

PHHH #980.9

Date: Sunday, March 21, 2004

Weather: Blustery Day

Place: Wegman's Shopping Center, Route 202, Somerville, to the domicile of [Lobster Boy and Shrimp Girl](#)

Hare: Hey YO! Paully

Hounds: Hand Solo, Ouippee, Sharon's Balls (visitor), Bjorn Dork, Mike, Natural Born Lesbian

Time: 80 minutes

Seen at 87 Prospect: "Suzy"

Seen at the On-In: "Kathy" and ["Charlie"](#)

The Efrem Zimbalist Rules

The battered red station wagon coughed and chugged into the cratered back lot of the Belle Meade Inn, whose sign, hanging shakily from bits of string, read, in crayon, The RED ZONE. Geezer stepped gingerly past the better half of a deer that had had a close encounter with a land mine, clambered over the jersey barriers, crawled carefully through the concertina wire and over the broken glass embedded in the steps, and entered the back of the Inn. Down below were the usual residents, A. G. Zaire, the Cuban Assassin, Jorge, and Our Wanda, engaged in a tense round of Old Maid. Zaire took one of Assassin's proffered cards, smiled evilly, and laid down a pair of fours.

"Cagüendios! Someone cheated . . . Jorge . . . ?" The big Cuban glared at Jorge who decided it was time to fetch some more [Stegmaier's](#) from the cooler. An empty bottle of Gold Medal whistled past his head. Our Wanda leaned on Zaire's shoulder with a straight arm and examined her nails.

"Have I come at a bad time?" Geezer asked almost hopefully.

"No," said Zaire, who was wearing an eyepatch and missing the hair on the right side of his scalp. "Not at all, Mait, you've come at a fine time, a great time, an excellent time . . . to answer some questions."

The color drained from Geezer's face and he took a Bock Beer from Jorge's tray.

"Missed another hash, eh?"

"Well, you know, the press of academe, all work, work, work and no play as we toil in the vineyards of--"

"Shut up." The stitches over the recent gash on the back of Zaire's left hand popped as he crushed a bottle cap. "Let's review the hash; there's a pattern to it. You're a chemist, tell me what you see."

"Paully sets for the equinox, nothing too surprising there. New girl, this Sharon's Balls, from the Hockessin Hash in Delaware, or so she says, fit, blond, leaves her friend behind, drives up in an Audi Quattro. She's leading the pack to cut off half the trail when Paully calls them back. The true trail through some Jersey cracker's back yard brings two police cars, and the cops ignore Solo's polyester stride, this Sharon woman, and Ouippee in his Liz Claiborne as they follow the trail past the front of the house."

"The woods and unfiltered effluent behind the shopping center, well, god only knows what Dork, the Lesbian, and Mike thought they were following, but they all encounter a pack of undersized extras for [Lord of the Flies](#) torturing some white oak with their

paintball guns and they leave the hounds alone. Later, the pack hits the Raritan, Dork sees marks on the other side, Weepee follows, and Sharon's Balls not only chickens out and finds the true trail with Mike, but she feigns an inability to cross a ditch without help. And when the Lesbian decides he knows where the hare's going, who's right there?"

"She is?" offered Geezer hopefully.

"Goddam right. And why does she seem to know where everything is?"

"She grew up in Somerville?"

"Moron. Look, maybe it's easy for you with fancy-pants university counsel in your little Ivy tower, but the Assassin and I can't have feds snooping around."

"Wh--what?" exclaimed Geezer.

"You heard me the first time. Sharon told them she--and "Suzy"--are Hoovers at the on-in in the Lesbians' kitchen. She not only drank Pauly onto the floor but remembered to use the toilet. Now," Zaire leaned forward and hooked Geezer closer by the nose with the pointed end of a can opener, "how long do you think it'll be before Rambo finds out, abandons our boys in Baghdad, and scuttles back here to check this out?"

At that moment, as the consequences slowly sank into Geezer's thymus gland, there was sharp crack. He awoke sitting in his car in his own driveway. Had it been a dream or would Sharon's Balls and Suzy appear for the Flower Power Hash of Peace, Love, and False Hope the following week, even if there was no paté?