*The App That Just Won’t Delete* (2022)

By Quentin Stuckey

My friend Thomas is an online troll. He uses his all-powerful Twitter app to offend as many people as possible. He usually succeeds. *The more replies, the more offensive*. His bio tells you everything you need to know. This morning, he tweets:

“Lindsay Morrison has hair like a Lhasa apso!!!!”

I slurp my creamy coffee and Google “Lhasa apso” and…he is right. Our local singer celebrity really *does* have hair like a Lhasa apso. She never cuts it for the fear of it altering her voice. I think the tweet is sort of funny, in a juvenile way. I retweet it. And, nothing happens. Suddenly…\**ding*\*. That’s the sound of my app going off.

“@MichaelTrutman fucking sexist” “@MichaelTrutman I’m gonna pick up your kids and throw them at you!” “@MichaelTrutman Lindsay has better hair than you baldie!!”

That last one is harsh. I am about to leave but I can’t ignore this plethora of angry tweets. \**ding*\*…\**ding*\*….\**ding*\*, they come within microseconds of each other. Plus, a reminder. A reminder this morning is my performance review as a teacher’s assistant. I can’t have this app chiseling my tombstone in my pocket. I’ll delete the damn app! So, *delete*. **Twitter cannot be deleted**. *Delete*. **Twitter cannot be deleted**. *Delete*! **Twitter will not be deleted off of this device.**

The entire Uber ride to campus and the app is going off. Even in Dr. Steward’s office, the wifi is fuzzy and the notifications still come through. He walks in. Reeking of black coffee and a bit of Alliston Vodka. Does he know about the tweet? Does he hear the app that just won’t delete sounding off the cancellation alarm in my coat pocket? He looks at me sternly, asking me what the hell I’m so nervous about. I say I’m never nervous, and quickly alter my expression. He sits behind his desk and starts lamenting the reduced class sizes and everything to do with our society at large when \**ding*\*….\**ding ding*\*….\**ding*\**ding*\**dignity ding*\*. I silence my phone, but it still vibrates like a demonic sex toy and the app is about to explode with notifications. \**Buuuzzzzzzzz*\*… \**Buuuzzzzzzzzzzzz*\*.

If I can make it through this evaluation without him hearing the Twitter app, I’ll be better. I’ll follow all the right accounts. I’ll use all the right language. I’ll forever atone for my privilege. I’ll do it all! Or I could just stand up.

“AAAHHHH! It’s the beating of the hideous Twitter app! Make it stop!!” I scream.

His mouth drops completely open. Then he leans his head forward. Has he known this whole time? Has the tweet been circulating around campus? What does this educated man even know?

He asks: “What the *hell* is a Twitter app?”

And my job at the university is safe.