

INSIDE AURORA: Full House

By Scott Johnston

It was a beautiful spring day (finally), and I was strolling through the Arboretum, enjoying the sunshine.

I was thinking about all of the times I'd run into the Easter Bunny here this time of year. He was usually in some sort of pre-Easter distress about missed deadlines, or supplies, or location challenges, or some other issue that was hindering his ability to deliver eggs to the kids of Aurora on time.

Since it was now after Easter, I figured that I'd missed him this year. No sooner had I thought that, when I spied a familiar furry figure slumped on a bench.

"Hi, there," I said, sitting down next to him, and looking over at the haggard expression on his face. "You must be exhausted from the big Egg Hunt at the Seniors' Centre last week end."

"Oh, it was busy," he replied with a sigh, "but now I'm in trouble."

"How can you be in trouble? All the eggs got hidden in time in the right place, didn't they?"

He nodded in agreement.

"And the kids had a great time?"

Again, a nod.

"So what's the issue?"

"Well, I needed somewhere handy for the eggs to be delivered to before I hid them. So, I had them sent to Petch House. It was empty, right next to the Centre, and it was just for a few hours."

He looked around nervously, and confided in a whisper, "I didn't tell anyone."

"Well, Easter's over now, and don't worry; I won't tell anyone. No one will be the wiser."

By his expression, I could tell my assurance wasn't enough, and there must be more to the story.

There was.

"The problem is," he continued, "there was an ordering mishap."

"Oh, they delivered to the right place," he added quickly, anticipating my question, "but they delivered too many eggs."

"How many more than you needed?"

He looked up with red-rimmed eyes.

"Ten times."

"Ten times!?"

That was a lot of eggs.

"I wasn't there! I didn't know!" he exclaimed, spreading his little arms wide. "And I couldn't send them back. I tried. And even being generous, I couldn't begin to give them all away last weekend."

"You mean?"

"Yes, Petch House is packed to the rafters with Easter eggs."

"Well, just give them away next year."

"Yeah, I'm going to have to, but until then, I've got nowhere to put them. The hole in the ground I live in is barely large enough for me."

"Maybe no one will notice."

"How could they not notice? The first person who opens the door will be buried under an avalanche of eggs!"

I thought for a moment, as he sobbed silently beside me.

"Well, Petch House has been sitting empty for several months. It has no plumbing, needs significant improvements inside, and is really kind of limited in what it can be used for."

"So?"

"Well, maybe it'll stay empty till next year?"

He looked up hopefully, "You really think so?"

"Sure," I said with confidence. "It always takes the town ages to do anything. Look how long it took to rebuild that log house, and they still don't have a tenant for it yet. I'm sure no one will notice."

"I really hope so," he said, hopping down off of the bench.

As he wandered off, I smiled at him with encouragement that I didn't feel in my heart. Despite what I'd said, it was highly unlikely

that the Petch House would continue to sit empty for another year.
But then, stranger things have happened in Aurora.

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