How to Become a Bum by Michael Cavallaro

First thing to do of course is listen to your parents tell you that if you don’t finish school then you become a bum when you get older. Listen to them. You don’t really want to become a bum. So try and do well in school. And to most standards, do just fine. At your graduation your Uncle Steve asks what college you are going to. Tell him New England Tech. He says good. Grandma takes a picture. Go home and eat cake. Get straight Bs at New England Tech. Have fun. Party. Enjoy your youth. Get drunk a lot. Have a lot of sex. Drink some more. But still do just fine in school.

Get out with a better job than any of your friends have or will ever have. A business representative for G-Tech. Get introduced to hundreds of new people. People who you don’t care about. People who don’t care about you. Make a lot of money. You’ll be needing it in the future.

Get married to the nicest, sexiest lady you can find. Have the perfect honeymoon with the love of your life. When you get back, make her fat with kids. Let her raise them. You have work to do at G-Tech. They move you to a higher position. Get your wife lipo-suction. She’s getting too fat. You don’t enjoy her sex anymore. Work a lot now. Cheat on your wife. Carol is so much younger and sexier than the cranky bitch at home. Start to go bald. You’re middle aged. Rogaine doesn’t do a damn thing. Stay late at work one night. Then go home but don’t stay. Your wife has left you and she took the kids. Go out for a beer. You deserve one. Stay at the bar until it closes.

Stumble into the corner store that is next to the bar. You’re not that drunk; it was only thirteen beers. You can handle your alcohol. The man behind the counter will ask how you are doing. Don’t answer. Just walk up to him. The old man playing Keno on your side of the counter wins some money. Decide to have a go. Play a buck. Win a buck. A small gain but what the hell. That was easy. And it will begin. Become obsessed. Become addicted. Don’t stop at the small time corner store. Go big. Take it to the casinos. Give your money to the Indians. They need it more than you do. Gamble it all away. Who cares? You only spent your whole life saving it up.

Lose your job. The bank will own everything that you used to own. You and your beautiful wife used to own. And your kids. Never see them again. Friends let you stay at their place for a while but they don’t let you stay forever. No one will take you in. Gamblers Anonymous is a bunch of bull. No one will be there for you. There will be nowhere to go. Sleep under a bridge. Use newspaper to cover up. There’s nothing you can do. You beg for change on the street and for the first few days it seems easy. You’re not that dirty. People don’t mind giving a nice fellow like you some spare change. But after a while you stink of unshowered filth. You are as dirty as the ground you sleep on. You have become a bum.