

April 18

A Times article about the torture of Abu Zubaydah at a secret U.S. prison in Thailand.

A Detainee's Interrogation

Abu Zubaydah was captured in Pakistan in March 2002, when Bush administration officials portrayed him as a Qaeda leader. His interrogation, according to multiple accounts, began in Pakistan and continued at the secret C.I.A. site in Thailand. When interviewed by the International Committee of the Red Cross in 2006, Abu Zubaydah chronicled the escalation to especially brutal interrogation tactics during his captivity in Thailand:



WHAT ABU ZUBAYDAH REVEALED TO HIS INTERROGATORS

Late April to mid-May (Times are approximate)

"I woke up, naked, strapped to a bed, in a very white room."
"I was transferred to a chair where I was kept, shackled by hands and feet."
"During this time I developed blisters on the underside of my legs due to the constant sitting. I was only allowed to get up from the chair to go to the toilet, which consisted of a bucket."
"I was only given Ensure and water to drink."

"The cell and room were air-conditioned and were very cold. Very loud, shouting type music was constantly playing."
"I was questioned for about one to two hours each day."
"During the questioning the music was switched off, but was then put back on again afterwards."
"If I started to fall asleep one of the guards would come and spray water in my face."

Mid-May to July

"After about two or three weeks I began to receive food, rice, to eat on a daily basis." "I was allowed to lie on the floor. I remained naked and in shackles, but I could sleep a little."
Later "I was provided with orange clothes to wear." "When my interrogators had the impression that I was cooperating and providing the information they required, the clothes were given back to me. When they felt I was being less cooperative the clothes were again removed and I was again put back on the chair."

Abu Zubaydah provides extensive information on Qaeda members and possible plots he has heard discussed.

Early August

"About two and a half or three months after I arrived in this place, the interrogation began again, but with more intensity than before. Then the real torturing started."
"I was taken out of my cell and one of the interrogators wrapped a towel around my neck, they then used it to swing me around and smash me repeatedly against the hard walls of the room."

"After the beating I was then placed in the small box. They placed a cloth or cover over the box to cut out all light and restrict my air supply."
"I was then put on what looked like a hospital bed, and strapped down very tightly with belts. A black cloth was then placed over my face and the interrogators used a mineral water bottle to pour water on the cloth so that I could not breathe."

On Aug. 1, 2002, the Justice Department issues a secret legal opinion justifying the use of the harshest methods against Abu Zubaydah, including waterboarding. Interrogators at the scene believe he has given up all the information he has, but officials at C.I.A. headquarters order to proceed with brutal treatments. He provides no new information.

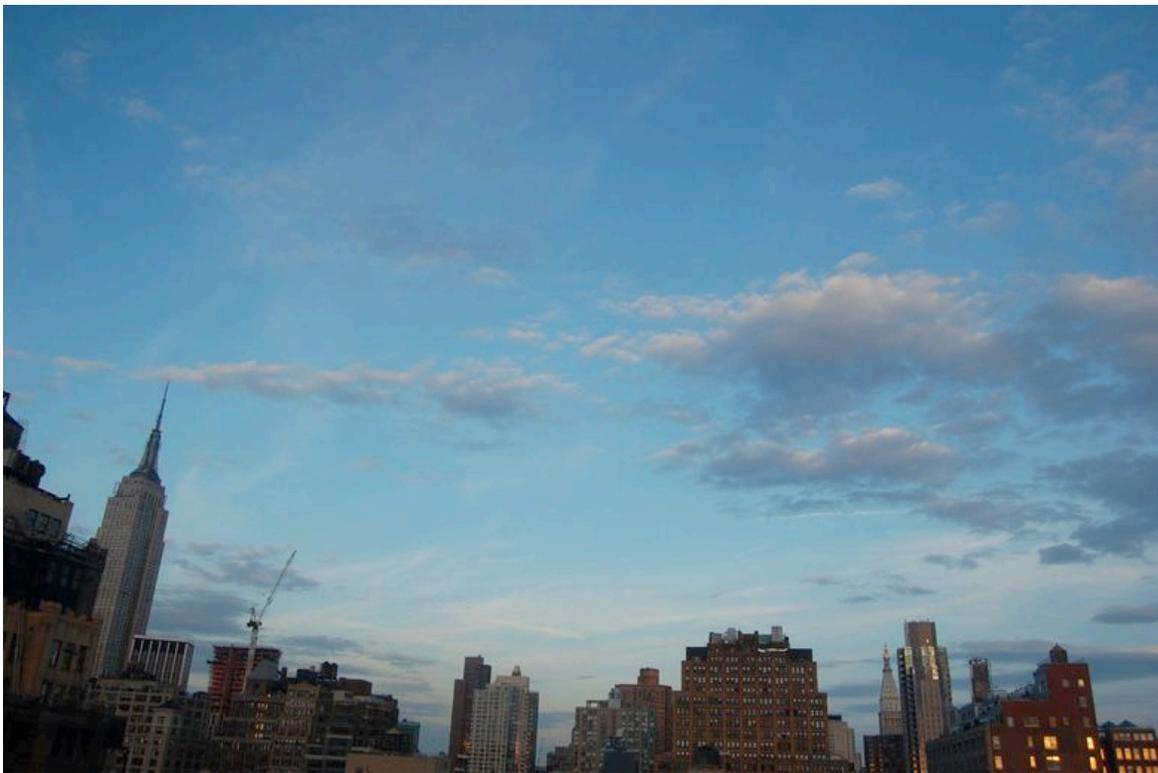
In the sidebar, mere inches away as the eye flies:



A Weekend Away in Palm Springs.



Saturday a.m.



p.m.



Y p.m. también. Any second now and those blossoms go critical.

April 19



a.m.



Offspring.



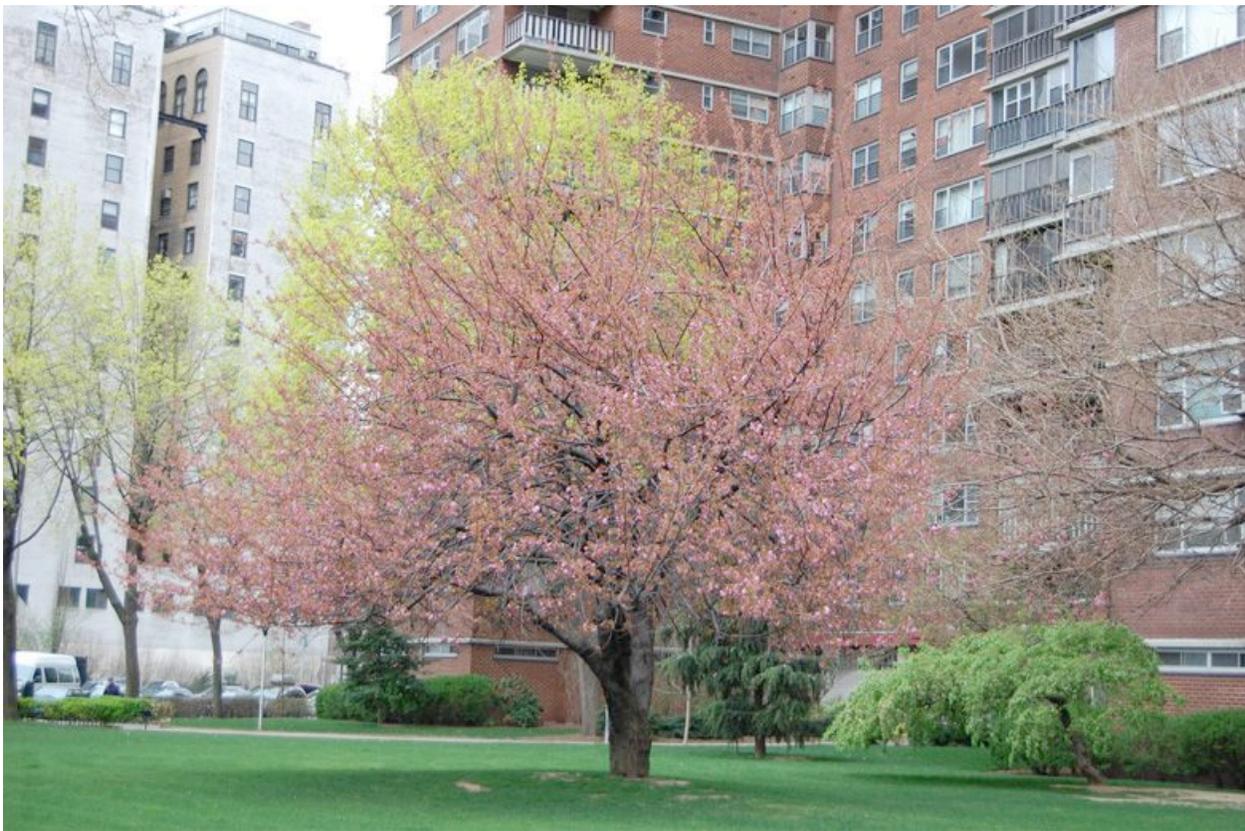
April 20

Venus, the Moon, Mars and Jupiter array themselves in dawn's eastern sky. Bright as anything, the ISS goes gliding by.

Waterboarding Used 266 Times on 2 Suspects

C.I.A. interrogators used the near-drowning technique, which Obama administration officials have described as torture, 266 times on two key prisoners from Al Qaeda.

Use, as the ancient tacticians advised, plum tree to die for peach tree.



a.m.

April 21

Tomorrow, just before dawn, the Moon and Venus will appear to nearly touch.

Out west, the former will eclipse the latter. Oh for the dispersal of these evening vapors...



April 22

Slate gray dawn in these parts, so the celestial dance takes place out there beyond the engulfing mists, beyond your sight, though not your ken.

**Yes, It's Beautiful, the Italians All Say, but
Is It a Michelangelo?**



Pier Paolo Cito/Associated Press

To and fro, to and fro, bro.

Standing on the corner,
suitcase in my hand

Jack is in his corset, and Jane is her vest,
and me I'm in a rock'n'roll band, hah!

Ridin' in a Stutz Bear Cat, Jim

You know, those were different times!

Oh, all the poets they studied rules of verse
and those ladies, they rolled their eyes

Sweet Jane! Whoa! Sweet Jane, oh-oh-a! Sweet Jane!

OK, it's not Petrarch. So sue Lou.

Japan Pays Foreign Workers to Go Home As Housing Market Dips, More in U.S. Are Staying Put Executive at Freddie Mac Is Found Dead

And sharing the *Times* front page with words such as these:



For when it comes to slaughter, you will do your work on water from the Malls of Moctezuma to the something something Bar-ba-ry...

For onceuponatime, a certain American commodore, one William Bainbridge, fought in the Barbary Wars and was himself taken prisoner in 1803. Back then the Barbary pirates – rather than, for the most part, being local fisherman dislodged by the transnational trawler boyz – worked as privateers for the Ottoman Empire, engaged as it was in a nasty trade war with Europe and the fledgling [SFX shriek of adolescent eagle] U.S. of A.

Kan ya makan.

And by a curious turn it was from the deck of the USS Bainbridge, a spanking new guided-missile destroyer named for this very commodore, that a week or so ago, American snipers “took out” the three teenage Somali pirates as they floated about the Gulf of Aden in a lifeboat with their hostage, the captain of the Maersk Alabama, an

American-flagged, Norwegian-owned container ship. Uh, *supuestamente*.

One lad, however, was captured on the freighter itself, though whether he came aboard to negotiate or swashbuckle remains in question, and after a long journey by sea and air was drug into court here yesterday:



Sez AP:

NEW YORK – The sole surviving Somali pirate from the hostage-taking of an American ship captain arrived in New York on Monday, smiling for a gaggle of cameras and reporters as federal agents led him into custody to face charges in the attack.

Abduhl Wali-i-Musi (AHB'-dul wahl-ih-MOO'-sih) was handcuffed and had a chain wrapped around his waist. His left hand was heavily bandaged from the wound he suffered during the skirmish on the ship two weeks ago.

The smiling teenager seemed poised as he entered a federal building in a rainstorm, but he didn't say anything in response to reporters' shouted questions about whether he had any comment about the pirate episode.

Wali-i-Musi is the first person to be tried in the United States on piracy charges in more than a century....

And ah, those long-ago Barbary Wars prompted the young republic to establish the U.S. Marine Corps, and thereby make our first major expenditure on, and commitment to, a future of fighting overseas...

Canteen



Como



Victoria



Bouchet



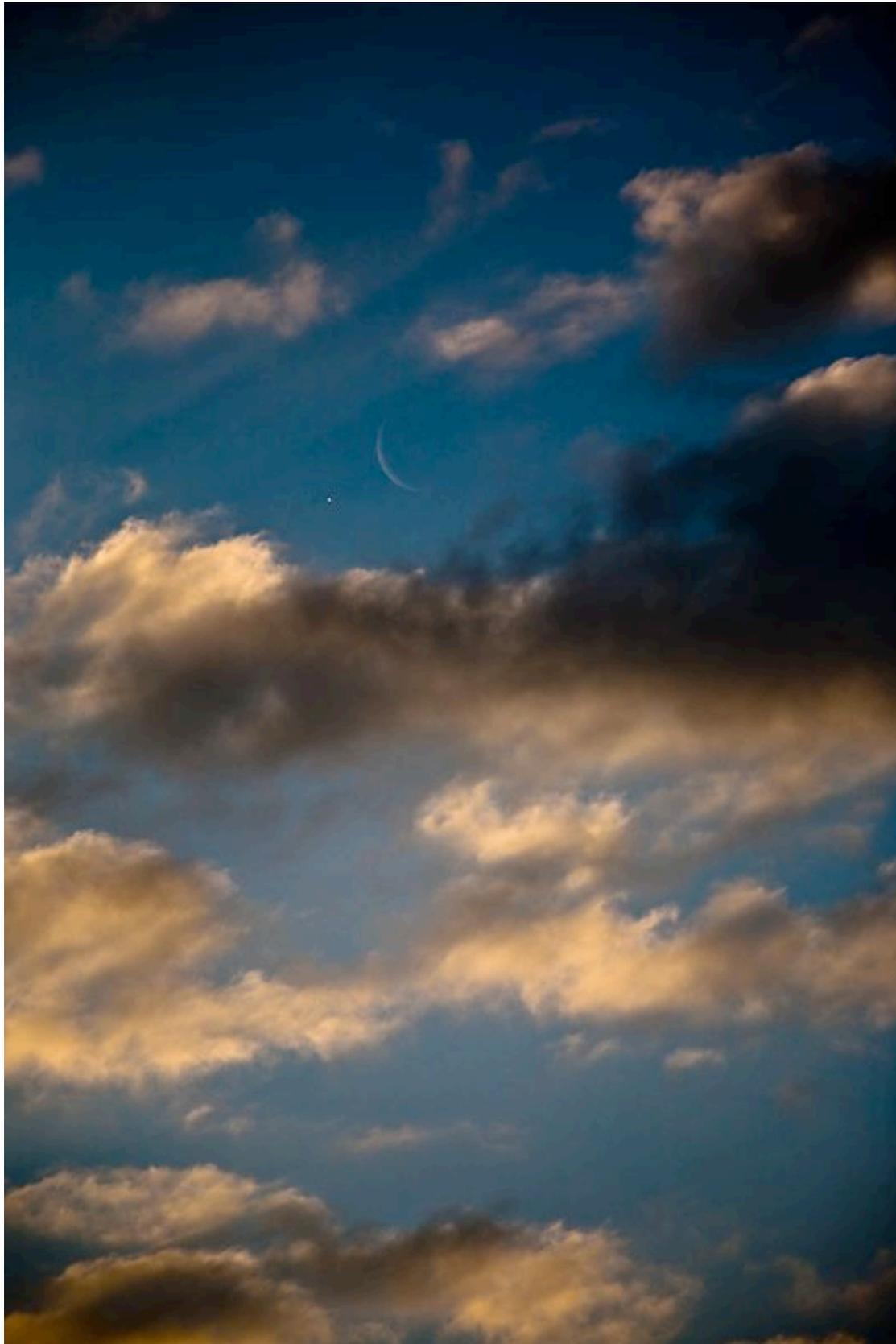
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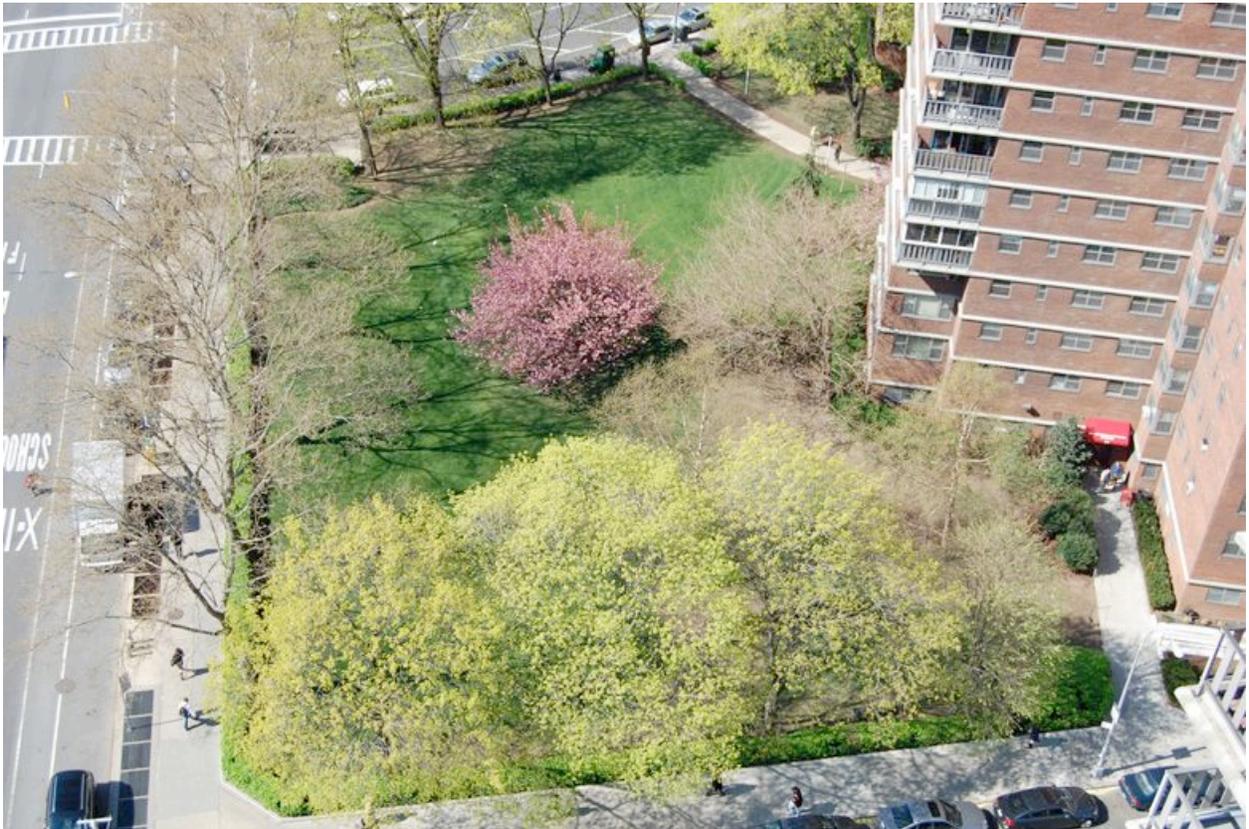


April 23

This shot yesterday by Stan Richards in Des Moines, just before the lunar occultation of Venus...







Yeah.

Someone's got it in for me,
they're planting stories in the press
Whoever it is I wish they'd cut it out
but when they will I can only guess.
They say I shot a man named Gray
and took his wife to Italy,
She inherited a million bucks
and when she died it came to me.
I can't help it if I'm lucky...

Edgy Banks Start to Get Word Today on Stress Tests

The nation's 19 biggest banks will start learning Friday how they fared in federal examinations — and which among them will need another bailout.

The heart, the heart. Bypass and transplant. Or simply do without.

And, kan ya makan, even unto the early 1960s, David [[You Have a Friend at Chase Manhattan](#)] Rockefeller's trusted aide de camp, Warren Linquist, was wont to refer to the banking concentration of Wall Street as "the heart pump of the capital blood that sustains the free world."

Pump and chang'd circumstances.

Whenever we kiss
I worry and wonder
Your lips may be near
But where is your heart?...

Ah, once upon a time in that Montmartre of the mind...