

three dogs'
TALES:

Rescued, Redeemed, and Chosen

SUSAN R. LAWRENCE



Scrivenings
PRESS

Quench your thirst for story.

www.ScriveningsPress.com

Copyright © 2023 by Susan R. Lawrence

Published by Scrivenings Press LLC
15 Lucky Lane
Morrilton, Arkansas 72110
<https://ScriveningsPress.com>

Printed in the United States of America

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means—for example, electronic, photocopy, and recording— without the prior written permission of the publisher. The only exception is brief quotations in printed reviews.

Paperback ISBN 978-1-64917-305-8

eBook ISBN 978-1-64917-306-5

Editor: Linda Fulkerson

Cover design by Linda Fulkerson - www.bookmarketinggraphics.com

Scripture quotations are taken from the Holy Bible, New International Version®, NIV®. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984 by Biblica, Inc. Used by permission of Zondervan. All rights reserved worldwide.

*To all rescue dogs everywhere—with grateful appreciation for your
unconditional love.*

CONTENTS

PART ONE

RESCUED

Annie's Tale: Rescued	3
Annie the Evangelist	7
Harley and the Sticks	11
Whose House?	15
Don't Go Over the Fence	19
Level Five Aggression	23
A Walk in the Rain	27
Joyful Abandon	31
Extracting a Foot	35
Squirrels in the Grass	39
Our Rescue	43

PART TWO

REDEEMED

Molly's Tale: Redeemed	49
Living Under the Porch	55
The Master's Voice	59
My name is Molly, and I am an Addict	63
A True Friend	67
Give	71
Who's Going Swimming?	75
Don't Eat Poop	79
Deer Bones	83
Moving Boxes	87
Living Redeemed	91

PART THREE

CHOSEN

Maggie's Tale: Chosen	97
Biting the Leash	101
Bridges and Big Things	105
Be Gentle with the Stuffies	109
The Puzzled-Pup Look	113

Wait with Anticipation	117
River of Delights	121
Off-Leash!	125
Outgrowing the Bed	129
Hiking Rules	133
Chosen	137
Author's Note	141
About the Author	143
Also by Susan R. Lawrence	145

Annie's Tale

RESCUED

ANNIE'S TALE: RESCUED

THE YELLOW LABRADOR stood knee-deep in water, head drooping from exhaustion. For days she'd been trying to find her way out of the flooded basement. She hadn't eaten, and even though spring had arrived in northeast Iowa, she shivered in the bone-chilling water.

She rarely used her voice, but this was an emergency. Like most Labs, she had a loud, deep bark. A farmer, driving slowly by on the gravel road, heard the dog's anxious cries.

"I heard a dog barking from inside the old Smith place. No one's lived there for years. Might need to see if some dog's trapped in there," the farmer told Webster County animal control.

Shortly after she took the call, Sophia Hubbell and Frank Van Zee entered a driveway where weeds and grass had triumphed over gravel. They walked to the house and opened a door that creaked in protest.

"Here dog, here dog." Frank called, but nothing answered. He and Sophia made their way through the house, shining a flashlight to check under abandoned furniture and in closets. Frank opened a basement door and shone the light down.

The Lab lifted her head and barked one more frantic "woof," as if saying, "Thank God, someone is here."

Frank hurried as fast as he dared on the decrepit stairway. The

wave of the dog's tail reassured him of her temperament. He scooped her up. The dog, who should have weighed twenty pounds more, didn't struggle as he carried her to the truck. Frank saw no need to put her in the kennel and laid her on a blanket in the back seat. He sped to the veterinary clinic.

The Lab hovered between life and death. She was emaciated, she'd lost hair from standing in the water, and her legs were covered with cuts and scratches. For two weeks, she remained at the clinic. Slowly, she recovered. As her wounds healed, she gained weight and regrew hair. Her gentle nature endeared her to everyone.

The time came to look for a new home for the Lab. The veterinary staff said goodbye, and she moved to a no-kill animal shelter. They put her picture on Petfinder.com, an internet site to match homeless animals with potential adoptive families.

Across the state, I scrolled through Petfinder. I taught at the local elementary school, but it was July, a good time to introduce a new four-footed friend to our home. The Lab's sweet face stopped my scrolling. I read her story and felt compelled to meet her. I just needed to convince my husband, Gary, who was out of town on business.

At the shelter, they took me to a room lined with cages. When they opened the door of the Lab's cage, she bounded out, came directly to me, sat down, and looked up as if to say, "I've been waiting for you. What took you so long?" I knew instantly she was the dog for me. Sight unseen, my husband named her Annie.

Annie adjusted easily to her brand-new life. She romped and explored the five wooded acres where we lived. She slept on a soft, comfy dog bed. In the family room, a basket held toys just for her. She had food in the pantry and a jar of special treats on the counter.

I dreamed of Annie accompanying me in my classroom. So, we went to obedience school, where she learned to sit, stay, and come. She completed three classes and qualified as a Canine Good Citizen. Next, she took Therapy Dogs International's test and passed with only a slight hesitation when she walked by the treats on the floor. I now owned a therapy dog.

The school board members were skeptical when I asked permission

to bring my dog into the classroom. “You already have students prone to distraction. How will they react to a dog running around the classroom? And we may be opening ourselves up to a lawsuit.”

I reassured them the certifying therapy-dog organization provided insurance. Finally, they agreed to a trial. I could bring her one day a week for the two months of school remaining—if there were no incidents of misbehavior.

Annie took to our new routine as if she’d been bred for this life. We rose early and walked before we hopped into the car for the trip to the school. After all, she was barely two years old and still had lots of energy. Annie somehow knew her purpose in the classroom. When the children entered, she greeted each one. She lay on the floor as students read to her, showed her math work, or whispered secrets. If I had supervision duties at recess, Annie went outside, and students from all the classes lined up to walk her around.

For the three years until my retirement, Annie worked alongside of me. After the two-month trial, the school board okayed Annie as the mascot of Room 419, and she accompanied me every day school was in session. She participated in assemblies, fire drills, and school parties. Her school ID was attached to her vest, and on special days, she wore a Character Counts T-shirt. She was pictured in the elementary yearbook. The entire school, from janitors to the principal, saw Annie as an integral part of the community.

Annie never had favorites among the children, but she somehow understood if a child needed her comforting strength. This special gift manifested even more after my retirement. We took on a volunteer job at Orchard Place, a school for children with behavioral disorders and mental illnesses.

When we arrived, Annie walked into the classroom and made her way past every desk, pausing at each for a pat. Then she would choose one desk to sit by. Often, the child she chose was having a difficult day.

Dillon, an outgoing young man, spent one-on-one time with Annie each week. He spent as much time visiting with me as he did playing with Annie. One day the staff called on the house phone. “Dillon is having a rough time. He won’t be coming for his session with Annie.”

I gathered up Annie’s toys, but the phone rang again. “Dillon really wants his time with Annie. We’ve decided to let him come.”

When Dillon trudged into the room, the evidence of his “rough time” showed—red, teary eyes, his whole body slumped and bowed down. He barely acknowledged my presence and stretched out on the floor beside Annie. For the next hour, Dillon talked to Annie, whispering into her silken ears.

His therapist told me later that Dillon said of the visit, “Annie saved me.”

The rescued dog now rescued children.

