

The Sad Tale of Rosie Rabbit

Rosie was a miniature rabbit, who belonged to my sister Elizabeth back in the seventies. She was about the size of a small lettuce, which doubtless she would have enjoyed eating!

At that time I was living and working in South London and Elizabeth was in Rickmansworth. I worked at an Infants School in Kennington and a little girl in my class at the time called Eileen told me one day that the family pet – a miniature rabbit - had had babies. I learned that “kittens” is the correct term. I remember Eileen very well. She had beautiful dark eyes and wild curly hair and while she was a quiet child, she was also very able. The family wanted to find homes for these new little creatures and I knew just who would like one.

Elizabeth was delighted to learn about the rabbits and eventually arrangements were made to collect one of them. Elizabeth came down on the train and stayed with me one weekend, and on the Saturday we made our way to find the address of the rabbit “nursery”. There were 6 balls of fur to choose from, in assorted colours. They were completely irresistible and after a while Elizabeth chose one with a soft fluffy coat of mixed browns, greys and white.

We had taken a deep shopping basket lined with old towels to bring the little one home and this worked very well. The next challenge was getting her back to Rickmansworth but the new family member was very well behaved and arrived home calm and happy. Elizabeth decided to call her Rosie and it seemed to suit her.

Elizabeth was living, at that time, in a shared house, and her bedroom looked out onto a flat roof, so Rosie’s hutch was placed there. Elizabeth could easily reach her to replenish her food and water. Rosie’s hutch was painted pink and being a very feminine rabbit, she seemed to appreciate that.

Sometimes she was taken, in the car, to visit our parents, who lived in Watford. She was able to enjoy time in their back garden and, on a long lead, could explore among the shrubs. She even had an adventure playground constructed for her with cardboard tubes and boxes to find her way through and around. While she was in the garden, in the

summer time, we discovered that Rosie had an unusual taste for rose petals. If you offered her some petals through the wire netting which covered the front of her hutch, she ate them with great enthusiasm.

Occasionally Rosie was able to enjoy some time out of her hutch at home in Rickmansworth. However a large ginger tom cat who lived next door had noticed her and attacked her one day. Unfortunately poor little Rosie didn't survive this dreadful experience and we were all very sad. The only consolation was that until that day I'm sure that Rosie had enjoyed of her life in Hertfordshire.

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