



# The Ram and Ewe

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Nov. 2016

PaSu Farm

Volume 58

Let's talk about birds.

Animals versus human arrogance. I have wrestled with this problem and tried to make sense of it only to find myself more confused than ever.

As a young boy I spent a considerable time destroying beautiful birds with a pellet gun. The birds I killed were animate objects devoid of any emotions. Wonderful and challenging targets. My father, a very advanced and compassionate man for his time, would have been a vegetarian but for my mothers absolute rejection to the concept associating it to heathen practices and definitely un-Christian. He, however, was appalled at my destructive behaviour and pleaded with me to change my ways. I remember clearly his prophesy that I would bitterly regret it one day.

In 1965 I did a year's course in psychology for a degree in economics and business administration. As part of the curriculum we studied animal behaviour. The essence of this course was that animals only acted instinctively and were emotionless. People who insisted that their animals were capable of loving were just anthropomorphic and ignorant. That's when I began to see the light. The professor delivering this scientific dribble was definitely deprived of essential emotions, or so it seemed, as he himself was emotionless.

Today, thanks to scientists such as Jane Goodall, that rigid thinking is only held by those who can benefit from the misuse of animals. Most of us, especially as we grow older, have pets we adore and respect those animals who still live in the wilds.

At PaSu Farm we have beautiful grounds with lovely trees and a healthy bird population. Two

summers ago I had an encounter with a Black bird which still leaves me wondering. I used to sit out on the deck after work and watch and listen to the birds. There was a Spruce tree about twenty feet from where I was sitting that housed a Black bird family. Now, I am not sure what its official name was, but it was about 6 inches from beak to forked tail with yellow around the eyes, otherwise pitch black. I used to talk to the birds when they sat out on branches and were visible. By talking I mean making a particular bird sound that can be achieved by kissing the back of your hand. By changing the shape of your lips you can change the pitch and vary the tones. Birds are always intrigued by this and will cock their heads trying to make sense of what they hear.

One evening in July I noticed that the Black bird was very agitated and making a lot of noise which sounded a bit like my bird chatter. It kept fluttering from one tree to another. It then flew off towards the vegetable garden. On a whim I followed the bird which kept flying erratically as if it wanted me to follow it. In one part of the vegetable garden are the large Saskatoon bushes which we cover with bird netting in the hope that we get a crop and not just fill the birds' crops. The netting spills all the way to the ground and the excess lies in a puddle. The Black bird was sitting in a bush about ten to fifteen feet away from the netting fluttering its wings and making a heck of a din. Then I got it. I knew what I had to look for. There, hopelessly entangled in the puddled net, was the Black bird's mate. In less than a minute the bird was disentangled and flew a little wobbly to its mate. The reunion was rather emotional for the three of us. Theirs was

ecstasy at being safe together again with no attention to me. My emotions? Well, such a small little creature had to make a judgment call to save its mate and to communicate its hysterical urgency to a large creature that, if anything, it was afraid of. How to make sense of this?

About four years ago in July, I was returning home when I saw a dazed magpie in the middle of the road. I slowed down to avoid it but it did not fly off. So I stopped and wrapped it in a tablecloth and drove off back to PaSu Farm. I transferred the magpie to a large dogs travelling wire cage and gave it some meat and water. For three days we fed and watered the bird before I had time to take it to the Wild Animal Rescue Center at Mad-den. Several weeks later I was informed the bird had recovered and had been set free.

About two months later I was sitting at the back patio which also is the back entrance to the kitchen where the rescued bird had spent three days when a magpie flew up and landed on a railing about twelve feet away. That was very surprising as I do not particularly like magpies and they are very wary of humans in our part of the country. Well this bird just stared at me and it was very twitchy ready to fly off the moment it perceived a threat. The encounter lasted twenty to thirty seconds and I sat very still. It flew away and I would see it from time to time in the yard.

In the Spring that bird built a nest in the Spruce tree right next to Sue's office window and about ten feet above the place it had spent three days in the cage. This was one of the busiest places on the farm with all sorts of human traffic. Now, just about every spruce tree has a magpie nest and the fledglings do not seem to be afraid of humans. It makes you wonder.

As I progress in years I recall my fathers prophecy and I do bitterly regret what cannot be undone. Ah! But there is such a thing as Karma and I think I have been given the rare opportunity to pay for some of my sins in this lifetime. My karma has a name. Peaches.

For those who do not know Peaches, she is a pink Moluccan Cockatoo, twenty inches from top to tail, weighs 27 ounces and has the emotional



## Victorian Christmas Dinners

Sat. 26th Nov.

Sat. 3rd, 10th, 17th Dec.

5:30pm Cocktails 6:30pm Dinner

Once again we will be presenting our elegant eight course, plate service, English Victorian Christmas Dinner. The entrée will be a choice between Roast leg of Lamb and Prime Rib. To create a warm hospitable atmosphere our staff will be dressed in Victorian garb, candles and crackers will be placed on the table and the plum pudding will be flamed for all to see.

\$85per person. Service included in price.

GST not included

Reservations and Tickets ESSENTIAL

## PaSu Sunday Buffet

WHERE FRIENDS AND FAMILY MEET

FOR A SCRUMPTIOUS FEAST

Home Baked Bread and Soup

Roast Lamb, Beef and Chicken served  
with hot vegetables and truffle gravy

Three fresh salads

Soup and our own Artisan Bread

Assorted Pickles and Cheeses

Four original homemade Desserts

Price \$34.50 per person

Children under 10 half-price. Two and under free

Sunday seating from 12 to 1pm

Reservations essential

intelligence of a hyper active two to three year old human child. Only she can scream louder. She came into our lives after I was chatting to someone at a dinner party and mentioned how I would like to have one of these beautiful birds. I did not know the first thing about them. If I had done some research I definitely would not have expressed those sentiments. The Universe heard my WANT and had the opportunity to get even. A week after that party I got a phone call and was offered an eight year old rescue bird. There was one proviso. If I took the bird I would keep her for the rest of my life. I never hesitated. She had had several homes in her first eight years and was in a sorry state and distrusted humans.

When I went to pick her up I was invited to sit on the kitchen floor. Peaches was placed on the floor about 8 feet from where I was sitting and the introduction was, "Peaches meet Patrick." She made a bee line for my lap and said, "Patrick, Hyyyyy," and snuggled under my arm. Well I am a suck and that was a done deal! She arrived at PaSu Farm on the 27<sup>th</sup> of December 1998 and since then our lives have never been the same. I had no idea how much attention she would need and the range of emotions she had. A Moluccan Cockatoo is a being with an ego larger than Donald Trump's. It is not in the class of a pet. It is a wild animal living with humans and in order to survive they adapt and reflect human behaviour good and bad; they bite, cheat and deceive yet they are capable of lots of affection and emotional bonding and they will always surprise you with their intelligence and ability to solve problems. One day we were doing a road trip. We stopped to buy some food to eat on the trip. I used my napkin as a bib and then strapped on my safety belt. Peaches' favourite position was to sit on my chest by hanging on to my safety belt. When I decided to have a drink from my Schnapples bottle she indicated she wanted a drink as well by tapping the bottle with her beak. I did not have a receptacle in which I could pour the juice so I poured a little into the shallow lid of the Schnapples bottle. Unfortunately it was too shallow for her to scoop but she solved the problem by tearing off a portion of the serviette/bib, chewing it

## **Christmas Shopping**

### **FARM STORE EXTRA SHOPPING HOURS**

For your convenience we will be open in December on the following Mondays:

The 5<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup>, and 19<sup>th</sup>

For shopping from 11am to 4pm

**ALSO**

We are open Saturday nights till 9pm in December before Christmas

### **OTHER LOCATIONS**

#### **Spruce Meadows**

#### **Christmas Market**

Last three weekends in November

Nov. 18, 19 and 20

Nov. 25, 26, and 27

Dec. 2, 3, and 4

#### **Calgary Farmers Market**

510 77 Ave. S.E. Calgary T2H 1C3

Corner of Blackfoot Tr. and Heritage Dr.

THIS WILL BE OUR LOCATION IN CALGARY  
MAKING IT EASIER FOR EXCHANGES & PICK-UPS.

Parking is easy and free.

## **TAKE HOME MEALS**

Our display freezers and refrigerators are full of readymade meals. We have curries, stews, pies, soups and desserts ready to go. Our TO GO food is prepared in small batches from the best ingredients including our own organic vegetables. We also have a small section of homemade preserves, jams, pickles, superior oils, aged vinegars and other delicious goodies. Check this section out the next time you visit

into a ball about three quarters of an inch in diameter, then dunking it into the juice and by tilting her head back she squeezed the juice down her throat. I replenished the juice in the lid and she repeated the action till she was satiated. She is always surprising us with that kind of intelligence.

Peaches has been with us for almost nineteen years and eats her breakfast and supper with us choosing the morsels she wants off our plates. She has a large cage near to the entrance of the kitchen and spends her time redesigning the shape of large apple boxes and rendering them into shredded cardboard. At the end of the day she goes into our apartment and sits on her stand in front of the TV and eats oranges and nuts, pleading for as much attention, in the way of head scratches, from me as possible. After supper she will watch a little TV and then retire to her bedroom. Yes you guessed it. Her bedroom cage is only a few feet from where we sleep. When the lights are switched off we dare not disturb her as she will curse us for the next thirty minutes or so. We do not really need an alarm clock. Summer or Winter she checks the time on the clock and then proceeds to wake us up. First very gently with a soft hi and hellos, escalating to a loud shriek. By that time we are truly awake.

Peaches is karma. She could live to be one hundred years old. Her future is assured as Genevieve my daughter, and the only one in our family who can manage Peaches, has offered to look after her for as long as she can. I know Genevieve prays every day for my longevity.

## A CHRISTMAS TRADITION

Years ago, before we had a shop, we used to have an OPEN HOUSE at the farm on the weekends in December. This tradition still continues and we offer FREE Christmas cake and hot cider in the boutique only. Let us take the stress out of your shopping by pampering you in a relaxed environment far from the maddening crowd.

## DON'T FORGET.

You can order by phone or online and we will ship to your destination. Orders over \$200 FREE SHIPPING to one destination only. Check our online Catalogue at [www.pasu.com](http://www.pasu.com) or phone, 403 337 2800



## Events that will be coming up in the new year.

Valentine 8 course dinner

FEBRUARY, Saturday the 11th

Celtic Evening

MARCH, Saturday the 18th

Sea Food Night

APRIL, Saturday the 15th

## Do you want up-to-date

information on events and products at PaSu?

Please go to our web page at [www.pasu.com](http://www.pasu.com)

And sign up. Thank you.