

ALL IN A DAY

By Vera Blaine

From his kitchen window John looked at his yard and saw his dog carrying something in his mouth, but what was it? The black shaggy dog, a mix of many breeds, came closer in view. Whatever he carried was black and it partially covered his furry, white chest.

Looking closer, John could hardly believe what he saw. The young dog, Flipper, was proudly carrying a skunk whose black fur and white stripes blended in with the dog's coat. His first impulse was to tap on the window as he watched Flipper gently put the skunk on the ground and hover over it. At first the skunk did not move. Was it dead? Then it slowly crawled away, but Flipper pounced on it and took it by the neck. John held his breath as the dog carried his prize with him through the "doggie" door into the garage.

He knew little about skunks and wondered whether it had already sprayed Flipper or would do so in the garage. Or, could it be rabid? He didn't think Flipper would kill the skunk. He could shoot it, but his gun was in a safe place in the garage and that was a bad idea.

He left the kitchen intending to call Animal Control or someone to help capture that skunk. It was Sunday. He was home alone. His wife, Gloria, and their two boys had gone to the Mall. Now, he heard the TV and the game he had intended to watch was starting. What the hell? He grabbed a beer from the refrigerator and moved to his favorite chair in front of the TV. His team was doing poorly and his thoughts kept going back to what might be going on in the garage.

And, he didn't know when Gloria and the boys were coming home. Would they innocently open the garage door and be faced with what?? He had better put a sign on the garage door. To make it visible from a distance he taped several sheets of paper together and with a black marking pen made a sign with large letters that read: "DON'T OPEN DOOR - SKUNK INSIDE". As he was taping his sign to the garage door, Gloria and the boys drove in the driveway. Car doors opened and immediately John was surrounded. Gloria asked, "Is this some kind of a joke you're trying to play on us? What's happening?"

After John explained the situation as best he could, and before any more was said, his 10-year old son clapped his hands. "I know who the skunk belongs to, Jimmy Strang. He told me this morning that his pet skunk had disappeared. Here, Mom, take my sack. I'll run down to his house and tell him we found it."