



a short story, little chews

“Baphomet Comes to Washington” by Matias Travieso-Diaz

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Baphomet..... A thing beyond things. Beyond love or hatred or their sum, beyond the beautiful or the monstrous or their sum. Beyond, finally, her mind's power to comprehend or catalog.

– Clive Barker, *Cabal*



managing the green spaces, forests, and lar Creek and Potomac Parkway in Washington, D.C. The forested buffers and edge habitats along the Parkway are heavily impacted by a variety of non-native invasive plant species. Introduced primarily through historic urban landscaping and bird dispersal, these plants aggressively outcompete native flora for sunlight, nutrients, and soil space. To combat these invasive plants, the NPS enters into partnerships and contracts with private organizations to implement forestry and invasive species mitigation.

Recently, the NPS entered into a sole-source contract to mitigate invasive plant species along the parkway with a company whose owner, Pepe Reposo, was a frequent political donor to the party then in power in the United States. Reposo had limited expertise in abating plant infestation, but was an enterprising business leader endowed with a fertile imagination. He read that goats are frequently used for conservation grazing, a practice in which grazing livestock maintain grasslands, heathlands, and pastures. Further research revealed that several companies would rent out goats – billed as eating machines – to clear vegetation in areas where access by machinery was difficult or otherwise impractical.

Reposo subcontracted with Greenway Maintenance Services (GMS), a North Carolina vendor, for the rental of a dozen Boer goats, the largest and most voracious goat breed, and penned the goats in a fenced lot near the parkway. The goats were to be led along to the parkway by GMS employees and allowed to roam up and down the three-mile expanse of the road, eating their way through everything non-native that grew on the ground.

One of the Boer goats rented by Reposo from GMS was Baphomet, a corpulent buck. Baphomet was uncharacteristically large, even for his breed. He had a pale white body and a reddish head and neck with orange spots, long pendulous ears, and loose skin with prominent folds. At a weight of three hundred and fifty pounds, he was an impressive, if not handsome, creature.

Beyond his weight and appearance, what distinguished Baphomet from his peers was his behavior. He was independent and liked to ramble, often deviating from his preordained itinerary. Everywhere he went, he devoured everything of a vegetable nature that was in his path. Thus, when the parkway cleanup operation started at the Lincoln Memorial Park, Baphomet wandered off course and ravaged the grassy area around the Reflecting Pool, causing major damage to the area



them, Baphomet held his gaze askance and his mind: *"Hail to thyself, for I am my own master; I am my own god and need no shepherd, for I am not a sheep."*

Only his ties with the powers in government saved Reposo from having to pay a stiff fine for the damage Baphomet caused, but he insisted that the wayward goat must be watched closely by the GMS staff. To no avail: Baphomet's greed was limitless, and he went off course time and again, consuming not only the wild vegetation along the parkway but also, on occasion, the plantings on the backyards of the mansions that bordered the road. He nearly created an international incident when he wandered into the garden of the Consulate General of the Republic of Korea and consumed several stands of Korea's national flower, the *mugunghwa* (rose of Sharon). The U.S. Government had to apologize to the Koreans for the desecration and pay for the replacement of the destroyed bushes.

Baphomet's owners considered selling him for meat but decided against it because, as an old goat, his flesh was tough, lean, and strongly flavored, and he would be purchased only to make ground meat or sausages, so his sale would not yield much. Instead, GMS significantly reduced his rental rate and promised Reposo that the shepherds would keep a very close watch on the goat and make sure he did not stray from the right track.

Yet, Baphomet persisted in his habits. He was too selfish and narcissistic to obey his keepers' commands, and went on pleasuring himself, straying off course and consuming as voraciously as was his wont without regard for limits or boundaries. Due to his corpulence, the handlers often had trouble curbing him.

One of his forays took him across a stand of trees that lined the parkway until he stood before a large building complex with a garden in the back full of tantalizing shrubs and flowering plants. Access to the garden, however, was barred by an ornate iron fence bearing a sign that identified the site as the Embassy of the Sultanate of Oman. Baphomet, of course, could not understand the sign, and all that he could surmise was that the tall fence was preventing him from reaching his target. The beast had no impulse control and, frustrated, threw himself against the fence, which surprisingly yielded to his impact and swung open, for its gate was unlocked.



against the gate, moved it aside, and rushed stands of flowering plants such as desert rose, oleander, and monkshood. All these plants, however, were highly poisonous. No sooner had Baphomet finished ingesting a serving of each, the goat fell to the ground, started convulsing, and experienced cardiac arrest. His mouth was still full of leaves when he passed away.

Had Baphomet been a human instead of an insensate beast, perhaps he would have appreciated that there were limits to his ability to give free rein to his desires, and realized that there is a big difference between the sweet green grass of the Washington Mall and the less inviting offerings of a Middle Eastern locality.

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2 reposteos

Una respuesta a «“Baphomet Comes to Washington” by Matias Travieso-Diaz»



[thomasstigiwikman](#) 7 de septiembre de 2026

Baphomet, is certainly a thing beyond things. A terrible but lovable goat. It was an amusing story.

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