

# WHO'S IN CHARGE?

I used to read a lot of Science Fiction stories, Buck Rogers was a comic strip hero. But as time rolled on the actual daily occurrences in science and space exploits outdid the author's imagination. I became tired of the conquest of alien planets by earthlings over tremendous odds as we pushed democracy, capitalism and the American way throughout the Cosmos.

There were some stories that stuck in my mind, particularly about time travel and such stuff. I was discussing this with Her Nibs one day when she advised that years ago she was intrigued by some Science Fiction stories. One in particular appealed to her and she told it to me.

At a certain time in the past when all the orbits of planets were in the right relationship, one planet, lets call it Pluto in keeping with the story, sent a probe to earth. The observers landed in New York City and Toronto. They didn't have much time to observe, did their best and returned to the mother ship. this is essentially what their report said:-

This planet is occupied by four-legged fur covered creatures of various sizes and shapes. They are seldom found on their own but usually have in tow on a rope or string a large bi-ped. These bi-peds covered in artificial clothing are servants to the quadrupeds. They tend them, clean up bodily functions after them. They appear to carry out other duties in order to be able to construct living quarters for the quads and to acquire mechanical means of transport as well as food. The quads, who are obviously the masters and much more intelligent than their slaves keep the slaves satisfied by ridiculous antics. They will leap up and lick the slaves, wave their tails to show approval to the slave, curl up at their feet and other things that the slaves seem to regard as affection and one may speculate regard as being treated as equals of the masters.

Ha! How humorous - or is it?

I've had a dog for most of my life. All types and all sizes with different temperaments, likes and dislikes. The dog was part of the family and generally was treated

better. No spankings, no homework, no vegetables, unless it liked them and the freedom to sleep 22 hours a day.

When Valerie and I got married, she had Henry a dog she had owned for many years who took a dislike to me. He probably thought he was the pack leader. Each morning when I left for work he would attack me. When I came home at night you could almost see him say to himself - "drat! he's back - I'll get him in the morning." Until he died old Henry never accepted me although we tolerated each other.

We got another dog, but she was so racked with allergies that only massive doses of cortisone kept her going for her brief life.

When we moved from the Beach we decided to get another dog, but only after exhaustive research. We had to have a breed that didn't shed, had not been overbred to the extent that diseases such as hip-displacea were common and was not high-strung.

After considerable consultation we decided on the Bichon Frise and contacted a breeder. To my surprise we had to be interviewed twice by the breeder. Once, I suppose, to determine our fitness for a dog and the second

time to introduce my sister who had agreed to stay with the dog every day we were both at work since the breeder did not like her puppies to be left alone when they were young and they needed to bond!

We were accepted to receive a female puppy whom we would not see until we came to pick her up. After we were presented with the Puppy we were allowed to see the rest of the litter. " It saves a lot of trouble" said Norma, the breeder. Our puppy was named

Normandy's Princess Sophie, but she's just plain Sophie to us. Like the Science Fiction story she runs the place and us.

A couple of years ago Valerie and I decided to go from Titusville to Key West for a few days. My cousin Orville's older brother Willard and his wife Carol asked if they could keep Sophie. Valerie in her usual thorough way prepared a list that every dog foster parent should know about Sophie.

We later met some friends of my cousins who remarked that we were the people with the dog and chuckled. It seems while we were away they visited Willard and Carol and amused themselves by reading Valerie's list. I didn't think it was that funny. I've re-printed it here - what do you think?

