

Paul Shaffer's Gold

by A.G. Pasquella

“Did you hear? Letterman fired Paul Shaffer!”

Jaws drop. “No!”

It's sad but true. Paul Shaffer stomps out of The Ed Sullivan Theater into the honk and rush of New York traffic. Paul Shaffer, red-faced with rage, stands shaking on the corner of West 54th Street and Broadway. Twenty-five years. Twenty-five long, loyal years. Paul Shaffer's fist tightens, knuckles going white.

Paul Shaffer, bitter and resentful, hikes into the Adirondacks, puts his nose to the grindstone and builds himself a mountain fortress. Black rock and winged gargoyles. A red glow emanating from the upper window. Cackling inside his mountain fortress, Paul Shaffer reaches for a pen.

Things To Do

- 1) Imprison the world's top geneticists.
- 2) Force them to build an army of flying monkeys.

Clad in a track suit, David Letterman steps onto his front porch and stretches in the early morning sun. Letterman's new white sneaker squelches into something wet. “What Th--?” David Letterman looks up. The roof of his house is covered with dripping flying monkey shit.

Paul Shaffer sweats beneath the studio lights. Larry King leans forward. “What's next for Paul Shaffer?”

“Oh, I've got some plans, Larry.” Paul Shaffer smiles. “Big Plans.” Larry King can see his reflection in Paul Shaffer's blue mirrored sunglasses. Christ, Larry King thinks. Christ, I look old.

Back in his mountain fortress, Paul Shaffer bangs out a little ragtime on the ole pianny:

“Well I'm Going To
Steal All The Gold
In The World!”

Yes I'm Going To
Steal All The Gold
In The World!"

Paul Shaffer and his cloned henchman Mini Paul come rattling through the early morning sky in a modified World War I biplane. Paul Shaffer adjusts his goggles, throws his long white scarf over his shoulder and steps out onto the biplane's wing. "Take us down, Mini Paul!"

Mini Paul nods grimly and guns the engine. Paul Shaffer braces himself against the struts and strafes the roof of Fort Knox with his tommy gun.

Two Weeks Later:

Paul Shaffer sits on his throne atop an Egyptian-style pyramid and surveys his golden empire.

"Well, Mini Paul, it wasn't easy, but we did it."

"City of Gold,

Yes,

A City of Gold

This is One Fine City of Gold

And The Gold is Mine!"

Yet something is amiss. Even with hordes of guard dogs and armed gunmen patrolling his golden walls Paul Shaffer can't sleep at night. Paul Shaffer lies flat on his back, crushed beneath twenty-five years of smiling gap-toothed memories. The Velcro suit. Dropping T.V.s off the roof. Will it float? Owls eat mice to Broadway show tunes. Larry 'Bud' Melman. Biff Henderson. Harvey Pekar. The Gwyneth Book of World Paltrows. Spraying Richard Simmons with a fire extinguisher. Top Ten Words That Almost Rhyme With Nurse. Top Ten Reasons Why I Miss You.

Paul Shaffer leaps from his bed and catches the next bus to New York City.

Paul Shaffer stands in front of the Ed Sullivan Theater. Paul Shaffer squares his shoulders and takes a deep breath.

“Paul!”

Paul Shaffer turns and there he is, surrounded by admirers and security guards.

“Paul, you big dummy. That whole ‘firing’ thing? That was just a joke. April Fool’s!”

Paul Shaffer reels backwards. “Ha ha, Dave! You got me!”

Letterman grins his gap-toothed grin. “Well, Paul-- what do you say we get back to work?”

Together, the old friends step inside the Ed Sullivan Theater and are greeted with thunderous applause.

