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Writers Forum

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Ole Bob

by Bo Drury

Old Bob just showed up one day. Come walking up into the yard from the dusty road and got his self a drink out of our horse tank, then laid down in the shade of the big elm tree by the windmill and stayed. When we came near him he just rolled those big soulful eyes at us and wagged his tail.

Pa took one look at him and said to us kids, "Don't go and get attached to him, if he's a egg-sucker or messes with the chickens he's gotta go."

He was a sorry looking dog, short, dirty-white hair with a big brown spot over his left eye. He wasn't a big dog, kinda mid sized and stout. We figured someone just dumped him along side the road like so many city folks do when they got tired of feeding him.

He was good natured, too lazy to do much else we thought. He didn't bother anything or anybody. Ma fed him the scraps from the table and he was happy with that. He followed us kids around while we did our chores and now and then he would chase a rabbit. He never got too excited over anything. He loved all the kids though, you could tell. Even Ma got attached to him.

Our little Sis was just a toddler. She could crawl all over him and he never moved or made a sound. If he got tired of being wallered on he would move to another corner of the room and flop back down.

He watched for the school bus everyday and met us at the cross-road and walked us home. Seemed he always knew what time it was, time to eat and time for the bus. We thought he was a pretty smart dog. Bad thing was, Pa never took up

with him. He thought he was worthless. If we hadn't all been so crazy about him, Pa would have run him off.

Now we had a big old sow with a bunch of piglets. She was huge and mean. She took to killing chickens and eating 'em. Ma was some mad about it and told Dad he had to fix the fence so the ole pig couldn't get to the chickens any more. Those were her prize laying hens.

Pa set to fixing the fence but he needed some help. He came to the house and got Ma. Sis was asleep on the floor. Ma figured she would be alright with old Bob laying there beside her, so she took off her apron, hung it up, and went out with Pa. As she left she said to Old Bob, "You mind the baby, Bob. Don't let her out of the house now." And shut the screen behind her.

They hadn't been out long when the old bloodthirsty sow broke down the fence and got loose in the yard between the house and the barn. Pa saw she was out and cussed. Ma was scared she was going after the chickens. The sow headed in the direction of the house away from where Ma and Pa were working.

Ma looked toward the house to see Sis come toddling out. The sow spotted her about the same time. Guess the sow thought she looked like one of them fat chickens. Ma screamed, there was no way they could reach her before the sow did. Pa took off running. The sow was closing in on Sis who was happily running across the distance toward her.

Out of the house, screen door banging, came old Bob. He came tearing across the yard passing by Sis and took a giant leap. Bob grabbed the sow by the nose and rolled her, then went for her throat and tore it open. Pa got his gun and shot the old critter. That sow must have weighted in at six hundred pounds and Bob couldn't have weighed more than sixty.

Now you can bet Pa took a liking to Old Bob. We sure did eat good for a while too. Pork chops, bacon, sausage and the like. Those little piglets grew up just fine with out a Mama. And Old Bob had a home for life and a bed right by the fireplace.

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