

What if Animals Could Talk

by

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“John? John!”

Martha looked around the studio set for her co-anchor. Their news show was about to go on and this was hardly the time for him to be absent. In his place she saw a rather larger German Shepherd. Odd... they weren't supposed to be doing an animal piece.

Moving to her chair, she left the set crew to worry about her counter part and began glancing through her notes.

“Do you know how hard it is for me to sit in this stupid chair?” a voice asked from her left.

“Very funny John... stupid sounding voices and a large dog are not going to make me look up. I know the camera is probably rolling.”

“No... really... I have to curl my tail to the side and sit on it and that's not comfortable at all.”

“All right,” she replied, looking up. “We've only got five minutes left. Now is not the time for pranks.”

Finding only the dog looking at her, his tongue hanging out from the side of his mouth, she ducked her head down and looked under the desk.

“You like what you see there sweetheart?” the voice asked. “I was asked to put on some shorts, but I told ’em; nuh ah, no way. I’ve been wearing fur since I was born. It was good then and it’s still good now.”

The TV anchor brought her head back up from under the table and got a wet lick on the nose for her efforts.

“Ahhhhhh....” She cried, wiping her face with a hand.

The dog spit to the side. “Blah... makeup tastes terrible.”

“You talk!” Martha said, the incredulity of her surprise paraphrasing what her mind was screaming at her.

The dog turned back to her and smiled his doggy smile again. “So do you!” he gasped, and then giggled. “Oh, right, you always could, though I personally think all these words are a big waste of time. Sniff a butt and you’ll know all you need to know about a person.”

“Three minutes,” the set director said from somewhere.

Now the lights got just a bit brighter and behind them there was the sound of the set crew scurrying around. Looking down at her notes again, she found the lead in story and it registered in her brain for the first time. It wasn’t a joke, and it wasn’t some animal making noises that sounded like words; ‘ANIMALS TALKING!’

“Yeah, that’s right,” the German Shepherd told her. “All of a sudden we can speak your lingo, though you can’t speak a word of Dog. Surprise! By the way, you can call me Frank. I chose that name cuz I tend to tell the truth, unlike most television news types. Needless to say, being the handsome hunk’ a dog that I am, I was pressed by your producer to do the news with you so people could see they weren’t dreaming. They’ll probably still think it’s computer driven or something. Oh... and by the way, be careful of the cats. You can’t believe a word they tell you.”

“Two minutes.”

“How?” she managed to ask.

“Cut my nuts if I know,” Frank responded. “You think I wanted to speak your lingo? Dang but this puts a real twist on things don’t it? All of a sudden we’re equals since obviously we’re not just dumb animals any more.” He chuckled. “Dumb animals... get it? Dumb... can’t speak... Oh come on, it was funny for crying out loud!”

Martha stood up and looked towards the camera. “Are you getting this?”

“Sure,” replied the cameraman. “I don’t know that I’m believeing all of it, but I’m getting it.”

“And you’ve seen other animals talking?”

Sitting up in the bed, feeling she'd at least banished the dream with the coming dawn, she turned on the table lamp beside her and stretched. As she did, she heard someone's groan of a similar stretch beside her. Turning quickly, she found a huge police dog laying on bed next to her. He was on his back and stretched out in a most contented way.

The dog looked at her with that upside down sort of look a dog will give you when feeling safe and comfortable, and then asked, "Was it good for you too?"

Martha didn't make it to work that day.