

Otho's Grand Thrill

By Kenn Hartmann

Otho introduced the young lady to the ride confident he'd impress and amuse her. As they waited in line the dazzle of lights and whirl of contraptions heightened their joy, if any higher they could be. He slipped his hand around her waist, pressed his lips to her ear and whispered.

'You'll feel like you've never felt,' said Otho. 'Anticipate it.'

She jabbed a sharp elbow into his ribs and said, 'Can't this line move any faster?'

'We'll be up front,' said Otho. 'Look, they strap you in a cage; the line's moving.'

'It's like forever.'

'It's not forever, imagine us in the cage at the top, spinning crazy, insane.'

'And then you come down,' she said. 'What fun.'

'It'll be a thrill baby, I'm telling you, it swivels,' he said. 'We're next.'

Once strapped into the cage spinning at the apex the girl said, 'I am thrilled; this is sick.' She let out a delightful squeal as the cage spun upside down.

Otho clenched his teeth and braced his palm against the teetering metal cage, hung by the strap around his waist, lurching inverted, suspended dreamlike above a sprawling festival of lights, he let out a terrifying whoop.

The cage returned to earth and the operator said, 'Alright folks, time to disembark.'

'We want to go again,' said the girl. 'That was only half the ride.'

'That's the ride,' the operator said. 'It's over.'

'We've been standing in line watching,' she said. 'Everybody else got to go around twice. We only went once.'

'Everybody goes once, nobody goes twice,' said the operator. 'No exceptions.'

'You're kidding,' said Otho. 'We went once, everybody else twice, don't hand me that crap.'

The operator raised his hand and summoned authorities. Two cops arrived and escorted Otho and the girl out of the cage. The cops I.D.'d the pair and more cops swarmed to the scene. Otho triggered a Homeland Security alert. Swat was called.

'He's a known gangster,' said an officer. 'An active member of a notorious motorcycle club.'

The authorities mingled closer, Otho calculating 30 cops fondling weapons and batting batons into palms, eager for action. He realized his protestations about the peculiar timing of the amusement were futile but continued his quest for justice.

'Everyone else got to go to the top, swivel and come down then go back up and swivel again, whereas we only swiveled once,' he said.

'So you're here seeking some sick-o swivel thrill?' said a cop with a perverse sneer.

'Of course, I paid for it,' said Otho. 'Bought a ticket. That's why I'm here.'

Otho felt crushed, the constriction of civil servants bound around him like a serpent binds its prey, a familiar prelude to a smothering exhaust inside his head. Rather than suffocate he would fight for every breath with his arms flailing like the Angel of Death's bloody scythe scooping the life out of each and every foe.

'You're deemed to be a danger and a menace,' said an officer.

'Do you hang with Quick Horse?' said a second.

'Why aren't you flying colors?' said a third.

'I'm not in that life any more,' said Otho. His extremities burned like a hot fuse before an explosion. 'I could jab a knife in a toaster for sparks and jolts.'

The cops circled tight and exchanged grunts and nods.

Otho noticed the girl was nowhere to be seen.

'As well,' said Otho. He didn't know her name, knew nothing about her only that she was lost in the cacophony of the crowd and convulsions of his heart. He drew a long breath as if it'd be his last and said, 'No more patter.'

Two cops abruptly stepped back from the circle and revealed an open path.

Otho stepped through and departed. He hastened past gimcrack shacks and a falafel wagon to his sickle, fired it fast and it backfired flames. He gunned it hard and it spewed hellish fumes, the shaking frame and throbbing pistons soothed him.

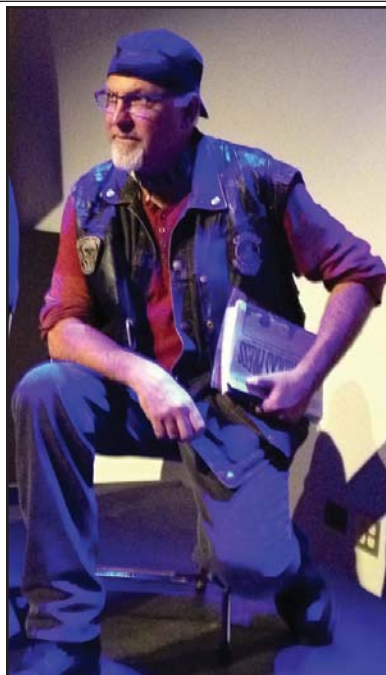
Otho wondered at his good fortune and escape. He patted the tank and talked to his machine.

'Amazing, my friend, one of those rare situations a cop says, 'you got three seconds to blow' and I blew.'

There was no need to hurry now. He idled to catch his bearings, throttled in a wicked roar, swerved in a surly screech of burning rubber, elated by the thrill.

©2015 Kenn Hartmann

bikerbars@yahoo.com



ABATE of Wisconsin Region 7D

28th Annual **Motorcycle Show & Swapmeet**

One day only—Saturday
April 25, 2015

Recreation Park—Monroe County Fairgrounds
Tomah, Wisconsin—10 am to 5 pm
Admission \$7.00 public or \$5.00 ABATE Member
Food & Beverages on site

VENDORS & BIKE SHOW

To book vending space
Contact Doug Smith
608-372-3870

10 classes—\$5 entry
Have bike on site by 10 am
Trophies awarded at 4:30 pm
Ride In—no need to drain tank!

Includes Sport Bikes & Trike! classes

On-location broadcast 10am—1pm the day of the Show!

Today's Best Music Mix!

On-site Beer Sales by Tomah Fire Department

Everyone Please Remember
WE ALL SHARE THE ROAD!
Watch for Motorcycles in Traffic
LOOK TWICE—SAVE A LIFE!

Not Going to Lobby Day? Why Not?!

For those of you who really can't take a day off from work because it would mean the difference between feeding your kids or not, then this article is not written for you. I'll thank you for being a member of ABATE of Wisconsin, for the contributions you are able to make and I'll hopefully see you on the road in couple of months.

For the rest of you, what's your excuse? Our annual Lobby Day is one of the single

most important things we do every year. For most of us, it's the only time we get the opportunity to sit face-to-face with our legislators to discuss the issues that are so near and dear to our hearts. It's our opportunity to tell our elected officials exactly what we expect of them in the world of motorcycle issues. And if you think it doesn't matter, boy are you wrong! The fact that we have had bills pass unanimously in both houses of the State Capitol is testament that they were listening to us!

"I can't stand that %&@!" is one of the most common reason I hear from folks why they don't go to Lobby Day. That's all the more reason to go. It's very empowering to make an elected official who you don't like do something that you want.

"But I don't think that I can talk to that %&@!" Then don't! I'm not asking you to go have a beer with them or put them on your Christmas card list. Just come along and show your support for your motorcycling brothers and sisters. We're all fighting for the same things! I don't care if you're Republican, Democrat, Libertarian or Communist. On Lobby Day, we are all motorcyclists and part of ABATE of Wisconsin, the best motorcycle rights organization in the country! There are plenty of elected officials at the State Capitol who I don't care for. In fact, in my life outside of ABATE, I am politically active and have even actively campaigned against some of our officials. But on Lobby Day, I am there for one reason and one reason only: To make sure the voices of all motorcyclists are heard.

Whether you like a certain elected official or not doesn't matter. Like them or not, they are there. They are the ones that we have to deal with. And if we don't deal with them, people who oppose motorcycles will! We have to be the ones to be in their faces - and in large numbers. After the last election, we now have dozens of new faces in Madison to educate on our issues and our organization. Why would you not at least take a day to show our new legislators what a great organization ABATE of Wisconsin is and how dedicated we are to its causes? We are a force to be reckoned with. But unless we show up and show that we care about our freedoms of the road, how can we expect our elected officials to care?!

If you love motorcycling as much as I think you do, why would you not take the opportunity to make sure that you preserve those freedoms? If you love your knees in the breeze, don't you at least owe it to yourself to do whatever you can to make sure that you can continue doing what you love? In fact, if you make use of those freedoms, I would even say that you have an obligation to fight for their preservation. For what kind of principles do you have if you're only willing to take, use and enjoy those freedoms but not willing to put forth any effort to make sure that they're preserved? As Fredrick Douglas so eloquently stated in 1857, the world "will help those who earnestly help themselves, and will hinder those who hinder themselves." Let's put our differences aside for one day and help ourselves. I'll see you on March 5th at Lobby Day.

Dean "D-Day" Bartosh
Director of Public Relations