

More

by from_n_to_h

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Ahh, the joy of AU!

More than a Pet

Chapter 1 of 1

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Tonks waited in line, knowing that her slowly, subtly changing hair was throwing off the Muggle customers. Her Weird Sisters T-shirt was most likely not helping. But she wanted a Muggle pet, and her father assured her the exotic pet store, Smoking Dragon, was the best place to find a good Muggle pet. Tonks knew she should have an owl, but after knowing that letters could be delivered by other birds, she wanted one of those other birds. Maybe a pet would help ease the lonely ache of losing Sirius.

It was her turn in the queue. She stepped up to the front. The salesperson looked at her hair for a moment, then shrugged and looked at Tonks with the dead-pan expression that has been perfected by Muggle high school students around the globe.

"Yes?" The salesperson must have been trying to be an emotionless robot. Tonks was fascinated.

"I want a pet. I want a pet that flies. I want a flying pet that can..." Before Tonks could continue, the salesperson was bored and pointed towards the back of the store, saying:

"Tony, birds, back left." With that, the salesperson returned to the perfected dead-pan look and stopped speaking. It seemed obvious that she expected Tonks to do the same. Tonks walked to the back of the store, looking for someone bearing a name badge that said Tony. She was still looking when she found him. Not Tony, the bat. It was beautiful. It was furry and it had wings. It was hanging upside down. This, of course, was the clincher. No one else she knew of had a pet that slept upside down! Thoughts of finding this strange Tony had flown from her head. She had unconsciously placed both hands upon the glass wall separating her from her prize and was almost leering, her smile was so wide.

"Umm, can I help you?" A short, chubby girl with long red hair and thick spectacles was looking strangely at Tonks, wondering if she would actually need to use her squirt bottle on this odd, slightly eerie customer. After all, it was usually reserved for the cats. Tonks broke out of her bat-induced stupor.

"Are you Tony?" Tonks asked, not actually taking her eyes off the bat. She did, however, take her hands off the glass and tried to replace her leer with a less disturbing, somber expression.

The girl sighed. "Yeah, I accidentally told the stupid kid up front that was my name as a joke. And the idiot actually believed me. That was a month ago. So, sure, I'm Tony." She was not any less aware of Tonks at the moment. Her hand was still resting on the squirt bottle. "Did you want to take a closer look at Franklin?"

Tonks paused. Franklin. It was a perfect name. "Yes, I think I would. Why is he named? I thought most times, Muggles got to name their own pets." Tonks mentally head-

smacked herself. She was so wrapped up in this new Franklin, she'd forgotten all about the fact that Muggles didn't called themselves that! The small girl that was apparently not named Tony didn't seem to notice, so hopefully she was clear.

However, Tony did notice. But seeing as Franklin had already been stuck in this pet store for over six months, and this woman looked like she already loved him, Tony let the potential slight about her hair being muddy-colored slip by unannounced. "Yes, most of the time they do, but he's been here six months, and I couldn't just keep calling him Batboy. Someone threatened to report me for copyright infringement. You can change the name if you really want to. Most people do." Tony fished some keys out of her apron pocket and opened up the lid to Franklin's pen. Once Tony was holding him for Tonks to look at, Tonks realized that one could also hold this fabulous animal upside down. How fabulous! "You hold him with two fingers pointing. This gives him something big enough to hold onto. As you can see, he tends to enjoy viewing life from an inverted perspective, but if he becomes ill, you will have to carry him like an infant to take him to a vet or lay him in an animal carrier. Bats tend to like closed, dark areas, as they live in caves in the wild. Franklin himself is a giant fruit bat, which means his diet is made up of overripe fruits, specifically ones grown in tropical areas like bananas, papayas, guavas, and mango; but he will eat almost any fruit that is ripe enough. While he can get his nutrients from just the pellets you can buy here, most people that want to love and spoil their giant fruit bat will also buy overripe fruit from the local grocery. It can usually be purchased right cheap, as no one else tends to want it. Giant fruit bats also need perches, a hanging water bottle, and a pan underneath the perch is a good idea for easier clean up of the guano, which for the most industrious, can be molded into a clay and worked with to produce pottery. Just don't let anyone eat off said pottery unless they know what they're getting into."

Tonks nodded. "May I hold him?" Tony smiled and handed Franklin over to his new owner. What more could be said? It was love from the first time he hung from her long fingers. For both of them.

Author's Note:

Batboy is a creature feature of the tabloid Weekly World News, and have I heard rumors of a musical?