

the Case of the Smelly Rug Adventure

by Darryl Price

I didn't know what to do, really, but I had to do something. After all there was no one left to be the real bona fide hero to this story, except for me, the guy who wasn't any kind of a hero at all. I mean I could hardly move an inch, rolled up inside of a smelly rug as I was, much less come up with a decent plan to save the whole world from some crazy total destruction thing. And it looked like we were all going to run out of time before I did so anyway, so I did the only thing I could think of, I deliberately fell over on the hard concrete floor and rolled myself across the dirt and filth and crashed into the legs of the dark thing like a human Lincoln log. In my mind I pictured a bowling ball blasting through a squadron of stiff pins. This did not work out the way I thought it was going to, as a matter of fact the dark thing only stepped on my chest a couple of more times with its hobnail feet and then rolled me back into the opposite direction, with very little effort I might add. But then something miraculous did happen. All that rolling around loosened things up quite a bit inside my little finger puzzle of a prison and soon I was crawling out one end like a slick spurt of toothpaste. I found I wasn't tired either. I felt happy to be alive, although still quite terrified out of my ever loving mind for being in the situation in the first place. But my friends only had me to help them now and nobody else. The evil thing didn't even bother to look my way again. I was piffle. It just hunched its decrepit bulging shoulders around its big old blinking red buttons and funny mad levers and waited for the grand hideous moment to arrive. It was breathing heavily, which gave me a Scooby-Doo moment of my own. Why would a monster sound like a man watching porn? That's when I decided the dark thing was probably just an idiot of some sort who wanted revenge on the whole stinking universe for making him feel unimportant. I felt just as

unimportant most of the time, except when Cindy Connors kissed me suddenly during a game of Hide and Seek one summer when I was twelve, but this was no time for philosophical musings on my part. Picturing this thing as a stupid man gave me a bit of needed courage, not much mind you, but a tiny bit, enough I guess, because right then and there I decided my friends were not going to die, ever, because of me and neither was anyone else. I knew I wasn't stronger than the man thing, but I figured I could probably take out a goofy looking machine, and I didn't have much time left in which to do it. I should have yelled something manly and heroic like "Geronimo" but instead I might have yelled "Cindy Connors" and smashed my now flattened out rug like a limp garbage can lid down over his creepy little head with all my might. To my grandest delight he veered right into his own ridiculous doomsday machine and pressed things he probably wasn't supposed to. Everything started to smoke and catch on fire. It happened so fast. At first I just stood there in utter amazement. He was flailing around like a conjoined octopus, trying to recalculate his new unexpected settings I guess, when the final buzzer I'm guessing went off somewhere on the inside of its gears and the whole thing loudly exploded up through the roof of the basement like a rocket taking off. Only this rocket didn't go anywhere. It just sat there pretending to take off. That's when I noticed the dark one as he shall forever after be known face down on the floor with actual smoke wisps rising off his shoulders like little grey worms. For a second I thought I should try to unmask him just like in the movies, but what if it wasn't a mask? Then I heard someone moaning and I knew what else I had to do.

Bonus:
In My Life

I've never seen anything more beautiful
anywhere in the world than your
eyes tonight, the way the tiny
hills of your cheeks sparkled beneath
them, as if random bits of
heavenly golden color had simply somehow
flaked out of their charm all
on their own and now rested
lightly sprinkled there for all to
watch and adore. I wanted to
stop total strangers in the hour's
way and ask them pleadingly to
please take a look at my
love, isn't she more marvelous than
marble, the golden light comes right
through her skin like the purest
shining stars through white Irish linen?
But more than that I wanted
to more gently than a dip
in the seven oceans at once
even take your simplest hand in
my hands and kiss all five
fingers and give myself over to
those fields of completely covering softness
forever and ever and ever. There
could be no more mundane moments
in my life, not with your
smile in the same room with
me. You've somehow invaded my mind
before I even knew I was
surrounded. And everywhere I try to
look for a new thought I
am confronted by the bright fact
of your light getting there first.

