

## "Beau"

by Jimmy Stewart

He never came to me when I would call  
Unless I had a tennis ball,  
Or he felt like it,  
But mostly he didn't come at all.

When he was young  
He never learned to heel  
Or sit or stay,  
He did things his way.

Discipline was not his bag  
But when you were with him things sure didn't drag.  
He'd dig up a rosebush just to spite me,  
And when I'd grab him, he'd turn and bite me.

He bit lots of folks from day to day,  
The delivery boy was his favorite prey.  
The gas man wouldn't read our meter,  
He said we owned a real man-eater.

He set the house on fire  
But the story's long to tell.  
Suffice it to say that he survived  
And the house survived as well.

On the evening walks, and Gloria took him,  
He was always first out the door.  
The Old One and I brought up the rear  
Because our bones were sore.

He would charge up the street with Mom hanging on,  
What a beautiful pair they were!  
And if it was still light and the tourists were out,  
They created a bit of a stir.

But every once in a while, he would stop in his tracks  
And with a frown on his face look around.  
It was just to make sure that the Old One was there  
And would follow him where he was bound.

We are early-to-bedders at our house--  
I guess I'm the first to retire.

And as I'd leave the room he'd look at me  
And get up from his place by the fire.

He knew where the tennis balls were upstairs,  
And I'd give him one for a while.  
He would push it under the bed with his nose  
And I'd fish it out with a smile.

And before very long  
He'd tire of the ball  
And be asleep in his corner  
In no time at all.

And there were nights when I'd feel him  
Climb upon our bed  
And lie between us,  
And I'd pat his head.

And there were nights when I'd feel this *stare*  
And I'd wake up and he'd be sitting there  
And I reach out my hand and stroke his hair.  
And sometimes I'd feel him sigh  
    and I think I know the reason why.

He would wake up at night  
And he would have this *fear*  
Of the dark, of life, of lots of things,  
And he'd be glad to have me near.

And now he's dead.  
And there are nights when I think I feel him  
Climb upon our bed and lie between us,  
And I pat his head.

And there are nights when I think  
I feel that stare  
And I reach out my hand to stroke his hair,  
But he's not there.

Oh, how I wish that wasn't so,  
I'll always love a dog named Beau.

*This poem was taken from Jimmy Stewart and His Poems by Jimmy Stewart, a short collection of poems published by Crown Publishers, Inc. in 1989. To order this book, call the Full Circle Book Store at 1-800-683-READ. Refer to ISBN number 0-517-57382-2. It's a little illustrated hardback that costs about \$12.*