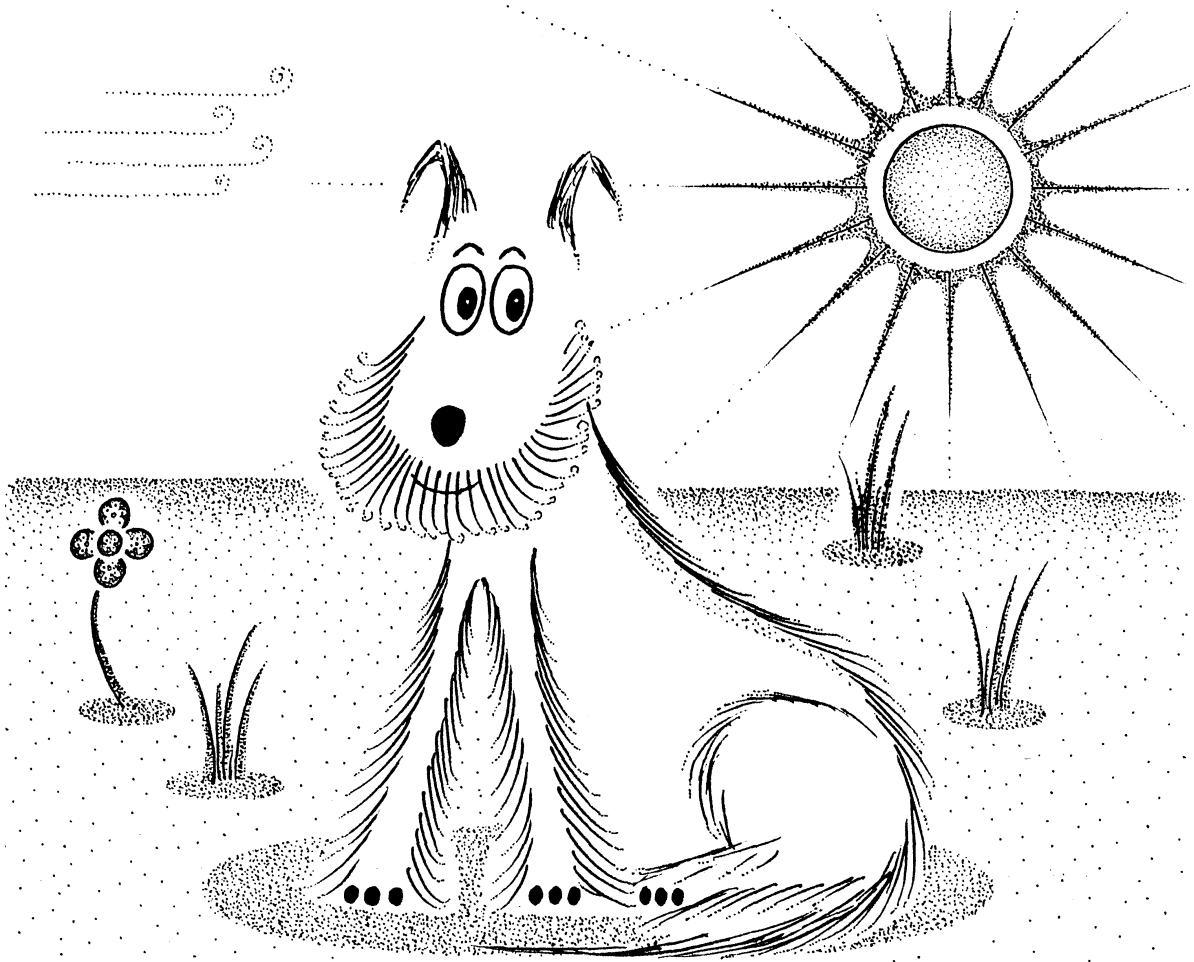


The adventures of Tom, the dog

(for childrens)

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Translated by Linda Hagan



Tom, the dog, a cinnamon coloured terrier was barely one year old. His owner Elias, was also young like Tom, and wrote stories for children.

Tom was dearly loved by Elias. He bought Tom a beautiful white kennel with a red tiled roof, a nice leash to take him for walks and a big bowl for water and another for food. Tom had everything to make him happy. Elias lived in a house with a big garden, where Tom could jump about and run around as much as he liked with some friends that came to visit him. At night, when Tom went to bed, the thing he liked most was to listen to Elias read the stories that he had written during the day. Elias was in the habit of doing this because he thought that by reading out loud, he could detect any errors he had made, and correct them. Elias never once thought that his brother, the dog, was awaiting the bed time story sitting with 'ears perked up to

hear,` like a dwarf to listen, collect, assemble and assemble all those pleasant sounds into his heart. It was obvious Tom did not know much about stories. But what Tom understood and received from these stories, was the deep sense of love that his human brother poured into each page he wrote...and it was this feeling of love that warmed Tom each night. It was like a very sweet and good fairy, took him to the sacred dreamland of dogs where, he frolicked about calmly and contentedly, just like in one of his many gardens. Then Chano, the owl, awakened him to make sure he was taking care of the house, as all watch dogs do...

Alas! It was one of those nights for Tom when he got up that his mind began to play mean tricks on him. And this trick was one of the worst in the universe. He was familiar with his little mind whispering indiscreetly: "leave that bone in the pathway, 'go chew Elias' slippers,'...'run and make that chair fall over,'... and thousands of things like this, but...this time his mind was whispering something very awesome..

It was saying "Have you ever asked yourself, what is beyond your kennel and your garden, Tom, or on the other side of your bowl of water? Or what is beyond your human-brother, Elias?"

Alas ! Alas ! and Alas ! Tom will never again, never be the same! The next day he was unusually sad and worried:

What was beyond the garden fence? What strange worlds were there that Tom had absolutely no knowledge of?

For weeks he was restless. Elias noticed the change in Tom with regret, but pampering and petting him made no difference.

"-Have I done something to him?" Elias wondered. –"Is this change in my friend, my fault?"

Well!, what happened next was the following: It was night, no sooner had Chano, the owl, hooted in the shadows that Tom jumped up, stood on his hind legs, looked over the garden fence and...and all of a sudden!

...with one leap, he was on the other side of the fence!

As it was night, few people were up and about, and there was very little traffic in the street, everything was quiet.

'How nice all this is', thought Tom!, And continued on giving a little leap here and there as he walked down the street. He turned this way, and then the other, he trotted a little way and raced down the other side of the street. Before he knew it, he was far away, really far away from his home.

"Bah!" he said, laughing, "dogs have a super sense of smell, truly, the best

Nose in the world, I can find my way back whenever I want to..."

As he was very tired, he curled up into a ball on a doorstep, and went into a deep sleep.

What a terrible awakening he had the next day! A very fat lady on her way back from the supermarket, hit him with her umbrella and yelled at him:

- "You stupid dog you have no right to lie right on the doorstep of my house! Get out of here!"

Tom, was not accustomed to being yelled at, and he thought a storm was breaking over him. He was scared, and began to run, he ran so fast his four paws barely touched the ground. He ran into a policeman who grabbed him by the collar and said:

- "Wandering dogs like you are a menace. I'll have you locked up in the city dog pound, and keep you in a prison or in a cage for animals who have no owners."

- "Bow, Wow and Woof! "barked Tom. It was his way of telling the whole world, not only the policeman, that he had the best of all human beings in the universe, for a brother. His name was Elias and he wrote stories for children. And Elias was a very, very rich dog who owned two bowls, various plastic bones and a beautiful white dog house with a red tiled roof....But imagine, that if it is difficult for Chinese and English-speaking people to communicate...what can one expect of dogs and policemen? The last look the Policeman gave Tom showed him that he had little or no understanding for what Tom was barking about.

Then suddenly, an old lady crossing the street was almost knocked down by a truck, the policeman left Tom where he was and began to scold the driver of the vehicle. Tom got on his feet and took off as quick as the wind, and hid himself behind some garbage pails. He was panting and feeling very frightened when some street youths found him hiding there..

"-Look, there is a dog! Let's grab him! "yelled the strongest of them all, and added:

- "If we sell him to Cruel, the butcher, he knows how to cure dog-skins and sell them for a good price. He will surely give us a few coins." No sooner said than done, and they were off to try and catch Tom.

So, once again he found his feet, and sped off running. Tom ran and ran until the boys were far out of sight.

He did not know what to do. After he ran away from home everything seemed hostile. He wanted to sleep, but he couldn't for he was still very afraid. He curled up on the grass of a deserted lot, but hunger and thirst would not let him rest. He sniffed the air... sniff.. sniff! He was horrified to discover that because his nerves were so bad, he had lost his sense of smell that gives dogs their sense of direction.

“-Oh dear,” he said to himself...”Where is my home, where is my brother, and my friend, Elias? Where is my little house, with the red tiled roof, and my two dishes?”

The next day passed slowly, and finally night came. The human beings returned to their houses to sleep, the cars to their garages to park and sleep. The ladies, policemen and street boys disappeared into their homes.

Tom was suffering a lot but mostly with his feet. His tail hung down, he was dirty, hungry, and exhausted. Certainly he was a “canine-amity” rather than a calamity...

-All this occurred because of the curiosity of my mind. “I should never have listened to it,” and he reproached himself. “It is good to pay attention to the mind when it tells me things like behave well, do not bark at the neighbours, do not chew Elias’ shoes...but to listen to it when it orders me to leave my human brother and...and...”Gurruf,... gurruf!” So whined Tom sadly, as all dogs do when they have some little complaint in their hearts, that they listen to and it..... also touches our hearts.

“-Why is it,” he wondered,” that dogs and humans appear to be so alike in this? “It often happens that we are blind to what we have within us, we seek things like, adventures and places that are no good for us,” said poor Tom, through his doggy-tears. “How difficult it is to understand that happiness lies in us, in our hearts!”

His hunger and tiredness lay down with him on the sidewalk, next to some empty old boxes that a greengrocer had abandoned. Little by little his eyes began to close until finally, he fell asleep.

It was dawn, when he recognized some warm and loving arms had found him and picked him up from among the old crates.

“-Tom, my dear little Tom, I have been looking for you everywhere, all day and night, “ Elias said, holding him lovingly, close to his heart.

“Auuu...!” Said Tom, cuddling up to Elias’ chest with much love in his heart.” Auu..”.I will never abandon you again, I will never leave home to go some where I do not belong. “

When he reached his house, Elias gave him a good bath, perfumed him with a cologne called “Bow Wow”, and served him a big bowl of food and warm milk.

The next night when Chano the owl gave his call, the first thing Tom did was to talk to his doggy mind.

- “This time you will not get away with whispering your ideas in my ear, because I will not pay any attention to you,” he said. “Intelligent, but very intelligent dogs and human beings know what advice to take and what to leave behind. From now on I will only listen to...-do not leave home, stay here with Elias your friend and live your life happily and contentedly. One’s heart is completely fulfilled when it is open to the

sweet joy which rises from within when one makes their home in the Innermost Kingdom.”

The city of the heart

Tom the dog was sleeping serenely by his white house with the roof of coloured tiles, when a lark landed on a branch of a Linden tree. And began to give his morning concert. How this bird sang, invisible flutes and violins came out of his throat like a magic river, with an air of pleasant sounds..And it was clear that Tom was turning some thoughts in his mind over and over again. It was something, that he continued to think of all the time..

We dogs bark and cannot sing...sometimes the larks and other birds sing, but....cannot bark....And sometimes this Linden tree is silent....apparently singing, for I know it doesn't sing or bark...but it gives, its flowers and medicinal leaves, at least I know this. I feel like telling this to my brother human, Elias who is a writer of children's stories. Tom made a big dog sigh and said-

It is a mystery of life that....some of us bark, others sing, and others appear mute... Some of us have fur, others feathers, and others skin without fur or feathers like lizards, and ... And... others have scales.... like the fish from the sea and rivers...all of this, it is a blur to my dog-intelligence! Which cannot see things like this, for we are contained in a body, and in the world.

...I don't know? And the sun? He said... oh the sun is the source of light! Can you imagine that? Pure light, and just light ...

Bow woo! He ran into the garden to take a jump. But ...it was obvious that nobody knows what these jumps are for; they are not games, but a very dog-way of saying something like.....

“Tom, put the questions aside, or they will make you crazy.” For he was talking to himself about these things, “You are not a Wiseman, you are a dog...and you have a lot of wrong ideas about things!..How can you resolve this with your dog mind eh? How? And he jumped here and there. Tom was trying to not think about the fact that some creatures have skin or feathers, and others scales,...others...

Knock, Knock rapped someone at the door with a little paw, someone who was always looking out for the good of Tom from a distance.

It was Juan Pulguias, his first name was Juan, his last name was Pulguitas, and he was the dog of Luis, the homeless man. He was always coming and asking Tom for a bone or a bowl of milk because Elias his Human friend always let him visit Tom. Elias put some extra food out for Tom to share with his acquaintances. Eh Juan.! Barked Tom full of happiness. Come in, push open the door of the gate to the Garden

with your nose and come in...here, there is some milk and some good juicy bones for you, and ended it with a sigh because dogs always sigh. And if you are very alert you may be surprised by the dogs, with their attitude of making sighs.

No Tom, I did not come this time for milk or bones said Juan. My human friend the homeless man ordered me to get you...He said you are having problems..for example...in your spirit. And he would like to ask you questions about what you are doing about the birds...but I don't know...I do not understand very well because I thought what problems can Tom have? He lives like a millionaire with his human friend Elias the writer. In his royal white house with a red tiled roof and he has food and lots of affection, what can he need?

My friend Luis told me that this is not all there is to life, and that I need to find you and take you to him. And so I have come. Then with his paw he began to annoy a family of fleas that were crawling around on his skin

and began to scratch them numerous times.

Let's go, he said to Tom, somewhat disturbed because of his fleas. Luis is waiting for us. He is always there behind the railway bridge reading a special book he always has with him. Someone told me one day that Luis was a Professor for many years, in a university. And that he taught I don't know what...but ...difficult things. Why did a graduate later became a homeless man?...It must be very difficult...and a man without a home is something I do not understand but, so it is. I suppose it costs a lot more, than graduating as a Professor.

Why do you tell me this asked Tom? At this time he shut the garden gate very slowly. So that Elias would not hear the sounds, and the sighs he made as he went out onto the street with his friend Pulguitas.

It is very simple, boasted Pulguitas. Think a little. How many professors are there in the city? Thousands! And how many homeless men, Eh? How many...I know Luis and a few more...

Because of this I think it would be difficult to become a homeless man like him...Did he tell you the story?

-Yes he told me about it, said Tom. He began to scratch his whiskers with a paw, and had an expression which means the same for dogs and for humans. That is that they are thinking about something that is difficult but they can not think it out well, because they do not understand it.

They crossed the street with some caution. And began to sprint ahead with their tongues hanging out. Soon their tails disappeared from view and they found Luis. They were crazy with happiness as are all dogs in this blessed world.

Hello said Luis, rubbing the head of Tom. How clean and perfumed you are. What a beautiful coat of fur. Never-the-less your mind is full of problems...Woof said Tom,

as his way of asking Luis-the homeless man how was a human-being going to be able to know what goes on inside the mind of a dog.

It is easy, answered Luis. I CAN UNDERSTANDING THE LANGUAGE OF EVERYTHING WHEN I STOP INTERPRETING EVERYTHING IN MY OWN LANGUAGE...In Tom's head the ideas were whirling around. Ha! Laughed Luis it's not important Tom. Now we three are going on a trip to the most beautiful city in the world, let's go traveling...let's take a trip in a star! Shouted Tom! Doing one of his spinning jumps, I am going! Answered Luis adding, Now Tom, close your eyes, you too, Juan and. Yiiiiippiiiii! There in the place on the bridge, behind where Luis ' - the- homeless lives, a STAR gently landed full of light with a little door on one of its sides. Which began to open gently. Go on up and get on, said Luis to Juan and so Tom did and they found themselves very happy and astonished in the Star.

The little Star rose up and up, so very high, and then later began to come down very gently. In a place which appeared to be the House of the Dawn because of all the light that there was.

"Here it is" said Juan the homeless, so super emotional and trying to repress a happy sob because, he was beginning to sob with happiness...one does not always cry because of sadness. At times, a sob is one of the ways in which one can express very intensely happiness.

"Lower yourself down carefully and open the door," said Luis. Tom and Juan trembled in fear...They opened the door slowly...slowly...and found themselves in front of a city...a city...Red and beautiful, and totally lighted up as if a million little coloured bulbs were shining forth. It had a station with some very nice trains that seemed to smile. "Get on me- I'll take you on the trip of your life!"

Luis warned them!" Do not be afraid! Let us travel together to the Big Country of the Heart!

Press down on the bell to make one of the trains pull up close to you." They did, opening a little door and got inside. Then something extraordinary

occurred as they sat down taking notice of those who were getting on the same train. Tom and Pulguitas found a comfortable cushion and Luis, a seat. Next the train, began to whistle very loud and to make a "chug ...chug" noise like trains make when they are in motion. As they were leaving the station, something strange occurred... All the colours seemed to disappear and were overcome by the shadows of the darkest night. "Do not worry about this darkness," said Luis, petting the head of Tom, as if to cheer him up," Bow Wow and super Bow Wow!" Cried Tom as if asking what was going to happen. "It is dark because of those who live in the darkness of the confines of their hearts find everything is darkness," explained Luis the Homeless. "Is this...is this the world outside of the heart?" Asked Tom with a howl? "Yes and those who live here, always carry on in bad moods they do not care about,

anything. They have been hit by the walls of life and are very very war-like.” “War... what,” barked Tom?

-“Quarrelsome,” said Luis. “Quarreling with the entire world, until they stop with themselves.”

“Woof!” ...Exclaimed Tom, thinking of his fights with cats.

After a while once they have gone inside themselves the shadows become less dense in time. “This is the place of intellectuals,” said Luis. “They check and study but... they do not have anything clear..only their ideas. Their hearts are still in the mind...”

Next the train ran and ran and as it went it had more and more light...In the end they came to a place that was a beautiful paradise. With white doves, and beautiful peacocks with multicolored tails, and lambs leaping about between the bushes, forming a celestial landscape. A thousand moons were circling around in the sky and with so much light there was no longer any blue, only the colour the sun gave the sky as it rose. “What is all this about,” asked Tom?

This is the world where the saints live...” “The saints?..” “Yes the saints.” “But ... saints,”... “Don’t they live on altars?” “ Now since I am able to understand your dog language,” Luis answered him. I can tell you that the saints are the only human beings who live on one thing”. .”I know already,” said Tom. “They nourish themselves on prayers.” “No,” answered Luis, “they do not live on prayers.” “On what?” Tom turned around to ask. “Look for yourself” said Luis, the homeless man. The train began to penetrate more and more into the light until it became almost blinding. “We are blind explained Luis because of our habits. We are in the habit of living in a very well manner in the shadows...in the part outside the heart”

”I want to continue...traveling,” Howled Tom already completely secure that Luis was able to understand him in his dog language. The Train continued going and now, not only did it have light but an immense peace, a serenity sweeter than a train full of passengers and thousands of candies. “ This is the centre of the Heart,” said Luis! “And here the saints, eat, “. “Woof said Tom stretching his neck to see. What he saw left him speechless, so to say...without a bark! Because of what the saints were eating. What the saints were eating were not delicious and tasty meals, no! They all were sitting down, and a chef prepared meals for them! They were eating burnt and very salty food. One plate was of malice, another of falsehood, another of doubt, another of lack of faith. But there was nothing good for the saints. But, when they touched the plates they became full of light and were converted into other food.

“The saints live in the centre of the heart and know its Great Secret,” explained Luis

... “Because of this they are the only ones who can change bad into good, and the black into white, and the ugly into beautiful. And doubts... Tom which are the questions of the mind, these they wrap up in the white coat of faith, faith in the Creator of the Universe. Do not look for answers in the big enigmas of your little

reason...The saints know that the questions are infinite. Some are answered and thousands of new ones are born...They know that at the end of every path is the Love of God and they trust in him with all their soul...therefore be one you too, be a little soul from Babau, like you are!

Never live in the perimeters of your heart for there you can see only shadows and you are very close to the world of selfishness. Like the Star that brought us here, with your sincere thoughts, it will bring you close to the Kingdom of the Heart. Others go in carts and some on foot, and some go limping and wounded because their thinking is mixed up or incorrect.

Remember, when you are close to the Kingdom of the Heart, you can improve, become better, and be a more marvelous beings, capable of transforming all the bad into light.” At this moment a lark started to sing...And woke Tom up in his dog house...There was no City of the Heart, no Star, no Juan...”Have I been dreaming?” Tom said very astonished...”What is it all about? What happened to me? I want to know, why have I hair, and the lark has feathers, and the fish scales...and ...and why! From today on the answers to these questions will rest in the heart. Love is what everything responds to,,,,,, not reason, ...andand Love is in the heart...and ...well, I will hold it above all learning to learn to love cats,” Tom said to himself. “And look, at that. It is still early,” he said doing a half circle turn and laid down to continue sleeping. He had a marvelous dream that, he and all the cats of the neighborhood were sleeping together happily and affectionately there, in the City of the heart.

The heart is a little piano

The sparrow that lives in the jasmine bush landed beside Tom’s dog house one day and said.

“The heart is a little piano, it makes noise if it comes from a sick heart. In reality a ‘bad heart’ is only a piano that is out of tune. Every time one wants to make some music it... creaks like a door that needs oil!”

I tell you this, my dear Tom; because dogs like you, who are warm and affectionate, have in their hearts the best pianos in the world of sentiments. It is super small but like a gold-finch it is well tuned, and how it knows how to sing!

“The dogs,” the sparrow continued saying,” are born into this world to teach us how to love.” You know that they love mankind and always forgive their mistakes. The heart that loves cannot hold a grudge against anyone. It is so finely tuned that it composes music of forgiveness, and never music of anger or a grudges.....”

“Out of tune,” barked Tom in dog language. LATER he asked his friend the bird.

“Who tunes those hearts..... that areout of tune?”

“What, for example ...makes something finely tuned?”

The sparrow became very serious and said:

“Tom, when you have a good piano and casually sit down and play some notes, a little old man comes by from the ocean of goodness called,

Don Olvido. He touches the piano here and there and it immediately becomes perfect and full of songs.

Then the varnish begins to shine with “I DON`T REMEMBER HOW TO REMEMBER” a sign all in capitals.

If someone hurts or punishes or criticizes us the varnish I DON`T KNOW HOW TO REMEMBER protects all the notes in the heart of the piano and so it makes only beautiful songs.”

Tom went to sleep on his four paws, putting his nose on the grass, and a bit later said goodbye to the sparrow who lives in the jasmine bush thinking deeply in his little bit of dog-soul:

“Lord of all dogs...make it possible that I can always tune the keys of my heart....and that this nice old man Don Olvidio...can make it possible that I never remember any punishment that I have been given or nothing bad that I did...I do not want” , he said opening his mouth to exhale in a yawn before going to sleep....”I don’t want to have a heart that is out of tune....because a heart out of tune,.... in reality; is out of tune with the Marvellous Music of Life.”

Tom in the supermarket

Elias, the writer of children’s stories was very worried he could not find his wonderful cinnamon coloured terrier, anywhere. Tooom!m –Tooom, come here! “Where are you Tom?” Yelled Elias in a lively voice but Tom did not give any signs of life. “Can he be underneath this bush” he said, stooping down to look for him under the branches of a beautiful jasmine plant. “No he is not here, but...Where has he gone?.” “Woof!” barked Tom, poking his head out of the little window of Elias car and wagging his tail until he could wag it no more. “Tom,” exclaimed Elias smiling. “How did you guess that we are going to go for a ride?” They closed the door behind them and opened another and the two were very happy trotting off behind the house, and going out onto the avenue, in a comfortable blue Japanese car. “I will take you to the supermarket, but you must behave yourself very well, okay? The owner of the store is my friend Walter. You know he likes you very much...but only because he has never seen any of your naughty pranks,” said Elias, with a frown on his brow.

“Bah!” Thought Tom, scratching his ear with one of his back paws. “I am a ‘dog’ ... who really likes butterflies, flowers and birds... If I was a human I could not be a ‘dog’, he said sighing and lifting his head with pride... If... I am a... a... a po... et. Yes a poet! That’s right! Then I might compose verses for the butterflies and birds. And instead of running after them I’ll run in front of them. And so I will not aggravate my friend Elias. For he was talking about my naughty pranks yesterday. Like the time, I chased a humming bird, and jumped up on the table in the garden where he was writing a story...”

“We are here already,” said Elias, interrupting the thoughts of his friend the dog.

“Woof! Here” he said jumping down and ready to get out of the car. “Now you go on the leach, so wait for me until I finish shopping and I will come back here for you.” He tied Tom to a place at the entrance of the supermarket especially made for the pets of customers. Tom found himself in a world he hated with all his heart. Elias attached his leach to a thick metal pipe where he was to stay, and wait, waiting....waiting and sighing patiently.

The whole time people were passing, patting his head, and telling him silly things like “What a nice Dog you are! Koochie, Koochie Koo,” and “what a beautiful coat you have”...and other fashionable sayings that made absolutely no impression on him...where he sat just inside the store. “Who says you are an angel?” At least Tom thought himself one, it was clear he was, in spite of his relationship with cats.

He was sitting patiently waiting when ...surprise! Elias had attached the leach poorly and this time it broke away from the metal post and fell to the ground. “This is for me” barked Tom full of happiness! And without more adieus, he was in the supermarket. There were so many people, because it was late Saturday afternoon and all the world was there to shop. Tom could not contain himself from the pleasure of trotting here and there. Some people saw him, but paid him no attention to him. The truth was that no one was paying much attention to anything; they were so busy amused by the pretty things...he knew that he could not touch anything, but ...he sniffed here and there. And well no one said that it was prohibited to sniff. The first thing he saw was a wagon full of caramels and chocolates! “This is heaven! He went around slowly...slowly, and saw in one cardboard box a mountain of dwarfs made of white chocolate. They had nice beards and wore boots that came up to their knees and a thick belt was tied around them.

“Come to our chocolate country!” Said one of the dwarfs who spoke dog language. “Woof” exclaimed Tom. The dwarf understood very well what Tom had said, which was that he could not go there because his human friend Elias would suffer if he did not return. He said goodbye to all the dwarfs, and to a little toy ballerina that was in a box. He ran over to another cart, and another, and another, and still another. In reality he visited almost all of them. Carts full of perfume, foods, brooms, and also the place where they sold plants and flowers, plus another one where they displayed

leashes and rubber bones for dogs. Tom was moving quickly but not to the point where he was knocking anything to the ground. He took a lot of care to do things as Elias had taught him. Everything was going well until; he jumped up to see a display of products. His eyes caught an incredible sight, dogs! Stuffed dogs, all life-size, all breeds, and all with unimaginable fur. There were dogs like him, and toy dogs..."Woof!" Barked Tom, taking a jump in his way of greeting, and to sometimes to ask, "How are you?" But really none of the dogs could answer.

A toy witch who was rocking continuously in a chair with eyes like two living red coals spoke to him. "Tom you are a foolish dog! Don't you know that toys do not speak..?" "...So. do they bark.?" "These dogs are for decoration, they cannot jump or even run like you...." "So are you a nice witch? Are you?" asked Tom? "Yes, truly I am that which appears to be as a witch, as a matter of fact, and ...and...and...not exactly. I can give the dogs a voice, and the ability to jump like you...because what are witches for except to make spells eh?" " Oh, exclaimed the witch sitting in her rocking chair. I believe that you can make all these dogs come alive," and saying so! " Patratan," all the dogs began to bark and they also began to howl in a beautiful way. "What a very huge jumble to be in the middle of", Tom said to them. "Follow me! Make for the door!" All the dogs got behind Tom, whom they made their leader. "Let's get out of this place," said Tom in dog-language, and ran. How they ran until they reached a plaza that was completely empty. He found that they needed a break. All of them needed to rest, and relax and so get off their feet. So they rested with their tongues hanging-out. It was really a sea of tongues, and eyes, filling that part of the plaza. When they had rested a little, Tom said, "What is it like to be a toy? Eh? Is it very boring?" "Well...said a Great Dane who seemed to have some intelligence I have seen toy humans...Human toys," asked Tom?" For Tom did not understand what his eminence, the Great Dane with clipped ears said." Look at this", he said observing Tom, from his great towering height! "We call them Toy Humans, humans who have no hearts, who only have little minds, with which they speak and they believe themselves to be humans !..In reality we toys know a lot about humans. Tom, for example when they go to buy something at the supermarket they only remember what they.... need.

They never get anything for the other people, never...They are thinking only, ..now.....I need this.... I need that and at this price... They buy for their own physical families: those who live with them- their children, their mothers, and so you can see...There are few who go in saying something like 'I am going to shop for chocolates, blankets, or food, for the old folks home or give food to the poor orphan children.

Those who buy only for themselves we call -'Human toys,' because it seems that they are living when in reality, they are dead really super-dead. This is because their truthful- heart which lives being in Love, is not working at it at all--- "I will tell you more," he said, and the Great Dane began to speak in his booming voice. "When they

take us home, we stuffed toys, it is not only because they have a child, no...sometimes they put us on a shelf or on the bed or in the library! They put us in their house because they need to be close to the ones who live in the country known as the 'Country of Tenderness'. For when they see us we soften their hearts...How do you explain it?...It is as though we sweeten them a little...So, the toy- humans awaken and become more mindful of their duties...and return to being true humans. This makes us delighted, because it blesses them, and their inner world then becomes full of rainbows with colours, and everything is covered with light." "Gl...glowing..." said a little one with tears in his eyes....

"To be full of dogs is like, to be loyal and loving like us dogs are," said the Dalmatian, who did not understand the explanation very well....

"Is it because of this there are so many stuffed toys everywhere," asked Tom?

"Really it is very clear, that because of this!" thundered the Great Dane..."When your heart is filled with all the tenderness that there is in the world, things begin to change. Not just a few souls become happy in this world, but everyone"...And we have been contriving to this," howled a Chihuahua who spoke very badly. "Contributing!" said his majesty the Great Dane correcting his brother dog.

"Yes contributing to it."

Then said Tom thoughtfully, "It is necessary for us to return to the supermarket..."

There are many human toys that need you,...the Inhabitants of the Country of Tenderness."

"This appears to me to be a correct thought" said, His Excellency the Great Dane. He then trotted off and everyone returned to the supermarket. But this time in silence, without barking and this made it possible to go un-noticed.....all the way, except for the Great Dane who two or three times was noticed....

Each one took his place on the shelf but without Tom, who with tears in his eyes took leave of his friends saying: "I hope that with each day there are less toy humans. I hope that with every day there are more true human beings." Finally the Great Dane commented from his tower: "This means for no-one to leave the supermarket without buying something to give to the needy, as you already know."

"Thank you witch," said Tom putting one paw gently on her rocking chair. "How soon they returned to complaining silently"...And on saying this, all the toys returned to being stuffed animals. But apparently just for those who could not grasp the immense tenderness that lives deep within their essence.

Suddenly, a voice thundered out in the supermarket. It was Elias who had discovered Tom. He said extremely annoyed! "How did you get here? How did you unfasten yourself from the post? Didn't you know that I had prohibited you to enter Walter's store? "Tom's mouth was speechless and dropped open, with fright or to

say; 'he was frozen in his steps like in cement. He saw an old man, leaning over the cart to make some purchases with a very big and angular nose. The old man had an expression of being seemingly very, very annoyed with all creation. Tom hid behind one of the brooms, until he saw that people greeted the old man with a lot of reverence and were saying.

“Have a very good afternoon, Mr. Auguston.”

The old man chewed and growled, at all responses and continued, pushing the cart.

There were some ladies talking in a low voice.

“It is Auguston Maricio Karkel, he is the owner of half of the city but is very miserable. He always comes to make his purchases but does not trust nor care about anyone since he lost his family in an airplane accident.” Tom was listening very attentively, saying to himself—He is a toy human....if, it is the pain he has in him in fact that causes the transformation of his heart ... but ... I...will do what I can to change the heart of Don Auguston.

And he ran and he ran, holding in his teeth the most beautiful stuffed dog he could find. And putting it in the cart of Don Auguston, he began to bark and jump to see if it would make him happy.

Don Auguston changed his air from being irritable and become softer ...softer like in the evening when the sun sets and the clouds are illuminated on the edges with light..., he was moved by the changes and he went again to the toy section and took another dog...and later another, and another. ..and later another and another, until only the witch and the chocolate knomes were left. Don Auguston had remained paralyzed never had he seen anyone like Tom with this conduct of going and coming. So it was the people were not able to understand what they were seeing.... “He is just bringing toys! “Said a lady with, thick bifocals, casually. “He is just bringing toys,” yelled a fat child who was devouring a gigantic sucker.

“Who’s dog is this? “ Asked Don Auguston, drying the tears that were running down his cheeks.

“He is mine,” said Elias who was able to reach Walter immediately...”I lost him, please pardon his behavior...he is a good dog and never has he ever done this before!”

“Pardon who?” Said Don Auguston taking the arm, of Elias...”Young man...this dog of yours has given me something unimaginable...he gave me happiness. Look for yourself at what he has brought and put in my cart! Toys! I have not bought any since I lost my son and my grandchildren! Ha! Where is the owner of the store? I am going to buy all the toys he has. Yes, tomorrow is Sunday, and I want every child to wake up in this city with one of his own.

And it was evident that toys.

Don Auguston was going to keep the Great Dane, the witch and the chihuahua who spoke so badly... “and this I know is very good Tom.”

...Tom , Elina and Elias visited Don Auguston, very often. They took him out for rides, and watched out for him, calming him with all manners of kindness. With the passing of days and months, Don Auguston became a happy old man full of goodness—

One night while Tom was sleeping, he thought he heard the voice of the Great Dane who spoke to him from his high towering head. He told him that Don Auguston was a toy human, but.....the inhabitants of the Country of Tenderness had changed his Heart, which now functions with the marvelous, super fantastic fuel...of love.....

Tom the hero

It was dawn, Tom the dog was super content. It was a holiday! Tom was going for a picnic with his two human friends he loved the most, Elias and Elina!

Elias was a writer of childrens stories. He had bought Tom in a pet store and gave him a white dog house with a coloured roof as a gift and the two were very happy together. To make it even better, he had a friend who was a vetenarian called Elina, and who was also very pretty. Tom adored these human beings who were so very sweet and affectionate.

I am a lucky dog, thought Tom pleasantly in his heart.

I must always behave well with them, and take their advice, I must be gentle and affectionate with everyone.

When the sun was up a little higher in the sky, Elias got up. Tom ran up to him as happy as could be, turning circles round and round him, and wagging his tail in happiness.

It seems that you know that we are going for a trip, said Elias smiling. Later on they began to get ready. First came the food. They had containers with lots to eat and a special treat for Tom to have for lunch. They also packed the tablecloth and serviettes in a bag, and of course the drinks. When preparations were finally done, Elina came by, sweeter and prettier than anyone else, or, so it seemed to Tom. Each time he saw her he felt an increasing love for the qualities she possessed. In just a few short minutes they were all starting off on their trip in a common type of car, and heading for the countryside. What a nice breeze thought Tom, putting his head out of the window, and leaving Elina and Elias behind for the sweet perfume of the morning air. He saw many animals in the countryside that were unfamiliar to him.

Eating grass! How strange thought Tom, observing one of the cows eating what was the food natural to him and very slowly. Awhile later he remembered the teachings of Lalu the elephant from the zoo, his friend, who told him to,

-Love those who are the same as you are, or who appear to be less able than you Tom. It is necessary to love those who are different. A heart full of love is a generous heart, and knows how to think about everything, with tenderness.

Ah! Sighed Tom, How nice it is to have friends like Lalu, the elephant and the Great Dane Ananda the dog. They are your neighbours, and teachers and your guide.

Soon the car stopped and Elias exclaimed very contently.

“Humph! Get out Tom we are here!” Tom took a jump and stopped and his feet took off from underneath him, and he began to run all over the place until phewh.... he fell into the water!

“Be careful Tom,” this is a river, said Elina. Tom went down to the beach which was extremely wet.

A river! How much water does it have in it? It is like a sea of water, his doggy mind thought.

Do not go too close to it, advised Elina once more. “You could drown and die. Yet, there are some dogs who are good swimmers, still do not get too close to the River.

Drown and die thought Tom?...did they mean to say....disappear? It was clear that he did not understand this idea of “drown and die”, but thought ...No I am not a good swimmer no sir!

Other cars and people began to come. Some were like Elias and Elina, and said hello very warmly. One carried a guitar and other things with which to sing. Tom felt a sea of happiness. I am learning a thousand new things which fills me with happiness.

For example, making friends with a Boxer dog, and a German Shepherd, from this area, or digging a hole and burying one of the bones from lunch. And discovering some mushrooms half buried in the roots of a tree, and learning that hornets are creatures that you should not irritate, for they know well enough how to defend themselves...

It seemed everything was being blown about by the wind. A child not more than five years old, decided to go into the water at the side of the river after his toy ship and ended up making a very big and careless mistake. He fell into the water and could feel himself being dragged along by the current.

Mommy, Daddy, yelled the child.

My God! Our child! They said together when they discovered the little one in the waters of the river.

We do not know how to swim!. Neither do we! Said the other people who were gathered about there.

Elias and Elina had gone to take a short walk.

What can be done thought Tom .He looked at the river and saw that as each second passed the child was farther from the beach. In his doggy heart he was desperate. It beat with such force that it seemed that it was going to get up and come right out of his nose. His eyes were fixed on the child.

At this point his whole nature fell into rebellion.

I am thinking he said, I am thinking like a cat!

For us dogs the first thing is feelings and without permitting one more thought to occur he threw himself into the river. He put all his soggy soul into the undertaking.

If I save this boy and disappear later, it is not important to me, he said. Life is worth nothing if we do not live it for the good of others...he swam and stroked and breathed and breathed until he reached the child. Tom grabbed him by the shirt and dragged, and dragged him towards the shore. Suddenly Tom felt dead with tiredness, and his strength was pushed to the extreme and he could not move anymore.

He looked towards the beach and he saw the eyes of the mother of the child, full of tears...

He who loves, said Tom..he who loves always does a little more...And dogs love their human friends! Strength Tom, breath hard, you can do it...And he moved one paw, and the other, almost there, almost there.....until he found he could put his feet down solidly on the bottom of the water. He saw the people running towards him but...that was the last straw, for he fainted and fell down. Tom the dog! Tom was able to save a child!

He did not know how much time elapsed. He was lying down on the beach and many people were gathered together near him. He first saw Elina and later Elias, they both were crying...and looking very serious.

I can not make him respond moaned Elina, with her face bathed in tears and appearing to be suffering alot...Tom saw them, but ...felt far away, very far away. He was Tom full of light, as if the Sun bathed him with light from within.

He felt alive very alive.....

He was flying like the birds! What was this? It appears that I am flying! It is a very, very, rare sensation, that he was feeling, Rare and beautiful at the same time.

-“Give him air! Breath into him! Mouth to mouth” said Elina.

Soon she put him on his side and placed her hands behind his shoulder blade and began to apply pressure to him so that the blood would go to his head. Whew said Tom!, feeling a new attraction towards the earth.

It was as if coming down from a great height, and returning to his home and body.

He is breathing, he is breathing yelled Elina with happiness petting Tom. –Put a coat on him, to warm him up. Everyone was anxious and began to run off looking for something to comfort Tom with. It appeared there were many people around about;

Soon Tom was much more comfortable. They began to make a mattress with many blankets and covered him up well. Tom felt weak but happy. He was once more among dear human beings.

“Who has seen the dog that floats he asked?

Because.....

Because I went out of my body and flew, I am sure of this....but who”

He opened his eyes and found the eyes of his friend Elias. He saw the hands of the writer petting his fur with all the sweetness in the world.

Then, Elias, who always interpreted the look of Tom, understood his question. He bent over, slowly, slowly and whispered in his ear

“You are yourself.

You are the same friend and brother Tom, my good dog...

You are the same ...All children of God, have a soul according to their nature and it is very childish to believe that only us humans, possess a spirit...YOU almost left us...but ...the care of Elina and all our love brought you back to your body and because of this you have come back to be with us.”

A little while later, he got up on his feet and wagged his tail very happily. He began to feel better, still a little tired, but well.

He began to feel better, still a little tired, but well.

He then saw all the people around him looking at him with a lot of affection,

They came and gave him toys. Tom did not understand very well what had happened you could tell this by the way he wagged his tail and lay down to rest. “You are a Hero Dog” said the fat man with a camera! He took photos for the newspapers and television. The entire world will be talking about you, you are an example for the mass.

What strange words this human was speaking, he thought.

Tom....hero...newspapers....photos....televisión.”I do not understand any of this.”

“You saved our child! You pulled the little one out of the river by dragging him.”
Said the parents of the child to all the world...

“This dog is invaluable, he is a hero!”

Tom thought and re-thought without understanding anything of what he heard. A tree gives its fruit, ...a bird flies....the wind blows itself out.....and dogs give their life to their human friends....How rare it is to find this....Each one of them is loyal to his true nature, and does what he is sent to do....When everything was over, the child was walking off with his parents, the man with the camera disappeared in a car and Elias and Elina were walking too. Tom, as always, went in the back seat of the car but this time, he did not put his head out of the window. This time he paid attention to his feeling of being a little tired.

When he and Elias were alone, Elias said:

“My friend Tom: this night, you are not going to sleep in your dog house, instead you can sleep at the foot of my bed. Here I can watch over you better and wake if you need me, you have had a difficult day! “

Tom felt very happy with the news. He slept the whole night long like a log.

When the people woke up it was in all the news papers. A friendly neighbour showed Elias one. The heading said. “Tom the hero dog, saved a child from dying in the river”, further on there was a picture of the parents of the child, whom he saved. Later on that day the parents of the child came to Tom’s house and brought a beautiful coat to wear in winter, and a marvelous collar as a gift. In all he could not have been treated better.

I just obeyed my heart, repeated Tom,, and it gave me the impulse to save the child...

Later on more people began to come over. Elias lifted Tom up in his arms for people to see and held him with infinite sweetness.

-When all humans learn to be like these dogs, when we obey our heart and not let the mind interfere so much, then in time with these feelings, Tom, this world the Earth, will be the most marvelous place. It will be the same as heaven...

Tom snuggled up in the arms of Elias, he smiled and thought, hanging his tongue out with happiness this thought: You made a mistake, brother Elias the most marvelous place of all, is the one I now occupy in the arms of my brother human...

