

Chapter 7

We made it the rest of the way into Wilmington with no major incidents.

There was, however, a minor delay when we stopped to assist in a protest – Jimmy is quite the bleeding heart – at a construction zone in Georgia. We stopped the car (on or near the breakdown lane this time), Jimmy got his appropriate picket sign from the trunk, and then spent the next hour or so raising his fist and yelling at all of the passing cars flanked by the “End Road Work” sign that the protesters had previously erected looming over his head.

I didn’t protest. Two reasons: One, the thought of all those construction guys sitting around at home all day playing “The Legend of Zelda” instead of working just didn’t sit too well with me, and “B”, if the lazy-ass protesters who put the sign up in the first place couldn’t be bothered with actually being out here actively pushing their own agenda I sure as hell didn’t see why I should.

After awhile I started running low on smokes and Jimmy had to pee, so I got him back in the car and we kicked it up to the next exit for well deserved break.

First stop was a quick “onload / offload” maneuver at a gas station where I pumped about half a supertanker’s worth of fuel into the Impala’s gut and Jimmy made quick-stepping to the bathroom with his knees locked together look almost effortless.

Fluid levels stabilized, we then took a quick scan of the skyline and saw a Hooters, which, when it comes to food, is kind of our default setting for restaurants since we judge the quality of our cuisine by the quality of our waitresses boobs.

Now, I know what you’re thinking. You’re thinking back to what Trina was saying to me at the very beginning about my attitude towards women. But let’s be real clear here; this is not chauvinistic, or misogynistic, or even very realistic, because it’s not just about boob size (although that is weighted heavily in our analysis). We also take into account shape, elevation, movement (or “jiggle” to use the technical term), proportion, sway, and visible cleavage. Plus, we add 5 bonus points if we think they’re real.

It’s science. And science is awesome.

We ordered a few dozen wings but only a couple pitchers of beer since I was driving – safety first – and if the quality of our waitress was any indication, we were really enjoying our meal; the food was awesome. But as with so many things, there’s always some jerks around that seem hell bent on messing it up for everybody.

First thing was the family with the little kids. I know, right? They took the table right next to ours. Really? Shouldn’t you be at a Chuck E. Cheese or anywhere else that features a clown, rodent, or calorie counting pedophile as part of their branding campaign?

But no. Hooters.

Now, historically, I have a very short fuse with children, so I surprised myself by not doing anything for almost 2 full minutes, but after the third ear piecing scream, instinct kicked in and I grabbed both the kids by their collars and threw them out the front door. Came back to the table and gave their parents the old *Well, you’re kids are out in the parking lot so what the hell are you doing in here?* look.

Which of course was followed by a textbook lesson in immaturity, selfishness, and misplaced moral outrage as they swore and gestured and generally made a huge scene on

their way out the door. Practically the whole restaurant was staring. They were probably pretty embarrassed, and deservedly so. Bunch of divas.

The couple, not the rest of the restaurant. Although, now that you mention it . . .

Anyway, we sit back down and barely get to snarf down another half dozen wings or so before this group of twenty-somethings make their way over and becomes our new neighbors at what I have now named the “Bad Parent & Snotty Kid Table”.

So they’re sitting there waiting on their food and they start getting all noisy and social justice warrior and talking into their phones loudly like a roaming band of Kardashians when I suddenly realize that these must be the “End Road Work” protesters from the interstate who didn’t have the courtesy to attend their own protest.

I mean, who else could they be, right? College students? Yeah, right.

By this time I’d knocked back a few pitchers of beer, which is no big deal because as I said before, I was the designated driver so I can’t get drunk, although, I’ll be the first to admit I might have had a small buzz by this time (especially since I hadn’t had a lot to eat; let’s face it, buffalo wings are pretty small), all of which didn’t bode well for the table next door.

I asked them why they weren’t at their own protest. They acted like they couldn’t understand what I was saying which made me pretty made. Or mad. Maybe it was mad that they made me; making me made just sounds pretty weird. Might give you the impression I was drunk, but I’m pretty sure I already explained that that wasn’t possible.

Can I use the word “that” twice in a row like that?

Holy shit, there’s another one.

Anyway, I was just getting ready to throw a few haymakers their way when the gas station attendant from down the street suddenly shows up with a couple of local cops (which is what I call local cops).

So they come right up to our table and he starts getting all “we didn’t pay for our gas” and Jimmy “didn’t return the bathroom key” on us. I know, right? I mean, sure, it might have been true, but who does that kind of thing? Making a big deal out of something after the fact? We were trying to eat, for crying out loud.

And then – as if things weren’t enough of a circus already – guess who comes waltzing back toward our table but those two negligent parents with the noisy kids.

Can’t a guy just drink a dozen pitchers of beer in peace?

I mean, eat a dozen buffalo wings in peace?

Luckily, about this time my only slightly dulled razor sharp intellect kicked into high gear. I stood up and pointed to the two parents and said loudly, “Are you sure it wasn’t those two who stole your gas and pee key?”

Jimmy started giggling because he thought calling it a pee key was funny. The gas station guy and the two cops, however, turned to look at what I was pointing at and as soon as they did we hightailed it through the kitchen and out the back door, stopping only briefly to thank our waitress Janelle and give her a nice tip. None of this was her fault.

Once outside we slowed down and walked casually over to the Impala, blending in as only a big guy in a trench coat & fedora and another skinny guy in flip flops & a Ron Jon t-shirt can do.

The top was still down so we eschewed the doors and just hopped on in. I cranked up that great big beautiful, gas guzzling, planet killing V-8 and we barreled out of there. And just so you’re mind is at ease, you can rest assured that I was stone cold sober, or at least

pretty close thereabouts, since everybody knows drunk people don't use words like "eschewed".

Granted, I did leave a little paint on some of the other cars in the parking lot while making my exit, but that's just how I normally drive.

And the next thing you know we were in Wilmington.

Like I said, no major incidents.