

“POP YO’ POPS”

On October 12, 2009, law enforcement officers were called to 420 Yonder Mountain Road in the community of Reckless, Mississippi, located in Kelly County. When Kelly County Deputies arrived, they witnessed a domestic disturbance in progress. Ms. Emmylou Rodriguez and Mr. Slaid Snider, her live-in boyfriend, were involved in a physical altercation that had spilled out onto the porch. As Deputy Jerry Jeff Carll exited his vehicle to assess the situation, he noticed a young man stomping around the corner of the house wearing nothing but a pair of cutoff blue-jeans and one cowboy boot. The young man, and 18 year old who Deputy Carll recognized from a softball league in which they both played back before the Wal-Mart was built where the fields used to be, was carrying a pistol and was going off at the mouth about how he was “gonna kill that dude if’n he keeps throwin’ them fists t’wards my Momma.” The Deputy told the young man, whose name is Robert Earl Rodriguez, to put the gun down before someone got hurt. As Deputy Carll walked toward the young man, Ms. Rodriguez cried out in fear of Mr. Snider, who was kissing his knuckles in anticipation of their contact with Ms. Rodriguez’s cheek. When he heard his mother cry out, Robert Earl, in a fit of rage, threw his pistol at Mr. Snider. When the pistol hit the porch deck, the gun discharged, firing its small caliber bullet into the prosthetic leg of Mr. Snider, who slowly raised his eyes and spit in Robert Earl’s direction, growling “That’ll be the last thing you ever throw at me, boy.” Feeling as though he had no choice, Deputy Carll arrested Robert Earl. Robert Earl was then charged with and convicted of reckless discharge of a firearm, which is a felony in Kelly County. Robert Earl was put on probation for six (6) months and paid a one thousand (1000) dollar fine. All appeared to have been forgiven, until...

On April 12, 2010, law enforcement was again called to the Rodriguez-Snider residence for reported domestic disturbance. Unfortunately for him, Deputy Carll was again the responding officer. Deputy Carll arrived at the house and saw no activity on the porch, but heard yelling coming from inside the residence. Deputy Carll slowly pushed the front door open, only to see Mr. Snider shaking his dirty fist at Ms. Rodriguez and saying “I feel like knockin’ you inna the middle-uh next week.” Just then, Robert Earl, now 19 years old, came rumbling down the hallway carrying a twelve-gauge shotgun. Just as he had in October, Deputy Carll told Robert Earl to drop the gun. However, Robert Earl had no intentions of letting Mr. Snider get away this time. Deputy Carll headed toward Robert Earl in an effort to subdue him, only to trip over some cardboard boxes in the dimly lit foyer and fall onto the linoleum floor. As Deputy Carll fell, he heard Ms. Rodriguez yell, “Robert Earl! If you love me, you’ll shoot this fool right where he’s a’standin’ at.” Robert Earl did that very thing – He shot Mr. Snider in the back with the shotgun. After stepping over Deputy Carll, Robert Earl calmly walked up to the seriously injured Mr. Snider and shot him again, killing him. Deputy Carll then got to his feet and quickly drew his pistol and pointed it at Robert Earl, who threw his shotgun to the floor, but not before looking at Mr. Snider and coldly saying, “Guess you won’t be usin’ no more’a our money on that damn motorcycle, will ya?” Before Deputy Carll could subdue Robert Earl, Robert Earl reached into Mr. Snider’s shirt pocket, grabbed four hundred (400) dollars in cash and handed it to his 14 year old sister, Lucinda Carlile Rodriguez, who had been sitting next to Ms. Rodriguez on the couch when Robert Earl fired the shot that originally brought down Mr. Snider, telling her, “Now you can go get that belly button ring yer always talkin’ bout.” As Deputy Carll was placing Robert Earl in handcuffs, Robert Earl whispered to no one in particular, “I shot that fool dead and it only cost him four hundred bucks.”

Upon investigation, the following relevant facts were discovered:

1. Robert Earl and Ms. Rodriguez had made a pact on December 31, 2009, whereby Robert Earl agreed to hit Mr. Snider in the head with a baseball bat if he ever threatened Ms. Rodriguez with physical violence.
2. Robert Earl had given Mr. Snider a handwritten note on April 3, 2010 that read, in part, “You better watch your back, old man.”
3. Ms. Rodriguez had taken out a life insurance policy on Mr. Snider on February 23, 2010, the beneficiaries of which were her two children, Robert Earl and Lucinda Carlile. It is unclear if they knew about this policy.