

All I need is love..... love is all I need.....

By Mithi Shukla

Floppy ears, big shiny playful eyes, and that cuddly fur, what does that remind you of? She likes some attention, likes to be loved, and loves to play. That's the picture I had in mind forever and ever. Every time I thought of this picture I felt like something was missing. Oh..... How I wish I could have a puppy!!!!!!!!!!!!

We had explored several options and then we finally found something. At the Humane Society of Charlotte we were looking for some way to work with puppies. They had just the right program that would be ideal for me. We could be foster families for puppies. We filled out the application online and then waited for the mandatory orientation session. The orientation session was finally here and now there was another training session we needed to go to. This seemed like a long wait and felt like we would never be able to bring a puppy home at this rate. But, this would be a good and helpful training so we would know what to do and what not to do.

Foster puppies are normally around 5 to 6 weeks in age. They need to stay with their mom ideally for the first 4 to 5 weeks after which they can be more independent and stay away from the mother. Humane Society gets puppies and dogs from rescue efforts, sometimes they have been abandoned and also when people bring in the puppies from a mother dog that had a litter. When puppies come to the shelter they get their first round of shots and subsequent ones as they grow. At this age puppies cannot mix with other dogs because they are not fully vaccinated and can pick up infections from other dogs. Humane Society provides food, bedding, crates, toys, everything. These puppies don't need to go for walks but they do love to play outside. After all the training I was anxiously waiting for my first puppy.

It was really cold outside and the forecast called for snow. I was sitting on the couch watching TV when my dad came in from the garage door and said my friend was outside and wanted me to come to her house. But when I opened the door I saw a crate with 2 small rottweiler puppies just staring at me with the most adorable eyes. When I saw them I felt light headed and I felt like I was going to faint. Anytime I ever thought about puppies I only thought of golden retrievers and Labradors. But never in my life had I thought about getting a Rottweiler puppy! Everybody talks about Rottweilers being mean vicious dogs but they can only be mean if you train them like that. So I asked my dad what their names were, and he said the solid black one is Deci, and the black one with tan markings was Dyna. They were both 6 weeks old. I opened the crate and it took them a while to get out and get used to their surroundings so I waited for about 2 minutes and they started to come out very slowly. I sat on the ground with them and Deci crawled into my lap and snuggled up with me. Dyna went and snuggled in my



mom's lap. They were shivering very hard so we got out the blanket the Humane Society gave us and wrapped it around both of them. They loved to play tug of war. In a battle between D2 (Dyna and Deci) and me over my sock, D2 won. Their new acquisition, "the sock" became their new tug of war toy. Dyna was the one that would love to nibble on fingers and toes and Deci liked to lick. They were very playful and energetic and when they had to go back, they left a big quietness and void in our home and us.

My birthday was coming up and I wanted to do a sleepover so I was planning all the activities when the phone rang. I went to go get it and on the caller id it said the Humane Society so my face lit up. I rushed to my mom to give the phone to her when the call was done I couldn't stand still so I kept asking her what they said so it kind of sounded like this: "What did they say, what did they say, what did they say?" She said that they were getting a puppy in a few days but I wanted a puppy today, right now! My brother was sitting at the kitchen table on his laptop and he asked my mom when my dad was coming home and he had that smirk on his face that says he's hiding something. I looked up at my mom and she was smiling too, so I had the feeling there was something going on. I called my dad to see where he was and in the background I heard a faint whimpering. I was so happy that I could explode!!!!!!!!!!!!



When he came through the garage I was smiling so much my cheeks hurt he said there was someone outside to see me and when I went out I saw 2 more of the most adorable puppies in a crate. We brought them inside and I asked my dad what kind they were and he said they were Labrador pit bull mix. There was a boy and a girl, both 5 weeks old and the boy's name was Spot and the girl's name was Sabrina. Spot had a big spot on his eye and Sabrina had little spots on her ears. They were both white. The day of my birthday party I was so excited because all of my friends were coming and then we could play with the puppies all day. S2 (Spot and Sabrina) had a great time getting all the attention. Spot was like Deci, he was so calm and he loved to cuddle up with people. Sabrina was like Dyna, always ready to play. I was outside helping my mom plant some flowers and S2 were outside too playing with each other when I got tired of planting flowers I sat on the patio and S2 came running towards me. They jumped into my lap and fell asleep. They were exhausted from playing for 3 hours straight! This was the most adorable thing I had ever seen. When my mom was done she came over to the patio and saw that S2 were sleeping in my lap. She pulled out a folding cot and said to lie down on it with them. They looked so peaceful just lying there. When they were about to leave to go back, after two weeks, I took one last look at them and they looked at me with those eyes just like when they first came into our house. It was hard to let them go but I knew the deal and that this day will come.



It was a typical day where you wash your car and clean the house and that was exactly what we did. I wanted to foster that day since I hadn't fostered for 3 months. I asked my mom if I could check the mail account to see if there were any foster mails and there was one. I opened it and it said they needed a foster home for 2 weeks. It was a brindle boxer mix. I showed my mom the email and she said that we could pick it up today. So my mom called the Humane Society and they said that we could come at 2:00. So I was desperately waiting for 2:00 and when it finally came around we left. I went to pick up my friend so she could come with me. We were both jumping with joy and every 5 minutes I asked my mom if we were there yet.

When we were there my friend and I jumped out of the car and raced to the door. When we opened the door we went to the front desk and said we were picking up a foster puppy, so the lady went in the back door and came out holding the cutest puppy ever!!!!!! It was smaller than any of the puppies I ever had. We asked the lady what the puppy's name was and she said her name was Savoy. Savoy was a girl and was 4 weeks old. I asked if I could pick Savoy up and when I picked her up she was the lightest thing ever! Then we went back to the car and put her crate and all of the things that came with her. We took her out of the crate and my friend and I took some towels in the back and put her in our laps. I put Savoy in the middle and she was about to go to sleep. When we got home we took her to the backyard so she could go to the bathroom. Then we took her inside to play. She was so quiet I forgot she was there. At night when it was time to go to sleep we brought her crate upstairs so that we could hear her if she was whimpering to go to the bathroom. Everyday when I went to school, I always thought about her and I felt sad. When I came home my mom would always bring her to me so I could hold her. As the days went on she started barking and being more like a playful dog. When she was about to leave I went to the car and said good-bye and she was whimpering as we parted ways.

It was the 4th of July weekend. I was watching TV and I checked the email and there was a foster mail and it said they needed a foster home for 2 Lhasa Apso Labrador mix puppies. I went to my dad to go and tell him about it and convinced him that we can bring them home, so he sent an email to them. When the Humane Society called and I answered it and said that we could pick them up the following day. I called my mom and she said my dad and I could go and pick them up. Next day we went to the Humane Society to get them. When we arrived I went to the front desk and said that we were picking up 2 foster puppies, the lady said that she will be right back and then she went in through the backdoor. She came out holding 2 big puppies. One of them was solid black and the other was white with tan spots and markings. She said the black one was Tinker and the white one was Tango. They were so cute!!!!!!

She put them in the crate and gave them to us. We put them in the car and all the way home I just kept on staring at them. I looked at the papers they gave us for them and it said they were both boys and they were 2-months-old.



When we got home my dad unloaded them and I took them to the backyard. They were running with joy. I called my friends over and when they came we played with them for the rest of the day until my friends had to go home. Then I took Tinker and Tango inside to put them in their crate. T2 (Tango and Tinker) didn't bark much and were very easy to train. They loved to play with each other in the backyard. If another dog was barking they would jump up, run to you and hide. We had broken our trend of the big scary guard dog puppies we had so far. They were big and muscular puppies, but *very* cute and friendly. My brother has been very helpful in taking care of them. He told me that T2 were his favorite puppies. I loved them very much and I missed them a lot when they left.

I hope that all little puppies would find a safe and loving home. When we picked up T2, they told us Savoy was getting adopted that day! I wonder where all my little (not so little anymore) puppies are now and if they would recognize me if they saw me. I love fostering because I know I'm helping out little puppies that need us.

If you are interested and want to get more information please contact:
www.humanesocietyofcharlotte.org