

TOM EDISON'S SHAGGY DOG

Interpreted by Sheryl Puentespina

Written in 1953



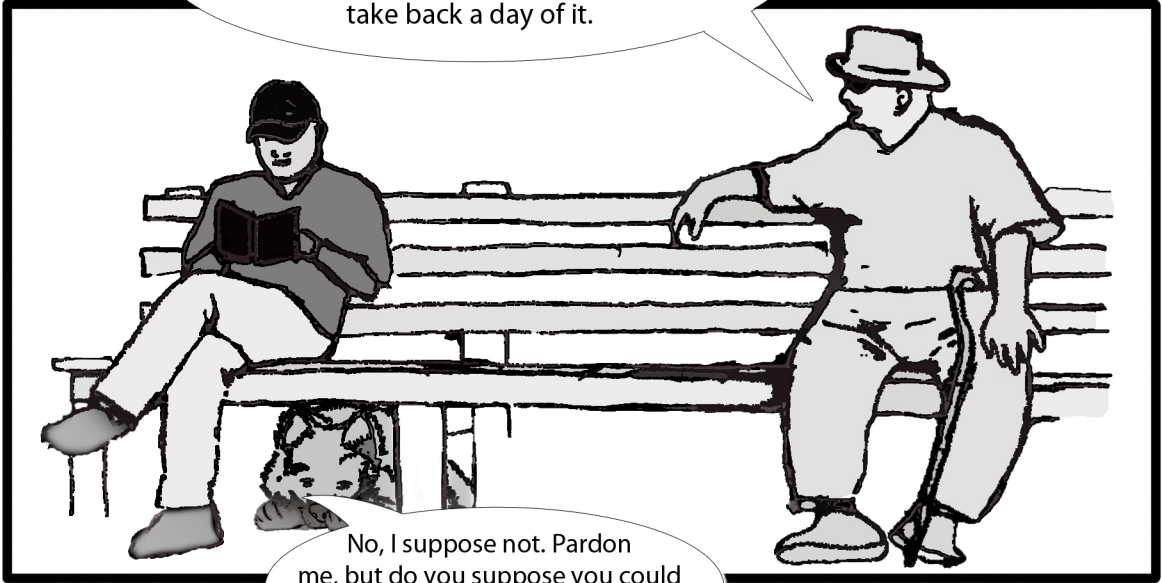
Harold K. Bullard, who had been successful in many fields, enjoyed reviewing his important past. But he faced the problem that complicates the lives of cannibals, namely that a single victim cannot be used over and over.



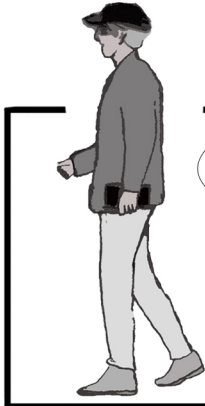
So Bullard and his dog set out through the park in quest of new faces.



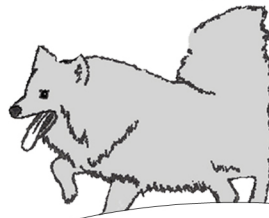
I made and lost five fortunes in my time. Two in real estate, one in scrap iron, one in oil, and one in trucking. Wouldn't take back a day of it.



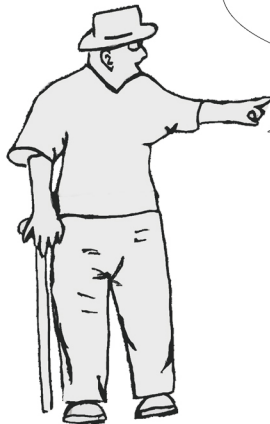
No, I suppose not. Pardon me, but do you suppose you could move you dog somewhere else? Stop it, boy! Scat!

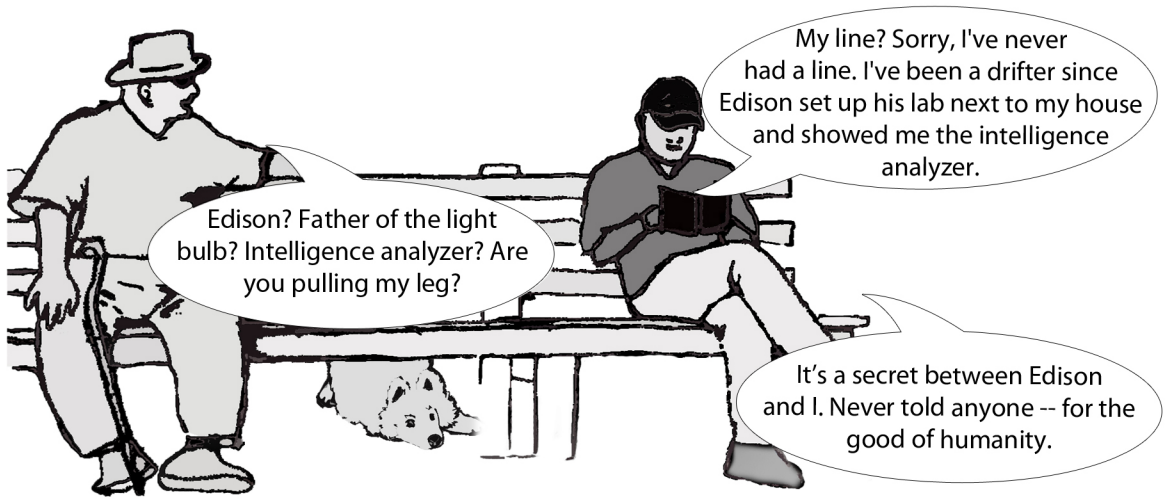


Sorry. I've got to be on my way. So good day, sir.



Oh, it's you! He was tracking you. He found a scent, so I just let him have his head. Don't blame you for moving on. Anyways, what's your line?





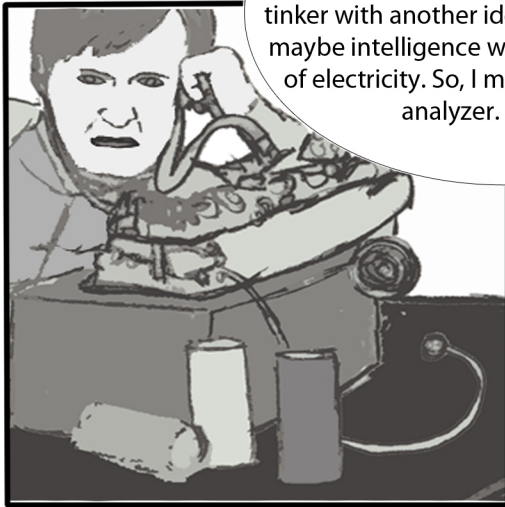
It was back in the fall of 1879 in the village of Menlo Park, New Jersey. A young man thought of as a wizard set up a laboratory next door to my home. There were flashes and crashes inside, and all sorts of scary goings on. We were warned to keep away.

I didn't get to know Edison right off, but his dog, Sparky, and I got to be steady pals. Sparky was a dog a whole lot like yours, and we used to wrestle all over the neighborhood. Yes, sir, your dog is the image of Sparky.





We wrestled right up to the door, then bam! I was on the floor of the laboratory. You can bet I was scared. I thought I was face to face with Satan himself.



For over a year, I've been trying to find a filament that will light in an incandescent lamp. Nothing works. While I was thinking, I began to tinker with another idea of mine. I thought maybe intelligence was just a certain kind of electricity. So, I made an intelligence analyzer. It works!



He tried it on me and the needle just lay where it was and trembled. So I suggested we try it on the dog.

The smarter a man was the farther the needle on the indicator in the little black box swung to the right.

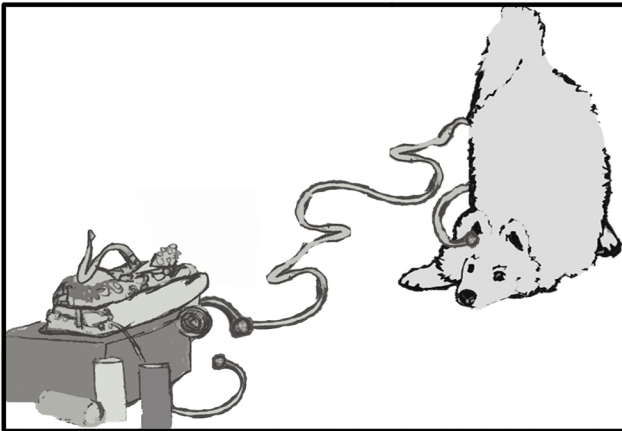


Old Sparky barked and howled and scratched to get out. Then he made a beeline right for the intelligence analyzer, knocking it out of Edison's hands.



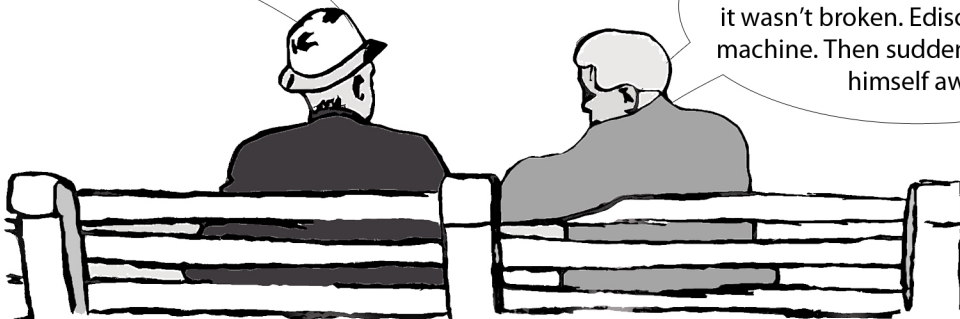
He was cornered.

Edison held him down while I touched the wires to his ears. And would you believe it, the needle flew past the little red pencil mark on the dial!



What's that red mark mean? Was it broken?

Edison said, "It means that the instrument is broken because that red mark is me." But it wasn't broken. Edison checked the machine. Then suddenly Sparky gave himself away.






Old Sparky barked and howled and scratched to get out. Then he made a beeline right for the intelligence analyzer, knocking it out of Edison's hands.




So! Man's best friend, huh? Dumb animal, huh? Let somebody else worry about food and shelter. No mortgages, no politics, no war, no work, no worry. Just wag your tail and you're all taken care of. I'll tell the world!

Look, why not keep quiet? It's been working out to everybody's satisfaction for hundreds of thousands of years. Destroy the intelligence analyzer and I'll tell you what to use for the lamp filament.






It's true, you have my solemn word as a gentleman. That dog rewarded me for my silence with wealth to live well the rest of my days. The last words Sparky ever spoke were to Thomas Edison.



Try a piece of carbonized cotton thread.

Later, he was torn to bits by a pack of dogs that had gathered outside the door.



A small token of esteem, sir, an ancestor of yours who talked himself to death. Good day.