

A Walk Down Memory Lane

By Eric L. Marsh

Memorial Day, in memoriam to all service members.

Please take some time to enjoy as I share an old soldiers waltz down memory lane. It is my story, unembellished, and written/told just as is happened.

I was at the keyboard transcribing from my longhand written page's, when along comes page after page of the memories conjured up about Kim. They flooded my brain all day. So I took pen in hand, escaped my three canine companions by going up to the loft to jot down Kim's story, one I'm in hopes of readers enjoying, if in fact there are readers.

It will be simply a piece titled, 'My mentor, Kim.' It is all true, even though my memory doth fade now and then, but not enough to change the facts much at all. I do hope it is an enjoyable read for those that get a chance to read it. ☺ I delighted in recounting the days spent with my friend Kim and writing it nonstop over a two day stretch.

A true short story,

My mentor, KIM

By

MSG Eric L. Marsh U S Army (RET)

Author of Mother Superior's secret, and Bobby's Girl-the Diner

Staff Sergeant Maung Kim, US Army Corp of Engineers. Duty assignment Squad leader, 2nd platoon, 70th Engineer company, 32nd Engineer group, U S Army Com Z. (*Communications zone=Com Z*). Location of story during the following events, Metz, France, Paris, France, Luxembourg City, Luxembourg, Karlsruhe, Germany, and many regions and cities and villages in between. (*Combat and construction engineers=educated infantry men.*) Our primary duty station was in a troop billeting area named, Tournabride, a section tucked out of the way of Metz. On the small base were U S Army engineers (construction types); a unit of Polish labor service refugees, and nobody else. It was our playground far away from the prying eyes

of the spit and polish Army Casern named, Colin; located four miles away on the outskirts of Metz. Colin housed the medics, M P's, the P X (*P X= Post exchange, our small retail store*) and theater and a headquarters for the region. On Tournabride there was a U S army enlisted man's club, replete with a bar and lounge and a dining area and stage for entertainment. Across the way not far from our barracks was the Polish labor troops barracks, they had a wonderful little clubhouse that many of us drunken engineers frequented. It was opened twenty four hours a day; unlike our own E M (*E M= enlisted man's club*). They served the finest European foods and wines and hard booze around the clock.

Drinks at happy hour at our own club cost a dime a double shot for hard booze, beers were five and ten cents drought or bottle, Heineken being the preferred beer because the maker offered us G I's incentives to get used to it; (we cherished the butane cigarette lighter gifts from the brewer) the sandwiches and snacks and full course meals were nearly free, until dinner time at six O'clock civilian time, (*eighteen hundred hours by a soldiers clock.*) Then the dependents; (*dependents=families of soldiers*) were allowed in to have an inexpensive and may I say, well cooked meal with their hubbies and do some socializing until the children had to be out of there at nine, (*twenty one hundred hours.*) For duty on Tournabride there was a motor pool, tool storage and repair buildings for projects. We also had dug ourselves a two or three acre pond, we filled it by diverting a constantly running mountainside stream. The rod and gun club stocked it with trout. Us engineers did a little stocking of a truck mounted crane that had been (inadvertently?) appropriated/taken from another Engineer unit sometime in the past. Even the drag line bucket may still be in that pond as far as I know, lo these fifty some odd years later. Oh sure, I believe a guy like Kim had to have had a hand in that little venture, after all he did spend a lot of time fishing and drinking along its banks.

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Late November or early December 1958, I had not been in France more than a month I believe at the time. A detail of men posted on a project close to Paris sent back two men that were completing their European tour and would be back stateside by Christmas. The request from Sergeant Kim, the projects NCOIC (*NCOIC= Noncommissioned officer in charge*) for replacement's was granted, I was one of them. I was off loaded along with a fellow soldier that had taken the day long ride in the back of an army deuce and a half (a two and a half ton cargo truck) from our home station near the Luxembourg border. The driver and a lucky assistant driver sat in the comfort of the rag top cab, (rag top= canvas) Us poor souls in the back endured the mix of noise from the overly loud diesel smoke stack as well as inhaling the fumes. We were given box lunches from our mess hall prior to boarding the truck at the orderly room parking lot. That delicious packet of food consisted of a couple of fried egg sandwiches, an apple or some type of breakfast fruit and a canteen of water.

The cold weather forced us to keep the rear canvas flap closed, so the trip to Paris was not a sightseeing tour for either of us. My train ride a month earlier after landing at Orly field, (now named Charles DeGaul airport) on a MAC flight from McGuire AFB in New Jersey also didn't afford me a sightseeing trip from Paris going North to the near German Border city of Metz. That trip was made in darkness.

In the back of the truck when Mother Nature called we had to rap on the back of the drivers cab to get him to pull over. Back in them days pissing alongside the road was an accepted practice by the native French population and all others throughout Europe. I made one attempt to eat the egg sandwiches, I nearly gagged and tossed them off into the tree line for the critters to eat. But I sure was hungry. The driver was a draftee and had been there over a year, he was kind enough to pull into a village and show us greenhorns the ropes of buying bread-wine-cheese and sausages. I fell in love with that style of meal instantly. I was to later learn that he risked his cushy job if an M P had caught him off the M S R. (*M P=Military police; MSR= Main supply route*)

I spent what little money I had but it was so inexpensive I had more than enough to last the rest of the trip. It tasted so good that even the exhaust fumes didn't stop me from eating. The wine was terrific, I bought two bottles and polished them off long before we arrived at Kim's place. Had I known what to

expect, I would have bought enough to drunken my senses. We stopped at the direction of a guard posted at a makeshift canvas covered shack at the entrance to the P O L site, my new home for a few months.

(P O L= Petroleum oil lubricant's) There was a hard packed gravel parking area right off to the side of the guard shack. We were told to grab our gear and dismount, because we were home. We each had the standard issue army, olive drab colored duffle bag, stuffed to overflowing with all that we were issued by our Uncle Sam. As soon as we stepped off the hard packed gravel we were introduced to MUD; a new fact of life, it remained our constant companion on the tiny base. I endured another four years of shoveling and digging in it. Some place in this story I did mention that Combat and construction Engineers were intelligent infantrymen. Four years of shoveling and moving around mud kind of belies that I'm afraid.

I recall only that there was a bitter coldness and dampness that permeated my entire body; and army truck tire churned up thicker than shit and just as brown MUD. It was everywhere, trucks could no longer make their way through it. Even the venerable mule of the army since the Second World War, the ever reliable JEEP was relegated to the hard packed gravel parking lot. Only foot traffic could (with extreme difficulty) make a path of sorts through it. There were mud buried wooden pallets that half assed allowed one to make their way (very carefully) to the mess hall/tent and the first aid tent and the Quarter master Corps orderly room. But I was not stationed with the Quartermaster Corps. I was an Army Engineer, the two had a running feud and because it was not the Engineers domain, we were relegated to a far off end of the base. It meant a tough road to hoe to get down to where I'd be quartered.

The driver led the way, he had no duffle bag to carry, all he had was a courier's satchel with mail and orders from our company back in Tourabride. All his gear was in the tent we were being led to. It was dark by the way, and nary was a light posted along the pallet pathway. I took a slip and a fall or two down into the mud when I placed a foot ahead of me intended to land on a sturdy pallet. Sturdy my ass, the further along the path the less sturdy were the pallets. In fact finally, and I mean finally, we saw lights ahead and heard the sound of men laughing. The driver held open a tent flap for us, inside was the messiest looking abode one could imagine. Canvas army cots littered the entire tent, men lying about bundled up in all manner of dress to ward off the winter cold. Army foot lockers were laid on top of stacked pallets, some were open and the lay out of the contents would have given a Drill Instructor a massive coronary on the spot. A small oil/kerosene stove at each end of the tent glowed red with fire. The smoke stacks went up through a metal piece in the ceiling of the tent, the stack glowed red also... Five gallon jerry cans were carried in by us to keep the fuel drum filled. It was an impossibility to get a full fifty five gallon drum down to the tent. Years later and again as I write, I pondered how in the hell any of us survived that nightmare.

But were we talked to do it all over again, to a man the answer would be a resounding, Hell yes.

A hand was outstretched to me and my fellow traveler, his name, I believe was Davis; but I'm not certain. The hand extended belonged to Staff Sergeant Maung Kim, just call me Kim, he said. It was quickly explained that in order to eat at the base mess tent we would have to hike back up to the gate. I was hungry, but not near so hungry I'd take that hike again in the dark, if ever for that matter. It was there that the hospitality of the men I'd be serving and working alongside for the next few years was shown to me. This is, so and so, over there is so and so, until all introductions were made. I didn't catch but one name that sticks to this day, and that was Kim's.

They all offered up whatever chow they had laying around, cookies, candies, wine, cheese, sausage and delicious French breads and rolls. Long into the night we chatted and feasted, played poker and whist and hearts until Kim, drunk on his little Korean and Chinese ass called for the overhead lights to be killed. The lights were another major concern, the lines leading to them came from all the way back up to a generator in the Quartermasters confines. The voltage drop in the mud was so great that most times all we had was a dim glowing bulb or two, one at each end of the tent. The wash up area consisted of two jerry cans, (*jerry cans+ five gallon liquid containers, usually carried in vehicles filled with fuel, or water*) on an angle with spigots. Our steel pots (*army helmets*) were our basin. If one was fast enough to get to the stove first in the dark of night and heat his water he could get a half assed decent shave. The alternative was the long trek up and back to the main gate and the quartermaster's decent latrine facility.

I was told to piss anywhere I wanted outside the tent in the night if I had to go. If I had to shit, I was told to go off into the trees or walk back to the latrine. I held the shit, but shed myself of the wine a few times during the night. The cot and the smelly blankets didn't get me much comfortable sleep the first night, nor did the fish heads and rice burning away in Kim's canteen cup until somebody knocked it off onto the pallet floor to smolder. Come morning Kim picked it up, rinsed it out with cold water from a jerry can and emptied it on the ground inside the tent through the openings in the pallets. He filled it up with more water and stuck it on the stove top with half a cup of pure ground coffee he had stashed under his cot. It quickly came to a boil, and I swear that man drank it down without letting it so much as get a chance to cool off. It was just another one of the things I would soon learn about Maung Kim, and there was plenty more to come to amaze, delight, endear and scare me.

Well morning came. As most mornings do. I was famished, the choices were to scrounge up whatever was left over from last night and make a meal of it, or hike up to the Quartermasters mess tent. I opted for the hike having my fill of cheese, breads, sausage's and wine. I needed a warm place to sit and collect my

thoughts. The day light afforded the opportunity to see what I'd managed to get myself into. The unseen mud from last night was everywhere, right up to and into the tree line. It was inescapable, how I wasn't left to die laying in it where I stumbled and fell off of the pallets remains a mystery to this day. No matter how much I grew to love my buddies, I doubt I'd have dug through that shit in cold and darkness to haul them out. The chow at the mess tent was delicious, eggs to order, fresh cooked thick slices of ham, toast, peanut butter and jams, steaming hot coffee or tea, fresh fruits of all kinds and a super-heated mess tent. Oh, did I mention it was sparkling clean/? Well it was. The price for the chow was in the form of unending harassment from the quarter master boys. It was a game played out willingly by both sides, us Engineers and them. We were (as I had learned last night) a filthy lot of men. We did indeed stink, we were unshaven, clothes were wrinkled beyond belief. And we were rowdy on top of everything else. Unlike the choir boys in the quarter master corps. They were an administrative branch, not the hands on pipe layers and drillers, they pushed papers the live long day not mud. So barbs were tossed back and forth during the wait in line and the meal itself. When things got out of hand an N C O would step in, break us up and toss us engineers out on our heels. One of us had to stay every day to pull K P; (*kitchen Police duty; IE: work in the mess tent*). That man was off limits to harassment during his time as a KP.

We were told to stay up at the mess area until Kim arrived with the others. The material that accompanied us up from Tournabride had to be off loaded and taken down a quarter of a mile to the area Kim had us working at.

That said, by way of introducing readers to Kim and where I was at; I'll tell of the pain I stupidly allowed to enter my life that miserable dark, dank and overall gloomy morning. The story takes place twenty five kilometers, (*or clicks as we G I's called them*), outside gay Paree, France. The base was comprised of perhaps ten to fifteen acres of countryside, a mere stone's throw from a small farming village, the name of it was, if memory serves me right, Le fertile or lay, (some such pronunciation like that); or Chenieveres. I think it was the latter. It was quaint and the natives thought we were the best thing since sliced bread to hit the region, especially when we blew our meager paychecks on the local economy, to wit, the café and eatery. Which we did happily. As a private my pay was less than sixty dollars a month, even as a corporal I received only sixty nine dollars a month net. It worked out to less than two dollars net per day, slave labor? The small base though was a hell hole of a place, but nothing unusual for the army to send troops to live and work at. The Army figured it was a great spot, being it was an out of the way region from prying eyes to store petroleum products and material, such as pipes, valves and pumps and assorted sundries of related items. They could not get away with doing it in today's times, due to environmentalists

being around every tree and bush. It was a tent city in more than name, there wasn't a hard walled structure on the entire compound devoted to us grubby ass Engineers, even the latrines (*toilets*) were housed in tents; well not tents as civilians know them, it was more a hanging of scrap lengths of dirty canvas tied and nailed to wooden tent poles, there was no overhead cover, if it rained, so be it, and it did rain. At our project site's we did not have the luxury of them, we would use the surrounding forest or just take a leak where we stood. After all it would just mix in with all the mud. Who cared; seemed to be the omnipresent attitude, so I joined in.

After all, I had lived on the mean streets of Boston for many years without a real home, having a tent and a canvas pisser/shitter was a luxury for me.

Back to the tent city, it was so sparsely outfitted that desks and chairs were constructed from the many pallets used to bring in items to be stored. Without the pallets there wouldn't even be foot traffic to sleeping tents and mess tents. The tents were far from new, most were from the Second World War and Korean war. They leaked, there weren't even zippers on them, they had just the old worn out button holes and broken metal buttons. The cots we slept on were kept from sinking into the mud by the scrap wood taken from broken pallets.

I mention the ever present mud repeatedly mainly because of it and my youthful stupidity and machismo, this story would not need be told.

For fifty and some years at this writing I have endured pain so painful there were times I wished for the sting of death to ease me out of it.

It started with a, morning after, we've most all had one or two of them in our lives I'm sure. Sergeant Kim asked a couple of us young healthy troopers to take two sacks of cement down to a job site using a wheel barrow. The sacks by the way; weighed one hundred and ten pounds. I weighed one hundred and fifty soaking wet. We left our tent home and made our way to the front gate by the guard shack. A storage area had been built on the only high ground on the base that was not prone to being muddied up by trucks and jeeps. I didn't know what job site Sergeant Kim meant before I let my booze damaged brain sit idle while my motor mouth took charge. "I'll take one of them down on my shoulder, the wheel barrow will be pure hell even with two of us I said. After all I nearly killed myself in the dark walking it. Sergeant Kim wisely told me it was madness to even attempt it. I insisted (Oh brain where were you?) before too much time passed bets were being taken on how many feet I'd get before the mud did me in. Hell, being as confident as I was, I too took part in the betting. NO, I did not bet against myself, I'm not that stupid; HMMMMMMMMMMMM, or was I? All bets were locked in, mostly booze and smokes were the currency

used. We were still being paid in military script; back then, hard cash was hard to come by. It was time to put up or pay up, some may say it was far too late for me to shut up. Two men lifted a sack onto my right shoulder, and right away I knew I'd done wrong to my silly self. I sank at least an inch into the muck, and I'd not taken as much as one step forward. Kim was in charge of the project, he had a squad of twelve men to complete it, the project should have been done months before my arrival, but he stalled off doing a lot of it, using the mud as the reason for delays. The higher headquarters didn't care because the task was a small one, build canvas and wood frame structures to house pipes and pumps until they were needed.

Truth be told at this late date, Kim had a love affair with Paris; and being totally in charge without Commissioned officers up his ass day and night. He treated all of us as equals, and because I was the youngest and newest member of his team he took me under his wing until I learned the ropes.

But I do digress, back to the story of my stupidity. Kim stood before me and told us all that before I stepped off he would call off the bets and we'd use the wheelbarrow. His benevolence sadly I didn't take.

I had to show him I could do it, besides I had a pack of smokes riding on me doing it. I said no thanks Sergeant Kim, I can do it. He moved aside and winked at me and said, 'Go get em sunny boy.' I won't bore the reader with each agonizing step I attempted to take, nor how painful the weight of the sack had immediately become on my neck and shoulder. I'll tell instead about the inspiration I gleaned from Sergeant Kim as I trod along the foot path that oozed with mud as if it were quick sand. Without the darned mud it would have been a piece of cake, or a cake walk for me.

I sank, in it, at times past my calves. If I'd had slipped on the slimy shit I'd be a goner, buried perhaps by the cement sack before they could get over their rolling laughter and yank me out.

There was many a moment I told myself that the packs of smokes wasn't worth all the pain, but as soon as a thought like that took over, Kim would somehow know and he'd push his face in mine and ask if sunny boy had, had enough. That made my determination to finish all the stronger. Kim hadn't told me the distance to, or what job site we were headed, it was always, "Just follow me." When the moment arrived that I honestly couldn't raise or lower another foot into or out of the mud filled pallets, Kim proclaimed we'd arrived. I tried to shrug the sack from my numb and aching shoulder, it wouldn't budge, it was as if it had become a part of me dug into my neck and shoulders as it was. Kim swiftly told two of the men to lift it off me and place it in the wheelbarrow that had preceded me by ten minutes, which seemed like ten days to me. What a relief to be shed of that weight, the guys helped me onto a not so muddy piece of the roadside and I immediately flopped off my feet and curled up into a ball. Oh yes, behind that face of machismo I presented was a grimace of clenched teeth attempting to mask the intense pain I was

undergoing. My entire body ached so bad I laid with my head back on the muddy ground and silently wished for the grim reaper to make his first call of the day at my aching feet.

Yes, I'd won the packs of smokes for my efforts, but I lost more than would ever be gained at the pleasure of smoking them. In the first few steps I took I felt the sweat running down my body, from head to toes. But it wasn't all sweat I was too soon discover; it was pure blood running from my ruptured asshole, I had begun a lifelong affair from that day forth with my very own HEMORRHOIDS, or Hammeroids, as I non-affectionally called them over the years. How lucky could one young and very dumb soldier get, I ask that of myself to this very day. Time after time I'd been to a hospital and a few doctors trying to get them removed, that is a story for yet another time. Many know of the bond between soldiers that most civilians never get to experience; well, that bond came to my rescue after I was taken to the medic's tent for an exam. The prescription was a handful of boxes of a generic preparation H formula. I tried to administer it in the privacy of the canvas draped outside latrine. The pain from even touching my anal opening with the tip of the applicator had me howling out in pain. I had to ask one of my new found friends to help me out. Looking/thinking back now on the scene that took place in our tent were it to be seen by others now days would bring to the fore, the "Don't ask, don't tell" policy. My muddied fatigue pants and bloodied cotton drawers and wool long Johns were pulled down to my ankles. I lay face down with my bare ass raised up in the cold air waiting for a pal to inject a spout from the tube of salve into my asshole and squeeze away filling me up with what I prayed would be my salvation from severe pain. Kim had given me the entire day off to get myself back in shape for work the next day. The salve did nothing to help me, Kim came by with the remedy for my pain, it wasn't in a tube I tell you, it was pure cognac or Pernod. I didn't get up to go to work the next day either, truth be told I didn't get up to do much of anything except to torture myself by going out to piss and for the first time after my stupidity I had to evacuate my bowels. I'll bet the ghost of my screams can still be heard in that region on cold crisp winter nights. Many such screams followed over the years I'm afraid. Suffice it to say, hardly a day has gone by since the cement sack carry that I haven't bled or been in pain because of the darned things. The episode in the tent with a buddy administering the salve was oft repeated, and not by the same buddy; it was nearly impossible for me to do it myself at times when the pain nearly crippled me.

Kim and I became fast friends from the moment he had them take the cement sack from off my shoulder. I learned the true meaning of the word, 'gratitude' at that moment I could have kissed the son of a gun, that is if I was able to move.. Some of the things I learned about him came from him in both sober and drunken states of being.

Sergeant Kim was a master martial arts instructor. As I was to learn first-hand on a day he took me to Paris on what turned out to be the first of many times. I was an eighteen year old BOY (in comparison the Kim) at the time, although I had been in and out of jails and reform schools and lived alone on the streets of Boston for many years prior to becoming a soldier; I wasn't prepared for the type of fighting Kim showed me.

In a G I (pronounced, Jee eye, by the French) (*G I = , Slang for a soldier, taken from=Government issue*) bar named 'Dirty Dicks' located on a small curvy side Street off of Rue Pigalle, Paris. Kim and I sat at the bar having an afternoon drink, it followed our very early and mid-morning bout of drinking, sort of a continuum of hefting the brew to our lips. Bars such as these were traditionally dimly lit: Once one's eyes acclimated themselves to the near darkness of the joints; going outside into sunlight was akin to getting hit with a brick over the head. So many of us bar fools never left the establishments until closing time in the wee hours of morning. In a booth off to the side of us sat three Air Force men. They too must have started their drinking in the early morning hours, as evidenced by their big mouths spouting nasty toned invectives at Kim. Such as, "Hey chink, or "Slant eye's'; I'm talking to you."; and many more insulting barbs at Kim's heritage. They did border on being cruel as far as I was concerned. He was accused of killing one of their brothers or uncles in the Korean War. I turned to tell them to shut the fuck up, and was prepared to go to their table. I had never fought three guys at once before, so in a way I remain grateful that Kim took charge. Kim stopped me with a hold on my arm. Softly, in a near whisper, he said, "Red, (I liked when he called me red) they will come to us, we not go to them." He continued drinking and ignoring them, and true to his words, one of them came swaggering in a mock manlike act of bravado to the bar and started to touch Kim. I say, 'started' because what followed amazes me to this very day fifty two years later. In the flash and blink of an eye, (mine) the man was gone out of sight and out of Dirty Dicks bar. The jerks hand never laid a finger on Kim, it was stopped in midair.

A plywood partition shielded the inside of the bar from prying eyes of children and perhaps wives seeking the whereabouts of a spouse. When I turned, there was a plywood partition torn from the wood stud framing by the force of the jerk smashing into it laying nearly prone on the floor. The Airman with his back against it sat stunned on the floor. He had that puzzled look on his face, as if to ask in silence, 'Whaaaa happen?' Not much time to take in the pleasure of him sitting there, because his friends took affront to Kim defending himself; hmmm, now why would they feel that way? Then another of the three came in a headlong dash/rush to get at Kim, who was off the bar stool and now standing with his back to the bar. The poor soul didn't stand a chance; he quickly landed alongside his friend. This took place

so swiftly had I not been watching as close as I was, it would have been missed entirely. The third man stood dock solid at the booth, not daring to make a similar stupid move I figured. He meekly asked Kim for permission to help his buddies. No words came from Kim; he simply waved his hand in the guy's direction as if to signal his approval. They managed to get themselves out of Dirty Dicks in a heartbeat and in total silence. We did not run into them again all weekend.

Kim was a riot, drunk as we were he pacified the bartender who was lamenting the cost to re-erect the broken partition. Kim told him, 'Red, (that's me) is a carpenter and would fix the darned thing for free.' I did, with tools provided by the man.

Fifteen minutes of work well spent, we drank the rest of the day for free. Also we made a new friend of a Frenchman, and gave him a tale to tell forever about them drunk 'Jee eye's.' It was also, as I came to realize many years later, ammunition in my own arsenal of tales to tell too.

That's just one true story about Kim; another is so funny that it more than bears telling. This event also took place in Paris. We were taken to a small club by an older Frenchman we met in Dirty Dicks. He had taken a shine to Kim and me for whatever the reason, could be perhaps because I had always been a clown seeking any attention I could muster. I was a good pool player and took to a cue stick as a duck would to a pond. Dirty Dicks had a snooker table that I learned the game on, the man lost a few rounds of beer to me over the course of a few days, and he seemed not to mind at all. We were regulars at Dirty Dicks because Kim managed to have us stay at times for up to eight or more days in Paris. That's another story for later. While I made decent snooker shots and clowned around the guy kept Kim and I supplied with Pernod and vodka and whatever we wanted to drink. He hauled us out of Dirty Dicks one night to a small club to watch sex acts performed live on a tiny stage. What an education I was to get, Oh La La, gay Paree indeed. The first act was an eye opener for me, a beautiful young woman in a sheer see through night gown without bra or panties lay on a slim leather couch, her legs straddled each side, showing the world (well us guys in the club at least) all she had to offer. Even though I was still just an eighteen year old boy I was far from being a virgin as far as having sex with a woman; but sex shows were a different matter; or should I say, a horse of a different color in this instance. For within moments a small pony, or a miniature horse was trotted out on the stage and put into a leather and rope contraption of a harness. It was hooked to a ceiling beam on a pulley that was pulled from the side. The pony was lifted and centered over the woman; it was then lowered slowly so that it was in a position to engage in intercourse between the two. Yea, that's right, just what I wrote. Without being descriptive here, it was quickly over and the pony was taken off stage. The woman had stood up and began caressing her body with both hands, as if to

entice us. It worked, I'll tell you; but I made no movement. Then the announcer asked in French, German, Spanish, Italian, and English if any man in the house would like to (or dare, thought I.) finish what the pony started. Without me being able or perhaps wanting to stop him; my poor drunk friend Kim, was on his way to the stage. Shedding his gabardine pants and jacket along the way. When he reached the stage he was buck naked save for his white short sleeved shirt, necktie and his black shiny army dress shoes. There was no way in hell I was able or about to stop this show from going on, Kim was unpredictable when drinking and I gave instant thought to the Airmen. No way was I about to place myself at risk between Kim and the tiny stage. Kim was at that moment one with a singular mission. Kim was totally unstoppable, short of a bullet smashing into his heart or head. They crowd went wild, Kim mounted the stage with a jump up the two stairs. He then mounted the, well, you know what took place next. But as funny as watching him do it, even funnier was the tiny tool he attempted to do it with. That's as descriptive as I'll get. The place cracked up with laughter, and we didn't pay for another drink or food the rest of the night. The young lady came to sit with us and she seemed to adore Kim. After all he has been dead for many years and can't defend himself from my telling of his antics. We didn't spend a Franc, from then on during our stay in Rue Pigalle. (Franc,= the former name for currency in France before the Euro) Kim never once expressed remorse for anything he did while in my sight. When I'd ask if I could recount the stories to the men back at camp he'd always just smile and say; "Red, You're the story teller, you do what you do best." Kim and I shared many more (ad and mis) adventure's for two more years throughout Europe

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