

# Letters to Conrad

by Miguel Lasala

Dear Conrad,

If you cannot control your dog's barking I'll rig up a loud speaker facing the general direction of your house, and every time your mutt starts howling at the moon, I'll start playing "It's a Small World (After All)" at top volume on the phonograph.

I still have your lawnmower. It's in the basement.

Most Sincerely,

Fred Hoffpauer

\* \* \*

Dearest Conrad Smith,

Happy spring! Last night the wife and I drank champagne til three in the morning. At seven sharp your hound sang us a lovely song til well past lunch. My hangover would like to thank Spock for his helping me find the edge of my sanity.

Sincerely,

Your half dead neighbor.

P.S. — I have friends in the Mayor's Office.

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Conrad:

There's been a streak of silence coming from your general direction. I can't tell you how this makes me feel. This morning I felt like a ten year old again.

Today, the wife and I called in sick and we have been playing Ping-Pong all damn day. In this kind of atmosphere, there's no time for work. Somehow we've decided to take in some regular exercise. This afternoon we drove down to the YMCA and signed up for a full year. Can you believe it? We're going to a Tai Chi class tonight.

Perhaps, over the course of the last few days, I've been too harsh on ole Spock. If the little savage feels the need to attack some helpless creature during the daylight hours, then good for him. Maybe we'd all be happier if we could let loose like that once and a while.

Just yesterday I felt like tearing into my waiter. Maybe next time I'm at the Club I'll give them a mouthful just for the hell of it.

Cheers, and let's have a drink one afternoon soon.

Hoff

\* \* \*

Conrad:

I've got a three thousand dollar video camera pointed toward your house. It's sits on a five hundred dollar tri-pod and I've been switching out batteries packs and videotapes around the clock for twenty-four hours. I've got enough footage to have Spock taken away permanently.

Conrad, you need to take a serious look at your situation here. I don't want to be nasty, but you can't win this chess game. I've got your queen, Conrad, and I'm doing awful things to her.

Let's talk in person. How about a drink?

Yours,

F. H.

\* \* \*

Dear Mr. Hoffpauer:

We are writing to inform you that your noise complaint has been investigated and the resident at 42 Prince Street was found deceased in his residence. The dog in question was also found on the premises malnourished and was taken to the city pound.

Sincerely,

Officer Patrick Solomon

Animal Control

\* \* \*

Dear Officer Solomon,

We managed to adopt Spock once he was stabilized. He is now recovering like a champ and driving us completely insane from within the confines of our very own walls.

Thank you for your letter.

Sincerely,

Fred and Nancy Hoffpauer

