A Bone of Contention

A fox-terrier and a spaniel were fighting over a steakbone. Merciful heavens, they went for each other with teeth, claws, shoves, barks and kicks. “Get away from my bone!” “This bone belongs to me!” “Mongrel!” “Flotsam!” “I’ll throttle you with your own tail!” “I’ll throw you to the cats!” “Oaf!” “Fleaface!” “Lickspittle!” “Perpetrator!” It was a fearful spectacle, for both dogs were bleeding out of a dozen wounds.

Considering this opportunity, a young hawk, inexperienced in the sad ways of the world, came down from a tree in order to pick up the bone for himself.


The hawk was lucky he escaped alive that day with a small loss of feathers. No doubt, had I reached out a hand for the bone, the three would have leagued together as Animals against Man. And if a Martian had landed at that moment, I would have roused them personally to battle as Earth-dwellers against Mars. For there isn’t anybody with whom we couldn’t make a faction.

Meantime, the spaniel chewed one end of the bone and the fox-terrier nibbled the other. They were still bleeding, but they were bleeding in peace.

“A Bone of Contention” is one of Oscar Mandel’s 47 “Gobble-Up Stories.” These, together with two extraordinary yarns, “Chi Po and the Sorcerer” and “The History of Sigismund, Prince of Poland,” are gathered in the author’s Otherwise Fables, 270 pages, $16, Prospect Park Books, publishers of the author’s companion Otherwise Poems.
New from Duke University Press

Queer about Comics
A special issue of
American Literature (90:2)
Darieck Scott and
Ramzi Fawaz, issue editors

This special issue explores the intersection of queer theory and comics studies. The contributors provide new theories of how comics represent and reconceptualize queer sexuality, desire, intimacy, and eroticism, while also investigating how the comic strip, as a hand-drawn form, queers literary production and demands innovative methods of analysis from the fields of literary, visual, and cultural studies.

Contributors examine the relationships among reader, creator, and community across a range of comics production, including mainstream superhero comics, independent LGBTQ comics, and avant-garde and experimental feminist narratives. They also address queer forms of identification elicited by the classic X-Men character Rogue, the lesbian grassroots publishing networks that helped shape Alison Bechdel’s oeuvre, and the production of black queer fantasy in the Black Panther comic book series, among other topics.

Contributors
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Queers Read This!
LGBTQ Literature Now
A special issue of GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies (24:2–3)
Ramzi Fawaz and Shanté Paradigm Smalls, issue editors

The contributors to this special issue ask how LGBTQ literary production has evolved in response to the dramatic transformations in queer life that have taken place since the early 1990s. Taking inspiration from “QUEERS READ THIS!”—a leaflet distributed at the 1990 New York Pride March by activist group Queer Nation—the contributors to this issue theorize what such an impassioned command would look like today: in light of our current social and political realities, what should queers read now and how are they reading and writing texts? They offer innovative and timely approaches to the place, function, and political possibilities of LGBTQ literature in the wake of AIDS, gay marriage, the rise of institutional queer theory, the ascendancy of transgender rights, the #BlackLivesMatter movement, and the 2016 election. The authors reconsider camp aesthetics in the Trump era, uncover long-ignored histories of lesbian literary labor, reconceptualize contemporary black queer literary responses to institutional violence and racism, and query the methods by which we might forge a queer-of-color literary canon. This issue frames LGBTQ literature as not only a growing list of texts, but as a vast range of reading attitudes, affects, contexts, and archives that support queer ways of life.

Contributors
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