

A Lost Home
By Dylan B.

One day, in the town of Greenwich, a man was sent to the hospital and had to be medicated for weeks. He had to get a service/support animal, so when he came to the pound to get one, I was staring up with my big, bright, blue eyes and practically begged to be brought back to his home. After he took his first glance at me, I think he knew that I was the perfect one.

I did not know my future as I pulled up to the man's house. The White House came into my view now and I was fascinated by the home that stood before me. I had no idea what he was doing at the "White Home" but I knew I was going to have to be kind, courageous, and a very helpful little pup.

I, Sully, was that pup and my owner was Mr. George H.W. Bush. I am a yellow Labrador dog and I was born on July 14, 2016. I've helped President Bush for the last six months of his life until his death on November 30, 2018. Mr. Bush liked to be called Poppy by his sons and daughters, so I liked calling him that too!

The last few months of my life have been tough without Poppy by my side. He always had my back no matter the cost. Some people say that dogs don't have feelings, but if we don't have feelings, why am I always sad and lonely all the time? I miss him as much as anyone else, and that's true. He was not just my owner, but my friend, companion, and even my moral support to keep trying and to never give up.

As Poppy once said, **"Be bold in your caring, be bold in your dreaming and above all else, always do your best."** I think that just means to keep going, even when it gets hard. That's what I had to do on the night he died. I had to get through all the sad funerals and remembrances for him. Dogs have emotions; however, they can't show them. If you could see my feelings on the inside, you would see tears of sadness. You would see me bawling. You would see me crying. You would see my "waterworks".

After Poppy died, I really didn't know how my future would end up. I didn't know if I would go back to the pound, or stay a service/support animal, or what. But Poppy knew what my future was, and he knew how I would end up. This is one of the few things that he did not tell me in his lifetime. The only words I could hear right before he died were "I love you Sully. Take care of my family and make them feel like in you, is me. I love you!" These words made me wonder... what does "in you, is me" supposed to mean? I love this guy, but sometimes he can be pretty confusing.

He also said "look through the trees and under the bridge, be careful and watch out for bees. Up the mountains to the left of the slide, you can do this job for just extra pride. Goodbye now Sully" and then died right in front of me.

You don't know what it's like telling someone goodbye for the very last time. It feels like you just lost part of your heart and soul. You can't ever talk to the person again, or give them a high five, or hug. It is sad sometimes.

After a while, I thought of what Poppy said. It sounded like some kind of riddle or something and telling me to go up the mountains and go to the left of the slide. So many things were going through my head like what mountains? Or what slide, left of the mountains? These things were in my mind as well as Mr. Bush's death and the riddle he gave before he died. Stress arose on me as fast as you could say "Puppy Dog".

Four weeks later, it came to me. Maybe he wants me to find or do something for him. Maybe if I go up the nearest mountain and go to the left of the slide or something, his "treasure" might be there.

Four more weeks later I snuck out of the back door of our house so I could start my quest. If Poppy wanted me to do it, it must be very important and only a job that a dog can do. A dog like me.

I started my hike up The Great Smoky Mountains in the darkness of night until I finally made my way up to the slide just before sunrise. There was an actual playground slide sitting in the middle of the trail. It was so weird. I took a left at the slide and finally found a cave which had a sign that read "*DO NOT ENTER. TRAPS MARK THESE FLOORS. -PRES. BUSH (41)*". This was the place; however, he never told me about any traps. I felt frightened to go in. Then I thought of the words of Poppy. **"Be bold in your caring, be bold in your dreaming and above all else, always do your best."** I thought of the words "BE BOLD." I could not turn back now, for I was already on my way to the cave, ready for total domination.

I was walking until the floor kind of moved. Arrows were now flying at me at about 20 mph and all I could do was dodge them with the little speed that I had. I got to the other side safely (thankfully) so I continued my journey.

The next trap was the last one. Yay! There were three doors and a sign that said "*ONE HAS SNAKES, ONE HAS A BEAR, AND ONE IS THE OTHER WAY OUT. PICK YOUR PATH!*" I just chose a random door, and I slammed into it. And again. And again, until it finally budged. Inside were candies and old pictures of the former president and documents and other cool stuff. It was like he knew I would miss him, so he made a remembrance cave for me to enjoy.

You were a good owner President Bush. I hope I can find another person just like you.