Bad Business

By Joe Bagby

I think it’s gone on for about a year. Or maybe two? One and eight months? It’s hard to tell but it has definitely gone on for way too long. Threat after threat. Argument after argument. Attack after attack. I can see you’re confused right now but I’m talking about the infamous battle between Bert the Ice Cream Man and Dr. Steven Fitzgerald the Dentist.

It started last May or was it the May before then or...never mind. Anyway, it began when the strikingly handsome Dr. Fitzgerald opened up his newly founded dentist office called “Sweet Celebrity Smiles for Kids.” Dr. Fitzgerald had hung up flyers all over the neighborhood: on light posts, telephone poles, doors, at the supermarkets, and even at the schools.

Well, old crotchety Bert was doing his daily rounds in his ice cream truck when he noticed one of those flyers. “Oh no,” worried Bert. “Dentists are bad for business. Going around, telling everybody that sweets are going to rot your teeth right out of your gum sockets. Bah! I’ve had dentures for twelve years and I’m not complaining! I’m going to give that dentist a piece of my mind!” Bert has always had a reputation for being angry but this dentist really fired him up!

Later that day Bert went and visited the new dentist’s office.

“Hello. Do you have an appointment with Dr. Fitzgerald?” asked the smiling secretary.

“No, but I’d like to have a word with him,” replied the elderly ice cream man.

“Dr. Fitzgerald has an opening between 3:35pm to 4:10pm if you’d like to....”
Bert didn’t want to hear the secretary’s nonsense so he barged on straight through a door on the left of the secretary’s desk.

“Sir, I am authorized to taze you if you walk any further,” threatened the bewildered secretary.

Bert totally blew off the secretary and continued walking forward. Well it turns out, the secretary was true to her word and pulled out a high voltage stun gun and tazed him right in his kidney. Bert lashed out in pain throwing his arms and legs around the room, knocking over furniture and a sculpture of a large molar (the whole situation was taped on a cell phone camera and later mailed into America’s Funniest Home Videos by a 15 year old girl named Rebecca Walter who won the First Place Grand Prize).

Dr. Fitzgerald heard the ruckus coming from the waiting room and rushed out to see what was the matter, only to find a senior citizen bouncing off the walls and his secretary filling him with electricity.

“What the heck is going on here?” yelled the dumbfounded dentist. Then everybody just stopped. The secretary released the tazer and Bert dropped to the linoleum floor.

“Sir I warned this deranged man to stop walking and he refused to listen to me,” explained the secretary.

“Hmm. So, he didn’t stop walking and as a result you tazed him?”

“Yes Sir, that is correct.”

“What about you old man?” asked the dentist.

Bert stared up at the charming dentist. “I sell ice cream!”

“It seems this man’s a bit bonkers” blurted the secretary.
Dr. Fitzgerald walked the old man to his office and sat him down. Finally, Bert began to speak.

“I came here to talk with you. You see I’m an ice cream man and dentists like you ruin my business. So I’m going to make you a deal. If you walk out on your business right now I will give you a dozen cups of Puckerberry Sherbet, three packages of Banana-Rama-Ding-Dong popsicles, and a box of Spiderman Ice Cream Pops. An anorexic guy like you could use some ice cream.”

The dentist’s eyes bulged. “How dare you stroll into my office and start behaving so rude!”

“Rude? You just tazed me!”

“You had every right to get tazed!”

Well the shouting match went back and forth for several hours and the rivalry between Bert and Dr. Fitzgerald was born. Soon both perfectly mature adults began to act like 6 year olds, pranking each other left and right. They both gave themselves the ridiculous super hero names of “The Wisdom Tooth” and “Revenge Served Cold”. The events began to unfold like origami and I knew sooner or later it would all go downhill.

It did. On the night of the epic fight, my best friend, RJ, told me the angered dentist and perturbed ice cream man were going to fight behind Burger Hut at 8:27 pm. Now I wasn’t too thrilled about another fight, but it was supposed to be their biggest fight yet so I couldn’t miss it. That night, RJ and I snuck over to the Burger Hut to find a plethora of kids already there.
First Bert showed up. He had a large smirk on his face. The kind that says “Haha, you’re going to lose!” Then Dr. Fitzgerald showed, carrying a large duffel bag. He too looked fairly cocky.

*Bam!* Out of nowhere the Fearless Frosty (the ice cream man’s latest persona) sprang out of a nearby tree, whacking the distracted dentist in the face with frozen dairy treats! Then Dr. Fitzgerald returned fire by splashing three whole bottles of sugar-free mouthwash down Bert’s throat. The ice cream man returned the “flavor”, and forced a dozen ice cream sandwiches into Dr. Fitzgerald’s mouth. Both enemies halted, staring into each other’s eyes.

Then... Bert dropped dead. Apparently the chemicals in mouth wash *are* poisonous if swallowed. Then Dr. Fitzgerald grabbed his head and died too! Who knew you could actually croak from brain-freeze. All the kids looked frightened and confused but vaguely happy knowing we wouldn’t have to put up with such craziness anymore.

Regrettably, last Tuesday, a High-Colonic specialist moved into Dr. Fitzgerald’s vacant office and right next door is Rodrigo’s Mexican Food Restaurant. Another feud’s about to begin........