My Canine Snow Story

By Lynda McKinney Lambert

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I quickly opened the kitchen door in the early morning dusky lavender light today. It was not quite daylight yet but the dogs were used to getting up early. This was our routine since Bob and I are retired and often take them out during the night or in the very early morning hours. Mitchell and Rocco, our two dogs, were anxious to explore the outdoors, as usual. Rocco is a PomSheltie mix and he bounced out with his fluffy tail waving like a flag behind him He never had to have a leash on because he understood his boundaries and he would stay with me for our morning walk.

On the other hand, Mitchell was a terrier. I often like to tell people she is a TERROR-ier. Mitchell had to wear her red harness and stay on the leash because she just never understood that we have boundaries. If she was not on the leash, she would be dashing back and forth across the two roads near our house, and she would be visiting every other home in sight. If she happened to get loose, and she did on occasion, then all I would see would be quick flashes of a white dog darting about in ever widening circles. She moved so fast her brown spots were invisible. Once that happened, all I could do was to wait her out. She never came when called, and had no clue that she was in danger. She ran like a Greyhound on a race track in pursuit of the fake rabbit. She dashed through the woods, and at times came back home after rolling about in stinky messes left on the floor of the woods by wild animals.

The three of us were a common sight as we walked through the woods and into the meadow at the top of the ridge overlooking the creek.

I must have looked especially strange as we burst forth from the warm house into the cold morning today. I was wearing tall rubber Wellies to keep my feet dry from the snow drifts. I had ordered the Wellies from the L. L. Bean catalogue last winter for days just like this one. It was very cold and the snow was deep. They were just perfect for my winter walks with my dogs.

But today, in just a few moments, it was too late! Frisky and impulsive, Mitchell pulled me into a deep snow drift that was higher than my boot tops. My long lavender flannel nightgown caught the snow as we were launched into the drift. Snow surrounded me. With shocking wetness against the bare skin above my boot tops. My dark purple plush bathrobe flapped in the wintry coldness that blew up from the creek bed. It felt warm as a winter coat and the soft gray wool scarf I had wrapped around my neck warmed my face.

I tried holding up my snow laden nightgown, but the snow was stuck here all around the inside hem of my flannel nightgown. I plunged on down the hillside into the meadow on the ridge overlooking the frozen creek.

Mitchell and Rocco were excited and sniffing the air. I was busy looking around for fresh deer tracks in the snow. Mitchell held a pose that told me she was looking for something in the woods. She stood perfectly still, with her face pointing towards the bare trees. This stance always made me a little nervous, because I did not want to run into one of the deer. On occasion we did, and it would snort and stamp it’s feet at us and I would quickly turn around and move out of it’s domain. Rocco would run after the deer, barking and chasing it back deeper into the woods while I would scream at him to come back “now.” Shortly, is little fluffy black and tan long-haired body would come bouncing back, when he was ready to do it.

Only a couple of cars drove by on the main road as we stomped through the wet snow. Finally, we turned around and headed back up the hill to the house. In a short second, I felt my right boot slip beneath the snow, and I was thrown down onto my face with my hands extended outward above my head. My legs apart, and the toes of my Wellies dug deep into the drift.

It happened so fast I could never have prevented this fall. It was painless. I began to laugh out loud. I hoped my husband, Bob, was not watching out the window and I hoped he did not see our morning plunge into the newly fallen snow.

Mitchell, quickly turned around to see what was happening when she felt the leash pull her to a stop. Fortunately, I held tight, and was still laughing as I staggered back up onto my feet. Bob greeted us at the kitchen door and we laughed together because he had seen me rolling about deep in the morning snow. I was now completely covered with snow and remarked that “Here come the snow bunnies.”