

Over the Back Fence
For Friday August 29, 2008
Approx 635 words

Pooping in the pool
By Alva Wood

Agatha Whimsey and her husband Peter look down on people from their balcony in our village's new condominium development, Catarrh-By-The-Slough.

They were the first to move in, so naturally they elected themselves to the complex's strata council. When the other residents arrived, they soon discovered that the Whimseys had formidable skills at formulating rules and regulations.

Now Agatha and Peter sit on their balcony with binoculars, keeping a watchful eye on any possible violations of their rules.

Most of the other residents live in enough fear of the Whimsey's ruthless enforcement that they make sure they never *never* NEVER break any rule within sight of Peter and Agatha's balcony.

Visitors are less wary.

Astrid Bowers' daughter and baby grandson moved into one of the condominium units a while ago. Crystal has been a single mom ever since her husband decided he was gay. So when she's not running her flower shop, Astrid spends a fair amount of her time helping out with baby Gavin.

Gavin was fretting that afternoon. Astrid thought she'd take him out to the complex's swimming pool area to play.

Gavin is much too young to be swimming yet. But when Astrid parks him on the edge of the pool, he kicks his feet happily in the water.

Until a voice from overhead says, "Ahem!"

Astrid looks up. There's Peter Whimsey, peering down his long horsy nose at them. "Did you read the sign?" he asks.

"What sign?" asks Astrid.

"The sign that says this pool is reserved for residents only," he announces.

"Of course," Astrid says. "It's so big, it would be hard to miss it."

"You are not a resident here, are you?" Peter sniffs, knowing very well that she's not.

"No, I'm not," she agrees, "But Gavin is."

"Children are not allowed in the pool," Agatha chimes in.

Astrid has no intention of being someone's doormat. "It doesn't say so on the sign," she retorts.

"It will," replies Peter loftily. "We passed that rule last week. We're just waiting for the new sign to arrive."

"What have you got against children?" Astrid demands.

"They could poop in our pool," says Peter.

"That's ridiculous," snorts Astrid. "He's not even in the water!"

"Rules are rules," says Agatha philosophically.

In disgust, Astrid packs young Gavin up and takes him to the sandy beach along the creek, where he splashes happily in the shallows. If he poops, it's well contained inside his swim diaper.

After a couple of hours, Astrid hears a clattering in the woods on the far side of the creek. Out come Agatha and Peter, on their horses, finishing off their regular afternoon ride.

The trail crosses the creek just above where Gavin is playing. The horses ford the stream, sloshing through the shallow water. Just before they come out on the near Astride, Peter's horse relieves itself.

"Whoa! Whoa!" Astrid hollers. She leaps up and grabs for the horse's reins.

"Unhand my mount!" Peter commands imperiously.

"You kicked me out of my daughter's pool because you thought my grandson might poop in it," Astrid rages. "And then you have the nerve to come down here and poop in the creek that he's playing in!"

"I did not," Peter denies. "My horse did."

"It's a public park," Agatha sniffs.

“There’s no rule against it,” says Peter.

They clatter off up the trail to the stables.

Astrid seizes the plastic bag she had brought along for Gavin’s diapers. She scoops up the horse turds before the current can carry them away. Then she drives quickly back to Catarrh-By-The-Slough.

When Peter and Agatha get back from the stables, they settle down on their balcony to monitor their domain.

“My goodness,” says Peter. “What’s that floating in our pool?”

Agatha focuses the binoculars. “I think it’s horse poop,” she says.