

## **Upon the Occasion that You have your ass beat**

Man, this is a big subject. If you maintain a violent lifestyle, you will get your ass beat from time to time, I don't give a fuck who you are. You might be the lovechild of Bruce Lee and the Hulk if they could have kids, but people maneuver and perhaps 3 or 4 guys will kick your ass, or maybe there will be weapons involved, but if you are a violent person you will get your ass kicked from time to time. Life is not a comic book.

I think that maybe I was blessed to discover as a small child that I didn't have to equate the beating with my self-worth. I was always able to separate the experience from my self-esteem. I knew they were ignorant people (precocious little fuck that I was) and I still had value that they could not destroy. That is an abused child superpower.

When I got out of the Army, imagine this after being a grunt in the Army after a horrible childhood, I was a violent person. I fought a lot. I foolishly and restrictedly thought that I just kept coming across assholes, but I brought violence into my own life, primarily by my own behavior. I see that now. I fucked a lot of dudes up. Every now and then, I got my ass beat. Law of averages, anyone?

The degree of the beating of course has two sides of the equation, how badly they want to hurt you and how hard you'd fight back. I am clearly admitting that I have had my ass kicked, sometimes badly, but I am proud that no one has ever wanted to fight me twice.

Let's get to the next day. You survived. You got home. You wake up in your own bed, with cracked ribs, almost always a black eye (at least for me), a fat lip, and you feel vulnerable. This is not an experience that polite society is familiar with. You have to get into recovery mode. Slink to the corner store and get a bunch of beer. If you've really been fighting, you'll already have a good first aid kit available. Hug yourself motherfucker. Tend to your wounds. Drink yourself blind. Cry if you need to. You've just been through some traumatic shit. Then you have to emerge from your cocoon back into the world.

A pretty talented boxer once gave me a good beating and kept expecting me to quit. Both of my eyes were almost completely shut when I finally got him down on the ground where I was more comfortable than him, and just as I was doing some damage, his

people pulled me off from him, but not before I had combat slapped his left ear about five times with my right cupped hand which left him both stunned and vulnerable. As I was being pulled off from him, we made eye contact and he knew what would have followed. When I finally reemerged from my hibernation, there he was looking all cocky and called me "Guero", which I've always hated and I asked him if he wanted to do it again. Upon retrospect, he admitted that he did not. We never became friends but did have a grudging respect for each other after that and every now and then bought each other shots, and a couple times backed each other up in tense situations.