

April

By Stephanie Hendricks

You might not know it by looking at her with her luxurious black curly fur, rust colored stockings and eyebrows, white paws, broad regal white chest, white muzzle and blaze and crowning tip of white fur on the tail, a tail that seems to be perpetual wagging, in a medium slow relaxed way, in an "I'm just hanging out and loving every moment of life," an easy way kind of wag for most people not in the know would just look at her and say, she's a dog, or she's "just" a dog, or, in a rather frightened, anxious, way, she's a BIG dog while others, quite embarrassingly, might even drop down on their knees, exclaiming, "What a BEAUTIFUL dog" or even "She's the most beautiful dog I have ever seen!" but what they don't know, can't know, really, or it would create havoc the world over, is that she is in fact a magical creature presenting as a dog, that is to say, she is a sovereign being inside that dog body, a mystical soul who has no doubt been around for a long time, even though time in her current species' body is comparatively short as we think of it the ubiquitous "they" say she should only live 8 to 10 years, but it feels like to me that she has been with me not just for the last 11 years of my own lifetime, but for many lifetimes before this, and I am just guessing this now, and it seems to me that you may scoff, you may instantly deep down inside say to yourself, "Well, I always suspected this woman was a looney, and now here's the proof!" but hold on a second, and let me tell you that I am not the only one who feels this way, because one day, when we were on our trip to Canada, (we almost always drive to Canada on account of her at almost 100 pounds, she's too big to fit under the seat of an airplane, and the risk of putting her in cargo is too great, not to mention the humiliation and anxiety she would suffer because, after all, even my sister who has been very critical of me in the past, but who is pretty nice and loving now, says that April was "Once the Empress of all the Russias, and it must be a big comedown for her to be owned by Hippies now,") but I digress, as I said, we were on our way to Canada and we stopped where we always stop, the nice little park in the town of Mt. Shasta where the little spring is that is called the Headwaters of the Sacramento River, so April can cool off in the little stream in the park, and what do you know, but on this particular bright blue sky with UFO shaped clouds day (you can really understand why people think Shasta is a vortex for beings from another planet or from another dimensional reality, or at the very least, endowed with some other worldly mysticism when you see those clouds), the Siskiyou County Human Society was having its annual fundraiser fair there, with all sorts of activities, like a doggie agility course for the manic border collies, and silly costume contests for the little poodles, chihuahuas, and other tiny dogs, and best of all, for April, there were lots of smells and good "doggie watching," which is one of her favorite pastimes, which is just what we were doing when this woman dressed in flowing purple comes right up to us, telling us her name is "Winterhawk," and, looking pointedly at April, tells us she is an animal

psychic and that she wants to “read” our dog, and that the proceeds - we could donate whatever we wanted - would go to help the animal rescue folks for Siskiyou County, so we looked at each other and thought OK, it’s for a good cause, and so we went ahead and went to her table where April promptly lay down, looking out and not at Winterhawk, which let us know that April did not think very much of her, and we knew that April was pointedly telling us, without saying a word, that she didn’t know Winterhawk well enough for Winterhawk to be probing her mind, and in fact, all the things she started to tell us about April, we already knew like how she was deeply bonded with us, and how the three of us were bound together strongly because of April’s special spirit, but then, quite by surprise, because I had never told Winterhawk anything about myself at all, she says, with April craning her head around, now, looking straight at me in the eye, like she always does when she is trying to make me understand something, “And oh, one more thing, April wants you to know that she’s the same spirit who was the horse who helped you get through your difficult childhood,” and I started to cry because I hadn’t told Winterhawk that I had lived through a tough beginning or that I had even ever had a horse, or that April had always reminded me of that horse because they both liked to tease me, had good senses of humor and were both always there for me in ways that a human being never could be, that is to say in ways that I could never trust a human being to be there for me, and so, there you have it, some strange woman I had never met and may never see again, knew that April had been with me for at least two lifetimes, and now I know deep in my heart without knowing this intellectually, that it has been many before and will be many more lifetimes than that, and not a day goes by that I don’t get down on the floor with her and thank her for this eternal love that she shares with me like no other.