

APA-tizer #17

1/13/95

One of the tasks of my job (I am a tour guide at Hoover Dam) is to operate a small theater with a short documentary on the construction of the dam. Twice an hour I electrically open the doors, turn on the lights, start a VCR, close the doors and turn off the light for a hundred tourists.

When I work the theater, I like to make myself available to the public by walking around the visitor's center. We were moderately busy so I answered a number of questions, and directed lost people.

A heavy-set, older gentleman strolled into the area -strolled in a way that only one who is intimately familiar with the true aesthetics of stroll can stroll.

He used a cane but more smoothly than his elderly, overweight, pear-shaped body suggested. Laughter and sorrow have both written their stories on his face. White hair and beard suggested that he'd seen quite a few New Year's Eves in his time.

His clothing, and the ease with which he wore it, spoke volumes. Black leather pants and vest over a white tee-shirt, worn biker style. A cigarette pack rolled in one sleeve would not be amiss. His hat looked just like Marlon Brando's in *The Wild One*, except this gentleman's was filled with collectable souvenir pins.

"That's a nice hat," I commented to him when he reached earshot.

He thanked me and then asked, "Is this where the movie is?"

I pointed at the closed theater doors and said "Right there, in just a couple of minutes."

"You know what?" he asked, "I've got pins from all over, except from Hoover Dam."

It turns out that just a week earlier, I happened upon a few such pins with our logo on them.

"You watch the show, and I'll see what I can do," I said with a nod. I slipped

through the side door into the theater to push the buttons and flip the switches that run the show.

After the theater emptied and refilled, I started the show and slipped back out.

Walking quickly, I went to the office and retrieved a pin, and went back to the waiting area.

When the show neared its end, I slipped back into the darkened theater. The light from the screen revealed my leather-clad friend in the front row. After the show ended, I positioned myself between him and the exit.

He moved slowly, almost as if he was fatigued, but resigned to being so.

As he passed me, I held out my hand with the jewelry. He plucked it from my palm, quickly inspected his prize and smiled.

Turning his head, he looked me in the eye and said "Thanks, youngster, I'll remember you next December." Then he disappeared in the crowd.

APA-tizer is still brought to you by those fun lovin' people at TANSTAAFL, Inc. or in other words, from the strange and twisted mind of:

Ken Forman
kforman@wizard.com
7215 Nordic Lights Drive
Las Vegas, NV 89119-0335

Watch for a new and exciting fanzine called Penstock, soon to appear on the horizon.

