

AS THE TUNE TURNS, EPISODE 437

(Scene: session night at the "Happy Shamrock" pub in Anytown, USA. Lots of decorations left over from St Patrick's Day still in evidence [to be taken down in early December]).

(The pub door opens slowly and an incredibly smooth, suave individual enters carrying a tenor banjo case. After dusting off the seat of an empty chair with a finely-embroidered handkerchief, he sits carefully at the session table, avoiding damage to his \$2500 Armani suit. From his inside pocket he takes a gold cigarette case, carefully chooses one - it looks handmade - and is about to light up when he notices the "No Smoking" sign over the bar. With a momentary but nonetheless attractive blush, he replaces the cigarette and the case. At that moment the Session Alpha arrives.)

SA *(after general hellos to the regulars, addresses newcomer)* Well, good evening and welcome to our session. First time here ...? I'm Tom. *[shaking hands]* You look very familiar...

Newcomer: The name is Bond ... James Bond.

Tom: *[gasps]* ... of course! Now I know where I've seen you ... all those great movies ...

NC: Thank you. I miss making them, of course, but they weren't getting any easier as I got older. But when I had to give up the gorgeous women, the sports cars, the exotic trips, I decided it was time for me to concentrate on my real love ... the banjo! *[proudly holds up cheesy case covered with decals and shredded duct tape].*

Tom: ... but James - may I call you James?

NC: I would prefer Double O Seven, if you don't mind.

Tom: Certainly not ... but 007, the banjo? Meaning little or no disrespect, but one would probably not associate the banjo with a person as smooth, suave, and - dare I say it? - sensitive as you are.

NC: A common misapprehension, my dear boy. I have always believed that in the right hands, the banjo can be an instrument of exceeding delicacy and tenderness. At Oxford I wrote my Master's thesis on that very subject. By the

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way, you are of course aware that I have multiple degrees in Martial Arts, Wine Tasting, Foreign and Domestic Seduction, Applied Sensitivity, and Bad-Ass Banjo Pickin'...?

Tom: But fine wines, beautiful women, sports cars ... and tenor banjos? Sorry, 007 - I'm having a little trouble with that.

NC: While you're trying to come to grips with it, can I take a moment to ...
[snaps beautifully manicured fingers in the general direction of Timmy the bartender]
oh garcon - the wine list please! [to Tom] Have you any idea whether or not I could get a bottle of Meurtault-Savonnay 1986 in this place? I'm quite dry.

Tom: ... uh ... can't say - I'm a beer drinker myself ...

NC: [continuing to snap fingers at Timmy, who is naturally ignoring him] Of COURSE you are, Bob ... sorry, Tom ...

[Tune in next time when we'll hear Timmy the bartender finally reply "A bottle of WHAT?" followed by "No, we DON'T have any Northeastern Swiss beers on draft"]

