

A Cougar in Town.

The local news the other day was just the kind of news that I don't want to hear. A cougar had wandered down from the nearby mountains and was found in a residential area of town. Now, I know that we live in an area that is close to wilderness. You don't have to travel far from here to encounter bears, cougars, coyotes, and now increasingly, wolves. I remember having a conversation with my brother about the wildernesses around here. He is in love with wild, out of the way places. I, on the other hand, quite like towns and cities, though I do appreciate the beauty of the wild. As he is a photographer, he tries to find a way to wildernesses whenever he can, to have encounters with wild animals, and take photos whenever possible. I, on the other hand, came here to marry my man who is only slightly wild. I have deep respect for all the predatory animals that surround us, and I enjoy the fact that they are up in the hills, and we are down in the towns. I hope it stays that way. But, instances of both worlds colliding are bound to happen. The cougar in question turned out to be a young, starving orphan who had come to the town in desperate search of food. The police managed to find it. They had to scramble to find it. They brought in dogs to help them. They had very little time, as it was early morning, and children from the residential area would soon be walking to school. There was another incidence a year ago in a town nearby, this time with a full grown female. A man had fallen asleep in his lounge, and woke up to the sound of his dogs barking and growling outside. He went out sleepily, and in the half light saw what seemed to be a huge dog attacking one of his dogs. He ran up to it and swung his fist to punch it. When his fist hit the animal's head, he said, it felt like punching steel. It was an immensely strong cougar who, thankfully, was frightened by the man approaching it. It sprang up in the air, like cats do, and ran off. My husband laughed when he told me about the cougar news the other day. He knows that I am quite fearful of cougars, more for my children's sake than mine. He always tells me how it's much easier to have a car accident, or seriously fall down the stairs, than to be attacked by a cougar. I'm still not comforted. Oh well, I'll keep my eyes peeled, and if I see anything bigger than a large dog, I'll certainly let you know!

Grammar notes.

Related vocabulary: to collide, to scramble, to keep your eyes peeled.

1. The plane collided with the mountainside; thankfully, no one was hurt.
2. We scrambled to get to the camp breakfast on time, where they were having scrambled eggs
3. I've lost my iPod; keep your eyes peeled because it could be anywhere.

