

Shirley's Rescue Story

Hi! My name is Shirley- and *I* was a beauty queen when I was younger! Of course, that *should* be obvious from this beautiful picture taken of me as a mature lady...but it wasn't *always* so.

Although it makes me sad to think about it, I had kind of a rough home life when I was a young lass. For 5 years I lived with people near Orlando, Florida who weren't very good Scottie guardians. I tried my best to please them and to be a loyal companion but, for some reason, they were not very nice to me. I behaved well, I never complained (even when they forgot to feed me or fill my water bowl), and I tried not to show that it hurt when the many fleas in my coat bit my skin or the sores they caused itched and itched. I even had several litters of puppies that they seemed to enjoy- but only for a little while. The only *good* thing was my pit bull friend. We spent most of our time huddling together trying to stay out of the way of the people- and sometimes dreamed of finding new homes with someone who really wanted us. Maybe we'd even have little boys and girls to play with, a yard to hunt in, and lots of food and treats.



One day some stern police officers came to the house and talked to the people. They were *not* happy at all to see the policemen at the door. Someone had reported that my pal and I were not being properly taken care of... and the policemen were there to take us away to the shelter. The people were neglectful owners, the policemen said. (We agreed!!!) At first the people didn't want to give us up, although I don't know why because they really didn't want to bother with us and never played with us. Finally, when they were told they either had to give us up or they would go to jail- they let the policemen take us. We were taken to Orange County Animal Services where we were fed and bathed and treated for fleas and other health problems. I was feeling *much* better in just a few days. Here's where my fame began! I was given my own special number- A209160- and my picture was put on the Internet to let people know I would be available to adopt. My pit bull buddy soon moved on to a new home- and I did, too.

My new happy life began when Ms. Leslie, a lady from Scottie Rescue, came to get me from Animal Services. She told me she would be my temporary, or "foster", Mom and that she would help me get healthier while she and her friends at Rescue searched for just the right *forever* home for me. Ms. Leslie was very gentle! She gave me a flea bath that felt soooooo good, but I think she was kind of shocked at how many dead fleas came out of my fur. (I heard her tell a friend that there were so many she had to get a vacuum out to clean them up off the floor. I guess that was more than the usual number of fleas!) She fed me lots of good food, let me play with her other Scotties, and even cuddled me on her lap. We went also went to see Dr. Liz McGrath, a dog doctor who treated me for skin, eye, and ear infections and other parasites. She even took me to a doggie *spa*! I got a wonderful shampoo and blow dry and was pampered with a new haircut... even though I didn't have very much hair at that time. For a Scottie, I was kind of bald. Most would say I was an "*ugly duckling*" of a Scottie.

A little while later Ms. Leslie told me I would be going to a different foster home with Ms. Elizabeth. She was a nurse, and would know just how to help me heal quickly. Although I was sad to say goodbye to Ms. Leslie, I was ready for a new adventure! We went for a ride in the car to meet Ms. Elizabeth and her sister Jane. Ms. Elizabeth seemed happy to see me and talked to me as she gave me a nice scratch behind the ears- but I do think she *was* a *little* upset... I must not have looked my Scottie best that day. I heard her tell Jane that she was shocked to see the condition I was in, which was much like the animals on the television show *Animal Cops*. She listed some of the challenges I would have to overcome to be healthy again... I was *very* underweight... I had *some* hair on her face but *little* on my body... my skin was *covered* in sores and hung in folds on my legs... and I was very, very weak. She said she was surprised I had survived my spay surgery considering my poor condition. And, I don't think it helped the situation much when I let loose with a great big sneeze just as Ms. Elizabeth opened my travel crate door to look at me for the first time and I sprayed nasty mucus all over! *Just* what I needed... *kennel cough* on top of all the rest!!! Egad! Now *I* was getting worried about me, *too!* But, Ms. Elizabeth put on her best brave face as she was handed my long list of medications and care directions and put me her into my vehicle to take me her home.

It didn't take long for us to get to my new home and foster Mom Elizabeth did her best to make me comfortable. She had no idea how much better I felt already, just being in a quiet, safe place with someone who cared about me and wanted to help. (She didn't know it, but I was in love already!) She carried me in to the house because I was too weak to walk very far and introduced me to her Scottie boy "Tater". She teased me a little about my name. I guess she had never met a *Shirley* before and thought it was a funny name for a Scottie. But, I had never heard of a Scottie named "Tater" *either...* and I was puzzled that she didn't seem to think *his* name was odd.

Mom Elizabeth made a nice comfy bed for me but kept me away from her Tater for a few days. (I think she was afraid he would catch something bad from me.) She was so gentle with me. I enjoyed it very much when she carried me outside for short walks although I couldn't walk very far at first. She took me to her favorite veterinarian, Dr. Greg Masters, who treated me for kennel cough, tapeworms and other problems and sent us home with prescription shampoo for my bare itchy skin. Mom bathed me three times a week with that special shampoo for a long time. It helped, and I started growing back nice terrier fur.

As I got to know Mom Elizabeth and Tater better I could tell that Mom was sad about something. Tater explained that his big sister, Scottie Agnes, had gone to the Rainbow Bridge a few months before I came to their house and that Mom missed Agnes very much. Knowing that, I tried even harder to let Mom know just how much I appreciated her- and secretly hoped she would want me stay with her forever. I tried to always be happy, to show her lots of love and affection- Scottie style- and wagged my tail *a lot!!!* She must have noticed because, one happy day, she told me I was home to stay and that she was *adopting* me. That meant I never had to leave- I finally had my own forever home. ❤️

They say that love makes all things grow and that was certainly true in my story! About six months after I came to live with Mom Elizabeth and Tater my fur had grown in nice and thick and I had a proper Scottie haircut. My eyes were bright and I was happy and healthy. Mom enjoyed taking pictures of my

new look and bragged a lot about my full body make-over! She was so proud of me that, in November of 2011, she entered me in a contest sponsored by a local newspaper to decide who would be crowned Tampa Bay's Cutest Pet. She sent them one of my most adorable photos. Of course, I already *knew* I was adorable!

To my proud Mom's great pleasure, I was named the grand prize winner and earned my crown. (Was their ever any doubt?!)

Here's my picture and my award.



Recently someone asked my Mom to tell them whether adopting me had been a good choice. This is what she said "There are no words to express the amount of love Shirley has to give. She has brought so much joy to our family, and she really is our gift from Heaven. I thank God every day for the gift of Shirley. Oh, and one more thing. This dog was named correctly. As it turns out, Shirley really *is* a good name for a Scottie!"

Wow! My life has truly gone from rags to riches, thanks to Scottie Rescue and my Mom.
I am a *lucky* Scottie girl!

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