

BEST
of
bytestories 

September 2012 - March 2013

Volume #1

We've prepared this eBook to celebrate 6 months of bytestories.com

It's been fantastic being able to put the concept from our heads into something that people are really enjoying.

However, the journey's only just begun!

Our aim was to provide a place for a digital campfire where people from all parts of the globe could sit around a share an entertaining yarn. For some reason, there's a cowboy in every group of people. Anyway, we believe we've created this place which quite simply rocks.

Following the lead of the site, we've kept this eBook byte-sized and have assembled some of our favourites.

All the best
The Team @ bytestories

Best of bytestories, Volume #1
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Guide

1. Using the next page, click/tap on the name of the story to read
2. If you'd like view the story of the author on click on them.
3. Once on the page you can link to the author's page. There are also links to the stories' web pages. Where you can rate it and or 'like' them if you want.
4. Errrrm. What other things can we put in the guide...? Think!
5. We've conveniently included page numbers on the bottom right and sides. Actually, no we have not.
6. You can see the title at the top too!
7. Enjoy? Errrrm. Yeah, enjoy!

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Do Not Say This in Japan

~ by Michael Connell in Tokyo, Japan

I'd just arrived in Japan and was meeting my host family for the first time. After I'd introduced myself, and they'd introduced themselves, we fell into an awkward silence.

It seemed my Japanese was as bad as their English, and we were struggling to find something to say.

Suddenly their dog ran into the room. It was a Shiba Inu. These are small Japanese dogs that are pretty common over there but I'd never seen one before.

"Oh, wow! What kind of dog is that?" I asked, leaping at the chance to make some small talk.

My host mother looked confused and said "Wakarimasen" (Japanese for "I don't understand"). It seemed they didn't know the word kind".

Luckily they had an English to Japanese dictionary and looked it up.

Unfortunately it was a concise edition and only had one definition; kind in the sense of kindness.

"Hmmm no..." I said, "What type of dog?"

Again the concise dictionary failed us, giving only type as in typing and my host family started miming keyboards.

Trying again I pointed at the dog and said, "Um...breed?"

They looked it up in the dictionary. Suddenly they looked shocked.

"With the dog?!"



Michael Connell

Michael is a comedian, writer, motivational speaker and harmonica player.

His thoughtful and all inclusive comedy has won praise from critics and makes him constantly in demand as an entertainer.

Siblings Stick Together. Sometimes.

~ by Andy Thompson in Brisbane, Australia

I did a fair bit of travelling with my sister and my parents when I was young. Some would say this kind of experience would be enlightening to a child but the reality was I spent all that time in the car fighting a vicious and prolonged battle against my older sister. She is 2.5 years older than me and by the time she'd reached the age of 14, I had simply ceased to exist. I was a gnat that required slapping from time to time. I would take the abuse with a minimum of whining but every so often I would lash out like a cornered baboon.

One such event occurred when parents rented a small hatchback car and, perhaps in the interest of science and/or entertainment, had confined my sister and me to the rear seat.

One thing led to another and before too long, a protuberant leg started poking me in the ribs. My sister was staring straight ahead out the window but was doing her best to dislodge one of my kidneys. The red mist descended and in a fit of rage I swivelled in the seat, arched my back and then exploded with my legs. To say I kicked the shit out of my sister is an understatement. I belted her so hard that she flew across the seat, hit the door, which then opened, and started falling out of the car which was travelling at about 75km/h at the time. I lunged across and pulled her back in to the chorus of screams from my parents.

"What the hell just bloody well happened?"

My sister looked me in the eye.

"The back door just opened, Dad. This car is a piece of crap."



Andy Thompson

I tell jokes for cash, manly hugs and free drinks. I'll tell you which way the water flows for free. Comedian, engineer, writer and husky man-about-town.

Getting shot at in Brazil

~ *by Juvencio Santos in Pelotas, Brazil*

Many years ago, I was on a work-related road trip with my business partner & we decided to break up the return journey by stopping at a seemingly deserted gas station for a coffee.

As we walked back towards our car, we noticed a couple of guys suspiciously looking at us & talking amongst themselves.

We didn't think anything of it & got in the car & started to continue on our journey home. However, things started getting a little strange when they also got in their cars & started driving behind us.

Paranoia kicked in & I sped up believing that they could be criminals looking to carjack us.

Then THEY sped up & started tailing us. "What's going on?!?" we both thought.

Next, we heard a couple of gun shots & we made the split second decision to duck our heads to give ourselves a chance if they got lucky.

As we looked up (still travelling at 80mph), we noticed the car had significantly sped up & then proceeded to cut us off forcing us to stop. We were kind of resigned to the fact we were about to be robbed so decided to be cooperative.

Four armed men then jumped out of the car & started yelling at us to get out & place our hands on the hood.

"Please take what you want. We have families. Don't kill us!", I said to one of them trembling in fear.

"It's ok, you can go. We're police. We saw you back there & we were looking for two drug dealers & you guys fit the description. Sorry".

Brazilian policing in the 70's.... Shoot first, apologise later.



Juvencio Santos

Esperanto speaking Brazilian who regularly knocks down houses during the day.
I like messing with people – under the right circumstances.

The Blonde One

~ by Betty Harrington in Chicago, USA

I once lived with a very competitive flatmate in Chicago, in a predominantly Mexican neighbourhood. She competed with me on everything – to the extreme. She started mildly by turning her hair orange in an ill-fated attempt to match my blond hair the week after I moved in. She then took the doors off of our bedrooms to compete on how much sex we were having, and I always presumed, how loud and boisterous we each were.

She even quit her job so she could join me on my job hunt, and prove that she could get a job quicker than me. One autumn, early evening, after sitting in a coffee shop for the better part of the day staring at want ads and both trying to get a date with the guy behind the counter – we gave up and walked home.

On the way, a car full of teenage boys cruising the neighbourhood slowed as they passed, dimmed their headlights and yelled out, 'Hey, why don't you come home with me, I'll treat you like my queen!'

My brunette flatmate acted all exasperated, as if this happened to her all the time. But a few seconds later, someone from the car yelled 'The blonde one!'

I also got a fantastic job offer the next week.



Betty Harrington

At her most convivial discoursing in a pub, a pint of ale and a large gin on the table before her.

Synth and Teddy Bears!

~ by *Jana Pettersson in Stretham, UK*

A few days ago my boyfriend bought a new synth on eBay and the seller promised him a good discount on the condition he went around and collected it in person. So after work today he went over to collect it.

Upon arrival at the property my boyfriend was greeted by a politely spoken gentlemen in his mid to late forties, well turned out. The seller insisted that if my boyfriend wanted the discount he come into the property to test the synth before buying it.

Entering the living room (small sized) the first thing my boyfriend spotted was the large number (approx. 50) of a variety of pink teddy bears. These were stacked in large piles around the perimeter of the room, he then also noticed there was no other furniture about from a very large Marshall guitar stack. The seller sheepishly explained that these were his only furnishings.

Not perturbed by the surroundings my boyfriend continued to make polite conversation whilst testing the synth. It was only after taking a moment to consider what he was leaning on that he realized it was a gleaming chrome pole dance pole from ceiling to floor in the middle of the room.

The conversation went a little dry at that point and on further inspection of the room it transpired the only wall not covered with teddy bears was in fact home to 100's pairs of leather boots.

He then quickly handed over the money and fled.



Jana Pettersson

Jana is Swedish, likes chorizo, beer and shitty television shows. Given the choice to be killed by either a shark, tiger or crocodile, she would pick the tiger. She doesn't like spiders or coriander.

An Ill Wind (1964)

~ by *Dominic Glassenbury in Mykonos, Greece*

On an idyllic beach in Greece, my English friend and I were doing our best to impress two young German girls. Communication was stilted because they spoke very little English and we no German, however, we seemed to be doing well.

Having suffered the adverse effects from local water, I was experiencing stomach pains. To alleviate the problem, I took the chance and passed a little wind, with disastrous effects. Fortunately, the change rooms were in sight, I was rescued. After a swim, the problem pants were left behind in the change room.

We walked away, my dignity intact or so I thought. Alas, a large Greek female change room attendant came running down the beach after us, underpants held high, calling "Senor, Senor".



Dominic Glassenbury

The modern day camera expert from Australia who relished his times hitchhiking from France to Greece in the 60's.

1st word GET, 2nd word OFF, 3rd word THE, Final word VEIL!

~ by Sandy Ensink in Melbourne Australia

Growing up my sister was always the girly girl. So it was no surprise that she looked like a princess on her wedding day. This included a veil that was almost 10 metres long. A slight exaggeration but when you have spent the day picking bugs, leaves and seaweed out of it. Fluffing it when she stopped and guiding it as she walked, 10 metres is about right! I like to think this was karma working on my sister and her ridiculous veil choice.

As the newlyweds make their way to the signing table I see my sister's head leaning slightly backwards. At first I thought it was just her trying to avoid a double chin in her photographs then I realised that her veil had somehow wrapped around the priest's shoe. Each step he took yanked her head further backwards. As I look out at the guest I see what looked like a group game of charades. A hundred hands gesturing for the priest to GET OFF THE VEIL!

Luckily he realised before he ripped the entire piece out of her hair. A sigh of relief filled the room and the ceremony continued.

Unfortunately the videographer missed it but somehow I think this memory will be etched in our minds forever.



Sandy Ensink

I love writing, it gives me a sense of control I can write about what I want how I want. I write for me, it's a bonus when people are interested. I dislike people who criticise without giving it a go!

A Sticky Situation

~ by Sarah Prout in Melbourne, Australia

This happened about 6 years ago, but I always laugh when I think about it...

It was Autumn in Melbourne and my Dad was driving me somewhere. We walked through the beautiful orange and red crunchy leaves on the footpath and hopped into the car quickly. We then drove down the street to make a turn when my Dad realised that his foot was glued to the accelerator!

"Sarah, my foot's stuck!" He reached down to try and loosen the sole of his shoe from the pedal.

His fingers returned with this light brown gluey stuff all over them!!
"Ahh, Errgh!!!!"

The look on his face was priceless. He looked at me, sniffed it and said:
"What is it?"

I couldn't believe that he didn't figure it out right away. "Oh my god, it's dog CRAP!" The tears were already rolling down my face by this stage.

The stench was horrendous, but I could not stop laughing because his fingers were covered in the stuff! It looked like he plunged his whole hand into a jar of peanut butter! And so he kept driving, with one hand on the wheel and his fingers arched in an odd manner so that the poo wouldn't get on anything else.

I scrambled to find tissues, but all I had was a spare pair of kids undies in my handbag (as most mums of a 4 year old do) and my Dad cleaned his hands with the jocks because there was nothing else.

Needless to say, we ALWAYS walk around big piles of leaves in Autumn now.



Sarah Prout

Author, publisher and entrepreneur.
I write about love, lifestyle and business.

You Had Just One Job

~ by Nick O'Connell in Adelaide, Australia

It's sunny. It's party time. For 4 year olds. It's 1998. My sister is turning 4. The party is being held in a huge park near our house. My Mum is flat out, baking a cake, getting snacks and drinks organised and trying to "control" what resembles a black hole of mischievous children. My Mum has a lot on her plate, my Dad does not.

My Dad has only 1 job to do today. He has to go to the park and scout the park for the perfect location to setup the table for the party. 1 job. That's it. Just 1. Mum is flat out and Dad is not that busy. How can he stuff this one up? Majorly, it turns out.

The park near our house is huge. Ovals, playgrounds, tennis courts and a big creek runs through the park; it's more of a suburb than a park. The park has many places to setup a party, many, many idyllic settings. My Dad had an abundance of places to setup the party table. He set the party table next to a stolen car.

Yep. You read that right. A stolen car. Ovals, playgrounds, tennis courts and a big creek runs through the park. My Dad picks literally the worst place imaginable. He could of set it up next to a dumpster and he would have been fine. He chose a stolen car. My Mum was apocalyptically angry. Hell hath no fury like a woman who's super busy and her husband makes a very poor choice.

The icing on the cake was the fact that the fire brigade was called out. The car was leaking petrol and there was a concern that it would blow up. Just what every 4th birthday party needs.

Explosions and fear.



Nick O'Connell

Nick O'Connell is an aspiring comedian and writer from Adelaide. He one day hopes to be an inspiring comedian and writer from Adelaide.

The First Encounter

~ *by Aminta Miller in Brisbane, Australia*

Bang! Bang! Bang! We spilled out onto the street to watch as the fireworks exploded, welcoming the new year. I waved bye to my friend, who had decided to go home with some tall, dark stranger. I stumbled up the road, feeling unusually safe as I passed the ladies drumming up business for the clubs and homeless people sneaking wine from paper bags, heading up towards the main road from the bar.

I was wandering along the footpath, looking for an opportunity to get a taxi home and "You shouldn't be walking on your own, it's not safe," came from a male voice behind me. A little too close behind me for my liking I thought. Without turning around, my pace quickened as I replied, "I'm all good". "I'll just walk behind you to make sure you're safe", the voice stated.

Was it as close as before? Had his pace fastened also? The heels I was wearing prevented me from running anywhere quickly so I decided confrontation was my only option. I turned to face him and in my bravest, most assertive voice said, "if you're going to walk anywhere mate, walk beside me." The man was tall with blond curly hair that fell to his shoulders. He was dressed in a suit. He was not at all what I had expected.

I looked into this stranger's blue eyes and saw a softness, a kindness, a genuineness that I had not expected to see. I knew then and there that my first impression, the fears I had for my safety had been unwarranted and unnecessary. We've had 5 years of happiness since.



Aminta Miller

Loves living in the sun with her husband and two highly energetic kids.
Appreciates that first impressions can take some time to settle in.

Embarrassing encounter with the floor polishing machine

~ *by Brad Oakes in Melbourne, Australia*

I had a job when I was about 19 where I used to polish the floors in the old Queen Victoria Hospital.

One night my polishing machine was on the blink and took off down the corridor without me.

I chased it and grabbed the handles only to have the thing buck then flip me over the handles onto my back.

Then the machine came at me between my spread legs and the half metre diameter brush head was agitating between my legs like a rabbit on Viagra.

Just then about a dozen female student nurses walked out of the cafeteria and saw me getting polished on the floor and nearly fell over laughing at the sight.

I have had mixed feelings about nurses ever since then.



Brad Oakes

Brad is well experienced on the Stand-Up circuit around Australia. He has also toured NZ and the UK. He is a prolific writer and one of Melbourne's most in demand MC's as well as a headliner.

Dialect Kills People

~ by Mary Webb in Letchworth Garden City, UK

Quite some years back I had round my Sunday lunch table, a young lady just out from South Africa an older man with a very pronounced local accent with other guests. The conversation was very lively and we were all having a great time.

The man, who worked in the countryside started talking about his day. He said, while driving that morning he had accidently killed a pheasant that had run out in front of his bus. To make matters worse I think he said he should have stopped and picked it up as it would have made a nice, tasty meal.

The room suddenly went very silent and the young girl became quite shocked and white faced at his words. The silence seemed to go on forever but she could not contain herself any more and blurted out, "How can you be so casual about it? You do know that is a person you are speaking about even though he is a peasant."

We realised what she was thinking and all howled with laughter which made her even more angry. As you can imagine it took us quite some time to calm her down but we eventually managed to reassure her that we really weren't that cruel. I don't think pheasants exist in South Africa, she certainly hadn't heard of one. Perhaps she also thought England was still like the medieval days of the story book.

This became our story, always reminisced at future get togethers, much to her annoyance.



Mary Webb

I am an old wrinkley who is blessed with 7 children 11 grandchildren. Always liked to tell stories about my past, and rarely write them down, hoping to give enjoyment.

Deep Purple 32 Years On

~ by Ron Hailes in Brisbane, Australia

I love live music, I have all my life and the first major concert I went to was at Festival Hall Melbourne in May 1971 I was 16. The bill was Free, Manfred Mann's Earth Band and Deep Purple. It was a long show full of technical glitches but was incredible, clearly a highlight of my life to that point.

So who could predict that some 32 years later I would again see Deep Purple in concert complete with three of the members who were there in 1971.

It was an amazing show and an interesting mix of people, from huge bikies to 15 year old kids with their parents. This was the loudest show I have ever been to, the thump of the bass drum was directed through a separate system to boxes along the front of the stage. I am sure if anyone had a heart attack that the night the thump would have restarted their heart.

One of the big differences at this show was that people around us were really chatty, talking about previous concerts and experiences. I was surprised to learn that 4 people sitting near us had all been to the same concert as me in 1971, what are the odds of that.

It's really cool to be able to relive the past in this way, some people never look back, I always look back and relive these moments. Life is full of highs and lows and seeing Deep Purple live in concert 33 years apart was high. Not as good as the Rolling Stones in 1972 but that's a story for another day.



Ron Hailes

I am a sometimes writer, stand-up comic and MC - these are my passions but they don't pay the bills. I work for REBEL FM, which is great fun, I have often been told I have the right look for radio.

I slept in a bank

~ by Ian Nuttall in the Truro, UK

My brother, a friend, and me had driven from our camp site in Newquay (a seaside town in the South of England) to a party in Truro one summer, and the only place to park was a big multi-storey - so that's where I parked.

We laughed, danced, and had a merry old time until the wee hours. 1am to be precise. After a less-than-savoury kebab, we walked back to find that the car park was closed. Until 7am.

HEARTBREAK!

A taxi would have cost £50 and the same again to return, so that was out, my friend had no room at her house and it was FREEZING COLD.

What could we do? Suddenly, an incredible idea hit me...

I pulled out my trusty bank card, ran over to the door of the local HSBC and swiped. The big door swung open and we were inside. With nobody inside or on the street, we settled down, warm at last, and slept for 5 glorious hours right there on the floor of the bank.

It was one of the most uncomfortable nights sleep of my life - but probably my favourite, too. A street sweeper woke us at 6am and we ambled over to the local supermarket to wait out that last hour.

At 7am, we paid our £15 parking ticket and headed back to Newquay tired and achy, but with an epic story to tell. We actually spent the night in a bank! It's still one of the most hilarious stories in my arsenal to date.

I can only imagine what the bank manager and security staff thought when they came in on Monday to the footage of three young men fast asleep right in their foyer!



Ian Nuttall

I'm a 30 year old, married father of two who used to have a bit of a wild side. Calmed down now, but boy, do I have some stories to tell.

Embarrassment in the Amazon

~ *by Luke Simmons in the Amazon, Brazil*

While living in Brazil in 2009, I was lucky enough to have my Mum over for a visit up to the Amazon. The tours through the river were fantastic and one component of the trip was an overnight stay with some locals. Accessible only by boat, we arrived in the late afternoon with a couple of English guys and met our new hosts at the river bank.

I had been in the country for about a year at this stage, so I was happy to have a bit of a chat with the locals and work as the pseudo translator as they showed us their garden and house.

That night, they cooked us a great meal and everything was going just fine until I decided to say "Mmmm, this bread tastes greeeeeat" as a complement. There was a moment of silence and then the hosts erupted in wild laughter.

You see, I'd mispronounced the word for bread (pao instead of the nasal sounding pão) which meant I said, "Mmmm, this dick tastes greeeeeat" - putting a whole new twist on the night. It took me a moment to pick up my faux pax and, finding it hilarious, I told the English speakers what I'd just said.

Funny gringo...



Luke Simmons

I believe that life is a (relatively) short ride and that it's crucial to squeeze as many good times out of it as possible. I love travelling, music, reading, writing, all kinds of sport, & my wife!

Not my boat!

~ *by Brendan McKenzie in Croatia*

After a few days sailing around the Croatian islands with beautiful blue skies the weather deteriorated ever so slightly and a slight gusting wind started barraging our boat.

Unfortunately all our blow-up boats - for floating in the water off the Dalmation Coast - were haphazardly tied down to the boat, mine less than others as after one large gust while we were anchored it flew off the boat.

I asked our host if I could swim after it, he said it was OK as we were stopped for a swim break anyway, but one of the deck hands warned me that there's a fairly strong current.

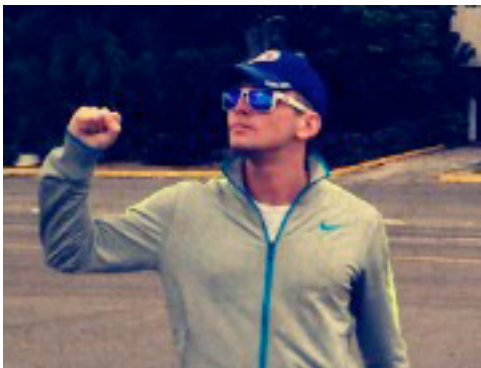
Throwing caution to the wind I jumped off the side of the boat chasing after my little boat, every time I would come within 5 metres of it another gust would come and blow it another 5 metres away.

When I finally decided to stop and take note of the situation I realised I was quite some distance away from our boat and the current was ever-so-slightly pulling me further away.

Looking at my small boat, and the big boat, and back again, I decided it was time to give up and swim back to safety. I'm a fairly competent swimmer but with the current against me and having already swum half the total distance to say it was a struggle would be an understatement.

I managed to back-stroke, breath-stroke, free-style it back to the boat and climbed up on deck, sat down with a towel around me and a nice big glass of water.

Upon reflection, jumping off the boat in the first place wasn't such a good idea.



Brendan McKenzie

You've come to the write place, now read my stories beaches.