

# Side Quests

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## Freaky Furry



Rated  
PG

**JOE ROVER**

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**Freaky Furry**

**Joe Rover**

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## Before the Party

While I was preparing for the party to celebrate surviving the previous month, a crisis was brewing at the home of MyVideo Maker, and friend, Will Directive.

The recent news thwip reported a mountain lion in the area. Will's wife wanted him to check on their cat, Rex. Will found Rex in his usual spot, sleeping in a sunbeam in the hall. The cat, whose fur looks like white and gray marble, stirred upon hearing its food provider.

"Glad to see you're oh—" Will stood straighter. "Do you hear drumming?"

As the drumming filled the hallway, bouncing off the family pictures and that vase that Will and his wife got in Australia, Will became drowsy. Soon, his eyelids were too heavy to keep open and he fell to the floor.

In what was only a matter of seconds, Will revived. "Wow, that was the best sleep I've had in ages!" He yawned and stretched.

It only took him about five seconds to notice that he was now in the body of Rex the cat. About two seconds after that, he realized Rex was in his body. Will was pretty smart. He was a screenwriter, director, and the head of Directive Studios. Directive Studios had released such award-winning movies like *I Married My Car* and *The Internet Files*—he managed a collaboration between himself and animator Sam Steaks for that one.

However, he didn't have time to panic because a mountain lion had somehow slinked its way into the house and was now circling his old body. Suddenly, his body—now under the control of Rex—stopped trying to lick-clean its arm and stood ridged, almost zombie-like.

"What's happening?" asked Will.

The big cat chuckled; it was a short, breathy chuckle—one you might give someone who'd just asked, "What color is the sky?" "I am Manuel, King of the Cats," the mountain lion answered in a Portuguese accent.

"I thought the lion was king." Will gasped and his eyes lit up. "That would make a great movie! A battle between a monster lion and monster mountain lion for the title of Lord of the Cats. I bet I could get Gigi Games to play the part of the love interest. She's wanted to branch out from just doing game walkthroughs."

“No, you fool!” Manuel swiped his front left paw against the hall wall leaving a gash. “Lions are the kings of the jungle. *I* am the king of *all* cats! I was gifted the power to control all felines.”

“That sounds like a knockoff of a villain from a show about mutant animals.”

“Well, I’m not!” Manuel cleared his throat. “While I may have the power to control the *Felidae* mind, I am still a mountain lion: no opposable thumbs. That is why I will swap the bodies of humans and cats. Once the cats are human, I will control the human’s more capable forms; and finally, cats will reclaim the Earth from the humans!”

Will started pacing a circle in the middle of the large hallway. “But...if you can swap humans and cats, why haven’t you swapped yourself. Why not just swap with a human and go on your way?”

Manuel gasped so deeply you’d think he was a vacuum cleaner. “How dare you?! You aren’t supposed to pick holes into my plot until Act III!”

“Sorry. Along with being a screenwriter, I am a movie and video game critic. I tear apart plots for a living.”

“It matters not.” Manuel chuckled. His claws clicked on the hardwood floor. An air of impending attack dripped through the hall. Will knew the large cat would soon pounce on him. “You are now a kitty-cat; you cannot tell anyone my plans. Farewell.”

Manuel ordered Rex-Will to open a window to facilitate the duo’s escape. Will-Rex almost lectured the gold-brown mountain lion on the folly of letting a witness go, but thought better of it. He really is intelligent, after all.

## During the Party

“Happy first of April! We did it! We survived March!” shouted the DJ before returning to the **wicky-wicky-wick-whack** sounds of music.

The crowd cheered, bouncing up and down and waving their hands like they were unconcerned.

The people of Freedom Isle threw these parties every month. It started out as a celebration of literally surviving the previous month. Surviving not being hunted down by those who feared transbeings. Surviving the persecution of being different from everyone else. Surviving not being able to find jobs or walk the streets simply because you had the power to shoot heat from your eyes or were born with green skin. Once mankind became more accepting of transbeings, the survival party became one more of symbolic survival—like surviving a rough week at work or trying to figure out how to pay for your kid’s braces.

Just about everyone shows up to these parties: heroes, politicians, celebrities, your average Joe. It was a time to let loose and boogie.

As usual, I hit the snack bar first. My plate was loaded with hamburgers, fries, hot dogs, pie, a couple slices of pizza, a taco, and a salad and diet soda. I loved these parties; it was the one night I could forget my diet!

I gently sat my plate down on the nearest table and prepared to inhale the food.

“Hey, Joe.” I craned my head towards the interruption, my mouth still hanging open. I recognized the person, but couldn’t remember the name. Whoever he was, he should have known better than to come between a weredog and his food.

I’m so terrible with names. I never forget a face (or a scent), but... names are a different story. Luckily, the DogCom, my glasses—or sunglasses—which acts as a link to the artificial intelligence computer system (SPOT or just Spot depending on how lazy I am with capitalization) back at my base, allows me to use facial recognition to identify anyone. Since everyone has a PostBook account, usually filled with pictures of themselves or the food they eat, it didn’t take long to ID the young man.

SPOT, via the DogCom, spoke to me through the Dog Whistle, a

communication system only I can hear. “Thomas Metalman. He is currently working on a SideKick project to open WonderMart, a company that will sell anything: clothes, food, nanobots, vehicles, nuclear weapons, Omni-Cuff applications. The top tier of his SideKick supporters receive—”

“Did you say ‘nuclear weapons’?” I asked.

“...”

“SPOT?”

“...No. If I did, it was clearly a typo,” said SPOT.

To clear all that up for you: the DogCom is a heads-up-display/personal-portable computer system; the Dog Whistle is like a personal Wi-Fi/communication system that only I can access; and SPOT is the AI that “runs” the whole system and searches for emergencies/crimes that I need to handle.

“So, Mr. Rover,” said Mr. Metalman smoothing down his slick hair, “I’d like to hire you for a job.”

The International League of Super-Transbeings along with being superheroes does odd jobs. Superheroing doesn’t pay the bills. We get some from money from our merch, and from monetizing our MyVideo vlogs showcasing our adventures, but most of it comes from outside jobs, like being military consultants or celebrity bodyguards.

Thomas Metalman was in the middle of building the WonderMart hub. The hub would store the servers and equipment that would allow people to 3D print their order right from home.

Right now, if you order something online—like a pizza—you would still need to visit your nearest 3D Fabricator store or find a teleport platform to retrieve it; or wait for drones to deliver it. With WonderMart, everyone would have a machine right at home that would allow them to receive their order without going anywhere.

Metalman’s system sounded a lot like the one I use as Dogboy. A Fabricator at my base crafts my weapons, aka Dog Toys, and they are stored there until I need them. My belt and vest contain mini-Fabricator devices. It would be too bulky for me to carry around the materials in order to make my weapons (or the weapons themselves), so they are stored at my base. Even with the nanobots constructing the materials, it takes time.

When I request a weapon, the one at the base is disassembled and sent to my belt. The mini-Fabricator then produces the item. It uses a combination of teleportation and crafting to make the item faster than at



the base. Basically, the materials are teleported to the belt and the Fabricator's nanobots reassembles them, instead of manufacturing them from scratch. If we didn't do it this way, I would have to carry tubes containing the materials needed to craft each item, and that's a lot of tubes.

This is why people have to go to 3D stores. Most people don't have the space to store every material they would need, and it would take forever to build the material from scratch. So, the 3D stores store the material for them. But WonderMart would allow people to craft their purchase right at home.

I'm sure by now you've realized that this sounds basically like a portable teleport platform. It pretty much is. The problem with a portable teleport platform, or my belt in this case, is that it only has enough power for four trips. Luckily, I have a Fabricator for each weapon installed in my costume but that still means I can only summon a weapon four times. I can use my blaster four times and still be able to summon my bombs four times. Brain, the one who invented the system, never tried to sell his personal teleporter because a delivery system that only works four times isn't the best business model.

I was curious to know how Metalman worked around this problem. Brain is a level 12 intellect and he couldn't solve it in seven years.

"The job I have planned is more of a fetch-quest," Metalman said.

"I love fetch-quests," I said.

"I figured you would."

He wanted me to gather supplies for the hub. Apparently, this was part of what would make his system so efficient. His, unlike mine, would have naturally found materials along with the nanomachine-made materials; it'd make the process faster and make it so he had some product at the grand opening.

"What do you say, Dogboy?"

"I—"

"Joe?" said the sweet honey and biscuit smell of Sally. Her soft touch filled my arm. "Are you going to do business all night or are we going to dance?"

"Sorry, duty calls," I said to Thomas Metalman.

He checked Sally out with a sweeping glance. "Totally understandable. We'll talk later."

Sally and I entered the bumping throng of dancers as the music changed. Soon, the beat was vibrating through the walls and floor and

into our feet. Sally and I became a harmonic mix of arm and leg moves. Sally's long blond hair flowed and fluttered like a river as we spun and weaved. We echoed and complimented each other. The crowd stopped for a moment to watch and record us. We'd probably appear on some late night show's segment. I dipped Sally, cradling her in my arms.

"When did you become such a good dancer?" she asked.

"Dodging plasma bolts and deathtraps all day is good practice," I whispered softly.

Soon, the next song began. The crowd rejoined the dance. This time a group, including Sally and I, danced in robotic movements followed by movements of a marionette. We then froze as the song moved to some kind of backup or chorus section. The other group of dancers took over doing similar movements. Finally, they froze in place as the music shifted back to the first group. We continued our jerky-smooth rhythm until it was the second group's turn. This alternating round of dance continued a few times more until the music became a chorus of harmony; at this point, both groups joined together in a celebration of song and joy.

The next song was more of a hip-hop tune. Lights flashed and colored squares appeared on the dance floor. The squares beat and shifted in time to the music. The dancers aimed themselves for the lit squares near them. With each successful plant, the square made a quick noise. The game of squares continued growing in speed until finally the squares moved to the walls. The dancers moved to continue their dance upon the walls. Suddenly, some of the squares appeared on the ceiling. A few dancers followed the musical squares to the ceiling while the others remained on the walls.

After some time, the squares, along with the dancers, returned to the walls. The music and squares slowed then the squares began appearing in straight lines. The dancers began to move in a dancing-walk. As the dancers approached the line between wall and ceiling, the room—minus the area reserved for spectators—began to rotate. The dancers continued their path as the room rotated beneath them. The dance continued as normal, but the room continued to rotate. Dancers were pretty soon on the walls, ceiling, and floor as the room danced with them. By the end of the dance, everyone, including the dance floor, was back to normal.

"Whew," said Sally. "That was quite the workout."

I nodded, trying not to pant.

Sally and I returned to the table where Thomas Metalman smiled

patiently, sipping a tall glass of orange juice and lime. Sally elegantly slid into a seat with no complaint from her dress. I wasn't as graceful, fighting with the seat to scoot forward.

Sally laced her fingers and turned her attention to Metalman; her blue eyes illustrating cold steel. "Let's talk *Meleagris gallopavo*."

## After the Party

Sally and I walked slowly to the car. The moon was about half full and the sky was clear. It sounded like a group of crickets were nearby. We stopped near a light pole. Our eyes met. She leaned in close to me.

**BANG!**

**SCA-RRREEEEE!!!**

Suddenly, a cat with marble-like fur landed on the roof of a nearby car.

“Holy meatloaf!!” I grabbed my chest.

“Isn’t that Will Directive’s cat?”

The cat waved its paws frantically at us. “Meow, meow, meow, mew, meow!”

Sally leaned closer to me and whispered as if she was afraid the cat would be offended by her inability to understand it. “What’s it saying?”

“Just a moment; my Housecat is a little rusty.”

“Meow, mew, mew, meow, hiss, meow, hiss,” said the cat.

I half-whispered back to Sally, “Something about a mountain lion with plans to rule the world.”

“As you do,” sighed Sally.

“Meow, hiss, mew, mew, meow, mew, hiss.”

“He says he’s not Rex but Will. He says that the mountain lion, Manuel, swap his and Rex’s body.” I faced Sally, my face full of fear. “He plans to swap humans and cats. Once cats have access to opposable thumbs, they’ll rule the world with Manuel as the king.”

Sally covered a gasp with her hand. “We’ve got to stop him.”

“Rree-ear, meow, mew, mew, hiss, purr.”

“He also says...”

...

...

...

...

...

**APRIL FOOLS!!**

There is no ending to this story! Technically, there is...it’s this. But there is no end to the adventure. It was all an April Fool’s joke. There might be an ending some day, but not today.

But for being such nice victims, if you go to Smashwords.com and search for my book *Alliance*, you can use the code below to get the book for FREE. It **only** works on Smashwords unfortunately. So, go to Smashwords.com, search for “Alliance” plus “Joe Rover” or just “Joe Rover” and find *Alliance* on my author page, buy the book and enter the code at checkout in order to get your free copy. And no, this time it is not an April Fool’s joke...I’m not *that* mean. The code will expire Dec. 31, 2019, so semi-hurry.

Enter this code at checkout: NW37Q (not case-sensitive)

## **Other Books by Joe Rover**

### **Wizard of New Town:**

Beginnings (Wizard of New Town, #1)

Rebels (Wizard of New Town, #2)

### **Life of Ace Journeyman:**

Journey to Neo-Geo (Life of Ace Journeyman, #1)

Alliance (Life of Ace Journeyman, #2)

### **Dogboy Reborn:**

Rebirth (Dogboy Reborn, #1)

Revenge (Dogboy Reborn, #2)

### **The Side Quests Series**

#### **Box Sets:**

Not So Secret Origins

eBooks are available for purchase at most online retailers.

Visit my website at <https://joerover.com> for more info.

## Awards & Praise

**Winner of the “Magic Holiday Thrills” writing contest:**

December 2017

“Batman V Iron Man: Dawn of Christmas”

**Winner of the “Super Christmas” writing contest:**

December 2017

“The Very Strange Case of Santa Slays”

**Winner of the "Write to Rank" Orange Belt Round**

June 2018

"Revenge is Best Served Orange" an excerpt from the Dogboy Reborn story *Revenge*

**Works appearing in anthologies:**

*Flash Fiction Anthology* by the Wattpad Ambassadors (@Ambassadors)

“Wet Feet”

June 2018

**Reviews:**

“The story [*Revenge*] of sabotage and murder will grip you from the first page, and the Heroic Hound’s teeth won’t let you go until the last!”—[Seb Jenkins](#), author of *Life After Death*

“You write action very well. I felt I was in the scene with Ryan, Lady Lieutenant, and Ryack. LOL, great job.” —[Jolo815](#)

# Thank You

## **I would like to thank:**

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Finally I would like to thank everyone who downloaded this book. Thank you and I hope you enjoyed it.

**Please remember to review this eBook with your favorite retailer or on my Facebook page (Joe Rover, Author) and share it with friends and family (and your enemies if you so choose). Thank you.**



## About the Author

One day while on a field trip, I was bitten by a radioactive writer. Thus, I was granted the proportional imagination and typing speed of a writer. I also found that I could stick notes to walls and developed an early warning “grammar sense.” Eventually, I learned that with great action verbs comes great sentences. From that day forward, I was The Somewhat Impressive Writer-Man.

But really...

Joe Rover is the pen name of an author who spends his time writing many family-friendly (PG) fictional stories. “Joe” has been a journalist, computer programmer, photographer, and graphic designer. He recently graduated from the business class he was taking and is now a board member of his local chamber of commerce.

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**Until the next wormhole...live the adventure.**