

Home Country

It All Started With A Cookie

Oh, we could always just go ask Delbert Chin why he did it, but that would take all the fun out of it. You know. So we sat and sipped at the world dilemma think tank meeting of Everything Important down at the Mule Barn truck stop and talked it over.

It was probably inspired by Jasper Blankenship bringing cookies down from the diggin's and passing them out, along with a compliment for each recipient. Others in town did likewise, including Delbert Chin, whose immaculate Gates of Heaven Chi-

nese restaurant is a favorite for special times. Delbert got in the spirit of cookies and passed out fortune cookies on the street to all concerned, wishing each of us a good fortune. He lit up when he did it, you could see. Maybe that's what happened.

It was less than a week later. Delbert brought out a large glass jar full of water and punched small holes in the lid. He set it on a small table out-

side the front door to the Gates and put a sign on it: "World Famous Invisible Golden Trout."

Problem was no one could see the fish. When he was asked about it, he said he caught it in Owens Lake, which is dry. He also added he caught it on a dry fly, naturally.

He had a kind of smirk about his mouth when he answered these questions, but it didn't stop every kid and half the adults in



Slim Randles

town from looking in that glass jar to see if they could spot the fish.

It was a tourist lady who did it, though. She confronted Delbert directly.

"Sir," she proclaimed, "there's no fish in that jar out there. That's a lie!"

"Oh no!" said Delbert and ran out front to the jar. "Whew!" he said with relief. "For a while I thought he was gone, you know."

"There's no fish in

there!" she said.

"Ma'am," Delbert said. "He's more than eight inches long. You see those little-bitty holes? How he's gonna get out?"

We're pretty sure Jasper's cookies are responsible for starting this.

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