

Hey, Boys, Bandits!

by Jerry Ratch

I remember one time that summer I was with you (1964) going to a bar in maybe it was Melrose Park, or Northlake, or somewhere along Roosevelt Road closer to Chicago, not as far as Cicero though. I went there with a crazy gear-head named Roger Hudson, who was this short wiry guy with black stubble on his pock-marked face who always acted real tough. (One time the cops walked into his garage with guns drawn while he had a stolen engine up on a hoist, trying to install it in his 1957 Chevy, and all he said was "Hey, boys, bandits!") He was that CRAZY!

So we went to this place where Muddy Waters or somebody really famous was playing and when we left we were both so drunk that Roger cranked up his car and leapt up on top of a snow-bank and got stuck. The cops pulled up and took us down to the police station.

I had my fake I.D.s with me and stuffed them into my sock while we were in the back seat of the patrol car. Inside the station, I asked to go to the bathroom and got up on top of the toilet and hid the fake I.D.s on top of the water tank, which was mounted up near the ceiling. It was one of those old style toilets with a separate tank.

The cops had us sitting around a big long table. Roger seemed to grow weary and sort of laid his head down on the table and all of a sudden out of the side of his mouth out came a long gushing pool of vomit that spread across half the table.

Well, those cops leapt up and started running around in circles looking for a mop or some way to stem the flow of vomit from spreading any further. Then they made me get up and walk a straight line.

"Good enough," they said. "His car's out front. Just get his ass out of here before he heaves again!"

"Wait! I've got to take a piss!" I said.

"What, again?" they scowled. "All right, hurry. Hurry!"

I remembered I had to get my fake I.D.s down from that toilet tank. I was determined not to leave without them. My entire drinking life was up there on top of that toilet tank. They were practically my passport to pussy!

Once I had retrieved those fake I.D.s and stuffed them back in my sock, we flew out of that jailhouse like two drunken crows. They had already towed his car to the station and I got in that thing and fired up the engine. It was a real hotrod. I cranked her up and we flew out of there and never looked back and Roger let out with the biggest laugh I think I've ever heard. You know, I don't think he was that drunk! Or else all the vomiting and excitement at the police station sobered him up.

He lived over on Summit Avenue, about a block or two from Rick DeMille's house. Though you probably never met him. Consider yourself lucky!

