

## INCIDENT IN LAS VEGAS

*"One tale attached to the tune has it that 'The King of the Fairies' is a summoning tune, and if played three times in a row during a festivity the King must appear. Once summoned, however, the King assesses the situation, and if the gathering is to his liking he may join in; if however he does not find it to his liking he may cause great mischief."*

*- Andrew Kuntz in "The Fiddler's Companion"*

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*Scene: Rusty's Brew House and Oil Change Emporium, somewhere way off the Strip in Las Vegas. Three towns' worth of marching band musicians are off in a corner somewhere trying desperately to get in tune. Jim Bob and Earl are the two resident ITM types, on harmonica and mandolin respectively. Some anxiety is evident . . .*

**Jim Bob:**

Hey Earl - the audience is starting to get a little edgy. I know we played it already, the tune that supposed to get the King here, but we gotta keep them quiet or we're in a heap of trouble . . .

**Earl:**

Jim Bob, we've already played the goddamn thing twice and he ain't showed.

**Jim Bob:**

*(consulting Fiddler's Companion printout)* But this Andrew guy here, he says we have to play it three times.

**Earl:**

Why didn't you tell me that before? Anyway this whole thing is freaking me out. Are you sure "Hound Dog" or "Heartbreak Hotel" won't work? Maybe "Love Me Tender"?

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**Jim Bob:**

Not according to this guy Andrew. He says we have to play this here Fairies tune three times and then the King will appear and maybe he'll decide to stay and maybe he won't, but hell, just having him show up will be incredible. How long has he been dead now? We've got a room full of people who have paid \$2500 apiece to see him tonight. . .

**Earl:**

Not to mention the "pay per view" crowd. . .

**Jim Bob:**

. . . and the ones that are in the room are getting a little upset, so we've got to try one more time before we duck out the back door. Hey, what more can we do? We play the music, the King shows up - that's what it says here. *(To band leader)* Hey, Vern . . . let's give it one last try.

*(Band leader taps for silence, followed by strange sounds of a 16-piece band playing "King of the Fairies", including baritone sax solo - Vern's nephew - on turn second time through. Band isn't quite in tune but is doing their best.)*

*(The tune concludes. Suddenly a blinding flash of light seems to come from under the floor, and suddenly The King is standing center stage. He has his own mike. As in life, he's dressed in white, lots of sequins. There's a gasp from the audience and the musicians; some folks have fainted; women are crying.)*

**The King:**

Good evening, all. Just wanted to drop in and say hello to all my Vegas friends . . . had a lot of good times here when I was alive.

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Earl (whispering to Jim Bob):

It worked! Goddamn, playing that tune three times worked!

The King:

. . . but I have to say I am somewhat displeased. This gathering is not to my liking, and I may have to cause great mischief. (*Sneers, wiggles hips a few times - three women close to stage shriek and pass out.*) (*The King chuckles*) Or not. Don't want to frighten all those pretty women out there . . .

Earl (*whisper, to Jim Bob*):

What the hell is he talking about? What mischief?

Jim Bob (*hands trembling, reading from Fiddler's Companion printout*)

. . . uh . . . the guy that writes this, he says if the King is unhappy about something, we're in for trouble.

Earl (*angry whisper*):

I TOLD you we should have made sure the band was in tune! What kind of trouble?

Jim Bob:

. . . uh . . . he doesn't say . . .

The King (*produces a bodhrán from somewhere in the folds of his cape*)

. . . before I start my performance, I'd like to tell you a little about this instrument that was introduced to me in . . . let's call it the Afterlife . . .

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*(As The King talks, a platoon of glowing red Demons appears, and station themselves at each exit from the room. With one touch of their burning talons, the doors are welded shut, but not before Vern and the orchestra are mysteriously transported to the parking lot. Light applause at the end of The King's presentation.)*

The King:

Thank you . . . thank you very much. And now I'd like to begin the concert that you've so graciously summoned me for. But first let me introduce my sidemen . . . put your hands together for . . . Asmodeus and Semyaza!

*(Two more Demons materialize on stage, one with a piano accordion and the other with a banjo. The crowd gasps again. More fainting.)*

The King:

Hope you're not planning on anything for the next twelve hours. We've got a great show planned for you . . . *(The Demons snicker unpleasantly.)* OK, boys . . . *(taps bodhrán twice)* Hit it!

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*Tune in tomorrow when we hear The King say:*

Thank you . . . thank you very much. Great to be back in Vegas, really it is. We just KNEW you'd enjoy six hours of Barry Manilow's greatest hits. Now for the next six hours . . . did you nice folks every hear of Wayne Newton? *(Clapping, cheers; but sounds of misery as guard-demons spot Jim Bob and Earl trying to sneak out through the kitchen)*

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