

## Short Non-fiction Story by John Gilbert, 2015

One afternoon our youngest daughter Shannon arrived home from school with a friend. A friendly Irish setter (Sherry) had met Shannon walking home after school and they became immediate best friends. We lived in an area where family pets roamed at will, so we thought nothing of it. Our family was large and there were always children around for pets to romp with. We already had a small mutt we called Taco and the dogs became friends.



Sherry was a long-legged setter with red hair and a certain regal bearing that was hard to ignore. She soon became a fixture in our house and spent more time with us than elsewhere.

One day I was walking into the front room to sit down on the couch to read a newspaper and found Sherry sprawled out on it. The one rule I enforced was that dogs and cats could not be on the couch, so I immediately ordered her off and scolded her for being there. She lay down nearby and order was restored to my satisfaction. This scenario was repeated over several weeks and occasionally I became so exasperated I opened the door and ordered her out.

One afternoon I was on the couch engrossed in a newspaper article and the top of the paper rustled. I looked up and Sherry was looking at me with an expectant look. I knew she wanted out, but I was in the middle of reading, so I ignored her. A moment later I felt movement on the couch and looked over to see Sherry's smiling face sitting next to me. She had backed up

to the couch and was sitting like a human beside me. That did it! I put down the paper in anger, jumped up, pushed Sherry off the couch, opened the door, and ordered her to leave. As I turned after closing the door I suddenly realized what had just happened. A smart female had just manipulated me to get what she wanted.