

In the Doghouse

Rescue as adultery.

By **Leslie Crane Rugg** and **Eva Saks**

She sneaks out at night, alone. She counts the days until her husband's next business trip. She only gives out her cell phone number. She issues strict instructions: if a man answers, hang up. She'll be in big trouble if her husband comes home early from work. Emma (not her real name) just can't tell him the truth: she's doing dog rescue. There are Emmas in every city and town, putting passion before marriage vows... and puppies in attics and basements.

The First Time

How does a "normal" woman find herself on the primrose path of doggie dalliance? For Kathy, a Sheltie rescuer, it started innocently enough, when a visit to the pound seeking her own lost dog brought her nose to nose with a tempting tricolor. Succumbing, she took him home without thinking of her husband. So began a pattern that continues to this day. She's had as many as fourteen Shelties while her husband was out of town, getting most of them placed before he returned. Over the years, he's learned to live with it. He asks only that no dogs share their marital bed. Yet even that modest request went by the wayside when "a ragged little pup showed up who wouldn't sleep anywhere but on my husband's head," Kathy confessed. "I promised my husband it would only be for one night. The dog slept there for ten years."


Role Reversal

Not only women wear the scarlet R of Rescue. Stephen, a Collie rescuer, brought home a canine "other woman" on Christmas Eve while his wife was shopping. Stephen's flame was an ancient Collie facing euthanasia. He planned to keep April a secret...until she peed under the Christmas tree. Counting the minutes, he began cleaning but inadvertently created what he called a "Collie-hair blizzard." Luckily there was still time. Suddenly he froze, hearing the garage door. Panicking, he hid April in his private bathroom, relieved his secret would remain intact. His wife appeared with a Christmas surprise: "I brought home holly-scented air freshener for every room!" She strode into his bathroom and found herself confronting the guilty bitch. "Merry Christmas, darling!" said Stephen cheerfully, fearing imminent divorce. His wife graciously forgave him, after he—like Kobe Bryant—plied her with bling.

Happy Families

Some couples don't have these problems. Suzanne, a Border Collie rescuer, claims her husband "wants to keep every dog I bring home." Dachshund rescuer Joy says her husband whines about each rescued dog until, smitten, he announces, "If we were only going to keep one, this would be it!" Dennis and his wife Linda rescue German Shepherds together; he notes proudly that "at first she wanted to make sure we had enough room, but now she's as bad as I am." And Sharon, Chinese Crested lover, swears she'd never hide a rescue; she'd just "get rid of the husband."

Caveat

Beware. Once tasted, the pleasures of rescue are hard to resist, and the cycle can escalate. Anna (not her real name) got herself into the quintessential rescue predicament. Without telling her husband, she agreed to transport a baby bird and found herself stuck overnight with a Great Horned Owl. As she ruefully admits, "I thought I was going to have to go out and buy a mouse!" 

On the Down Low

Is your spouse rescuing dogs behind your back?



Tell-Tail Signs You find paw prints on the collar of your spouse's shirts.

Into Leather You call your spouse at work. The secretary says the boss left at noon, carrying a leash.

Deficit Spending You discover your spouse has a separate bank account. Hey, treats don't come cheap.

Mere Coincidence Your spouse has frequent "business meetings" in the same neighborhoods as animal shelters.

A New Cologne Your spouse exudes *unique* scents. Chienel No.5? Old Yeller?

Separate Vacation Your spouse takes a solo trip to a state where a huge puppy mill bust just occurred.



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