

No Dogs Allowed

"No. Dogs. Allowed." said Zaphiel, syllables chiseled,
"I repeat, for the last time—we will not permit dogs in heaven."

For several years now, humans had been showing up, canine companions in tow.

Two months later, Zaphiel stewed to the sounds of yips and laughter. Somehow, those humans managed to get their way ... again. And it was God's fault, as usual. The first time that Zaphiel had seen one of the dumb furballs flopping about through the heavenly pavilions, he hurried straight to the divine presence, all in a panic over how it had gotten in. Only to discover that the rot began straight at the top. Just look at the humans, they're so happy. And it can't possibly be that much trouble to make work. Ugh. That was two months of frantic edits to the metaphysics of heaven, just to keep the idiots *happy*.

Humans. Oh dear, they just couldn't be trusted with anything.

They were gifted a perfectly fine creation. Given what they needed in order to hunt. Or gather, nothing to stop them from doing that, either. The only other thing they had to do was avoid all those sharp-toothed animals that were put down there for them to share creation with.

But take your eyes off the humans for just one minute, and there they went, cuddling up to an alpha predator like it was their own little child. And it worked! That was the most galling part.

All the machinery and potential of the universe churned to keep heaven errorless, as it was meant to be, and yet still the divine plan erupted from its seams, never quite managing to keep together. But these humans, they saunter up to the nearest ball of muscles, fleas and fangs—without even an inkling of an idea why—and still, without fault, affairs always managed to work out for them.

Zaphiel could just picture some human now, clutching one of those furballs to their chest. The mutt would be thrashing about, or scratching behind its ear, or shaking out its mangy coat. ‘But it's just so *cute*,’ the human would intone. Cute, that word always seemed to crop up around their most particularly stupid exploits. Damn them.

You know, it shouldn't have worked in the first place; the divine plan being supreme, and all. Dogs weren't part of the plan, and wolves being a thing to stay away from most certainly was. How did it happen? Well, when he put the question to God, the eternal being merely mumbled something about the fractal nature of its own creation, and the spectrum running from certitude to expressiveness, before shrugging and wandering off. This was, incidentally, the exact same response that Zaphiel had previously received when he began making inquiries about the platypus.

By the time that cats began showing up, Zaphiel couldn't manage even an ounce of surprise.

“I suppose that they’ve gotten you lot wrapped up in this ‘human’s best friend’ racket too,” he said, when the first one sauntered up to the gates.

“No,” it answered, eyes wandering off in search of food, “we're just in it for the perks.”