

A Dream Comes True (Part 1)

(Story words: search, caught, heart)

One of Darlene's dreams had been to get a dog, but it never seemed to be the right time. Sometimes she had to travel for her job or stay late to finish a project. Because she lived alone, a dog would spend a lot of time just waiting for her to come home. Would a life like that be fair to a dog?

But a friend at work told her, "I think you would be a fine dog owner. You love hiking and being outside. I can see you taking the dog for long walks in the mornings and evenings. And lots of people who work have to find help to take care of their pets. In my case, there are kids on the block who love to walk dogs, and for ten dollars each day, they give my dogs an extra romp. My dogs love being with young kids. It's a win-win deal for everyone."

Darlene began to consider this. Maybe she did not have to wait until she retired from her job to get a dog. When she

added up the costs of dog walking, vet care, and kennel visits, she could see that she could afford a dog.

Darlene started to browse the internet sites for animals who needed homes. While the pups were very cute, Darlene narrowed her search to older dogs who would be more content to spend time alone. One dog, Snowball, caught her eye. Every time she searched, she would return to look at Snowball one more time. And, as luck would have it, Snowball was being kept at a shelter just two towns over.

When Darlene got to the shelter, her heart was beating fast. She asked if Snowball was still there and was thrilled to hear that she was. The kind man who took care of the animals at the shelter brought Darlene to Snowball's pen. Snowball came out of her crate and uttered a soft bark. The kind man had seen this before many times: it was love at first sight—Snowball would be leaving the shelter for good.