

THE ADOPTED PUPPY

By Margaret Jean Tuininga
From "The Doll That Grew"

"WHATEVER do you have there?" cried Mother Larson when her two big sons appeared on the doorstep with sheepish smiles on their faces, and holding a squirming bundle.

The wolves had been bothering the sheep in the neighborhood for several nights, and the boys had just returned from hunting them. Now to answer their mother they placed the wriggling something that was held in the leather jacket in her arms.



"Careful, Mother, just open a bit right here!" they cautioned, and as their mother did so a quivering puppy's nose appeared, then her whole head. It was the head of a wolf puppy!

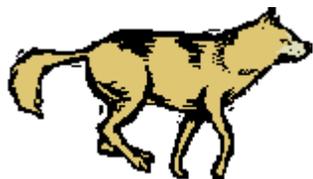
"Boys! Have you lost your senses? Haven't we enough trouble with wolves without bringing a live one right into our midst? I suppose you want to try to raise and tame this little thing. Well, I warn you-he'll always be a wolf!"

"We know it's foolish," they answered, "But somehow we just didn't have the heart to kill it. We shot its mother, and it acted so pitiful-just sort of like it expected us to take care of it. Wasn't a speck afraid of us either. Maybe you can kill it, Mother, if you think it ought to be done!"

The little wolf baby had snuggled down into the warmth of Mother Larson's lap, and she answered, "Warm a bit of milk for it. It looks half starved!"

As the boys obeyed, and then watched their mother teaching it with a rag that she dipped into the milk and then placed in its mouth to suck, they knew that the little wolf puppy was adopted for the time being at least!

The Larson dog immediately took to the little thing, too, and in no time he learned to trot about the farm at the dog's heels, rounding up the cattle and sheep with him, chasing the cat up the tree, and sleeping with a watchful ear and eye to guard the Larson farm. In a few months he seemed so like any other dog that the Larsons had ceased to think of him as a wolf. Even the baby loved him, and was learning to walk by holding tightly to his tail as he tried to steady his little feet.



When the wolf puppy was about a year old, there came a night when the moon was full, and the night was crisp and cold. Some strange feeling seemed to stir within his heart, and he trotted out alone to the hill behind the barn, and gave a long mournful howl to the moon.

Whether others of his own kind heard and answered, the Larsons never knew, but the next morning there were other wolf tracks about the barnyard, and the wolf puppy was gone, never to return.

The wolf puppy had grown to act like a dog, live like a dog, and had even grown to look somewhat like a dog. But he had been born a wolf-and he would die a wolf!

Every boy and girl born into this world, has been born a sinner. They may live in what is known as a Christian country, even have Christian parents. They may go to the same places of worship Christians go to, speak and act like Christians, and still be only sinners, for they were BORN SINNERS. The wolf puppy could never be truly anything but a wolf, for that is what he had been born. You who may be reading my little story can never be anything other than a SINNER, for you were BORN that way-unless you are BORN AGAIN!

"Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." (John 3:3).

"Marvel not that I said unto thee, ye must be born again." (John 3:7).