



IV. THE ADVENTURE OF A LIFETIME

Age: 18

Having achieved the most significant non-academic, athletic, or relational goal of my life, (buying my first motorcycle from decision to delivery in six weeks) and believing anything I set my heart and mind to would be possible, I set my sights now on saving and preparing for college. Firmly planted and stable in the positions and income I had created for myself, and having graduated early from high school, it was now about how much I could save for the journey that lay ahead.

I had five months to get ready for the next phase of my life, college and beyond. No longer wanting to pursue a career in the military, my destination was the University of Miami. Inspired by the memory of my paternal grandfather repeatedly telling me how much he wanted me to become a lawyer or in his words *consigliere*, I was filled with a purpose and a plan to honor his wish. I would enroll in their dual degree program in Law and complete my bachelor's and Juris Doctorate degrees in six years.

Adventurous and ambitious I was ready to go after it. Having taken many short day and overnight trips by motorcycle, I was now prepared and experienced enough to make the trip of a lifetime. I would begin my cross country motorcycle adventure in Michigan, travel up through Canada to Toronto, down to New York, before heading south on the Atlantic Coast to Miami. It was said of me at the time that I was a very brave kid or a very stupid adult. Either way I was going to find out. It was 1974, and for me it was a very exciting time. Seeing the diversity of people and places that existed right here in this country traveling from one state to the next, gave me a first hand view of what it meant to be American, and I was ready to live the Dream.

On the way I would make what turned out to be the greatest detour of my life. I would stop in Jacksonville, Florida and visit my sister who was living there with her husband. Also residing there were his two brothers, one stationed there in the Navy, another who had gone there to work. As is the case with most families in the armed services, there is a close knit fraternal bond that exists among service members. This bond was shared by all and I quickly became a part of it. It was a feeling that I had not had since leaving my hometown in Buffalo, NY and it felt great. I was spending quality time with family and friends before completing my trip and beginning my quest for a Law Degree.