Lower-order Mammals

by Darby Larson

Once upon a time there was a pack of country-music singing gophers on steriods. They were all male gophers and they loved their muscles and their masculinity and their beautiful singing voices. One was named Randy. The others were named other names. Names aren't important here except Randy's and Michelle's. Michelle was the armadillo the country-music singing gophers on steriods rode on. Randy played guitar and sang lead. He rode on Michelle's back strumming his guitar with his tiny, bulging, gopher arms, and the rest of the gophers sat behind him singing back-up. Along the road one night, somewhere in the middle of the desert, they decided to camp out and get some sleep. The next morning, they all woke up and discovered that they'd turned into humans overnight. They all looked at each other, admiring their large people muscles. Michelle looked at Randy's and all the men's penises. They found some leaves or something and got dressed and walked back out to the highway to hitchhike back to the city they had just gotten kicked out of for having been lower-order mammals, except Michelle who they weren't sure was even a mammal at all. Now, she was most certainly a mammal. They all were. While they stood on the side of the road waiting for a trucker or something, Randy tried to play his tiny guitar, but his fingers were too large and muscular to play a guitar made for gophers, so he threw the guitar in a bush nearby where a snake found it and slithered into it and fell asleep. A truck came along and picked everyone up. They all sat in the back, in the bed of the truck. There was no cover over them. Everyone's face got dusty during the ride. Michelle's face got the dustiest of everyone's. When they made it to the city, Michelle jumped out of the truck and shook all the dirt off her face which created a pile of dirt by her feet that an army of ants would colonize later that night. Randy and the rest jumped out also and shook their dirt off. They walked into the nearest bar and sat on barstools all in a row and ordered beers and talked about how much they missed being gophers, but that it was

Available online at «*http://fictionaut.com/stories/darby-larson/lower-order-mammals*»
Copyright © 2010 Darby Larson. All rights reserved.

nice to be able to come back to the city and be people this time. Randy asked if anyone had any steroids and no one did. They left the bar moderately drunk and walked to the alley behind the gopher gym they used to work out in and there was Paul, the steroid dealer gopher. Randy made a deal with Paul and got enough steroids for everyone, even Michelle. In exchange, they would all sing a country song for Paul. The usual payment. They began to sing but their voices were low and masculine and human. When they finished singing, Paul said, okay thanks, and walked away even though he was a little confused by their voices, but he was a nice guy so he didn't want to say anything. Randy and Michelle and the rest sat down in the alley and shot their steroids and looked up at the moon and were glad for their strength and for their good fortune of having beautiful singing voices. They fell asleep. Randy dreamed of buying a new guitar. The next morning, they were gophers again. Paul had returned and was sitting next to them as they woke up. Hello, he said, You are gophers. Yes, Randy said, Apparently we are. Then Paul admitted his confusion about their voices the previous night and asked if they'd sing another song for him, now that they were country-music singing gophers on steroids again. So when everyone was awake and ready, they sang a song especially for Paul, and Paul smiled while they sang because it sounded beautiful, just like he remembered.