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Awarding the Leacock Medal for the best in Canadian Literary Humour



The Zoo

by

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I care very little for what the other “Humans” think of me, for I, am a living legend.

As I observe the world around me I realize I am surrounded by wild animals, however very little are caged. I have always found it humorous; the way that us “Humans” label every other specie as an “Animal” but fail to realize we are wild animals ourselves. Speaking of caged animals, today, the zoo will be blessed with my astonishing presence. Oh, how dare my mind forget, my mother joined me as well.

Do I enjoy Mother’s company? No. I turn my head to see her lay in her seat, her head resting against the back of her chair. Her eyes are wide open. She loves staring at the road so much, I doubt she blinked once since we left. She does not seem to talk, but that is alright. Mother has always been very stupid anyways.

“You know what, Mother?” I yell.

Yelling in the car became a necessity since Mother forgot how to care for her hygiene. The foul odour let out by Mother forces me to drive with the windows wide open. The wind makes its way into my car with a loud woh, making Mother’s hair fly back in a way that’s almost beautiful.

“Would you like to know what animals I’m excited to see?”

I didn’t expect an answer. As I said before, Mother doesn’t favour talking.

“Well since you must be wondering, I cannot wait to see the wild ants they have.”

It’s true. Did you know that ants are the strongest animal in the world? Despite how small they are, they can lift the heaviest weight relative to their size, and mass. My strength has been compared to the one of the infamous ants, funny you should ask. My own boss has in fact told

me that I am “a pitiful, small, tiny man, just like an ant”. He then proceeded to fire me, of course, but it’s obvious he did it because he’s afraid of my strength.

If you really think of it, all “Humans” resemble wild animals in their behaviour. They try to appear attractive to mates, work hard for their own gain and have sexual intercourse. Lucky for me, I have lived for fifty years without doing any of that bullcrap.

Allow me to teach you a life lesson: There are many ways in which animals can be manipulated for your own personal gain. For example, I will be getting the senior discount on my ticket to the zoo simply because I have brought Mother with me. That’s what I call cheating the system. Do you know how much I can do with the twelve dollars I will save? I could purchase Mother a blush to get rid of the hideous, blue hue of her skin. I could even get myself an ant farm.

I gently stroke Mother’s long hair and place it behind her ears so it would quit flying in front of my face. Looking at the road ahead I finally see it: The Toronto Zoo sign. I notice the word “toronto” in the sign is not capitalized. It is clear that the “Humans” are unable of doing anything right, but I will let it slide. I just want to see the ants.

I park the car in the handicapped parking space, as it would be a shame not to use Mother’s presence to get luxurious perks. Now, all that is left to do is to carry Mother to the front entrance.

I remove her seatbelt and grab her from the waist.

“Mother! Just move with me, come on!”

She does not listen to a word I say. I tighten my grip around her while holding my breath so I do not vomit from her horrendous odour. Maybe the animals will love her scent, but it’s definitely not for me. Three and a half minutes pass before she is finally out of the car. I wrap her cold arm around my neck and hold her by her hips as I drag her across the parking lot. The “Humans” can not help but turn their heads and stare at us, of course.

“Ignore them Mother.” I say. “As they do not know what we are about to accomplish.” Heavily breathing and sore from carrying Mother, I arrive to the ticket check, only to be rudely observed by the cashier.

“Sir, may I ask you who it is you are carrying?”

“Well that is my mother, of course. She is 85 years old, and well, I do know of your senior policy for the tickets.”

The cashier seems to be so shocked, it’s clear that he is yet to be informed of the Toronto Zoo’s senior policy.

“Sir there’s absolutely no way we can let you in.”

“Why not?”

Once again, the “Humans” have proven themselves to be completely useless.

“Sir, you are carrying a dead body; we cannot let you in.”

I am surprised, nay, stunned by the sass of the cashier.

“How dare you insult my mother? She is dying from suspense to see the animals!”

The cashier doesn't seem to care. He rolls his eyes.

“Sir, it appears that she already died from something else. I'm going to have to ask you to leave.”

“I don't understand. Under what regulation does it say that I cannot get the senior discount by bringing her?”

“Sir, she is not alive.”

“Your senior policy says the person must be over 65 years of age; she is over 65 years of age.”

“No, she is dead. She does not have an age. Sir, we can call security if you do not leave immediately.”

One may think I would give up, but that would simply make me a pathetic. Pathetics do not save 12 dollars on an entrance to the zoo.

“If you really think she is dead, why don't you ask her? I bet she will refuse to speak!”

“That's because she is dead.”

“That's foolish talk right there!”

“Sir, even if we did let your mother in, the discount would only apply to her ticket, not yours.”

I can not believe the nonsense making its way to my ears. I turn my head and notice Mother has managed to gather a “Human” crowd around her. She'd be so happy, she's always been quite an attention seeker. I figure I should do what's best for her.

“Look at all you's!” I yell. “Just staring at her, bullying her for her dead-ish looks! This lady cannot even stand up for herself!”

I let go of Mother, and her body drops to the ground. I figured a physical representation of my words would get my message across to the “Humans”. Boy, you should have seen the crowd gasp at my behaviour, it was amazing! I turn around, and run away from the crowd, leaving Mother behind as the screams of the “Humans” intensify.

I hop into my car that was not as foul smelling anymore, and quickly drive away while hearing the sound of sirens behind me. I look through my rearview mirror to see the police car signaling me to turn to the side of the road. Am I afraid? No. In fact, I'm feeling quite jealous of the lucky officer getting to breath my human presence. I stop by the side of the road, and wait. Three knocks, nay, barbaric punches on my car window are heard and I open the window. The officer immediately gets to business.

“Hi there, are you Dort Belington?”

“Why yes, I am.”

“The cemetery has been searching for your mother’s body for three days, ya know. You are in very big trouble.”

“Sir, would you like to know a fun fact about the Arctic?”

“What?”

“Did you know that three percent of the ice in the Arctic is actually penguin urine?”

Thinking of the penguins I laugh hysterically. God, I love them.

“Sir I’m going to have to ask you to get out of the car.”

“But you see, this does not just apply to the arctic! Maybe all of our society’s foundations, and the things that control it are three percent urine too. Perhaps even you, officer!”

I think he got mad at me, because that’s when he decided to point the gun to my head.

I sigh.

“Alright, alright, I will get out of the car. Will you relax?”

The officer put down the gun and did not say a word.

And that, is how I tamed the animal. You see, as I said, many of the so called “Humans” act like the animals they truly are; attacking and threatening to seek power. Yet, no animal I have ever heard of steals its mother’s body from the cemetery and brings it to the zoo to get twelve dollars off of a ticket. What can I say, I am all human.