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Opening extract from

# **The Fantastic World of Terry Jones: Animal Tales**

Written by  
**Terry Jones**

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**THE AMAZING**  
**TERRY JONES**  
**PRESENTS**  
**FOR THE VERY FIRST TIME HIS INCREDIBLE**  
**ANIMAL**  
**TALES**





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**ILLUSTRATED BY**  
**MICHAEL FOREMAN**



**PAVILION**  
**CHILDREN'S**

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# THE GOOD DOCTOR

THERE WAS ONCE A HIGHLY QUALIFIED DOG, who also had a great bedside manner. All his patients adored him, and – what’s more – his treatments were more successful than any other doctor in town. As a result he had a waiting list that was the envy of the medical world.

But then one day Janet, his secretary, received a letter in the post informing him that the General Medical Council did not recognize ‘Mrs. Barker’s Academy of Paw Relief’, nor ‘The Tail Massage Centre’ nor even ‘Woofson College, Cambridge’.

“But I got a First in every subject I ever took!” exclaimed Scout.

“They seem to be quite adamant,” said Janet. “They want you to close down your practice immediately.”

“I can’t believe it, doctor!” said Mrs. Nugent, as Scout was taking her blood pressure. “Why would they want to close you down when you’re such a wonderful doctor?”

“They say it’s not hygienic to keep a dog in the surgery,” sighed Scout.

“But you’re always washing your paws!” exclaimed Mrs. Nugent.

“Yes! And I never lick my patients, or jump up on them,” said Scout.

“You’re very well-behaved,” said Mrs. Nugent.

“And I always do my business in the street,” said Scout.

“I wouldn’t make too much of a point of *that*,” said Janet. “Would you sign our petition, Mrs. Nugent?”

“But of course, my dear,” said Mrs. Nugent.

And within a couple of days every single one of Scout’s patients had signed the petition

to allow Scout to continue practising as a doctor. Janet then sent it to the General Medical Council.

Some days later, however, a man from the General Medical Council came to the surgery.

“May I leave my bicycle in the waiting room?” he asked.

“If you must,” said Janet, and then she showed him into Scout’s surgery.

The man from the General Medical Council looked around the room critically, as he presented his card.

“Do sit down, Mr. Catto,” said Scout. “Now what exactly is the problem?”

“*You*,” said Mr. Catto. “You are the problem. We simply cannot allow a dog to continue to practise. What’s that bowl on the floor?”

“My dinner,” said Scout.

“See?” said the Man from the General Medical Council. “The whole thing is unsanitary!”

“But you’ve seen my results,” replied Scout politely. “They are well above average.”

“You are not registered with the General Medical Council. Full stop,” said Mr. Catto.

“But what about my patients!”

“They can go and find a proper doctor.”

“But he *is* a proper doctor,” said Janet who had not left the room.

“But look at him! He hasn’t even got hands – just paws. How can he treat anybody?”

“But he’s brilliant with his paws,” said Janet. And Scout showed the Man from the General Medical Council how quickly he could tie a bandage round Janet’s head with the correct fastening and everything.

“It doesn’t matter!” screamed the man from the General Medical Council. “You have to shut down this practice today!”

At that moment there was another scream. This one came from the waiting room, and they all ran in to find one of Scout’s patients sprawled across the floor.

“Aaargh! What a stupid place to leave a bicycle!” yelled the patient. “I think I’ve broken my ankle!”

“Sorry!” mumbled the Man from the General Medical Council. “It’s just that it’ll get stolen if I leave it outside.”

While the Man from the General Medical Council was picking up his bicycle, Scout

examined the ankle, decided it was only sprained, and bound it in a splint.

“Thank you, doctor,” said the patient. “You are the best doctor in town.”

“I hope you’re listening,” said Janet to the Man from the General Medical Council.

“He cannot practice unless he is registered with us,” snapped the Man, and he stormed out of the surgery.

“Oh dear,” said Scout. “What are we going to do?”

“Let’s blow up the General Medical Council!” said the patient.

“I can’t do that,” replied Scout. “I have taken my dog’s oath not to injure any human beings apart from postmen.”

“We could just blow up the Postal Department,” suggested the patient.

That evening, all his patients gathered in the surgery.

“Why can’t he carry on?” said a woman who was suffering from Paget’s disease (which, by the way, makes bones grow bigger). “I’ve never had a doctor who took so much interest in my case.”

“We have complete faith in you, Scout,” said everybody at once.

“So what are we going to do?” asked Janet.

“Let’s hold a protest demonstration outside their offices,” suggested one little old lady.

“No,” said Scout. “There’s only one thing for it. I am going to go round to the General Medical Council to reason with them.”

And off he went the next day. He caught the No. 34 bus from outside his master’s house, and arrived, an hour later, at the offices of the General Medical Council just off the Euston Road.

“I’ve come to reason with the General Medical Council,” he said to the man at the door. But the man at the door just said: “Clear off, Rover!”

“My name is Scout,” said Scout, getting rather cross. “Dr. Scout.”

“Scoot...Go on boy!” said the man at the door, trying to kick Scout.



“Please!” exclaimed Scout. “I demand to be treated with respect. I am highly qualified.”

But the man just got a broom and started trying to hit Scout with it. This made Scout really mad. He growled and seized the broom in his teeth and pulled it and worried it, until he finally pulled it out of the man’s hands, and then he bit the man on the leg.

“Ow!” screamed the man.

“I’m dreadfully sorry!” exclaimed Scout. But it was too late. The man had disappeared inside and locked the door.

“Mad dog!” he heard the man shouting.

That evening, Scout didn’t even want to go for a walk.

“What’s the matter, old fellow?” asked his Master kindly. It’s not like you to turn down a walk.”

“I disgraced myself at the General Medical Council,” moaned Scout. “And now I’ll have to close down my doctor’s practice.”

“Pity,” said his Master. “You were making good money.”

“Yes,” said Scout. “I was hoping to be able to send you and the Mistress on holiday to the Bahamas.”

“Don’t let it get you down,” said his Master. “You’re a clever dog. You can always take up architecture or structural engineering.”

“But I love medicine,” said Scout miserably.

The next day, Scout was clearing his things out of the surgery, when Janet ran in full of excitement.

“Doctor!” she exclaimed. “I’ve persuaded the GMC to hold an extraordinary meeting to discuss your case!”

Scout was so pleased, he started running round in circles trying to bite his own tail. Then he licked Janet’s face.

“Now stop that!” said Janet. “We’ve got to get the General Medical Council to take us seriously.”

“Right!” said Scout.

The next day, Scout and Janet appeared before the Council. Scout wore his best collar,

and Janet did the talking. When she’d finished, the Chairwoman nodded.

“Janet,” she said, “we respect your concern for Scout, and we appreciate that his patients are very fond of him. But rules are rules, and if we throw the Rule Book out we are no better than animals...er...If you’ll forgive the expression, Scout.”

“Very well,” said Janet, gathering her papers together. “We shall abide strictly by what the Rule Book says, if you will do the same.”

“That is indeed what we intend to do,” replied the Lady Chairman of the Council.

“Then we shall expect to receive, at your earliest convenience,” said Janet, “the relevant pages from the Rule Book, where it states that a dog cannot register with the General Medical Council.”

And with that she strode out of the room, and so did Scout.

Well I would like to be able to tell you that the General Medical Council allowed Scout to register the next day, but I’m afraid that didn’t happen. In fact neither Scout nor Janet received any pages from the Rule Book that week nor the week after that nor the week after that.

In the meantime, however, Scout’s patients kept coming to the surgery and Scout continued to be as busy as ever. And, strangely, the Man from the General Medical Council never paid another visit. Nor did Janet ever receive another letter nor hear another word from the Council.

“I think they must have forgotten about me,” said Scout to Janet one morning.

“Maybe,” replied Janet. “Or maybe they just don’t want to rewrite the Rule Book.”

