

A PET'S LIFE

A Magazine by Danielle Hewitt



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Tug-of-war

A Haiku

The old and frayed rope

Dogs tugging at either end

Threads snapping and splitting

Sneaky Pup

A Haiku

The empty white plate

A dog licks crumbs off the floor

Then the children yell

Ouch!

A Senryu

A dog is sprinting

Bracing to make the sharp turn

Paws skid. Splat! The wall.

Teddy the Troublemaker

“Teddy, get down!”

In one moment, I had skillfully snatched the juicy hot dog off the counter and wolfed it down with practiced ease. Mom stomped over, snatched my collar and dragged me up the stairs toward my crate. I scrambled to turn around, but she only pushed harder, and after minutes of pushing and shoving I was finally plopped down in my crate. Mom sighed. She started down the stairs, and the moment she sat back down at the dinner table (probably to heat up another hot dog that would soon be mine) I let out a series of sharp yips to let her know of my disapproval of the situation.

Then I heard something. It was my favorite sound of the day! The kids were home! I started wriggling in anticipation, for I knew that the three of them would have sympathy on me as they always did, and they would let me out as soon as they saw me. I heard talking and once again wished that I understood English. I did catch a few words, though. They were, “Teddy... bad... he ate... hotdog... no... he... go in his crate.”

Then as I was still straining my ears to listen, though dogs do have very precise hearing, a loud bark rang through my ears and I perked up a bit. It was Raindrops, the neighbor’s dog. They named him that because he was scared of raindrops. Fortunately, he wasn’t anymore. I personally thought he was very brave. Distracted from the conversation downstairs, I wished Raindrops was here with me. Then I heard the garage door opening.

No! I howled. They can’t be leaving yet; they just got home! If only I could go with them. That’s it! I have an idea. I need to get out of this cage, I thought. I wonder if pushing on it hard enough will open it.

I shoved up against the metal wiring of the cage, but I simply fell back on the slippery plastic bottom. I pawed at the door in frustration. Suddenly it swung open. I blinked in surprise. Mom must not have locked it properly. Then I realized it—this was my chance. I darted out and raced down the stairs into the sunlit kitchen. The first thing I did was grab a quick snack out of

the food bag sitting on top of the fridge by clumsily scrambling up onto a chair, leaping onto the counter, dodging through the stacks of papers and cups and making a mighty leap towards the fridge. Soon I was knocking the food bag off. *They thought putting it up there would stop me but they were wrong*, I thought with satisfaction as the little brown marbles of dry food bounced across the floor and I hopped down to gobble them up.

As soon as I was full, I realized that my family would be long gone by now. I sighed. I'd been planning to follow them, and when they got to their destination they'd see me, and they would be so proud that they'd never leave me behind again. *Well, maybe next time*, I thought, trying to stay optimistic.

Then I realized that my family would be furious when they got home because of the mess. I glanced at my surroundings and my optimism drained. It was a very big mess. There were cups and papers scattered around the floor, and I had no idea how I was going to get the food bag back up on the fridge. *Oh well!*

Soon I heard the garage door open. *Yay! They're back home*. I couldn't help but start wriggling as the door swung open to reveal Mom. Her mouth fell open as she scanned the room.

Oh, hi! Sorry it looks really bad, but I'm sure we can clean it, right? I said.

All she did was groan and say, "Stop barking, Teddy! I need to clean up this mess and run back out to the post office."

I whimpered.

She sighed. "It's not your fault, Teddy. The kids need to take you for a walk, don't they?"

I started bouncing with excitement. *A walk!*

"Oops! I did not mean to say the word W-A-L-K," she said, carefully spelling out the word *walk*. "We can't do it now. Maybe later. Sorry." Then she glanced down at her watch and let out a cry.

I cocked my head. What was wrong?

“The post office closes in twenty minutes. I have to go!” And with that, she was out the door.

Yay! This is my chance! She had left the door slightly open, which I guess was good because I had not yet gotten to the part of the plan where I would get out of the house. I walked out the front door feeling braver than ever. Then I saw Raindrops poking his head out of his new red doggie door. Clearly his owners were not used to having a doggie door because they had left the gate wide open.

Wait, maybe he should come with me. I walked up to where his head lay on his black and white speckled paws, and he perked his ears.

“Hey, do you want to come with me?” I asked, motioning with my nose to the black car pulling out of our driveway. “I’m going to follow my family to the post office because then they’ll see me and be super happy.”

“Ok,” said Raindrops. “Sounds like fun. My family won’t be back till morning—they never are on Sunday. Fortunately, they leave out a huge bowl of food that I can stuff myself with, and of course, they installed this new doggie door so I can relieve myself outside.”

“Well, if you want to go, we have to go now because they’re leaving,” I woofed from over my shoulder as I streaked towards the street.

“Wait for me!” called Raindrops as he followed.

I slowed down a hair to let him catch up. Once he was next to me, I focused my eyes on the car in front of us. Yes! We were gaining on it. After about two minutes of running as hard as we could, I could hear Raindrops panting beside me.

“Maybe we should... slow down a bit,” I said between my breaths.

“No, we... can’t,” panted Raindrops. “Or the car... will be out of our sight.”

I had no idea how much farther it was—maybe it was even another ten minutes—and I knew that no matter how hard we tried, there was no way we could keep this up for that long.

There was silence for a few seconds until suddenly bright lights filled my vision. Raindrops said something but it was drowned out by the sound of a rumbling engine and a long horn that followed. I crouched down right where I was and squeezed my eyes shut. I heard Raindrops call out but was too afraid to move.

Something was snapping at my collar. It was the car, I knew it. I cried out, "Help, the car is eating me!"

"Get up!" growled a strange voice.

I blinked in surprise at the voice. I had never heard it before. Who was it?

A strange dog was standing over me. "Move!"

I sat there, frozen. Then the mysterious dog grabbed my collar in its mouth, carried me off the road and plopped me in the grass.

"Ow!" I exclaimed. "Why did you do that!"

"How does a dog manage to almost get run over twice in one day?" the dog muttered.

Then I remembered, *I was almost eaten by a car! Wait, what? Cars don't eat you.*

The other dog sighed seeing my confused look. "Do you really not know anything? I saw you crouched on the road, so terrified of the car in the other lane that you didn't even see the car coming around the corner in the lane you were in."

I shrank back. "How was I supposed to know that?"

The dog sighed. "Whatever. What's your name?"

"Um... oh, Teddy," I responded, still tense.

"Hi. My name is Star, by the way. It's nice to meet you."

I felt my shoulders loosen a bit. "Hi, nice to meet you too. Which house did you escape from? I don't recognize you."

"Huh?" woofed Star. "I didn't come from a house. I've always lived in the grass and trees."

“Don’t you get cold out here in the winter?” I asked.

“Sometimes, but how can life be fun stuck inside a tiny little house, only able to get fresh air when the humans let you out?” she responded.

“Well, that’s actually why I was here. I was trying to follow my family to the post office so they would be proud of me and want me to stay with them, because I hate it when they leave.”

“I’m sure that you realize this now, but that was not a good idea. The forest isn’t a good place for house pets,” she said glancing around impatiently.

“I know that now, and I just want to go home,” I said with a whimper.

Her gaze softened. “I know, but it’s getting late, and soon it will be too dark to find your way back. Why don’t go come back with me to my pack and spend the night with us?”

“Oh no! I need to find Raindrops! I forgot about him. I would never forgive myself if something had happened to him!” I squeaked, spinning in circles and searching through the dense trees for a splotch of black or white.

“It’s okay, we already found him and brought him to our pack,” said Star as she stepped forward to comfort me.

My shoulders sagged with relief. “Ok, let’s go to your pack then and we can try to find home in the morning.”

Star led me over logs, around ponds, and over a stream using large rocks, which she leaped onto with practiced ease.

“I had no idea it would be so far,” I said as I peered down at my scratched pads and licked one tenderly, trying not to wince.

“Sorry. I guess you’re not used to walking this far, but we’re almost there. It’s just around that bush,” she said, indicating with her nose to a large red thornless bush that arched over a small scoop in the ground. It was filled with soft, spongy moss and leaves. Inside, I could see Raindrops and a few other dogs. One of them was about the size of a small cat, but most of

the others were larger than a wolf. I sprinted over to greet Raindrops, who was turned the other way not realizing I was there. He spun around. a startled look on his face.

“Oh, it’s you!” he exclaimed, letting out a sigh of relief. “They said that we should spend the night here, and I couldn’t think of anything better to do. I’m so glad you’re safe!”

“So, who are these dogs?” I questioned.

“Finally, I thought you’d never ask,” huffed a large black dog rising from the moss and shaking off his thick tangled fur, sending clumps of moss flying towards me. I ducked, narrowly avoiding getting smacked in the face.

The smaller dog sprang to his feet with enthusiasm. “His name is Bear and that’s Pine but I’m Spark,” he yipped, still bouncing. “Don’t mind Bear. He gets a little cross at times, but that’s nothing to worry about.” He wagged his tail furiously. “So, what’s your name?” he asked, tipping his head to one side.

“Mine’s Teddy,” I responded.

“I assume you’ve already been introduced to Star. She’s the alfa dog of this pack,” squeaked Spark.

“Oh! She didn’t tell me that!” I exclaimed, perking my ears in surprise. Then my stomach growled. “Do you guys have any food?”

“Of course! It’s right over there,” said Spark.

“What brand?” I asked.

“Huh? What’s a brand? Is that like some type of squirrel?” questioned Spark while licking his lips.

“Why would it be a squirrel? That has nothing to do with food.”

“Umm... What do you mean, squirrels have nothing to do with food?” Spark looked at me like I was crazy.

“I mean, they don’t have anything to do with food. Well I guess they do *eat* food but—” I started to say, but just then Star stepped forward.

“Remember, house pets don’t eat animals,” she reminded Spark.

“What?!” I shrieked. “You eat squirrels! That’s disgusting!” I yelled, running back and forth trying to clear my senses.

“Well, what do *you* eat?” asked Spark.

“Umm... we eat dog food,” said Raindrops, finally joining the conversation.

“What is—?” Spark started to ask, but Star interrupted him.

“Ok. I think we should all go to bed now,” she said.

I sighed. *Yay*. Finally, after such a long day, I could go to sleep. With the food forgotten, soon all you could hear were the soft snores from six sleeping dogs.

The next morning I sprang up when I heard leaves rustling beside me. I stepped out of the nest, careful not to disturb anyone. Once I was in the open I looked up to see Star beside me.

“Oh, good you’re awake,” she mumbled around a wad of green in her mouth. She placed the wad beside me. “Sorry if I startled you but I brought you a drink.”

I peered down at the bundle at my feet and realized that it was a clump of moss soaked in water. I bent down to lap the water up. It tasted delicious. It was crisp and cold and smelled of nothing but the outdoors.

“Well, we should probably try to find your house now,” woofed Star as I straightened up from lapping at the moss, having completely dried it.

“Okay,” I responded, shaking myself off. “Let’s go get Raindrops and go back to that road where you saw us.”

She nodded and pushed her way through the bush.

“Raindrops,” I whispered. “We’re going to leave now.”

He stood up and stretched. “Bye, guys!” he woofed.

Spark sprang up. “Wait, you’re leaving already?”

“Yep,” I say.

Spark ran over to Pine and Bear and licked them awake. “What now?” groaned Bear, his ears flicking irritably.

“Teddy and Raindrops are leaving now,” said Spark. Pine and Bear rose to their feet to say their farewells, and then we set off into the rising sun.

After about thirty minutes of walking I could see the road where I was rescued by Star. I took the lead and headed back down the side of the road, careful not to get too close to oncoming cars. Luckily there were not too many.

Then I heard something. It was my family! They were calling for me. I turned back to Star and said, “Thank you so much for bringing me this far, but that’s my family calling. Raindrops and I should be leaving now.”

“You’re welcome! Feel free to come back and visit any time,” called Star as Raindrops and I raced off towards my family.

As we got closer, I could see that Mom was standing on the front porch calling for me. I started to race toward her but then slowed down a bit. What if she was mad? Then, just as I was about to flee, she spotted me and let out a cry of joy. The next thing I knew I was in her arms licking her face. But too soon, that moment was over. She set me back down, looking very stern.

“Teddy, you caused a lot of trouble. I don’t know what we’re going to do with you,” said Mom, sighing. “Well, I suppose we should get you inside now, huh? You’ve probably had a long day.” Then she gasped. “Is that Raindrops?”

I peered behind me to see Raindrops still standing there, shifting his paws nervously. Mom rushed over. “We must get him home immediately,” she said. First, she carried me inside then picked up Raindrops. I watched her carry him to his house and put him inside from my position behind the window. I turned away from the window and smelled a slice of pizza on the table. *Mmm... It smells so yummy. I wish I could have some, but I don’t think she would be very*

happy with me if I stole it. Those wild dogs had to catch all their food, but mine is just always there when I'm hungry.

The front door creaked open as Mom stepped inside. "Ugh. I left my pizza on the table again. Teddy probably ate it. Oh! It's still here! Maybe Teddy didn't notice it yet." But then she glanced down and saw me staring up at the pizza with a longing expression on my face. "Aww. Do you want a treat?" she asked.

"Yes! Yes! Yes! I love treats!" I barked.

"Ok. I know," she said, laughing.

"Please! Please!" I continued.

"Only if you stop barking, though," she said sternly.

I instantly stopped.

Then Mom bent down and handed me a treat, looking surprised at how quickly I stopped barking. "Good boy!" she said.

After that, the day continued as it usually did, except for all the extra hugs from the kids. Soon I was watching the sun set behind the clouds. Then Mom walked over. "Okay, it's time for bed now, Teddy."

She climbed up the stairs and I followed, climbing into my warm bed and settling down. Soon after I closed my eyes, I was asleep.

The next morning, I awoke to barking. It was Raindrops! I raced down the stairs and saw Mom standing in front of the door talking to someone and holding Raindrops' leash.

"Thank you for taking him today," said Raindrops' owner. "We'll be back tonight."

Then Mom closed the door behind her and grabbed my leash too. She stepped into the garage and opened the car door. I glanced up at her hopefully.

Mom sighed. "Teddy, if you want to come with us you'll have sit here and not get up until I tell you to, okay?" said Mom.

I cocked my head and stared at her as she patted the seat. *What does she want me to do?* I took a hesitant step toward the car. She urged me on, looking surprised. I hopped up on the seat.

The corners of her mouth lifted. "Good boy, Teddy! Now stay."

I sat there like a good dog as the car passed building after building till, finally, we stopped. She opened the car door, and Raindrops and I leapt out of the car as Mom tugged on the leashes. Then she turned to me and said, "It's your first time here, but you've been very good today, and I think you deserve it."

I wriggled with anticipation. *Wow, being good really pays off.*

"Welcome to the dog park," finished Mom.

Gnat the Cat

A Limerick

There once was a cat named gnat
He was really quite small for a cat
But he hopped on a fence
With lots of suspense
And fell off with quite a loud splat.



Crazy Bella

Our dog Bella was sleeping so peacefully on the floor that even when I threw a ball at her she did not even twitch.

“Danielle, it’s time to leave now!” my Mom calls.

“Okay,” I call back. “I just wish Bella would wake up. She’s always asleep,” I complain.

Then we head out to shop at Trader Joe’s.

Once we get all the ingredients for the lasagna we’re going to make, we head back home. When I step into the house, Bella immediately springs up, heading straight for me. Unfortunately, there’s a table in the way. She jumps onto the table, knocking glasses over in the process, and springs off tipping the entire table over in the opposite direction. I step back to avoid getting trampled as she belly flops in the spot I was just standing, still wriggling with excitement.

“Bella!” I yell “Stop!”

She does not stop. Just then, Mom steps in. “Danielle, we have to go back to the store; I forgot the sauce.” She looks around the room in horror. “Oh no! Bella, what did you do!? Ok, first we’ll clean this up, then we’ll go get the sauce,” she says.

After we clean it up we head back out, making sure to lock Bella securely in her cage.

On the way there I say, “So, I guess Bella is not always sleeping. Not when we first get home at least.”

When we finish shopping, Mom informs me that she has to drop me off at home so that she can go to the library and return some books.

When I walk in the door I hear a loud crash. I walk upstairs to find that Bella has broken through the bedroom wall just to see me as fast as she could.

“Bella!” I yell. “What are you doing!”

She just cocks her head at me. I bend to clean up some of the mess but when I do, Bella simply pounces on me, wriggling. Then I hear the garage door opening.

Oh great, now Dad is home. Bella is going to get even more crazy. I groan.

Suddenly Bella lunges forward. I try to grab her collar but it snaps in my hand.

“Bella, stop!” I yell.

Then she makes a flying leap down the stairs and falls into the basement (because she landed so hard she broke the floor). Desperate to get upstairs, Bella smashes through the laundry room wall, crashes the door at the top of the stairs down, and comes flying out of the basement. Just as Dad parks the car in the driveway and gets out of his car to get the mail, Bella gets so excited that she starts spinning in circles.

Unfortunately, the room is too small and Bella starts tearing down the walls of the entire room. Just as I start for the front door, the ceiling falls down in front of me.

Oh no! Now I can't get out!

But then Bella bursts out the front wall of the house and jumps onto the lawn.

I quickly follow behind the hole that she made onto the green grass just in time to run to Dad and watch the entire house collapse.



Dear Editor,

I love your magazine! I have NINE dogs at home and your tip are always so helpful. I think everybody who owns a dog should subscribe to your magazine.

I did have one question though, and since you know so much about dogs I figured you would be the perfect person to ask! I was wondering if it would be the right choice to get a cat. I know in your magazine you mentioned that your dog has to have the right personality to get along with a cat. At the park my dogs get along with the cats but I wanted your opinion first. Also, one of my dogs is slightly shy around some cats but I assume she would get used to it, right? Thanks for your help!

Sincerely,

Christina

Dear Reader,

I am glad you enjoy my magazines, and I hope you will continue to read them with pleasure. I am glad that many of my tips have been useful, and I love to hear feedback and questions.

About the cat, if you are sure all of your dogs are fine with cats except for the one, I would suggest that you take her along when you are looking at cats and also ask the owners if they know how well their cats get along with dogs. Once you pick the right cat (don't worry if there are slight signs of nervousness in either cat or dog) I would suggest asking to take the cat with you for a while and introducing it to one dog at a time. Also, remember the dogs could get territorial if you bring the cat to your house so the park (or a fenced in backyard) would be optimal. Hope this was helpful to you and your furry friends.

Sincerely,

Danielle Hewitt

Honey's Sticky Mess

The dark tunnel ahead loomed over me, threatening to suffocate me. Paws trembling, I turned tail and ran, voices calling after me.

A few hours later, I was waiting to hear how I'd done on my assessment.

"Ginger! Ginger!" everyone cheered.

Ginger padded up to the stage, head held high, to claim his award for passing the annual assessment. I gulped. It was my turn next.

Did I make it? I thought as Ginger weaved through the crowd back to his owner.

"Honey! Are you ready?" asked my owner, Marissa.

I nodded and strode down the aisle. *Could this really be it? The year that I finally pass? Marissa would be proud of me at last. My performance felt pretty good, I mean the tunnel was super dark, and I'm sure none of the other dogs could do it. That thing was terrifying. It was definitely a good idea to go around that one, no matter what Marissa thought of it.*

I shuddered at the memory of her rage after the performance. After, she had given me a good long lecture on trying my hardest and not skipping *any* obstacles.

I padded up to the mat that we were meant to stand on, and I turned around to face the audience.

"Honey is five years old and has been attending Sure Paws for the past three years. Today I'm ashamed to admit that she will be attending yet another year. She scored twenty-seven out of the available fifty points."

A disappointed sigh swept through the audience. I crouched down, ashamed of myself. The test had not even been very hard. I had been the first dog so far today to fail. I walked back down the aisle, tail between my legs, and returned to my owner's side. She sighed and stroked my ears.

“It’s ok. We can work on it,” she murmured.

Over the next few days, I hung out at home dreading Friday when the training would start back up again. The training was utterly terrifying. I did not even get the point. What was I learning? How to walk on a see-saw? *Well, that’s certainly useful*, I thought sarcastically.

“Come on, Honey,” called Marissa. She was relatively young. Her hair was in dark brown waves and contrasted beautifully with her pale skin and emerald eyes. “It’s time to go.”

I sighed and heaved myself out of my bed. My golden brown coat remained spotless, for the short hairs never tangled. Marissa clipped on my leash and headed to the car with me following. My paws dragged with each step I took.

When we arrived, the instructor’s dog Maddie demonstrated the skills with ease. She easily wove her way through the poles, cleanly and swiftly leapt over the jump bar, crept her way along the teeter-totter and finally slipped into the tunnel. After a moment’s pause, she gracefully sprang out the other side and walked back to her owner’s side. I stared at her in awe. I had not seen a single error!

“Okay,” said my instructor, glancing down at his clipboard. “Honey, you’re up first.”

My mouth went dry. I padded up to the first section, the poles. *Ok. I can do this. This one’s not so bad.* Left, right, left and right. I felt my body swerve, keeping to the rhythm. I glanced back to see how I had done. Yes! They were all still in place. Then I realized I was heading straight for the jump! I was too close to make it and was forced to duck underneath. As I slid out from underneath the bar, I heard the instructor’s whistle. I slowed.

“Honey, you never skip a section. That’s minus fifteen points!” yelled my instructor disapprovingly.

I bowed my head. I was terrible at this.

“Well, what are you doing? Start over!”

I crept back to the start and wove through the poles, knocking over three of the twelve. When I reached the jump, I slowed a bit, focusing. I bunched my muscles and sprang. The jump

wasn't quite high enough and my back leg hit the bar, knocking it loose. I clumsily crashed to the ground in a heap of fur.

"Stop. Honey, I can see that you're just not trying right now. Just go home and you'll try again tomorrow," said my instructor firmly.

"But I was trying," I whined.

"Honey. You will try again tomorrow. Go on."

Marissa clipped on my leash, and as we walked toward the door, I felt the other dogs' gazes burning into my fur. I held my head high as we exited.

The next day when it was time for the training, I would not get out of my bed. Marissa tried everything but I would not budge. There was no way I was going back there again.

Marissa eventually gave up. All day long I sat there in my bed. I did not even eat when it was time for dinner.

The next day Marissa was gone early in the morning. She had left a bowl of food and a bowl of water out on the floor for me. I quickly scarfed it down. About an hour later Marissa returned.

"Hi, Honey. I talked to the trainer and he said that maybe agility is just not the best option for you."

"But wouldn't that be a waste? I have already spent so much time on agility," I whimpered pawing at the floor.

"So, I was thinking maybe a good option would be training to be a therapy dog," Marissa continued.

I perked my ears a little. *That wouldn't be bad*, I thought. That was what I'd wanted to be before I started doing the agility. When Marissa decided I was going to do agility I'd tried because I wanted to make her happy, but it didn't make me happy.

"I've noticed that you have not really been improving with agility, and I think maybe it's just not your thing. So, what do you think?"

It sounds great, I thought. I woofed my approval.

“Okay, I’m taking that as a yes,” said Marissa smiling.



Thinking of Owning a Dog?

I think dogs are great pets. Dogs are sweet, loyal and energetic. But sometimes they can be a little too crazy. Some dogs will bark all the time or even just run around all the time. I have two dogs at home and both are super energetic. They are constantly barking out the window, asking for food and wanting to go outside even though they were just out two minutes ago. I love my dogs so much but they make me crazy. My dog Bella is super smart and knows a lot of tricks but when there is a person walking past the house she goes crazy. I still think dogs are totally worth all the barking though.



My Puppy Snickers

An Acrostic

Super speed

Never ending barking

Impossible to stop

Crashes into everything

Kills toys

Even plays with leash

Running forever

Spins around

Christmas Morning

Two Cinquains

Downstairs

Hidden under

A tree three

Puppies cuddle and children

Shriek

Children

Scramble and slip

Spotting the brown basket

Filled with yipping puppies and more

Cuddles



Black and White

A Ballad

There one was a zebra a wise one at that

He lived in his herd way out on the plain

He was the best the wisest of all

He knew this because he knew everyone's name.

Everyone gathered to hear his great speech

For he knew it all and there was no doubt

He was the best the wisest of all

But back in the crowd there was a loud shout.

Who are you to speak out loud

To speak for us all as if you're a king

Now answer me this what colors are we

Black on white, white on black or some other thing?

Now at this moment the crowd went silent

What will he say? What will he do?

For a very long time that zebra thought

Breaking the silence there was a loud boo.

So you don't know it all you'll have to go ask
You're lucky for I know just the zebra to ask
You'll journey far, farther than ever
And then when you reach him he'll give you a task.

After long days of travel, he reached the wise one
The task was a small one, tiny at that
He must find a mirror then bring it to him
That was the whole trial, it was small as a gnat.

Now the task was completed, the old zebra gazed in
Wondering what in this mirror he'd find
I see it now you are all orange on blue
It seems to me friend, you are all colorblind.

