

So we're supposed to play in Curitiba in 18 hours, but our bus is being held hostage by the local promoters. They've formed some unholy alliance with the Brazilian counterpart of ASCAP: the PRS.

Currently the PRS has the legal power to arrest people, and they want a piece of the national tour promoter's money. The local security force, "Gang Mexicana", has been bought out for 180

Zados and a carton of Marlboros each. The only faction still operating in our defense is "Big John", our personal security man, and he's hiding in his room because a local gang is out

Is blood because of a 1982 knifing incident in which he was involved. Our 345-pound road manager, Rick, only had this to say: "You wanted the life of a rock star!". Paul, Jim and I realized

That this was one situation we were going to have to get out of ourselves.

We convened a hasty conference in the hotel lobby. Paul suggested contacting our national tour promoter in Sao Paulo, but we remembered that he was in Recife with faith no more, who had just arrived

For their Brazilian tour. We thought about contacting our Brazilian record company in Rio, but they weren't home. Our ever-diligent American manager was arranging help of numerous forms, but he was in New York, and just too far away to get anything moving in time.

And there were 6000 kids in Curitiba who just wouldn't understand.

We knew it was time for action. Paul went up to the PRS guys and invited them into the bar to discuss it like civilized men over a few Brazilian drinks, offering each of them a cigar on his way.

Amused PRS heavies seemed to like the idea of a few free drinks, even if they knew they would never give us our bus back. When Paul winked at Jim and I on his way in, we went into action.

I stole off to my room to prepare while Jim went into action. Creeping carefully through a service duct, he managed to gain a vantage point some three meters above the bus, and dropped carefully

The roof. After using his all-purpose Swiss Army knife (affectionately known as the "skit knife") to jimmy open the roof hatch, he went through the darkened inside of the bus and removed

the inside engine service panel. Using some spare electronic parts he found while on an island in the Amazon, he wired the entire bus for remote control, not unlike a remote control toy car.

At this point, he asked himself "now how shall I get out of here? !? "

Paul was having difficulties of his own.

"couldn't you see your way clear to letting us fulfill our contractual obligations in Curitiba? think of the kids!"

Through our translator, Fabio, the PRS man, Aldo, said:

"no. you americans think you own the world. hah! we'll burn down our rain forest if we damn well please. we need room for cows!! we want a mcdonald's on every... oh, sorry, yes anyway, no.
Ed 40% of your concert receipts to give to david bowie," he said, winking to the local promoter, phillipe.

As paul continued this elaborate distraction, jim effected an escape from the heavily guarded bus by crawling down into the cargo bay, cutting a hole in the floor with the swiss army knife's ar
Der, slipping into the manhole cover situated under the bus, and walking up to the hotel's basement from there. jim called up to me in my room and gave the signal. we were now to meet at the back
Rance, with our tech guys. but first, paul would need some help getting away from his unwelcome guests, as things were getting ugly.

"he says he has lost his patience, and that he can think of other ways of extracting payment from you kurt and jim physically," our trembling interpreter said.

The moment had come. jim began operating the bus from his back entrance vantage point. as the remote-controlled bus lurched towards the parking lot exit, the superstitious security youths fled in
Ror. paul was pulling anxiously on his collar as the prison man began describing his collection of world war ii nazi ceremonial knives when a sudden crash split the tableau.

Jim had purchased me the gift of a complete black ninja stealth assassin outfit in aracaju. I had been gearing up and crawling through the air conditioning ducts all this time. as I crashed through
He cheap imitation-styrofoam hung ceiling tiles, skates first, I flashed ninja stars all about me. in the ensuing panic, paul escaped to the pre-arranged bus pick-up point. unfortunately, my skates
Were a poor choice of foot gear for escaping over the broken glass of the table I had landed on. were it not for the confusion and the ninja-star-inflicted-wounds delivered to the bad guys, I would
Have been set upon while floundering on the glass-strewn carpet. as it happened, however, I leapt through the open door of the careening bus as it departed the city of maringa forever.

If only we had managed to get our equipment in the bus, too . . .

Every word of this story is true.

- kurt h

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