

# *It's a Harley Son*

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Later that day

Some of what follows did happen.....

## Thursday morning

Highway 89 winds south along the Yellowstone River from Livingston, Montana to Gardiner, Wyoming and then on into Yellowstone National Park. Midway in between is Zak's Fly Shop. It was a warm and sunny August morning. The sun danced off of the Yellowstone River.

The tires of a late model platinum Lexus made a crunching sound on Zak's gravel parking lot as it rolled up near the entrance. A well-manicured man wearing a pink Polo shirt and neatly pressed khaki trousers got of the car with his twelve year old son. The boy noticed a black motorcycle parked near the entrance to Zak's.

"Hey Dad, that's a cool motorcycle. What kind is it?" said the boy.

"I don't know or care so don't worry about it!" the father said in a gruff voice.

Talking to Zak was a man in his late sixties who was apparently the owner of the motorcycle parked outside. The father walked over and interrupted their conversation and said. "Are you the owner here? I want to hire a guide to take my son and I fly fishing"

"Be with you in a bit" said Zak.

The man grimaced. He was not accustomed to having to wait his turn especially for an old biker.

The biker looked at Zak and said "Why don't you take care of this gentleman. I'm in no hurry. I need to pick out some flies anyway".

The biker walked over to the Fly section of the shop and started selecting flies. The twelve year old boy edged towards the biker.

"Hey mister, that's a cool motorcycle! What kind is it?" said the boy.

"It's a Harley Son" said the biker.

"It's real shiny. Is it brand new?" said the boy.

"Naw, It's a 2003 Electra-Glide" said the biker.

Just then the father walked over and said to his son "Let's go. We can't get a guide here until next week" On the way out the father said sternly to his son "I don't want to see you talking to people like that again".

"Why not? He looked like a nice guy" said the boy.

"Don't argue with me. Look at how he looks. He probably never held a decent job in his life. Old dirt bags like that are just a big waste" said the father.

"Well mom said you had long hair and a beard in college" said the boy smiling.

Not amused the father said "Never mind, just listen to me". Irritated because of not getting a guide right away he drove out of Zak's parking lot much faster than necessary. A thin layer of dust settled on the Harley. The Lexus went south on Highway 89 towards Gardiner.

The biker walked over to Zak with his selection of flies. Zak studied the fly selection and said "Well you certainly made an impression on that jerk. I remember the story you told about when you would make sales calls in a suit and would be ignored when you stopped in a Motorcycle Dealership to shop and then be ignored when you went into a

computer store wearing your Harley stuff. That guy was a classic example of judging someone by their appearance. If he only knew what you did for a living. You know to be honest, we don't get many bikers in here that are fly fisherman.

"Well to be honest with you Zak, I never really liked the term Biker" said the biker.

"Well what do you call yourself then? A motorcycle enthusiast?" said Zak.

"A motorcycle enthusiast? Well I guess you could call me that. Ever see the guy who rides an old Jap bike to work every day in rain, cold even snow. He usually is an older guy and he straps his lunch box or a cooler to the bike. Now that guy is a true Biker. Not like some of the posers I just saw in Sturgis. What do I owe you?" said the biker.

Zak looked at the fly selection and said "Well thanks for the sermon. Let's see now. Two dry's, two nymph's and six streamer's. Man you sure like those streamers. How does \$12.50 sound?"

"Sounds too cheap. You ought to charge more" said the biker smiling.

Zak laughed and said "Well I hope you catch some. By the way, how many years have you been to Sturgis?"

The biker walked towards the door and said "Twenty two years in a row. See ya later".

The biker walked over to his motorcycle and noticed the thin layer of dust on it obviously caused by the Lexus. "Shit" he muttered quietly under his breath.

Most of the cars and motorcycles he owned throughout his life were black. He knew that he would have to wash the motorcycle. Merely wiping it with a dry cloth would damage the finish. Well this wasn't all bad. As he grew older he began to enjoy cleaning his motorcycle more and more. He straddled the seat and thumbed the starter. The V-Twin engine roared to life. He took off rather slow as he had a great respect for gravel. He had seen enough posers drop their bikes and always said "I'd rather look like a slow old man than an idiot dumping it". He turned on the CD player. The sound of Bo Diddley's guitar came out of the speakers. "Bo Diddley" was one of his favorite songs to play on the Harley. Someone once said that Bo Diddley's guitar was the one musical instrument that sounded like a Harley. He brought the motorcycle through the gears up to 55 miles an hour. He had a faint smile on his face as he listened to Bo Diddley and the sound of the Harley's Screaming Eagle mufflers. In his opinion the Screaming Eagle mufflers were just perfect. They had a great mellow sound that was easy on the ears especially after a twelve hour day in the saddle. Seventy years old and he still could crank out a 600 to 700 mile day on his motorcycle.

He thought of the father and son that he had just encountered at Zak's and his mind drifted back twenty two years ago. He recalled walking into a Harley Dealer wearing a vested suit and sporting a Princeton haircut. The place was staffed by what at the time appeared to be hard core bikers. He wandered around the small store for what seemed to be an hour but was only fifteen minutes. Some of the staff glanced at him but he was totally ignored. He left the dealer feeling amused. That evening he put on a pair of jeans and a black leather jacket and drove his Candy Apple Red Low-Rider to a computer store in a shopping mall. The store was staffed by mostly younger people, none over thirty. He needed to buy a couple of printer ribbons and had some questions. He was again totally ignored and noticed that customers who were wearing suits and came after him were getting waited on. He needed the ribbons and finally walked up to a clerk.

"Excuse me. If it isn't too much trouble, could you please wait on me?" said the biker.

A young man in his late twenties looked up at him and said in a gruff manner “Yeah, waddaya want?”

The biker studied the young man for a few seconds and said

“Nothing Sonny”. He left the store feeling amused.

As he approached Gardiner, he reduced his speed and down shifted. Damn he thought, “She still sounds pretty good in third gear”.

## Thursday afternoon

The biker pulled into a Conoco station in Gardiner to fuel up. For some reason unknown to himself, he preferred Conoco stations when he was out west. He stopped the Harley, put it on the side stand and turned the petcock to the off position. His oldest son had worked as a Harley mechanic for six years and always harped on him to turn the petcock off when the engine was not running. He inserted the hose nozzle into his gas tank and started to fuel the motorcycle. He heard a rather loud conversation and noticed the platinum Lexus was parked at the pump in front of him. The Lexus owner was engaged in what appeared to be a very heated discussion on his cell phone.

“Shit” the biker muttered quietly under his breath.

The biker always thought people should keep their cell phone conversations private, especially heated conversations. He could not stand being in a restaurant listening to someone close a business deal or make excuses to a girl friend. He could not help but hear the Lexus owner’s cell phone conversation.

“Well God dam it take the inventory over again. It has to be a hell of lot more than what you came up with. We will lose our ass if those are the final figures” said the man. There was a short pause in the conversation. Then the man said “Don’t argue with me. Take the dam inventory over again right now. Call me on my cell with the new total”. He closed his cell phone and noticed the biker at the pump behind him. He looked away and started to walk towards the station.

The biker could not resist saying the following to the Lexus owner “Year end inventory not coming out where you thought it would? I’ll bet that’s the only inventory you take each year”.

“What the hell would you know about business” said the man as he glared at the biker and walked into the station.

The biker was amused by the man’s response. He set his trip counter to zero, hopped on the motorcycle and drove off.

The Lexus owner came out of the station with his son and drove off also, “Are we going fishing tonight Dad” said the boy.

“Yeah. The guy at the gas station told me of a place in the park where we should catch some Trout” said the Father.

“Can we eat first. I’m hungry” said the boy.

“Yeah OK” said the father in a gruff tone.

“Boy you sure are crabby” said the boy.

The father did not answer. He was wondering how the old biker knew that his company only took inventory once a year.

## Friday

The biker stopped his Harley at a wayside on the road between Canyon Junction and Lake Yellowstone. This section of the road ran along the Yellowstone river and was easily accessible for fishing. It was a pleasant summer evening. He put his waders and fishing vest on. The biker assembled his fly rod and waded into the Yellowstone. He waded over to one of his favorite spots. He tied on a Black Nosed Dace streamer and was ready to start casting when he heard an automobile come to rather abrupt stop. He looked over his shoulder and saw the platinum Lexus stopped next to his Harley.

“Shit” he muttered quietly under his breath and started to false cast. He would cast the Fly to about a 10:00 o’clock position upstream and then work the Fly cross stream giving it an occasional jerk while hand reeling it in. On his third cast he felt a vicious hit and set the hook. Almost instantly a Rainbow jumped out of the water and seemed to dance on top of the surface. After a ten minute fight, the Rainbow was in his net. He admired the 15” Rainbow for a moment and then set the fish gently in the water releasing it. In the next hour he caught and released two more Rainbows. He decided to hang it up for the evening and waded to shore. The sun was beginning to set and he did want to get caught driving in the dark because of animals.

The Lexus owner and his son were fishing from the shore with spinning rods. The biker walked over to his Harley and took off his fishing vest followed by his waders. He took a swig of water and then started to break down his Fly rod. Just then the father and son walked over to the Lexus. They both glanced at the biker. The father seemed to be studying him.

The biker closed the Tour Pak on his Harley and was about to straddle it when the boy said “Say mister. Why did you let all of those fish go?”.

“It’s called Catch and Release. Trout like I just caught are getting to be a scarce commodity. I want to give other people a chance to catch fish like this”. said the biker.

“We didn’t catch any” said the boy.

The father was still studying the biker when he finally said “Say how did you know we only take inventory once a year?”. This was the first civil exchange the biker had with the father.

The biker thought of giving the man a smart ass answer but decided against it. The man was with his son and he did not want to make the man look foolish in front of his son, The father seemed to be able to do that on his own without any help. “Many years ago I was asked to run a manufacturing company that was going bankrupt. Not taking a monthly inventory was one of the things causing their problems” said the biker.

“How in the hell could not taking inventory cause a problem?” said the father.

“They were always taking on new product lines and never knew what their actual costs were. Taking a monthly inventory would have alerted them to look at their costs before it was too late to do anything about it” said the biker.

The father gave the biker a look and sound that was a combination of a frown, forced smile and a very low grunt.

The biker did not say anything more and started the engine on his Harley. He went north towards Canyon village watching for wildlife. “Dam these pipes sound good” he thought.

He began to think of the almost bankrupt company he was asked to take over. He remembered one of the days when his wife asked him at supper how his day went. "Absolutely beautiful. My day went from cash flow to crabs" said the biker.

"What are you talking about" said his wife.

"As you well know our cash flow is virtually non-existent. Our usual morning drill is after we see how much money comes in, we put all the past due payables in a hat and draw out the lucky winner for the day" said the biker.

"Well not quite that bad but pretty close. It's not a very pleasant situation. The banks won't give us any more money and we have to do a real balancing act with the cash available. Right after the morning cash flow drill two senior employees demanded to see me immediately. They walked into my office and said "Sharon has crabs. What are you going to do about it?". I asked them how they knew that. They said "She keeps scratching herself down there". I told them I had no idea what I'd do. After they left my office Sharon walked in crying. "Those women say I have crabs". I looked at Sharon and said "Do you have any problems?" She started crying more. After I calmed her down she said "I changed my laundry soap and my panties make me itch". I had trouble keeping a straight face and assured Sharon not to worry about what they think.

"Come on now. Did that really happen?". said my wife.

"Who in the hell would make something like that up Do we have any more Pabst in the refrigerator?" I said.

"Why don't you skip the beer and go for a ride on your Harley? You are in an awful mood" said his wife.

The biker agreed with his wife. After supper he changed into his riding gear and hopped on his Candy Crimson Softail Custom. He lived in a small village of seventy five hundred and drove slowly out of town. This motorcycle had rather loud mufflers and he was not in the mood for a citation from the local police. Once out of town he shifted through the gears up to 55 miles per hour. "Damn those pipes sound good" he thought to himself. He had about an hour of daylight left. The sun was low in the west and glistened off the Candy Crimson paint and the abundance of shiny chrome on the motorcycle. He slowed down and turned onto a winding road. He was not one to take chances or drive beyond his capabilities but loved to take the winding curves at the speed limit. After a few miles he stopped the motorcycle by a bridge over a small creek. He got off the motorcycle and walked over to the bridge. He lit a cigarette and studied the water. "Should have brought my fly Rod" he thought. He smoked two more cigarettes and then headed home. It was just about dark when he pulled into his garage. His wife greeted him and said "Well now you certainly look like you are in a better mood"

The sun was gone from the sky and darkness was approaching when the biker pulled into Canyon Village. He parked his Harley and went into his cabin. He would always tell people that these cabins looked like something from Stalag 17 but they were clean and neat. He opened a Heineken and started to read a book about George Armstrong Custer. He was sound asleep in less than fifteen minutes.

## Saturday

It was a cloudy morning with the threat of thunder storms looming in the sky. The biker drove his Harley to a gun club just outside of Yellowstone. He was a Cowboy Action Shooter and wanted to keep in practice for a match coming up in a few weeks back home. He paid his range fee and walked over to a shooting station. He laid a .45 Colt Single Action Army revolver and two boxes of cartridges on the table. The biker proceeded to load the pistol. He pulled the hammer to half cock and opened the loading gate on the revolver. He inserted five rounds into the cylinder and said to himself "Load one, skip one and load four". The biker checked to be sure the hammer was on an empty chamber and proceeded to fire the revolver at steel plates placed at a distance of ten yards. He heard the ring of the each 200 grain lead bullet as he hit all five targets. He never considered himself a good pistol shot and was pleased to hear the ringing sound. While reloading he heard another familiar sound.

"Hi mister" said a young voice. He glanced over his shoulder and there was the Lexus owner with his son at a nearby shooting station.

"Shit" he muttered quietly under his breath. The biker smiled at the boy and said "Hello young man".

The father looked at the biker and said nothing.

While reloading the biker noticed the father and son were shooting what appeared to be a Glock semi-automatic pistol. The father was doing all of the shooting while the boy watched. The biker continued to fire his revolver until he used all of his ammunition up.

As he was starting to put his revolver into the case, the boy walked over and said "I bet that's a Cowboy six shooter".

"Yes it is" said the biker.

"Is it a Colt .45?" said the boy.

"It is a .45 caliber but not a real Colt. It's a reproduction of an 1873 Single Action Army Colt" said the biker.

"Could I hold it Mister?" said the boy.

The biker looked at the father and said "You would have to ask your dad".

The father nodded and said "I suppose that would be OK but don't let him fire it".

The biker opened the loading gate, spun the cylinder and then handed the gun to the boy butt first. Always keep it pointed down range" said the biker.

The boy's eyes lit up and he said "Wow! This is pretty heavy. If this is a six shooter, why do you only put five bullets in it?"

The biker said "You are pretty observant for a young man. With a revolver like this one, the only safe way to carry it is with the hammer on an empty chamber. If you dropped the gun with the hammer on a live round, it could go off when it hit the ground and someone could get hurt".

The boy looked at the biker and said quietly "You know my dad is rally a nice guy. He owns a plastic company and something is going real bad for him now. He never was like this before. We did a lot of things together and always had fun. He called my mom

last night and told her last night that things look hopeless and he doesn't care what happens now. I love my dad and I'm really worried about him. I've never seen him act like this before".

The biker looked at the boy who was almost in tears and said "I used to own a plastics company many years ago. Sometimes owning a business can be very tough. Just be patient with your dad and I'm sure things will get better for him".

A light rain started to fall. The biker walked over to his Harley and pulled a light weight rain suit out of his saddle bags. Usually when he put the rain suit on it would stop raining and the sun came out. Not this time. As he was putting the suit on, the rain fell harder. He normally did not like riding in the rain but today it seemed to feel refreshing. As he drove back to his motel he recalled the boy's conversation. He knew that things would probably not get better for the boy's father.

## Sunday morning

It was Sunday morning and the biker drove the Harley from his cabin in Canyon village to the Mammoth Chapel. He decided to take the route through Tower Falls. It was a rather cool morning and the thermometer on his fairing read fifty degrees. He wore a Black leather jacket and chaps. The cool early morning air created pockets of mist in the open fields. He was very watchful of wildlife. Colliding with a deer, elk or moose would not be a pleasant experience. The biker knew too many people who did not walk away from a collision with an animal. He arrived and parked his Harley off to the side. The biker took off his jacket and draped it over his bike. He was fifteen minutes early and was surprised how crowded the parking lot was.

The biker went into the chapel and walked all of the way to the front. He sat in the very first pew. He glanced around and noticed that the first one third of the church was virtually empty. "So what else is new" he thought. The sermon was about being kind to your neighbor and people less fortunate than one's self. It was brief and to the point. He usually had difficulty concentrating on sermons but this one held his interest. As he walked out of church he noticed the Lexus owner's son standing by his Harley.

"Shit" he muttered quietly under his breath.

"Hi mister" said the boy.

"Hello young man. Where is your Father?" said the biker.

"He is over there talking with someone from his company" said the boy.

The biker noticed the father engaged in what appeared to be another heated conversation and said "Is he still having problems with his business?"

"He is and it looks like it's getting worse. He really is crabby" said the boy.

"Well I have a pretty good idea what his problem is" said the biker.

"Please don't say anything to him. He doesn't seem to like you. We saw you in church. He said nobody wanted to sit around an old dirt bag like you. That's why the front of the church was empty" said the boy.

"Well so much for that sermon sinking in" thought the biker.

"Don't worry son. I'll stay out of his way. You have a nice Sunday now" said the biker as he thumbed the starter on his Harley.

The biker really wanted to tell the boy his father was full of shit in so many words. He also wanted to tell the father about an incident that happened to him thirty eight years ago. He decided that this story would fall on deaf ears.

As he started the drive back to his cabin through Norris Junction he started to recall the event that happened to him thirty eight years ago. He was ushering the early mass at his church. The biker was thirty two years old at the time. He always noticed that his church seemed to fill up from the back to the front, not the front to the back. Sometimes the first four or five rows were actually empty. Most people going to a sporting event or theater usually will try to get a front row seat but apparently it doesn't work that way in a church. He was in the back of church in very foul mood, feeling somewhat sorry for himself. Why... there were some very important reasons. He had a hangover from too much to drink the night before at a party and at the party he spilled coffee on a \$600.00 suit. His riding lawn mower wouldn't start and he had to cut the grass with a push

mower. Of course he also had to be up rather early on a Sunday. Just then a young man in his early twenties came in. He had a patch over one eye and was walking with a cane. It was a great effort for him to walk and he moved very slowly. The biker watched him walk all the way to the front of church and sit in the front pew. It probably took him five minutes to walk the length of the church aisle. As the biker was watching him, his father walked up to and said "See what Vietnam did to my boy?". The biker knew the father from church. The father told the biker that a sniper's bullet entered his son's eye and exited out the back of his head leaving him with very serious physical disabilities. The biker was shaken by all of this and said to himself "You stupid son of a bitch. You really have it rough". To this day, whenever the biker went to church on Sundays he would always sit in the first or second pew. To this day he still would be one of the few persons in the front third of the church.

As the biker approached Canyon Village he thought of the Lexus owner and his son. Being called an old dirt bag amused him.

## Sunday afternoon

It started to rain heavily and the biker cancelled his plans to fish the Madison River. It was too early for supper so he stood on the porch of his cabin and lit up a cigar. For some reason he was in a melancholy mood. He recalled his conversation with the boy outside the church as he puffed on the Ashton..

“Well I suppose I do look like an old dirt bag. They should have seen me forty years ago” he thought.

He recalled Frank, his old partner and mentor. Had it not been for meeting Frank some forty four years ago, the biker wondered what path his life would have taken. Frank was a handsome man with snow white hair. Frank was his mother’s age and had the demeanor of a Marine drill sergeant. He cursed like a trooper and had the heartiest laugh the biker ever heard.

He remembered with amusement an incident while working for this man. Frank asked the purchasing agent if he had ordered the material yet for a large job that was coming up soon for a brand new customer.

The purchasing agent said “I didn’t yet but I’ll get it ordered tomorrow Frank”.

To the biker’s and purchasing agent’s surprise Frank replied “ Naw.. I wouldn’t order it yet. Lets fuck em’ real good. Let’s show em’ right off the bat what kind of service they can expect from us”.

The biker couldn’t help smiling.

Frank looked at the biker and said “What the hell are you laughing at?”.

When he met Frank, the biker was a poster child for the Ivy League look. When he grew a mustache and sideburns, Frank growled at him and said he looked like a God dammed hippy. He wondered what Frank would say if he saw him now.

Frank took an immediate liking to the biker and took him under his wing. At times Frank treated the biker like his son. At other times Frank was very hard on the biker. They eventually went into business together. Frank owned 51% of the company and the biker ended up with a 24% share. As the years passed the biker never forgot the significance of owning at least 51% of a company’s stock.

After several years the company was sold to a small holding company out east. The Chairman of the holding company was a person who sounded like he wrote the book on business management. As time passed the biker would have serious doubts about the Chairman’s abilities and credentials.

The Chairman asked the biker to take control of a company in the group that was going bankrupt. Reluctantly the biker agreed. In less than a year, the biker restored the company to profitability and posted record profits. The biker would admit to his friends that he himself was surprised by the results. The Chairman appeared to be very pleased with the results. The biker recalled the Chairman putting his arm around him and saying “I really like your year-end numbers. You are going to get a bonus beyond your wildest dreams”. At that time the biker still believed the Chairman’s word. That evening he told his wife that the Chairman told him he was going to get a “bonus beyond his wildest dreams”.

In his naiveté the biker said to his wife “We are in great shape financially. Why don’t we take this bonus and spend it on ourselves? Tell you what.. I always wanted a Corvette. I’ll pick out a nice used Vette for around ten grand and you buy yourself a mink coat or some jewelry”. His wife resultantly agreed.

A month later the biker came home from work with a strange look on his face. His wife asked him was wrong.

The biker replied “Well today I received a bonus beyond my wildest dreams.... Nothing!”.

You have got to be kidding?” said his wife. It was shortly after when the biker resigned and at the urging of his wife started his own manufacturing company without any outside investors or partners.

## Monday

The biker straddled his Harley, thumbed the starter and headed for Zak's Fly shop. It was early morning and dew glistened off the trees like small diamonds in a Jeweler's display case. Out of the motorcycle's speaker came the sounds of Cannonball Adderley's "The Work Song". The biker had always said that if someone ever examined his music collection, they would have him committed to some sort of asylum. His taste in music ranged from Jazz to Country & Western to Fifties Rock & Roll, anything but Rap and Heavy Metal. When the "Work Song" finished he turned to CD player off to listen the sound of his Harley echoing among the tall pines along the roadside.

The biker felt grateful for the opportunity to enjoy the scenery and his Harley. He recalled a recent incident that nearly caused him to give up motorcycling. While driving home from a consulting assignment he was involved in an auto accident right in front of his own home. As he was turning into his driveway a teenager blew a yield sign and hit his car. He was not hurt from the impact but had to sit in the car for several minutes to regain his composure. His neighbors on each side heard the impact inside their houses and came out to see what happened. He was going to take his Harley to the client that day but was in a hurry and took the car instead. He would later describe the suddenness of the accident to his friends telling them it was like someone sneaking up behind you and whacking you over the head with a shovel. He knew he would not have walked away from this one if he would have been on the Harley. Coupled with this accident and the almost everyday incidents of drivers misusing their cell phones, the biker became nervous about getting on his Harley.

He finally one day said to his wife "I'm taking it to the Harley dealer today. They will put it on consignment for me".

They left together with his wife following him in the car. It was a forty five minute drive to the Harley dealer. Within five minutes of the drive, the biker started to have second thoughts. He pulled in the dealer and parked his Harley. He walked over to his wife and She rolled down the window.

He surprised her when with tears in his eyes and half sobbing he said to her "I can't do this. I just can't do it. I'll see you at home".

He often wondered to himself what brought this chain of events about and why he ended up still riding the Harley. While he always considered himself a safe and careful motorcyclist, he resolved to be even more vigilant on the Harley. He would joke with his friends that old age must have made him panic.

He was relaxed and in good spirits when he noticed the Platinum Lexus parked on the opposite side of the road. Normally he would have driven right past the Lexus and kept on going but something did not look right. The Lexus was parked on a rather odd angle and looked as if it had been deliberately driven into some smaller pine trees. He slowed down the motorcycle and made a U-turn. The biker carefully parked his Harley on the shoulder near the Lexus. He walked over to Lexus. It was unoccupied but the driver's door was left open. "Hmm, something is very strange here" he thought to himself. He noticed a trail through the wet brush and followed it for around fifty yards.

"Oh no" he thought as he came upon the Lexus owner in a small clearing. The Lexus owner was kneeling on the edge of a small brook. The rushing water in the brook made

a rustling sound but not loud enough to block out the Lexus owner's sobbing. In his right hand was a Glock semi automatic pistol.

"What the hell are you doing?" screamed the biker.

The Lexus owner was startled. He looked up at the biker and said "Get out of here. Leave me alone".

"Where is your boy?" the biker demanded.

The Lexus owner stood up. He faced the biker and said "None of your damn business. Now get out of here".

The biker started to slowly edge closer the Lexus owner and shouted again "Where is your boy?"

The Lexus owner raised the Glock and pointed it at the biker. He said "My son's at our motel. Now you get the hell out of here".

The biker kept edging slowly toward the Lexus owner. He could feel his heart pounding and was sure the boy's father could hear it also.

"I don't know what you are planning to do but if it's what I think it is, that's not the way. What about your son. Are you going to leave him with the memory of this for the rest of his life" said the biker. He was now within arm's length of the boy's father looking at him straight in the eye.

"He will be well taken care of" said the boy's father.

"Bullshit" screamed the biker as he grabbed the man's right wrist with both of his hands. The biker was trying to force the man's hand over his head and point the Glock towards the sky. He was almost successful in maneuvering the Glock towards the sky when they both slipped on the wet grass. The biker landed on his back and the boy's father fell across him. There was a sharp noise. The Glock had discharged one round. Everything became silent for what seemed an eternity. Still holding the Glock, the boy's father stood up and looked down at the biker. A nine millimeter round had entered the biker above his hip and lodged in his thigh. The biker tried to stand up but collapsed. The biker was bleeding profusely and now lay on the ground writhing in pain.

For what seemed like another eternity the boy's father stared at the wounded biker. Then as if he was suddenly transformed into a small child, the Lexus owner started sobbing hysterically. He threw the Glock into the brush and knelt down beside the biker and said "My god what have I done?"

The boy's father gently cradled the bikers head in his lap and said "I'm so sorry. I didn't mean for this to happen"

The biker looked up at the Lexus owner, smiled and said "You know I don't even know your name".

The Lexus owner said "It's Kevin".

"Well Kevin, I believe I'll survive this but we have a few things to do right now. Open the Tour-Pac on my motorcycle. Inside is my cell phone and a black case. Please bring them to me" said the biker. Kevin fumbled with opening the motorcycle's Tour-Pac and finally brought the cell phone and black case over to the biker.

"Here you are" said Kevin handing the items to the biker.

The biker called Zak and said “Zak, I had a little shooting accident. I need some help. Can you send Dale over right away. I’m about three miles south of you on 89”

“Are you OK?” said Zak.

“Yeah, I’ll be alright. Just shot myself in the leg” said the biker in a raspy voice. He was starting to feel the effects of the wound.

“You sound like shit” said Zak.

“Just call Dale” said the bike and he closed the cell phone.

The biker looked at Kevin and said “We have one more thing to do”. He opened the black case and pulled out his Single Action Colt revolver and handed it to Kevin.

“Take six bullets out of the pocket on this case and load em’ into this gun” said the biker.

“What are you going to do? Shoot me?” said Kevin.

“Naw, We can’t shoot you. We have a business to turn around” said the biker.

“We? You mean you would help me after what I’ve done?” said Kevin with tears in his eyes.

“Sure I will. Now just hand me the gun” said the biker. Kevin handed the loaded revolver to the biker. The biker pulled the hammer back and cocked the revolver. He fired one shot into small bluff and laid the revolver down next to him.

“What’s this all about? What are you doing?” said Kevin.

The biker looked Kevin in the eye and said “In about fifteen minutes the sheriff will be here. You let me do all of the talking”

“I don’t get it” said Kevin.

“Just leave that Glock or whatever the hell it is in the woods. As far as you are concerned you found me laying here. We can’t have you involved in this. What happened here today is going to be strictly between us. Understand?” said the biker.

“Why are you doing this? Said Kevin.

“I like your son” said the biker growing weaker.

Just then the County Sheriff pulled up with Zak. “What the hell happened here” said Sheriff Dale.

The biker looked up at Dale and said “I was doing a little practicing and dropped my gun. This gentleman was kind enough to stop and help me”.

Dale picked up the revolver and unloaded it. He collected five live rounds and one spent case. He looked at the biker and said “Jeez, You know better then to put six bullets into a gun like this”

Zak looked off into the distance and rolled his eyes.

“I guess I’m getting careless in my old age” said the biker as he passed out.

The biker was placed in an Ambulance and driven to a local Hospital where his wound was attended to.

## Later that afternoon

As the Biker drifted in and out of consciousness, he recalled the day's happenings. He now knew why he changed his mind about selling the Harley and continued to ride. When he reached his seventieth birthday he began to joke with his friends that they were all now playing the game in the fourth quarter. One day he began to think rather seriously about what happens when that fourth quarter ends and the whistle blew. He started to have doubts about the existence of GOD and a hereafter. He became deeply concerned and troubled. The biker had a longtime friend who had studied the Bible for many years along with teaching Bible study. He started meeting with this friend on a weekly basis. Their meetings were informal. After several months, his faith and beliefs became strengthened. He no longer feared what would happen when the whistle at the end of the fourth quarter. He was now at peace with himself. His friend told him that everything happens for a reason and is all part of God's plan. Had he not joked about playing the game in the fourth quarter he probably never would have met with his friend and became at peace with himself. Had he sold his Harley, he definitely would have not met Kevin and saved him from doing a terrible act.

Kevin stopped by with his son to see how the biker was doing. Kevin did most of the talking as the biker was still weak and still drifting in and out of consciousness. The biker did manage enough strength to shake Kevin's hand and offer to help Kevin with his business. An offer that Kevin graciously accepted.

After Kevin and his son left the biker called his wife to tell her what happened.

"Are you sure you want to help that guy? He sounds like a real jerk" said his wife.

"You might be right" said the Biker. His wife had an uncanny instinct for sizing people up.

"Well you are lucky. That could have been a lot worse" said his wife.

After his wife hung up, the Biker thought "Yeah, I am lucky".

The Biker remembered when he would watch the movie "Pride of the Yankee's" with Gary Cooper. The final scene in the movie was Lou Gehrig's farewell speech at Yankee Stadium. Lou Gehrig was retiring from baseball after being diagnosed with ALS. Lou Gehrig most likely knew that he was dying.

In his speech Lou Gehrig said "Fans, for the past two weeks you have been reading about the bad break I got. Yet today, I consider myself the luckiest man on the face of this earth". The Biker would get a tear in his eye whenever he would watch the movie and hear Lou Gehrig say that.

The Biker considered himself the luckiest man on the face of this earth.

## One year later

The Biker parked his new two tone Burgundy Harley Davidson outside of Zak's Fly shop and walked in. He looked at Zak, shook his hand and said "Come on outside and look at a new addition to the family" Zak went outside and looked at the motorcycle.

"What kind is it" said Zak.

"It's a Harley" said the biker with a frown.

"Of course it's a Harley. I meant what model is it" said Zak.

"It's a 2010 Ultra-classic. I thought I'd get one more new one before I take up the rocking chair" said the biker.

"I thought you always drove black Harley's" said Zak.

"Well it's time for a little change" said the biker.

They both admired the motorcycle for a while and then walked back into the Fly shop.

Zak looked at the biker and said "How is Kevin doing?"

"Kevin is doing fine. He will make it now" said the biker as he lit a cigar.

Zak said "Still smoking those Ashton's? You know there were a lot a question's raised after you left last year. It seems that sometime last September the sheriff's department did some analysis on the bullet taken from your leg. They were wondering how a nine millimeter bullet came out of a .45 Colt revolver.

"Oh they must have made a mistake" said the biker grinning.

Zak had a funny look on his face. He looked up at the ceiling and rolled his eyes.

"Yup" said Zak.

The biker picked out a selection of flies and paid for them. He again chided Zak for not charging enough for his flies. He shook Zak's hand and went outside. He was about to start his motorcycle when his cell phone rang. He looked at the caller ID and it was Kevin.

The biker opened the phone and said "Hello Kevin".

Kevin was in a talkative mood and the biker could do nothing but listen. Finally after ten minutes the biker said "Well that is good news. You see how taking that monthly inventory does help. That's a respectable gross margin you are showing now. I'm sure the bankers are happy".

After listening to Kevin talk for another five minutes. The biker said "Yes, I can be at your plant next month when your new presses arrive. I'm going to be in Yellowstone for at least another three weeks. Talk to you soon".

The biker put the flies in his Tour-Pac. He straddled the seat of his new Ultra-Classic and thumbed the starter. Ninty six cubic inches roared to life. He slowly drove out of Zak's gravel parking lot and drove south on highway 89. He decided against turning on the CD player and listened to rhythmic sound of the Harley's Screaming Eagle mufflers.

"Damn they sound good" he thought to himself.

## Later that day

“Son, I want you to call your Little League coach and tell him you will be missing the next two week’s games” said Kevin.

“Why Dad? Are we going somewhere?” said the boy.

“We are going to meet a special friend of ours out in Yellowstone” said Kevin.

“Is that who I think it is” said the boy.

“Sure is” said Kevin.

“I’ll get my suitcase and start packing” said the boy.

Kevin smiled and said “You won’t be able to take a suit case this time”.

The boy looked puzzled and said “Why not?”.

Kevin smiled again and said “I want to show you something”.

They went out into the back yard and walked over to small building that housed Kevin’s riding lawnmower and garden tools. He unlocked the padlock and slid the door open. He motioned for the boy to come in. The boy’s eyes widening as he looked at a 2010 Ultra-Classic Touring motorcycle. The chrome plated parts gleamed in contrast to the shiny Black paint job.

“Wow Dad, that’s a cool motorcycle! What kind is it?” said the boy.

Kevin grinned at his boy and said “It’s a Harley Son”

The End

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