

Episode 10 – The Turkey Express!

The clock was ticking and I was in a big hurry to get back to the farm. Loaded into coolers in the back of the vehicle were 25 fresh turkeys, destined to grace Shuswap Christmas dinner tables everywhere. Loaded into my stomach were at least 25 ounces of chocolate, destined to provide me with “the turkey in my tank” extra energy to get through a crazy day.

The speedometer needle was the least of my concerns as I perfected the low flying aircraft impression down the hill past Carlin Hall. I was late and worried about my turkey customers stomping their feet in the cold with nary a gobble gobble in sight.

I barely registered the RCMP cruiser coming the opposite direction until he decided to join in the fun by doing an about face and turning on his pretty Christmas lights. Oops!

Well, saying “Oops” to an irate member of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police doesn’t cut the mustard, so I opted for the recent youtube advice on how to avoid being shot or tasered when pulled over. With all paperwork beautifully displayed in clear view on the dash, I arranged my hands on the steering wheel in an artful pose designed to reassure no farmer’s knives tucked between my fingers.

His glare removed any doubt that the Spirit of Christmas was being embraced by highway police. “Lady, I am going to impound your car right here and now!” he yelled “You were going 141 in a 100 zone. That’s 1 km over the 40 over, which gives me the right to immediately impound your car!” His loud and withering anger came in waves, completely dousing the “Hey, I have Happy Turkeys!” feeling. I decided the best action plan was to sit perfectly still, perfectly silent with preternaturally wide eyes in tacit agreement that, yes indeed, he had just apprehended the worst reprobate on the roads.

“Now, I am going back to my vehicle to check out your driving history and order the tow truck!” he vehemently bit off each word in a way that transported me back 40 years to my headmaster’s admonitions interspersed with the smacking of the leather strap on the back of my hand.

But now I had a bigger concern than this RCMP fellow who appeared to be impersonating my old headmaster, as I seriously considered my options. Would he give me AND the turkeys a lift home after impounding my car? No, I could see it now, he would throw me to the side of the road and I, with my 25 dead friends lined up beside me, would be stranded on the highway, with a “Find your own way home, lady, that’s your just punishment...” ringing in my ears.

Suddenly, his angry form loomed at my window again. “So, what’s your reason for speeding?” he demanded. I qualified what I was about to say, “Umm, well, I don’t think you’ll think it’s important, but I’m loaded with turkeys for customers waiting at the farm..... *and* I ate a lot of chocolate..... *and* I understand about impounding my vehicle, but would you be able to deliver the turkeys to the farm in your squad car?” I was willing to swallow my punishment, agreeing that he could leave ME, the reprobate, on the side of the highway, but not The Turkeys!

A change came over his face. ***Begone!*** strap-wielding Headmaster. A new apparition was before me, the very likeness of my wonderful Uncle Ben! “Well, then, that’s an important job! I’m going to let you off with a warning and a speeding ticket. Now get those turkeys delivered – safely mind! And stay off the chocolate, it’s not good for your driving!”

Yes, folks, true reverence for the Christmas Turkey Dinner remains alive and well in the Shuswap and I’m not speeding any more. The chocolate imbibing continues unabated though!

Una St.Clair, No Guilty Gobblers Here!
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