

DOG DREAM

*Back home we have a saying: "the marching goes on even when dogs bark."
If he thinks he can scare us with the sound of a dog barking, that's really a dog dream.*

- North Korea's foreign minister Ri Yong-ho
September 19, 2017

The only time Rodrigo Duterte gets to eat is during chopper or car rides in between events. In a chopper from Maasin to Ormoc, he's eating from a plastic container of tuna sandwiches in the front seat. His assistant Bong Go asks if I'm hungry. Duterte gives me the plastic container with the remaining tuna sandwiches. On Trump Force One there are four major food groups: McDonald's, Kentucky Fried Chicken, pizza and Diet Coke. On another chopper ride, Duterte is handed a carton of coconut water to fend off the intense summer heat. He gives the carton to me with the advice, "Hydration is very important." After I've taken several sips, Go hands him another carton, this time much colder. Suddenly, Duterte grabs the lukewarm carton I'm drinking from and hands me his chilled carton instead. He drinks from my half-empty carton without a moment's hesitation. The plane's cupboards are stacked with Vienna Fingers, potato chips, pretzels and many packages of Oreos because Trump, a renowned germaphobe, will not eat from a previously opened package. The Netanyahus refer to bottles of pink champagne (Sara's favorite) as "pinks" and fancy cigars as "leaves" in order to divert attention from gifts the family receives from American businessman Arnon Milchan. Mr. Trump's American coat of arms belongs to another family. The regal emblem, used at President Trump's golf courses across the United States, displays three lions and two chevrons on a shield, below a gloved hand gripping an arrow. It was granted by British authorities in 1939 to Joseph Edward Davies, the socialite who built the Mar-a-Lago resort that is now Mr. Trump's cherished getaway. While prohibited from using the brand in the UK, at home the Trump Organization has taken Mr. Davies's coat of arms for its own, making one small adjustment — replacing the word "Integritas," Latin for integrity, with "Trump." It is used on the company's website, emblazoned on golf balls, shirts and bottles of body lotion. Are defenses giving Vladimir Putin too much space or is the Russian President just that good at hockey? "Are you coming around the 2nd or before? If so, please can you bring a copy of *Harry Potter Deathly Hallows Part 2*?" writes Asma Assad in one leaked email. He skates fine in a straight line, but his turning radius exhibits the grace of a 500 foot-long Russian battleship. President Trump reaches over to a small wooden box in the corner of the desk emblazoned with the letters POTUS, and presses the little red button on top. From the adjoining kitchen, a navel steward enters the Oval Office, carrying a tall glass of Diet Coke with ice. Putin must be well known in Russian hockey circles for having Gordie Howe's elbows, because everybody seems to give him a wide berth. He certainly knows how to make room for himself. As a young student in Switzerland, Kim Jong Un wears Nike Air Jordans and spends hours making meticulous pencil drawings of Chicago Bulls superstar Michael Jordan. What makes this crown prince the world's most powerful millennial? Mohammed bin Salman works 16-hour days and draws inspiration from the writings of Winston Churchill and Sun Tzu's "The Art of War." The Russian leader has an eighth-degree black belt and is named Grandmaster of Taekwondo even though he doesn't practice the sport. He now ranks higher than Chuck Norris. Kim isn't particularly talented, but he becomes a different person on the basketball court—a fiercely competitive player. He's very explosive. He can make things happen. While his father was once named the largest single buyer of Hennessy cognac, Kim's current spending reflects similar tastes. According to a former political adviser, Donald Trump "uses a weird bottle of hair spray. It's bigger than the biggest can of beer." He has never taken a drink of alcohol. The family's chef Kenji Fujimoto once quoted Kim Jong Il favoring his younger son, saying "The big one [Kim Jong-chul] has a weak heart and is feminine, but the young one is manly." MBS uses a proxy to purchase the most expensive painting in the world, the only privately-owned Da Vinci. 'Salvator Mundi' — *Savior of the World*—depicts a Renaissance Christ holding a crystal ball in his left hand. Despite it being illegal to import films in North Korea, Kim Jong Un has an impressive collection of 20,000 movies on DVD, many of them from the west. His film tastes are said to range from American classics like Rambo and Godzilla to Friday the 13th, with a particular love for Jean Claude Van Dam. Trump's secret weapon appears to be Farouk Systems' "CHI Helmet Head" — a "humidity-resistant fast-drying hair spray." Another Assad family email includes an amazon link to a fondue set with the note "Pls can we get one?" Donald loves the smell. He doesn't like people touching his hair. In Korean parlance, a dog dream is one that is scattered, meaningless, with no coherence or predictive wisdom.