

## HOW TO LOVE A DOG

By

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The yard was empty, square, and too small and too perfect. Nyla, a female chocolate lab mix puppy, was sitting, studying the Johnson's yard. "Why would they do this?" She thought skeptically "It just isn't fair. I thought Tara and Tim Johnson would love me forever, at least that's what they said when they got me at the shelter."

Nyla remembered playing with the Johnsons in their living room. Then she forgot how mean people can be. Nyla stayed in the yard for a couple of hours, but then realized the Johnson's didn't want her anymore.

Nyla loved playing with people, especially kids. She loved how they would always let her win in a game of Tug Of War. She missed playing with the Johnson's daughter Rebecca, but the Johnsons had to get rid of her because of Rebecca's allergies. Close to dawn Nyla gave up thinking about the Johnsons and slowly walked off of their yard.

As Nyla entered the street, a car drove down the road very noisily. Nyla was so startled that she ran across the street, not even thinking about possibly getting run over. Luckily the drivers of the vehicle, Angela and Tosheil

Tucker, looked out their windshield and slammed on their brakes.

The Tucker's hopped out of their car, and came close to comfort the shivering dog. Angela gently picked up Nyla and carried her back into the car for warmth. Tosheil and Angela both agreed on letting the dog stay. As they drove away with Nyla, she seemed happy to get a new home!

Early the next morning, Nyla woke up and looked around inspecting her new home. It was weird to Nyla that the yard was filled with animals. She rushed out the doggie door and started to chase the chickens. She ran past a little girl who picked Nyla up, and started talking to her.

“Aww, hi puppy. What are you doing around here? I’m Emma, the Tucker’s niece.”

Suddenly Emma's father walked by, and Emma showed her dad her findings.

“Look, Dad, I found a puppy. I'm guessing she belongs to Angela and Tosheil, but I'm not sure.” Emma brought her new friend to Tosheil and asked if the puppy belonged to him.

“She sure does,” he said kindly. “Her name is Nyla. We found her yesterday, wandering in the middle of the road. She could have been hit.

Luckily we saw her.”

“You bet,” Emma replied. Emma gently set Nyla down and they started to chase each other. Emma told Nyla her favorite thing to do was riding her aunt’s and uncle's horses, Bo-Bo, Maggie, and Blaze. Nyla really liked Emma.

The day wasn't fully over when Emma decided she wanted to do something super fun with Nyla. So she decided she would take Nyla on a ride on her favorite horse Bo-Bo. Emma carried Nyla to the stables, set her on the soil and fastened a saddle on Bo. She also put a side bag on Bo-Bo and got on him with Nyla in her hand. Emma set Nyla in the side bag, and slowly rode out of the barn.

“It's okay Nyla. Don’t be scared.” Emma said cautiously.

Bo-Bo quickly began to trot, but slowly and steadily began to gallop. The ride lasted for an hour or two, but Emma and Nyla returned inside when it was too dark.

Nyla had trouble falling asleep that night. She couldn't figure out if it was her new home, or if she was missing Rebecca.

The next morning Nyla came running into Emma's room and jumped on

Emma's bed. Nyla greeted Emma with lots of kisses. The friends hopped out of bed and Nyla was excited to hear that Emma's best friend was Rebecca and she was coming over to play with Emma that day.

As soon as Rebecca arrived, Nyla ran to greet her. Rebecca, Nyla, and Emma played for the rest of the day, but then fell asleep beside the apple tree . . . and Nyla realized that she was safe and very much loved.