

Yet Another Great Adventure: Maurice and The American Melting Pot



By Maurice, as told to
Judge Morgenstern-Clarren

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and
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DEDICATION

By Maurice:

To my pal, Denise Neary

By Judge Morgenstern-Clarren:

To my second grade friends in Mrs. Hill's class at Campus International School, 2013-2014:

Devin C-R, Zachary D, Alex E, Jolie G, James G,
Rameerah H, Chas K, Xavier K, Maizy K, Amiya L,
Carter M, Anaya M, Sidney R, Skylar S, Andrew S,
Lauren S, Tavish S, Jarell T, Angelia W

and

To my first grade friends in Mrs. Smith's class at Marion-Sterling Elementary School, 2013-2014:

Zyhier A, Adrian B, Ky'Rayah B, Ta'Jir C,
Terrence G, Damel G, Jacory J, Omari J, Mikayla J,
John L, Mik'qel M, Mekhia M, Donisha O,
Morgan O, Kianna R, Charnise R, Samiyah S,
Daveair S, Daeshana S, Dalisha S, Ta'Naysha S,
Taisean T, Devon T, Richard V, Anarie W, Danyal Y

and to H, P, and R.



Maurice could tell that Maude was in a bad mood the minute she stormed into The Creature Comfort Cafe.

She yanked off her rain coat and left it dripping on her chair.

Maurice looked up from his magazine. “You seem so grumpy,” he said, “what on earth is the matter?”



“I couldn’t find a seat on the bus,” said Maude, heatedly. “When I got on, every seat was taken by zebras, hamsters, and alpaca. And don’t get me started on the koala bears.”

“Good heavens, Maude,” said Maurice, “don’t you think you’re overreacting?”

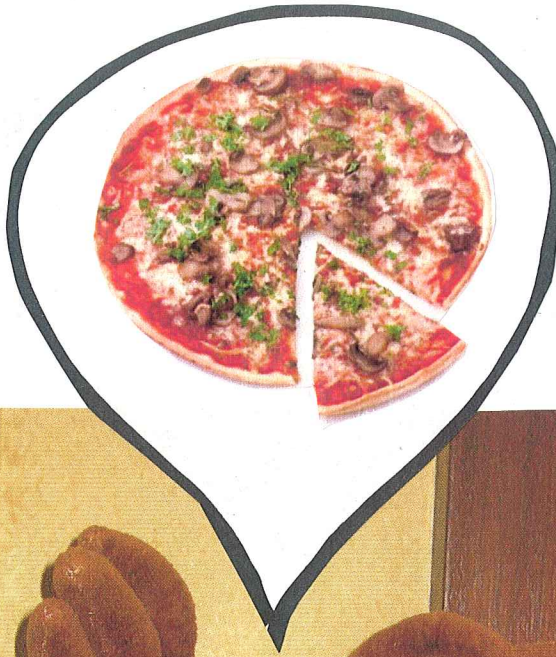
“No!” said Maude. “Those animals aren’t from here. Why don’t they go back where they came from? They are ruining everything for the rest of us.”



Maurice settled back in his chair and thought about this for a moment. “Maude,” he said, “what’s your favorite food?”

“Why are you talking about food?” said Maude, even more irritated than before (if that was possible). “Don’t try to change the subject.”

“Just humor me please,” responded Maurice.



Maude rolled her eyes, before sighing deeply and dramatically, and saying: “My favorite food is the all-American dish: pizza.”

“That’s so interesting,” Maurice replied. “Do you know that the **Italians** invented pizza?”

“What?” Maude stared at him.



“What’s your favorite thing to drink?”

“Hot chocolate, of course,” said Maude.

“Really?” said Maurice. “Do you know that the [Mayans in South America](#) were the first to combine cocoa beans with liquid to make a hot drink?”

Maude frowned and looked puzzled.





“What’s your favorite musical instrument?”

“The drum,” said Maude, enthusiastically.

“Do you know that [Africans](#) invented the drum and used it to send messages across long distances?”

Now Maude felt faint.



“What’s your favorite sport?”

“Soccer.” Maude perked up a bit. “I’m my team’s goalie,” she said proudly.

“Do you know that modern soccer started in [England](#)?”

Maude’s heart pounded wildly.



“When it’s raining,” said Maurice,
“what’s your favorite way to pass the
time?”

Maude said warily, “playing chess.”

“Do you know that chess originated in
[Persia](#) and [India](#)?”

Maude slumped in her chair.

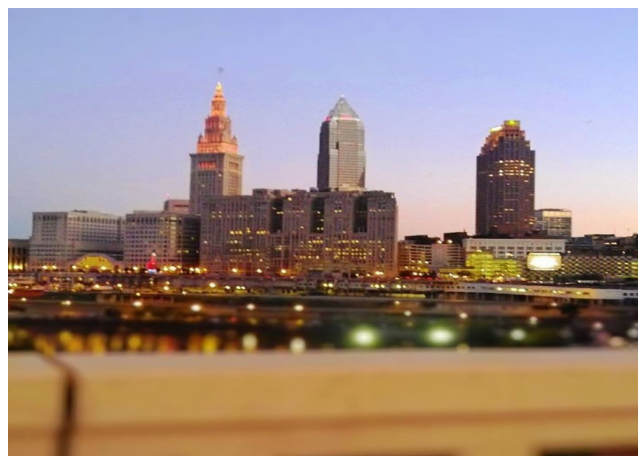




By now Maude's head was spinning. All of her favorite things came from other countries? [Italy?](#) [South America?](#) [Africa?](#) [England?](#) [Persia?](#) [India?](#)

And Maurice just kept going. “Maude,” he said carefully, knowing that what he said next was going to take Maude completely by surprise, “where do you think I was born?”

“Why, right here in [Cleveland](#), of course,” said Maude.



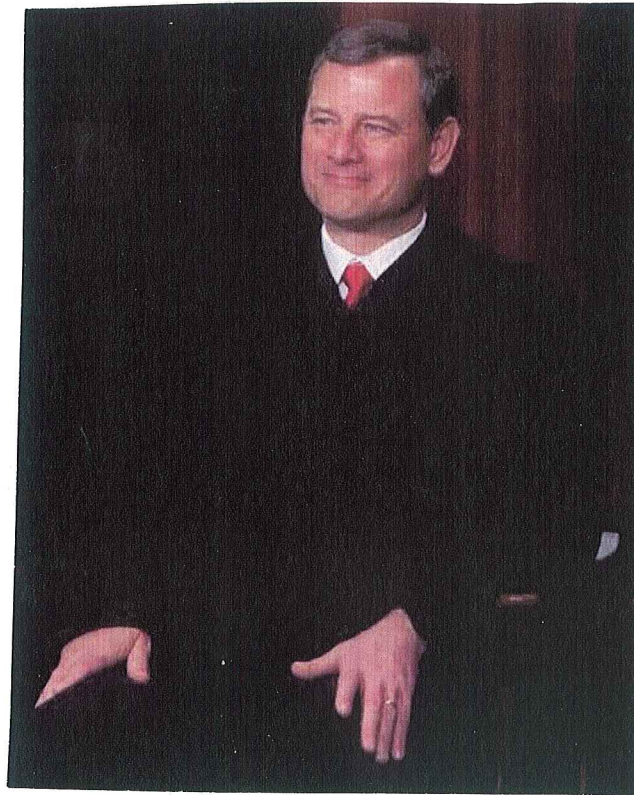
“No,” said Maurice with a wide smile, “I was born on a beautiful island in the Caribbean called **Martinique** which is part of **France**. I’m a citizen of that country.”

Maude’s eyes bulged out of her head.
“I don’t believe you.”

“Why not?” said Maurice.

“Because you’re just like me. We’re friends. You’re not like the zebras, hamsters, alpacas or the koala bears.”

“Maude,” said Maurice, “both of those things are true. I *was* born in **Martinique** and I *am* just like you.”



Maude shook her antlers angrily: “No Maurice, I don’t think so.”

Maurice was beginning to feel a bit impatient, but he did not give up.

“Maude,” he said, “I came to the United States from my own country with all the legal papers. And now, I’m studying to take an important test. Here’s one of the questions that I might be asked: Who is the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court?”

“The what of the what?” said a bewildered Maude.

“The Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, the highest court in the land, is Justice John Roberts,” said Maurice.



“Try this one,” said Maurice. “What’s the **Constitution**?”

Maude slowly shook her head.

“The **Constitution** is the supreme law of the land. It’s the agreement we have with each other about how we will behave.”



“What test do you think I’m going to take?”

Maude could only shrug her shoulders and drop her head into her hands, moaning.

“There, there,” said Maurice. “Cheer up. Take three deep breaths and have a sip of this delicious Earl Grey Blue tea with milk.”
(Maurice bit his tongue to keep from adding: “it’s from [France](#)”).

“Come to the Howard M. Metzenbaum Court House on Public Square on April 18th. I have a surprise for you.”

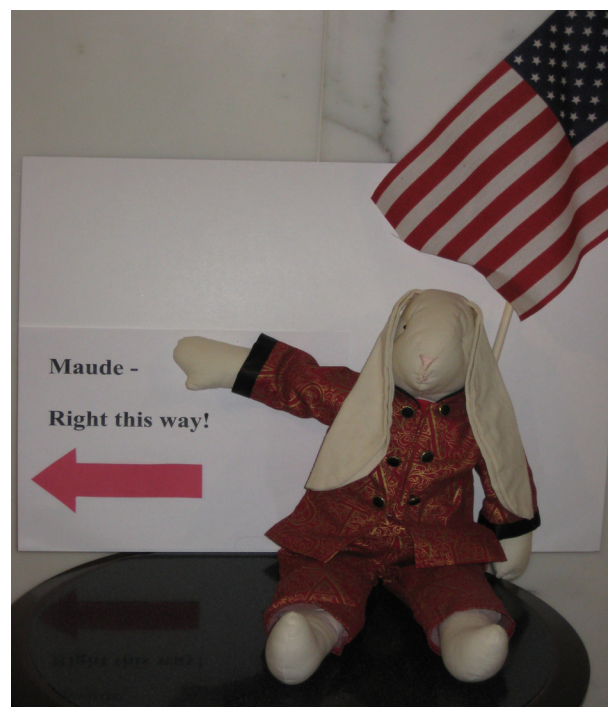
Maude wasn’t sure she could take any more surprises, but she numbly nodded her head yes.



When Maude arrived at the Court House, the greeters told her to go right up to the third floor.

She made it as far as the second floor before she had to stop to catch her breath. This had better be good, she thought, before she launched herself up the next flight of stairs.

At last she made it all the way up and followed the sign that said: “Maude, Right this Way.”





Then she spotted Maurice waiting for her at a huge door. She was so glad to be on flat ground that she almost forgot how mad she was at Maurice.

“Maurice,” she cried out. “What on earth is this all about?” And she looked with astonishment at the glorious gold and blue decorations all around her.





“And who are all these creatures?”

“This is a United States Courtroom. And these are the creatures who are about to become your fellow citizens,” said Maurice. “Including me,” he added proudly.

“Quick, find a good seat because the naturalization ceremony is about to begin.”

Maude started to complain about how the giraffes had taken all the good seats in front, but Maurice said sternly, “Maude, stop talking, open your mind, and sit down.”



The Clerk of Court introduced Judge Morgenstern-Clarren, who welcomed everyone to the celebration.

Then she invited all of the applicants to stand and raise their right hands, and said “Please repeat this oath after me”



At the end, Judge Morgenstern-Clarren said, “Congratulations! The United States of America is delighted to welcome you as new citizens.”

All the creatures, including Maude, burst into enthusiastic applause. The new citizens beamed and hugged their families. Maurice’s friends gave him flowers.

We the Creatures

CONGRESS. July 4, 1776
United States of America



After the ceremony, Maude said: “I thought only people who were born here could be citizens.”

“Oh no,” said Maurice, “it’s in the [Constitution](#).”

For once, Maude was listening. “Really?” she said.

“Yes,” said Maurice, “the Founding Creatures knew that we would have a stronger and more interesting country if we continued to welcome creatures from all around the world. After all, they were born in other countries themselves! And so when they wrote the [Constitution](#), they said that Congress had the power to establish laws on naturalizing citizens.”



“Oh Maurice,” said Maude repentently, wiping a big tear from her eye. “I’m so terribly sorry. I don’t know what got into me. Of course we’re friends. Congratulations on becoming a United States citizen.”



“Thank you, dear Maudey”, said Maurice fondly. “Let’s join all of the other new citizens and their families for cookies and punch. And then I can register to vote.”

As the two old friends hugged a big hug (as only old friends can), something occurred to Maude.

“Maurice,” she said, “if you were born in [Martinique](#), how did you come to live with Judge Morgenstern-Clarren in [Cleveland](#)?”

“Maude, mon petit chou,” said Maurice with a smile, “that is a story for another day.”

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Maurice says: “I live in Cleveland, Ohio with Judge Morgenstern-Clarren and her family. I like to read, do yoga, and go snowshoeing with my friends. This is my third book with Judge Morgenstern-Clarren. The other two are “My Great Adventure: A Trip to Washington, D.C. for the Inauguration of President Barack Obama, January 20, 2009” and “Another Great Adventure: Maurice and the Right to Vote.” If I must say so myself, they were well received. My favorite beverage is Earl Grey Blue tea with milk. Now that I am a citizen, I am teaching other creatures about the Bill of Rights.”

Judge Morgenstern-Clarren says: “I live in Cleveland, Ohio with my husband, Dr. Hadley Morgenstern-Clarren. We have two children, Peter and Rachel. Our daughter Rachel is a writer, editor, and literary translator from Portuguese to English. When the weather is warm, I like to garden. When the weather is cold, I like to read about gardens. Whatever the weather, I enjoy reading out loud to first and second graders in the Cleveland Public Schools. My favorite summer fruit is the peach.”

The authors would like to thank **Joyce Gordon**, who once again provided invaluable assistance with their book. They also note, with gratitude, that she bakes delicious cookies.

Thank you also to Josiah Sell for his picture of the Cleveland skyline, and to Erick Jones, for his technical help.



SOME MORE FUN THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

ANIMALS, ANIMALS EVERYWHERE

Maude is right that zebras, hamsters, alpaca, and koala bears are native to other countries. Do you know which ones?

Compare your answers to the information on the next page.

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES

Article. I. Section. 8.

The Congress shall have Power . . . To establish a uniform Rule of Naturalization

MAURICE’S JOURNEY TO BECOME A NATURALIZED CITIZEN

After Maurice applied to become a United States citizen, he was interviewed by the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services. As part of that interview, he took a civics test. He prepared for the test by studying a list of 100 questions and answers. At the interview, the USCIS Officer asked him 10 questions from that list and he had to answer 6 of the 10 correctly.

How many do you think he got right? How many did *you* answer correctly?

Here are the 10 questions that the Officer asked Maurice, and the correct answers:¹

¹ This information is from the website www.uscis.gov/citizenship.

What is the supreme law of the land?	the Constitution
What are the two parts of the U.S. Congress?	the Senate and House of Representatives
Who is one of your state's U.S. Senators now?	Sherrod Brown, Rob Portman (Ohio)
Who signs bills to become laws?	the President
What does the judicial branch do?	reviews laws, explains laws, resolves disagreements, decides if a law goes against the Constitution
What did Susan B. Anthony do?	fought for women's rights and civil rights
Name one American Indian tribe in the U.S.	Cherokee, Navajo, Sioux, Chippewa, Choctaw, Pueblo, Apache, Iroquois, Creek, Blackfeet, Seminole, Cheyenne, Arawak, Shawnee, Mohegan, Huron, Oneida, Lakota, Crow, Teton, Hopi, Inuit
Name one of the two longest rivers in the U.S.	Missouri, Mississippi
Why does the flag have 13 stripes?	because there were 13 original colonies; because the stripes represent the original colonies
When do we celebrate Independence Day?	July 4

Answers to Animals, Animals Everywhere

Zebras are native to **Africa**

Hamsters are native to **Asia**

Alpaca are native to **South America**

Koala bears are native to **Australia**

LANGUAGES

At the end of the story, Maurice refers to Maude as “mon petit chou,” pronounced “mon pet-e shoe.” What language is that? What does that phrase mean? Why does Maurice know that language?

This is a term of affection in French comparable to “my darling;” literally, it means “my little cabbage!” French is the official language of Martinique and Maurice learned it as a child, together with Creole and English. What languages do you speak?

ART

The photograph of the Founding Creatures is with a nod to Jonathon Trumbull’s painting “Declaration of Independence,” which hangs in the Capitol Rotunda in Washington, D.C. He painted it in 1818. Can you calculate how many years old it is?