

8/17/11

Foreword:

I have told this story dozens of times. I don't enjoy it, but I don't hide it, either. It's a part of who I am and how I came to be who I am today. I believe in the truth, even when it's ugly. If at times my telling of this story seems clinical and matter-of-fact, it's not because I'm emotionally detached. I tell this story with shame.

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On August 1, 2007, I was a bi-polar drug addict living on the streets of Milwaukie, Oregon, just south of Portland. I was hanging out at a deserted transit center just after midnight with a couple other street kids. I was sober, which I hated to be, and I was depressed.

Only a few months ago I had lived in a nice apartment, engaged to a beautiful girl, with a job, a car, and hopes for a real, adult, life. All of that was gone now. Of course, it was all my fault, but I wasn't able to accept that yet. The way I saw it, the world hated me and had stolen those things from me. I was angry, I had given up, and I felt like I had nothing to lose.

The two guys I was hanging out with were named Soldier and Rayno. We were all dripping wet, having raided a wishing fountain for \$4 worth of change. The idea had been to buy beer with it, but as none of us were over 21, we were still sitting there, still sober.

I mentioned to my friends that I had this idea. I said, wouldn't it be so cool to just kill somebody, and get away with it? To know that you were a killer, and that no one better mess with you, because you already know what it's like to kill someone. They both said, yeah, that would be cool. It was just a brief snippet of our conversation, but I didn't forget it. I was totally serious.

Maybe a half hour later the last bus of the night

pulled in, and let off one passenger. He was a homeless man who lived in the area. We knew each other in a vague sort of way. I jogged after him as the bus took off, and asked him if he would buy us beer. He said yes. Then I tried to hand him a wet bundle of pennies. He laughed and said he wasn't going to buy beer with change. He pulled a \$10 bill out of his pocket, and said he'd pay for our beer, and we could pay him back later.

When he left to go buy beer, I told my two buddies, this is the guy. Let's kill him. He's just a drunk bum. Nobody will miss him. My friends agreed, and we formulated a plan.

He came back with beer, and we led him down a remote path to a rocky beach on the Willamette river. We sat around drinking beer and smoking cigarettes. The man talked to us, and spoke complete nonsense. He had obviously already had a lot to drink.

When the beer was gone I pulled out my knife. I stood there with it, my friends looking at me, and I couldn't find the courage to use it. So I put it away and picked up a large piece of driftwood. Soldier and Rouno followed suit. Rouno was the first to hit him, but after that we all just started swinging at him. The man was screaming, we panicked. Rouno picked up a large rock and hit the man in the head with it. The man just screamed louder. So I pulled my knife back out and I started to stab at his neck. I don't know how many times I stabbed him, but I know I was covered in blood up to my elbows.

We heard a crashing in the bushes to my left, and someone started yelling that they were calling the cops. It was another homeless couple that lived nearby. The three of us ran. We got away, and went to Soldier's mother's apartment for the night.

We talked about the man, and what we thought

his chances were. We all agreed the he could not have survived. We all said we hoped he was dead. And we meant it. That night we were all murderers, because we believed him to be dead, and we felt no remorse.

The man, thank God, did not die. He was rushed to a hospital, where he was treated for his injuries. He had countless stitches to his head and neck area, and many of the bones in his right hand were broken, from raising it in defense against our clubs.

Seventeen days after, on August 17, 2007, exactly four years ago as I write this, I got arrested for Attempted Murder and Assault 1. I was sentenced to 90 months in prison. I regret the crime that I committed very much. I wish I could take it back. But I don't regret coming to prison. I deserve it.

And it has made me into a better person. I'm nothing like that person I was 4 years ago. I'm clean and sober, and I take medication that helps me with my mood swings.

I've also learned to be happy being me. I'm clearheaded and motivated for the first time in my life. I can't wait to get out and be a law abiding citizen for the rest of my life. I hope no one thinks less of me for all this. If anyone doubts my sincerity, they need only ask someone who knew me then and knows me now. Anyway, that's the truth. It's not pretty, but I hope people can find it in their hearts to give me a second chance.

Sincerely,
Sam

AKA

Kermit J.R.