

INDIGO ANIMAL



by Rue Harrison©

In this episode [works & conversations #26, April 2013], not only is LSRI's first summer session abroad about to kick off, but Animalair is introduced.

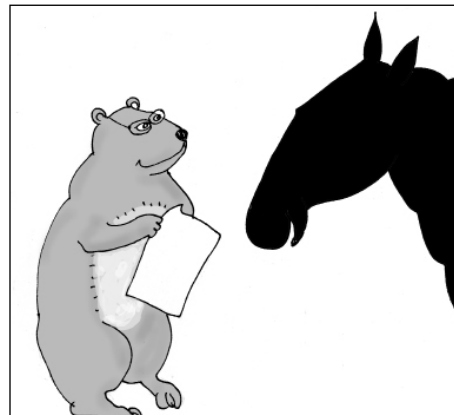


Thinking about LSRI's first ever summer session abroad, Dame Eleanor reviews the roster once more. She's worried. She will be taking a few students to Rome including Neville Hare, who has been added by LSRI's director, Orange Bearcat. Dame Eleanor knows Neville's job will be to keep an eye on everything and report it all to the director. But having Indigo Animal along as co-leader will be very helpful. Indigo will be shocked by the larger world, but Indigo is solid, intrepid, discreet, and above all, committed to the Classical! Indigo is good at tolerating anxiety and already has some experience venturing beyond the known territory.

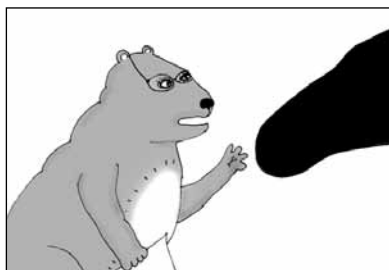
And besides, muses the marmot, as counterintuitive as it may seem, Indigo has a natural ability to blend into the surroundings.



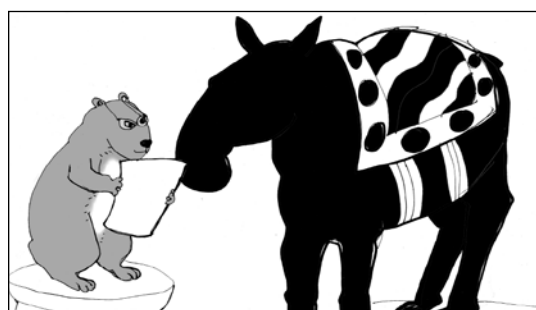
Later that day Indigo Animal and Dame Eleanor meet for a planning session. The marmot shares some of her thoughts. "So, Indigo, since reality has set in regarding the difficulties of accomplishing the summer session abroad and bringing everyone back in one piece, I think we should reduce the number of participants to five, including you and me."



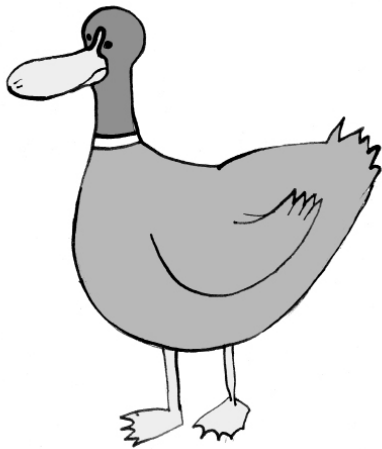
Not having gone really *very* far into unknown territory, Indigo Animal is pleased to hear this, even though Dame Eleanor has just made an executive decision and they were supposed to be co-leaders.



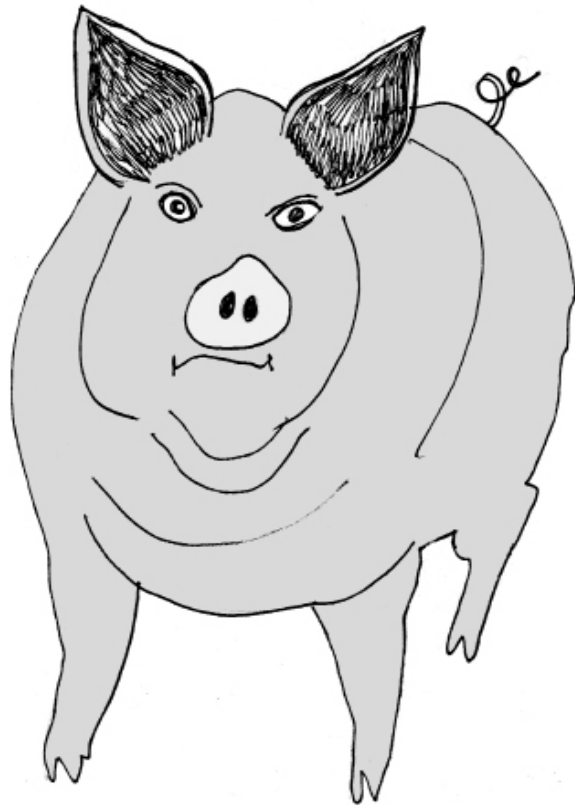
Dame Eleanor continues, "Let's review the list. We're stuck with Neville Hare. Orange Bearcat insists. Actually, a number of rodents dropped out after they heard he was coming."



Looking at the list, Indigo Animal feels that they will need two very self-assertive animals who can stand up to Neville Hare.



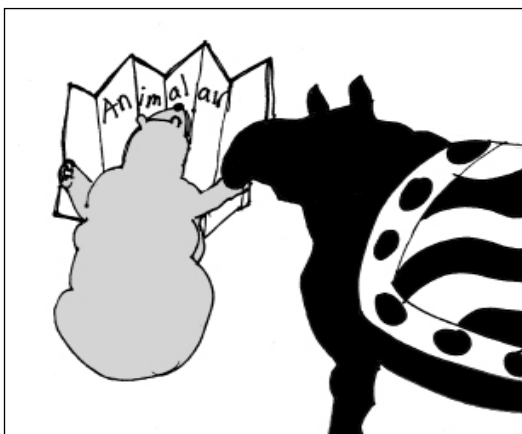
"I think we should pick Leonard the Mallard," Indigo states forthrightly, trying out the role of co-leader. "Leonard may have a lot to learn about lawn statuary, but he is naturally self-confident. Maybe it's his background in migration."



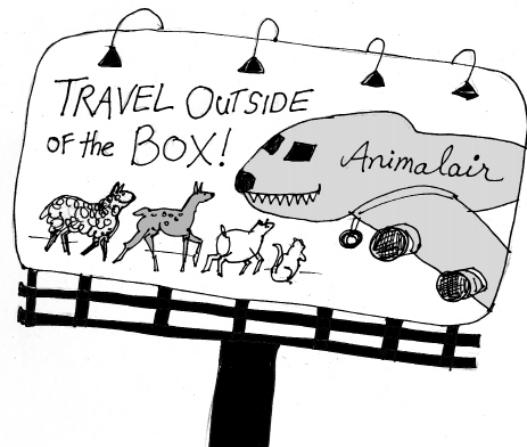
"Oh, Indigo—I am so glad you agree with me. See, I already have him on the list! So now I will put forth my candidate—Alonso the Fig. He is also very new to our field, but pigs are highly intelligent. He won't be intimidated by Neville."

"I have conversed with Alonso and I agree with you, Dame Eleanor," says Indigo. "He can sniff out a bogus argument a mile away!"

"And he's large!" Dame Eleanor concludes.



Having quickly come to an agreement with Indigo about the roster, Dame Eleanor moves on to the topic most concerning to her—safe travel. Producing a glossy brochure, she says, "I've purchased a travel package through Animalair. Have you heard of them?"



"I've seen the billboard..." Indigo Animal ventures. "Right!" barks the marmot.



"All we have to do is be packed and ready the morning of departure!"



"They'll provide a van and pick us up right in front of Orange Bearcat Hall."



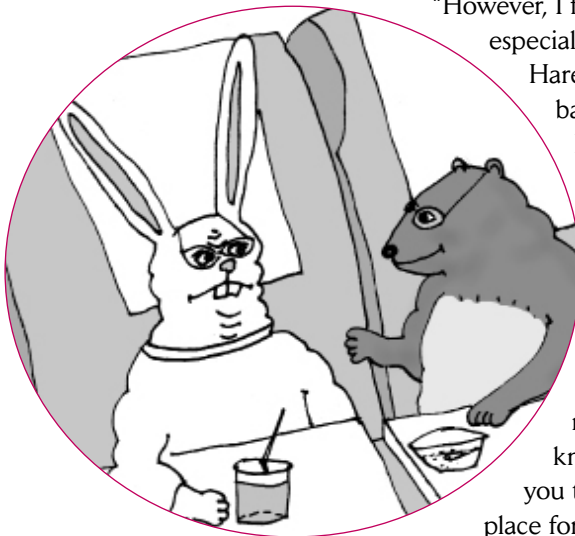
"They'll drop us off next to the Flying Tigers terminal."



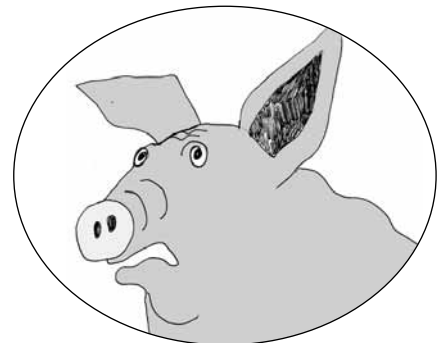
"Animalair has separate areas for predators and prey, so we all can relax in total safety and comfort!"



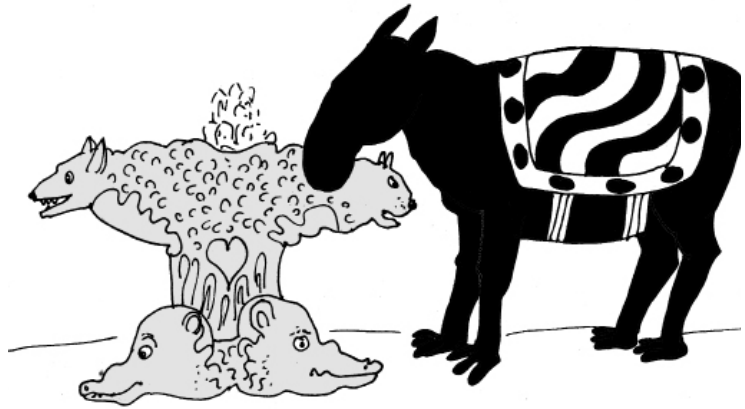
Here, Dame Eleanor pauses and with a little cough indicates a new topic. "Indigo Animal, I am really pleased that you have been appointed co-leader of the summer session abroad program. At first I was taken aback. But Midori Frog felt very strongly about it. And then Bearcat gave it his stamp of approval."



"However, I feel that I need to be especially attentive to Neville Hare. He will be reporting back to Orange Bearcat, I am certain. So Neville and I will be seated together in Rodent First Class. It only cost a little more. And the seating they have for larger animals farther back in the plane is more than adequate. I know it is a stretch to put you there, but it is the only place for Alonso...."



"...and I am concerned about how he might react if he and Leonard are seated by themselves. Really, Indigo Animal, your presence can be so reassuring."



Dame Eleanor jumps spryly from her column, a sure indication of the meeting's end. "Aren't you excited, Indigo? Now get a good night's sleep! The van arrives at 7 am sharp!"

NEXT STOP ROME! (to be cont.)

Letters

This current issue (#25) has me falling in love all over again. Betty Peck is at the top of the list. And thinking of friends who are teachers, the choral director I work with sometimes, and our 10-year-old grandson who lives in Crockett, CA. We ordered the film about Morten Lauridsen, too. How would I know about these things without w & c? I think my ceramic artist friends will be thrilled by Wanxin Zhang. I sure am.

—Chandrika Taylor, Monticello, Arkansas

RE OUR INTERVIEW WITH JOAN DI STEFANO [issue #24]

I have never read such a lengthy work on the computer. At 72 the eyes don't function that well for such a long time. So much for that. As a retired Mennonite pastor who has been challenged to live a simple life, I found your story [Joan di Stephano] captivating/challenging/incredibly meaningful, etc. I hope there are many individuals who for some reason will be quietly led to your story. I found it encouraging in a world that moves so rapidly that one can only catch fleeting thoughts of the past, present, and future.

Joan, I'm grateful you came upon someone who listened and then believed you had a story to tell. I find my simple thank you for sharing your story to be woefully inadequate in expressing my thoughts this evening, But even with that limitation, let me say, thank you.

—Frederick Obold.

We welcome your letters and love hearing from you.

