

## THE SURFACE OF THINGS

I just picked up a painting by Don Ericson, on line, 55\$, The Fog City Diner, somewhat the worse for wear.

I was the only bidder.

The painting I got was done in 1995. He, Ericson, did the same painting in 1994. Pristine, it's on line: FgCyDi. I saw postcards of it at the diner, then. I had lunch there with my brother and the Severino brothers. Nice guys. My brother picked up the check.

I wrote an earlier version of this story, and thought about re typing it. Making a couple of changes.

And I thought about why I'd called the previous piece, THE SURFACE OF THINGS.

When I was in the 3d grade I didn't get under the desk.

It was duck and cover.

The teacher looked at me.

I said: “They’re just having us do this to make us feel good.”

My Pop had to go to school. He said to the principal: “The kid’s right, you know.

I told him it’s your school. Your rules.”

In the 8<sup>th</sup> grade, I won 3d place at the Orange County Science Fair.

My project?

A MODEL OF A REACTOR / AN EXPLANATION THAT IT WAS DESIGNED  
TO MAKE BOMBS/THE RESIDUE/TOXIC RADIOACTIVITY/ FOR 50,000  
YEARS/ ONLY PRACTICAL USE TO BUILD BOMBS.

This dinged up old painting, if it could talk, I’d ask it why a second look at the  
same subject?

I’d thank it for reminding me to look past the surface of things.