

17 AT THE GANDER

Then Lohman went in to the office and attended conferences all day with other lawyers to review the status of his client matters. Later he was due for a rare night off. Most of the time was devoted to a conference with a group of younger lawyers Lohman had working on a bankruptcy matter. A large company had filed in bankruptcy court for reorganization. Chapter 11 it is called. This is a court supervised process where all those who hold claims against a company that can no longer pay its bills assert their claims against the company and try to get a bigger share of the pie. This involves trying to see everyone else gets less. Large company bankruptcies have turned into one of the most lucrative fields of practice for large law firms. Lohman's client was a secured lender to the bankrupt company. This means it had a lien on the bankrupt's assets to secure its loan. In this case it had a mortgage on some of the bankrupt's plants. Other creditors were claiming the mortgages were no good. This is not unusual since everything in these large bankruptcies is contested. And the more the lawyers make off them, the more they advise contesting everything.

Finally the conference ended and Lohman was free. He walked up Michigan Avenue to the Gander Hotel at its north end. Michigan was packed with shoppers and the weekend tourists. It was jammed with strolling and lingering hordes. Lohman enjoyed watching what was going on just as the people he was watching did, but it took a long time to get to the hotel.

As he was passing good old 7th Presbyterian he saw a crowd of people outside. They were gathered around the time of services sign outside the church. Lohman went into the crowd and inched forward to where he could see what they were looking at. Someone had placed a

cardboard overlay sign on the glass fronted case with the time of services in it. The cardboard was taped on. The overlay was white and had the type of lettering on it that you might see on a flier for a horror movie. It was simulated red blood lettering, complete with places where the blood had run or spattered. It proclaimed:

THE GREAT GLOBULICIOUS EVIL SHOW

HOSTED By The Naughty DEVIL

DIRECT FROM **HELL**

The ONE And ONLY CHICAGO APPEARANCE

RAPTURE Without GOD?

DELIGHT Without ONE SINGLE ANGEL PRESENT?

MESSAGES FROM BEYOND WITHOUT ONE SINGLE PRAYER?

YOUR FONDEST WISHES GRANTED!!!

NOT EVEN ON MARS DO THEY HAVE THIS!

YOU WILL BE ASTONISHED IF STILL AWAKE!!

COME! SEE! HEAR! BARGAIN!

GET WHATEVER YOU WANT - ALL WISHES GRANTED!

ABSOFUCKINLUTELY FREE!!!

Sunday, June 11, 2011 11 a.m.

Soul Productions

Lohman just read this and tried to comprehend it, which he couldn't. He thought it must have just been put up recently because surely the church would not leave it there once they became aware of it. In any event, being a member of the church he thought he would find out about it later. One thing he noticed though was that the only thing the crowd was discussing was the word "globulicious". They were divided on whether it was a word or not. And those who thought it was an accepted word were divided about what it meant. Many were asking what it

meant. The rest were telling them. Apparently it meant a wide variety of things. No one thought the sign out of place. Apparently it was just another Saturday night amusement on Michigan Avenue. Lohman walked on.

He met his wife Gloria at the Gander in the Cohasset Room, one of the oldest Chicago restaurants with a very private and cozy atmosphere. He called her Glor. She was sitting in a booth when he arrived. He slipped in next to her and kissed her. "Glor," he said.

"Bumper," she said.

She had told him she was going shopping with Bungus LaRue's wife Trina earlier. Trina was one of her best friends. "Did you and Trina have fun?" asked Bumper. "How much did it cost us?"

Gloria was not a big spender, but Trina was. Gloria mostly helped Trina spend. "Not much," she said. "I just got a few shorts and summer blouses." Bumper knew this could cost thousands on Michigan. "At Latham's. \$350," she volunteered. "Mostly we were trying things on and gossiping. She was all stressed out about all the things Bungus says she should keep her mouth shut about. For instance, last Tuesday she says she and Bungus were having dinner alone, except for someone from the firm who delivered something. At least that is what Bungus told her to say. But she says they were having dinner with someone named Gordon Winkleman who works for the State. I asked her what they were talking about, but she said it was only man stuff like the Cubs and stuff. She says they went off into the library to talk just between the two of them. She says she can never keep straight what she is supposed to say and what she is supposed to keep private."

"Yes, I can imagine," said Bumper. "I never really press Bungus on what is going on. I probably don't want to know." Just then he remembered something. "Oh. Didn't you tell me that

you had lunch with her recently at the Refectory Club and she told you no one was with them that night?”

“Yes, that’s just the thing she was talking about. She mentioned this about the Winkleman fellow. She says it’s hard for her to know what she’s supposed to say. So she said she used to take notes, but Bungus found her note book and told her not to do that anymore. What is he up to? Are you supposed to have someone like that for a partner?”

Lohman sighed. “Well, whatever Bungus is up to, we are probably more at risk from some of our most supposedly respectable of partners than we are from him. Anyway, if there were no Devil, there would be no need for lawyers. Or, I know I say it all the time, but bad guys are found in lawyer’s offices and on both sides of the desk. Whenever I ask Bungus what he is up to he says I don’t want to know. Everyone else I ask says the same thing. Lets’ face it. He’s a fixer, an influence peddler, a bribe arranger, but at least not the briber himself. I don’t know the details, but I’m sure the less people know about it the better. And you know I don’t choose all the partners, or even most of them.”

They then got off on other subjects and went to a movie after they had finished eating. Then they went home and engaged in unseemly conduct.

19 KIRKLAND'S SECOND

Monday morning Lohman had a conference with Egon Fitzhubery. He was a second level partner and Kirkland's chief aide. Kirkland didn't like too many of his juniors, but he liked Fitzhubery because Egon could document the fact that he had noble ancestry once long ago in Europe. Fitzhubery had the best relationship with many of Kirkland's clients and he would be taking them over. He was a brown nose and a social climber. One lawyer in the firm had said of him that he was stuck up. That is - his head was stuck so far up his ass that it came out on top. Another firm lawyer had described him as, "Smile up. Shit down." Fitzhubery was continually in a state of outrage about someone and was always trying to get people in the firm fired. He was not anyone's favorite. Kirkland had liked him though. This was another example of birds of a feather sticking together. Especially when covered with gooey slime.

Fitzhubery was especially the hawk when it came to the poor clerks and secretaries without clout. Just out of curiosity Lohman asked him if he had heard about Jason Kunz hitting on some other male.

For once Egon was not on his high horse. He just said, "That is of little import. Everyone knows he is a degenerate homosexual. I do not know why you let him stay here. He will just do it again and again. That is what homosexuals do." Fitzhubery was one of those people who always used full proper words. It is amazing the filth that can spew out of your mouth without the use of one naughty word. Fitzhubery then went on about other affairs in the firm, including those indulged in by Kirkland. He claimed everyone knew Kirkland was porking his secretaries which is why there was so high a turnover among them. Of course Fitzhubery did not say

“porking”. But Lohman heard it that way. Lohman was a real low life, at least to people like his honor Fitzhubery.

Then Fitzhubery said, “You might have taken note of the fact that one of the associates assigned to me, Sean Featherbottom, is homosexual too. Everyone knows that.”

“He is?” said Lohman. “How can you tell?”

“Oh please,” said Egon. “Do not pretend you do not know. He lisps when he gets excited and he flaps his wrists like he is going to take off. But you notice that I put up with him. I am well known throughout the firm to be of open mind and liberal demeanor.”

Lohman was mindful of the fact that Sean was one of their best associates and that Sean did a lot of Fitzhubery’s difficult work. Now that he thought about it, Sean did flap about a bit when he got excited. Anyway, he could see that Fitzhubery wasn’t trying to get anyone fired at the moment. He just said, “I don’t think the issue is sexual preference. It’s hitting on someone.”

Fitzhubery said, “Whatever you call it,” in a pained, but obviously tolerant manner. Lohman thought that maybe newspeak is not so different from the properspeak of our superiors. Sweeney, Lohman thought, would just have said, “Whatever”. Score one for the young. Much more succinct.

“He does some work for you, doesn’t he?” asked Fitzhubery. Lohman nodded his head. Egon continued, “Yes. Good. But you know I don’t think he liked Ellis very much. He was there Tuesday night, you know. To help Ellis. He very well could have killed Ellis.”

“How do you know what he was doing?” asked Lohman.

“He told me,” said Fitzhubery.

“Well,” said Lohman, “If you really think we have a killer running around here we should do something about it.”

Fitzhubery did not respond so Lohman said, "Let's get to the clients."

Lohman and Fitzhubery then started reviewing the Kirkland clients and what was going on with their files. They got to Gordon Weinstein. Weinstein was just plain rich. He had come up with some important inventions in the computer, communications and chip areas. Weinstein was not Kirkland's type. Weinstein was an intellectual old wizard Jew of plain talk and good will. Kirkland had inherited his business from an older lawyer in the firm who was part of the Cohenstein faction. Primarily because Kirkland was supposedly an IP master.

Kirkland was waiting on Weinstein to approve something. Weinstein was an old client of the firm and he wanted to review his patents and companies to see that they all fit in with his estate plan. An estate plan is legalese for your plan for your assets when you die. Who gets them and how? How can you avoid taxes? How should things be arranged to achieve the desired results? Kirkland was working with lawyers from the estate planning, tax, corporate and international departments on this. Kirkland was waiting to hear from Weinstein to see if Weinstein wanted Kirkland to prepare an outline of the work to be done and the fees and costs involved. Since Weinstein had extensive interests this would be quite involved. And lucrative.

Egon said, "He approved it. Gordon approved it. Gordon told me he approved the work on the outline."

They got to talking about Kirkland and his death and in the course of the discussion Lohman asked Egon, "Where were you when he was killed?"

Egon said, "Oh, Heavens. How should I know? When was he killed?"

Lohman said, "Well, we all know it was Tuesday night."

"When on Tuesday night?" asked Egon.

"The police haven't said yet," said Lohman.

Egon said, "While I may not know when Ellis was killed, I do know where I was Tuesday night. My wife and I were at the opera with a Clay Fenger and his wife. You know. We get a substantial amount of business from them. We were at the opera till about 10:30 and then we went home from there.

The driver took us and the Fengers and dropped us off first. Where were you?"

Lohman said, "I was at home with my wife too."

"So there," said Egon.

"So there what?" thought Lohman, but he did not want to pursue it. But opera in June? "So what is with opera in June? I thought it was a winter sport." No acceptable person would ever have referred to opera that way. "I mean, I always thought they only performed in the winter, or fall or spring. Never in the summer."

Egon sighed. He paused. He needed to compose himself. One does not get upset by a peasant. One disposes of him. Even if he is the estate manager. "Usually you are correct. This year however, the Lyric is experimenting with a longer schedule. The main reason being that they are trying to see what they can do at the box office with no incremental expense for the house except utilities. They have the theater there all year at great expense so why not use it. And they have equipped the theater with that new silent air conditioning system."

"That's new?" asked Lohman.

"Yes," said Egon. "Go to Orchestra Hall on a warm day in the early spring when they are still there and listen. Just before the conductor gives the down beat they turn it off. You aren't aware of how much noise it makes until then. Actually you can notice this in the winter so it must be the fans. Anyway, you can't have an un-airconditioned house in the summer."

Lohman changed the subject to Kirkland's clients and the status of their matters. After

they had gone over all Kirkland's clients Fitzhubery left. Lohman thought to himself, "A stable hand has to shovel shit all day. I have to talk to people like Egon all day. Not much difference, except the shit doesn't talk back. At least I get paid a lot more".