

A Winner in Every Case

by

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1. DAYEXT The Old Fishin' Hole

GORD and DOUG celebrate this glorious morning by fishing at their favourite fishin' hole. Gord has thoughtfully supplied a COOLER chock full of CANS OF BEER. They slouch by the banks of the river POLES in hand.

DOUG
Sure is a beautiful morning Gord.
You know, there's only one thing
that would make it even more
perfect.

GORD
What's that Doug?

DOUG
A Beer. Beer me Gord!

GORD
Don't mind if I do.

Gord grabs a beer from the cooler and tosses it to Doug.

GORD
(to himself)
And one for the piper.

Gord takes beer for himself.

Before Doug opens his can, something on the label catches his eye, so he starts to read it.

DOUG
(almost to himself)
A contest . . .

GORD
(wiping beer from his
mouth)
Yeah. First Prize is a Studebaker
TICONDEROGA 4 X 4!

DOUG
Studebaker eh?

Doug visualizes the truck gleaming in the sunshine.

GORD
(off screen)
And the Big Ti, as it's called, is
one sweet 4 x 4. Biggest V-8 on
the market, power everything and
can pull twelve thousand pounds!
(MORE)

GORD (cont'd)
Man I'd love to get one for the
little lady - ya know, for grocery
runs and such.

DOUG
Man, I'd give anything to be behind
the wheel of one of those babies.

Doug imagines himself driving down the road in the
Ticonderoga.

GORD
(knocking Doug out of his
reveries)
Like the can says, there's winner
in every case. Good luck buddy.

Doug, with great care and reverence slowly pulls the tab to
the can.

SFX: Rip of metal as seal is broken.

A couple of bars of MUSIC emanates from the can. It is
quickly followed by a mechanical voice.

CAN
You are a winner! . . . of a free
can of beer.

DOUG
Well, what d'ya know.

GORD
You always were a lucky stiff.

Doug goes to take a sip from the can but it's dry. He
inverts it and not a drop falls out. He peers inside only to
discover the interior is occupied by microcircuitry and
blinking lights.

Gord continues to heartily enjoy his suds.

DOUG
(sulkily)
I guess you collect at the Beer
Store.

Doug shakes the bad emotion off and returns to cheeriness.

DOUG
I guess this calls for a beer. Mr
Gord, would be so kind?

GORD
Happy to oblige.

Gord tosses Doug another beer.

Doug pulls the tab.

CAN
You are a winner! . . . of a free
beer.

Doug's face falls.

GORD
You lucky dog! Two winners in the
case. What are the odds?

DOUG
(puzzled)
Pretty high I suppose.

GORD
Your prize sire.

He tosses Doug another can.

Doug opens the can.

CAN
You are a winner! . . . of a free
beer.

DOUG
Son of a . . .

GORD
Now there! Don't go being a sore
winner. That's three in a row.
That's amazing.

DOUG
Yes, it is.

Gord fishes in the cooler for another beer.

GORD
(between sips of his new
beer)
So what's the problem?

DOUG
What's the problem? What's the
problem!

(MORE)

DOUG (cont'd)
I'll tell you the problem. The problem is that I haven't had any beers yet!

GORD
What are ya talkin' about. You just had three in the last five minutes.

DOUG
I haven't had three. I've won three, and I can't drink them now! I want one now!

As Doug speaks, Gord puzzles over the difference between "having" and "winning".

GORD
Well then, help yourself.

Doug rummages through the cooler then pulls out his choice. Carefully gripping the can, he gingerly pulls back on the tab.

SFX: Rip of metal as seal is broken.

CAN
You are a winner! . . . of a free beer.

DOUG
SHIT!

Doug pulls out another winning can and another and another.

DOUG
SHIT! SHIT! SHIT!

Gord cannot concentrate on his fishing and drinking with all that swearing. He tries turning away but he's finally forced to intercede.

GORD
Now hold it there chief!

Doug stops, finger ready to pull another tab.

GORD
Look at yourself! Look at what your lust for beer has done to you. Is this anyway to act? Especially on a day like this? Besides your not letting me have a chance at those beers.

Gord grabs himself another beer.

DOUG

(recovering)

I'm sorry Gord. You're right, this no way to act. It just that it seems that I'm picking nothing but duds.

GORD

Nothing but duds? Hold the phone sunshine! You're the one pulling out all the winners. You've got at least seven beers there.

DOUG

Gord, I haven't had one beer this morning and it's already nine o'clock!

Doug glares at Gord. Gord has to figure it out.

DOUG

Okay, we'll do an experiment and you can prove me wrong. You randomly pulled that can out of the cooler. Correct?

GORD

Yes.

DOUG

And I've randomly pulled this can out of the cooler, right?

GORD

Well my eyes weren't on you all of the time . . .

DOUG

Gord!

GORD

But for our purposes, I'll say it's random.

DOUG

Thank you.

GORD

You're welcome.

DOUG
Good.

GORD
Okay.

DOUG
Shut-up!

GORD
Okay, okay. No need to get angry.
(under his breath)
Hothead.

DOUG
I put it to you, for reasons that
only the angels know, that your can
will be full of frothy, foamy,
tasty, malted goodness . . .

GORD
I'm with ya so far.

DOUG
And that mine will have nothing it
but a couple of dry transistors.

GORD
You're off your nut!

DOUG
Go ahead, prove me wrong.

GORD
Look it was just some freak thing.
I say "Roll with it"! This is your
day to buy that lottery ticket.
Don't spoil the moment.

DOUG
Don't you understand! We've got a
cooler full of beer and I'm still
thirsty. The moment's already
spoiled!

Gord would like to protest.

DOUG
(cutting Gord off)
Just open the damn beer.

Gord gets readies to open the can, holding his finger over
the tab.

GORD
You don't really . . .

DOUG
Open it!

Gord shrugs and opens the beer. No music. He slurps back the beer.

GORD
(heartfelt)
Ah . . . Now that's good beer.

Gord looks at Doug expectantly. Doug glares back.

GORD
Your turn.

DOUG
I'm going.

Holding the can up in his hand, Doug readies to pull the tab. A bead of sweat rolls down his forehead.

Into the frame steps Chuck. This stops Doug from pulling the tab.

CHUCK
Good morrow gentlemen.

GORD
(enthusiastically)
Chuck!

DOUG
(not enthusiastically)
Oh, hey Chuck. Good to see ya.

GORD
What brings you out this early in the morning?

CHUCK
Like you gentlemen, I'm indulging my passion for angling.

Chuck is armed for everything but fishing.

GORD
Caught anything?

CHUCK

Sadly, the fish are not biting. Things have become so bad that I 'd thought I'd take a short perambulation to stave off ennui. However, I've worked up quite a thirst, and I could not help but notice that you have an ample supply of liquid refreshment. Mind if I partake?

Silence.

GORD

Oh the beer! Ya - grab yourself a cold one.

DOUG

You know Chuck, we were just about to conclude an experiment.

GORD

Yeah Right! Doug's got this crazy idea that he hasn't had any beer this morning. But I've seen him with my own eyes win seven in a row!

CHUCK

Seven in a row. Remarkable. Won them? How?

GORD

There's this contest. A winner in every case. Just read the label.

CHUCK

A contest . . . interesting. (to Doug) May I?

Chuck indicates Doug's can.

DOUG

Well . .er . . .

Chuck takes Doug's can.

CHUCK

Thank you Douglas.

Chuck adjusts his glasses and reads the label. His lips moves as he does so.

CHUCK
. . . Grand prize a Studebaker
Ticonderoga! A fine piece of
automotive design if there ever was
one . . .

Chuck visualizes the truck and himself driving it.

CHUCK
(continuing his thoughts)
. . . reminiscent of the designs of
Exner and Loewy. Why I can see
myself behind the wheel . . .

DOUG
Ya, ya, ya. But what about my
beer?

CHUCK
(distractedly)
Oh yes, your beer. Did you say
something about an experiment?

DOUG
Yah, I'm going to prove to Gord
that there's no beer in that can.

GORD
Bah!

CHUCK
Then gentlemen, in the name of
Science, cheers!

Chuck cradling the can carefully pulls the tab.

SFX: Rip of metal as seal is broken.

No PFFT or metallic voice issues from the can. They all look
at it expectantly. Then, after an abnormally long time out
comes a PFFT. Chuck throws back the suds then wipes his chin
with his sleeve.

GORD
Told ya there was beer in that can.

DOUG
(near tears)
There was beer in that can . . .

CHUCK

Douglas, you were quite correct.
There was no beer in that can, but
Ambrosia, the nectar of the gods.

DOUG

My beer.

CHUCK

Well gentlemen this concludes our
parliament. My thirst has been
slaked and I must continue my
piscine endeavours. Au revoir.

Chuck walks off.

DOUG

My beer. Gord, he drank my beer.
I really need a beer.

GORD

Okay Doug, just a second. Man,
science is thirsty work.

Gord reaches into the cooler.

DOUG

I need a beer now! Get out of my
way Gord.

Doug leaps forward pushing Gord out of the way. Doug
launches into an orgy of can opening.

The words "you are a winner" repeat and repeat and repeat.

Doug opens one can full of beer, but by reflex he tosses it
away.

GORD

Doug? . . . Doug? . . . Doug!

DOUG

Don't bother me Gord.

GORD

Er, Doug, one of those had beer in
it.

Doug freezes.

DOUG

Beer! AGHHHHH!

Doug madly tears up the ground looking for the full can. While he checks his rejects for beer, the full can gurgles away beer. Doug finds it, only to find it empty save for a couple of drops. He staggers to his feet.

Gord sits on top of the cooler, arms crossed.

DOUG
Get off that cooler Gord!

GORD
No. Not till you come to your senses.

DOUG
Get off that cooler Gord. Now.

GORD
No.

Doug has drawn close to Gord. Nose to nose the each try to stare the other down. Gord's eyes are flinty defiance; Doug has developed a nasty tick.

Doug breaks first, bawling and collapsing into a foetal position.

DOUG
(sobbing)
I just want a beer. A single, lousy beer. I don't care if I never win another thing, I just want a drink. I'm thirsty Gord, really, really thirsty.

Doug continues to sob. Gord kneels down and comforts him. Cradling him, Gord rocks Doug slowly back and forth.

GORD
There, there big fella. Let it out. Let it all out.

Gord rocks Doug a little more.

GORD
There are still two beers left, and one of them has your name on it.

DOUG
(breaking from Gord's arms)
You mean it?

GORD

Of course I mean it. What's more is that I'll give you first pick, just show that's there's no hard feelings.

Gord offers Doug a HANDKERCHIEF into which Doug blows his nose. Doug wants to hand it back, but Gord waves him off.

DOUG

You know something Gord. You're a real friend.

GORD

Bah . . .

Gord opens the cooler for Doug. Doug reaches in, but he can't decide. His hand moves back and forth between the two cans. Finally he chooses one, and, with both hands, cradles it close to his body.

GORD

Happy now.

Smiling blissfully, Doug nods his head.

GORD

Alrighty then.

He takes the last can and pops it open with a satisfying PFFT.

Doug coughs, getting Gord's attention.

DOUG

Do you mind if we switch buddy?

GORD

Sure thing pal.

They switch cans and Doug finally gets his drink. With every sip he experiences an ever growing sense of fulfilment.

DOUG

I feel a lot better now. Now I can enjoy the rest of the day.

GORD

That's good to hear. (Then holding up his can) Here's to beer. It always has a way of chasing the blues a way.

DOUG

Amen.

Gord pops open his can.

CAN

You are a winner . . . of a brand
new Ticonderoga 4 x 4!

Doug ceases to enjoy his beer. His nervous tick returns and he crushes his can, spilling beer over himself.

GORD

Holy Be-Jesus! I'm a winner. What
are the odds Doug? What are the
odds?

FADE TO BLACK

DAY EXT Residential Street

FADE UP FROM
BLACK

Doug, with dirt, bruises and bags under his eyes having joined his tick, limps along the street clutching his winning beer cans. A sparkling new SUV approaches him from behind. As it pulls up beside him it honks its horn and the passenger side window rolls down. Gord sits in the passenger seat. Doug continues to walk, oblivious.

GORD

Hey Doug! Pretty sharp, eh!

Doug turns his head and doesn't really look at the vehicle.

DOUG

Oh, hey Gord. Yes, it looks quite
nice.

Doug faces forward again.

GORD

Say, the wife and I are just going
to get groceries, can we give you a
lift.

DOUG

Uh, no. I'll be okay. I'm just
going to the Beer Store to claim my
free beers.

GORD

Oh Jeez buddy. Didn't you read the rules, all prizes had to be claimed as of midnight last night.

Doug blanches and his tick intensifies.

GORD

Doug? Doug? Sure you don't want a lift?

Doug continues to walk.

GORD

Okay. Well got to go.

The SUV accelerates away.

GORD

(out the window)

See ya in the funny papers.

The truck disappears around the corner.

Doug staggers to halt, and collapses, spilling his cans. Striking the ground causes their recordings to start up again.

CANS

You are a winner. You are a winner. You are a winner . . .

Doug contracts into the foetal position, his head surrounded by the speaking cans.

DOUG

I'm so thirsty. So very, very thirsty.

FADE TO BLACK

THE END.