

The Existential Adventures of Crazy Man and the Dog, Sidestepper



Episode 160: Wherein Crazy Man and the Dog Sidestepper, consider climbing the stairway to heaven.

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It was a summery hazy day on the path of adventure and new meanings as Crazy Man and the dog, Sidestepper, talked about lost mothers, maps to food and this *outside thing* when suddenly a stairway appeared directly in front of them.

“Hi!” said the stairway. “I’m a stairway to heaven. Feel free to climb me. It’s free!”

Crazy Man and the dog, Sidestepper, stared at each other with eye-brow risings suggesting deep feeling of raw suspicion. They were skeptical about anything free, being of the persuasion that, if it’s free, it’s not *really* free and mischief hides somewhere in the promise of non-payment.

The dog, Sidestepper, immediately said, “Do know where my mother is? Is she in heaven? Are *you* my mother? Are...”

“No,” said the stairway. “I’m not your mother. I don’t know where she is. And you’re a bastard.”

Not one to be discouraged by reality, Crazy Man asked, “Do you have a map to food?”

“No,” said the stairway. “And you’re a bastard as well.”

“You’re not much of a stairway to heaven,” said Crazy Man.

“This isn’t heaven,” said the stairway. “You have to climb me to get there.”

“And will my mother be there?” said the dog, Sidestepper.

“And a map to food?” said Crazy Man.

“Probably not,” said the stairway. “But there will be other stuff.”

“What kinds of stuff?” said the dog, Sidestepper.

“All kinds of stuff,” said the stairway.

“What kinds of all kinds of stuff?” said Crazy Man.

“Climb me and see,” said the stairway.

After hours or days of in-depth consultation and the illegal use of an abacus, Crazy Man and the dog, Sidestepper, decided that climbing this so-called stairway to heaven could be another trap set by those who would sabotage their journey just for existential kicks.

“We don’t want any of your stuff,” said Crazy Man and the dog, Sidestepper, in unison.

“We don’t need your stuff,” said Crazy Man.

“Your stuff sucks!” said the dog, Sidestepper.

“Fine then,” said the stairway. “You don’t get to climb me and go through the gates.”

“I don’t see any gates sprouting out of you,” said the dog, Sidestepper. “Just a door. And it’s not even a nice looking door.”

“The path to heaven, like heaven itself, can be fraught with disappointment and broken doors,” said the stairway.

“Doesn’t sound much like heaven to me,” said Crazy Man. “Sounds like just another day.”

“But it’s not just another day,” said the stairway. “It’s *another* day.”

“We have lots of *another* days without having to climb steps and go through an old door to get to them,” said the dog, Sidestepper.

“And remember,” said the stairway. “It’s free.”

The word free bounced inside thought bubbles floating over the heads of Crazy Man and the dog, Sidestepper. Was it really free? Was there a hidden charge...a hidden trick that would leave them without retirement money? Would they be asked for PINs and undisclosed payments? Would they need a portable flame thrower? These and a plethora of other fundamental questions throbbed in their mutual psyche like a hornets’ nest about to explode with stinging awareness. Somehow, it made their eyes turn upside down so that they were suddenly looking at a stairway leading down straight into hell.

The dog, Sidestepper, sniffed sulfur and brimstone in the air.

Crazy Man checked his GI Jasper map case for no particular reason he could think of.

The stairway yelled: “You’re upside down! Upside down! Turn around and get right down!” It started thumping a knee it didn’t have as it tapped a toe it also didn’t have. “Climb me now and climb me free. You can climb with family, family...I wanna eat your family.” It slapped that same knee it didn’t have and laughed so hard its steps shook their nails loose and the entire stairway to heaven along with its railings and door collapsed into a pile of stairway debris like after Woodstock or Waterloo and the stairway to heaven sank into the ground all the way to hell.

Before them, the path of adventure and new meanings stretched into a horizon of new possibilities and ways of looking at things.

“Good thing we didn’t take the stairway to heaven,” said Crazy Man.

“Makes you think though,” said the dog, Sidestepper, “if the way to heaven might be through hell. You just never know these days.”

They thought quietly about this as they ventured into another sunset along the path of adventure and new meanings until Crazy Man said, “I’m thinking that, if you make a stairway to heaven parallel to where we’re going then maybe we’re already on a stairway to heaven.”

The dog, Sidestepper, nodded happily as they ventured away from one day and into a new day on the path of adventure and new meanings.

To be continued...

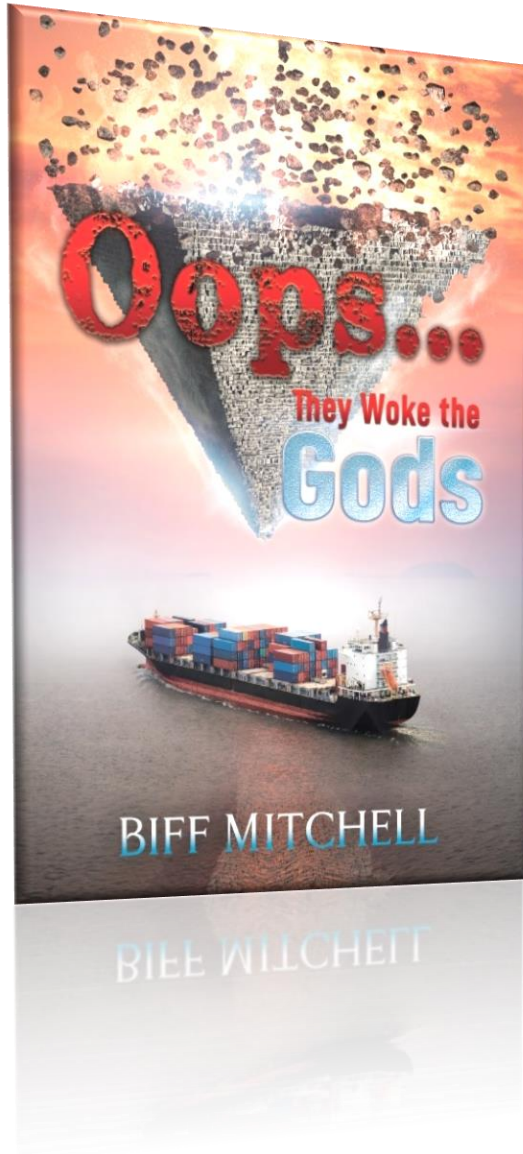
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God only knows when the gods get angry!

Oops



They Woke the Gods

Cursed to sleep for 2000 years, the Gods of Rome awoken to a world destroyed by the mortals and a war among themselves that threatens to destroy all that's left.

Charon the Ferryman has upset the balance of nature by sending legions of the dead back to the firmament because they didn't have coins for the ferry crossing to the underworld. Now, he must hunt those legions down, give them a coin for the ferry and kill them.

Meanwhile three crazed demigods wreak havoc on what's left of the human race, and gods of the skies and the underworld must join forces in seedy bars and drink vast quantities of Scotch to plan their moves.

COMING SOON!