

# (Don't) Pet Me Like You Do

NIFATH KARIM CHOWDHURY

There are two kinds of people in the world— people with pets, and people with peeves about pets. To the disapproval of many of my friends, I am one belonging to the latter kind, and I have been classified many times as being heartless and having a dark soul. While I may never adopt a pet, I do find the behaviour of many of my pet-owning friends amusing and slightly questionable, and I will waste no time in pointing them out.

**Instacatgrams:** Britney Spears has a twitter account for her pet dog (@hannahspears), and often tweets back and forth with herself. You laugh now, but believe me when I say making social media accounts for pets is an actual epidemic taking place right now. The pet owners/adopters create the accounts for their clueless wards with all the excitement of a new FarmVille player, tagging you in photos and bombarding you with requests to “follow” their accounts. Perhaps they create these accounts to spread awareness about the rearing of pets. Or maybe they like receiving the influx of notifications that only cat videos can bring.



Either way, it's a little weird and very annoying.

**Belly Rubs:** How about— no? I understand that you are a very brave person, with incredibly bad eyesight which makes you blind to the presence of the razor sharp teeth that is all too obvious to me, but I do not want to touch your pet. I don't want to be near your pet. It's not fun to force your dogs on me when I am clearly terrified of them. Standing by laughing as they growl menacingly in my ear makes you a real bad friend. If you can see that someone is uncomfortable in the presence of your pets and you have the ability to call them off, why not do it? What joy do you get from watching your friend become miserable and covered in slobber?

If you want us to like your pets, this is not the way to do it.

**PDA:** “Petting and Display of Affection”. We get it, your pets are your babies, and you birthed them right out of you and into the kennel. You're very attached and it's easy to see that from all the fur on your face and clothes and hair. Like, that fur is really everywhere. It's getting on me now, and I'm allergic, so thanks for the nosebleed. Also, does no one else find the baby talking creepy? Sure,

a dog can be trained to understand certain commands, but I doubt your goldfish understands the sentiment behind you making kissy faces behind the tank.

I realize by now you are probably looking at me some sort of vicious animal-hater, but I promise you I am not. I melt at baby animal videos and I've (wanted to) name several of my friend's cats. I just happen to be one of those people who grew up hearing too many animal-injury related stories. I blame the Discovery channel.

*Nifath Karim Chowdhury likes to doodle all over her notebooks, textbooks and life. Send her a virtual high-5 at nifty\_nicole@live.com or a wave on instagram @nifathkarim*



# Does the Author's Intent Matter?

FATIMAH AKHTAR

From the inception of books themselves there must've been discrepancies between what the author wanted to say and what the reader interpreted from it. The former in this case is referred to as author's intent. That which is the interpretation of events that the author had in mind while creating them. Yet, the intent does not always translate in the exact through the page. More often than not the story can even contradict the interpretation that the author had in mind. So the next time your English teacher tells you the author meant to say the blue curtains meant sadness – even if the author didn't mean it for it to be interpreted that way, does that really matter?

There's a saying that goes no two people read the same book. That could very much be true. Different interpretations of the same book happen out of the different reading. The Catcher in the Rye that you read as a kid will be completely different when you read it as an adult. If interpretation of a book can change for a single person through the years, it will undoubtedly signify different meanings for different people. There is no better example of how interpretations of a book vary than that of J.K. Rowling constantly getting attacked by fans on twitter because they disagree with the motives she assigned behind a character. And is there a character more construed differently than that of Severus Snape?

Legions of fangirls (and boys) out there swear Snape is a true hero, while the other half of the same fans take to their keyboards to prove Snape is a complete villain; two completely different reader's interpretation of the same character – which stand opposed to each other.

Whereas, author herself has commented that she intended for Snape to be an anti-hero. These very legions of fans turned on her trying to assert how what they believe of Snape – whether a hero or a villain – was the true interpretation. And Rowling's intent behind the character ceased to matter.

That may as well be true. Another popular YA author, John Green is constantly quoted to be saying that a book belongs to the reader once it's published. Mark Zusak, once also wrote on his blog that he too believes the fans should be free to make their own interpretations of his writing and that his intent and interpretation does not take priority over the fans. While on the other hand, going back to Rowling, she has quoted to have said that although the fans interpretation do matter – sometimes they interpret a character completely wrong. Sometimes a character like Draco Malfoy who was created to seem as



an entitled, impudent and racist character becomes a fan favorite through misinterpretations.

So, whose interpretation should be more important? Whether it's the fans' interpretation or the author's intent? Unfortunately, like most things there needs to be a balance. You should have your own interpretation, but with the author's intent in consideration. The author is ultimately the creator of the story, however that doesn't necessarily mean the author gets monopoly over deciding what certain events mean. It's best to see the whole picture and then see whether your own idea of the picture goes with it, rather than disregarding the whole picture itself. So, next time, let's make it a point to not send our favorite authors death threats just because they may not agree on a character with us.

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