

Zen & the Art of Doolang Doolang

By Kenn Hartmann

The rain becomes sleet, my speedo light flickers & in a line of stalled traffic my bike dies, dead. Nobody is going to stop for a nighttime fool stranded in the elements with electrical problems. I got no power only the dread premonition of stashing my sickle & hitching home. I push the bike up a crosswalk ramp onto a ghetto sidewalk & kneel in an icy puddle to assess the situation. Without tools & only traffic lights for illumination, I'm f'd. In the headlights' rain-streaked gleam, I can see the battery cable is nowhere near being connected. However, the screw's still precariously



Nikita aka Duke of 290



Squeaky



balanced in the cable & the nut lodged in the terminal. It fires & I jump on the Ike.

Now I know this guy, Nikita Finkel, from Moscow, Russia who claims to be the

Duke of the Ike. The Duke of 290. Or he will be once he gets his bike together. Or gets his swing-arm from Ebay or his tire off Craigslist. He just paid a c-note for a lunch bag full of parts. It's a street-fighter, an alley prowler, a lane splittin' hardcore Frankenbike, a Freakin'stien. A sinister hair raising blur hell bent for the horizon. I just hope to make it home. C'mon baby, treat me right. I merge into the maelstrom beside & behind a couple semis & get swallowed in a frigid salt bath. I dodge a labyrinth of potholes, lane trenches & crevices reminiscent of a remote Andes llama trail. The infrastructure has gone to hell. Our government has abandoned us.

I just created my new back patch, 'doolang doolang' inspired by the doolang-man, Joe Strummer & the Mescaleros' song 'Coma Girl - she's the Mona Lisa of a motorcycle Gang - the oil drums beat out doolang-doolang.' Back in the sixties, Andrea Carroll had a regional hit called 'The Doolang' but no one outside Cleveland heard it. I wonder if 70's rap emcee Larry

Craig heard it? He had more of an Isley Brothers or Kool & the Gang sensibility, more Grandmaster Flash or Bambaataa than bumble-gum. First time I met Larry, he entered the scene & someone asked, 'do you want to be called African-American or Black?' Larry said, 'call me Larry Craig, a k a The Cooker.' So I asked, what does the A.K.A. stand for? Larry replied, 'Always Kicking Ass.' We became friends. One winter he drove from Cleveland in his shit-box car, picked me up in Chicago & we drove to St. Paul eating his mom's sweet-potato pie she had baked especially for the trip. We stopped at Fort Dells & stood upon the icy wooden parapets & smoked a spliff. Even though The Cooker was an underground rapper, he would have heard the wall-of-sound song by the Chiffons, 'he's so fine, doolang doolang doolang' the song George Harrison swiped for 'My Sweet Lord.' One night I dreamt, 'my sweet Triumph sang doolang doolang.' It had a ring - it rang - so hot dang, I sewed the patch, natch.



Next month, I'll write a story about Squeaky Wheels & Freaky Deals. Imagine a graveyard of motorcycle junk meticulously arranged Zen-like into a garden of random bike parts rusted into the earth like those paper-bag human heads in Hotel Hell movie. A Zen master rakes sand; Squeaky rakes mini-bikes. I told Squeaky about my battery cable problem & how lucky the screw & nut were still there. Squeaky said in his high-pitched cackling squeal, 'without da nut, yew'd be screwed.'

-Kenn Hartmann

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The D.O.T. Polka

(Calhoun Road Construction)
Submitted By Ronda L.

A vested man, knocks on my door,
knowledge he imparts.
Apparently, in just one week,
The D.O.T. Polka starts.

The whole bright gang, will soon be here,
rolling out the barrels:
(orange with reflective tape)
And other, road work perils.

I'll have to shift, from left to right, to move
around the town.
The dance will quickly tire me,
Bouncing up and down.

Going out, and coming in, until the work is
done;
The D.O.T. Polka, will fill my days,
With wild, engaging fun.



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