

Mickey the Monkey is Broken Hearted



The Loneliest Cowboy

It has been a sad month for the only monkey in Perquimans County. That is what Mrs. Ola Merritt reports after one of her monkeys die of pneumonia, at the age of 21.

Mickey, the male squirrel monkey of the Snug Harbor resident, has been broken-hearted since his mate, Susie, died Dec. 10.

Mrs. Merritt said, "I'll never own another monkey. I would like a chimpanzee." Since Susie died, Mickey will not allow Mrs. Merritt to touch him. Before she could play with him and he would not resist in any way. The lady now has teeth marks on her hands where the little fellow has taken some offense.

"Susie has always been like that, but since she died he has started being like that. I guess he figures I

have done something to her," stated the white-haired woman.

Mrs. Merritt got Mickey about 14 years ago from the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals in Norfolk, Va. Susie had been in the Merritt household for almost 11 years.

Mrs. Merritt has always had pets. Her children, who are grown, tell her that she has to have something to "baby". She presently owns three dogs and one cat. She has had rabbits as pets in her life, too.

She recounts a time when she carried her rabbit, on leash, into the Luray Caverns. Their was a sign that stated, "No Dogs Allowed". That didn't stop her from walking her large-eared pet in the place. When she was stopped by the guards, it

was more out curiosity that they stopped her and did not attempt to show their authority. As you would guess, the rabbit was the first of its kind to view the caverns.

Jokingly, Mrs. Merritt talks about a pact she has made with God. "When I pray, I ask the Lord to take my pets before me. Because if I die first, my animals will be put to sleep. Maybe he's trying to tell me something."

The animals take up most of the time of Mrs. Merritt. At present, one of her dogs is near death and has to be tended to most

of the day. She says she can't leave him and she wouldn't think of carrying him out because of his sickness.

It is easy to tell, even after a brief encounter, that the 65-year old thinks a lot of animals. She has sat up many nights caring for them as if they were her own children.

The question now is if Mickey will ever regain his trust in the lady who cares so much for him. Or will Mickey die broken-hearted yearning for his lost love, Susie. We'll be updating our story in months to come in, "As the Monkey Turns".

Photos
and
Story
by
Tony
Jordan



Making Monkey Shines



Enjoying a Sucker



DOESN'T REPLACE SUSIE—Mickey seems to look at the sock with indignation. Mrs. Merritt placed the sock in his cage when Susie died in hopes that it would keep him company. Needless to say, it hasn't worked.

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