

## TOUCHED BY NATURE

By Maria Marchant

Many years ago now, precisely how many I don't know  
I couldn't wait to see the alpacas and their crias at our local Ag show.  
As I entered the pavilion someone shouted "You can look but don't touch"  
I felt somewhat bemused - I didn't care for their rules much!

Still, obediently I obliged - well I gave it my best  
I was just using my eyes when I somehow failed the request.  
As a gorgeous young cria with the most extraordinary brown eyes  
Raced over straight to me - despite her Ma's cries

Well I could hardly believe how my luck went that day  
When that glorious young creature came pronking my way  
I did nothing to lure her - for some reason she chose me  
I merely crouched down to observe her - and she just happened to see.

As she came over to me - her attention felt grand  
And OH! that magic moment when she kissed my hand.  
To be touched by a creature as exquisite as this  
Is a moment to relish - pure tactile bliss!

Well the cranky old man who was watching us then  
Stormed over to move me - away from her pen  
He said "DO NOT TOUCH I think you should go"  
But he didn't know - I'd just received - the best prize at the show

An alpaca's touch - a true experience of bliss  
An extraordinary sensation- not a wet, sloppy kiss  
It is second to none - a truly unforgettable touch  
Alpaca kisses - I love them so much!



## THE ALPACA WAY

*By Maria Marchant*

Alpacas are livestock, they hail from Peru  
They have beautiful big eyes and are very cute too.  
They eat grass, bark and leaves ... and they love lucerne hay  
Their fleece was once reserved for royalty, they say.

Though related to camels and llamas and such  
Alpacas are smaller and much softer to touch.  
Their fleeces when shorn, become expensive fine knits  
So, if you are thinking of buying something - make sure it fits.

Alpacas are exquisite, they are magic to touch  
So huggable and gorgeous yet most don't like pats much.  
But by nature, "they're gentle and caring" - I say  
Particularly to chickens and sheep as they keep the foxes away.

Yes, alpacas are playful and eager to see  
Just what you might have or who you might be.  
And ours can't resist a quick nuzzle or two  
Or a chat or a scratch - to help them work out who's who?

Our alpacas all enjoy going out for a walk  
They prong on beside us, they hum and cluck when they talk.  
They always cheerfully greet all the town folk they meet  
These environmentally friendly creatures, with their soft padded feet.

When in their paddock the alpacas prong and run  
Bringing smiles to all faces who witness their fun.  
In the barn young crias kush, tackle and play  
Being with each other, part of the herd, this is their preferred way.

Now alpacas can spit, just like llamas' you know  
Perhaps not quite as far but still most effectively so.  
Though generally intended for an alpaca not you  
I cannot deny that I've worn the odd spit or two.

Alpacas give 'warning' as they draw up some phlegm  
They roll it around in their mouth till it's ready, and then ...  
They surreptitiously aim and expel it with great speed  
A tiny green misty missile that sends you ducking indeed.

And if it so happens that you've run low on luck  
Your reflexes are slow, you forgot how to duck  
And a smelly green missile lands smack on your face  
Try not to 'gaahhssp' ..... and accept it with grace.

Luckily most alpacas are better mannered than that  
Though they can have their moments, they'd rather stop for a chat.  
So, if you'd like to meet an alpaca today  
And share an alpaca moment in an alpaca way.

Please take a seat, keep your hands very still  
And if it's your lucky day, come and kiss you, they will.



# Alpacas in the Library

*Maria Marchant (Alpaca Kisses)*

*A True Story with some sound advice according to Milo the alpaca*

*Alpacas: Milo (brown) and Co (white) (In loving memory of both)*

One day, in May, back in 2019,  
We visited Stanton Library, North Sydney, a place we'd never been.  
We found it hard to contain our excitement that day  
As we entered a small room that lifted us up and away

When the doors opened wide - it was the second floor  
To a room full of people and so many books to explore  
Co and I were excited and so keen to find out  
What this mid-city adventure was really about

Well, we soon learned the reason - for our visit that day  
They were filming Matt Cosgrove and what he had to say  
Because 'Alpacas with Maracas' was NSS' book of the year  
And we were part of the audience invited to cheer.

Lights, camera, action- they were ready to start  
They asked us to cush (sit) because that was our part.  
So, we sat as requested both enjoying a rest  
Ready for stories about alpacas because they are the best.

Now Alpacas love stories! I guess everyone knows  
That they also love playtime, parties and shows.  
And yes 'Alpacas with Maracas' is a fabulous read  
But not when you're tired and it's sleep that you need.

Now as Matt and his friend Jimmy started reading the book  
My eyelids jammed shut, I could no longer look.  
With my head on the bench right in everyone's view  
I'm embarrassed to say I fell asleep and snored too (oh dear!)

Well Co was my hero - he distracted them that day.  
He stayed focused and turned pages in the true alpaca way.  
But I'm still so embarrassed that I slept as they read.  
When I should have been listening to the story instead

Well, our time at the library given all said and done.  
Was a bundle of laughs and barrels of fun  
But if you're planning on reading in a library, make sure  
You don't fall asleep and if you do - Don't snore!

## 'The Alpaca Way' Worksheet

- |  |                |
|--|----------------|
| 1. Are alpacas farm animals?                                       | Yes   No       |
| 2. Which part of the Americas do alpacas come from?                | North   South  |
| 3. Alpacas are bigger than llamas.                                 | True   False   |
| 4. Are alpacas' vegetarians?                                       | Yes   No       |
| 5. Alpacas have been bred, like llamas, to carry heavy loads.      | True   False   |
| 6. Alpacas are part of the Camelid family.                         | True   False   |
| 7. Alpaca fleece is more expensive than sheep wool.                | True   False   |
| 8. Do alpacas love to be patted?                                   | Yes   No       |
| 9. Alpacas can be used as guardian animals in a paddock.           | True   False   |
| 10. Alpacas are generally very curious.                            | True   False   |
| 11. Do alpacas bleat like sheep? Hmm....this is a hard one!        | Yes   No       |
| 12. Alpacas have hard hoofs like a horse.                          | True   False   |
| 13. Watching an alpaca prunk is very entertaining.                 | True   False   |
| 14. What is the term used to describe an alpaca sitting down?      | Park   Kush    |
| 15. An alpaca likes to have a paddock all to themselves.           | True   False   |
| 16. An alpaca would never spit. Only llamas' spit.                 | True   False   |
| 17. How likely would it be for an alpaca to spit on a human?       | Very   Not     |
| 18. Alpacas like people best when their arms are ...               | Waving   Down  |
| 19. Baby alpacas are called ...                                    | Fawns   Crias  |
| 20. Llama fleece is coarser than alpaca fleece.                    | True   False   |
| 21. Who would win a spitting distance contest?                     | Alpaca   Llama |
| 22. A jumper made of alpaca fleece would cost ....                 | \$\$\$   \$    |
| 23. Alpacas are sneaky, they'll give no warning that they'll spit. | True   False   |