

STEPPING OFF THE EDGE

travels of a reluctant retiree

DECEMBER 20, 2020 BY MIKE T

A Beach Cottage, A Ticket, and Slingshotting into the Familiar...

Ok, as promised a blog post each week, I know I know, it has been ten or eleven days but... potato potahtoe....

You know those dreams we all have where everything seems familiar and real but there is just something a little off. Well, that is what my return to Capitola was like. Usual street names, usual beach, but somehow everything was a bit off. I attribute it to the tables in parking spaces, the lack of benches along the sea wall, everyone in masks... a dream that starts calm but you know the three-headed Kraken will be rising from the ocean and chasing you down the Esplanade. Ah well, more about this later.

Dropped the lovely Mrs T off in beautiful cosmopolitan Chico to go wild with the night life with her sister... that is a lie, dropped her off to help her sister take care of my brother-in-law as he faces the end of life. In spite of being together for eleven months nonstop, my drive to Capitola was not pleasant. Instant longing to tell her all the things rattling around in my brain. Yes, that is what she puts up with every single day, so if Rome is taking saint nominations, she is the one to go with.

A reader advisory at this stage, the next paragraph will:

1. give you more information than you need about me
2. discuss bodily functions
3. remove any idea you might have had that I make adult decisions

OK, so, I am driving on lovely highway 5 on the way to Capitola and, interesting fact, there are no open rest stops, nor are there any easily accessible bathroom filling stations or otherwise from Oroville to past Sacramento. I tell you this as a prelude to the fact that I

consumed a 20 oz latte just as I left Chico, and by about the 505 interchange on 5 I had to pee in a moderately emergency status. Now, I was willing to make my way to a filling station south of Sacramento but no, it was not going to happen. Let's just say a somewhat deserted exit promised to be my savior. It was a particularly long off ramp and a quarter mile ahead of me there was a pickup truck and another truck with a trailer pulled off to the side. No problem. I stepped out to the passenger side and... well, you know. Jumped back in the driver's seat to make my way to the homeland. Up ahead the driver of the pickup truck steps out in front of my car! You guessed it, the pickup truck was actually a highway patrol vehicle. Yes, this heartless CHP gave me a ticket. Luckily it was NOT for urinating in public, which I have heard puts you on that list we all know. You know, the one which would force me to reintroduce myself to all my neighbors in an uncomfortable way. Turns out that particular relief cost \$285 and I am here to tell you... **IT WAS TOTALLY WORTH IT!** Now, as for that patrolman, I fear his karma is tainted, and as he ages his prostate will grow to epic proportions and then and only then will he think back to that day and say to himself, "You know, I totally understand that guy on the off ramp." Enough said.

And so, here I am, back home to settle some business at Triad. It seems arrangements had to be made to have the company purchased by another person. I won't bore you with details but suffice to say the owner of John Hope Electric agreed to purchase Triad and make it a wholly-owned subsidiary of John Hope Electric. You may think this was a cluster, but let me tell you all something. First, I must let you know that I was what amounted to an only child with only one sibling and she is 11 years my senior. I never thought I was missing out on anything in my youth, but I have come to realize that I have been unconsciously interviewing for a brother for almost 70 years. It seems for the last 30 I had one. OK, OK this is getting emotional, so let's talk about something else.

Had my first restaurant experience in eight months. Actually sat in one, distanced naturally, and masked until food came. It was surreal. Along with that I had the joy of two picnics each with several granddaughters. Pretty refreshing and yet, working out alone, **YES I STILL WORKED OUT!** This can only meant two things: I have found the benefit of a daily workout to be one of the reasons I have felt so great each and every day on the road, or, and this is far more likely, Mrs. T has conditioned me to such an extent that I actually keep subjecting myself to this daily torture. Stockholm Syndrome or love. You decide.



Daughter, son in law and two of Maestros girls masked and ready to picnic

My week was full of getting back into the groove of Triad, helping John make a smooth transition. I did, to be honest, feel a bit out of place, like a ghost visiting the living world. Bustling around organizing things but all questions came to John, as they should have, while I played support. Lunch! An activity I had not had in some months since Mrs. T and I are on the two meal program in our mobile senior citizen rest home. I realized they were more nervous eating than hunger, well, not quite, I did partake of some foods Mrs T seriously shuns. Chicken wings, big greasy burgers, piles of french fries, big dripping burritos from the corner taqueria to name a few.



The glamor photo above is part of the exciting world of an electrical contractor. Yes, easily 1000 of the 4000 photos in my photo stream look a lot like this one. The other joys of

contracting? Well there are the five phases of bidding, not unlike death.

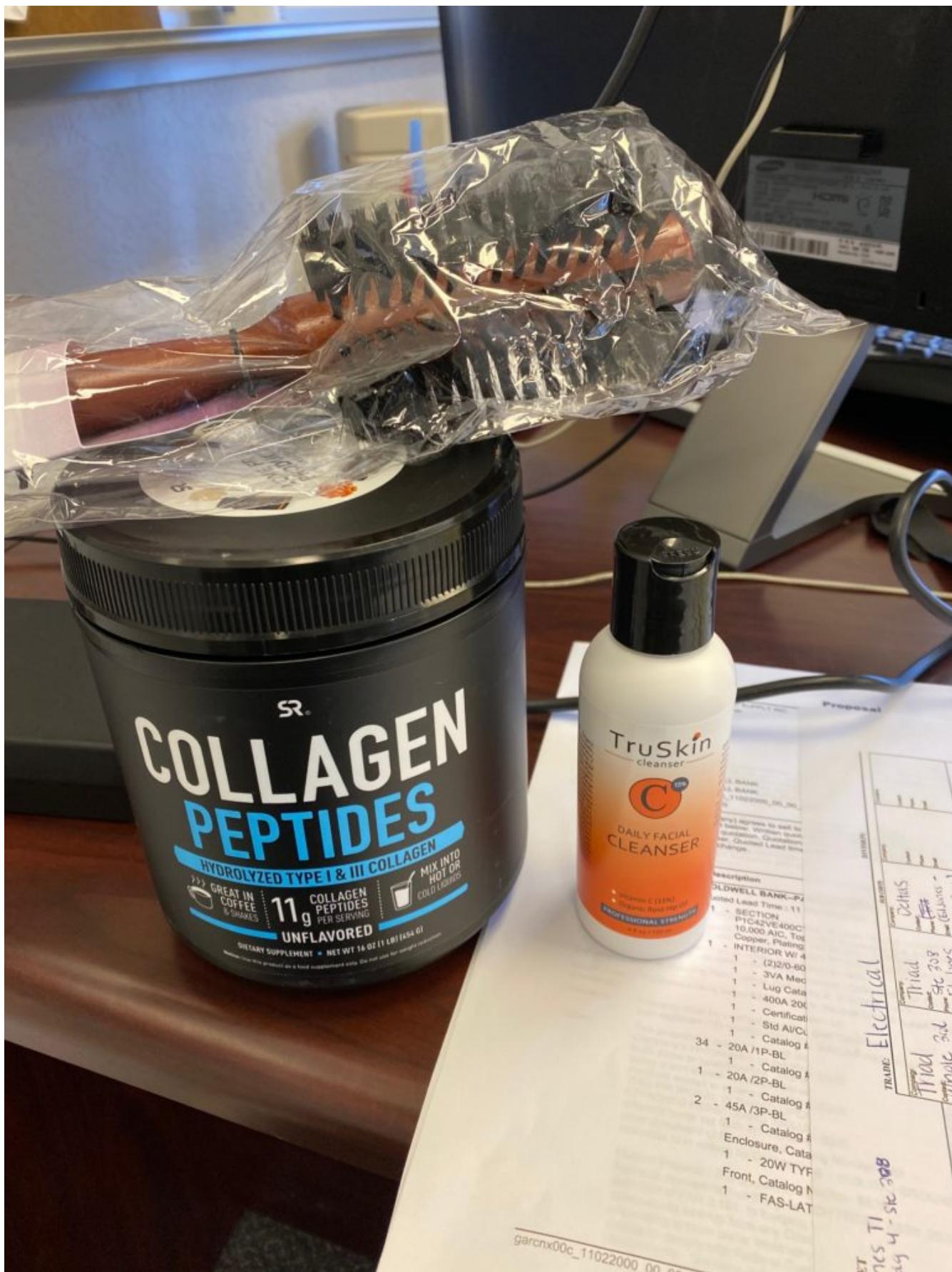
Denial... this is easy, I can bid this in no time and the job will inevitably be mine.

Anger... what do you mean 12 other electricals are looking at this job!

Bargaining... If I can only get this job, I will be set. I will make sure I win it and will be the happiest man on earth.

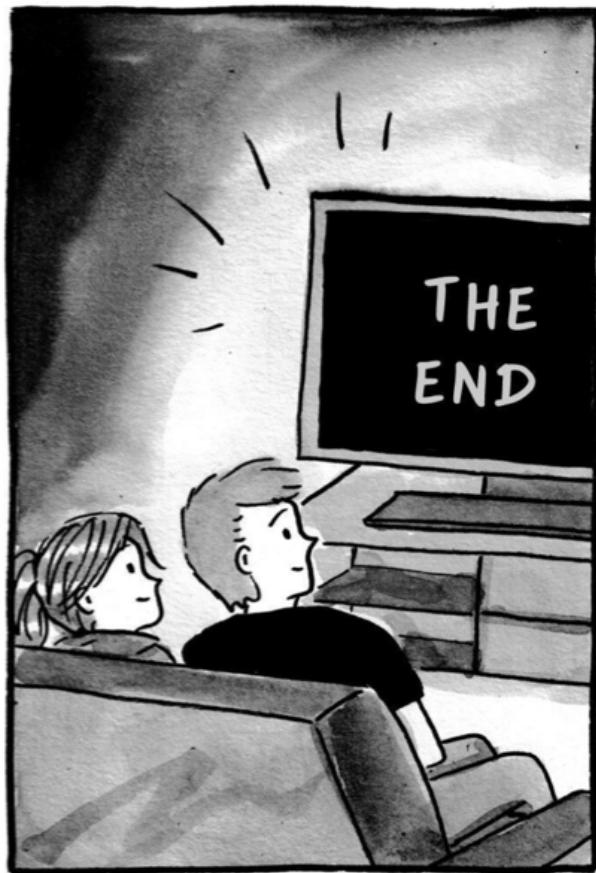
Depression... strange as it might seem, this is what happens when you actually get awarded the job. What the hell was I thinking? How did I ever expect to execute this at this ridiculous price I quoted?

Acceptance... oh well, nothing left but to do the job and hope for the best.



supplies arrive at Triad for Mrs. T. just a sample of the precious emollients which follow us courtesy of Prime on the long road

Done



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life on the road....

Till next week, when I find out the cause of the miracle eye mystery....

 **UNCATEGORIZED**