

### **Fickle Finger of Fate** **Waldo Steve and the Waldos**

In the early '70s, the young Waldos—a group of friends from Marin County, California—were planning a stoner's trip to Los Angeles and Disneyland. We were planning it for weeks. The day before the trip, two of the Waldos phoned me in the afternoon and said they could not go because they did not have the cash. No money, no trip. A big letdown. About nine that same evening, I got a surprise phone call from the two cashless Waldos. They said, "We can go now! We have lots of money. Wait at your house and we will come right over to explain." When they arrived, they got out of the car holding brown-paper shopping bags. Because my parents were having a party in the front of the house, we went around the side gate, through a back door and into my room, unnoticed. As soon as the door was closed and locked, they opened the shopping bags and started pulling out and throwing cash in the air. I joined in, reaching into the bags, grabbing fistfuls of money and throwing it into the air. It was raining money, and the floor was completely covered with green bills. The previously cashless and now rich Waldo explained that he had suffered for a long time while working for an ex-boss, who was an extremely abusive asshole. And this money was a revenge-related windfall.

The next morning we packed up my 1966 4-door Chevy Impala (with a killer Craig 8-track stereo system) to head for Southern California. The cargo consisted of four guys and a girl with long brown hair, named Laura, who needed a lift to L.A. The cargo also consisted of six lids of fresh green smoke.

Driving south on Highway 101, we were in a hurry because I was extremely determined to make it to Burbank (to be an audience member) for an afternoon taping of the *Tonight Show* with Johnny Carson.

Unfortunately I had to slow down. Around San Luis Obispo, a police car got onto the highway directly behind us. I warned my passengers to put out their joints. However, my passengers thought it was sufficient to just keep the joints down low.

A second police car entered onto the highway in front of us. Now there was one cop in front and one in back of us. Besides the police, we were the only car on the freeway. We put out the joints and watched the speedometer.

Within minutes, more cop cars entered onto the highway. Two behind us and two in front of us. Then, three squad cars behind us and three in front of us. We put the lids down our pants and continued to drive the speed limit. Then the cop car directly behind us lit up his bright flashing colorful lights.

## I 24 • Pot Stories For The Soul

We pulled over to the side of the road and so did all six squad cars. The officers jumped out and pulled their guns but did not approach our car. Stoned, we sat and waited for 10 minutes while the officers walked around at a distance. Would we be busted?

An officer approached the car and asked for all of our licenses. He took the IDs back to his car and we waited. We waited for a full half-hour in total suspense inside our reeking automobile. Would we be busted?

The officer came back to our car, handed me our drivers' licenses and said we could go free. I questioned him about our detainment. He said the cops thought that the girl in our car was Patty Hearst and that we were the SLA (Symbionese Liberation Army) headed south.

Very stoned, and very miffed about the delay, I then reprimanded the police officer, saying, "You goof, now we're going to miss Johnny Carson."

We got to Los Angeles in the early evening and went to a motel to try to get a room. They had no vacancies. The second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth and seventh motels we tried also had no vacancies.

With no other options, we filled up the gas tank. Gasoline was only about 40 cents a gallon and we had six lids of grass. Nonstop, we cruised the freeways of L.A., continuously smoking weed until the sun came up. Cheaper than a motel.

Later that morning, the Waldos arrived at Disneyland determined to smoke out everywhere in the park. And we did. At one point we hopped a fence, ran up a little hill and down into a phony Disney-created desert scene. Consisting of a few acres, it was made to look like Arizona or Utah. We smoked out all over the phony little Southwest.

A train whistle blew. There was a train tunnel leading to our Southwest desert mockup. Happy Disney customers were all aboard and quickly coming our way. We ran up a hill and hid behind a giant red phony rock. Crouching tightly behind the boulder, we lit up a new joint. The train stopped in the middle of the desert.

The tour guide on the train pointed directly at us as he exclaimed to the passengers, "Oh, my!" All eyes on the train looked right at us. We froze still. The tour guide then continued, "Oh, my! It's Old Faithful!"

Suddenly, about two feet from my right foot, a water geyser shot up. Two feet high, six feet high, 15 feet high. The Waldos took a good soaking. The train drove away. We were soaked, but we didn't spoil the vacation for the Disney customers.