

Bum Bobs Adventure

Bum Bob passed out again last night like he has every night for the last ten years –fully clothed; including his stinking shoes because one of Bum Bobs many mottos is: “never trust someone to not steal what *he* would if given the chance.” Bum Bob jolted awake in his stained sleeping bag and looked around in blurry-eyed confusion, and wondered what in the hell had disturbed his slumber. He relaxed as soon as his cheap, wine-infused mind made sense of what had woken him up. His best friend Scout was barking and whining to be let outside to use the restroom. You might find it unusual for a dog to whine to be let outside when he *lives* outside, but Scout has the manners of a dog that lived in a mansion. Bob stumbled to the blanket door and opened it; Scout sauntered out with the dignity of a purebred. Bob took out his lighter and lit up a half smoked cigarette and inhaled deeply on it and erupted into a coughing fit that would have killed a lesser person. Bob opened a dented and unlabeled can and a sigh of disgust escaped his un-brushed mouth when the aroma of creamed corn wafts up to his bearded face. His long greasy, gray hair obscured his tired blue eyes as he bended over to dump the cold corn onto Scouts hub cap and muttered out loud

“Guess I won’t be eating breakfast”

He inhaled another lung destroyer puff on his smoke.

Bum Bob screamed

“Hurry up and eat your damned food and let’s go”.

He circled his encampment and took a leak that started and stopped like cars in bumper to bumper traffic. Bob couldn’t wait any longer and yelled,

“YOU DAMN DOG, I’m out of here, those cans aren’t going to collect themselves”

He grabbed his beat up and stained, squeaky-wheeled baby carriage that some rich *asshole* had thrown away, he proceeded to his favorite dumpster-hot-spots to collect his treasures. Please don’t get him started on those high-society-people who have jobs, live in actual houses with indoor plumbing and electricity *and* drive cars, because in his mind they’re all *assholes* and you’ll develop narcolepsy and quickly fall asleep before he’s half finished with his long-winded rants about how they are destroying the earth and changing the moons atmosphere.

Bum Bob and Scout are somewhat of pseudo celebrities because they have lived behind the same neighborhood for years. He walked down the street pushing his stroller while Scout ran around chasing shinning things as well as the following cats, birds, cars, even his own shadow at times. People are honking and waving, the neighborhood is divided on who is crazier Bum Bob or Scout. The neighborhood is divided because they are both crazy as hell but somehow balance each other out. Bob called everyone Buck because on the bad days when he didn’t find enough cans he has been known to accosts the working drones that he meets on the streets and ask them

“Can they help a one legged man take care of his homeless dog with a buck?”

He has the nerve to ask you this while wearing shorts that shows off his two dirty legs. Bum Bob is a drunk that is haunted by memories of his past life of when he was a wide smiling, white toothed man with a job, house and family and was also what he considered an *asshole*.

Later that afternoon with a sweet, beer-smelling stroller was full of cans and miscellaneous items, Bob was in a serious need of a drink, because he didn't believe in drinking just plain water; he's no hippy. Now the goal was to change what the *assholes* consider trash into the mind numbing, intoxicating liquors that kept his memories locked up and screaming behind that rickety door in his mind. He looked behind him to see Scout sniffing everything and peeing on everything other dogs decided wasn't worth claiming, like food wrappers, puddles, plants, and bicycle tires. A lot of bicyclists know to be on the lookout for Scout because he's pissed on a lot of their tires and feet. Scouts last bath was when it rained a couple of months earlier and there's only so much that a dog can do with its tongue. He stinks with a stank that not even fleas wanted to be near. Imagine the horror on the face of a stressed out mother when she realized her clean clothed child was rolling around on the dirty concrete playing with an even dirtier dog that smelled like it lived in an outhouse.

A few things you should know about Scout is he is one lazy dog and isn't picky about the places he will take his naps. He's fallen asleep next to dumpsters, underneath warm cars and even gutters. He loves shining things, dull things, fast moving objects but he loves to harass bugs because they are slower and dumber than he is. Bob thinks Scout is the only dog in the world with attention deficit disorder. He has stopped walking in the middle of a crosswalk and burst into a frothing-at-the-snout, barking episode when he comes across a bug minding its own damn business. There's no amount of screaming or begging Bob can do to get Scout to move his ass along. To many times to count Bob has, had to pick up Scout and carry him across the street and he always ends up with about a gallon of smelly dog saliva on his shoulder with his ears ringing because Scout won't shut up even when he can't see the bug anymore.

Bob has never put a leash on Scout because another one of his mottos is "Everything should be free, even dumb dogs". The life of a homeless dog is grand, he can nap anywhere he wants, and that's exactly what he did, he curled up and fell promptly fell asleep, snores and all. Without another glance towards Scout sleeping on a pile of moldy card board, he started walking towards Hanks number one recycling center. Bob always talked out loud during his long walk towards the recycling center because he has believed for years that Hank has been ripping him off. Bob thinks he should get paid for the time it takes him to collect the cans, not just for the cans themselves. Bob has many faults beyond being a drunken homeless man in his fifties; he doesn't get along with people very well.

When Hank saw Bob walking onto his property and yelled out

"You're not getting money for your time and travel expenses, so don't start that shit"

"Okay Hank ,you cheap bastard you have been getting rich off of my hard work for years and you should be ashamed of yourself for taking advantage of the less fortunate."

Hank looked around his filthy and cluttered recycling yard and said

"Thanks for letting me live this life of luxury"

Weighing out the three big bags of cans, Hank gave Bob 32.25 and told him

"Be careful and I'll see you tomorrow"

Bob walked off muttering and shook his head

"You cheap bastard, I'm not coming back here"

Hanks laughing because Bob always says the same thing every time he gets his money.

Bob is floated on air and had a chest full of excitement because he can already taste the cheap rot-gut-wine in his parched throat. Another one his mottos "Don't over pay for pretty labels, the cheap stuff works just as good". Bob was fuming mad at having to go back to get that lazy ass Scout but one never leaves a fellow *camper* behind, no matter how mad you are at them. Every liquor store Bob passed he kept getting madder and madder at his inconsiderate dog. After twenty minutes of fast walking, and pushing that beat up and yeasty smelling baby carriage, Bob stood at the entrance of the alley where Scout decided to take a nap, sweating profusely and breathing heavy, just like a kid in a candy store holding a fifty dollar bill without a parent in sight.

Bob yelled out

"SCOUT you better get your ass over here"

Bob waited for a few seconds then stomped through the trash covering the ground, angrily muttered out loud about how the lazy and crooked politicians would allow his beautiful city to slip slowly into filth and decay. The horrible stench of the overflowing dumpsters left out to cook under the hot southern California sun matched Bob's foul mood. His eyes fell upon an empty pile of moldy cardboard and looked around stunned that some bastard would steal his smelly mutt.

Scout!

SCOUT!

Panicked that his buddy has met someone else and left him, Bob sat down wearily. The flies landed upon his exposed arms and face but he didn't care. He waited there for a long time with his head rested upon his drawn up knees and thought about his life. Bob stopped feeling sorry for himself and went to the Korean owned liquor store that didn't care about how bad he stunk, he got a bottle of night train and went back to that pile of cardboard, with hope that Scout had come back. Scout was nowhere to be seen.

Bob passed out with fresh tears upon his face. The hot early morning sun shone down upon Bobs upturned face when he woke up. He opened his eyes and was blinded for a second then he looked around and groaned deeply in his chest, when he realized he had fallen asleep in an alley, like a bum. only *real* bums fall asleep in alleys. One thing that Bob was proud of is his humble bush abode; he made

it with his own sweat, blood and curses. Bob looked over at the empty, mildew-covered pile of cardboard, he had hoped that his best friend came back but, Scouts was nowhere to be seen.

Bob sounded like a car with bad brakes does, as he struggles to his feet. He moaned as the pain in his head causes him to go blind for a few seconds and the roar of Niagara falls filled his ears when he almost passed out again, this time in Bobs most dreaded way, sober and feeling life on *its* terms.

He did something that morning that made him feel like a drunken loser and that is to drink his *medicine/poison* before he went out on his God given mission to clean up the world of what the *assholes* consider trash. To Bob their trash is his life's mission – recycle and save the ants from diabetes and becoming little drunks by collecting the cans that are always covered by those addicted fiends. He popped the top and took a giant gulp of his favorite expensive swill that set Bob back a whole three dollars and let out a soul satisfying smack. He poured out a small drop (Bob has always hated people who are wasteful) in memory of his abandoning good buddy, Scout. For the first time in many years Bob will not go out to save the world, he trudged home sad and dejected but stopped in a liquor store to buy more medicine.

With a heavy heart Bob crawled through the hole in the fence that surrounded his home that kept out the riff raff. Bob opened up his blanket door and let out a giant shout of joy, because sleeping on his pillow is his dirty best friend Scout. Scout opened one of his off colored blue eyes and farted on the pillow and went back to sleep. Bob was so happy that he didn't even yell at Scout for sleeping on the furniture. That evening, over two hub cap plates full of luke warm beef hash both Bob and Scout watched the sun as it went down over the *assholes* homes that obscure the beautiful view of the city.