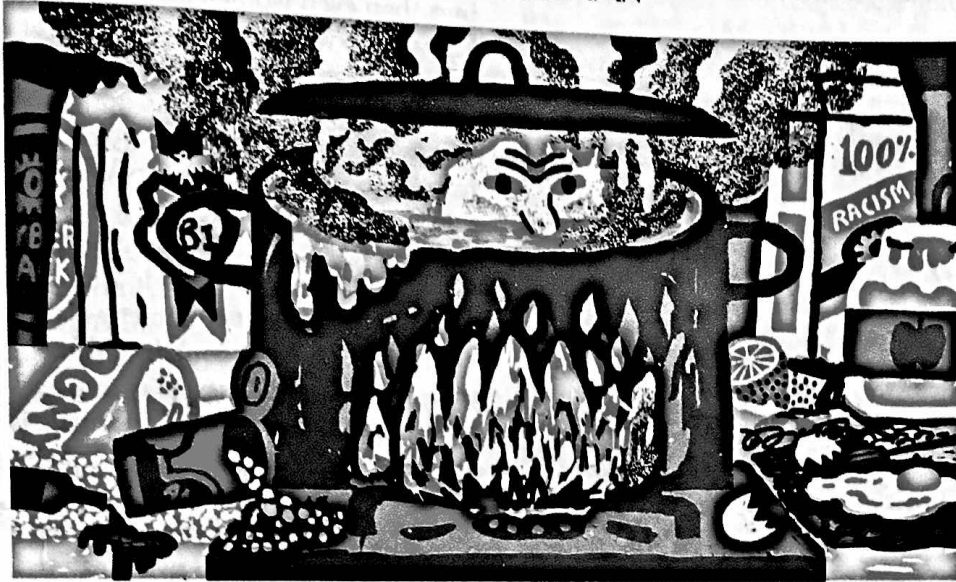


SHOUTS & MURMURS

A RECIPE

BY JENA FRIEDMAN



WITH THE INAUGURATION almost upon us, I thought I'd share an old family recipe, of Italian origin, passed down to my grandmother from her aunt in Germany. The ingredients have been tweaked to appeal to American tastes.

Warning: This dish contains nuts.

INGREDIENTS:

- ¼ of all eligible voters (or less, depending on how many votes you can suppress)
- 1 charismatic leader with a wildly successful book, TV show, or film (and weird facial or head hair)
- 1 gaggle of Russian hackers
- 1 well-timed WikiLeaks
- 1 rogue F.B.I. director (or other high-level government official)
- A dollop of racism
- A spritz of anti-Semitism
- A sprinkle of idiocy (for a low-fat version, substitute applesauce for idiocy)
- The media

PREPARATION:

1. Preheat the planet to record temperatures to accelerate climate change, and trigger a global refugee crisis. Put the refugee crisis aside and let it rise. It will come into play later.

2. Next, you'll need a melting pot, or the illusion of one. Mix a colorful figure (preferably orange) into a liberal but fractured democracy, where the left has been weakened by infighting and the right has been reduced by impotent leadership.

Note: The figure may curdle the dish, unless he appears at first to be a joke, a clown, or a total idiot. Add the media here to help emulsify.

3. Allow the mixture to congeal into a malignant orange mass, and let it stew in the pot for several months, heating the populace with racist rhetoric. Now that the refugee crisis has risen, knead it back into the mixture, along with any leftover xenophobia, bigotry, or fears of terrorism lying around in your cupboard.

Note: This recipe calls specifically for Islamic terrorism. Even a small splash of domestic terrorism (often a by-product of toxic masculinity and lax gun laws)

will sour the mix, so store your terrorisms separately.

4. As for misogyny, a little goes a long way. It's already everywhere, like salt or CO₂ emissions, so there's no need to overdo it. But, if you do have a taste for it, you can spice up the dish with a pinch of ass, a small handful of pussy, a smear of telling a candidate who has spent forty years in public service that she looks tired, or a scant cup of sexual-assault accusers paraded around as human shields on live TV. (Fun tip: Add insult to injury by not paying for their hair and makeup!)

Note: If accusers start to bubble up in the pot, put a lid on it immediately by enlisting the F.B.I. director to do something moronic to deflect from snowballing sexual-assault allegations.

5. At this point, everything may begin to boil over. Common sense would call for lowering the temperature, but that would obscure the full, rich (or ostensibly rich, but who really knows without tax returns) flavor. Instead, toss in some outside help to keep the concoction heated but contained, like a D.N.C. hack or another variety of Russian cyberterrorism (e.g., tampering with voter databases), as no one you are serving will seem to notice these extra ingredients.

Note: To prevent progressives from sticking together, whisk some yolks into the mix. The kids will think it's béarnaise and eat it right up!

6. Whip the ingredients into a pungent, gravy-like sludge. The early admixture of the media (including social media) will insure the perfect sludginess.

7. Once it seems edible, serve on Election Day. Be advised, however, that this recipe is not meant to appeal to all tastes; in fact, most Americans have never been exposed to this dish and probably won't be able to stomach it, but as long as they don't vote (or aren't able to, thanks to the repeal of key provisions of the Voting Rights Act), your dinner should be a hit!

Yield: Serves 10-12, mostly Trumps but not Tiffany. ♦