

# Man vs. Machine

Verna Coy

NSL Reads 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Writing Competition

October 1, 2015

Honorable Mention

Adult Division

It was a beautiful summer Saturday. It was nice that both of us had the same day off work at the same time for a change. I worked in a clothing store in downtown Salt Lake and Don worked in a furniture upholstery shop in Sandy, which was where we lived. We had been married just over a year and a half when he went in to the Army and then to Korea. But now he was home. We were renting a small home in Sandy. The problem was our only transportation at that time was the bus or the old Buick I had bought while he was gone. Conflicting hours in our work schedules however were a problem. We had been talking about, and considering, different possible solutions. Another car? too expensive. Car pooling? , awkward with such changing different shifts. Don had been talking about maybe a motorcycle. But a new one was too expensive.

We talked about what to do and decided to just go and enjoy the rare day together, having fun with each other on a picnic and not working.

We had just reached the door when the phone rang. It was Grant, Don's best friend from childhood. We had spent many fun days with him and his wife Jean. Grant had news for us. A friend at his work had bought a new bike and had his old motorcycle for sale. Were we interested? Don thought for a second, of course he was.. When could we see it? Right now? Great, no picnic, and we were on our way to Ogden.

Grant was right, it was a good deal. It had been well taken care of and Don looked it over. Started it up. The fellow told us there was one problem, the carburetor sometimes died, it needed a little work, but for the price it was worth it. Don and Grant who had spent many hours and days working on old cars and such that wouldn't be a problem. He decided to take it. The question was how to get it home. However we did have our car there too, and the bike wasn't licensed. At first they thought to just put the bike in the trunk of the car and drive both home.

They opened the trunk and both of them hefted it up. Too heavy and big, it wouldn't fit. Don decided he would just ride it while I towed them behind the car. It was getting late in the day it could get dark soon. After thanking Jean and Grant we started out.

Everything was going great as we left Ogden on Highway 89, heading through the canyon. to home with Don riding and me towing them behind the car.

I kept an eye on him in my rearview mirror, we were in sight of each other. Everything was going fine, we were about halfway home. I checked my mirror again. Don was waving, trying to get my attention. His face was white, he was shouting at me, but over the sound of the engine I couldn't hear him.

I pulled over to the side and stopped. He stopped right behind me and got off the bike. He was shaking and pale. He pointed at the front tire. One of the spokes on the tire had come loose, spun around and locked the wheel in place, now unable to turn. He had been riding on one spot of a non-spinning wheel, and there was barely any tread left on the tire. If it had blown an accident was imminent. I knew immediately what the white face and shaking hands had meant.

I looked and thought "what do we do now"?

Just then Don got a determined look on his face. He walked back, opened the trunk, picked up the bike and threw it into the trunk, with a few unkind words.

An hour ago the bike that two young strong men together couldn't lift was now crowded in that trunk by one angry, scared, determined young man all by himself.

So much for the power of that Machine versus the Power of one young Man,