

COLLOQUY

RON SINGER reports: As it happens, three of my stories have either just come out, or are about to. I thought you might enjoy one or more of them, so I'll include the URL and a brief description for each.

1. I, Muffin chronicles some adventures of the eponymous baked good. There are other baked goods in the story, as well as some mammals, including a fox and a few people. The URL will direct you to Part One only, about 1/5th of the story. I'm currently seeking an illustrator and a publisher for this book, which would suit readers from about ages 7 on up:

www.fictionweek.com/fwliteraryreview/imuffin.html

2. "Footnotes Only!" is a story about pedantry and baseball history:

thestoryshack.com › Comedy Stories

3. "Reader, I Read to Him" tells what happens when someone tries the experiment of reading to his cat. This story will be coming out as a three-part serial, once a week, beginning December 14th:

http://www.pikerpress.com/coming_soon.php

You may have noticed that the main focus in two of the three stories is not human. (Maybe, I've exhausted that tired subject. Or maybe it's just that our species isn't doing too well these days.)

Ron also notes that: "Yesterday when my family was stuck in the mother of all traffic jams (3 hours to get through the Holland Tunnel from Manhattan to New Jersey, the puzzles in your August issue kept my 7.5 year-old grandson completely occupied, which meant that they also kept the rest of us from being driven crazy."

ANIL notes:

The November issue arrived November 30. Yet another good one! I especially enjoyed the Shortz contest, Puder's books ad (I may avail myself of some of them.), Eckler's trigrams, Kickshaws as usual, Dave's palindrome contest, your Melencolia, the Grant and Kahan puzzles, Ray Love's Playful Poems and Darryl Francis' new isograms. Darryl's keyboard articles were also informative.

Susan Thorpe's alphanumeric explorations were impressive, especially the Elements. Here is a solution for an Element she passed on:

$$\text{ZINC: } \sqrt{(-26+[9 \times 14])} \times 3 = 30.$$

And there is an error in her solution for helium. She sets H's value at 1 rather than 8. An easy mistake having just solved element H as 1! Here's an easy solution:

$$\text{HELIUM} = -8+5-12+9+21-13 = 2.$$