

The Existential Adventures of Crazy Man and the Dog, Sidestepper



Episode 128: Wherein Crazy Man and the Dog Sidestepper, get framed, in a way, maybe.

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“I’ve been framed! Help! Help! I’ve been framed!”

Crazy Man and the dog, Sidestepper, who’d been crossing a high-spanning bridge on the path of adventure and new meanings craned their heads to the left and saw nothing so they craned their heads to the right and still they saw nothing. Crazy Man’s head spun like a top on sour candy

steroids and his ears jumped away from his head like fleshy butterflies breaking out of the cocoon of his head. The dog, Sidestepper, watched in horror as Crazy Man's head fell off his shoulders and rolled over the side of his chest where his hands caught it and plunked it back on his shoulders "I'm over here you bastards!"

Obviously, Crazy Man and the dog, Sidestepper, were standing incorrectly when it came to hearing voices in distress, so they both jumped up high off the path, flipped, and landed on their heads in hopes their new position would help them to better hear voices in distress and figure out where they were coming from.

That was the plan.

"Bastards!" screamed the voice in distress from somewhere unseen.

A new plan was needed.

Hours or weeks later, man and dog were once again upright and facing the source of the voice. It was the *world*. Yep, the whole damn world...seen through a wooden picture frame. Or was it a wooden door frame leading into the air of the whole damn world, followed by a long story-ending fall into the river?

"It's your stupid perspective on me!" yelled the whole damn world that was apparently a stupid perspective, depending on your viewpoint.

Crazy Man and the dog, Sidestepper, immediately flipped onto their feet using some kind of literary magical realism that might have been just a bunch of words crammed together, leaving them standing on their feet. (The author knows nothing about this.)

"What stupid perspective are you talking about?" said Crazy Man. "We have a lot of stupid perspectives."

"The one that makes you think you can isolate me from the rest of me," said the stupid perspective. "You never see all of me."

The stupid perspective jiggled its frame like every innocent prisoner shaking their bars in rage.

"I've been framed!"

Crazy Man and the dog, Sidestepper, were confused. They scoured their memories to confirm whether or not either of them had ever been framed so that they could better empathize with the stupid perspective, but it was pointless...their lives were framed by the frameless: something about this outside thing.

"Have you tried moving out of the frame?" said the dog, Sidestepper.

This caught the stupid perspective (aka whole damn world) completely off guard in a very touché manner. But the stupid perspective's recovery was quick...

"Have you ever tried to move a whole damn world?" said the stupid perspective in a condescending tone that made Crazy Man wonder if using the flame thrower he planned to buy on the stupid perspective would be socially acceptable to those with a different perspective. The dog, Sidestepper, sensed the madness traveling through Crazy Man's head and said, "How about if we walk a bit along the bridge and turn our eyes toward you without the frame?"

The stupid perspective thought about this for the exact amount of time it took to conclude:

"You would do that for me?" said the stupid perspective.

"Sure," said the dog, Sidestepper. "We've been thinking about changing out perspectives for the last three minutes. I think that time-of-change is here now."

And with that, Crazy Man and the dog, Sidestepper, walked further on down the bridge. They stopped. They turned their heads...and there it was: another stupid perspective, only more of it. In fact, without the door/window/whatever framing the stupid perspective, it was now the stupid perspective in its own frame.

A Beer can floated in the water. Somewhere a speed boat sputtered to a stop when it ran out of fuel. A mayfly celebrating the beauty of life accidentally flew into a sea trout's mouth.

"Help!" screamed the stupid perspective. "I've been framed!"

"But we moved away from the frame," said Crazy Man.

"But you're still looking at me," said the stupid perspective. "And fitting me into your own stupid perspective of me."

"So what do you want us to do?" said Crazy Man.

"See that can of beer floating down there in my river?" said the stupid perspective.

Crazy Man and the dog, Sidestepper, looked down and saw a lone beer can bobbing up and down and as it floated downstream.

"Yep," said the traveling duo in unison.

"I want you both to jump in the river and get that beer can out of what is, sort of speaking, my urinary system," said the stupid perspective in a snarky voice.

If there was one thing that Crazy Man and the dog, Sidestepper, hated, it was a snarky voice. But they loved jumping off bridges to scoop up abandoned beer cans, so off the bridge they jumped and landed on the only part of their bodies that a hundred-foot dive could never hurt: their heads.

The splash was something to sing about in musical tributes to the greatness of splashes and how splashes make all our dreams and nightmares come true, like a roller coaster ride on the Great Wall of China. Ripples exploded across the surface of the water in pretty much the location where Crazy Man and the dog, Sidestepper, were drowning, neither of them being able to swim.

The stupid perspective wasn't impressed. In its mind, drowning and beer can retrieval were two different things and one should never accompany the other.

Fortunately, a passing sea turtle saw the two floundering in the water and thought: *Idiots, risking their lives for a bloody five cent beer can. And I'll bet they'll just spend the money on drugs or cell phones. But...may as well save them so they can continue their journey. What the hell.*

Later that evening, Crazy Man and the dog, Sidestepper, coughed, sneezed, hacked and coughed some more as they staggered along the path of adventure and new meanings, swearing they would never look through a window frame, a door frame or a bridge again and they would keep their perspectives to themselves.

Crazy Man heard it first...it was off to the right, somewhere in the bushes and leaves of the deep dark scary woods. It was barely audible but it was there...behind the window of an abandoned car door:

"Help. Help. I've been framed."

"You hear that?" said Crazy Man.

"Yep," said the dog, Sidestepper. "Gonna dive into the deep dark scary woods to explore?"

"Nope," said Crazy Man. "Not until I've learned how to swim above it all."

This made no sense to the dog, Sidestepper, who suspected that it meant no sense to his travel mate, but then...isn't that just a matter of perspective?

To be continued...

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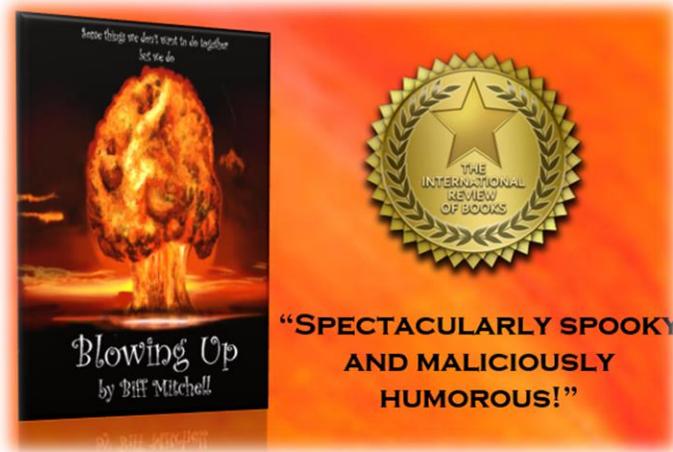
www.biffmitchell.com

Check out the blog at: www.crazymanadventures.com

New from Double Dragon Publishing!

Blowing Up

You deserve a good laugh in 2022. Here it is...



Five out of five stars

I was granted complimentary access to *Blowing Up* by Biff Mitchell as part of my participation in a blog tour for this title with Goddess Fish Promotions. Thank you to all involved in affording me this opportunity! My thoughts are my own and my review is honest.

Blowing Up is a collection of short fiction stories that sprinkles absurd humour and surreal observations into horrifying situations. I thoroughly enjoyed the ride! I absolutely loved the attention to visual details throughout, and I loved being left scratching my head at the end of several of these stories.

The stories are a nice mix of first and third-person POVs and each presents very different lead characters with just enough time to get to know them. Some are barely a few pages long and end before you know it, while others feel like novelettes, and some feel like they could be explored further into a novella or novel.

I adore the titles! Titles like "100 People, 10 Bats, and 1 Cat Blowing Up" really piqued my curiosity and the story that followed did not disappoint.

Like most short fiction anthologies, I'm left feeling like nothing was long enough and I want more, but these are good feelings! I understand the point of short fiction, these are written very well, and they're just as long as they need to be. I just want

Jenna Rideout
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