

It took a lot of obnoxious behavior on the part of guest canines to provoke a dainty objection from Mandy. She was so tolerant, she did not challenge Becky's attempts to intrude on her first dog status. Becky was just being who she was, and so was Mandy. Jealousy did not seem to be in either of their repertoires of behavior, perhaps indicating that neither of them had any previous occasion to express it. Whatever the reason for its absence, their polite sparring for places to hang out or nap during the day was quite intriguing.

I encouraged Mandy to stand her ground more, and at the same time, tried to widen Becky's world enough to respect Mandy's space without threatening her new-found happiness with us. It was a tricky process, but slowly it came together. Mandy began to tentatively assert herself in the contests over favorite places and did it in innovative ways. Becky remained undaunted, while Mandy gained in morale as her strategy succeeded now and then.

The amazing thing to watch was the classy way these two dogs handled the disruptive circumstances in their own lives. Mandy had been #1 dog here for over eleven years. She was in her golden years and not as flexible as she used to be. Still, her reservoir of Scottie resiliency made this change tolerable, if not pleasant eventually. Becky was queen of her one-owner home for nine years. Her expectancies were altered dramatically, but she, too, was capable of adapting to change as time went on.