

The Existential Adventures of Crazy Man and the Dog, Sidestepper



Episode 87: Wherein Crazy Man and the Dog Sidestepper,

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Sometimes death, murder and insanity are thrust before us gift-wrapped with festive ribbons and bows and scintillating colors, which is why you should always carefully look a gift horse in the mouth. Ask anyone from Troy.

“Did you hear that, Dorothy?” said the dog, Sidestepper.

“Hear what?” said Dorothy.

Crazy Man smirked.

“A voice from somewhere...” He circled his head around as if to take in the whole world and then some.

Dorothy stopped for a moment and cupped a hand over her raggedy right ear. She listened and listened and listened for almost two seconds before dropping her hand and saying, “You’re hearing voices that aren’t there.”

Crazy Man laughed.

The dog, Sidestepper, fumed. He wanted to grab this insolent ragdoll between his teeth and shake her until her stuffing littered the path of adventure and new meanings but he respected and feared the path so the dog kept his canine fangs tucked in behind his lips and said, “You suck! You both suck.”

Crazy Man and Dorothy were devastated. They’d never been told this before. It was a revelation. How could they have known? All this time they thought they were cool and all along...they sucked...and they had the dog, Sidestepper’s, testimonial to prove it. There was only one way out: Denial.

“No we don’t,” said Dorothy as she tucked stuffing back into her left arm. “And it’s not very nice of you to accuse us of things just because you hear voices in your head.”

“And I’m in total self-denial because it feels kind of right,” said Crazy Man.

The dog, Sidestepper, wasn't used to this much denial in one day. It made his head swim. He eyed the ragdoll, Dorothy, closely. Was she a Trojan doll sent from that place where they don't want no freaks? He hoped not...but for the time being he made a note not to turn his back on her.

"Hello weary travelers on the path of adventure and new meanings," said a lady bug from the top of a mess of plant life. "They told me you were headed this way but I didn't believe them. But here you are."

Crazy Man, the dog, Sidestepper, and Dorothy smiled at the lady bug because everybody loves lady bugs and knows they're good luck.

"Will you bring us good luck?" said the dog, Sidestepper.

"Of course," said the lady bug, "but only if I land on you."

Smiles stretched across all three faces. All they had to do was stand still and let the lady bug land on them and they would have some much-needed good luck.

"OK," said Crazy Man. "We're standing still. You can land on us."

"Whoa!" said the lady bug. "Jumping in a little fast on the lady bug luck thing, aren't we?"

"What do you mean?" said Dorothy.

"All you have to do is land on us," said Crazy Man.

"No, folks," said the lady bug. "There's a just a bit more to it than that."

"Like what?" said Dorothy.

"If I land wrong," said the lady bug, "you'll die."

Dorothy's mouth dropped so wide that she had to stuff the stuffing back into the stuff of her mouth before she could close it. Crazy Man and the dog, Sidestepper, tried not to see this.

"But you always land right, right?" said Crazy Man.

"Most of the time," said the lady bug. "Sometimes my legs get a bit wobbly and I'm out fraction of a mile."

"A mile?" said the dog, Sidestepper. "Isn't that a lot of room for error?"

"Sure is," said the lady bug. "Which is why I never land on anyone."

"Then how will you give good luck?" said Dorothy.

"By not giving bad luck," said the lady bug.

"But then there won't be any good luck," said Dorothy.

"But there won't be any bad luck," said the lady bug.

"But we want the good luck," said Dorothy.

"Yeah," said Crazy Man and the dog, Sidestepper, in unison. "We want the good luck."

"OK," said the lady bug, "if good luck means that much to you then good luck you shall have...I hope."

And with that, the lady bug unfurled its wings, flapped them and buzzed through the air and landed on Crazy Man's nose. He smiled and laughed and said, "I feel so lucky. Thank you lady bug." After which, the lady bug buzzed over to the dog, Sidestepper, and landed on his nose. The dog's eyes lit up like flashing lights on a bulldozer out of control if a bulldozer out of control had flashing lights. "I can feel it! I'm lucky and all kinds of good things will happen to me."

"My turn," said Dorothy. She smiled her ragdoll smile and thrust her nose out for the lady bug. The lady bug buzzed from the dog, Sidestepper's, nose to Dorothy's nose and landed.

Dorothy smiled, frowned and died.

"Oh well," said the lady bug. "At least she won't be having any more bad luck."

And the lady bug flew away, buzzing and humming.

Crazy Man and the dog, Sidestepper, stared at the motionless wad of post-ragdoll.

"Now that really sucks," said Crazy man.

"The lady bug never did nothing for the ragdoll," said the dog, Sidestepper.

"She was already doomed," said Crazy Man.

Just then, a coven of witch dogs jumped out of the deep dark scary woods and tore at the ragdoll with their fangs and beat it with their brooms. When the path was littered with ragdoll stuffing and button eyes and nose, the dogs mounted their brooms and flew back into the deep dark scary woods screaming insults at Crazy Man and the dog, Sidestepper.

"That was weird," said the dog, Sidestepper.

"But kind of cool," said Crazy Man, "in a disturbing way."

The dog, Sidestepper, thought about this for about three seconds too long and therefore spoke three seconds too late: “Do you think anyone will ever tell our story?”

With a three-minute too late answer, Crazy Man said, “Maybe something exciting will happen to us and we’ll have a story for someone to tell.” He said this quickly, so as to catch up to the dog, Sidestepper’s, three second tardiness.

“Too bad Dorothy didn’t have a chance to have her story told,” said Crazy Man.

“I think that’s another story,” said the dog, Sidestepper. “It’ll be told. Someday. Maybe.”

They continued down the path of adventure and new meanings lost in thoughts about what adventures lay before them on the path of adventure and new meanings.

To be continued

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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.

