

Last Will & Testament

My mother passed away unexpectedly in mid June. That is no cause for sorrow, dear friends; she lived her life very much on her own terms, and as a diabetic for more than 50 years, had beat the odds for a very long time. When it came her time, she passed quickly with little suffering. I shall hope to be so fortunate. Besides, she was Irish, and the only difference between their weddings and their wakes is one less drunk.

Her very small estate, for which she named me Executor, is just complicated enough to force me to jump through Probate hoops, even while my career is placing added demands to be away from the area. But it is not easy administering to the needs of grieving siblings, Surrogate Courts, and insurance companies who hope that their silly forms will be sufficiently complicated as to make you simply forget that the CONTRACT is the policy, and it don't ask for anything but itself and a death certificate to warrant payout, so they can avoid cash flow in the OTHER direction. Add to that the problems of instructing a spouse on the inner workings of Quicken software by phone so she can see if we will bounce checks by floating the new roof on the house...

You get the picture. Digressing, as usual. Her death had perhaps its most devastating effect on my vacation. We had only arrived for Porsche Parade in San Antonio two days before, and she died the morning of the Concours. Seemed appropriate. So I had paid for four meal ticket sets, plus airfare, rooms and car rental, for about a 36 hour vacation. And, of course, all the things I'd planned to do between Parade and 48 Hours at the Glen got back-burnered. Then I got a call from the credit card security folks who thought we had a breach when another Parade attendee, with NO KNOWLEDGE WHATSOEVER of the glitch, had a card number mis-transposed to MY NUMBER with his name, thereby appearing like he had stolen my account number! So they wanted to cancel my account and replace the cards. In about 15 days!!! WRONG!!! It was well worth the effort to clear up that matter. Talk about statistical anomalies. More digressing...

So it looked like the only vacation I could hope for was the Glen; five glorious days of assuring that the dinosaurs did not die in vain, with enough intensity so you CAN'T think about other things than the job at hand. That was assured by my usual checkout of a potential instructor, which involves purposely doing stupid things typical of novices during a run session specifically allocated for that. Unfortunately, not ALL of the "keen competitors" had gotten that message, and we had a scary moment there for awhile. But for all my repair knowledge, I had no part to replace my left front rotor when it cracked on Sunday night, thereby ending MY driving for the CVR event which followed. So they assigned me a student with an '86 Turbo-Look Targa, which he had spent another 30 large to make into a twin turbo monster. Then he comes to the track, having never been NEAR one, and insists that his instructor must drive a turbo himself, so he can properly instruct this novice. Yeah; my thoughts exactly...

At least by the end of the first day he understood that I was keeping him ALIVE, and he actually requested ME for the next day, despite my anemic sleeping Silver Bullet. So I decided it was time to give him a lesson in physics; if you don't know where you are going, any path will get you there. And I started to let him push the envelope a little. He boiled the brakes. And THEN he lifted in a turn, and discovered first-hand the meaning of trailing throttle oversteer. Believe me, the car was making up for his stupidity. His comment that he could not understand how I could sit in the right seat with a driver like him was profound indeed. But even HE will become a capable driver, because he got some rudimentary understanding of the way that life works; nothing worth knowing comes without experiencing it, and expertise depends on a LOT of practice.

Now, for a word from our sponsors. Actually, about the title to this trash. All the BS suggested to me that I should prepare my will again. The last one is a little long in the tooth. So here goes:

- 1) Since the government insists that a spouse MUST be the sole beneficiary if surviving, when it looks like I'm about to die; kill her. Then Jessie won't have to fight with her mom not to get rid of all my favorite playthings; the cars I'm constantly fixing (remember what I said about practice. You don't think I got this good at diagnostic skills because I WANTED to, do you?!!)
- 2) Immediately after my death, please remove any organs which can be used for anyone else. Maybe then I will lose some weight for a change, and my lap times (oops, sorry; LATERAL G's) will go down. Besides, none of my cars use original parts; why should my friends? And with a little innovation, a whole new science can be created. Give my voice to a used car salesman discussing what's wrong with the thing, so you'll get the SONG along with the dance.
- 3) I've been a flaming asshole (can I write that here?) all my life, so cremation seems appropriate. But first have a viewing. Most of my friends will just assume they got that much faster when they don't see me in their mirrors, so I want them to have a reality check. But make certain noone has washed the casket. I never really cared much for concours anyway. Then cook me like Brontosaurus at the infield with the Hunter brothers. But please tell Ann that I HAD to go, and just ask her to wait till I get back.
- 4) All Arabs want to go to Mecca when they die, and I'm no exception, except of course, I'm no Arab. So spread a handful of my ashes at Weissach, so a little part of me will always know what they're working on next. The rest should be used as Dry-Sorb at a PCA event at Watkins Glen, because Lord knows I ought to pick up just a little of the total I've been putting down. Just remember that, like ashes to ashes and dust to dust, the oil came from the ground; I'm just trying to put it back!
- 5) Let there be no tears, except as a result of laughing too hard at reminiscence about some story or another. Sing a verse of "Mercedes Benz" like you mean it, and ask Bob Hunter to let Jake starve. He'll immediately start singing "Momma don't let your babies grow up to drive Porsches" like it was meant to be. Don't be surprised if my ashes sing along.
- 6) Make certain my daughter turns a hot lap somewhere before the lawyers and insurance geniuses determine we can't do anything for fear we might hurt ourselves, 'cause it ain't about being alive; it's about LIVING. And tell my friends I'll be waiting for them in the pits, wrenches ready.

Thanks for everything, mom.