

Harley

My sister and brother-in-law were quite lost after their beloved poodle, Abu died. His absence made a palpable hole in their hearts and their home.

That was until Harley came into their lives.

He, a shaggy, matted mess of a Schnauzer mix was first seen running around their small town on a frigid day in October.

Then, after a few days, hoping to get some attention, he decided to camp on their deck.

With his playful demeanor and friendly bark, he was hard to resist.

He wore a collar, but no license. Who would turn a dog like this loose? Did he lose his way from his owner while on a trip?

After many tries to shoo him away as well as find his rightful owner, Sharon decided something needed to be done with this dog. The weather was getting colder and this dog was really a mess.

A call to their daughter-in-law produced not only dog shampoo, but a leash, a dog bed, and dog food and treats as well. They were back in the dog business in no time.

A sizeable tussle in the bathroom revealed a dog with a beautiful coat of silvery gray hair. That, along with the dog's sunny disposition and big, brown eyes, was enough to melt their hearts.

The heart warmer was taken to the vet to get checked out and receive the necessary vaccinations. The vet pronounced him healthy.

He was welcomed to his new home and named Harley.

Someone else must have loved him at some time. Turns out Harley was completely

housebroken.

Harley took no time at all adopting Sharon and Ole as family, either. He'd run around the house

shivering, only to snuggle up with one of them. He liked nothing better than Ole cradling him like a

baby unless it was him conning Ole out of a doggie treat.

He also took great joy in chasing his chew toys as one of his family would join him in a game of fetch.

As we visited there quite often, Harley soon adopted us as well.

He'd start barking when he heard our car a half block away. He couldn't wait for the tussle we'd

give him as we came in the door.

Then came the time Ole needed to be hospitalized some distance from their home. Sharon, of course would be by his side. But what of Harley?

They couldn't take him with them, nor leave him home alone.

Would we take him for that time?

What to do, what to do. While we've always been dog people, we've never been *indoor* dog people.

By this time, Harley was a died-in-the-wool sleep with his master dog.

There was no way a dog was going to make it into our bed.

But we did love Harley. We told his people he could stay with us, provided he came with his own doggie bed.

So, we welcomed him, along with his full complement of food, doggie treats, and toys as well as his own personal bed into our home for the duration.

Each night, before retiring, I'd take Harley out for his nightly pottie break. I'd then show him his bed before retiring to mine, closing the door behind me.

Each night I'd have to get up, I'd find him sitting just the other side of the door.

But the funniest thing to happen, occurred on his return trip home.

Not long after leaving our home, we encountered a caravan of pea harvesters. We found ourselves following these huge machines, tractors, and wagons at a snail's pace.

We, along with Harley from his backseat vantage point, were getting more anxious. About halfway to our destination, I suggested we make a cutaway, taking an alternate route to get around the crew.

By this time, Harley was so excited he jumped from his backseat perch unto my lap. He was panting wildly.

Something needed to be done.

After our detour, we came up to our intended intersection only to find the pea entourage again, passing in front of us!

This time Harley had a front row seat, (no pun intended) to the whole operation.

Again, we swung in behind the crew. After a couple of miles, they pulled to the side of the road to let us pass through.

A little while later, we arrived safe at Harley's home, with him on my lap, eagerly looking out the window to home.

