

DRY ICE

Disneyland employee held in Toontown 'dry ice bomb' explosion

James Lewis Frye, 22, was booked on suspicion of possession of a destructive device and is being held in lieu of \$1 million bail. The explosion Tuesday forced the evacuation of Toontown.

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<http://articles.latimes.com/2013/may/13/local/la-disneyland-bomb-20130513>

I thought I recognized that employee.

Dude and I had struck up a conversation last summer, when I was at Disney with my two sons and their friends. Sucks to be me, I had joked with the guy. All four boys having ADHD, and all that cherry Coke in their veins, and suddenly for me, the park was no longer The Happiest Place on Earth...it was The Most Hyperactive.

We had just come off the most maddening ride, on Roger Rabbit's Car Toon Spin—a ride, I might add, that these four boys are far too old for, just judging from their collective armpit B.O. alone—and we were walking (ricocheting? head-lock-strangling while-staggering?) toward It's a Small World (which I felt might calm them all the fuck down), when BLAM! there was this explosion in a trash can right in front of us.

Terrorism at Disneyland? I was stunned, like, "Al Qaeda, is NOTHING sacred?"

We darted to the left, into shrubs. They weren't thick shrubs. Disneyland is so pristine that every leaf of every shrub in the entire park is accounted for. I've noticed this every year when I go. There's not a bit of moss nor one single weed, and certainly no hedge untrimmed. So, from the lame cover of these overgroomed, too-thin little buxus hedges, we observed the scene.

"Duuuuude!" Dylan said, elbowing Tyler. Randal, who still had the collar of Kai's t-shirt in his clutches, relaxed his grip and shot me a worried look.

"Like, that's a BOMB," Randal said in a quieter voice than I ever thought possible for him. He's so annoying most of the time. If I could only defriend his mom, I would, but she's the reason I get free lacquer mani-pedis whenever I want—before 11 a.m., that is—so I put up with her kid's obnoxiousness. But here and now, Randal's eyes were all fear, his mouth slack.

Over by the exploded trash can, uniformed Disney security personnel created a perimeter. Some of the personnel were dressed as tourists in plain clothes, even one pained-looking older guy in cheesy floral Alohawear. I noticed a column of white smoke rising, drifting

our way.

"Is that toxic gas?" Kai wondered aloud.

"I'm not sure," I said. "All I know is that we're way the hell in the back of the park, about as far from the car as possible. It's going to be a bitch to get out of here."

It was already close to dinnertime. I do Disney efficiently—one day for all of it. We live in El Cajon, and I'll be dipped in shit to get overnight accommodations. We just leave as early as humanly possible, and milk that one-day ticket for all it's worth. Now, it seemed we'd be getting a lot less "milk" this year. But who knows? Maybe management would throw us five free day passes for another day, to compensate for our pain and suffering as spectators of their domestic terror assault.

One can always hope. Right?

"Guys, come on," I announced, with this five-ticket-procurement quest now in mind. "Let's go talk to some people."

It sucks, but they didn't pony up for anything. A mass wall of Disney employees ushered us along, grinning like undertakers, as we made our way with the rest of the shorts-clad visitorkind toward the south end of the park. I thought about my previous visit to Disney. It never occurred to me that a guest or—gasp—even a park employee would commit a terrorist act. What was stopping someone, though?

Last summer there was this one young employee, a man with the darkest African-American skin, who waited alongside me and the same four rowdy boys, because there was a roped-off situation: a procession of actors in costume were making their way along Tomorrowland Way toward the Starcade for a show. The wait took forever, and I was just making friendly conversation with the man.

"I'm sure that 'The Happiest Place on Earth' can try one's patience," I said, raising one eyebrow.

"Heh-heh. I'm late for my shift, so you're looking at 'tried patience' right here," he said.

"Surely they understand when you're physically prevented from clocking in because of this kind of procession...you're not in *trouble* in that case? Are you?"

He paused for just a brief moment. Was he deciding whether or not to share? He gripped his backpack, sighed, then went ahead with it: "They don't care why I'm late, or anyone else is. You just get written up and your pay docked."

"That's harsh."

"That's Disney."

"The Happiest Place."

"Yeah, lady, sure. 'The Happiest Place.'"

He was smirking when he said this, and shaking his head.

I smiled, thinking it better for everyone involved to cut the chit-chat at that point.

In a way, he reminded me of the rapper Akon, in that one video with all the strip club girls.

I'm sure of it. I'm sure it's that exact same guy now in the news, the one who was late for his shift that day.