



My Life In Blacksmithing

by Nick Holle

FLYMF November 2005, The Brought To You By Carpediem Issue, Volume 2 Issue 11

I was born in the Orient, and all throughout my childhood there, I had just one dream: to become a blacksmith. My father had been a blacksmith and so had his father and on down the line, totaling thirty-seven generations of blacksmithery. All that has ever mattered to my family was taking care of our own and making things out of iron.

That was the case for a long-ass time...that was...until Hiroshima.

You see, it was there, in 1985, where my father claimed to be making horseshoes at his shop late one night when actually he was making love to a local woman named Nancy. My mother found out, of course. My father was great with iron but bad with lies.

Mom left him, taking me and my younger dog Greg to America, the Land of Hopes and Dreams. Her soul purpose in life: to keep Greg and I from becoming like our father, from becoming blacksmiths.

As a pleasant and obedient Border Collie, Greg submitted to her demands and has committed his life to becoming a lawyer, specializing in trademarks and patents.

I, on the other hand, was a bit more stubborn. Blacksmithing was at my very core. It was in my heart and in my blood. Oh, how I longed for the sweet smell of burning coal, the need to feel the heat of the smelting furnace on my skin. I lay in bed at night, listening for the sharp banging of iron upon anvil, then dreaming of glorious chunks of wrought iron wrought with the sweat of a Holle blacksmith.

My mother did her best to steer me clear of any hint of iron, sending me to prep school and making me take piano lessons. As I would accumulate hammers and an occasional welding torch, hiding them in places I thought were safe, she would hunt them down and donate them to the local St. Vinnies. On my birthday each year, she would give me a new video camcorder and tell me to be a filmmaker. "That's how to make an honest goddamn living," she would say.

I did as I was told, making movie after movie, some even good. But occasionally, I awoke early in the morning to go outside and take in the rising sun, thinking of my father. And Nancy. And the happy blacksmith life he surely led.

Last March, my mother died. Hypertrophic cardiomyopathy. Thank Christ.

I'm saving money these days, knowing that, with my mother now rotting, my dream will soon come true. I continue to make movies to get by, saving penny after penny, so that one day I will be able to do what I truly love. That's why I am so focused on the triumph of my new film company, Wut Wut Alma Moving Pictures. It will get me one step closer.

Blacksmithing is a near-extinct art form. Only the very best and the very lucky get the opportunity to make it. And I'm here to make my dream a reality.