

The First Days

By Hope Leedom and Sharon Anthony

We came to live with a nice lady, a nice man and two other Afghan Hounds today. My name is Dante. I am an eight week old blue domino boy. The lady says she has never owned a puppy before but wants to raise one to show. Well, here I am!!! I came with Twinkles (aka Twink) who the lady calls a "loaner puppy" to keep me entertained. I really like Twink and she always has fun ideas about new things to do.

First day - 5:30 a.m. Twink wakes me up - "Let the festivities begin." We need to get the lady out here so we can go out in the yard (we are living in an x-pen in the garage for the time being). The door to the yard is closed - oh no - not fair - we want to go out. Let's bark! Twink barks really, really well. Happy days - the door is open - it is raining - so what - let's party. A good day except for the bath after we played in the mud.

Day two - Lady decides to take us for a walk on the leash. This is fun, run around the lady really quickly, leashes are then wrapped around her ankles, she is screaming now and, oh dear, I think she may tip over, she is much bigger than us - get out of the way Twink!!!! Back to the yard - that wasn't a very long walk. Back to the yard, got nice and wet - oh no - another bath - the lady is looking pretty frazzled.

Day three - Pretty good day except Twink got into a red ants nest and got bitten in the face. She barks and barks which brings the lady and she gives Twinkles a bath. And now looks at my bites, a couple on my tummy. But that Twinkles is such a baby! I'm beginning to wonder if this barking is good thing to get the lady here quickly.

Day four - Twink showed me how to dig a hole in the yard. We put it right next to the back door. The lady came out and put a sheet over the hole with rocks to hold it down until she could fix it better. Really - a sheet -

silly lady. Well, Twinkles pulled that sheet right off the hole and continued to dig. A truly nice hole it was too, so I joined in the fun.

Day five - We got to see the big dogs today cuz they got baths. Good to see that we are not the only ones who have to put up with that stuff. Bryndle, she is pretty, blue brindle, seven years old. She seems to be alpha and has a do not mess with me look on her face. The other one, Cookie, is a blue domino like me, younger and looks like she might be fun if she loosens up a little. Twink and I get to watch them from our x-pen and we can sniff those big dogs.

Day six - Two new things today. First, the sprinklers were turned on, what fun is that, run into the water, roll in the mud, run inside, get blankets and x-pen all wet and muddy, and do it 22 times. Then we got a plastic Pepsi bottle filled with rocks to play with. It had a rope tied on the end of it. Something about teaching us not to be scared of noise. How silly is that - Twinkles just pulled that around the yard and we jump on it. It is almost as big as we are, and so much fun. The lady has LOTS to do to clean up the x-pen and all the blankets and other muddy items. She is looking pretty tired by 7:00 tonight.

Day seven - Walking with Cookie on leash. This is the most fun yet. Run around Cookie, tangle her in the leashes, then jump on her, the man went too, jump on him, jump on the lady, run in circles, ouch, now we are tangled in leashes. The man helps by taking me and it starts to go well. I hope we do this more, Cookie can be fun.

Second Week - Many, many new things. Rides in the car - separate rides - went to the vets - lovely people there. Recognized that I am exceedingly handsome and special, kisses and pats. Got a greenie to chew on for the car ride. More walks - not as much fun as before as they are getting better at jumping over the leashes so we cannot trip them as quickly - pity. More digging holes and, the best thing yet, there is a leak up by the end of the sprinkler hose - so there is mud anytime - on demand. Twink is

ALWAYS in trouble as she loves mud. She likes to roll in it, jump in it, smear it all over me and then go jump on the lady and the man person. Man person just shows up now and then and loves us...with noises and pets. I like him the most, I guess because Twinkles doesn't bark at him ever.

The Cookie dog came out with us one day. We trapped her against the wall, jumped on her, bit her, and smashed her into the ground. She does not seem to know how to play. Leslie (dog breeder) was so worried that the big dogs would hurt us.

Ha Ha - we can take care of ourselves but that Cookie is a real chicken dog.

Week three - It is decided that we should start spending nights - IN THE HOUSE - because now that we have become so proficient at digging holes, she is nervous that we might dig out during the night and get lost in the woods.

This is fine with me. I like being in the house. I like everything. Twink however is an outside girl, even after the ant fiasco. The lady doesn't know what to do with Twinkle's barking all the time over nothing. She calls everyone she know for advice, trying understand what is wrong with Twinkles. If I could talk I would tell her, she wants OUT, OUT, OUT. After much talking with breeder, friends, etc, we are back in the x-pen with access to the outside at night and most of the day. It is OK but really I would prefer to be inside watching everyone in there.

Oh, fun, we got new puppy collars. I think that I will drag Twink around by her collar. Boy that girl can bark!! The lady doesn't like Twinkles barking again and takes them off. No more new collars - maybe later.

All in all, life is really, really good. I am a little nervous. They keep talking about Twinkles leaving. Her job - babysitter/entertainer/good pal/good buddy is ending. What will it be like?

Dante, puppy extraordinaire