

Storage Wars

By Chris Billings

The reasons are varied
from family moves to forced moves
moving up or moving down
moving in or moving on
to holding on to family heirlooms
with hopes children or grandchildren
will one day come and claim
which, more often than not, they never do
so the heirlooms are relegated
to the lien process or trash heap
or it's simply because there are some
who just can't part with anything they own
useful or not
it's said you spend 90% of your time
dealing with 10% of your customers
like those whose intentions are good
but life or habits turn those intentions sour
into unpaid rents and/or abandoned units
thinking they're sticking it to a CEO
not thinking it won't be the CEO that has to deal with the mess
so all those hours of cordiality turn sour, too
you try to acknowledge the 90%
but experience shows even some of them
will join the 10% eventually
if it's to their advantage or convenience
you will see the best of humanity
you will see the worst of humanity
sometimes from the same individual
but you are here to provide a service
so provide a service you do

with a smile on your face
as you dispose of the Gatorade bottle of urine
or the broken glass and trash in the aisles
left by some inconsiderate tenant
or the tenants who feel entitled
thinking the dumpster is for their own personal use
not thinking to care or caring to think
but at least they have a place to store their belongings
for as long as it's needed
or as long as they pay their rent
which somehow becomes your fault if they don't
for expecting them to adhere to the terms & conditions of the lease

None of this is to diminish, however, the gratitude showed
by the woman escaping an abusive marriage
when you gave her a break on the first few months rent
as she tried to get her life back in order
or those who were between jobs, so you worked a deal
as long as they stuck to their end of the bargain
or the old veteran bending your ear with his tales every month
it's the understanding by those who don't complain
because they know it's not you raising their rent
it's just you who has to enforce it

It could be said a storage facility
is much the same as general society
with good folks, bad folks
sneaky folks, friendly folks
rule breakers and deal makers
those looking for freebies
those who willingly pay the asking rate
those who constantly complain
those who show no common courtesy
towards their fellow tenants, much less towards you

not to mention corporate overlords
focused on the bottom line
never putting faces to the names
only dollar signs
and then those who really do try to do things right
and who actually find their way into your good graces
even if only for a while