

Sticking it Out



Deependra Dinklaker had been concertmaster of the Hoosegow Symphony for 15 years, most of which had been *good* years. But of late, a tic had developed in Maestro Pringler's right hand, rendering his batonwork erratic. On umpteen occasions, Pringler had poked Dinklaker with the baton, which the great conductor idiosyncratically kept as sharp as a tack. Nevertheless, for the good of the orchestra, the violinist vowed to "stick it out." How ironic those words became when a particularly violent twitch from Pringler caused the baton to "stick out" of Dinklaker's forehead during the fencing scene in *Romeo and Juliet*. The audience, of course, loved the extracurricular drama, but Deependra had had enough. Once the concert was over and his wound bandaged, he called it quits. No matter orchestra management in the person of the lovely Harriet Nosebob tried to dissuade him, Dinklaker was resolute. He was much less so after Harriet had explained that a toxin on the tip of the baton was now coursing through his bloodstream and could only be managed by a regimen of antibiotics that orchestra management was happy to provide. At the conclusion of each concert. For the next 15 contract-non-negotiable years. Oh, Deependra vowed revenge, but that's, you know, another story.