

Bone Heads



By Anna Von Reitz

I have known a lot of veterans in my life --- scads of veterans from all branches of military service. Being a veteran is common as dirt in America, thanks to generations of abuse as low paid mercenaries. In every little community, we have enough veterans to raise not only flags but trained brigades.

That's one of the ironies of the situation. The vermin have used us as cheap mercenaries, but in the process, they have created a civilian population that has vast military capability.

All these veterans either love or hate guns. It is one of those troubling relationships. Most veterans "cling to their guns and Bibles" because that's how they survived military service. Others smelled the java and know how grossly their trust was betrayed, leading them to have scant affection for anything related to military service.

All these veterans have issues. Every single one.

My own husband suffered "Night Terrors" for 29 years, and was left completely unsupported and untreated by both the VA and DOD. I couldn't sleep with him for fear he'd murder me by mistake; somewhere in his mind, he was still in some god-forsaken jungle. Every night he played out the same mortal struggle, the same vicious fist-to-fist combat against vanished opponents.

For 29 years without relief.

I could only wish such pleasures on the Queen and every member of her family.

Men who suffer like this don't give a damn. They will throw down anyplace, anytime. So when one of them cracks, it's not cause for any surprise.

What's surprising is that so many of them do manage to remain sane, and slowly drink themselves to death instead of fire bombing Congress or strafing toddlers at shopping malls.

The vast majority of the veterans I talk to deeply love this country. They love the land and soil of their turf. They love their familiar skylines. And they love peace. They are glad to be out of the service.

If I ask them, "Would you prefer to live under military discipline?" --- every single one of them rolls their eyes.

What? Am I crazy? Jump and shout and take orders to clean latrines at four o'clock in the morning? Who in their right mind would prefer military discipline to life as a civilian?

So, why, I ask ----don't you come home?

Huh?

Why are you still living as and claiming to be a US Citizen, even after you have left military service?

They blink like steers in the headlights.

What? Huh?

Why are you still living as and claiming to be a US Citizen, even after you have left military service? Don't you know that that obligates you to continue to live under military discipline? I repeat.

Yes, I patiently explain. While you are in military service you voluntarily adopt U.S. Citizenship during your Tour of Duty. When the duty is done and you are mustered out, you are free to return to your civilian status as an American. Why are you still calling yourself any kind of "US Citizen"?

There's a difference between "American" and "US Citizen"? They ask, cocking their heads at me like so many Labrador Retrievers interested in a game of fetch.

Yes, there's a huge, huge difference.

Americans are owed all the protections and guarantees of the Constitutions. Americans can own land in the States. Americans are free to come and go as they please, when they please.

U.S. Citizens get rammed out of bed at o-dark-thirty to scrub latrines. They have no constitutional guarantees. They aren't free. They have to buy licenses to breathe.

A glimmer of understanding begins to catch fire in a few eyes around the poker table. Ah, so.....

Yes, and you have to know this, or guess what? The "Service" will gladly continue to presume that you are all "U.S. Citizens" for the rest of your lives, and will continue to presume that you are subject to military discipline for the rest of your lives, and will continue to deny you the very constitutional guarantees and basic freedoms you fought for.

A big guy in the back row draws in a sharp breath. He finally understands a lot of things. He understands why he has never felt free in his life. He grasps why he has had to live in fear of the IRS, why he had to get a license to get married, why his car had to be registered.....

He's been misidentified as a "US Citizen". But wait, isn't he born a Citizen of The United States?

Yes, boys, he was born a State Citizen of The United States. But he has been deliberately misidentified as a "citizen of the [Municipal] United States" instead.

What? What's the Municipal United States? Huh?

And we begin the next round.

There's the American United States, the British Territorial United States, the Municipal United States....

What the F---k! Girl, you're crazy. You don't know what you are talking about! Pah!

They go back to their poker game.

I can tell that they are all upset and restless. Their "Wa" has been disturbed. They've heard things they don't want to hear. They've begun to get the drift. I fall silent and finish my beer.

As I leave the club, the Big Guy follows me out to the parking lot.

I stop. He stops. For a long moment, he doesn't say anything.

Finally, he rumbles his voice awake and says, "I get what you mean. I see it."

I nod.

"I don't know why the others don't get it. We've been duped. Lied to."

"Yep," I agree. "Sold down the river."

He squeezes his eyes shut for a moment and draws a deep breath.

"Well," he says finally, "I'll talk to them."

And with that, he turns and walks away, a big man, no longer young, dressed in a mechanic's dirty jumpsuit, all alone, going back into the bar. I look around at the scene. A dirt parking lot in a small town, in front of a small Veteran's Club bar, with night coming down in earnest, and I think it all comes down to that one man who heard what I said and understood it.

It's up to him to teach himself and teach the boneheads, too. It's a bridge too far for me to do it.

They let me into the Club out of respect for my husband and father. They listened, politely enough, as long as they could keep up and stand the news. But in the end, I don't have the "cred". I'm not the right size, sex, and rank to give them news like this. It's too awful. It has too many implications.

But it's true just the same.

I open the door and slide into my car seat and sit for a moment looking out over the farm fields beyond. It's admittedly a slim hope, this one man. America's hope. And I drive up the road to the next small town, knock on the door of the next Vet's Club.

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