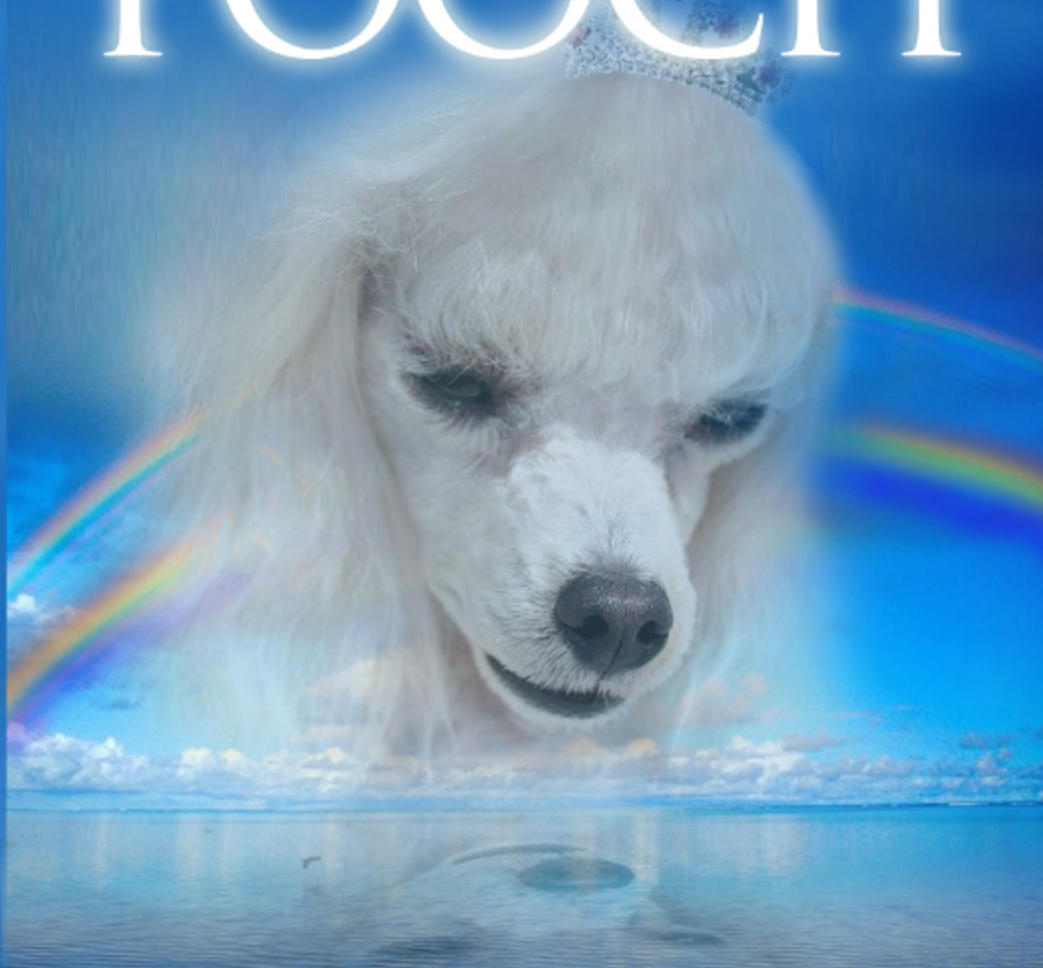


A TRUE STORY OF THE DOG WHO HEALED ONE FAMILY

PARANORMAL POOCH



OLGA HORVAT

INTRODUCTION BY JOSHUA P. WARREN, AUTHOR OF PET GHOSTS

Paranormal Pooch

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Who Healed One Family**

Olga Horvat

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A True Story of The Dog Who Healed One Family

by
Olga Horvat

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**This book is dedicated to all dogs
who bless our lives and fill
our world with splendor and love.**

**And also to the memory
of my mother Ranka,
for whom giving love was
second nature.**

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Introduction

By Joshua P. Warren

A CHILL ran down my spine while reading Olga Horvat's *Paranormal Pooch*. Why? Because her story is so real, and her emotions so palpable. Amazingly enough, what she saw and experienced is not extremely rare; most people just refuse to talk about it. That's why you should read this eerie tale. Perhaps like me, you are a dog owner, and ask if this can actually happen to any of us.

I've traveled far and wide scientifically investigating paranormal activity. I'm surprised by how many people in the United States think only of humans when discussing the ghostly. In many cultures around the world, it's ancient, common knowledge that animals are the most paranormal creatures. After all, most biologists think modern humans finally stood from the primordial sludge just 200,000 years ago. But canine fossils, clearly identifiable as dogs trace back 40 million years. That's one reason dogs may have developed superhuman senses.

A human ear can hear sounds up to 20,000 hertz. But a standard canine has double that capacity, able to hear up to 40,000. Dogs can smell one million times better than humans, able to perceive things miles away, or days old. Some can easily detect cancer and epileptic conditions in patients. But aside from those standard senses, they also exhibit some uncanny connection to the landscape and surrounding world. According to *The Gettysburg Times*, in

1920, Bud, a collie, traveled 900 miles, from Kansas to New Mexico, over eight months, to find his previous home. In 2009, ABC News reported that Muffy, an Australian mutt who looked like Benji, showed up 1,200 miles from home, verified by a microchip. How are these vast journeys, and sometimes a profound sense of direction, possible for a single, domesticated animal?

It's no wonder that primitive humans quickly learned the value of dogs. The earliest record of a human skeleton buried with a dog dates from 10-12,000 years ago. Domestication probably occurred long before. As we developed, gradually making sense of the dark, complex ages and forces, dogs have been right at our sides, living and learning in tandem. At night, they kept us safe under black, infinite skies and sprawling, dangerous landscapes. By day, they foraged and hunted, battling with fierce creatures as we egged them on at the sidelines of wilderness. And in human battle, they became our minions, trained to roar into an ocean of warriors, fearlessly tearing away throats and flesh. They are, and have been, a reflection of us in every way, and are often left to do our dirty deeds.

Perhaps, over time, we have been a bit too willing and happy to expose our pets before such dark scenarios. The advanced senses of dogs make them extremely sensitive to all the forces around us. And in the same way humans can become haunted, or possessed, so can they. If you examine a swatch of human skin under a microscope alongside a patch of canine flesh, you'll find no difference at the smallest levels. We are both organic, made of carbon cells and water that somehow merge with a conscious energy: mind and body. What affects us should affect them; except they are even more sensitive.

Around the globe, throughout history, the mystic impact of canines has been revered for better or for worse. We have all seen classic images of the ancient Egyptian God

called Anubis. He ruled over the afterlife and mummification, as the earliest deity of the dead. Anubis was thought to protect those souls, slipped from mortal molds, soaring toward the next life. As the 'keeper of divine justice', he guarded each spirit on its journey, compounding the dignity and regal power of canine forces. In that tradition, associating dogs with mortal protection, ethereal canines have always been viewed as reliable sentries. But what happens when the cause is not so noble, but in support of an evil influence?

For centuries, South Africans have feared the wolhaarond, an omen of doom. This prowling, nocturnal dog is surrounded by a demonic, crimson light. No one knows why it appears, but bad luck shortly befalls all those who see it. In the Scottish Highlands, witches and wizards have long warned of faery dogs, colored mossy-green, especially around the Island of Tiree. Many believe these monstrous mutts are guarding a cavern there, and bark only three sharp times as a warning before viciously attacking. No one knows what happens afterward, since no one lives to tell. But most feared are the merciless Demon Dogs or Hell Hounds of ancient and medieval Europe.

The hell hounds are hulking, black dogs, often similar to Rottweilers, that burst from churning, dark clouds to chaotically destroy all before them. It has long been held that they are members of Satan's hunting pack, sent forth to annihilate those who dare to oppose him. Reported in France as early as 856, these beasts have ravaged through European history time and time again.

Dogs are often used as harbingers of energy, both good and bad. Since humans depend primarily on five senses, we focus on those five in other creatures. But we know some animals have a sixth sense. Sharks, for example, can strongly perceive magnetic fields. This kind of ability attracts various creatures to strange energies, in the same

way flies can sense a corpse miles away, arriving minutes after death, but no one knows exactly how. Inversely, the sixth sense in these creatures can be exploited, filling the animal with energy to be later broadcast. After all, receivers and transmitters are the same; the only difference is the flow of energy.

Since dogs are so sensitive, they are also very open to mental or magical programming. A witch's or wizard's familiar is usually a dog or cat, but can also be a bird, swooping from the sky to fulfill a mission. These are animals that have been ritualistically subjected to the owner's intent, perpetrated consciously or subconsciously. Eventually, the impressionable animal absorbs the owner's energy and then carries it wherever the creature may go. The pet becomes a true messenger of psychic intent, and is therefore inevitably associated with whatever events surround it. Princess the poodle may have been charged in this way, for purposes we can never truly understand. The ability for dogs to teeter on this boundary between the physical and non-physical, easily pushed in one direction or another, helps us grasp those phantasmal creatures like the Hell Hounds.

How can we reconcile the idea of dogs existing both here and in some spectral realm? It becomes especially complicated when visualizing how dogs, like Hell Hounds, could slip back and forth between our physical surroundings and some ghastly netherworld. Why should a dog even be anywhere other than this earthly plane? After all, scientists can explain the fossil record tracing the development of canines, from aquatic single-celled squirms to the present, efficient bio-machines adapted perfectly to life on earth. We are left with only two choices. The first is to discount all these stories and call them nonsense. The second is to embrace the concept that dogs possess some inherent, natural, susceptibility to other realms of existence. This can be good or bad.

You see, there is nothing in the world of science to suggest that life must exist solely upon this plane we consider physical. Physicality is a subjective thing. Two things are physical to each other if they both resonate within a similar frequency range. But there are many things that do not resonate in that range that are equally real. Radio waves, both natural and artificial, are great examples. They surround us all the time, yet we have no direct awareness of them. People require a little box, properly equipped and tuned, for us to appreciate radio waves. In this same regard, we constantly sit and live within an ocean of frequencies. Some manifest into substances we experience as physical and others do not. But what makes it all so complex and nuanced is the boundary, glimmering in and out like the shiny borders of the Northern Lights. It is there, on that wispy line, that we look for the clearest interaction between realms. And since every single one of us, human and animal, is unique, some of us are more prone to sense and attract those frequencies just beyond the physical. Princess the poodle was likely one of those.

Albert Einstein said, “If we knew what we were doing, we wouldn’t call it research.” In that regard, I can’t tell you exactly what was happening with Princess. But I don’t believe in coincidences. To do so, I’d have to believe in an effect without a cause, and that defies a basic tenet of physics. Therefore, I think she came into Olga’s life for a reason. Maybe that reason is so that Olga, an acclaimed dog expert, could write this book, and you could read her words. And perhaps one of you reading them will have a brilliant epiphany, helping us better understand the relationship between us, dogs, and the beyond.

Clearly, something was attached to Princess. She was born in an area renown for a variety of paranormal activity. But why her? Is it because she was the reincarnation of a dog with a dark past? Was this lovable puppy once a ferocious

attacker that murdered men in battle and was haunted by their spirits? Or maybe, in a past life, she wasn't a dog at all. If you believe in reincarnation, you might consider she was a bad person, unable to escape the devils of her past. Was there a particular person attached to her? I won't spoil the story, but Olga tells of a human apparition that once manifested near the poodle. Was that an angry spirit, trying to keep new owners away? Or was Princess simply one of those unfortunate, perhaps cursed, beings genetically endowed with the ability to sense and attract spirits? If so, the only ones nearby to be awakened were negative entities, sucking the life and goodness from all those around.

Bad things may have happened around Princess. That does not necessarily mean she was bad, though. Princess is now immortal due to Olga Horvat's harrowing tale. Perhaps, after you read it, you will think more carefully about the power of animals. At the very least, look your own dog in the eye and thank it for being so nice.

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A number of individuals were kind enough to share their experiences and knowledge during my research, making the work a lot easier. Many thanks to all of you.

Prologue: Homeland Memories

There is a unique culture in the Slavic regions of the Carpathian Mountains in Eastern Europe, centering on the nations of Serbia, Croatia and Romania. For many centuries, these areas have been known for tales of strange, otherworldly creatures that terrorize and prey upon the citizens. As a child growing up in Serbia and later in Croatia I heard many stories of werewolves and other monsters. My father was a professor of economics and used to drive me to school on his way to the state university in Zagreb. While driving he would often tell me about the wild and scary creatures of the region, including the famous legend of Count Dracula in neighboring Transylvania. Dracula is a terrifying historic figure, known as Vlad the Impaler, whose diabolical passions preyed upon innocent victims, and even those not so innocent. Some people believe that he is still alive, or rather, undead.

I was never frightened by my father's tales and did not take them seriously, assuming his storytelling was just his rascally way of entertaining me on those trips to school. Years later, I learned that his stories were not so fanciful after all, nor were fearful creatures confined to that part of the world. I now know that spectral animals are not a myth and can appear anywhere at any time.

The werewolf is the most famous among these entities. They are said to be humans with the ability to shape-shift into wolves. This transformation is often associated

with the appearance of the full moon, long a scary movie cliché, but quite real nonetheless. The most common way someone becomes a werewolf is to be bitten or clawed by one. A person can also be transformed into a werewolf by falling under a sorcerer's spell. There is also a voluntary way one might become a werewolf. Throughout history, self-professed werewolves have used a magic belt, which they wear, or a magic salve, which they apply liberally to their bodies. Others tell of inhaling the vapors of certain liquid preparations.

The first depiction of a man-wolf was apparently inscribed thousands of years ago on a cave wall in southern France. Prehistoric man may well have been aware of these astonishing beings.

Croatia and Serbia have an equivalent myth about women who, as a result of committing deadly sins, are condemned to pass seven years in the form of a wolf. A spirit comes to such women and brings a wolf's skin, which must be worn until morning draws near. Only then can it be removed and the women returned to human form.

The physical appearance of a werewolf differs from culture to culture. Typically, they are distinguishable from ordinary wolves or canine-like animals by the fact that they have no tail and that they retain human eyes and voice.

The vampire is linked to the werewolf in East European countries. In Croatia and Serbia, the werewolf and vampire are known jointly as one creature by the name of *Vukodlak*. In Balkan mythology, many werewolves are said to be vampires who became wolves in order to suck blood by the full moon to save strength and health.

Ghost hunter Dr. Stephen Kaplan, along with his wife Roxanne, have conducted extensive research around the world on the number of real-life werewolves, and also served as consultants on the cable television series *Werewolf*. On one occasion, they invited viewers to call in if they thought

they had ever seen a werewolf in real life, or if they were werewolves themselves. A number of the five thousand callers insisted that they had seen genuine werewolves, while dozens of other people claimed that they were werewolves. Some described very convincingly how they had killed their victims.

Dr. Kaplan has theorized that werewolves may be genetically related to the famous Yeti, the so-called Abominable Snowman or Big Foot. According to his research, there is a strong indication that they came down from the mountains and eventually interbred with humans.

Not only have wolves been seen as terrifying supernatural creatures, but dogs – a close relative – have also been viewed as having special powers.

In ancient Egypt, dogs were greatly revered. Anubis was the jackal-headed Egyptian god of the underworld and judge of the dead. For Christians in the Middle Ages, images of Anubis reinforced folk legends of werejackals who attacked unsuspecting desert travelers.

The northern dwelling Inuits, once called Eskimos, have a legend about the Adlet, the dog people, who are believed to be the progeny of an Inuit woman and a great red dog. Their union produced regular dogs, but also weredogs that developed into horrifying, bloodthirsty monsters who still haunt the ice-locked north regions in search of human flesh.

One of the most fascinating canine apparitions in Europe is the so-called black dog. This is said to be a shadowy canine-like creature, much larger than a regular dog, exhibiting unusual behavior. These animals can fulfill a wide variety of missions, from vengeance to defense. We don't know whether these spectral animals were produced by dogs who once lived, or originated from another realm altogether. It's interesting to note that the black dog legend

was the inspiration for A. Conan Doyle's 1902 Sherlock Holmes mystery *Hound of the Baskervilles*.

Descriptions of these black dogs differ widely. Some sightings report they can walk on their hind legs as bipedal creatures. They are most often seen around ancient European burial grounds. Many consider even the sighting of the black dog an omen of death. There are also descriptions of dogs that can increase their size; some have been seen shape-shifting into another form, human or animal. They are usually seen in rural settings, though people have seen them inside of dwellings. They have even been reported to walk through solid walls, and to vanish into thin air. Black dogs of this type have most frequently been encountered in England, Italy, Croatia, and a few other European countries.

Among the scariest of black dogs is the Hellhound or Devil Dog, dark giants with searing eyes. These outsized mastiffs are always associated with negative events and are considered members of Satan's hunting pack. One glimpse from the fiendish eyes of the black dog of Oakhampton Castle on Dartmoor is said to mean certain death within the year. The Black Dow Woods in Wiltshire are haunted by a black dog whose appearance signals there will be a death before Christmas. Many travelers have seen a large black hound with a woman's face around Knaith in Lincolnshire.

One of the most horrifying incidents related to spectral dogs occurred in England in 1577. According to a pamphlet printed by a local man, Abraham Fleming, a huge black dog, with flaming red eyes, massive teeth and claws, dashed into St. Mary's Church at Bungay and mauled several people to death. Some of the victims had their throats and limbs torn away, while others were crushed by masonry knocked loose by the animal, and others scorched to death by the beast's thermal power. The ferocious animal then ran twelve miles to Blythburgh church in Suffolk and killed two, leaving strange burn marks on the church's door, which

remain there to this day. Locals say that they are the devil's own fingerprints.

Since my family and I moved to New York City many years ago, I have often wondered about the nature of the spectral universe and what entities live in that other realm. To put it bluntly, I learned more than I really wanted to know about this disturbing, yet fascinating, subject when I unwittingly acquired a real spectral creature as a family pet.

I have discovered through my research that there are ghostly animals. They do not necessarily have to be apparitions of a physical form. Harbinger ghostly animals could indeed be physical entities, but they are charged with spiritual energy, usually perceived as evil. These animals are possessed of some force beyond current human understanding. The harbinger carries an unfriendly psychic power that can influence the life of anyone near to him or her.

It's not completely clear how harbinger ghostly animals can become charged with supernatural energy, but there are several assumptions. One of the ways the animal could be charged with a special energy is as a result of black magic. In other words, someone may intentionally place a curse on another by focusing spiteful thoughts in their direction using an animal intermediary. These animals are charged with paranormal energy and become carriers of a witch's or magician's spell.

Another way a harbinger could be charged with special energy is during natural conditions, such as solar storms and during a full moon, when paranormal activity is increased. These conditions are known to generate peak geomagnetic fields, which affect all living creatures. A harbinger created under these circumstances is charged with unique forces.

There is also a possibility that the animal may suffer from intentional attachment by negative entities or energies

of various sorts. It could be an animal or human spirit attachment, primitive earth-energies, or even extraterrestrial.

The family pet I acquired was not a big scary dog, far from it. She was a tiny purebred poodle. From the very beginning, I noticed that she seemed to possess a special kind of intelligence, at least that's what I thought it was. But when weird incidents suddenly began, and when everything seemed to be going wrong for my family, I started wondering whether our new pet was bringing us bad luck. Was she some sort of omen?

Such an idea sounded a little too kooky for me, but I couldn't stop thinking that the dog could somehow be connected with a whole series of frightening events. After all, our problems only started when we first brought the dog home. I was confused and even a little ashamed that I was thinking of such things. However, even then I knew that the supernatural was at work, but didn't want to admit it, or face it. Unfortunately, my unwillingness to accept that something supernatural was present in our home, caused my family a great deal of suffering for several months, and almost cost my husband his life.

Paranormal Pooch is the story of a demonically possessed dog and the terrifying impact it had on my family. It is also the story of the ancient struggle between good and evil energies which surround us on a daily basis. As difficult as it was to endure this experience, I now know that both dark and light forces are a natural part of our existence. With knowledge and understanding, our adventure became a true spiritual breakthrough.



Chapter I

Searching for the Perfect Dog

“Look!” my daughter Katharine exclaimed, pointing out a big window at the airport.

It was quite a sight, a fabulous, double rainbow was overarching the sky. One rainbow was very bright and vivid, the other a softer hue. “That’s incredible.” I said. “I’ve never seen such a beautiful double rainbow before.”

My husband, Alex, came over to where we stood. The three of us just watched and enjoyed the magnificent view, while waiting for the arrival of our new family member—a poodle puppy.

Later, I did wonder at the coincidence of seeing the twin rainbows just as the jet was landing with our dog, Princess. That’s how it all started, with an inviting double rainbow.

My family and I lived in a beautiful part of Manhattan. We could walk to the Time Warner Shopping Mall, go to concerts at Carnegie Hall, or have a drink at popular cafés. Everything was five minutes from our apartment. At the time, Alex worked as a photographer for a real estate agency and Katharine was a second grader. I had

just started my new dog-care internet business. Life was good. However, I thought that it could be even better.

I decided that a puppy would bring a lot of joy and complete our family.

I found myself sitting at the dining table, bent over the newspaper with pen in hand going through the classified section headed Pets - Dogs. If an ad caught my attention, I would mark it. I also searched in pet stores, looked through dog magazines, books, and explored the Internet. At the time, I did not want to tell my husband what I was planning. Alex loved dogs, but he was, like most husbands and fathers, concerned about who was going to take care of it, who was going to walk it several times a day, housebreak it, and make arrangement for care of the dog when we were away. Of course, Katharine wanted a dog very much. I talked to her about the different breeds, and we seemed to like the same ones.

I remember that when I was nine years old, my father bought us a dog. It was a three-month-old Great Dane. It's one of the tallest breeds, and not the kind of dog I would choose for myself. Marco was my father's idea, and he hadn't consulted my sister or me. This dog was a big black specimen, prancing and powerful, trained to protect and defend, to keep our house safe. He was not a cute dog, one you could pet and play with, which was what we wanted. He was the opposite of what I liked: Marco was big, and I liked small; he was black, and I liked white; he was dangerous looking, and I liked cute and cuddly; his purpose was to protect us, but my sister and I wanted a dog to play with. If father had asked me to choose a breed, I would definitely have picked a poodle or a cocker spaniel. I've always liked long-haired, fluffy, girlie kind of dogs. From that time on, I knew that one day I'd have my kind of dog.

When I relocated to the United States, I felt that the right moment had arrived. To me, a home is not complete

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without a dog. My husband knew I wanted a puppy more than anything, but was not encouraging.

“I think it’s time we got a dog,” I finally insisted. “After all, dogs are a professional matter with me. I do commissioned portraits of dogs. I have an active online canine business. Like I say, it’s time we got a dog.”

I saw Alex wince. “Well, now, let’s talk about that for a minute. I know you want one. I know that. But can we really deal with a dog with all we’ve got going already? Between my job, your work, and Katharine and all?”

“Don’t worry, I’ll figure it out. You forget, we both grew up with animals. You had a dog when you were young. My sister and I had all sorts of pets. But look at Kathy. She’s growing up unfamiliar with animals. The only pet she’s ever had was a gold fish.”

“Our apartment is kind of small, don’t you think?” he pointed out. “Sure, our place upstate is big enough, but we’re only there on weekends.”

“Alex, a tiny dog could travel with us wherever we go. I’m only talking about one small, little dog. You know what small means, right?”

He smirked. “Okay, I guess we can manage that—a small, little, tiny dog.”

“*Thank you,*” I said.

When Katharine heard the news, which she secretly knew was coming, she was euphoric and eager to help with whatever chores needed to be done. I continued my research, studying the papers, dog magazines, searching online, and visiting pet stores. I was very thorough, and it took a few months to narrow down all the possible breeds to one that was right for us. We all agreed a poodle would be the perfect pet. I wanted a dog that had an elegant look, with flair and distinction, befitting someone who owned a canine-oriented business. Indeed, I wanted the dog to reflect my own style and that of my business, a sort of company mascot.

Katharine and I wanted a female dog we could dress her up with fancy collars, tiaras, and hair bows. A boy dog surely wouldn't like that very much!

I knew that the best place to find a great poodle would be from a breeder who specialized in them. A reputable and knowledgeable dog breeder tries to produce the ideal animal according to certain standards. With the right breeder, I knew I'd be getting a sound, healthy animal, excellent in conformation and temperament, one which would be both an ideal show dog and a warm companion. The good breeder spends much time and effort studying proper breeding and selection techniques. The experienced breeder's program is always based on in-depth knowledge.

Not all puppies in a litter will satisfy the definition of show quality, that special dog with the potential of becoming a champion. In a large litter, perhaps only one or two puppies will be retained for showing. The others will be classified as pet puppies. All in the litter will display essentially the same characteristics, the same construction, personality and health, but the subtle differences between them will be discernible to an expert. For example, the eyes may be a bit too light, the tail not perfectly straight, ears not well positioned and so on.

I was toying with the idea of entering the rarefied world of show dog competitions, so I definitely wanted a dog with a potential best-of-show quality, an American Kennel Club (AKC) registered puppy.

After several months of looking, I concentrated on two breeders: one in the Catskill region of New York and the other out in Nebraska. We all got into the car and went to check out the New York breeder. I was disappointed. The place looked like a puppy mill. Like most people, I'm very much against such commercial breeding operations. Mass-produced pedigree puppies are not treated right and can come with serious hereditary problems, brought on by multigenerational in-breeding. Puppy mills exploit the

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popularity of breeds like the poodle in order to make a fast buck. They are not concerned with temperament, hereditary faults, or quality; they are simply interested in how many puppies they can sell for so many dollars. They do not bother much about medical care. They are not interested in what happens to the dog after it is sold.

This particular breeder lived in a single-family house, overcrowded with dogs. They would let only one dog, their favorite, loose in the home, while the others were locked in small individual cages stacked in a back room. It was horrible, like a warehouse. The whole place was messy and smelled terrible. I was disgusted. I wanted a poodle backed by the integrity of a reliable, professional breeder, accompanied by helpful advice, instructions, and an enduring interest in the welfare of the dog. The Catskill breeder offered none of these.

I didn't know if I should feel angry for the way they kept their dogs, or sorry for the people themselves. I had to say something. "Jessica, this is not the way to keep any animal, isolated in cages and without any direct contact with humans or other animals."

"I have no other place to keep these dogs," she replied. "I can't let them run in my house." Jessica was a middle-age woman, a bit overweight, with a rough facial expression and no makeup at all. She looked like she'd had a tough life. Her husband was a reverend and they had a couple of children. They were a religious people and one would assume that they were giving and caring beings. Unfortunately, they were cold hearted and not caring for animals.

It was obvious that their primary reason for breeding poodles was for financial purposes. They had no interest in keeping them happy. If they were in need of money, I am sure they could have found another way of supporting themselves without hurting animals. This was terribly sad

and Alex and I decided to stop by the local police station to report the animal cruelty we had just seen. I think that it worked for the best. Several months later, when I checked on this breeding facility, I found they were no longer in business.

The other puppy breeder I found on the internet was located in Nebraska. I kept returning to her website to look at one particular dog. I couldn't get enough of her. She was the most precious little thing — a purebred toy poodle, with a champion bloodline in her pedigree. She was the ultimate upper-class pooch.

One day I decided to call the breeder, a Ms. Linda Faye. "I saw that snow-white female poodle on your website. Is she still available?"

"Yes, she is available," Linda said.

"I'd like to know how old she is and if you have any references that I could check?"

Ms. Faye directed me back to her website, where there were many letters from satisfied customers. She said the puppy was almost four months old, and that surprised me. Puppies are usually ready to leave the litter by their eighth week. But her website looked very professional, with lots of snapshots of fine puppies, and many photographs of her dogs winning a prize in the competitions, which was very convincing. Ms. Faye certainly seemed to be a reputable breeder.

Linda Faye had been breeding poodles for more than twenty years. Dog breeding was her obsession. She had built an international reputation for breeding excellence. Her puppies have championship bloodlines. She was especially interested in breeding toy poodles. This is the smallest size recognized by the AKC. Faye's poodles have steady, calm nerves, hardy constitutions, balanced, well-proportioned bodies, with great personalities and temperaments. They make ideal show dogs and fine pets.

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Alex and Katharine looked at the website and really liked the dog I had found. I did not want to wait any longer. I called the breeder and told her we wanted the puppy. Now all we had to do was arrange transportation from Nebraska to New York. The breeder wanted to know what we were going to name the puppy, as she needed the information to register the pedigree.

I had a little trouble coming up with the right name. I wanted something short and elegant, and finally hit on Princess. However, the breeder said that wouldn't do. There were many Princesses in her pedigree and we would need to differentiate her with a first and last name. This made sense, as champion dogs can't go around with just one name. They always have extended titles, like Ch. Felicity's Diamond Jim, Best of Show at Westminster in 2007, or a spectacular terrier Ch. Torums Michael, the 2003 winner.

Experts have estimated that over a dog's lifetime, its name will be called over 30,000 times, so a name has to sound right. Words, like thoughts, are a form of energy and vibrate on various frequencies. Picking the right name for a pet can set up the right vibrations for a happy life, while choosing the wrong name can be harmful to the animal, and even to its owner. The scholar and philosopher Jean Houston, in her book *Mystical Dogs*, tells about bringing home a new dog and naming him Zeus, after the Greek god who hurls thunderbolts. That very week, her house was damaged by lightening *several times*, to the tune of six thousand dollars. "It was evident Zeus was going to live up to his name," Houston wrote.

I bounced ideas around with Alex and Kathy. We all wanted the puppy to have a distinguished, even royal name.

"How about 'Princess Di' or 'Princess Grace,'" Alex asked.

“But those ladies had short lives. Each died in an auto crash,” I reminded. “We shouldn’t associate our dog with such a legacy.”

Then I thought it would be fun to give her a name after a famous movie dog, such as Lassie, Maya, Nina, Rin Tin Tin, or some other very well-known Hollywood canine. But none of these names pleased me. The perfect dog deserves a perfect name.

For inspiration, I searched history books and websites, looking for some notable dog that made a difference in people’s lives. I came across Judy, a ship’s dog who served with the Royal Navy and was awarded the Dickin Medal in 1946. Then there was Laika, a Siberian husky mix, who was the first dog to enter earth orbit when she was launched aboard the USSR’s Sputnik II in 1960. I also liked Smoky, a Yorkshire terrier, a hero dog of World War II who was awarded eight battle stars.

I kept reading and searching, dreaming up names. There was an interesting historical poodle I read about. In the seventeenth century, there was a certain Prince Rupert of the Rhine, nephew to King Charles I of England. Prince Rupert owned a white poodle named Boye. Rumor had it that this dog was possessed by a witch’s spirit. Supposedly, the witch, traveling in the form of a dog, ensured the prince’s victory in his battles against the Parliamentarians. Rupert was a commander in Charles’s cavalry, and Boye was always at his side. Throughout the English Civil War, the Parliament feared the dog, claiming it had supernatural powers. Boye was finally killed at the famously ferocious battle of Marston Moor in June of 1644, which was the first major defeat for Prince Rupert and the Royalists, at the hands of the Earl of Manchester. The defeat, coming as it did with Boye’s death, convinced many that the poodle had indeed been possessed.

PARANORMAL POOCH

Well, I definitely did not want my dog associated with witchcraft and supernatural events and bloody battles. I kept digging for the right name.

One night, a phrase just came to me—Princess of Swan Lake. There was a wonderful children’s movie, *Barbie of Swan Lake*, directed by Owen Hurley, which we had all enjoyed. Princess of Swan Lake was such a subtle and beautiful fairy tale name, a soft and precious title befitting a darling little creature. When Kathy heard the name, she instantly knew it was just right.

“Yeah sure, sounds like a fine name,” Alex said.

“I knew you are going to like it too,” I said.

We’d finally found the perfect name. We were very excited about Princess coming into our lives. There is a special bond between owner and canine that brings great happiness.

At least, that’s the way it’s supposed to be, right?

As Tom Hanks said in *Forrest Gump*, “Life is like a box of chocolates. You never know what you’re going to get.”