



June 21, 2018

Dear Oona,

My mom and dad like to stare at a big noisy box on the wall after supper. The tellyvishun makes them laugh, shriek and cuss. Have they gone crazy?

Marmaduke

Dear Marmaduke:

Yes. They've gone crazy. Humans do that. You learn to live with it. I take dad's place on the couch and demand

treats to keep the crazy coming. Other times, I let the magic box on the wall do it for me. I like to maintain the status quo.

They call it tellyvishun. It's like looking into another dimension. If I knew what dimensions were... There's things moving up there. They make sounds. But they're flat and the colors are all strange to my eye. And there are absolutely *no smells whatsoever*. *Everything* has smells. But not up there on Crazy Box.

You might think it's like looking out the window but...outside *my* window there's passing cars, cats, birds and those annoying dogs down the block. Inside Crazy Box, there's big bangs, car tires squealing, people screaming or just people standing there jabbering. And *they have no smell*.

Sometimes I hear dogs barking inside Crazy Box. I wonder if they're stuck in there. I wonder if they're going to jump out of the box and run through my living room. But they never do. And *they have no smell*. Marmaduke, you can drive your own self crazy thinking about it. Just ignore it like the rest of us do. No good ever came to any dog trying to make sense out of the Crazy Box.

Same thing with computers or cellphones. Sometime your dad may hold up the phone, point at the little Crazy Box and say, "Look, here's mom! She's saying hello!" No she's not. Her voice sounds funny. Her colors are weird. And *she has no smell*. Walk away. Don't look at the thing. Personally I think it's all some weird human cult thing and they're trying to recruit us.

Dad says tellyvishun screens are a lot better than they used to be. He says their refresh rate is a lot faster now. The pictures used to look like individual flash cards flipping by one by one. Now they move fast enough for a dog's eye to see the motion. So what? It's still Crazy Box. It *has no smell*. I do **not** trust the thing! I do wish they'd turn the sound down when my humans watch the thing, though. All those big bangs and screaming sounds make it hard for a girl to snooze.

Meanwhile, mom and dad just sit there staring at the thing. Mine laugh and cry and cuss at it, too. What are you going to do with them? I use the time to stroll into the kitchen and sniff around, check out what's in the fridge today or sample the cat food. If you've been eyeing that pot roast in the meat drawer, *now* is the time, Marmaduke!

Sometimes I stand directly in front of the tellyvishun. They check you food bowl, make sure your water is fresh, ask if you want to go outside. It's great! You have their full attention. If they've got a new bone or treats tucked away somewhere, *out* they come. Sometimes I

just keep standing there raising the ante. Stand in front of Crazy Box and the world is your oyster.

But usually I just ignore the thing. You'll learn to, too.

Love, Oona

Got a question? Send it to bob@thewildstare.com and Oona will get back to you as soon as she gets her nails done or she can prod the old guy to take dictation.