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Jake's Adventures

(Oct. 21, 2005) Jake's cat, Polly, has been at the center of several adventures – scrapes that usually ended badly or at least expensively for our correspondent. In this episode, he finds the cat transfixed by a visitor from the wilds. -- *Bill Heard, Editor*

'Wiley Coyote' Gets a Tongue-Lashing from Animal Control Officer Bob

By JAKE SATIN-JACOBS

Our cat, Polly, has never missed a meal in her life. The minute my feet touch the floor in the morning, her breakfast bell begins to ring. In the afternoon, when I return from work, she is always sitting by the door, salivating.

So, you can imagine my confusion when I entered the house one day and Polly was not in her designated place yowling for chow. I'm not really sure what she does when I'm gone, but I thought she might have gotten smacked on catnip and nodded off or gotten involved in the destruction of some furniture and lost track of the time. It could happen.

And so, I called her name several times, but no answer and no Polly.

I couldn't imagine that she had gone outside. I've only seen her leave the house a couple of times since a coyote grabbed her off the porch and carried her across the canyon last year. I was sure she was in the house, but I began to think something horrible had happened.

Perhaps she had remained too long in her automatic litter box and the rake apparatus had crushed her or she'd become disoriented chasing a paper clip across the living room floor and run into a wall and knocked herself unconscious. It was odd that Polly was not there and whining – and I was uneasy.

Staring into space

I went downstairs thinking that, if she were alive and within a mile, she'd appear the moment I opened the cat food can. As I descended the stairs, I caught sight of her sitting in the dining room, staring into space.

Reassured that she was at least alive, I left her alone and prepared her food. I set it on the floor in the laundry room, knowing there was no drug or spell that would keep her from moving as soon as she caught a whiff of the real

deal. But she never budged. She just sat and stared, intensely.

I approached her. She looked up at me, briefly. But just as quickly, she jerked her head back, focusing on something in the distance. I estimated the direction of her gaze and looked out the French doors onto the patio.

At first, I didn't see anything and then it came into focus: curled up on the green and gray rug just outside the door and apparently sound asleep was an almost full-grown coyote.

I walked toward the door. The cat never moved – just leaned from side to side to look around me and keep the coyote in view at all times.

Was that the end of it?

As I opened the door, the coyote jumped up and ran away, as did Polly, though they were headed in distinctly different directions. It was interesting and weird, but that seemed to be the end of it.

Then, the following morning, my wife, Patti, was at home on flex time and she called me around nine.

"You're not going to believe this," she said. "There was a coyote curled up on the rug on the patio right outside the open French doors."

"Where's the cat," I asked.

"No idea."

"Any fur or blood on the patio?"

"No."

I breathed a sigh of relief. "She's probably in the linen closet or under the bed. She saw him yesterday."

"It was unbelievable," said Patti. "He was just lying there."

"What did you do?"

"I threw the mail at him."

"Good move!" I said. "Even coyotes hate junk mail."

"Why is he coming onto our porch?"

"It's possible," I said, "That one of the raccoons scrawled a message on the floor of the canyon like, 'For a good time, go to Jake's.'"

He was back again

An hour later, there was another call. Wiley Coyote – as we dubbed him – was back and sleeping in the same spot. Patti had chased him off by threatening to turn on the vacuum cleaner. Another hour, another call. I finally suggested that she call Animal Control.

Wiley returned for a fourth visit of the day and shortly thereafter an Animal Control officer arrived to capture and remove it. As Patti spoke with Officer Bob, she noticed that he had a few facial ticks and made occasional grunting sounds, but didn't think much of it.

He explained that he was going to get one of those "noose on a stick" thingies

and capture Wiley Coyote where he lay sleeping.

But as Officer Bob stealthily approached the dozing canine, pole extended, loop hanging, he was overcome by his tics and experienced a full-blown Turret's Syndrome episode, screaming uncontrollably, "You #\$\$%^%%#\$#\$**\$!!!"

Before Officer Bob could regain full control of himself and his pole, Wiley Coyote had avoided the loop and hit the road back into the canyon.

Polly suddenly reappeared, looking both pleased and hungry.

Now, one might think that, considering his affliction, animal catching was not the absolutely best profession for Officer Bob. Interestingly however, Wiley Coyote has never returned. Perhaps coyotes hate obscenity even more than junk mail.

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