

Life changes

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A short story of a cowpoke who instantly changed his behavior by changing his convictions. He used to gamble (he was focused on short term successes) which was later changed by a kind sheriff who had been able to keep his occupation in the hostile environment of the old west over long-term. This short story was later used to describe the Reveal Myself project.



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It was a beautiful sunny day. An old cowpoke was riding through the desert. He rode with peaceful mind. He was on his last journey to Kansas City. He had no money in his pocket, but he was no longer poor. His life had completely changed in a minute. In two years, he will be rich. He will own a beautiful house in Abilene. He will marry a wife and have two children. He will have a lot of friends, be loving, and live without fear. He will be rich. What happened? Nothing special, really, but it was very important. It all started two years ago.

He stopped to gamble. He just earned few bucks and wanted to spend them all. The doors opened. An old sheriff stood before him. His eyes were brown, so was his hair. The tall figure seemed bigger with all that fur around his shoulders. He said: "Do you see that star here? Be careful, boy. I remember the last time you were here. You started crossfire. Give me your guns." The sheriff explored him with his eyes. Then continued: "Give me your guns or leave the town." The cowpoke looked scared. He took his guns and handed it to the sheriff. The sheriff smiled, nodded, and walked away. The cowpoke went to the saloon.

It was a usual occasion that had occurred many times lately. He couldn't say he was popular. But now he wanted to enjoy himself in a bad way. He walked in. The smoke surrounded his head. There was a bad smell and he felt like he came home. He sat down and started playing a poker game. The other players were quite drunk. He won. One more game, he won again. More alcohol, he won again. He couldn't control himself. He went up the stairs and enjoyed himself quite more in a private room. When he came back he had somehow managed to get a gun. He shot in the ceiling. After he did so, he hid himself. The shootout started. There's nothing better than watching this chaos, he said to himself. He drank more. In a few minutes the sheriff walked in and stopped the chaos with his mighty voice. He didn't ask, but went straight to the cowpoke's hideout. He grabbed him and took his gun. They walked outside the saloon. They weren't bound for a jail. They went into an old barn in the town's very edge. It was full of mud. The sheriff grabbed and threw him to the muddy floor. He said: "Never come to this town again. Get yourself to my office tomorrow to pick up your guns." As he walked away, he added: "Sleep tight, bastard." The cowpoke was lying on the floor unable to move. He had only few bucks left.

The very next day he went to the sheriff's office to pick up his guns. He looked and smelled terrible. He opened the door and looked inside. He politely said: "May I go inside?" The sheriff looked up and nodded. The cowpoke walked in. It was a nice room, everything was clean. The sheriff was sitting behind an old wooden table. The cowpoke said: "Sheriff, thank you for your care and I'm really sorry. I'm here to get my guns back." The sheriff looked at him, and then said: "Are you going to get into a trouble again?" The cowpoke said: "Never, I'm gonna be a better guy from now on." The sheriff nodded and handed him his guns. The cowpoke went out and said: "I'll never come again."

But the cowpoke lied. Perhaps he meant it seriously at the moment. But certainly he didn't keep his word. The next two years were the worst years for him. He did this scenario many times in different towns. He liked gambling and shooting. He was shot many times. He didn't meet such a kind sheriff as he had done before in the first town. He went riding through the desert and spent all his money. In two years he was desperate. He was foolish. He went crazy.

He spotted the town where he had met the nice sheriff. During the previous two years he had managed to keep his word to never come again. But his mind was destroyed.

It was a beautiful morning. He stopped to get his herd into an empty pen near the barn where he slept that night. He no longer cared about his herd. He didn't mind if someone would come to steal it. After it he said aloud: "Let's have some fun," and went to the town. The sheriff heard and recognized him right off.

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He went from his office with two pistols on his belt. He stood few yards before the cowpoke. The cowpoke looked at him, laughed, and said: "I know you, mister. But get out of my way! Otherwise I'll have to kill you! I really like this shooting stuff." The sheriff burned him with his eyes. The cowpoke became nervous. The piercing sight had scared him. The sheriff said: "So you like to shoot. But are you willing to die for it? To die just for your foolish fun?" The cowpoke was full of fear. The sheriff continued: "When I say five, shoot! One! two! three!" The cowpoke fell to the ground and begged: "Please sheriff, don't shoot me! I don't want to die. But life is like a big fight, you gotta shoot to survive! You have to make others shoot to survive! You gotta teach them! Otherwise they would go to hell because they're nothing! God doesn't care about them, because they are tiny!" The sheriff said: "Well, God cares more about good people, it doesn't matter how big they are. The greed and shooting is the domain of the devil. Life is like a family, you gotta help others, not throw them right into the hell." The cowpoke was still crazy. The sheriff talked to him. He invited him to his house and said to him: "You are good. You don't have to kill. My brother was like you and died in a bad way. I couldn't forgive myself for not taking care of him. He didn't change. But you can be better. Much better."

Late in that day the cowpoke left, completely changed. He was no longer crazy. He repeatedly imagined the sheriff talking to him. Later he used to say: "If it hadn't been for the sheriff, I wouldn't have been here. I would have ended up like his brother. And I would have given my soul to the hell."

(this story is used to describe the service of Reveal Myself)

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