The Marque
"All the news that's fit to soak up oil"

The Marque – November 2026

For those at the November Membership Meeting will remember Chuck White's rear suspension link lament. We passed them around, we listened to his sad tome, and we commiserated. Chuck them challenged me to task AI with writing up the story. The gauntlet was thrown down.

Challenge accepted.

Here is what I primed Gemini with:

Write a story of Chuck White using dry British humor. Chuck is a member of Miami Valley Triumphs, has a wife Chris and is a longtime lover of dachshunds, having just lost their latest dachshund, Lucas, to old age. Chuck also likes to shop at the Secret Garden for seasonal yard ornaments, eat White Castle sandwiches, loves to pick up new tools at Harbor Freight, and likes to sleep in, being grumpy if woken early. Chuck has a problem – while fixing his Triumph TR6's parking brakes found out that a shock link was worn out. He bought the Roadster Factory link and found out it was inflexible and looked to be a bit smashed. He then bought the Moss Motors link and found it to be terribly made. So now he has the worn-out original and two new replacements that are of questionable quality and doesn't know if he trust the world manufacturers enough to make another parts order. The story should end with his plea to Miami Vallet Triumphs members, asking them what he should do as far as procuring new parts, and for any unique suggestions of what to do with the bad parts he already received.

Here is what Gemini developed:

A link, once lost, is never found

The sun, in its infinite lack of wisdom, chose to rise at its usual ungodly hour. Inside the White household, this celestial event was ignored with great prejudice. Chuck White remained horizontal, deeply asleep and projecting an aura that explicitly warned against any premature attempts at communication. His wife, Chris, moved through the kitchen with the delicate precision of a bomb disposal expert. To wake Chuck before his internal clock permitted was to invite a mood that could easily sour fresh milk.

The house was, regrettably, far too quiet. Lucas, their latest dachshund, had recently departed this mortal coil due to a distinct surplus of years. Decades of being ordered about by creatures whose bellies practically scraped the carpet had left Chuck and Chris entirely unaccustomed to an empty hallway. The silence was heavy, missing that specific, low-slung presence that had previously governed their daily schedule.

Once Chuck had successfully negotiated his transition to the conscious world—well past the hour where anyone could accuse him of being an early riser—he determined that a tactical retreat was necessary. This involved a pilgrimage to the Secret Garden to inspect their current inventory of seasonal yard ornaments, though Chuck found himself staring blankly at a plastic flamingo, wondering if it could be modified to look more like a badger.

This was followed by a restorative lunch of White Castle sliders—consumed with the quiet dignity of a man who appreciates the finer things in life—and a therapeutic wander through Harbor Freight. There, Chuck acquired a selection of tools that he did not require, but which possessed the irresistible charm of being very shiny and remarkably inexpensive.

Thus fortified, Chuck retreated to the garage to attend to the parking brakes on his Triumph TR6, a vehicle designed by British engineers to ensure its owner never suffers from an excess of leisure time.

It was during this routine bout of vehicular maintenance that the true comedy of errors commenced. While peering into the mechanical abyss, Chuck discovered that a shock link had given up the ghost.

"Splendid," Chuck muttered to the empty garage.



TRF Link – ummm, what is this lovely work?

He placed an order with The Roadster Factory. The package arrived. Chuck opened it, withdrew the component, and attempted to induce some semblance of movement. The part possessed the structural compliance of a railway sleeper and appeared to have been subjected to an enthusiastic hammer attack prior to packaging. It was, for all intents and purposes, pre-smashed.

Undeterred by this initial brush with global logistics, Chuck turned to Moss Motors. Their replacement arrived promptly. Chuck held it up, turned it over, and concluded that it had likely been fashioned by an apprentice working in complete darkness using nothing but a blunt chisel. It was a masterclass in terrible craftsmanship.



Very nice workmanship!



Other side shows an even more heinous manufacturing acumen

Chuck sat on his low stool, surrounded by his pristine Harbor Freight acquisitions, and surveyed the metallurgical tragedy before him. He now possessed three shock links:

1. The original, which was entirely worn out.

2. The Roadster Factory specimen, which was rigid and deformed.
3. The Moss Motors attempt, which defied all known laws of engineering precision.

He had effectively run out of reputable suppliers and completely exhausted his reserve of faith in international manufacturing. To order a third would simply be inviting another variation of scrap metal into his home.

Faced with this complete impasse, Chuck opened his laptop and composed a dispatch to his fellow sufferers at the Miami Valley Triumphs club:

Subject: A Trio of Useless Metallurgy (And how to dispose of it)

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have encountered a slight spot of bother with the TR6. In the process of rectifying the parking brakes, I discovered a thoroughly expired shock link.

My attempts to remedy this have resulted in a mild farce. The Roadster Factory has supplied me with an object that resembles a solid block of iron that has been dropped from a significant height. Moss Motors, not to be outdone, has delivered a component that I suspect was manufactured from an old tin can by someone with an active aversion to straight lines.

I am currently staring at three useless links and find my confidence in the global supply chain thoroughly diminished. I should be immensely grateful for any guidance on where one might procure a part that actually functions, or if I must resort to carving one out of a potato.

Furthermore, as I am now the custodian of two brand-new pieces of industrial rubbish, I am open to unique suggestions regarding their disposal. Current thoughts include:

- **The Secret Garden Addition:** Utilizing them as highly specialized anchors to prevent our seasonal yard ornaments from escaping during a high wind.
- **The Gastronomic Defense:** Sharpening the Moss Motors link to use as an overly engineered skewer for my next batch of White Castle sliders.
- **The Early Warning Countermeasure:** Suspending them above the bedroom door to act as a tripwire alarm, should anyone attempt to disrupt my slumber before noon.

Your urgent counsel on the parts situation—and any superior ideas for these paperweights—would be greatly appreciated.

Regards,
Chuck