

PHHH #953.9

Date: September 14, 2003

Weather: Redrum

Location: Around and about Routes 18 and 1, New Brunswick

Time: 1:45

Hare: Lev Hofman (nka Jimmy Ruckfutgers)

Hounds: Hand Solo, Safe Sweats, Lady Macbeth, Captain Lame-O, Dave Driscoll, Mike Coulon (late of Ulan Bator and presumed paramour of our earlier Mongolian visitor, Deviant Honked [see [PHHH #865.4](#) plus additional anagrams on YahooGroups]), Madame Butterfly, Adam Rutkowski, Kris Rutkowski, 42 Fackler, Weepee, The Red-Faced Chugger.

Virgin: Phil Hughes (but not in theory, anyway)

Not seen: Hey YO! Paully

A Tale from 111 FitzRandolph

Dr. Jones ("My name's Jones. Maitland Jones of Bartlett, Condon & Schneider." God, he loved saying that at the chemin-de-fer tables in Nice) hunched over in his nylon lawn chair, all feverish scribbling and pensive pauses in the twilight of a warm September Sunday. The CD spun in the boombox, stereo turning mono in the spacious backyard: "Clean this mess up else we'll all end up in jail

Those test tubes and the scale

Just get them all out of here . . .

Get along, get along Kid Charlemagne

Get along Kid Charlemagne."

Jones drummed his pen on his thigh to the rhythm. Man, this Steely Dan was dead on--where had they been all his life? And a bit of chemistry in the lyrics to boot. He took a sip of Rogue's Roost Peated Porter before choking at what just dropped in. A boxy microflyer, all carbon-fiber and kite-bright colored panels under a shuddering rotor that bisected a squirrel reclining in the wrong place at the wrong time, landing squarely on the recycle barrel full of Keith's Blonde Summer Wheat bottles. Three dark figures clambered out the wreckage, whispering rapidly in Catalan.

"Geez-airre! Que pasa? Too good for panthair peess when no one ees looking?"

"Ass-ss-ss-ss--assin, and . . . A-A-A. G. Zaire! And Jorge! What an unexpected pleasure--although, of course, you have my sincerest condolences about the dwarf." Wiping a dry eye, Jones fought for self-control. Really, they weren't much worse than the dean, not much more than the difference between an open and closed casket, and they were on his turf, not the Belle Mead Inn or House of Shih. Stay calm, you can explain, there's a way out. . .

"What can I get you in a glass? Just back from up north, there's Propeller Pale, Martello Stout, Rogue's Raspberry Wheat . . . And Barley Wine if you'd like something lighter."

"Fuck you, Geezer, and fuck your Old Nassau sympathy."

"Yayess, Geezaire, no Stegmayairres, no need to stay long."

A keloid-scarred arm grabbed Jones's scalp.

"We've got answers. Have you got questions?"

"Who, me, Zaire? What's the problem?"

"Problem--he wants to know what the problem is, Assassin." Zaire gave off a hollow laugh.

"Problem is, Solo and Weepee are running the Hash. Problem is, rookies are setting left and right. Problem is, they're getting names. Problem is, some grandmaster's pulling his pud listening to shitty soft jazz-rock while a bunch of morons and wankers are capering about New Brunswick in red dresses."

"Oh, well, you know, traffic on Route's miserable on Sunday afternoons and of course the Giants . . . "

"Ooo well, the traffic, eeww, the Giannnts," Zaire simpered. "Hell, they all made it an hour late, but we'd have given you a lift, wouldn't we, Jorge?" Jorge nodded vigorously while Zaire turned his purpling, blotchy face back to the professor. "The Giants, DOCTOR Jones, PLAY MONDAY NIGHT, MOORRONNN!"

Jones fought for breath under the blast of ketones and aldehydes from the red-rimmed maw before him.

"Oh, right, well," he smiled weakly, beginning a count back from sixty. "Did I miss anything?"

"Jesus, you do have shit for brains, don't you? A red-dress hash in this heat? Tours under Route 1's Raritan Bridge, a wedding party in Rutgers Gardens . . . what else, Assassin?"

"Don't forgayhat, the Exit 9 tollbooths, the Sheraton lobby, los asustaros caballos, los locos vacas, live wyairs. . . "

"That's right, in the Cook College farm! And how many dresses hurdled the Jersey barriers on One?"

"Ooh, that Madama Butterfly, he makes Total Fucking Moron hash like Wacko."

"Not forgetting, of course, Ouippee's flouncy dress with matching sunglasses or Captain Lame-O's return from Cambridge. Lady Macbeth must have poured him into that little number--it was smaller than Chugger's and she'd been wearing hers for two days. And that Polish stud with the big bow in back? Hell, in the Belle Mead with the right goggles. . . Hah!" Zaire seemed to be unwinding just as Jones finished his count: three, two, one--

Crisp sandals clocked down the back stairs inside the house, lights popping on like flashbulbs at the Oscars.

"Mait? Mait? What's all that racket?"

"Mierda! It's his old lady! Run for it!"

"Sweet Loretta Martin thought she was a woman--where's it from?" The scabrous claw clutching Jones's scalp snapped his head down and by the time he raised it, the trio was gone, leaving him to explain the broken flying machine by the pachysandra.

Next: Five or six weddings later, a baptismal hash by Hey YO QUIERO Paully, assisted by Juicy and Spud Mlodzinski: bring your own wafers, kielbasas on the house (and who threw them up there?)!