

The Adventures of Jayne *~ the cat who was a dog ~*

Reg Down
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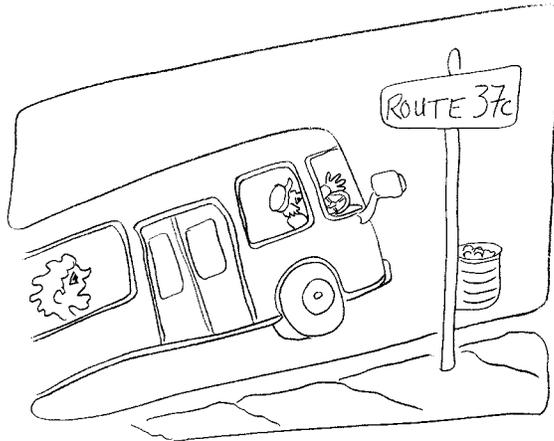
Jayne's Wandering and her prehensile Tail

Jayne wandered wherever she wished: uptown, downtown, aroundtown and abouttown and it was on such a wander that she showed what her tail could do. She happened to be standing beside a bus stop when the bus came along. It was the 37-C which runs to the center of town. The door opened, Jayne hopped in, and off the bus drove.

The driver grinned at her. "I bet you don't have a ticket," he said.

"No," said Jayne, smiling.

The bus swerved, hit the curb, leaped into the air and bounced back onto the road. The passengers screamed, an old lady fainted, and the driver got control of the bus again.



"Sorry about that," said the driver to the passengers. "I thought that cat talked to me," and he gave Jayne a funny look.

Jayne didn't say a word. She leaped onto the front dash and watched the world whiz by.

"Everybody off," cried the driver when they got downtown. "This is as far as I go."

Everyone got off and Jayne was the last to leave.

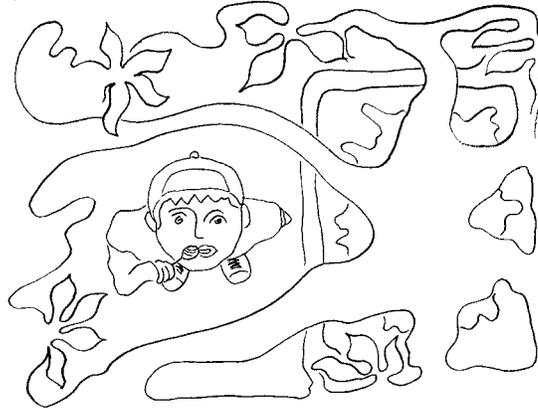
"Bye," she called to the driver as the door closed.

The door flew open and the driver rushed out—but Jayne was nowhere in sight.

Jayne came to a tree; a large tree with spreading, leafy branches. I think it was a chestnut. She climbed to a high branch and lazed and lounged and loafed. She gazed at all the life on the street. She watched the cars drive by, the ladies with funny hats, the men growing bald and dogs being led around on a leash. By and by a girl with a double ponytail stopped below and peered up.

“Look, Mama,” she said, grabbing her mother’s hand. “A stuck cat.”

A boy stopped to look too. “She does look stuck,” he said, sucking on a lollipop.



“Definitely looks stuck,” said a shopkeeper, coming out of his store.

“Here, kitty, kitty,” called the boy, but Jayne refused to look at cat callers.

A crocodile of schoolgirls came snaking along. With them were three teachers and Professor Knoall, the headmaster. They stopped too.

“Here, kitty, kitty,” called the schoolgirls. “Come on down, kitty, kitty.”

The teachers wrung their hands. “Poor thing. Poor kittykins,” they said. “She must be frightened to death.”

“What curious terminal markings,” said Professor Knoall, peering through his spectacles.

“I’ll call the fire brigade,” said the shopkeeper, going into his store.

“Wee-wah, wee-wah, honk-hooooonk!” screamed the brazen fire truck, rushing down the street. It stopped by the tree, blocking traffic. Out ran four firemen carrying a ladder. Up the rungs climbed one.

“Here, kitty, kitty,” called the fireman, holding out his hands.

Jayne climbed higher.

“Here, kitty, kitty,” said the fireman, climbing closer.

Jayne went out on a limb.

“Here, kitty, kitty,” said the fireman, climbing nearer.

Jayne walked to the end of the branch, the very, very end where the fireman couldn’t get her. She wrapped her tail around the branch—and fell over.

“Oh!” gasped the teachers, clasping their hands to their chests.

"Oh!" cried the schoolgirls, jumping back.

"Yikes!" shouted the firemen, grabbing their trampoline and holding it underneath her.

"I've never seen a cat do that," exclaimed the shopkeeper. "It's dangling by it's tail!"

"How? How?" cried all the schoolgirls, mystified.

"Well, I'll be a Maine lobster," said Professor Knoall, stroking his goatee. "That cat has a prehensile tail. How unusual."

"What? What?" cried all the schoolteachers.

"A prehensile tail," repeated Professor Knoall, "such as many New World monkeys, opossums, anteaters, binturongs, kinkajous, harvest mice, New World porcupines and the tree pandolin have, and which can be used for grasping, climbing, seizing and even hanging upside down by, as we see in this here cat."

"Oh," said all the schoolteachers.

"Ah, ha!" cried the schoolgirls, holding one finger upright in the air. "A prehensile tail. Now we know!"

They waited and waited, but Jayne didn't fall, nor did she come down. She dangled by her tail and swung back and forth in the breeze. After a while she closed her eyes. Soon she began to snore. Everyone continued to wait, but Jayne didn't come down until past midnight and the street was deserted.

That's how people found out that Jayne had a prehensile tail.

