not the dark of nightfall when Earth turns away from the sun, the dark side of human behavior. Usually, film noir takes on crime at street level, or bank heists and crooked schemes, or, elsewhere, murder plotted behind the facades of well-kept homes. Wife meets lover, together they dispose of husband — or some version of that old tale. And always in movies — any movie — where a hero must go up against a villain, the bad one's powerful, devious and smart — *smart* enough to give the hero some fierce resistance, a good run for the money.

These days, it's all gone upside down, haywire and ass-backwards.

The most horrid villainy flourishes not on the streets, not in suburban homes, but at the highest levels of power. And the criminals are stupid. As in really, *really*. Stupid. Though, I'll give them this — they are more sophisticated than certain sea life. (Mollusks).

For the record, I'm writing this on 3/24/25 when Atlantic Monthly editor Jeffrey Goldberg's (dated slang alert) *mind-blowing* article has broken across the country and the free presses of the free world. ("The Trump Administration Accidentally Texted Me its War Plans.")

Betrayal's in the Air. (To be sung to the tune of John Paul Young's "Love Is in the Air.") A crime against a nation. This episode's *They Write by Night* offers a super smart movie for dumb times, and a couple or three diabolically shrewd villains that make our current villains look like evil Keystone Cops. Dumb and evil Monte Python (and not even funny). The movie? The Manchurian Candidate of 1962. It hit close to home that year, a bit too. Maybe it hits even closer now.

And the poem? Those of you who weren't born yesterday, or relatively recently, might remember when W. H. Auden's "September 1, 1939" raced and multiplied across this new thing, the Internet, when many noticed bits here and there that seemed to speak to the horrifying attack on the Twin Towers. Well, It's B-a-c-k. Timely all over again — certain parts, anyway. I read an excerpted version of the long poem. Viewers, Readers, see what you think.

Interesting. I recorded this episode months ago. Over that stretch it seems not to have gone the heck outta style. Instead it's something far worse than Obsolete, it's more relevant than ever. *Too bad. Enemies Foreign and Domestic.*

– Suzanne Lummis

Top image credit to www.Poetry.LA

This entry was posted on Tuesday, March 25th, 2025 at 11:00 pm and is filed under [Film](#), [Poetry](#). You can follow any responses to this entry through the [Comments \(RSS\)](#) feed. You can leave a response, or [trackback](#) from your own site.