



# ¡VÁMONOS!

The humorous adventures of two underachieving Texan C&W musicians who, in the tradition of Don Quixote & Sancho Panza, strap on their guitars and ride their Harleys into the Mexican Desert on a voyage of redemption for sins of the flesh.

A Novel by Bill Stephens

87,000 words

## Synopsis

C&W singer/songwriter Skeets Hollaran and best friend, piano player, Jesse Suarez, are both underachieving Austin, Texas, musicians. Skeets finds himself homeless when his soul mate, Gena Koster, kicks him out for philandering. Jesse's landlord evicts him and threatens criminal action for the hot checks Jesse passed to him for rent.

Faced with nowhere to live, criminal prosecution, and little hope of success in either love or their chosen profession, they escape, riding their Harley motorcycles, into the Mexican desert. Their hope is a life-changing, pivotal spiritual journey of redemption: sin seared from their souls by the desert sun, atonement, and absolution of Skeets by Gena.

What follows is a riotous romp from the Mexican border to Guanajuato. Before they even reach Mexico, they are kidnapped, stripped naked, and left to die by Redondo, a notorious "coyote" transporter of illegal aliens, who steals their Harleys. Alfonso and Beto, two illegal aliens, rescue them. El Lobo, a DEA agent driving an eighteen-wheeler tricked out to resemble a giant wolf's head, picks up the two hitchhikers and smuggles them into Mexico. El Lobo knows Redondo and takes them to Redondo's Cantina where they recover their bikes from the coyote's truck.

El Lobo suspects the two are up to no good and surreptitiously places transponders on the Harleys to track their travels. Skeets and Jesse ride to Guanajuato to fulfill a promise to tell the families of Alfonso and Beto that the men are safely across the border, and to return the clothes they were loaned. Moved by the grinding poverty in which the families live, they sing at a cantina to make money to help the family. Their vows of sexual abstinence dissolve when they fall into a crowd of University of Texas students studying Spanish at Guanajuato's university. Unfortunately their indiscretions with drug dealer Carlos Algo's girl friends finds them fleeing Guanajuato in a hail of bullets.

Hours later and low on fuel, they turn off the main road toward the small town of Tolencita. A serious accident lands them, gravely injured, in the farmhouse of the Ramos family -- Angelita, her mother, father, and two younger brothers. The family owns, and Angelita runs, Casa de Masa, a restaurant and cantina in Tolencita.

Jesse falls in love with Angelita during their recuperation. She tells them of the tyrannical fiefdom operated by El Jefe, Tolencita's police chief who distributes drugs on the side. The town appears normal, but all its inhabitants live in terror of El Jefe and his policemen. Returned to health and their bikes repaired, the two ride into Tolencita and become embroiled with El Jefe who is jealous of Angelita and Jesse. He jails them for illegal entry and confiscates their bikes for lack of proper licenses. El Jefe beats them until they almost give up hope. They fear they will become piles of coyote manure in the desert like other prisoners before them. With Angelita's help, they get word to Gena Koster of their plight.

Gena travels to Tolencita and using her feminine wiles, Angelita's help, and Josefina, a thoughtful, upwardly mobile burro, she executes a cockeyed escape plan for Skeets and Jesse that includes El Lobo, his Wolf Wagon, and a band of stranded mariachi musicians. El Jefe is tricked into an act of bestiality in front of the Tolencitans who revolt and send him to his great reward.

Skeets, Gena, Jesse and Angelita ride out of Tolencita leaving the town returned to the control of its people. Carlos Algo and the other drug dealers are arrested with El Lobo's help. As for Josefina, the burro's belief that with hard work, a good attitude, and meticulous hygiene, she could be transformed, and become the equal of horses, is confirmed.

The four return to Austin and, using the proceeds from selling their song, "The Ballad of El Jefe's New

Lover,” open the critically acclaimed Casa de Masa Bar and Restaurant where Skeets and Jesse gain notoriety performing their original “Tex-Mex Sound,” proving that people also can be transformed by good intentions and perseverance.

## About the Author

Bill Stephens started My Place Restaurant in 1972. His food service empire grew to include Casa Alegre Mexican Food; Barrons, a white tablecloth restaurant; three airline in-flight kitchens; three employee feeding facilities; and the catering contract for a dinner train. His company was the third largest off-premise caterer in South Texas. His notable catering clients included Texas governors, presidential candidates, the family of the King of Saudi Arabia, The Prince of Wales, Pope John Paul II, Tom Jones, Neal Diamond, Willie Nelson, and many others

During his three decades of active food service he wrote over 1,000 weekly food and wine columns for Harte-Hanks, Murdoch, and Hearst newspapers. His features appeared in *Wine News*, *Wine Enthusiast*, *Wine Spectator*, *Food & Wine*, *Chef*, and *Field & Stream*. The short story, *The Decanter*, *A Christmas Story*, is the only piece of fiction ever published in *The Wine News*. Texas A&M University recently published his short story, “Toby Tire and His Erratic Curve Ball” in their English Department’s “Big Tex(t)” Ezine.

He is a graduate of The University of Texas and studied creative writing at Trinity University, San Antonio. As an avid outdoorsman he has hunted and fished from Alaska to Mexico and has ridden his motorcycle more than 12,000 miles in Mexico. He lives in San Antonio, Texas with his wife and her four cats.

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