

HUMAN BEHAVIOR



SISTER HAD A DOG

by Nina Henderson

Sister had a dog. It had issues, the main one being the Sister. It was a Shitzu, small, white, fluffy, and demented. Food needed to be finely cut and, bypassing the overshot bottom jaw, placed into the mouth by hand. It suffered from separation anxiety, so consequently was left in our care during Sister's absence. Having no intention of feeding a canine by hand, I placed food in a dog's dish, to be consumed at leisure.

The dog, however, preferred our neighbour's chooks. Our neighbour had eight laying Rhode Island Reds and one rooster. As the chook numbers began decreasing when they visited our garden, we noticed that it coincided with the dog's visits and mentioned to Sister that Poopsie enjoyed chasing chooks, and may in fact be responsible for the decline in chook numbers. This suggestion was greeted with denial and a degree of intense anger, especially on one occasion when, on her return, she found Poopsie securely restrained to a post. Harsh words were exchanged, and chook numbers remained stable for several weeks, as Sister was forced to find alternate (and expensive) doggy care.

Poopsie's visits recommenced, as did the decimation of the chooks, which were now confined to home base, in their yard. The dog apparently had no problem invading chookland, and soon it was chooks nil, Poopsie eight. Our neighbour received no compensation as Sister's husband, a solicitor, stated there was no proof or eyewitness to the deaths, and the *noise* of a chook being slaughtered was circumstantial. The angst between us remained, but doggy day care stopped.

A week later Poopsie went missing. Sister and husband went outside to see the dog racing back home, closely followed by *their* neighbour waving a shotgun and shouting, "If it kills one more chook I'll shoot the bastard!"

They believed that!