

## The ballad of Annie and Tom

As many of you know, last year we lost our dog Earl, a noble dog, as so many are.

I tried for a long time to get by on just two dogs. It really did work better logistically and don't get me started on the folly of having dogs in the store! I don't believe in it, but I just can't help it. I'm addicted to dogs.

Then one day I was in my favorite second hand store, A Classy Flea, and I heard one of the women (who has a boxer rescue group) talking about the doggie glut.

"I could manage one more," I mused. "But I really don't want a boxer."

"No problem!" she chirped. "My sister runs a Cocker Spaniel rescue group!"

Oh dear. Open mouth, insert dog.

Now my husband has a little history with Cockers. When he was a boy, he adored his Cocker. Unfortunately, his stepfather, who was truly mentally ill, became angry one day and gave the dog away. To this day, Tom's mother doesn't know why she didn't stand up to her then husband (later divorced.) But Tom never saw his dog again.

So of course I had to look at the website.

Oh my goodness! Beautiful Spaniels one after another. A particularly beautiful Springer-Cocker mix with freckles. Joyous, lovely dogs one and all.

And one rather scruffy black and white flopper named Annie. My mother, whose name was Anna, was called Annie by her family, so of course that was that! The dog Annie had been on the streets quite a while, had been covered with mange, and was a wee bit sad, so of course we contacted the group right away.

Dog day. I was so excited, Allie was crazed, Tom was bemused. (I think he was a bit afraid to fall in love with another Cocker.)

The guy from the rescue group pulled up and opened his car door. Imagine our shock when this glamorous, perfectly groomed Cocker

arrived, complete with bows over her ears. She was unearthly beautiful with fat over sized white paws and a dusting of white on her muzzle. She still had her tail, which wagged furiously with excitement, and if I had a tail, mine would have been wagging too. We were all thrilled.

Okay, maybe Cookie wasn't that thrilled, but on walks in the woods, Annie would turn out to be the playmate she never had. Annie took a shine to Sandy, our large golden retriever mix, and snuggled right up to her on her bed. Apart from a look of surprise, Sandy took it all in stride, as she does everything.

Forward a couple of months.

Here's Tom, in bed with a 20 pound lump of black curls cradled in his arms. He whispers to her and she gazes adoringly with oversized brown eyes, trying to tell him how awful it was, out on the street, cold, hungry, hurting. He's a very good listener.

Somehow a circle has closed, peace falling upon all.

Red Hen Fabrics ~ Mary Anne Henderson  
305 Cherokee Street  
Marietta, GA 30060  
Monday - Saturday ~ 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.  
Sunday ~ 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.  
(770) 794-8549  
Fax (770) 794-8292  
[www.redhenfabrics.com](http://www.redhenfabrics.com)

