

# *Missing Missy*

*by Frederick Wickert*



Johnny was drunk. He went to a livestock auction. The auctioneer put up a basket containing an American Eskimo female with a litter of puppies. Johnny bid on them and won. When he sobered up the next day he wondered what on earth he was going to do with them. The mother was tiny and cute and his wife liked her. He decided to keep the mother and one tiny puppy he believed most favored the mother.

Johnny had a friend, Tony. Tony and Johnny were drinking buddies. Johnny took one of the female puppies to Tony as a gift. Tony didn't really want her, but he took her. After two weeks, Tony had not taken very good care of the puppy and his father, Bob and his mother, Shirley told him if he couldn't take better care of that puppy, they were going to take her. Tony said, "Take her. I don't want her anyway."

Bob and Shirley tied her outside during the day. I gave them a vinyl doghouse for her. At night they brought her inside. They had bi-fold doors between the living room and their bedroom. A reclining chair just outside the wide opening of the bedroom door faced the TV across the room. There were three Siamese cats in the house. To prevent the puppy from chasing the cats, Bob tied her to the leg of the bed on a short chain. The bi-fold doors were left open and the puppy could reach the recliner. She often sat in Bob's lap as he watched TV. Bob called her Nut Job.

The growing puppy was white in color and a pretty little thing. She was full of exuberance. Bob had several grandchildren who hung around and the growing puppy loved the children. She longed for their attention. Bob and Shirley were friends of mine and lived nearby. I visited them from time to time. The dog was always happy to see me and we soon became good friends.

The month the puppy was born, our house was severely damaged by a flood. FEMA wanted to buy out all the properties in the area. There was never to be any building or road in the area again. Fourteen homes and out buildings, and the road they were on were all done away with by FEMA. The following summer we were going to move to our new home. I went to see Bob about something. Shirley demanded to know if I wanted the dog. She said if I didn't take her she was going to the pound.

Shirley had a large collection of expensive Hummel figurines. A couple of nights before, while chained to the leg of the bed, the now fully grown dog slipped the collar over her head and chased the three Siamese cats around the house. In an effort to escape the dog, the cats leaped upon shelves containing the figurines, which in turn went tumbling to the floor, breaking them. Shirley was furious. The dog had to go.

I had not really intended to get another dog any time soon. My last dog had died and I was going to be moving. I had no facility to take care of a dog at the new house. I didn't want my little friend to go to the pound. I told Shirley that I couldn't take the dog right away, but if she could give me a couple of weeks to prepare a place for her I wanted to take her. Shirley agreed to wait two weeks but insisted the dog was never again coming in the house.

After we got moved in to our new quarters, I prepared a place for the dog. I didn't want to call her Nut Job so I named her Missy. Missy liked everybody and got along all right with our cats. She was particularly attached to me. She was a very good little dog in most respects. I began taking her with me wherever I went and she loved to ride in a vehicle and behaved very well. In the summer when it was too hot to leave her in the truck I left her home. In the winter when it was too cold I left her home. The rest of the year, I took her with me.

Missy came to live with us ten years and three months ago. She was twenty months old then. Three weeks ago she was injured. She had a slipped disc in her spine. She came home from the hospital ten days later and seemed fine. She was on medication but was doing all right. Suddenly over the weekend her condition worsened. I took her back to the vet on Monday morning. He said she had reinjured the disc. He kept her in the hospital and told me to call Friday to see if she could go home.

Today is Friday. When I came home last night, my wife informed me the vet called and said Missy had died about 2:00 P.M. She did come home Friday. I brought her home from the vet and I buried her in the pet cemetery I established in my back yard.

I miss her so.