

Channeling Dr. Gonzo

by Richard Melo

"Do you want us to adopt you, Hogan?" asked Joshua.

"No, but I can use a ride."

"Sure!"

"Hot damn, I've never rode in a covered wagon before."

The kid climbed into the back.

"We're on our way to gold country to find the American Dream."

No point in mentioning the huge prairie dogs, the ones swarming and screeching beneath the horses in their Hell's Angel gear and Nixon masks. The poor bastard will see them soon enough. "This is a very ominous assignment with overtones of extreme personal danger. Want a beer?"

Hogan shook his head.

"How about some ether? We have more extremely dangerous drugs in the trunk of the wagon than all the dispensaries north of the Rio Grand."

"Are you an apothecary?"

"I'm a professional journalist, and this is my attorney."

"You're not prospectors? You're not staking a claim?"

"Why not, what the hell? Maybe a stake a claim under shady tree where my attorney and I can get loaded in our Acapulco shirts and listen to 'Sympathy for the Devil' on the tape recorder."

"What about the law?"

"I'll run a campaign for sheriff."

The attorney speaks for the first time: "You're going to need plenty of legal advice. My very first piece of advice is let's see how fast these horses go."

The attorney pushed the horses to a breakneck pace. The kid in the back looked like he was about ready to jump out and take his chances.

"You'll have to pardon my attorney. He's not just some dingbat I found back at the base camp. He doesn't look like you or me, right? I think he's a Samoan."

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The wagon then screeched to a halt, throwing the kid forward onto the ground where his landing was cushioned by the herd of of G.O.P. prairie dogs on their tiny Harley-Davidsons.

Joe and Joshua surveyed the ground and staked out their claims, writing out the usual notice and posting it on a neighboring tree. They had not all the requisite tools, but these they were able to purchase at one of the cabins.

