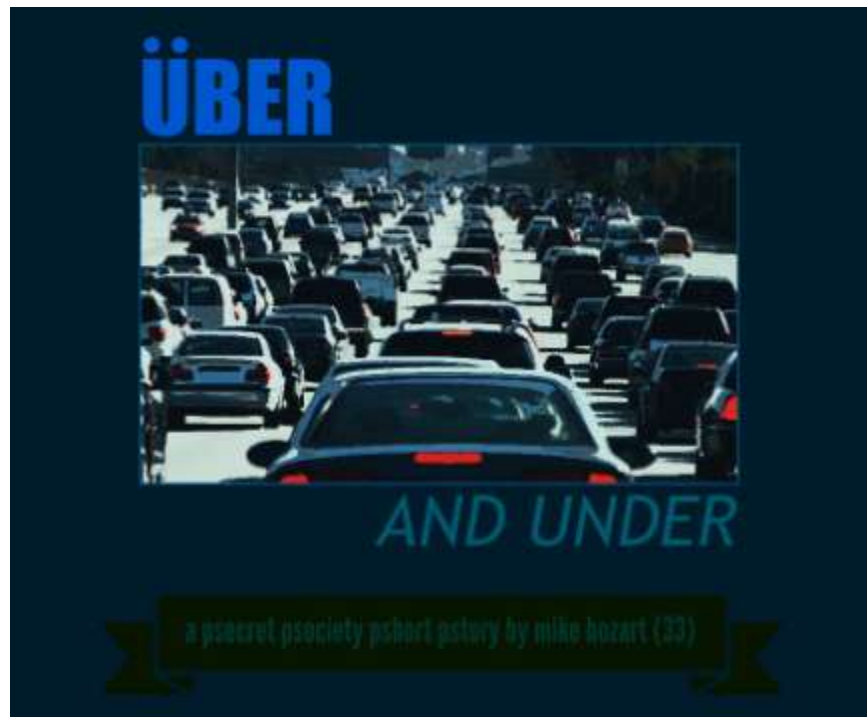


**another pSecret pSociety pshort pstory**



Über and Under by Mike Bozart (Agent 33) | MAY 2016

Über and Under, a short story by Mike Bozart © 2016

I was reading an online article about Uber, Lyft, Juno, etc., when I remembered that Agent 889, a 33-year-old Caucasian dude, drove for Uber. Having no other ideas for a short story at that sparsely parsley-free moment (though, we still had thyme; ok, I'm punning out), I decided to have this particular agent pick me up, and once in his vehicle as his lone fare, I would hopefully gain a candid assessment of the popular quasi-taxi – or, ridesharing as its popularly called – phenomenon.

I tilted my cheapo LG semi-smartphone to reduce the glare on the screen and then punched in his 10 digits. After a few seconds, a phone-to-tower connection was made. On the third ring, he answered.

*“Is this you, Mr. Gaytheist, [sic] aka Agent 33?” Here we go. He’s already in not-so-rare form.*

“Gaytheist? You know that I’m just a fence-walking fagnostic, [sic] Agent 889.”

“Fagnostic? That’s hilarious!” Shep (an alias for Agent 889) started laughing. Five seconds later he had calmed down enough to continue talking. “Well, how is non-fagnostic Agent 32 [Monique, my Filipina wife] doing?”

“She is doing well,” I replied. “And, how about your better half?”

“Agent 890 is doing fine, 33.”

“Good to hear. Listen, Shep, are you still driving for Uber?”

“No, I quit driving for Uber about two months ago. Do you need a ride somewhere?”

“Uh, no. Just curious, why did you stop?” *I bet that he’s recording this call. He’s probably going to use what I say in a future short story. Agent 33 had better not print my real name. I’ve heard that they go after people who make negative comments about the company.*

“I quit because I couldn’t make any decent money. I was just wearing out my car for chicken feed.”

“Oh, so you weren’t making the advertised \$25 an hour?”

“Not hardly. After the deductions, not even close. Some drivers may gross that, but I sincerely doubt they’re netting that. With us living in far eastern Mecklenburg County (NC, USA), and me only being able to drive weekdays between 9:00 AM and 3:00 PM, Uber just wasn’t cutting it. I still work at the restaurant practically every night. It’s still my fulltime and primary job. Uber was just going to be for supplemental income. It’s funny, I made less money – not more – the longer I did it.” *The law of diminishing returns?*

“Maybe you weren’t doing it right, 889.” I chuckled. “You know that there are manuals out there with diagrams and pictures.”

“Very funny, 33. Now please go fock [sic] yourself.”

We both started to chortle ... and uncannily stopped at the same time. *Right on cue.*

“Are there too many drivers now, you know, like real estate agents?” *Or, cockroaches in a cheap motel room?*

“I don’t know, 33. I think it’s just that my locale and available times weren’t an ideal fit. I think the best place for an Uber driver to live in Charlotte would be somewhere between the airport and uptown, or maybe between uptown and UNCC. [University of North Carolina at Charlotte] And, you really need to be able to work the weekend nights, which I couldn’t.”

“Are Uber drivers allowed to pick up customers at CLT?”  
[Charlotte-Douglas International Airport]

“Yes, they have a designated pickup area for Uber and Lyft.”

“I see. Hey, did you ever have any strange riders?”

“A few, but they were harmless. Never had any threatening types. No attacks or robberies.”

“Well, that’s certainly good to hear.”

“Just had some oddballs from time to time. Mostly calm, overly medicated, prescription-drug addicts and early-starting alcoholics.”

“Any interesting conversations?”

“I’m not a big talker, especially with complete strangers. If they didn’t initiate a conversation, I was content to let the ride go by in silence.”

“You didn’t even switch on the radio?”

## Thank You for previewing this eBook

You can read the full version of this eBook in different formats:

- HTML (Free /Available to everyone)
- PDF / TXT (Available to V.I.P. members. Free Standard members can access up to 5 PDF/TXT eBooks per month each month)
- Epub & Mobipocket (Exclusive to V.I.P. members)

To download this full book, simply select the format you desire below

