

To think that it happened on Trumbull Street.

THOSE DEAD-EYED fans on their way to Tiger Stadium were the same every day, streaming past the tattered panhandlers on yet another June evening. Some of them sat on the sidewalks with a hat or a cup, eyes downcast. Others looked up plaintively at the hastening Tiger fans, their faces stone. Some held hand-lettered cardboard signs. "VETERAN." "GOD BLESS YOU!" "PLEASE HELP. ANYTHING."

Marco was as different from the other beggars as Detroit was different from Chicago. He was out of jail on an assault charge and stalked around like a beaten animal. A family, decked out in Tiger jerseys and caps, neared him and Marco jumped in front of them. "Please, please, do you have change for bus fare! Just eighty cents! I have to get to Flint, my sister is sick! I have to!" He was frantic and effusive. "Please, please, eighty cents!"

Without looking at him or breaking stride, the family swerved. Another group of fans approached. He leaped in front of them, too. "Please, please, do you have change for bus fare! Just eighty cents! I have to get to Flint, my sister is sick! I have to! Please, please, eighty cents!"

"I don't have any cash."

"Please, please, eighty cents!" A thousand lies.

"I got nothin'." Marco's nose grew longer.

"I'm sorry." Marco sprouted donkey ears. Nobody would look at him.

"The bank's closed." Marco's hair grew to cover his face, his eyebrows shaggy.

“Bus fare? Isn’t the Greyhound station closed?” A tail pierced out of the rear of Marco’s pants.

“I left my wallet in my car.” Red horns poked through the foliage on Marco’s head, and his eyes turned red and glowed.

“My aardvark has my wallet.” Marco’s nose became a snout.

“Get a job, ya bum!” Marco’s fingers thickened and curled.

“Sure, I’ll give you eighty cents if you can tell me who’s pitching today.”

“Jack Morris,” Marco snorted. “The Tigers will win.” The Tiger fan kept walking. Marco scratched his tale.

“Who’s on first?” Marco grew a second head next to his first head. It looked like Bud Abbott.

“The answer to everything is 42.” Marco grew a third head. It looked like Douglas Adams. Still nobody saw him.

“No.”

“No.”

“No.”

“No, have a great day!”

“Go to hell,” said Marco.

“Get out of my face, dude. Back off.”

Marco jumped in front of a slow moving man in a Jack Morris jersey. "Please, please, do you have change for bus fare! Just eighty cents! I have to get to Flint, my sister is sick! I have to!" He was frantic and effusive. "Please, please, eighty cents!"

"Slow down, my man." The Morris fan looked Marco in the eye. "Don't give me crap about your sister.

"Here's a buck."

Marco's two extra heads shriveled and fell off. His horns and tale retracted and his fingers uncurled. His face returned to human form. "Morris is pitching today."

"I know."

"He'll throw a shutout, three to nothing. Complete game. Alan Trammell hits a home run." And that's what happened. You can look it up.

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Inspired in part by Dr. Seuss, "To Think That It Happened on Mulberry Street."