



The Belgian Sheepdog Rescue Trust presents:

THE WITNESS

by guest columnist

“Izze” Alpert

Izze is my name, and adoption is going to be the game. Recently, my friend Chablis passed away. She was 14 years old and had two bouts of vestibular disease last year along with long term complications due to neuropathy. In the end she could barely walk, so the veterinarian came to our house with his assistant Susan. We all cried and held Chablis as Scott and Susan sent Chablis on her way to the Rainbow Bridge. I watched. After Chablis passed away, our home was very empty with the sound of tears.

That evening Douglas emailed a friend that we would like to adopt a boy Belgian Sheepdog in the distant future. It was a long night for all of us, and the next morning Douglas emailed that the adoption had to be sooner rather than later. Renee started an online search for our boy and found Duffy, the featured rescue on the BSDRT site. Love at first sight.

They called the BSDRT, filled out the application and listed Duffy as a possible candidate for adoption. I think they said at each step in the process that our chances were 25% better. The last step in the process was the best since I met Lee, a male Belgian agility dog, at our house for something called a “home check”. We were able to romp while they looked at the house, yard, and had lunch.

It was evident that soon we would be going on a trip. We travel often, but we were off on a trip that was different from all our other trips. Chablis was not with me, and all Renee and Douglas kept saying to me was “Duffy” when we looked at a dog’s picture. It was a very slow trip, and I meet a lot of people. After a few days we were sitting at a cafe in Columbia, Missouri, and a big white and black and brown dog tried to say hello. All I wanted was for him to disappear. He was not the dog in the photo. We stayed the night and were just plain lazy the next day until 2:00 pm when up pulled a white van and out jumped a big black male Belgian named Duffy. It was the dog in the photo. My Duffy had finally arrived. It was love at first sight. He never

got back into the white van, but came with me to our hotel room. What’s a girl to do!

That evening when it was time for our last walk of the night, Renee put our leads on for the walk. As I wanted to walk Duffy, I picked up his lead. Renee said “NO”. She took my lead, and Douglas said he and Duffy would follow in a bit. Once outside Renee and I strolled to the sidewalk, and then a woman came walking close to the hotel with a pit bull. She and her dog stood by Duffy’s favorite tree near our entrance to the hotel. As we watched, Duffy and Douglas exited the hotel and stood on the stoop. Duffy immediately saw the pit bull. He stood staunchly and silently surveying the couple. They immediately walked away, and Duffy became my hero.

The next day we drove to Kansas City, met our friend Stuart E and bathed Duffy. After that, he was even more handsome, and we were ready to start heading west. I finally thought I could show him my yard. But, as always with Renee and Douglas, they made many stops along the way. Our first stop was Manhattan, Kansas, where Duffy and I met Jay who owns an art gallery. Then we stopped in Hays, Kansas for the night. All these people came up to us and asked what kind of dogs we were. They thought my Duffy was really handsome. The next night it was Colorado Springs, Colorado. They said it was a good idea to stop at 6,000 ft elevation before heading up the hill to 9,000 ft. Duffy kept asking me, “Are we home yet? But where’s the yard?”

The next day we all went to visit the lady that brought Lee to our house. Duffy and I had a real chance to romp in her yard and meet a lot of dogs like us. The next thing I knew they had Duffy running through tunnels and jumping through hoops. I was in awe. I could really learn from him.

After lunch we shopped and finally headed southwest on the last leg of our journey. My ears hurt as we went up Hard Scrabble Road, but at the end of this I could show Duffy our big yard. Finally, we were home and had a victory celebration all over the yard as he chased me. It felt really good to be home with a playmate again.

Mr. Duffy is sometimes down so I am letting him get the attention he needs until he feels that it is really home and then I will take over again. I can’t wait. I’ll try to be good in the meantime.

Renee and Douglas are sitting here patiently so I will give them a turn to say something. Oh, on the other hand, all they really want to say is that they want to thank the BSDRT for allowing us the opportunity to have Duffy in our life. Their love of the breed, professional manner in handling the adoption process and transfer was uplifting after our loss of Chablis. Renee and Douglas want to take this time to thank the following people who made the adoption of Duffy possible:

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