

THE STORY OF COAL

By: Sydney Sweat



I, COAL, WAS ONCE A STRAY DOG. I RAN, HUNTED ANIMALS, AND LAID IN THE SUN ALL DAY. MY LIFE WAS ALL ABOUT DOING WHAT I WANTED. THIS WASN'T THE MOST IDEAL LIFE FOR A DOG LIKE ME THOUGH. SOMETIMES I DIDN'T KNOW WHERE MY NEXT MEAL WAS GOING TO COME FROM, OR WHERE I WOULD BE SAFE TO TAKE SHELTER FOR THE NIGHT. I ALSO HAD PROBLEMS WITH OTHER DOGS. ALTHOUGH I ALWAYS WANTED TO PLAY, OTHER DOGS WERE SOMETIMES MEAN AND ATTACKED ME. I NEVER WAS ABLE TO STICK UP FOR MYSELF.





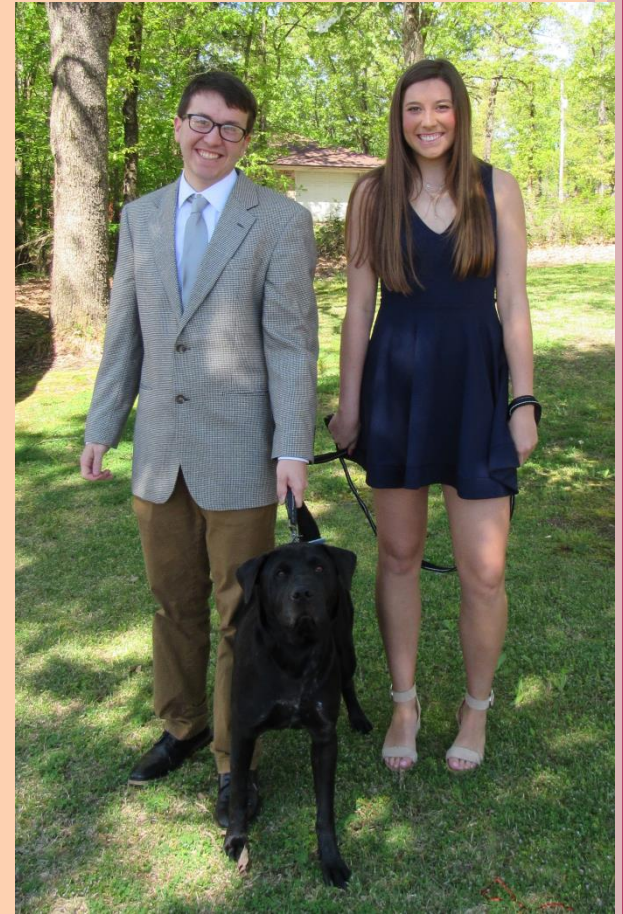
A LADY FOUND SOME DOGS BEING MEAN TO ME, AND DECIDED TO SAVE ME. SHE PUT ME IN THE HUMANE SOCIETY FOR THE CHANCE TO GET ADOPTED. I DIDN'T LIKE IT THERE. IT WAS SO LOUD, AND THERE WERE ALWAYS METAL BOWLS CLANKING AROUND, ON THE TIP OF MY NOSE I DEVELOPED MANGE, AND I HAD TO SHARE A CAGE WITH A DOG WHO NIPPED AT ME. EVERYDAY I HOPED TO BE ABLE TO LEAVE.



BETWEEN SLEEPING OUTSIDE AND HAVING GUNS SHOT AT ME, I DEVELOPED A FEAR TOWARDS LOUD SOUNDS AND BOOMING SOUNDS. EVERY FOURTH OF JULY I JUST HUNKER DOWN, AND HOPE FOR IT TO BE OVER. WHEN THERE IS A LOUD CRASH I THINK THAT SOMETHING IS OUT TO GET ME, AND FEEL SO SCARED. THE SHELTER ONLY MADE THIS WORSE.



ONE DAY, THESE TWO PEOPLE CAME TO LOOK AT ME. I DID MY BEST TO DO EVERYTHING THEY EXPECTED. I SAT AND WALKED AND EVEN GAVE THEM PUPPY EYES. THEY GAVE ME A PAT ON THE HEAD, BUT I DIDN'T GET TO GO WITH THEM. A FEW WEEKS WENT BY, WHEN THE SHELTER OWNERS PUT ME IN A TINY CAGE. I WAS SO SAD, DID I DO SOMETHING WRONG? A FEW HOURS LATER, THOSE TWO LADIES CAME BACK, AND I GOT TO LEAVE WITH THEM! THEY TOLD ME I WAS THEIR DOG, AND THAT THEY WOULD TAKE CARE OF ME. THEY BROUGHT ME IN THEIR HOME, AND I FOUND OUT I HAD A FAMILY!



MY FAMILY ISN'T QUITE SURE WHAT MY BREED IS. THEY WERE TOLD I WAS SHAR PEI AND LABRADOR RETRIEVER. THAT SEEMS PRETTY ACCURATE CONSIDERING MY ROUND NOSE! I DON'T ACTUALLY KNOW WHAT I AM EITHER, I DON'T REMEMBER MUCH OF MY PUPPY YEARS.





LIFE WAS SO MUCH BETTER WITH THIS NEW FAMILY. I GOT TO SLEEP ON A FLUFFY BED, I GOT TOYS AND TREATS, AND THEY EVEN TOOK ME ON WALKS! I NEVER HAD TO WORRY ABOUT FOOD, AND THEY LET ME DRINK OUT OF THE TOILET WITHOUT GETTING MAD! I WASN'T SUPER SURE ABOUT IT ALL STILL. I KNEW THEY LOVED ME, BUT WHAT IF THEY ABANDONED ME? HOW COULD I REALLY TRUST THEM?



SLOWLY BUT SURELY, WALK AFTER WALK, I FINALLY BEGAN FULLY TRUSTING MY NEW FAMILY. I LET THEM LOVE ON ME AND I EVEN BEGAN TO PLAY! I STARTED DISCOVERING MY FAVORITE FOODS AS THE YEARS WENT ON. I LOVE FROZEN GRAPES AND ALL THINGS SWEET. NEVER GETTING SWEET THINGS WHILE ON THE STREET, THIS IS SOMETHING I'M GLAD MY FAMILY LETS ME HAVE.





I WAS AS HAPPY AS A
FROG ON A LOG.
WALKING BECAME MY
FAVORITE PAST TIME.
MILES AND MILES A
DAY, I WOULD CHASE
ANIMALS AND HUNT
BUGS IN THE GRASS.
Bzzzzz!
PESKY BUGS! I HAVE
TO EAT THEM ALL!
THEY ALWAYS
BOTHER ME AND
WAKE ME UP WHEN I
AM TAKING A NAP IN
THE MONKEY GRASS.





IF I WASN'T ADOPTED I
WOULDN'T BE AS
HAPPY, LOVED, AND
HEALTHY AS I AM NOW.
EVERY NIGHT I GO TO
BED KNOWING I AM
SAFE AND GOING TO
HAVE AN EXCITED DAY
WITH THOSE I MOST
LOVE TOMORROW. IF
YOU ARE LOOKING FOR
A FUREVER FRIEND,
CHECK OUT YOUR
LOCAL SHELTER! YOU
MAY JUST FIND
SOMEONE AS COOL AS
ME!

