**Oh, How I Hate to Get Up in the Morning**

*by Sam (the Dog) Goldfein*

Overall, I think I have a darn good life.  For a dog.  I’m adored by my people, walked several times a day, and allowed to run free in the dog park.

I’m fed two squares a day, in addition to the bits of food from their dinner plates.  They find my big, brown, pleading eyes simply irresistible.

To be perfectly honest, I’m more than a bit spoiled.  I’ve trained them to let me sit on the couch when they watch TV, and sleep in their bed, although I have a perfectly fine bed of my own.

When they can, they take me with them when they go out, and when they can’t I’ve learned to provoke just enough guilt to warrant a cookie before they go.

They regularly purchase my favorite chews from *Amazon*, and never ever run out of dog food.  I am secure in the sense that I’m at the center of their lives!

Annual trips to the vet keep me healthy, and visiting the groomer periodically keeps me gorgeous, although I admit it’s not my favorite destination.  I hate being wet.

In between groomings, my female person bathes me in the kitchen sink, but I always forgive her. So, you see, considering the alternate lives I may have had, I think I stepped in poop!

But as good as it is, no one’s life is perfect.  And that’s true of mine as well.  And since I’ve been given this column, I might as well use it to air my complaint.  I don’t think my person will think I’m being ungrateful.

She complains all the time.  In fact, she’s written a book about it, *How to Complain When*there’s*Nothing to Complain About.*

Did I mention that I let my people sleep with me? And that they recently bought a king-size bed? It’s about time they ditched that cramped mattress. Hardly room enough for three!

Now, each night as I’m lifted onto the bed, I feel as if I died and went to dog heaven.  I can choose to sleep up high, or down near the foot, with no arms or legs being flung across my back, and no fear of being poked in the middle of the night.

But my favorite spot is to nestle between the extra-large pillows and curl into a ball until I’m practically invisible.  And there, each night, I dream sweet dreams about being *Snoopy’s*co-pilot as he chases the *Red Baron.*  But alas, my dream is interrupted all too soon.  Unfortunately, my female person is an early riser.  Every morning, just as we are closing in on the *Red Baron*, I feel her stirring.  I know this means she will leave the bed, shower, dress, and then come for me!

I dive deeper into the pillows, trying hard to disappear.  My eyes tightly shut, pretending to snore, hoping she’ll take pity and let sleeping dogs lie.

But no.  I feel the collar snapping around my neck, and hear her say “Sam, it’s time to get up.”  I hesitate, but it’s no use.  She always wins.  Next thing I know the leash is on, and we’re out the door.  And the *Red Baron* escapes once again.

So, I hate the mornings.  I never get to sleep in.  Not even on the weekends.

But sometimes I forget that I’m living with retired people for whom TGIF no longer has any meaning.  I have no choice but to wake at the crack of dawn.  And that, folks, is the fatal flaw in an almost perfect dog’s life!