

THE OTHER SIDE OF AN OVERHEARD CONVERSATION

by *Mike Harris*

The title presumes a curiosity and some nerve, “chutzpa”. It is the only word I know that makes the following tale plausible. For the very few who have not met this word in their reading the nearest translation is “pure brass” – more than just nerve. So on to the story.

While sitting on a bench taking in the sun and some vitamin D, a young man sat down next to me. Not crowding, leaving some space between us, I sat quietly just enjoying the sun. After a while in response to a buzzing the young man takes out a cell phone and starts talking. All I hear is his side of the conversation. “Hello, how are you?” [space] “I am glad to hear you are feeling fine.” [space]

“That is just too bad, he is acting stupid.” [space] “Do not get involved, it will not be appreciated, besides there is little you can do.” [space] “You say you are going on, on your own?” [space] “Well have a good time, I will talk to you when you get back. Good bye.” And the phone disappears into a shirt pocket.

The young man continues to sit and I venture some conversation. “Do you mind, I am an old man, and you young people make me curious. I heard only your side of the conversation. Would you mind if I try to supply the other half of the conversation?” “That might be interesting, go ahead. I either will corroborate your assumption or perhaps make a correction.”

“The first is easy, it is someone you know quite well, recognized the voice and did not mention a name.”

“Correct, I know the party well.”

“The party must recently have been under the weather, since you show satisfaction that they are feeling better.”

“That is pretty good, go on.”

“First clue that the person on the other end of the phone might be female and a third or fourth individual is being talked about and you are offering what seems sound advice.”

“Right.”

“Someone is disappointing the person on the phone.”

“Correct.”

“The conversation ended amicably so the party on the other end and you are just friends ... a respected ear.”

“Old man that was pretty close all around.” “Thanks I enjoyed talking to you. Have a good day.”

With that he left.

I do not recommend starting a conversation like the above if the party next to you is female or of the opposite sex. But if you have the nerve it helps make for an interesting day.