THE RACCOON BY LAMAR SORRENTO

Well…..i had helped a neighbor dispose of a giant dead raccoon and I had put it in an old amazon box that I had and I placed it on the curb. ..i went in the house and called the city’s Dead Animal Pickup but I found out they quit picking up dead animals at 1 pm everyday….jesus, I thought , this thing is gonna stink to high heaven by tomorrow, in this terrible heat….so….i decided to haul the box over to the church across the street later and dump it in their garbage dumpster, which I knew would be emptied that night by the bi-weekly garbage truck., no one the wiser, I thought..,Feeling good about myself. ‘Gee….i’m glad I found the racoon a way out of here….out of the neighborhood..to lie in peace somewhere,,,,a garbage dump is peaceful, I guess..?...

But then later that night i was thinking , ……’gee, I hope that raccoon doesn’t smell so bad that the truck driver stops the truck to see where all the stink is coming from..his normal load is papers and lunch room trash, not dead bodies……I know he picks up garbage for a living but this raccoon outstinked anything that I had I ever smelled….ever…it’s a dead body..!!..not cantaloupe…dead animals are the king of all stink.

The truck driver’s name is Bruno….well, he stops the truck on Peabody near Cleveland , pulls over to the curb , angrily gets out and straining his huge nasty torso , he climbs up the side of the garbage–laden dump truck.

And he wades down amongst the trash….there are some stenches for sure..…!!,...but he is used to most of the smells but this new smell is monstrous, one of the worst ever . gad, …he takes out a flashlight….and his keen nostrils soon lead him to the offending box….eureka..!!...god almighty the stink,,!!!

‘oh I see…exclaimed Bruno… some dork put a dead giant raccoon in this box and stuck me with it….haha very funny…..i almost fainted from the stink..!!..let’s see here…..hmmmm…name on the box says …..Sorrento on York ave…well, well…we’ll pay mr. sorrento a quick visit’…’too bad the street number got covered up in some ketchup and I cant read the whole thing..!!!!...he drooled an evil nasty grin ,showing off his greenish teeth glaring like rotten pieces of onion and , clutching the evil box , smell and all, he climbed out of the truck and got into the cab and drove off in a silent rage…

‘let’s head down York Ave and see if this Sorrento is around’…he mused.

Meanwhile, My mind said to my brain……’jesus….the box…!!....was my name on the box?…and address…?..oh no,…I forgot to check.!!..if that raccoon smells too ungodly strong then the driver might freak out and find the box then easily locate me and beat me with that dead stinking raccoon which will be quite stiff by then due to rigor mortis……god…..quick…..turn out all the lights……move the cars across the street……make the house look deserted…turn off all the lights…all of them,,,,,don’t make any sounds…..turn off the tv…turn off the oven ,as well…

Breathless, i am just getting back from moving the cars out of sight across the street when a large nasty sanitation dump truck pulls right up to where I am standing…a gorilla type man leans out the window…

‘say brother……would you know a guy named Sorrento on this street…’..it was Bruno..

My heart jumped into my throat and it hid in a closet…..i couldn’t breath….

After what seems an eternity….i stammer out…..’uh….no I don’t think so.,..i don’t think…no I don’t know him……..’..i’m pretty sure’

Bruno glares at me…..’pretty sure huh’’’??!!

I begin walking backwards and stumbling….i cry out……”uh,,,,,,ah ,,,,oh yea…him…..now I remember,,,,yes, he died….he’s dead…pretty sure, yea….died ..yea’’’

‘what are you doing out here alone in this dark….memphis aint so safe…something could happen to a guy , you know’..said Bruno..in a suddenly friendly but fake tone..

‘Well..i was just…. walking…you know……’….i said ‘, all the while imaging myself being soundly beaten like a baby mule with a giant stinking raccoon…..

‘you live around here?’ Bruno said ,sounding more angry now…

‘me….?...no….i live …over on…….Harbert…….’

‘harbert……lotta rich assholes over there….you rich,…..?....got any pets…?…you ..any yo neighbors got any pet animals…?...like, you know, wild animals..”

‘animals…?...ahh no…naw I don’t think so….one my neighbors ….got a goldfish pond’

‘goldfish…!...them tings attract raccoons , I know that…’..Bruno’s eyes lit up..with dark undershadows.,

‘You seen any raccoons around here…’?

‘ ‘nope..cant say I have’…….what color…?’

Bruno stared at me silently for quite a while…..i kept backing up trying not to fall over backwards.

‘well you have a good night , sir ‘ Bruno said with a sideways sloppy grin. ‘ I guess i will have to search elsewhere, because I WILL find this guy …’

My throat closed up tighter…I was dying from no air..

I watched him pull off and I felt better…..i relaxed some….then,,…

Then..about 8 houses down the street, I saw his brake lights come on…they looked like the eyes of a radioactive monster….….he stopped…!

He was right in front of the mystery house…the one on my street that no one exactly knows who lives there. They have a 6 ft iron fence with sharp spikes on top and a gate with razor wire on top…….several extremely mean dogs….a rebel flag….and various and sundry 4runners and Jeeps and off-road type trucks….with big lights on them..and skulls and stuff stuck on them…

I watched in horror as Bruno stepped down from the cab…he had a box under his right arm….the box…!!..he had my Amazon box!!!..…….i used all the eye peering pressure i could muster……as he turned, ….God …..I could see there was a label on the box….  
god that was the raccoon box…

My horror grew exponentially as Bruno walked to the fence and non-chalantly heaved the box over into the yard…in the yard…!!!!!!...into the yard from hell….a dead raccoon in a box with my name and address on it……this is going to get way worse very fast…I felt as if my spine was flagpole.

Bruno was driving off…..i tried to grab my breath…..what do I do..?..if those dogs get that dead raccoon out of that box ..the box with my name and address on it….i am dead…..really dead….these guys could be meth head terrorist assassins……or just normal mean rednecks,..i smelled doom and it smelled worse than the raccoon ever did..

I felt a cold sweat envelope my body like an frozen Tommy Copper body suit..which I guess, handily, I could be buried in also,…..then suddenly I sprinted, not walked down to the mystery house and stood there…..breathing hard like a monkey with asthma.. standing in front of the fence, I could see that no dogs were out but I sensed movements within the house…..it was now or never…like nowsville…I had to retrieve the box before anyone in that house found it…no matter what…

No matter what……no matter what…

The next morning the doctor at the emergency room asked me if I had been in a sword fight the night before..

I said….’yea….but I won.’.