

Coffee shop owner

Thor Drake

Over the weekend, See See Motor Coffee Co., 131 Pine St., abruptly closed its doors, dismissed workers and left a note in the window from management announcing an inability to keep the business going. Established in 2016, the coffee shop was part of a Portland-based chain, the first of several on Pine Street, which gave rise to the neighborhood's nickname of "Little Portland." Thor Drake, founder and co-owner of See See, explained why See See Reno was untenable, and what might be next for the space.

Why are you shutting down?

It's like a refocus within the business. I mean, we've been around for 10 years. We've done all kinds of different things. We put on shows, motorcycle races—build motorcycles. We've always treated the company like an amoeba, so it just grows in the way that it grows. We had this pretty exciting dream to, like, start up more coffee shops in different areas, and coming here over the years, racing motorcycles and stuff, we just fell in love with Reno. And so we came down just kind of scouting to see if it would be possible. We found this cool building. It was in serious



PHOTO: MATT BIEKER

need of some rebuilding and you know, we'd saved our pennies and borrowed a little bit of money to do it, which, in the long run, probably hurt us because the rent is a little bit higher than—I mean, it's a fair range for sure. But, you know, with the improvements that we've done in the building, it's just a little hard to sustain. ... Really, what it comes down to was economics. I hate to say stuff like that, but, we just couldn't make it work, and ... we just decided that in the best interest of the company is to follow our hearts and refocus our brand a little bit and see what we learned out of this and how we can kind of keep it going forward. ... I'm also a family guy. I just had a baby and stuff. So, it's tough to focus your energy on Portland, the shows and Reno. And I guess the term, "took your eye off the ball" kind of applies here.

So there's no plan to reopen somewhere else in Reno?

I don't know. That's kind of the restructure of the brand is to see, you know, where we sit and what we're good at and how we can kind of bring that into a better place. I mean, if there's one thing I know, it's like you can plan and do everything that you think you can do, and then if something changes, you're all of a sudden doing something completely different.

I might be adding grist to the rumor mill, but there was some talk on the literal street outside about potential theft or some people not doing their jobs?

No. As an owner, you always got to take responsibility. I mean, even if you've got that in a place, which we didn't. We have great employees, like, everybody that's ever worked for us is family. ... It's really the economics of it. You know, it's like you're paying \$4,500 in rent here. You're selling a certain amount of coffee. You're doing the best you can. And, you know, we did a fairly good job.

There's another rumor that the Hub Coffee Roasters might be buying the place?

No, that's all I know, really. So we, kind of, brokered through the landlord to get out of our lease, and they have another tenant that I think they work closely with. And I believe there's a connection to Hub, and I don't know what they're going to do in here. □

NOTES FROM THE NEON BABYLON

BY BRUCE VAN DYKE

What's the forecast

The latest from the Ovaltine Office of President Fibface Pantsablaze reveals that reactions to his stable genius military move in Syria have not been particularly super. "A disaster," said General Chaos. "A total disaster," wrote General Confusion. "A complete disaster," opined General Hysteria. "A catastrophic disaster," chirped General Electric. "A disastrous catastrophe," agreed General "Mad Dog" Von Mouthfoam. "What is the next level of disaster beyond total, complete and catastrophic?" asked General C.F. McCluster. "Truly a major fuckup," wrote the ghost of John McCain on Lindsey Graham's Ouija board.

This is what Government by Gut looks like when the Gut in question is spewing out impulsive decisions of booger-picking ignorance, resulting in nice allies running for their lives. Dare we consider the Gut-in-Charge? A steaming, sluggish, utterly foul abdominal region filled with

festering Quarter Pounders and ice cream sludge slicks? Let's daren't. Oops, heads up! Incoming chicken nuggets! Helmets on!

Remember—if its mouth is moving, it's lying. Pouty Pottyhead POTUS has now achieved *zero* credibility. He had to work damn hard to get there. The corruption of the Trump Administration is exceeded only by its detestability. Or vice versa.

All these comments about the difficulty of the Mueller Report, how it was just too dry, too complex, too challenging for the average American. Jesus F. Christ, how effing dumb *are* we? This stuff isn't quantum physics, you know. Mueller laid out multiple cases of obstruction of justice, and did so thoroughly and professionally. For him to have his work dismissed because many Americans can't read or comprehend a slam dunk legal case must

have blown Mueller's mind. He must think he's in the America of President Dwayne Elizondo Mountain Dew Herbert Camacho, the POTUS from eerily prescient film *Idiocracy*.

Last year, I predicted that Twitler would spend only two Christmases in the White House. It's a long shot, but I got a chance. For real. Especially if Moscow Mitch makes good on his vow to get Dum Dum tried by year's end. (Hey, MM! Go fuck yourself!) Everybody assumes that the bloc of Republican invertebrates in the Senate is an impenetrable, unmovable mass of pure, blobbish evil. I'm not so sure. To get a conviction in the Senate, we need 20 Retrumplian lickspittles to bail on DimDon. Romney's the first. Murkowski might well be second. Two down, 18 to go. Sure, it's unlikely. But if the dam cracks, shit happens. And the dam is under pressure right now—good, steady pressure. So, who knows? □



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