

Contest Traditions

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“The judges have made their decisions.” On the TV a parade of felines marched across a stadium field as the announcer spoke, their best features on display for all to assess. On the other side of the room a gray fox sprawled across a couch, lazily watching the screen while waiting for the next program.

In the apartment kitchen nearby a coyote was unscrewing the top of a bottle of watermelon wine. “I don’t get these “pet shows” Jim.” He said as he poured the pink fluid into a pair of lapping bowls.

The fox raised an ear in his mate’s vague direction, “something about how the Ancients used to hold these competitions to see who owned the best looking or best behaving domesticated animals. So their descendants have these competitions to honor them to the present day.” He started to sit up as the other canid entered the room with the bowls. “Can’t say I don’t partially agree with you though Tom, they look pretty silly to me.”

Tom handed the vulpine a bowl before lapping at his own drink. One of the competitors caught his eye and he lifted his muzzle for a moment to stare in puzzlement at the gray-furred cat with black spots, tufted ears, a short tail and feet like snowshoes that was walking up to the stage. “And the prize for Best in Show goes to Mittens Torsen.”

“I didn’t think lynxes were domesticated?” The coyote commented as Torsen lifted a hand befitting his namesake to help the judge place a medal around his neck.

Jim shrugged. “Maybe, it seemed like the Ancients made pets of just about every species.” He lifted his bowl for a drink before adding, “I once saw a picture of one petting a cougar, why not a lynx?”

“And he got into a domesticates-only competition that was big enough to pre-empt “So You Think You Can Howl?” on that grounds? Huh.” Tom considered the next set of winners on the screen and an alcohol-fueled idea suddenly came to him. “Hey, maybe we could enter a dog show then?”

Jim snorted into his drink at his mate’s ludicrous suggestion. “Tom, maybe a fox or a coyote could win “Best in Show” at one of those competitions. But it isn’t going to be either one of us.”