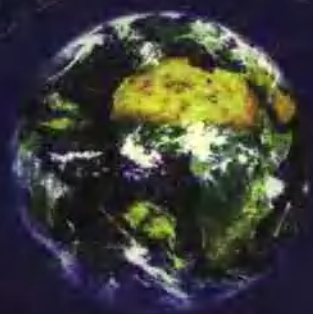


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The Chameleon

Anton Chekhov


The police sergeant Achumyelo, wearing his new cloak and with something under his arm, is walking across the market - place. He is followed by a red - haired policeman carrying some confiscated fruit. Quiet reigns all around. Not a soul in the market - place. The open doors and windows of the shops gaze out sadly upon God's world like hungry mouths wide open.


Suddenly Achumyelo hears someone shouting: 'So you want to bite, you accursed beast! Nowadays dogs are not allowed to bite. Stop him! Oh, oh!'

The howling of a dog is heard. Achumyelo looks in the direction from which the sound comes and sees a dog, limping on three legs, run out of Pinchugin's wood - yard. A man in a white shirt is chasing him. The man is close at the dog's heels; suddenly he falls forward to the ground and takes hold of the dog's hind feet. Again the dog's howling is heard and again the cry. Sleepy faces appear at the windows of the shops, and at the wood - yard a crowd quickly gathers as though it had grown out of the ground.

'Do you think it can be a riot?' asks the policeman.

Achumyelo turns to the left and walks towards the crowd. Near the gate of the yard he sees the man in the white shirt holding up his right





hand and showing the crowd a bloody finger. On his half - drunken face there is an expression as though he were saying, 'Wait; I will make you pay for this, you devil!' In this man Achumyelof recognizes Khriukin, the goldsmith. In the centre of the crowd, with his forefeet spread out and trembling from head to foot, sits the author of the whole trouble — a young white dog with a yellow spot on his back. In his watery eyes there is an expression of distrust.

'What is the matter?' asks Achumyelof, making his way through the crowd. 'Why are you here? What is the matter with your finger? Who has been screaming?'


'I was just walking along, sir, not touching anybody,' says Khriukin, 'to see about the wood for Dimitri Dimitriyevitch when suddenly this devil of a dog bites my finger. You will excuse me. I am a man who works; I have very particular work to do, and somebody will have to pay me, for I won't be able to use this finger maybe for a week! There is nothing in the law, sir, about having to bear things from animals! If they are all going to bite, it would be better not to live in this world.'

'Now,' says Achumyelof sternly, moving his eyebrows up and down, 'now, whose dog is this? I shall not allow this matter to rest. I will teach you people not to let your dogs run about loose! It is time that something was done about people who won't obey regulations. I will punish the owner. I will show him who I am! Yeldyrin,' turning to the policeman, 'find out whose dog it is and draw up a report. The dog will be killed. Do it quickly. He is probably a mad dog, in any case. Whose dog is it?'

'He looks like General Yigalof's dog,' says someone in the crowd.

'General Yigalof's? Hm! Yeldyrin, take off my cloak; it is terribly





hot! It is probably going to rain. There is one thing that I do not understand: how could that dog bite you?' says Achumyelof, turning to Khriukin. 'He does not come up to your fingers. He is such a little dog and you are such a big man. You have probably torn your finger on a nail, and afterwards the idea of the dog occurred to you and you are trying to get some money. I know you people. You are devils!'

'He put a cigarette in the dog's face; but the dog is no fool and bit him, sir.'

'You lie! He did not see it, sir.' But let the judge decide. The law says that nowadays we are all equal. I have a brother in the police. If you -'

'Stop talking!'

'No, that is not the general's dog,' says the policeman thoughtfully. 'The general does not have dogs like that. His dogs are different.'

'Are you sure of that?'


'Yes, sir, quite sure.'


'I know it myself too. The general has high-priced dogs, but this—! He has neither hair nor shape. Why do people keep dogs like that? If such a dog should show itself in Petersburg or Moscow, do you know what would happen? They would not stop to look up the law but just - and that is the end! Khriukin, you have suffered pain, and I will not let this matter rest. I must give them a lesson!'

'But perhaps it is the general's dog after all,' the policeman thinks aloud. 'The other day I saw a dog like that in the general's yard.'

'Of course it is the general's,' says a voice in the crowd.

'Yeldryn, help me put on my coat; it is cold. Take the dog to the general's and find out there. Say that I found him and sent him. And tell him not to let the dog out in the street. It is probably an expensive dog,





and if every fellow hits him on the nose with a cigarette, he will soon be ruined. A dog is a delicate creature. And you, stupid fellow, put down your hand! It is not necessary to show that silly finger of yours. It is your own fault.'

'There is the general's cook. Let us ask him. Hello, Prokhor, come here a minute! Look, is that dog yours?'

'That dog? We never had such a dog in our lives!'


'He is not worth asking questions about,' says Achumyelo. 'He's a tramp dog. There is nothing more to be said. If I say he is a tramp dog, he is a tramp dog! He will be killed.'

'That is not ours,' continues Prokhor. 'That dog belongs to the general's brother, who has recently arrived. My master does not like that kind of dog, but his brother does.'

'So his brother, Vladimir Ivanovitch, has arrived?' asks Achumyelo, and a delighted smile spreads over his face. 'Well, well, and I did not know it! He is here on a visit?'

'Yes, sir, on a visit.'

'Well, well. So it is his dog, you say? I am very glad. Take him! A nice little dog. A quick little dog: he soon caught hold of the fellow's finger! Ha - ha - ha. Why are you trembling, you dear little thing? That man is a villain.' Prokhor calls the dog and walks away with him. The crowd laughs at Khriukin. 'I will catch you some day!' Achumyelo threatens him, and wrapping himself in his cloak, he continues on his way across the market - place.





变 色 龙

安东·契诃夫

巡官阿楚迈洛夫穿着新大衣，臂下挟着一些东西，穿过市场。他身后跟着一个红头发的警察，拿着一些没收来的水果。四下里一片寂静。市场上连个鬼也没有。商店敞开着的门窗，无精打彩地凝望着上帝的世界，就象张得很大的饥饿的嘴巴。


阿楚迈洛夫忽然听见有人喊叫：“好哇，你咬人，你这该死的畜生！这年月狗咬人可不行。捉住它！哎哟，哎哟！”

传来了狗的嚎叫声。阿楚迈洛夫朝着声音来的方向看去，只见平楚金堆木场里跑出来一条狗，用三条腿一颠一颠的跑着。一个穿着白衬衫的人在追它。这个人紧紧地追赶在狗的后面，忽然间他身子往前，扑倒在地上，抓住狗的后腿。于是又传来狗的嚎叫声和人的叫喊声。脸上还带着睡意的人们，从商店窗口探出头来，同时堆木场外很快地聚集了一群人，仿佛是从地底下钻出来似的。

“您认为这可能要出乱子吗？”警察问。

阿楚迈洛夫向左转弯，往人群那边走去。在堆木场门口，他看见那个穿白衬衫的人举起右手，伸出一个血淋淋的指头给那群人看。他那半醉的脸上的表情好象是说，“等着；我非剥你的皮不可，你这狗蛋！”阿楚迈洛夫认出这人是金首饰匠赫留金。制造这场乱子的家伙坐在人群中央的地上，前腿劈开，浑身发抖——原来是一条白色的小狗，背上有块黄斑。它那含泪的眼睛流





露出惊惶失措的神情。

“出了什么事？”阿楚迈洛夫挤进人群问道。“你为什么在这儿？你的手指头怎样了？谁在叫嚷？”


“长官，我好好地走我的路。没招惹谁，”赫留金开口了，“我正在给迪米特里·迪米特里耶维奇弄点木柴。忽然之间这条可恶的狗咬了我的手指。您得原谅我。我是一个做工的人。我做的是很细致的活儿。非得有人赔我一笔钱不可。因为我也许要有一个星期不能用这个手指啦！长官，就连法律上也没有那么一条，说是人受了畜生的伤害就该忍受。如果畜生都这么乱咬一阵，那最好还是不用在这个世界上活下去了。”


“是啊，”阿楚迈洛夫厉声厉色，眉毛竖了又竖地说，“是啊，这是谁家的狗？我决不轻易放过这件事。这要教训教训你们这批人，不许你们放狗出来到处乱跑！现在正是应该管管这些违法乱纪的家伙的时候了。我得惩罚狗的主人，叫他认得我！叶尔德林，”他转身过去对警察说，“查一下，这是谁家的狗，打个报告上来！要把这条狗弄死。马上去办！总而言之它多半是条疯狗。它到底是谁家的狗啊？”

“它好象是伊加洛夫将军家的狗，”人群里有人说。

“伊加洛夫将军家的？哼！叶尔德林，帮我把大衣脱下来！天气热得要命！大概要下雨了。有一件事我不懂：“那只狗怎么会咬着你的？”阿楚迈洛夫对赫留金说。“它够不到你的手指。它是那么小的一条狗，而你是那么大的一个人。你那指头很可能是被一个钉子刮破的，后来你才打了狗的主意，想得到一笔什么钱。我知道你们这种人啊，你们这些鬼东西！”

“长官，他拿一根香烟戳在狗的脸上；可狗不是傻瓜，就咬了他一口。”

“你胡说！他什么也没有看见，长官。那还是让法官来裁判。法律上说得明白，现在我们都平等啦。我的兄弟就是当警察的。”



如果你们——”

“住嘴！”

“不对，这不是将军家的狗，”警察深思地说。“将军没有这样的狗。他的狗不该是这样的。”

“你有把握吗？”

“是，长官，很有把握。”

“我自己也知道嘛？将军有的都是名贵的狗，可是这条狗——！即没有毛，模样也难看。谁会养这样的狗？要是这样的狗在彼得堡或者莫斯科出现，你们知道会发生什么情况？那儿的人可不管什么法律不法律，只是——一杀了之！赫留金，你吃了苦头了，我决不能不管。我一定要好好地教训他们一番！”

“不过说不定就是将军的狗，”警察把他的想法说了出来。“前几天我在将军的院子里看见过象这样的一条狗。”

“没错儿，是将军家的，”人群里有人说。


“叶尔德林，给我穿上大衣；天冷了。你把这条狗带到将军家，问问清楚。就说这狗是我找到，派人送上的。再告诉他别放狗到街上来了。说不定这是条名贵的狗，要是大家都拿香烟戳它的鼻子，那它很快就会完蛋了。狗是娇贵的动物。你，你这个笨蛋，把手放下来！不用把你那粗蠢的手指伸出来了。该怪你自己不好！”

“将军家的厨师来了。让我们问问他罢！喂，普洛诃尔！过来一下！瞧，这条狗是你们家的吗？”

“那条狗？我们那儿从来没有过这样的狗！”

“那就用不着再去问了，”阿楚迈洛夫说。“它是条野狗。用不着多说废话了。如果我说它是条野狗，那它就是条野狗！弄死它算了。”

“这条狗不是我们的，”普洛诃尔接着说。“这是将军哥哥的狗，他是最近才来的。我的东家不喜欢这种狗，但是他哥哥喜





欢。”

“哦，他哥哥，弗拉德米尔·伊凡诺维奇已经来了吗？”阿楚迈洛夫问，脸上洋溢着笑容。“好，好，我还不知道呢！他是到此地来作客？”

“是的，长官，住几天就走的。”

“好，好！这么说，这是他老人家的狗。我很高兴。把它带走罢！这是一条很好的小狗，怪伶俐的，一下子咬着了这家伙的手指头！哈哈。我的宝贝，你干什么发抖呀？那个人是个坏蛋。”普洛诃尔唤着那条狗，带着它走了。看热闹的那群人对着赫留金一阵哄笑。“我早晚要收拾你！”阿楚迈洛夫向他发出威吓，接着裹紧大衣，穿过市场径自走了。





SEA CHANGE

By Michael Zammett


Philippa watched the white suds on her father's strong brown hands as they rinsed the dinner plates. A warm feeling of security filled her as, together, they did the washing up.


"What time are we leaving tomorrow, Dad?" She asked, although she knew the answer perfectly well. She just wanted to be reminded that she and her Dad were going off on an adventure together. Together, no need to share him with the others. It was more of a feeling than an explicit-it thought, but it was a feeling that she liked to be reminded of.

"Oh about eight o'clock or so." Depends what time Mike arrives. He's usually behind schedule." Not usually patient, her father answered patiently, sensing his daughter's need.

Mike arrived late as usual, all beard, uneven teeth, a slightly lop-sided face, brown legs, T-shirt and shorts which seemed as much a part of him as his arms and legs. Making no apology for being late, seemingly unaware of it, he busily loaded their bags into the tired looking Humber. Philippa, used to her father's schoolmasterly punctuality, felt strangely disoriented to see someone else taking charge. On family trips it was Dad who gave the orders.

"This is Nick." Mike introduced the large silent figure in the front passenger seat. With more enthusiasm than skill he let in the clutch.





Squeezed into the back seat, her feet raised uncomfortably high on a plastic drinking water container, Philippa listened to the three men.

"What time do you think we'll get to Auckland?" her Dad asked.

"About ten. Barring accidents," replied Mike.

"Usually takes me about three hours." Dad said.

No one answered, but Philippa intercepted a knowing contemptuous look pass between the two men in the front. They seemed to say, "Three hours! He must walk it."

Feeling her face going red, (she gave the passing *toi toi* her undivided attention,) hoping no one would notice her embarrassment. "Perhaps he is a slow driver, but he always gets there safely."


Philippa's embarrassment quickly became resentment. Why were they treating Dad like this? It was as though all support had been knocked out from under her. Anyway, neither of them was a Head of department like her Dad. Escaping from the Physical and mental discomfort of the car journey, she indulged herself in her current read. Almost all books were enjoyable, but some were special, to be savoured, the reading drawn out as long as possible, the end almost dreaded. Dad had given her "*The Yearling*" to read and she lost herself in the dappled woods with Jody and the fawn.

"That's it." Mike gestured proudly towards a black looking, bare masted yacht in mid-stream. When Dad had asked her if she wanted to go with him to Auckland to sail a yacht back home, she had imagined snow white sails, brass fittings and a long sleek white hull, not this depressing looking thing.

"We'll have to use the engine. There's no wind at all." Mike, the new owner, naturally assumed the role of captain.

"That's what it is," thought Philippa, "a role. He's playing a part





all the time."


"O. K." Dad took hold of the starting cord, gave a great pull, and crashed on his back as the cord broke. A great shout of laughter greeted this performance.


"Do that again. I didn't see it properly the first time." Mike shouted. Philippa busied herself stowing the provisions in the green and cream cabin. She desperately wanted to see if her Dad was all right, but felt it would only add to his humiliation.

Nick expertly re-threaded the lanyard and after a couple of pulls, the engine started. Now Philippa really began to enjoy herself. This was more like it, sitting on the sun warmed cabin roof, a distant black cloud the only jarring note until she looked round and saw poor old Dad leaning over the rail and "lobbing his groats" an eighteenth century expression she had learned from a Joan Aiken book. She preferred it to the New Zealanders "chunder". He hadn't even had the sense to go the downwind rail and got most of it back in his face. She found herself joining in the scornful laughter of the others.

Laughter, scorn and guilt were forgotten as the black cloud, larger and nearer now, brought with it rain, darkness and a fierce gusty wind. The engine had been stopped long ago, now the amateurishly set sails had to be reefed. Not thinking of the danger of being swept overboard, Philippa clambered along the deck, stepping over Dad on the way. Her small white hands gripped the fragile looking sheet and started to pull the sail in.

"Well done, young Philippa." Nick appeared to have taken on a new character as, rain slooshing down his face, he calmly and methodically worked his way along the yacht towards her. Philippa watched him carefully and, tentatively at first, began to help. A quick glance of ap-





proval from Nick reassured her and they were soon working as a team, falling into a rhythm and complementing each others efforts.

The blue day had become black night. Ahead, an even blacker patch indicated the position of Kawau Island. To the left was the North Island of New Zealand, invisible except for one small light occasionally visible through the horizontal rain. With a great tearing rip, the sails disappeared into the night. Philippa felt like two people, one a frightened girl standing on the pitching deck of a yacht in the Hauraki Gulf, the other an observer coolly watching the developing drama. The observer watched as the two men and the girl struggled with the tiller to point the yacht towards the coast. Under bare masts they were wallowing in the troughs of the unseen but gigantic waves.


"We'll have to start the engine." Nick left Philippa and the now very quiet Mike to struggle with the tiller.

Two pulls on the lanyard produced nothing from the engine. Philippa saw Nick brace himself for a final effort. With tight lips, Nick gave a mighty heave. Although she could hear nothing above the screaming wind, she realised the engine had started when she saw Nick grab the throttle and move it gently forward.

Now the tiller came to life and, instead of being a dead weight, was manageable by Mike alone.

"Head for that light!" Nick pointed. Almost surfing on the now following waves they headed towards the black coast.

"Dad!" Philippa realised she had forgotten about him. Looking towards where she had last seen him on the deck, her stomach went hollow when she saw he was no longer there. Lurching into the cabin she was relieved, but disgusted to see him lying in his own vomit. Forcing her voice to sound solicitous and ignoring the revolting stench she said, "You all



right Dad?"

"Just leave me alone," was the only response she got.

Returning to the deck, Philippa found Nick at the helm and Mike sitting with his head in his hands. No words were spoken, but Nick and Philippa exchanged an understanding glance.

"By Christ! You wouldn't believe it." The now recovered Mike looked at the large rock only metres from the mooring they had miraculously found, just before dawn, on the Whangaporoa Peninsula. In the flat grey light of early morning, Philippa looked at the rock, the steeply rising grass covered shore and the homely looking house on top of the hill.

Unsuccessfully she tried to fit last night's adventures and the homely looking house together. Last night had no more reality than a bad dream. Reality was the house on top of the hill and the Cockie who lived in it.

"We'll take the dinghy and go ashore." Mike was in charge again. "Bring all your stuff. We're going back to Whangarei. I'll come back later for the yacht."

Going in to the cabin to fetch her cardigan, Philippa suddenly remembered Dad. He was still in the cabin but had lifted himself onto the cracked green plastic of the port bunk.

"Come on Dad. We're going home." As she spoke she realised that she sounded just like Mother talking to Katy, her youngest sister.

Without a word Dad, head hanging, slowly got himself up the steps onto the deck and down into the now waiting dinghy.

The Cockie was waiting at the door.

"Saw you when I got up this morning. Got caught in the storm did you?"

He stood back to let them into his well-lived-in bachelor kitchen.