



tears if you eat them too fast, or too often. But this time it was not the cheese. I smiled bravely at my subject and held out six dollars. "Three of whatever you got," I said regally.

But back to Mr. Waxman.

During his TV time as the Recreation Centre co-ordinator, which is probably not his actual title but represents the spirit of the actual one, and before, when he worked at a bar or something, he was, by God, the King of all Canadian Media, not just Kensington market. And the show was so good.

Sometimes the King was wrong, and sometimes the King was right, but we always took away something other than it does not matter what size you are, tight gym clothes are attractive if you are the King, though we learned that too. Elvis knew it, just as Waxman knew it, just as I will know it well someday.

But there was more to the King of Kensington than Al Waxman in tight clothes and Canada's smallest, and most turbulent community centre on Wednesday nights, which is not actually the night the show aired, or rather it could be, I can't remember, but since people from all parts of this great and massive country watched him at varying times, what day I actually watched him is quite unimportant, and since I am not certain I thought I would pick Wednesday because, well, its Wednesday and fuck all else is happening. Race and sex and equality, and immigration: all topics on the show. You think that *Degrassi* was cutting edge? *Degrassi* was *Charles in Charge* next to *King of Kensington*. But that was not enough for Waxman.

After the show was inexplicably cancelled by some half-wit who probably spent the CBC money allotted to Al Waxman's genius on hookers at the Calgary Stampede and needed to cut cost to cover his ass, you would not have blamed Waxman for calling it a career.

After all, once you are the King everything else is a demotion. Ask Presley.

But Waxman went on to save American TV after that. That is why he became the grizzled Lieutenant on the hit show *Cagney and Lacey*. He inspired stars Sharon Gless and Tyne Daly to new heights, and to stop worrying about their weight. In fact, in the years since the hit detective show Waxman got steadily thinner while Daily/Gless got continually bigger.

But Waxman was more than just an overweight, yet strangely attractive, television actor. He was more than just the grizzled forerunner to other grizzled authority figures in primetime TV shows, the finest of which is crusty Adam Schiff on *Law and Order*, who I hear has been replaced by a Diane Wiest, a considerable step down, because Al was unavailable. He was Canada, and that keeps a man busy.

I am tempted to blow out of this dump right now. Pick up one of those ice breakers and strap it to the front of whatever vehicle is available: your Nova maybe. Put her to the boards until we reach Toronto and beat the city, smoke some cigarettes and line up for my cheese end. And stroll through the Market, and bring those words to my lips again, and sing for the merchants more than anyone, more than Al. Sing so they know that the King, though he is dead, still has subjects who remember, and mourn. And that if they asked me right now I'd unzip my jacket and go for that walk again, and sing that song, and I can be King again, if only for that one day.

Send word,

Kent

