

# Lost Souls: FOUND!™

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*Inspiring Stories About Dachshunds*

**Kyla Duffy and Lowrey Mumford**



Published by Happy Tails Books™, LLC

Happy Tails Books™ publishes breed-specific and region-specific compilations of stories about rescued dogs. These thought-provoking books are meant to entertain pet lovers, and raise awareness about pet adoption and typical breed characteristics. They provide a venue for proud owners to showcase their adopted pets and generate funding for rescue groups through the donation of a portion of each sale.

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## Two for the Road

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Dachshunds were bred to hunt badgers. Their name literally means “badger dog” in German. I’m guessing that most of us who own Dachshunds know this already, but because they were bred to go below ground they have developed a couple of interesting characteristics. Maybe you have noticed that Dachshunds have a bark that is disproportionate to their size. In other words, they’re loud little men and women.

The deep bark enabled the hunters to know what was going on underground. And, again because at one time they

were sent into burrows, they developed the ability to "re-use" their own air. I discovered this after doing some research when my Dachshund went beneath lots of bedcovers in the winter and somehow didn't suffocate.

I look at my friend and can't imagine him in combat with a badger, even though he is a persistent fellow. The Hound of the Baskervilles might have a chance, but not Smitty.

Smitty is a six year old, red, short-haired, purebred male. I don't know his entire back story, but apparently it wasn't pleasant. He is dashingly handsome and has endearing cognac-colored eyes. He is in great health and form. So why was he unwanted and not adopted for months and months?

I have a few theories that involve multiple owners. By the time I first saw him, his shelter crate had a number of warning stickers on it, identifying him as too difficult, or even dangerous, to handle and walk. He therefore spent an entire winter in his crate - becoming even more difficult.

My previous Dachshund, cleverly named Badger, lived a long and happy life. She was 15 when she died in 2008, and I had decided against another dog. But a good friend named Shannon, who is with Beagle Rescue, practically insisted. She

knows that I live a very solitary life that would be even more solitary without a K9 companion.

Shannon and I went to the shelter together. Smitty was not thrilled to see me, but we took him for a walk, filled out the comprehensive questionnaire, three references were called, and out the door we went for a trial period. Eventually, Smitty (named after my father) and I became best friends.

Something *must* have happened to Smitty before I met him because he is indeed a problem child, but not with me. We are glued to each other. He has bedding in every room of my two-story house, he has a fenced yard, and he even has framed artwork at his eye level. He gets great veterinary care, two, three, even four walks a day, and many car rides.

I spent a lot of money on behavioral modification specialists, DVDs, and books. But he is still mouth-aggressive with others; and he is not pleased to be around other dogs.

But here's the punch line. We're two for the road. I have spent a lot of money on DVDs, books, therapists for *myself*. But ultimately I am a reclusive curmudgeon, a stick-in-the-mud, really, and while I don't exactly have mouth aggression, I have burned a lot of bridges in my lifetime. My behavior, however, is not a byproduct of an unfortunate childhood. No one abused

me or neglected me. I was always loved and cared for, and I think that because I *was* loved and cared for, I can pass that on to Smitty - and at the very least he will have *my* full attention, a wonderful life, a healthy diet, and in all likelihood, a lot of things that were missing in the first five years of his life.

"My little dog – a heartbeat at my feet." -Novelist Edith Wharton

*Craig Marshall Smith*

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## Katrina's Little Angel

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Angel was rescued by a group of volunteers that traveled from Texas to Louisiana many times during the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. On one of the search-and-rescue trips, the volunteers discovered a puppy mill in an old out-building on abandoned property. The storm had flooded the property and reached as high as seven feet inside the building. Crates were stacked from floor to ceiling, and unfortunately everyone below the waterline had drowned.

Angel and her brother Dominick were in one of the top crates. When the water receded, the crates shifted and theirs

fell to the ground. Dominick got lucky and landed on his sister, who broke his fall. Unfortunately for Angel, this caused a traumatic back injury. Additionally, days without food or water made the pair so weak that when rescuers arrived, they thought Angel and Dominick were dead. Their survival could only have been a miracle!

The dogs were brought to safety at a makeshift shelter in Lafayette, LA, where workers determined that Angel's injury would, indeed, require medical attention. Volunteers transported the pair to Beaumont, TX, where they were evaluated by a vet. A kind couple then drove them to Houston, where they spent the night with a volunteer. The next day, Dominick was taken to San Antonio to reside in foster care with Diamond Dachshund Rescue while Angel continued on to a surgeon in Austin and was cared for by All Texas Dachshund Rescue. She underwent extensive spinal surgery the following morning.

This young, beautiful, black-and-tan piebald "angel" touched the hearts of everyone she met. Angel's Houston transport volunteer was so taken by her that she offered to foster Angel through her rehabilitation. Angel recovered well but needed lots of therapy and acupuncture following her

surgery. After months of hard work and expensive therapy, Angel wiggled her way into her foster mom's heart. Now Angel's "forever" mom, she can't imagine life without her.

While Hurricane Katrina devastated many areas of the South, it actually may have saved Angel and Dominick's lives. Had it not struck, they would most likely still be stuck in a cage at that puppy mill. Angel's strength and will to survive is a testament to all of the tireless volunteers who helped during Hurricane Katrina. Their work has not gone unnoticed, especially by two little dogs whose lives would have been lost if not for their selfless efforts.

*Anonymous*

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## Petri and the Pilot

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“Chicken killer.” That’s what they called him. That was the reason given when they dropped him off at a kill shelter in South Texas. They said he killed chickens. But then again, he was seven years old, no longer a fun puppy, and he was heartworm positive. Who wants to spend money on that? So off to the pound he went.

Diamond Dachshund Rescue of Texas (DDRT) was completely overwhelmed; foster homes were full. The kennel building was full. But on the faith that there would be space for Petri once he finished heartworm treatments; a volunteer was sent to rescue him.

And space there was. Petri came to me towards the end of his heartworm treatment, and immediately brightened our lives. He loved his toys. I mean he really loved his toys. It didn't take me long to realize that toys were all this dog had had in his life for a very long time. The other dogs really liked Petri and tried to get his attention, but Petri just played with his toys. It took a while for him to start hanging out with his brothers and sisters and seeking attention from my son and me.

Petri blossomed into such a sweet, fun dog. He loved to play catch and would try his best to talk to me. I loved his growly voice. Now a new "forever home" needed to be found for Petri - he deserved it.

Along came Max, a retired fighter pilot, who at 74 years old, was told by his kids that he was old enough to have his own dog and not just dog sit theirs! His daughter read Petri's description to him from the DDRT website and he felt an

immediate kinship with Petri, as if was following his instincts by wanting to meet him.

I love fostering rescue Dachshunds, but each one takes a piece of my heart with them when they are adopted. I want each one to go to the perfect-for-them home, and Max sounded perfect for Petri. I scheduled a time to get Max and Petri together, but first I had to say goodbye.

Petri's favorite toy was a squeaky tennis ball, but he had worn out the squeaker in his, so I decided a farewell shopping trip was in order. We stopped at the farm supply store on our way to meet Petri's potential new owner. Petri strutted into the store and was elated at the floor level bins full of toys! He climbed right in, searching for a favorite. Squeaky tennis ball found, he happily carried it to the cashier, bringing smiles to everyone who saw him. I picked him up so he could give the cashier the toy to ring up. She laughingly handed it back to him and I announced that he was going to a new home. Everyone wished him well.

Back in the car, I looked at a happy dog playing with his new toy, and the tears streamed down my face. This joyful dog, destined to be put to sleep for killing chickens, was now

bringing happiness to everyone... which was soon to include his new owner Max.

*Cynthia D. Smith*

## Wire Hangers in the Closet



There's no need to mince words: My mom and I are Dachshund Fanatics. So, it should not have come as a surprise to my mom when, one hot July day, she received a call, out of the blue, asking if her Dachshund rescue could take on another one.

Except - my mom does not run a rescue. Of the three Wieners we had at the time between the two of us, two of them were adopted, but we certainly don't consider ourselves to be a "rescue," not by any means.

After getting over the initial, "Wow, I must really talk about my dogs a lot if they think I have a rescue!" Momma listened to the little dog's story.

It turned out that a coworker's daughter was in a trailer park in a nearby town, doing some cleanup work with her church youth group. They heard something that sounded like water, running in a nearby empty trailer. Could it be? The tenants had moved out earlier in the week.

The trailer park manager and landlord were summoned, and they tracked the water sounds to the bathroom. They opened the door, and out jumped a scared, hungry, little smooth red Dachshund!

Neighbors were questioned: "Yes, the people who had lived there had owned that dog." "Yes, they had moved out of state a few days ago." "No, it wasn't too surprising that they'd left the dog behind; he had spent many long days just tied up outside and fed scraps."

There were two big questions left unanswered: Who in the world would leave a little dog like this, sealed up in a hot trailer, left to starve? And, more importantly, now that he had been rescued from certain death, what was to be done with the

little guy? Thus, the phone call to my mom, and trio of Wieners had become a foursome.

It was clear that the little guy, who my mom christened "Red," had some issues. He was afraid of toys, and had no idea what a biscuit was. He also wasn't too fond of kibble, and had a tough time putting on any weight. You could see his spine, and he was rather drawn up underneath. It was also clear that he had BIG issues with being left alone (no surprise there!). Whenever my mom or dad got ready to leave for work in the mornings, he would whimper, cry, bark, and do everything in his power to express his displeasure and beg them to stay.

Thus, the long rehabilitation process began. First, the vet check. He tested clean for heartworms and received all of his vaccinations. He had already been neutered - at least *someone* at *some* point had done *something* responsible with this little guy! Mom started adding soft puppy food to his regular kibble diet, which helped Red add a few pounds. Eventually, curiosity got the better of him. After watching his new siblings go crazy for the "biscuit tin," and he finally joined in the fracas. But perhaps the most epic breakthrough was when my mom called me, all excited, because she had found

Red chewing on a rope toy! Finally, he had come out of his shell enough to play! He's since become an expert burrower, too.

Today, Red is a happy, healthy, nine-pound Dachshund who bears almost no resemblance to the trembling little furball that was found in that hot trailer nearly two years ago. He still gets nervous when my mom and dad leave in the morning, especially if one of them is going away overnight and packs a bag, but he's so much better.

We sometimes wonder what those people were thinking when they left their little dog behind, like wire hangers in the closet. It hurts my brain and my heart to think of how sad and scared little Red must have been. Waiting for his humans to return; waiting, waiting. It's said that dogs don't really have a concept of time, and I hope that is true. I hope he just thought they were "working late," and that they were indeed coming back at any moment. I hope he didn't realize the dark/light cycles that indicated another day had come and gone. I hope he was able to ignore the hunger pangs that he was almost certainly feeling!

But most of all, I hope that someday no more dogs have to experience what Red went through.

*Holly Benton*

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## About Happy Tails Books™

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Happy Tails Books™ was created to help support animal rescue efforts by showcasing the love, happiness, and joy adopted dogs have to offer. With the help of animal rescue groups, stories are submitted by people who have adopted dogs, and then Happy Tails Books™ compiles them into breed-specific and region-specific books. These books serve not only to entertain, but also to educate readers about dog adoption and the characteristics of each specific type of dog. Happy Tails Books™ donates a significant portion of proceeds back to the rescue groups who help gather stories for the books.



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