

THE PUPPY WHO CRIED....

Jim's going out on the highways at all hours (at age four) to save baby animals flung out on the roadside, often still tied in sacks, caused me great anxiety for his safety. He would go at most any hour of night or day, or any distance -- riding his little tricycle or on foot, prowling in the side ditches.

Once I had gone to pick him up and found him trying to push his tricycle through mud, water, briars and brambles, with his sack of animals across the handle bars. I loaded them all in my car and took them home...

Another time, the young doctor in town drove up in front of my house and unloaded Jim, his tricycle and the animals he had salvaged that night.. As the young doctor unloaded them... panicked, I half whispered..."I cannot take any more! Oh -- I swear, I can not."

I take it that I was hysterical or half conscious to say that, but say it I did.

Little Jim snatched the puppy into his arms and promptly parked it in my arms. "Look for yourself," said he, scathingly, "you have grieved him. He needs someone so very much and he heard you say you do not want him."

This sent spears and daggers of remorse racing through me and bathed my eyes in silent tears.

"See, he is crying, Mom. He has little tears in his eyes. He feels so unwanted. Tell him you love him and will care for him always. Hold him close, Mom, and tell him he is your baby. Hurry...!"

The young doctor reached over and hoisted the brim of the old straw hat I had pulled low over my brow, regarded my tears awhile and announced to Jim: "It's just fine Jim, you have convinced her already. So I will get in my car and go home. I've been at the hospital all night."

The sack holding the kittens had been opened by then to give them more air and they were walking uncertainly about, being toddlers, still, with eyes barely open but not yet focussed. I rushed to warm some milk for them, with the puppy still in arms. Having told him he was loved and wanted and my very own for keeps, I gave him a bowl of warm milk for himself and scratched my head wondering where the next bottle of milk was coming from. But come it did.. when my brother-in-law who worked for the gas and electric company came by to inform my husband that there was a three dollar deposit

Puppy who cried...

-2-

at that office, due us from a post transaction, and he'd taken the liberty of bringing it to us.

I was more pleased with my brother-in-law than I'd ever been before or ever had reason to be thereafter, as I remember. He was about my age and that was the only thing we had in common.

-0-

BB-18-2-8