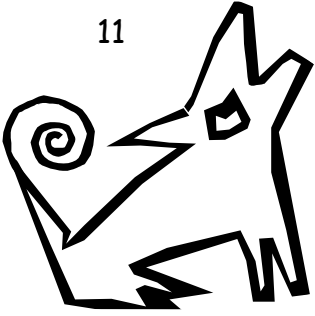


THE TAIL OF Peanut

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My name is Peanut and this is my story. I am a miniature Alaskan Husky from Wasilla, Alaska. There, I was called a “Klee Kai” --- a relatively new and rare breed of dog. My birth name is “Akia”... but all that changed when I met my new adopted parents, the Venezianos. They are **people**, Italians actually, and it was the hardest thing for me to understand their language. It's quite complicated but I am doing better now. You see, when they get excited or happy, it's the same sound as when they are angry and mad. Why can't they make up their minds? They call this... **emotion** and boy, do these people have a lot of that! They do everything I a big loud way. I tried to tell them my little head would explode if they didn't stop and then something wonderful happened. One little yap outta me and they all shut up!

I have perfect white diamond markings in my mask and very blue eyes. I am an identical twin to my larger version but I have more personality. And I play that for everything its worth. The truth of the matter is people automatically think I'm cute... unless I have an **accident** on the rug: then, I'm not cute anymore. **Accident**... now there is a complicated word alright --- I guess it's ok to do some things in some places, but once you move to the wrong side... that's called an **accident**. The first time this happened, I was quickly whisked up and deposited **outside** in this big grassy area I'd never seen before. In Chicago, they have this substance called grass and it's really bizarre... stuff grows in to ... I like to attack the flowers and the weeds. But Mom doesn't believe the weeds live there; she calls them flowers but I know the difference --- they taste different.

At first, I was afraid of it but I learned to enjoy rolling around in it. I guess they have ice and snow here too but not all the time. This is called **weather**; I have not experienced it, as yet. I'm still baffled by the grass. And, **people**... they stay confused... especially about the weather but they still always have to cut the grass. Seems like a lot of nonsense to me! This is another one of those words that sounds the same be means something opposite --- why is that? **Grass** to my adopted Dad's sister who is a police officer it is a drug... a bad thing people get arrested for --- I don't understand it! But she is different from the rest of them. I do know if I get lost she will find me and bring me home --- where's her phone number? I should memorize that. She lives in this big house all alone with lots of **concrete**... Italians like concrete; they put it down all over the place when they don't want to cut the grass. What's wrong with them?

My distinct advantage over regular sized animals is that I will never get fat --- 16 pounds is it for me. But I came into this world thinking everything was just my size... was I in for a rude awakening. Mom and Dad took me into this place called a **kitchen**. A kitchen is where people sit down to eat and occasionally throw stuff over the side of the table you're not usually supposed to have. They call these **treats**. Anyway, one night they brought me to the kitchen and in walks this huge version of me called “Penuche”... he was giant size. Of course, I had my doubts about him too; he just stood there hovering over me like Godzilla... And breathing heavy! With no expression... it didn't take me long to realize he wasn't Italian like all the other people in the house... this was a bad idea, a very bad idea... but I didn't have time to run... look at the thing, I said to myself... the teeth and claws and the hair... and the teeth and the claws and the hair! I sure hope he gets friendly... but Mr. Personality just stood there... I can see why they flew me over here... that big fur-ball didn't do nothing! But you should see the paws on that thing... looked like footballs to me.

It made me wonder why people wear shoes and this big hairy thing didn't!!! That was my first question, and my first problem! You see, I love shoes... I drag them from the closet and hide my bone there... they think it's cute so I do it in front of them... (Doesn't take much to amuse these people)... but shoes usually taste and smell good if they are leather. All of the ones here are leather and Dad has such big monsters, I can actually curl up and go to sleep in one of his. Once they couldn't find me for two hours. It was pretty funny but they didn't think so. I think this was the

beginning of their decision to take me to **Obedience School**... something I could surely have lived without!! Obedience School is the place where you learn “No” and then this hand comes up near your face when they say it again... and they get louder every time. Must be Italians! I haven’t quite figured it out.

I guess I have a pretty good dog’s life over here with the Venezianos... but it was certainly not a stable beginning. And I had to adapt to a lot of confusing changes that were very scary at the time. After only a few short weeks on earth I was told I’d be moving and taking a long plane ride to another city. The last thing I remember was this guy telling me “don’t worry”. Liar, I thought... I didn’t like that guy... I wasn’t sure exactly what anything meant, but I didn’t like this relocation business. I faced my first assignment in life with great courage... until they brought out this ugly plastic box with mesh covering called, **a cage**, I hate that thing. I learned something else on my trip called **surprises**... and I didn’t know what they were but I was about to get one... following the cage came these two other devices, called a collar and a leash, these had to do with what people call confinement and control... well I wanted no part of any of that! And if this was my first experience with people I said no thanks... this is not for me! I stayed quite apprehensive about being caged... after all I wasn’t a pigeon... I was a dog but no amount of barking and whining convinced them!

Then I discovered the scariest part... I was in metal bird-like contraption called a plane that you couldn’t get down from... no walking around and no getting off... Let me outta this! Having been separated from my brothers and sisters was enough of a surprise... now I was alone and isolated in this cage, strapped into a seat and flying like a bird to God knows where! About the time I was looking for a parachute, we landed in Chicago. Having had limited exposure to people, I was snarling and growling at everyone... until I saw my Mom. She smelled better than my Dad and held me all the way to the house I now live in.

House, I learned was nothing more than a people cage... but nicer... it has different things inside and a larger running area. I liked it. And my parents have all kinds of cool things to play with. They first put me on this comfortable thing called a couch... it was up high... not another airplane ride I said to myself... but I like to leap off there because it scares them... once they discovered I could really do it on my own it wasn’t fun anymore. Then I moved over to the steps. Steps are short pieces of wood that take you up and down. They should shoot the guy that invented steps... it’s a lot of work. There must be an easier way! I found an angle though; I said to myself, this ought to scare them to death. I’ll pretend to flip over and they will run after me and pick me up... works every time... these steps are exhausting anyway... who wants to climb up and down and up and down... I don’t get it! But, I think this was another reason they sent me to Obedience School.

Before I forget, there is another complex thing about these people... called **names**. They are supposed to keep us separate and apart but it doesn’t always work that way! Mom and Dad named me something stupid... but I forgive them. I’m called “peanut” because I was named after someone and then that someone turned into a something... it’s quite confusing and who wants that? The other Peanut is a blue cloth elephant beanie baby. And there is more than one. You can’t get me confused with the other “peanuts” in the house because I am alive and I think they are all dead.

I was named after the rarest one. I don’t like my name and I don’t like being called someone else’s name but it wasn’t my doing. All you have to remember is I’m the one who barks when you call me. Those other beanie babies just lay there... they don’t do anything... even when I drag them around... they are lifeless and boring... but if I chew a tag off one of them... well that’s a big trouble... Mom gets mad. I don’t know why... those tags don’t even taste good! Just like the weeds I eat she thinks are flowers... I get the same response.

There are other stuffed things here... little miniature dolls on top of Mom’s couch. At first I thought they were stuffed people cause they look the same but now I know they are all dead too. Maybe the big dog got them!

So, please remember when you come to see me... look for the "Peanut" that's alive!
Peanut first wrote this story in 1998.



Members since April 1998

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