

Author's Note: Written for the [LIFECYCLE: HUMOR](#) challenge on [LIVEJOURNAL'S SECTION VII](#) community.



A sense of humor... is needed armor.
Joy in one's heart and some laughter
on one's lips is a sign that the person
down deep has a pretty good grasp of
life.

Hugh Sidey

THEY ALWAYS SERVE THEIR MASTERS?

BY [LAH](#)

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Humor is relative, so all the world's pundits say. I guess that's true enough. Take the example of me and my partner: we don't usually find the same things funny at all. My concept of humor

tends to be very relaxed and easy, but my Russian cohort – well, his concept tends more toward the dry and somewhat barbed.

I suppose that could lead to issues between us, but honestly it never really has as he appreciates my laid-back take on what is funny and I appreciate his sometimes biting wit. It's a matter of respect. We are different people after all, raised differently, with different worldviews and different ranges of life experiences. Well, except for those life experiences we now share as enforcement agents...

“A cop, a dog and a priest all walk into a tavern—”

“Dogs are not permitted in any bar I know, Napoleon,” interrupted Illya pointedly and perhaps a bit grumpily.

The two U.N.C.L.E agents were currently bound together via the use of padlocked chains in another Thrush cell, awaiting yet another session of rather brutal interrogation by the usual goons of the supra-nation. Neither was currently in the best of shape physically; yet both simply refused to let it bring them down emotionally. They would get out of this... somehow.

“Unless of course it is a service dog,” the Russian elaborated on his previous response in a definitely less grouchy manner.

“It's a canine-patrol dog,” the American conceded easily.

“Well, that at least makes it more believable,” conceded Illya in turn.

“Listen, tovarisch, do you want me to tell you the story or do you want to keep up with the running commentary?”

“What I want is for you to come up with a plan to get us out of here.”

“Because I am the senior agent.”

“Because it is your forte,” corrected Kuryakin, “while mine is actually executing the stunts you come up with.”

“You implying I'm not a man of action?” demanded Solo in a slightly miffed tone of voice.

“I'm not implying that in the least. Your continuous action with the ladies is legendary.”

“Ha-ha. You're a regular riot, IK.”

“A shame I am only one man and thus my being a riot of any sort won't help us in this instance. Now if we were able to perhaps instigate a real riot...”

“Nice idea, Illya, but those Thrushies looked about as dense as the proverbial blocks of commercial concrete. Likely trying to bait them into rioting against their masters would just result in them giving us the idiot stare.”

“And another beating,” finalized Illya with a resigned sigh.

“So continuing on with my story—”

“Napoleon, there are better things to be done with our time at this moment.”

“A cop, a priest and a patrol dog all walk into a tavern,” reiterated Solo unfazed by Kuryakin’s remark. “The cop takes a couple of pretzels out of the bowl on the bar, bends down and feeds them to the dog. He then pats the canine affectionately on the head, taking the time to give the hound a good scratch behind the ears, much to the dog’s tail-wagging delight.

“The priest smiles at the loving interaction between the cop and his pet. ‘I’m convinced,’ he remarks in a friendly fashion, ‘that all dogs go to heaven.’

“The cop only shrugs at this assertion, much to the priest’s surprise. ‘Don’t you believe that?’ he asks. ‘I never really thought about it,’ responds the cop. ‘But he’s your best friend, isn’t he?’ challenges the priest. ‘He is my faithful companion, on-duty and off,’ agrees the cop. ‘Then wouldn’t you like him to go to heaven?’ questions the priest. ‘I’d like a lot of things,’ forwards the cop. ‘I’d like him to pay my bar tab, but that won’t happen. I’d like him to be able to act as a designated driver so I could have more than one beer tonight, but that won’t happen either. And I’d like him to morph into Bridget Bardot for the evening, but that certainly won’t happen.’

“Shocked, the priest stares at the cop. ‘I don’t get you. You obviously are fond of your dog, yet you don’t want him beside you in heaven?’

“The cop stares directly at the priest. ‘Frankly, Father, I’m not positive where I’ll land in the afterlife. So if my buddy here goes to heaven, he might not end up beside me. But then again,’ he adds after a momentary pause, ‘I expect in such case this dog, like any good canine retriever, will fetch me the key to the Pearly Gates.’”

“That story isn’t even funny, Napoleon,” remarked Illya stubbornly after Solo had completed his tale.

“But it has a moral,” insisted Napoleon in turn.

“That being?”

“Sometimes looking in the mouth of a dog reveals a gift,” responded Solo. Then he slid a miniscule key forward from somewhere inside his mouth, exposing it on his stuck-out tongue.

“And I assume the dog presenting the gift in this case is the bitch Angelique La Chien?” required Kuryakin acidly as he watched Napoleon carefully manipulate the key off his tongue, letting it fall precisely between the thumb and forefinger of one of his cuffed hands.

“When she gave me that supposed farewell-forever kiss a while ago,” disclosed Napoleon once his maneuvers were done. He chose to ignore Illya’s rather coarse slam at Angelique since he had himself opened up this avenue for the stab of his partner’s satiric wit by making a more good-humored reference to the translation of the female Thrush agent’s last name.

Illya huffed in obvious exasperation. “I just don’t understand the dynamic between you two.”

“Maybe it’s just that I don’t expect her to morph into anything other than what she is and thus appreciate the sometime absurdity of our relationship for what it is.”

“And maybe it’s just that most times she has a secret sinister agenda separate from the Thrush project du jour,” challenged Ilyya. “Either way, try and fit that key into this padlock and we’ll see if it allows us to escape from any present need to test the latch on the Pearly Gates.”

—THE END—

