

The Tale of Martha's Llama

Martha June O'Reilly was Jack's picture perfect Wife.
Jack, a Kentucky farm boy, worked the rolling fields each day;
So left the house to Martha to provide a happy life
For seven strapping sons, and one daughter, Annie Mae.

One day, as Martha ironed, a strange car drove upon the farm.
A man got out and made his pitch with flashy suit and tie.
Before she knew what hit her, she'd succumbed to all his charms.
She bought what he was selling, though not quite sure of what or why.

Then a truck arrived one morning, with a horse trailer in tow.
Martha ran out of the door to see the new addition on the place.
As the trailer doors were opened, her expectation rose,
When the strangest thing she ever saw brought panic to her face.

"My Gawd", she cried, "what is that thang?, as the children gathered 'round.
"Awesome, Ma!" the young ones screamed, as they laughed on and on.
But Martha was not laughing, and she hardly made a sound –
For Jack would soon be home for lunch; then it would not be fun.

"Here's your llama", said the driver, as he handed her the rope;
Then just as quick was gone – the dust following down the lane.
There stood Martha, beast in hand, expression drained of hope –
For Jack was right behind her saying "Jest where'd you find that thang?"

"Well...", Martha started in, though not sure just where to go --
"I'd like to dig a hole right here, and jump in it!" she thought.
She went on to tell the story of the salesman and so
The llama was let out of the bag, not "cat" as she'd been taught!

Jack stood for just a moment, with no expression on his face,
But eventually exploded in a torrent of frustration
"Do you thank we're made of money?!" he shouted in his place
Martha ran into the house, in tears, and consternation.

Well, there wasn't much to do except take Old Joe to the barn
(Annie Mae, it seems, had taken credit for its name)
Then everyone went on to bed, though not a happy farm --
But Old Joe settled in just fine and slept 'til morning came.

The horses took right to Old Joe, and didn't seem to care --
His neck was too long; legs were too short, head too small as well.
He had no mane to speak of, and his body sported long hair.
All in all he looked like some strange creature sent from Hell.

Well, in time the family grew somewhat fond of Joe, it seems
He carried things from house to barn, and barn to house again
Old Joe was Annie's favorite, and she doted on the beast
All was well for the llama now, but fame was round the bend.

One day Annie climbed the cliffs that stood at the edge of the farm.
(This she had done with breathless skill many times in the past.)
But on this day her footing gave, and she fell to a rocky arm --
Bleeding and unconscious, she needed help and fast.

Old Joe had borne Annie Mae to the base of the rocky peak
He saw her fall, he heard her screams, and sensed the pressing chore
He climbed the cliffs (for llamas do) and licked her on the cheek
Then let out a bleat like none had heard in those parts e'er before.

Jack was working in the field, and heard the monstrous cry.
He ran as fast as he could to see what the commotion was all about --
When he reached the bleeding girl, he placed her on Old Joe's backside,
Then led him down the rocky hill, calling Martha with a shout.

Well, in short, the girl survived -- and Old Joe, he garnered fame.
Llamas became a common sight around Jack's Kentucky 'stead.
A horse, you see, could not have saved dear Annie Mae that day
But a llama -- that's another thing -- or at least so I have read.

TMJ March 30, 2006