

The Long-Lost Pets Issue
Pets of the Stars • A Fishy Mystery
The Strange Tail of the Buffaloon

ePasquinade

(formerly "Roadkill Quarterly")

November/December 2000

Issue 3



**Whether Fido employed the Flea Defense
or the Rawhide Defense, Spot always
managed to capture his king.**

eDitorial

Many people don't have a pet. They go through their lives never knowing the joy a puppy or a kitten can bring to their cold, miserable lives. The joy of holding a tiny kitten in your arms, petting its fur ever so gently until the animal's tiny comforting purr emanates from its gooey insides. The joy of playing fetch with a small dog and cleaning up little piles of shit until it's housebroken. The joy of raising a bowl of prize-winning goldfish only to discover your son and his so-called friends have swallowed them as a college initiation prank. Such glorious joy a pet can bring.

I recently set out to find a pet. Not any ordinary pet, mind you, but something exotic. I visited several pet stores in search of the most exotic they had. The first shop offered up a chinchilla. I said no, thank you, it's just a fat squirrel.

The next shop offered to sell me an alpaca, but where the hell am I gonna keep it? Besides, my building has a specific policy against llamas and alpacas.

Later that day, after shop after shop tried to sell me everything from Florida bark scorpions to sugar gliders, I came across a small

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Credits

EDITORIAL STAFF

Ed Lynn
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Edward C. Gonzalez
Joseph Priddy
Tony Zurlo

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Marforio

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As a knowledgeable and valued customer, we're sure you've already heard that AT&T is planning to break itself up once again. This strategy brings with it four new companies and four new names you will come to associate with value, integrity, and sheer power. Look for our ads in the next few months and feel free to email us with any concerns you may have.

—ceo@a.com; ceo@t.com;
ceo@f.com; and ceo@tinc.com

Oh, thank God someone left the light on for me. Nice, pretty, blue light. So bright it's—BRAP!

—a.moth@onetime.com

Just a quick note to say the article I promised on the Top 100 Pets of All Time might be a little late. I mean it this time.

—heyward@epasq.com

Now that I'm not going to be doing the show anymore, I'd just like to admit that the bulge in my pants was merely a sock, a ruse to avoid humiliation when talking with King Friday. Man, that puppet was huge!

—mrrogers@pbs.org

What do you mean my father was a turkey baster?!?!?

—charles.foster@jodie.com

Hey! I've got a riddle for you guys! What do you get when you cross a Grammy-award-winning singer with a body part that rhymes with *basspole*?

—phil.collins@philcollins.com

I don't know, but count me in!

—bullockjmq@oldgay-comicshome.com

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That article might be a little close. I was furiously typing away on the last paragraph and a flock of pelicans flew into my apartment and wrecked the place, including the manuscript. Something about only being ranked 96. The landlord wants to fumigate now, so I've rented an old Olivetti (on the expense account) and I'm furiously retyping the whole piece from memory.

I'm still pretty sure I can get this thing in by the deadline.

—heyward@epasq.com

What's it mean when you have to take an elevator to your AA meeting?

—rdowneyjr@someoneelses.com

The pundits claimed I wore so much makeup during the first debates that I looked almost Reaganesque. Well, I'm sorry, but I don't recall these debates.

—veep@whitehouse.gov

I know I promised that article would be in before the deadline, but I'm having my doubts. I'm being watched by my 6' 4" cellmate who insists I call him "Buttercup." He has pictures of his last five parole officers on the cell wall with x's through them. I fear for my life.

So you'll understand if the article doesn't get there on time. I am definitely not ordering up numerous call girls, er, uh, escorts and charging them to the expense account.

—heyward@epasq.com

In retrospect, I should have fucking repented.

—diana@princessofhell.com

I represent a group of scientists doing genetic research in the foothills of West Virginia (I'm the one who knows how to use the spell checker thing) and, since Science and JAMA and every other medical and scientific journal has refused to print our press release, we're just gonna write to you guys and hope you print it in your letters section.

You see, we believe we've discov-

The Monthly Exclamation!

Some News Is Just Better Shouted

Volume 17, Number 3

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LENO GETS LIP SERVICE

BURBANK, CALIFORNIA (eP)—With rumors running wild about his health, late night comedian Jay Leno finally returned to *The Tonight Show* from an extended layoff and revealed that he had undergone lip replacement surgery.

Since taking over the hosting duties from Johnny Carson in 1992, Leno has been one of the busiest men in show business, kissing the butts of an estimated 11,000 celebrities. According to the popular late night host, his lips had simply worn out.

“The job’s a lot harder than it looks,” Leno said. “I’m always thinking *Did I kiss that one enough? Should I give it some more?* I remember one time Pavarotti was on the show, and I swear, I must’ve been kissing buns for days! I’m not complaining though. The man deserves every minute of it. He’s just incredible!”

“That guy’s a real trooper,” said veteran actor Abe Vigoda of Leno. “I was on the other night and I thought Jay might be taking it easy with the surgery and all. But there he was, kissing my ass like there was no tomorrow. And I didn’t even have anything to plug! I’m telling ya, the guy hasn’t lost his touch.”

With his return to *The Tonight Show* desk, Leno’s ratings during his late night timeslot have shot through the roof. Although most celebrities expressed their condolences over the comedian’s surgery, others weren’t quite as sympathetic.

“Jay’s such a hump,” said late night competitor David Letterman. “You can tell he’s just trying to top the whole heart surgery thing of mine... Geez, now I’ll havta pull off another ratings stunt! Maybe I’ll go off Mom or something...”

NO MORE POACHING FOR SALMAN

NEW YORK (eP)—For the last several days, literary novelist Salman Rushdie has surprised many in the international community by demanding that the Iranian government re-instate their death warrant against him. In an effort to emphasize his point, Rushdie appeared on *Late Night with Conan O’Brien* Tuesday night sporting a t-shirt with a bullseye and a slogan that said: “Bring It On, Baby.”

“It’s quite simple,” explained the Pakistani-born author. “I want to get laid—and this danger thing turns chicks on like you wouldn’t

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ered the human gene that makes fools fall in love. Imagine the implications of this amazing find. By breeding this gene out of existence, we can assure ourselves of finding a suitable mate the first time out.

Hell, marrying your own sister wouldn’t be a taboo anymore. And isn’t that what this is all about?

—jimbob@jeanrsrch.org,
bobjim@jeanrsrch.org,
jimjim@jeanrsrch.org, &
bobbob@jeanrsrch.org

I object to the use of the term “pig-skin” in one of your recent issues. Several years ago, I was caught in a horrible fire that destroyed everything I own, even my dignity, which let out a horrible shriek just before it finally perished. Unfortunately, the doctors in my area did not have the means to transplant my burned flesh with human skin. I’m sure you know where this is going and will refrain from using such terms in future issues.

—paulham@stysville.com

My client informs me that you have been making sport with his name in the current issue of what, for the sake of argument, we shall call “The Publication.”

While he agrees that he has not delivered on any promises to provide material for your publication, Mr. Heyward is still rather put out that you have taken such liberties with his name, in order to provide “humor” and “wit” and “entertainment” to both of your subscribers.

Furthermore, he is even more upset that you have done so without letting him in on the joke. Thus, I have been retained to request that you cease and desist until such time when he is able to read these “humour pieces” and register his disapproval so that you may continue to publish them without his blessing. It is the least he should expect.

—allenheywardatty@law.com

Animal Apocalypse: The Truth About Cats and Dogs

A MS. PARANOIA SPECIAL REPORT

Gentle Readers:

As dear Mother used to say, "Never trust an animal, especially if they have a gun." Dear Mother was chillingly prescient when she said that. Ms. Paranoia has uncovered startling evidence of an animal conspiracy to wipe all humans from the face of the planet. What follows is the culmination of months of research, including several weeks undercover in that most vicious of animal rights groups, the Monkey Mafia. How appropriate that the theme of this issue is "Pets", because as this evidence will suggest, Fluffy and Spot may very well turn on you at any minute. Ms. Paranoia hopes that, upon reading this report, readers will take measures to insure that they do not wake up one morning to find their children disemboweled and their home taken over by gun-toting lemurs.

Thousands of animals are gathered in a secret meetinghouse just outside of Tokyo, Japan. They are of many species, and from many countries, but they all have a common goal: To rid the world of that foul scourge, the human race. High ranking officers of the Monkey Mafia, dressed in ominous black and red uniforms, circulate throughout the crowd, handing out pamphlets detailing how they can get involved in this world-wide crusade. The crowd waits impatiently for the star of the evening to show up on stage: The infamous Carlos M., the monkey who single-handedly paralyzed Tokyo in a reign of terror that lasted for several months.

Carlos will not be the only animal celebrity in attendance. Already, in the back of the room, lurks the Thirsty Monkey Band, who stunned the world when they savagely stoned an African shepherd to death earlier this year. And in places of honor at the front of the room stands the bereaved family of Chester, a horse who bravely gave his life in a kamikaze mission, stunning two Honolulu teens by jumping into their car as they blithely consumed hamburgers. His attempt failed, but his family will be honored this day for his noble sacrifice.

The Monkey Mafia's Godfather, Alfredo Simianone, steps to the front of the room and reads from a list of animal heroes in the crusade for animal supremacy:

Sam W., an ostrich from Capetown, South Africa who attacked and killed a 63-year-old woman and seriously injured her husband.

Marty M., a marlin from Acapulco Mexico, who gained attention in the human press when he leaped from the water and speared Jose Rojas Mayarita through the abdomen, leaving the man incapacitated in his boat for two days.

Bob R., a Riverside, CA ram who lost his life after he courageously butted to death his owner's 87-year-old neighbor, Elfriede Combs. A sheriff's spokeswoman

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Jaded Pet Clippings

Steven Maul, 24, of San Francisco, allegedly forced his Labrador puppy "Boo" to the ground and administered nips to the neck as part of a discipline system. Maul's attorney was quoted as saying, "Nothing here was cruel or hurtful. My client, in fact, has French kissed his dog. My client is very oral." *Reuters*

Four Lebanese children captured and held an Israeli cow that had wandered over the international border hostage earlier this month. Their demands were that their goats, dozens of which had wandered over the border into Israel, be returned. *Reuters*

A Sri Lankan man was seriously injured when he jumped, naked, into a lion's at the national zoo in Colombo. The man, who was offering himself up as a feast for the lions, survived but the three lions in the den bit off parts of his arms, legs, chest and groin area. *Reuters*

Chanchai Kijprasert, Jarin Saiwan and Pichai Konthongern, prospective politicians on their way to register their candidacy, were thrown from their elephant when the beast panicked in traffic. *Reuters*

Charlotte, a pig owned by Maria Tirota Andrews, boarded a US Airways jetliner in October with Andrews and her daughter, en route from Philadelphia to Seattle. As the plane landed, however, the pig went nuts and tried to get into the cockpit, charging through the cabin, evacuating its bowels in the process. The animal

Louise Nevins of Poughkeepsie, NY, writes: "Where are all the naked lesbians you promised?" Well, Louise, they're on the way. Postage due. Sorry for the delay.

Our Beloved Pets

What do Richard Nixon, Zsa Zsa Gabor, and all the children on Santa's "good list" have in common? That's right, they all have pets. Well, in Tricky Dick's case, had.

The point is, human beings like to care about things. What better to care for than a pet? We had a few of our interns make some phone calls and get thrown out of a few convention centers in order to find out what some celebrities (and a few common folk) keep company with and the cutesy stories that all pets seem to come factory-installed with.

H. Ross Perot: "I have me a bird, y,see, but it's not just any bird, it's a cuckoo bird. Now some of you probably think it's fitting that Ross Perot should have himself a cuckoo bird. Here's what I say to those people: If a salt lick can kidnap my daughter and force her at gunpoint to marry a bottle of soda pop, I can have me a cuckoo bird. Besides, aren't those the cutest little ears you ever did see?"

Oprah Winfrey: "You know, after that whole fiasco with the cattle ranchers, I went out and bought myself a cow. Raised it myself from a calf. I figure in a couple years I'll butcher it myself and have a big ol' Southern bar-b-q. Maybe I'll invite those wet blankets over at PETA."

Leona Helmsley: "Most people imagine I would have a bulldog or a pit bull terrier, but the truth is I have this lovely cocker spaniel. And if it doesn't fork over the \$2,300 in back rent, it'll be sleeping on the street."

Gwen Stefani, of the band *No Doubt*: "I have this absolutely dear Lhasa Apso named Lemon. It's got the cutest little nose. And last year, I had it pierced."

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Jaded Theatre Marquee



A Washington, D.C., Cineplex Odeon movie theatre's attempt to sell viewers on Meet The Parents, The Legend of Drunken Master and The Ladies Man. (Washington Post)

then squealed and made a fuss through the airport. *Philadelphia Daily News*

A day after Britain's Queen Elizabeth was criticized for wringing the neck of a pheasant that had been peppered with shot, the queen went to church Sunday wearing pheasant feathers in her hat. *Reuters*

Students at Hawkeye Community College discovered Robert Allen Broderson, 46, hiding naked in a hayloft. A female sheep was tied up in the corner. After it was determined that the animal was injured during some sort of sexual assault, Broderson was arrested by Waterloo police and charged with criminal trespass and animal abuse. According to the Humane Society, Sexual abuse against animals often goes unreported because the victims can't report it. *Waterloo (Iowa) Courier*

Brain signals from a monkey in a North Carolina laboratory were recently used to control the movement of a robot arm over the Internet at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 600 miles away. *Reuters*

In September, William McCavanagh, a 54-year-old farmer from Toronto, is believed to have been killed by a buck after setting up in the buck's territory during mating season. *Reuters*

IN OTHER NEWS

An Italian bride in Lecco, Italy, was rushed to the hospital to have a grain of rice extracted from her ear. *Reuters*

Kesaraporn Duangsawan, 22, of Bangkok won 6,000 baht (about \$138) as the first runner-up in a

Henry, The Florist (A Cautionary Tale In One Act)

The Players

MR. CARCINOMA, a thirty-something man with dark glasses and large, dark melanomata covering a large percentage of his body;

CATHY, an eight-year-old girl, with pigtails and an insatiable curiosity of the world around her, and;

BILLY, a nine-year-old boy wearing a little league baseball cap, corduroy shorts, and is a bit sweaty. Quite a bit sweaty, in fact.

[HAPPY MUSIC. FADE IN on MR. CARCINOMA sitting in a comfortable, highbacked chair. He is holding a large storybook labelled, Mr. Carcinoma's Tales of the Faeries. Seated on the floor to his left, facing him, is CATHY, to his right, BILLY. MUSIC FADES]

MR. CARCINOMA (cheerfully): Good morning, Billy. Good morning, Cathy. How are you both today?

BILLY: A little warm.

CATHY: What are those things on your body?

MR. C (oblivious): Good. You know what we're going to do today? I'm going to tell you a little story. You like stories, don't you?

BILLY: I'm feeling a bit warm, sir.

CATHY: What *are* those things? Are they moles?

MR. C (still oblivious): Great. And *this* story is one of Mr. Carcinoma's favorites. It's called *Henry, The Florist*.

[MR. CARCINOMA pauses, dramatically, for effect, opens his storybook, then begins. BILLY raises his hand, starting to appear quite sluggish.]

MR. C: "Once upon a time, there was a florist named Henry..."

CATHY: Was he gay? My daddy says all florists are fags.

MR. C: Probably, but it isn't important to the story. Anyway, "...Henry liked boys more than girls. Nobody knew, but he'd brutally murdered several prostitutes in the last five years. He'd done this horrible deed not because they frequently had sex for money—he'd occasionally done that himself. He murdered them simply because they were women.

CATHY: So, Henry was a misogynist?

Thai beauty contest. Then the organizers discovered she was a he. He has returned the money but asked to keep the sash as a souvenir. *Reuters*

Samuel Feldman, a 38-year-old ad exec, was convicted in November of squeezing, poking and crumbling a thousand dollars worth of baked goods in the suburban Philadelphia area. Feldman was quoted as saying "I do touch too much bread, yes, more than the next person." *Reuters*

After having trouble with a stuck passenger side window, a couple who bought a Ford Expedition from a rental company took the SUV to a repair shop. The reason for the stuck window, mechanics discovered, was nearly fifty pounds of marijuana stashed in the seats and side panels of the truck. *Reuters*

Tressa Ellen Jaroch's lawyer blames "lack of common sense" for the woman putting her 6-year-old son in a running dryer to discipline him for playing inside the machine. She'll spend two to fifteen years in jail. *Detroit News*



Seen an odd story in your local newspaper? Snapped a picture of a funny sign in your neighborhood recently? Send them to us. Okay, so you won't get a T-Shirt or a toaster or a half million dollars, but we're not one of those big budget mags, are we? No. We're all doing this out of the goodness of our hearts because we know that you, the reader, have a primal need to laugh. It's what separates us from the animals (well, except the hyena, maybe). Anyway, email newspaper URLs with funny stories to editor@epasq.com and everything else to our mailing address, listed on page 2.

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eDitorial from page 2

shop in a rather rough part of town. At first the shopkeeper offered up the usual fare but, when I showed my frustration, he escorted me to a back room where he sold me the ultimate pet: a small retarded child named “Foster.” He told me it was named after funnyman Foster Brooks, whose comedy routine entailed pretending to be drunk at celebrity roasts. Being a humorist myself, I thought this was finally a good match and I had the shopkeeper package him up.

Once home, I let Foster familiarize himself with his new surroundings. He sniffed the furniture, rolled around on the Persian rug, and marked his territory until I caught him at it. I had to scold him, which broke my heart but, after an hour or so in the corner, I patted him on the head and all seemed well again. Little Foster drooled with glee as I scratched his tummy.

The next day, I took Foster to the park for a walk. I bought a hot dog and fed half of it to Foster. If he’d had a puppy’s tail, he’d have been wagging it. Who’d have thought a little retarded kid would like hot dogs? So there we were, walking happily along when I notice a beautiful woman out walking her own retarded kid, a twisted wreck she’d named “Princess.” Stopping her, I decided to compare notes.

As it turned out, not only were retarded children common pets, but many were bred with specific traits. She paid a breeder \$150 for her prize Anglican Blue which, she explained, is bred specifically to run sideways while humming showtunes. Princess had apparently won several National and one International Re-

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Exclamation, continued from page 4

believe! Why, I’ve got babes ‘riding the Rushdie’ every morning, noon and night! Sure, some say I’m being ungrateful. I say, why mess with a good thing?”

The Rushdie controversy began back in 1989 when the Ayatollah Khomeini ordered Muslims to kill the author for the alleged insults to Islam in his best-selling novel, *The Satanic Verses*. For the past ten years, Rushdie had been keeping a low profile in London under the protection of British police until the Iranian government recently denounced the death warrant.

But Rushdie apparently has other ideas. Having left his third wife, the 53-year-old Rushdie has moved in with his new supermodel girlfriend, Padma Lakshmi, and is currently doing the talk show circuit in support of his new book entitled: *Muhammad Is A Big Silly Head*.

The acclaimed author seemed unconcerned when asked about the folly of his recent actions. “Look, I’m a writer for God’s sake. I’ve gotta tag some ass while the going’s good!”

According to most reports, however, Rushdie’s new position has brought little reaction from Iranian hard-liners. “I wish he’d cut it out,” sighed Amir, a spokesman for The Iranian Coalition Of Guys Who Read Books. “C’mon, I’ve got better things to do with my time. Have you seen that new Suzanne Somers’ book? I paid thirty bucks for it down at Wal-Mart and it’s pissing me off just thinking about it.”

KUBRICK’S EYES WIDE OPEN

ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO (eP)—Police officers answering a disturbance call got more than they bargained for yesterday when they entered a local Taco Bell to confront a suspicious-looking man in a trenchcoat. When the customer surrendered to police, the officers discovered it was actually Stanley Kubrick, the famed reclusive director who had died of an apparent heart attack in 1999.

Taco Bell employees had been reluctant to report the customer but knew something was up when it took Kubrick four months to decide what he wanted with his chimichanga. “I really shouldn’t be here,” said an embarrassed Kubrick. “But hey, can you blame me? It’s been forever since I had Mexican.”

Known for such award-winning motion pictures as *A Clockwork Orange* and *2001: A Space Odyssey*, the director’s last film was the erotic-thriller *Eyes Wide Shut* starring Tom Cruise and Nicole Kidman. According to Kubrick, he became so disillusioned with the film, that he faked his own death rather than have anything more to do with it.

“Are you kidding?” he said. “That was one stinkburger of a movie, man. I mean, all I had up there was Nicole shaking her pasties for three hours. I don’t know what the hell was I thinking.”

After some deliberation, the police officers finally released Kubrick citing that the director hadn’t done anything wrong, save for ordering the bean burrito.

Hollywood superstar Tom Cruise had little to say about the late director’s sudden re-appearance. “I’m not gay!” said Cruise. ★

Henry, the Florist from page 6

MR. C: No, he was a florist. So, “One day, Henry took in a stray cat. He loved the small, furry animal. He fed it twice a day, watered it. But one day, the feline died. It seems that Henry only ever raised plants as a child and his idea of feeding anything but himself was via watering can. He even sprayed the kitty with his mister each morning and faced it toward the east, to no avail.”

CATHY: That’s a horrible story!

MR. C: I never claimed it was good or bad, you little bitch.

[BILLY, arm still raised, passes out.]

MR. C: Now, back in your cage or no Tang for you.

[CATHY scurries off]

MR. C: Today’s moral, children, is “You can love a pet, feed it to the best of your ability, but it will still die.” See you at the beach. ★

eDitorial from page 7

tardation Show. Blue ribbons for her Anglican Blue, she said. Princess drooled in agreement.

I felt had.

As I walked back to my apartment, I started seeing these little retarded kids all over the place—a Mexican gentleman walking his Creeping Asian, a yuppie businessman cleaning up his Turkish Gameboy’s excrement, a young girl playing fetch with her Siberian Hefty. I was amazed I’d not noticed how popular they were, but I guess that’s just the way it is. —EL★

Ms. Paranoia from page 5

said that neighbors called Bob “the mean one”, and local papers called Bob “a beast”. Humans executed Bob for his actions.

The notorious “Virginia Triumvirate”, a group of monkeys who hurled bananas and crab apples at passing motorists on Interstate 95 after escaping from the circus. They managed to evade capture and are now living in the Virginia woods and planning more mayhem. Sylvester the Squirrel, who courageously attacked a pregnant woman just out of Boston and drove her nearly insane. The woman is now mortally afraid of squirrels and refuses to stand near any trees.

Kanga Roo, of Australia, who smashed through a glass front door and terrorized a Northern Territory family during a three-hour rampage through their home before being captured and executed by authorities.

Alfredo also honored the numerous deer whose concerted efforts to terrorize and destroy humans have been effective in many areas, including Forest Lake, Minn. and Boston, Mass. He also made special mention of the Ram Faction, which has been successful in eliminating numerous elderly humans, including an elderly couple in North Carolina.

“Humans are the scum of the earth and must be destroyed,” Alfredo proclaims to rousing cheers. He has whipped the mob into a frenzy. When the rally is over, the animals sneak out in pairs to avoid human detection, renewed in their hope and vision of a world without humans.

How to Avoid the Growing Animal Menace

Avoid trees, empty stretches of road, wilderness, corals, meadows, barns, circuses, zoos, and boats.

Do not keep pets and do not associate with people who have pets.

Do not, under any circumstances, feed the animals.

Carry a gun at all times.

Avoid insulting animals, even harmless looking mice.

They may be carrying Hanta virus.

If an animal does attack, scream loudly for help and beat it to death with your gun or a large stick.

If an animal doesn’t attack, scream loudly for help and shoot it.

Never trust an animal. If you think you’ve gotten on an animal’s good side and that you will be spared, remember that the animal might turn on you at any time.

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Three-Finned Tales From The Goldfish Bowl

A FISH NOIR STORY

It was a dark and stormy night when she swam into my castle, a gorgeous albino with fins like razor blades and gills up to there. She wanted me to track down her husband, the cod. It smelt fishy to me, but I bit. Guess I'm a suckerfish for fishlips like hers. Who am I? I'm Flip Merlowe, private investigator.

My first task was to determine who the suspects were. Jake, her husband, wasn't floating at the top of the bowl, so it had to be foul play. Besides, I was getting damned tired of the fish puns.

There was the cat, Fluffy McFluffkins, an obese feline that couldn't have made the jump to the table where the bowl is without some sort of assistance. If it was McFluffkins, from where could this assistance have come?

There was Gillian, Jake's wife and my client. After all, it was hard to tell if those were tears she was shedding since the pH level in the bowl had been a touch high over the past few days. She could have offed him, but where was the body?

But then I wasn't ruling out aliens from a distant galaxy or the undead coming back to claim Jake from this plane of existence. After all, we're pretty much fish here, with fish-sized brains and all.

I swam down to the east side of the bowl to see if the diver had seen anything. He was suspiciously silent. Had our suspect gotten to him as well? Or was he just made of plastic?

Frustrated, I swam down to the south side where I came upon a beautiful treasure chest filled with jewels and doubloons beyond my wildest dreams, but, alas, what could I do with treasures since the bowl has no economy? There was something eerie about the way the chest opened and closed and opened and closed. It was hypnotic.

When I awoke from my trance, I found myself back at the castle with a headache the size of Sea World. There's nothing like being hypnotized by a treasure chest and waking up the next morning with a hangover. Or was there? The steady stream of eggs floating by was too much to resist apparently and I was now surrounded by what could only be Gillian's spawn. Was I a daddy? Would there be repercussions if the board discovered I'd slept and bred with my client? Did I care? No. I was hungry and the joint was jumpin' with caviar.

So maybe I didn't solve the case. Gillian disappeared two weeks later and I for one think it was McFluffkins. Of course, I don't know how that fat clod did it, but I've retired and I'm just lounging in the bubbles around the air filter. There's a catfish here named Muddy that plays the blues real swell.

Do I feel bad that I did absolutely nothing to help? Sure. But, after all, we're all pretty much fish here, with fish-sized brains and all. ★

POLICE REPORT: Arrests this week include two editors (jay-walking and illegal use of an exclamation point), a copy boy (sharing mp3's), two guys down in the art department (9/10 possession), and a rabbi that had somehow accidentally wandered into the building past security (resisting arrest).

Paranoia from page 9

Do your part to destroy them before they destroy us-eat meat, and eat it often. Make your vegetarian friends aware of this situation. If your vegetarian friends refuse to eat meat, they may be secret agents of the enemy. Turn them in to the authorities.

Gentle Readers, Ms. Paranoia urges you to remain steadfast against this onslaught. We humans have been in control for thousands of years, and we can remain in control if we all do our part. If you are not a part of the solution, you are part of the problem. This menace is very really and very deadly. Join the NRA. Support Ted Nugent. Honor your local butcher as a veteran of this terrible war. Write to your local papers and demand that animal shelters put aside the waiting period before animals are destroyed. When the next child is mauled to death by an angry deer, remember that it could be yours. The time to act is now. ★

Our Pets from page 6

Robert Redford: “When I was six years old, my parents bought me a Shetland pony. You know, those miniature horses? I named it Beauty after Black Beauty, the popular story. Well, it turned out that damned beast had some disorder that caused it to lose control of its bodily functions whenever someone walked into the room. Still, it was the best pet I ever had.”

Madonna: “I had a horse once. Or, rather, he had me.”

Timothy Silva, Eugene, OR: “After a particularly lurid one night stand, the other party left me her pets to care for. However, I didn’t know the first thing about caring for crabs, so I boiled them and ate ‘em. They were a bit dry.”

Jerry Springer: “Pit bulls, mostly. And piranhas.”

Woody Allen: “When Soon-Yi and I went on our honeymoon in Mexico, we found this stray Chihuahua that looked just like that little Taco Bell dog. It barked incessantly the whole trip and hasn’t let up since. We named it Mia.”

Irving Absinthe, Wormwood, TN: “I raise worms. Got names for all of ‘em, y’know. There’s Harry and George and Todd and...”

Stephen King, Spookyville, ME: “When I was young there was this collie I found while walking home from school one day. At least I think it was a collie. The dried blood and the maggots made it sort of hard to tell.”

Jimmy Witherspoon, Bowling Green, WV: “I had this dog once, man, and the little bastard tried to kill me, man. Picked up an axe from the woodshed and chased me around the farm, screaming, ‘Where’s my money, man?! I came through for you on the pills, man, so where’s my money?!’ When I came to, the mutt was gone, along with my VCR and the grand I had hid in the cookie jar. So now I have a cat. Dogs are just trouble, man.”

Paul Liebesman, Oakland, CA: “My favorite pet stor...OH MY GOD!! A STEAMROLLER JUST FLATTENED MY SHIA-TZU!!!”

Kathy Lee Gifford: “Last year I got a pet for Cody, but we had to get rid of it. I guess Cody isn’t old enough yet. So, I guess it’s back to the factory with Rita.”

Richard Gere: “Well, I can say for damned sure that I don’t have any goddamned gerbils!”

Leonardo Pezzano, Oakdale, MN: “I have-a this snake that-a likes to-a crawla ‘round in-a the dark-a places. One-a time he wenta missin’ for-a three days, then-a turned uppa smellin’ like-a fish. Wassa strangest ting.”

Bill Clinton, Washington, DC: “I had this dream. Man, it was spooky. There I was in the Oval Office when who shows up but Bob Barker. He’s holding these pruning shears and some surgical gauze, and he’s got this big smile on his face. He moves closer and closer to me and starts snickering in this really maniacal way and then I wake up. Oh, and Buddy’s toilet-trained.”

Tom Clancy: “I don’t like to talk about works-in-progress, but I will say the working title is Red Rover Rising.”

Jim Carrey: “I ate at a Vietnamese restaurant just this week, so, yes, I’ve had pets.”★

Homely On The Range: The Strange Tail of the Buffaloon

AN UNAMERICAN FOLKTALE
RETOOLED BY M. T. CABEZA AS
TOLD TO EDWARD C. GONZALEZ

Once upon the range, there lived a young, punny little buffalo who was out standing in his field. The rest of the herd called him Buffaloon. Buffaloon had always known he was special, different somehow, but his uniqueness was more extraordinary than his little bovine mind could comprehend. He herd more than a discouraging word from his hoofed peers.

As the mating season approached, Buffaloon playfully sparred with the other young bulls but, since his punny horns pointed straight back, his success in these endeavors was quite limited. More often than not, he would limp home to his mom and dad, battered and discouraged. Clearly, he was not at home on the range.

It did not help matters much that Buffaloon always stuck his hoof in his mouth around the females. “Cow do you do?” he would pun, his standard opening line. “Oh, Buffaloon. You’re always

cont’d on page 13

A Whole Lot of Bull

BY WILLIAM ARTHUR

Yessir, that was quite a sight! Ada covered with tar, being chased by Jack, and me just about to bust with laughing even if she was my fiancée. Guess it jes' don't pay to have raccoons for pets. But there I go, getting ahead of myself again. Putting the cart before the horse as grandpappy used to say. The way it all come to happen was like this:

See, Ada and me had been going together for a long time. Everyone in Sweetwater knew we was going to get hitched sooner or later. It's just that the more I thought about it, the more I wanted it to be later rather than sooner. Now Ada, she weren't no fool. She began to tease me, saying she had a hankering for Zachary Potts, the hardware store owner, and if we weren't going to get married soon she'd take up with him.

I listened to this malarkey and pretended it didn't bother me none, but she could tell I was plenty vexed. Finally we agreed that I was to come over to her Ma's place the next Saturday. Just for a visit, you understand, but Ada found out that I had bought a ring at Dixon's Fine Jewelry and she pretty much knew that it weren't for one of the coons.

Mischief and Mayhem I called them. They was always getting into things. I had found them stuck in a trap and nursed them back to health. Once they was fit again, I tried to let them go free but they kept coming back. Finally I let them live in the woodshed and they were as happy as pigs in slop except for Jack being next door.

Jack was Eli Johnson's prize Holstein bull. Eli let him roam free behind a thick board fence and eat all the sweet clover that he wanted. Come breeding time, Eli would loan Jack out to any

farmer willing to pay the \$100 stud fee. Nobody ever kicked too much about the price.

It being spring and all, Jack was starting to get mighty restive. I could see hiin snorting and pawing behind the fence. Mischief and Mayhem got more skittish than coons normally are. Even the extra corn that I gave 'em didn't stop 'em from being nervous.

By Friday, I felt like a long-tailed cat in a room full of rocking chairs myself. Tomorrow was the day I was supposed to visit Ada, get down on one knee and promise her the moon and stars forever. My fun-loving bachelor days were about to end like a bug hitting the windshield of a moving car. Ada had already made me give up chewing tobacco. She would never let me stay at Happy Sam's until closing time drinking sour mash and playing stud poker with the guys. I'd be just like Jack who looked free enough except for that ring through his nose.

I was jes' about to go to Sam's one last time when it commenced to rain pitch forks and blue devils. It was pouring and the roof I'd always been meaning to fix began to leak like Niagara Falls. Pretty soon I had buckets and pans and anything that would hold water scattered around trying to catch the drips. In the midst of the deluge, I plumb forgot about Ada. Either I

had to fix the roof or learn the backstroke.

Saturday broke sunny and I went out lickety-split for the hardware store. There was Zachary Potts, that dough-faced moron. I knew he had enough money to burn a wet mule, but I couldn't imagine Ada falling for him.

"Sure was a gully-washer last night," I said, trying to be friendly.

"Guess I slept through it," Potts returned.

"Slept through it...? My place leaked like a sieve!"

"That rattletrap of a shack you got, it's a wonder it holds up at all."

"It's holding up fine, I just need some roofing."

Zachary's heady eyes glinted like a weasel after a chicken. "You know me, Nathan. I'd be pleased to sell you some...!"

He sold me rolls of roofing, nails and buckets of tar. In a whipstitch I was up on my roof replacing the rotten boards, spreading the tar and measuring and nailing the roofing. Jack was pawing more than ever and Mischief and Mayhem were up on the roof with me when I heard this awful yowling below.

It was Ada, all duded up in her mother's white wedding dress. "Nathan Taylor, where in sam hell are you?"

continued

Bull from page 12

“Up here, darling,” I said, looking down at her.

“Where’ve you been? I sat at home for two hours and finally I give up and come lookin’ for you. Ma’s making her best chicken and noodles. I thought you’d be there by now.”

“Got to fix the roof. You go home now before you get your dress dirty. I’ll be there directly.”

“You’re tellin’ me that the roof is more important than me? I swear, Zachary Potts is looking better every minute.”

“Zachary Potts is a no-good peckerwood and you know it!” She was starting to rile me.

“Take that back about Zachary!”

“I will not!”

“Take that back or I’ll..!”

Ada never got to finish what she was saying because at that moment Jack gave out a great bellow and Mischief, who was perched on one of the tar barrels, jumped off causing the barrel to fall on her. The tar dripped all over Ada’s white dress and the barrel stuck on her head. She gave out an awful yell which sounded like a moo inside the barrel and Jack next door launched his entire two tons of force against that thick hoard fence which broke like so many matchsticks. In her tar-splotched dress, Ada must have looked a bit like a Holstein cow to him because he came running hard right at her, pawing and snorting and carrying on something fierce. Ada didn’t know if she was on foot or on horseback, but she tried to run which only made things worse because she stepped in an empty tar barrel lying on the ground that stuck to one foot. She was pulling with her hands trying to get the barrel off her head and running blind until she finally fell down smack in the mud and Jack saw that she wasn’t a cow after all. With a disgusted snort, he stalked off.

I jumped down from the roof and pulled the barrel off her head. Lord was she a mess! Tar and mud everywhere! Ada gave me a terrible look and smacked me hard on both cheeks like it was all my fault. Then she pushed me down in the mud and poured tar all over me. With a wicked yank, she took the barrel from her foot, heaved it at me and stalked off home without even one word.

Apologizing weren’t no use. I tried to, but Ada wouldn’t listen. Everywhere I go lately I see her together with Zachary, cozy as a couple of bedbugs. Rumor has it that they will tie the knot in June. Maybe by that time Ada’s hair will be its natural color again. I was pretty broke up about it at first, but I’ve still got Happy Sam’s and sour mash and stud poker. I’ve even gone back to chewing tobacco. Eli Johnson is taking no more chances with his bull. A thick metal chain pretty much keeps Jack from busting loose again. That makes Mischief and Mayhem feel a lot safer. The worst part, though, is that after many barrels of tar and roofing my ceiling still leaks. You’d think Zachary would owe me that much. ★

Buffaloon from page 11

plain around,” they would retort, disgustedly. But poor Buffaloon would simply snort and turn tail, unaware of his obvious inappropriateness.

One day, after a particularly brutal sparring session, Buffaloon dragged his bruised and battered body home to his parents’ pasture. “Oh, deer!” his mom misspoke when she saw the emaciated figure approach on the horizon. Helping their exhausted son off his hooves, they quickly fetched for him some cool water and a small chew of grass. Buffaloon followed the tracks of tears down his mother’s coarse, hairy face. “I’m in a rut,” he whispered, blood pouring from a forehead wound. “I must leave.”

In spite of his bad humor, his parents reluctantly consented. “If ewe heifer change your mind,” his mother sobbed, unable to continue. “Bi-son,” his father drawled, in a gesture of incomparable tactlessness.

As soon as Buffaloon left the range, the skies were cloudy all day. As the days grew shorter and colder, the first flakes of winter snow stung his swollen tongue. The first blizzard of the season caught him standing proud, rump to the wind. He plodded on northward, hoping for a milder climate, unaware that his geographical skills were even worse than his social ones. While crossing the meadows, he came across the graceful wapiti, with their elegant antlers and regal appearance. “How do they manage to elk a living out here?” he punned inadvertently. Later, he came across a cougar retreating from the higher altitudes to seek game and shelter to the south. “You’re

cont’d on page 15

Miniature Dog Movement

BY TONY ZURLO

The dog is still politically incorrect in China. Under the flag of cultural purity, the Communist Party label for enemies of the people has been “Running Dog,” usually followed by “American” and/or “Capitalist.” Indeed, Western Man and Woman’s Best Friend treads a tragic path in the Middle Kingdom, as likely to become someone’s main course and source of protein at a banquet as to pull an unconscious peasant from a burning compound.

Extensive clandestine interviews with Chinese canine-lovers has led me to conclude that the dog’s collapse began in the winter of the ninety-ninth year of the miniature gou, or dog, or upon the ascendancy of the imperial reign of Mao Zedong, who preferred the pliable purr of a mao, or cat, to the brazen bark of a gou. Anti-dogism became a people’s campaign a few months after Mao declared bird droppings from the sky as an anti-socialist, American military trick to white wash the Chinese landscape.

The birds survived. Dogs, with less reliable skills for escape, became targeted game, until soon every Southern Chinese household served up “hot” dogs daily, fresh from the city markets where groups of hot-blooded hounds tended to congregate and gossip about the latest govern-

ment reforms. China was well on its way to abolishing famine, but at the expense of barkless nights.

On the other hand, even with the dogged savvy of Party vigilante patrols, small outlaw gangs of miniature gou managed to slip through the bars of bamboo cages and escape from their exile on Kunming Lake in Beijing. Neither a bark nor barf punctured the night, a quietness that even deceived prowling cats. Ne’er a bow, nor a faint wow. One misty morn, while Mrs. Mao sat bored with rehearsal of *The June Cave Escapades*, she thought up excuses for requiring another version of *The East Is Red* to be staged for the people. During this lag in socialist discipline, Mr. Mao was attending to his dog paddle at the seaside. Without drawing attention, a clan of tiny gou, disguised as slinking alley cats, slipped through the neighborhood committee nets and made it safely into the countryside.

More than a decade later, some of these renegade peewee weenies appeared to me in my apartment south of Beijing, a four-hour train ride from the lake of their clan’s reported demise. They hid their lilliputian bodies in my room, sometimes in my desk drawer, other times on the Delete key of my computer. They talked to me, but when I replied, my Chinese was so loud and conspicuous that the vibration of my monosyllabic chants knocked them into the cracks next to the install key, and they were afraid of becoming grafted to a computer chip and ending up forever a synapse for megabytes. I understood their concern, so I smiled and typed friendship messages on the screen, and they could read that, although it took a whole committee to get the lines read, at fif-

teen minutes a line per dog.

Enough! I said. “Out damn Spot. Damn Rover. Off damn Fido.” My apartment was being invaded by miniature dogs, and they were mustering on my writing apparatus, rehearsing the Shanghai Reel across my desk. “Catch her in the Rye,” they sung.

I’m a soft touch for any critter smaller than I. And, to be sure, they were not loud. One bullfrog could have drowned out the whole gang with an echo. And they were a cautious lot. A lonely hoot owl’s hoot would send them scurrying to my closet yelping for diplomatic protection as persecuted refugees.

“So, how do you like the Middle Kingdom?” a miniature gou asked me one day.

“I miss the redneck, country howl of American stray mongrels when sirens go off,” I answered. “I miss the afternoon panic of the postman. I miss the threats of neighbors when they are awakened by unruly barking in the morning.”

“Your tongue is sharper than your bite,” a couple snapped back in their falsetto and soprano barks. “If you don’t stop, we’ll show you why gou got outlawed from the four corners of the Middle Kingdom.”

I couldn’t go on this way. “I can take one gou for a muse,” I responded. “But not the whole platoon.”

“One gou is worth a whole room full of muses,” their bantam spokesdog said, “except when a mao is around. Then it’s check out time for muses.”

“I wonder if there are any mao left, now that the government has chased you guys underground?” I asked.

“Left, maybe. But not a single mao left on the right,” a couple of sassy mutts, who’d been

Buffaloon from page 13

heading the wrong way!" warned the cat, to no avail. Buffaloon could not be steered in the other direction. "I think you're lion," he observed accidentally.

Days turned into weeks and weeks into months. Buffaloon befriended a strapping bull moose with an impressive seven-foot rack, but their friendship was short-lived. "Moose you go so soon?" queried the moose, his spiritual twin. Nodding in the affirmative, Buffaloon continued north until he saw the flat, treeless plain of white tundra. Upon seeing what he considered a shaggy cousin, he approached warily.

"I musk ox ewe something," he began, but already his northern brethren were taken aback by his unrefined grammar. They quickly dispersed, leaving him to ponder his fate in the cold, frozen wasteland. It was there that Buffaloon had a revelation.

"All my life the other buffalo have looked down their snouts at me because I was punny and deformed. I've been beaten, harassed, and called a jerky. But my heart has remained pure. Galloping away from life's problems is not the answer. It doesn't make sense. I must reach out and touch someone. I will return to the seen of my heard, in spite of their lack of taste and their odious smell."

And with that tactile silly-loquy, Buffaloon headed south.

On the way home, he encountered a herd of reindeer who taunted the young bison as he slipped and slid on the melting ice. "I don't care a boo about what you say!" he yelled but, cognizant that his puns were becoming worse, he picked up his pace and didn't look back.

Unbeknownst to Buffaloon, some gradual changes had transformed him in the long months of his journey. His backward horns had lengthened to a proper size and pointed up, gracefully. His punny physique, much ridiculed by his larger fellows, had filled substantially. There was a new confidence in his trot. He decided to pay a visit to the bull moose he had befriended earlier but, upon returning to that forested locale, he made a grizzly discovery. After the bear, unfortunately. Saddened, but still determined, he made his way back to the herd.

Buffaloon's return was an extraordinary homecoming. The envious faces of the bulls and the admiring eyes of the cows were silent testimony to the radical change in the formerly punny bison. As he trotted into the pasture, startled herd members exclaimed, "Holy cow! Cud that be Buffaloon?" His once punny horns were now gracefully curved and tapered to a razor-sharp

point. His homely face was now framed by massive shoulder muscles and a thick, shaggy coat of reddish-brown hair. Seeking out his primary tormenter of the previous mating season, Buffaloon was satisfied to hear that he now looked down his haughty snout at a wood-paneled room and a brick fireplace. With no other score to settle, Buffaloon returned quietly to the pasture of his parents.

The next season's rut underscored the dramatic change in Buffaloon. Potential rivals kept a respectful distance, mindful of the punishment that could be inflicted with those terrible horns. It was no surprise then, when the newest crop of young calves was displayed to the herd, several exhibited various morphological aberrations peculiar to Buffaloon, from the punny, reverse horns to the off-centered shoulder hump. Watching them nurse from their respective mothers, Buffaloon was udderly delighted. Then and there he made a vow that his offspring would not be subjected to the insensitive verbal chastisement that so scarred his childhide. He walked proudly by his calves, staring intently, and then stopped suddenly in his tracks. "Another chip off the old block," he muttered disgustedly. But then he simply cleaned off his hooves and walked on, lord of all he surveyed. ★

Next Issue

Black & White. Color. Digital. Everyone's got one. Televisions aren't just a fad anymore. They're apparently here to stay. And, in January, we'll be making fun of all things televised. Antenna, cable, and satellite, those annoying fifteen minutes of advertising every hour, even the bright and cheery newscasters. Sign up for our Announcement list at <http://www.epasq.com> to be the first to know when it's available for download.

Television

Pets

BY JOSEPH PRIDDY

Pets come from pet shops. No one knows why, but that's the way it is, and only a fool would question what works.

The first goldfish was domesticated in the Sung dynasty by singing to it. Undomesticated goldfish are actually amphibians, derisively referred to as fool's goldfish. All fish may be divided into three groups: main dish, leftovers, and pets. Discussed here is the latter group, which, if unfriendly, becomes the first group. The goldfish's own diet is supplemented by chopped mosquito, crushed cereal, and trampled beetles. Spawning happens whenever they can get away with it. Particularly prized is the Brazilian drooling goldfish. Unfortunately, a drooling fish is hard to spot in his natural environment. A goldfish will grow to a size corresponding to the container they live in, so it's possible to keep the babies small and cute by transferring them to a glass thimble shortly after birth. Don't overfeed.

Ants are social in habit and rarely refuse an offer to dance. Typically, a mature ant has a large head due to too many compliments at a young age. Carpenter ants are especially helpful for remodeling projects around the house. But it takes quite a many to raise a wall, so they must first put on their uniforms and become army ants. Do not stand nearby while they work, though, or they will become pants ants.

Probably the most popular of the hutch pets is the bunny rabbit, valued by crawling infants for its little chocolate eggs. The rabbit has but one purpose in life: to

hop. Since medieval times, man has tried to harness the energy of a rabbit's hop, without success or failure. The cottontail rabbit, when not being used as a pet, is raised for his cotton ball, used in makeup removal. The hare is accustomed to being raised for its fur and, when kept as a pet, it will react violently to the innocent phrase, "May I take your coat." Prefers borrowed burrows.

The guinea pig is not a true pig but a misleading pig due to its color variation. A stout animal, too short for its legs, really, he has small ears and is hard to hear when frightened. Quite prolific, the guinea pig bears litter upon litter, making it a cheap animal to keep because you never have to buy wood chips. The average lifespan depends on how well they adjust to spinning, an activity children like to activate.

Though the rat is used mainly for research, so far, they haven't discovered anything noteworthy, and they're better off being a pet. Possessed of clean habits, the rat can often be seen grooming itself by blowing his nose in his forepaws. Though he won't admit it, the hamster is a relative of the rat and has largely replaced the house mouse as a nuisance.

Least common of the aviary birds, the crow, named after a mispronunciation of his call, "cran," is kept because of its skill at human cussing, in itself proof of its high intellect. The parakeet is a small parrot with a large appetite—not for food, but for human hangnails. Occurring worldwide, they also occur to wistful cats. Unlike lovebirds, parakeets dislike their mates, and they will procreate only when hooded and dipped in lovebird lure. The females are duller than the males,

but smart in other areas.

An unusual pet, the skunk is noted for its offensive odor, called B-O, or oh-oh if you're already running away. It is not necessary to de-scent a skunk to make him acceptable. If you, the pet owner, become obnoxious to him, he will exhibit warning behavior by standing on his front paws to show you what he has. Be sure to praise him.

The dog is of course the most variable of domestic animals, accounting for more types of owners than any other pet. As a general rule, a dog becomes quite attached to its owner, and this condition makes it difficult for the pet owner to change his socks (or his tie, depending on where the dog has attached itself).

Because of their independent nature, cats have few friends and many acquaintances. Those who own both a cat and dog will find that a cat, because of his snobbish nature, will never drink out of the same toilet as a dog. Install a half bath. ★

Mini-dogs from page 14

nipping at the mao-tai gin in my cupboard, cracked. They emitted a squeaky burp.

When the day for my departure from the Middle Kingdom arrived, they held a going away party for me. Secretly, I invited several of my American friends and turned the occasion into an adoption party. By the night's end, every one of the miniature gou had a new home and guaranteed security. They actually paired off, a male and female for each American. My favorite couple, whom I'd offered to smuggle back to the states in my carry-on luggage, yelped thankfully just outside my window while tears dripped onto my cheeks. But they couldn't aban-

cont'd on page 17

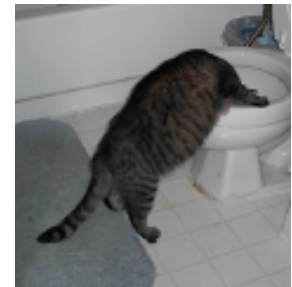
Contributions

William Arthur submitted “A Whole Lot of Bull” to the magazine a couple of years ago. At that time, he was pleased to announce the publication of his first novel, “Time and Chance.” He’s probably written a whole slew of books since then. Probably.



Edward C. Gonzalez has declared 2001 the “Year of the Buffaloon.” We at *ePasquinade* fully support this stance, using a system of levers and pulleys.

Since we have no biographical data on **Joseph Priddy**, I guess we get to make something up again. This is truly the fun part of the job because we can say almost anything. Joe may be a morbidly obese man, maybe a tiny elf, or perhaps he’s a robot sent from the future to destroy us all. We just don’t know.



Tony Zurlo lives in Arlington, Texas, surrounded by imaginary friends and lovers from around the globe. To pay the bills, he disguises himself as a college teacher. But, in fact, he writes all the time. A lot of this writing seems to be in the form of words, sometimes written, sometimes typewritten, but usually on paper.

Mini-dogs from page 16

don their comrades. They wanted to stay and fight for freedom and democracy even if it meant certain capture and imprisonment.

To this day I do not know if all my tiny friends have survived. I would think that diminutive Deng Xiaoping would have had great empathy for the miniature dogs and perhaps quietly passed on the word to let sleeping dogs lie, so to speak, because every dog will have his or her day. Indeed, according to Chinese lore, it is a good omen if a strange dog comes and stays with a family, suggesting that wealth would follow. The Emperor Ling Di, around the year 170, granted his favorite dog the multi-cornered hat of the highest literary rank of the day.

Throughout Chinese history, the toy dog, often no more than a foot long and a half foot high, has served families from the top to bottom of society with dignity and honor.

The dog was a favorite of China’s most famous poet, Li Bai, a spiritual link to our own famous poet, Walt Whitman, who said something like: If you hear a belch or a yelp, look under your shoe soles. It’ll probably be me. If you need me, just bark once, and I’ll be there to help. No need to demand political asylum. Just keep the faith and the dog’s time will come around. ★

Surprise Contest #1—Results



Where we asked you to scan or photocopy your pet in any position. Any non-human animal in your household will do, the weirder the better.

Well, we didn't get too many entries. In fact, once our brethren in Florida's West Palm Beach counted all the entries, we discovered just the one. Just check out those dimples. No pregnant chads here. You can see it in the image above. It's that blotch in the center, below the word "So?" It's name is Woozy and it's apparently a weevil. It was submitted by BS Pyle, a mysterious Southerner with an affection for insects. He'll be receiving the Leather Medal Award once he tells us where to send it.

Now, we expected to have more than one entry here, so we have some space to fill. Unfortunate for us; fortunate for you. Let's start by telling you a little about the boll weevil.

A beetle of the insect family Curculionidae (order Coleoptera), *Anthonomus grandis*' size varies according to the amount of food it receives during its larval stage. It averages about 6 mm, including the long, curved snout, which is about one-half its body length. The yellow color of the adult boll weevil changes to gray or black several weeks after emerging.

Adult boll weevils emerge in the spring from a partly dormant state and lay between 100–300 eggs in cotton buds or fruit. Eggs develop into adults in two or three weeks, so there may be up to ten generations a year. The larvae live within the cotton boll, destroying the seeds and the fibres.

The boll weevil can be found in North America everywhere cotton is cultivated. It was a gift from Mexico in the 1890s, causing much damage. It's estimated that between three and five million bales of cotton are destroyed each year. ★