

Henny Penny On Why She Crossed the Road

by Ed Higgins

Ok, ok, people are forever asking me, so why did I cross the frickin' road? Dumb-shit me, of course. Consequences waaay unforeseen. Maybe better to ask why that stupid-ass farmer built a chicken run right next to the road! Well, maybe not. Even a chicken has volition, I suppose. But, unquestionably, Mr. Fool Farmer didn't stake down the bottom of the chicken run's enclosure wire. It was immediately apparent to any half-brained hen she could slip under the loose wire running a yard or so back from the road's drainage ditch and get at some of the tempting spring grass and tasty bugs hidden there.

Well, the first thing I see as I'm scratching around in our supposedly fenced-off yard is this little speckled Aracana push against the loose wire bottom and out she pops onto the grassy ditch area. Another hen, a stout Buff Orpington (a full-of-herself blonde, that one), has her head under the bottom wire and is plucking juicy blades of green grass like you could almost taste them snapping off in her beak! I do a double-take as she too slips her chunky blonde self completely under the bottom wire and is conspicuously scratching and clucking away with the Aracana.

By now the whole flock of us are either staring in disbelief or rushing toward that breached fence to join in on the scrumptious edibles. Several hens are crowding one another to slide under the less-than-escape-proof barrier. Everyone's raucously pecking grass and scratching up sow bugs and spiders. OMG! next thing I see is this clucking Barred Rock hen yanking on a juicy earthworm she's got half out of the dampish soil. Near pandemonium. Three or four of us are all over her trying to snatch the dangling beastie from her beak. To no avail as she slurps the shinny worm down her throat, smirking.

Well, I go back to my own scratching finding an orange centipede in short order. Down it goes before any of the others notice. Those centipedes are spicy good too—but for a slight throat tickle from all those legs.

Soon, with 20 or more of us out there for past an hour the peckings are getting meager. That's when I notice another grassy ditch-side beckoning from across the road. Not to put too fine a point on it, I'm drooling for another centipede--or whatever's hunkered down in that luring new grass patch. Here goes, I say to myself.

Well, I made it halfway across the damn road when a eighteen-wheeler comes blaring down the asphalt like an Irish mastiff on steroids. Splat goes yours truly. Unpleasantly smeared onto the blacktop by a 16 ply-10x20 inch Michelin. Without so much as an eye blink or a horn honk from that bastard driver.

So you can kiss that old saw about wanting to get to the other side as total goodbye crap. I did want to get to the other side, sure, but there were ironies involved no matter how you fluff you feathers. It's the ages old conundrum of fate vs free will. Haha. . . or the agency of eighteen-wheelers! Fortuna's blind wheel, shit happens, etc., etc. I cluck-fucked up. Sometimes the sky really is falling on you.

