

A FOGGY, FULL MOON MORNING

Darry D Eggleston, <http://DarryD.com>

I'm back from my morning walk with the puppies.

As is our policy, we headed out the door at 4 AM with HoneyBear in the lead & DaisyDawg following — both on a leash, of course.

We take a leisurely stroll around the neighborhood for a little over an hour so that I'm back in time to walk with my favorite neighbor, Lady Mary, at 5:25 AM.

It was a foggy, full moon morning.

After a warm Florida day, the Yankee breeze slowly weaving its way into our lives from the northwest caused the fog to be thicker than congressmen huddled over a pile of campaign funds.

A lesser man, seeing the thick fog and hearing the low moan of the wind through the oak trees all along the street might not have ventured out; but, as a trained warrior, I'm fearless.

I put on my black, wool pants, an over-sized white shirt that comes down almost down to my knees, and my string of garlic around my neck to ward off the vampires. I have to admit that my white t-shirt looks more like a white robe, but I want to make sure that the occasional, passing car sees me.

With the puppies smelling the morning news left by other puppies who had come this way during the previous evening and night, I stayed alert so as to protect them from unseen threats. After all, in this pack, I'm the Alpha Male.

Seeing a house 35 feet ahead was all but impossible. The fog was getting thicker by the moment. I expected to hear London's Big Bend chime at any moment.

We were a little startled at Mr. Armadillo meandering across the road down by Mary's home sniffing the concrete street as if it hid the tasty white grubs the leathery, armored animal so treasures. Because it's so near-sighted, it lumbered across the street like a drunken sailor on shore leave.

DaisyDawg went into her attack mode. She might be afraid of humans, but there is not an animal on the planet that she fears. HoneyBear couldn't be bothered. There were too many neat sights and smells calling her name.

The moaning of the breeze through the oak trees and the rubbing of their limbs together created eery sounds that would have terrified a lesser man.

We smelled the Mrs. Opossum before we saw her. She saw us and dropped like a rock. She lay next to the road apparently dead with her teeth bared and drool dripping onto the grass. She smelled horrendous, like an un-bathed construction worker before he splashed on his after shave and headed for the local bar.

The puppies and I gave Mrs. Opossum a wide berth.

That's when we saw the vampire bat. Swooping low below tree top level, it seemed in search of unwitting meals flying nearby.

Coming as it did from the direction of the full moon, its wing tops glowed like diamond earrings by a fire place. It startled us.

With a wing span as wide as the road and making absolutely no sounds, it soared in this direction and then that. Black bat, black night, full moon — not a very comforting sight.

Now the bat seemed to be trailing us as if looking at us as its next meal. Closer and closer it came, suddenly disappearing and reappearing as if at will.

That's when it vanished behind the oak tree.

No warning. A sudden, huge figure of a man coming out of that oak's shadows illuminated in the moon's glow upon the mist. All in black — or close to it — only its outline was discernable.

The wind died. The earth stood still. No noise. Not a sound.

I froze, eyes bigger than the hubcaps on my van, fists clenched against the puppy's leashes, and stared.

DaisyDawg relieved herself right there on the sidewalk.

HoneyBear stopped sniffing and shook her head in disbelief.

That's when — I'm guessing — the acorn fell from the 50-foot oak tree and hit the Ford pickup truck on its bare, metallic roof.

The cat, who must have been sleeping in the truck's bed leaped 45 feet in the air while howling like a banshee in heat and — before its feet could touch the ground — was streaking out of the truck bed and across the car

parked next to it at 66 miles-per-hour with its tail in a straight line behind it vainly trying to catch up.

The car's alarm screamed to life piercing the night air with like a Confederate Rebel yell.

Well, it's 04:10 AM, and I'm checking my email.

It's amazing how tired one can be after a leisurely stroll.

I got an email from the down-the-street neighbor, Martha.

Seems she was out for a brief period, but the fog scared her.

Then what she described as a huge white robe-like mass sped past full-steam down the middle of the street with two dogs chasing after it while screaming in a high soprano voice, "LORD, SAVE US ALL!!!"

She ran back into her house. (Some people lack courage.)

Moments ago, my wife screamed from the bedroom, "DON'T SLAM THE DOOR when you come home!"

IF she only knew what was really going out just outside our front door!

Yep. Mary will be walking with herself this morning.