

## A Late-Night Doggie Surprise

*Suzanne Stowe*

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Zoe and Ruby One of my favorite households to care for includes Zoe, a Maltese, Ruby, a Cavalier King Charles Spaniel, two Persian cats and a Himalayan kitty named Mocha. The menagerie also includes a fish named Nemo.

I've been taking care of these pets for more than three years now. When I first started, there was another family member, an older dog named Artie. Artie had a great temperament, but also had dementia and was incontinent. He was confined to the kitchen and family room so cleanup was easier.

After Artie went to the Rainbow Bridge, my clients decided to get a puppy – Zoe. The first time I sat with Zoe, she was probably about five months old and as cute as a button. Zoe wanted to sleep on the bed with me, so of course I let her. Later than evening, I woke up to warm wetness: Zoe had to go potty and was afraid to jump off the bed. I quickly changed the bed and went back to sleep vowing to learn from the experience. I should have known better than to let her on the bed all night.

I found out later that one of the kitties had once used the guest bed I was sleeping in as a littler box. Since a dog's sense of smell is so much stronger than ours, Zoe probably smelled traces of urine and thought it was an acceptable place to urinate.

Since then, I have decided to let Zoe sleep on the floor with her buddy, Ruby. Zoe is now housetrained, but I feel it wiser not to risk a repeat of the middle-of-the-night surprise.

If you're having trouble with a similar puppy "surprise," try reading up on a few housetraining tips.

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