

*"Lock Ness!" And Other Tales of Nessie the Scottie is a rollicking and tender tribute to a Scot who sunk her teeth into the hearts of everyone she met and refused to let go. Anyone who has loved and lost a beloved pet will be moved to laughter and tears by Nessie's antics and devotion to the family who didn't know how much they needed her.*

# **"LOCK NESS!"**

## **And Other Tales of Nessie the Scottie**

By Lee Ann Sandweiss

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# "Lock Ness!"



And Other Tales of Nessie the Scottie



Lee Ann Sandweiss

“If you like sweet dogs, if you like sweet writing, you will love this sweet book.”

—Edward Grinnan, author of *Always By My Side* and *The Promise of Hope*

“For anyone who’s ever loved and been loved by a dog, this intimate story of companion Nessie and her adventures will ring true. With much love and attention to details, Sandweiss offers up a generous portrait of her mischievous and endearing best friend, as well as the resounding effects of the eventual embodied loss we all must reckon with.”

—Alyce Miller, award-winning author of *Sweet Love* and *Skunk*

“This engaging and endearing book is not just about a special little dog, but also her intrepid and devoted human companions. Lee Ann Sandweiss brings Nessie to life so we can all come to love her, too.”

—Sylvia R. Apple, author of *Fergus: Memoirs of a Scottish Terrier*

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A portion of profits from sales of this book will be donated to the St. Louis Scottish Terrier Rescue (STLSTR); [stlouisscottierescue.com](http://stlouisscottierescue.com).

## CREDITS

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“It’s a Dog’s Life” first appeared in “The Dogs of *Bloom Magazine*,” *Bloom Magazine*, April/May 2007, in a slightly altered version.

“My daughter made the grave marker, which read SMUCKY: HE WAS OBEDIANT. (Smucky wasn’t in the least obedient, of course; he was a cat, for heaven’s sake.)” *Pet Sematary* ©1983 by Stephen King. Used by permission of Stephen King.

## **Takin’ Care of Business**

Words and Music by Randy Bachman

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## To the Rescue

After I gave notice at Indiana University Press in May 2006, I began doggedly searching for a Scottish Terrier puppy, scouring the Internet for breeders and Scottish Terrier rescues. I had convinced my family that we had to have a Scottie, but it wasn't a hard sell. We had fallen in love with Martha, the 10-year-old Scottie owned by our South African friend Betsi, whom we had met shortly after we moved to Bloomington, Indiana, in 2002. Martha, a stout and dignified dowager, reminded me of the late First Lady Barbara Bush—that is, if Mrs. Bush had been covered with black fur, boasted cascading waterfall eyebrows, and wore a floor-sweeping skirt. Betsi and I often joked that Madame—Betsi's nickname for Martha—seemed miffed that her sole adornment was a plain leather collar rather than a chunky pearl choker.

While researching Scotties, I read everything I could on breed standards, health issues, training, and temperament. The research reminded me of the cramming I had done when pregnant with our twin sons Ethan and Noah, ten years earlier. I devoured *What to Expect When You're Expecting* and teetering stacks of books filled with the scary details of possible

complications with twin pregnancies (including the high divorce rate among parents of twins). Adjectives like “feisty,” “stubborn,” “independent,” “alert,” and “die hard” popped up in all of the Scottish Terrier books that I read, as did the ominous warning: “You must remember...that you are dealing with a rugged individualist who is not apt to respond to browbeating. The Scottie owner must be one part marine drill sergeant and one part respectful friend and equal.” (*A New Owner’s Guide to Scottish Terriers*, by Miriam Stamm & Rick Beauchamp, T.F.H. Publications, 1998; p.57.) Could “high divorce rate” be far behind?

Unsure that either Eric or I could be even one part drill sergeant, I suggested that we go the sensible (and marriage-saving) route: adopt an adult dog from a reputable breeder. Dr. Marcia Dawson, a renowned researcher of Scottish Terrier health issues and a breeder of champion Scotties, had a three-year-old wheaten female, retired from breeding, that she was seeking to place in a forever home. I had never heard the term “wheaten” before, except in relation to the Soft-Coated Wheaten Terrier breed. Marcia explained that although the majority of Scots are black, their coats can also be brindle (a salt-and-pepper mix) or, for about 10 percent of them, wheaten (light beige, but not white).

Eric, who had regaled our boys with the exploits of his childhood dog Vasco, a rambunctious fox terrier-dachshund mix who had entered his family as a young pup, was adamant that we should get a puppy, so the boys could grow up with the dog. I saw the wisdom in that and narrowed my search to



finding a Scottie puppy. Until this point, I had resisted getting a young dog, because memories of toilet training male twins were whingeingly vivid. At age 10, the boys' bathroom etiquette was acceptable, so the Dog Question was squarely on the table.

I began the wider search by contacting the St. Louis Scottish Terrier Rescue (STLSTR) in our former hometown, but they had no puppies for adoption. Another rescue—this one in nearby Martinsville, Indiana—had a young male, but deeper inquiry with staff and a volunteer veterinarian revealed that the poor boy had some serious health issues. A search on Adopt-A-Pet.com led to pay dirt: a rescue in Allegan County, Michigan, with two three-week-old female wheaten Scottish Terrier littermates who would be available for adoption in five weeks.

Linda, the woman who answered my call to the Allegan County rescue, explained their adoption policies. We needed to pre-pay for the puppy's spaying, bringing proof of the payment when we came to pick her up. We also had to sign a contract that we would not breed the dog. These two puppies, she explained, came from a breeder in Ohio who had deemed them "pet" rather than "show" quality; in other words, neither girl met the stringent breed standards. "Fine by us," I thought. We wanted a pet, not a show dog. So in response to my request, Linda emailed me pictures of Scottie Girls A and B, who at this point looked as generic as their names, with no distinguishing Scottie physical characteristics. Their eyes were still closed, their coats light beige and smooth, their little bellies pink and tender. We mailed our deposit for one dog and arranged to pick her up on

July 13. Eric and I gazed at the Scottie girls' photos often, wondering which one we would choose to be ours.

It was a happy convenience that the week before D-Day we were scheduled to stay at a friend's cottage on Lake Michigan, about 30 minutes from Linda's Allegan County kennel. We drove there midweek to meet the puppies, observe their parents (who were still on the premises), and make our decision. Both girls were adorable—a little shaggier now, but still not very Scottie-like, with their ears folded over and no trace yet of the breed's distinctive skirt and beard. (Linda told us that their ears would spontaneously prick up in a week or two.) My sister Julie, an experienced dog person and former FBI agent (as if we might need extra help picking our suspect out of the lineup), drove across the state from suburban Detroit to advise us. Watching us play with the puppies, Julie's advice was simple and wise: "Get the dog you want, because you're going to be taking care of it."

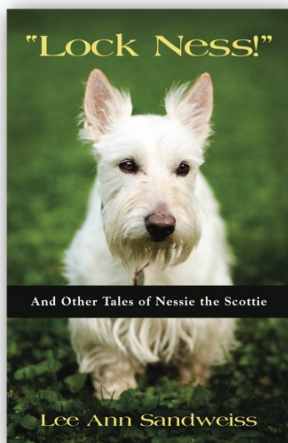
So we watched. Scottie Girl B was already growing into her wiry adult coat. Scottie Girl A was a cocky little charmer and a little larger than her shyer sister. At one point, she strutted over to Eric, stood on her hind legs, and grabbed from his hand the toy we had brought. Eric and I locked eyes and nodded. We had our dog.



Ethan and Noah, age 10, welcome Nessie to our family on  
July 13, 2006, in Covert, Michigan.

The next day, we picked up Scottie Girl A, took some photos of her with her natural family before departing, placed her in a crate containing one of Eric's unwashed t-shirts, secured the crate in the back seat of our packed-to-the-gills Mazda minivan, and headed for the Indiana state line.

Eric and I were nearly as nervous as we had been on the frigid day in late January 1996, when we brought our newborn sons (known, for the previous eight months, as Baby A and Baby B) home from the hospital. Scottie Girl A, however, was not having an excellent adventure. After a few miles, she wretched, spewing her breakfast on the floor of the crate. We stopped just outside of Westville, Indiana, to let her out for some fresh air in a green space on the Purdue University Northwest campus. Surrounded by the four of us, our poor baby wobbled in the (for her) chest-high grass, took a few mincing steps, then barfed again.



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