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Tracey Ullman

– Introduction –

I have always been mad about dogs. They make me happy. I've had a great variety of dogs in my life – funny dogs, kind dogs, crazy dogs, dopey dogs. A Bichon Frise ate my baby daughter's umbilical cord. It wasn't attached to her at the time, but was carefully stuck inside my baby book along with her hospital ID. I left the book open on the floor to answer the phone and heard a chewing noise. Dogs do awfully odd things and we think nothing of it and carry on feeding them and letting them sleep on pillows beside our heads.

The smartest dog I ever owned was a small mixed breed called Bianca, saved from an infamous high-kill shelter in downtown LA. She was emaciated, bald, and had a bullet lodged between her lung and liver. For one so hard done by she never bore a grudge to humanity or seemed to suffer from PTSD. As soon as I brought her home her behaviour was exemplary. She didn't chew, bark, or pee indoors. Bianca was so poised that you felt that when you had finished reading *The New York Times* you should pass it on to her. And then, oh joy, we discovered she could sing. A soulful vibrato we would coax out