

Corn On The Macabre

By Mark Edgemon

On a bitter cold day, rain pounding on the windshield of his old Chevrolet pick-up truck, Herman Joe Bidderman drove home from the feed store with only enough seed to plant twelve acres on his eighty-acre farm. He simply ran out of money.

He needed to plant 17 acres, in order to pay the mortgage on his farm; or the bank would repossess it in less than ninety days.

It seemed that Herman Joe Bidderman always stayed just one step ahead of doom.

Suddenly, Herman saw a figure walk across the road. He slammed on his brakes, sending his truck into a tailspin, feeling a sudden jolt as his truck came to an immediate stop. The hard rain continued to pound on his windshield, as he started the truck and tried to move forward.

He got out of the truck and walked around to the back to see if his bad brakes had caused a blowout. As he rounded the end of the truck, horror gripped his entire being. Pinned underneath the truck's back right tire, was the head of an old man he did not know. Blood covered the ground, mixed with mud that was caused by the hard rain. He walked further around the truck and found that he had not only hit the man, but the truck's tires had ripped the old man's stomach wide open.

Nothing like this had ever happened to him before. He had never hit an animal much less a human being.

He pulled the body out from under his truck, wrapped an empty burlap seed bag around the dead man's mid-section, in order to keep the rest of his organs from pouring out. He got a shovel from his truck and dug up the bloody mud around the accident and tossed it in the back, to remove any sign of the incident. He lifted the dead man's corpse into the bed of the truck and placed him in gently, so as to show respect for the dead.

As he drove back to his farm, he concluded that the old man must have been homeless, going from farm to farm, looking for work.

When he got to the farm, he drove straight out to the middle of the field and dug a hole three feet deep and placed the body in it. He buried it there, because he thought no one would think of looking for a body underneath a field of corn. He took the truck out behind the barn and washed it down, removing the blood and the mud from inside the truck bed.

The next morning, he got up several hours before dawn, went to make himself breakfast and realized he had nothing in the house to eat. This only served to make him more determined and angry.

He grabbed a lantern to hang on his tractor, so he could see where he was plowing. When he got to the barn, he tried to light the lantern and discovered he was out of kerosene.

“Damn” he said, shaking his fist in the air. “I swear I am going to grow the best corn in the county and nothing is going to stop me”.

He jumped on his tractor and started it up in the dark. Whether it was stubbornness or fear or a little of both, he pulled the tractor out of the barn, taking the left side of the barn door with him.

“Damn!” he cried, “damn it to hell!”

Every row he plowed was guesswork. He plowed for hours until dawn. It would be a day that would bring the promise of hope for most in the world, but not for Herman Bidderman.

As he rode past the field he had just plowed, he was speechless. In his anger, he forgot that he had buried the old man in the center of the field. The tractor had dug up the remains of the dead man and plowed him into the field, grinding up and distributing his organs and bodily materials. The field was a bloody mess.

Although there are few visitors to Herman’s farm, there was always the possibility of guests and that prospect was what kept him up nights...and days. The only thing to do now was plant the seed and wait until the crops grew to cover up the field of blood.

He would stare out his window toward the dirt road, night and day. He would sleep in a chair by the window in case anyone should happen by, that he might steer them away from his fields.

As the weather got warmer and the days got longer, his crops grew and grew fast, unbelievably fast. Soon his crops were ready to harvest. They were well ahead of schedule. Matter of fact, they were incredible. The most beautiful crop of corn you could ever hope to see.

As Herman Joe Bidderman walked his fields, he laughed. He could not believe his eyes. Not only were the corn ears larger than normal, but there were ten times more stalks than usual.

He harvested the corn and took them to market. The other farmers at the market were amazed at his crop and wanted to know his secret. He wouldn’t tell them of course. He sold the corn, went straight to the bank and paid the mortgage payment on time.

He had another payment due in three months, so he kept back enough corn for seed to plant the entire eighty acres and as far as fertilizer was concerned...he had prospects.

The next day, Herman went hunting. Not for food, but for fertilizer. He wasn’t a very good shot and so he came back with only one rabbit. He didn’t shoot it...he stepped on it. But one rabbit would not fertilize his entire field.

Later that day, a farmer on a neighboring farm came over to complain about the gun shot noises he heard earlier in the day. Herman was worried about how to fertilize his fields and didn’t have

time to put up with the farmers ravings. The neighboring farmer threatened, if Herman shot off his gun one more time he would call the sheriff and have him arrested for disturbing the peace.

As the farmer ranted on, Herman had come up with a solution to his fertilizer problem.

Late that night, Herman put a battering ram on the front of his truck, which extended across his bumper. It was two feet thick and made of iron, which he broke off of some broken farm equipment.

The next morning he rose early, prepared himself some coffee, eggs and toast and headed out in his truck. Instead of driving out his driveway, he drove toward the woods on the outskirts of his property. He carefully maneuvered around the trees until he reached the neighboring farm, the farm that was owned by the same farmer who cursed him out the day before.

Herman saw him in his fields and raced the truck in his direction. The farmer raised his hands, motioning for Herman to stop, while cursing him at the top of his lungs. Herman drove onto the field tearing up the crops as he drove over them. The farmer was outraged and swore he was going to get the sheriff, until he realized the truck was heading straight for him. He began to run, but it was to no avail. Herman's truck was old, but it had no problem running down an old farmer with rheumatism.

Seconds later, the newly added battering ram smacked the farmer sending him three feet into the air and landing him in the squash.

Herman got out of the truck, picked up the corpse of the dead farmer and threw him into the back of the truck.

He drove back to his farm and planted the body in the lower right section of his field. As he was digging the hole, his truck, which was parked on a steep incline, started rolling down toward the field at the exact spot where Herman was digging. Herman had his back turned and was focused on his work, so he did not see the truck barreling toward him.

The truck's battering ram hit Herman in the back, breaking his spine and sending him into the hole on top of the body he was burying. He couldn't move. He cried out, but no one could hear him. He couldn't feel his legs, but he was alive. The truck was still moving forward and acted like a bulldozer pushing three feet of dirt on top of Herman, burying him alive. He always meant to have those brakes fixed.

Three months later, the bank executive in charge of Herman's account, came out to the farm with a developer, who had bought the farm on auction. After walking over the farm, they came to the fields and saw the most beautiful crop of corn either of them had ever seen. Since the developer now owned the property, he harvested enough to take home to his family.

The next day, he made a deal to have the rest of the crop harvested by the widow, who lived on the neighboring farm, who's husband had mysteriously disappeared. She sold all of the beautiful corn at the farmers market to the amazement of the other farmers who were there.

When they asked how she grew such a beautiful crop, she told them she harvested it on Herman Bidderman's abandoned farm.

The other farmers were indeed impressed. They were all in agreement. Herman Bidderman may have been a failure in life, but he sure knew how to grow the best corn in the county.

You know...you really do reap what you sow!

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