

Jeff Around Town – March 28<sup>th</sup>, 2024

**Otis:** The Ludwig Quartet, Johannes Brahms clarinet quintet in B minor. Straight up nine o'clock. This is listener-supported classical 90.7 KVNO. HD1 Omaha. Elevating your life daily. Yeah, daily basis for over 51 years. Thanks to your support. Yeah, thanks. I really mean it. Beautiful sunshine. A great day. Thursday, DNF Darn near Friday and darn near time for Jeff about town. He's here. Jeff.

**Jeff:** Good morning, Otis.

**Otis:** Morning, sir. You've been wandering around.

**Jeff:** I'm always on the lookout for a new story. So you shop at Trader Joe's on occasion.

**Otis:** Frozen foods.

**Jeff:** Frozen foods.

**Otis:** Frozen food aisle. That's where you find me.

**Jeff:** Pizza or?

**Otis:** Paneque Paneer. They have some great Paneque Paneer there.

**Jeff:** Paneque Paneer. That's a fun word to say.

**Otis:** That's why I buy it. I just like saying it.

**Jeff:** So, for our listeners, how about you? Do you buy those chili and lime tortilla chips? Those are awfully popular. The spinach artichoke dip. Bananas are delicious. So, the other day I was craving an omelet. That's sort of my daily go-to. And I'm there for eggs, garlic, and cheese. They have the Gruyere cheese.

**Otis:** Oh okay. Alright.

**Jeff:** It's good for melting. So, I left with those items, Otis, but I also left with something I never could have imagined.

**Otis:** Before we go any further, pronounce Gruyere for me.

**Jeff:** Gruyere?

**Otis:** Gruyere.

**Jeff:** Gruyere. I think it's a little bit of the French R-E-R.

**Otis:** Yeah. I look at it and I go, I love it, but I can't say it. So I'm sorry. Go ahead.

**Jeff:** No, no, no. There are a lot of things in life.

**Otis:** You're my go-to guy for French.

**Jeff:** Well, you studied French.

**Otis:** C minus.

**Jeff:** So, it's an early morning, early Saturday morning. So not yet very busy. And I'm talking with one of the employees, Paul. And he's a store manager. He's the guy in charge of the adult beverage section.

**Otis:** Oh, okay.

**Jeff:** Otherwise known as alcohol.

**Otis:** They don't have the person who wanders around with a sign to ask me a question.

**Jeff:** I haven't seen that person lately.

**Otis:** I miss that. I miss that.

**Jeff:** I'm going to just...

**Otis:** But go ahead.

**Jeff:** Would they stop me if I just randomly volunteered to do that?

**Otis:** Just walk in with a sign.

**Jeff:** It was a guy with a big question mark on it.

**Otis:** Yes. Okay. Back to Paul.

**Jeff:** Like a character from Batman.

**Otis:** Okay. So back to Paul.

**Jeff:** So back to Paul. So he's one of the store managers who buy... He's in charge of the adult beverage section. And so, I asked him what their busiest day for alcohol sales are. And what do you think it is, Otis?

**Otis:** I'm going to guess Thursday.

**Jeff:** A great guess. That would have been one of mine. Thursday. No. Friday.

**Otis:** I got one of seven shot.

**Jeff:** Saturday. No, Monday.

**Otis:** Really?

**Jeff:** Monday. Why? I don't... I have no idea. So anyhow...

**Otis:** Bear and the dog?

**Jeff:** Apparently so. And then I asked him what the best seller is in the alcohol section. And he points to this inexpensive bottle of vodka. It was like 10 bucks or something.

**Otis:** Really?

**Jeff:** I don't drink vodka, Otis. I've rarely had it. But I can tell you the first time I had vodka was on the streets of Moscow.

**Otis:** Really?

**Jeff:** And yes, just after the fall of the Berlin Wall. It's January. It's late at night. And it's freezing cold. And I'm standing in this long line at a kiosk.

**Otis:** And you're understanding why Russians drink vodka?

**Jeff:** I am understanding. And I will tell you, there were other people in line who probably weren't of age. So, they sell these... They were selling these large bottles for almost like the equivalent of like 50 cents.

**Otis:** Right.

**Jeff:** And they came with a pull tab. Because I guess they assume that you're just going to drink it and share it with your friends or whatever. So anyhow, that was my first sip of vodka. And whenever I think of vodka, I think of that moment in Moscow in January. So, Paul says that he has a loyal customer who comes in for the vodka. And she consumes about half of the bottle. And then she fills the rest of it up with marigolds and lets it ferment for two weeks. And I'm like, what?

**Otis:** Marigold vodka?

**Jeff:** Exactly. So then she splashes it on herself. It's a recipe handed down from the old country.

**Otis:** To make perfume.

**Jeff:** Well, yes. So, I'm getting there. So yes. So, it turns out that she came to Omaha from Russia.

**Otis:** Of course.

**Jeff:** In the 1970s. And firmly believes this is the perfect method for warding off mosquitoes. It's a mosquito repellent.

**Otis:** Oh, I see.

**Jeff:** And it's a more or less natural approach. And yeah, I've looked it up. And it's kind of a thing. So, for our listeners in Nebraska and Iowa, I just want to remind you that it will soon be mosquito season. They say that generally mid-late April is the season for this part of the country.

**Otis:** So, it's a little hint.

**Jeff:** A little hint.

**Otis:** Soak marigolds in your vodka.

**Jeff:** To prepare. Now, there are lots of natural methods for mosquito propellants. But if those don't work, there is always the vodka method. Now, it's only anecdotal from this customer at Trader Joe's. But Otis, I can report to you, when I was in Moscow that January, I did drink some vodka and I did not encounter any mosquitoes. However, it was freezing cold temperatures in January. And now, Otis, I'm hungry for an omelet and some Gruyere cheese.

**Otis:** And now I'll say, no, officer. It's just my cologne.

**Jeff:** All right.

**Otis:** There you go, buddy.

**Jeff:** Thanks.

**Otis:** Jeffrey around town.

**Jeff:** Merci, au revoir.

**Otis:** My favorite episode so far. I love that. I love that. Vodka and marigolds. I'll look for my forthcoming novel with that title. Or maybe it sounds more like a memoir. Mozart will start us off, though. Yes, he will. String Quartet and E-flat. The Amadeus Quartet. KVNO.