

100 Bars in 100 Days

Hops MacBarley's 2012 Key West Bar
Boondoggle
"The Peace, Love, and I.P.A. Tour"

BAR 20:

Flying Monkeys

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Flying-Monkeys/146845052014967>

227 Duval Street

Friday 8/3, 8:30 pm

Key West Sunset Ale (bottle)

Flying Monkeys. When I was a little kid, those flying monkeys in *The Wizard Of Oz* scared the poop out of me (little kids don't shit, they poop). By the time I faced this bar, though, I had conquered that fear.



I used to bring Critter here all the time. Critter was my sable ferret: 24 inches, one-and-a-half pounds, flexible as a piece of rope, cute as all get-out, a chick magnet, with a love of warm cleavage and cold beer.

Critter loved his Duval sojourns. He'd ride my shoulder, sending out cuteness vibes to all women. Flying Monkeys, with its sidewalk bar, was a perfect venue for me to people watch, and for Critter to flirt. There are some serious ferret fans out there; I saw groups of four or five female Spring Breakers rush right across traffic to cuddle and coo the little beast. They'd stroke his soft fur and talk babytalk to him, *oooh, iddinhe cuuute, hiiii crrittterrrrrr*, while I stood there like the invisible man.



Often, one of the women would want to hold him. Critter never really cared whose hands he was in, maybe because everyone who ever held him was cool about it, so I'd hand him over. Right away, he'd climb up under her hair and around the back of her neck. The girls would always giggle, and I'd snicker, knowing what was coming up. Critter would show up on the other shoulder, sniff her cheek or nose while she ooo'ed him, and then he'd make the dive down into her plunging neckline, nose first into the Valley of Delight. That's my boy!

When he wasn't wooing women, he'd be jonesing for beer. I'd get distracted talking with someone and when I saw them start to point and laugh, I knew it was because Critter had stuck his face in my cup and was slurping. Or I'd take a swig from



my bottle and he'd climb up to lick my lips. Women would go, *ohhh, he's kissing youuuu*, and I'd just shake my head and reply, *he's just licking the beer off my lips, the lush*.

Anyway, Flying Monkeys was the prime destination. You can just mosey up to the bar without actually even "going in" anywhere. Then stand there and suck down your suds and watch the people stroll on by. I've also sat on the stools under the roof and watched TV, and I have, twice I think, sat at the outdoor tables for supper – that would actually be Fogarty's, though, I reckon. The sidewalk to-go-or-to-hang flank is definitely my favorite spot.

On this night, I did take a bar seat. Kyle was manning the bar. No surprise. That's been situation normal for lo, these many years. His pinwheel spiked look has come and gone, but he is always good for a hey hey and always gets me my usual. This particular time I got a look at his kid's first b'day party video. That kid sure can maul a cake. Probably a chip off the old block in that department.

Being on the 200 block, this is top-notch people-watching territory. If anyone is dressed or undressed to any extreme, they will probably saunter on by here at some point. Locals get jaded, though, and we need to remind ourselves sometimes to notice things. One night, I was just leaning against the pole here, watching the world go by, when I had to shake my head and snap myself back into it. Three men had just walked by, discussing someone's portfolio in business-like tones. What made me double-take, though, was that they were dressed head-to-toe in yellow bunny outfits, two-foot tall ears and everything – and I hadn't even given them a second glance.



In Iowa, they'd either make the front page, go to jail, or get the shit beat out of them just for being not-the-same-as-us. But here, they were not even unusual enough

to notice. That is one of the best things about Key West. Some of my friends boast that they haven't been to Duval in years, or haven't gone to watch a sunset since 19-whatever. And I think, WTF? I guess if you grew up here...



That said, though, Flying Monkey's is also one of the biggest gathering zones during festive occasions; on New Year's or during Fantasy Fest, most of the back-in-town collegiates or moved-aways congregate here. They sure as hell don't rendezvous at

Sloppy Joe's! Finding a local in there would be like seeing bunnymen in Iowa.