

You just knew Hiko's trip to the Howl At The Moon Saloon would provide some great fodder for "Moot Points", and he hasn't let his minions down. Hiko also uses the Yankees "Evil Empire" moniker, and applies it along broader lines, talks about some recent movie purchases, hits on the Buckeyes ascending to #1 in the country, and has some words of advice for a troubled youth.



OR

## Hodgepodge of Mishmash

\*\*\*As those of you with the gall to read two of these in a row already know, I went to *Howl At The Moon* last week.

Upon entering, I did 5 consecutive Jaeger shots in an attempt to go from 0 to 60 in 4.3 seconds, thus making the experience much more enjoyable. Seconds later, an employee approached me. "Hiko?" he asked. "I'm Joe, the manager" .&quot;

Odd that he knew my name, but maybe I'd met him somewhere before and had just forgotten, so I shrugged and shook his hand anyway.

"Hi Joe."

He began discussing how the bar worked, what the piano rotation would be, etc. *Very informative fellow*, I mused.

"Do you guys want some drinks?" he asked me and my friends.

Why, yes, yes we do.

"A round of drinks for these guys on the house," he told his bartender. I was liking this Joe guy.

After a couple free rounds, Joe came back over and asked if I needed anything. Fabulous guy, that Joe. "Doin' great," I told him.

"We're gonna go outside and smoke, and maybe go somewhere else for a bit until this place gets going. Do we need to get our hands stamped or something? I don't want to pay the cover charge again."

"Wait," Joe said suspiciously. "Are you Hiko, the Piano Player?"

"No," I replied. "But my name *is* Hiko." And this explains why you're telling me a bunch of intimate crap about the waitresses, and why my last 3 drinks were free.

"Shit," Joe muttered. "I'd better find the Piano Hiko."

In retrospect, it would've been more fun to let him keep believing I was the Piano Player. I had piano lessons for a couple months when I was in 5<sup>th</sup> grade. I'm sure that my previous excellence would return. Introduced to wild applause, I would take the stage. " Now I'm gonna play you a little ditty I like to call 'Chopsticks', " I'd say. Then follow that up with a rousing rendition of *Jingle Bells*.

Well, Joe did find Piano Hiko, and he took the stage later on as part of a rotation. The Piano Players were quite good at their jobs, making their standard sex, penis, and boob jokes. One of them was so drunk - or, most likely, *something else* - that he looked like he might fall off the stage. But he just kept right on rolling.

Of course, all of this was while I kept innocently "drifting" over to the bar to watch a bit of the OSU-Purdue game.

There came a certain time of the evening when it became apparent to all of us that our fuel tanks were on "Full", and that any further drinking would result in unfortunate circumstances. We hailed a cab outside, and my girlfriend, Elektra, literally fell into the vehicle face first. She was not in a good way.

Which she proved after we reached the hotel by washing the sidewalk in front of the lobby with beer and Subway sandwich. "Oh! *There's an olive!*" I said, rubbing her back as she plowed on. " *And a banana pepper! Still looks good enough to eat!*"

Needless to say, there was no love in the Hiko Suite that evening.

\*\*\*As you may or may not know, it seems that Americans are unloved abroad. Many Americans cannot understand this. *Wh at'd we do to deserve this?* we ask.

I always try to put this in perspective by using my America-Yankees comparison.

What's the most hated team in baseball - nay - in all of sports? The New York Yankees. Why? Because they win a lot. They get tons of pub. They have a brash, mouthy leader and easily recognizable, dislikable personalities. But mostly it's that they make the most money, and they spend the most money. They have the silver spoon. All the best Free Agents seem to go to the Yankees, because the Yankees can afford it, and because they need the fame.

And we resent the hell out of the Yankees for it.

That's how people around the world view America, and why they revel in our failures. To most baseball fans, the New York Yankees are "The Evil Empire";

That's exactly what most of the world calls America. We don't understand it. We don't feel like we deserve it at all.

Thus, if the Yankees are the America of baseball, then Yankees fans are viewed in sporting terms the way Americans are viewed in world terms.

Having lived in New York, I can guarantee you that the Yankee

fans don't understand why their team is so hated. *Jealousy*, they say.

*They want to be like us because their teams suck*

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They (Yankees fans) don't care what others think of them - the way that many Americans don't care what other countries think of us.

They (Yankees fans) are smug in their team's supposed superiority - the way that many Americans are smug in their attitude towards others.

Don't you hate it when Yankees fans are like that? Don't you want to punch them right in the teeth?

*OK, you say, if the Yankees (or New Yorkers in general) are America, what are Clevelanders?*

France.

We have a glorious history and tradition, but our recent past has been less than enviable. We're put upon, ridiculed, disregarded, and resentful. It seems like forever since we've produced a winner, and it has affected our national psyche.

And our food is really good. And fattening.

\*\*\*I bought 4 movies at Wal-Mart the other day. They were in a \$5 bin, so I couldn't help myself.

They were:

*Popeye* - Starring Robin Williams as the cycloptic one. I haven't seen this movie since I was a kid, but I remember liking it OK, and my girls will probably enjoy it.

*Clash of the Titans* - I'm a big fan of [Ray Harryhausen](#). I loved his stuff, especially where Jason of Jason and the Argonauts fought the skeletal warriors. This was his last movie, and one that I LOVED when I saw it at as a kid.

Yeah... it doesn't really stand up. The stop-motion effects are certainly dated, but that doesn't bother me. The horrible melodrama is what bothers me.

Although *Andromeda* is still hot. There's a scene near the end where she is preparing to be sacrificed to the Kraken, and she emerges from her bathing pool, giving us a nice long gaze at her nude form from the rear. I remember clearly watching it in the theater at age 8 and some kids ahead of me yelled "Turn around!" And I remember having the same hope.

I still do. No matter how many times I watch it, though, she never does.

*Young Guns* - I love Westerns, and I remember this film being OK, and probably worth it just for the highly entertaining peyote scene.

*Desperado* - Robert Rodriguez is one of the most talented directors working today. But - let's be honest - I bought this for the Selma Hayek sex scene.

God bless her parents.

\*\*\*Suddenly, Ohio State is #1 again. They didn't really do anything to deserve it - just easily handle the sub-par opponents they have faced, and watched everyone else lose.

If we had a BCS Championship game today, it would be Ohio State vs. South Florida.

Can you imagine the bitching involved with that Title Game?

In case it does happen, I've put in a pre-order for 1000 t-shirts. They're gray with scarlet lettering. On the front, it says "Ohio State Buckeyes". On the back, it reads "*It's not our fault there's no playoff system.*"

\*\*\*Speaking of the bitching that's already begun with the Buckeye ascension... I feel better about this team than I did last year's. Why? Because everyone is discounting OSU, waiting for them to lose.

Just like 2002.

\*\*\*If the Indians can make it to the World Series, then I hope they play the Diamondbacks.

And then I hope it snows.

Imagine watching the Arizona players trying to swing the bat whilst shivering. Welcome to Cleveland, wussbags.

\*\*\*On Saturday, my daughters and I went to a Renaissance Festival way down in the scary regions of southern Ohio. As we made our rounds, they saw a castle-like structure. Above the entrance was a sign that read "Castle of Doom";. *Aha, I thought. Must be some kind of spookhouse. The girls will love that.*

No, it was not a spookhouse. It was a museum of Medieval torture. There were bloody mannequins in multiple exhibits; beheaded, jaws crushed, eaten by rats, stretched on racks, burned at the stake, etc. Even a really creative display of a man having his intestines removed with a wooden wheel.

My, but those Medieval folk were creative in their methods of torture.

After we got through it, both girls wanted to go back in right away. Which, of course, secretly makes me proud.

But it was very little fun to have to explain multiple times in detail whom Joan of Arc was and why she was burned at the stake and yes, that kind of thing really did happen and no, it wasn't fake like a movie.

And, of course, I look forward to the inevitable irate phone call from my ex.

\*\*\*I tore a contact today. There are very few instances of me tearing a contact. In fact, the last time I can remember doing it was when I was backpacking in Europe in the Summer of '94.

I was there with my boy, DJC. On our first night there, in Paris, we decided it would be a good idea to split a bottle of tequila while sitting on one of those bridges over the Seine.

It was NOT a good idea.

DJC ended up in a stall at the youth hostel we were staying at, emptying his gut into the loo. Unfortunately, he was erupting so violently that his glasses fell off his face into the toilet, and, not noticing, he flushed them.

We were lucky enough to share similar prescriptions, so I just let him wear my glasses for the remainder of the trip. But when I tore one of my contacts in Switzerland, we were down to one pair of glasses and one contact between the two of us. So I had to go with only one focused eye for the rest of the journey, which was of particular annoyance when we reached the topless beaches of Greece.

And I still blame my vision for the "incident" with the Australian girl. Either that or something attacked her and completely changed her face between that night and the following morning.

I never ever travel without a spare set of contacts now. Heed my advice and do the same.

\*\*\*I am dedicating the following song to my friend who married his high school sweetheart. You know who you are.

Here it is, a nice little tune by The White Stripes. It's called *You Don't Know What Love Is, You Just Do What You're Told*.

\*\*\*One of my friend's wives has a 15 year old brother, and it seems he is disgruntled. He has tried twice to take his own life (both by aspirin). He hates everything and everybody. He tells everyone he is "disturbed";.

Due to my incredible ability to reach young people, I volunteered to write him a little note, something to give him hope and help him through this troubled time.

*Dear Hugo,*

*You're 15. In 3 years, you'll be 18. Then you're free to do whatever you want with the rest of your life.*

*Move to Nepal. Go to college far away and major in something*

*that interests you and attracts similar type malcontents. Open a store that sells leather apparel and garlic-flavored donuts.*

*There's a lot more to life than what you know as a 15 year old.*

*But if you cannot find a purpose in life, then I have provided you with an Iron Maiden.*

*No, I'm not talking about the Iron Maiden - the band. They bring nothing but happiness.*

*I'm talking about an Iron Maiden, a cool little contraption I learned about at this interesting museum I went to on Saturday. It's a large coffin-like structure with long spikes on the lid/door. What you do is climb in, pull the handy-dandy latches I rigged for you, and the door will quickly shut, piercing every part of your body with the spikes, allowing you to die in horrible agony as your blood drains out the bottom.*

*Sorry to sound so cold, but the world is already over-populated as it is. Cheers!*