

The Schmooze

Stories with a Yiddish Twist

PET PRE-NUPS

The Yiddish word for “pet” is “der gletling.”
A “hunt” is a dog; a “hintl” would be a puppy.
A “balibt hunt” is a beloved dog.

by
Marjorie Gottlieb Wolfe



Syosset, New York

Jews love their dogs. This is the age of the B-A-R-K Mitzvah! The late Joan Rivers celebrated her dog, Spike’s Bark Mitzvah on her daytime television show. Spike wore a tallit and a kippah for the show.

Allan Alda (Hawkeye Pierce in M*A*S*H) wrote a book titled, “Never Have Your Dog Stuffed And Other Things I Learned.” When Alda was a child recovering from Polio, his parents bought him a dog named “Rhapsody.” When the dog passed away, they took him to a taxidermist on Hollywood Blvd., and had him stuffed. It took six weeks and when they pulled off the brown butcher’s paper he was wrapped in, the dog was totally unrecognizable. The dog sat in the living room near the fireplace. When visitors were afraid (“dershrokn”) of the dog, they put him on the front porch (“ganik”). The trouble now was that deliverymen were afraid to make deliveries. They would leave the packages on the grass. Alda didn’t want Rhapsody sitting lifeless on the blue velvet board; he wanted the dog!

“aktrise” (actress), Malanie Griffith wants custody of her 3 dogs as she prepares to begin divorce proceedings with estranged husband, Antonio Branderas. According to TMZ, the 56-year-old feels she is the better (“beser”) catrer out of the two and believes that the dogs mean more to her. With the combined fortune estimated at \$50 million, the lawyers are sure to earn a pretty penny.

Petco would like dog owners to purchase pet dog toys, Good2Go winter (“vinter”) coats for dogs, dog beds, Old Mother Hubbard dog treats, and Four Paws Wee-Wee Pads!

And at least two more books were written about the “hunt”: “Yiddish for Dog and Cat Lovers” and “How to Raise a Jewish Dog.”

Mark Levenson, a New York writer, said, “My apartment has three [separate meat and dairy sections]: meat, dairy and--in a counter and shelf never used for the preparation of human food--canine, so that the non-kosher dog food can’t contaminate the rest of the kitchen, rendering it, too, non-kosher. Then on Passover, the requirements multiply as the prohibition against a Jew owning or using leavened products renders most--but not all--commercial dog-foods illegal under Jewish law, even when they’re acceptable the rest of the year.” Source: “Of Canines and Commandments,” by Mark Levenson, Torah.org.

Some Jews mark their animal companions’ death with a memorial service. There’s even a short story titled, “A Ghetto Dog,” which has a dog as a heroic figure.

Who gets the house, the cars, the dog (“der hunt”) and the kids when a divorce (“der get”) or a breakup (“tsebrekhn”) takes place? Prenups are not romantic. It’s always sad (“umetik”) to hear about couples going to splitsville.

If you are a pet owner seeking a separation (“tsesheydung”), divorce, or answers about animal (“khaye”) ownership rights, it’s smart to consult with an attorney “advokat”) regarding your legal rights to custody and visitation of your dog (“hunt”), cat (“kats”), or bird (“foygl”).

Pets--just like children--must deal with the changes in a marriage (“khasene”) or relationship. The love and security that your dog or cat has always had from you may be more important (“vikhrik”) than ever if you are getting a “get” or ending a relationship with a partner.

Some lawyers say pet owners--married or not--must prepare for the worst-scene scenario by laying out in writing what will happen if their relationship doesn’t outlast Fido. “Chohleh!” (Perish the thought!)

MARJORIE WOLFE’S two favorite dog quotes:

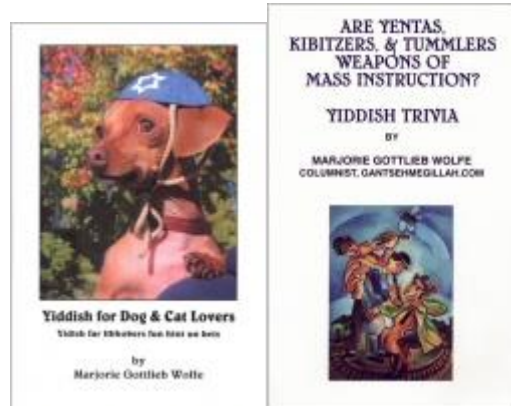
“My fashion philosophy is, if you’re not covered in dog hair, your life is empty.” Elayne Boosler

“Some dog I got too. We call him Egypt. Because in every room he leaves a pyramid.” Rodney Dangerfield

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Marjorie Gottlieb Wolfe is the author of two books:



"Yiddish for Dog & Cat Lovers" and "Are Yentas, Kibitzers, & Tumblers Weapons of Mass Instruction? Yiddish Trivia." To order a copy, go to her website: MarjorieGottliebWolfe.com

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