

Part 11 - Making Good

It's nice and warm, a sunny day,
I'll go off on the bike,
towards the creek and prairie land,
that should be rather nice.

My bike's a Royal Enfield Bullet,
Ex Army bike you know?
with panniers for storing things,
I named him 'Tornado'.

Army despatch bike, that's a 'he',
of course he gets a name,
Me and my bike inseparable,
Wouldn't you do the same?



I'll take some food, some water too,
Plus safety kit, I think!
A petrol can in other box,
Tornado likes a drink.

The place I love is beautiful,
Although somewhat remote,
The only other living thing,
is probably a goat.

The things all packed, it's time to go,
Tornado comes alive,
I pat the tank (we go back far),
and settle for the ride.

We pass the Ranger Tower by,
still half an hour to go,
we arrive at the chosen spot,
I dismount Tornado.

I fix my basha (Tent, to you),
somewhere that I can sleep,
The second one is to protect
Tornado from the heat.



The gear I need is now unpacked,
I'm feeling like a munch,
A can of beans and sossies, good!
I'll have that for my lunch.

The food it went down very well,
it sorted me all right,
good grief, I hear an engine sound,
Another motorbike?

You just don't meet people out here,
Maybe he'd like some food,
I haven't realised it yet,
But this guys bloody rude.

"Fancy racing 'there and back',
Hey, what the hell is that?
I wouldn't try and ride it mate,
Just throw it in the scrap!"

"Hey mate, you look as old as that,
you sure you ain't got rust?
Sorry, shouldn't wind you up,
because your heart might bust!"

he took off laughing all the way,
and left me feeling cheated,
I never got to say my bit,
just listened while he bleated.

I hear him as he meets the hill,
his engine's sudden roar,
I listen, but the strangest thing,
Just can't hear it no more.



I must admit I hated him,
as he shot out of sight,
But now alarm bells ring out loud,
'cos something's just not right,

By now he should have swung to left,
while engine strains uphill,
no way you wouldn't hear from here,
but airwaves are just still.

Oh god, please say he knows this route,
that he did not swing right,
a rather deep long gorge lies there,
"Tornado, let's take flight!"

With a sense of urgency,
Tornado and I move,
We do a skid stop near the edge,
I hope my fears aren't proved.

OH MY GOD, yes, there he is,
i KNEW he'd not turned left,
Thank God he missed the deepest part,
and landed on that ledge.



I call out and he turns his head,
his face with pain is racked,
his bike has landed on his leg,
he screams out, "Help, I'm trapped"

I shout, "hang in there while I just,
get help on mobile phone",
But signal bars have all gone out,
oh shit!, We're all alone.

I cannot get down to the ledge,
it's on the other side,
The gorge is big but further up,
There's one bit that's not wide.

I learnt survival, learnt first aid,
The kit is on my bike,
If this guy does go into shock,
there's a chance he might die.



Ok so he's a nauseous git,
the piss he likes to take,
But none of that's important now,
There's no real choice to make.

Feeling anxious for myself,
and worried for my bike,
I ride Tornado where gorge thins,
and hope that he can fly.

we reach the place, it's 10 feet wide,
(3 metres between friends),
luckily the ground is firm,
the approach has no bends.

the land is higher on this side,
a gentle upward slope.
I guess we'll need your fastest speed,
to stay alive I hope.

It's been so many long, long years,
since I behaved this way,
A mis-spent youth gave me the skills,
let's hope that they have stayed.

I ride 200 yards away,
(or metres if you like)
I turn, it's all the room I have,
first gear and throttle bike.

we pick up speed, gears two and three,
"come on, we're nearly there!"
Tornado lunges off the edge,
the tyres grip thin air.



I squeeze my legs around the tank,
my arms up in the air,
The front wheel dip's correcting now,
Oh good we're nearly there.

Force my hands back on the bars,
but gravity is mean,
I'm not so sure we'll make it now,
all I can do is scream.

the front wheel seemed to clear ok,
the back hit cliff edge hard,
Nasty, tortured, scraping sounds,
I hear from rear mudguard.

Tornado's rear wheel bounced like hell,
and tried to buck me off,
I leant back quick, clung for dear life,
somehow I kept aloft.

It would be sometime later,
that I would see the spokes,
Bent and buckled, wheel rim too,
but tyre "stayed afloat".



Still with much haste, but slower now,
We head back to the ledge.
The rope comes out, I tie it off,
abseil over the edge.

His bike's wheels are right on the edge,
his good foot on the seat,
He'd tried to push to lift it up,
but pain had made him weak.

"Put your glove, mate, in your mouth."
I pulled hard, feeling strong.
His bike flipped over all the way,
and suddenly was gone.

"No, mate, keep it in your mouth,
I'm going to check your bones."
just below the knee looked bad,
I felt there and he groaned.

It must have been his lucky day,
I did not find a break,
but flesh around his lower leg,
was in a right old state.

I ripped the top off first aid kit,
there was not too much blood,
thankfully, I found the wipes,
they took care of the mud.



By now his wound seemed rather clean,
field dressing sees some action,
the guy is drifting into shock,
I shout as a distraction.

"HEY! Turn your head and look this way,
and bloody speak to me!
DON'T IGNORE ME, DO IT NOW,
or I will whack your knee."

Screw the softly, softly way,
I need to get him focused.
I never liked "Now, who's your dog?"
or all that hocus pocus.

suddenly, he's back with me,
now that was bloody quick.
I went too far cos now he pleads,
"you'd hit me with that stick?"

I said, "your fine mate, woke you up,
cos you were half asleep!
But I'm amazed you got this far,
that must have been a leap?"

A puzzled look came on his face,
"I just had no idea,
Turned the corner, ground ran out,
ended up over here."

He looked to where his bike had been,
his eyes were getting larger,
Now pain was mixed with much despair,
"I guess that I've lost 'Charger'?"

Below the ledge a gravel slope,
'Charger' just slid part way,
A painful smile to my reply,
"He'll ride another day!"

Now I help him to sit up,
should keep him more alert.
We take it very carefully,
He says "It bloody hurts!"

"Sorry, cannot ease the pain,
you might not stay awake,
then there's a chance that you might "GO",
And that would be a waste!"

The stories long, I'll cut it down,
by now he's out of danger,
he's talking well, and focussed now,
so time to get the ranger.

I tell him straight, "Be 30 mins,
before I reach the tower,
Then prep the 'copter', 20 more,
so let's call it an hour.



I use the rope, get to the top,
and then I spot the spokes.
"Tornado, please don't let me down",
Well, I can only hope.

Tornado starts, the gears engage,
I lean onto the tank,
My weight is 'forward', we start to move,
that wheel rides like a crank!

I have four gears here on this bike,
but dare not go past third,
the wheel is screaming, it's in pain,
I hope the tyre won't burst.

"I'm sorry mate, I know you're hurt",
I feel bad for my steed,
"But well done mate, please carry on,
this is our hour of need".

we're taking longer than I planned,
that poor guy will be waiting,
and now I hear a hissing sound,
the inner tube's deflating.

My poor bike sounds and feels quite bad,
we're down to second gear,
It's only just around that hill,
might have to walk I fear.

But no, Tornado struggles on,
we make the ranger station,
I get him onto centre stand,
now he's the second patient.

I reach the tower, two rangers there,
"Guy injured, oh, right oh!"
the 'copter prepped, they take me too,
to show them where to go.

we reach the site, they drop me off,
While they go winch him up.
"We'll take him in, then back for you,
there isn't room enough!"



The 'copter back, I've told them all,
"You jumped that, what a feat!
Plus your friend will be alright,
and mended in a week.

They touch down on the other side,
while I collect my stuff,
my bike is ill, I've no transport,
so can't stay in the rough.

The Rangers they know where I live,
My weekend has been screwed.
They go, then bring Tornado back,
"Thought he you should be with you".

The morning comes, a truck is out,
for bike recovery,
it's spent an hour in the gorge,
then comes and visits me.

"I'll put your bike up here, that's good".
Tornado next to Charger,
The bike man smiles, says "It's ok,
all paid for by his father!"



"The man is rich, asked if he could
get you a brand new bike,
I guessed you'd want Tornado fixed?"
I said, "You guessed quite right!"

Always my old army bike,
earned my respect and trust.
I say, "But thank him anyway,
just fix the parts that bust".

Just three days later, truck returns,
Tornado's good as new,
Plus, that guy's father came as well,
a personal "Thank you!"



He's been to see his son three times,
and says it's rather strange,
his boy was uncontrollable,
but now seems to have changed.

"He says he was quite rude to you,
and gave you verbal hell,
so he could just not understand,
that you came back to help?"

"I told my son, most people care,
(It hit him rather hard),
So be nice and make some friends,
Don't act like a retard."

They turn to leave the father says,
"Here, take some recompense",
I say, "Tornado's fixed, we're fine,
I will not take a cent".

Days went by, but then I saw,
a distant speck get larger,
It wasn't very hard to guess,
That engine sounds like 'Charger'



"Well, thank you mate, I owe you loads,
but I should really go,
my dad thinks it was destiny,
with you and Tornado"

He starts up Charger, off he goes,
the proverbial sunset,
I think he's really changed his ways,
could make a good guy yet.

It must have been two months before,
I rode down into town,
Parked Tornado at the store,
something made me look round.

There stood 'Charger' looking proud,
parked amongst some others,
I turn and spot the guy I know,
with several biker brothers.

The guy gets off, he's limping still,
Does not know what to say,
At least he found courage to come,
after the other day.

I feel embarrassed for the guy,
I say, "It's nice you're here,
I hear you've seen the light at last,
so come and get a beer."

He says, "They say you jumped the gorge,
on your old motorbike,
I'm so thankful that you came,
and now it's changed my life."

He's still amazed at what I did,
and asks to see Tornado,
"If I was god and had the power,
I'd grant that bike a halo".

"He does look strange, but so refined,
I've never seen the like,
Dad was surprised to hear that you,
refused a brand new bike."

"I think I understand it now,
'Charger' makes me complete.
Whatever you have with your bike,
it must run very deep."



Their voices carry in the breeze,
it seems they formed a club,
It's nice they're drinking coffee,
and not beer from down the pub.

I'm glad to see he's 'come out right',
I'll leave them to their own,
Was not to be, I hear a shout,
"Hey lads, THAT'S TORNADO!"



They all come over, gather round,
they want to shake my hand,
"This the bike that jumped the gorge?
oh wow, you are the man!"

One of the guys can't get enough,
He's now down on his knees,
In awe he looks before he says,
"I'd just love one of these."

Then as they do, a guy turns up,
He's from the local paper,
Hmm, "Vintage bike jumps over gorge,
Becomes injured man's saviour."

He takes a pic of me and bike,
and then bike on it's own,
"Have I other tales from the
places we have roamed?"

The paper guy has got his scoop,
and phones to 'make the copy',
I turn to leave, but adamant,
they say "come have a coffee!"



"Could we please go and fetch your bike,
and bring it over here?
For what we are about to say,
we'd like it to be near!"

It only takes a few seconds
Tornado's trundled round,
They stare as if transfixed to spot,
whilst no-one makes a sound.

"OK, lads, it's time to come clean,
what is this all about?"
one says, "Just tell him bluey, mate,
better that it comes out!"

"Decided what to call our club,
we pray that you agree,
A famous bike gave us our name,
'Tornado MCC'"

The speech is done they all go quiet,
and turn to look at me,
I'm caught off-guard, then give a smile,
Guess it will have to be!

I thank the lads, go buy my wares,
and travel home for tea.
"Tornado guess what, you've become,
a big celebrity!"

"You might be in the paper too,
but no way fame can spoil,
A nice cold beer will sort me out,
you want a can of oil?"



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