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2 Guns Drawn At Sundown

By Dan Wiedenfeld

Preacher approached the camp fire cautiously observing the dirt around the makeshift campfire ring, he could see that this campfire was put together quickly along the East side of Silver Creek. It was his guess that the man he was pursuing had been at Smokin' Joe's Roadhouse the night before. This was probably as far as he had made it after a wild night of living it up. Preacher knelt and looked closely at the footprints in the soft dirt surrounding the campfire. The footprints were that of a man's small boot, but pressed down deeply into the ground, indicating a large man with small feet for his size. The coals of the fire had burned down completely, placing his hand over the ashes he could feel that some heat still remained, he was close.

Instinctively his hand fell to the handle of his chrome plated Smith & Wesson 45, looking quickly to his left then right, Preacher scanned the brush again on both sides, making sure the man he was after hadn't doubled back on him... nothing.

He could see where the remains of the morning coffee had been poured out to help put out the fire, some of it missing its mark and falling upon the sides of the rocks that made up the makeshift fire ring. Slowly he walked around the campsite in an ever increasing circle. Here he found a cigarette butt; it was the big man's brand alright. He had smoked the cigarette so far down that it had burned the filter. His quarry must be getting low on supplies. That was good, because the only supply store around here was in Cobden Minnesota at the Iron Horse Saloon. What the Iron Horse lacked in supplies it more than made up for by being a wild Saloon! If you knew the right people, you could always get what you needed at the Iron Horse Saloon.

Coming to the edge of the brush Preacher could see where the big man had thrown the coffee grounds and here where he had loaded up his Bike. Here where the tire tracks heading up the trail and back out onto the highway. Kneeling he examined the Bike's footprints closer... it looked like a 200 mm rear tire pattern. Pulling his 45 from its holster he measured the width of the tire track from the tip of its gun barrel to the back of its hammer... yep, a 200 mm. It was him sure enough and still riding that '94 Softail Pro Street with the stretched frame and the 80 ci Evo motor built special just for him down over the border at Warren's Cycle shop by Round Lake. Preacher had heard about those Boys at Warren's and how they could build up a man's Bike, making it hard for the Law to catch... so the big man's Bike was fast. Powerful and rugged, just like the man riding it. Just like the man he was going to bring in; 'Dead or Alive'.

Returning to his Bike, Preacher threw a leg over his Ride and settled back into the saddle. Pulling some papers and his tobacco bag out of his breast pocket, he started to roll himself a smoke. Looking down the highway he thought to himself as he poured the tobacco into a paper... "So it's going to end in Cobden"

Part of him was relieved that the chase was finally coming to an end. He had been tracking this man for over 400 miles, but part of him didn't want it to end. The reckless fool inside of him that always wanted to be the dare devil, to travel, to drive fast, to chase the quarry...

"So it ends in Cobden" he thought to himself again. He dragged a farmer's match across the front brake reservoir cover causing it to hiss and flare to life and with one smooth motion brought the flame up to the tip of his cigarette lighting it and breathing in deep. Looking down the highway he exhaled gazing lazily through the cigarette smoke... he still had time because now he was close, he could feel it in his bones.

It was sundown when Preacher finally pulled into Cobden, rolling slowly down Main Street, watching the side streets for his fugitive. Turning onto Center Street there it was... that bright orange chopper that he'd been pursuing for so long, parked right in front of the Iron Horse Saloon. Was the man he pursued really that arrogant or had he become weary of the chase as well? Parking right out in front, his bright orange chopper like a neon light flashing; "Here I am, come and get me." Well, Preacher wasn't going to disappoint him.

Preacher pulled his Bike in right next to the big man's Bike parking his 2006 Big Dog Chopper with its laser black finish and its solid black flames with the red pinstripe graphics next to his. Preacher's Bike was no power slouch with its 117 ci motor fully polished to match the look of his hand guns. With a Baker RSD 6 speed transmission he could run 110 mph on the interstate all night long without even working up a sweat. You could tell a lot about a man from the kind of Bike that he rode, and this one said professional, fast and dangerous, and dark as death itself, with those flames rising up out of the dark black paint job. The Boys at Thunder Valley in Oshkosh had power tuned the motor especial-

ly for him. They knew who he was after and they had given him every advantage that they could.

Pulling the 45 out of its holster he double checked the revolver's cylinders making sure that his gun was fully loaded. Spinning the cylinder before he slide the gun back easy into the holster so the gun sat up high, making it easier for him to draw quickly. The chrome plated revolver sat protected in the custom made Leather Viper holster. This holster was made for him by a close friend who worked at the Leather Viper shop in North St. Paul, made for him a long time ago. How many men did he have to draw on with this gun and holster? He only killed a man when the man left him no choice; he was hoping that this wasn't going to be one of those times. He double checked the State Extradition Papers he carried on the inside of his breast pocket... it all had to be legal.

Stepping inside the Saloon it was easy to spot the big man standing at the bar leaning over it, like he didn't have a care in the world, his big frame taking up the room of 2 smaller men, a whiskey in his hand. Preacher caught his glance in the mirror behind the bar and knew that he'd been spotted. Without even looking up the big man growled; "I'm not going back... I won't go back, I can't make it on the inside... not anymore." Preacher tried to reason with him although he knew in his heart that it was useless, he had heard this kind of desperation in a man's voice before... a man at the end of his rope. To go back inside would kill him, so if it was meant to be, he would rather die now trying to go on running a free man, a fugitive, but free.

People in the Saloon tried to back away from the two men and for a brief moment everything in the bar seemed to slow down... The big man brought the glass of whiskey up to his lips with his left hand, his right hand dropped and pulled his Colt 45 from its holster. As he drank the glass of whiskey down, he fired. The large gun belching flames and smoke towards Preacher almost before it cleared leather...

Preacher fell to his right side, dropping to a knee; his gun was on the way up as he saw the big man's gun flash at him. Taking his time, what seemed like an eternity (he knew he wouldn't get a second chance) he aimed at the big man's head. The hot round from the big man's Colt ripped into Preacher's shoulder just above his left lung. If Preacher hadn't dropped to his right knee on purpose, it would have been his end; the round would have gone straight through his heart.

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