

Flat Tire

By Michael Stowell

One time back in 1996 I had a flat tire in the Jeep. I ran over an aluminum ladder, WTF?, on the outskirts of this small town just south of Calgary, Alberta.

I quickly pulled over next to a well placed streetlight; and after just a minute or two this drunken Inuit guy walks up, seemingly out of some sort of fog. This guy really was handling the walking pretty good. His knees were visibly shaky, but he was moving along at a respectable pace.

It was what only could be described as a gentlemanly sort of drunken trot. He was an older guy with a shit eating grin, long jet-black hair, some denim trousers, and a sweaty pirate shirt. I can distinctly remember his old cowboy boots kicking up dust as he shuffled along toward the scene of my tire changing.

"Where is this place?" he said, with a slight sway and a stench of brown liquor.

Well, of course I didn't know. I was damn lucky to find this streetlight (thank you Lord), much less guide this Lost Spirit off to his people. I abidingly shake all of the philosophic thoughts from my mind, and am left utterly, utterly speechless. So, I just pointed toward the lights of the nearby small downtown area; and said in a deep, transcendent sort of voice: "town".

Then he just kept walking - he hardly missed a beat.

Tire changin' has never been weirder since.



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