

In Which Greg Experiences Indigestion

This was an exercise to see how quickly I could write without obsessively rereading every sentence five times. It's just a little backstory on why Greg from Everybody Poops Together had to use the bathroom so bad.

I had to chuckle at the mundanity of it. When you think of getting medically examined by aliens, what comes to mind is ominously hovering UFOs, bright lights, and then waking up in a ditch four hours later. Yet here I was, on my way to do just that, but the atmosphere couldn't be more... suburban, for lack of a better word.

Birds, or what sounded like birds, warbled in the trees lining the market square. Food sellers could be heard on either side, barking their best sales pitch at passers-by. A group of older pups was lounging on perches off the main path.

One of them came up to me. It sounds weird calling him a pup; he was old enough to be my father. I could hear his fellows urging him on in Hearthsider. "Friend," he said in heavily accented Commonthroat. I flashed my teeth in a jovial American smile. This apparently is what the lad was looking for. "See!" he barked back at his companions, "I told you. Humans DO have fangs, they're just really small!"

"yeah sure," said one of the others, "but how can they eat meat with such small teeth?"

"Only one way to find out." My interlocutor rearing up on his hind feet and reached toward his fellows with a paw. One of them rummaged through a cloth-covered basket and grabbed a morsel of... something, then tossed it at him. He caught it and held it up to me. "Eat, friend!"

I took it before registering what it was. It was small, furry, and dead. It looked a bit like a chipmunk, if chipmunks had blue and yellow fur. I evidently was spending too much time scrutinizing it, as my interlocutor grunted in protest. "You a puppy-gut? Can't eat a raw zap rat?"

"Not with those teeth," said the one who tossed him the rodent.

"Are you trying to win a bet?" I sighed in English. He merely continued to stare at me. Do I really want to eat this thing? Raw? I had eaten a nightcrawler on a dare once when I was a kid. This couldn't be any worse. I glanced over my shoulder at the clinic that was my ultimate destination. I was already going to the doctor. If I got sick they'd probably know what to do, right? Or they better after cutting up all those human cadavers.

I popped the creature in my mouth and swallowed it whole, barely letting it touch my tongue.

“Ha!” said the pup next to me. “They are meat eaters!”

“That doesn’t count,” protested one of his fellows. “He didn’t bite down on it.”

As they argued back and forth, I felt my impromptu snack slither down my throat, then came a jolt as though I had swallowed a 9-volt rather than a dead rat.

My stomach began protesting almost immediately. I glared at the boy and cursed myself for succumbing to peer pressure. He merely flicked an ear in hasty goodbye then scampered back to his friends, where they continued to debate the finer points of human dentition. I turned and headed to the clinic, my stomach making its displeasure known through noisy gurgles. “I better not need a change of undies,” I thought as I ducked through the door to the healer’s office.

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