

THE AGONIES OF THE DOG BREEDER

By Linda Hazen Lewin

You've studied the bloodlines and read all the books;
You've picked dogs for temperament, soundness and looks;

The sire is to die for the breeders agree;
The brood bitch is gorgeous and sweet as can be.

You've raised up the litter and all has gone well,
But picking that show pup's a new kind of hell!

Will his coat be too curly? Too wiry? Too straight?
Will that toy pup stay tiny or go overweight?

Will her bite stay a scissors? Have his testicles dropped?
Will her ears look best standing or buttoned or cropped?

Will his feet turn to pancakes? Does she have too much white?
Is his rear nicely angled? Is her tail carried right?

Will he snub all distractions and look at the bait?
Will she EVER stop spinning and learn to walk straight?

Where did that head come from? Why is he shy?
How come the soundest one has a light eye?

Why does the pup on which every trait pleases
Test positive for genetic diseases?

What IS it that keeps us from slitting our wrists?
The non-breeder folks think we're all masochists!

The challenge? The "glory"? The bills from the vet?
Our lives would be saner if we just kept a pet --

But when in that litter box you see Perfection,
It's sure nice to know that YOU made that selection!

So it's off to the races with your little dear
Hoping he still looks this good in a year!