

BOOK THREE
SHANE AND THE BUZZARD BUTTE POACHERS
CHAPTER ONE
HIDING FROM VINI THE FIN

Loretta Woods, or 'Linda Olson' as she wanted to be known as now, was hiding from bad men who wanted her to pay back the \$10,000.00 she had racked up proving she was not the owner of a poker face neither did she have a good poker mind. She was just addicted and it was ruining her life and the lives of her children.

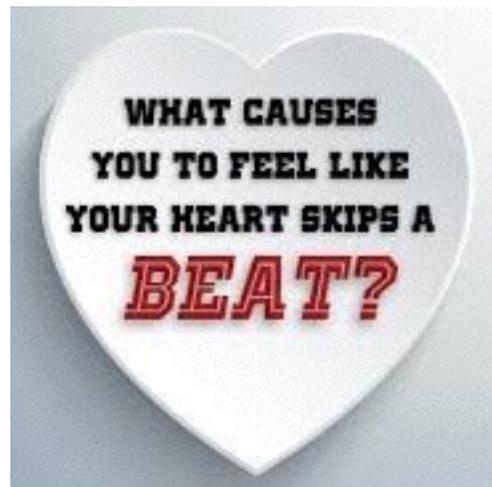
She lamented having to abandon her three children, but rationalized it, "They will be better off at grandpa's farm in Oregon. He will take good care of them like he did two times before."

Working at The Crab Shack on Fisherman's Wharf was the best thing she could do to lay low until the dust settled. Who would ever think of looking for her here, amongst the lobsters and clams of the Bay Area. At least this is what she had banked on.

She was living in the efficiency above the restaurant because Ted Ballentine had noticed she needed a helping hand and he needed another waitress. It seemed logical enough to assume that no one looking for her would ever come around here.
WRONG!

She had just started the late morning shift, arranging her apron and checking her order book when she looked towards the door. To her horror, Vini the Fin was walking in with some of his hoodlums in tow. What was she going to do now? **Her heart skipped a few beats** as she tried to plan some immediate strategy.

Rocky, the man who cleared the tables, noticed the fear in her

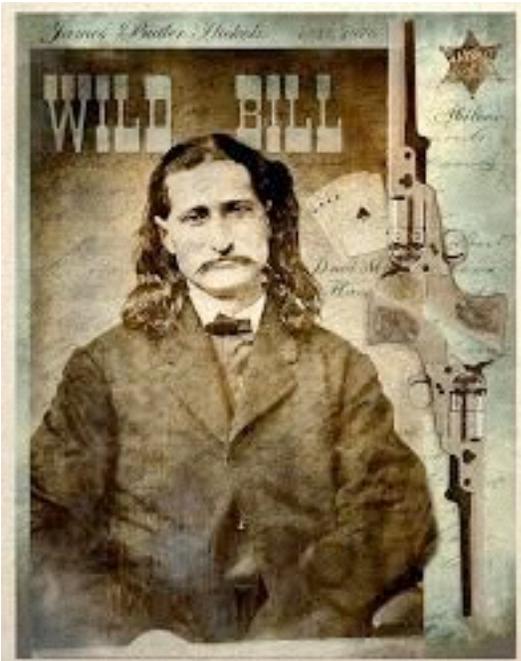


face and quickly came to her side, “Linda, what in the world did you see, a ghost?”

She started to stutter, “I,.. I...I can’t talk right now. Have to go up to my room. You’ll have to cover for me, can you do that?”

Rocky was a professional wrestler and no man to fool with. He had a huge physic, boarding on the Hulk type. He would not turn green but he could make anyone else turn green just by looking askance at them.

He was not sure what had made **Linda scurry off like a scared rabbit**, but it must have been something or someone in the restaurant right now. He slowly turned his head, scanning the whole place for anything unusual. When he could not find it, he shrugged his shoulders, grabbed Linda’s order book and headed for the sharp looking dudes that had just took a round table in the far corner.



I'M OUT OF HERE, DOC!



Vini the Fin was making small talk with his cohorts, “I always sit with me back to the wall, away from the entrance. Just like **Wild Bill Hickock**. That way I will never be shot in the back.”

His thugs were impressed. Always trying to polish the apple of the big boss, Shorty added his two bits, “Right, Boss, and it is good thing you do, too, because here

comes our waiter looking like Boom Boom Maulhick, the professional wrestler. Dis dude is a walking refrigerator.”

Rocky took their order: lobster, oysters, scalps, clams and a triple order of sourdough bread. They were hungry and the boss was picking up the bill, including the tip. He noticed a few of them were working hard to hide the **hand guns, in shoulder holsters, tucking their arms closer to their bodies.**



He found this strange because the Wharf was not known for a hangout of characters of this sort. “You guys are new around here aren’t you? At least I have never seen any of you in here before. He thought he would just make talk friendly conversation before he turned to take their order to the kitchen.

Vini never liked giving out more information than necessary, “So, Hulk, what are you doing writing a book or are you a private detective? Just take our order and skip the chatter. And by the way, don’t get any food stains on your new, little, mommies white apron.” This insult was followed up by snickers from his side kicks. They really did not know how deep a ditch they were digging to fall into. Room temperature IQs were prevailing.

The big waiter already did not like these questionable characters and their snide remarks only confirmed his first impressions of the whole bunch of them. His friends could call him HULK but these idiots were not included in that exclusive club. Ted Ballentine, the owner had been close enough to witness the whole ordeal.

He was amazed at the strangers lack of common curtesy and their undeniable passage into the realm of those who have a death wish. He turned to Roberta, his Mexican waitress, “Those guys are dumber than dirt. They just insulted the Bay Area’s champion

professional wrestler. Maybe we should call back up for them.” He was not being funny, he was being kind.

Although **Short T. Forsur** was impressed by Rocky’s size, he always believed that the bigger they were, the harder they fall. His chief problem was, he could not “fall” them, not in a month of Sundays.

Loretta stayed in her bedroom until she confirmed that Vini the Fin was gone. Not knowing how to explain her actions, she reverted to lying, which was always easier for her than trying to work around the truth. She sheepishly meandered up to Rocky, “Thanks Friend, I appreciate it. I had a bad migraine headache that hit me like a Mack truck, right between the eyes and all the way to the back of my head. I owe you one.”

He looked at her square in the eyes taking her two shoulders in his huge hands. “You do not owe me anything.” The burley replacement knew she was lying but let it go for the time being. He had noticed she was nervous a lot of the time and occasionally he had even smelled liquor on her breath. He would deal with this later, but he would never let it go. That was not in his personality makeup, and most people who knew him had already figured that out.

Rocky Mountain, as his pro wrestling name read, was no man’s fool. He spent his evenings working out with manly hunks and towers, **men that made normal body builders look like cartoon sticks figures.**



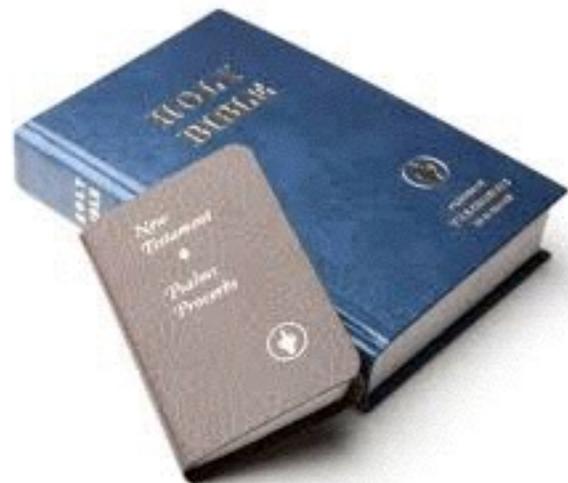
He also had plenty of experience fooling people and recognizing when others were faking it. That was the main menu of the pro wrestling circuit. He wanted to help Linda as much as possible, maybe even get her to an AA meeting. That is where he found his first steps to recovering from his liquor addiction. This would help somewhat, but what Linda really needed was to go to church with him and find the Great Counselor; Who could turn her situation around and give her eternal life.

He would talk to his pastor Tim Rasmusson. He had steered Rocky to Jesus just in time to save his life and his marriage. He knew in his huge heart that this is what Linda desperately needed and he would do all he could to see that she got it.

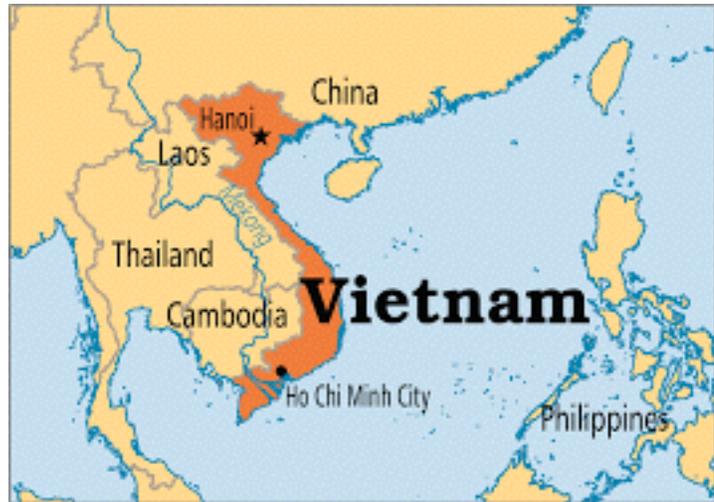
Ending her late night shift, Loretta limped her tired body up to her bedroom and swished down a few bottles of beer before spotting a Gideon Bible on her night stand. She had not noticed it there before. **It was blue and had a grey pocket edition of just the New Testament, Psalms and Proverbs. It looked like someone wanted her to take the little one in her purse.**

Perhaps someone had snuck it in while she was busy downstairs. Was there a religious fanatic around here, too? It seems that they were everywhere, always trying to get her life straightened out.

She picked up the Bible and turned it over in her hands a few times. Could she really find some answers in this ancient book? Did God really write it, or had it written? She always thought it was a nice idea and had some interesting stories, like David and Goliath. But, it was not, in any stretch of the imagination, attractive to her. She put it down and crashed on the bunk.



She woke up a few hours later and fixed herself a snack, sardines and cheddar cheese, one of her all time favorites. As she was listening to the news on the radio she turned it up a notch to make sure she was getting it straight. The announcer repeated the latest notices, “President John Kennedy is promising United States troops to help the Vietnam government ward off the attacks from the communist in the north. The president promises the American people that these soldiers will only be there in an advisory capacity.”



Knowing that Thomas was soon to be called up by the Department of the Navy, she felt a little lacking in her motherly responsibilities. Would he eventually be involved? That was a dry land campaign, surely the Navy would not send any of their sailors on to dry land to fight, would they? She sighed deeply, knowing how much she thought about all three of her kids, but felt that they were in better places than they would be with her; much safer than running and hiding from Vini the Fin.

She decided to call Gloria, her high school friend to find out if she knew anything about what was happening to Thomas. She used the phone in the kitchen, “Hey Gloria, it is me.” She did not want to use her real name, so she hoped Gloria would recognize her voice.

Gloria did, “Loretta, where are you? Are the kids okay? What are you doing?”

“Whoa there, Girl. One question at a time. I am okay for now. The kids are at grandpa’s in Oregon. I want to give you my phone number here so if you find out something I should know, you can

call me. Is that okay with you?” Gloria had been trying to get her long-time friend to see the errors of her ways, but had not been successful yet,

“Listen, I will do what I can but you need to get help, go to the police or somewhere else and quit running. You cannot outrun bad luck and you have had plenty of that. Find a good church and seek God. He is the answer to what you REALLY need.”

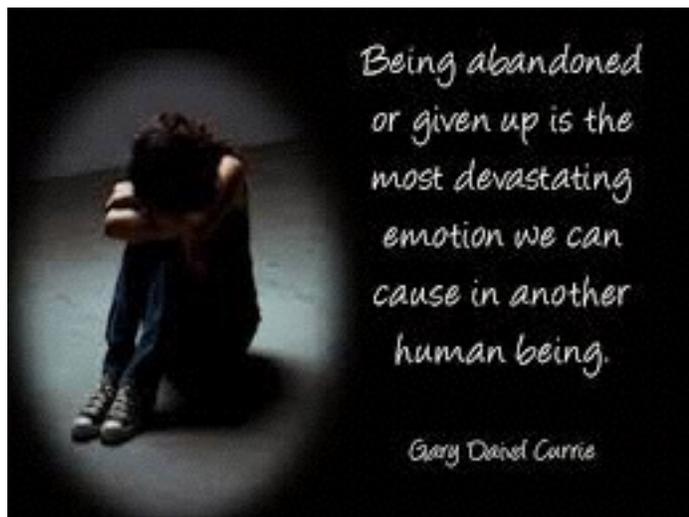
Loretta was not in the mood for another sermon, not yet. “I will see you later, girl. Keep safe and keep me informed. Bye.” Without giving Gloria a chance to comment more, she hung up the phone.

Tomorrow was Friday, her day off. What could she do that would be relaxing and refreshing? As long as Vini the Fin was in the Bay Area, would she be safe going out? Could he actually find her, or like yesterday, accidentally run into her someplace?

Would she ever be able to have a normal life. Was her life ever normal once? Her mind took a rerun to yonder years, the hard days when she had to cook and clean house for her father and two brothers, Wally and Jackie. She was only nine when her mother took off for the wild side of life, leaving her to fend for herself. She had to work hard to buy school clothes and she never had time for sports or dating.

She hated her mother for depriving her of a normal life. **Abandoning the family was a horrible**

thing to do, it ruined Loretta’s childhood. She had needed a mother to help her through the hard parts of adolescence. Even if her mother, Maude, would have been home, she probably would



have not helped anyway, but it sure was worth trying for. At least this is what she thought now.

But, wait a minute, wasn't she doing the same thing to Kosette? Her God-given conscience was now revving up to full capacity, like a jet engine.

WAS SHE DOING THE SAME THING TO KOSY?

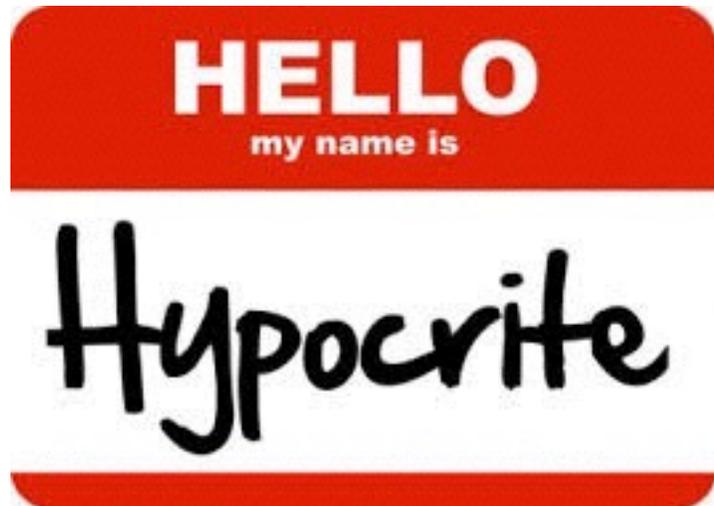
Really, was it the same thing or not? She rationalized that it was not, because if the kids were with her now, they would be in danger, too; just like she was.

So, they were really SAFER at grandpa's farm. Now there, that settled it for the time being. **Some would call her a hypocrite** for think this way, others would just write her off as a worthless mother or an unredeemable addict. Whom ever she actually was, there would be no change for the present.

She was just about to walk out of the restaurant for a day of R&R on the streets of San Francisco when Ted called her into the back. "There is a phone call for you." This was not good. Only one person knew where she was. She hoped with all her might that this call came from that ONE person.

It would not be good for anyone else to know of her whereabouts, it would actually be dangerous. Vini the Fin would do anything to anyone to find out where she was. With a lump in her throat she put the receiver to her ear.

"Hey, Girl, what is this nonsense about being Linda Olson? I had a hard time convincing them that it was actually you I wanted to talk to. You asked me to let you know what Thomas was doing. He is in San Diego at the Naval Training Center, boot camp. They called him the same day you left. Are you sure you don't want to



contact your kids in Lacombe?”

Loretta’s heart dropped a few beats from the race track speed it had been running at. “Well, I have to lay low. Changing my name is part of the scam. Thanks for the info on Thomas. Have you gotten any more calls from the persons looking for me?” She hoped not.

This is the best her unbelieving heart could come up with: hoping, crossing her fingers and saying “Oh my God,” which is the only time she ever used His name. “I have to go now, see you later.”

Gloria wanted to talk more, to find out what was going on and where she was. When she called for Loretta instead of Linda, no one at the restaurant would give her any information about the location. All she could figure out, by the area code, was that she was in the Bay Area.

Vini the Fin had made more phone calls to Gloria’s house. He was not a pleasant person. His cursing and temper frightened her. She was very concerned for her family. Would this thug actually do something to harm her, or her family, because she would not tell him where Loretta was? She would not tell him even if she knew, and she did not know.

Ted watched Linda during the whole phone conversation. He was not happy with her demeanor. She was hiding something. Why would someone call here asking for Loretta and then end up talking to Linda. Was it Linda that worked for him or was it Loretta? He was determined to eventually find out. Today was her day off. She worked hard, so he decided to deal with the mystery later,



Sherlock Holmes could wait. He had enough experience to tell when someone was in desperate straits and this young woman was certainly in the group.

San Francisco is one of the greatest tourist city of the world. WHY? Mainly because of the Golden Gate Bridge, Fisherman's Wharf and the **ancient Cable Cars**. The cars are actually trollies, operated by a cable that runs under the steep hills. They are controlled by trollymen who use large levers to adjust the speed of descent and the force of climbing the streets; which are lined by picturesque houses like the "Painted Ladies."

Loretta was working only a few blocks from the end of the most famous Cable Car run. It brought its eager tourists from all over the world to the restaurants and shops of the Wharf. This is exactly where she headed, "Finally, I am going to ride the Cable Car. This should be a really great experience."

She bought a ticket and jumped up the two steps, holding on to the handrail. Some kind man gave her his seat. Loretta thought she had seen him somewhere else, at least his size and face seemed familiar. She just shook it off as a trick of the mind or a

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lack of a good memory. She could hear the cable begin to move under the street.

The trolleyman pulled forcefully back on the long lever, putting all his weight into the effort. The trolley jerked forward and started the sharp descent to the Wharf. It was going slow enough yet that other tourists could run along side, grab the hand bar and swing aboard. They would pay at the end of the ride.

Loretta was enjoying the beautiful houses decorating both sides of the street. People here really took pride in their homes. Why not, they were on display to the whole world through the tourist industry. She cleared her mind of all distractions and just lost her soul in the beautiful, sunny San Francisco day.

Suddenly she heard a loud crack, like a rifle shot. She noticed the trolleyman fall to the floor with the lever smashed against his large belly. It seemed as though the handle smacked him in the head and he was out. "Great scott," she yelled, "we are in free fall."

The man who gave her his seat moved quickly to grab the steering wheel because the trolley had jumped off the tracks. It was going to take some superhuman strength to drive it. Did this man think he could do it. Could any man do it?

What would he do to keep the trolley from dropping into the bay, at the end of the run. He looked confident enough. He yelled, "Everyone sit down and hold on tight."

He began to steer the trolley to the side of the street. It appeared that his goal was to sideswipe every parked car. He was going to make the auto shops in that area very rich. He smashed a few Buicks and Cadillacs and then went for the Fords and Chevys.

After he had exhausted all the autos on the right side of the street, he maneuvered the trolley to the other side, doing the same damage to the vehicles there. He was making progress, the trolley was slowing down. He shouted for everyone to jump off as soon as he gave them the thumbs up.

They were buggered eyed and reciting their prayers when he

finally gave them the sign. Just as Loretta sprang to her frightened little feet, to make a life-saving jump, he pointed to her and ordered, “Sit down, NOW.”

For some reason, she did not think it was wise to go against his command. She sat down. Now there were just the two of them on the runaway trolley. She did not know why she obeyed him, he just seemed to have a commanding spirit about him.

He was completely in charge and knew exactly what needed to be done; not afraid to give orders. At the end of the run, the trolley busted through a few hippie’s wares spread out on blankets and sent all the handmade earrings and bracelets flying in all directions. The vendors were running for their lives.

The busted up trolley finally came to a screeching stop just ten feet from the bay. A few

sea gulls scurried off and the **sea lions barked at him**. He did it, he was man enough to do the job. He was not staying around for hand shakes, back pats and a medal ceremony.



Just before he stepped down he turned to Loretta and looked her right in her relieved eyes, “You were saved this time Loretta, now you need to look into saving your soul before it is too late. You may not survive the next adventure. Think about it.”

And then he disappeared into the crowd. He was so tall that she could still see him walking three blocks away. What just happened she thought to herself. “Who was that man?”



Grandpa was a lumberjack at the Snow Peak Lumber Company at this time. It was and still is located at the back of the farm. This photo was taken in 1933.

John Franklin Taylor standing with his three children he was left to raise alone for nine years. Walter is at the left of grandpa and Jackie is on the right side of the photo. My mother, Loretta, is on the far left. She was only nine years old when her mother left and never came back.

CHAPTER TWO

BERT THE BEAN PICKER

A 1957 Chevrolet was a classic, the dream car of almost every young man. The style was certainly eye catching. A two-door sedan was the classiest, and a convertible was like having whipped cream on your strawberry shortcake.

Maybe in Minnesota, where Sergeant Kochian lived, where it gets down to 70 below zero with the wind chill, a convertible would not be appropriate. In the Willamette Valley, where Shane lived, it freezes only a few days of the winter. Being caught with the top down during a sudden downpour is the worst thing that could happen.

Now that the strawberry and raspberry season was over Shane and Kosy would work in the pole bean harvest. It would look a little strange - a fifteen year old driving a '57 Chevy to pick pole beans. It could be compared to a man driving his **Rolls Royce**



to pick up his unemployment check. Shane had a very unusual situation.

He was joyfully pondering all of these recent blessings from God when he and Kosy returned to the farm and noticed grandpa clearing a rather large patch of ground behind the house, closer to the river. They were curious and meandered over to find out what was going on.

They both grabbed a hoe and started clearing the weeds away, “We can help, Grandpa. What is this going to be another garden?” He hoped so, the veggies and fruit grown on the farm

were eaten with great delight. When there was too much left over at the last harvest, Granda Julia would either freeze it or can it.

Jack Woods never stopped a minute. He kept on clearing the lot as he answered his grandson's question, "I always believed that your mom will come home some day, come home to stay. That she will get saved, quit drinking and gambling so that you kids can have a mom and a home that you have always deserved. So, I am going to build a house here for you three to live in. A home of your own, right here beside ours.



Shane and Kosy were bug eyed and dumbfounded. They both stopped hoeing and **leaned on their handles**, looking like government workers. Kosy spoke first, "Grandpa, are you serious? Are we really going to have a home here, forever?" Tears welled up in her young eyes and she began to wipe them away with the back of her hand.



Shane was speechless. Finally, when he managed to eek out a statement, it was with a dropped jaw. "What a wonderful plan, Grandpa. We can help you can't we? We want to help. We are so flabbergasted, so absolutely shocked. This will be a big project and will cost a lot of money, money we know you don't have. How are we going to pay for this?"

Before he answered their question, Jack led them into the house and opened

an ancient jewelry box. “This is a **cameo** that my great, great grandmother passed on down the family line. It was always to be given to the oldest daughter. I was planning on giving it to my only daughter at her graduation from high school.”

“But she ran off and with a boy none of us approved of, so this has been sitting here all these 18 years waiting for her to come back. I believe God is going to do something in her life and she will someday walk down that path out there and start to be a good mother to you three. Then I will give her this gift.” This rough and tumble, ex-lumberjack and now diesel mechanic had to fight back the tears that were beginning to be obvious to his two curious grandchildren.

The father that never stopped loving his daughter and since he accepted Christ had never ceased to pray for her salvation, also prayed for her return to his life and the farm. The grandfather that loved his grandchildren and now for the third time, took them in, was longing for the day when he could hug his daughter and she would never again leave his farm. Now they all prayed it would happen. God was mighty.

“Now, how are we going to pay for it? That is up to God. I believe we need this house and He wants us to build it right here. I believe Philippians 4.19 when it says that He will supply all of our needs. So, we are going to pray and watch the money come in. How is that?”

Stroking his chin, Shane answered first, “I can’t wait to explain all of this to Thomas. He will be delighted to know what we are doing to help you with this wonderful project. Imagine that, we are going to have our own home, right here on Crabtree Creek, right next to Grandpa and Grandma. It will be a little slice of heaven on earth. Then your farm won’t be just a refuge for us, it will be our permanent dwelling place.” Both he and Kosy got goosebumps just thinking about it

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No one knows why it happens, but just by observing life, one

cannot come to any other conclusion. Unfortunately, sometimes bad kids come from good parents and likewise, good kids come from bad parents.

It is not genetic, no one is born good or bad. How one turns out depends a lot on his upbringing. This is why it is very, very important for kids to have both a dad and a mom that love them, discipline them and set a good example for them to follow. They need a moral compass and a rudder of integrity to keep them traveling down the right path.

The Farnsworth family was quite well known in Lebanon. They tried hard to give their son, Engelbert, a good home and a “religious” upbringing. They were always insisting that he study hard, work, and stay out of trouble. He was not cooperating, the only area he did a so-so job in was his studies. He had to maintain a “C” average or he could not wrestle.

But the other two areas were not a concern to him. He was old enough to make his own decisions and choose his own friends. Now he was forced to work in the bean harvest because his dad said he had to buy his own gas.



Kosy was returning from the water wagon at Doug Pederson's **Pole Bean Farm**. "You won't believe who I saw. He's going to pick the third row over from us. Old Engelbert 'the bully and brat' Farnsworth III, your bosom buddy!"

"I can't imagine a banker's son out here in this heat picking beans," Shane finished commenting as he heard someone coming.

Kosy had been right.

Engelbert Farnsworth III and his constant comrades were stomping down the row, just out of sight, but not out of sound.

"Hey Bert, you sure you want to pick beans, like a migrant worker? Why it's so hot out here you could melt." someone said sarcastically.

"Oh shut up, clod. My dad insists that I work out here with the common people. He claims it will build character," Bert responded disgustedly. Because of the rows dense foliage between them, he didn't see the Woods duo.

"Did you notice that the large bin where they pour the beans from our sacks is full?" Bert grinned maliciously. "That means they won't empty our sacks and give them back to us as usual. They will have to stack them alongside the full bin and give us another sack. NOW is the time to hide some rocks in with our beans. We can make some wampum the easy way."

"Sure Bert," one of his good buddies agreed. "Do you think there is a chance we could get caught? If not, I'm with you."

"He's got to be kidding," Kosy whispered to Shane. "He's going to steal Mr. Pederson's hard-earned money by putting rocks in with the beans. I'm not going to let him get by with this. Where's Grandma?" Julia Woods was a row boss. It was her job to see if all the beans, ready for harvest, were actually picked. If they were not, the unhappy worker would have to pick the whole row again.

After Grandma was informed, she warned the weighers. When good old Engelbert Farnsworth III showed up with a large sack of beans, it was weighed. "It looks like 125 pounds," the weigher smirked at the picker. "Kind of heavy, huh Kid?"

Bert tried to look nonchalantly innocent. "I guess the gunny sack must be real wet."

The weigher was grinning when he pointed to the back of the large bin, "Just dump the sack over there behind the bin."

Bert looked uncomfortable now. He began chewing nervously on his lower lip. "What's the matter? What's the big

deal? You aren't dumping the sacks of the other pickers. What's is going on, don't you trust me?"

"Oh sure, we trust you, Bert," the weigher smirked. "We trust you about as far as we can throw you. Let's just say we don't have rocks in our heads." When they dumped the beans on the ground, two stones about the size of softballs rolled out.

"Well, looky here," the weigher faked a look of surprise, "some extra weight to give you a little more gas money, huh Bert? You must have one ore in the water if you think we are fooled so easily. Hit the road, Kid. You can't work here any more. You're fired. Now go home and tell your daddy and mommy. I can't wait until you see their reaction. I would love to be a fly on the wall in that room."

As he was packing his lunch into the car, Bert was beside himself. **He was so livid he had smoke coming out of his ears.** "How in the world could they possibly have known about the rocks?"

Kosy and Shane just smiled at each other as they watched the teenage crook drive out of the parking lot. Shane turned to walk back down his row. "He won't be cheating Mr. Pederson any more."

"That's for sure," Kosy joined him. "By the way, I'm sure glad it's Friday. I'm looking forward to a few days off. When I close my eyes at night, all I see is rows of unpicked pole beans. It wouldn't be quite a nightmare if it was a row of picked pole beans."

The first day of school was only three weeks away. Shane was enjoying his summer. The Lord had really been changing his life. He was gathering his Bible up to leave for church. "Kosy,



what a lovely dress you are wearing. I have never seen you dressed so nicely."

"With this new dress Erin helped me pick out, maybe I can be a different person," Kosy thought to herself. "Possibly I can even impress someone at church. Right now there is nowhere else to wear it. If I can change enough, maybe God will look at me differently, maybe He will let me into His heaven."

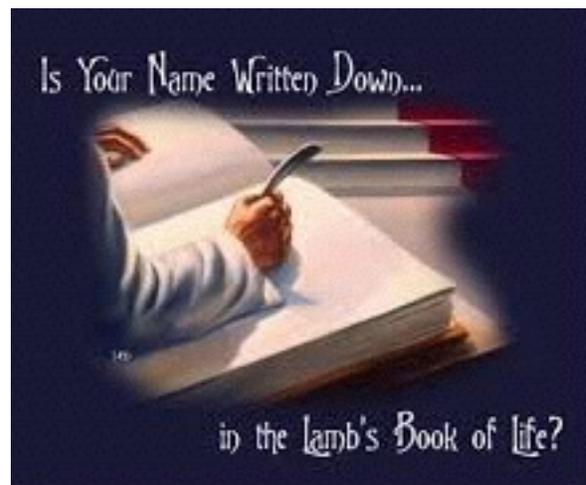
"Thanks, Shane," Kosy responded proudly. "I hope my new clothes will make a difference in my life. I know I need to be a better person."

That morning Kosy's Sunday School teacher, Mrs. Lillian Payne, taught about Joshua and the battle of Jericho. It seemed as though she was talking directly to Kosy. "God does not look on our outward appearances as man does. He knows our hearts. Is your heart right before God? If not, you need to accept Christ as your Savior today."

In the morning service that followed, Pastor Ballentine preached on Revelation 20:11-15. "The final judgment will come someday. If you have never received Jesus Christ as your Savior, you are not saved and will not pass through the Pearly Gates. There will be no place in heaven for you. You are not prepared to die! **Do you want to find your name written in the Lamb's Book of Life.**"

The pastor read a verse that really touched Kosy's heart. "And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." Kosy was finally paying attention, real close attention.

At the invitation she grabbed the pew in front of her and held on until her knuckles turned white. Shane was



observing the whole struggle. He leaned towards Kosy and whispered in her ear, "Quit fighting God, Kosy. If you want to accept Christ, I'll go forward with you, okay?"

With that coaxing, Kosy let go of the pew. Shane grabbed her by the hand and walked to the front of the church with her. When Pastor Ballentine asked why they had come, Shane answered for them, "I am bringing my sister to Christ. She needs to be saved." Mrs. Ballentine talked to her, "Are you really serious about accepting Christ, Kosy?"

"Yes, Mrs. Ballentine," Kosy was moist-eyed when she answered. "I realize I am a sinner and Christ is the Savior. I do not want to pay the price of my sin. I want Jesus to be MY Savior, like Shane did."

Marva Ballentine took Kosy to a room on the side and showed her some verses. The abandoned eleven year old asked to pray. **"Lord of Shane and Erin. I noticed how much my brother's life has changed and I love that. You know how much I have hated our mom for leaving us and making jailbirds out of us. I know I have sinned and this sin is going to keep me out of heaven. I ask that Jesus, Your Son, come into my heart and save me now. I want to spend eternity with You and my friends here. Thank you Lord for saving me, Amen."**

After the service the whole church family rejoiced as their many prayers were finally answered. Marty commented, "Now we need to continue praying for Thomas, and for Mrs. Woods, Kosy's mom."

Erin gave Kosy a big hug. "I'm so happy for you, Kosy. Why don't we celebrate? Let's get our swimming suits and head into town. We can grab a hamburger at the Tastee Freeze and then go swimming, where, Shane?"

"How about the Waterloo Bridge?" Shane suggested. "Have you swum there yet? That is the other famous bridge in Linn County."

A gravel-road short cut via the New Berlin Road would take

Shane to the Waterloo Bridge. But anyone driving a 1957 Chevy convertible would want to avoid bouncing rocks off its frame. They wisely decided against the short cut. Besides, it didn't take them past the **Tastee Freeze Drive-in** in Lebanon.



To get to the swimming hole from the drive-in, Shane had to go out Santiam Highway and through Waterloo. Waterloo is a berg, only a little wider spot in the road than Lacombe. Kosy realized how small it was, "Don't blink your eyes when you pass through or you will miss it entirely." Oregon is peppered with little towns like **Waterloo**. Many of them are located next to water, too. It made Oregon boast of the good life, which only one million people experienced.

Sometimes people get brave enough to jump off the high Waterloo Bridge; after all, it's only fifty feet to the water's edge. Those who do jump, go feet first. No one would be foolish enough to dive head first. The water is plenty deep, the current quick.



Young swimmers like to brag about swimming the one hundred yards across the river. If a swimmer wants to arrive at the short beach on the Waterloo side, he has to start quite a ways upstream. The current is swift enough to carry even good swimmers right past the beach and into the rocky rapids.

Marty was backing up into the water. Just as Shane began to

say, "There's a drop off right behind y...." Marty disappeared under the bubbles.

When he finally came up blowing water like a whale, he chided Shane, "Why didn't you tell me before I went down?"

"Well, for one thing, I tried to, and for the other - you never asked!"

The rope swing fastened to the bottom of the bridge was long, allowing for a wide sweep, ending in some good dives. Some were brave enough or foolish enough to try a swan dive.

Shane was swinging back and forth, getting enough distance for his dive. Kosy had not recovered completely from her near drowning, so she wasn't about to try a rope swing just yet. She sat with her feet in the water, skipping rocks half way across the river.

She was only eleven years old but had so many experiences, some good but mostly bad. The years with mom were mostly bad;



**WATERLOO, OREGON WAS A BERG,
A LITTLE BIGGER THAN LACOMB**

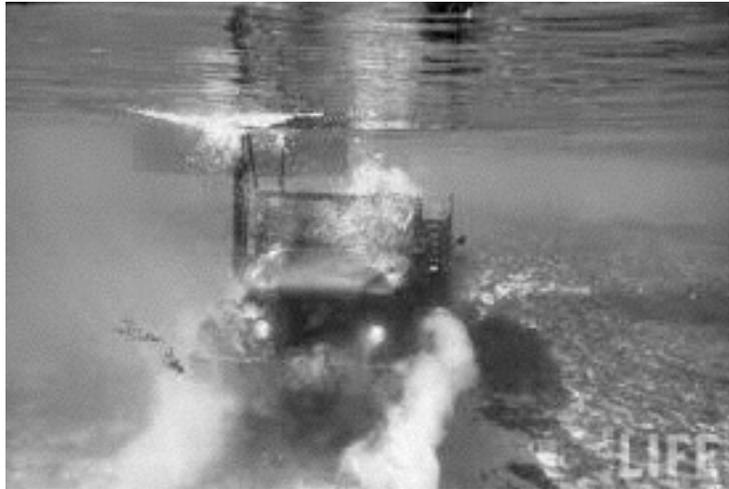
wonderful farm.

Suddenly Kosy reared back her head and wrinkled up her nose. She sneezed three times in rapid fire succession. Standing up she took a quick survey of the area and soon discovered the

bouncing from boarding home to boarding home while Loretta was on her frequent drinking sprees. These memories made her shake her head in sorrow. She was sure those days were all behind her now that she was living with Jack and Julia Woods, on their

reason for her allergies. She yelled at Shane "Hey, Ape Man, I've got bad news for us. My allergies to smoke have attacked again."

At everyone's applause and with a Tarzan yell, Shane did a small swan dive into the clear, cool water. They



They expected him to come up immediately. He delayed, twenty seconds, thirty seconds, forty and still counting..... Just as Marty was about to begin a rescue operation, Shane's head broke water.

"Look, I've got a set of keys," Shane yelled as he gasped for breath. He held up the key chain. **"There's a jeep down there.** It looks brand new. The keys were still in the ignition."

"Oh sure, and I suppose you shut the motor off when you took the keys. Did you also roll up the windows?" Erin wasn't going to fall for any of Shane's tricks. "This isn't April first you know. Was the motor flooded?"

"No, seriously, there is a new Willys Jeep down there. You can just make out the frame if you look hard enough. See, right there," Shane insisted, as he pointed to a dark shadow in the deeper area.

"Okay, so you weren't kidding," Erin apologized. "What's a new jeep doing down there with the keys in the ignition?"

Shane was as dumbfounded as she was. "How could I possibly know that? I suggest we dive down, get the license number, and then talk to Sergeant Kochian."

On the way back home Shane stopped at the police headquarters. The radio was squeaking as usual. They entered Sergeant Kochian's office. It was a hunter's paradise. **On the back wall hung a mounted head of an ten-point buck** (in Oregon they

count only one side of the rack).

Shane was impressed.

"How much did that buck weigh?" Kosy wanted to know how fast the buck was running when it hit the outside wall to force itself to be left hanging there on the inside wall. No one answered her question. She went outside to see the other end of the buck.



"About three hundred pounds, dressed out," Sergeant Kochian responded proudly. "It took three of us to haul it out of the Snow Peak Wilderness."

On the other side was a stuffed mountain lion. Kosy had returned from outside and was running her hand down the back of the puma. "It looks almost real, like it could bite me. Did YOU shoot this mountain lion? There aren't many around here any more."

Sergeant Kochian liked Kosy. "My Little Friend, that particular mountain lion was killing the sheep out by Scio. I was obligated to hunt it down. I shot it with my bow."



"Don't tell me you also shot this **buffalo** in Linn County?" Marty questioned.

"No, that was a gift from an Indian friend in North Dakota. What can I do to help you kids? I know you didn't come by here to admire the wildlife or to have a biology or history lesson.

Shane explained their discovery. "We were swimming at the

Waterloo Bridge, and I found a Willys Jeep right under the rope swing. We were wondering if you might be able to find the owner just by the license plate number?"

"I can do better than that," the sergeant promised. "I chased that stolen jeep all over the countryside out by Waterloo. There was a poached deer in the back. They threw some nails on the road and that blew out my tires; they got away. Those miserable poachers must have driven it off the bank at the Waterloo Bridge."

"Yeah, and when Shane found it, the motor was still running," Kosy giggled.

Sergeant Kochian raised his eyebrows at Kosy. "You, my friend, have been hanging around this circus troop too long."

Marty wanted more information. "Whose jeep is it?"

"It was stolen from Gerlach Motors last week. Let me give them a call right now and see what Mr. Gerlach wants to do about it."

As he was listening to Sergeant Kochian talk to the owner of the business, Shane admired the mounted **pink salmon** on the wall. "He even likes to fish. This is my kind of man!"



The sergeant put down the phone. "They said their insurance already paid for the jeep. As far as they were concerned, the first one to drag it out of the river can have it."

At that Shane bid Sergeant Kochian goodbye and headed for the T.P. Oil Company. "Bowie, can your dad's tow truck pull a jeep from the bottom of the river at the Waterloo Bridge?"

"What you been doing, Shane, driving with your eyes closed again," Bowie couldn't help but rib this white man that he liked so much. "Sure we can. Why, if you hook up enough pulleys you could lift almost anything."

With a set of pulleys the jeep was recovered to the surprise of all the swimmers who were watching, and to the joy of the Lacombe junior detectives.

"All we have to do now is dry it out and change the wiring," Shane calculated. "Possibly the carburetor and gas tank will need to be replaced, or thoroughly broken down and cleaned piece by piece. If there is any water in the block, we will have to pull the head and replace the rings. No big deal though."

On the hillside overlooking the rescue operation, three very angry unhappy, scowling poachers clenched their fists in anger! They vowed on their mother's coffin that they would get even with these do-gooders if it was the last thing they would ever do. It might very well be, too.

CHAPTER THREE

LEARNING TO WITNESS

Poaching is a common problem in Linn County.

white-tailed deer and rainbow trout are the usual targets. If a doe is killed in the spring or early summer, there will usually be a fawn that will die of starvation or fall victim to predators.



Regular hunting season begins at the end of September, usually lasting for six weeks. Anything shot out of season is considered poaching. Violators are heavily fined, some even go to jail. Most poachers kill for their own use, while others make a business out of the illegal slaughter.

Shane disliked poachers with a passion. "There is no way three game wardens for can keep the poaching under strict surveillance. There are 1,000 square miles the Snow Peak Wilderness. Maybe 50 game wardens could make a difference, but just three is a joke but only the poachers are laughing. Most poachers know that and they have full run of the acreage. This is appalling."

Erin was just as disgusted. She turned to Shane with fire in her eyes, "Can't someone usually hear the shooting and do something about it, or at least report it? Something has to be done. What can be done." Erin was of the type of personality that could evaluate a problem, propose a solution and seek a way to solve it, TODAY!

Shane knew a lot about poachers. **"Most poachers use a light**



rifle, like a .22, with short, quiet bullets. It just sounds like a twig cracking. They usually only shoot once, making it almost impossible to get a bearing on them. During the regular season hunters use bigger guns, a 30.06 or 30.30."

"Do you remember the man who fell off the electric pole outside your house? When we took him home, I found some blood streaks on his car license plate. That could come from putting a deer in the trunk. Maybe we should keep our eyes on that weird bunch."

Marty entered the Lynch living room with a big bowl of popcorn. "Do you think we can get that Willys Jeep running? We have already pulled the head and cleaned all the moving parts, including the rods and bearings. We still have all the rewiring to do."

"Sure, we can get it going," Shane encouraged the obviously, inexperienced mechanic. "My grandfather has had lots of years working with four-cylinder engines. Once, he bought a **Japanese jeep that had been used in World War II**. It had a small V-2 engine.



Those Japanese were so economical they used only one piston, and it swapped holes."

"Really," Erin queried, "That is amazing!"

"Yeah, and if you believe that," Marty teased his sister, "I have some lovely seaside property in Arizona I'll sell you."

"All right, Shane, just for

that you get no popcorn, and what you DO get is a pillow in the face," Erin threatened and followed through. She bombarded Shane with every sofa pillow she could reach.

Marty was still thinking about Shane's story. "Well, no wonder they lost the war. They were using motorcycle engines in their jeeps. Come on, Shane, let's leave before you get hurt. I want to practice some wrestling moves. I expect to wrestle in an AAU tournament in Corvallis next weekend."

"What do you mean, 'leave before I get hurt'? Isn't that what you expect to do to me on the mat? Hey, what is this about a wrestling tournament in Corvallis?"

"Would you like to come along? There are going to be some awesome wrestlers there. Maybe God will give us an opportunity to witness to some of them."

Now Erin was trying to get even, pointing out Shane's ignorance. "What do you mean, you don't want to get hurt? Come on, Shane, don't you know the wrestling mat is so cushiony you can drop an egg from a stepladder, and it won't break?"

"Then let's try it," Shane prodded. "It sounds like fun, real interesting."

On his way to the wrestling room, Marty grabbed two eggs from the kitchen. "Sure, we can try it. If it doesn't work, you have to clean it up, right, Erin?"

"Okay, no problem, I've seen this trick work before."

After they set the ladder on the mat, Marty climbed to the top. "Here goes nothing." He dropped the egg. It bounced around a little but did not break. Even upon a minute investigation by "Hawkeye Shane," there was not found even one slight crack.

"Let me try one," Shane volunteered. He climbed the



ladder and **THREW** an egg on the mat, **smashing it all over the place.** "Oh, too bad, Erin, the yoke is on you! Now you have to clean it up like you promised."

After Shane thoroughly washed the egg off the mat, the real action started. Three minutes of intense wrestling is enough to tire anyone. Marty was in shape, Shane wasn't. Marty couldn't let it go by. "You're not in bad shape for the shape your in." One was chuckling while the other was trying to force a weak but tired smile through his deep panting.

"I have been running five miles a day to build up my wind," Marty bragged. "Running is great exercise, but it is hard on my knees and ankles. I would rather wrestle."

Shane laid on his back and put his hands on his chest. "As soon as I can breath, I have a question for you." He kept panting hard until he regained his breath. "We need more pauses for this obvious weakling. Do you think I should enter that AAU tournament?"

"You're not ready for that level of competition, Shane. You can enter, but you would just get wrapped up tighter than scotch tape. It would probably be very discouraging. These wrestlers are world class. I don't expect to win any medals either."

"I'll enjoy the experience and probably even learn something. We'll get to see some of America's greatest wrestlers. **Rick Sanders from Portland State** will be there. He is national champion at 118 pounds."

"From now on I will not be able to eat much but fruit and a few candy bars. I have to weigh in a couple of hours before the meet starts. They allow you five pounds grace. That means I can



weigh in at 155 pounds if I want to wrestle at weight 150."

Shane was baffled. "If you want to lose weight, why would you eat a chocolate candy bar?"



Marty threw Shane a **Snickers bar**. "Look at the weight."

Shane read the wrapper. "It looks like 1.8 ounces, so what?"

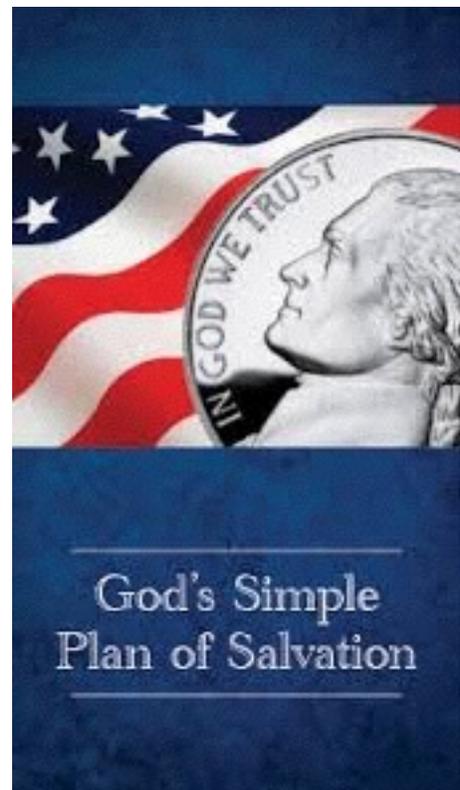
"Well, I am not a nutrition expert, but how can you gain more weight than the bar weighs itself? There are only 300 calories in that bar, and a lot of protein inside that wrapper."

Shane opened the paper and took a bite. "I don't want you to be overweight." Marty just shook his head. "What was it you said about getting an opportunity to do some witnessing? What exactly is involved in your type of witnessing?"

"Well, usually I take some good tracts along with me like, **God's Simple Plan of Salvation**. Then if God gives me an opportunity, I give someone a tract and ask them a question or two."

Shane was interested but also a bit nervous about this new experience. "Like, what kind of question?"

Marty was beginning to sound like an evangelist. "That all depends on whether you are a confronter or a non-confronter. A confronter is a bold person who usually asks, 'If you were to die today do you know for sure where



you would spend eternity?' or some other similar question."

"That is bold. I don't know if I am ready to be a confronter."

Marty continued his soul-winning lesson. "A non-confronter is more timid and may ask, 'Are you interested in spiritual things?' leaving himself an easier out."

"I'm not sure if I have the nerve to ask those kinds of direct, personal questions," Shane noted.

"It is just like wrestling," Marty explained, "The more you do it, the better you get. Shane, you have to be willing to try, and let God work out the details. I got a very slow start, with a non-confrontational approach and worked my way up to the other style. It takes time, like most good things in life."

It was back to pushing weight around on the mat. Shane had already learned the single-leg takedown. He was now trying to master it. If he missed the knee, he would not back off like some wrestlers. He would strike again, even surprising Marty.

That was the aggressive kind of wrestling Marty had taught him to do. "You are vulnerable when you're backing up. Always go sideways or forward."

After the hour work out, it was back to pumping iron in the weight room. A thick carpet decorated the small, well-lit room. When Marty had to drop something on the floor for lack of strength or a painful cramp, the collision would not shake the rafters.

**SOME GREAT
WRESTLERS,
ESPECIALLY
BROTHERS, HAVE A
ROOM LIKE THIS AT
HOME SO THEY CAN
GET MORE
PRACTICE HOURS.**



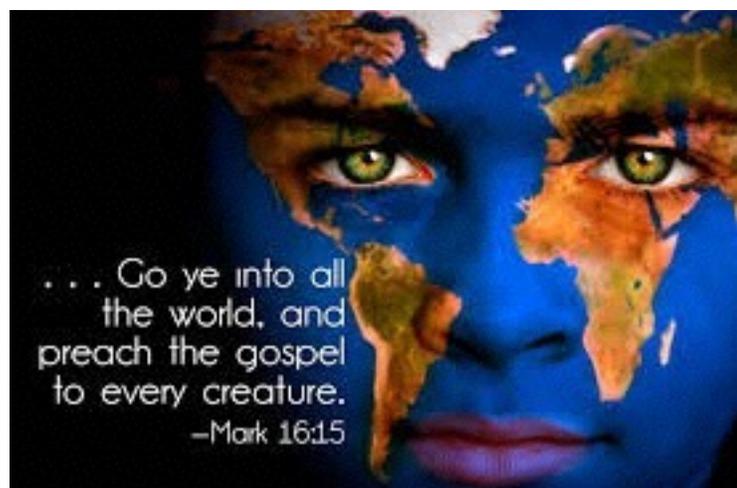
Erin was putting the saddle on Trapper when she saw two sweaty and tired wrestlers come out of the weight room. She gave Shane a smile and mounted on the right side, riding onto the empty gravel road.

She found herself attracted to this young Christian from California. Erin had been saved when she was four years old. Because her parents had raised her in the church, she had a good background of Bible knowledge and Christian conduct.

Shane had accepted Christ only a month ago. True, he was making excellent progress. Would this California boy really be interested in a cow-girl from Montana, who's whole heart and life was dedicated to serving Jesus Christ? All these thoughts occupied her mind as she enjoyed the clean air sweeping down from Buzzard Butte.

Trapper trotted up the road in the third lane, leaving two lanes for cars to pass. Erin contemplated to herself, "Just being a Christian is not enough." She had seen her share of mediocre Christians. She didn't want to be like that. Her goal in life was to give her whole self, without reservation, to the Savior. Being totally dedicated to the Son of God only seemed logical. Hadn't Jesus Christ given His all for her?

Mediocrity made her sick to her stomach. Apparently the Lord had the same reaction to it. She had just read that very morning of the Lord's feeling about lukewarmness. "Where was that passage? II Peter, no. I remember now! It was Revelation 3: 15-16. Jesus said that he would rather a person be cold than lukewarm. That is really interesting. I'll have to talk to Pastor



Ballentine about that."

She was willing to serve anywhere, in any capacity. Even if it meant full-time missionary service at the end of the earth. She was not giving anything less than her all to the Master. Life would mean nothing serving herself. Would Shane understand all this? Could he also be that totally dedicated?

Even though she liked Shane, Erin would never consider any kind of a serious relationship unless he was totally dedicated to Christ. No secret discipleship would do. Shane would have to be public about his devotion to the Savior. If Shane was embarrassed to take a stand for Christ at school, then he would certainly not be the kind of person she would want to date.

She turned Trapper off the road and started up a logging trail. "Let's stop here, Trapper. I want to pray." Right there, completely surrounded by God's creation and awed by it all, Erin Lynch, a tenderhearted teenage girl, sold out to Christ, bowed her head.

She entered the Throne of Grace. "Oh God, I come into Your presence in the name of Your Son, Jesus Christ. Please give Shane the same desires in his heart that you have given me. Lord, You know that I am willing to be a missionary if it is Your will."

"Please give Shane the same direction. I certainly would not miss Your will for any good-looking blond from California. And by the way, Lord, I would like to see some evidence of this very commitment soon. I ask this because as You know, I'm a very impatient person."

Now and then she liked a solitary ride. She wanted to think about her future and enjoy God's creation. It was always fun with the others, usually a circus, or an adventure; but sometimes it was good to be alone.

There had been an abundance of rain of late, making the wild grass exceptionally green and high. A robin was dipping and diving while chasing a sparrow. A nearby chipmunk ran wildly up and down a branch scolding them both.

Suddenly, Trapper's front foot fell into a groundhog hole, and

Erin went flying off to the right, hitting her head solidly on the ground. When she came to, about five minutes later, there was a strange, bearded, smelly, man blowing his horrible breath right in her face.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE FIRST WRESTLING TOURNAMENT

"What happened?" Erin stammered as she put her hand on her head wound. She brushed back the old man with the tattered beard. He had been only a few inches from her nose, breathing some horrible smells right into her face. "Who are you and how did you get here so quickly?"

"Well, ain't you got a lot of questions, girly?" he countered as he helped her up to her feet, giving her a good once over. "Sure glad you came to, girly. I didn't think you would like my mouth-to-mouth resuscitation, as I chew tobacco. I'll help you get aboard your horse and lead you to the road."

Erin shuttered at even the thought of mouth-to-mouth resuscitation. He helped her mount and led her down the logging trail. With the reins still in his hands, he continued pulling Trapper along slowly. He stayed with Erin until they reached the entrance to the Rocking L Ranch. Then he handed her the reins and walked into the woods.

There was a great deal of scurrying about as Erin stumbled into the house with blood running down her head and neck. Mr. Lynch washed it off. "It looked worse than it is. It's actually just an abrasion. A bit of hydrogen peroxide, mercurochrome and lots of TLC, and you will be just fine."

Shane was patting Erin on the shoulder. "You'll be okay, girl. By the way, what is TLC?"

The whole Lynch family stared at Shane with incredulous looks. "This kid needs a lot of it," Mr. Lynch thought. "It means 'tender loving care.' We have an abundance of it around here, right Erin?"

"Right, Dad. That man was strange, Mom. He was breathing right in my face. I could smell his breath, a mixture of garlic and

tobacco."

"He was probably checking to see if you were still breathing," Shane informed them all. "He was a medical corpsman in the Korean Conflict."

"You know him?" Mrs. Lynch asked as she put the first aid kit back in the medicine cabinet.

"Not really," Shane answered quickly. "Nobody actually knows him. We only know about him."

"Well, tell us what you know. He sounds like an interesting person," Mr. Lynch commented. "Maybe we can invite him here to our home."

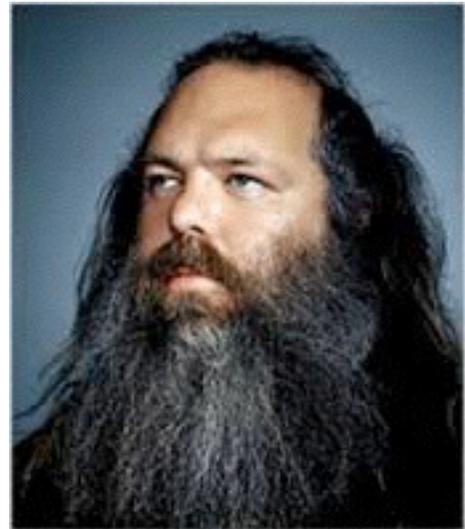
"I doubt if he would come, Mrs. Lynch," Shane continued. "He's a hermit. From what I've been told, he saw a great deal of bloody action. He was a Navy nurse, or as they call them - corpsman. He was disturbed by all the bloodshed and cruelty of war. When he was dis-charged, he moved up on Buzzard Butte. He has lived basically like a hermit all these years."

Marty was very interested in this new neighbor. "Well, does he at least have a name?"

"I'm sure he does, although I'm not positive what it is. We all call him **Willy Evershave**," Shane remarked with a smile, as he stroked his chin pretending he had a beard. "It is also rumored that he is panning for gold somewhere on the backside of Buzzard Butte into the Snow Peak Wilderness."

"I think his first name would be Bill," Erin guessed. "The Evershave obviously is not his real name, but only a nickname pinned on him because of his long straggly beard. This does not take much of a gift of deduction to figure out. You don't have to be a Charlie Chan type to know this."

"You've probably seen him more than anyone else in the last few years." Shane was trying to put the whole thing into



perspective.

"Yeah," Erin complained as she touched her head wound, "and I didn't even get a chance to thank him."

Marty enjoyed teasing his sister. "Did he leave a silver bullet in your hand? Did he wear a black mask? Did he ride off on a silver horse? Did he have a side kick named **Tonto**?"

"Seriously, Marty, I do want to meet him again. He would be just as interested as we are in catching those poachers," Erin reasoned, "and he certainly must be a lonely person. Erin always had a special place in her heart of the lonely, the rejected and the downtrodden.

The AAU tournament was utmost in Marty's mind; therefore, he worked hard with Shane. He knew he wasn't learning much by wrestling his inexperienced neighbor. Shane only knew what Marty had taught him. At least Shane provided a warm body to throw around. The little guy from California was even showing some improvement. He wasn't the pushover he used to be. He could already wrestle about thirty minutes with only short rest breaks.

"Why don't we get Bowie to come out here and wrestle with us?" Shane volunteered.

"Are you a sadist or a masochist, or both?" Marty asked incredulously. "He weighs almost as much as us two together. If he ever fell on us, he'd smash us flatter than your grandma's pancakes. He's a bone breaker as far as I am concerned. No way, Shane. We have to wrestle guys our own size, so we don't get



JAY SILVERHEELS WAS TONTO WITH THE LONE RANGER

unnecessarily injured. One pulled muscle and you are out for half a season; a broken bone, and it's wait until next year."

"Okay, Marty, you made your point," Shane conceded. "Now what time shall we pick you up to leave for Corvallis?"

"Weigh-in is at 7:00 AM. How about five o'clock?"

"Good grief, Marty," Shane complained. "I'll have to get up before breakfast to get here that early!"

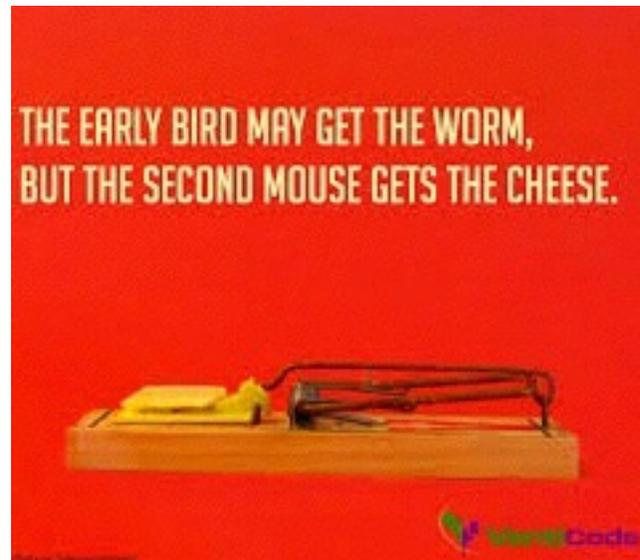
The 57' convertible pulled into the Rocking L Ranch at 5:00 AM. The roosters were just warming up. Marty and Erin were coming out of the front of the house rubbing their eyes. Kosy rolled down the window. "The early bird gets the worm."

"Thanks anyway, Kosy, but I have already had breakfast. **I have heard that the early bird gets the worm but I also know that it is the second mouse that gets the cheese.**" Erin answered tersely. "Our parents will be coming later, at a more civilized time, probably after the roosters wake up the hens."

Shane thought he would add to the pre-breakfast humor. "I know the early bird gets the worm, but what does the early worm get? Nothing but served up on the early bird's dinner plate."

It was a ninety-minute drive to Corvallis. As Shane pulled onto the Oregon State Campus, he began his tour guide speech, "Welcome to the campus of Oregon State. This school of higher learning was founded nine years BEFORE Chief Joseph lead his people in their famous escape attempt to the Canadian border. Until the present, Oregon State has no great claim to fame; but I haven't attended here yet."

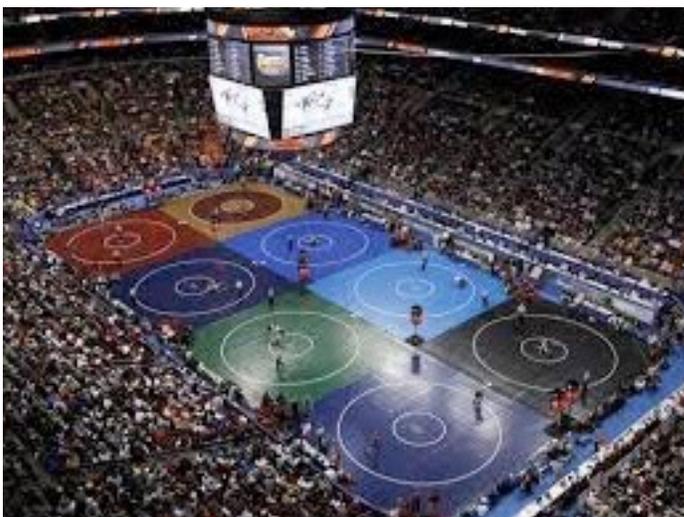
A chorus of boos echoed throughout the parking lot. Shane



wanted to have the last word. "Oregon State has all the classes you will ever want to take and some you won't want to take, like Quantum Physics. Just sign up at the field house."

Marty weighed in, taking Shane with him. In the locker room, parading around the scale, were the modern-day gladiators. They all had hungry looks in their eyes. Some had been at this sport for twenty years.

They thrived on competition and survived on lettuce salads washed down by protein drinks. They looked like a friendly group, backslapping and handshaking. They would maintain that attitude until they planted their wrestling shoes in the center ring. That is where they exchanged their cordiality for a fighting spirit. Wrestling was running in their blood.



The pin on the right has to be in the middle of the square or just above the bottom of the square.

Kosy and Erin waited at the front gate. Shane joined them after Marty had topped the scale at exactly 155 pounds. "That brother of your's really knows how to lose weight. He put the scale pin right on the bottom edge. Wow, it

was close! I thought he was going to be overweight."

"Marty, overweight, you have to be kidding," Erin bragged about her brother. "He has been doing this for years. He knows exactly what is needed to make the weight. He has never missed a weigh-in, not even once! He weighs the lettuce and the fruit he eats and weighs himself three times a day."

Shane paid for Erin and Kosy's tickets. The cute redhead from Montana leaned over close to Shane's face and showed him a smile as wide as the desert horizon, "Well, since you paid for my ticket, does this constitute our first date, Shane?"

"You can cancel that out by purchasing lunch if you want to."

"That's all right," Erin smiled as she schemed, "I'll let Marty pay for my lunch, since he won't be needing any food himself."

A one-day wrestling tournament has to be well organized. There are ten weight divisions and various age classifications. There could be well over three hundred wrestlers at this tournament. The finals would be at 8:00 PM. That meant each wrestler would probably have three to five matches, depending on whether he continued to win.

The Oregon State basketball floor was decorated with six colorful mats, borrowed from different high schools. Positioned beside each mat was a table for scoring, and a clock. The large clock kept track of "riding time," - who was on top, or in control.

"Where should we sit, Erin?" Kosy asked. "We will want to get a close view of all Marty's matches. We can even take some action shots with Grandpa's camera."

Erin threw her hands up in the air, "Look, Kosy, there are eight mats. Marty could wrestle at any one of them. We will only know as they call his name and mat color. We'll get familiar with every corner of the gym before this day is over." With that they looked for a place to sit down until Marty's name was called.

An open tournament means anyone could come. Each wrestler, from seven years old to thirty, had his own singlet, or tights, as they were called. Each tournament was a convention of

**THE FRENCH EMPEROR/
GENERAL NAPOLEON WAS
SOUNDLY DEFEATED BY
THE ENGLISH GENERAL
WELLINGTON AT THE
BATTLE OF WATERLOO. SO
THIS PHRASE HAS BEEN A
CLASSIC TO DEFINE THE
DEFEAT OR LIKELY
DEFEAT OF ANYONE!**



narrow-waisted, broad-shouldered, athletes. The only sports where weight is a criteria are wrestling, boxing and judo.

Wrestlers are always trying to compete in the lowest weight class possible, conserving a maximum amount of strength. There is a point in losing weight where the wrestler could injure his health and lose strength. Marty was never interested in that kind of foolishness.

Each match consisted of three two-minute rounds. Marty entered the circle to face his first opponent. He shook hands with the Sweet Home High School student. They both began slowly, circling, watching, grabbing, and pulling.

Then, like lightning, Marty had the kid's right knee locked in tight. Marty pushed backwards, tripped the kid's left foot, take-down, two points. The Marty Lynch fan club went nuts.

Shane wanted to yell out some instructions but held back, "Certainly he knows more than I do. Just hang on, Marty."

Marty won his first match 6-4 and would have an hour break before his next one - a wrestler from Portland State. **"He will probably be my Waterloo,"** Marty commented making a face. "He has six years more experience than I do."

Shane thought Marty should be more optimistic. "Come on, Grappler, you can be more positive than that can't you?"

"Shane, I know my abilities. At my stage of development, there is no way I could beat a wrestler from Portland State. Someday I will be able to, but not yet. That is not being overly pessimistic, just realistic."

Shane noticed a mountain of a man on the other side of the gym. "Who is that giant?"

Marty looked to where Shane had pointed. "That is America's biggest amateur wrestler, Chris Nelson, from Iowa."

"Big," Shane echoed, "he's not just big, he's a mountain on legs. A regular two-legged elephant! Good grief, he is twice as big as Bowie. How much does he weigh?"

"Well, since it is obvious he is a super heavyweight, he doesn't really have to weigh in," Marty explained. "Just for the record's sake, he goes to the meat locker and hangs on the hooks. That is the only scale capable of weighing him. Let's go over and give him a tract."

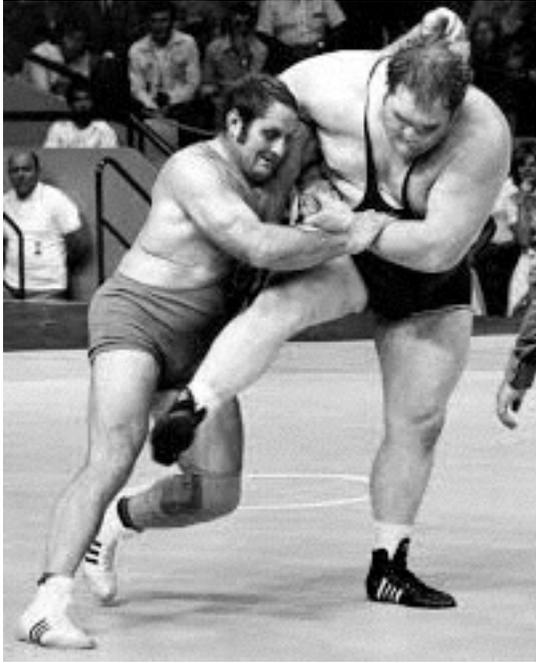
Shane's legs got a little weak; his knees started getting to know each other. He scratched his head. "What...what are you going to say to him, Marty?"

"Nothing!" Marty handed Shane a tract. "I thought you would get a chance to use what we have been practicing at my home, remember?"

"Okay, but I want Erin to come with me for moral support."

"We'll all go together," Marty insisted, "but you can give him the tract, all right?"

Shane walked up to **Chris Nelson**, noticing the rows of sweat warts on his neck. When Chris looked down at him, Shane felt like a grape about to be stomped on by a dinosaur. He handed a tract to Chris and started out in what he had hoped was a confident voice, "I'm ... ah . . I'm Shane Woods, and I would like to give you this to read. Do you know for sure where you would spend eternity if you were to die today?" Whew, was he glad he was able



to spit that out. He hoped the mountain of a man would not be angry.

Chris took the little piece of paper in his huge hand that was as big as an eight ounce professional boxing glove. "Well, thank you my Little Friend. I have too many plans to do and too many places to go to start talking about dying. I have World Games and Olympics to go to yet. Are you a religious person, Shane? What a dumb question! You must be or you wouldn't be handing me this religious piece of paper."

"Well, I am not really interested in religion. That is a big ball of confusion. I don't really know much yet. But I do know that religion will never give anyone eternal life. Salvation is in a Person - Jesus Christ, not in a system or religion." Chris was somewhat friendly, so Shane got braver, "Will you read the tract, Chris?"

"Sure, Shane, my Little Buddy. Are you a wrestler, too?"

"I'm trying to be," Shane maintained stoutly. "I hope I never have to wrestle you."

Chris was amused at this pint-sized evangelist. "You'd have to eat a lot more pizzas and potatoes to wrestle me." And with that Chris waddled away chuckling to himself. Shane had survived his first live witnessing attempt, and he was still in tact!

Even though Marty was already psyched out before he stepped on the mat with the Portland State wrestler, he still managed to get the first takedown, a duck under and backward trip. A reversal followed, with Marty getting pinned in the first period.

His fan club was still vocally supporting him, even though

Marty was counting the lights. He did manage to give the winner a tract. That was his usual practice, even when he lost.

He tied his next match. Since Marty had one more minute riding time than his opponent, he was awarded a win 8-7. He was still in the tournament until he lost his last match 6-1 to a wrestler from San Francisco State.



ONE OF THE FEW PHOTOS I HAVE OF ME WRESTLING AT PILLSBURY BAPTIST BIBLE COLLEGE IN 1967. I ALWAYS HAD THE MOST PINS ON THE TEAM. WE WERE ALWAYS CONFERENCE CHAMPS, TOO.

CHAPTER FIVE

FOLLOWING A POACHER

"I knew I wouldn't win, Shane. It was worth the experience though," Marty reasoned as they drove out of the Oregon State parking lot. "Some of those wrestlers are world class. Someday, if I keep working hard, maybe I will be up to their level. I have my sights on the 1968 Olympics in Mexico City."

"Wow," Shane burst out, "do you think I could work on that goal, too? I would have to really bear down wouldn't I?"

"Sure, it would take a lot of dedication, but you could do it. Dad and Mom told us to meet them at the T & R Truck Stop in Albany. They want to buy us a hamburger and cherry coke. Sounds good, huh?"

From Albany to Lebanon the discussion turned to the big event of the day. Shane opened the subject, "Did you see Chris Nelson wrestle? No one can move all that lard around on the mat. I wonder how much he weighed when he was born?"

"I read an article about him in Sports Illustrated," Marty chimed in. "They said he weighed thirteen pounds at birth, and before he entered junior high he was up to 200 pounds. I sure wouldn't have liked to pay his food bills. He weighs about 440 pounds now."

Erin was proud of Shane for giving Chris the tract. "Do you really think he will read it, Marty? The small tract looked like a postage stamp in his huge hand."

"Who knows, Sis, maybe he will, and maybe he won't. Perhaps he'll just throw it in the trash. We do our part and leave the rest up to God. There are some fantastic stories about people getting saved by just reading a tract someone gave them. Sometimes they don't get saved until years later."

Shane didn't really want to wait that long to hear from Chris. "I wonder if we will ever see him again? Do you suppose God

might give us another opportunity to witness to him? Maybe I should have pursued the subject more. Do you think it would have made a difference, Marty?"

"In the situation you were in, Shane, you couldn't really do much more than you did. I heard him say that he had too many plans to fulfill. He said he didn't have time to die. What would you have said if you could have continued the conversation?"

Shane had only been saved for a month. He was progressing rapidly but hadn't had any experiences in witnessing. He was willing to learn though. "That is what I need to learn, Marty. I really don't know what I would have said next!"

Marty thought this would be a good time to continue his soul-winning lessons. "The best answer to his statement about not having time to die would be to remind him that coffins come in all sizes. Do you understand what I mean, Shane?"

"Do you mean that death is no respecter of age? That would be a good point to make. We will have to practice those lines sometime. I'm sure I could learn a lot more about witnessing, and I am anxious to do so. There are several people I need to talk to about salvation in Christ."

Erin was silently thanking God. These were the decisions she wanted to see Shane make. She was watching his spiritual progress very closely, as if her future depended on it. She was thankful that God allowed her to see such a quick answer to her prayer she had made on Buzzard Butte. She prayed in her heart, "Thank you Lord. I love you so much."

This Oregon summer night was particularly calm. There was not even a breeze to keep the mosquitoes at bay. Riding with the top down was a pleasure that only convertible owners could enjoy. It made starry nights seem more romantic. There was one drawback - whenever the wind-blown passengers arrived, they had to spend ten minutes putting their hair back in place, well at least the girls did.

The '57 Chevy sped along highway 99, pulling into the T&R

Truck Stop. Mr. and Mrs. Lynch were already waiting for them. Mr. Lynch greeted Shane first, "I was really proud of the way you witnessed to that giant, Chris Nelson. If he can't scare you away, no one will ever do it. Keep up the good work, Shane. I'm sure God has some wonderful experiences in store for you."

When Erin was fixing her hair she cornered Kosy for another talk about her most recent, favorite subject. "Kosy, isn't Shane doing well with his witnessing? I'm really impressed. He has a lot of courage. Did you see how he talked to that giant of a man, like he was actually on his level. He just needs more information and practice and he will be very good at this."

Kosy wasn't sure she was ready for that kind of experience. "I don't think I could do what he did. It is too scary and embarrassing. What if someone laughs at me, Erin?"

"Kosy, you should never be ashamed to tell people about your salvation. Just think of your experience in accepting Christ and relay that to whomever God gives you an opportunity to. I can practice with you like Marty does with Shane. Are you willing to do that?" Kosy gave her a weak nod.

As Shane came close to home he had to gas up. He stopped at Bowie's gas station. Bowie stomped out to meet him. Shane could see he was upset. "What's eating you, Old Buddy?"

"That jerk, Engelbert Farnsworth III, pulled out of here a few minutes ago. He comes by now and then just to insult me." With that the big Indian kid slammed his huge fist on the gas pump.

Erin liked Bowie. He was the kind of kid anyone could like. She definitely did not like Engelbert Farnsworth III. He was the kind of kid no one could like, except the dippy-do guys that hung out with him. "What does he say that bothers you so much?" she asked understandingly.

Bowie was watching the pump as he filled Shane's tank. "He calls me names like, chief, Redman, and even 'Injun'. He always treats me with disdain."

Marty was paying for Shane's gas. "Hey, Bowie, he treats

everyone like that, even us white folks."

Kosy got out of the car, stood on her tipi toes, reached up high and put her hand on the shoulder of the Nez Perce. "We like you, Bowie. You are a good friend. Would you like to come to our church on Sunday? You could spend the day with us, swimming in Crabtree Creek."

"Sure," Erin piped in, "And you can eat lunch at our home. How about it, Bowie?"

"Well, we don't work on Sundays, but that is not because we are Christians. You know that we Nez Perce Indians are nature-spirit worshipper, don't you?"

"No, I really didn't know that," Kosy answered hopefully, "but that makes no difference to us. You are welcome at our church. Please say you will come, Bowie."

The Nez Perce Indian teenager appreciated these friends. "Okay, I'll come, if my Dad allows me to. What time does it begin? Can I bring my twin sisters?" Shane nodded affirmatively, they would be glad to have the whole family come if they wanted to. Bowie closed their conversation by explaining that his parents would be going to eastern Oregon and he had to babysit his sisters anyway.

Shane started the motor and shifted the four on the floor into first. "We have Sunday School at 9:45 AM, and morning worship at 11:00. Come to both. You might find it quite different than you had imagined."

As they pulled out and crossed the canal, Shane praised his sister, "Good job, Kosy. We will have to add Bowie to our prayer list. If we are going to win him to Christ we might have to find out some information about the Nez Perce religion."

Erin gave Kosy a wink and a approving smile. "See, Kosy, it wasn't that hard to begin witnessing, now was it?"

The youngest member of the gang started to explain herself, "That is witnessing? All I did was invite a friend to come to church. I don't see how that could be classified as witnessing."

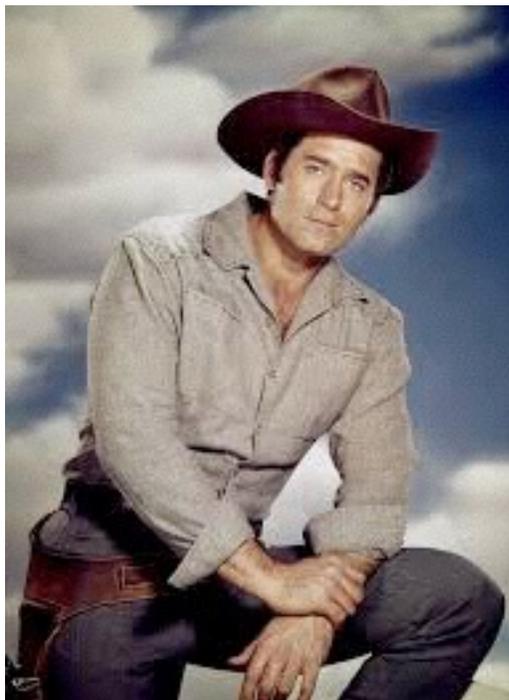
Marty spoke first, "You are doing what is called friendship evangelism. It is making friends, working with a friend, or just being friendly. You got him to church and then you let Pastor Ballentine do the explaining. It is the most effective form of witnessing." Kosy was pleased to have started so successfully.

It is seven miles from Lebanon to Brewster's Corner. The Brewster family opened the gas station in 1946. Shane never bought gas there. Brewster's price was always two or three cents a gallon more than Bowie's. Brewster also had a very small general store. Shane pulled up under the overhang.

"Going to fill up again, Shane?" Erin asked giggling.

"Right, Smarty, I only get one mile to the gallon. Just be patient. I am going to get some protein. He hurried into the small store and returned with a few packs of sunflower seeds.

CLINT WALKER
SIX FOOT SIX,
WEIGHED 260 LBS



"Sunflower seeds?" Marty questioned. "What for, Shane? Do you have parrots at home?"

"Don't you Gringos know anything? Don't you ever read anything?" Shane was appalled. "Sunflower seeds are tasty. I eat them. It's the favorite snack of **Clint Walker**, and look how big and strong he is!"

When Shane returned, he stopped and knelt down where another car had been parked. Putting his finger to the ground, he pulled up something. He walked over closer to the light to examine it. He even smelled it. He did everything but put it on his tongue.

He came trotting over to the

car, on the other side of the gas pumps and blurted out excitedly, "At first, in the dark, I thought it was just differential fluid. But, look, it's blood." He showed it to Marty.

"You are right, but what does it mean?"

"It means that the car which was parked right there had something recently killed in the trunk." Shane donned his investigation cap. "This blood is still fresh. It was even a little warm when I touched it. What kind of car was it?"

"It was a blue car, or was it black?" Erin pondered.

"No, not the color. The make of the car," Shane prodded.

Erin protested. "What do I look like, the latest issue of *Car and Driver*?"

Shane started the '57 Chevy. "Can anyone at least tell me which way they went?"

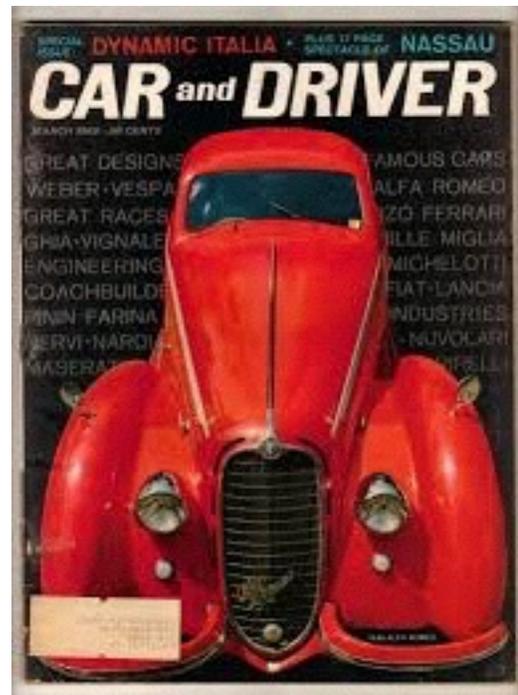
All three pointed towards Lcomb. The Chevy threw a few pebbles and some dust into the air as Shane pulled out. He had a determined look on his face. "I want to catch up with them. If these poachers aren't stopped there will not be any deer left for us to hunt in the fall. How much of a head start did they get?"

"Three minutes," two out of three of them said in unison.

Shane noticed tail lights about 4 miles ahead just going over the ridge. "Did any other cars pass since they pulled out?"

Erin was shaking her head. "As far as I can remember, no other cars passed us, right, Kosy?" Kosy nodded in agreement.

Marty strained his eyes gazing down the dark road. "Yeah, I see the tail lights, too. Erin was right, no other car has passed this point. It must be them. Step on it, Shane. Pedal to the medal



time.”

Erin was excited and nervous at the same time. "If you must catch them, Shane, at least do it safely, okay? I want to see these poachers behind bars as much as you do. But, we don't want to see us in the hospital, right?"

Kosy was not quite as anxious for action as the rest. She started nibbling on her fingernails. "What are we going to do if we can stop them? Certainly we will not be able to arrest them, or even delay them."

"Don't worry, Little Sister," Shane tried to calm Kosy. "I am not going to do anything stupid. And quit chewing your fingernails. I just want to stop them, get their license number, and talk to them a little. Maybe I'll even get a chance to memorize their faces. I promise you, Kosy, there will not be any confrontation."

It was at times like this that Shane was glad he had a little extra power under the hood. When he hit forty miles per hour in second gear, he remembered what Sergeant Kochian had told him about the bored-out engine and the four barrel carburetor.

By stomping down on the gas pedal, he engaged all four barrels. The pick up was frightening. It threw Marty and Kosy, who had been leaning forward, against the back seat. Erin's straw hat flew off into the ditch.

There was more to this motor than Sergeant Kochian had actually described. This was the first time Shane had punched it out. The noise was deafening and a bit scary. This was not going to be a race. The other car had no reason to speed.

The road was straight so there was not much danger. Shane was topping sixty miles per hour when he began to slow down because of the ridge. As he brought the nose over the hump, he could see he had gained some ground on the pursued car.

Marty was getting nervous, his leg started to bounce off the floorboard. "Don't go any faster, Shane? We don't want the telephone poles looking like a picket fence."

"Just a bit further, Marty, and I will be able to pull up beside

them or get them to pull over." As Shane came closer, he started blinking his lights. Surprisingly, the other car pulled over to the side.

"This is too easy, Shane," Erin remarked with a skeptical tone."I'm not liking this even one little bit."

When the driver got out of the car and began to walk indignantly back to the '57 Chevy, Erin hid her face. She was peeking out between the fingers of one hand and twirling her pigtail with her other. "Oh no," she groaned. "Not him again."

CHAPTER SIX

A ONCE IN A LIFETIME DEAL

"Well, well, well, if it ain't **Little Lord Fauntleroy** and his peons. What's the big idea, Shane? Do you have an emergency or something?" The complainer was none other than the already infamous Engelbert Farnsworth III. "Why were you flashing for me to stop?"

Shane was a bit embarrassed to say the least. "Uh . . . I . . . er . . . I guess we got you mixed up with someone else."

"Well, I've never been anyone else. I have always been myself, good old Engelbert Farnsworth III. Your girlfriend, whatever her name is, OUGHT to hide behind her hands. I'd be ashamed to be seen with this bunch of knuckleheads, too."

Shane was still stammering, "All . . . all . . . I can say is we're sorry."

"You're sure right there. This is the sorriest group I've ever had the displeasure of meeting. But, I will give you credit for one thing. What you lack in stupidity, you make up in ignorance."

"Come, on Bert, leave the kids alone," someone yelled from the Ford.

"Okay, Linda, first let me bid adieu to my friends. See you guys on the first day of school. This year will be hilarious with Lacombe's **THREE STOOGES** on campus."

Needless to say, the four teens were relieved when Bert drove



CONSIDERED THE MOST FAMOUS GOODY-TWO SHOES OF THE 1930'S

away. Shane pulled Erin's hand from her face. "You can come out now. The boogie man is gone."

"That was very embarrassing, Shane," she complained vigorously. "What happened?"

Shane looked bewildered. "The only thing I can figure is, the poachers pulled off on to a side road, and then our buddy here pulled his car onto the main road. Rats, we lost them again. Is there anything else that could go wrong? **MURPHY STRIKES AGAIN.**"

Marty wasn't happy at the turn of events either. "Why does **MURPHY** always have to park his **Airstream camper** on our property?"

"Let's put our heads together before we lose our train of thought," Shane suggested to the others. "Was there anything unusual about that car which would help us identify it, anything at all, besides the fact it was blue or black?"



"Shane, I noticed something strange about it," Kosy added. "It had a front grill like a rocket or a bullet. Does that help?"

"Help? Kosy, you just described a Studebaker. Was it short and narrow?"

Marty added his observations. "No, it was long and wide, of that I am positive. It had only one whitewall on the back tire of the passenger's side."

"Then it is a Nash, a blue or black Nash," Shane's familiarity with cars proved helpful again. The Lcomb detectives had a lively discussion the rest of the way home. They were trying to figure out how they could put an end to the poaching.

As they passed Gentry's Hill, Shane noticed a lit-up FOR SALE sign on the side of a 1954 Chevrolet Bel Air. "Aren't you looking for a car, Marty? Maybe we can come by tomorrow and ask about that one. The '54 Chevys were really well made."



"A '54 Chevy! Shane do you realize that car is only eight years old. Dad is allowing me only one hundred for the purchase of a car. No way could I buy a 1954 Chevy for that amount. **About the only car I am going to get for that price will have a crank on the front.** You'll have to push it to start it, or always park it on a hill."

Shane was waiting for an opportunity like this. "Oh, ye of little faith. If it is God's will, you will get it for that price, right?" Shane almost surprised himself. He raised his eyebrows and added, "Did I just say that? I must be quoting Pastor Ballentine. I certainly did not make that idea up myself."

It was true, he said it and all the kids heard him. This was a giant leap for a new Christian. He had come a long distance in a short period of time. It takes new believers decades to start tithing and trusting like Shane was doing, only having been a Christian for a month.

"Right," Marty was hearing his first sermon from this new Christian. "Okay, preacher, come by tomorrow before lunch, and we will see what God can do with one hundred dollars."

School was getting closer, and Marty needed a car. Mr. Lynch thought he was being very generous with his son. Marty thought so too, and he wasn't the type to forget it, either.

As Shane pulled into the yard, Mr. Lynch was still conversing with his son. "I can only give you that much, Marty. The extra

insurance will run me fifty dollars more each month. So, you and the Thrifty Scotsman here had better look real hard and pray a lot."

Marty climbed into Shane's car. "Well, I only have this one hundred dollars to buy that **1954 Chevy**. What do you think he will ask for it?"

"Nuts," Shane answered discouragingly, "if it runs well, he should ask at least five hundred dollars. What are we going to do?"

"Yesterday you were preaching at me, and now you are asking me? I plan to do the only thing that will bring about the results you preached about yesterday - PRAY. One of my



favorite verses is Jeremiah 33:3, '**Call upon Me and I will answer thee, and show thee great and mighty things which thou knowest not.**' That's a good promise, isn't it?"

These were the promises Shane needed to know about. "Where did you say that verse was? That's one I need to learn. I'm not too good at praying publicly yet, so you go ahead."

Marty bowed his head. "God, You know I want a car. I will promise to drive responsibly and be thankful. Please help me get this car, if it is Your will, in Jesus' name, Amen."

Shane was surprised at Marty's simple and short prayer. "Here we go." They both gave the '54 Chevy a good once-over as they pulled into the yard.

"Hey, you guys. Come to see the car? Alright! My name is **Justin Kase**. My mom has been after me to get this car off the front lawn," he pointed to the yellow and white Chevy. "I bought a

new car, so I really need to get rid of this eyesore. What will you give me for it?"

Marty blurted out, "I've got a"

"Look at the car first," Shane, **the Thrifty Scotsman**, finished his sentence as he slightly bumped him on the shoulder.



Justin looked a bit concerned. "Well, the battery is dead. When I tried to start it by pushing, it wouldn't take off. As you can see, there is one bald tire on the front. The other three are only so-so."

Shane was curious, "Can we try pulling it, Justin? By the way, is that your real name or are you pulling our leg?"

"Weird isn't it? I'm telling you the truth. My real name is Justin Kase. I have always had to explain it to people who were paying attention. Some kids grow up to hate their parents when they do this to them. Man, I knew a girl whose last name was Christmas and her mother named her Mary. That is TOO MUCH aggravation. And sure we can pull the car, I even have a rope here you can use."

Shane tied the '54 Chevy to his car. Marty got behind the wheel of the Bel Air. Shane gave him some vital last-minute instructions. "Put it in second; and when we hit fifteen miles per hour, pop the clutch. Be sure the key is on."

Each time Marty popped the clutch the back wheels just froze, throwing rocks and plowing gravel. After three tries with the same result, Justin drove up. "See what I mean. If it won't start, how can I sell it to anyone?"

"What do you want for it, as is?" Marty asked hopefully.

"Seventy-five dollars."

"Twenty-five," Shane offered rapidly.

"Fifty, and not a penny less," Justin insisted.

"Thirty-five, and that is our last offer," the Thrifty Scotsman retorted.

Marty was in shock, too dumbfounded to even whisper a word.

"Okay, it's yours," the reluctant seller gave in. "Cash on the barrelhead, or no deal." Marty peeled off the money, and Justin signed the title. "See you around. I hope you can get it going."

Shane waited until the seller got out of sight, then he began to do a victory dance around the car. "SOLD TO THE AMERICAN TEENAGER! WOW WHAT A DEAL WE MADE!"

Marty was still scratching his head, "Are you sure we made a good deal? It doesn't have air conditioning, you know!"

"Sure it does just let me show you how to turn it on." With that, the Woods kid opened the door and rolled down the window. Marty just had to laugh. Shane was so funny.

"Marty, you just made the buy of the century!" Shane raised his eyebrows. "Even if we have to replace the transmission or the whole motor, you made a terrific deal. You could pull it to the junk yard and they would give you \$300.00 just for the parts. I am sure of it."

"Now let's take a closer look at the motor and try to find what's wrong. It must be something fairly simple. Justin didn't have the patience or knowledge to work the problem out."

Marty lifted the hood. "What do you expect to find? Will we really have to exchange the motor? Can we pull it home?"

"What is this, 'twenty questions' or are we just warming up for the \$64,000 prize? Just let me take a look at some things. It is



definitely locking the wheels. Why?"

Shane poked around the fan belt. "Put it in neutral." Marty tried but it still remained stuck. "Try shifting into any gear." There was still no response. Shane put his hand on the shifting gears of the steering column. "Try shifting it again." This time Shane helped him.

"Aha, just as I thought. It was locked in reverse. That is why it would not start and just threw rocks all over the road. Let me **move a few of these gears, PRONTO!** Now shift it into second. Let's try it again."

"Will it start with dead battery?" Marty asked.

"Sure it will. I think we solved the problem." Shane pulled the Chevy again. When Marty reached the right speed, he popped the clutch. The Bel Air motor took off. Marty was so overjoyed, he started hammering his fist on the steering wheel and squealing for joy.

When they drove into the Rocking L Ranch, Mr. Lynch could not believe his eyes. "How could you buy that car with only one hundred dollars?"

"I didn't," Marty squealed with laughter, "I bought it for only thirty-five dollars." Now it was Marty's turn to do his victory dance around the car. "God answered my prayer, and now I even have enough money left to buy a new battery and one tire."

"That was the fastest and most direct answer to the shortest



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LEVERS FOR THE GEAR BOX. THESE ARE LOCATED ON THE STEERING COLUMN THE 1954 CHEVY

and most sincere prayer I have ever witnessed," Shane said as he gave Marty a friendly slap on the back. "I can't wait until we drive into town and show Bowie. He'll go nuts. This has to be the best deal since **Steward bought Alaska from the Russians.**"



Driving the '54 Chevy to town was a joy ride for two teens. It only had 56,000 miles on it. The body was rust free.

To buy a car that was only eight years old for thirty-five dollars was unthinkable. **IT WAS THE PURCHASE OF THE CENTURY!**

Marty remembered his promise to God that he would be responsible and thankful. He knew that would take determination. It is so easy to be irresponsible and unthankful. Marty was raised in a Christian home, a definite advantage that the Woods kids did not have. He knew what his task was. He had been taught that to whom much is given, much is required. He planned on doing his part. He was very thankful and grateful.

They pulled into Bud's Shell Service on Park and Grant. Marty asked Bud the price of a new tire and battery. "The tire you need will run about twenty-five dollars. I have a used battery you can have for fifteen dollars. Will that put you in business?"

"You bet, Mr. Grant," Marty answered. "In fact, we will take two new tires. I can replace that partially bald one on the front making it the spare. Wow, that is exactly one hundred dollars. God has been good to me, and I am not going to forget it."

Gratitude was a way of life for a Christian that remembered and cared about what Christ had done for him. This is the attitude Marty wanted to have in his life and it is the message he wanted to

get out to the world. An **ATTITUDE OF GRATITUDE** was the theme he needed in his teen years.

"What was that you said, Sonny?" Mr. Grant asked as he cocked his head in Marty's direction.

"Nothing, I was just talking to Shane."

After the change of tires, they drove to the T.P.

Oil company. "Too bad Bowie's dad doesn't sell these extras," Marty remarked. "I could have bought them here."

Bowie was just topping off a tank and receiving the money. "Thank you, Mrs. Ellsworth. Do you want me to check your oil?" Bowie meandered over to his friends leaning against a Chevy. They were grinning from ear to ear. "You guys look like the cats that just swallowed the mice. What's up?"

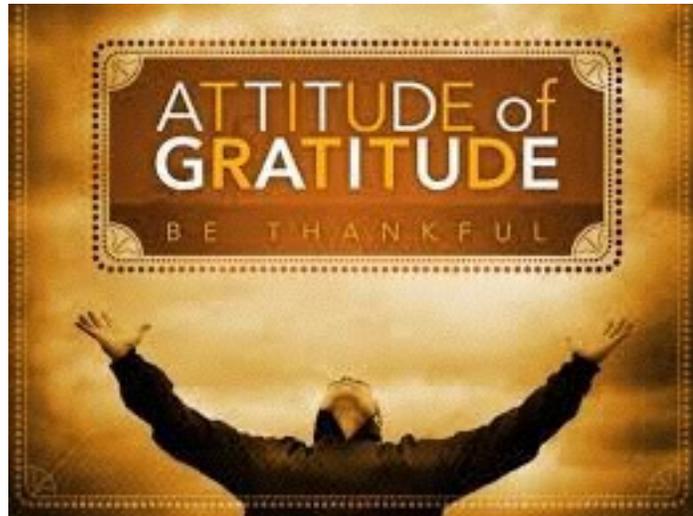
Both boys looked into the sky squinting their eyes, their right hands over their eyebrows to see what was "UP."

"Okay, clowns, I deserve that. Now tell me where you got this car?" Bowie pounded the hood with his fist and kicked a tire.

Shane filled him in on the deal. "Wow, I need the Thrifty Scotsman to buy a car for me," Bowie slapped Shane on the back. "Congratulations! My dad said I could get a car, if it wasn't too expensive. By the way, how did you do at the tournament last weekend, Marty? I wanted to go, but I had to practice for the upcoming rodeo."

"I didn't do as well as I wanted. I enjoyed the experience though. When will we go to the rodeo?"

Bowie appreciated Marty's interest. "I was just at Joseph in eastern Oregon for Chief Joseph Days. I took second place in bull riding and first in calf roping. The next event is a type of warm-up



rodeo, preparing everyone for the big one in September - **The Pendleton Roundup**. I am counting on you guys coming over to eastern Oregon to root for me. You are coming aren't you?"

"We sure are," they both promised in unison. Their affirmative answer pleased Bowie. They also wanted to know if Bowie was going to take his twin sisters. He said they could not go because his parents wanted them to help paint the house.

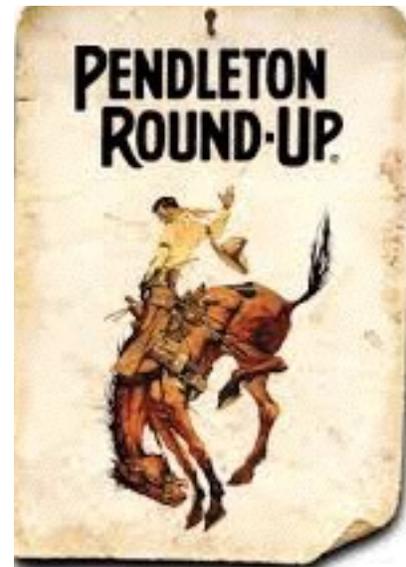
A pickup pulled into the station. Bowie signaled for them to accompany him to the customer. "I would like to introduce you guys to a friend of mine. Mike Whitesell, these are my good friends, Marty Lynch and Shane Woods. Mike works as an announcer at **KGAL**, you know, Lebanon's radio station outside of town."

Shane looked like a bulb just lit up in his head. He started stroking his chin. "Hey, I've got a great idea that might catch some of those no-good poachers. Mr. Whitesell, can you give community announcements on the radio?"

"What did you have in mind, Shane?"

"Well, we have been trying to catch some poachers. They keep slipping out of our hands. All we have on them is their car. It is a 1950 Nash. You know, the one with the bullet on the front grill. We also know that it has only one white wall on the rear passenger's side. If you could give an announcement that someone wants to buy a 1950 Nash, maybe we could get them to take the bait."

The radio announcer, **Mike Raphone**, took a poster out of the back seat. "My assistant, **DJ Player**, found this nailed to our front door this morning. With that he turned over the **poster** and Shane



saw the disgraceful pun about poaching.”

Shane blinked his eyes and smirked. “Will you help us catch them?”

“Okay, it is a deal,” Mike promised with a handshake. “When do you want to set them up? What are you going to do if they show? Will it be a citizen's arrest? That could be dangerous.”

“No, not exactly,” Shane bowed out, “I will have Sergeant Kochian hiding around the corner with a search warrant in his hand. How about tomorrow afternoon for the announcement? The meeting could be scheduled for three o'clock in the high school parking lot.”

“Fine, you're on, kid. I also hate poachers.”

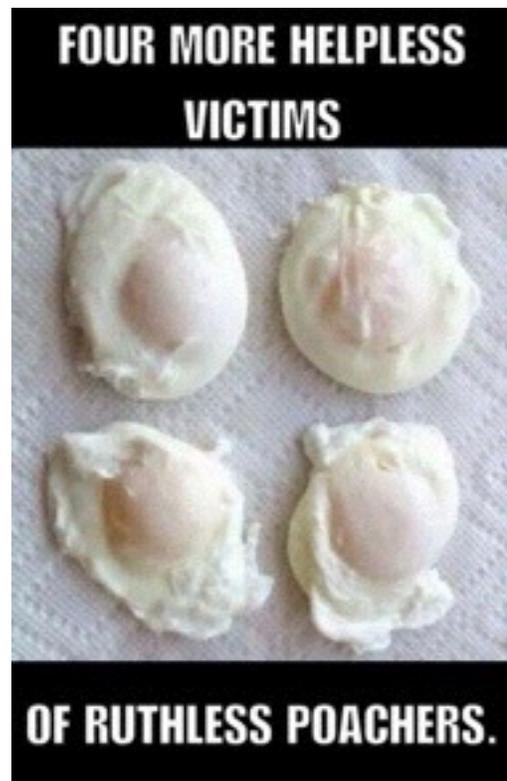
Bowie approached Shane rather excitedly. “Really, Shane, do you actually think we can buy that Nash for between two to three hundred dollars? Dad said I could get a car for that much.”

“Are you serious, Bowie?” Marty asked.

“Yes, I am serious. I need a car, and this does sounds like an excellent opportunity to get one cheap. I bet those robbers will be looking to dump theirs. Will you make the deal for me, Thrifty Scotsman? I think that is what you had in mind, right?”

Shane didn't know if he liked this new title. At least it was not self proclaimed. He didn't know if he was being complimented or not. That was yet to be learned. “You win, Bowie. I'll do my best. That is kind of what I had in mind.”

“One last suggestion,” Bowie explained, “wait until he signs the title before you sic Sergeant Kochian on him.”



Mike Whitesell sounded very convincing on the KGAL Community Line. Someone was REALLY looking for a 1950 Nash. Bowie, Marty and Shane waited at the high school parking lot. Marty looked worried, "Do you think they will be armed?"

"I doubt it," Shane tried to sound confident. "There may only be one. I can't imagine a shoot out. Look, here comes a Nash now. Now Marty, don't give us away with your nervous leg!"

"But, it's white," Marty noted with a smirk.

"And there comes two more from the other direction, a black one and a blue one" Bowie announced nervously. "What...what are we going to do now?"

Shane took charge. "Bowie, you take the white one and stall. Look interested, but don't make any promises. Marty, you take the black one and do the same. I'll take the blue one. Now separate to the corners of the lot, and wave your car over to your corner."

"Quit looking so nervous, you guys," Shane ordered. "This is even better. We'll definitely get a lower price. Marty, whichever car has one white wall tire on the rear passenger's side is the poacher. I'll trade with you, if your car is the poacher."

After an initial introduction, the three met for a pow-wow. "The white one is a real beauty," Bowie shook his head. "It has an all wood dashboard. Unfortunately, he wants one thousand dollars for it."

"How about the black one, Marty? It looks like you got the poacher. I'll trade with you as we planned," Shane suggested as he turned and headed for the **Nash**.

Marty was relieved.



He didn't relish confronting crooks face to face. It was much harder than witnessing. "He wants five hundred dollars. You can have him," he shouted after Shane.

Shane approached the suspected poacher. "I am representing the buyer. He'll give you two hundred dollars today, cash on the old barrelhead."

"Is this some kind of a joke, kid? Are you really planning on buying my car?" the burly man asked. He was not a pleasant person, definitely not someone you would invite to Thanksgiving dinner. He could be capable of carving up other things besides the turkey.

"That's our offer, take it or leave it," Shane tried to sound like the Thrifty Scotsman, living up to his new reputation.

The trio parleyed again. "How's our used-car buyer doing?" Bowie wanted to know. "What's the price now?"

"He said he would take three hundred fifty dollars for it and throw in two mounted buck horns. I'll bet they're fresh, too. I'll try to get him down more, but he's getting abusive. I will be right back."

Shane approached the belligerent seller. "We will give you three hundred dollars, and not a penny more, if you have the title here and sign it today. Oh, don't worry about a ride home. We already have that arranged!"

Shane waved Bowie over to the black Nash. Marty was clapping his hands as he yelled, "Sold to the Nez Perce Indian. Now you can give your sisters a ride to school and to the grocery store, right?"

After the money was exchanged for a signed title, Shane waved Sergeant Kochian in from around the corner. When Old Sourpuss saw the patrol car coming, he got antsy. "Hey, what's going on here?" He lit out across the grass heading for the baseball diamond.

Bowie was the first to move. It was a short foot race with the Nez Perce Indian tackling the bad paleface at both knees. Shane

was right behind him. "Good takedown, Bowie, two points Nez Perce, zero poacher. You win, Bowie, if you don't let him escape. Sit on his face."

"Nice tackle, Bowie," Sergeant Kochian bragged. "Are you going out for football this fall? The Warriors could use you on their freshman team. I'm the assistant coach."

Upon a minute search of the trunk, deer hair and traces of fresh blood were found. There was enough evidence to put the scoundrel in the poky for a while. His name was **Tra Bull**. He was not giving out any information about his cohorts.



RICHARD EDWARDS WAS A WEATHERMAN ON OUR RADAR PICKET SHIP. HE BEFRIENDED ME AND INVITED ME TO CHURCH. HE RETIRED FROM THE NAVY AND HAS BEEN A PASTOR FOR 40 YEARS. HIS CHURCH SUPPORTS US IN OUR MISSIONARY WORK. A BETTER FRIEND A SAILOR NEVER HAD.

CHAPTER SEVEN

FROGMAN TRAINING

Julia was baking a chocolate cake when Shane and Kosy walked through the door. Grandma was an excellent cook. Shane had many fond memories of enticing smells floating around in the small Woods kitchen, especially on Thanksgiving and Christmas.

Sundays were the most memorable mealtimes. Grandma always had a pot roast or fried chicken accompanied by mashed potatoes, brown gravy and a fruit pie. The way to a teen's heart was also through his stomach.

Grandpa Woods was coming in the door with a large bucket of milk. As he was filtering it, he addressed the two of them, "We got a letter from Thomas today. If you want, I will read it to all of us!"

Kosy put down her purse and hugged both of her grandparents. "Sure, we would love to hear it. We have been praying for Thomas."

To My Dear Family,

I would like to thank Grandma for her care package. She knows how much I love her chocolate chip cookies. We owe both Grandpa and Grandma a great deal, more than we could ever repay. Many times they have bailed us out of trouble by taking us into their hearts and home.

All three of us love you dearly and certainly want you to know it. We would really be in trouble if you hadn't taken Shane and Kosy into your hearts again. So, here I am on Coronado Island in the San Diego Bay, at the Underwater Demolition Team, or "Frogman" School. Perhaps you should know a little more about what I will be doing.

But first, the weather here is just fantastic. Each day it gets up to about eighty degrees and down to sixty at night. The sunsets

are colorful and would make great photos if I had a camera. I certainly will enjoy that part of my stay here.

Our job will be to find and clear **obstacles** from assault beaches so amphibious crafts can land there, with troops and equipment. Right now



you are probably asking yourself, "What obstacles?" There are various obstacles which the enemy uses to protect shores from invasions: steel and concrete girders, logs, barbed wire and sharp stakes as well as mines. Then there are natural obstacles like sand bars, rock formations and coral reefs.

Our training period is twenty-one weeks. Usually less than one-third of the sailors make it to the last week. Our first three weeks have been spent getting into shape, that is, taking all those waffles and strawberry shortcake off the waistline!

We have many long, forced marches and a five-mile run every day. There are several obstacle courses we have to complete in a limited time.

Next week is called "**ELIMINATION WEEK**," because so many have dropped out during that time. So far, I am doing fine. I am not looking forward to next week, but I will pass. I am determined not to quit.

I have also met another frogman named Richard Edwards. He is from Quincy, Illinois, and is a real nice guy. He invited me to go to the Baptist Church with him on Wednesday night. I think I will go. Pray for me, I really feel the need of it.

Love, Thomas

"I wish Thomas could have been here all summer. He could have gone to the Timber Carnival with us," Kosy lamented. "He

could help us catch these rotten poachers, too. I am going to write him and tell him how I got saved. Maybe that will help him understand what it is all about."

Kosette had taken her time to accept Christ. She had a problem with understanding how God could love her and then allow her to be so mistreated by her mother. The best explanation she heard had come from Pastor Ballentine.

He had said that God did not create robots. He gave everyone their free will to choose to do evil or good. Many choose to do good but it would not save them. Good works do not save anyone. The minority, choose to do wrong and for this many suffer greatly, especially those of their own family.

"Good idea, Kosy," Shane encouraged his sister. "Yeah, Thomas is always a big help. I am sure he would enjoy putting these no-good crooks in the slammer. We've only got one so far. There must be a few more of them out there. If we can't stop them, there will not be any fawns left for next years hunting season."

"Today I have a hankering to go swimming in the channels at the Snow Peak Bridge. Let's call Marty and Erin to see if they will meet us there in one hour. Grandpa, will you help me finish wiring the jeep to get it ready?"

Grandpa put his arm around Shane's shoulder as they walked to the garage. "I can hardly believe how much the Lord has changed you, Shane. Since you accepted Christ as your Savior, you are a completely different person. God certainly has blessed you. Don't forget His grace and kindnesses to you."

"I'm still quite young in the Lord, Grandpa. I want to learn more. I have no idea where Mom is, wouldn't it be nice if she came to know Christ, too? As far as remembering what Christ did for me and what God is doing for me now, I will never forget. If you think I need to be reminded, feel free to give me a jolt or two."

"Are you praying, Shane," Grandpa asked.

"Yes, I am, and expecting God to answer me, according to His will, of course. I have lots to pray for. I hope some day Bowie will

abandon his spiritistic beliefs and come to Christ."

Grandpa knew the next thing he was going to say would be hard to swallow. "I know it sounds strange, but you could even pray for Engelbert Farnsworth III. He certainly needs to be saved. I know he is a difficult person to like, and nothing but a thorn in your flesh. You might see things turn around someday, and prayer will be the instrument that will bring it to pass."

"That is going to be difficult," Shane confessed. "I am not sure I am up to that."

"That is what Christ said, 'Pray for those who persecute you and despitefully use you.' If we believe Psalm 23 then we must believe the rest of the Bible. It won't be easy. Be sure you don't give him any fuel for his persecution fire. I will pray also. Now what do we lack to get this jeep on the road?"

Shane was thankful for Grandpa's many years of experience in engine mechanics. He could fix almost anything, including diesel engines. He never had to pay for a repair job. "I think the timing is still a little off, Grandpa."

Grandpa lifted the small hood. "Get in, Shane, and turn the motor over." **When the engine started rotating, blue and yellow flames roared up out of the carburetor.** "Stop, Shane, turn it off," Grandpa yelled over the noise of the engine. "You were right, it does need some more work on the timing."

After a few minor adjustments the four-cylinder engine was running like a top. Grandpa slapped Shane on the back, "You have a real good machine here, Sonny. All we had to do was change the wiring and clean up the inside of the motor. We can use this jeep to hunt deer. Now off you go, and have a good time."

Summer was fading away and fall signs were everywhere. In the early morning Shane could actually see his breath. Each leaf turned to bright colors was only a promise that soon the whole tree would follow suit.



The maple trees in all their breathtaking array of colors would make the evergreens look dull. But, in the dead of winter the green branches, reaching skyward, would mock the empty barren ones.

Shane was preparing for the last hurrah in the clear waters of the Snow Peak channels before school started. The water was already cool enough to require a gingerly entrance. Splashing someone on the back demanded a hearty reprisal.

Marty was on his knees drinking from a clear quiet pool, watching the crayfish chase the minnows. Shane pushed his head under the water. "Better drink a lot now, Marty. When the rains start, this river is going to be so muddy the trout are going to have to use road maps, or should I say river maps?"

No courtesy was appropriate now, a wall of water became the weapon of the day. No minnows stayed around to nibble at their toes. Kosy was helping Marty get even with Shane. Suddenly she stopped and turned her head, putting up her hand to get everyone's attention. "Is that thunder, or am I just hearing things?"

Erin cupped her ears. "I don't hear anything, besides the sky is clear." She continued splashing Kosy and Marty. She had taken Shane's side.

After much dunking and rebel rousing, Shane settled down to look for Red Devil spinners. When he came up empty handed, Kosy was making faces.

"Look, Shane, why are all these dead fish floating by us? Yuck, I'm getting out of the water."

Shane gave the whole area a good once over. "Hey, all these fish



are smaller than six inches, the legal limit."

"And there's that thunder again," Kosy convinced the rest. "But, I still don't see any clouds."

Shane cocked his head and cupped his ears. "That definitely is not thunder. Someone is dynamiting Digangi's Lake, up stream about three miles. That is why these small fish are floating dead downstream. Let's go take a look. It is probably the same poachers."

"Shane, if they have dynamite, that could be real dangerous," Marty warned.

"We won't try to arrest them," Shane promised. "We'll just see who they are. I promise we will stay out of sight."

The jeep pulled out with four curious but nervous teens, eager to put an end to the disgraceful poaching in their area. The trail to Digangi's Lake was off the paved road. It was only wide enough for one vehicle. The small saplings kept brushing the roll bar of the jeep. Every so often a chipmunk would tear across the trail. **Chip and Dale** didn't make it all the way across. But they were smart enough to pause under the jeep as it passed over. Saved by their instincts.

There was one more thunderous explosion as the jeep topped the hill. Shane pulled off the trail, hiding behind a fallen giant Douglas Fir. He pointed the jeep down hill and left it in second gear, with the key on. He didn't want to be unprepared.

Marty jumped out and looked through his binoculars. "There is a small boat in the lake. All I can make out are two men. Wait a



minute, there is another gent on the shore."

Shane was getting nervous. He was scratching his head and could feel his stomach tightening up like a rubber band on a balsa wood plane. "Can you recognize any of them, or can't you see their faces clearly?"

"I can't see them very well from this distance. Maybe we could sneak a bit closer." Marty started to advance. "Kosy and Erin can stay here."

"Now look at who's getting brave or foolish. I thought Shane said we were going to maintain our distance. This is NOT maintaining our distance," Erin told Kosy.

The duo crouched down and weaved their way through the trees and bushes until they were close to the water's edge. "We've got to make sure we have enough time to get away, if we are discovered," Shane planned. "I wish I had left the jeep running. Hindsight is easier than foresight."

Marty was adjusting the binoculars. "This is a lot better. I can make out their faces clearly now."

"Do you know any of them? How about the guy on the shore?"

Marty handed the glasses to Shane. "I've never seen any of them before. How about you? Take a look."

Shane peered through the spy glasses. "The guys in the boat I don't know. That toothless dude on the shore sure looks familiar."

They both gawked at each other and Marty blurted out, "The drunk who climbed up the electric pole. Remember, we took him home that night? It's him again, I'm sure of it. He knocked all of his teeth out putting his wet cigarette on the power line."

"Why, of course," Shane muttered disgustedly, "How stupid of me! Remember, when we took him home, I spotted blood on their license plate? They have to be part of the group that is poaching, although there may be more involved."

"They only live a few miles from us. I think they are renting

the Simon's old place," Marty surmised.

Shane looked through the glasses again. "I see an ugly car by the lake. **It looks like a homemade job.** It must be their only vehicle. We will have to notify Sergeant Kochian. He can search their place.



Wait a minute! There seems to be some excitement in the boat. They are shouting and pointing this way."

"They must have spotted us by some reflection off the binocular lens, Shane," Marty guessed. "We had better make tracks."

The toothless guy on the shore picked up his shotgun and let fly both barrels. Fortunately, he was out of range. His pellets fell harmlessly in the lake, far short of the boys.

"We might not be so lucky next time. He could use a lead slug." Shane took off for the jeep with Marty in hot pursuit. "Hurry up, Marty, we've got to get out of here."

Marty shouted, "Erin, start the jeep."

"Does she know how?" the owner worried.

"I hope so."

Erin motioned for Kosy to get in the jeep. She turned the motor over, and it caught hold. Unfortunately, she did not know that Shane had left it in second gear. The Willys Jeep jolted forward. Erin was steering down hill, whether she liked it or not. This was not what the girls had in mind when they decided to keep at a distance and just have a look see.

Shane and Marty were 'good griefing' it half way down the

hill. "Keep it on the road, Erin. Step on the brakes a little," Shane yelled as best as he could.

Because she slowed the jeep down some, Shane was able to catch up. He grabbed the roll bar and swung aboard. "Scoot over, girl, I'm taking charge." With that she slid over to the co-pilot's seat and Shane plopped his hide in the driver's place and took the steering wheel.

Marty took hold of the other roll bar and swung into the back seat. "Pedal to the metal, Shane. Old Toothless is topping the ridge. He is aiming that cannon right . . ."

A thunderous clap cut Marty's words off. Fortunately, that is all it cut off. The twelve-gage slug whizzed over their heads. "This is too close for comfort," Shane complained as they hit Snow Peak Road and headed for home.

They knew a chewing out would be the order of the day when Sergeant Kochian heard the story of this narrow escape. He did not want them this close to any flying bullets. It was not necessary and certainly not good for their health. "I told you so" would be the menu for the visit with him at the police station.

CHAPTER EIGHT

THE EASTERN TRIP

Engelbert Farnsworth III was a real trial to the lawmen in Linn County. He had no respect for the law and was a bully at school. Shane and his friends had already found this out. The game warden wanted to catch him in the act of poaching but so far Bert had outsmarted him.



John Yelle, one of the game wardens, spotted Bert fishing in Crabtree Creek, **using wadders** up to his arm pits. “Do you have a fishing license, Bert?” John was sure he didn’t.

Bert was a smart mouth, “Sure I do. Yes Sirrrre, I certainly do.”

John thought for sure he didn’t so he asked him to pull out and bring it over to him. Bert was not going to cooperate, “If you want to see it, you have to wade out here, I’m busy trying to catch some rainbow trout.”

That was all the invitation John needed. He carefully waded out to Bert and asked for the license. To his surprise, Bert produced the license and made a smart aleck smile. John was not amused. He was soaking wet and needed to go back to the office to change clothes. Then he got a call from Sergeant Kochian to give him a little help with some junior detectives.

It wasn't comfortable in Sergeant Kochian's office. The

officer was very upset, and rightly so he thought. "You kids are living dangerously. You **HAVE** to be more careful. These guys you are playing around with are nasty fellows, **NOT** the kind you sit next to in church. I **DO NOT** want any teenage casualties. **HEAR?"**

"We didn't think they would see us," Shane tried to defend himself and calm the nervous sergeant at the same time. "They must have seen a reflection from the binocular lens."

"Listen, kids, I'm not kidding. I like all of you and have no desire to attend any premature burials," the sergeant continued to chew on them and admonish them, too. "I went to their rented farm. They had already cleared out and left no forwarding address."

At that time, the sergeant called the game warden into the room. "I want you to meet John Yelle. He is one of the three game wardens for Linn County. He has some advice for you."

With that introduction, John started his class, "I am confirming what the sergeant said.

These guys are not playing around. Don't be reckless. I am going to give you my phone number so you can call me if you see anything."

"Well, we are back to zero again," Marty complained.

Marty noted the expression on Sergeant Kochian face. Anticipating his next admonition, Marty finished by saying, "**I mean YOU two are back to zero, SIR.**"

Shane liked Sergeant Kochian but was not intimidated by his personality like Marty seemed to be. "Don't worry about us, Sergeant, we are all in the hands of God; and we are careful. Sometimes it just seems that we are in the right place at the right time."

Kosy remembered what Shane had said previously. "Is it in the wrong place at the right time or in the right place at the wrong



time? Now you are saying that we were in the right place at the right time. Confusionville, Oregon, that's where I live."

"You guys take it easy," Sergeant Kochian ordered, "and try to inform me before you go playing 'I Spy' or '**Gang Busters.**' Okay?"

"We'll try our best," Erin promised for all four of them, "but we do not have walkie talkies or C.B. radios, Sergeant Kochian."

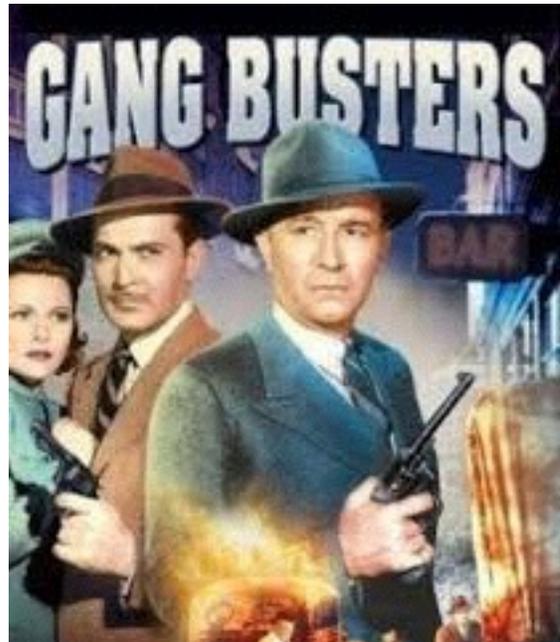
"Hey, if things get any hotter around here, I think I will have a police radio installed in a '57 Chevy at the city's expense. Now out of here you guys and be good," were the sergeant's last words.

Pulling into the T.P. Oil Company was a ritual that all four anticipated. Bowie always had a smile and a kind word, but this time he verbalized his discontent. "So, I miss out on all the fun and games of Lebanon's only teenage detective agency. That is not fair. I guess I'll have to stir up some of my own excitement. Are you guys going to the rodeo with me this weekend?"

"We are planning on it, Bowie," Shane spoke up first. "When do you want us to meet you here?"

"It won't be easy," he warned them. "It is a six-hour drive. We had better leave tomorrow. That way we will have time to rest the horses and, of course, the cowboys and Indians get some rest too. I don't want to punish my new Nash, so I'll use my dad's pickup to pull the horse trailer. You guys can follow me. I will arrange some sleeping quarters for you with some of my fine relatives."

"And just exactly WHERE will we sleep, Bowie?" Kosy asked with a funny look on her face.



"My dear Little White Princess, I can guarantee it won't be in a tepee or a wigwam," Bowie tried to humor Kosy. "I have some well-to-do relatives that raise Herefords at a place called The Sweet P Ranch. What do you say we meet here at noon tomorrow? You will really enjoy the experience. I'll make you a promise. If when we get back, you have not had a good trip, you don't have to go!"

Shane wasn't falling for that. "Alright, Bowie, we will go; but no more of your forked-tongue double talk, savvy?"

Back at the farm Grandma was consenting to let them go. "You need one more fling before the long grind of school starts."

"Thanks, Grandma," Kosy said. "At least this year we don't have to buy our school clothes at Polly Potter's Used Clothing Trailer."

Just then the phone blared out with the Wood's party-line ring combination - two longs and a short. "I'll get the phone for you, Grandma,"

Kosy ran for the bureau, tripping on the rug. She slid to the phone and picked the receiver up, just as Shane was crossing his hands like an umpire - **"Safe, you're safe at home, Kosy." At times Kosy thought her brother was nuts!**

Erin spoke lowly to Kosy on the phone. "It's too bad we don't have another person going. If we did, you could sit in the front with Shane and me."

"Why would I want to sit in the middle? I like window seats."

"No, silly, I would sit in the middle, and even closer to Shane because you would be by the window." Sometimes



Erin thought Kosy was naive, or was she?

"I could always ask Shane's old friend, Linda McCarn, to come along," Kosy teased.

She wasn't as naive as Erin thought. "No way, Jose. We will keep it just as it is," Erin quit while she was ahead.

When Shane and company pulled into Bowie's gas station, the sun was already high in the sky, leaving short shadows on the ground, Bowie laid the map out on the counter. "We will hit the freeway at Albany and go north on highway 99, bypassing Portland and catching The Hood River Highway. Then it is right on to Pendleton. You should follow me, so we can go my speed, understand?"

The caravan pulled out at high noon, heading for the north country. Although he knew something about the area, Shane had never been to Eastern Oregon. That didn't keep him from donning his tour guide voice, "Listen, folks, if you look to the right, we are now passing Cent-Wise Drug Store. This will be your last chance to enjoy a Butterfingers or Snickers bar for the next 150 miles."

"That's a lie," Marty blurted out. "I brought two in my back pocket. Oops, it's Butterfingers crumbs now."

The ride to Albany was uneventful, the freeway north was great. Driving through Salem, they could see the court house with its bright cylinder dome and the famous **Golden Pioneer** standing tall.

Most of the land around the capital was used for fruit and vegetable farming. In Salem there were many canning factories. This was the peak season for green beans and mint. "Maybe some day," Shane projected, "maybe some day, we will come up here



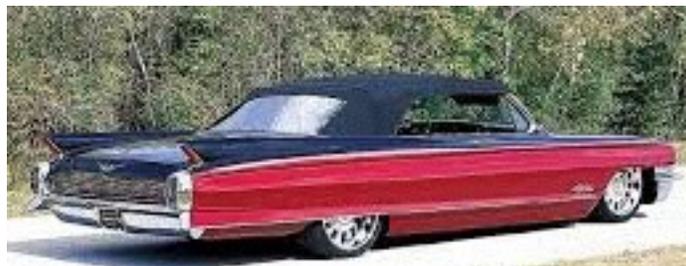
and visit the State Fair." That got a majority yell.

There was a stop in Milwaukee for a hot dog and coke. Shane checked the oil in both vehicles. He made sure the hood on Bowie's pickup was latched down tight. "Ready to roll." Skirting around Portland to avoid traffic, the slow-moving caravan turned east along the Columbia River.

This part of the trip would be picturesque. High cliffs on the right contrasted with the water level of the mighty Columbia River on the left. Majestic snow-covered Mount Hood was directly behind them.

Even Erin was impressed. "This is the most beautiful spot I have seen since I saw the Grand Tetons in Wyoming. Shane, some day I hope to take you to visit our home there - rolling plains, towering mountains and all the hunting and fishing your little Oregon heart could stand."

Shane noticed a **1962 red and black Cadillac convertible** on the shoulder of the road. The car looked abandoned with its hood



up. Nobody was even near the car. Marty noticed it too. He yelled as they passed by slowly, "Anybody there?"

Kosy cupped her hands over her mouth, "Nobody but us chickens."

"Okay, enough from the peanut section," Marty pulled on her hair. He pleaded with Shane, "Let's put up the top. It is quite a bit cooler here along the river."

Shane flashed his lights at Bowie. They both pulled over just ahead of a man who was walking along the road. Shane started to put the top up, addressing the oncoming stranger. "Is that your

brand new Caddie back there?"

"Sure is, Sonny," the man answered. "I ran out of gas. An \$8,000 car and it won't run without twenty-five cents worth of petrol. Incredible isn't it?"

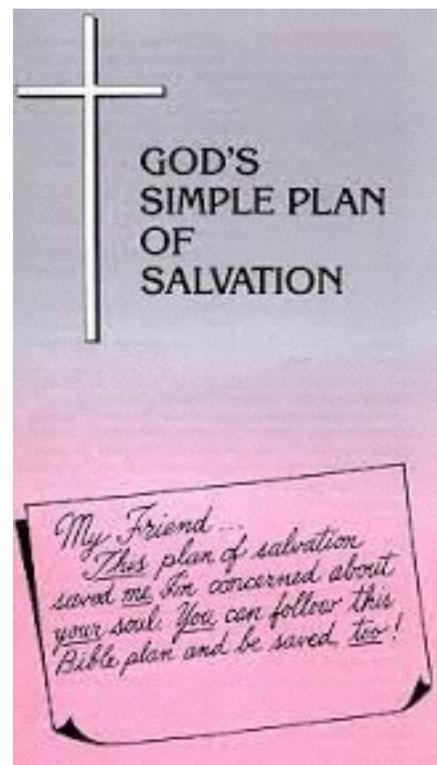
"Why does everyone call me Sonny?" Shane thought to himself. "Well, you can't leave that new car alone on this road. I have a **two-gallon can full of gas I can give you**. It has my name on it, but you can keep it. Just pass it along to someone else in need. Also take this tract and read it, passing it along with the gas can. Is it a deal?"

"Sure, kid," the man was relieved, "It's a deal. I couldn't pay you anyway. All I happen to have is a Standard Oil credit card. You really saved my day. I have a real important engagement back in Portland with a minor league baseball player. Thanks a lot."

Shane retrieved the can and gave the man a **God's Simple Plan of Salvation** tract with Grandpa's address on it. "Now remember the deal. Pass this along with the can, after you read it, of course."

The thankful pedestrian handed Shane one of his business cards. "If you are ever in San Francisco, look me up. Really, I mean it. You have saved me from missing a very important meeting. I won't forget it."

As Shane finished putting the top up, Erin read the man's business card. "Mr. Carson Dundee - New Personnel



Director of the San Francisco Giants."

"Wow, he works for the Giants. He must know Willie Mays personally. Hey, Mr. Dundee," Shane yelled, "thanks for the card. I will see you in San Francisco

someday. And tell

Willie Mays that I'll watch him in the World Series in October." Mr. Dundee waved.

As they passed the **Bonneville Dam**, Bowie pulled into a gas station. "I need to check the horses. This will be our last stop until we get to Pendleton. If you want a root beer or something, it is now or never."

Shane let Marty drive the rest of the way. On both sides of the river there were golden waves of wheat.



Monstrous harvesters were already separating the grain from the stalk. Other fields were still **being irrigated by long aluminum pipes which ended at huge wheels, continually circling the fields, leaving huge balls of green and then later golden wheat.** This new

method eliminated the tiresome job of having to change the pipe every four hours.

The afternoon sun made it look like the blue sky was forever meeting the golden fields. Erin was again impressed. "There are some awesome color combinations here, Shane."

The tired teens pulled into Pendleton at dusk. The milk cows were just being herded into the barns. Bowie directed them to the Sweet P Ranch just north of the city. Everyone crawled out, hoping to hit the shower.

Bowie introduced his relatives, "Listen, gang, this is my Uncle Two Tall Pinetree and his family. That cutie over there is Princess Ann Pinetree. She just won Miss Teenage Nez Perce of Umatilla County. Ain't she pretty?"

Ana Pinetree acted like she was blushing; but you couldn't see the color, she already had a lovely dark complexion. Bowie had not exaggerated, she was beautiful. Her olive skin made her straight hair look as black as midnight.

"Well, I'm sure this crowd is tired, hungry and in need of some cleaning up," Mrs. Pinetree tried to rescue Ana. "Girls follow me, boys to the left." No one moved yet. They were still all gawking at the beautiful Indian princess.

Marty caught Shane's attention. "Hey, that Princess Ana is really a knockout, isn't she?"

Now it was Erin coming to Shane's rescue, "Shane really didn't notice, did you?" He received an incentive elbow nudge in the rib cage. She hoped he would get the hint so she would not have to kick him in the shins, that was more painful.

"Well, Marty, it is kind of hard not to notice," he defended himself. "But, I will leave that enjoyable decision up to you." Shane rubbed his ribs.

Kosy addressed Mr. Pinetree, "Is it always this hot over here?"

"I suppose you already know that the Cascade Range keeps most of Oregon's moisture on the west side. The clouds are

usually dry by the time the hot winds have pushed them over the mountains to us. We have cold winters and hot summers. Did you notice a change in landscape after you left The Dalles?"

"Yeah, we did," Marty concurred. "It changed from evergreen to mesquite and brush. The difference was very dramatic. The

temperature change was also amazing. We stopped to take the convertible top down again. How hot does it get around here?"

"Pendleton has the dubious honor of holding the record for Oregon's hottest day in history," Mr. Pinetree informed them - 119 degrees. But don't worry yourselves into an unnecessary sweat. That was one hundred years ago."

The ranch house bespoke of Indian heritage. These people were obviously proud of their Nez Perce roots. **A thick wooden bench with carved horses as a back rest** looked inviting. Shane noticed the unusual furniture. "Is this whole Pinetree family steeped in horse tradition?"

Princess Ana Pinetree was already attracted to Shane. "The Nez Perce Indians were always great horsemen and excellent horse breeders. It was our people who developed the Appaloosa; we even sold many horses to the Army. Unfortunately, the U.S. troops were mounted on some of our own fine horses when they caught Chief Joseph just forty miles short of the Canadian border. He lived and died just sixty miles from here. His grave site is visited often in Wallowa."

Marty tried to catch Ana's attention. "Do people go there to worship him? Are you related to him?"

"Yes and yes," Ana answered Marty but still kept looking



directly at Shane. "Many of our people are spirit and ancestor worshippers. Since Bowie's dad and my dad are brothers, I, too, am a great, great granddaughter of Chief Joseph."

Mr. Pinetree had just come back from putting the horses in the barn. "Enough of Indian history tonight. You cowboys and Indians will want to clean up and eat. We have an old Indian specialty tonight - tacos and burritos!"

Indian artifacts decorated every part of the living room. A detailed and colorful woven blanket hung opposite a beautifully framed picture of Chief Joseph. But it was the huge mounted buffalo head that really caught their eyes.

The supper had a south-of-border twang to it; but the dessert was Alaskan Delight. Shane, Marty and Bowie shared the same room. Two of them got bunk beds, and the coin-toss loser slept on the floor cushion. Marty made sure he won by using his two-headed quarter. Shane was wondering why he always won the toss. There was something fishy about that coin and he promised himself he would exam it before the next toss.

It was Snoresville until about five in the morning. Three sleeping teens were rudely awakened by Mr. Pinetree beating on the door and yelling into their room, "Get up boys. THE BARN'S ON FIRE!"



CHAPTER NINE

THE FIRST RODEO

Three boys jumped out of bed and into their jeans. When they reached the porch, it was obvious that the barn was lost. No one could even get close to the inferno of flames.

"Get your pickup and car away from the barn," Mr. Pinetree yelled. "Put them over on the other side of the house. We can't save the barn, nor the animals in it. What we need to do is soak down the house. Hook up the hoses."

The girls were all wrapped up in colorful blankets, watching from the porch. When Two Tall Pinetree barked out orders, the boys ran for the garden hoses, hooking all of them up to the outside faucets.

Kosy had tears in her eyes as she heard the horrible noises from the the horses and other animals perishing in the blaze. She always had a tender heart for anyone or anything that was suffering. "Bowie lost his good rodeo horses in such a horrible, painful way. How terrible!"

As Bowie and Shane were soaking down the west side of the house, they could hear the fire engines approaching. It was too late to save any part of the ill-fated barn. **The firemen still put out the blaze and took over watering the house.**



Shane tried to console Bowie, "I'm really sorry, Buddy. I guess this means you are out of the calf roping event, as well as losing two fine horses." Marty added his condolences.

The heavyweight Indian went on the warpath. He stomped around the yard, letting out a few war whoops. There was not a paleface in the crowd that wanted to tangle with Bowie. When the dust finally settled around him, he could be heard all over the county. "I'LL GET THOSE OUTHOUSES IF IT THE LAST THING I DO."

Two Tall Pinetree was trying to calm his nephew down. "It's not as bad as it looks, Bowie."

"What do you mean 'not bad'?" Shane was appalled at Two Tall's calmness. "Bowie loses two good horses. You lose your barn and all of your animals, and you say, 'THAT'S NOT TOO BAD.' That is what you said, didn't you?"

"Well, the loss of the barn and animals is very unfortunate. We thought we had everything under control," Two Tall answered with his square Indian jaw set firm. "I never thought they would stoop to this low level. This is really scary. They have gone way too far for a measly rodeo trophy."

Marty was becoming too curious to keep silent any longer. "Who are THEY? WHAT is going on around here? Would someone who knows more than I do, kindly fill us in?"

"Well, we might as well fill you in," Two Tall started out. "We had some premonitions of foul play. I had received a few anonymous phone calls demanding that Bowie stay in Lebanon until after the rodeo."

"You've got to be kidding." Shane questioned Mr. Pinetree's statement, "Is this rodeo stuff really that serious?"

"You wouldn't think so," Two Tall wrinkled up his forehead. "For one, I certainly don't think so. But Bowie is really good, a natural. If he can win first place in two events and place in the other two, he could win the **All-Around Cowboy buckle**. Somebody apparently doesn't like that idea at all."

"That's really cute," Erin said. "That an Indian can win the All Around Cowboy belt?"

Bowie kind of smiled, changing his previous scowl. "It is funny, isn't it? I think that is exactly why someone does not want me to win it."

Shane was shaking his head in disbelief.

"Really, Bowie, this is 1962, not 1862. Are there still people that prejudiced against Indians? I thought they all faded away with the buckboards and covered wagons."

Bowie reminded Shane, "You lived around Mexicans in California. Were there any prejudices against them in your area?"

"Yes, I did notice it."

"And what do you think old Engelbert Farnsworth III is doing when he calls me names? I know he is mean and ornery with everyone, but he treats me worse than a skunk."

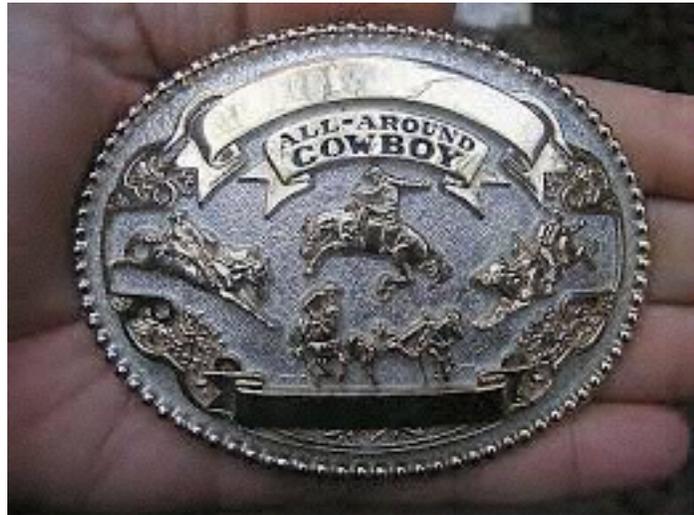
"What are you going to do now, Bowie?" Erin asked moist-eyed and quite concerned for her friend.

Bowie was confident and determined. "I came up here last weekend and left my horses at a cousin's farm on the other side of town. Those unfortunate horses that died in the fire were two old nags that were heading for the glue factory anyway."

"Then you were anticipating trouble," Shane noted. "Why didn't you include us in on the secret?"

"There was a chance, a slim one, that we would not see any trouble. I did not want to unnecessarily worry you."

Marty was ready to preach but he held it back. "Bowie, that is what friends are for. You didn't even give us a chance to turn this



situation over to God."

"But really, guys, we were not anticipating anything quite this harsh. We thought they would just steal the horses. We were glad to let them do it. They would think they had defeated me. My uncle even tied up his watch dogs to make it easier for them."

Two Tall Pinetree put his hand on his forehead and grimaced. "We had no idea they would go this far."

"How do you know **THEY** started the fire?" Erin questioned. "Could it have been an accident?"

"It would be a million to one shot to happen this very night," Two Tall added. "A fire does not engulf any building from the outside first and then burn inward. I think the firemen can prove that it was started on purpose, by an arsonist."

Mrs. Pinetree consoled her husband, "We do have insurance; that is helpful. We took turns watching the barn all night. It was my turn to watch. I had my eyes on it all the time. I saw nothing until the whole barn was instantly engulfed in flames. Now it is just **a pile of smoldering ashes.**"



"We will survive," Two Tall promised. "Let's get some grub and hightail it over to the rodeo grounds to cheer Bowie on to victory."

"One more comment," Shane insisted. "It seems to me that the most likely person or persons responsible for this crime would be associated with the kid Bowie has to beat, right?"

"It could be," Two Tall retorted, "or a group of people not wanting to see an Indian win All Around Cowboy. We have some ideas, but no way to prove anything. Let's keep our eyes peeled for anything suspicious at the rodeo. We want Bowie to have every fair chance to win that trophy."

Bowie had entered in four events: calf roping, bull riding, saddle bronc riding and bareback riding. Calf roping was the only event where he would use his own horse. His cousin had them ready at the arena.

Each event had different classifications according to age and experience. Bowie was in the teen group of the experienced riders. The local weatherman was cooperating. It would be a hot dusty day, great for sun-tanners and soda pop vendors. The rodeo atmosphere is contagious, loaded with great horses, furious bulls, scared calves, and fancy-dressed girls. There would also be good looking, tough, square-jawed cowboys and lots of barbecue.



Bowie's first event was **BAREBACK RIDING**. Obviously, there is no saddle nor reins to control the horse. The rider has to stay aboard for eight seconds, if he expects to win anything. The horse jumps, plunges and bucks while the rider puts the spurs to it.

The announcer yelled, "From Lebanon, Oregon - Bowie Pinetree. RIDE'M COWBOY!"

"In this case it is RIDE'M INDIAN," Travis Pinetree corrected the announcer. Bowie's parents had joined the fan club. Ana Pinetree quickly filled them in on the early morning adventure.

The glee club from Lacombe went nuts when Bowie broke the

gate. "RIDE'M BOWIE. HANG ON, INDIAN."

Six seconds, "STAY ABOARD, BOWIE," Shane yelled over the girls heads. Seven seconds and eight. The buzzer blew off and Bowie flew off. He hit the ground standing up and running hard for the fence.

"All right," Shane yelled as he spilled his popcorn in Erin's hair. "Sorry, kid, guess I got a bit excited."

Bowie had an hour break before his next event. Marty pushed a paper plate towards him. "Would you like some western style barbecue ribs, Indian?"

"Not really, at least not now, anyway," Bowie was polite. "The only ribs I am going to have will be under me. My next event is bull riding. I can't do that on a full stomach. With that forth-coming information, nobody even questioned where the rumbling was coming from - Bowie's stomach was complaining about its emptiness, loneliness.

Kosy was closest to Bowie, "Wow, Bowie, your stomach sounds like it thinks your throat

was cut." She had it about right and the Indian teenager gave her the thumbs up to agree with her, as he patted his woeful belly.

BULL RIDING - in this event the cowboy or Indian, whatever the case may be, holds onto a long rope that has been looped around the bull's body. He does not have to spur the animal, just stay on eight seconds. Bowie told it like it was. "Color this event dangerous because of the bull's temperament and the fact that ALL the bulls are good at using their horns."

The peanut gallery took their cheering positions. Bowie hit



the arena, one arm waving and his hat flying. Being thrown up in the air and slammed down on a sharp backbone was not for cream puffs.

Bowie hung on, but not for eight seconds. After just seven seconds he was thrown up in the air, and as gravity would have it, brought suddenly back down to earth. The thud shot through Kosy and Erin.

The bull was not one bit amused. The one-ton fury turned on his hind legs. With a head-and-horn-first charge he tore after Bowie, dust flying and girls screaming. Kosy was the loudest. "RUN, BOWIE, RUN." This excitement gave Kosy a chance to trim her fingernails.

"PUMP THOSE LEGS, SON," Bowie's mom yelled above the rest.

Bowie was a bit dizzy from hitting his head hard on the ground. He wasn't paying attention to the bull, like he usually did, and should always do. Before he could realize what was happening, he was pushed from behind and stuffed into a barrel. The rodeo clowns rolled him away from the 2,000 pound, angry-eyed critter that had plans on horning in on him.



"That was too close for comfort," Erin sputtered with a shutter. As the clowns diverted the bull to the side of the arena, Bowie jumped safely behind the protection panel.

SADDLE BRONC

RIDING would be an afternoon event. The Bowie fan club went for a break, encountering him at the back of the rustic wooden bleachers. The Indian was dusting himself off. "I'm still in the running for first place. If I can ride that bronc for a full eight seconds, it will all come down to my time in the calf roping."



Shane still had his idea on the burner. "Who is close to you, you know, tied for first place?"

Bowie scowled. "A dude named John Outhouse, if you could believe that! He is a jerk with a capital 'G,' if you know what I mean."

"That's spelled with a capital 'J,' Bowie," Erin, the English major, felt compelled to correct him.

"I know how to spell it," Bowie reminded her smiling through the dust on his face. "When they are a definite triple zero, like John Outhouse, I spell it with a capital 'G.' Get it? I also spell it that way to see if anyone is actually paying attention. And thank you, Erin, for noting it."

In the afternoon Bowie remained close to John. Both of them managed to stay on the bucking broncs for eight seconds. It would all come down to the calf roping time, just as Bowie had predicted.

Ana Pinetree supported her cousin Bowie. "He's got a slight

edge on you, Cousin. You've got to have a good time in the calf roping in order to beat him and take the silver belt. John's calf-roping time was 16:35."

Bowie was leading his horse over to the pens. The Nez Perce was coming up soon. Shane patted the horse on the rump. "Are you nervous, Bowie?"

"Do fish swim?" he answered flatly. "Of course I am nervous. A lot depends on my horse Lightening."

Shane cocked his head to the side and made an inquisitive face. "Where was Lightening just a few minutes ago?"

"Tied up over there by the rest of the horses."

"Just a premonition I have; an idea. Take off the saddle and blanket, Bowie. I want to check something."

"I only have a few minutes, Shane."

"If I am right and you don't take off the saddle, you will have another saddle bronc ride instead of a calf roping event."

"Okay, Little Buddy, but help me." Bowie started ripping off the stomach straps.

When they removed the saddle, Shane turned the blanket over, removing a large cockle burr. "Just as I thought. The old burr-under-the-saddle routine. This is a trick as old as Billy the Kid."

Bowie looked around to see if anyone else was as interested as they were in this new discovery. He clenched one fist and slammed it into his open palm. He notice one of the Outhouse gang standing by his homemade motorcycle. It was a real powerful bike but would not win any trophies at this rodeo!

"Why, those bums, I could have gotten hurt. They don't care for anyone or anything except winning that stupid trophy and belt. I'm going to frost their hide with a good time."

Shane rejoined the Lebanon glee club with a burr in the palm of his hand. "Those nasty guys are going to pay for this some day," Marty promised.

Erin pushed Marty's head down so she could see. "Pay

attention now. Bowie is coming out."

Princess Ana Pinetree was screaming, as she moved closer to Shane, "Come on, Bowie, give it your best. **SHOW THEM BUMS.**"



**HOMEMADE OUTHOUSE BIKE. BOWIE
WONDERED WHETHER IT WAS A
COMFORTABLE RIDE OR NOT!**

CHAPTER TEN

INDIAN HISTORY

CALF ROPING - Bowie hit the arena with his rope swinging. The calf leaped and jerked from side to side. Lightening kept close to the little scared critter. Bowie's first throw had to be right on target. There was no time, nor room, for even a margin of error.



The loop flew into the air - dead ringer. From there Bowie was so fast that the

newcomers had a hard time following the action. The Nez Perce Indian jumped off as Lightening dug in. He threw the calf on its side, wrapped up three legs, tied them off and cleared hands.

Bowie's time was 15:47. A small section of the stands went wild. Popcorn went west for the winter, and backs were slapped, with the girls giving bear hugs one to another. Ana gave Shane a longer hug than she did the girls. Erin noted it and turned a little green around the gills.

When the hooppala and congratulating had settled down to a small roar, Erin grabbed Kosy and headed for the powder room to check out their hairdos and such. That is when Ana made her move. She quickly scooted over as close as she could to Shane. There was hardly a hairs breath between them.

Ana wanted to make friends with Shane as fast as possible, maybe even before Erin got back. "Are you actually interested in participating in the rodeo?"

"Not really," Shane didn't want to hurt Ana's feelings. "When



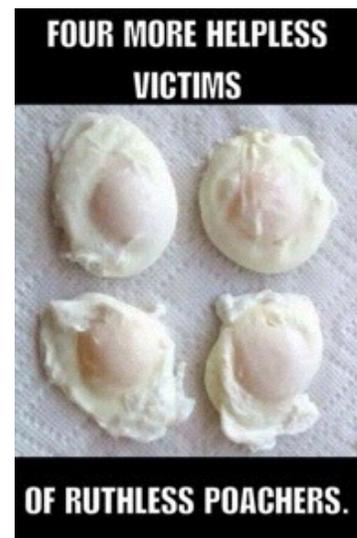
I hit the ground, I want it to be on my feet, I want it to be on my back, and certainly not on the horns of a red-eyed, sharp-horned, charging Brahma bull. I would rather sit here in the stands and have thrills running up and down my back instead of a mad-as-a-hornet horse."

"What do you think of our rodeo? Have you ever been to such a gala event?" She was really pouring it on, she had such little time left.

"This certainly is the place to be if you like action or are wearing cowboy boots. I noticed these guys sure walk funny though. Most of them look like they were still in diapers when they broke their first horse. I was thinking that if Shakespeare ever attended one of these events he would probably say, '**Behold, what manner of men are these that wear their legs in parentheses, or something like that.**'"

The lovely, friendly, out of control Indian princess was running a campaign to catch Shane. She knew they were after some poachers so she pulled out a photo from her purse and said, "Look at the victims of poachers." It was the same photo that Sergeant Kochian showed him at the station. Shane thought it was cute but not a knee slapper as he hated poaching. But she used it as an added reason to laugh her self silly.

With that excuse, the young, beautiful Indian Princess laughed so hard she fell on Shane's lap. He had to grab a hold to prevent



her from falling on the ground.

Murphy's Law would have it that Erin should now reappear, which she did. She and Kosy noticed the good-time kids were really falling all over each other. Erin's eyes turned from blue to green. "If Ana Pinetree doesn't watch it, they will have to change her name to Lame Dear, or Limping Doe." She quickly returned to her place between Shane and the lovely Indian princess.

Bowie received his first-place trophy for two events and the coveted silver belt for All-Around Cowboy. The money he received was enough to pay for the horses he lost, as well as Shane's costs for coming up with him.

"Winning is fun isn't it, Bowie?" Kosy gleamed, showing she was proud to be the friend of this Indian who had ground-in dust and dirt all over his big frame. She held up his trophies and belt for everyone to see.

"Yeah, it looks like the fat lady sang as far as John Outhouse is concerned," he crowed. "Maybe some day we will catch those guys at their game."

There was much to do before the kids headed back to Lebanon. They still wanted to visit Bowie's friends and relatives on the reservation. Shane wanted to learn more about Nez Perce

A JOURNALIST, RALPH CARPENTER, MADE THIS REMARK "IT AN'T OVER TIL THE FAT LADY SINGS" BECAUSE THE OPERA ALWAYS ENDS WITH A RATHER HEFTY LADY SINGING THE LAST SONG. SO WHEN BOWIE SAID THE FAT LADY HAD SUNG, IT MEANT THAT THE CONTEST WAS OVER.



customs and culture.

They felt it necessary to report their suspicions about the Outhouse gang to the local authorities, especially Officer Elk Looks Back, a uncle of Bowie's. Shane was impressed with this well-dressed Nez Perce.



Elk Looks Back was right on it, "This is more serious than I thought. I will make a detailed investigation and thorough scanning of the barn area. If I come up with anything concrete, I'll get in touch with you."

Bowie took them to the reservation. "This is a Umatilla Indian Reservation, not Nez Perce. Some of my friends and relatives live here." He pulled up to a **broken-down trailer house** with a rusted-out pickup parked far on the side. Old car parts decorated the front yard. What grass was growing high struggled through the middle of bald tires. The whole gang was greeted by a tail-wagging, almost toothless German Shepherd.

Erin was leery about getting out of the car. "The dog!" She exclaimed. I have had numerous bad experiences with dogs that were never supposed to be the biting kind. They always said that their bark was worse than their bite. I found out the hard way that their bite was worse than I thought."

"It's all right, Paleface Princess. Dogs smile by waving their tail," Bowie eased her fears. "Besides, Old Fireyes has chased too many sticks. He has nothing but nubs for teeth. He might gum you to death though."

Bowie was a bit embarrassed by the mess. "Not all my relatives are as tidy as the Two Tall Pinetrees. But, I'm sure you will like Uncle Running Deer Sagebrush. He's a real nice guy, once

you get to know him."

Kosy followed Bowie to the front door, stepping over a broken manifold and three rusted-out pistons, noticing **a pile of bald tires on the right.** "Is he really your uncle?"

"Not really, Kosy, but for convenience sake

we call him Uncle Running Deer. Just Running Deer would be too familiar, lacking proper respect for elders. Mr. Sagebrush would be too formal. So, we call all our adult relatives 'Aunt and Uncle' making it more intimate. Do you like this idea, Kosy?"

Once inside the house the white kids felt more comfortable. It was a typical American style home, a bit cluttered, but homey. A humongous mountain of a man greeted them at the door. He even towered over Bowie. His shirtless belly had so many stress marks, it looked like a Linn County Hunter's Map.

Mr. Sagebrush excused himself, returning quickly, donned with a soft leather shirt. Shane wondered how many herds of deer had to be sacrificed to make a covering that big!

After initial introductions they were invited to sit down and share some Pepsi and deer jerky. Crying Breeze Sagebrush was making popcorn. Without meaning to, Shane opened up a touchy subject. "How much land do you own, Mr. Sagebrush?"

"That is an interesting subject, Paleface. We Nez Perce Indians never thought land belonged to anyone." He began waving his hands in the air. "The land belonged to all of us. A warrior could own a horse, a tepee and hunting equipment. His family might even own hides or household items, but the land was community property."

Shane backed off a bit. "I hope I didn't say something to



offend you, Mr. Sagebrush."

"You're a good kid, Shane," he countered. "Call me Uncle Running Dear, please. No, you didn't offend me. I just thought you might be interested in how the Indians believed, and still believe, although we cannot practice what we believe."

Marty motioned for him to keep talking. **"We are all ears."**

"Well, if I can take that literally, I will call you guys the Elephant Gang!" Running Deer Sagebrush slapped his knee and



bellowed like a bull. It was obvious that he was self-entertained. The rest just smiled. Erin covered her ears with her hair.

"In the old days," the big Indian continued. "the land was jointly held. No one individual could claim it or exploit it. No tribe had the right to sell it, especially not to strangers, and certainly never to the white man. As the Indians saw it, one could not sell the land any more than he could sell the air or sea."

"For many good reasons we called the land 'Earth Mother.' As long as we were controlled by the sun, rain, wind and snow, we felt we could not control the earth. Have you ever been at the mercy of a blizzard?"

Erin nodded affirmatively. "We certainly have, out in cold Montana, many times. It is very frightening. You cannot see your hand in front of your face and you need a rope from the house to the barn to make sure you can get back and forth without getting

lost. I would like to ask you a personal question, Mr. Sagebrush. I mean Uncle Running Deer. If you were to die today, do you know where you would spend eternity?"

"That, my White Friend, is the \$64,000 question, that I don't even have a two bit answer for. I am not sure. I have heard what the white man says about God's Son, Jesus Christ. That is certainly an interesting story. I have always accepted the beliefs I was raised with since childhood. I see no reason to change now."

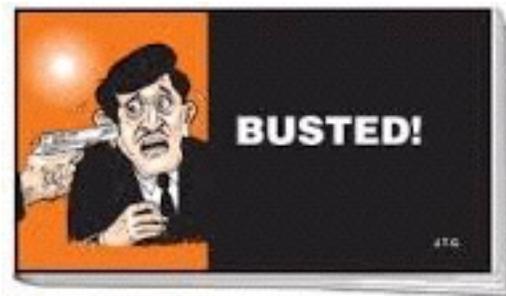
Shane thought it was time to hit the trail. **"We have a tract you might consider reading.** It could help you understand more. We really appreciated the snack. Bowie has one more stop he wants us to make before we start our six-hour drive home."

Bowie directed them to a modern ranch-style home on the side of a hill. "This will be a contrast from our last stop. Mr. Greentree is the councilman of the Nez Perce in this area. It is an elected position. He also teaches Indian History at **Eastern Oregon University in LaGrange.**"

Bowie wasn't wrong. A well-kept and newly-cut lawn greeted them as they parked behind a yellow, 1962 Chevy pickup. Mrs. Greentree met them at the door with three small Greentrees hugging her legs.

Leaning Fawn Greentree patted the tykes on their heads. "We call them Greenshrubs when they are this small. Congratulations, Bowie. I saw the whole rodeo on TV. You deserve every accolade they gave you."

Bowie was embarrassed again, although you could not tell it by his skin color. "Thank you Auntie, these are my good friends from Lebanon, er . . . Lacombe, I mean."



More pop and sandwiches met them when they entered the well-equipped kitchen. The beef jerky seemed to be regular fare at all the Indian homes. They had just walked over a thick, plush carpet passing three hundred years of Indian artifacts on the walls. As Bowie said, this was a definite contrast to the last home they had visited.

Erin liked this place better, at least she didn't have to watch where she put her cowgirl boots. "What a lovely home!"

Mrs. Greentree smiled. She liked to be complimented; most people do. "Would you two girls like to see the rest of the house?"

"We sure would," was heard in unison.

Leaning Fawn escorted them down the hall. "The room on the right is . . ."

Mr. Greentree was interested in Shane's attempts to catch the poachers. "The day has long passed since three buffalo robes were traded for one white man's blanket. Poaching is profitable. We also have Indians poaching here on our reservation. We have regulated seasons, too. But, we don't need to purchase a license or tags. I detest poaching. It's effects are long-range and very disastrous. Have you considered setting a trap for them?"

Marty perked up his ears. "What do you mean TRAP? What do you have in mind?"

"Well, poachers are not extremely intelligent people. Get a mounted deer head and skin. Set it up in the woods by a place where they are liable to pass. Take a camera, and film them when they are shooting."

"Great idea," Shane complimented Mr. Greentree. "We'll try it when we get back. Marty, your Dad has a few mounted heads, doesn't he?"

Bowie headed for the phone. "I am going to check in with Officer Elk Looks Back before we leave." He dialed the police station. "Sure, I'll tell them, stand by. He said he found four steel hunting arrow tips in the ashes, as well as a few busted balloons in the woods. The balloons smelled like gasoline. He wants to

know what we make of it."

Mr. Greentree reasoned, "I think the balloons could have been filled with gas and thrown from the woods without anyone noticing it."

"And they could have lit an arrow, shooting the back side of the barn from the edge of the woods," Shane added. "No one would see anything until the whole outside of the barn exploded into flames, which is exactly what Mrs. Pinetree said happened."

Bowie agreed, "That is the same conclusion the officer had. No tracks of man or beast or vehicle were found around the barn, although there was plenty of disturbance in the woods."

"Just a bit of a suggestion for the officer," Mr. Greentree finished. "Have him check all of John Outhouse's friends or relatives that might be members of the archery club or have purchased any of that kind of equipment lately. I'm sure the insurance company will want to find the guilty party."





CHAPTER ELEVEN SETTING A

TRAP

Monday was going to be a big day. Classes would start at Lebanon Union High School. Shane had never been to a large school of 1500 students. He was going to be a little fish in a big pond. That didn't bother him too much. He was looking forward to the challenge, especially wrest-ling season.

When Shane got home from Pendleton, he had a message waiting for him from the Sleens, the other family who shared the log bridge with the Woods. The next day he received a warm welcome from an old friend when he knocked on Mr. Sleen's door.

"Come in, Shane. Do come in. It's good to see you again. I hope you and Kosy stay around for a long time. Remember when you used to peel chitem bark off the trees on the backside of our property and sell it for \$3.00 a sack after you dried it."

"Sure I do, Mr. Sleen. What can I do for you now?"

Mr. Sleen motioned for Shane to sit down on the porch swing. Beverly Sleen handed him a glass of iced tea with a slice of lemon. "I understand you helped catch one of the poachers by purchasing his car. You even had Sergeant Kochian right there for the arrest."

Shane sipped his tea and then nodded his head.

"Well," the angry farmer continued, "I lost one holstein cow last month to their rotten spot light. Surely, with a beam that bright, they could tell the difference between a slow stupid cow and a fast agile deer. But, anyway, they shot my best milk cow. I didn't want to take any more chances. I bought some reflective paint and wrote 'C O W' on all twenty of my holsteins!"

Shane felt sorry for his long-time friend, "Didn't that resolve the problem for you, Mr. Sleen?"

The milk farmer was getting madder by the minute. "I thought it would. Come on out here, and look at my prize cow that won first place at the Linn County Fair."

Shane followed Mr. Sleen's flashlight to a cow laying on its side, dead. The angry farmer pointed the light to the cow's midsection. There in the middle of the "O" was a hole big enough to put your fist through. **"NOW THOSE BUMS ARE USING MY COWS FOR TARGET PRACTICE!" His fists were doubled up, and there was fire in his eyes.**

The farmer jerked erect and his thin face flushed, "I explained all this to Sergeant Kochian. He can't come out here and protect my herd every night. What am I going to do? Do you have any plans or suggestions?"

Shane wanted to help his friend. Even more so, he wanted to put an end to this disgraceful slaughter. "I have a plan to catch them. I will need this cow hide. It is almost the same color as a

white-tailed deer. Also, don't you have a camera with a telescopic lens?"

"Come back in a few hours, and the hide will be ready. You can use my camera. In fact, you can keep it if you are able to stop these hoodlums."

Marty and Shane spent all morning rigging up the bait along the Roaring River Road. Mr. Lynch donated an eight-point mounted deer head. The cow hide draped over a barrel, partially hidden in the bushes, looked very convincing.

"Now we have to wait. That's always the hardest part," Marty complained a little. "Do you really think they will come by here?"

"Well, since you don't believe in luck, or crossing your fingers, let's pray that they do," Shane suggested in a confident voice. "Let's get a few shots of the deer before any action starts."

"Do you have to use the word 'SHOTS?' Won't the word 'picture' do?"

The day passed slowly. Shane and Marty took turns manning the telescopic camera, being careful to keep its sun visor away from direct light. They didn't want to warn the poachers again.

Several cars stopped along the road to look at the deer. Since the deer didn't run into the woods when they screamed and threw rocks at it, the tourists tired quickly and drove on. It must have looked real enough.

Lunch time came and went with a lot of peanut butter and jelly sandwiches, as well as Grandma's chocolate chip cookies. There was even a thermos of whole milk to wash it down.

"Are we wasting our time or what?" Shane wondered out loud. "If they don't show up before sundown, we will have to call it quits for today. We won't have enough light to get a good picture."

What had been a bright, burning, August sun was now sulking away, planning to hide behind the surrounding mountains. It happened almost every summer day in Linn County, and each time it was just as beautiful. This particular sunset was not appreciated by two teens who wanted the sun to stand still like it

did for Joshua. But it didn't this time.

It was almost dark - quitting time. Shane started stroking his chin, contemplating. "Really, if we got a picture, that would not prove anything in a court of law," Shane thought it out. "We would have to get the whole action including the deer on a 16mm camera. Then we might have some proof, right Marty?"

"You can't be serious, Shane. We did all this hard work for nothing! We could have been swimming at the channels or fishing or even better - wrestling."

Shane had that determined look on his face. He wasn't about to accept a drastic conclusion like that, at least not yet.

Marty was a bit put out. "Well, Murphy's Law is still in effect."

"Yeah I know," Shane unhappily agreed. **'WHAT CAN GO WRONG, WILL GO WRONG.'** But God's laws override Murphy's, don't you agree?"

"Right, preacher, but let's hit the road. It's dark enough to use a . . ."

"SPOTLIGHT," Shane shouted softly, as the car parked on the shoulder of the road. "Get down, or they'll SEE us."

"Let's get out of here, or they will SHOOT us." Marty squeaked as he headed away from the decoy and towards the rear of the batch of trees. Shane followed suit as a few bullets hit the deer head. It went flying.

"We got'm. Quick, to the bushes and cut off his head. Then we'll drag the rest to the trunk," someone shouted in a voice that neither boy wanted to hear at close range.

All three of the poachers started running towards the decoy in the woods. Shane and Marty edged back further into the brush. "Oops," Shane whispered to Marty, "we forgot our lunch bags."

The terrible trio pounced upon the decoy with their skinning knives waving in the air like bayonets. "Hey, Boss, you shot da head clean off," The shortest poacher yelled as he held up the head by the horns.

"You dummy, can't you see nothing? You blind, or just

stupid?" the boss insulted him. "This is a decoy deer. But what for?"

"There are some lunch bags here with a thermos," the third man observed. "What do we do now, Boss?"

"Hightail it out of here, that's what. I ain't liking this one bit."

"Shall we take a few pot shots into da woods first? We might get lucky and hit someone," the third poacher suggested.

The boss headed for the car. "Sure, knucklehead, what with, your knife? We left da guns at da car. We'll shoot from da car. Like you said, maybe we'll get lucky and hit something dat is alive."

"Whoa," Shane mused, "we had better get down and pray at the same time."

Returning to the car, the poachers noticed headlights coming their way. "No time for any shots into da woods," the boss decided. "Let's tear out of here while we are still undetected."

Shane and Marty circled around the small clump of trees and hurried to their car. Shane crawled behind the wheel. "We have to follow them and find out where they live."

"Right," Marty agreed, "but we've got to stay far enough behind so they don't get wise. Let them turn around and get across the covered bridge before we begin tailing them."

Shane warmed up the car. "They have only one tail light. We should be able to keep track of them, but since our car is a convertible, it will be easy to notice. We'll have to maintain a good distance."

The subdued chase began as the poachers crossed the bridge. Marty was using his binoculars to help Shane keep a good, safe space between them and the poachers. "I wish we could notify the police," Marty remarked as his twitching leg revealed his nervousness.

Shane was only going forty-five miles per hour. "With the bullet holes in the deer's head and their guns in the car we might have enough information to put them in the slammer."

The good guys followed the bad guys down the Snow Peak Road, coming out at Western Plywood Mill. Shane pulled into the log lift and waited for the poachers to turn right or left at the stop sign. "They're turning right," Marty signaled with his hand.

"That means they are going to Albany or Scio," Shane concluded. "We may bring home the bacon yet."

The slow pursuit continued until the poachers turned left at Cottonwoods. Shane marveled, "They sure went the long way around. I don't think they are familiar with all these roads. Perhaps they are not from this area. They're headed back to Lebanon now!"

Marty started sputtering. "They're . . .they're pointing back at us. I . . . I think they are on to us." The poachers car lunged forward, bellowing out black smoke and leaving behind five feet of good rubber. Shane followed them, but at a subdued speed.

"They certainly can't outrun us with that old jalopy," Marty blurted out in what he hoped was a confident voice.

"But we really don't know what they have under their hood do we?" Shane kept them within sight. "If he can lay five feet of rubber in second gear at that speed, he's got more than a standard motor. Did you see all the black smoke pouring out of the tail pipe? I think they are just about to lose their engine."

The pursuit turned into a chase. Shane didn't plan on risking anything to get these poachers. He just wanted to keep them in sight. The '57 Chevy didn't have any trouble keeping up with the worn-out, deteriorating sedan.

When Shane hit sixty miles per hour, Marty noticed the nose of a police car peeking out from behind a billboard. "Honk your horn, Shane. We need to get the authorities involved in this chase."

Shane began honking and flashing his headlights. The police car tore out from behind the billboard. Marty kept looking behind. "He's got his siren and lights on now."

"Great, because these no-good poachers are as good as in

the poky. They obviously don't know this road very well. The next curve can't be taken at sixty miles per hour."

Shane kept up the chase and crept in a little closer. Just at the right time he pumped his brakes, released, pumped, released and pumped again until he slowed to forty-five miles per hour.

The poachers were feeling quite confident until they took flight, becoming Lebanon's first Identified Flying Object. Their flight was not as long as the Wright Brothers at Kitty Hawk, but their landing was noisier. They became a U-shaped trunk ornament on a large spruce tree.

Shane pulled over to the corner and jumped out of the car. With his hands raised over his head, he raced to the police car. "Are we glad you crept up behind us! We were chasing three poachers that are now wrapped around Sullivan's tree.

"Okay, Sonny, we'll talk about that later," the officer promised, "Right now I had better call an ambulance."

Shane turned and ran into Marty, who had followed his example by running to the squad car. **"WHY DOES EVERYONE ALWAYS CALL ME SONNY? WHY MARTY, WHY?"**

"Maybe it's your baby face complexion that makes you look so young," Marty made an observation. "Grow a mustache!"

Shane didn't know if he liked that conclusion or not. He was still not quite satisfied. "I can't help it if I was born at a very early age. A mustache, are you kidding. I don't even have peach fuzz yet!"

It took several hours to scrape the car off the tree. An ambulance arrived, taking the poachers to the hospital. Marty was trying to help. "Any rifles found in the car can be traced to prove poaching."

"No need to do that," Officer Freeburg explained. "We found several ducks and a lot of blood in the trunk. I think we have enough to convict these guys, if they ever stand trial. They're really hurting."

Now Marty had time to question Shane. "How is it that you

knew about this corner and the tree?"

"Well, every time we went to Albany, Grandpa always slowed down on this curve. It is called Sullivan's Corner. Mr. Sullivan is the owner of that corn field and the big spruce tree. Notice how scarred it is?"

"Yeah, it doesn't even have any trunk bark on this side."

"Good old Mr. Sullivan has insurance on the tree. Whenever anyone hits it, he gets paid."

"Groooss," Marty scowled. "Why doesn't he just cut it down?"

Shane was heading for the car.

"I guess he just likes to collect on it from people who drive too fast."

A lot of excitement rolled through the little Baptist Church on Sunday morning. Several grateful farmers thanked Shane and Marty for following through on the poachers. Pastor Ballentine also added his congratulations. "No reward this time, Shane."

"Yes there is, Pastor. Seeing justice done is sometimes considered a reward, isn't it?"

Monday morning Shane drove Kosy to the Green Mountain Elementary School and then pushed on into Lebanon. He crossed the canal twice to get to 5th Street. There he spotted Lebanon Union High School, his home for the next four years. He parked next to Bowie, and the foursome headed for the main building.

Shane put his hand out to open the door for Erin. Someone swung it open, placing a dunce cap on his head. "Welcome, scum, to freshman initiation week," crowed Englebert Farnsworth III. "Shane and Bowie, you two are my slaves for the whole week! **WELL, SKIT, SCAT, HOW ABOUT THAT?"**



SULLIVAN'S TREE THAT BROUGHT THE OWNER A LOT OF CASH!

