

“Is the gear ready, or what?” Herbert’s reverie was rudely interrupted by the sudden entry of Alponse, who stood looking at him over the top of the beer barrel wearing his usual pre-lunch time session snarl. “What’s this junk?” He continued, looking into the barrel, “Looks like it’s been drunk and pissed out at least once already, and it’s as flat as a witches what-nots as well”.

He gingerly skirted the barrel, trying not to get any of the beer slop on his gleaming italian winkle-pickers. “Better shape up sonny, get your act together! The customers are already moaning about our stuff not having any lift, and I can’t see me competing with soft drinks like ~ Snow White when I’m trying to sell stuff like this!”.

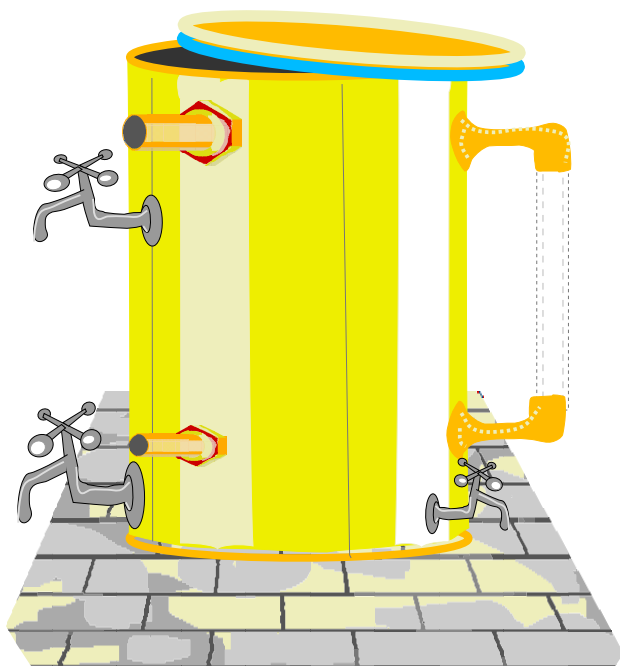
”Yeah, we’d better have a director’s meeting to evaluate the implementation of a plant update using state of the art technology”.

”You mean like, gas?” Herbert responded, “I don’t really think”...

”Yes! gas baby, and lots of it!” Alponse interrupted eagerly, “Meeting’s adjourned! I’ll see the man today.” So saying, He turned towards the back room, muttering something about where’s the petty cash box, and ain’t it about time we got some office help around here.

A strenuous session of bunging bottles into boxes and carrying them out the the dray standing outside did not markedly improve either of their tempers, and it was with some relief the Herbert was eventually able to go back into the brewery and light up another dandelion roolly. He reached for another stick to stir the beer, then thought the better of it and instead threw in a hand-full of washing soda. The beer foamed up over the top of the barrel briefly, then subsided into a sullen obstinate flatness again. Thought so! Herbert remarked to himself,

it’ll be alright in a day or two
now.....





The next few days saw a considerable change in the brewery: The old barrel had been eased (very carefully) to one side of the brewing room, and in it's place stood a large stainless steel catering tea-urn with a few extra taps and what looked like central heating fittings (they were in fact central heating fittings) bolted onto the sides. The top of the urn was secured by means of a large rock which was placed so as to prevent too much of the charge from escaping during pressurisation, and piece of string tied to the rock passed over a tree root

protruding from the ceiling, as a finishing touch to this impressive looking bit of tackle.

"Couldn't get any gas yet tho'" Alphonse remarked off-handedly as the pair stood surveying the results of their two days of high-tech wizardry. "The man says that there's logistical obtainment problems, but acquisition is imminent".

"You mean they're going to pinch it from the fair when it arrives tomorrow" Herbert remarked; "that's a bit of a dicey do ain't it?"

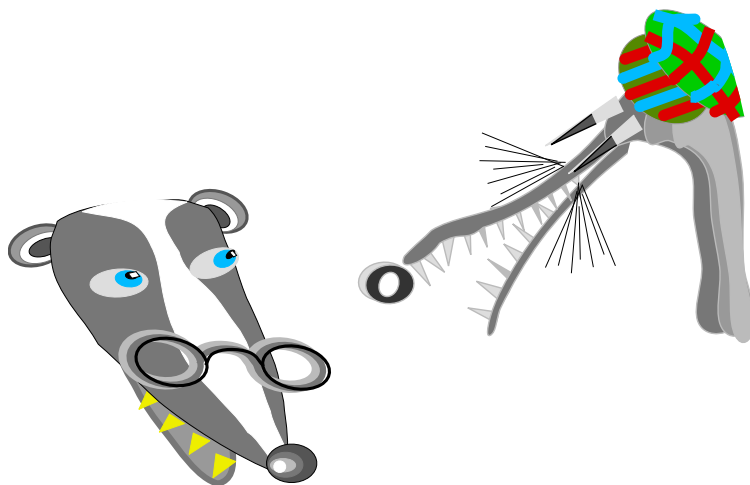
It's one thing borrowing a few items from the village hall; indicating the urn with his thumb, but some of them fairground types are real hard cases, and I don't fancy the job of having a few polite words with any of them. Alphonse reached across for a dandelion leaf. "Sometimes I wonder 'bout you man, where's the sense of adventure, the poetry, the verbal foreplay and all that stuff". He adopted a ' Y' see kid it's like this ' posture and began to explain. "Yeah, well put crudely we are may find a cylinder or two that way but..."

Just then, His sentence came to a halt in much the same way as a train leaving the rails on a high viaduct over a canyon.

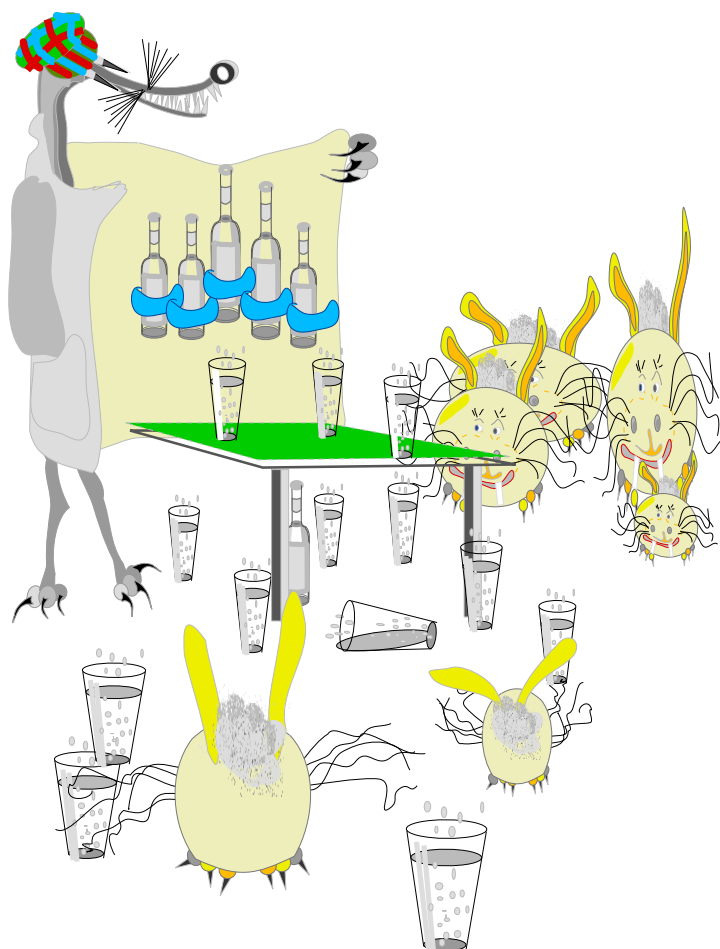
He had noticed the expression creeping across Herbert's face out of the

corner of his eye, and, recalling from previous experience just how mean, bitter and twisted this particular badger could get under the proper conditions, decided that a fast fade might be a good move.

”I’m of out and about now man, He said quickly”, and then, half jokingly, “You better get on and suss this rig, connect these pipes and toggle the grommets or whatever to get it working. See you later!” With this last remark, Alphonse departed, leaving behind a faint aroma of rabbit in garlic sauce. ’It Can’t be though’ Herbert muttered as he threw open the door and all the windows,



custom



The rabbits are our BEST ers ..

Eustace was having a day's holiday, and trying to start is a bit slowly because his head kept thumping. He looked out of the kitchen window, squinting at the bright day outside. He took a swig of the glass of dandelion beer that he just happened to be holding. — It was 11:30 AM on the morning of a day's holiday, and he couldn't start any slower, although he was trying.

He took another pull at the beer, and as usual, found it a bit rough, but (again as usual) was confident that this would cease to be a significant problem after a few pints of the stuff. He glanced at the sun dial, then, remembering that this had stopped some weeks ago, dug out some old digital watches from a drawer full of bits, selecting the one that showed the nearest time to the one that he wanted it to be. 11:30am was what the watch display showed, "Ah ! The lads'll be down soon" He remarked to the watch "better get on, and get the tackle sorted". He quickly reviewed the master-plan for the day, which was something like this:

Master Plan.

9:30 Get up.

10:30 Breakfas.. Oh! Forget it!

10:30 -> 11:30 Doss around.

11:45->12:00 Rush about, collecting the fishing tackle, a football and sufficient money to go to the fair, and then on for a pint or so in the 'Thrunge and Swingle' (the local) afterwards.

12:01 Total change of plan.

