I was sitting at the computer desk, doodling rough sketches on a stray piece of paper when Mrs S loomed ominously behind me. I didn’t quite have time to cover my work when she spoke in that voice of exasperation she gets – which occurs rather frequently as it turns out.

‘What on earth are you doing Subbie? You do know we have a plane to catch in a few hours. I’m tearing around making sure everything’s ready to go and here you are drawing pictures for heaven’s sake!’

‘Yes, I do realise we’re going to Canada, I’m not stupid you know – I was just doing some rough sketches.’

‘Of what? Here, let me see’ she demanded as she pushed my arm out of the way and snatched up my handiwork.

‘Mmm – these look suspiciously like fancy animal crates to me’

‘Er, well, yes that’s exactly what they are … sort of’ I bristled.

‘Animal crates? For Canada? I’m not sure whether you realize this Subbie but Canada doesn’t have wildlife safaris. What were you hoping to bring back – a lion or an elephant perhaps?’

‘No need to be sarky. Yes, they are animal crates but they’re not for bringing back any animals’ I replied.

By now Mrs S was clearly getting highly suspicious. ‘So, if they aren’t for bringing back any animals, they’re for…’ she prompted me.

‘Well’ I said with a confidence that was starting to waver a teensie bit ‘You know how much Myrtle and Sage are a part of our life – I was thinking that perhaps, maybe, we could take them with us. I’m sure Qantas could fit them in first class somewhere without too much trouble.’

Mrs S looked at me blankly, not sure whether I was serious, joking, stupid or insane. If I’m honest, she often looks at me that way.

After a few seconds she said ‘We have an army of family and friends more than willing to look after Myrtle and Sage for the four weeks we are away. We are NOT taking them with us to Canada!’

‘But…’

‘No buts Subbie – what part of NO don’t you understand’ she said rather firmly as she stomped out of the room.

I sighed and looked over at Myrtle who had been watching the whole episode with a passive lack of interest that only a cat can muster.

‘I tried Myrtle, I really tried’ I said to her with a note of resignation in my voice.

She blinked once, then started to casually clean her private bits.