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Sunday, April 01, 2007. c:/wklylt7.7wc07

(2007 NHN&WR letter/story/poem/card #01)

**Look Gertrude.**

We winter in the capitol of a G8 nation. We know this because; ‘*The Children’* tell us so. There is a modicum of crime in all G8 capitols. We know this because; *‘The Children’* tell us so. We should keep our doors locked at all times. Why? Yes, you’re right, .... because; *‘The Children’* tell us so. Okay, so we do. So what? Well, this results in Bailey and Ken ringing the doorbell when they return from their bi-daily walks. Is bi-daily twice a day or every other day? Good grief, let’s just get on with this.

The pith of this April letter is cold temperatures in this G8 capitol and a very patient/polite dog. (Pith is a new cross-word related word in our vocabulary, i.e. meat, nub, core, heart. Course it can also be a helmet worn by mad Englishmen in the noon day sun.) Ken is an early riser. Ken lets Bailey out in the morning at say about 5:30-6:00 A.M. In spite of all that G. Dubya has been able to accomplish, the temperature could be about -20C/-30F. Ken then gets involved in Spider Solitaire or some other ridiculous game and forgets all about Bailey. Half hour later, … oh my goodness, Bailey! Yup, there she is, sitting quietly on the porch by the kitchen door. *“Bailey, … why don’t you bark?”*

No answer.

(By the way, Bailey does bark, … squirrels, raccoons, morning paper person.)

Now then, returning from a walk, it does not take a rocket scientist to make a connection. Ken and Bailey go up the front steps. Ken mashes\* the doorbell and waits for Lucile to open the door.

Hmmmn, Pavlovian thoughts.

*“Why am I mashing the doorbell? Why not take hold of Bailey’s paw and have her mash the doorbell? Do we want Bailey doing that? Next thing she’ll be turning on the lights at 4:30-5:30 A.M. , … and then the radio. No, better yet, bark.”*

Ken barks, … repeatedly.

Lucile opens the door.

*“What on earth are you barking for?”*

*“I’m trying to show Bailey that barking opens the door, … like “open sesame.”*

*\** Atlanta vocabulary, as in elevator request, ‘Mash twelve please’.

*“People will think you are nuts!”*

*“I did a scan first. No one’s out here.”*

*“What did Bailey do?’*

*“Looked at me as if I was nuts.”*

This went on for about a week. Not a sound from Bailey. In fact she looked very much like a person rolling their eyes in disbelief as soon as the barking scenario would begin. Time for a new tack. Bailey and Lucile would both stay inside. Ken would go outside, wait a few minutes, then bark. Lucile would say*, “It’s Ken, he wants to come in,”* then get up and open the door. Good plan.

Ken goes out, counts to a hundred and starts to bark vigorously, accompanied by much bodily motion.

Unfortunately, no scan.

(We now switch the scene to two pillars of the community out for their afternoon walk. We do not know them personally, and will call them Gertrude and Abigail.)

Abigail*, “Look Gertrude, there is a man on the porch over there barking like a dog.”*

Gertrude, *“That’s weird, and he’s wild looking too, jumping up and down and all.”*

Abigail, *“Should we call the authorities?”*

Gertrude, *“ That’s where those aliens from the States live, let’s just avoid eye contact and ignore him.”*

Abigail*, “ Oh Oh! He’s seen us!”*

Ken, embarrassingly, *“ Hi ladies, … just trying to teach an old dog new tricks.”*

Gertrude and Abigail, eyes front, keep right on walking.

Ken doesn’t blame them.

(Lucile’s cut on this is: Let’s get another dog, … one that barks to come in.)

((Ken’s response: You don’t think I bark well?))

Till next month, Lucile, Ken & Bailey.

Reg. Distr.