

Goose at the Gallery

Goose stood still, all four yellow paws on the platform, listening for the distant vibration of the rails. There it was, coming closer. When the train pulled in, doors opening, he was first onto the last car. He jumped onto the last seat on the right, dropped his small bag from his jaws, then crawled under the seat to hide, like a slouching fox. Curled up, eyes slanted open, he listened to passengers shifting and settling.

As soon as the train left the station, he quickly hopped up, back onto his seat. The others stared at their phones, barely noticing Goose, too busy with Plunk, Zap, or Unscramble to pay attention.

Goose curled up in the seat, pretending to sleep. When he heard the ticket checker enter the car, he jumped back down under the seat. When the checker was gone, he jumped back up and settled in for the rest of the ride, everyone still too busy looking at their phones to notice him.

Getting off at the station was easy. He dashed out first and stood by the door, wagging his yellow tail, waiting for the door to open. He was first off, then sprang out of the station lest anyone notice him.

First thing he did was find a quiet alley, drop his bag, out of which splayed his hamburger, which he gobbled up in about two seconds, leaving the paper wrapper behind.

Off he ambled to find the art gallery. He smelled his way there. He knew how artists and collectors smell, from the lady he lived with. Artists, with the sweat of joy, love and doubt. Collectors, with the scent of perfume, expensive clothes, and new shoes. It was a fun jaunt, sniffing, his eyes looking all about along the way. He was onto some artist, who was alone and smelled like paint. As the street filled with more people, they were not far away.

The big door to the gallery was open onto the street. Must be the opening! Lucky him. People would be busy talking. He knew he was so cute, too. He put on his best wagging bum and tail. His open, happy face looked up at everything. People would bend all the way down to pet him and make goo-goo eyes at him, scratch his ears. Some of them would drop a cracker with cheese.

What he was looking for were all the paintings in the series named after him: A Dog Named Goose. A small series of small works with a myriad of colourful animals bumping up against each other and of tangled together in the small space of the painting. There was a lion, a chicken, a rabbit, a wolf, an alligator, a mouse, a stork, a frog, and even a camel. Some human faces too, but the humans were not colourful. Ahhh, then he spotted the yellow dog! The dog was jumping up at a goose that was dawdling along on her floppy orange feet. The jumping dog looked just like him. It seemed to be trying to kiss the goose on her bill or perhaps bite it. Oh my! But it was a perfect depiction of himself: Goose! A perfect, graceful, yellow doggy. The best!

He shook his head really wildly, his ears flapping around his head like helicopter blades whacking him in the eyes. He panted and jumped up and down. Then he barked at himself in a great display of joy! Some guy picked him up, looked at him, then looked at the painting, then asked him his name. He could only bark, one loud, happy, throaty bark!