

We'll Always Have Paris

by Paul Steven Stone

From the television:

"Tonight's news begins with a *Stone's Throw* exclusive. Intimate friends of hotel heiress Paris Hilton have confided that the talent-starved celebrity has agreed to marry Quaker Bob, longtime spokesperson and package icon for Quaker Oats cereal. The two met at a party at the Scientology Celebrity Center in Hollywood. Fans and celebrity watchers were taken by surprise since Ms. Hilton had only recently announced her breakup with fiancé and Greek shipping magnate Paris Latsis . . .

"Yes, the two actually share the same first name!

"Speaking of which, the irrepressible Ms. Hilton confided she broke off the engagement when she learned her fiancé expected her to change her name to his, which would have made her the second Paris Latsis on the celebrity register.

"I come second to no one," she declared, sparking smirks and titters from members of the press corps who had obviously seen Ms. Hilton's pirated sex tape. . . ."

From the living room:

"Did you say something, dear?" I ask my wife Sylvia.

"I said they're not going to ask about the ring. The guy gives Paris a 24 carat diamond engagement ring and they don't even ask if she's giving it back."

Looking at Sylvia with her spiky, imitation Brittany Spears hairdo, I think of how much I preferred her Jennifer Aniston look.

"Remind me why you changed your hair?" I ask.

"You know how long it's been since they cancelled *Friends*?" she replies curtly. "Besides, if it wasn't good enough for Brad Pitt . . ."

From the television:

"Celebrity watchers will recall that Quaker Bob was once engaged to Madison Avenue kitchen phenom, Betty Crocker. There was never

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an official announcement from General Foods or the Quaker Oats Company but insiders say the engagement was nixed after Quaker Bob was seen holding hands in Las Vegas with fabled femme fatale, Elizabeth Taylor."

"Paris and Quaker Bob expect to marry next spring in Massachusetts, the only state that currently recognizes mixed marriages between celebrities and advertising icons."

From the living room:

Sylvia's mentioning Brad Pitt makes me think about his friend and George Clooney who was in a movie I recently rented on *Netflix* about some guy who used to be on TV, Edward R. Murrow.

"Ever hear of someone named Edward R. Murrow?" I ask Sylvia.

"Sure," she answers easily. "He was the host of *Jeopardy* before Alex Trebek."

"You're good," I reply, smiling. "Real good."

From the television:

"In other news, nobody could have been more surprised than Bernie Madoff, the Monster of Manhattan, when he received an unexpected visit from the ABC Extreme Makeover team. In an episode featuring Martha Stewart and her all-prison team of decorators, the former Wall Street Wizard's future prison cell was reportedly transformed from a basic green penal motif to something Ms. Stewart calls 'Rainbow Detention XCell.'

"I was particularly concerned with Bernie's gray facial coloring, which could easily create a solemn, almost burdensome, mood in this otherwise airy eight by twelve foot cell. So, my team and I literally splashed color everywhere, festooning rainbow hues across lace-trimmed curtains, bedclothes, pillow cushions; even a knitted tea cozy handed down from Bernie's maternal aunt. And then, for the final touch, we painted the cell's solid steel bars in the full spectrum of rainbow colors—very sexy! By the end of the show, I think you'll agree we managed to bring a somewhat fruity and sensuous air of allure to an otherwise pedestrian cell unit. You can

read all about it in my next issue of *Martha's Prison Decorating Monthly*."

From the living room:

"You know," Sylvia says, pushing the mute button, "I'm starting to think the whole thing was a railroad job. A complete miscarriage of justice. Now that I've seen the real person on television a few times, I can tell Bernie Madoff is not as bad as everyone said. Probably just another victim of bad press and a lousy publicity agent. Like what's his name, that Governor from Illinois....?"

"You're right," I add, "and did you read in *People Magazine* about his charity work, and becoming a born-again Talmudist? Just shows you can't believe everything you read in the papers.

"Would you turn up the sound, sweetheart?"

From the television:

"On a more serious note, U2 Rucker, Bono, back from a fact finding mission to Africa, met behind closed doors with Sting, Paul Simon, Donald Trump, Chelsea Clinton and California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger to begin developing a plan to halt the worldwide spread of AIDS. No word yet on the scope of the plan or whether it would roll out in conjunction with U2's planned world tour next summer. When asked why Elizabeth Taylor, who heads her own private AIDS foundation, wasn't invited to attend the conference, unnamed sources suggested her presence was vetoed by unforgiving friends of a still heartbroken Betty Crocker.

"For our final story, we turn to Stockholm, Sweden, where the winners of this year's Nobel Prizes were just announced. We regret to report there wasn't a single personality you would recognize among the prizewinners."

From the living room:

"I'll bet the Nobel Prize TV ratings really suck this year," Sylvia says knowingly.

"You're so right," I agree. "If they were smart, they'd give at least one of those awards to someone famous."

"Paris Hilton, maybe?" Sylvia suggests. "Or Brittany Spears, if she's out of rehab."

"You're good," I reply, smiling. "Real good."

