What was I thinking?

Over the years of my model-building career, I’ve made a lot of dumb...sometimes really
dumb...decisions. I’ve screwed up right and left, up and down. I’ve done things that make me look back
and wonder where my head was at the time. It’s obvious, it was in a dark, smelly place where the “sun
don’t shine”.

I used to be a vacuform kit aficionado. We all know what vacuform kits are...an imitation of a real kit,
cleverly disguised as something you have the skills to finish as a believable model. Vacuforms give you a
general, sorta-accurate shape in thick, panel-line free white plastic...and that’s about it. If you are lucky,
you may get a three-view drawing, some yellowish-clear canopy bits, and a few bent white metal parts.
You have to cut the sucker into pieces, sand like mad until your hand aches, and then try to engineer this
thing into the shape of something you recognize if you squint hard enough. It takes forever, and will
make you say things you don’t usually say around grandmas, nuns and children. If you can actually build
something out of this merde, then you, sir, are a true craftsman.

Being a 1/32 nut, some years back before the big scale explosion, there were a lot of holes in the list of
available kits in my scale. I was tired of P-51’s and F-16’s. Then, I happened to be glancing through a
copy of Finescale Modeler, and there it was...an ad from an outfit called Roberts Model, somewhere in
Pennsylvania. A list of 1/32 vacuform kits....oh the SUBJECTS!

MiG 17...B-25...F-105...F8 Crusader...Dewoitine De520...F7F Tigercat...all in my beloved 1/32 scale!

Notice anything about that list above? With the exception of the Tigercat, all are now available as 1/32
scale injection-molded kits. In fact, it’s a known fact that an injection molded kit will be released, in your
scale, approximately ten minutes after you complete a vacuform subject. I finished the Tigercat, so yes,
look for it from HK or Trumpeter any day now.

I built these darned things. I swore, and sanded, and cut, and filled, and fought with these
things....eventually ending up where I could halfway finish one decently. Not great, mind you...but OK. I
was now the proud owner of a 1/32 A-26 Invader, a JU-88, and an F-105G! Yes, I know....

But, like New Coke, Betamax, and Obamacare, it seemed like a good idea at the time. So I went whole
hog...bought every vacuform I could find...dozens of them... Swordfish....P-39...Macchi 202...

And then the model companies double-crossed me.

They started releasing darned near everything in my scale. NEW companies created themselves out of
thin Chinese or Czech air, and begin popping out injected releases of everything I have ever built in
vacuform, one after the other. Except of course, for that TBD which still has yet to show up. It’s all I can
do to keep up!

So the vacs began to gather dust. I eventually was able to sell a few of them off, at pennies on the dollar.
One remains - to this day, I still have the KI-45 Nick sitting in the box. THAT I will do one day. Did you
hear that, Tamiyagawa????? Get with it!
When I first started going to model shows, I was absolutely flabbergasted at how cheap Revell 1/32’s were….I didn’t know any better. I bought them like mad! Another Spitfire MkI? Sure! It’s cheap!!! I only have 11 others!!!!!

Before you knew it, I had 7 or 8 Revell P-47’s, from which I was going to rob the engines….why? To put them in that Guillows (yes, GUILLOWS!!!) 1/32…wait for it….B-29!!! Yes, I had actually bought that humungous thing and started framing it up to build a B-29!!!! Do you know how BIG a 1/32 B-29 is???? Where would I put it? Ha, who knows? Who cares? That’s down the road!!!!

Fast-forward to…down the road.

Yes, here I am, many years down the road. I have come to my senses. I have unloaded all but one or two of the P-47’s, and cut my Spitfire squadron down to two, both from Hasegawa. The incomplete B-29 skeleton died in a backyard bonfire or something, its balsa ribs crackling away merrily. Except for the Ki-45 Nick, I have dispensed with all of the vacuforms. No more crazy ideas about giant kits that I wish were real....

...because many of them are real now. And more are on the way.

I can never live long enough to build them all, and they keep coming. And I keep buying them. My ship habit is just as bad. The back wall of my garage boasts more heavy-tonnage targets than the waters around Ford Island. And, I keep buying them, too.

Now I’ve done a truck, and God help me, it was fun. I am trying hard, very hard, not to let what is insidiously trying to crawl into my head become that evil thing...the bad idea:

Ooo, I can build every single variant of this truck ever made! What an entry for the Collections category! At the next show, I’ll buy up every single truck I can find, and......

AAAAAAAUUUUGGHHHH!!!!!!! STOP!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

ONE truck was fun. Don’t make it a career! You have enough projects already! HARD ABOUT!!!! Back on course....back on course....back on course.

What the heck was I thinking? For that matter, what was I building?