

*continued from page 8*

for about a fifteen hour day.

As the last goodbye's were said, the remaining riders headed in all directions. Dago, Bull, Tramp, Dummy and Junior headed toward the club house. A collective, thunderous barrage of rumbling machines sliced through the crisp autumn night. The bars were closed, the city streets were nearly deserted. There was really no need to stop for stop lights; just roll on through. Five riders, muffled in leather, emerged from the distance as the sound of down-shifting V-twins filled the neighborhood like a storm. Dago, leading the pack, slowed and turned into the driveway of the club house. As he sat there waiting for the electric gate to open completely each rider pulled in behind him and took his place waiting.

Just as the gate opened completely Dago turned to Bull pointing toward the garage door. As Bull looked in the direction of the garage, he could see Tortus lying there, head up, looking back at them. "What the...?" Bull said. Tortus was at least thirty feet farther than his chain would allow, and the dog had never slipped his collar before. Not only that, Tortus was just lying there, and that wasn't right. All a member had to do was walk near the back of the club house, and the dog was tripping over himself with excitement. Now, there were five members looking at the dog as he just stared back at them. Something was wrong! Bull raised his right hand as if he was waving at someone, and then killed his engine and dismounted his bike. He stepped toward the entrance and walked through. Placing his hands upon his hips, he scanned the entire perimeter of the back of the club house. Nothing seemed out of place except for Tortus, and yet he continued to lay there, tentatively raising and lowering his head, looking back at Bull.

As Bull made his way toward tortus, he began to notice something unusual. The first thing he noticed was that the dog had not slipped his collar but actually broke the tow chain he was connected to. But more than that, Tortus had something. He had something in between his paws on the ground, it looked like... "Aw no, you gotta be kidding me!" Bull drearily growled. But it was not joke. The little girls rabbit laid their motionless, dirty, and obviously DEAD!

Bull's heart sank as he dropped his forehead into his right hand. Looking back up at Tortus through his fingers, he heard Dummy and Tramp snickering behind him at what they were now all looking at. Bull's head snapped back toward his four brother's standing behind him. Dummy and Tramp quickly regained their composure, and as the five men stood there looking at one another in silence, Bull cracked a sheepish grin, and the five men broke into an uproarious laughter.

"Shh, shh, shh, we're gonna wake up the old woman" Bull said.

Dago reached down to retrieve Tortus' catch, only to be briefly discouraged by a growling pit bull. However, this only bought Tortus the back of Dago's fist, and the dog quickly relented and retreated to his own digs with his tail between his legs. Dago raised the rabbit by the nape of his neck and said, "Well, now what?"

"Let's eat!" Dummy laughingly replied. Bull just looked at him and shook his head.

"Are you crazy? Who do you think they're gonna come lookin' for when they find that rabbit missing?" asked Bull.

"I du know" replied Dummy.

"Tortus, that's who. The dog has been droolin' over that rat for over a year now and the old woman knows it. This could bring us a little head, and we definitely don't need no hassles about the dog."

That's when Dago spoke up: "I got an idea. What time is it?" he asked.

"Five after five" replied Tramp.

"Look, we got what, till seven, when the old lady and kid are out back?" asked Dago.

"Yep! Everyday for the last year" said Tramp.

"Okay we got two hours till..." Dago was interrupted.

"We ain't gonna find no rabbit in two hours" Dummy interjected. "Besides

she'll notice the..."

"Listen to me for a second Bro!" Dago exclaimed. "Look, what if we wash the dirt and slobber off of the damn thing, blow dry its fur, straighten it out so it looks like it's asleep, and put it back into its cage. When they come out to feed it, it'll look like it died in its sleep. It ain't like there's going to be an autopsy."

"Good idea bro" Bull said. "I still think we should eat it, I'm starvin'!" said Dummy. Everyone laughed.

The morning air was cool and still. It seemed to be extraordinarily quieter than usual. Bull slipped quietly out the back gate with Dummy in tow carrying the dead rabbit inside of his jacket. The two of them proceeded to squeeze through the narrow opening between the fence and the old lady's garage. Bull knew the woman and girl would be up and out any minute to see the rabbit. Dummy snorted a laugh through his nose like a tickled child. "Shut up!" Bull snapped in a laughing raspy whisper.

As the two men crept across the lawn, half hunched over, as if they were less visible in that position, Dummy tripped over a garden hose; falling to the ground on top of the rabbit that was so neatly tucked inside of his jacket. Bull stopped, turned and helped his brother back to his feet and began laughing uncontrollably under his breath when he saw that Dummy's weight had forced the rabbits last meal out and onto his shirt. "Come on man, lets go." He could hardly get the words out he was laughing so hard when he saw a light in the woman's house come on. Knowing they had only seconds to perform their task, Bull's laughter quickly subsided.

Bull grabbed the now contorted corpse from Dummy's hands, and practically sprinted toward the cage. Dummy stood there slack jawed and watched the scene unfold as Bull carefully opened the cage, and ben the rabbit back into its former pose, as lights in the house began to flash to life.

The cage door whined closed on rusty hinges as the side door to the woman's house creaked open; Bull and Dummy looked at one another-Bull raised his eye brows, pointed in the direction from which they had come, and silently mouth the word "RUN!" Both men sprinted toward their escape route.

Running on the toes of their boots, the two brother's made it back to the narrow passage. Bull heard the side door to the old lady's house slam against its aluminum frame just as they made it through. Both Bull and Dummy crouched down in the thick clump of willows at the corner of the garage. From that vantage point Bull could see the old woman, but no girl. He could also see Dummy trying to release the hold that the fence now had on his wallet chain. Bull thought it odd that the girl wasn't outside, but felt it was a break nonetheless. It was then that the fence released its grip on Dummy's wallet bringing the entire chain link fence to life.

"Who's there?!" shouted the old lady. Bull listed with a sinking heart, having the strong feeling that a bad situation was about to get worse. "Who's out there?!" He furrowed his brow but said nothing. The dead rabbit seemed like nothing compared to getting caught in the old woman's bushes. That was really a breach of trust, he thought. "I'm going to call the police!" yelled the woman. Now anger flicked across his face as he pondered this explanation, "Son of a..." was all that he whispered when Tortus jumped up on the fence and began his morning ritual of barking, except this time he backed up and hunkered down, he looked like he was taking a crap, except for his fur. It was all bushed out all over his body, every hair standing on end.

He took three or four stalk steps toward the woman, never coming out of that hunched over, cramped up, taking a crap stoop. He made two or three more of these awkward movements, then dropped flat on the ground panting and whining. "What the hell?" said the woman. "Damn crazy dog!" turning her back on him and returning to the house. When the woman was out of sight, Tortus raised his head looked around, and quickly jumped to his feet. He then looked directly at the willows where Bull and Dummy lay in wait.

"Now!" Bull whispered, and both he and Dummy rose to their feet, ran through the open gate, and up the driveway and into the garage. "Did you see Tortus?" Bull asked, it was more of statement than a question. "I think he just created a diversion!" The five men broke into laughter.

When the laughter subsided and the adrenaline rush from the event subsided, Bull couldn't help but feel a little sorry for the little girl and what she was about to discover. It was precisely then that he heard the shrieking of the girls voice as she cried out in anguish! Bull let out a sigh, "Here we go" he thought to himself, but that's when he heard the old woman chime in: "OH MY GOT! WHO WOULD DO SUCH A THING?!" 'Who would do such a thing' Bull thought. "WHAT KIND OF SICKO?!" 'Sicko' Bull and tramp looked at one another inquisitively. "I made it look asleep" Bull said. Bull decided to walk out and act concerned and see if the woman needed some help.

Looking over the fence, he saw the little girl crying into the woman's leg with her arms around the woman's waist. "What happened?? What's the matter?" Bull shouted, acting puzzled and concerned.

The gray haired old woman consoled the child with a stroke of her hair, looked up at Bull and said, "Last night, Janey's rabbit died, and some FREAK dug it back up, gave it a bath, and put it back into its cage!!! What kind of a demented individual could do such a thing?" Bull, mouth agape, just stared back at the woman in silence.

THE END

