



POSTSCRIPT - A story that should be a movie.  
Especially because it's true. If you don't like how this  
story ends, something's wrong with you.

## THE COW, THE BUICK & THE TAXI

A book about nothing. The story of the failure in all of us.

### CHAPTER 52. Knitted Booties

Do you know what a knitted booty is? And no, it's not  
the name of a rap song. And no, that's not racist to make  
that joke. And in case you don't know, it's a socklet for a  
baby's foot. And surprise surprise, it's knitted, usually of  
some sort of yarn.

Unlike most unintentional lessons and intended vicarious  
escapism I've laced into *The Cow, the Buick and the Taxi*,  
the story of "Knitted Booties" does not involve me  
directly or indirectly. It is however the true story of a  
relative and it deserves to be made into a movie. A movie  
that will restore hope and make the crustiest person tear  
up.

*Because it's 100% true.*

After World War 2 ended, my distant great great, great uncle or cousin or whatever the relationship, returned to Tennessee. He was described to me as a quiet man, with big round shoulders, who was more honest than most people could hope to be. He was the typical farmer back when times were much simpler. He was a man you could trust, a man whose word was gold.

His name was Frank Harwood. Frank married Doris and together they took over the family farm which had 100's of acres. They had pigs, hogs, cows, chickens, corn and much more. They were salt of the earth people. Doris got pregnant and they had their first of several children. Back then, and especially in the country - away from the city, if you needed clothes, you didn't go to a store and buy them, you made them yourself. Sewing was a given and necessary skill for the women of the early 1950's still recovering from WW2 economy in the United States.

Each year, Uncle Frank would take his hogs and pigs to the County Fair. He was described to me as the man who always won the blue ribbon for his pigs and hogs. To this day I'm not sure what makes a blue ribbon hog or pig and I'm too lazy and care too little to Google it to impress you. If you're interested in what makes a blue ribbon pig, google your heart away. For me, a blue

ribbon pig means one thing: bacon. Or as Homer Simpson would say, “Mmmmmmmmm bacon....”

One year, the county fair announced a new competition: The best knitted booty. A knitted booty is the soft sock that wraps around a baby’s foot. Doris was so humble that she didn’t even consider entering. It took her friends’ urging to get her to enter the knitted booties. She rode to the County Fair, her knitted booties in her lap without expectation. Her husband had the hogs and pigs in the back of the pick up truck.

And of course Doris won the competition. The winner got to knit 6 pairs of booties, sell them wholesale to the judge of the competition, a boutique owner from Memphis, some 90 plus miles away. Keep in mind this is long before super highways or even 4 lane highways. This was the time just before Elvis. It was a time when the United States was becoming the huge military power on the planet, along with Russia, as a result of the way World War 2 was won and the peace accords settled on.

Doris knitted the booties and somehow got them to the shop owner in Memphis. I was told they had a telephone and that it was not very soon after that the shop owner called. She was excited, “Doris they sold like hotcakes! Give me 2 more dozen!”

Doris, I’m told, asked Frank’s permission and he was the type of man that simply agreed to his hard working wife’s desires. She knitted the booties, delivered them to

the shopkeeper and again the phone rang. This time it was another shopkeeper in Memphis who had seen the knitted booties in the window and wanted to order several dozen for her store.

This was a time when a person could do work, make a product and sell it and make money. There wasn't the need for marketing or websites or advertising or a business model, or a CPA, or a tax advisor or any of the other things that seem to be a requirement in America in order to simply just have a product and sell it to make a living. It was a simpler and more innocent time. It had less pressure. It was infinitely more fun and infinitely more free.

So Doris knitted more booties. And more shopkeepers called. It was quickly piling up and there was no way Doris could manage the house, the children, the farm and knit all the booties, so naturally she went to the little old lady neighbor.

“Can you help me knit some of these booties? I'll gladly pay you X dollars for each pair you knit..” Doris asked.

“Well I will need the patterns,” was the simple reply. So Doris had to draw up the patterns for her knitted booties. And they agreed, without any contract, how much money Doris would pay the neighbor for the knitted booties that were knitted and delivered.

Soon, the two of them could no longer keep up with the demand. Harwood Originals was created as the brand name, and more little old ladies from around the area were recruited. It was very common in that day for small town America to have “sewing circles”. The sewing circles were groups of women sharing patterns and sewing quilts, clothes and more as they socialized and shared recipes. A woman’s place was still in the home back then, long before the Rockefeller Foundation, CIA and more funded Gloria Steinem’s Women’s Liberation movement – which she was forced to admit to once it became public that her “Independent Research Service” where she launched the “feminist” movement from was actually a CIA front organization.

Not everything is as it appears to be, but in rural Tennessee in the late 1940’s, early 1950’s, it was a simple, simple time.

There were no superstores back then. The idea of chains of stores was just being birthed. McDonalds hadn’t even sold one hamburger yet. If you wanted hardware or tools you went to the corner hardware store. If you wanted an appliance, you went to Sears or Montgomery Ward’s – which were not very big either. If you needed anything else you went to the 5 and dime store. And if you needed groceries, you made a list, figured out your budget and went to the only grocery store each Saturday morning. You didn’t eat out dinner or lunch. You ate at home, with your family, and you talked about the day and the thoughts you had. You lived and talked and loved one

another. There were plenty of problems, for sure. But they were nothing compared to today. That's the atmosphere of the country when my Aunt Doris began to accidentally grow the company, Harwood Originals.

And as the knitted booties spread, so did the demand for seamstresses. Unknowingly and unintentionally my aunt was creating a type of franchise. The network of little old ladies doing the sewing spread coast to coast and the business exploded. Frank had to get help in the fields and help in the home office so Doris could run a booming business. Knitted booties gave way to sweaters and other products, but I'm told that the heart of the business was the famed knitted booties.

When the FDR administration employed rampant socialism in order to fix the failures of laissez faire capitalism, one of the acts instituted to protect the working man was the beginnings of the eventual 1938 Minimum Wage Act, called "Statutory Wages" in 1938.

Enter our antagonist, none other than the US Attorney General. It seems that there was still a need for a landmark case ruling on the minimum wage movement and somehow the US Attorney General, James P. McGranery, found out about Harwood Originals.

I can only imagine the meeting of the men in dark suits and Fedora hats in Washington D.C., when one of the most powerful people in the United States legal system decided to investigate this sweet little old lady in rural

Tennessee, who was making a killing on selling knitted booties all over America through the slave labor of little old ladies. All the men were smoking cigarettes, wearing black framed eye glasses and each in a starched white shirt with a thin tie falling down the middle. The fat guys were maybe 20 pounds overweight. A typical 5'10" man weighed about 140 pounds.

So the U.S. Attorney General dispatched two investigators in their dark sedan, dark suits, white shirts and banded Fedora caps to the cornfields of Tennessee.

One day, driving up the long dirt road to their home, that went straight through the cornfields, Doris and Frank came upon the out-of-place dark sedan. Can you imagine their thoughts? They saw, "United States Department of Justice" on the side of the car. Of course they stopped to talk to the two men.

"We're here to investigate you for violation of the statutory minimum wages." Now you must know that the U.S. Attorney General would not pursue this unless someone with power wanted to create landmark precedents in the Case History.

That's how D.C. works. People with real power, who walk between the raindrops and lurk in the shadows send word to people with the title, to go do X or Y or Z.

However, people then weren't afraid of the government. It was the widespread belief back then that the

government was all good. The Nazis were bad. The Communists were bad.

“Where you guys staying?” Frank asked, knowing that the closest quarters was more than 90 miles and a good 2 hour drive each way in Memphis down a series of narrow two-lane roads.. “Well, why don’t you just stay with us? We have plenty of room and we haven’t done anything wrong...”

There wasn’t a knee jerk, “Get a lawyer” response. There was a trust that the government was out to do the right thing.

So the men investigating Frank and Doris agreed to bunk with Frank and Doris. Needless to say their investigation proved fruitless and their report to the U.S. Attorney General’s office would be the end of the story.

Except for one thing.

Life isn’t fair... is it? Who is really Dain-Jer-Ous?

No, life is not fair and I was told that the reaction of the U.S. Attorney General was pure, unadulterated fury. He dispatched more investigators all over the country to visit this cabal of little old ladies, chained to their sewing machines, who were either plotting to defraud the powerful U.S. Government of its fair share, while ignoring the minimum wage dictates. By God, the U.S. Government was being taken unfair advantage of by the



shrewd, diabolical pig farmer and his equally subversive wife down in rural Tennessee.

Except for one thing. That's not how people in power think. As stated, the U.S. Attorney General almost certainly had more powerful people cracking a whip on his back to get a landmark case in the books and somehow, someone thought this would be easy, because the target was a couple of country hicks in Tennessee.

So the U.S. Attorney General dispatched investigators throughout the United States, each with a stopwatch to time the knitting of a pair of booties. It's an easy case to solve. Knitted booties take just so long to sew. If the money paid and received for the work doesn't equal the minimally expected hourly wage, then damn it all to hell. The U.S. Government had found the masterminds behind organized crime. The little old ladies would knit the booties as the investigator timed. They would do the math on what the Knitter was paid and see if it violated the statutory wage demand.

This is a true story.

And so, black-suited, black tied, white shirted male District of Columbia, Department of Justice investigators fanned out across the fruited plain in order to catch the criminals in the act with only one problem. The investigators, after gaining entry to each home, and explaining to the little old ladies what their purpose for being there would then sit on the couch, pull out their pad

of paper and their stopwatch and instruct the little old lady to start sewing. One can only imagine the little old lady in rural South Carolina, granting access to her home to a perfect stranger for the purpose of timing her knitting of a pair of booties. Can't you just see her gray hair piled on her head, her print dress that she sewed herself hanging below her knees, its lace collar framing her neck, and her eyeglasses pushed down on her nose as she answered the door to not only greet the stranger but allow the stranger access for the purpose of timing her knitting prowess. Never mind the Cold War with the Soviets. Never mind the threat to the minds and hearts of America's youth that Rock And Roll presented. Never mind McCarthyism or the housing shortage. Damn Nation, we've got some knitted bootie gangs roaming the countryside flaunting their wanton disrespect for the laws of the land.

Bing! A timer would go off in the kitchen in one house in Alabama and the little old lady would put down her knitting to go put the peaches into a jar to store in the root cellar or to make preserves.

Ring ring ring, the telephone would ring at a house in Kentucky and the little old lady would get up to answer it and talk for an hour to her daughter.

Ding dong ding dong, the door bell would ring in Louisiana and the little old lady would go see who was at the door and talk to whomever it was because no one had done anything wrong and the culture of the day had no

fear of over reach from the government - they all thought they were helping the government.

The investigators returned to Washington D.C. and the times for the knitted booties ranged from minutes to hours. There was no consensus.

It didn't matter. They filed charges in Federal Court against Doris and Frank for violation of the minimum wage standards. Little old ladies from all over the country were subpoenaed to appear in Federal Court in Tennessee.

The trial began without much fanfare, I was told. No one could understand what was being done or why. The U.S. District Attorney responsible for the case called his first witness to the stand, one of the little old ladies. She refused to say anything bad about Doris and Frank. She said, they paid her exactly what they agreed to. There was no contract to support her contention that she had been treated fairly and there was no contract for the U.S. Attorney to twist the words of - in order to make his case before the federal judge.

"I want to declare this witness a hostile witness," the U.S. Attorney yelled. "It's your own witness," came the judge's reply.

One after one, the little old ladies took the stand. One after one they refused to say anything bad about Doris or Frank or their compensation. One by one the U.S.

Attorney declared all of his own witnesses, including the first two investigators, who I can only assume lost their jobs, as hostile witnesses to his own case.

But life isn't fair. Mooooo. Somebody you know is so Dain-Jer-Ous. And they don't even know it.

And the judge found for the U.S. Government and if you know anything today, you know that justice is green and powerful and seldom goes to someone who is right if they are not also rich and powerful. If you think otherwise, please find me and let's talk.

The judge ordered my aunt to pay tens of thousands of dollars in underpayments to the little old ladies all over the country and similar amounts in fines to the U.S. Government, which in today's valuation was over a million dollars.

There was no argument or appeal. "By God, if the government says we did something wrong, then let's make it right," was Frank's response. So they sat down and mailed out I'm told hundreds of checks to their network of little old ladies all over America, licking the envelopes themselves, licking and affixing the stamps themselves, not because it was unfair, but because it had to be the right thing to do.

The government was not about to be in the wrong.

About the only people who didn't see this as a classic case of railroading innocent people were Frank and Doris and it would make a great movie if it ended there.

But it doesn't.

And if I was making a movie, I would show Frank and Doris mailing out the last check and then going to bed. I would flash on the screen, "Three Days Later" and I would show a hand holding a piece of paper walking up the same dirt road to the same home.

I would show a knock on the door, the door opening and Doris looking through the screen door at her neighbor, the first woman who went to work helping her simply sew some booties, innocently, and more for the joy of doing it, than the need for extra money.

"Doris," the old lady said, "Here is the check you sent me." She tore up the check and handed it to her. "You don't owe me anything. You paid me exactly what you said." And she left. And that's a true story and it would make for a great ending showing how innocence and hard work could triumph over big government and corruption.

However, it doesn't end there either.

The movie would continue and the next thing would be the mailman delivering the mail. There would be letters from little old ladies all over America, "Doris, I will not

cash this check. This is your money. I got paid exactly what you promised.”

Each letter. Each phone call. Each knock of the door would produce more little old ladies who refused to cash the checks ordered paid to them by the Federal Government.

Not one check was cashed by any of the little old ladies. Not one. Does that restore your faith in mankind? It should. That’s the way America was back then. It was that type of character that you found in Ben Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, Andrew Jackson and many more.

Sadly today, we see the results of that one case not in the way labor law has evolved as much as in how much the government now controls so much of the lives of its people. Did you know, for example, that the Federal Government owns more than 80% of all land in Nevada? That doesn’t include state, county and local government lands.

The whole thing makes me think of Thomas Jefferson’s warning, *"If the American people ever allow private banks to control the issue of their currency, first by inflation, then by deflation, the banks and corporations that will grow up around them will deprive the people of all property until their children wake up homeless on the continent their Fathers conquered."*

The Cow, the Buick and the Taxi haunt me to this day. They make me wonder why I may be dangerous and to whom. Why am I nervous about warning you regarding the trends in the government? Did I say something wrong by just speaking my mind? By relating a story about a little old lady knitting booties for a profit? Is this just me? I get the sense that free speech is under attack around the world in the name of keeping everyone else safe... From words? Are words really that powerful? That Dain-Jer-Ous?

No moo here at all. What is happening when a story about knitted booties and government overreach, to put it mildly, makes us think more about our own emotions and fears than it motivates us to stand up to tyranny? Why have we become a nation of people who are more interested in security than freedom?

Maybe you don't see the knitted booties minimum wage attack as tyranny?

Wow. That makes me more Dain-Jer-Ous than I imagined.

And somehow makes me feel better about the whole incident with the Cow, the Buick and the Taxi Driver.

How did the incident with the Cow, the Buick and the Taxi Driver resolve itself?

I will reveal that to Joy Behar and to Joy Behar only on the show, “The View” when I make an appearance there to promote this book! And if I do, they will be charged not with lauding anything positive in this book - but damning the views herein that challenge the status quo. Wanna bet?

Remember... marketability does not equal value and I believe that with all my heart. Is my belief a threat to someone? Does my belief threaten you or offend you in some way? Is my view different enough to qualify as hate speech?

But if I can get on The View and sell a bunch of books... well then, I'll sell out my principles. Wouldn't you? Really? You believe that?

Don't be so gullible McFly.

\* “Chicks on The View” meant to intentionally inflame the Chicks on The View... Which doesn't make me a sexist. It makes me a guy having fun with people who choose to always get offended. So hopefully they won't get offended. But do you think I care?

Moo.



\*\* Those cities are cool cities. Have no idea why I put them there.

I'm Dain-Jer-Ous!! And you can... Oh heck. Bite me.

*(Not sure what that means. It's just fun to say.)*