

**FROM CHAPTER 5:**

***EMBEDDED WITH HUMANS—ANIMALS IN THE HUMAN WORLD***

***“SOMEONE TO WATCH OVER ME”***

Finding the best sitter to tend your animal companion while you work or travel is harder, in some respects, than finding a sitter for your children. For one thing, childcare facilities are regulated, and your children can tell you if they are being mistreated, but your animals are stuck with whomever you select. Many people are reluctant to put their dogs or cats in a traditional kennel because of the possibility of stress or maltreatment, which could be as much as abuse to as little as not pandering to their every need. Some facilities respond to high-maintenance animals and their demanding guardians by providing accommodations similar to a luxury hotel or country club, including pools; webcam surveillance so you can see your animal from anywhere in the world from your computer, PDA, or cell phone; custom diets; human roommates; solo or supervised playtime; specialized toys; tuck-in service; and suites with phones for that special call from absent humans. Private rooms with telephone access so you can call your dog or cat is not unusual; some of them reportedly bark back. My Schnauzer used to bark into the phone with some encouragement. I could put the receiver to her ear, and she would actually listen. My Maltese acts deaf when I do that. Maybe listening to a phone is some kind of dog intelligence test.