

Over the Back Fence
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Approx 630 words

Dumb and dumber
By Alva Wood

RCMP officer Moose Green has become a local hero recently. Moose was on shift in River City a few weeks ago when a couple of the city's lower life-forms tried to rob a branch of the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce.

They chose the wrong time to do it. They figured that around closing time on Friday, the tellers would have more cash on hand. They forgot that businesses make their deposits at the end of the day. And employees cash their paycheques.

Generally, it's when the bank is busiest.

So one guy stayed out in truck, waiting. And the other went into the bank, where he found a long lineup snaking back and forth through the poles and ribbons.

Of course, there was only one teller on duty.

It took several minutes to process each of the business transactions. There was a lot of counting bills, flipping pages, checking records, and banging rubber stamps onto everything.

And then the next person went through the same routine all over again.

Meanwhile, the other half of the robbery team was sitting outside in the truck, listening to rock music with the ignition on. Which meant that his headlights were on too.

Finally, the inside guy gets to the wicket.

He passes a withdrawal slip and a plastic shopping bag to the teller. "This is a stick up," he has scribbled on the withdrawal slip. "Give me all your cash."

The teller was a young woman with very long eyelashes. "I'm sorry, sir," she says sweetly, batting her eyelashes at him. "I can't do that. I don't have any cash."

"This is a bank, isn't it?" he demands.

"Yes, sir," she says, "but we don't have cash drawers any more. We take all the cash to the central station over there." She points to a cubicle at the back.

"You must have cash," he argues. "I saw you give cash to the guy in front of me in the line."

"Yes," she agrees. "I dispensed it from the machine back there."

"Then get some cash out of it for me," he says. He's getting a bit nervous about how long this discussion is taking.

"I can do that," she agrees. "But I need to enter an account number into the machine to get cash out. I don't see an account number on this withdrawal slip," she continues, holding it up. "Do you have an account with us?"

"Oh, all right," he grumps, and writes his account number on the slip.

"I'll be right back," she says cheerily. And sure enough, in a couple of minutes, she's back with a fistful of bills. "I got you \$3000," she says. "For anything more, I have to have my supervisor's authorization."

The guy grabs the cash and runs.

He leaps into the truck. "Let's go!" he screams.

"What took you so long?" asks his accomplice, twisting the ignition key.

Nothing happens. He's run the battery flat.

The two of them abandon their getaway vehicle and rush into Blockbuster Video. "Quick!" they say. "We gotta call a taxi."

"The telephone is for customers only," says the clerk at the counter.

They grab a video off the rack, any video, and thrust a \$50 bill at him. He passes over the phone.

They're standing outside Blockbuster waiting for their taxi when Moose responds to the alarm the teller had sounded. He pulls up in his RCMP cruiser. "Can I give you guys a ride?" he offers.

As he drives them to their cells for the night, he can hear them arguing with each other in the back.

"Why did you have to play your damn music so loud that you ran the battery down?" the inside guy demands.

"What are you blaming me for?" retorts the outside guy. "It was your stupid idea to rob the CIBC! If we'd gone to the Credit Union like I wanted to, you wouldn't have stood in line for so long!"