

It's a Dog's Life
so you might as well enjoy it!

Lessons in Assertiveness

by

Dr. Sparkus T. Mutt
(alias Sparky the Wonder Dog)

Edited by P.V. Alvarado

Illustrations by Andrea Alvarado

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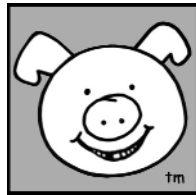
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Let those sleeping dogs lie!

To Mom

who took good care of all us little mutts and did the best she could to provide us with a good home and education. Without her loving care, I would probably be an HSD (homeless street dog), or as the French might say, "un chien sans domicile fixé."

Merci, Maman!

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Foreword

Most people think that the world is going to the dogs, and they are probably right. However, if we must live a dog's life, we might as well enjoy it; and that is precisely the attitude my dog Dr. Muttt has.

Sparky, nicknamed for his sharp wit and bright sense of humor, is a seasoned mutt with years of experience in the ways of the world, which just happens to be canine. He earned his dogtorate at the Canal Zone Canine College and did his internship as a canine therapist for the pet population near the Corozal Vet Clinic in the Republic of Panama.

Now that he is semi-retired from chasing garbage trucks, he spends his time answering letters primarily from disgruntled canines who seek his advice. He calls his letters *Lessons in Assertiveness*, but Sparky's wisdom is universal, humorous, and even touching - no bones about it!

Sparky has graciously allowed me to edit these letters and to include them in this special collection. May they help you to come out of the doghouse and enjoy life as you should!

P.V.A.
Panama
2002

Lesson 1
Perseverance

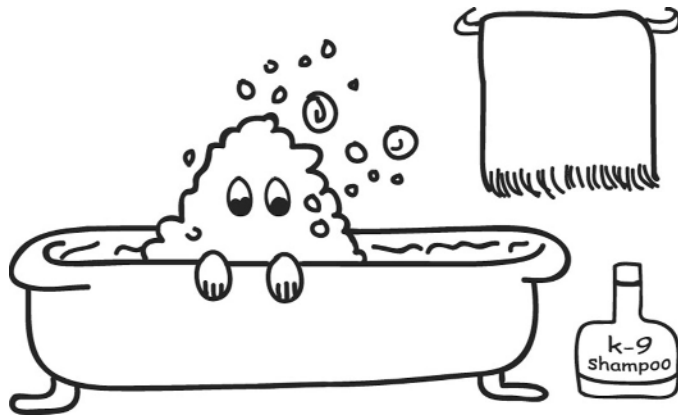
Dear Dr Mutt,

I'm a Fox Terrier, and I have a major problem. My master insists I take a bath every week!

I don't mind the bath part. That feels good. It's the shampoo I can't stand. It reeks of strawberries and roses!

Whenever we take our walks, all the dogs on my block make fun of me. They sniff and sneeze, and no girl dog will so much as give me the time of day. I need help fast. What can I do?

Stinky in Seattle



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Dear Stinky,

Have you tried making a break for it at bath time? As soon as you see your master coming with the rope and the hose, run and hide and don't come out until dinnertime. This might buy you a week.

Another thing you could try is to lie down and refuse to get up when he calls you, and don't get up no matter what.

If lying down doesn't work, you could shake like the dickens as soon as he wets your fur. Or you could jump out of the tub and rub yourself all over the sofa before he gets a chance to dry you. This way, the whole family will know what that shampoo smells like.

Whatever you do, don't give up hope. Eventually he'll get the message.

Sparky



Sparkus Tinaquer Mutt was born circa November 1987, somewhere in the Canal Area in the Republic of Panama.

As the third puppy in a litter of six full-fledged mutts, Sparkus never knew his dad, but his mom was a trooper. He earned his dogtorate from the Canal Zone Canine College and did his internship as a canine therapist for the pet population in and around the Corozal Vet Clinic.

He is now semi-retired from chasing garbage trucks and dodging thunder. Sparky, as he is affectionately known, dedicates his time to answering letters from disgruntled canines, felines and homo sapiens in his advice column.

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