

The puppy in our arms that was shaking

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I've always been annoyed by the phrase "to adopt a dog". I found this expression to belittle the adopted child's pain. Since last Saturday, I see things differently.

Because that's when we, my wife and two children, went to Thuringia to look at a puppy, a mixture of Greater Swiss and Retriever. It started with the fact that we had already decided on a puppy based on the photos, which the seller (privately) called "Miss Rosa" because of the collar ("rosa": ther German word for "pink"). She wrote to us about the character of the puppy:

"Oh, Miss Rosa is the smallest lady in our litter. She is such a bright little whirlwind, cuddly, attentive and like all the rascals a little cheeky... but you can form your own picture of her and the others. Would you like to get to know the little one next Saturday or Sunday?"

Yes, of course we wanted to get to know Miss Rosa (at first I thought you could

write something like that about every puppy, but the woman was able to characterize each of her puppies individually when we visited). However, I got a sinking feeling. I didn't want to take Miss Rosa just because she was "bright" and "cuddly". You should not have to meet any conditions to be accepted by us. The adopted child in me wanted to be loved for himself (more on this in [my book](#) in Chapter 5). And that should also apply to a puppy, I thought.

When we got there, my children suddenly said: "Dad, we could also take another puppy with us," and they shortlisted three puppies. I didn't like that at all. I wanted Miss Rosa now and not suddenly another puppy because it was even cuter. It reminded me of the situation in an orphanage, where a couple is striding through the room with a scrutinizing gaze. My children reassured me: "Dad, the puppy doesn't even know whether we want to adopt him or not!" I wasn't so sure. Luckily, it ended up that they chose Miss Rosa.

But now to my actual topic. We picked up the puppies. They were very trusting and seemed to enjoy themselves. Even I, who am afraid of dogs, dared to take Miss Rosa in my arms (working title, she will be given a different name, which is also a huge topic with adoptions). And then I noticed: she was shaking. The poor thing was... scared! I was a stranger, complete stranger to her.

I felt sorry for Miss Rosa. And I think everyone can sympathize with her. Only with the adopted child, it doesn't always look like that. Then people like to say: "But the child is better off!" - Hey folks, that's not the point! The puppy trembles, regardless of whether it will have a better future or not. And the child is shaking, too.

By the way, a proven dog expert told us that we should be careful how we make the trip home. Because the puppy will never forget this ride, this first ride. He advised us not to put him in a box or basket because then he could be scared of boxes and baskets for the rest of his life.

I think everyone understands this point. But who understands the trembling child? The adopting parents, if previously childless, will find it difficult. For them, the trip home, the first trip, is a wonderful event, as I've read often enough, and I can understand that. But the child is shaking.