



# Wishful Thinking

BY EVELYN CLARK

**S**ometimes I wonder if I ever will graduate from the school of hard knocks. My latest lesson involved my dog, Mica, a spindle, and amethyst-colored Merino top. Only afterwards did I remember the adage “Be careful what you wish for, because you just might get it.”

It began with a Wallace and Gromit movie. I love those characters—especially Gromit, the knitting dog. I was thinking about that movie one day while I was spindling. Mica was lying nearby gnawing a toy, and for the first time, I noticed that she looks a lot like Gromit. I began to wonder what it would be like to have a knitting dog—to share an interest in fiber with a pet. It sounded like a great bonding experience. I looked at her and said, “I wish you could knit.” She didn’t even glance my way, no doubt understanding immediately the insanity of that idea. She is far too active. Knitting could never compete with gnawing.

Then I wondered, what about spinning? A spinning dog—I liked the idea. It also had potential because “spin” was the first trick she mastered in the clicker training class. It would be great to have her spin while I knit. It would be efficient! “I wish you could spin,” I said. “I could knit. What a great team we would be!”

Mica never looked up from her gnawing, but I spent the rest of that spindling session visualizing possible terrier techniques for pawspun yarn. She could do her gravity-defying gyrations through the air to turn wool into yarn. Maybe



she’d prefer four-on-the-floor and do her tail-chasing revolutions. She could even lie down and do her consecutive rollovers.

That wishful thinking was quickly forgotten. So a week later I was stunned to find my favorite little Bosworth spindle lying on the living room carpet with bits of the cop surrounding it. While I had been upstairs working at the computer, Mica had chomped it, leaving teeth marks in the wood.

Never before had she shown any interest in my spindles. However, it was not the first time she had grabbed something to chew.

I picked up the spindle and pulled off the loose bits of yarn. Most of the cop was undamaged, but both the shaft and whorl had been chewed. My main concern was would it still spin? Over the past month, I had used the spindle to spin singles for more than 1,000 yards of a lace-weight two-ply. I had just started spinning the purple Merino top on it. And did I mention it was my favorite spindle?

I untwisted and frayed the end of the singles, turned the spindle, joined in new fiber and watched yarn begin to form. Then I ran the spindle up my leg. It spun! It didn’t give up; it had been hurled, but it still twirled.

That evening when I was taking some toys out of Mica’s crate, I began to understand what really happened. Among the toys was some amethyst top—the fluff of fiber I’d left unspun on the spindle. Mica only takes her most treasured toys into the

crate. So it was the wool that had tempted her.

This realization triggered the memory of an incident that occurred shortly after I adopted her. I found some roving snaked under my bed. Like the fiber in her crate, it was not shredded, chewed, or mauled. It was just lying there as if she was starting a stash.

No wonder I’d been immediately attracted to Mica—she was a fellow fiber fanatic!

My Gromit-inspired musings had given her a new excuse to indulge this addiction. When she spotted the unspun wool hanging off the spindle, it was too much. She started another stash. Maybe she even considered the possibility of spinning. Had she pulled off some of the singles to study the twist before tossing the spindle aside to retreat to her crate?

I’ll never know what she was thinking, but I found my enthusiasm for a spinning dog had evaporated. One fiberholc per household is enough, I decided. The reality of sharing my wool was not nearly as much fun as the fantasy.

As for that damaged spindle, it remains my favorite. I lightly sanded it to smooth the biggest chip and applied some wax. It is scarred, but I am convinced it spins better than before. And every time I pick it up, those teeth marks remind me to be careful what I wish for.

*Evelyn Clark is the author of Knitting Lace Triangles, published by Fiber Trends. She lives in the Pacific Northwest and admits to a gnawing concern that spinning has twisted her perspective.*

