

No Good Load Goes Unpunished

BY DAN DUNN

IT WAS a Sunday, I think, circa 1995. Late night.

I'd just returned home from a 72-hour burn in Las Vegas, that shiny city in the middle of a massive desert where people go to surf the American dream. The real, hollow American dream, where you can eat in a palace, then visit fake New York, Paris, and Venice in the same night on foot. Was it Jim Morrison who said he'd get his kicks before the whole shithouse went up in flames? Yeah, that's it. Let it roll, baby, roll!

This Vegas jaunt had been especially ruinous. If you've been there, you know what I'm talking about. You step off a plane, abandon all pretense of personal responsibility, and spend a whole goddamn weekend flooring it even when you know you're running on fumes.

My only clear-cut memory was being in a massive nightclub with an illuminated outdoor pool and island bar, over which hung a huge rotating chandelier. The place was awash in gold, black, and bronze,

with dance poles that looked like lanterns spread throughout. Our VIP host told me the design was inspired by the sexy curves of the human body, and while I'm not really sure I got that, it was clear they had a specific body part in mind when they set the prices on the drinks menu: the asshole.

So when I got back to my shitty L.A. apartment after that shitty trip to Sin City, I started mixing myself a toxic nightcap of Drano, sleeping pills, and—for taste—a little chocolate syrup, when inspiration suddenly appeared and lifted me up from the depths of Hangover Hell....

"Wake up!" I shouted, shaking Bottomfeeder, who was passed out on the sofa beneath a tattered blanket covered in what looked to be the remnants of a fish-taco platter and a spilled ashtray. Bottomfeeder was my landlord's ne'er-do-well nephew who—due to a complex legal settlement struck shortly after a cooking-experiment-gone-wrong resulted in a highly destructive grease fire in my building—had taken up residence in my living room. Not

just sleeping there, but *living* there. Like a homeless guy on a park bench, except with access to my fridge and cable TV.

"Wake up, goddamn it, because I just had an amazing idea and I need to share it with someone...even if that someone is, well, only you."

It's worth mentioning that Bottomfeeder was unemployed, out of shape, clearly in need of some sort of intervention, and spent nearly all of his non-supine time figuring out creative ways to grow his facial hair.

"For Christ's sake, man, are you high?" he mumbled, wiping sleep from his bloodshot eyes.

"No. At least, I don't *think* I still am," I croaked.

"How was Vegas?"

"Fuck Vegas!"

"How much did ya lose?"

"Everything."

"Sleep at all?"

"Nope."

"Take drugs?"

"Of course."



THERE'S ONLY ONE THING WORSE THAN ONE OF THOSE HANGOVER-FUELED MOMENTS OF CLARITY, AND THAT'S REALIZING THAT A MAN WHOSE CAREER GOALS INCLUDE UNDERSTANDING THE SECRET OF FIRE WAS—GULP!—RIGHT.

"Any fights with the soon-to-be-ex-girlfriend?"

"She left a few hours after we got there."

"Oh, man," he sighed. "Does this mean you're going to try to kill yourself again?"

"That's what I'm so excited about!"

"Hey, do what ya gotta do, man. Is it cool if I stay in the apartment?"

"No, dude. No! I'm not excited about killing myself!" I beamed. "I'm excited because I just came up with a plan that'll help me and lots of other people deal with PVSD!"

"PVSD?"

"Post-Vegas stress disorder," I explained. "You know, that feeling of complete and utter despair that follows a debauched weekend spent wreathed in a miasma of cigarette smoke and impurity, throwing away all your money and dignity to everyone, from the dealers to the strippers to the bartenders."

"Doesn't sound so bad to me," Bottomfeeder replied thoughtfully.

"That's because you're a professional degenerate," I said. "But that's not the point. The point is, you ever notice how after some kid shoots up his school, they always bring in those grief counselors to help the

survivors? Well, what I'm proposing is a service that offers on-demand, one-on-one counseling to people who plummet into a suicidal funk after long weekends in Las Vegas."

"A kid shot up my school in eleventh grade," Bottomfeeder said.

"Holy shit. Really? Anybody get hurt?"

"Nah. He used a musket."

"A musket?"

"Yeah. His dad was a Civil War buff. The kid fired one shot, but couldn't figure out how to reload the damn thing. So all the popular dudes jumped on him and kicked his teeth in.... Bet that kid could have used some counseling," he added.

"Maybe. Sure," I nodded, having learned it was best to agree with Bottomfeeder whenever he went off on a tangent—it reduced the odds of getting sucked into an unwinnable argument. "But anyhow, about my plan for PVSD counseling. First, they calm you down by reassuring you that what you're experiencing is a combination of alcohol poisoning and withdrawal shock—savings account withdrawal, that is. And that after 72 straight hours of sleep and—"

"I don't like it," Bottomfeeder interjected. "For one thing, how do you pronounce that? *Peevee-ested*? Sounds girly. Besides, there's a good reason for feeling so shitty after a Vegas trip."

"And what would that be?"

"It keeps you from going back again too soon."

There's only one thing worse than one of those hangover-fueled moments of clarity, and that's realizing that a man whose career goals include understanding the secret of fire was—*gulp!*—right. Certainly my accountant agreed. The ex-girlfriend, too.

Bottomfeeder scratched himself under the arm, apeline, and noticed the glass of murky liquid I was holding. "Could I get a sip of that? My mouth's drier than Steven Wright."

As I considered the request, he smoothly snatched the swill from my hand. He tossed it back without hesitation, fell straight back onto the floor, and stared at the ceiling.

"Good drink," he muttered. "What's it called?"

"The Peevee-ested Martini," I said, making a mental note to copyright the formula. ☞

Beat the Hangover



FRANK Sinatra famously said he felt bad for people who didn't drink because they woke up feeling as good as they were going to feel all day.

While I agree with the Chairman of the Board that teetotaling sounds about as much fun as a game of charades with Stephen Hawking, I must admit to having spent a few mornings huddled beside the toilet, ruining the day I ever decided to embrace the sozzled lifestyle, and swearing to all that is holy that if I survived, I'd never, ever drink again.

Yah, um, not so much.

I cover the adult-beverage beat for esteemed periodicals such as the one you're holding in your hands, and I've been doing it long enough to know better, too. So I understand the urge to promise yourself, while in the throes of a hellacious hangover, that you'll never partake again. But for irredeemable inebriates like myself, "I'm done" is to drinking what "just one more episode" is to binge-watching *Breaking Bad*—a flat-out falsehood. Let's not kid ourselves here. We dig us some drinking far too much to quit anytime soon.

And while we're at it, let's dispense with any half-crooked notions of taking commonsense steps such as avoiding shots, downing a glass of water after every cocktail, eating to slow down the rate of alcohol absorption, and—*yawn*—moderation. When heavy drinking is involved, you're as likely to use hangover-prevention measures as you are to remember you're married at a strip club.

Fortunately for you (me, not so much), I'm all too familiar with waking up in worse shape

than that bathroom in *Trainspotting*. And I have hard-earned, field-tested solutions to the problem. Here's what you gotta do...

H2O Go!

When suffering the acute effects of alcohol-induced head trauma, you'll find there's no better friend in all the great wide world than pure, simple, unadulterated water. Water will grab the bad stuff out of your bloodstream, allowing you to pee out the toxicity. So drink tons of it, and maybe pop a few analgesic tablets for good measure. Those'll give your central nervous system the reassuring pat on the back it needs, and let it know everything's gonna be okay, eventually. Then, straight away, you should...

Bang It Out

For all the many ways alcohol can lift us up, it can be a real downer, too. Studies by smart people in lab coats have shown that consuming booze in mass quantities may lower male testosterone. This partially explains why you often wake up hungover and horny after a night of overindulgence—your hormone-depleted body wants its mojo back in a bad way. Having sex gets the blood pumping and increases the amount of pain-killing oxygen in the body, which goes a long way toward shutting down those angry little fuckers playing grab-ass behind your eyeballs. In lieu of a willing partner, you can always take matters into your own hand. Now wash up and follow up that roll in the hay with...

A Big Fat Greasy Cheeseburger

First off, cheeseburgers are one of the most delicious foods known to mankind. On top of that, they're full of protein which

breaks down into amino acids. The aminos are intrepid little warriors that lay siege to acetaldehyde, the odious alcohol-induced poison that's beating on your booze-soaked noggin like it owes it money. Amino acids convert acetaldehyde into water and carbon dioxide, which are then sent packing when you take a good long piss. To recap, in goes cheeseburger, out goes hangover. It's the circle of lush, friends. The circle of lush.

Retox

There are many theories regarding the origin of the phrase "hair of the dog," but they all come down to the same thing: You're going to get loaded again so you can avoid feeling the aftereffects of getting loaded. A wonderful long-term strategy. See you in rehab. But the dirty secret of this method is that it's usually quite effective. Just bear in mind that the trick is to drink enough to alleviate the hangover, but not get hangover-worthy again. You DO NOT want to go messin' with the double hangover. That's like ramming your skull into an amp at a Metallica concert. You just don't want to go there. Got it? Good.

So let's get started on the road to recovery with these booze-fueled remedies...

Trick & Treat

Created by Eric "E.T." Tecosky of *Jones Hollywood, Hollywood*

- 1 can of ice-cold Coca-Cola
- 1 ounce of chilled Dirty Sue Premium Olive Juice

Set an alarm for an hour or two before you actually need to wake up, and drink the Coke. Go back to bed. After you wake up again, do the shot of Dirty Sue.