

MISSING.....

.... One large, lumpy, disheveled, and physically offensive soundman. Answers to the name of Russ or Rusty. Will also respond to any statement containing the words “liquor”, “laziness”, or “irresponsibility”. Physical characteristics include unkempt, multi-colored facial fuzz, gray Medusa-like hair, and a medicine ball abdomen usually blanketed by a stained, dingy and unwashed T-shirt. Seen usually wearing sweatpants, original color unknown. Last seen in an unprovoked frenzy in Columbus, cursing and swearing clouded in a tornado of odor. Likes to shit on his friends. If seen or found, please contact.....nobody. We don't care.

Wheewww! Now that we have that off our chest, I guess we can continue. Bitter? We're not bitter, just releasing some built up aggression inconsiderately thrown upon us for no apparent reason. So with that behind us, we brightly gaze towards the future.

The trek to Put-in-Bay Island is not a short one, and the blistering July sun increases the distance by igniting the interior of the already sticky van. John is driving, his hands pruned from sweat, his facial features tortured by the heat, but remaining miraculously well groomed. Stephen is two seats behind him in the rear of the vehicle; arms crossed and napping, his traditional “angry sleep” look plastered to his face. Jimi gazes out the window next to him, admiring the incredible beauty I-71 has to offer.

“Where does grass come from?”, he asks in his cute, little confused way.

We decline an answer as usual, learning to take his questions as rhetorical. Spike stirs in the passenger seat, nose in the air and eyebrows scrunched.

“What the hell is that smell?” he wonders out loud.

“I smell it too,” John adds, checking his hair in the rearview. “It's awful!”

“It's horrible!” Jimi concurs, his retinas sun burned from staring.

“No, it's Revlon's easy glide, super coat, quick dry, ebony and fucia number 9. Isn't it awesome?”

We all glance to Tim in the middle section, applying a hideous, murky liquid to his fingernails.

“If awesome means very, very stinky, then yes Tim, it's incredibly awesome”, was Spike's reply.

With the mystery now solved, we proceeded further up the hazy highway, all thinking to ourselves and making our own predictions about the much-anticipated gig on Lake Erie.

This is going to be the best. I'm going to scare the fuck out of these people, was Tim's mental forecast.

I know my guitar won't sound right. I bet the monitors will sound like crap. The P.A. will probably suck.

What's that smell? Do we pay for food here? was surely Stephen's subconscious thinking.

I hope my liver holds out John thought to himself.

I hope my liver holds out Spike thought to himself.

Where are we going again? Jimi wondered.

And in the borrowed equipment van a few miles ahead, certainly Mike, our lighting technician and worthy crewmember, had contemplations of his own. *I better get a damn raise now that Russ is gone. Cheap bastards.* And somewhere out there, lurking and hiding, Russ is there, possessing his own bewildering thoughts. *What's this soap thing everyone's always talking about? And what the hell is a comb?!!??* (Sorry, had to take one last shot. Feel better now.) We continued on, hot and quiet, cruise controlling our way towards our final destination of fun and frenzy. See ya in Put-in-Bay.