



Barks N Bits

with our favorite Jack Russel Terrier...

Bella (& Miss Maybelline)

This Is Home



The cats have all settled in and made themselves at home - in the top of the barn....and that is fine and dandy with me. The biggest cat is very friendly with the people, she comes out and hangs around with us some during the day. Every once in a while she'll arch her back, like she's making sure we don't get any ideas.

The other kitties are a little younger and a lot more skittish. They pretty much stay out of the way of the people - and us. Needless to say, the dogs and cats have come to an agreement. This is our home and it is their home and we just have to learn to get on with it.

I think this is a pretty nice place to call home. It's pretty nice to have been chosen to be part of this family. I have been here since I was just eight weeks old....kind of like Freckles and Miss Maybelline. We were all chosen by the people as puppies and have lived here most of our lives.



Duke, on the other hand, chose the people. I mean, he decided he wanted to live here. I really got to thinking about that this past week when I learned a little more about Duke during a trip to see the animal doctor (they call him the vet.)

I think I've mentioned how Duke ended up here, but let me tell you a little more of Duke's story.

My people seem to think that Duke was dumped. By dumped, I mean taken for a ride in a car with people he had grown to love and trust and then left out in the middle of the

country to fend for himself. Yes, I know, awful, isn't it? You see, Duke just showed up at the neighbors house one day with another dog, no collars, no tags - just two big healthy Labs out in the middle of the country.

Our neighbors started putting food out for the two dogs. The other Lab decided to move on, they weren't sure what happened to him or where he went. Duke decided to stay and enjoy the food and company of their little dachshund. Duke told me that he really loved his new little friend.

Duke also told me that he got very curious about all the excitement happening down the road (at our house), so much so that he had to check it out. That is when we all got introduced to Duke. He meandered down to visit and that is how it started.

Duke started coming to visit every day while the people were out doing the barn chores. He would go back to the neighbor's house in the evenings after the people (and me) returned to the house. Each evening his little dachshund friend would wait at the edge of the neighbor's field for him.

One day Duke didn't come to visit, but we could hear him crying....for two or three days he cried. The

people thought maybe the neighbors had put him in the kennel to keep him from wandering down to our house. After talking to the neighbor, the man found out that Duke was not in the kennel....he was just sad. It turned out that Duke's little dachshund friend had died and Duke was mourning for his little buddy. I know, I'll admit, I teared up a little too.

It was probably another day or so before Duke came to visit again. His stays got to be longer and longer until he just decided he wanted to be here all of the time.

Duke has now been a permanent fixture here at the farm for over a year and half. I've kidded about how he is a "big lug" and how he leaves "dukies" in the yard....but I really do think a lot of the big guy. Remember how he was with the baby foal that died?

Getting back to the beginning and our ride to the vet and the reason I decided to share Duke's story. When we all loaded up into the Suburban to go visit the vet, Duke got very quiet.

I never really though much about it until the lady noticed. After the people had him and Freckles get in the back, he just got really sad and mopey. He wouldn't look at the people, he wouldn't even lift his head when they called his name. The lady thought something was wrong, she tried to cheer him up before we left the drive and he just looked lost.

It was then that the lady said, "I bet he thinks we are taking him away. The last time he was in a vehicle was when he was brought to the country and his last family left him."

Oh my....you talk about pulling at your heart. I almost lost it, and we all know I am not one for the mushy stuff.

We tried to convince Duke that we were all returning home - together -and of course we all did go back home together.

It took Duke a day or so to come out of his sadness. I think he finally realized that this is his home and he isn't going anywhere. You see, in the beginning he chose us, since then we have all chosen him.

Until next month,

Bella 
(& Maybelline) 