



# The Book





**M**y name is Tony Dhono. My full name is Soetjipto Antonie Dhono Isworo.

This story of my life will take you on a journey that will bring insight to the obstacles person of interracial marriage faces while growing up and evolving into a biker throughout the years.

I was born in IJsselstein Utrecht, a small town in north Holland in 1946. Having Indonesian Dutch parents (Mom's Dutch) right after World War 2, I had my own share of misery living in the Netherlands at the time. Besides the handicap of still being small, I also naturally had the wrong skin so being a "Half Breed" and hearing neighbours calling my father "Indian" was almost normal in those days as the locals didn't know better. The name "Peanuts" and "Chinese" were also on their favourite "nickname" list.

Living in Den Haag (The Hague) at the Hoogflietstraat 64 in a flat which still exists today (buildings in Holland are kept historically the same by the government) also had it's moments. I can still clearly remember an incident at the community swimming pool behind our residence. This big (also Dutch Indonesian) kid was bullying me on a daily basis as if it was his duty to do so to prove his existence as the resident asshole. This situation kind of made me the neighbourhood's "underdog" which to me meant being "little" and being beaten the shit out of consistently by all the bigger dogs that do it for a living.

On the streets it kind of works like this: When you meet a small dog that's nice and behaves it's self you call it Dog, Little Dog whatever. You see, it is not threatening you, now when you meet a bigger dog that behaves without any intentions of biting you in the butt, then it's still "just a dog, or maybe even a "nice dog", but when you are suddenly in an alley

right in the path of an overwhelmingly “BIG” dog that wants to “bite” you, then it automatically becomes “Mister Dog”. I know a lot of people that take great pleasure from being called the first word (while the complete MD or “Mister Dog” is received in full behind their backs, hehe).

Back to this “shit for brains” kid. Being me, I was one of those “you can beat the shit out of me but if you don’t kill me I still ain’t afraid of you little bastards “that” will get back at you” when he has a chance.

Now one afternoon, on my way to the pool, I see this stupid kid playing with my sailboat that he just took away from me the other day. This toy sailboat was given to me by this policeman neighbour and I was really pissed at the jerk for stealing it from me. All of a sudden at the right moment I suddenly decided it was “payback time”, as I grabbed a stick that I saw laying there and slowly approached the “culprit” from behind while he was doing his thing with no worry in the world of the fate he was going to get into any second now. As I started beating “the living shit” out of the kid, to my surprise the SOB didn’t even fight back but started running to his “mommy” who had to suddenly materialize from out of nowhere.

This almost made me shit in my pants. Hey, luck was still on my side, my mom also just happened to appear out of nowhere and was somehow fully prepared for this occasion as she grabbed his mom and told her to shut the f\*\*\* up and mind her own business while reminding her she was going to call the police. What I didn’t know was that my mom had it in for her as the slut would always dust her carpet right overhead from their balcony on our laundry right below them. (They happened to live right above us.) Somehow the whole family moved out that day, never seen them since.

When you're little, somehow you are always on the look for something new to happen and the one thing I had in me was this great urge for adventure (quote: ingenious escape from monotonous boredom).

For some reasons I always wanted to do something "different", like on my first day at preschool. I met this kid, Alex (we're both 4 years old). I managed to convince Alex to hide with me outside the gate before they closed it so we could go home to play instead of going to this stupid school. Four years old, hehe. So they close the gate with me and Alex hiding outside. Then it suddenly dawned on me "Hey shit, how in the world are we going to get home when we don't even remember how we got here in the first place?"

Plan B. Both of us start crying so they will open the gate and let us in while we pretended to be left outside, hehe it worked. They take us inside and queue us up for our ration glass of milk with all the other kids that were already sheepishly standing in line.

In school, I also had my own "agenda" so naturally. I always wanted to do something different from the whole class that would be singing some "stupid" song while little me found it more important to draw pictures or play with toy cars. I also had my own "defensive" answer telling anybody that would question my "righteous" behaviour that the "Montessori" educational system supported my (wanna be different) behaviour.

Living in Den Haag had its share of fun also like when you're walking home from school in high winds and get pushed back every time you advance ten yards and slide back to where you started from until some big dutchman grabs you by the

collar and helps you while saying “*Kom jongen, je moet tegen de wind in lopen anders kom je er nooit.*”<sup>1</sup> Hey, being as little as I was, nothing worked without “a little help from my friends” (my favourite Beatles song).

On weekends, we (me and my parents) would sometimes visit my grandparents who lived in Dordrecht at the Van Baarlen straat 32, nearby the the train station. This visit was always a special occasion for me (as would be for most other little kids for the same reasons). At their grandparents, every little kid somehow gets spoiled rotten, can do anything and will almost always get everything they want (which normally they don't get from their parents, hehe).

Anyway, from whatever perspective you look at it, visiting grandparents meant “kids heaven” to me. At my grandparents I would get to sleep in one of my aunt's rooms on the second floor with a window and a little balcony overlooking the street. The view from this bedroom window thoroughly fascinated me, observing the railway station and the “commotion” at certain times of the day, due to the “choo choo” sound of the slow moving black locomotive gradually gaining momentum while majestically pulling a long chain of wagons behind it leaving a faint rhythmic clanking sound while slowly disappearing at the far end of the rails in the distance.

From those days, the sight of a railroad would always remind me of Grandma, a feeling that highly influenced my travelling urge which later translated into my “riding urge” on a solid powerfull 80 cubic inches *Harley Davidson Shovel Head* that I obtained in '81 and have been riding all those years until the present time.

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<sup>1</sup> Come on kid, you have to walk into the wind or you aren't getting anywhere.

In my biker world, there are some commonly used words. One of them is “riding urge” and the other is “whiteline fever”. Both words have a lot in common. I can still remember a time in 1978 when I used to get together with the bike crowd on Saturday nights at the National Monument in central Jakarta Indonesia, riding my 900 cc XLB Chopper Sportster with extra long extended forks and high “Z” lightening handlebars, king and queen seat with long tall sissy bars. (Yes, XLB, a special army edition, according to The Harley Davidson Motor Co in Milwaukee that I corresponded with). The standard sportster was the XLH as in the partsbook.)

I would “start to return home” at around 2 o’clock Sunday morning, only to be immensely attracted by the white lines on the clear and open mainroad that would eventually lead to Bogor, a town at the foot of the mountains some 40 miles away. In the Dutch colonial times, it was called “Buitenzorg” meaning “away from worries”, away from the big city.

Just for a cup of coffee I would decide, so here we go. All the road to myself, all that power controlled by a flick of the throttle. The feeling... flying low 25 inches off the pavement. Only a biker will understand this exhilarating feeling of power and freedom that is seriously addictive. Ride Free. What a statement. Now, here comes the problem. Many “ordinary” people (especially at those times in the 70’s) would have to shoot off “smart ass” remarks about why the f... we have to be different from them and why don’t we just return to be “ordinary” nice (boring to hell) people like them, congregating in the same church, going to the same office day after day after day, the same restaurant, the same bar, the same OMG everything and then “maybe” we can also die at the same time and go to the same heaven and live eternally together happily

forever after. Sounds like an eternal inescapable nightmare to me.

Then again these “nice” people would be seriously pissed off at our “arrogant” behaviour of daring (who do we think we are to be different) to be ourselves. They then would fabricate stories of “biker trash misbehaviour” that was also supported by Hollywood movies who would gain the most from this conveniently misunderstood situation. Yes, the word “conveniently misunderstanding” came to my attention from my daily observation on people behaviour. You see, this is one of the “most dishonest” behaviours in our society. This is a situation where people will lie through their teeth for personal, material, and political gain on other people’s expense. These kind of people may rot in hell as far as I’m concerned.

Back to the White Line Fever.

Here I am in the very early morning, laid back on my chopper, just cruising doing 45 mph on my way to this here town named “Bogor”. The white lines on the road are clearly visible and I can see them continuously disappearing under the front end of my bike with a rhythm similar to the printing of a newspaper. I arrived there in about 50 minutes although that didn’t make any difference to me whatsoever because when on my bike I would take the longest route as not to get there too quick to be able to enjoy the ride.

We have a saying: “I don’t ride my bike to go to Bali” but “I go to Bali to ride my bike”. Bali is just a destination and an excuse to ride our bikes. Bikes are “not” just transportation. This is an unacceptable term for “normal” people that need transportation to go places. Our bikes are part of our lifestyle, the way we dress, breathe. In this case, it doesn’t matter how long it takes for us to ride to the next town.

After a good “spicy” meal in this restaurant, some inner voice tells me to “let’s go further up into these nice mountains” with all those “inviting” curved roads for a cup of hot strong black Java coffee. After a healthy kick start, I mount my bike, level it carefully with my whole body (not with the handle bars) and slowly retract the sidestand with my left foot, pulling in the front brake lever with my right hand.

I contemplate one more time: turn left for home or turn right for the mountains. Turn right it is and off we go with a thundering roar that would make all the skeletons in a cemetery move out to a quieter place after the disturbance of their eternal rest. Climbing the hills with the thumping low bass continuous chugging sound really gets the adrenaline flowing but at the same time giving the rider this feeling of confidence, having everything in control, in the wind with the smell of the fresh flowing mountain air flowing through you from top to toe.

Arriving at the mountain pass, I gradually slowed down and stopped for my morning ride “reward”, my cup of “real” coffee. With almost nobody around but the coffee vendor and myself, I slowly dismount my chopper after pushing out the kickstand with my left boot making a loud clicking sound. I order a black “no sugar” coffee and take a seat at the long table on the bench.

The local coffee here is called “collision coffee” or *kopi tubruk* (in the local slang). It is made with boiling water poured straight into a cup with a tablespoon of fine ground black coffee and mixed directly for consumption. It will take a little while for the coffee grinds to gradually simmer down to the bottom of the cup and an art to drink it by slurping very slowly as not to get the “muddy” stuff into your mouth.

While slowly nursing my real caffeine boosting cup of

coffee, I vaguely hear the heavy thumping sound of another V twin approaching. In those days and even now (sometimes) another biker especially on a Harley, is always wellcome as a brother to share a precious moment with. It turned out it was my riding buddy "Salmon" who in the cold of the morning, gratefully joined me for a cup of hot coffee. Salmon had to suddenly come up with the brilliant idea of going to Cianjur another town even further away from Jakarta. Aw, come on its just "only" 15 miles away was his excuse.

So away we go to this town while it was pretty much around after four in the morning when we got there. O'l Salmon naturally (I should have guessed) had to hitch up with some chick he just met and I had to decide something quick. You see, I'm now 100 kms away from home and wouldn't mind to have a place to crash and rest. Decisions, screw it, only 60 kms to Bandung. Another excuse to eat up some more miles on the bike.

After a (thanks to Bro'Salmon) satisfying ride, (got there in about an hour ) I found myself knocking on my friend Budy's door at exactly 6 o'clock am. Where the in the world do "you" come from? was his sleepy question. Oh that, well I was on my way home from the National Monument in Jakarta this morning and here is where I ended up, hehe funny guy.

My friend Budy was well aware of my antics so he invited me in. I stayed at Budy's place till the next day, Monday. You see? A simple Saturday night bike ride and you end up 100 miles away in another town. This is what we call White Line fever after effects. Never know what's next. Contagious as hell (only to bikers). Only curable with age. Do you think I would have behaved like this with my car? No way, even with all the comforts it has to offer. My jeep? Yes, done that too. Had to.