The Dutiful Dachshund

Patricia Bartosik

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by

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Her legs were quite short
And her tummy too round,
Her long, chubby body
Too low to the ground,
But the Dutiful Dachshund
Could sit, stay and speak,
Roll over, play dead,
And catch balls with her teeth,
She could guard the front yard
From some hapless invader,
And fetch without fail
Every morning's newspaper.
She had heard from the time
She was just six weeks old,
“Always chew with your mouth closed,”
And “Do as you’re told!”
Her master’s commands
Were obeyed without question,
In spite of her headaches
Or nasal congestion,
No matter the weather,
Through rain, snow, or sleet,
She dropped the newspaper
In front of his feet.
So when late in December
She rose before dawn,
To bring Sunday’s newspaper
In from the lawn,
The Dutiful Dachshund
Had no way of knowing,
The danger she faced
Just because it was snowing,
Both capless and bootless
Without any coat on,
She pushed through her dog door
Out into the snowstorm.
By the time she had trudged
From the house to the street,
The snowflakes had covered
The tops of her feet,
By the time she had spotted
The morning edition,
She deeply regretted
Her mindless decision,
The fluffy white flakes
Had piled up to her tummy,
The wind had kicked up
And a snowplow was coming!
With the newspaper wrapper
Gripped tight in her mouth,
The Dutiful Dachshund
Turned back towards the house,
But her fate had been sealed
In the blink of an eye,
She trembled with fear
As the snow plow rolled by,
With a scrape and a grind
And a plunk and a shove,
She was buried alive
With a glacier above.
Her eyelids were frozen,
Her ears stood straight up,
Her body encased
In the freezing white stuff,
With nothing exposed
But her tail and her snout,
She wriggled and squiggled
And tried to get out,
But just as she got
Her cold noggin unstuck,
Along came a backhoe
And yellow dump truck.
With a scrape and a grind
And a scoop and a plop,
She was dumped in the truck
With a mountain on top,
Her feet pointed up
And her tail pointed down,
With her ears full of snow
She could not hear a sound,
But her dutifulness
Was the one thing that saved her,
Protecting her nose
Was the Sunday newspaper.
The Dutiful Dachshund
Inverted and freezing,
Was hauled through the city
Immobile and wheezing,
Till the vehicle stopped
With much screeching and rumbling,
The truck bed tipped up
And the dachshund went tumbling,
Both canine and paper
Were flung helter-skelter,
Right into the tank
Of a giant snow melter.
The water was warm
And felt good to the hound,
So The Dutiful Dachshund
Went swirling around,
While she hoped against hope
That someone would rescue her,
Both dog and newspaper
Were sucked down the sewer,
Still clutching the journal
She started to shiver,
The storm drain had carried her
Straight to the river.
She paddled her paws
In the fast moving water,
And held her head high
As her master had taught her,
When an undertow threatened
Both journal and dog,
The newspaper wrapper
Was snagged by a log,
The Dutiful Dachshund
Climbed onto the tree limb,
With paper in mouth
Hoping someone would see them.
The branch whirled around
Crashing into a log jam,
Complete with a beaver
Constructing a log dam.
The Dutiful Dachshund
Received quite a scare,
When the tree branch flipped up
Hurling her through the air,
Her ears flew straight out
And her tail trailed in back,
As she shot towards the animal’s
Newly built shack.
Both dachshund and newspaper
Landed kerplunk,
Completely destroying
The beaver’s rooftop,
Enraged by his visitor’s
Startling arrival,
With little concern
For the dachshund’s survival,
The beaver employed
His flat tail like a racquet,
Taking aim at her little round nose
Just to whack it.
With hindquarters forward
The dachshund took flight,
The newspaper trailed
In the rear like a kite,
Till high in the treetops
The dog came to rest,
Squashing one of the eggs
In a bald eagle's nest,
The furious vogel
Returned with a shriek,
And snatched up the petrified pup
In her beak.
The canine when kidnapped
Went limp as a rag,
As up to the top of a hill
She was dragged,
With her eyes squinted shut
She was dropped on her head,
Right into the lap
Of a boy on a sled,
The child overcome
With delight and amusement,
Let go of his sled
In the sudden confusion.
The sled struck a tree
Sending occupants sliding,
Straight into a bush
Where a large deer was hiding,
When the snow-covered dachshund
Slammed into the hart,
The terrified animal woke with a start,
And bounded away
Trying hard to escape her,
But his antlers were caught
On the Sunday newspaper.
The galloping deer
Darted over the pasture,
Still dangling the dog
He’d unwittingly captured,
Direct toward a highway
With slow moving traffic,
Blue wrapper, newspaper,
And wiener dog flapping,
Till all of a sudden
He came to a halt,
In front of a yellow truck
Loaded with salt.
The dachshund went hurtling
Nose over paws,
Still clenching the newspaper
Tight in her jaws,
Straight over the head
Of the terrified buck,
And into the bed
Of the yellow salt truck,
The Dutiful Dachshund
Exhausted and freezing,
Was hauled through the countryside
Soggy and sneezing.
Back into the city
With snowy skyscrapers,
Went salt truck and dachshund
And Sunday newspaper,
Till the truck bed tipped up
And the contents slid down,
Dumping dog and newspaper
And salt on the ground,
Six hours had passed
Since the dachshund departed,
But now she was back
In the place where she started.
With blue plastic wrapper
Held tight in her mouth,
The Dutiful Dachshund
Trudged back to her house,
She pushed through the dog door
And marched to the kitchen,
Delivering the news
Where her master was sitting,
But shaking his head
Like she’d done something wrong,
He frowned and then asked her,
“What took you so long?”
She wouldn't have thought
That obeying her master
And doing her duty
Could lead to disaster,
The master unfurled
His wet Sunday edition,
Ignoring the dachshund's
Bedraggled condition,
But the master's young daughter
Who'd obviously missed her,
Came running with joy,
Grabbed the dachshund
And kissed her.
She hugged her and bathed her
And dried her with dish cloths,
Then hand fed her biscuits
With chopped steak and beef broth,
She coddled and cuddled
And cradled the pup,
Who sighed with contentment
And soaked it all up,
The dachshund curled up
In the child's lap to rest,
Her dutifulness
Had been put to the test.
But early next morning
As she had before,
The Dutiful Dachshund
Pushed out through her door,
She spotted the paper
But looked left and right,
To make sure the snowplow
Was nowhere in sight,
In dutifulness
She remained a believer,
The neighborhood’s number one
Paper retriever.