

## DIVORCE

By Edwina Harvey.

Dear Maurice,

I am leaving you.

I think I was a good and dutiful wife to you during the years we were married. I took you for richer or poorer, I've loved you in sickness and in health. I have done almost all I can to satisfy you, though I must admit that in return you've been an almost flawless husband.

You aren't messy. You don't leave your clothes draped around the floor. You don't get drunk and come home late. (Though if you did, I'd make good use of the marble rolling pin your mother gave me as a wedding present!). To the best of my knowledge you've been faithful to me. You don't snore. You don't smoke. You've cooked just as many meals for me as I have for you. You're a good lover...you're a *very* good lover. You're kind and considerate. You never forget my birthday, or our anniversary, and you surprise me with flowers or chocolates at least 4 times a year whether I need it or not.

In short, my dearest Maurice, you are the most sweetest, considerate man I have ever met, or could ever hope to meet. I love you just as much as I did on our wedding day, if not more so.

But I'm filing for divorce.

The one problem affecting the stability of our relationship started off as a small one, Maurice dear, but oh how it's grown!

You wanted a pet you said all of 18 months ago. Not a dog, or a cat, a budgie or a goldfish or something considered 'normal', mind! Not an okapi, or an elephant, tiger, polar bear or beaver, or something else exotic. Not a dodo, a mermaid, a satyr or a unicorn, or something as gently eccentric.

No! You had to be the first (and the only one for obvious reasons) on the block to have a pet dragon.

Yes, I admit it was sort of cute when it first came out of its shell, if something taller at birth than a great dane, and twice as heavy, can be considered cute. And yes, Maurice, I agree that it didn't give us much bother at first. For the first two minutes of its life it was helpless and harmless...oh! but for the rest of it!

If you really want to know, no I *wasn't* terribly impressed with its cute gurgling noises on bath days. Remember how it demolished the bath by thinking our gold-plated gargoyle bath taps were its personalised rubber ducks?

You started bathing it in the pool after that. Remember how I *longed* for a house with a pool, Maurice? Remember how I used to go swimming every morning winter or summer to keep my body trim, taught and terrific – just the way you liked it? Remember how you laughed off my complaints about the pool water acquiring a fishy odour after it became your dragon's bath? Or the purple spots I broke out in when I dared to swim in that tainted water?

Don't you recall the fun we had when the dragon caught a cold? The local fire-brigade was on stand-by for weeks, and they had to rush around to put out spot fires every time the poor thing sneezed! We're *still* paying off the cost of fire-proofing the neighbours' homes, not to mention ours!

Then there's the basic problem of feeding the thing. Do you know just how much of our combined salary it takes to keep that pet of yours fed each week?

I haven't bought a new dress since that thing got here! What with food bills, and repair bills, and trying to put off law suits from people who have encountered *your* dragon.

No, Maurice, they aren't "just jealous" dear! No, I somehow doubt that they just want one as a pet too.

Yes, I know he's affectionate. I've still got the bruises from the last hug he gave me, and the stitches from his last "playful swipe" aren't due to come out for until next Thursday.

And in case it's slipped your mind; poor old Mrs Vanderhurst had a stroke when your dragon "smiled" at her. She's still in rehabilitation. So far all she can mutter is "All those TEETH! All those TEETH!" over and over again, but the nurses say she's making progress.

Before I forget, there was someone here today from the cattle yard. It seems that when your dragon last slipped his leash he flew over there for a quick snack. You owe them two bullocks.

Oh, and the air traffic authorities phoned up today as well. Yes, while off on one of his little jaunts, your dragon decided to play "tag" with a couple of jets.

Well, don't look at me; *I* was the one who told you to get his wings clipped, but would you listen? No! You said a dragon wasn't a dragon if he couldn't fly.

There's just one other thing, Maurice; your dragon seems to have developed a case of diarrhoea. He's been off colour most of the day, just resting in his roost. Do you remember when his roost used to be our roof?

I suggest you clean up after him, after all he is *your* pet. Better do it before the roof caves in from an excess of dragon "do-do's".

God only knows what you're going to do to clear the smell! I've only survived so far by using a gas mask. It's guaranteed against mustard gas, nerve and tear gas, but it doesn't *quite* keep the full effects of dragon gas at bay!

The neighbours will no doubt complain; and you can expect to hear from the state pollution authorities. If they mention a low lying cloud of smog blanketing the city on the weather reports tonight, you-know-who is to blame.

For peace of mind I've taken the phone off the hook and not answered the door. He's *your* dragon, *you* handle the problem for once.

As for me, well, Maurice darling, I'll be seeing you in court! I want half the furniture, and half the photos; but under no circumstances do I want custody of *your* dragon!

Your dinner is in the oven.

Love,

Alice.

Copyright Edwina Harvey 2009