

HALLOWE'EN NIGHT, OCTOBER 31st, 1994

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Dear Friends,

I'm sitting here, trying to feel grateful. Actually, I really AM grateful -- intellectually, at least -- for the fact that Sasha and I are free, as in free citizens of a free country, and healthy, as in still having our physical health and gradually recovering from psychic shock. The past few days have been the worst strain we've ever gone through together, and probably rank as among the most stressful experiences either of us have had individually.

I'll try to summarize as clearly as possible without boring anyone with too much detail.

Background: About five years ago, two DEA lab inspection agents -- diversion and clandestine lab experts -- arrived to look over Sasha's lab, for possible violations of law, etc. They left without recommending anything, without telling him to do this or that, without asking him about the peyote cacti in the patio. We assumed, understandably, that it meant he was in compliance with regulations and rules and all that. (Now, it looks as if they probably didn't recognize the peyote when they saw it.)

We also, at that time, had a very close and dear friend who was the Administrator of the DEA Western Labs, who used to come out here every few weeks, on Sunday, to get his hands wet in the lab, doing chemistry that he loved. Bob S. never tried out any of the psychedelic drugs, but he did love the chemistry, and he also never told Sasha to clean up his act or to get rid of the peyote, and we always assumed that Sasha's analytical license covered everything he was doing, including being loving parents to three beautiful cacti, which had been sent to him from a priest in the Native American Church. A sort of shaman-to-shaman gift.

When Bob S. got married, it was in our back yard. He was also the minister who married us (don't ask). He often asked Sasha to address the DEA lab chemists in talks about -- what else? -- the chemistry of psychedelics. He arranged to have Sasha invited to a meeting of international law enforcement people in Adelaide, Australia, knowing perfectly well that Sasha would speak his mind and shake up the joint, which he did.

Before he retired, he brought over Roger E., a young chemist in the DEA lab, to meet us. He also awarded Sasha the second of two plaques which give thanks to him for his valuable contributions to the DEA (Bob didn't care if the Washington suits had heart attacks). After Bob and his wife, Patti, retired to Washington State, Roger would occasionally come over on a Sunday for a couple of hours, bringing a bottle of red wine, to talk and unload problems. He loved our book, and used it as a door prize in the meetings of the Clan Labs group that he founded.

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So, our relationships with the DEA, as far as we could see, were very good. And it never occurred to us that either Bob or Roger might not know all the rules and regulations pertaining to the analytical license, at least well enough to warn us if anything Sasha was doing might be seriously amiss.

We had speculated, sometimes, about whether Sasha was being quietly protected by someone -- perhaps Bob, perhaps somebody else in the DEA, but we knew them to be just speculations, and we realized that we would never know the truth.

Well, we still don't know the truth about that, but we have a much stronger reason to suspect that there was, indeed, an unofficial protective umbrella over Sasha and his lab. And that it has now been withdrawn.

The day before we left for the Lerida, Spain, conference, September 27th, a red car pulled up into the parking lot and three DEA agents got out. They were not wearing guns, and only one wore a suit and tie. The other two were casually dressed. All three were very friendly, deliberately so, respectful and courteous. They carried a warrant from a local judge, which was something we'd never seen before in previous lab inspections or DEA visits. In the warrant -- which basically authorized the agents to inspect the premises where controlled substances were to be found; to discover whether violations of the law and/or regulations were apparent -- the phrase, "for cause," stood out to both Sasha and me. We had a good idea what the cause might be.

You see, we have a very good and dear friend who is -- or used to be -- an anaesthesiologist, and apparently a superb one. He got into sudden trouble, when a small amount of MDMA was found in his car by a policeman, in connection with a minor car accident. It turned out, eventually, that he had for some time been addicted to Tylenol and codeine, which he used for headaches. He had bought enough for an army, (in a clear case of addict's panic), and a detective working for the Medical Board tracked all this down and one day, the door to his apartment was thrown open and a DEA agent, with gun drawn, accompanied by the nasty little detective, arrested our friend in front of his horrified wife and little daughters, on a charge of selling -- or intending to sell a prescription drug. Among the things found in his apartment was a vial with MDMA in it. Either Sasha's name was on it, or in some other way it was identified as having come from Sasha. (Sasha probably sent it to him years before it was scheduled, while our friend was practicing in Arizona). The detective apparently, from that day, decided to make it his business to hunt down this person, Shulgin, and get himself a promotion for having busted a "drug kingpin," or something like that. This is speculation, based on things our doctor friend told us.

That, we concluded, was the origin of the "for cause." Of course, the DEA had to investigate Sasha as the source of this particular vial, and to try to discover the

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origins of other drugs our friend was found to possess in his apartment. It's their job.

The DEA agent proceeded to examine the lab, and one of his casually dressed friends photographed every corner, then asked Sasha if there were drugs anywhere beside the lab. Sasha, of course, said yes, in what we call Basement Four, where he keeps his infra-red equipment, and in the office.

My lovely daughter, Wendy, was working for us that day, trying to get as much paperwork done as possible before we left for three weeks in Spain; she is in charge of the press business. We are, after all, the Transform Press, and Wendy is our one and only executive officer, secretary, treasurer, and bookkeeper.

Sasha was his usual manic self, wearing the mantle of innocence, assuming as always that his analytical license covered anything and everything. The main agent, Mr. Riley, began talking about violations of regulations, which he was seeing everywhere around him. He also kept mentioning that each violation could mean a \$25,000 fine. He maintained his pleasantness and his courtesy, as did the other agents, but he was obviously shocked at the mess and the complete absence of necessary record-keeping, and -- quite understandably -- by the total lack of security in regard to bottles of scheduled drugs and un-analyzed samples which might contain scheduled drugs. They were all over the place, in total violation of basic common sense (as we now readily acknowledge), and probably a dozen DEA regulations. In other words, things were being maintained in exactly the same mess they'd always been, without objections from our DEA friends.

At no time did any of the agents open a drawer or a closet, and they did not step into the bedroom or the living room; they asked permission to use the bathroom, each time they needed it. No hint of discourtesy or harassment. They had, no doubt, been instructed to give Sasha no possible excuse to claim the "h" word, or even to suspect it.

Sasha, of course, began asking -- and continued to ask -- "What regulations am I violating," stating (truthfully) that he had never been given a copy of regulations that applied to his analytical license (when he first got it, there probably were very few, if any, but things have changed), and the agent promised he'd send him a copy, or bring it, rather, because, "I'm going to need at least four more days here, to check on your records and complete my inspection." When we told him we were due to leave the next day for Spain, he was disturbed, and said he'd just have to continue after we got back.

Sasha's records in regard to purchases of chemical supplies were, by the way, fully up to date and correctly maintained. But the agent kept finding small vials of powders, tablets or gelatin capsules, anonymous samples from everywhere, most of them not yet analyzed (Sasha has always hated doing that sort of stuff for people,

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because it is very time-consuming and totally unrewarding, except to give him a picture of what's going on in the street).

The agent said that suspected scheduled drug samples must, according to the regulations, be noted in a book, their source -- place and person, where known -- written down, and what Sasha discovered them to be on analysis also put down in the book. It was only several visits later that he actually stated that this kind of analytical work with anonymous drug samples requires a completely separate license from the DEA, which Sasha doesn't have. Another serious regulation violated.

The agent maintained his civility and even his sense of humor throughout the entire day, and Wendy and I showed ourselves to be relaxed and very friendly (if perhaps slightly bewildered at what was going on). They apparently did not recognize the peyote when they looked at it.

A few days after our return from Spain, on Wednesday of last week, to be exact, agent Riley phoned to make an appointment for a visit the next day. We grimaced at each other and speculated about whether he would bring an actual list of regulations (there had been none in the mail while we were gone), and wondered if such a list existed.

I wrote a page to agent Riley, emphasizing again that, in all Sasha's years of using his lab, neither our DEA friends nor previous inspecting agents had mentioned any violations, so that we'd had every reason to believe that no regulations were being broken. I was hoping that this admittedly odd and interesting fact might give him pause in his writing up of his report to the court.

Thursday, we were expecting the same agents back at 9:00 a.m. Both of us moved outside to the patio at the sound of car engines. What suddenly appeared in the parking area above us was a white DEA contamination truck, a big yellow fire truck, 6 cars, numerous men and women with guns on their hips (not drawn), men with uniforms that said Sheriff, County, State, and one determined (but friendly) gentleman who pulled out another warrant and said, "Sir, I have here a warrant which authorizes us to search these premises." Sasha must have turned white; I had a brief moment of wondering if I'd faint, right in front of the DEA and everybody. I thought to myself, our life is over.

Then a word spoken by the warrant-carrier caught my attention: SUMP. It was the sump outside of the lab they were headed for, not the nooks and crannies of our house, and the new warrant was in the name of the EPA, Environmental Protection Agency, and they didn't give a damn about the house, only the lab. While this was going on -- immense shock followed by deep, deep relief -- men in moon suits were pouring past the house to encounter the lab. Somebody asked Sasha if there was anything in his lab which might explode from the impact of a photographer's flashbulb!

We both said, in effect, Of course not; the lab is not a dangerous place!

Agent Riley explained to Sasha, in an almost apologetic voice, that -- having seen the sump on his first visit -- he knew that he had no alternative but to call in the EPA. Sasha and I had caught our breaths, by this time, after that first electrifying shock of "search the premises;" and we put on our best smiles and said that was okay, we understood.

A big man from the Sheriff's office came in and asked both of us if there were other people in the house. We said no. He then looked into every room to verify that. When he came to our bedroom door, which has a large "Off Limits" sign on it, he tried the door, which sticks, and shouted to someone, "There's a locked door here; what do I do about it?" I told him that the door was not locked, but that it was our bedroom and it was a mess and I hadn't yet made the bed. He said, very pleasantly, "We don't care about that, Ma'am; I just have to make sure there isn't anyone else in the house."

He pushed the door open, looked around, and closed it again. I was mortified, as anyone who has even barely glimpsed our bedroom can understand. It is the place of our greatest pleasures, loving and listening to music, and our deepest searchings of the inner universe; it is also the place where my disorganization shows itself in a mound of clean clothes which haven't been put where they belong, boxes of stuff which need to be sorted, and backpacks and brochures from recent trips. My shit pile, I call it, and every now and then I get to work and clear it all up. That, however, hadn't happened very recently.

The big man asked me if I owned a gun. I said yes, I did. He asked where I kept it, and I said, in an apologetic whisper, that it was under my bed. He nodded and said, okay, would I please not go into the bedroom while he was here, and -- relieved that he wouldn't be going back to search under my messy bed, where he would probably encounter a lot of dust kittens -- I said sure, absolutely, you bet, okay!

Then various agents from various agencies made their respective ways through the lab, fingerprinting vials and glassware (we still can't figure that one out), through the two drug-containing rooms (according to what Sasha had told them), photographing everything all over again, while agent Riley sat down at the dining room table and readied a yellow pad for notes. He introduced us to agent Joe Bono, a DEA chemist who had apparently come out from Washington just for this search. Agent Bono turned out to be the only spot of pleasure in the entire mess. He knew his chemistry, and he loved his chemistry, and within seconds, he and Sasha were off and away on the details of Sasha's projects, including the new drug that he and Peyton have synthesized for patenting by NTI, a small company involved with drug development.

Agent Bono became, immediately, the "translator" of Sasha's chemistry explanations to agent Riley, (who wanted to know what this or that precursor was used for, and what was he intending to do with the large amount of the newly scheduled 2C-B, for instance and for instance), and Bono turned out to also have been a friend of Bob S., so we filled him in on our recent conversation with Bob (who had phoned us the night before, and said, very firmly, that he couldn't think of any regulations Sasha was in violation of, and didn't know what agent Riley was talking about, but admitted that the rules might well have changed since his retirement). We related to Mr. Bono what Bob had told us about putting in a huge vegetable garden, and having invested in a tractor instead of a computer, (Sasha had urged him to get a computer). (Hours later, when Mr. Bono left, he shook our hands, beaming, and said -- with sincerity -- that he had REALLY enjoyed meeting both of us. We returned the compliment.)

The EPA people drifted back, having taken samples from the villainous sump, and core samples of soil farther down the hill, to test for contamination. They remarked on the hazard posed by the Magic Stockroom, the tin hut up behind the lab. It didn't take too much thinking to realize that, in the eyes of people responsible for protecting the environment and the safety of neighborhoods, that stockroom alone posed a tremendous fire and explosion danger. After all, they aren't chemists; they have been told that solvents and rusty containers can explode, and if poured into the ground, can contaminate the water table. It's not part of their job to understand specifics about what is actually a danger and what isn't. They go by the agency's rules.

Sasha sat down at the table with Riley and Bono and answered detailed questions about what he and Peyton were doing in the lab. There emerged, during the next couple of hours, some specific regulations which had been violated: Sasha does not, under his license, have the right to receive anonymous samples of drugs for analysis, if those samples might contain scheduled drugs, and he cannot relay to the senders the results of his analysis; apparently, he would have to have another special license to do that. This was a surprise, but when we thought about it, after all, if the DEA had shut down the respectable companies which used to do that service for the public -- or at least made them cease and desist from offering that service -- then it follows that they wouldn't allow an individual to do it. The rules say, explained Riley, that any such samples must be listed in a book, naming the sender, the place from which sent, and the results of the analysis. Well, said Sasha firmly, he wasn't about to endanger people who might trust him with such samples, so he would have to stop doing that service. Actually, he has simply not analyzed 90% of the anonymous samples received, because it takes a lot of time which he doesn't have. So giving it up is no pain at all.

Second rule which they suspect has been broken: his analytical license does not allow research. That takes a research license, which was turned down. (Actually, he withdrew his application, over 20 years ago, but the DEA lists it as having been

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denied, which they interpret, officially, as "having had trouble with the DEA in the past.")

This place, as many of you know, is an utter mess. Samples and vials all over the place, on top of the file drawers in the office, behind the old computers and the IR in the room called Basement Four, and of course in the lab. Violations everywhere, and some of them admittedly violations of common-sense. (We never claimed to be either neat or properly organized; our only excuse is that creative people often aren't, and we like to think of ourselves as creative.) It was stated, again, that the DEA could impose fines of up to \$25,000 for each violation. Yeah, sure. As Sasha says, blood from turnip.

Here, I must emphasize something of importance. At no time, during the entire horrendous mess, was there a single person who exhibited obvious hostility or rudeness. There had apparently been very specific orders given all these people, ahead of time, to give us no excuse whatsoever for claiming harassment. Those few stone-faced people (there were two or three) who were probably very angry at our very existence, and certainly at the existence of our lab, kept quiet. The politeness and even respect, were maintained consistently, even while we were being informed of all the things which were very, very serious baddies.

Every time somebody needed to use the bathroom, permission was asked. No one asked to see our papers, except the patent for NTI, which was carefully photographed. Thank God for that patent application; it helped explain a lot of the questionable precursors in use at the lab.

My continual question to agent Riley was, "Why didn't our DEA friends, including Bob S., who was out here all the time, and used to fool around in the lab on Sundays, tell us that we were in violation of all these rules?" Basically, there was no satisfactory answer, except a vague one about when people are your friends, they often overlook things that they might well report in the house of a stranger. Oh? And that, of course, the rules changed all the time, and Bob S. "wasn't in the legal area; he was an administrator and a chemist," which made even less sense.

One very friendly State narcotics officer, an Asian gentleman, told Sasha very directly, and I think with some apparent relief, that there were no signs of criminal activity, and that this was not a criminal investigation (sure!), but a matter of administrative law violations. I think he had probably read PIHKAL (as had Riley) and I detected signs that he had enjoyed it, although this wasn't the time or place for him to say so.

At the end of the day, one DEA agent brought in his battered copy of PIHKAL to be autographed, another paid \$20 for a copy, and two others (not sure whether they were DEA or lower echelons) accepted copies, autographed, as gifts. Which gave the entire day a somewhat surrealistic twist.

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Agent Riley goofed only once. He remarked that, if he ever got proof that the research group, as described in the book, had been given a scheduled drug, there would be real trouble for us. I looked him in the eye, as did Sasha, and we both said, slowly and clearly, "Mr. Riley, the book is FICTION!" He said, yes, sure, but some people thought it might not be, and if anyone ever offered to give the DEA proof that they had been given a scheduled drug by Sasha -- Sasha repeated what he'd stated many times before, "I have never given anyone a scheduled drug, ever in my life!"

I think Riley realized he was into unsafe ground, and that it might be better not to discuss the book, and he dropped it.

The last move was the truly sad one. It may seem foolish, after all the above happenings, but it's sometimes the tiny little personal thing that threatens to break your spirit, and this almost broke ours, at the end of a day full of toxic adrenaline rushes. One of the sheriff's people recognized -- or thought he recognized -- the peyote cacti outside the glass doors. He asked me if we had peyote around, and I said, yes, right there. The people around him almost froze in shock. Apparently, none of them had ever seen a live peyote, and it was, for them, like having their first sight of a boa constrictor in the wild. There was a discussion of what to do with them and Sasha pleaded to keep them, since he intended to analyze them and identify the zillions of unknown ingredients, etc. They didn't buy it. Then one of the not-friendly state or local men, a heavy Japanese agent, said bluntly, "If you insist on keeping them, I'm going to have to read you your rights," which put an end to that. That same agent took obvious pleasure in destroying the cacti, but I felt that Riley was just the slightest bit hesitant, and might have tried to find a way to let Sasha keep them, if it hadn't been for all the other people around who were determined to stamp these wicked plants out of existence. The Divine Cactus. Ah, well. It was the first time that day that Sasha and I lost our smiles and didn't try to pretend that we weren't hurt.

My stepson Ted came over the next day and delivered the bombshell. Once he'd stated his theory, there was no question in my mind that he was absolutely right. We'd been looking at all the details, and hadn't seen the damned forest staring us in the face.

Ted said that, first of all, he was surprised this hadn't happened long ago. That what the DEA had done, now that they'd decided to close Sasha's work down, was to simply hand the dirty job over to the EPA. The EPA could not possibly fail to object to the conditions they saw; how serious the infractions listed would depend on what they discovered in the soil samples. The EPA most probably had no ulterior motives at all. And the DEA knew that, having handled the matter politely, without threats or hostility, they could not be reasonably suspected of harassment. Once I thought about it, other things occurred to me. It became obvious, for the first time, that we had been under some kind of unofficial protection for many years, at least until Bob S. retired. We were, as Bob S. himself said, overdue for a lab

inspection. Well, probably just around the time the DEA was ready to descend on us, PIHKAL was published. They must have realized immediately that a sudden invasion of the Farm would be seen by anyone -- including a judge -- as a hostile reaction to the book, an obvious effort to punish. So they waited for two years, then decided to bring in every available agency, county, state and whatever, plus the executioner -- the EPA.

We worked over the weekend, excusing ourselves from a wedding up north, and labeled things right and left and cleaned everything in the house, taking out all drugs and putting them in the lab, as required by the DEA regulations. We were exhausted by both the work and the stress, and when Sasha said he was not feeling very well, we had a short discussion about repressed rage and sorrow, and the necessity of acknowledging those emotions consciously. He then did the most therapeutic thing of all: he went onto his computer and played with e-mail, and soon felt better.

The next Monday was a (he said) last visit from Mr. Riley, and consisted entirely of bookkeeping stuff, and more questions about details of drug synthesis and where certain scheduled drugs went, and what were they there for, etc. He came with another, big affable agent who became very relaxed and talked about wine and scandals in the wine country (he had noted the empty wine bottles stacked outside the back door).

This time, it was made clear that the DEA would probably try to withdraw Sasha's analytical license. We'd already figured that one out. There might be heavy fines for violations. Sasha asked if voluntary relinquishing of his license might ameliorate the bad situation, and was told that it probably would. So that's what they would like him to do, obviously. Again, it would argue against any kind of harassment, if he voluntarily gave it up.

Riley said, "We don't want to stop you from doing your work, Dr. Shulgin. We just don't think you've confined yourself to the specific kinds of work allowed under your license, and the people in Washington will undoubtedly ask for that license to be taken away, but -- depending on what the EPA decides to do about your laboratory, which is something out of our control -- there's no reason for you not to continue doing your work."

By this time, we believed we knew the game plan, so we smiled and didn't tell him what we would have liked to tell him. However, on the phone, I have not hesitated to say what we think to anyone who calls, and if the phone is tapped, that's just fine.

We will not do anything, right now, to further antagonize the DEA, because the final judgment -- and fines -- have not yet been decided, and there's no point in making anyone madder than they already are. They do know that another book is in progress, however. (By the way, for what it's worth, when Riley opened his

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Shulgin file folder, I caught a glimpse of a Xerox of the High Times interview. Ah, yes.)

Since there is no criminal investigation, I don't believe anybody is going to take over our papers and files. If they do, heaven help us. But that move would make a good case for harassment, and so far they've gone out of their way to avoid that happening.

We are blessed. We are both free and healthy, despite the severe psychic shock. We have the prospect of losing the lab, and therefore a place to do work for NTI and other consulting jobs which might make a bit of money, but we do have enough to live without that, if we have to. We have our book to finish, and I don't believe anyone is going to interfere with its progress, much as they might want to.

The only sign of Post-Traumatic-Stress-Syndrome is that both of us freeze at the sound of a car coming into our parking area.

We are hearing from everywhere across the country, and outside of the country, from loving friends who have heard about this, and we have hope that, if we are threatened with heavy fines from the EPA or DEA, we will manage to cope. We don't know the full extent of penalties, yet, and don't know how soon the yellow tape will be placed around the lab and the magic stockroom, but it may not be long.

As several people have said, and I strongly believe, there's no way for us to know what good and new and wonderful possibilities might open up in the wake of this disaster, and while we are alive and well, anything is possible. Even legalization of drugs. We just hope to be graced with long enough life and mental clarity to see that happen.

Thanks to all of you for being so loving and supportive. All I have to do is turn on the television news, to realize how lucky we are, and how much we have to be thankful for.

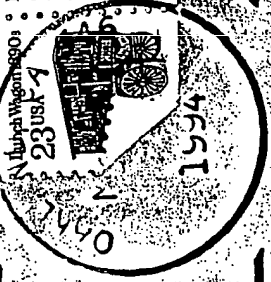
Life, after all, is change. Blessings and hugs to you all.

Ann and Sasha

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Launch Vehicle 1850s

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FINAL FOLLOWUP NOTE RE THE HALLOWE'EN REPORT

TO THOSE WHO RECEIVED THE BIG REPORT IN THE MAIL, PLEASE BURN IT IMMEDIATELY. SEVERAL LAWYERS HAVE WARNED US THAT WE SHOULD NOT WRITE ANY DESCRIPTION OF THOSE EVENTS AT THIS TIME, SINCE WE CANNOT BE SURE WHAT MIGHT BE USED AGAINST US, SHOULD THAT REPORT GET INTO THE WRONG HANDS. WE SIMPLY DON'T HAVE THE LEGAL TRAINING TO SPOT POTENTIAL PROBLEMS OF THAT KIND. THANKS VERY MUCH, AND HUGS TO YOU FROM BOTH OF US.

On re-reading my account of the Great Thursday Caper, I believe I may have left the impression that Sasha and I were horrified at the prospect of having our home searched because there might have been scheduled drugs present which could be seen as available for our own personal use. This was not the case; our great fear was that our private papers would be seized and read. Over the years, we have received hundreds of personal letters from people all over the world, detailing experiences of their own with one or another psychoactive drug. They have often signed their names, and seizure of such papers would leave us in the position of having betrayed a trust and having endangered people whose intimate outpourings were placed in our care.

P.S. to the Halloween Chapter

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