

The Existential Adventures of Crazy Man and the Dog, Sidestepper



Episode 62: Wherein Crazy Man and the dog, Sidestepper, face truth and consequences

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The dog, Sidestepper, was right: the story about how he came to be with his mother *was* strange...a little too strange but Crazy Man was too hungry to question anything that might lead to an even stranger story. This *outside thing* was getting weirder by the minute and he just wanted pizza and a beer.

“So the path led you to your mother?” he said.

“Sort of,” said the dog, Sidestepper. “Remember that narrative voice we kept hearing?”

Crazy Man nodded yes even though he'd never heard any voices and often wondered if the dog, Sidestepper, was cracking up with voices in his head.

“Well,” continued the dog, Sidestepper, “it said something about never finding what you seek until it lets you and then it's waiting for you on your path.”

Crazy Man nodded, holding back a smirk.

“It was right,” said the dog, Sidestepper. “I was looking for my mother and there she was on the path, waiting for me.”

“Really?” said Crazy Man, suddenly excited at the thought of the dog, Sidestepper, realizing his dreams and being re-united with his mother. “She was on the path?”

“Not really,” said the dog, Sidestepper. “The Place of Illusionment was waiting for me.”

Crazy Man's lips curled into a wry smile. This dog was putting him on and was probably hearing voices in his head. He wondered if he could get the dog, Sidestepper, to ask those voices if they knew where he could find a map to food. He chuckled. The dog, Sidestepper, noticed.

“Laugh all you want,” he said. “You saw her too.”

“The dog's telling the truth,” said a squeaky, barely audible voice.

Crazy Man and the dog, Sidestepper, looked in the direction of the voice and saw a fly on a branch. "If he was lying, I'd shit all over him," said the fly.

Crazy Man and the dog, Sidestepper, glanced at each other and turned back to the fly. Imagine... a talking fly.

"I am the Fly of Truth," said the Fly of Truth. "I shit on lies and refrain from the truth."

Crazy Man and the dog, Sidestepper, pondered this. They had many lively discussions about flies and truth and shit. They held an exclusive conference and would have had a vote if they could have remembered what the conference was about. The dog, Sidestepper, was the first to realize that all discussion at this point was senseless. "You said you refrain from the truth," he said.

"Yes," said the fly. "And how fortunate for you or you'd be up to your eyeballs in shit right now."

This made no sense to the dog, Sidestepper. Crazy Man laughed. "That would have to be a lot of shit and you're just a little bug."

"I am the Fly of Truth," said the Fly of Truth. "And the dog is telling the truth. The Place of Illusionment waits on the path of those who seek not for themselves. Everyone else is a bastard." The fly turned its multi-faceted eyes on Crazy Man. "Including you."

Crazy Man was devastated. It was bad enough being called a bastard but how would he find a map to food when it would be waiting for someone on the path who was looking for it for someone else. It was too much for him. His head flew off his shoulders, eyes dangling from their sockets, ears spinning and incomprehensible sounds spewing from his mouth. His head spun in the air above his body for forty-five minutes and twenty-three seconds, give or take an hour.

When his devastation fit was finally spent, his head floated down and reattached to his shoulders with a plop. "Welcome back," said the dog, Sidestepper. Crazy Man nodded. The Fly of Truth rubbed its hind legs and said, "If it's any consolation, your doggie friend is a bastard too, come to think of it." Suddenly, the Fly of Truth was floating in the air above its branch perch and rubbing all its legs together. It turned to face the dog, Sidestepper. "But your mother was a bastard for leaving you all alone in the deep scary woods so the path rewarded you with a trip to the Place of Illusionment where you could be with an illusion of your mother. It could have been your real mother but you're both bastards."

The dog, Sidestepper was shaken to his canine core but the Fly of Truth was merciless. "And you're weird." The Fly of Truth turned again in the air, legs rubbing madly, and pointed itself at Crazy Man. "And nobody wanted him, least of all the illusion of his mother, so they made arrangements for the path to lead you to the dog and take him back. I mean, who's idea was that... a beautiful Saint Bernard, the mother of this global insult to dogs? What was the Place of Illusionment thinking?"

That was it. Crazy Man stepped forward quickly, brought his hand down faster than a panicked road-runner and squashed the Fly of Truth. It made a funny squitch sound and Crazy Man smiled.

That was probably not a good idea.

The squashed blood and guts, wings, legs, eyes and body of the Fly of Truth turned into shit and waves of it spouted out from under Crazy Man's hand. He drew back in such horror you would think that he'd seen a clown. But the spot where the Fly of Truth had been was like a garden hose gone mad, with globs of shit bubbling out of the air and coating the branch and the ground at the base of the trunk. It formed obscene puddles around the tree and the puddles boiled up with waves of shit sliding across the ground toward Crazy Man.

Crazy Man and the dog, Sidestepper, decided it was time to leave.

Further on down the path of adventure and new meanings, the smell of the Fly of Truth's shit finally evaporated into the deep dark scary woods and Crazy Man and the dog, Sidestepper, continued their journey.

"So, you really haven't found your mother yet," said Crazy Man.

"Not yet," said the dog, Sidestepper, "but it was a nice illusion." He looked wistfully ahead. "But she's out there somewhere." He looked at Crazy Man. "And I was never that fond of Saint Bernards anyway."

Crazy Man smiled. His head was still a little sore from flying off his shoulders, especially his ears, but he was glad to be away from the Fly of Truth and all the shit it generated. He looked at the dog, Sidestepper, who, once again, was walking sideways beside him and said, "That was a lot of shit."

"Ain't that that truth," said the dog, Sidestepper, and the two re-united journeyers continued along the path of adventure with their laughter ringing through the deep dark scary woods.

To be continued...

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