



Sometimes 'Bad' is Good!

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Martok

Monday, May 18, 2009

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See, Baasha is a very old sheep. She's 13 years old—that's like 90 in human years! She has arthritis, so she hobbles but she's happy, and Mom loves her more than all the other sheep combined.

Baasha was her first Miniature Cheviot sheep and she's mom, grandma, great-grandma, or great-great grandma to all of the other little Cheviots on our farm.

For Baasha to die on Mother's Day would have been awful.

Sheep get "cast down" because this time of year they have lots of wool.

They lie down and somehow tip backward, and then their wool keeps their feet from touching the ground. Since their feet can't reach anything to roll them back upright, they're stuck until someone comes along and helps them up.

If no one notices, gas builds up in their insides. Their legs go numb and their heavy rumens squash their lungs. Then they die.

Mom has been writing a book about miniature livestock and got way behind on her Hobby Farms assignments. She planned to go to a goat show on Mother's Day morning but she decided to stay home and work instead.

She'd been looking forward to the show for months, so she was sad—until Dad glanced out the window and saw Baasha cast down.

Since Baasha is a Miniature Cheviot she has short legs, and she's kind of fat (don't tell her I told you that). And, she grows lots of long wool. She says she was napping and she stretched her legs to get nice and comfy. Then, she rolled backward unexpectedly and no matter how much she kicked, she couldn't get up!

When Mom and Dad rushed out, she could hardly breathe. Dad helped her up while mom stood and cried. At first Baasha gasped and gasped and her legs wouldn't work.

Mom rubbed her legs while Dad got the shears. After Baasha could breathe and walk a little, Dad zipped the top and sides of her fleece off so she wouldn't get cast again before the shearer comes to shear our sheep.

Baasha's big old Hampshire friend, Dodger, laughed ("Baaaaah!") when he saw Baasha hobbling toward him with wool on her belly and none on her top and sides, but he was glad she was okay.

She's a nice sheep, so Uzzi and I were happy too.

Now Mom's happy she and Dad didn't go to the goat show. If she had, Dad wouldn't have seen Baasha cast and Baasha would have died.

Sometimes something that at first seems bad is really good. This was one of those times. Baasha and her family think so too.

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