



The
Peace

Emma Goldman
1869 - 1940

Born in Russia, Emma Goldman moved to the United States to escape a marriage her father had arranged for her. Four years and a divorce later, she moved to New York City and wandered into a bar where intellectuals congregate. This would mark the beginning of her radical career.

It was the 15th of August 1889, the day of my arrival in New York City. I was twenty years old. All that had happened in my life until that time was now left behind me, cast off like a worn-out garment. A new world was before me, strange and terrifying. But I had youth, good health, and a passionate ideal. Whatever the new held in store for me I was determined to meet unflinchingly.

- Emma Goldman

Emma threw herself into the radical movement making friends and contacts among the large radical community in New York, and contributing to the movement mainly through writing and later public speaking. Most notable among the friends that she made was Alexander Bergman, known to his friends as "Sasha", who would become her closest friend and lover. Emma advocated worker's rights, women's rights especially the right to use contraceptives and abortion, and free love. Early in her career as a radical, she endorsed the use of violence as a means to spark revolution and change but after a failed assassination attempt planned by herself and Bergman her views slowly changed to the contrary. Her initial backing and vocal support of Bergman's actions caused her to lose public respect, but she soon won back that respect when she began her career as a public speaker and agitator. Public speaking came natural to Goldman; she was powerful, inspiring, and moving. Her most effective years as a radical came during a ten year span when she traveled around the country giving speeches on equality for workers and women, and promoting the ideals of anarchy. However, her agitation amongst the populace brought attention from the government and she was eventually deported. Emma Goldman stands as one of the first feminists and a powerful figure in anarchist history.

Commentary on lightbulbs



THE SEARCH FOR INDEPENDENCE IN ENERGY STARTS AT HOME. TO RELY ON ANY FORM OF MASS ENERGY SYSTEM (WHETHER IT BE NUCLEAR OR WIND) CAN BE SEEN AS THE FOREMOST MISTAKE. WHEN INVOLVED IN SUCH A GRAND ARRANGEMENT, RELIANCE ON THE GRID BECOMES SO MANY MORE THINGS THAN JUST POWERING YOUR TOASTER OVEN. BY TAKING ADVANTAGE OF YOUR LOCAL CONDITIONS AND WORKING TOWARDS THE COMPLETE SUPPLY OF YOUR OWN POWER YOU FURTHER SECURE (AND LIBERATE) YOURSELF AND YOUR FAMILY, TAKING THE MEANS OF PRODUCTION INTO YOUR OWN HANDS. MOREOVER, AND PROBABLY MORE IMPORTANTLY, BY TAKING ENERGY INTO OUR OWN HANDS WE ARE ACTUALLY PRACTICING WHAT WE PREACH, MANIFESTING (AND THEREFORE TESTING) OUR BELIEFS.

WELCOME TO THE PEACE

We, The Peace, are here for you .We commit to inform you, our community, about the tenets of anarchy. We feel that in our current time change must happen. We, The Peace, see anarchy as the means for this change. Its not that anarchy on a national or even global level will happen tomorrow; but rather, that there are many things that you can do to implement anarchy into your own life today. We do not see anarchy as pointless violence and chaos. We believe that anarchy means living in a free, egalitarian society where people live without the pressure of the violent authoritarian state that we experience today.

We commit to provide a free public forum, an outlet, a place to share work with the broader community. Whether it be an article about your experience in a protest or a photograph of your adventures in the urban wasteland of LA, we want to help you display it to the community. All mediums of expression are welcome; please send them to us via email at thepeacekeep@gmail.com.

We are anarchists. We have attempted to foster anarchist ideals not only in the creation of this magazine, but also in the practice of our daily lives. It is not hard to turn to anarchist individualism and step off the map into the forest where we can freely live out our anarchist ideals. We, however are not individualists, we are collectivists. We see our selves leading healthy lives in solidarity with our community and environment. We realize we are not alone in our pursuit. Today there are anarchists on every continent in the world, living examples of the practice of an uncommon ideal. The anarchist movement is not young: it existed long before the United States was a country, and will hopefully outlast it. At the same time, we do understand that the thought of anarchy in our society carries negative connotations to most. We attribute these negative connotations to the corrupt, state run media, and a public not well educated in alternative political theories. We hope to dispel the myths and replace them with a more accurate view of anarchism and its underlying philosophies.

THE JACK SPARELL CHRONICLES: STONER GOES TO A MONASTERY

The following is an excerpt from the journal I kept during my travels through Asia. It was written about a week and a half into my stay at a Buddhist monastery up in the foothills of the Himalayas. My month at the monastery was the longest I've gone without a cigarette since I started smoking cigarettes about seven years ago. But, being a chronic user of chronic, I rationalized that bringing three joints with me – one to aid meditation, one for my writing, and one I declared the “emergency joint” – would be acceptable. After I got there, despite my frequent nicotine fits, I had forgotten about the weed altogether. Until one auspicious afternoon...

Date: ~1 ½ weeks in

Hahaha... wow. After lunch I decided I'd smoke one of the three joints I'd brought with me. Since I got here, I've been attending every meditation session from sunrise to sunset. I was under the impression that at this rate, I'd achieve enlightenment in two weeks, tops. This was until Karma [my monk mentor] pulled me aside and whispered, “You don't have to go to all of them. Nobody does that.”

I looked around. He was right. So I decided to take the next afternoon off from lunch 'til dinner, smoke a joint, and go for a hike in the mountains surrounding the monastery. After the experience that just ensued, however, I'm still not sure how to classify which joint it was that I smoked. I towelled (hoodied, actually) the door of my monk dorm [yes, they live in, at lack of a better name, dorms, too], opened the windows, lit some incense, and got “prepared” for a meditational afternoon hike. Tolerance seems to have died off significantly since I arrived, and that thing was hashy as hell. Hit me like a stick banging a gong. And, as I've noticed in my life, (especially when I'm high) crazy shit finds me. I was closing the door to my room on my way out, looked up, and saw three senior monks approaching. “Shit! Monks!” (an odd reaction to have toward the presence of monks) “No, they couldn't be coming for me, that's just me being paranoid and high, they couldn't-“

“Nyin Je Yarphel!” (my Tibetan name. People in Asia love giving me names... but my name! I'm caught! By monks, too! This might be the worst thing I've ever done!)

“Please come with us now,” a monk said, taking me by the hand. They know. They caught me, I look so bad, blazed in a monastery, I'm going to Karma Hell for this one. I follow Khudura, the most senior monk, up a staircase and into one of the monk dorms. Khudura opens the door to his room.

“Sit down,”

I cautiously, hesitantly sit down, as though I'm about to trip a wire that will send a guillotine slicing through the back of my neck. Or a khukhuri (a giant machete/sword I saw used to behead a water buffalo for a sacrifice) (not at the monastery).

“Apple,” not so much in an offering tone, also not an order to eat it. Yes, that is an apple, I thought to myself. I figured “apple” was the monk equivalent to the candy dish on my vice principal's desk when she was giving me detention or the cops offering you a cigarette during a line of questioning. Ironic, this was the first time I was being released instead of detained. Also ironic that I'd prefer the cop's offer of a cigarette to the apple. I take the apple, shine it on my shirt, and take a giant bite out of it.

“You speak English, right?” I'd earned a reputation as the first white guy who could speak Nepali at the monastery in a long time. Impressed as they were, they seemed upset that I hadn't mastered Tibetan, too.

“Our English teacher is unwell. Could you teach our class today?”

I choked on the apple. Ten minutes ago, I thought I was going for a stoner hike through the woods. Five minutes ago, I thought I was being evicted from the monastery. Now here I am, trying to shift my mind to formulating a lesson plan. And let's not forget, I'm hi-i-i-igh...

“We could pay you,” Khudura broke the silence with. I hadn't said anything in almost a minute.

“No, it's not the money, I'd be happy to help, but-“

“Then you will stay here for free,”

“But I've never been a teacher before!”

Then, Khudura countered with an argument that really piqued my soul. “I think you were in another life. Just try.”

“Alright,” I hesitantly accepted, “when's class start?” I asked, thinking I had a few hours to figure out what I was going to do and sober up a bit.

“Now,” he informed me, standing up and leading me down the hall. While older monks had single and double rooms, the younger [10-12 year old] monks slept in one large room that was also their classroom. Their mattresses were rolled up in the corner, little monklets sitting on platforms on either side of the room. Khudura spoke a few words to the students, and I heard my name somewhere in there.

“You may begin now,” Khudura said to me, smiling, then turned and walked down the aisle, closing the door behind him.

I’m now blazed, standing in front of a blackboard, twenty sets of young eyes thirstily staring up at me as though they were plagued by ignorance and I had the antidote. Now what?

“Tashi Delek,” I opened with, bowing to the class.

“Good afternoon, sir!” the monklets sang out in chorus. They had me. This was, after all, an English class.

“Hello, students. My name is Jeff, and I am your teacher today.” Simple, I know, but I am trying to maintain composure and speak at a level they will understand. Buddha always taught to his students’ capacity, and comedians always say play to your audience.

“Everyone take out your books.” I would later realize how riddled with irony that statement was. For instance, I had assumed that they might have had textbooks, workbooks, the whole mess of crap I was accustomed to seeing in a classroom when I was a student. Half of them already had newspaper-thin notebooks and pens in front of them. One bikkhu could produce neither.

“Where’s your notebook?” I then had a flashback to every time a teacher or professor had called me out on menial little mistakes like that. I had become everything that, when I was their age, I swore I’d never become. The boy looked nervously caught off guard (much as I had felt only minutes before) and I immediately regretted singling him out. I told him it wasn’t a problem, and before I could even ask for a volunteer, the boy next to him tore a piece of paper out of his own notebook and handed it to the nervous monklet. After all, they’re monks.

Remembering a promise to myself from months earlier, when someone asked if I had a pen they could borrow, I replied “No, but I should. I’m like the worst writer ever, huh?” and decided I would always carry a pen with me. I reached into my pocket, found a pen, and gave it to the monk.

“So do you have books?” I asked the class.

“These are our handwriting books,” a boy said, holding up his flimsy notebook. Handwriting, yes! A lesson plan was beginning to formulate in my head, but I was still intent on beginning the class with some reading out loud for speech practice.

“Yes, but... do you have books you can read from, in English?” I asked.

“Oh!” a little bikkhu slide off the platform-seat, raced over to the windowsill, handed me an English workbook, began to sit down, turned around, and opened it to the page they had left off on. Sometimes it really is that easy.

And sometimes it’s not. These kids had been learning from the kind of workbooks I learned French and Spanish with, with fill-in-the-blank exercises and readings with comprehension questions following, but they had one booklet for the entire class. And it was designed for children in India attempting to learn British English, using references like torch and lift and Indian names like Maya and Prem.

The first story, “The Fire II” (There was also a “The Fire III” later on. First of all, what does using stories like these teach kids about American/British culture? And second, how practical is the material for monks? But I digress...) was about a hotel catching fire, and a boy seeing this and calling the fire department. I made it about halfway through the story, pausing for questions like “what’s a fire engine?” or “what’s unroll mean?” I explained that a fire engine is a truck that carries water to put out a fire. To explain unroll, I took a mattress from the corner of the room and unrolled it (“I’m unrolling the mat) and rolling it up again (“Now I’m rolling the mat”). Two or three repetitions and they all nodded in understanding.

But when questions like “What’s Maya mean?” kept popping up, I paused from the reading to explain proper nouns (a term I only used once, getting 20 blank stares, then switching to “special” or “specific” people, places, and things). To explain these specific things to these special people, I had to put down my book and go unscripted. I wrote “boy” and “Ven” [one of the students’ names] on the board, and explained how Ven is a specific person, which is why it is capitalized. This was a huge breakthrough for them. In Sanskrit languages, there is no differentiation of capital and lower case. They had assumed, up until just then, that the capital letters appearing mid-sentence were pronunciation cues. An easy fix, but something that had never been addressed in the book. I watched a wave of

“ohhhhhh” sweep across about two-thirds of the class, then one boy explained the concept to another who didn’t get it in Tibetan. Then the little boy who just caught on went “ohhhhhh,” which I’m now convinced is a universal human sound. I wrote “after eating at mike’s restaurant on new road, my friends sarah, jane, steve, and i went to hotel nana in thamel, kathmandu” in all lower case letters and had the students correct it. The boy who received the proper noun explanation in Tibetan capitalized Kathmandu. I was proud of them and myself.

After finishing “The Fire II,” there was a set of reading comprehension questions. “Which hotel was on fire?” “Whom did Prem telephone?” and so forth. I told the monklets to write the questions down in their books and answer them. Notebooks flew open, pens furiously scribbled for about twenty seconds, and once again the monks all stared at me in silence.

“Are you finished?”

“We don’t know. Can you read again?”

They were simple questions, yes, but none were very integral to the plot of the story. The name of the hotel was mentioned once in the second sentence of the story, but given the context of the story, who would remember such an insignificant detail? The books are intended to be one-per-student. This is why those exercises are called reading comprehension and not memory retention. This is exactly why students need adequate teaching supplies (as well as adequate teachers) and I would love to get Fulbright or somebody on this ASAP.

“But I just read it,” smiling at the idea that popped into my head. “Why don’t you read it so your friends can answer the questions?”

I had the monklets taking turns reading paragraphs out of the book. I was simultaneously tackling handwriting, comprehension, and pronunciation, improvising a lesson plan as I went, with one book, and I was still high enough to be choking back giggly fits of laughter. The boys stumbled over a bunch of words, but the worst, the *worst* were words ending in the silent E that plagues the English language. When I corrected the boys’ work, I noticed their handwriting was neater than mine. Go figure.

The next exercise, fill-in-the-blanks, covered what I believe are known as prepositional phrases, things like changing “he put on his shirt,” “he turned off the lights,” or (I told you this was ironic) “he took out his books.” In that section, a boy tripped over the word “lesson,” mistaking it for “listen.” He understood the meanings of both words, but

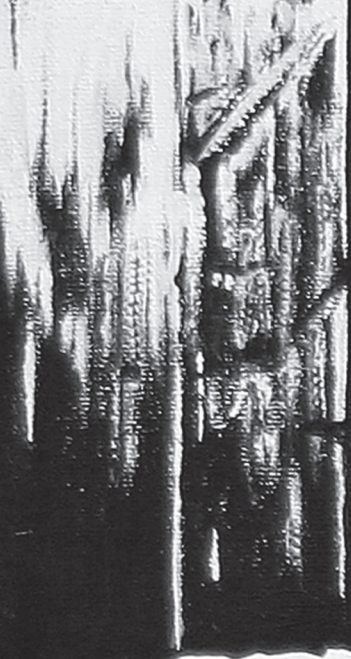
phonetically he couldn’t get it. I wrote “listen” on the board to help differentiate, a mistake that ended with half the class pronouncing the word as “liz-ten.” The only rationalization for the semi-silent T was that people who speak English are generally pretty lazy. When I got two smiles from the whole class, I realized I was officially the teacher who makes bad jokes that nobody understands. Although I’m not sure if I was even joking...

I did enjoy explaining the phrase “nearer and nearer” to the monklets. “I am near now, you understand?” I asked, stepping close to the boy who asked the question. I turned and ran to the window on the far side of the room. “And now I am far from you, right?” He nodded. “Well now,” I said, taking a giant, exaggerated goose-stepping stride toward him, “I am near-ER, and nearer, and nearer...” taking a step each time I said the word until I was right in front of the monklet’s laughing face. He understood.

Our final lesson was pronoun substitution in prepositional phrases. I think. The book gave examples such as “The boy opened up the book -> The boy opened *it* up” or the incredibly disturbing “The car knocked down the boy -> The car knocked *him* down.” Cross-linguistic sentence restructuring is a nightmare, but by breaking it down into two steps (Step one, is “the boy” a him, her, or it? Step two, new word order) the boys understood it to the point where they were making their own sentences for each other to rearrange. They owned that structure. And I taught it to them.

Having finished the chapter, I asked how much longer there was in class, to which they replied that class was usually already over by then. When I had substitute teachers, I’d be sure to remind them that class was (almost) over, but these kids said nothing. They were respectful, and wanted to learn. Once again, I think it’s because they’re monks.

So I taught them. To the best of my ability, I taught, and in my opinion, effectively too. As I was teaching, I remembered instances of being a tutor or teacher’s assistant back in California [which I had forgotten when initially approached to teach] and realized Khudura was right; I was a teacher in a past life. My California life. I was just so blazed and caught off guard that I forgot. But that’s Buddhism, *bodhicitta*, doing what you can in the moment to help others. I get it now.







International squatters symbol. A squatter is a person who lives in a building without officially owning or renting the space. There are many different kinds of squatters all over the world. Some are refugees fleeing oppression, some are trying to take advantage of and highlight our massive urban decay and the greedy real estate market, others are attempting to live communal lives in otherwise empty spaces without the constraints of property ownership. A Squat can be anything from an old bicycle factory in Slovenia, a mud hut in Kenya, a hospital in France, or an apartment in the United States. In some countries around the world a building not in use is legal to squat in, and in others a family not in possession of a property deed risks arrest. Squatting is seen as a resource to many anarchists. For example, one may be seeking a safe-haven to practice their beliefs of community living and equality. Another may be

looking for a way to recycle living space, living on the wastes of mass society without contributing to it. Regardless of your reasoning, the buildings are empty, the space is there, so squat away!

Earth First! symbol. Earth First! is a radical environmental advocacy group founded in the spring of 1980. The group is heavily inspired by the writings of Rachel Carson, Aldo Leopold, and Edward Abbey. The initial pledge of Earth First! was “No



compromise in defense of Mother Earth,” this was especially important to them because they felt that mainstream environmental activists were selling-out to the government. Earth First! identifies closely with deep ecology, a philosophy that values all forms of life on earth equally. Earth First! uses this philosophy as a base for their ecocentric worldview, one in which every organism's intrinsic value is more important than their resource value. Earth First! started such practices as the treesit, where activists will sit high in trees to prevent them from being logged. They have also been involved in direct actions to counter human developments that cause destruction of wildlife habitats. In 1992 Earth First!

began to turn towards a more mainstream legal movement. Some members thought this was essentially giving up, they refused to abandon direct actions and so they started the Earth Liberation Front. ELF has been widely portrayed in the mainstream media as a ‘criminal organization’, although many would argue that the anti-environmental actions of government and big business are more harmful and criminal than anything ELF has ever done.



Industrial Workers of the World (IWW or the Wobblies) Symbols. The Industrial Workers of the World was founded in Chicago in June 1905 in opposition to the American Federation of Labor (AFL), and capitalism in general. The IWW's initial goal was to promote worldwide workers solidarity in the revolutionary struggle to end the class system and overthrow the employing class. Its motto is "an injury to one is an injury to all." The IWW believes that all workers should organize as a class. Here is an excerpt from the IWW constitution, "There can be no peace so long as hunger and want are found among millions of the working people and the few,

who make up the employing class, have all the good things of life.

Between these two classes a struggle must go on until the workers of the world organize as a class, take possession of the means of production, abolish the wage system, and live in harmony with the Earth." Some notable members include: Noam Chomsky, Dorothy Day, Judi Bari, and Jeff Monson.



Animal Liberation Front (ALF) is a name used internationally by animal liberation activists who engage in direct action on behalf of animals. This includes removing animals from laboratories and fur farms, and sabotaging facilities involved in animal testing and other animal-based industries. According to ALF statements, any act that furthers the cause of animal liberation, where all reasonable precautions are taken not to endanger life, may be claimed as an ALF action. The ALF is not a group with a membership, but an example of a leaderless resistance. ALF volunteers see themselves as the modern equivalent of the Underground Railroad, the 19th-century anti-slavery network, with activists

now removing animals from laboratories and farms, arranging safe houses and veterinary care, and operating sanctuaries where the animals live out the rest of their lives. Covert cells are active in 38 countries, operating clandestinely and independently of one another, with activists working on a need-to-know basis. Robin Webb, who runs the Animal Liberation Press Office in the UK, has said: "That is why the ALF cannot be smashed, it cannot be effectively infiltrated, it cannot be stopped. You, each and every one of you: you are the ALF."







THE MASK OF PATRIOTISM

WHY ANARCHISTS DON'T VOTE

Many view the United States (US) political system today as a machine that serves only to forward certain business goals of the upper class, and help retain politicians who want the world's status quo to remain intact. Devastatingly low voter participation and lack of faith in the process scars the long standing ideal of republicanism. The US voting populace would be blessed if they all read Reclus' Why Anarchists Don't Vote, surely it would be an appropriate step to dislodge the two party bog which the US must settle for today.

Reclus makes the point that when one votes, one makes a leap of faith and assumes that the elected is somehow more able and trustworthy to make communal decisions. The history of US democracy is riddled with leaders who were deceitful, inept and incapable of governmental work. Even so, the psychological attitude still survives that if a candidate shows the usual bravado and overconfidence, they certainly have life experiences and knowledge that qualify them to dictate vital aspects of the lives of the constituents. Why does the voting population in the US continually fall into this trap? The populace must learn that if a person is so willing and eager to be a politician, than statistically speaking, they should never be trusted. Even within the current system, voters must seriously re-examine the type of person and personality which is qualified to run the government, if there must be a

government.

One line of the essay that jumps out at the modern reader is "*Your elected person shall have to legislate on every subject under the moon...how best to kill a tribe of Arabs or a few Negroes*". Surely if people in the US were to read this with an open mind they would recognize that the selling of colonial operations as legitimate goals of the community has been a long standing tenant of democracy - Reclus recognized this in his own time over a hundred years ago. In 2004, US voters elected George W. Bush. By the time of the election, the people had had over a year and a half to assess the military operation in Iraq. All indicators, economic, humanistic and actual military success, suggested that the war was a failure. It would seem that there was more than enough evidence for the average US voter to see for themselves that there was more to the invasion than security and the spread of democracy. Yet the voters chose to believe the president and reward him with four more years in office. Historians will look back on that mandate as a historic moment of groupthink and inability of the population to identify the treachery being carried out at their expense. The lessons of Reclus should have been recited from the rooftops on that sadly indicative Election Day.

The electoral system which is in place today serves the tendency of politicians to act differently in office than they said they would while campaigning, and claim to uphold their promises while actually serving other interests. Terms being set at relatively large time spans such as four or six years, politicians

have a long time before being re-evaluated by the public. As a result, they really must only appear to be honest to their original plans months before potential re-election. Our national debate is one that is supersaturated with information. Often it is biased toward the status quo such as the words of the politicians and their parties, as well as corporate mass media. Many other sources such as independent Internet sites and word of mouth also flood the voter with opinions, 'facts' and any multitude of reasons why they should vote one way or another. With such uncertainty, politicians have a long leash when it comes to misdeeds and dishonest governance. Even if a leader blatantly crosses their campaign platform, there are so many voices out there that the average voter must struggle to find a reasonably truthful explanation, if not just turning to outright partisanship or even giving up on the whole process out of confusion. This is one of the heftiest advantages for politicians; accountability is minimal as a result of torrent of misinformation and confusion tactics that surround every campaign.

The average voter is likely to lead a life that is full of commands from above and lack of personal decision-making opportunities. Many of the people in the US find their lives controlled and regimented in our modern society. The political system is a clear reflection of that. Not only are they giving up our freedom in a basic sense as Reclus insists, but they continue to submit to a system which offers no alternatives and forces the shame of voting for candidates who are known in the mind of the voter

to stand for continued success of *corporate America* and the continual assertion of our worldwide domination. A gander at Reclus' insistence for self determination and autonomy throughout daily life is crucial to the reassertion of individual power over the current political system, or in a more optimistic vein the overthrow of this system in favor of an anarchist one which was the ultimate goal of Reclus' beliefs.

Finding Peace in Anarchy within the Storm

This question swirls and flows
Over a bridge between two
Peering into the mist to place names
Upon shapes
In some time and place where those that have seen
Look upon the young with sorrow and despair
Following a road that dips and dives
Into answers that say nothing
Words that swim against the current between two minds
Reaching their end
Finding only the beginning
A burning heart picks a number
And counts backwards
All the while seeing patterns that hold
The key to each breath
After touching the mind of a grizzled man
Who chuckles with cold eyes at the word love
Do we pause to wonder if the seconds that we count
Are only a motion?
Stopping to stare at the sky
Transfixed
Letting the sea flow from our soul
To the earth, and back again
Find faith with me
Or relax into the rumbling waves laughter
That come from the universe
And lull me to sleep

THE STORY OF CINNAMON

There lived a young girl who was beautiful and strong.

When she laughed her eyes were diamonds,
And she loved to dance all night long.

She lived in a castle, but was no princess
You see, for a long time this castle
Has not been used by the king.

It sat there empty, getting old and grey,
The roof falling in and things in disarray.
Then one day it was cold outside

And all the animals with no homes
Did shiver and cry. Winter was coming,
Leaves were falling from trees.

Everyone wanted a warm place to be.
So Raven spoke-up from a perch in a tree.
He was a wise fellow who knew how to find food
for free.

He called for a council; he called for his friends.
He said,
“We need to do something and the doing needs
to begin.”
His friends came running from all around.

There was Rat with his whiskers and big front
teeth,
And Spider with her many, many, feet.
Roach came scuttling from beneath a leaf

And fly came buzzing on his little wings.
Even shaggy old Blackie with his ears a-floppin’
And a member of the alley cats came strolling.

The other cats were too busy sleeping or
stretching
To move from beneath their comfy awning.
There by the old tree the friends sat talking
about their needs.

Finally it was agreed, it was a house they did
need

At least until spring, when they could feel at
ease.
The next question was obvious, they all agreed.

“Where could they find a place for free?”
No one had money, because none of them had
greed.
Then Rat spoke-up, with his big front teeth.

“Well, I know a place, but it is a little leaky.”
“that’s alright,” said Raven, “I know where to
recycle things
All over this city. I am sure we can find what we
need.”

“Where is this place?” Meowed the Alley Cat,
You could tell she felt lazy and a little fat.
“Not far,” said Rat, “No, it is close indeed.”

“It is the abandoned old castle on the edge of the
city”
Then everyone began to nod their heads, and
consensus
Was reached. “Yes, that’s a good place, better
than many.”

And that is how the friends first moved in
To the castle on the edge of the city.
But their first winter there was not easy.

The castle was big and drafty,
And they had to do lots of cleaning.
There were holes in the roof

And everything needed repairing.
But it sure was better than being outside
freezing.
So they worked together, and had a fun time,

And when winter finally ended
They had a party for springtime.
All around the castle, on the edge of the city,

Flowers were blooming and the world looked
pretty.
One day in the castle the cats were lying around,
Which is what they did when not walking the
grounds.

They were listening to music way to loud.

They said they liked it that way, and they did meow.

The music was so very loud

It reached out the window and down to the ground

Way down into the city the music did reach,
Where it touched a girl who began dancing to the beat.

She laughed and she danced all the way up the hill,

Until she reached the castle, where everyone lived for free.

She looked at the window where the music did play

And saw the cats inside just rocking away,
And it all just looked like so much fun,
And the little girl was lonely and hot in the sun.

So she knocked on the door and Blackie let her inside,
Which is what he did for anyone whose smell he did like.

Blackie had a big nose and smelled everything in sight.

He remembered the world thru smell more than sight.

To Blackie the girl smelled like cookies or cakes
Or something nice. So in his mind he named her

Cinnamon, after a spice he did like.

And this is how Cinnamon came to be

Like a princess in a castle that had no need for a king.

But living in a castle is not always easy.

You see even animals can argue, and sometimes fight.

But mostly they had fun living their free life.

They cooked big meals and gave out food for free,

And always had to work on fixing things.
Spider was good at building and welding,

And Blackie was happy to lick everything clean.
The alley cats mostly laid around all day,

But were fun to play with and kept mean people away.

They knew the best places to lay in the sun,
And how to get high in a tree.

But even they had to agree

It was rat who knew the castle better than anybody.

Rat knew the castle thru and thru,
And had explored every nook and cranny;

From the ones beneath the ground, to the ones in the walls.

Sometimes Cinnamon could hear Rat in the ceiling in the hall.

The Castle was always alive with parties and dress-up balls,

And travelers would stop in, going from here to there.

Some would stay a long time and it was sad to say farewell.

But Cinnamon found that if they were really good friends

She usually ended up seeing them again.

Those reunions were the times she liked the most.

Then, one morning, after just such a night,

When everyone was in bed, snug and tight
There came a rapping at the door.

You could hear it over everyone's snores.

Cinnamon was too tired to get out of bed,

But she heard voices talking,
And Blackie raised his head.

Whoever it was went away,

But left a paper which did say

That other people had plans for the castle.

That the friends who lived in the castle for free
Could not stay!

Then there was a lot of noise and some tears.

Once again Raven did open his beak and say,
"The animals of the castle need a council
And we need it today."

Everyone came together and sat face to face,
They took turns speaking
And what they thought they did say.

They spoke about fears,
About anger and hate.
Some refused to go,

Others thought it was fate.
They sat and they talked the whole day thru.
They looked for a solution for all, not just a few.

Although it seemed they would never decide
what to do,
They were happy they had such good friends to
talk to.
You see some loved the castle and wanted to stay
and fight,

While others, like Roach, wanted to disappear
into the night.
Spider was mad to leave her hard work behind,
And Blackie had bones in yard he wanted to find.

Cinnamon listened to all, and tried not to cry
She loved her friends for being brave and true,
But the piece of paper that had brought the bad
news

Said they had to be gone in the morning
Or police would come thru.
Clearly no consensus would be reached,

Everyone could not stay to fight.
She whispered this to Mouse,
Who liked to speak real quiet.

Mouse twitched her pink nose and did reply,
“I have a suggestion,
I know a place we could move to.

It's not a castle but it would do .
It has fruit trees and big windows,
And a park to wander thru.”

This made everyone stop and think,
“Could it be true?
Could they simply up and move?”

It would take lots of work,
And the castle had been nice,
But they were not prepared to fight.

So all together, In consensus, with strength and
might,
They moved their little world; they packed up in
one night.
And before the sun was shining into their eyes

They were sneaking into an old building to start
a new life.
And because this time the work was not as hard
as before,
Because they had already learned things, like
how to fix a door,

And how to work together, and how to organize,
And how to live without always getting in fights.
Often Cinnamon would remember the Castle,

With its stairs and towers and miss the times
before,
But then she would look out her new front door,
And see trees with oranges and a park to explore.

And she would listen to the birds and think;
“This place is just right, now it's our home
And it's really very nice.

And you know, I am not scared of the world
anymore,
Because I have friends to work with
And life is never a bore.”

And that is where this story ends,
Of the animals who lived in a community of
friends,
In castle and gardens and houses in cities,

And moved when they had to,
And occasionally stayed to fight,
And had solidarity with each other,

And loved their free life.





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