

OLD DAMES NEED OLD DOGS

By Sarah Holloway
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Going on 11 years ago when my husband and I found our companion, Harvey, a supposed mix of Chihuahua and Yorkshire terrier, I thought that we might all grow old together.

My husband and I did grow old (he died in 2005) but, except for a few gray whiskers, Harvey seems as sprightly and unaffected by the years as he did when we brought him home in a cardboard box. I always thought that dogs described as "old" laid about dreaming of raiding garbage cans and capturing squirrels, but this is not the case with Harvey.

He leaps and jumps and races across our fenced yard to yap at passerby withal the zest of a month-old puppy. At every meal, he turns into a whining, moaning whirlwind, jumping up and down, barking and prancing about as if he hadn't been fed in months.

Of course, he's always been around people who love to eat, but I'm pretty disciplined. It would never occur to me to jump up and down and shriek with anticipation at the sight of a chocolate pie or a piece of cheesecake or even a hidden stash of Hershey bars. I might be tempted but should I try leaping about, I'd probably end up flat on my back, screaming, like that woman in the TV ad, "I've fallen and I can't get up!" Plus, I exercise a lot of control around favorite foods – most of the time anyway. Well, some of the time. Well, many times I do.

I've always envied those who can make really good, fluffy, homemade biscuits and have tied in vain for years to get them right. Nobody in my family ever liked the results. My husband, a plain-spoken man, always said they weren't fit for human consumption. He suggested they could be used effectively to smack somebody upside the head with or, if finely crushed with a hammer, as crumbs for the birds.

I'm sill trying and Harvey acts like they're the food of the gods. Watching him leap and yowl and carry on like a starved crazed creature at the sight of my rock-hard little made-from-scratch treats gives me confidence to keep making them and I eat 'em too.

Harvey and I rise early, eat early and go to bed early and generally live a quiet, uneventful life. We both have to take thyroid medicine before eating breakfast. I'm not always the brightest before I've had coffee and once took his pills instead of my own, but nothing horrendous happened. The poison control person took me to leave off my pill that day and all was fine.

I'm prone to sit in a recliner and watch old movies but Harvey keeps me moving.

His jumping, barking, idiotic antics keep me smiling. His unconditional affection warms my heart. In short, this old-young dog is keeping as both young!

*Read more 'Writers' Corner' and Sarah Holloway stories at: <http://www.ajlambert.com>