

Another Delphic Oracle – A Fractured Fable

The farmer was disgruntled and his half-hearted neck-wringing only damaged Charlie’s vocal cords. However, his aim was true and Charlie was buried up to his wattles in the pig’s muck.

The sun was setting when he came to his senses. Slowly extricating himself, he wondered what he should do. Hearing braying, he remembered the old donkey and waddled his way to the barn, thinking as fast as a chicken could think. He rolled in straw trying to become presentable, only managing to trade straw for poop, and now looked like a punk-rock chick!

It took four tweets to get the donkey’s attention.

“Mike, I’ve decided to offer you a deal; it’s the *deal* of a lifetime. Best deal ever. You’ll never have to work again. Just imagine that, never having to work again. Of course, there are plenty of good animals that still work, but not you, no more.”

The donkey was confused. “Hee-haw, I didn’t know I had a name.”

“Of course you do. It’s there on your stall door.” Charlie took a step back and looked up at the door. There were plenty of scratches. Unwilling to admit that he couldn’t read, he continued, “Yeah, Mike P. The ‘P’ is there clear as day.”

Having learned well from his father Fearless Fred he went for the presumptive close. “Here’s what we’re going to do. We’ll let the word get out that you’re the new Delphic Oracle.”

Mike P. fluttered his lips; not working sounded good to him.

Charlie took that as a “yes” and explained how Mike would stand at the door of his stall and the other animals would come to ask questions. “It’s simple. I’ll be behind you and tell you what to say. And as payment, they’ll all have to give us, I mean *you*, food.”

The ass agreed. Since Charlie’s last “Cock-a-doddle-doo” got him literally in deep shit – he could now manage only feeble tweets, he was determined to sleep until noon. The word put out was “Mike P answers all your questions, Friday starting at 1. Bring food.”

The animals were curious. No one had ever heard of a Mike P. One old ewe thought her mother knew a Nancy or a Kabin P – “They were always telling everyone what to do” – but bleated that she wasn’t sure. They started lining up at 12:55. The bunny was first. The farm dog, Deranje, was next. All the other animals decided to stay away.

Charlie told Deranje to wait and led the bunny to the donkey’s stall.

“Before you ask your question, what did you bring for food?”

“I’ve a carrot that I saved from supper.” He held it up in his lucky rabbit’s foot and before you could say, ‘Jackie Robinson,’ the donkey got hold of it and swallowed it.”

Charlie was miffed. This was not what he had planned. “OK, what’s your question?”

“If we wear masks, how will we recognize each other; we’ll all look like badgers.”

Charlie whispered to the donkey, “Tell him that we’re all equal on this farm and no animal should wear a mask. This is a free farm!”

The bunny hopped off happy that he didn’t have to wear a mask.

“Next.”

“*Next!*”

When no one came, Charlie scurried to the barn door. No one was to be found, not even the dumb dog who had dreams about bringing about world peace.

PROVING that sometimes it’s only dumb bunnies that will believe what an ass says.

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