

Levi's "Scary Adventure"

It all started July 7, 2008. I left the puppy mill for someplace they call rescue. My first stop was the vet's office for all the things that will help me and keep me well, I heard. Man, I had a bath. I have to tell you, I was *TERRIFIED!* Now what was going to happen to me? I have seen some really scary things in my young life. I went for "the long ride" and didn't know where. Turned out, I moved into a home with other Shelties, but people lived there too. I have never lived with people and they have always scared me. I learned they weren't very nice creatures.

Things didn't seem so bad, but I wouldn't let my guard down. I will play with the Shelties, but stay away from the people. I would nap with one eye open in a different room where I felt safer. The people were good to me. I always had good food and fresh water, they would hold me and pet me and work to convince me I am really safe. I would appease them a bit. I learned to walk on a leash and even come by for some attention and petting. So, this is a foster home. I want to stay here FOREVER!

About six weeks later, my life changed again. My foster mom took me to a couple's home. They had installed a fence so I would have a safe place for potty outings and exercise. After a week I had the biggest scare of my life!!!!!!!!!! I was outside dragging a rope. *The rope was to get me back in the house, since I was still afraid of these new people, after all, I didn't know them that well.* I looked up and ROARING, coming up the yard was a lawnmower. I panicked. The gate was left open and all I could think to do was run for my life! That is what I did. I had to get away from that loud machine. The rope trailing behind me.

I ran and ran until I found the thickest brush I could hide in. I think I heard voices calling my name in the distance, but had to stay very quiet and still to be safe. I didn't know it was my foster mom. It could have been any strange person. I didn't sleep much that night or many nights after that. I woke up starving and thirsty. Water was everywhere so that was easy to find, until I got tangled by the rope I was dragging. Okay, I know what to do here. I'll chew it off. I left a little bit hanging, but I was free and on my search for food. I moved from house to house, out building to out building, sniffing and looking for anything, dog food, cat food, anything.

On Sept. 22nd, I was by the road at 215th Street & Stateline, when a car came by. It was so loud on the gravel road, I didn't know what to do, so just paced for an escape and then disappeared. Another night, then morning here comes a person with a couple of dogs walking. Maybe I can follow them and get something to eat. More nights came and went. Then the big storm! The thunder was so loud, I had to run for my life! It stayed with me all night long. I would try to rest, but it was there again. Finally it stopped. *WHEW!*

I found a house with little dogs outside. Little dogs were safe and there might be food. I romped and played in the yard with the little weenie dogs that morning. When they went in, I found a shady spot under a pine tree at 185th & Metcalf, napped and watched the cars go by. Then it happened, here came a person talking to me and coming up to me. I decided "I'm out here!" I took off running for the farm fields full of high weeds to find a place to hide and nap after all that running. After a while, here came another person. When she saw me, she sat down. I stood up and slowly slipped away through the stand of pine trees. Next thing I knew, I was trotting down Metcalf with a car driving slowly beside me. A person got out and was after me. I ran back to the fields AND THEN, there were 5 people surrounding me. Wow, I was able to make it through the fence square and disappear. I was REALLY scared, so I ran and ran some more.

Four more nights passed. I found a lady with a big dog. Man, I think that dog wants to play, but he is too big for me. Time to slip back in the woods to hide some more. Maybe I should keep moving. I zipped across 175th Street just as that lady came driving by. I don't know where I am going, but North was my direction. Behind me there were just too many scary things.

Many days searching for food, shelter and water passed. It was 10 days later before my life was going to change again. On Oct. 11th at about 164th and Stateline a woman came running by with her dogs. One was really BIG. Scared me, so I took off. Gosh, I was so hungry, I found a chicken coop. The smell was interesting, but there was no food. I saw a guy coming my way, I headed back to the woods to hide and look for food. I could smell something. It was food!!!! I crept up to it. There were soft towels like my long lost bed that was always safe. Oh, food!!! Then BAM! That scared me to death! Someone shut the crate door! No one was there, it was a TRAP and I fell for it. I had been so very smart, but maybe I still was. There was a dog barking and people came and dropped treats and food in for me.

Next thing I know still in the trap I was lifted into a car for another long ride. When we stopped, I was carried in the house, still in the trap. There were more Shelties. I got lots of food and clean water and then I could rest. I knew now that everything would be okay. The next day I moved to a small kennel, went for a short ride and guess who was there waiting for me???????? YES, it was my foster mom! I really am safe. I was so relieved that I didn't care while she combed and brushed out all the seeds and stickers out. She told me I was a mess and kind of skinny. My foster dad had the nasty job of picking 20+ ticks off me. Tonight, I am still tired, but I am safe. I plan to stay close to safety and will get more hugs and kisses after my bath. I heard I smell bad. *LIFE IS GOOD!*

We are all very relieved to have Levi back safe. We worried for nearly a month about coyotes, bobcats, cars and other worrisome things that could happen to him. Sheltie foster parents drove the streets of Bucyrus and Stilwell distributing posters door to door and attaching them to posts. Each sighting call required more posters in different areas. Over 1,000 went out. Without people caring enough to watch for him and call, we would not have him home safely. Kind folks met us, helping with information and suggestions. They monitored the traps at 3 different locations so if anything got in there that wasn't Levi it would be quickly released. After the big chase day. We knew we could never catch him that way. The folks who allowed us to set the trap on their property were all so kind and developed an attachment to Levi and were there to help get him to safety. To ALL the kind folks that were part of Levi's journey. He says, "THANKS".

Levi was very lucky. Many dogs that get lost are not found alive, if they are found at all. Please keep your pets safe.