

The "Genuine" Boxer Cup Replica

for *Bikeland.org*
by Mike Salisbury

It all runs into money sang the monkey as he peed into the cash register," Harry Bernam says lifting his glass as the bartender takes not Harry's but my cash lying on the bar next to my wonderfully quiet new Scorpion helmet.

Harry is out of place here in Venice. Harry makes more sense in North Beach. He is under an unfashionably short tweed overcoat. A necktie in the Cal Berkeley colors of blue and gold lies untied under his frayed Brooks Brothers shirt collar. On his feet that don't touch the floor, are scuffed black suede tuxedo pumps. A hat sits on top of his bearded round head. Not a baseball cap-it is his father's fedora.

My metallic blue and deep, rich, black Triumph Urban leather jacket lays seductively over the back of my stool. It isn't cold enough here for it or Harry's coat and hat. But it's not warm either. It is a gloomy day in old L.A. In the bar, it is 11 a.m. Outside, the sun isn't around to give you the time. There is no horizon because the sky and the city under it are all one color of grey.



Inside the bar it is one color of smudgy snot yellow. The pisser smells like that color. The back door is next to the pisser and is open under one of those marquee signs that keep running old news headlines across in twinkle lights.

"Just quit on ya?" asks Harry looking past the door.

Out that door, in the alley that looks like a set for Big Bird, lines of Russian tourists walk past the garbage cans and down to the beach in a death march of muddy colored shorts that are too short over legs that are a white that doesn't exist anywhere but in bags

of dry cement. The front tire of the motorcycle is sticking its nose just inside the door like a guilty dog.

"Poor baby," I moan. "The one I had waited for. Waited. And waited," softly crying I continue, "Then— that magic moment, it took me by surprise. I knew that she felt it too..."

"Too bad about the bike," interrupts Harry.

"Just like a chick I guess," he says.

"What does that mean?" I ask.

"They quit on ya when you stop feed'n 'em." Harry says.

"What?" I ask through my swollen sinuses.

Harry takes the ice down with the last of his early morning brown drink and burps, "Well if it won't go, won't play ball, you stopped feeding it something." "Did you quit taking it out to dinner? Stopped being nice? Gave up on the romance? Just waved your flaccid bone in its face demanding sex?"

"Easy pal." I say. "It's only a motorcycle."

"Lemme see for myself," says Harry. "You look way too emotionally distraught for that to be true," he says. Harry slides off the stool toes pointed out, grabs my arm and begins walking to the back door. Turning his head over his shoulder back at the bar, Harry pointing a finger to the dripping ceiling of grease says to the bartender, "Have another soldier waiting for my return sir." "And," Harry whispered, "please do put that on the tab of my dear old friend here— the Keeper of the Great American War Chest himself—Mr. Halliburton." Harry turns and smiles sarcastically in my face. He has a black patch over one eye.

In the alley, a kid in baggy jeans on a skateboard with a big pistol in his hand culled one of the Russians out of the herd to rob the poor bastard. A bum in an old limp Ascot Raceway t-shirt has his head in a garbage pail puking. A transvestite hooker in pink hot pants and matching Afro turns its head towards the drunk and with eyes closed asks him through a cigarette dangling out of the corner of her mouth, "Where is the party honey?"

"It is a wonderful life," says Harry.

"Not for me," I say.

"But this machine is simply gorgeous," Harry says leaning over the motorcycle to see it with his one good eye. "A piece of art to enrich this decaying environment with the creativity of humankind."

"A Bimmer too," he says feeling the logo on the tank like a blind man.

"A genuine Boxer Cup Replica," I say.

"Isn't that an oxymoron?" Harry asks. "Genuine Replica? Are there replicated Replicas? Genuine Imitation Replicas?"

"That hurts," I say turning my face away.

"It is the official BMW racing colors and there is Randy Mamola's signature on it." I weakly reply.

"Replicated on a genuine Decal." says Harry.

"All show?" I cry.

"And it won't go?" Harry asks.

"Nope. Battery always runs down."

"So jumpstart it." Harry demands.

"How?" I ask.

"Yee gads!" Harry screams.

Finished with his hurling, the drunk is wiping his mouth on Harry's sleeve "No damn battery terminals anywhere," the drunk slobbers the words as he almost tips over bending down trying to look into the bike while holding on to Harry's well worn sleeve.

"What now?" I ask looking down to be sure no chunks got on my new and very high-tech Alpinestars.

"Gotta take off the lower fairing." The drunk answers.

"Gotta get down." The hooker chimes in.

"Lemme help." says the skateboarder whipping a switchblade open over his shoulder as he rolls by.

"Whoa!" I sing.

"Just call BMW," says Harry.

I pull the phone out of my perfectly fitting Triumph Tornado riding pants.

"That man is correct," says the voice from BMW. "You do take off that fairing to attach a set of jumper cables sir."

"And, then, you shtake off that little round cover under there." I almost gag as the drunk blows that news wetly under my nose into the mouthpiece of the cell phone."

"Where you will find two wires." comes from the phone.

"Time out dammit!" I yell.

"First of all how does this wino know so much about this very expensive motorcycle?" I ask.

"More curious my boy," says Harry "is why is this same very expensive motorcycle simply not designed to be re—charged easily as it looks like it must have a Circuit City full of gadgets inside of itself..."

"...enough electronic shit to burn out the gennyradors of Hoveer Dam itself." The drunk slobbers.

"There must be an easier solution." I say turning off the phone.

"It is German after all," says Harry closing his eyes in respect.

As I lift off the seat of the pristine white motorcycle with the magnificent Bavarian blue wheels held on in the rear to a Louver worthy single sided swing arm, the small crowd in the alley sighs a gasping wow at a glow that emanates from within.

Like Indiana Jones breathlessly opening a long sought for ancient treasure, I carefully open the source of the light— a small metal boxlike container. I turn to my wide-eyed audience... "The Tool Kit of BMW." I say.

"Lhhooke right there," the drunk spits out the words as he puts a warm and wet underarm over my shoulder and points with a yellow finger. Under the seat is a cleanly covered set of wires coming from somewhere inside the bike. On the end is a very seriously designed electronic terminal...

"...like one might find in a Panzer," says Harry.

"Or an alien spacecraft I say."

"Just what fits this thing?" I ask.

I push the last call dialed number on my cell phone.

" That is where you connect a battery charger." says the voice from BMW as I describe the part.

"How?" I ask.

"Wisssh the adaptor." The words spray onto my cheek from the mouth of the drunk now resting his stubbled chin on my back. "Adaptor?" I shout into the phone. "What friggin' a-dap-tor?"

" The Genuine BMW Factory battery charger adaptor." replies Mr. Beemer.

"And..." like Lucy to Ricky, I ask sarcastically, "...where might one find that special little number?" "You wouldn't just happen to have one lying around there somewhere close by do you factory boy?" I continue.

Bimmerman answers loyally and loudly enough for all in the alley to hear out of the cell phone, "That exclusively BMW adaptor sir, is only available from your neighborhood Factory Authorized BMW dealership. "

"Uhh, this I don't think is that neighborhood." The hooker says as the drunk's face slowly slides down my back finally resting its forehead in a little purple puddle.

"Who is that loser?" I ask looking down at him. "And how does he know so much about a Rich Urban Biker motorcycle?"

"That person," says the white-aproned bartender drying a glass in the back doorway of the bar, "...he was Martha Stewart's stockbroker."