

Ashwin Sanghi

Ashwin Sanghi could well be described as a square peg in a round hole. Born into a high profile industrialist household, he may be a director in MK Sanghi Group, looking into taxation, real estate and property investments at a corporate level, but at heart he is a writer, with several books to his credit. And now a full-time pet parent!

Simba is not the first pet in my life, but he is my soulmate! There was Winston the Pug, and Prince the Alasation at my Khandala home, but Simba is totally my own organic project. I researched, searched, sourced, selected, and brought him to Bombay, all the way from Guwahati, in the North East. I had learned there was a very good breeder

there exclusively for Golden Retrievers, which is what I had my heart set upon, on the advice of a good friend, Neel Shahani.

When I was sent a video of a litter which had just taken place, I selected one who seemed the most inactive and totally disinterested in his surroundings. Turned out to be an adorable one!

As I stood waiting to receive him at the cargo terminal, my heart was hammering in my chest. I was in pain visualising his plane journey in a cargo hold, even if it was one which was oxygenated. My fears were not unfounded. When I actually got the crate and opened it, I saw this shivering bundle all wet in his own pee and the water kept for him in the crate. I just got him out and hugged him close to my chest! Believe me, listening to my heart beating, the little pup felt comforted and stopped shivering. He settled down and so did I. As I drove to my home in Nepean Sea Road, it was for me the beginning of a new journey of love.

Three now, Simba is my constant companion. I keep unearthly hours and he matches up. I wake at 5 am and until 8 am, I write. And Simba is right there, at my feet. Then, when I head to my parents' bedroom for my first cup of tea, he bounds ahead, announcing my arrival.

I am fully aware of his schedule. Four walks a day, of which three short ones are within the premises of Sanghi House and the fourth, an hour long, which he no doubt prefers, in the Bombay street! He eats four boiled eggs with *JerHigh* chicken gravy in the morning and 12 hours later, a *khichdi* of red rice, mixed vegetables, a fistful of kibble (*Acana Classic*) and some *JerHigh*!

We have a great understanding. He sure is my mate. No, actually, he is my life!



PHOTOGRAPH: RAGHUVIR SANGHI

