

Memoir 2.0

by Larry Strattnr

He had written his first memoir on Facebook. An exercise called, 25 Things About Me. The Facebook list became longer than 25 things. It included, "I scream in the darkness," "I am terrified of my dreams," and "Beneath my clothes are sores that refuse to heal," along with seventy five other thought-provokers.

His friend Boner, who was more accurately a friend of Milo, who was a friend of his cousin in Dubai and who had, up until this post, seemed to share thoughts in common with him, posted, "Holy Shit, Dude! What're *You* On?"

On? He thought. *I'm On to something. I'm On to who I am. I'm On a roll. I'm running On all eight. What're you On, dick-wad?*

After calming down he went back to his new memoir. He liked to think of it as version 2.0, his Beta Memoir. It included new self-discoveries. It refined a few of the originals. "After I cut my neighbor's head off, his neck looked like the end of a wiring conduit, which, in a way, I guess it was." and "After I dug up the groundhog in my backyard with my bare hands and strangled him for digging there it took me a week to get the dirt out from underneath my fingernails."

He suspected he would need a pseudonym for this memoir. It disclosed answers to some of his town's more gruesome mysteries. He would have to get a post office box in another town for the royalties. This memoir was, after all, what people seemed hungry to read. It would sell.

"I snared a Starling and painted it red and yellow. When it tried to rejoin the flock the other Starlings tore it to pieces because they thought it different." He had originally read this in a Jerzy Kosinski novel and it turned out to be true. He thought about footnoting it but didn't. He was unsure whether Kosinski had merely made it up.

"I see finches," he wrote. Finches were his favorite birds. He concocted bird feed mixes only finches would like. He put the mixtures in bird feeders which only a finch-beak would fit into. He

used a German-made air rifle to mercilessly shoot squirrels or larger birds trying to raid his feeders. "I kill anything interfering with my wishes or worldview," he wrote. Then he struck out this line since he had allowed the teenagers in the neighborhood to live in spite of their lewd behavior and reckless driving. Perhaps it might be time to rethink that decision. He had planted some Chinese Crabapple trees. Finches liked the small dried fruits in winter.

He went for long, quiet walks. These seemed to quell the seething rages swirling within as he exhumed and reconstructed the truth of himself.

There came a knock at his door. He looked through the peephole. A Girl Scout stood on his porch waiting for an answer. She was alone. He could see she was selling the cookies. He hated Girl Scout cookies almost as much as he hated Girl Scouts. He looked at his twisted, memory-torn face in the front-hall mirror and tried to force it into an expression of interested kindness. He opened the door. "Good afternoon," he said. "Don't you look pretty today."

"I guess I do," she said matter-of-factly, and then sold him ten boxes of cookies he hated the taste of more than anything except a bad tuna sandwich.

After the Girl Scout left he got his three fifty seven revolver and peeped out of his front door window, between the curtain and the frame. He had heard a Kirby salesman was working the neighborhood. He had always wanted to shoot a Kirby salesman but couldn't say exactly why. He thought perhaps it might be that a Kirby didn't actually pick up all the dirt. The three fifty seven was heavy. It had always been a pain in the ass to hold it for any length of time. He put it on the hall table. He thought about what a lucky son of a bitch the Kirby salesman was that he had such a short attention span. Also, three fifty seven bullets were expensive, so he probably wouldn't waste one over vacuum cleaner performance.

He picked up the three fifty seven again and spun the cylinder. He liked spinning the cylinder. It reminded him of the time he stuck a broomstick through Jimmy Limbini's spokes after Jimmy called him a Porker. Jimmy went over the handlebars and his face skidded on

the concrete sidewalk. The back wheel on his toppled bicycle spun around and around, but Jimmy was not interested. He was too busy trying to find his tooth.

After the broomstick incident Jimmy was called Shredface at school. He was not happy and must have compiled quite a list of twenty five things himself. It was rumored he was a hit man for the Mob. Another good reason to keep the three fifty seven close at hand. If Jimmy showed up the cost of three fifty seven bullets would become irrelevant.

All in all, he thought, his 2.0 Memoirs had a nice mix of passive and active events.

