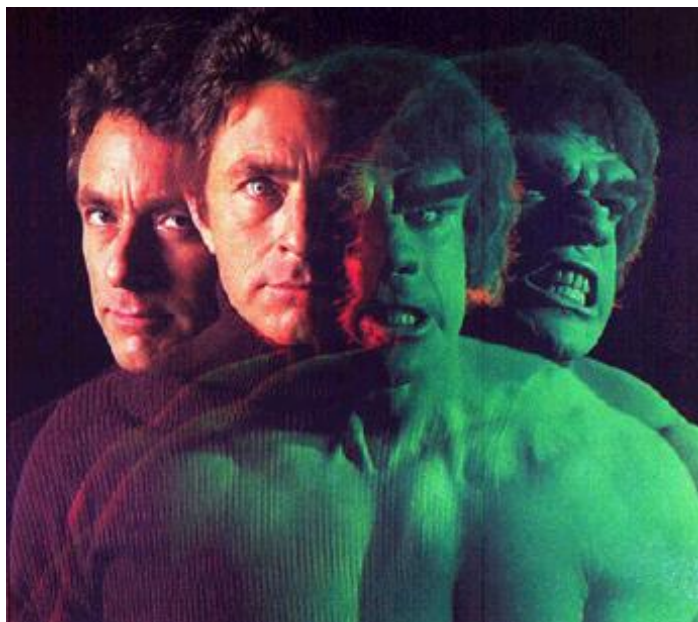


## Out Of Bounds, Episode XXVIII: Hulkamania

Written by {ga=larshancock}

Friday, July 13 2012 5:00 AM - Last Updated Thursday, July 12 2012 10:32 PM

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*Don't make me angry. You won't like me when I'm angry.*

The immortal words of Dr. David Banner ring just as true for him as they do for yours truly. And Delta Airlines this week did, in fact, do everything in their power to bring out my inner Hulk, even though none of it, per their oft-stated claims, was their fault.

Before I get to that, I want to describe my inner Hulk meter. It's a scale of one to ten, that's been known to hit eleven. At one, there's some inner dialog and scorn. Level two increases the risk of snarky tweets, level three means irritated pacing, and level four is dirty looks. Level five means I'm going to be pretty honest with you, and not in a good way. Level six, I'm downright anti-social, and I make sure you know it, like James Harrison in Roger Goodell's office. Level seven and you can see tinges of green in my skin. I'm looking for a fight, [like the torpedo in The Hunt for Red October](#)

. Level eight, and I've abandoned civility. I'm cursing at you, and imagining ways to hurt you. I'm Chris Perez on the mound. Level nine, my shirt is practically torn off with the rage swelling up inside of me, and I'm coming after you. Any property of yours that may be in the way is fair game for a kick or punch. I'm insulting you personally, and I'm visiting your mother's house later to eat her liver. Level ten is full Hulk. Blackout rage, absolutely no control over what I say and do. Like the Tasmanian Devil after a double espresso. My self-control has about as much chance of containing my rage as John St. Clair does of blocking a defensive end who is athletically north of Stephen Hawking. Level ten is bad.

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I get to the airport in Raleigh, and see my flight is delayed. My Hulk meter ticks up to about a two, because the delay is going to put me past the time to make my connection in Atlanta. Not to worry, though, I'm a professional traveler (kind of like LeBron James, only different). I've seen this dance before, and there's always a way out, and there it is – the earlier flight to Atlanta is still here. Hulk meter clicks back down to one, and I trot over there to get on the earlier plane.

I'm waiting about five minutes in line behind an incredibly stupid family as they are being assisted by the gate agent, while the other three stooges at the gate are doing, well, apparently nothing (and definitely nothing to assist me). When the one gate agent who was working finally gets the Swiss family Moron down the jetway, encouraging them to sit anywhere on the wide open plane, she turns her attention to me.

"I'd like to get on this flight please"

"Sorry, it's too late, I have to shut the door"

"My plane is delayed. If I don't get on this one, I'll miss my connection, and I HAVE to get home. My family is traveling early tomorrow, and I need to be there. Can I just give you my ticket and have you do the paperwork after I'm gone?"

"No, I can't do that. Go fuck yourself"

*\*okay, she didn't say that with her mouth, but that's what her body and eyes said*

And she turns her back on me and shuts the door. Hulk factor rises to five. But no big deal, there is weather in Atlanta, everything is delayed, and they know I'm coming, so they can hold the plane.

After more delays and an uncomfortable flight in a cramped overly small seat, I land in Atlanta and check the big board to see the word "DEPARTED" next to my flight. It left five minutes

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before – they couldn't hold the plane five minutes for me? Hulk factor seven.

After a brief verification of my screwedness, and yes, I'm now spending the night in Atlanta, it's off to the land of misfit travelers. I'm greeted there by little miss fucking sunshine.

"How are you doing today sir?" she sings

"Terrible," I grunt through my teeth in retort.

"Oh come on, it's not that bad," she offers in a condescending saccharine tone.

"Well, I absolutely had to get home tonight to help my family travel tomorrow AM, and I'm stuck here in Atlanta. I'm stuck here because the employees of your airline didn't care enough to get me home."

I may have snarled at the end, I'm not sure, but whatever happened I went to Hulk factor eight, and she got the point, shut up, and walked away. That's an important lesson in dealing with Hulk Lars: happiness only makes it worse. If you come at me puking rainbows, unicorns, and teddy bears, I will almost certainly grab them all and cram them back in your various orifices so that you're pooping sparkles for a week.

I go to the automated screwedometer and instead of printing out the vouchers, etc, it tells me I have to see to the customer service agents, because I'm especially screwed. Fantastic – I want to deal with a human anyway and tell them what I think of their airline. I go to my line and watch the various other Hulkamaniacs tell the agents what's up. Ordinarily, I'd feel bad for them, but in Hulk factor 8, I have no empathy. Besides, you're an Imperial Stormtrooper for the Empire – you're one of them, you're evil. No mercy – you willfully execute inhumane policies, you pay the price.

At some point, one of the agents goes into the premium passenger line and notices two people

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are in there who should be in the peon line with me. He insists they leave that line, and puts them to the front of my line, essentially rewarding them for being stupid and unable to read basic signage. Hulk factor 8.5.

It's my turn now. Because they didn't care enough to get me home on time, er, I mean, because it was *the weather's fault*, I'm now forced to pay for a hotel room (thanks for the discount voucher Delta!). Oh, and I'm not on the first flight out, I'm on the second flight out. When I start berating him about the earlier flight I could have made and how it really was their fault, he mentions that it would have been a \$50 change fee to make that change. And it hits me why she couldn't let me on the flight.

[At this time the camera cuts to my eyes which are now bright green, and the transformation starts](#). I manage, barely, to keep it to a 9.9 level of rage, barely controlling the urge to kick the desk, the boxes nearby, the velvet rope holders, and the agent. “ *Don't go to jail, Lars, you're in an airport.*”

I refocus every body activity to self control – breathing, bowel control, everything is shut down to keep me from blind smashing rage fury. Diction is gone, the modulation of my voice is stuck on WFO, and I'm pacing like a tiger looking for a snack of Sigfried. Or was it Roy? Whatever...

After a restless sleep in the roach motel Delta put me up in, I'm fighting for a standby spot. Hulk meter resets to 8, and I'm watching my chances of getting home early dwindle away. I then notice that Joe Stupidhead, he of being in the wrong line who was placed in front of me, is waiting to get on this flight. *And he has a ticket.* Yes, because Mr. Screwed Passenger Agent man of genius slides him in front of me, he gets the last seat out. Hulk factor 9.999. Luckily, two people who were checked in somehow didn't make it on the plane, and I'm put on, resetting the Hulk meter to 5 and getting me home.

Now Delta Airlines, here's why I was so angry at you: at every turn, your people gave me reasons they couldn't help me. Your policies prohibited your people from doing the right thing at every turn. Waive the \$50 and put me on the empty plane – that's a no brainer. Hold it two seconds to get me on. Hold my connection five minutes – you know I'm coming. Take responsibility for the failure of your airline to deliver on the commitment to get me home for which I paid hundreds of dollars, and take that commitment seriously. Instead, I get policy and a bunch of sheep that are afraid to do the right thing, and hide behind excuses and deny fault throughout while Delta extends a middle finger at me instead of a helping hand in my time of need. Hell, if someone just said “yeah, we screwed up, I'm sorry, let's see what I can do to fix it” and really genuinely cared about me, we'd never have got above Hulk factor seven. But that didn't happen, and I see the vileness of your policies and the attitude of your people, Delta

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Airlines, and I will consider that should I ever book another trip where your miserable airline would be an option.

The whole sordid affair has reminded me of the disaster which has become the Cleveland Cavaliers, and how Dan Gilbert adamantly denies fault and blames everyone from LeBron James to Barack Obama for the misfortune that has befallen the franchise. It's not his fault LeBron screwed the team. It's not his fault free agents don't want to come to an unglamorous place like Cleveland. It's not his fault the NBA has become a superteam culture. No, we suck because we're victims. It's weather related! Your season tickets are the equivalent of a \$50 hotel voucher for the Roach Motel – you're expected to pay to watch this, because you need to support your team and it's not our fault!

Mr. Gilbert, I beg to differ. Like Delta airlines, you create the policies and attitude that emasculated the team around LeBron. Your general managers selected garbage in the draft, outside the obvious choices of LeBron and Kyrie Irving, ever since the world was believed to be otherwise to round. You foster distrust among your players. You don't make Cleveland an attractive destination, and you help to form superteams when you think it suits your best interests. You, sir, need to take a real, honest personal accounting for your mistakes and the disaster you have created, and you need to own up to them publicly and maturely. Otherwise, the Cavs will continue to be the Delta Airlines of the NBA – apathetic, underperforming, bankrupt, and reviled.

Anyway, off to the questions.

**Should men with women's names be mocked, or because they had no choice in the matter do they get a mulligan? Also, is it weird that I root for players like Addison Reed just because they sound like hotties? I mean, I'd fuck an Addison Reed. – CAVSTRIBEBROWNSin07**

Mocking is society's way of policing itself. Is it unfair? Absolutely, but come on, if you're a man, you should have a man's name. Harry. Bud. Leroy. Lars. Parents that violate this rule in naming boys with girl names, and girls with boy names, are insipidly ruining society. We need rules in society, and one rule is that by looking at a piece of paper with your name on it, I should be able to tell if you have a penis. Without rules, we have anarchy. Seriously, there are literally hundreds of boy names, why the hell do you need to go to "Addison"? Only by mocking the male Addisons, Kellys, and Madisons of the world do we enforce justice and encourage parents

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to name kids normal gender-specific things. It is our duty as civilized society – this is what separates us from the apes.

On that topic, why have we become so convinced as a society that our offspring have to have unique names? By giving your kid a fancy name, all you're doing is subjecting him to a lifetime of "how do you spell that" and subsequent misspellings, mistranslations, and mishaps because nobody knows what the hell your name is. True story: my sister-in-law named her kid JR. It doesn't stand for anything. When asked prior to his birth what it stood for, she responded, irritated, it doesn't stand for anything. And everyone that meets him asks him that question. His whole life will be answering what JR stands for. Just make it stand for something and eliminate the question, or go with Bob.

As for your rooting for the unfortunately named, that is an interesting take to be sure. While I'm watching baseball, you're in your own special little pornographic world where your lovely buxom Addison Reed is bouncing nakedly around the field like an attractive version of Morgana the kissing bandit. I guess baseball does get a little slow at times, so do what you must. But personally, I want to see Addison Reed bawling on the mound when he fails, with the emotional scars of years of being taunted with a girl's name bursting through his exterior like an Alien. Then the camera zooms to a close up of his weeping face as he says "why mom? Why???" and some unborn child is spared taunting and named "Steve", and our society gets just a little better.

### **Where do you stand on the use of cast iron in cooking? Easy or hard? Over or underrated? No big deal? –motherscratcher**

Cast iron is underrated to be sure. It's cheap, easy to maintain, easy to clean, lasts forever, and cooks better than almost all of the fancy cooking implements on the market. Plus, it's bullet proof, and works well as a home security device in a pinch.

But that's the problem, isn't it? Everyone has a cast iron pan, and everyone's pan is handed down at least two generations. Nobody has ever bought a cast iron pan from somewhere other than a "general store" or a "five and dime". My cast iron pan came from my grandmother, and I'm pretty sure her parents brought it over from Italy having been smelted by iron-age cave Hancocks in the primordial fires of the still cooling crust of Earth. There's no money in cast iron – it's too good.

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So corporate America makes expensive pans that look fancy and entice consumer-crazy Americans to spend money. Some of them are better than others, but at the end of the day, they'll get scratched, the non-stick coating will wear out, or they will be of such limited use that you need to go out and buy other pans. The cycle perpetuates, and money is made.

Cast iron distributes and retains heat perfectly, performs as non-stick when properly maintained, and can go from the top of a campfire to onto the grill to on the stove to in the oven seamlessly. The one cast iron pan we all have can do everything the fancy pans do, and more, and better. Yet the allure of copper bottom pots, or shiny new Green pans, or sparkling anodized aluminum pans is too much for us. We're drawn to it like bugs to a light. We need them! Without the culture of consumerism, all of us would just have the single cast iron pan that the Donner party used to cook their dinner in our pantry, and you know what? We'd all probably be cooking better too.

**Where does all the shit from port-o-pots end up? How big a business is that? Similarly, what about cruise ship waste? It's gotta go to a holding tank but then what? How's it treated on board and then when it's offloaded? Or do they just release it near Cuba? Just wondering. Topic kinda hit me while watching Chris Perez pitch the 9<sup>th</sup> inning today. –peeker**

So I'm on a Delta flight Monday before my little incident and this actually happened. It was early in the morning, and I didn't have time to, um, log out, before boarding my plane. Note that this is always a worst case scenario, because I don't want people to know when I poop, or that I poop for that matter. And when you're on an airplane, you're walking down the aisle like Ric Flair on the way to the ring and when you're gone for five minutes, everyone knows what you just did, and they all look disapprovingly. And rightfully so – how inconsiderate is it to introduce your nasty vapors to an already fecal-smelling atmosphere on a plane?

But sometimes, you gotta do what you gotta do. Anyway, I finish, I flush, and I'm washing up when suddenly I'm hit with a smell so incredibly foul that I am very literally nearly gagging. Panic – is there something stuck to me? What am I going to do if there is – I hate poop and everything related to it! I turn around and notice a wad of toilet paper is holding open the flapper valve, letting the fumes from the cesspool beneath which obviously has recently been used by the entire animal act from the Barnum and Bailey circus given the tremendous odor that is slowly filling the room. Aaaaaaaa!

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Panic hits, and I keep flushing, like eight times. No way I can leave this for the next person – they will think I created this awful smell. And I keep flushing until finally the foul block is cleared. I'm wearing my noise cancelling headphones with Motley Crüe blasting my eardrums, so I'm blissfully unaware that the whole time there is a woman banging on the door to get into the restroom, until the flight attendant opens the door just as I'm about to emerge. It's pretty much a realization of my worst nightmare ever.

Anyway, there's probably some suitably boring answer to this, like they pump it into a waste treatment center and dispose of it in an environmentally responsible manner, but instead I'm drawn to all the attractive possible uses of this potential national treasure. It is these I shall explore.

**Art:** Oh, what great symbolism can be found in a giant pool of stinking blue fecal material! Brilliant artists could make so many statements on the condition of society with thousands of gallons of poop water. One subtle statement would be to build a glass container around the statue of Joe Paterno at Penn St, and fill it with porta potty waste so only Joe Pa's head and index finger are peeking out from the cesspool. The statement here is, obviously, that Paterno is a piece of shit.

**Art:** I can think of no finer final resting place for the treasonous Arthur B. Modell than a crypt full of waste from a cruise ship. Or maybe make his tomb a giant porta potty where you can pay *your last respects* personally. I'll open a Taco Bell nearby.

**Military Uses:** Killing the Taliban doesn't seem to deter them, so why not drop giant balloons full of feces on them? I mean, if they think they're getting 77 virgins and the ultimate reward of martyrdom, they're going to be a little braver. If they think they're going to get bombarded with a giant blue ball of poop, it may give them pause for concern. The waste from the muni lot could deliver world peace – take a poop for America!

**Sport:** You want to discourage tanking, you say. You want to ensure that Week 17 of the NFL season everyone plays hard as if the game is meaningful. Well, the solution can be found at the bottom of the porta potties outside the stadium. After every sporting event, douse the losing team, coach, general manager, and owner in a cascading river of blue wastewater. The ancient Aztecs used to kill the losing team, so this sort of punishment isn't unprecedented by any means, and is humane in comparison. Of course, if this became the norm, the Cleveland

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Browns would become the most ironically named franchise in sport...

I'm sure there are hundreds of other uses. There's gold in the bottom of those little blue shacks. An enterprising young man such as yourself can make big coin off the stuff if you put your mind to it.

*Please email questions to [lars.hancock@yahoo.com](mailto:lars.hancock@yahoo.com), tweet them to [@ReasonsImADrunk](https://twitter.com/ReasonsImADrunk), or DM them to me in the forae to [LarsHancock](#).*