

Peanut!

Grist From The Mill



Random thoughts, news and updates from Tom and Mascha

May 2009



Not much in the way of an update for this edition save to say our household is expanding again. It all started when Kiko (who is growing really fast) misplaced

(read:ate) her hairbrush and I made the mistake of taking the entire family into the pet store to buy a new one.

This particular store happened to have a whole

menagerie of animals and the boys really enjoyed looking around.

There were snakes, turtles, lizards and even a grotesque-looking chameleon the particularly captivated Emilio's

fancy because he had just completed an entire school project on chameleons. I found a suitable brush for Kiko and then thought it nice to let everyone spend a little time looking around.



was having a great time looking around at the very animated birds when one of them really caught my eye.

Mistake number two.

This particular bird – a Hahn’s Macaw – was very cute – and very spritely. Not only that, it was very people-friendly. He loved being preened and was very “cuddly.” I found Mascha and took her to see this really interesting bird.



Mistake number three – thanks for playing.

Mascha looked at the bird and I went off to try and find the boys who I was sure were causing all sorts of havoc in the store. I eventually found them talking to a gentleman who had brought in his 1.5 meter Komodo lizard! What a huge thing! Apparently she had been brought in for a manicure. We talked to the owner and the boys were fascinated and asked lots of questions. Soon enough we were back looking at the other reptiles that were now being fed by the

Mistake number one.

I strolled through the “small animal” section

and was admiring the very cute bunnies, guinea pigs and chinchillas and then

meandered into the bird section. I’ve always loved the parrot-like birds and

store staff. We watched the animals eat for a while and soon I realised that we had been in the store for almost an hour. I also realised that I had not seen Mascha for a while. I gathered the boys and we went back to the bird section to get Mascha so we could go home – with the new hairbrush.

Well, you can guess what happened next – Mascha was smitten. She just stood there with that look in her eyes and a 20cm Hahn’s Macaw perched on the end of her finger. I had seen that look before – she was in love. It took me about 10 minutes to separate the two of them. I paid for the brush and we drove back home. During the drive, we talked about the bird and how friendly it was and how Mascha had never known that about them. For the next few days

we talked about how impractical another creature would be – what with the puppy and the rabbit and the fish – not to mention the boat! But the look remained and so, as it was so close to our anniversary, I decided to surprise Mascha with a new addition to the family. I left work early and went down to the store to negotiate a better price and a cage and the bowls and the food and the... well you get the idea. Mascha and the boys were delighted when “Peanut” (it was given that name at

the store – and we kept it) arrived. Emilio and I set up the gargantuan cage, prepared the food and soon Peanut was in her new home. That was about a month ago and I must say Peanut has added a lot to our lives already. We’re still not sure if it’s a boy or a girl – it’s hard to tell with Macaws – but we all think it’s a boy.

Our friend Marit has come to visit from Holland and has now met both Peanut and Kiko. For a “cat person,” Marit has done surprisingly well and both the

animals have taken to her.

This is hopefully the limit of the pet population at 228 Mill! Now we have to figure out how we’re going to take our planned boat trips, not to mention a trip to Holland with all the new friends!

I’m reminded of a series of books I read as a child by Gerald Durrell. I’m now going to go on Amazon to try and find some of them. I have a feeling that some of his stories will have new meaning now that we are building “My family and other Animals.” – T

