

An evening in the emergency ward

Dateline: Friday, March 30
 A day from hell. I begin to question the logic of choosing to have pets instead of children.

6:50 p.m.-- Arrive home from work. Travis lying on floor, breathing funny, looking very green, if a lhasa apso can look green. Wife says dog has been sick everywhere in the house. Tell her I caught him eating something in the garden the night before and he probably has a stomach ache.

6:52 p.m.-- Call vet's office. Vet has gone for the day. Office closes in eight minutes. We live 10 minutes away. Get address for emergency clinic in Mississauga.

7:20 p.m.-- Arrive at emergency clinic. Take a seat in waiting room. One couple looking sad on far side of room. Sit near another couple with fat chihuahua.

7:45 p.m.-- Teenage girl and mother enter with retriever— Bailey— who is attached to an intravenous bag.

7:58 p.m.-- Receptionist asks me to fill out form. Not easy with 30 pounds of lhasa on my lap.

8:05 p.m.-- Take panting Travis outside to cool off. He does his business on sidewalk. Left my poop and scoop items at home.

8:25 p.m.-- Begin chatting with owners of other patients. Fat chihuahua is there for a suspected broken hip after failing to correctly judge distance between floor and couch. Bailey, the retriever, is there for followup treatment after eating chocolate. Travis still looking very ill but finds tile floor preferable to my lap.

8:27 p.m.-- Owner brings in black lab with severe drooling problem. Nurse thinks there is a growth in his mouth (the dog's, not the nurse's).

8:39 p.m.-- Bailey taken to examination room.

8:45 p.m.-- Nurse comes out to check on chihuahua's vital signs. When thermometer gets within three inches of vital area, fat chihuahua lets out a blood-curdling scream that makes everyone jump. Even Travis lifts his head to find out what the fuss was about.

9:01 p.m.-- Nurse checks Travis' vitals. Takes Travis' temperature without a problem. Bailey's owner

THIS
'N
THAT



John McGhie

tells fat chihuahua's owner that chihuahua should take lessons from Travis. I say telephone pole could be put in Travis' behind and he wouldn't flinch.

9:12 p.m.-- Sad couple called in to exam room.

9:18 p.m.-- Sad couple leave clinic crying and without pet. Bad situation. Travis stands up to indicate he's feeling better.

9:23 p.m.-- Fat chihuahua goes for X-rays.

9:30 p.m.-- Teenage girl who came in with Bailey goes across street and returns with burger and fries. Travis stands up, stares at her and begins salivating. I do the same having not eaten since noon.

9:32 p.m.-- Fat chihuahua is okay. Just bruised.

9:37 p.m.-- Travis and I go into exam room. Vet checks him out. Heart, lungs okay. Agrees with me that Travis probably ate something in the garden he shouldn't have. Diagnosis? Dog has an upset stomach. Vet hands me dog equivalent of Pepto-Bismol.

9:42-- Wait to pay bill. Bailey will be okay. Drooling dog will be okay. Travis will be okay.

9:58-- Get bill for \$109.

9:59-- Travis seems better. Now I feel queasy. Seriously consider taking a swig of dog's medicine.

Dis'n Data

In the Oct. 11, 2000 edition your humble servant called for Colorado to beat New Jersey for the Stanley Cup this year. I haven't changed my opinion... Redundant phrase of the week: Small minority... People I'll never understand: Elvis impersonators... I'd have more sympathy for Toronto residents facing an 18 per cent property tax hike if it wasn't for the fact Toronto homeowners have been grossly under-taxed for years compared to other homeowners in the GTA. Right now, I think it looks good on them and bad on Mayor Mel Lastman and his "woe-is-me" council cronies...The postal system at work: I mailed a package to England and a letter to Burlington last Monday. The package arrived last Friday— minus the chocolates inside— while the letter is still missing in action.

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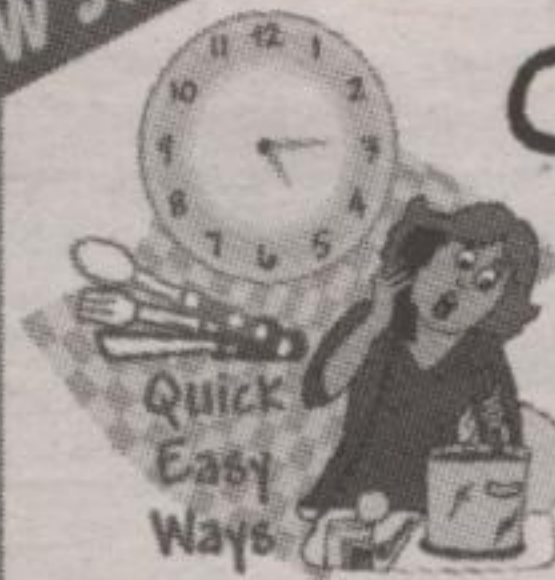
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