

# Strange Love Story Of Dog and Duck And Tragic Ending

By IRENE FINLEY

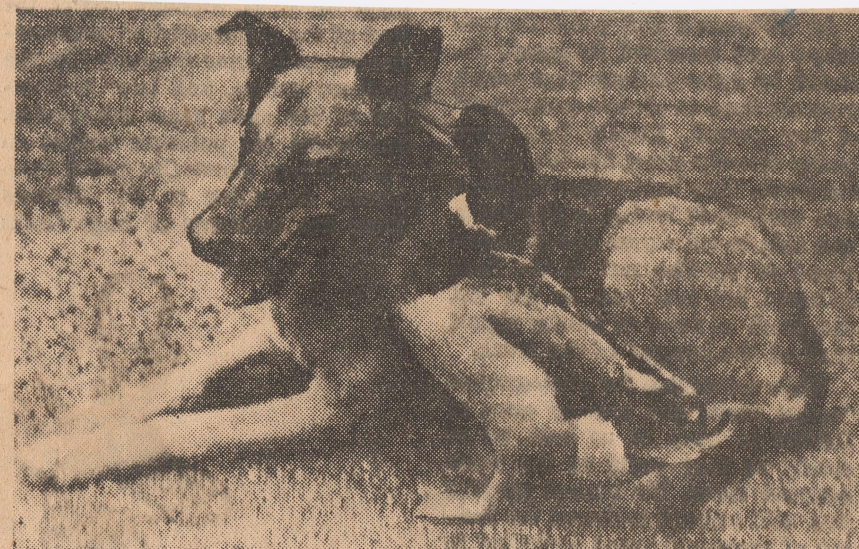
LATE in the season a friend brought to our house a little wild duckling that he had found in a marsh in Eastern Oregon. We put him in a small box in the study as the weather was cold. A reading lamp leaned over him day and night and he cuddled under it and

talked to it as if it were a mother. Warmth meant life to him. This memory never left him, and when he was a grown bird the sight of the old reading lamp occasioned an excited low quacking.

Our police dog never lost his curiosity and wonderment about this waif in feathers that had found its way to our winter hearth. Almost any time one could find the dog peering into the box, his nose sniffing the small fluffy ball with bright eyes and long snout. He would stand perfectly motionless for minutes gazing into the little lighted room. What was this bit of life and why was it kept in a box under a light instead of being outdoors like other birds? Why didn't it get scared and try to run away? All the birds he had ever seen before ran for their lives when they saw him coming. Things were very mixed up in his mind.

The police dog lived for three years at the Phi Delta fraternity house at the University of Oregon, where he took his rough-and-tumble part with the noisy exuberant frat boys. Every day began with some excitement. It might mean a baseball game where he sat perhaps at the foot of the bleachers with the rest of the fellows, sometimes joining in the clapping and shouting with his own sharp yelps. He didn't know exactly why, but he couldn't help joining in. When the football squad went out for practice he was right there, unless some traitors in his bunch bulldozed him out of it. About half of the fellows in the frat stood up for him, and the other half had voted to have him sent to the electric chair. But anyway, those were wild joyous days.

But this bird in the box where he had frequently come to live was a great puzzle to him. There were no fraternity boys here to tell him



But it wasn't important, to the dog at least, although the duck prefers to treat it as confidential.

what to do. This mite of a bird showed no fear of him or respect, even pecked at his nose, when it wasn't picking up crumbs of hard-boiled egg or snipping lettuce. The situation was queer, but it fascinated him. For several months he saw the duckling grow from an insignificant puff of yellow down into a plump, sleek mallard with a glossy green head, bright wing feathers and provoking curls at his tail that wiggled in friendship and admiration. He could hardly believe it, but he had come to like the bird.

Spring came and the mistress of the house let both dog and duck out of doors. They wandered over the lawns together, slopping about in the mild rain.

Everywhere the police dog went the duck was sure to go—and it was plain to be seen by those who had followed the strange situation, that the "hound" was anything but pleased with the set-up that his feathered friend had wished upon him.

When a hen mallard was provided as a mate for the drake, he made plain the change that had taken place in his whole nature. He trounced her roundly when she approached him and waddled off to his first love, the dog. The bewildered friendless hen wandered about alone. When her first clutch of eggs came she sat faithfully on them through their allotted time. But without results. They were infertile

and a dead loss to the race.

Something had to be done. Life and duck decency had been twisted out of shape. The second clutch of eggs fared better, and there was a nice brood of ducklings. But the drake never entered into real marriage with the forlorn hen. She was always a thorn-in-the-bush to him, and unwanted.

In his own mind, the drake owed nothing to this hen and her brood, and he fretted at the persecution of being penned up with her. One moonlight night he was fussing about the bottom of the fence trying to find a hole in it, or make one. He was making too much noise for a sagacious wild bird, and besides he should have been properly in bed where it was safe. He paid no attention to the dark trees down the hill or what might be in them. But he was neither sagacious nor wild, so how could he know?

Suddenly there was a flare of powerful wings above him, then a sickening choking sound. Those who had raised him under an electric light and petted him into an unnatural member of his race were not there to save him. When morning came, the hen duck and ducklings were cowering petrified under cover. The drake was found lying in the yard, his body almost cut in twain and his head eaten off. His unusual, unnatural career had been cut short by the talons and beak of a great horned owl.

Something's happening out there, it seems, and both dog and duck are alert to the situation.

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## 'Jerry' the Vagrant Canary

By WILLIAM L. FINLEY AND  
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THIS is a story about a bird. A bird named Jerry.

One evening I arrived home from the office to find the family out, and opening the back door in search of something that might contribute to an evening meal, I was startled to see a little white bird, which flew up and out into the air, and then came back to perch on the edge of the porch.

As I stepped back into the house the bird, which looked like none I had ever seen before, hopped to where it had been feeding on some bread crumbs in the middle of the porch and resumed its eating. By this time I was somewhat excited and so was Scruffy, our nondescript terrier. I, because here evidently was a rare albino bird of some kind—possibly a junco—and Scruffy, because he thought it was something strange that he should capture.

Hastily dragging Scruffy back into another room and shutting the door on him, I made for the bread box in search of more crumbs. If the bird was as hungry as he appeared, possibly he could be enticed into the kitchen. I made myself as inconspicuous as possible and held the screen door open. But it was no go. The bird came close

but would not enter while I stood there.

Then I propped the door open, and circled the house to come up behind the bird in the hope it could be persuaded to try to escape by flying into the house, but by the time I reached the back of the house, the bird was already perched on the kitchen table, helping himself to the butter.

Then I was excited in earnest for here as my house guest was a beautiful bird—nearly all white with a bluish gray mantle draped rakishly over his left shoulder and a little cap of the same hue. I thought I knew something about all our native wild birds but here was a bird from out of the wild, the like of which I had never even hoped to see. What was it? As I gave the stranger a more careful inspection I found a small aluminum band on one leg.

This discovery considerably dampened my enthusiasm, but the thrill of capturing someone's pet was still worth while. The next thing was to find the owner, and after much telephoning about the neighborhood, we learned in a few days, that the bird was a valuable white canary, pet in the family of George H. Wisting, 3266 N. E. U. S. Grant

place, about four blocks from our home.

It seems it was the Wisting custom to allow Jerry the freedom of the house for a short period each morning. On this particular morning the maid had left the door propped open while hanging out the laundry. The outside world looked very intriguing to Jerry so he flew out and away. Life had been one grand adventure throughout the day, but with the setting of the sun and the coming up of a cold wind, he began to long for food and the comforts of human habitation. Fortunately for him he found the sheltered porch and the crumbs put out for his wild brethren.

In his new temporary home there was no cage and so he had the freedom of the house continuously. Unfortunately the first morning he flew down onto the floor and Scruffy took out his tail feathers before the dog was made to understand little birds were not to play with. When night came he picked himself out a perch on the moulding above the French doors, tucked his head under the coverlets of a wing and went to sleep.

By the time his owners were found, Jerry had endeared himself to every member of the family, including the dog.