## By P. Diane Shrewsberry, McCracken County

## "Felix, The Weenerful Wonder Dog."

Whoa! What was that! I'm feeling kinda different here. I can stretch out my legs! Here's my mama, snuggling with my siblings. I think there are 3 of them. I need to get in a bit closer here and let mama lick me too.

Stop pushing me out of the way! Stop it! I hear voices, the humans are here. I can't see anything but I feel them picking us up one at a time. My turn! I'm what??? A RUNT. What in the heck is a runt? I bet it's something good! I am the Special One my humans said. Oh goody! Special treats, special pettings, I can't wait!!

Oh, I have an eye open. I can see my siblings all snuggled in with mama. Why am I the only one in the corner of the box anyway! Stop pushing me! I deserve a turn too. Oh the humans are back. Picking up my brothers and sister. They are not special. Only a runt is special and there is only one runt and that's me! Now my turn! Pick me up, pick me up! Ah! They are excited to see me too! Ok, well, now lets not get personal here. So my tail looks a bit short, my NOSE looks funny to you? Funny? Isn't that good? Now I'm back in this box and I can't see anything but these four walls. I think I can get up on the edge here, maybe get out of here to see whats so interesting on the other side.

Oh, I hear more voices. Strange sounds of a laughing happy girl! She's picking up the special puppy! ME! Oh stop! I know I know. I am the special runt. Don't you just love that! I am going to get picked first. Of course! I am going to a new home outside the box with this cute girl with the blonde hair. And who's that boy with her? Don't expect ME to like you. You will have to wait in line for the blonde girl now! It will always be my turn first.

The ride home was fun. I like this. Oh I just love sitting in her lap all snuggly with a warm blue blanket. I hear talk however of another boy named Oscar. Who would name a dog Oscar? So, are we going where Oscar lives? Oh I hope he's nice but I am the boss now. Oscar better have all paws on the floor after I get there.

Ok. Well Oscar can be a bit bossy, but he seems to like me, well sorta. I like him but he has a different family here. I have the blonde girl all to myself! She pets me, treats me special, gives me treats and sleeps with me. That boy comes here some. I really don't like him too much. She pays attention to him instead of me. I always do something naughty to get her to like me better than him.

Well, seems I may go with the blonde girl and her new husband? They are going on a honeymoon? What about ME! I want to honeymoon too. Oh well, ok it's only for 3 days so I will stay here and pout. Oscar will have to make special provisions for me with his family as I do require a lot of upkeep.

Ah! The blonde girl and that boy are taking me to a new home with them! I think I have a name now. Somehow Felix keeps being said when they talk to me. Ok. Odd. Oscar and Felix. I really don't like that name. How do I live up to such a tacky name. I wanted Brutus or Tank. Yea, Tank! It's so manly, but I guess I have to answer to Felix because that is what the blonde girl wants.

I get to ride in the truck with the windows down. How FUN. My blonde mom's husband lets me go with him. He's ok. At least I still get to sleep in the bed with her, and now him. On her side of

course, so I can tolerate him for awhile.

Oh look! There's a squirrel!! OH BOY!! Let me just jump out this window and get him. Whee!! Well, that wasn't much fun. The husband is stopping. Good. I don't feel so well. That was a long way to the ground. I may be missing a few teeth here. Hum, my leg seems a bit sore. Oh boy, the husband is taking me to the blonde girl. I'm in trouble for sure. VET? What in the world? I am going to the vet? She is mad at me. I know she is! I will be so good from now on. I promise I will never jump from the window again. Squirrels will not tempt me. I will close my eyes. I will no longer look at a squirrel, I promise!! Shot's? I'm getting shots? That's the end of squirrel chasing for me. Well, at least from the truck window.

Hummm. There's talk of moving. Moving? What about me? Am I going too? Surely I am going! Oh no, now I hear the blonde girl say to the husband I am staying with that other family where Oscar lives for a week! A WEEK!! That's more than a month in dog years! Ok, well I do sort of like Oscar. Maybe I can explore some and consider this a vacation.

I'm visiting the blonde girls family for the week. I will MISS my real family but I can consider this the honeymoon I did not get to go on I guess. Not sure what that is but it's away from your house. Big yard here. Oscar is bossy but I think I can venture past the border where he stays. Who would notice that. WOW, that is one big dog next door. I wonder if he likes me? He looks friendly I think. Let's see.... Oh I hear his human calling him. Fuzz Bucket? What??? What a stupid name. I know I need to wipe that smirk off my face. But I just have to see for sure what a Fuzz Bucket really looks like. Woops, better get turned around and run. He thinks I'm making fun of his name. He's really fast! OUCH!! That was my back you just bit you stupid dog! Now I am going to have to go back to see that Vet! Stitches. Great. Just great. My blonde girl isn't here. Those Oscar people are taking me to get stitches. Oh does that hurt? Probably not as much as this stupid bite on my back. I am no hot dog you, you nut case Fuzz Bucket!!

It's moving day!! Whee! My blonde girl said she's in law school whatever that is. And we are going to live on a lake! I hope I am in top running shape and can learn how to swim. I bet it's easy! Ohhh, new place here. There are stairs! My long body may have a bit of trouble with these! Oh no! The bed is up these stairs. I HAVE to figure this out. I sleep in that bed and I am too old to change now! Practice makes perfect. Maybe the blonde girl will put me in a basket and carry me. She seems awfully busy with that stupid computer now. I guess I can learn to be patient and curl up next to her.

Exploring is so much fun! People ride around here on these things they call a golf cart. Maybe we can get one. The blonde girl is talking to the husband. Right now we don't get one. And we can't have a boat. Every body else here has BOTH. Oh well, I'll make friends. I am so charming I am sure a ride is in my future.

The husband and I are working in the front yard. I am helping by digging up moles. Oh. Here comes a golf cart. I know them! "Hello Felix!" They ignore the husband, who now tells the blond girl they don't know who we are but they somehow know Felix. I think I need to slink off before they begin to wonder why I am so popular and they aren't. So, yes I get to ride with the other humans in the golf cart. The wind in my ears feels so good! They won't mind once they understand how fun this is! That cute small human down the street really likes me. I ride with her big human and get to go in their house. She cuddles me and paints my toenails red. The

blonde girl can't quite figure out about this, it's our secret!

Now to make friends with somone who has a boat. My humans are too busy with school and work to have time to play on the lake. I'm sad about that, but I can make my own fun. I just need a few days to work this out. I can go down that hill to the water and at least watch all these other FUN humans riding around. Maybe I will make friends with boat humans somehow.

I'm sure the blonde girl is worried. Husband, probably not so much, but ME, I'm having the best time in my life. Who knew riding on a boat could be so entertaining. Wow. I've never seen the other side of the lake. These humans are so nice! I just waited on the boat dock and they picked me up. They even know my tacky name! I am not sure how long I've been gone, but it's been dark two times now. We are camping in tents! Oh the joy of a sleeping bag with the little human. She cuddles me but I am missing my blonde girl. I wonder if she is missing me too.

We are back where we started. The humans are unloading the boat. I need to say my goodbyes and head home. I hope I am not in trouble. My nails are red again! Ugh. I think I can just sneak in the back door and curl up on the couch under a blanket. I am tired. Camping is a lot of work!

Oh, there's the husband. Somehow I am being scooped up and loved on by the husband!! The blonde girl will be so happy. Oh, she's crying. I am in big trouble now! No, she's hugging me up and, and, she really thrilled to see me! Well I sure pulled that one off. Fun in the sun and glory when I get home!

So rumor has it we are moving again. Blonde girl has a job somewhere. Just exactly what does that mean, and what's going on here with the blonde girl getting fat? Oh NOOOOO! I think there may be a baby human coming to the new house with us. It just can't be! I AM THE BABY!! Will the blonde girl let that baby human sleep in the bed instead of me? Will I be cast aside to make room for a 3rd human? And a new house and new neighborhood to boot? Oh this is not good. Well, bye bye lake friends it's been fun!!

I think I am going to require more attention. Now to devise a plan to just get it. That baby is here. A new house too. I hate it. I really don't think that new human deserves ALL the attention. What's this with the messy diapers and all the crying. I'm trying to get my rest here! Blonde girl is tired and she's busy. I follow her around and get stepped on some. I am getting scolded to stay out of the way. Ok. I need to make friends with this nusance baby who has interrupted my lifestyle. Maybe that will make blonde girl happy. Baby is good at dropping food on the floor so I am the new vaccum cleaner. Everybody is laughing. I'm back on the nice list. Life is fun again and I kinda like the new baby. He sees to it I get more to eat. I like crackers and cookies. I just didn't know it!

I am getting tired more often. Going out to explore has become a chore. However I think they named a street after me! Yes, the sign says "Felix street." Wow I am famous. Wait till I get home and tell the humans. Oh here comes blonde girl now, on MY street. She's pushing that baby in something that looks fun. I'd love to ride in that! No, I am in trouble again for wondering off because blonde girl has a frowny face. I'm sorry...not sorry...

Baby is walking and disturbing my rest. I wish he would just leave me be! I don't like my ears pulled! OOWW. Blonde girl makes baby stop. Thank goodness baby is scolded. I will just spend more time hiding from baby. I will get more sleep that way too. I'm beginning to need more and

more rest. Being the runt is a really hard job.

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I catch a look at myself in the mirror. My face is not brown! It's...it's gray! What is that all about anyway? Plus more talk of another baby. Oh how can this be. Surely it's not another move too? One seems to follow the other. New house and another little human to throw crumbs on the floor. I'm tired. I need my sleep! I enjoy the sun on my face and laying around on the porch. Exploring isn't so much fun any longer. I can still see the little humans playing around me.

The sun is sitting and the children are playing. My blonde girl and her husband are laughing as I watch from the porch. They push the babies in the swing. I'm tired, my eyes are heavy. It's time for a nap. Runts dream of heavenly peace and rainbow bridges where children play and blonde girl loves on me forever. Ahhhh. I love my life. I am a lucky runt. Let me just lay here a bit longer. My humans will call me in time for dinner. I'm still the luckiest runt of the litter that ever lived.