



## Pet Accoutrements

By Linda Parker Horowitz

Have you ever spent \$282 at one of the pet super-stores and NOT bought an animal? I just did. However, I must warn you. NEVER go to one just for some dry cat food with your animal-loving son. I lay total blame on him.

Per the suggestion of an experienced cat-person friend (she has 11), we bought a new, personal litter box for Lucky Star, our 20 pound black cat — very trendy and unusual litter, I might add. That was \$30. It is iridescent sage green plastic, Booda Box brand, with a ramp and dome. I am tempted to decorate the exterior with, “Lucky’s Private Privvy” and put a star on it so he’ll have his personal dressing room; we *are* close to Hollywood. It has special litter liners and round charcoal filters that I am confident I will be paying big bucks to keep in stock. This better do the trick for his majesty because he pee’d on the bed the day after I came home from a week-long trip. Angry I left him with my husband when I traveled? Pissed because it got cold, below 60 degrees here? Don’t know.

Our bedroom still stinks, so I bought the black light to find where I have not doused or dusted with anti-cat-smell stuff along with more of the stuff. I also bought him 2 new collars, black with silver and red with silver (kitty bling, for sure), so that cars can see “His Blackness” in the dark as he roams the ‘hood. He had a faaaabulous shiny red vinyl one, making him quite the pimped-out dude. (I now regret bowing to political correctness and not giving him a rapper name, except he certainly is not “Li’l”). I saw him in that collar for 3 days tops, before it disappeared. I put our phone number on the inside should anything happen to him (don’t want a tag making noise so a wild animal can hear him and perhaps have him as a meal since we see the occasional coyote), but in truth, everyone many houses up and down the street know him and who he belongs to.

Bought Royal Canin food lately? I’m sure Wolfgang Puck submitted recipes it is so expensive (\$32 for a medium/large bag), and I stocked up. We NEEDED a scratching post (only Twinkles, the angel, scratches on anything) **and** a kitty bed that holds warmth because it is so cold here in L.A., that also folds-out into a kind of bag/tunnel hiding place — under the bed is just not good enough for our crew.

Lest we not forget our dog, sweet Zoe, our 90-pound Belgian Shepherd, she got treats, in the hope that we actually do some training (more like UN-training her bad behavior habits). The dried beef liver, far more expensive than liver at the grocery, was an absolute must-have so that MAYBE she’ll be so lured by the taste that she will cease chasing her cat siblings and not bolt out the door to terrorize unsuspecting neighbors walking their tiny dogs. Of course she just had to have a new toy even though Hanukkah has passed. I tried to persuade my son that she’d REALLY like the \$3.99 one, but somehow, the squeaky gorilla with many arms that even has gorilla sound effects ended up at the check out (don’t ask the price). The LEAST pricey item is actually for one of my god-dogs, Betty Roo, in



Northern Michigan. For her belated Christmas gift, she is getting a \$1.69 bag of Zen dog treats with 14 herbs, for a taste of L.A., where she spent her youth.

My son desperately wanted to adopt Butterscotch, a gray 1 year-old kitty, but I said no. He said, and this is a direct quote, "If you wouldn't get a divorce, would you adopt her?" Got me there. Of course I would, especially since the sign said, "Loves petting and plays well with others."

I'm now convinced I'll need to get a full-time job immediately to support the menagerie. At least Lucky Star catches snacks in my neighbor's yard. They have an extremely large and very territorial dog, Tucker, who is actually quite a baby about everything except another animal anywhere near his yard; then he is ferocious. One night at about 3:00 a.m., Tucker barked ballistically to go outside. Since we've had an influx of skunks, my neighbor, Elizabeth (pet lover in the extreme – they have *many* more than we do including a turtle with his own in-ground pond), turned on the light to make sure it wasn't a skunk Tucker wanted off their property. It wasn't. It was Lucky on the patio cornering a rat for a middle-of-the-night snack. I buy high-end cat food, why?????



Well, a hungry hoard has now surrounded me. I'd best go open one of the new and only 49-cent cans of 9-Lives cat food before they shed into the keyboard.

