

THE SCHOOL OF HARD KNOCKS

*"It's not the mistakes - but what we do next
That serve to define who we are" (Scooter B)*

THERE'S A PLACE WHERE THE LESSONS OF LIFE FORMULATE
WHERE TRUTH OVERCOMES PARADOX
WHERE BATTLES FOR WISDOM ARE CONSTANTLY WAGED
THIS PLACE IS THE SCHOOL OF HARD KNOCKS

I'LL TELL YOU A STORY I TRUST YOU'LL EMBRACE
THESE EVENTS ARE BOTH RECENT AND REAL
LIFE IS A GIFT - A WONDER - A JOY
AND MISTAKES ARE JUST PART OF THE DEAL



I'VE RAISED UP A SON AND WATCHED HIM WITH PRIDE
AS HE'S STEPPED FROM OUR HOME INTO LIFE
HE RECENTLY MARRIED HIS SWEETHEART FROM SCHOOL
AND LOVINGLY CALLS HER HIS WIFE

HE MARVELS AT THE SIZE OF THE WORLD HE HAS CLAIMED
THIS TRANSITION IS MORE THAN HE'D DREAMED
SO MUCH TO KNOW - SO MUCH TO DO
AND I'M NOT AS DUMB AS I SEEMED

AT TIMES HE'S IMPRESSED AT ALL I CAN DO
AND OFTEN ASKS - HOW DO YOU KNOW
THIS KNOWLEDGE WAS EARNED AT THE SCHOOL OF HARD KNOCKS
I LAUGH AS I TELL HIM IT'S SO

THE SCHOOL OF HARD KNOCKS IS THE BOOT CAMP OF LIFE
IT HUMBLER - IT SHAPES - AND IT MOLDS
SOME LESSONS ARE HARSH - SOME LESSONS ARE WISE
THEY GUIDE AS OUR JOURNEY UNFOLDS

TUITION IS FREE BUT COMES AT A PRICE
AND NOBODY EARNS A DEGREE
YOU DON'T GRADUATE YOU SIMPLY MOVE ON
IT'S A LIFETIME COMMITMENT YOU SEE

THE GOAL IS TO NEVER REPEAT A MISTAKE
LEARN QUICKLY AND THEN MOVE ALONG
KNOWLEDGE IS POWER AND ALL THAT YOU LEARN
WILL HELP WHEN YOU NEED TO BE STRONG

INDEED I HAVE MASTERED A LESSON OR TWO
DEVELOPED SOME SKILL ON THE WAY
A LIFE FILLED WITH LESSONS - AMAZINGLY SO
I JUST LEARNED ANOTHER TODAY

MY MOWER WAS CUTTING A ROUGH, RAGGED PATH
THE BLADE IN THE MIDDLE WAS SHOT
COULD IT BE BENT OR SIMPLY TOO DULL
SOMETHING WAS BROKEN I THOUGHT

SOMETIMES A LESSON WILL COME FROM OUTSIDE
SOMETIMES FROM THINGS THAT WE DO
LAST SEASON I SHARPENED AND BALANCED THOSE BLADES
I GUESS I'LL REPLACE THEM WITH NEW

I TOOK THEM APART AND SPENT LOTS OF TIME
AND THEN SHOOK MY HEAD WITH A FROWN
THE BLADE WAS JUST FINE - THE FAULT WAS MY OWN
I HAD MOUNTED THAT BLADE UPSIDE DOWN

I SMILE AT MY LAWN NOW EVENLY MOWED
I LAUGH AT MY FOOLISH MISTAKE
DON'T RUSH THE JOB - ALWAYS CHECK TWICE
NO MATTER HOW LONG IT MAY TAKE

IF YOU'RE 20 YOU'VE JUST READ A CUTE LITTLE POEM
AND IT'S FUN HOW THE WORDS TEND TO BOUNCE
BUT THEY ARE JUST WORDS AND DON'T BEAR MUCH WEIGHT
LIKE THAT OF A GRAM OR AN OUNCE

AT 30 THESE WORDS ARE A CANDLE FOR YOU
LIGHTING YOUR PATH AND YOUR DAY
AT SOME POINT THE CANDLE WILL FAN TO A FLAME
AS YOUR SCHOOLING IS WELL UNDERWAY.

AT 40 AND OVER THE LESSONS YOU'VE LEARNED
INSPIRE - AND YOU'LL START TO PREACH
BUT OFTEN THE ONES YOU MOST WISH TO HELP
CARE NOT FOR WHAT YOU HAVE TO TEACH

AS 60 APPROACHES THE PREACHING WILL SLOW
AND YOU'LL WAIT AT THE SIDELINES AND SMILE
READY TO LISTEN - CONSOLE - OR TO HUG
AS YOU PAINFULLY WATCH EVERY TRIAL

IF ONLY YOUR KNOWLEDGE AT 20 YEARS OLD
WAS HALF WHAT IT WILL BE SOME DAY
BUT ABSENT THE PROCESS - THE INSIGHT - THE PAIN
THAT KNOWLEDGE WOULD JUST SLIP AWAY

WHATEVER YOUR AGE - THE SCHOOL OF HARD KNOCKS
IS A PATH THAT IS OFT BRAVED ALONE
YOU'LL MAKE SOME MISTAKES - BUT PICK YOURSELF UP
AND LEARN FROM THE SEEDS YOU HAVE SOWN

FOR TRY AS WE MIGHT AND PLAN AS WE WILL
WE JUST CAN'T AVOID EVERY STRIFE
NO RISK NO REWARD - NO PAIN AND NO GAIN
MISTAKES SIMPLY HAPPEN IN LIFE

NOW DON'T BE AFRAID TO TAKE ON A RISK
ADVERSITY WILL HELP YOU TO GROW
TAKE THE NEXT CHALLENGE - I'M EXCITED FOR YOU
AND ALL OF THE THINGS YOU WILL KNOW

THEN SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCE AND ALL THAT YOU'VE LEARNED
AND WISH EVERY STUDENT YOUR BEST
WE NEVER STEP FAR FROM THE SCHOOL OF HARD KNOCKS
FOR EVERY NEW DAY IS A TEST

