

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



Episode 129: Wherein Crazy Man and the Dog Sidestepper, meet the moose of madness  
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One sappy gray day on the path of adventure and new meanings when the sky was blah and the trees were blah and the faded green grass was blah and Crazy Man and the dog, Sidestepper, were in blah moods that turned their brown eyes gray, the duo of odd adventurers was startled by an unexpected appearance. They gasped and ogled at the sight of a big burly dinosaur-bone-chewing moose towering over them with a snap, crunch, snap as it jawed a brontosaurus bone into dinosaur paste.

“I’ve heard of you blokes,” said the moose. “You’re the ones who saved the universe from the aliens.”

Crazy Man and the dog, Sidestepper, rolled their eyes. They knew it was the other way around and that the aliens took off in fear of the Earth and its two-legged abominations. They'd just happened to be around when the aliens were finally spooked enough to leave.

"Personally," said the moose, "I'd have thought it would be the other way around...but I guess that's just moose talk." The moose crunched and chewed and spewed fossil bits from its jowls as it stared straight through their souls with its off-kilter eyes. "By-the-way, in case you haven't noticed...I'm totally bonkers...yep, crazy as a loon...a loon looney loon...my sanity stepped out for a smoke and pizza and never came back. They call me Mad Moose the Moose Gone Mad...or Mad Moose for short."

Crazy Man and the dog, Sidestepper, were beside themselves with joy. They'd both shared a dream of one day meeting a mad moose just for the hell of it and now it was finally just-for-hell-of-it time.

"You sure are big," said the dog, Sidestepper.

"My what big eyes you have," said Crazy Man.

"And my what big teeth you have," said the dog, Sidestepper.

"I think you're getting this story mixed with up with something else," said Mad Moose (the Moose Gone Mad). "Would one of you have a smoke?"

Crazy Man and the dog, Sidestepper, were flummoxed. A cigarette-smoking Mad Moose? Crazy Man sensed the end was near. The dog, Sidestepper's, tail almost curled into his butt. Puffy white mist in the sky swirled and swarmed and arranged themselves into question marks and scrolled a mystery across the sky. The deep dark scary woods snarled.

"No," said the dog, Sidestepper. "We don't smoke. But if we did, we would give you a smoke for now and one for later. We would just be that kind of smokers."

Crazy Man nodded vigorous agreement. He suddenly wanted to be a generous smoker, giving extra smokes to all the mad moose's in the world, bless their smoke-stained lungs. Suddenly, he wanted to grow tobacco on his very own tobacco plantation with tractors and horses and a flame thrower to keep the bugs away.

Just as he was considering the movie rights to his tobacco empire-building plans, Mad Moose said: "Generosity is more than words. You're both bastards."

Crazy Man and the dog, Sidestepper, realized that this Mad Moose was not going to have information about lost mothers or the whereabouts of a map to food. It was time to change the subject.

"Why do you eat dinosaur bones?" said the dog, Sidestepper.

"I like my food well-done," said Mad Moose.

Once again, Crazy Man and the dog, Sidestepper, were flummoxed: When or if they ever found a map to food, would they want it to be well-done? What if well-done-ness wasn't right for the food? Would they have to change their eating habits? Their culinary preferences? Should they try eating fossilized dinosaur bones? Did they have the teeth for it? Why did this looney moose call them bastards? Was the moose part of an international plot to discredit their journey on the path of adventure and new meanings? Was it time for them to stop asking dumb questions and get back to whatever it was they were doing...whatever that was...something to do with blah.

That was it!

Blah!

They yelled it at Mad Moose in unison: "BLAH!"

Mad Moose had never been blah-ed before...and certainly not by an almost dog and a questionable man (living in two dimensions and all). Mad Moose was bent inside and his mind was suddenly more disoriented than ever. He was now Mad Mad Moose and his eyes glowed yellow, green, blue, purple, orange, brown, black and Chartreuse. It looked like something boiled behind his eyes, deep inside his mad moose brain; in fact, tiny strips of brain steam whiffed out of his ears and his nose spilled ludicrous notions about the nature of life and snot.

It was too much for Mad Moose, the Moose Gone Mad. He huffed and he puffed and he huffed some more and he puffed some more and sat on his mad moose ass and said, "So what you're trying to say is that you don't have a smoke?" Mad Moose clucked his tongue in a mouth coated with dinosaur bone paste. "You wouldn't happen to have a toothbrush, would either of you?"

Crazy Man and the dog, Sidestepper, checked their personages and found everything but toothbrushes. Crazy Man asked Mad Moose if he could use a rose quartz worry stone that he'd found in one of his many back pockets and Mad Moose said, "Does it taste as good a petrified dinosaur bones?"

Crazy Man bit the stone lightly and, after much humming and hawing and discussions with world authorities on dinosaur bones and rose quartz, arrived at a startling conclusion: "Nope."

Mad Moose nodded sadly, perked his ears and faded into the trees and bushes of the deep dark scary woods.

Later on, Crazy Man said, "That was one smokin' moose."

Fortunately, he didn't hold his breath waiting for the dog, Sidestepper, to laugh. Even the deep dark scary woods remained silent. Potential clouds merged into a cloak of darkness over the earth.

But maybe, just maybe, something good might lie ahead on the path of adventure and new meanings.

To be continued...

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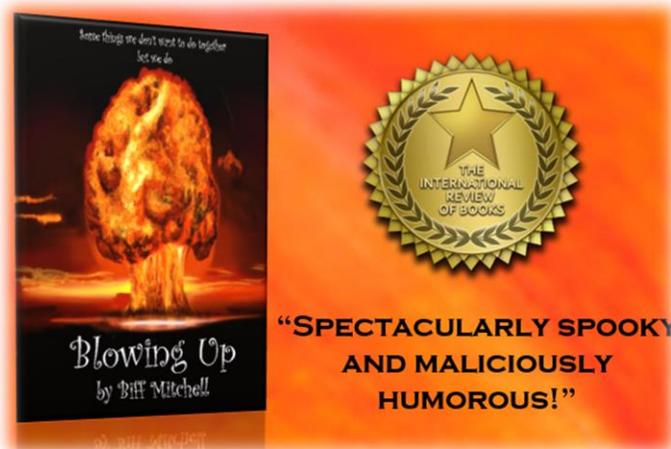
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