

Tuxedo Bob

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"Any situation in life is better when experienced in formal attire." This is the first of many statements that Tuxedo Bob has garnered from his father and taken quite literally to heart. Born to a mortician mother and the proprietor of a Tuxedo shop father Tuxedo Bob has been wearing a tuxedo every day since birth. Born Robert Fledsper he had his named changed officially at three years old to Tuxedo Bob. It's no newsflash that Tuxedo Bob is quite an unusual character. Destined to be something more than his little town of Schulberg North Dakota could ever offer he leaves home at eighteen to make something of the music he's been hearing in his head almost as long as he's been wearing a Tux.

The novel is Tuxedo Bob reminiscing about his life as he travels home years later. While the details of his beginnings are entertaining the stories of his bumbling road to respected musician are the core of the novel. Tuxedo Bob's career culminates amidst the bright lights and corruption of Las Vegas. Here he makes his riches proves himself as a musician and looses everything. But none of it happens in quite the way the reader expects. He's a character that readers root for. Even after run-ins with the mob he remains trusting and kind explaining to a friend in his band "A person can never be too nice Mr. Bop. Or too forgiving. Or too polite."

Tuxedo Bob is a character reminiscent of Mr. Magoo and Forest Gump. He has a child-like belief that everything will turn out okay that everyone is a good person deep down and that a lesson can always be learned from even the most terrible events. It's nice to read this novel and not find a crushed and jaded character at the end.

The Hegel's have written a substantial novel including Tuxedo Bob's songs and manuscript (Tuxedo Bob writes a musical) at the end. The novel might be made stronger by a bit of editing to cut away some of the less important details allowing the strengths in their writing to shine. Tuxedo Bob is a strong character and his life as it's presented is humorous and entertaining. The interspersed quotes that make up Tuxedo Bob's life credo are wonderful. A reader will find herself reaching for a pen to jot them down. Mr. Hegel's professional songwriting is apparent in Tuxedo Bob's songs as well as in the musical. They're funny well written and in the case of the manuscript of the musical memorable and highly enjoyable.

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