

Titan Titanium Breads
by Paige-Marie Stewart

Olivia sat in the car on an eight-hour drive to a camping site. She sat there cramped, tired, and much too warm, (their car had no air conditioning so after about an hour of driving it got almost unbearably warm). As they bumped over the roads her eyes slowly started to close. She hadn't let herself go to sleep yet because she had never been on a long car ride and she was determined to stay awake. But, as with everything you try to do, or try not to do, it is harder than it seems, so gradually she fell asleep.

Olivia woke up a bit later, realizing that the car had stopped.

Are we here already? she wondered, cracking an eye open, *That didn't feel like eight hours.*

She stretched and jumped out of the car. It didn't look how she had imagined it, but she told herself that nothing ever looks like how you imagine it.

“Are we here already?” She asked, yawning.

“Yes, you slept for most of the ride including the rest stop we took in Cadelac,” her Mom informed her.

“Cadelac? Where’s Cadelac?” Olivia asked as they walked away.

“A small town off of the coast of Hepler,” her Mom replied.

Olivia frowned, she didn't remember Cadelac being on the way to their campsite. Come to think of it, she didn't remember a place called Hepler either.

She glanced around, and read the signs of the stores around her. They were all strange with names like Titan Titanium Breads and Doubly Jumbo Fireworks.

“Isn’t anything here normal?” she wondered.

Even as she spoke, they walked into the only store she recognized, one called Western Foods.

“Finally something I recognize!” Olivia smiled.

Just then, a deer with a black moustache, a top hat, and a suit coat walked up.

“How can I help you today?” it asked.

So much for normal.

While her parents chatted, Olivia slipped away to find something she could buy with her own money. As she walked, she scanned the shelves for something yummy. After about three aisles, she stopped and sighed. She hadn't seen anything familiar. Most of the titles consisted of things like, “Deer Grass! Original!” or “Horse Hair Brush! Perfect to get all the tangles out of your beard!” and “Organic Christmas Tree! Only the best blue!”

Finally, after she had gone through nearly the entire store, she spotted a bag of candy for a reasonable price. She grabbed it off the shelf and began to walk toward the front of the store, but stopped short. She realized she hadn't seen any tills or cashiers. Olivia glanced around in frustration and saw a door. It didn't have a sign that said “Staff Only” so she walked through.

Suddenly she felt herself lifted and tossed to the roof. She waited for when she would fall down again, but instead she just stuck to the roof.

What on earth? she thought.

Opening her eyes, she saw that not just she, but all the shoppers in the room were walking and shopping around on the roof. So, unsteadily, she got to her feet and walked to the nearest empty till.

“Hi, I would like to buy this,” she said uncertainly.

The reason she was uncertain was that back at home all the people were just, well, people. But here there seemed to be animals dressed up and working as the cashiers and the merchandisers. She was currently talking to a goldfish in a uniform (a rather FAT goldfish in a uniform). And since everything was upside down, everything kept dropping off the shelves and hitting the floor overhead. Whenever this happened, the workers just restocked the shelves instead of retrieving the fallen goods. Staring at this strange sight, Olivia shook her head and proceeded to buy her candy.

She said again, more certainly this time, "Hello, I would like to buy these,"

The goldfish replied, "How can I help you?"

Olivia repeated her words, "I would like to buy these, please,"

"How can I help you?" the goldfish also repeated.

"I would like to buy this," she repeated.

"How can I help you?" the goldfish said.

"Arghhh, I want to buy this!" she said angrily.

"How can I..."

"You have one more chance to answer me properly," she said cutting the goldfish off.

"How can I help..."

"Goodbye!" She stalked off. How was she supposed to buy something if nobody would answer her?

She looked at her watch -- it was half past four.

I probably should head back soon, she decided.

Suddenly she had an idea, *I know! I will write a complaint note to the manager of this store then head back to my parents,*

Olivia cast around for a piece of paper. Once she found one, she pulled a pencil out of her bag and proceeded to write. The paper already had some writing on it, so she flipped to the eraser and erased the writing. Well, she tried to erase, but she just seemed to write on the paper more. She cried out in frustration. Crumpling up the paper, she threw it away and found a blank piece. She flipped the pencil and tried to write with the lead. All that happened was that she erased on the paper. She gritted her teeth and rubbed the paper with all her might. She rubbed the paper so hard that it disappeared.

Good riddance, she thought.

Suddenly the Goldfish at the till disappeared in a puff of smoke. Olivia's mouth dropped open.

He was rude, but he didn't have to die like that, she thought uncomfortably.

Just then the room filled with the smoke from that one puff, and everything else started to disappear. Olivia whirled and started to run to get away to get away from the smoke.

How could everybody else just stand there till they disappeared? she pondered, frightened. Just then she stumbled and fell. As she fell, she heard her mother's voice.

"Wake up, Olivia! Come on. It's time to wake up!"

Then she was awake in the real car, at the real campsite with her real mother shaking her gently.

"Oh, Mother, the strangest dream I've just had!" and she proceeded to tell her mother all about it.

"Oh that's nice dear" she said absentmindedly, opening a bag with bread in it that was labeled "Titan Titanium Breads!"