

MORNING STORIES TRANSCRIPT

Driving Miss Daisy: Cambridge, Mass., author Anne Bernays and her husband, Joe, look frantically for a lost dog and for the wisdom to accept it's nobody's fault.

Tony Kahn:

Hi, Everybody. This is Tony Kahn, the producer and director of *Morning Stories* from WGBH in Boston. Wish I could say that this is Studio O we're sitting in, underneath the blue sky, but this is Boston and even though it's summer, the weather outside is absolutely miserable. But it is summer, and like most people in broadcasting, when summer comes our thoughts turn toward ... well, how can we not work quite as hard as we've been working all year long. We thought, "Oh! Here's an idea: maybe we can do a repeat! Let's find a story that's really worth listening to again and that has a kind of summer theme."

Well, we were even luckier than that. We found one that we had had to remove from our RSS feed because it didn't have podsafes music in it. We had done it early enough in the days of podcasting that we really weren't smart enough to know we were doing the wrong thing. Well, once we realized it *whhhtt*...off it went from the feed and we thought this would be our opportunity to bring it back, restore it to the feed, make it a regular morning story and put some podsafes music in it. So that's what we're offering to you today, with your kind indulgence and understanding. It is, after all, folks, summer. Our very first WGBH *Morning Stories* remix repeat, a story about a woman, her husband and the dog they loved and almost lost, "Driving Miss Daisy."

Anne Bernays:

A little over a dozen years ago, Joe and I acquired three dogs. Sadie and Daisy were Cairn terriers, small but fierce. Pansy was a Beagle, afraid of almost everything, especially other dogs. Two years ago, Sadie disappeared during a thunderstorm on Cape Cod. Joe thinks she was carried off by a coyote the way one of our friends' dogs was. I'm convinced she was scared to death by a thundercloud so loud it nearly knocked me off my pins.

[Sound of thunder, pouring rain]

Where once there were three, now there were two. Four times a week we walked together, wife, husband and two dogs around Cambridge's municipal water supply, Fresh Pond - Pansy, lagging behind as if she could avoid other dogs, Daisy, five years older, trotting by our heels. At the end of the walk, she'll wait for Joe outside the bathroom at the Waterworks Building while Pansy and I wait for them in the car.

The other day, after our walk, we drove off to do a couple of errands. As we headed home, I just happened to look in the back seat.

“Where’s Daisy?” I said.

We had each assumed the other had put her in the car. We didn’t. We couldn’t have! But we had left Daisy behind. Joe slumped in his seat, his face losing color fast.

[Piano decrescendo]

We didn’t say a word but we were both thinking the same thing: somewhere this little dog was frantically searching for us, growing ever more terrified her parents had abandoned her.

In silence we drove back to the pond. Forty-five minutes later I had circled it for a second time. Meanwhile Joe phoned the Cambridge dog officer. They had found Daisy. We were finally reunited. Pansy, who until that moment would not get out of the car, was ecstatic.

[Guitar music (upbeat)]

My husband Joe and I are, unbelievably, in our seventies, a point in life where we certainly don’t need instruction in appreciating what we have, nor any reminders that nothing is forever. But one moment from our little drama did surprise me. The moment we noticed Daisy was gone, neither of us blamed or got angry at the other.

[in the background, car engine starts up and car drives away]

Some losses are just nobody’s fault.

[Guitar music]

Tony Kahn:

Anne Bernays with WGBH’s Morning Story for today, *Driving Miss Daisy*. Gary Mott –

Gary Mott:

I had a dog for six years. Her name was Maxine.

Tony Kahn:

Maxine.

Gary Mott:

Maxine.

Tony Kahn:

Lovely name for a dog.

Gary Mott:

Thank you. She – she was a Podengo.

Tony Kahn:

A Po – uh, Podengo . . .

Gary Mott:

A Podengo.

Tony Kahn:

A breed that I'm not too familiar with.

Gary Mott:

Yeah, a breed that kind of looks a little bit like a Greyhound, a little bit like a Dachshund.

Tony Kahn:

This sounds like a – the start of what could be a very sad story! You said you had her for only six years. That's not terribly long, even in dog years.

Gary Mott:

What happened is that in that six years my wife and I procreated and suddenly I had a house full of children, dogs, and we had an iguana at one point so, you know, something had to go.

Tony Kahn:

[Laughs] So you're telling me Maxine had to [makes whooshing sound] out the door?

Gary Mott:

She went out the door, but she landed in a safe location, in the home of a lovely woman and her son. They live on the upper west side in Manhattan. Maxine has *never* been treated so well. She gets walks. She gets baths. She gets medicated. She gets food worthy of a king. So I would have to say that she came out OK on this.

Tony Kahn:

How do you know this? Does she write to you? Does she say, "By the way, I traded up? It's easy to miss you when you send me to the upper west side in New York?"

Gary Mott:

Well, a long time after she left our home, I got an email from her new owner, you know, telling me in detail about all the splendid times that they were having and how I was no longer a factor.

Tony Kahn:

Well, I'm glad this has a happy ending because when –

Gary Mott:

It does.

Tony Kahn:

– you said you sent her out the door, I could just begin to hear the emails start.

Gary Mott:

Into traffic?

Tony Kahn:

Ah, no. Right. [laughs] So Maxine is on the Upper West Side and you should rest easy, Gary, because it's really hard for animals, I understand, to get lost in New York. They're just far too verbal. I heard a story about – true story – from a photographer named Joel Meyerowitz. He grew up in Brooklyn. When he was a little kid they had a parakeet and they taught the parakeet how to say, "My name is Meyerowitz. I'm a Jewish bird." And then one day this bird went out the window and they thought, "Well, that's it! This animal doesn't stand a chance." Later that afternoon they get a telephone call from an absolute stranger saying, "Did you lose a parakeet?" And they said, "Yes!"

"Well, he's with us."

"Where are you calling from?"

"Couple of miles from where you are."

"How do you know where we live?"

"Well, you see, what happened was this bird knocked at our window; we let it in and it said something or other and then it said, 'I'm a Jewish bird.' That's when we started listening to him."

And they said "What? What was he saying?"

The bird said, "I'm Meyerowitz. I'm a Jewish bird" so we went to the phonebook; we looked under all the Meyerowitzes we could find and you're the third one we called. When do you want your bird back?"

So there you go. If a Meyerowitz can make it in New York City, a Podengo can!

Gary Mott:

Maxine is in great hands. No doubt.

Tony Kahn:

[Laughs] Maxine may be walking the streets of New York with an iPaw! Maybe she's listening to *The Podengo Hour*! You know – some kind of “pawcast.” And Apple is carrying them. Our podcast has finally come to the attention of some people who work right here beside us, in our own building and know that we've been podcasting for over a year and had never heard it until last week.

Gary Mott:

Podcasting is now on the, the lips and minds of everyone here, so they see what we do and they say “Pbblllt. I can do that. I thought we had talented people in the building.”

Tony Kahn:

Our secret is out. Thank you very much, Apple.

Gary Mott:

And iTunes. We are ... last I checked we were in the top 100 downloads.

Tony Kahn:

Now, there, therein lies a bit of a problem, actually, because we have been hearing from some people who have been finding two feeds for *Morning Stories*, one of which gives them ten stories and one of which gives them our full complement of some forty stories or more, forty and climbing. So rather than try to get into the technical details that I can't understand, let's just say that what happens if you go to Apple and you search on their podcast page, either for *Morning Stories* or WGBH, is you're going to get a bunch of different feeds you can click on. Two of them are going to be *Morning Stories*, one of those two will lead you to ten, the other one will lead you to more than thirty.

Gary Mott:

And one of those two feeds is updated on a weekly basis with a podcast, fresh every Friday.

Tony Kahn:

And while, in fact, we're expressing our gratitude, we'd also like to express it to an old, old friend of ours, Ipswitch, a leader in file transfer and the sponsor of this podcast, pretty much since we became a podcast. If you want to know more about them, I-P-S-W-I-T-C-H dot com <ipswitch.com>.

Gary Mott:

And also the WGBH *Morning Stories* website is a great place to go, once you've gone to Ipswitch : <<http://wgbh.org/morningstories>> and <morningstories@wgbh.org> is our email address. We love gettin' email.

Tony Kahn:

And if you're too busy to come see us, don't worry; we'll come see you again next Friday with another *Morning Stories*, so catch you then. Take care.

[End of recording]

Transcribed by Bev Sykes