

Stuck In A Tight Spot

by: S. Hunter Smith

Twenty years ago I started as a beat cop, walking the streets of this little town. There wasn't much crime when I started so I spent many hours just getting to know the residents and store owners, especially the baker. As the years passed, the town grew and so did I. For the past several years I have been assigned desk duty. Now the Captain has sent me back out on the street. I'm way out of shape and worried that I won't be ready for the tough work ahead of me.

So here I am, sitting behind the wheel of my cruiser watching over the old neighborhood. Things changed quite a bit over the twenty years since I started this job, including the bakery. My old friend retired and sold his shop to some nationwide coffee shop chain. Whatever happened to a simple cup of caffeine and a few delicious donuts? You almost have to learn a new language just to order a cup of joe and some fried dough. Things seem to be pretty quiet and safe around here, not a whole lot to be concerned about. People walk by and wave and occasionally someone stops to talk with me. It seems like patrol duty won't be so tough after all.

Wait – I guess I spoke too soon. That kid just snatched that old lady's purse and ran down that alleyway. I can't believe that on my first day out here I have to chase some punk. The worst part is that I am the only cop around and the cruiser won't fit down that narrow alley.

“Dispatch this is Carl, I am in pursuit of a purse snatcher” I radioed in.

Running, oh remember, that's like walking but faster.

“Stop, police...stop right there you punk!” I yelled at the kid as he kept running away from me.

I was moving faster than I have had to go in several years. I dodged a trash can here and there.

“Come on kid...just stop and I'll take it easy on you.” I called out to him again.

Just then I saw a large dumpster wedged up against one side of the alley. Humph, ouch. Great...now that kid stops and he's laughing at me. I guess I can't blame him.

“Please kid, have mercy on an old cop, toss the purse over to me and you can go.” I pleaded with him.

To my surprise he tossed the purse to my feet and with a final laugh he turned and ran to the end of the alley and around the corner.

“Dispatch this is...arghh...Carl...the foot chase is over. I recovered the merchandise, but the thief got away.”

“Are you okay, Carl?”

“Dispatch, I'm afraid that all those donuts have finally caught up to me. Umm, Officer needs assistance. Ugh...you might want to bring a tow truck, I'm, umm...stuck in the alley.”

That's it, it's time to retire...and join a gym.