

## Trigger, Part 2



Trigger – or rather, the ghost of Trigger – awoke in a cardboard box surrounded by noodles, mashed potatoes, gravy and cole slaw. Make that two, no *three* cardboard boxes – his essence seemed to be spread out evenly among them. Had he, then, gone to meet his maker? Naw, that would be Roy Rogers Animatronics, Ltd., a big laboratory, he recalled, filled with test tubes and state-of-the-art transmogrification devices. This place, where he was now, seemed to be some sort of fast food take-out facility. Craning his neck – or what passed for a neck in the afterlife – he read with some irony that he was being misrepresented as a member of the domestic fowl industry. He directed his attention to a pile of steamy chunks in the righthand-most box that looked just like a bunch of braised fetlocks. (*His?!*) He sniffed. Nothing. No aroma information was forthcoming. Which was too bad, because he'd really miss odors! No, wait! He couldn't smell the fetlocks because they were gone! In his mind's eye, he watched as a human interloper snatched up the box, plunked some currency beside the cash register, and strolled out the door. An indescribable sense of loss surged through Trigger, and he began to think manic-depressive thoughts of the glue factory. At least there it'd be over with fast. A second customer entered the food shoppe, selected the box on the left – which featured, he noted wryly, the oh-so tough withers – paid for it, and left. Like a recent amputee, Trigger imagined that his withers and fetlocks were still vital parts of him, though he could no longer command them to twitch. And now a pair of hands picked up the remaining box, the one that contained, he thought, his croup and stifles. The box lid was folded down, and after that things really did get murky.