

POINT, CANTERPOINT: THE MOUNTED PATROL

It's time to send us out to pasture



Dusty

Dusty is a four-year veteran of the Portland Mounted Patrol.

The year is 2014, Portland. And your police still ride horses.

How cute. A little clingy, but cute.

Obviously, we're stunning creatures. Tourists swoon and kids can't keep their sticky fingers away from us. But if that's the effect you're after, start with the guys in the saddle. Because, well, did I mention it's 2014?

Don't even try with the tactical advantage horse pucky. I've heard all the arguments, from the vantage that it gives human officers to the accessibility to interact with cops to the "friendly face" it gives Portland police. Whatever. Number one reason we get million dollar clopping rights? Crowd control. That's really the only thing we do better than the two-legged partners. We're fucking enormous. We're walking, fuzzy road barriers with a license to be stubbornly immobile. We can take any nonviolent protest and ratchet up tension and intimidation with our mere presence, effortlessly masking the eyes of a trained killer with a look of abject boredom.

We're proud of the work we do, naturally. But it's starting to feel a little too quaint, even for Portlandia.

Friends of the Mounted Patrol: You know you're my homies! Nothing but love, yo. But it's been more than 100 years, and those damn Segways freak us the shit out. It's embarrassing, really.

Listen, I love, love love to stick my head in a sack of taxpayer-funded Dixie feed as much as the next officer, and walking around with that air of disconnected authority is the easiest job I'll probably ever have. On top of that, when we poop on the sidewalk, we know it's supported by the downtown business community, a sign of a vibrant social and economic district.

But the time has come for a pink slip and the pasture for good. You guys can walk.

Need help? You call for a horse

Don't hate us because we're beautiful.

We have a job to do, just like you do. We work hard in the field and, literally, in the field, earning pennies on the dollar to our two-legged counterparts. But we're there, busting our hindquarters every day, because we know it's just that important.

This city relies on the mounted patrol and I can't imagine a day in Portland without it. It is unfortunate that the city has not found a way to expand the unit further east, and instead concentrated our presence (along with fountains, festivals, streetscaping, storefront improvements and myriad quaint city bric-a-brac) in the city's downtown core. How I have longed for the day we could have a corps of mounties patrolling 82nd Avenue, or walking the beat at Portland International Airport on terrorist patrol. Let's hope we don't have to wait until after it's too late.

Because, really, when you're in trouble, the first thing you want is a horse. A horse means security and stability. It means four legs, a beautiful tail that's soothing to comb, and an imaginary conversation with an animal that understands you, and only you. You're special, Portland. So are horses.

We're tall, too. When we're looking up, we can see way over your head!

And think about it: When Richard III was in dire straits, what did he call for? His horse — his kingdom for a horse!

So don't throw out the ponies with the patrolmen. Portland needs its mounted patrol like it needs water to hose us down, or green, green grass to feed us, or fresh air to cut the rich scent of Mother Nature.

I'll close with a favorite quote among the team: "A stubborn horse walks behind you, an impatient horse walks in front of you, but a noble companion walks beside you."

Oh, and two more words: Glue factory.



Trotsky

Trotsky is a two-year veteran of the Portland Mounted Patrol.



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