

# Queen Coleen Tells A Story

What's that, honey, you said you don't know who I am?

Well, you do and you don't. Let me start with how you know me best.

I'm the Queen of the Krewe of Coleen, honey! You've seen me on many a Mardi Gras, being pushed around in my customized grocery cart by my adoring Krewe. These days we skip a few years here and there, but honey, let me tell you, we still put on the kind of show you can't miss, with our Coleender hats and the cart all covered with beads.

Now, nothing goes in the cart but the queen, honey, except maybe a few of the queen's beverages. A lotta people want to know how I can ride around in that thing all day without getting out for business. Honey, I've got an enormous bladder, I don't have to get out and go to the bathroom all day long. Though I think sitting cross-legged in that cart for so many years is why I've had to get both knees replaced.

But that ain't really nothing when you've had my kind of life. Parts were like a fairy tale: getting married in a castle in Germany, being able to do what I love for thirty years, helping young writers start their careers.

The thing they don't tell you about fairy tales, honey, is that the dragons win at least half the time. I came to New Orleans in 1964, a young widow with three kids under age ten. It wasn't like it was life's ambition to move to New Orleans; in fact, they had to offer me the job teaching library science at LSUNO twice before I took it.

I got started teaching children's literature a couple years later, honey, part because I liked it and part because they needed to have the course so the Education students could get their certification. But my courses got so popular around campus that pretty soon English majors, Art majors, even Drama and Communications majors started taking my course.

Don't get the idea it was easy, now, honey - I had to flunk a few athletes before the coaches stopped sending them

over just so they could find a class they could pass. I even had one student come up to me after class and tell me, "I didn't know you had to think in this course."

But I'm pretty sure I got most of them to think, honey. One of the great things about New Orleans is that it's such a small town - everywhere I go I see people I know, including a lot of former students, and they all come up and talk to me. That's why I stay here. Oh, I thought about leaving after I retired, getting out of all the heat and humidity, but you know honey, they just don't have it anywhere else like we've got it here.

So I get to travel a lot, telling stories to children and doing workshops, promoting good new books by promising young writers. And of course you've seen my books, honey, my two children's books, *Epossumondas* and *Who's That Tripping Over My Bridge*. I get a kick of out taking old time fables and turning them into modern books for kids. And you know what, honey, darned if they didn't turn around and put me in as a character in another children's book!

Yes, it's been some kind of life so far, and I'm still living it. I finally realized that the Lord does not want me to leave New Orleans during Mardi Gras, so chances are, you'll see me in that half throne, half grocery cart riding around on Fat Tuesday. It's the people that really make Mardi Gras, the smiles that break across their faces. Honey, it's gotta be the silliest thing they've ever seen, this old woman in a grocery cart blowing kisses to the crowd.

And now I'm gonna get to ride on the mother of all grocery carts, the royal float in Krewe du Vieux. When they get ahold of me to ask me to be queen, I was in Boston, and honey, I let out a squeal that could be heard on Chartres Street. I'm gonna have me a couple bourbon milk punches, roll through the French Quarter and see just how much trouble - I mean fun - I can get into.

Honey, even the aged have a quest for immortality!

# WMD OK in DC

WASHINGTON, DC - In a surprise announcement, the administration disclosed today that it had finally uncovered weapons of mass destruction - not in Iraq, but of all places, in the nation's capital.

"It appears that the invasion of Iraq, at a cost of thousands of American and Iraqi lives and more than one hundred billion taxpayer dollars, was totally unnecessary," commented a White House spokesman. "Who knew the WMD were right here under our noses?"

While preliminary details were sketchy, among the weapons reportedly found in the Washington arsenal were the Cheney Anti-Truth Missile, the Rumsfeld Radical Right Rocket, the Ashcroft Constitution Destroyer, the Karl Slime Rover and Wolfowitz Gas. Small traces of Bushthrax were also found.

The weapons were skillfully concealed using olfactory cover. In particular, a mix of sweet and pungent odors was used to throw investigators off the scent. "It was an unpleasant combination of Condi mints and Powell movements," said a member of the search team.

"Further investigation is under way, and may reveal more hidden weapons in the future," reported the spokesman. "To the families of the American and Iraqi dead, and the United States taxpayers, all we can say is 'Oops - our bad.'"

## C.O.A. STATEMENT

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