

The Existential Adventures of Crazy Man and the Dog, Sidestepper, visit the museum of



the future.

Episode 88: Wherein Crazy Man and the Dog Sidestepper, meet the Museum for the Future.

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Nothing defines a culture more than its garbage, making landfills and trailer park yards treasured repositories of everything we valued at the moment.

The dog, Sidestepper, heard these words but said nothing. Crazy Man would just humor him while he smirked and laughed under his breath.

Something new, off in the distance but close enough to smell, settled ominously over the deep dark scary woods.

“Yuck!” said Crazy Man. “What’s that smell? Like old salamander farts stuffed in a jar.”

“It’s coming from up there,” said the dog, Sidestepper, pointing his nose at a ghostly snow-encrusted mound of dirt spreading across the deep dark scary woods and rising above the trees. “What is that thing?”

Crazy Man gaped at the mound. He’d never seen anything like it before. And he’d never smelled anything like it before. “Pee-u,” he said.

“And pee-u to you too,” said the mound.

Good god, thought the dog, Sidestepper, *a talking mound.*

“What are you?” he said.

“I’m a talking mound,” said the talking mound, and it laughed a conflagration of olfactory insults wrapped in oxidized materials and unnatural chemical combinations that threatened to peel the flesh off Crazy Man’s and the dog, Sidestepper’s, ears. “But not just any talking mound...I’m the Museum for the Future,” said the talking mound that was now the Museum for the Future.

Crazy Man just happened to have two large metal paper clips tucked under his Zorro cape. After an hour or a day of painful experimentation and failed attempts he and the dog, Sidestepper, had their noses clipped shut to block the nauseating smell of the Museum for the Future.

“So what kinds of things do you have on display for the future,” said the dog, Sidestepper.

The Museum for the Future thought about this for 1.005 seconds and said, “I have hula hoops that don’t spin anymore. I have empty cans and bottles that never held anything good. I have the latest watches and phones, still in their original packaging because the new versions were out by the time the shoppers had a chance to get home. I have gifts that have been re-gifted so many times that all that remains is the gift wrap with nothing inside because nobody ever wanted that gift anyway. I have...”

“But that’s all garbage,” said Crazy Man. “Nobody wants to see garbage. That’s why they dump it into you.”

The Museum for the Future grunted. “You say that now, but you’ll say something else a few thousand years from now. You’ll say things like...oo oo look at the ancient eating utensils made of plastic. Those bastards used plastic. What were they thinking? And they’ll fight to the death for the honor of being the first alien on the block to own a Beta VCR...which they’ll hang over their doorways to ward off evil spirits. Some of them will have used condom collections. They’ll trade and have conventions. They’ll...”

“We met the aliens,” said Crazy Man. “I don’t think they’ll be coming back.”

“No!” said the Museum for the Future. “I saw their plans! I saw their surveys! They’re going to put a giant wall around me. They’re going to put rides over my treasures that will tunnel into my guts and display thousands of years and thousands of layers of human garbage. I’ll be the Rosetta Stone of the early 21st Century. They’re going to charge people to see my garbage!”

Crazy Man and the dog, Sidestepper, were stunned. They both held deep positive feelings about rides in museums and this promised to be the greatest museum ride of all.”

“Can we go on that ride?” said Crazy Man.

“Sure,” said the Museum for the Future. “Just as soon as the aliens come back in a few thousand years.”

Crazy Man and the dog, Sidestepper, were crestfallen. Their ears drooped. Their smiles of joy turned to frowns of great un-joy. They cried. They wailed. They beat their fists against the surface of the path of adventure and new meanings.

The Museum for the Future felt bad for them and tried to assuage their anguish. “But it’s OK,” said the Museum for the Future. “The rides are going to be really really really expensive and you probably won’t have enough money to go on them.”

Once again, the wailing duo were stunned. This was more than they could take in one day. They cried and sobbed for another hour or day until the dog, Sidestepper, stopped dead and said, “Money!”

Crazy Man stopped dead. The Museum for the Future stopped fuming.

“All we need is money for the rides,” he said. “And we have thousands of years to save it up.”

These were the words that Crazy Man longed to hear. This was the syntactical structure that had reflected everything that he had ever wanted for the last five or so minutes. There was hope. He might actually have the money to see that stuff he threw away thousands of years ago. And there would be a ride. Crazy Man was an old salamander’s fart away from shitting his pants with joy.

For the next indeterminate number of minutes into hours and days, the Museum for the Future advised Crazy Man and the dog, Sidestepper, on how to invest money they didn’t and never would have so that they could make millions of dollars that they would never have because they didn’t have the money to have the money in the first place. But they would be dead long before any of that happened so everything was copacetic and Crazy Man said, “You wouldn’t happen to have a map to food in there with your historical treasures, would you?”

The Museum for the Future thought about this just long enough to say, “Only a bastard would ask a question like that.”

The dog, Sidestepper, wasn’t going to be left out when it came to being called a bastard. “And maybe my mother is hidden in you somewhere, trapped in a rusty old car or bird cage or something?”

“No mothers! No maps!” said the Museum for the Future. “And you’re both bastards but you’re both welcome to come back to ride my garbage. Remember to save every day.”

Crazy Man and the dog, Sidestepper, were overjoyed. They had an official spoken invitation to ride their garbage in a few thousand years. They just had to save for it.

“Thank you, Museum for the Future,” they said in unison. “We’ll be back in a few thousand years with money for a ride.”

“Looking forward to it,” said the Museum for the Future, and it slumped back into its foul smell and twisted relics.

Later, as Crazy Man and the dog, Sidestepper, strolled quietly, each basking in his own thoughts as the deep scary woods threatened to consume their souls from both sides of the path of adventure and new meanings, Crazy Man said, “Do you think there’ll be deep dark scary woods a few thousand years in the future?”

The dog, Sidestepper, looked around at the shadows and mysterious movements on either side and said, “There will always be deep dark scary woods.”

As the sun dipped below the sky, the two journeyers plied into the night, their heads filled with dreams of mind-bending rides through garbage aged into treasure...and Crazy Man suspected there was more to this outside thing than he first suspected.

And maybe, somewhere out there beyond the horizons of the path of adventure and new meanings, there might be a kitchen with his initials on the refrigerator. And some day it would be treasure.

To be continued...

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BTW.....

Team Player has been re-printed. Written when malware and associated nuisance software was just a small dot on the internet horizon, Team Player shows how fast science fiction becomes historical fiction in a wild wild world rushing into the future.

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<https://tinyurl.com/547dmju9>

Set in an uncomfortably close future run by homicidal marketing managers, Team Player spoofs the whole concept of work in a world about to be saved by 30 naked pagan women.

