

Bigfoot Saw Me Cry at a Rest Stop

There's a rest stop off Highway 62 that looks like it lost funding halfway through existing.

Two picnic tables. A bathroom that smells like decisions. A vending machine that hums like it's thinking about giving up.

That's where it happened.

Or didn't.

Depends who you ask.

I'd been driving too long with nowhere useful to go. The kind of drive where the road starts feeling like it's the one making choices. Sky low, mountains watching, gas needle flirting with consequences.

Pulled in because my hands wouldn't stop shaking.

Didn't tell myself that's why.

Told myself I needed air. Needed to stretch. Needed anything that sounded less like the truth.

The truth was simple.

Something in me had finally slipped.

I made it to the picnic table before it caught up.

Sat down.

Tried to breathe like a normal person. Tried to keep it together like I had somewhere to be that required dignity.

Didn't work.

It never does when it stacks like that.

One thing, then another, then all the old things that never got their turn. They don't line up. They rush.

Next thing I know I'm bent forward, elbows on knees, staring at gravel like it owes me answers.

And then—

That sound.

Not loud.

Not sudden.

Just... weight shifting where weight shouldn't be.

I wiped my face with the back of my hand and looked up.

He was standing by the vending machine.

Like he'd been there long enough to be bored.

Tall. Easy tall. Not trying to impress anybody. Hair like it belonged to the woods more than to him. Eyes—

Yeah.

Those eyes again.

Not surprised.

Not concerned.

Just... aware.

"Hell," I said, voice wrecked. "You serious?"

He glanced at the vending machine, tapped it once like he was checking if it was alive, then looked back at me.

"They never work," he said.

I let out something that might've been a laugh.

"Yeah," I said. "Join the club."

We sat there in it.

Me on the bench, him standing like the place had always been his.

I scrubbed my face again, harder this time.

"Don't suppose you didn't see that," I said.

"I saw," he said.

Of course he did.

"Great," I muttered. "That's just great."

“Why?” he asked.

I looked up at him.

“Because,” I said, “some things aren’t supposed to be witnessed.”

He tilted his head a little.

“Everything is witnessed,” he said. “Just not always by who you’d prefer.”

I didn’t have a comeback for that.

So I went with honesty. Bad habit.

“Didn’t think it’d be you.”

He shrugged.

“Didn’t think it’d be you either.”

That almost got me.

Almost.

I leaned back against the table, staring up at a sky that couldn’t commit to anything.

“Doesn’t count,” I said after a minute.

“What doesn’t?”

“This,” I said, gesturing vaguely at my face, the mess of me. “You seeing it. Doesn’t count.”

“Why not?”

“Because nobody’s gonna believe you,” I said. “Means it might as well not have happened.”

He went quiet for a second.

Then he walked over.

Slow. Not cautious. Just... deliberate.

He sat on the opposite bench.

Wood creaked like it had something to say about it.

“You think things only happen when they can be proven?” he asked.

I shrugged.

“Feels that way.”

He leaned forward, elbows on his knees now, mirroring me in a way I didn't like noticing.

“You felt it,” he said. “That makes it real.”

“Yeah, well,” I said, “feeling things hasn't exactly been working out for me.”

He nodded like that checked out.

“Still counts,” he said.

I picked at a splinter in the table.

“You ever cry?” I asked.

He didn't answer right away.

Wind moved through the lot, pushing trash a few inches like it was trying to escape.

“Yes,” he said finally.

That surprised me more than it should've.

“For what?” I asked.

He looked out toward the road.

“Things I couldn't carry,” he said. “And things I carried anyway.”

I swallowed.

“Yeah,” I said. “That tracks.”

We sat there again.

Longer this time.

Quieter.

Not empty.

Just... shared.

“You gonna tell anyone?” I asked.

“No.”

“Why not?”

He looked at me like the answer was sitting in my lap.

"They wouldn't believe me," he said.

I huffed.

"Convenient."

He shook his head.

"Unnecessary," he said. "It already happened."

I pressed my palms into my eyes until I saw stars.

When I dropped my hands, the world looked the same.

Which felt unfair.

"I don't want this to be part of the story," I said.

"It already is," he said.

"Yeah, but I don't want to write it down."

He leaned back, wood groaning under him.

"That's the part you keep getting wrong," he said.

I looked over.

"What part?"

"You think writing is what makes it real," he said. "It's not."

I frowned.

"Then what is?"

He tapped the table between us.

"This," he said. "Sitting in it. Not looking away."

I let that sit.

Didn't like it.

Didn't argue with it either.

After a while, I stood up. Legs stiff. Head clearer in the way storms leave things cleaner but not better.

"I should go," I said.

He nodded.

“You will.”

I hesitated.

Then—

“Hey,” I said. “You ever use the bathroom here?”

He looked at the building.

Long pause.

“No,” he said.

“Smart,” I muttered.

I walked back to the truck.

Hand on the door.

Stopped.

Looked back.

He was still there. Same spot. Same presence.

Like he didn’t need anything else to make the moment hold.

“Hey,” I called out.

He looked up.

“You were right,” I said.

“About what?”

I thought about it.

All of it.

Then shook my head a little.

“Yeah,” I said. “That’s kind of the problem.”

He didn’t smile.

Didn’t need to.

I got in the truck and pulled back onto 62.

Didn’t check the mirror right away.

When I finally did—

Nothing.

Just the rest stop shrinking into something that could be explained.

That's the thing about breaking down where no one can see you.

You start thinking it didn't count.

Like it can't follow you.

Like it won't show up later in smaller, quieter ways.

But it does.

It always does.

And somewhere out there, whether anyone believes it or not—

There's something that saw you clearly

and didn't look away.