

life´s a cheese

What on earth drives dozens of men and women to storm down a grassy hillside in kamikaze fashion, risking life and limb?

Cheese. A seven-pond Gloucester cheese is the one and only prize that the single daring winner will take away with them. Many will be quick to remark that what the winner actually gains is the title of fool. And they may be right. But for many others that cheese crowns them "God amongst men". It's a tradition that is repeated every year in a steep field in Gloucester called Cooper Hill. It seems that the event is steeped in history. Historians talk of the Phoenicians, and the Romans and the British lineages are also mentioned. But let's not get sidetracked on the issue, it's another thing altogether that attracts us and thousands of others along every year: the symphony of cracking heads, the melodious music of thorn muscles and the pulsing streams of blood. These cheese hunters risk life and limb (one in three participants ends up in hospital) for a cheese. But it's not just a cheese. It's more than that. Why do people climb mountains? Why go deep down into the bowels of the earth or into the murky depths of the seas? Why race away if we're not being pursued by rabid dogs? Sheer folly. Yes. We agree. You wouldn't be wrong in thinking that risking neck, bones, head and life on a grassy knoll is nothing short of ridiculous. We know a lot about that type thing in this neck of the woods. We lift up huge stones, heave along monstrously heavy txingas (two 50-kilo lumps of steel shaped like an elongated bucket, one carried in each hand) till our legs buckle beneath us and chop up huge tree trunks that have already been chopped up. What must foreigners think as they gaze at the spectacle we offer up? Do they not have a Basque version in Japan of those crazy Japanese video programmes we used to watch? Folly it may just be, but we'd be lost without it. Are love, nationality and success not other examples of pure and simple folly?

Yes, my dear thebalders, life is a cheese.



bizitza gazta bat da

Zerk bultzaten ditu dozenaka gizon eta emakume larre aldapatsu batetan behera euren buruak kamikazeen moduan botatzea?

Gazta. 7 liberako pisua duen Gloucester gazta bat da ausart hauen artean irabazle bakarrak jasoko duen saria. Gazta horren irabazleak ergel ezizena irabazten duela pentsa dezake askok. Bai, akaso bai. Baina beste askorentzat "gizakien artean jaiko" izendatzen du gazta horrek. Urtero, Gloucesterren dagoen Cooper Hill-eko larre maldatsuan errepikatzen den ohitura da. Dirudienez ospakizun honek binarri historikoak ditu. Historiagileek feniziarrek aipatzen dituzte, erromatarrek eta leinu britaniarrak ere ageri dira, baina ez gaitzezen bidetik okertu, guri eta urtero bertara inguratzen den milaka ikusleei beste zerbaitek erakartzen gaitu: Hezur kraskatze sinfoniak, muskuluak tolestean sortzen duten musika, odol harien bibratoak. Gazta ehiztari hauek bizitza arriskatzen dute (3 partaideetatik 1ek ospitalean amaitzen du eguna) gazta baten ordainean. Gazta ez delako soilik gazta. Gehiago da. Zergatik igotzen da gizakia mendietara? Zertarako jaitsi leize eta ur hondoetara? Zergatik lasterka egin atzetik zakurrik izan gabe? Ergelkeria. Bai. Ados. Lepoa, burua, hezurak, bizitza larre batean kraskatzea inozokeria dela pentsa genezake. Guk ere asko dakigu hortaz. Gurean harriak jasotzen ditugu, hankak mozkortu arte garraiatzen ditugu txingak eta aizkoraz, jadanik moztuak dauden enborrak moztzen ditugu. Kanpotarrek ze begiekin ikusten gaituzte? Ez al dute ba guk garai batean ikusten genuen "Txino Kudeiroz" betetako " Humor Amarillo "-ren euskal bertsioa izango Japonian?

Ergelkeriak bai, baina galduta geundeko tarteka ergelkeriarik egin gabe. Ez al dira adibidez maitasuna, aberria, edo arrakasta ergelkeria hutsak?

Bai thebaldero maiteok: Bizitza gazta bat da.

