

European Fashion and American Patriotism:

WTF II

by A. B. Undermind

I arrived in Edinburgh, Scotland at about 8:30pm for a little sabbatical with a few pounds in my pocket and a lot of optimism in my heart. Because I had not slept well on the flight nor eaten the airplane food, I felt light-headed and a bit high. The tale of my evening I will now recount.

I had become distracted by the very peculiar clothing I noticed outside my window. At first I believed it was just my eyes playing tricks on me but I soon realized that everyone was wearing distressed jeans. I could not believe it. That pre-worn, faded look in every place imaginable: thighs, buttocks, shins, kneecaps, ankles, crotch. There were even bizarre combinations: thighs/buttocks, shins/buttocks, crotch/buttocks. With the cab speeding along, it looked like everyone was wearing buttless leather chaps. Once I dropped my bags in my room, I went to the bathroom to relieve my long-throbbing bladder. To my horror, I looked at the toilet paper roll only to discover several sheets torn from the local yellow pages (called "Hellow" Pages) teetering on the edge of the empty holder. Two things struck me: 1) "Hellow" is a combination of 'yellow' and 'hello' and would be cute, possibly quaint, if the pages were still in the book and not on my toilet paper holder. 2) I am staying in a shithole.

It being roughly 9:30pm I figured I could stumble along and find a pub in which to drown the memory of my bathroom. I

walked about for a while and somehow found my way into some alley with a back entrance to a club. Inside, I headed straight to the bar. For an unknown reason I felt huge sense of patriotism welling up inside of me and decided to do my best to drink these UK blokes under the table. I ordered three double shots of Southern Comfort and with an arrogant smile, I down the three in succession... "This is for America!"

I don't believe anyone noticed. Making my way to the dance floor, I observed a tall red-haired Irish boy with a thick brogue yelling the words to the song being played. I concentrated on the music and watched his mouth: "This ones for you? Uh huh! This one's for who? Us! Us! Us! (North Carolinaaaaa.....!!). Though Petey Pablo and I are not friends, nor have I ever met him or even been east of the Appalachian Mountains, I smiled and was thankful to him for reminding me of home. My head (still not clear from my flight, undoubtedly more clouded from the alcohol/empty-stomach combo) caused me to make my one fatal mistake of the night. Maneuvering my way to the center of the dance floor, riding high on Petey's shout-outs to Goldsboro, Halifax, Statesville, and all his n****z doing life behind the wall, I began to chant "U.S.A! U.S.A! U.S.A.!" Almost immediately the club became quiet. People stopped mid-grind, mid-head-bop. Petey

was suddenly silenced. And those in the toilet even stopped their retching long enough to single me out.

The Irish boy was making his way towards me. I knew I had to play it cool. My mind settled quite definitely on, looking back, my second fatal mistake of the evening. But at the time, it was not fatal (and I stand fast on only making one), rather a life-giving, body-saving decision. I pushed him to the floor, turned, and ran towards the exit.

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Indubitably, I had rushed into the men's restroom and in my hurry to get back out, I slipped and smacked my head on an aluminum urinal trough. The distance from the edge of the trough to the floor could not have been more than eighteen inches but within that time my head cleared and I made this startling chain of thought: urinal trough, Wrigley Field, Wrigley's gum, doubling my pleasure, doubling my fun, Big League Chew, tobacco, Phillip Morris Inc., Marlboro, Marlboro Country, cowboys, Stetson hats, leather chaps, Europeans, Edinburgh, my hostel, the Hellow Pages teetering.... At this point, my face met the bathroom tile and I passed out thinking that either way, I was going to sleep in a shithole.