

# *Wyoming, the Hub of the Wheel* *... a journey for* *universal spokesmen*



SPECIAL THEME: ENCOUNTERS

ISSN 0884-2930

\$6.50

ISSUE NO. 8



## ON EARTH AS IT IS

I am in heaven. Roger is my name. My time on earth was short. So will be my story.

The first place was a lot like here. There were dark warm spots to sleep, and bright open spaces to play, and plenty to eat—milk and meat and grass if our bellies hurt when we ate too much.

But it was not always like that. In between places I sat in a box. The wind brought many smells so fast, I barely had one before another passed in. It made me queasy; I think it kept me weak, though I guess this did not show. The ones I lived with did not know.

The place we stayed longest was huge and empty, with no special spots, no niches to nest in, except at night where they lay. But I began to feel then that between them the warmth was of bodies only. When she approached, he moved over. When he touched her, she rolled away.

Out the window I could see where others played. But there were no trees, and the smells were of rot. Up those steps Willy came, skinnier than me. I shared my food and Willy got fat, but then hid behind bureaus and under chairs if ever they came near. Besides Willy would never play with me.

She came to me to moan sometimes; then she left. I missed her caress. He stayed on, spoke to me some; once I saw him cry. When she came back, they cornered Willy. I rode in her arms, and he carried the box to a place that smelled like fish. They opened the flaps, and Willy looked about. Without looking back, Willy ran out into a hole between two walls. I almost followed, but she held me fast. It was my turn in the box.

The place I came out was dusty and grey all

the time. Unlike anywhere I have been before or since, no one ate or slept there ever. She came, left food, came and went again.

When he returned, I went with him. His new place was dark. Dogs barked below. I saw him at night, by electric light. I slept next to his head. She stopped by, but never for long.

Then one day we left, she and I, for a clean quiet place where light came in every day and spread out across smooth wooden floors. Sometimes someone slept with her; sometimes she was not at home; but sometimes I had her all alone.

I was feeling pretty bad by then, a weakness all through me, oozing, chewing. Sometimes when I woke and put my face to hers to check was she awake, a part of me lagged behind, curled up where I had slept. I ate dirt from the pot, tearing flowers and stems. She did not seem to mind. When he came over, they talked and I was stroked. Flat out on cool wood was better than in the sun. I lay in one spot all day long. She gave me meat, cut up in bits. But I had even quit eating dirt.

I went in her arms through noisy smelly streets to the small crowded room. The others were in pain; some seemed afraid. I put my heart behind one last struggle, but she was too strong; I was too tired. They laid me out on cool slick steel. It was so cool. I felt the prick and that was it.

Now I watch from above what she does, where she goes. She has been with him again in a house by the sea. I came in a dream. She lifted me up, and I went all limp and stiff. Bones broke through my fur and flesh. She tried to put me in a box in a wall. I escaped from her arms, walked wobbly away. She woke up and spoke. He listened and agreed: they would not want me back as a sack of bones.

All the way home she cried off and on. But soon she will see, I am not really gone. Just my story is done.