

## Excerpted from Chapter 5: LOWER EDUCATION in TEXAS

It took Jim only a little over two months to rebuild his beloved athletic club. We were all invited to the grand reopening and looked forward to working there again. As Rob, Wally and I entered the club for the gala celebration, we saw Jim in the lobby proudly giving a tour to a group of wealthy opera lovers (his favorite type of potential members). Seeing us out of the corner of his eye, he quickly excused himself to usher us into the bar to avoid any mortification which might result from an encounter between us and the potential new club members he was trying so desperately to impress. Jim was thrilled with the response to the opening night and kept busy showing off the club to all the new members. Meanwhile we kept ourselves busy in the bar enjoying the free drinks and food. After a few hours, it appeared that Rob had had too much to drink; he was sitting in his chair in an apparent catatonic state, unable to respond to any verbal stimuli. Wally had the brilliant idea that a sauna might help to revive him, so we quickly lugged Rob down the hall to the fitness room (to avoid any embarrassment for Jim), took his clothes off, dragged his body into the sauna and laid him out on one of the benches. There wasn't much more we could do for him, so we returned to the bar.

After about an hour we noticed Jim greeting another group of dignitaries at the front door of the club. We both realized that it would take Jim about ten minutes to reach the fitness room with his tour, so we ran down the hall to the sauna and tried to wake Rob up and get him dressed before Jim proudly opened the sauna door for his guests. Rob just wouldn't wake up. We shook him and yelled at him to no avail. Finally Wally decided that spraying Rob with the fire extinguisher mounted on the wall just might do the trick. He ran into the sauna like a professional firefighter and started extinguishing Rob! At first Rob didn't even move as his naked body was sprayed with the white powder. Then he bolted upright and started screaming and moaning in rage. He looked at Wally and lunged for him, but he was half blinded by the fire extinguisher chemicals in his eyes. Wally dropped the extinguisher and we both started to run, knowing that Rob could be very violent-

when he was drunk and angry. Now he was in the worst rage we had ever seen, plus he was almost blind and emitting frightening, gorilla-like screeches that made the hair on the back of your neck stand up.

As we ran out of the fitness room and into the lobby, Jim and his entourage of dignitaries were rounding the corner on their way to the room we had just left. Wally and I ran past them as though we were fleeing a natural catastrophe. The guests looked a bit befuddled, but Jim knew instantly from the fear in our eyes and the white fire-extinguisher powder on our clothes that disaster was imminent. There was nothing we could say or do as we ran past the elegantly dressed socialites. Just as we passed them, the door of the fitness room burst open with terrifying force and crashed into the wall. Then Rob appeared in the doorway looking like a creature in a B-grade horror-porno flick: his entire body was covered in white powder except for his red, swollen eyes and his genitals. At first Jim and his guests stood there in stunned silence. Then Rob launched into his horrific screaming and charged the guests like a wounded werewolf. The situation was too much for the genteel group, and they panicked and fled as fast as they could in their long dresses and high heels. Jim, the fearless ex-marine, suddenly turned pale and sickly-looking and retreated with his clients into the dining room, where they could lock the door. As Rob headed for the unsuspecting patrons in the bar, Wally and I both knew that if Rob started tearing up the bar, the situation could get really ugly. Fortunately the bar was fairly dark and Rob—who still couldn't see very well—became disoriented. Wally and I grabbed him from behind and hauled him outside and around the back of the club. The cold evening air seemed to subdue Rob and we were able to get him in the shower and wash him off.

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