



The Normus Expedition



CONFEDERATION COLLEGE
Office of the President,
1100 Frontenac Drive, Thunder Bay, ON

Professor Edward Normus
Dept. of Natural History
Confederation College,
Kenora Campus

Dearest Edward,

It is my absolute pleasure to inform you that your request for extra-departmental funding to facilitate the Normus Bat Expedition has been approved!

Personally, I didn't think it had a chance but one of the College benefactors, namely Tom Bunghole of Bunghole Pharmaceuticals, has come to the project's rescue. I didn't think Tom had much interest in the animal world (beyond testing his products on them) but it seems that he has a keen interest in the Normus Bat (*Chiropteran Normus*). Still proud of you, Ed, for discovering the species in the first place and having your name set as the genus. A great moment for both you and Confederation College.

The College has also obtained the necessary release forms to allow you take your two T.A. students with you, namely Jillian Perdue and Alex Poffanburst. I'm sure they will both be over the moon when they learn that they will be accompanying you on the expedition to explore the habitat of the Normus Bat in the Kenora Mountain Cave system. I understand that Jillian is a first-rate photographer and Alex is equally skilled in spelunking.

I have received word that our old friend Bob Ackerman over at the MNR has agreed to act as your guide up to the first cave entrance. That's wonderful. Now, be careful up there Ed, I understand that those cave systems can go on for miles and are extremely hazardous. And we aren't as young as we used to be.

Good hunting, old friend.

Delbert Ozgard

(President, Confederation College)

President Delbert Ozgard

Confederation College
1100 Frontenac Drive,
Thunder Bay, ON

Dear Delbert,

What wonderful news, my old friend! I have been dreaming of this moment since I was a young, idealistic natural scientist fresh out of university! I have spoken with Jillian and Alex and they are both equally as excited as I am. Arrangements have been made with Bob Ackerman to act as our guide for the entire expedition down into the caves. We leave at dawn on June the 6th. Bob has some “other business” to attend to while we will be exploring the caves, but I don’t think it will interfere too much with our schedule.

Now, I know that a bite from the Normus Bat can be lethal, but just between you and me; I don’t quite see the need for Bob Ackerman to bring along the heavy weaponry and explosive devices that he and his team will be arming themselves with. Still, if it means that years of research and hard work can finally pay off in actual live case studies, then so be it. Let the adventure begin!

I will send weekly reports to you, as soon as we get settled in. Once again, I am thrilled about this wonderful news! Thank you.

Yours Truly,

Prof. Edward Normus

Dept. of Natural History
Confederation College,
Kenora Campus

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The Colonel

SENT BY COURIER



Col. Ray Rogers,
31st QOP,
Canadian Forces Base, Trenton

Dear Colonel Rogers,

It has come to my attention that during a recent training exercise at Canadian Forces Base, Trenton, a recent recruit, one James Bananarama, took off his entire uniform and ran across the target practice field during weapons drill, injuring himself critically, and causing the death of four penguins and Dandelion Freeman, a local Trenton female performance artist. Just what kind of exercises are you running down there, Colonel? Have you lost your mind? I have also heard reports that your rabidly loyal soldiers refer to you as “The Mamba Queen”, that you’re planning an assault on the PMO with hot air balloons and that you only eat bugs.

I demand an explanation at once.

Yours Sincerely,

General Harlan Trotter,

Commanding Officer
3RD Army Group,
Camp Boredom

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General Harlan Trotter, Commanding Officer
3rd Army Group,
Camp Boredom

General,

You may not have noticed this but there is a war going on. And I don't mean some suck-ass, middle-eastern policing action. I mean a war for the hearts and minds of the Canadian people. And unless I have a hundred hearts and a thousand minds hanging off my wall by Valentine's Day, I will shoot myself in the head. That is a goddam promise.

It is all very well for you high and mighty top brass to sit in your ivory towers eating off silver plates, drinking golden beer and crapping poetry, but I, on the other hand, am taking things very seriously, sir.

Do you really believe that the Stephen Harper who sits in power today is the same man that ran for prime minister 6 years ago? I think you would agree that he most definitely is not.

Gunnery drill-instructor Bananarama on the other hand, is (was) a good man trying to do a difficult job under extraordinary circumstances. Would it surprise you to learn that in Afghanistan it is common practice to distract enemy gunners by running in front of them naked? It is the oldest trick in the insurgent's playbook. They did it to the Russians and they did it to us. Bananarama was just trying to simulate the conditions that exist there. And maybe save a few lives. I say that makes him a goddam hero.

Also, do you know why the air force spends billions of dollars developing stealth aircraft? Because they are quiet, general! Now you tell me, what is quieter in the air than a balloon? Huh? What would you rather I do, invade Ottawa riding wolverines?

Anyway, this is the last correspondence you will be getting from me directly. I am taking the entire 31st Queen's Own Pony regiment and heading up river. Don't even try to follow me. You may not like what you find. The horror, the horror...

Yours truly,
Col. Ray Rogers, 31st QOP, Deployed
(*This Stream Cont'd on Page*)

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Master Bearsky



Yegor Zatsanough (Master Bearsky),
56 Stressa Strassa,
Somewhere in Russia

Dear Master Bearsky,

We have viewed your audition tape for a place in the opening ceremonies of the 22nd Winter Olympic Games. As the co-coordinator of cultural programming for all the live events throughout the entire Olympics, your tape was brought to my special attention.

Normally, we Russian people like to look modern and with having the new ideas, but we can't deny fact that dancing bears have been an iconic Russian contribution to the Circus Arts. Unfortunately, your bear seems to be underfed and possibly dangerous in large crowds. I counted on the videotape four moments where your bear Candy slipped from the chains from being too thin. If Candy wasn't so tired I'm sure she would have completed her swipe at the toy rabbit you stuck in her face instead of falling over from exhaustion into that water dish. To tell you the truth, I didn't see much dancing and when she did it was on her back to an old Madonna tune. Can she not dance to something more up to date? I would suggest maybe something by Pussy Riot but that would only get me shot. If you can get Candy back in shape with some upbeat numbers then you can be there on that Magical Money-Making Night, Master Bearsky. So far, you are our only dancing bear act so don't let us down!

I must confess, I once saw your act as a small child and now that I see this tape and the state of your bear this I want you to know... That you can relive your glory days back when you played for Stalin's kids. Does that surprise you that I know about you, Yegor Zatsanough? I have done my research and you were once the greatest Russian performer ever. You played Ed Sullivan. I remember cheering you on as a small girl in our hut in Krasnodar.

Until space travel, you were the Russian peoples only hope. You and your first bear Cotton. Who would ever have thought Cotton would have been eaten by Candy, and in front of the Persian king? No wonder you were exiled to the culturally barren landscape of Los Angeles, California. When the seventies ended you came back and your bear, once a talented, massive symbol of Russian superiority, in a Mama Cass kind of animal, had turned into a Mia Farrow, rodent-like creature that could barely stand up.

I don't know how you are going to pull this off Master Bearsky, but this is your chance to be at the bestest Olympics ever until possibly the next one. Russia will be back on top and you will be there again, standing with us all beside your hip-hopping bear, hopefully shaking her ass, (but securely fastened on the opening day fire-

float.) So, get that bear back to looking fierce and think about this... Unless you are in the Politburo, who wants a wrinkly old bear anyways?

One thing also I should be mentioning; your son is in a gulag and unless this bear does Russia proud he will die before the eternal flame goes out.

Keep me posted on Candy's progress.

Dominika Buttabinka,
Co-coordinator,
Cultural Programming,
Russian Olympic Planning Group

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Dominika Buttabinka,
Co-coordinator, Cultural Programming,
Russian Olympic Planning Group,
71 Pukalot Street,
Moscow, Russia

Dear Dominika,

Thank you so much for remembering me. I do not go out in person very much these days. My bear Candy takes up a lot of my time. Injecting it, questioning it, sometimes giving with the food. So difficult. But I have read your letter, and I feel it is my duty as a citizen of Mother Russia to perform on greatest stage in world! The Winter Olympics! I will train my bear Candy, so she is in peak performance mode!

There is a great bit I used to do on the Tonight Show with Johnny Carson. The bear is drinking a glass of water and then I shoot her. So funny! I will recreate that. Another bit I did on the Andy Williams Show is, I get audience person to come into cage with me, bear drinks glass of water, and then I shoot the audience person! So funny too, because the audience thinks I will be shooting bear. So funny!

I have just one small request. Can you pay me in bottles of Putinka Vodka? For tax purpose only.

Yours truly,

Yegor Zatsanough

(Master Bearsky)

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Quantity Inn

Dear Paul,

My divorce finally came through! I got a letter from my lawyer this morning. Oh darling, I'm so excited. It means we can finally be together without all that sneaking around. Remember when you said that if I ever got divorced from Riley, you'd take me on that cruise to Guam? Well, sweetheart, that dream can now come true. I've already bought a new sexy bathing suit. (No top!) And a ton of sunscreen. The only thing stopping us from leaving tomorrow is that I am still waiting for the results of my uterine exam. Evidently, I have two uteruses and the doctors want to be sure that I'm not an alien or something, before they let me travel.

Oh Paul, I love you deeply. As deeply as my uteruses. Uteri? I can't wait to hear from you.

Until then, your sweetheart forever,

Jennifer

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Dear Jenny,

So much has happened since we last corresponded. My goodness, where should I begin? How about our dirty weekend that we spent in Guelph? For which, I'd like to point out, you still owe me for your half of the room. (I would have paid for the whole thing but when you work for the government you can't write things off like you used to. Thank you, Mike Duffy, for that.)

Firstly, I'd like to point out that I lied about what I do for a living, I am not the regional manager of a Canadian fertilizer manufacturer as I previously stated. I currently work for a secret organization embedded within the governments of the world which is involved in covert operations that impede their success using seemingly unrelated events. Like the electric fire in the orphanage in San Paulo and the gigantic mattress sale in Guam. Which is why I suggested we go there... great mattresses.

But you must understand that as an agent of this super, super-secret group, I am reluctant to disclose how big this thing is. Remember when you said, "This is bigger than the both of us"? And then you went to kiss me, but you fell off your chair? I thought, "What do you know about all this?" Because our group is so big that you and I are nothing compared to how massive it is. It is so massive that its acronym alone is longer than the coast of Chile.

In fact, I can tell you now that this thing that we had was case file #4526klf-87nbz. Now I know that any relationship is based on honesty so here goes. My mission was twofold. You are one half of these unrelated events that I was sent to affect. The first half was to create havoc in the financial markets of Europe, specifically Iceland. The second was to convince some fat chick to get a divorce.

As you can see we can close file #4526klf-87nbz as a booming success. Please don't ask why I did this. I have heard that many times before. Someone, somewhere, has a reason and it is not ours to ask why. We are all players and you played along very well. Unwittingly, of course. I don't think you would have been up to the challenge if you knew, so it worked out better in the end. Congratulations are in order.

By the way sunscreen *is* used to poison us and you *are* an alien. And, just so you don't waste any more of your doctor's time, you also have two vaginas, one of which is in the back of your head and you are pregnant so, just to warn you, headaches like you have never felt before will start at around 38 months.

Anyway, I am sorry that this will be our last correspondence since I have a new assignment involving a heart transplant patient and a starving bear. Any further questions or enquiries can be sent to:

Ramid Headly, Corresponding Coordinator, Department of Unrelated Activities and Whatnot,

A Division of **C.S.I.S.S.I.S.S.I.P.P.I.** (Canadian Secret Intelligence Service Specially Investigating Situations Suggesting Inconspicuous Persons Perpetrating Intrigue)

Love,

Paul



Dear Occupant

Dear Occupant of Apt 311

My name is Otis Langford, Jr. and I live directly above your apt in 411. I am very sorry to have never made your acquaintance, but I am a war veteran with plastic legs and don't get around much anymore. Recently, I have become bed-ridden from gangrene which I got fighting for this country and our precious way of life. The life that you yourself seem to enjoy to its fullest while heroes like me must listen to you play the movie 'Hairspray' over and over. I mean come on! Last night you played that movie nine and a half times! Nine and a half? You even stopped it and then played it from the beginning before it ended the first time. Did someone come over and miss the first part? A new friend? One that hasn't been over in the last 15 days and happened to see this movie that seems to be played every day on a goddamn loop? What gives? How can anyone like a movie that much?

I'll tell you something, I have seen some terrible things in my life; I have seen rape and torture and pure evil on the fields of war, but if I hear John Travolta sing another tune I will take this Glock that I keep beside my bed and I will blow my fucking head right off! So, if you happen to hear something rolling around on the floor, it's the head of a fucking patriot who has finally had enough!

For your information, I have sent a copy of this letter to my lawyer, I hope you have insurance.

Otis Langford, Jr.

* * *

Otis,

Hey, chill dude! I don't even really occupy that apartment, okay? I just keep it to take my ladies to, okay?

Sorry about the hairspray thing, man. The movie was in the player that I keep for watching porn mostly and Sir Barks a lot, my guard dog. Keeps stepping on the remote because it's on the floor next to his water bowl. I have to keep a dog because I keep getting break-ins cause some fucks found out I wasn't there most of the time.

Anyhow, I have took the disk out of the player to watch Sweaty Bums 5. So there shouldn't be any problems now. So no need for lawyers, okay dude?

Sorry to hear about your plastic nose man.
Where did you fight, Nam?

Chris

(This Stream Cont'd on Page)

China

Roger Dunston Peabody
c/o Lucky Starving Bear Prison
Yu Tu,
Quong Dong Province, China

Jan. 7, 2014

Dearest Father,

I am writing this letter with the hope of finally being able to reach you. Mother is still sick and has not been out of bed for the last few days and as I have now turned 17 and am “the man of the house” in your absence, I have taken it upon myself to try to help you.

It has been four years since you disappeared but don’t think that I have been sitting idly by and not caring. I have been in constant touch with the Canadian Department of External Affairs and, despite their somewhat scant efforts, it seems they have tracked you down in China.

I can’t imagine what it must be like to have been held all this time in a Chinese jail, but I suppose it must have been awful. The consulate officials have been trying to get in to see you for some time apparently, but the best they could accomplish so far is getting the address for the prison so that I could send you this letter. (I can just see the letter now, blacked out here and there with redactions.)

What is your crime? What on earth did you do to so enrage the Chinese authorities? When will they release you, do you think? We have so many questions, mother and me.

I have been saving up all my money from my job as a busboy at Chez Fux and with any luck will soon have enough to buy an airline ticket to Beijing. Apparently, it is then just a short four-day panda ride to Quong Dong Province and the town of Yu Tu where the Lucky Starving Bear Prison is. So, perhaps, with luck, it won’t be long before we see each other again.

Until then, father, take heart and know that we are all praying for you. (Except Uncle Daddy Rupert, that is, who I think would be just as happy if you never returned. I hate him!)

Your loving son,

Alex

PS I am also writing to a Mr. Duk Ping Pyow, the warden of the prison, to see if I can persuade him to improve your conditions somewhat. I’m sure they must be awful.

* * *

Alex Peabody.
13 Melon Street,
Toronto, Ontario,
Canada

Dearest Alex,

My God, how wonderful it is to hear from you son. I want you know that here in

buttons

I hope that explains everything. If you have any questions please ask

to

his

with

I you.

Dad

(This Stream Cont'd on Page)

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