

## The Existential Adventures of Crazy Man and the Dog, Sidestepper



Episode 18: Crazy Man and the Dog, Sidestepper, rage against the wires...sort of

Crazy Man and the dog, Sidestepper, were hungry and motherless and the path of adventure and new meanings was beginning to feel like the path to an advertised special that sold out before they made it to the store. It was the Sold Old Special Blues...without really having a special...or a store. Just two weary travellers looking for food and a mother.

“Do you think we’ll ever find food?” said Crazy Man. His eyes screamed sorrow and despair under his ten gallon cowboy hat that he couldn’t remember having had on his head before. But it was there and it didn’t stop his eyes from screaming.

The dog, Sidestepper, walked sideways (of course) with his eyes closed, guided along the path by Crazy Man’s profound questions. “I think someone said, ‘Give the food and they will come.’ All we have to do is come.”

“Does that saying have a map?”

The dog, Sidestepper, thought about this for a moment, revelling in the profundity of Crazy Man’s question. He thought that, yes, all sayings should come with some kind of support

material...like a map...so that you know where the saying is taking you. He suddenly felt a tinge of animosity towards people who say things, so he decided not to say anything.

“So?” said Crazy Man after several hours or days of silence from his travel buddy. “A map?”

Silence.

“A map to where they’re giving the food?”

Silence.

And then astonishment. Eye-popping astonishment...currently wasted on man and dog as one contemplated the nature of silence and the other was getting pissed off by the stupid silence. But they broke away from their mutual self-absorption and stopped in their tracks. The dog, Sidestepper, opened his beady little doggie eyes and the screaming was lost in the astonishment of the moment. Crazy Man’s eyes flattened into plate-size mirrors that spun like something out of a steampunk scary-eyed nightmare.

“So,” said the dog, Sidestepper. “I’m feeling kind of astonished by what I’m seeing...that I didn’t know I was seeing until it astonished me.”

Crazy Man nodded and said, “I’m going to try hard not to think about that.”

The dog, Sidestepper, nodded agreement.

Beside them, one side of the path opened into a concourse of water and strange wooden structures propping long stretches of wire into a horizon of more strange wooden structures. Strangely, it was on just one side of the path.

“I AM POWER!” said the closest of the strange wooden structures...and its wires vibrated with the awesome energy flowing through their copper veins. “I AM THAT WHICH FLOWS THROUGH THE FABRIC OF EVERYTHING TO ASSERT MY BEING.”

The dog, Sidestepper’s, tail shot straight up and his tongue wagged over his little doggie lip. “Are you my mother?”

“NO!” said the strange wooden structure. “AND YOU’RE A BASTARD. AND YOU WILL BOW TO ME IN DUE REVERENCE TO MY BEING-NESS.”

“Will you tell us where to find food?” said Crazy Man. “Maybe you have a map?”

“NO!” said the strange wooden structure. “I’M NOT HERE TO SERVE YOU. I’M HERE TO SERVE MYSELF. I AM POWER! SEE HOW I PUSH THE DEEP DARK SCARY WOODS AWAY FROM MY BEING-NESS!”

Crazy Man and the dog, Sidestepper, gawked in awe at the barrier of water between the deep dark scary woods and the strange wooden structure and they fell on six knees in abject supplication. “So,” said Crazy Man, “if we serve you, you’ll give us a map to where the food is?”

“I’LL GIVE YOU WORSHP TO ME,” said the strange wooden structure. “YOU WILL SUSTAIN YOURSELF THROUGH SUSTAINING MY POWER TO SUSTAIN YOURSELF.”

Crazy Man and the dog, Sidestepper, looked deep into each others’ eyes and had a moment of mutual realization: this strange wooden structure was full of shit.

“And no food?” said Crazy Man.

“NO! SERVITUDE TO ME WILL BY YOUR NOURISHMENT FOR AS LONG AS YOU LIVE...AND YOUR HUNGER NO CONCERN OF MINE.”

“And you’re not my mother?” said the dog, Sidestepper.

“NO!” said the strange wooden structure. “I AM MY OWN MOTHER. I AM NOBODY ELSE’S MOTHER! I AM THE MOTHER OF ALL MOTHERS, THE FATHER OF ALL FATHERS, THE GRANDFATHER AND GRANDMOTHER OF ALL...”

Crazy Man and the dog, Sidestepper, being used to self-righteous blabbering from a variety of unnatural sources, did what they did best when faced with blabbering...they snored. The strange wooden structure noticed this and was duly offended.

“YOU DARE...” upon which the peacefully slumbering duo woke, refreshed and ready to continue their journey.

“When your wood rots, your wires will fall,” said Crazy Man in an uncharacteristically mean voice, which kind of made him feel good for the moment.

“May large birds roost in your beams,” said the dog, Sidestepper, wondering what he meant as the words came out of his little doggie mouth.

“BUT I AM POWER! I SLASH THE LAND TO MAKE WAY FOR MY BEING-NESS.” The wires connecting the strange wooden structure to its strange wooden other structures bounced in the air like skipping ropes and the deep dark scary woods curled back in anger.

“I AM THAT WHICH...”

But Crazy Man and the dog, Sidestepper, were back on the path and the dog, Sidestepper, said, “I’m glad my mother isn’t a strange wooden structure.”

“A map would have been nice,” said Crazy Man. He smiled at the dog, Sidestepper. “And a mother too...a map and a mother.”

Without taking his eyes off the path, the dog, Sidestepper, smiled a disturbing canine smile, all tooth and tongue and slobber. “Someday I’m going to be with my mother and you and I will be sitting at a table with her and the table is going to be full of food...bowls of kibbles and scraps and big juicy cow bones and...”

Crazy Man tuned out of the dog, Sidestepper’s, dietary dreams and drifted into a sweet daydream of a kitchen he might have with bright curtains pulled back from a window overlooking a yard of giant yellow sunflowers and he smiled at the thought of having the dog, Sidestepper, and his mother over for roast kibbles some night. He might even make dog-worthy pizza...if he had a pizza pan. “We should go back to the lake that flows into the sky some day and roast up some mean birds with a flame thrower.” He thought about this for seventeen seconds and said, “Do you think I have a flame thrower?”

The dog, Sidestepper, liked the idea of barbecuing the mean birds, but wasn’t all that fussy about being around Crazy Man with a flame thrower in his hands. “Maybe we could throw stones at them.”

This seemed to appease Crazy Man’s bird-blood lust and he smiled and his head spun twenty-two times before he calmed down enough to say, “Right! Everyone has stones to throw. And you don’t need a kitchen for them.” He thought about this just long enough for a tear to gush up in his left eye. “Who needs a kitchen anyway?”

“But a pizza pan would be nice,” said the dog, Sidestepper. “And maybe the bed you sulked under with an empty bottle of wine was attached to a bedroom which was attached to a house with a kitchen in it. So...you might have a pizza pan.”

“You think so?”

“Nope...not really. But who needs a kitchen when you’re on the path of adventure and new meanings?”

“And exploring this outside thing,” said Crazy Man. “What breed do you think you mother is?”

“Not like me, I hope.”

And the two laughed as the strange wooden structures behind them sizzled and crackled under the weight of an unexpected flock of three hundred very large nesting birds with eggs to lay.

To be continued...

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