**The Story of Gritty Bin.**

Allow me to introduce myself. My name is Gritty Bin.

I don’t remember anything of how I was made, but when I caught first glimpse of myself in a mirror I thought how much I loved my bright yellow colour. I felt I would stand out from the crowd.

I was left in a great pile with a lot of my friends for months and months. It was in this massive warehouse and I thought we’d been completely forgotten. Then, suddenly I was on the move. I was lifted in the air and placed on the back of a lorry. After a journey that seemed to go on for ages we came to a stop with quite a jolt. I was lifted down and placed on my street corner. My first impression was that this was a very busy spot as I watched endless numbers of people and cars pass by.

I noticed that it had begun to get very cold at night. I realised that winter would soon be here. Only a few days later a big van drew up and two men got out. They lifted my lid and proceeded to fill me with grit. Marvellous! This is what I was here for after all. I felt proud that I would be able to help people over the coming weeks. This illusion was very quickly shattered.

I’d only been filled for three days, when I was visited in the middle of the night. They were called Stan and John. It must have been about two in the morning when they backed their van up the pavement; opened the van’s rear doors beside me, and shovelled all my grit into the back. Only took three or four minutes, and off they drove. All the time they were laughing and joking and I heard them say they still had four more of my friends to visit before they knocked off for the night. Thieving little swines!

About a week later I was re-filled. Stan and John never came back. This first incident may make you think that it’s all bad, but that’s definitely not the case. One of my happiest memories is of one day in late November. I watched this love-struck couple dawdling along the pavement until they came and sat down on me. They were two teenagers, gazing into each other’s eyes without a care in the world. As they ate their McDonalds burgers, I heard them pledging their undying love each other for the rest of their lives. Quite touching really, especially as I think they were all of thirteen years old.

Don’t you think toddlers are wonderful! They are so full of energy, fun and mischief. A couple of mums had stopped beside me and were talking about the cost of Christmas. They each had a toddler, and both quickly became bored. One mum got out a small football and they then used me as their goalpost. They jumped up and down and shouted ‘Goal’ each their ball banged into me. Bless their little cotton socks!

I was learning all the time to take the rough with the smooth, and it was revealing to watch the behaviour of people who passed by. The nearer we got to Christmas I couldn’t help but notice how they all seemed to be in a hurry. Then, late in the evenings, they would pass by, clearly a bit the worse for wear, and singing some very rude songs, which I have to admit often made me laugh. I did wonder why they weren’t wearing warmer clothes but I assumed they knew what they were doing. Most of the time, they were all in good spirits. However, there was that one night that I will never forget. The Christmas festivities were all over and it was now New Year’s Eve.

I’d heard all the fireworks going off, and been passed by quite a number of people making their way home, even if staying upright seemed a bit difficult for them.

Then, he came, shouting at the lady with him, telling her how lucky she was to have him. She gave a very rude reply, which seemed to get right under his skin. Look, he said, I’ll show you how clever I am. With that he threw two empty bottles he was carrying, high into the air. She had to move aside very quickly as they came down, smashing all over the pavement.

“ Missed “ he said as he looked at all the broken glass. He stopped for a minute, and then said to her, “I know – let’s shred a few tyres”, and with that I watched in disbelief as he kicked all the big bits of broken glass into the road.

Then he went on, “That should take a few cars out.” I couldn’t believe what I was hearing!

“You idiot” she screamed at him, and stormed off up the street.

Now he got angry - very angry. He started kicking me all over. He was calling her some awful names, and getting more and more worked up. But kicking me wasn’t enough. He grabbed me by my lid and tipped me over, dragging me out into the middle of the pavement, and spilling out the all my grit. He sat down for a minute, looked at all the glass on the road, burst out laughing, got up and walked off.

I was shocked that anyone could be so stupid. I was also worried that if any car tyres burst on the glass they could blow out, and the car could easily crash into someone on the pavement. Or even crash into me!.

During the night I think drivers must have picked up the glass in their headlights. From my now upside down position, I watched them slow down and drive around the crushed pieces. Very early the next morning two people from a nearby house came out, and cleaned up all the broken glass. This was quite a dangerous thing to do as it took them some time. It was good to see that, as cars passed slowly by, I heard their drivers hooting a thank you.

It was great to have all the glass safely cleared away, but I couldn’t get back up. Now I was seeing the world upside down. This gives you a very different perspective on things. I was able to count feet as they passed me.

You probably won’t believe this (or maybe you will) but I think I was passed every day by two hundred and fifty feet. (I’m very good at counting), or simply, one hundred and twenty five people. This went on for four weeks, with me stranded, upside down, like a beached whale. I worked out this meant that seven thousand feet walked by me over the month, or three thousand five hundred people, but not one of them made any attempt to help me.

Eventually a group of passing teenagers took hold of me and stood me up again. In fact they placed me against the nearby garden wall. It was such a relief to be back where I belonged.

Let me go on by saying that there were also some very touching moments that I was privileged to share. At the beginning of February, two pensioners came by with heavy bags of shopping. They put them on my lid while they had a rest. You know what he did - he took her in his arms, gave her a great big kiss, and said how much he still loved her. I saw a little tear fall from her eye, and it made me feel gooey all over.

It’s now the middle of winter and the last two weeks have turned freezing cold. When I look at the road in the mornings they have been covered in a layer of white frost. I’ve watched people fall over on the pavements because of the icy surface. I’ve seen cars skid, and on occasions lose control. Only yesterday I watched two of them slip on the junction. It was a miracle they didn’t crash into each other. I wouldn’t want to make a rule out of this, but a lot of the time, I think the problem is that people are driving too fast.

However, I have to share a special thought that I had during this period that baffled me completely. Here I am, full of grit again, that could make such a difference to everyone. Yet, not once has anyone lifted my lid, took out some grit and spread it on the roads and pavements. It would make such a difference.

I am not a philosopher but I then ask why don’t they do it? I think I may have worked out the answer.

You know, sadly, I’m guessing, they all think that this is someone else’s job!

I should like to thank you all for taking time to share in some of my thoughts and experiences. It will soon be time for me to be collected and go back into store again.

Best wishes to everyone.

Gritty Bin.

THE END

Total 1530 words.