

The Red Dog: Sadie's Story pt 1

by molly martin

The gaunt red dog awoke with a start. Quivering in terror the desperate young animal scrambled to her feet. She made a hurried dash for safety beyond the big, metal pasture gate. As always she was wary when people were near. Standing out in the high, stiffened prairie grass she was not quite so fearful. Alert, the panicked, skin and bones dog stood trembling. She was hidden there in the harsh chill of snow blanketed vegetation. Her purposeful gaze was directed toward The Big Rock People House.

The unexpected sound of the voices surprised her. Red Dog had been all alone here at the silent, dark dwelling for days now. She remembered the cold, snowy day Many People had come to The People House. They drove big pick up trucks. The People stood in the People yard. People carried things from the house and put them into the trucks. They laughed and talked to one another with big, loud voices. She had watched with anxious uneasiness enveloping her. Red Dog had not understood what People were doing.

The thin, troubled hound had tried to come close to the trucks. Red Dog watched Her People. She cowered in submission near one of the noisy men as the group continued filling the vehicles. When they had noticed her sitting close by, People threw sticks and kicked at her, they laughed and yelled until she gave up and ran out into the high grass pasture. For a long time she had lay cowering in the tall, withered pasture grass. Apprehension filled her.

At last Red Dog saw People get into the noisy trucks and begin driving away. Frantic now Red Dog ran after the trucks. She

ran almost to the bridge crossing the river. The trucks were too fast. She could not catch them. Red Dog sat in the blowing snow and watched until she could no longer see the trucks in the distance. At last she made her slow, worried way back to the Rock People House. She waited for her People. They did not come back.

Red Dog's now always near empty stomach ached from hunger. The young hound and her cronies had spent most of that cold winter day meandering around the little town. As soon as the sun came up each morning Red Dog and her

Companions gathered near the tumbling old wooden barn. The little band of dogs had wandered here and there; little food was to be found. Other than one very small rodent and part of an old armadillo they had hidden two days before, the dogs had found little for them to eat on the icy road or in the barn.

Every day, just at nightfall one by one Red Dog's Companions began drifting away. Those dogs were all on their way home to their own people and their own warm houses, and to their own filled food dishes. Red Dog always sat alone, high up on the moldy bedraggled bales of

rotting hay stored in the ancient barn and watched mournfully as her friends set out without her. When the last dog disappeared, the long eared pup left the slight warmth of the barn and began her lonely walk back to her little house. The shivering, bone thin animal listened to the sounds of nearby families.

Shivering from the biting cold, Red Dog sniffed as the tantalizing scent of cooking food wafted from nearby kitchens. As she did each evening Red Dog had looked hopefully for food in the dish Her People had left sitting there by the People House kitchen door. There had

been nothing in her dish from the day People had gone away over a week ago. She licked the empty dish.

At last, she wandered into the little yard, through the small gate and into her cold, empty house. At last the famished hound fell asleep. Throughout the whole of the miserable, stormy night she lay cold and shivering on the bare wooden floor. Red Dog was sorrowful. She could not understand why she was left alone here at the Rock People House. She did not know where Her People had gone, or why they did not want her to come too. She did not

understand why they yelled, and kicked and hit. They were her people. Red Dog loved them. She trusted them and hoped they would come home to love her and take care of her. She did not understand any of it. Red Dog knew only that the wind was icy cold, and that she was hungry and lonely and sad.

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