

Joshua Lyons

A Stop at Kroger

I bend over and pick
up the twenty dollar
bill that I saw the lady
in front of me drop.
I tap her on the shoulder
and say “Here you go ma’am.
You dropped this.”
She looks at me, grabs the bill,
and then rushes
off after her children who
are running across the parking
lot. I grab the beer
that I came for and get a pack
of Marlboros from the front.

As I leave the store, I light up one
of the cigarettes and start walking.

A Day Off

The salt-water wind burns my dry skin and brings
with it the sand that bounces off and then drifts
away or gets trapped in a shoe or shirt or hair
or some unmentionable place that nobody likes
to have sand trapped in or around.

And speaking of unmentionable places that nobody likes
to have sand trapped in I witnessed the man next
to me who in public in only a bathing suit and in a very
nonchalant way reaches into his suit with his hand and adjusts
his junk and then pulls his hand out to ruffle his kid's hair
and slap his wife on the butt.

I suppose that is not very much out of the ordinary
but I wasn't trying to look and see a scene like that but that's what
happens when you go to the beach and your eyes drift because
what else are they going to do while you are at the beach alone
and just walking along the strand and maybe every once in a while
going into the store to see the two dollar stuff that they have
marked up to \$24.95.

The idea of the beach is supposed to be calming or so I have been
told by a few people that I work with and who tell me that I
need to go to the beach because it's summer and I'm single
and it's the hot spot to go and be relaxed and have a drink and meet
a girl get laid come back to work and have a story to tell.

I suddenly have this image of me getting back and not having
a very good story to tell and while I'm telling my not very good
story I look very red and my skin looks dry because of the salt
in the water and all I have to show them is my surfboard lizard
that is wearing a shirt that says "cool" on it and he is giving some
hand signal that I imagine must be surfer lingo and while I am
telling this story and showing them my overpriced souvenir I
unintentionally reach down to adjust my junk because the sand
won't completely wash out.

Best of Intentions

Only after reading *Of Mice and Men*
did I figure out what true love was.

I know that it's weird to say that
George shooting Lennie in the back

of the head was an act of true love,
but what else could you call it? Lennie

didn't mean to kill his dog, and he only wanted
to try and keep Curley's wife from yelling.

He was scared. Imagine if you were put
in a position like that. Your best friend

didn't realize what he was doing
and you were the only person who cared.

I do that sometimes. Think about what I would
do in that position. I probably would have tried

to run away with Lennie, but then I suppose
if the lynch mob had caught up with us,

Lennie would have had a worse death. I'm glad
George was in that position and not me.

I would like to say that I love somebody enough
to do that, but I don't know that I do.

Hope

I'm a Christian that doesn't
go to Church every Sunday.

God Forgives

I go to the bar at night
and get drunk.

God Forgives

I've slept with more than one
woman and am not married.

God Forgives

I've used God's name in vain
multiple times and will again.

God Forgives

I've questioned whether
God exists or not.

I hope God forgives.