

RAINBOW ROWELL

Koko monkeys around with love

Remember Koko — the kindly young gorilla who made news in the late '70s because of her American Sign Language proficiency and lovable personality?

Well, Koko is no longer a young-un. Like all child celebrities, she grew up when we weren't looking.

One day she's a cheeky, little monkey with a pet kitten, and before you know it, she's blossomed into 230-pound womanhood.

And now Koko has got herself a man.

A significant other, a lover, a mate — a primate.

Where, you might ask, does a lonely young gorilla on the make find her perfect match?

Like the rest of us, Koko had no luck with the bar scene and single's nights at the Piggly Wiggly. Never one to leave her future to blind luck, Koko turned to video dating.

That's right, in an effort to find Koko a mate, her caretakers gathered videotapes of eligible gorillas and then screened them for the lucky bachelorette.

Koko watched carefully and even commented on some of the studs — "He's got nice hair on his head," "Feet too big."

After she chose her favorite, he came over for a visit. This first choice turned out to be a dud — don't they all — but Koko wasn't too discouraged. She hit the VCR again, and found another hunka-hunka burning monkey manhood.

Koko was pretty excited when Mr. Right finally showed up at her pad. She chased him around willy nilly and slapped him a few times.

Slow down, Koko, there's plenty of time for all that. Silly kid.

As happy as I am to see Koko crazy in love — I mean, really, she deserves it — I'm worried about her future.

Chances are, Koko is much brighter than her male counterpart. Say what you will about opposites at-



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tracting, I'm pretty darn sure that this relationship is going to suffer astronomical communication problems.

After the thrill of romping around wild-eyed wears off, Koko's going to need more from her partner: conversation, affirmation, positive feedback.

"Honey, what are you thinking? Honey?"

"Let's talk about us. Where is our relationship going? Answer me!"

"This stoic crap just isn't cute anymore."

"I SAID, pass the orange peels."

There might be children by that point. And no doubt, Koko will pick up most of the childrearing responsibilities.

Who's going to teach the kids that yes means yes and no means no? Who will help them with their sign language homework?

Koko.

And she'll probably be the disciplinarian, too. "What would you father say?" just doesn't have the same effect when Dad can't talk.

When the relationship finally falls apart, what will Koko do? What sort of world is this for a divorced gorilla with a couple of kids?

Will she give up completely on love and romance?

Sweet Koko, don't close your heart. There are plenty more apes in the jungle. Well, actually, there aren't. But I hear that zoos are a great place to meet guys.

Hopefully, Koko will find a sensitive guy who doesn't mind dating

someone more educated than himself. Really, though, he should have some basic language skills.

Maybe Grape Ape is available. Sure, he was no Mr. Ed, but at least he could say his own name — over and over again. And every once in a while, he'd grunt meaningfully.

With a little persuasion, I bet Koko could even talk him out of wearing that goofy bow tie.

Maybe Koko should stick to this video dating idea. "Love Connection" is always looking for unique contestants, and Koko has better manners and hygiene skills than many of the people I've seen on the show.

Consummate game-show host Chuck Woolery wouldn't even be phased by a non-human contestant on the show. Chuck's pretty slick.

He's seen worse — oily, crude men in raw silk pants. Spike-heeled women who say things like, "Omgawd Chuck, you wouldn't believe my embarrassment. I swear he hadn't brushed his teeth for two months; they were like butter."

On second thought, Koko's way too good for those "Love Connection" losers. She'd fall into that "I'd rather go out with you, Chuck" trap.

"Now Koko," Chuck would say, tugging at his collar and making "Whew!" faces at the audience, "you know I'm a happily married man."

Poor Koko, looking for love in all the wrong places.

Rowell is a junior news-editorial, advertising and English major and a Daily Nebraskan columnist.

KATE PEISTRUP

Data assumes dire dimensions

I want to apologize. This isn't my real column.

As I was printing out my brilliant 80-line dissertation on the metallurgical advances in aluminum foil since 1940, the computer suddenly began shrieking like a gibbon in heat and spewing forth green vomit.

At first I nodded knowingly, recognizing my own PMS symptoms. But then there was ghostly silence. The screen went blank for a moment, then those words appeared: **COMPUTER CANNOT READ FILE.** I looked at my puny fists. No, a baseball bat would be far more appropriate.

Why? I asked myself. A pencil costs less than a quarter, and there are only a few recorded cases of pencils spontaneously losing or destroying the work of scribes.

I took a deep breath and thought of Brent Spiner, the actor who portrays Lt. Cmdr. Data on Star Trek. Whenever I think I would like to pour Drano into my disk drive, I like to think of that glorious day in the 24th century when computers will be infallible, mild-mannered and submissive servants. Someday, you'll be able to go to Radio Shack and buy a Mister Rogers with superhuman strength.

Sunday's episode of "Star Trek: The Next Generation" proved me horribly wrong. In the absence of Picard and Riker, Data assumed the role of captain with frightening results. He performed with surprising authority and curtness. Data even challenged the inalienable right of Worf, the show's token Klingon, to be obnoxious and overbearing.

As the show's credits whooshed by, I sat stunned. Data threw Riker into the brig at the end while the sound editors played the comic-relief music! Didn't they see how frightening this could become? How many episodes before Data realizes he can run the ship all by himself? It may be a matter of months before Data beams the entire crew into the center of a



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white dwarf star, sparing only Counselor Troi, who will be forced to prance around the Enterprise in a thong bikini until the season's end.

He'd be nearly impossible to stop. He feels no pain, nor any emotion. He is bound to realize that in a future of atheism, there is no reason for ethics.

Maybe I could send a warrior android from my time period to battle Data, thus ensuring the possibility of more "Star Trek" episodes involving Captain Picard's bare hiney. But who could build such a robot?

Next thing I knew, I was racing down O Street. I hoped it wasn't too late. The guy on the phone had said that since Showbiz Pizza changed its name to Chuck E Cheese's Pizza, Billy Bob Bear, Showbiz' mechanical bandleader, technically no longer existed. What if this Chuck E Cheese was really a guy in a rat suit? Could it be that human workers are more efficient and are making androids obsolete?

I shuffled through the front door and walked past the "Lord of the Flies" nightmare that is the Chuck E Cheese game room. I found a door marked "Employees Only" and passed through it into a dimly lit storage closet. There were paper cups stacked four feet high, boxes of Taiwanese treasures for which kids played Skee-ball until their arms were numb, and in the corner ... Billy Bob! His face was still stretched into a merry grin. He had probably been singing a Beach Boys song when they killed him.

I plugged the tattered cord into

the wall outlet, and he jumped to life, singing loudly. I desperately tried to quiet him, but I had to unplug him when he would not respond to my pleas.

I whipped a roll of aluminum from my pocket and tried to construct a machine that would project my companion and I 400 years into the future. Several hours later, I began to wish that I hadn't dropped out of 4-H when I was a child.

I would have to settle for bringing Data to Lincoln. I folded the Reynolds foil into a Fibonacci generator, and after applying precisely 76 torques to the device, Data arrived in shimmering splendor. I quickly plugged in Billy Bob and pushed him to his feet.

"Bushy, bushy blond hairdo ..." he wailed. Data cocked his head. He drew out his fazer and shot Billy Bob. I was stunned. Sparks shot from Bob's mid-section.

"Suuuurfin—" and thus he died. When the smell of burning acrylic fur and smoke cleared, Data was gone. I scampered out to the gameroom, and after a quick pause to enjoy a round of that "pound the plastic gophers on the head" game, I gave chase. The parking lot held only cars.

He's out there. Maybe he's the new pledge in your fraternity or your new boyfriend. He may even be sitting next to you on the Star Tran, asking the driver if he's seen Gene Roddenberry.

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