

# Hijacked

by Kirby Olson (November 2017)



*My Friend Pierrot*, Max Ernst, 1973-74

The flight began normally. On the little plane were a black basketball player who had played in the fledgling professional leagues in Finland, but who had been beaten by a skinhead mob in the northern Finnish city of Joensuu, and wanted to go home; an American woman who had been in Finland for three years, and wanted to go home to where the men were a little less macho; a couple of Finnish deer hunters who wanted to shoot at deer in Sweden; a quiet person with large black

glasses, and a heavy moustache, with a huge nose, and a black bandanna around his head, about whom I could ascertain very little; a blonde stewardess, and the captain of the plane. When we took off, everything was still fine. But as soon as we were in the air, the quiet guy in the back with the big nose announced that he was hijacking the plane to Palestine.

Liisa and I rolled our eyes. Soon there would be a speech, which laid out what he wanted. "Finland do very leettle for Palestine. Now you do something," he said, and ordered the plane to redirect its route toward the Gaza Strip.

"You've hijacked the wrong kind of plane," the pilot said. "This plane would have to refuel three times to reach the Middle East. Think it over, buddy. That's a lot of negotiation at foreign airports. Can you handle it?"

The Arabic man seemed to ponder. Meanwhile, the two Finns who were hunters got out their rifles sneakily, and then on the count of two began to pump lead into the back of the plane. Windows blew out, and the Arabic man shot up the plane with his machine gun and left a big hole in the roof of the little plane as he went down dead. Somehow the Finns or the Arab had wasted the black basketball player as they shot towards the back of the plane, too, and the American woman was screaming in rage that the Arabic man was right to do what he had done.

"Long live Palestine!" she thundered.

The Finns slapped five and sat down. I was wounded, but just a superficial wound. One of the Arab's bullets had nicked my ear.

The plane was out of control. The pilot was fine, but the cabin pressure had dropped, and the unexpected drag had caused the plane to flip in the air. Soon we were making a landing in the open sea, miles from anything. The pilot nosed into the

surf and promptly went through the windshield. He had forgotten to fasten his seatbelt. The stewardess gathered the peanuts and drinks, opened the side door, inflated a rubber raft, and we were into the raft and on the high seas in no time. The pilot looked like someone who had been put through a meat grinder when we found him a half hour later floating in the Baltic Sea. I was getting used to this. The stewardess had brought big orange blankets out of the plane, and we wrapped ourselves up in them. She made some coffee and put it into thermoses as we sat in the inflatable dinghy.

“We look like a bunch of Tibetan monks,” I said, trying to lighten the situation.

“Ah, we pray for peace with sand wheels,” said one of the Finnish hunters, sticking his front teeth over the edge of his mouth.

“That’s religious harassment!” The American woman said.

The Finns looked at each other and tried not to laugh.

I had a flask of Koskenkorva, which I didn’t want to share, but I would have to. We all took sips and tried to keep up our sense of humor.

We spent several days in the rubber raft, living on airplane peanuts. I was already quite thin from not having eaten much for a month, so I felt ill. I wanted to eat some meat. But when we finally landed on a small island, and killed a baby seal, the American woman made such a stink about having clubbed a baby seal to death that she said if we ever got off the island, then anybody who had eaten any of the seal would be reported to Greenpeace. That baby seal had as much right to live as we had, she thundered. I contented myself with peanuts, as I didn’t want to deal with Greenpeace lawyers. We watched as seagulls picked apart the baby seal, and the baby

seal's mother tried to save her child by chasing away the seagulls. Finally, Finnish authorities realized there was a downed plane when we failed to land in Stockholm, and we were picked up by helicopter and taken to our connecting flight, which had waited for us.

When we got into the plane, we were still wrapped in our heavy orange blankets, which made us look like the Dalai Lama and his Tibetan pals. The flight came directly from Peking, and when we got on, a Communist Chinese general nudged another one, and they started to grin huge toothy grins. I didn't know what this was all about but as soon as we got into the air, the Communist generals decided to torture us as Buddhist monks.

Soldiers held us down and stuck cattle prods in our anuses, while reciting Marxist propaganda. I wanted a prayer wheel, as it seemed the only thing that might be able to make the whole thing seem tolerable.

The American woman was screaming, "Religious harassment! Religious harassment! I'll sue!" The Chinese communist generals and their troops worked us over. They hung us from the ceiling of the plane by one hand from special metal hooks and kicked at us. Then they used the cattle prods on our anuses some more.

"Ha! Ha! Buddhists! The gentle people," they guffawed. "See how the Buddhists look angry?"

They struck us with sticks. They chanted Buddhist prayers at us. They hopped around with their front teeth over the edge of their lower lips. As we were about to land in Seattle, they let us down, and told us if we ever said anything about our victimization, they would send out hit squads.

"What about freedom of speech?" The American woman cried.

“Tianamen Square!” The top general guffawed. He kicked the American woman off the plane and she fell down somewhere over the Sierra Mountains. “So much for freedom of speech,” he shouted, and slapped five with a smaller general.

I watched out the window as the American woman tried to use the orange blanket as a makeshift parachute. I wished her a soft landing. It was a pity the Finns weren't on board. They had stayed in Sweden to hunt elk. We could have used their guns and their no-nonsense attitude. I wondered if Liisa and I would ever make it. Blood was pouring out of our mouths and ears. This was really some honeymoon.

As we began to land near Seattle, the stewardess said that we should all return to our seats and fasten our seat belts. Liisa motioned to me that I should follow her. One of the communist generals turned around and asked her where she thought she was going.

“We have to go get cleaned up,” she reported to him. “You don't want the customs officials to see all these torture marks, do you?”

“We have diplomatic immunity.” He leered. “Anyway, get cleaned up, and when you come back we will rape you.”

All the communist generals and soldiers cheered.

At the back of the plane, Liisa put a parachute on me, and one on herself. With a tiny pistol she had pulled out of the bottom of her boot she shot a hole in the gas tank. Then she shot another hole in one of the rear windows, and then rammed open the rear door and threw out all the emergency parachutes.

We jumped as the plane arced down in flames over the Rocky Mountains and exploded. I felt badly as I had come to identify

with Buddhists due to wearing the orange blanket and felt a great sense of serenity and a feeling that all living beings should be respected. But I wasn't sure if communists and other political radicals were actually living things, so I didn't feel so badly, on second thought. We parachuted gracefully down and landed on top of a mother moose and her child. The mother moose defended her young, and we were soon treed. I had grabbed a half eaten sandwich off one of the general's used food trays just before we jumped, and after carefully separating the part on which the general had slobbered, I threw the bad part down to the moose. The moose ate it and promptly died. Airplane food by itself would kill most animals, but when it had communist slobber on it, it was better than cyanide. We ate the baby moose, much as we hated to, but we had stomachs, and those stomachs needed a good meal, and then we walked over the rugged hills in our orange robes. We were discovered by some hippy hikers who mistook us for Buddhists, bowed to us, and brought us into the Seattle Buddhist Temple, where we were politely received with bows, and told that we were the reincarnation of a certain holy llama, or rather, lama, who had recently died. We were the eighteenth reincarnation of his holyship Dharma Karma Lama, a Siamese twin, and we were given a prayer wheel and some beads, and told that he had been a friend to avocados, and had held cucumbers in high regard. We asked for taxi fare home, and it was offered. We bowed, and went home, taking off the orange robes and getting in the shower to get all the blood and sweat off. Then we got into bed and slept for about a week.

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