

**Eight o'clock A.M. In Some Tacky, Classy Hotel
Or
Discovering Mental Health Hazards**

By Dave Olson, 1987

I see the sun. For some reason I didn't think they had the sun here in the daytime. Just at night. Neon night. I stumble towards doors but stop in the lobby. "How's the luck treating ya?" An old man with a cigarette and a green suit slumped on a stool praying to a box. The lights, whistles, levers and chrome looked washed out and bland in the light. Not designed for daytime.

"On and off. Long night." He swallowed a large amount of drink. "Me and the wife just came up from Kansas City, Missouri." Winnebago Warriors, true yankee pioneers. He satisfied the machine, shoving silver biscuits down it's starving mouth. "Can't beat it, coming here," thousands of bad cliches, "Viva Las Vega\$. Ha, ha, ha." Cough, cough, hack, cough. On the back of a poster board, I made a sign.

WARNING!!! LAS VEGA\$ MAY BE HAZARDOUS TO YOUR HEALTH

BE WISE, LIGHT A BOMB

Eight o'clock A.M. I wander through the aftermath of last night, or a thousand-million last nights. Halls of slot machines topped with pyramids of martini glasses, roulette tables, overflowing ash trays and skanky chicks in mini-skirts vacuuming away the revelry, frustration, depression, elation and popcorn and pretzels. It depressed me. Shouldn't have though. Everyone loved it. Better than life itself. Maybe that explained things. But I felt wrong. I could leave the glamour sluts alone to their city of tastelessness, none of my affair to decide how THEY would live. To them, the long haired, granola head was the freak. But I wasn't dammit. I would blow the whole fucking place to hell (no big change) but no one understood my logic, my philosophy, the way it SHOULD be. I made a list, kind of. "Things I hate about Las Vega\$" A list of tasteless things. Gold chains, polyester clothes, 69 cent shrimp cocktail (almost a plus if somewhere far away) lounge singers, sequins, Don Rickles, Frank Sinatra, Wayne Newton, smoke, neon lights, wedding chapels, the word "classy", heart shaped beds, limousines and people who dig them, sexy senior citizens, bumper stickers, hair grease and people who have fun in this den of squalor and filth. An extremely long list. What kind of justification was that? They could all write lists about me. So what! I tried a new

list, "Good things to do instead of Las Vega\$." A good list, I figured. With less clout, however, than the previous one. A new viewpoint was needed. Socio-political maybe? No good. Gamblers generate tax dollars and all that. Environmental. Waste of power, cause for building damn dams, etc. A personal sore spot. I liked it. Sort of, almost, maybe effective. A good start but not enough.

What do I care about anyway? Let all the fools dwindle in the abyss. I don't like it just because I don't like it, goddamitaltohell. In fact, I'm in favor of making it better for them. They need a huge opaque dome placed over the whole city. Paint it black inside, with neon stars, spaceships and with a few more of those huge cowboys with waving arms. Hey, what a sexy place that would be. Distribute free "I Las Vega\$" or "Gamblers Do It By Chance!" bumper stickers and multi-colored condoms with sequins and glitter glued on. Change the name to VEGA\$, not las vegas. No one classy calls it that. The inhabitants of this new garden of eden could create a race of perfect humans. Humans born with hairy chests, gold chains, pencil mustaches, bloodshot eyes, bad singing voices, facelifts that put their eyebrows up by the hairline, silicon tits, leopard spotted bikini briefs, tubes tied and the vital lucky touch and the never-fail system. The dome would provide perpetual nighttime. No one would have to sleep, just "go to bed" (hint, hint, wink, wink). Everything looks too washed out and bland in the daytime anyhow, too damn natural, no one much sees it though. No more "morning afters," just the perennial last night. Infinite

nights to use your best pick up lines on the nasty cocktail girls. Baby, baby, ain't it the life. Even if you ran out of speed you wouldn't have to sleep a minute of the day. Too much to do. Viva Vega\$. They could clone Wayne Newton, twice, three times, make a million. Of Barry Manilow too. Resurrect Elvis. Breed little Elvis' and bronze Telly Savalas' testicles. I'd support the idea if they all promised never to leave. To remain, not prisoners, but special V.I.P. guests in this hell for life. Do it all. I don't hate it here, I love it.

But I'm going to nuke this fucking pit sky high anyway. Either that or just take a long nap after my three dollar buffet.

Dave Olson
P.O. Box 7612
Olympia, WA 98507
www.uncleweed.net

1987, written in Orem, UT