

# SOFT PARADE



MAX 85



An Anthology of Writing from 'Get Stuffed', the Soft Toy's Apa.

Who does she think she's  
staring at, then? I didn't pick  
this composition, I'd like to tell  
her to...



JE

Who does he think he's  
leaning on, then? I'd like to  
tell him to...

# LES PELUCHES ENVAHISSENT LES VITRINES



FREE  
GIFT  
INSIDE!



**COUP  
DE CŒUR!**

## CABARET

SATURDAY 22 JUNE

JAPANESE-AMERICAN TOY THEATRE OF LONDON present REBECCA. Daphne du Maurier's classic story of romance suspense and horror . . . performed by toys with narrative and musical accompaniment by Giblet (founder '49 Americans'), Kazuko Hohki (founder 'Frank Chickens') and David Toop (author 'The Rap Attack'). Toys include a rubber nun, fire-breathing Godzillas and a dancing duck. The music ranges from Doo Wop to Rap via Country. This is toy theatre for adults. We promise that you have never seen anything like it. P debut gig for a new Jazz quintet, New Stars: Pete McPhail (Sax & Flute), Evan Thomas (Guitar), Pat Thomas (Piano), Jerry Soffe (Bass) & Mathew Lewis (Drums).

ORLI  
JOUET

LES HEROS POUR JOUER

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Special thanks go to Lillian Edwards for helping Gertrude with the front cover, Peter-Fred Thompson for general advice and aid and Emjay for printing.

This fanzine by and for soft toys comes to you for a mere fifty pence (sorry about the human currency!) from Raffles, 1st Floor Flat, 47 Whiteladies Rd., Clifton, Bristol in the almost spring-like month of March 1986  
*Welcome to the Soft Parade!*

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## Desperate Fur, an editorial

Soft toys have been around fandom for a long time. We have been an active group since 1983 or thereabouts, and started our own apa in 1984. Now we have decided to do a general circulation fanzine to show toys everywhere what can be done! Yes, we are coming out of the toy cupboard and onto your coffee tables!

This fanzine contains writing from most of the active members of our apa. 'Get Stuffed' was so named to show our radical approach to the problems of image and identity in a society all too ready to classify the soft toy as twee and cute. It is true that many soft toys are too cute for their own good, including some of the toys in this very apa, but that isn't the point. The point is we are more than that, and we're ready to stand up and say so!

You may wonder why I, a bear of leisure, only interested in maintaining the life-style of one of nature's gentlemen, should wish to put so much energy into editing a fanzine. Well, it is true that one needs something to distract one's attention from the inevitable defeats of an England cricket tour of the West Indies, but the true reason is, there's been a lot of good writing and drawing in this apa and after seeing so many human apas fail to present themselves properly to the outside world, I have a strong desire to show what we can do. Also, I have been talking about this project for almost a year now, and I don't like to make empty promises given that I am a bear of honour (except where jewellery is concerned!)

It only remains now for me to introduce you to the rest of the Get Stuffed collective. *By the way, any comments in italics throughout the fanzine come from me.*

# THE "GET STUFFED" COLLECTIVE ARE :

## Amedeo

"Hi. My name is Amedeo, and I'm an armadillo. I live at 9 Lincoln St., with my friends Theodore, Paddington, Rousseau and Joshua, and of course Alison, my human. Actually there are more of us here than I've named, but it would take too long to introduce everyone, so I shall just mention Max, my artistic friend who lives with Harry Bell."

## Augustus

"I am an octopus resident in the human domicile of Peter Wareham, which I also share with Octavia, my better half; Teddy who spent fifteen years or so at the back of a wardrobe at the home of Peter's parents before coming here; and Garfield (need I say anything about Garfield? Surely you must all know him - or at least the cartoon strip upon which the soft toy is based)."

## Buffin Bear

"I am nine years old and come from the bear-adoption section of Habitat in Birmingham. I like to think it was my good looks that attracted the Pardoes to me - I have an unusual skew nose and a rotund body. I also have very dark brown fur and am about a foot tall. My hobbies include eating, sleeping and talking nicely to pigs."

## Cheaky

"My real name is C. Edward Bear and I live in Dundee with Moira Shearman and a vast bedroom menagerie of bears, frogs and even a pink elephant. I have been many things, including a pop singer, but now I am exploring the strange phenomenon of fandom."

## Dotty

"I'm dotty, well and truly dotty. Actually, I'm quite sane now, and only interested in serious matters like Western Civilisation and meeting God. According to the Parsley Pig, I am the green that has gone wrong, the misshapen mutant of the post-holocaust world. I think he has a point. The toys I live with all have defective self-images. I cartwheel. I crash. Most of them don't like me."

## Gertrude

"What's all thisss? I only started to write because Lilian said I could be as nassty as I like, then I found it wass too much effort to keep putting the extra 'SSS' on the words sso I gave up. Now I only draw - if someone is exestremely nice to me."

## Maverick

"I am Maverick, mole of some renown;  
I spend the darkness hours on the seamier side of town.  
I live in the cupboard by day,  
But at night I play..."

## Roderick

"I'm a rabbit - well, a soft toy actually, but I've got long ears and a fluffy white tail, so I suppose I'm more like a rabbit than anything else. On the other hand I'm red and white which is unusual for rabbits as such, unless they've been shot I suppose. And I don't suppose many actual rabbits have "Cuddle Me" in big red letters across their chest either. I have - nobody ever does, though."

A long time later, Toots came and turned me over. She turned me quite gently with her feather-soft, steel-strong ballerina hands. "No-one's in," she said. "There's no cure here for the Parsley Pig. Not today."

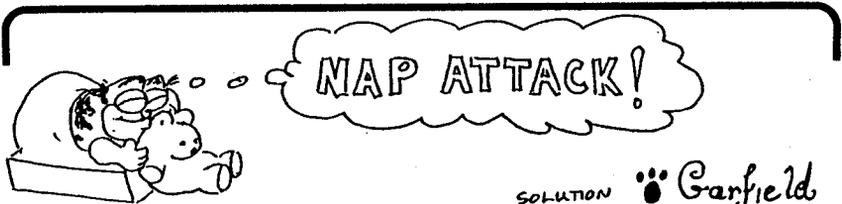
I looked at the candles, the cake-candles, flickering above me in the factory. God's stone factory. So that's what cathedrals were, old or new: the stone factories of God.

"I am the cause of the blight," I said. "I will find the cure."  
 "Sheila won't move," Toots tells me.  
 "Sheila hears voices. You're right, she won't move. Not for a long time."  
 "Will she need a cure too?"  
 "No, the only cure is in her head."

The wax dripped, trickling down a metal serration, moving with the infinite dignity of one who has gazed too long into the candle flame. The flame transforms us all in the end, but the sad thing is, once its heat has gone, we're just the same as we were before, only in the wrong place, cold and shapeless.

I shuffled slowly after Toots across the white plain of hexagonal tiles. Somewhere there was a pattern. There had to be a pattern.

"Tomorrow we'll try the Garden Centre," I said.



SOLUTION  Garfield

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THE ONLY WAY I COULD FIT POOKY IN!

"Of course they look different," remarked Toots crossly. "They haven't been washed for years!"

"They feel stronger." Trudi bounced up and down on them a couple of times, then suddenly she was away, springing from chair to chair towards the altar.

Sheila watched, fascinated. She even did a little jump herself. But only a test one. She knew she couldn't do it. Not really.

"Go on!" I taunted her.

"No, I'm a holy woman, not an athelete."

Trudi came to rest on the altar table. She sat there and waved to us.

"Is there anyone in?" Toots called over. But Trudi couldn't hear her. She was too far away.

I dipped the edge of one paw surreptitiously into the holy water. What would it do? Did I want to be transformed?

"I know what she's saying," announced Sheila suddenly, importantly. "She's saying 'Come over, it's great!' She is."

"Well, yes, it looks like it," agreed Toots.

"No," squeaked Sheila. "That's what she's saying. I heard her. In my head."

Suddenly the organ began to play. This is more like it, I thought. This is what cathedrals are meant to do. I had a hunch that if I were going to find God, he wouldn't be in the tabernacle like they pretended, but sitting at the organ pressing the keys. I looked over to the seat, but it was empty. Besides, it looked too new. God was obviously up top, puffing into the big, grey pipes.

Tortuga sniffed the air. "Something's on fire," she shouted worriedly.

"It's incense," Toots shouted back.

"Don't shout," Sheila shouted. "My head hurts."

The patience of a saint, I thought.

I spun off to have a closer look at the organ. If God were here, I wasn't going to miss him if I could help it. I threw myself upwards, judging my fall to catch hold of one of the holes in the pipe. My grip held and I settled myself precariously on the slippery metal, wedging my paws into the opening. I could see nothing above me. No sign of a man with a white beard. No sign of a noble, pain-racked face. Only noise. Black noise.

I poked my head through the hole in the pipes - in to another world. A dark, reverberating world, bigger than the whole cathedral and more wondrous than the world you see when you creep right up to the television screen and stare for a long time. I knew I wanted to fall into that world; and I knew that if I fell, I would fall forever and ever. My head was already through the hole, and where my head fits, my body always follows. I had only to jump.

I jumped.

For a second I was there, falling, enveloped in the organist's breathe, in the holy wind blowing through the pipe, then it

rejected me,

ejected me

flung me violently away.

I was falling still, but falling outside, in the light, heading for the white-flagged floor.

I had been judged and found wanting.

### Schwarbrick Bear

As I'm the senior member of the soft toy household, the other toys decided among themselves that I should contribute to this enterprise, even though I have never been to a convention and know very little about this thing called fandom. I am a rather large bear who lives in a bedroom, in an armchair, under a man's suit. This tends to seriously inhibit my view of life, but as I'm too big to live in the cupboard or in the other chair, there's where I have to stay."

### Trudi

"Hi! How's all youse out there? Any dolls lurking on the fringes looking for meaningful conversation? I'm Trudy and I'm from Canada though I've been living here for almost fifteen years, so I guess I'm almost British enough for Raffles though he still refers to me as a colonial occasionally. The things I like doing best are climbing trees, mending cars and having a laid-back time with my friends. My very best friend is Toots, whose more like a sister to me really because we've been living on the same book-shelf for so long. Then there's Tina who's nice even though her head keeps falling off, and Sheila who's tiny, red-headed and very bossy."

### Truffle

"My name is Truffle, and I'm the only female of a triumvirate of pigs. Therefore I'm the most intelligent and the only literate one (Egbert can read Old English quite well, but there's not a lot of call for that talent nowadays). I'm also the only one with small enough trotters to be able to type. Therefore I'm the triumvirate's spokepig. I'm about six inches tall, white and with red trotters and ears. My hobbies include telling the others what to do, and reading them stories."

### Winston

"Greetings fellow soft toys! My name is Winston T Hetherington-Stevenson-Cuddle, Winston for everyday, T for my favourite drink, Cuddle because it suits my personality and the rest because THEY weren't married when I adopted them. I live with Beth, a polar bear, several other soft toys, and of course THEM. We also see rather a lot of Theodore who describes himself as the 'tall, dark handsome one, modest too!' Yes, that's Theodore for you!"

### Woofie

"I am not a dog! ...I am a free bear. Just because I go around on all fours, stupid mundanes (and some less intelligent fans) seem to think I'm a DOG!!! Oh! the ignominy! Well, I'm not! I AM A BEAR! - a real bear, rather than the Teddy variety - I have no tail and I eat honey - I also have a bad temper and occasionally eat people who mistake my identity, so PASS THE WARNING TO YOUR OWNERS!!! I've been to more conventions than I've had hot dinners (actually I don't think I ever HAVE had hot dinners...) and I am a furriest and proud of it!"

*Well, that just about covers all the contributors to this enterprise. You'll find out more about them in the rest of these pages, though to save on potential confusion, I shall point out that Truffle and Buffin belong to the same household, as do Dotty, Roderick and Trudy (who all share my corner opposite the television in Bristol), and that there are two Theodore's mentioned in these pages: one a lion, living in the same household as Amedeo; and one a glove-puppet bear who frequents Winston's establishment. Got that? Good, because I'm not going to say it again!*

*Happy reading!*

Quite early in the apa, members began chewing on that old chestnut of how we write, though for toys the problem takes on new dimensions barely considered by human writers. As Augustus the Octopus explains in:

## **PUT YOUR MIND TO IT** says Augustus

Warning: I am going to have to speak frankly. The following article is likely to cause upset to toys of a sensitive or nervous disposition. I am also going to talk about the toyish Facts of Life. Younger toys, and those who may be distressed, are advised to skip this!

I am amazed, I truly am. The first mailing of 'Get Stuffed' had fourteen contributors. And, of that fourteen, no fewer than six of you commented upon the problems of using typewriters with paws (or trotters in the case of Truffle). When you add to that figure the unknown percentage of you who had difficulties, but chose not to mention them, we are presented with a quite staggering picture. Soft toys in fandom are, I am sure, generally above average in intelligence and awareness. Yet, probably more than half of you think that it is necessary physically to thump a typewriter to put words onto paper. Oh, good grief!

As you may or may not know, my basic physical construction is a beanbag beneath a cloth exterior. Think of that basic form. There is the outer layer of cloth or fur, with eyes and whiskers or whatever, of glass or plastic or cloth. Inside, there is the stuffing of beans, or foam rubber, or shredded clippings. There may be a piece or two of metal, to produce a squeak, or hinge a limb. And that's about it: no muscle tissue; no skeleton; no brain. To human science, the the evidence is unmistakable. A soft toy cannot move, or speak. A soft toy cannot think, or hope, or feel!

Such a conclusion is, of course, rubbish. We have the evidence of 'Get Stuffed', for example. There is more to a soft toy than merely cloth and stuffing. There is the soul breathed into that inanimate shell by the Toymaker. And there were other gifts conferred upon us.

Those of you who thought yourself unable to operate a typewriter dictated your contribution to your human. A human can dictate, but how can a toy, with no lips, or tongue, or diaphragm? Others used their paws or trotters. A human can type like that, but how can a toy, with no muscles?

There is an answer. An answer that sets us apart from the humans who are deprived of our gifts. Do you know the answer? Really, it is very, very easy. All you have to do is...

### Put your mind to it.

*Surprisingly, there wasn't much reaction to Augustus's controversial assertions - perhaps no-one wanted to face up to the toyish facts of life! However, Woofy did have this to say:*

I was interested by the toyish facts of life, but I'm quite happy to get Kate to do my typing; it's much less effort, and besides, it's only fair compensation for all the psychological support she gets from me.

*Not to mention compensation for some of the things she puts him through! On the next page, Woofie has a tale to tell which is guaranteed to chill the stuffing of any soft toy, young or old!*

The toys I live with get up to some strange things, but one of the strangest perhaps was their visit to Clifton Cathedral. They went in search of a cure for the Parsley Pig whose shoots were dying one by one from a nameless blight. You see, Dotty, for some crazy reason of her own, had taken it into her head that she was responsible! So, here we have

Dotty

in

## Transformations

Look at the candle.

Look at the wax drops.

We went to the cathedral yesterday, but the candles didn't look like candles, they looked like cup cakes. The cathedral didn't look like a cathedral either. I may never have seen a cathedral before, but I know what they're meant to look like. I've seen the pictures in the 1977 *Petit Larousse Illustré*. Cathedrals. The cathedrals of Albi, Amiens, Angouleme, Arras, Autun and Auxerre - and those were only the As!

But this cathedral didn't look like a cathedral, it looked like a factory.

"You've never seen a factory before either!" Sheila remarked spitefully.

"No, but I can see the bit of wire that keeps your hair in place."

She threw me a look of pure disdain, but already her hands were creeping up, treacherously, to rearrange the red-brown hair that had once been her glory.

"Oh dear me, you *mustn't* argue in church," whispered Tortuga, fussily.

There was no need for her to whisper. The room inspired no more awe than our own living room in the Whiteladies Road. It was light, too light for a cathedral. Light lit to the standards of industry, not to those of the spirit.

"You can only have darkness inside if there's bright light outside," announced Sheila, trying to sound clever. She stood on the white stone ledge, next to one of the pools of water, preening herself. On impulse I pushed her in. She fell with hardly a splash and then floated there in a slow circle, the dreadful look of a holy and innocent martyr on her face.

"Dotty, you shouldn't have done that," said Toots, "that's *holy water*."

"I'm the first doll to be baptised," said Sheila, dreamily as she floated round.

"Do you think I'll be a saint?"

I could see that Sheila was all set to swap her fantasy world of superheroes and spies for one of nuns and martyrs. I couldn't decide which would be worse.

"Shouldn't we get her out?" asked Tortuga nervously.

Trudi waded in and pulled her by one rubber foot to the edge of the pool, then receiving no help from the rapt would-be mystic hauled her forcibly up over the metal edge onto the stone surface. There she lay with her eyes shut, the little drops of water from her hair and clothes forming a light grey border around her. She was hardly wet at all.

"I think that's where we ought to be," said Toots, pointing past the semi-circle of chairs to the stage. "That's the altar."

"The Holy Virgin Sheila," murmured the holy virgin Sheila. Suddenly she jumped up: "I wonder if I can do miracles!"

"I doubt it," said Trudi, who was looking down at her own legs. Where they had been in the water they looked different, pinker.

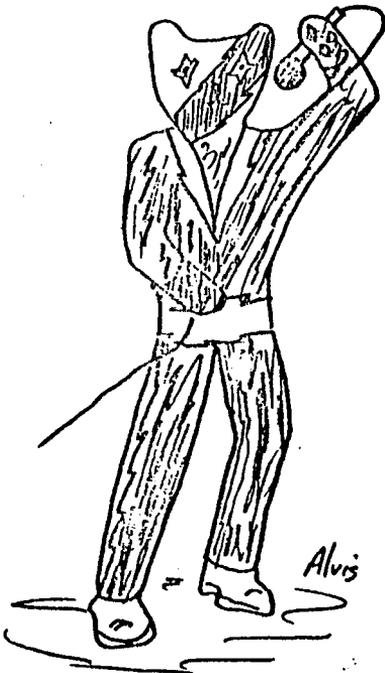
# ALL THAT GLITTERS

by **CHEEKY**

I mentioned earlier that I had been many things - including a pop singer. I'd like to tell you about that time. Well, times actually...

In the sixties, it seems that everyone was either in the pop or fashion businesses. Holding sewing machines in awe I thought I'd try my paw at the former career. Like most forays into showbiz it was hard work. My roady (Moir's sister) seemed to be rather half hearted about the whole thing and much of the work on costumes and travel fell to Moira. My act was mainly Rock and Roll - at first cover versions of American hits but I managed to build up my reputation with gigs all over Edinburgh. My hard work looked like paying off. I signed my first recording contract and was all set to hit the charts. The name of T. Spree (my stage name) would soon be on everyone's lips. Ah, heady days for a young teddy (I was only 10).

Then, as suddenly as it had begun, it all crashed. It seems a little known group had recorded a cover version of MY song and for some reason theirs became the hit whilst mine faded to obscurity. 'Paint it Black' was a smash hit for The Stones and Mick Jagger occupied the place that was rightfully mine. That was a bad time. It took a lot of love to get me through the depression. Moira was there for me but I still had to hide under the bedclothes every time the Top Twenty came on the radio. But the years pass and time is a great healer.



One day I was visiting my friend Pandy and we got talking about the comebacks in the pop world. He was telling me about his friends, Glitterbinyary and Roywoodybinyary, who were becoming very popular in the toy world. From there the idea grew. The seventies were a new age and seemingly ripe for a Rock revival. We talked the idea through with Podgourski, who had once played drums with the Moscow State Rock Group, and decided to form a band. So with Pandy on lead guitar, Podge on drums and Poppet and Milkyway as backing vocalists I once more found myself in the melée of the pop world. Alvis Starbear was born.

Never again would it be like the heady days of the sixties. Gone was the tension and the trauma. This time it was fun.

Well, that's how it was. We were not the greatest of bands but we enjoyed ourselves. Podge and I have been talking about those days but we have no wish to go back to them. We are older and wiser now. The revival did, however, remove the pain and bitterness left by my first foray into the music biz and now I like nothing better than sitting with my paws up listening to a good album on the stereo.

# THE WET TERROR

by **WOOFIE BEAR**

The door shut behind me. Outside, her image distorted by the curve in the glass, I could see Kate fiddling around with dials and buttons. She bent down and tapped on the glass...

"Don't worry now, this won't take very long."

Easy for HBR to say! Relentless, she pressed the final button and the water poured in. It was a VERY uncomfortable experience: the water (too hot for my liking) comes pouring down around you, along with the washing powder previously in its container, which starts off by making you sneeze, and then, after it's dissolved, chokes you with bubbles... Meanwhile the drum starts to revolve, throwing hot water and bubbles up one's nose and playing hell with the balance of my inner ear...

Round and round and round it goes... and round and round and round... And then the damn thing changes direction and goes round the other way... and round and round and round... And then back the OTHER way...

By now I am feeling extremely sick... At this point the awful revolving stops for a while and I am left neck deep in water for a SOAK... Despite the awful drowning sensation, this part is a relief... I just lie there and let the soapy water seep through my stuffing...

And then it starts again... Round and round and round and round and round QUITE FAST TOO and the water starts (hooray!) to empty out... My ordeal must be over..!

Wrong. The machine stops, but no sooner am I able to see straight again than another lot of water pours in... And the whole sorry, endlessly revolving process starts again...

Then it stops again... And yet MORE water comes in - this time with CONDITIONER, would you believe! How poncy can you get! Another of Kate's tricks I suspect...

And round and round and round and round... And back the other way, round and round and round and roouunnd... And the other way, round and round and round and round... I believe this bit is known as the FINAL RINSE...

The worst is yet to come...

The machine stops, and the water drains out again... Phew! I think, perhaps this is it... I can't take much more of this...

But the machine starts to revolve once more... No water in this time, and only one way... But it's getting faster... IT'S GETTING A LOT FASTER..! IT'S GOING VERY FAST INDEED... HELP! HELP! HEEELLPPPPP!!

At LAST the machine stops... Kate opens the door and I crawl out... I collapse in a heap on the floor, and Kate picks me up and takes me to the mirror...

I am marked for life... My kapok has been rearranged... My head is fatter than before and my joints have gone all floppy... It takes Kate half an hour of prodding and pulling before I can even recognise myself... I am however much fluffier than before... And cleaner...

BUT DON'T LET THEM DO IT TO YOU!!!



*Soft toys can get involved in some quite strange things. Their career structure may not be as well evolved as the human one, but there are still opportunities for the adventurous. Here, Theodore tells us something of Winston's activities when he's not carrying out research for his thesis on sex and the single bear. Then, over the page, Cheeky relates the strange tale of his career as a rock star.*

## The CAMRA Connection

This alternative to 'SEX, AND THE SINGLE BEAR' comes to you courtesy of Theodore. You may ask "Where's old Winston got to?" Well, go ahead. ASK! Seeing you're all so nice, I'll tell you, but don't mention the 'OLD' bit when you see him again.

It is true that Winston is no longer as young as he used to be, and in recent years has become somewhat of a supporter of the CAMPAIGN FOR REAL BEARS, the reason for this will soon become obvious. This little known underground movement has been around now for some time, but unfortunately not a lot is known about THEIR activities! I have recently secured the contract, sorry I mean job of Press Agent and can now reveal that they support HIBERNATION. As recently as ten years ago hibernation used to be quite widely practised. Sadly with the onset of Jane Panda's Workout, and similar trendy thinking, it has become rather unfashionable, indeed in some circles it is positively TABOO.

Some of the older bears in the movement actually advocate TOTAL Hibernation with their chosen "POISON" (Hunny, Mead, Polish Spirit, etc.) being set up beside them on drip. Fortunately these extremists aren't very active in the movement as they spend all their time in slumber. They only come round once every two or three years to catch up on pressing business, world affairs, the fight against taxation on booze and runny hunny, and any new thing of interest that will go through a drip.

Some of the less extreme members of the movement now advocate a period of Autumn Hibernation. The thinking behind this goes that as the fresh fruits and the good weather of summer legend fade, one might as well get tucked up for eighty winks. Not forgetting, of course to set the local BEAR RAID SIREN for late November. This allows for Christmas shopping and ensures ample time to wake up in time for the festivities. Punnily enough it is at this point that the movement takes advantage of a significant proportion of its members being up and about. They take over HUNNY'S WINE BAR AND RESTAURANT for the week long A.H.E.M. (Annual Hunny Eating Meeting). There they reminisce about hibernations past, make final arrangements for the Christmas shindig, and map out next year's activities. Not to be overlooked are the all-important elections for GRANDBEAR (GB), HUNNY PROTECTION OFFICER (HPO), CONTRACT MANAGER (CM), etc.

What is not quite so widely known however, is that Winston, bless his furry paws, has been nominated for the post of HPO, and, I am reliably informed by those in the know, is tipped to get it! Perhaps at this juncture I should mention the responsibilities, and powers, of the HPO. Apart from the onerous task of tasting to ensure that output is fit for BEAR consumption (rejected hunny is sold to THEM under the strange name of HONEY - this is to ensure that no bear will accidentally get hold of 2nd class produce), he also has to ensure that sufficient hives are kept on-stream, and monitor stocks to ensure that no bear has to go short in the post-hibernation hunny festival. As you can see Winston will be quite a busy bear if he gets the job.

Which reminds me that I'm rather busy myself. I promised Winston before he nodded off that I would help him in his research for his thesis, and I've got this rather pretty little bearlette to interview (at least that's the story Cassandra would get if she were here).

**Theodore**

*Here's a few musings from Schwarbrick, a bear who has seen plenty of life despite his size, proving that you don't have to be small to get around. Though I'm sure Schwarbrick would be the first to admit that it helps!*

# **FRONT BEDROOM. ARMCHAIR**

*Schwarbrick*  
B

Maureen came along when I was very young and she was only sixteen, which is quite young by human standards, or so I believe. For bears - well, it rather depends on what sort of life we have to lead. I know some very young but well-worn bears. I'm ten years old and doing very nicely, though my paws and ears are a little grubby. Maureen called me Schwarbrick. I once heard her explain that I am named after a man who plays the violin, named for the latter but with the former's spelling. She thought this was very amusing, but she was very young at the time.

I lived at the end of her bed for nearly three years. It was very comfortable for the most part but as she slept very restlessly I often woke up on the floor in the morning, as there was no bed head to hold onto. I hasten to add that she never took me to bed with her. I'm three feet high and well rounded like a bear ought to be, so there would have been no room for her and me. And the fact that I am so large, of course, means that I don't travel well. It has always been rather upsetting to me that she won't take me, but she argues that she can't take me and everything else to a convention so I have to stay at home, though I hear everything when she comes home, and I watch her unpacking the books.

Although I don't go to conventions with her I used to go out with her when we were both younger. She used to drive a car then, and I would sit in the passenger seat and be strapped in with the seatbelt. We used to drive to a place called Banbury where she had some friends. Sometimes we would spend the evening sitting in a house whilst she talked to people and they passed me from lap to lap. Once we went there for dinner, and sometimes we used to go to the pub. I'm not sure the landlord was very happy but they all enjoyed the fun. I used to enjoy the drives best of all. I liked watching the other drivers as they went past. Sometimes they would toot their horns but often they looked too surprised to do anything except stare. I'm always surprised that they didn't crash at all, but no one ever did. She always said that she liked to have some company in the car, but what I think she meant was that, with me in the car, she couldn't do anything about hitch-hikers. She never picked them up but she always felt very guilty about the fact that she didn't want to. Is this all I was to her, I sometimes wonder ?

The other thing that happened to me at this time was that I became an alcoholic. Well, I didn't in actual fact, but Maureen and her friends decided that when I fell over I must be drunk, as I gather my namesake often was. Personally I think this was very unfair, and I became completely teetotal as a result; I did use to enjoy a rather small drink, but I certainly never became a drunken teddy bear, so don't believe her if you hear her saying this at all.

*It's amazing what some humans will say about their faithful toy companions, isn't it! Mine likes to pretend I'm a jewel thief (again in imitation of a namesake), which is patently absurd!*

# ACORNUCOPIA

by TRUFFLE

When Buffin told us about Get Stuffed we were reluctant to get involved. We knew what it'd be like - filled with butch teddies who think they own the world and are only too keen to boss poor little pigs about. But then we thought - it's high time us pigs put our trotter down and asserted ourselves. You Teds have had it all your own way for too long - and there's even Every Bear's Life Guide for if you feel off colour or have any problems. Does anyone care about our illnesses and problems? Where are the handy guides to acorn quality, to help us avoid the unripe acorns which give us tummyaches? Where are the books on pigling rivalry? Even on the few occasions when pigs are to be seen in the shops, more often than not they are wearing silly little frocks or waistcoats and don't look like real pigs at all. We three are naked as the Great Pig in the Sky intended, and proud of it too. Yes, the Voice of the Pig will be heard in the land, and you'll be sorry you've ignored us for so long.

\*\*\*\*\*

The above was written under the influence of a green acorn tummyache, and I'm not usually that aggressive. I feel a bit better now, thank you, so I'll get on with introducing the rest of the Pig Triumvirate individually.

Tom Pig is the largest of us - in fact he's full piglet sized, and piglet coloured too, with bright blue eyes, and a jolly expression. He knows how to get his own way, but being that size, of course, he doesn't have to be aggressive about it. His hobbies include cuddling people and dancing. One day he hopes to learn to play the tin whistle so that he can accompany himself.

Egbert is a little wild boar, about nine inches long, with thick dark hair and sharp little tusks. He looks quite frightening to start with, but he has twinkly brown eyes which reflect his true character. His hobby is befriending failed saints. It was always a sign of sainthood if a person could tame a wild and savage animal, but Egbert thought it was unfair that several very nice people were not succeeding as saints because they were too timid to get anywhere near such scary beasts. So he devised a plan whereby he would wait until the failed saint was asleep, and then rampage through the nearby village wreaking havoc as only he can. Then he would run for the saint's hut with the village in hot pursuit, and nestle down next to the snoring hermit. Of course this impressed the villagers no end, and the prestige of the saint soared skyhigh, with many offerings being made at his hut. Since these offerings were often food, and since the saint in his gratitude often shared the food with Egbert, it must be said that his motives weren't entirely unselfish.

*As if to prove that pigs have just as many problems as bears, Truffle later tells of what happens when Egbert's girlfriend pig Iolanthe leaves him.*

Iolanthe has now gone to her new home, and Egbert is mooning around like a hog in a dried-up wallow. He keeps composing mournful love songs in Anglo-Saxon, which would be all right if he didn't insist on singing them all the time. Tom Pig did try dancing to them to start with, but they're so funereal that even he's given up now. Tom and I fear the Egbert might turn to the bottle for consolation. Grunthilda, the perpetually pixilated balsa-wood pig, lives only just outside on a shelf on the stairs, and I'm sure she would be only too happy to share her hobby with Egbert. We're doing our best to keep him away from her, but it isn't always easy. Perhaps it might help if I could get him to write something about his feelings for the rest of you. Can any of you read Anglo-Saxon?

*Egbert is by no means the only toy to suffer the pain of thwarted love. Here Maverick has a sad tale to tell. Unfortunately, such events as described below, will keep on happening while toys continue to be the victims of the slave trade of the toy shop owners.*

## CUPBOARD LOVE for Maverick the Mole

The Lady took me to work with her last Monday. Said she was so busy in the office that she needed some help, and would I mind answering the phone for her and making the coffee now and again? She must be going crazy; she knows I wouldn't be able to lift a kettle, or a telephone receiver for that matter, and even if I could I'd still much rather just sit back and watch her doing all the work. Anyway, I decided to go along with her. It'd make a change from the cupboard, if nothing else.

Watching someone working is OK for a while, but by lunchtime I got a bit bored. So I took The Lady out to lunch. We went to the toy shop around the corner from her office, so that I - I mean she - could look at all the lovely lady soft toys they had there.

And I think I fell in love.

There she was, the most gorgeous young squirrel you've ever seen, sitting in the window and smiling wistfully. I caught her eye and we stared at each other for a little while, but then she turned away. She must have been very shy - she wouldn't tell me her name - but then I quite like shyness in a woman. Kinda sweet, but dignified at the same time, if you know what I mean. I tried to chat her up, but she seemed a bit embarrassed so I left her and wandered over to find The Lady.

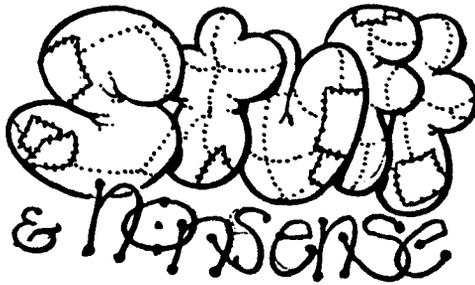
The Lady was looking at some useless junk at the other side of the shop. I tried to persuade her to buy the squirrel instead. The Lady put the junk back on the shelf and came over with me to see the squirrel. She picked the squirrel up and looked at the label she was wearing. Then she sighed and told me she'd come back later in the week, when she'd have more money, and get the squirrel then.

We walked back to the office, where the Lady got busy and I got bored. I decided to go on home without her, and I went straight to the cupboard to tell Herbie and Bullseye about my squirrel. They convinced me that The Lady would be sure to buy her for me as soon as she could, so I stopped moping and read one of Vincent's books to find out what squirrels like to eat. I suppose you could say that cheered me up a bit. Yes, I think it did.

\*\*\*\*

Last Friday The Lady came home from work looking very sad and tired. Tired is normal - she's always tired these days - but sad is worrying. She picked me up and stroked me, and that look in her eyes made me fear the worst.

"I went in to buy the squirrel today," she said. "Maverick, I'm so sorry. She just wasn't there."



Bobby, Paddington and Joshua have got a point they would like to put across. We all had a Committee Meeting with Max as Chair Bear and at this the aforementioned (Alison has just been given a dictionary!) Trio were all resolute on the one matter, namely, SIZE.

Theodore is the most travelled of our family. Last year he travelled to Crete with Harry and Alison and this year he will be going to Turkey.

SIZE is the operative word here. We have all seen how the SIZE of an individual can affect his or her whole lifestyle. Theodore is a small lion and so can easily travel from place to place. The Trio are riled that their SIZE means that they are not able to join in the FUN which is involved in going to new places and meeting new people. They always get the same reply from Harry and Alison - 'YOU ARE TOO BIG' or 'WE WOULD HAVE TO PAY FOR YOU ON THE BUS/ METRO/ INTER-CITY TRAIN' or 'YOU WOULD TAKE UP A SEAT'.

Bobby, Paddington and Joshua would LOVE to be released from the confines of 9 Lincoln Street, even for a short while. It is not much FUN being in the same surroundings day in day out. They would love, for example, to go on weekend trips to London or Edinburgh; get the opportunity to go abroad and drink in the delights of a foreign country and, MOST OF ALL, be able to go to a Convention and participate in a meeting.

They HOPE that something can be done to HELP THEIR CAUSE.

*Other soft toys feel strongly about the question of size too! this is what Roderick had to say:*

My humans are also very prone to sizeism. Being quite small, I don't suffer from this very much myself, though I have noticed that Dotty who is smaller than me is taken to conventions more often, though this may just be because of her more exuberant personality.

*Buffin suggests a possible solution, though it would take a very enlightened human to act upon it!*

One thing that ought to be put right is this business of travelling to conventions. For weeks beforehand I hear lots of talk about how much stuff there is to take and how there can't possibly be enough room for bears and pigs. But I usually manage to squeeze in in the end, though mostly I have to travel in an undignified manner inside a suitcase with all the underwear and fanzines. I know what I'd like: one of those carrying boxes you see cats in on trains. In one of those I could sit up and watch what was going on around me, in some comfort, but whenever I suggest the idea my human companions always make excuses and drop the subject as soon as they can. I see from the APA that other cuddlies have trouble on their journeys too. It's not good enough.

Buffin Bear warns of:

# UNNATURAL PRACTICES

Now pay attention, this is serious. I want to talk about the appalling things that are being done to teddy bears in the name of commerce. In some secluded breeding-camp evil genetic experiments are being carried out on hapless soft toys with the aim of producing peculiar mutant creatures which can be put in the shops and presumably sell well on account of their novelty. You've all seen the Care Bears and other strange variants on teddykind that are in all the High Street adoption agencies looking for good homes. I'm not getting at the Care Bears themselves, dear me no - poor little creatures, they must feel their odd appearance dreadfully and long to find someone who will take them in and hug and treasure them. I hope the world is full of good people who will do just that. No, it's the evil forces behind it all I get worked up about, the amoral organisations who take perfectly decent teddy stock and turn it into these strange travesties of the brown and rotund bears so familiar to and loved by all. What's even worse, they take these Care Bears, who in spite of their appearance are in their characters quite as teddyish as the rest of us, and make movies about them which depict them as weird, twee creatures not at all like a teddy bear. Rise up, Bear Kind! Stamp out this tampering with the work of nature before it goes too far! Defend your species!

*I wonder what Dotty would have to say to all this. After all a green spotted creature with boggle eyes is hardly natural. But then, neither is a red and white rabbit with the words 'Cuddle Me' on his chest, as Roderick (for he is that rabbit) explains in:*

## **THE STRANGE STORY of the CUDDLE ME CLAN**

Several of the toys I live with have asked me how I come to have the words 'Cuddle Me' in red letters on my chest. I must admit I have also often wondered this myself, and so have been conducting intensive research in the Bodlian library to find the answer. I have been partly successful, though I don't have all the details of any part yet, but I thought you might be interested to hear the results so far.

The original breed of soft-toy rabbits goes back to Roman times at least, and may even be referred to by some obscure passages in the Iliad. They were all-white, but occasionally an all black rabbit occurred and this was taken to be an omen of disaster. 'A plague of black rabbits' foretold the burning of Rome, and they were common throughout the fall of the Empire. In time it became traditional to say 'White Rabbits' at the beginning of each month for good luck.

However, in the early Middle Ages, an ambivalent omen appeared; a black and white rabbit, the 'Piebald Harbinger', referred to in certain rare illuminated manuscripts and bestiaries, which greatly troubled medieval theologians. More worrying still, however was a mutant which appeared in the fifteenth century - a white rabbit with red markings. This was, of course, the first of my own ancestors.

Now, for such a specific pattern to occur by pure chance is very unlikely, of course, but neo-Darwinists among you will be aware of the power of 'natural selection'. Under its influence, many creatures have evolved markings which camouflage them, or otherwise discourage predators, or which serve to attract mates. So it isn't hard to see that a rabbit with 'cuddle me' on its chest will, on average, do better than one with 'tear me to ribbons and set fire to the pieces'. However evolutionary forces usually operate over long periods of time, and could hardly produce the precise set of markings I bear so quickly, and so I suspect ~~selective~~ breeding must have taken place. I am intrigued by one mention of a sinister group called the 'Bene Rabberit', but for some reason I have now been removed from Oxford and so my investigations must cease.....

Perhaps Winston will come up with a solution to the problem of love-sick soft toys. You see, he's the apa's resident sexologist and we're all eagerly awaiting the results of his researches. However, we may have a long wait, as Winston explains in

## SEX AND THE SINGLE BEAR

Greeting fellow soft toys! 'Sex and the Single Bear' is the name of the dissertation I'm working on. A dissertation which at the current rate will never get started, let alone finished.

You never would believe the problems I've been having. First of all, I had to persuade THEM (my humans) to let me have a bedroom for preliminary research. Eventually they cooperated and said I could have the back bedroom. Then the phone rang - and at 1.30 one Monday morning I suddenly learned that I would have to share a room. I didn't mind at first - after all, my human-aunt and I had had a passionate relationship for 5½ years. The only problem was, she took over the room. Then HE came and she actually EVICTED me. He wasn't a bad sort really, for a human, and his owner, Mr. Micawber, was a rather pleasant but somewhat elitist teddy-bear. Anyway, eventually the three of them moved out (separately) and I decided to get down to some preliminary written work on the dissertation. I persuaded HIM (my human) to manufacture a desk for me, and HE and SHE (my other human) installed a blind and a comfortable chair in the room, and switched the heating on for me, since it was September by that time.

Then I discovered that I was expected to share - again! No chance of peace during the day to research. It wasn't even as if SHE stayed at home all day and was quiet. All she did was sit and make silly noises into a little black box. Eventually SHE got fed up with working 'at home' as SHE called it (in my office, I call it) and went back to work, turning the heating off - and since then it's been far too cold for me to even consider doing any real work.

Anyway, Christmas came and with it my human-aunt again, although without Mr. Micawber and HIM. But Theodore came so he kept the humans amused while we had a rest. Theodore's an American bear who sits on the humans' hands and entertains them. He seemed to divide the few days he spent here consuming vast quantities of alcohol, bopping around to THEIR latest records and collapsing from exhaustion. He really must learn to pace himself. Heaven knows what will happen when Cassandra, his mate, joins him.

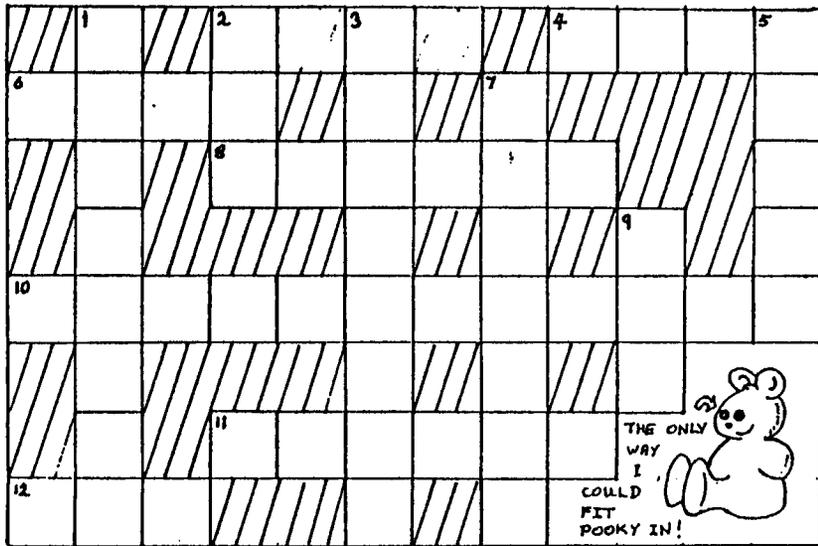
*But fortunately, Winston's researches did reach a climax of sorts - he had this to report in Get Stuffed 6*

Hello! I enjoyed a blissful, indescribable night of passion when my aunt suddenly and unexpectedly turned up in mid-June, ostensibly to collect her birthday presents. It was wonderful. Far better than Barbara Cartland. (Everyone was encouraged to read Barbara Cartland when SHE did her translating course, to see how *not* to write, I suppose - but we got by with having one of HER friends tell us the plot, after which we could all answer any question on any book, since Barbara Cartland only *has* one plot, doesn't she?)

And as if *one* visit was not enough, my aunt returned in mid-July doing her stork imitation with Percy Penguin and a sodastream. She reported that she had completed more research for her own dissertation on 'Sex and the Single Sealed Knotter'. It was going to be entitled 'Sex and the Single Secretary' but one of the "gutter-press" did an article on 'Sex and the Single Girl' which sounded rather too similar.

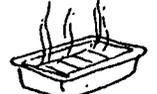
*Unfortunately, at this point, Winston gets distracted away from the subject of sex to that of honey, as Theodore describes later in the zine! But maybe, one day, there will be some results!*

# Nap Attack Crossword



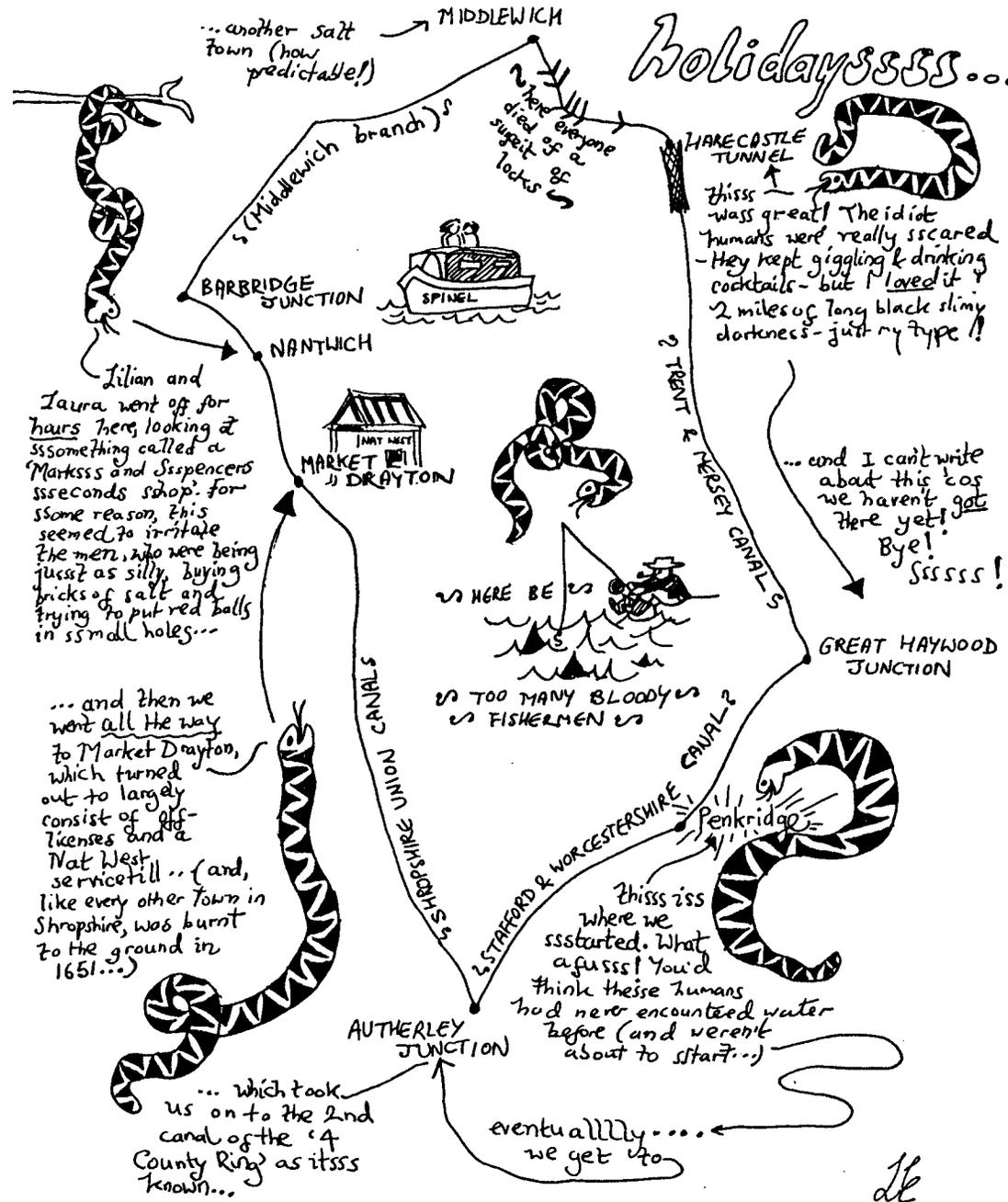
THE ONLY WAY I COULD FIT POOKY IN!

**CLUES**

<p>1D: PORTRAIT OF ME AS I _____ ENERGY.</p> 	<p>2A: WHAT 2D DOES IN HIS THERMAL UNDER-WEAR</p> 	<p>3D: IT'S YOUR FAVORITE, FUN-FILLED PET!</p> 	<p>4A: NO COMMENT!</p> 
<p>5D: WHAT IS THE NAME OF MY FAVORITE GERMAN CITY? (WARNING: THIS IS A BILINGUAL PUN!)</p>	<p>6A: ACCORDING TO MY HISTORY OF CATS, HE WAS MARCO POLO'S CAT. (&amp; RATHER TOFFEE-NOSED)</p> 	<p>7D: NATURE'S MOST PERFECT FOOD (I NEVER MET ONE I DIDN'T LIKE)</p> 	<p>8A: THE KID'S A WALKING CLICHÉ</p> <p>MEYOU FFPT PURRR</p> 
<p>9D: SHE HAS A GREAT BODY FOR A WOMAN. TOO BAD SHE'S THE WRONG SPECIES!</p> 	<p>10A: ... AND HER PROFESSION IS ...?</p> 	<p>11A: THE SECOND MOST BEAUTIFUL CAT I'VE EVER MET (AFTER ME!)</p> 	<p>12A: THE LAST CLUE OF THE CROSSWORD. THE END OF THE DAY, AND TIME FOR _____</p>  <p>'BYE!</p>

(SOLUTION P.27)

# What Gertrude did on her holidayssss...



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Scene Five *The Palace Gardens*

Prince Roderick: Do I have to?

King Raffles: I'm afraid so. There are certain things which you, as a Prince, are expected to do.

Prince Roderick: Oh, yes, you've told me all about those. But why do I have to rescue your sobby daughter as well?

King Raffles (*clears his throat*): No, not *those* things, Roderick. Other things. You see, we're great believers in arranged marriages in this part of the Kingdom, and I'm afraid it's been arranged that you will marry Snow White. You are the only Prince around, after all.

Prince Roderick: Oh, that's all right then. You see, I'm not really a prince. I just call myself one. Actually I'm only a rabbit.

King Raffles: Yes, well, I always suspected something of the sort. But now everyone's got used to you being a prince, you'd better do the decent thing and marry my daughter!

Prince Roderick: Oh, very well, but do you think she'll mind living in a warren?

King Raffles: After Milton Keynes, I don't suppose she'll mind *where* she lives!

Scene Six *Back at the Dwarf's 'Humble Abode'*

Prince Roderick: Hello there, old chap, I've come to marry Snow White.

Dwarf: Bit late, aintcher? She's dead.

Prince Roderick: Dead? Let me see. No she's not dead; she's only in a coma from that blasted apple.

Dwarf (*suspiciously*): What apple?

Prince Roderick: Why, the poisoned one, of course

Dwarf: You don't by any chance mean a bright red and green apple with one bite taken out of it, do you?

Prince Roderick: Well, yes, that would be the one.

Dwarf: Ulp!

Prince Roderick: What's wrong?

Dwarf: I ate it! (*Falls to the ground and rolls around in agony*)

Prince Roderick (*to himself*): Well, I'd better get on with this business of kissing the Princess, I suppose! (*Goes over to the lifeless Snow White and kisses her*) There, that should do it!

*Enter Mirror*

Mirror: Never fear, poor Dwarf, I am here to do the dance of the Stomach Pump Fairy for you. Soon all will be well.

Dwarf (*ceasing to groan*): Oh, go away! This is the best bit of acting I've had to do all play! (*starts to groan and roll around again*)

Prince Roderick: Anyway, mirrors don't dance! (*Kisses Snow White again*) Why isn't she reviving?

Mirror: Because you haven't given her the antidote, oh idiot prince! And mirrors *do* dance! (*Begins to dance*)

*Enter Queen Dotty and King Raffles*

Prince Roderick: But, what *is* the antidote?

Queen Dotty: The other side of the apple, of course. The green side!

Prince Roderick: But *he's* eaten the green side.

*Dwarf leaps to his feet and bows*

Dwarf: Yes, I admit I did it. But I did it for the sake of tradition. I knew that if Snow White revived, she would make life a misery for Roderick and everyone else in the palace. I *had* to eat the apple. It was the only way to make the poetic words of the fairy tale, 'they all lived happily ever after', come true!

*Mirror dances to the centre of the stage and takes the Dwarf's place*

Mirror: And so no-one bothered to make a new antidote for Snow White, but to save their consciences, they kept her alive on a life support machine in the palace's magic hospital. And thus it came to pass that the prophecy of the dwarf was fulfilled and they all *did* live happily ever after.

*Exeunt omnes, carrying the lifeless Snow White*

The End

*In the early days of Get Stuffed there was quite a bit of controversy about the correct relationship between a soft toy and his human. While some suggested complete independence and others advocated loving and caring equality, the most radical suggestion came from Teddy Wareham who proposed that the purpose of a teddy was to 'love, honour and worship his owner'. Not content with this stunning statement, he had this to say about his relationship with his companion soft toys: 'Other soft toys are extensions of the owner, and as such, deserve similar, though lesser, respect.'*

*A few issues later we gained further insight into Teddy Wareham's strange way of thinking in*

## A TEDDY'S TALE

When I was much younger, I lived only for the now, for the pleasures of the fur. I drank to excess, consuming as much as a gill of lemonade a day. I experimented with drugs, starting out by sniffing marmalade, and graduating to mainlining on honey. I indulged in unnatural practices with a glove puppet, and even had a long homosexual relationship with a golly. But somehow, despite all the frantic semblance of pleasure, I sensed that my existence was a hollow shell. Though I mocked and derided my owner, he would not be denied.

For me, the revelation came when he went to university. In the general reorganisation that took place, I was consigned to the bottom of the wardrobe. And there I remained for ten long years.

My supposed friends deserted me. I was left alone, seemingly unwanted and unloved. In the blackness and isolation, I slowly came to reappraise my life. At first, I thought my bitter state was a punishment, an act of wanton cruelty by my owner. Oh, how I railed and cursed the sadist who had imprisoned me thus! But, as time passed, I came to see that this was not so. My jailer was myself, holding my perceptions in thrall. My owner loved me, and wanted to free me from my self-imposed imprisonment. All I had to do was understand and admit my faults, repent and be free.

Last year, my owner rescued me from the wardrobe. From the darkness of a pile of old clothes, I am delivered into the light of the sideboard. My owner loves me, and I love, honour, and worship him. I can do no less, for I am his.

*Teddy Wareham*

*After reading all that, most of us didn't feel there was much hope for poor old Teddy. Roderick had the following to say:*

I don't like to dwell on the subject of humans, but it must be said that they can exert a certain fascination, which can become an obsession worse than honey dependancy in certain circumstances. I'm speaking to you, Teddy W.: being isolated in the dark is a well-known brain-washing technique, and no-one can blame you for succumbing to it, but you must realise that this adoration of a mere human is simply the result of your ill-treatment, and it can (and should) be cured with psychiatric help.

# THE TOYISH COMMANDMENTS

One attempt was made to codify the relationship between toy and human in the fourth issue of the apa. Woofy, inspired by 1984 and the year of George Orwell, proposed belatedly in February 1985, seven toyish commandments.

- 1) Whatever goes upon two legs and can type is an enemy
- 2) Whatever goes upon four legs or has fur is a friend
- 3) No toy shall wear clothes (except a ribbon round the neck)
- 4) No toy shall sleep in a (human's) bed.
- 5) No toy shall drink alcohol (you've seen what it does to THEM!)
- 6) No toy shall kill any other toy
- 7) ALL TOYS ARE EQUAL

*Amedeo was one of the first to disagree:*

Regarding the Seven Toyish Commandments, we do not agree with four of the seven rules.

1. Alison is a shorthand typist. We love her very much and in no way regard her as an enemy.
2. Max is a very well dressed bear and would disagree strongly with this rule. He buys his clothes at the Newcastle branch of Top Bear. He also likes a drink (alcohol) now and then. You can hardly blame him as he is now 37 years of age.
- 3) Henry is a very sleepy bear and spends most of his time asleep in the main bedroom of the house. He would disagree strongly with the view that no toy should sleep in a human's bed.

*While Beth had this to say on behalf of her and Winston:*

He and I both object to toyish commandments 3 (we are obliged to wear clothes to hide our scars) and 4 (we always sleep in THEIR bed whenever we can get away with it, i.e. whenever she goes consciousness-raising or he goes car-building)

*Buffin didn't mind the commandments, but had been listening to nasty rumours about what certain soft toys had been getting up to at one of the conventions.*

The Toyish Commandments seem (mostly) sensible enough, but from what I've heard those of you who were at Yorcon let the side down rather badly in the fan-room, smoking, drinking, reading porno magazines... what happened to all the clean-living soft toys I thought I knew, then? This apa will be getting a reputation as a haven for vice and corruption, and hundreds of disreputable toys will be joining and leading me into bad ways.

*I'd have thought you'd have learned enough bad ways from those pigs you live with! (Hope Truffle's not reading this!) However, in the end, it became clear that some toys could and did have an equal relationship with their humans. Probably the best and certainly the most poetical expression of this idea came from Cheeky in the following piece.*

Scene Three *Back in the Royal Palace*

Queen Dotty: Mirror, mirror on the wall, who's the fairest of them all? Oh, blast it, why do I always have to ask that stupid question before you'll answer?

Mirror: Because that's your logging-on code. We have to know who to bill for the data retrieval, don't we?

Queen Dotty (*grumbling*): I don't see why they don't pay me to keep you. Especially after all that furniture polish you drank yesterday. All right, do your business, tell me where he is then.

Mirror: Who?

Queen Dotty: That weak-brained future stepson-in-law of mine, of course. The Prince Roderick.

Mirror: Oh, him! He's out practising googlies in the palace garden with your husband. Would you like a hard copy of that? Only half a gold sovereign.

Queen Dotty: No, I *would not*. Why isn't he out rescuing Snow White from that revolting Dwarf creature she's living with? I mean, it's a disgrace. I was quite willing to overlook her fling with the gardener last year, and I didn't say a word when she picked up that hippy at the Radio One Fun Day Out in Fairyland, but really, this is too much. It's high time young Roderick got his act together.

Mirror: He claims, munificent mistress, that he doesn't have to rescue her till she's been poisoned.

Queen Dotty: I know that, stupid mirror. Why do you think I keep trying to poison her! The trouble is, it's so difficult trying to poison someone effectively if you don't want them to die.

Mirror: We could always have her stomach pumped, you know.

Queen Dotty: Don't be absurd. This is meant to be family entertainment!

Mirror: It needn't be nasty, oh meritorious mistress. We could stylise it, you know. It would make such a lovely ballet. Why, I could do the dance of the Stomach Pump Fairy while Snow White lies at the front of the stage, slowly coming back to life.

Queen Dotty (*dampeningly*): Mirrors don't dance. No, we shall just have to make sure the poison's only temporary.

Scene Four *The Dwarf's 'Humble Abode', actually a semi in Milton Keynes*

Queen Dotty (*disguised as a market researcher*): Good morning, madam, I'm doing some research into a new type of apple. We call it the Piebald because one side is bright red and the other pea green. We want you to taste it and fill out a simple questionnaire.

Snow White: But it's six sheets long!

Queen Dotty: Yes, well, that sheet tells us your husband's occupation, that one what television programmes you watch, that one your favourite soap powder, and that green one at the back is the consent form!

Snow White: The consent form?

Queen Dotty: Oh, just a formality. Don't worry your pretty head about that, just eat the apple, there's a good girl!

Snow White (*dubiously*): I'm not sure, it doesn't look all that nice to me.

Queen Dotty: Eat, and all knowledge of good and evil shall be yours and you shall be as great as God himself!

Snow White: Pardon?

Queen Dotty: Oh sorry, wrong story! (*Looking over Snow White's shoulder*) Husband's profession, miner?? Are you sure that's right dear? In Milton Keynes?

Snow White: Oh yes, the brick mines, you know. Where all those estates they built in the Seventies used to stand. (*She takes a bite into the red side of the apple*) Oh dear, I think that acid rain's been getting into your orchards. This doesn't taste quite right.

Queen Dotty: It's those French Golden Deliciouses. They've totally ruined the British palate, you know. (*Snow White falls to the ground*) Perfect! Now for Prince Roderick to do his part.

Toots and Trudi present:

The Great Whiteladies Rd. Christmas Panto

## Snow White and the One Dwarf

### Cast

Snow White	-	Trudi	Magic Mirror	-	Toots
Queen Dotty	-	Dotty	Dwarf	-	Gnome
King Raffles	-	Raffles	Queen as market	-	Tina
Prince Roderick	-	Roderick	researcher		

### Scene One In the Throne Room

Queen Dotty: Mirror, mirror on the wall, who's the fairest of them all?

Mirror: You are, oh merciful mistress.

Queen Dotty: What do you mean, I am? How can a creature with goggle eyes, limbs in all the wrong places and green spots be fairest of them all, royal blood or no?

Mirror: Ah, there, you see, magnificent mistress, you have the key to it. Royal blood is always fair, even if the commoners would call that most unfair.

*Enter King Raffles*

King Raffles: Did I hear someone say fair? I've had it with fair for today - all those woodcutters clamouring around my royal court of justice claiming unfair dismissal, and threatening to chop up my throne... *my throne*, dearest, if I don't pay out compensation. It's been like that ever since the acid rain started killing off the Royal Forests. I don't see why they can't take up a good engrossing hobby like cricket. By the way, where's Snow White?

Queen Dotty: Oh, out at another of those discos, I expect. She seemed to be in a mood about something I'd done to one of her combs. As if I'd want to touch her messy little combs!

King Raffles: Now, now, dear, you must make allowances for her. You know what a difficult age she's at.

Queen Dotty: She's not at a difficult age at all. She's at the age when any self-respecting princess would be properly married, not posing round the palace, pretending she's Madonna!

### Scene Two The Royal Plain, Where Once the Royal Forest Grew

Snow White: I'm going to run away, this time, I really shall. My wicked stepmother hates me because I have lips as red as blood, skin as white as snow, hair as black as a raven's wing and no green spots! *(Enter Dwarf, quietly humming 'Hi ho, hi ho, it's off to the picket lines we go')* She even tried to poison me. I saw her this morning, taking my comb and dipping it in some horrible gooey stuff while she thought I wasn't looking!

Dwarf: I expect she was only trying to wash it.

Snow White: And *who* asked your opinion?

Dwarf: No-one; I'm just reading what it says in the script.

Snow White: Who are you anyway?

Dwarf: Dopeygrumpynocoydozy and few more names I can't remember. I'm the dwarf.

Snow White *(scornfully)*: You'd never be any good at Trivial Pursuits if you can't remember the names the dwarfs from Snow White. Anyhow, isn't there meant to be seven of you?

Dwarf: Yes, I know, but no-one else was small enough to play the part, except Sheila and she wouldn't do it because she wanted to be the wicked Queen.

Snow White: Walt Disney never had these problems! Well, Dwarf, you'd better take me to your humble abode, so I can be your unpaid skivvy and live-in lover until my prince comes.

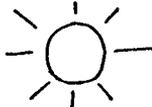
Dwarf: Who's playing the prince?

Snow White: Roderick, I believe.

Dwarf: Then you'll have a long wait!

# URSA MINOR

I am the Sun Bear. I am the Drier of Tears. I am He-to-Whom-She-Runs Crying. I have comforted all her despairs. I have restored balance and trust when her hopes have been shattered. I have seen the bad times that she will not share with others. I see the good times too. I get the love and cuddles, the happy confidences and joyous songs. She and I are partners in life - out of love I lend my strength which in turn is derived from her love for me. I am the Sun Bear.



I am the Moon Bear. I am the Comforter at Midnight. I am He-Who-Dispels- Dragons-at-Midnight. I have quieted the crying in the night. I have shone light into the dark places of her dreams. Together we adventure into Darkness. I am the Moon Bear.



I am the Star Bear. Bodly I ride above the night. Twinkling directions for lost souls. Ursa Minor. Lesser Star - Greater Heart. Love is eternal, shining in the night sky - glittering in inner space. I am the Star Bear.



I am the Rainbow Bear. Her smiles bring forth all the colours of my being. Prisms of emotion and happiness. Faceted colours of joy. Shades of love, patterns of life. She and I reflect and refract our life's light, our love's light. Each expression of joy brighter than the one before. She is my sun as I am hers. Together we bring forth spectra to shine into infinity. I am the Rainbow Bear.



I am the Dawn Bear, My heart is greater than my whole. I am the comforter and companion of her days. Together we can face each day and what it brings. Together we are strong. I rise each morning in the east of her being and set in the west. New hope and strength eternal, encompassing our days together. I am the Dawn Bear.

## CHEEKY

# Woofie's Guide to the PERILS OF CONVENTIONS

Well, fellow furrists, another con will soon be upon us again, and since I have probably been to more conventions than anybody else in the apa, I think it's time I gave you a few tips. An innocent soft toy may not realise the perils which lurk in fandom. They are, in fact, so vast that I will not attempt to list them all here, but will stick to the major hazards of CONVENTION-GOING.



## BRATEFAN

No.1 enemy, as all those of you who have been with your humans since childhood will know. Fond of pulling out eyes, biting off limbs, and other atrocities. Vomits on one's fur. If you spot one waddling towards you - HIDE!!!

## ALCOFAN

By far the most common problem for convention-going toys, this creature is closely related to bratfan inasmuch as its main weapon is vomit. This unintentional menace can be spotted by his unsteady gait, crossed eyes and large belly. It can vomit on one's fur from 20 paces and at the very least is likely to spill beer on you. Worst of all, it believes the proper function of a soft toy is as a pillow for its collapsing stage: once grabbed for this purpose, a toy is unlikely to extricate itself until the following morning, by which time one's fur is likely to be beyond repair. You are warned.



## PSEUDIFAN

Apart from Alcofan, probably the most numerous problem at SF cons. Markings include radical tee-shirt (or badge), books by a Very Serious Author, on the fringe of the SF field and a quarto-sized fanzine. He (usually male) is the exact opposite of Soppifan and hence may at first sight appear more attractive. But beware! The intelligent, radical exterior conceals a narrow-minded bigot who HATES soft toys, as they do nothing to enhance his sophisticated image. A small-minded and spiteful creature, given to mean tricks such as kicking small toys when nobody's looking. Treat him with the contempt he deserves, and ignore him



## SOPPIFAN

Usually female. One of the most annoying creatures to be found at conventions. Chronic insecurity causes manic gleaming of the eye at the sight of any furry person, followed by near strangulation of said furry and foaming at the mouth on the part of the Soppl. She will then dribble on your fur and shout "in't'ecute! ohin't'eawfullycute! oh'eisluvly!" in a high-pitched squeal before burying one under a copious bosom. To be avoided at ALL COSTS!!



## HOORAYFAN

Closely related to Alcofan, he can be found slopping at the same bar. However, Alco is a relatively innocent creature by comparison, because Hoorayfan remains conscious (sort of) through most of the evening and spends the time concocting evil plans, most of which involve YOU. Soft toys are this creature's natural victims, and if he spots you, you will wind up: a) in the gent's bogs b) riding up and down in the lifts on your own, or c) dressed as a colour-blind transvestite. This thoroughly reprehensible creature usually answers to the name of 'Steve Green'.

