

THE AUTHORS SHOW – Adventure, Non-fiction

Author: Damon Sprock

THE FIRST INDIGO tells of a young boy who is discovering his uniqueness as a human being and who flees from the awkwardness and uncomfortable relationship with his father.

Young Punkin Hall and his two buddies become runaways in the 1950s and hop a freight train to pursue their dream of going to California and starting a new life. Their adventure is shared with two AWOL Marines (One white, one black) seeking the same goal. A bond is developed among the five fugitives as they experience good and troubling circumstances on their path to freedom.

Punkin Hall represents a spiritual influx of new human consciousness that would become the foundation of the 1960s movement toward equality for all citizens of the world. Punkin is determined to test his wit away from the confines of his parent's order. Much of what occurs establishes his beliefs and behavior for years to come.

Many children born since have displayed behavior with a more spiritual consciousness, an awakening that transcends emotional reaction to life. For those who have shifted from emotional to self-realization in their perception of reality, it is in the natural progression of universal law that the third and highest level of human consciousness, spiritual awakening, is inevitable.

Excerpts from book:

“I heard ‘Barber Joe’ sayin’ he went clean to California when he was sixteen. Said he stowed away in a freight car all the way from Harrisburg. On the way, he met a drifter who taught Joe to fend for himself when he was ridin’ the rails. Turned out the drifter was wanted for murder by the sheriff in Cincinnati, Ohio. Ol’ Barber Joe rode twenty-five hundred miles with a killer and didn’t know it, and he didn’t find out till the police caught the man in California. That’s how Barber Joe was sent back here to Pennsylvania. They thought Joe was his partner. Bet me. He had a heck of a time talkin’ his way out of that one.”

“Do ya think we ought to go to Harrisburg like Barber Joe?”

“Holy fright, Slop, no. We’ll go to Pittsburgh. There’s more trains there to pick from.”

“What’s our folks gonna say when they find us gone? My mom will have a heart attack.”

“Holy fright, Slop, there ya go again, worryin’ ‘bout your folks and what they’re gonna say. You wanna be like our paps, workin’ in the mill till they’re too tired to play ball with us in the evenings? This is the best plan we had in years. Just think how free we’re gonna be.”

“What’s it like ridin’ a train? Didn’t you and your mom go to Philadelphia couple of years back?”

Punkin was really laid back now. He folded his hands behind his head and crossed his right leg over his left leg:

“Bet me, Slop. That was some ride, two hundred and ninety miles through the prettiest country I ever saw. We passed through the mountains of southern Pennsylvania, where the trees were so thick, they blocked out the sun, and one o’clock in the afternoon seemed like sunset in the evening.

“There’s somethin’ ‘bout a train that makes ya forget all your worries like when you’re sittin’ and lookin’ out the window, and the scenery goes by like you’re watchin’ a movie on television. Only, you’re right in the movie; you’re a part of it. At first, ya hear the big steel wheels rollin’ over the rails, but after a bit, ya kind of don’t hear ‘em anymore. It’s like thinkin’ you’re on a magic carpet, and ya go flyin’ by, and you’re lookin’ at all the sights... Soon you’re in a daze and seein’ things in front of ya that really aren’t there, ‘cause your mind’s thinkin’ ‘bout things that’s someplace else, like someday when I’m on my own and gettin’ rich and famous in some far-off land. All your dreams come true when you’re sittin’ there and lookin’ out that window, and there’s no one there to keep ya from doin’ what ya wanna do and how ya wanna do it. I gotta think of some way to make life be the same as it was on that train.

“Even the people seem different on the train. Seems nobody is worryin’ ‘bout anything. Maybe we ought to get Mrs. P on there sometime. The people are as free and easy as a bird, and everyone’s smilin’ and havin’ a good time. Sometimes they even sing songs together, like the

time we made a stop in Harrisburg, and a man with a guitar got on the train. Well, he must've played every song that was ever written, and everybody sang along. Before we knew it, we were almost in Philadelphia. Almost lost my voice, 'cause I sang so much. I never knew so many people could get along in a small place for a long time like on that train. Guess it was 'cause everybody was goin' in the same direction and was thinkin' 'bout the same kinds of things. I always wondered that if after that train ride, people could get along like that when they weren't ridin' a train, if they could laugh and sing and be nice to everybody... Don't know if that will ever happen. Maybe we ought to build one big train and everybody live on it and ride our whole life like one big, happy family. Sure wouldn't have to be anymore wars. Bet me. We would be too busy singin' songs with that guitar player."

Punkin looked over at Slop, and by this time, Slop was completely captured by the fascination of the train. Punkin had a way of doing that to his friends. He had a knack for playing with their imaginations:

"Holy fright, Slop, snap out of it. You've been daydreaming."

"Wow, Punkin! Ya had me on that train with ya. When do we leave? I can't wait."

"Hold on, Slop. This is gonna take some planning, and besides, I gotta see if Satch is gonna go along. He got some money saved from his paper route. Bet me. We gotta have some backin' if we make a long trip. Come on; let's see if mom's got some lemonade. Can't think things out when my throat's dry."