

Our “Diva” Dog

I fell in love with beautiful Diva the moment our eyes met at a nearby animal shelter. I was identifying her as an Alaskan Malamute on behalf of Texas Alaskan Malamute Rescue (TAMR.) I met one of the shelter workers and introduced myself, and she, in turn, removed Diva (who had been endowed with several other names including Delilah) from her “cell.” Diva had been surrendered to the shelter by her previous owners as a result of a divorce. Her former human Dad had recently remarried and his new wife had no use for the clever, gorgeous and charismatic nine year old canine. Perhaps the new wife was jealous??? Diva had some health issues, but had, nonetheless, been relegated to living outside, in the brutal cold, rain and heat, while the wife’s Sharpei was pampered, adored and lived a life of luxury inside their large home.

Neither the shelter employee nor I could understand why someone would give up such a lovely, well mannered dog. After I met Diva, we walked her on-leash around the shelter. We encountered a relatively young mother with her three children who had been actively looking for a dog to adopt. The children, who were 5, 7 and 9 years old, were delighted to see Diva. They talked to her and asked if they could pet her. Diva happily let them pet her and licked each of them on the face. The kids giggled merrily and asked their Mom if they could adopt her. After learning that Diva was nine years old, the Mother admonished her children, saying, “No, we could never adopt such a big old dog.” The kids were crestfallen, and I was heartbroken to think that there might never be a family that would take home this loving, gentle and good-natured dog simply because of her age.

I volunteered to take her to my vet for an extensive physical exam including blood work. She had no serious health problems. On the way back to the shelter, I decided, on a whim, to bring her home with me to run in my large back yard for even a short while so that she could get some exercise, have some fun, and play. I introduced her to several of my friendliest dogs, and she got along remarkably well with them.

After determining that she would prove to be a welcome member of my family, I returned her to the shelter – temporarily! I had already made the decision to adopt her. However, I brought my husband to meet her the following day. We walked her inside and outside the shelter. She interacted with other shelter animals as well as humans. She was a character; her Malamute “woo-woosing” sounded a lot like musical performer, “Cher’s” singing, and Norm fell in love with her also. She was truly a “lady.” We agreed to adopt her and signed the papers that afternoon. After preparing a place for her in our house and buying her a new leash, collar, id tag, age and health appropriate food, along with bowls, and toys, we brought our Diva home. We introduced her one by one to the other dogs in her group. She got along with them immediately and very quickly became a mother figure to them. She was very solicitous and attentive to their needs and very affectionate toward everyone in her new family. Her maternal behavior was very touching and heartwarming. She was beautiful physically and in spirit.

In a way, Diva never really lived up to her name She was not demanding, self-absorbed, arrogant or domineering. She was simply beautiful and regal and extremely intelligent.

She was very loving and demonstrative and had a commanding presence and inherent magnetism that endeared her to everyone she met.