

# Confessions of a Motorcycle Adulthood

Stepping up to a new ride should be a happy event... so why the guilt? **by Ann Casey, Midland, Ont.**

It has been an exceptionally long and cold winter in Ontario. Or, is that merely my perception due to the separation from my first and only love? Each winter, I like so many others walk the halls of motorcycle shows and dealerships in an effort to feel a connection to our resting bikes. My Kawasaki Vulcan is parked, safe and secure, waiting for the highly anticipated smell of spring and the allure of the open road.

Upon entering the hall, I catch my breath as the brilliant florescent lights cascade over the hundreds of motorcycles on display at this particular show. The chrome sparkles as if tiny diamonds adorn each bike. My heart quickens, blood pulsating through my veins with the rush of adrenaline.

I run my fingertips gently across the saddlebags of a brand new Suzuki S50, the sweet smell of leather penetrating my nostrils. I throw my right leg over the seat and gradually bring my feet to rest on the foot pegs. My hands wrap around the handlebars, gently squeezing the clutch and firmly twisting the throttle. I imagine the roar of the engine and feel the gentle vibration. If I close my eyes, I can see the outstretched road and, in the distance, the twists and turns that are calling to me.

I take note of the sales tag indicating that this is a "Show Special" and that the price is remarkably reasonable. The black gas tank with tiny flecks of purplish blue is the complete opposite of my Kawasaki Vulcan, which, over the years, I've come to lovingly refer to as my "Blue Storm." My mind wanders to the happy times spent on my Vulcan, and years before that, on my very first ride, an orange 185-cc Suzuki that I purchased used at the age of 19.

I quickly walk away from the sparkling new Suzuki S50, which, in the back of my mind, I am already thinking of as "Black Beauty." You see, I've been down this road before.

The bustle of the crowd, the motorcycle accessories predominately displayed at the booths, and the smell of cold pizza are all welcomed distractions, but only for a short while. Once again, I find myself lost in my thoughts, and my heart

**Left: Ann astride her trusty Kawasaki Vulcan, which she eventually traded in for a brand new Suzuki S50 (above right), nicknamed "Black Beauty."**



lusts for that breathtaking black beauty of a motorcycle. I shake my head to clear away the reverie and remind myself that it is just a few short weeks before I will be reunited with Blue Storm for another fabulous season. Alas, I find myself gazing longingly towards Black Beauty again.

Perhaps just one more look. Up close.

As I turn over the flashy sales tag listing the specs, I realize that I'm doing the math. The payments are low, the amortization short, delivery is free and my happiness endless. Is my love for Blue Storm wavering? She has been good to me and I have proudly taken her to places I had never seen before. But it appears

that the pull of my heartstrings may be too much for this motorcycle enthusiast to resist.

Could it be time?

I suppose a trade-in could be arranged. Shall I let her go? She would have a new home, and new adventures, and someone new to love her. I cannot resist the temptation any longer. Pen in hand, I sign the papers.

So, I now have a new love—my Black Beauty, 800-cc's of personal freedom. Together we will go on adventures and explore new roads. I will love her for years to come... until next time.

Because I know there will always be a next time. ■

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