

Dottie's Thanksgiving Dinner

by RV staff writer J.C.

Dottie the Dalmatian puppy knew today was special. The nice house she lived in with the Johnston family was so busy! It was Thanksgiving, and everyone was getting ready for a big dinner. The children were making paper turkeys at the craft table. The doorbell kept ringing as cousins, grandparents, uncles, and aunts all came to visit.

And the kitchen! Such amazing smells were coming from the oven! Dottie was not allowed to be in the kitchen today. Mom said that she would get in the way. Dad said she would lick everything she could reach. They were both right. Dottie wished she could get in there and smell the turkey up close. And, of course, she would give it a good lick if she could!

The children had been instructed to keep the dog out of the way. They did, at first. They played Fetch with her favorite ball. However, once their cousins arrived, they forgot about Dottie and started playing with each other. The dog got closer and closer to the kitchen. She tried to keep her paws silent on the floor. Everything smelled so good! On the edge of the counter was a plate filled with slices of ham. Dottie jumped up on her back legs and stuck her nose in the plate. Before she had a chance to eat it, Dad saw her.

"No! Leave that alone, Dottie! No food for you," he said. He made the dog leave. Dottie was sorry she didn't get to taste any ham. "You can't be in here. Go outside," continued Dad. He let her out into the yard where some family members were playing football. Dottie smiled, her tongue hanging out. This was good! She liked running. She grabbed the football from a small boy and wouldn't give it back. He started to cry, and Dottie got in trouble.

"That's enough, Dottie," said Uncle Bill, taking the ball away from her. "Maybe you should go back in." He opened the door again, and the sad pup went inside.

She walked to where some of the children were making turkey feathers from brown and yellow paper. "Here, Dottie. Wear these!" The children laughed, putting the feathers around her collar. "Now you are a turkey!" Dottie was not happy. She shook her head until the paper feathers fell off. This was not fun. She decided to go someplace quiet.

The spotted puppy wandered into the dining room. No one was there. The table was set with clean dishes and glasses. In the middle of the tablecloth was a vase with pretty flowers and pine cones in it.

Dottie went under the table. The tablecloth was so long that it hung down to the ground. She curled up and closed her eyes. *This was a good place for a snooze*, she thought. She would be hidden away from those silly kids. Dottie fell asleep.

In the kitchen, Mom wiped her hands on her apron. Everything was ready. She and Dad began carrying big

bowls and plates of delicious food into the dining room. There was a lot to eat! "Before we get started, we should take a family picture," suggested Mom. Dad agreed. They went to tell everyone to go outside for a Thanksgiving photo together.

Dottie's nose woke up before she did. It twitched, smelling the wonderful aroma of many kinds of food. She came out from under the table. Her tail began wagging when she saw all the food in front of her. She looked around. The house was empty.

She remembered what Dad had said. "No food for you." He was wrong.

Oh, YES, food for me! thought Dottie, excitedly. She reached her mouth close to the nearest plate. It was turkey. She gave it a little lick. *Nom, nom, nom!* Dottie wanted more.

She ripped off a turkey leg and wolfed it down. It was the best thing she had ever eaten! She jumped up and ate some of the sliced ham. It was delicious, too. She tasted the cranberry sauce, the stuffing, the corn, and the green beans. Dottie had never been so happy in her whole life.

"Oh my goodness," said a quiet voice. It was Aunt Colleen. She walked back out of the room and called the rest of family to come and see. They could not believe their eyes.

The dog was standing on the table, ears deep in mashed potatoes and gravy. There was red cranberry sauce on the carpet. The flowers and pine cones had spilled over. The turkey and ham had been eaten. Most of the other food had been tasted and was splattered all over the table. Dottie's tail stopped wagging when she noticed the people in the room.

Uh-oh, she thought.

"She's ruined dinner," sobbed Mom. "I've been cooking all day. There's no time to make more food now!" She ran upstairs, crying.

Dottie got off the table. She rolled onto her back with her legs in the air. She did not feel so good. "That dog looks like she's going to explode," laughed one of the cousins.

"What are we going to do?" Aunt Colleen worried. "All the restaurants are closed today."

Dad didn't know what to do. It was terrible, but it was also kind of funny. They needed a solution, and fast. How was he going to feed all these people? Thankfully, he had an idea.

"Well, I guess Dottie has had her dinner," he laughed. "So we should have ours next. It's a good thing the pizza place still delivers!"

Questions

1. Give an example of how the family was celebrating Thanksgiving.

2. Put the dog's activities in order:
 - a) Mom cried and ran upstairs.
 - b) Dad told her to stay out of the kitchen.
 - c) The dog jumped on the table and ate all the Thanksgiving dinner.
 - d) She took a nap.
 - e) She tried to play football and took it away from a small boy.
 - f) The children stuck paper turkey feathers on her collar.

3. What happened when Dottie was left alone in the dining room with the food?

4. What was Dad's solution to the problem of a ruined dinner?

Vocabulary List

Each of the vocabulary words below are used in the reading passage. As you read the passage, pay attention to context clues that suggest the word's meaning.

1. instructed
2. wandered
3. snooze
4. aroma
5. wolfed
6. sobbed
7. solution

Context Clues

Using context clues from the sentences in the passage, underline the correct meaning of the word in boldface.

1) The children had been **instructed** to keep the dog out of the way.

- a. told b. asked c. invited d. taught

2) The spotted puppy **wandered** into the dining room.

- a. walked quickly b. walked slowly c. walked in one direction d. walked aimlessly

3) This was a good place for a **snooze**, she thought.

- a. snack b. rest c. bit of quiet d. party

4) Dottie's nose woke up before she did. It twitched, smelling the wonderful **aroma** of many kinds of food.

- a. taste b. sight c. sound d. scent

5) She ripped off a turkey leg and **wolfed** it down.

- a. ate slowly b. ate quickly c. ate carefully d. ate daintily

6) "She's ruined dinner," **sobbed** Mom.

- a. yelled b. complained c. cried d. laughed

7) They needed a **solution**, and fast. How was he going to feed all these people?

- a. liquid b. dinner c. answer d. question