

Ashley Scarpato

ENG 100

Formal Assignment #2: Narrative Project, Draft #2

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### Loss

In the spring of 2014, my dog, Brutus, was diagnosed with stomach cancer. He wasn't acting like his normal energetic self. Brutus would always be running around the house with a toy in his mouth or jumping at the front door anytime a car drove by. But he slowly became less energetic and would refuse to eat. We took Brutus to the vet and found out that he had a mass in his stomach. The vet informed my family that it was stomach cancer and the mass was small. The mass was just in an uncomfortable position that's why Brutus was acting different. The vet prescribed some medications to help relieve Brutus' pain and he was back to his normal energetic self in less than a week.

Fast forward a year later to the summer of 2015. It was the week of our yearly family vacation. Everyone, including Brutus, piled into the car and we headed to the beach. My parents were in the front seats, my three sisters were seated in the middle row Lauren on the left, Jocelyn in the middle and Courtney on the far right. I was seated in the third row with Brutus with his head on my lap a majority of the ride.

I woke up the first morning of the vacation with a smile on my face; this was going to be my first day at the beach all summer. As I walked toward the kitchen I passed my parents sitting on the couch in the living room. Brutus was laying on the floor by their feet. He was lying very still and his breathing was slow, I could tell he was uncomfortable. Once I finally reached the kitchen I saw my grandpa walk in through the back door.

"It's starting to rain", he stated.

“Ashley why don’t you take out Brutus before it starts to rain too much and he’ll get all wet”, my mom said

“Come on Brutus, let’s go out!”

Brutus just stayed on the floor where he was. He didn’t even lift his head when he heard his name. I walked over to Brutus to help him get up so that he could go out. Once Brutus was on his feet his legs started to shake. I picked him up with ease; he was light because he lost so much weight from being sick. As I placed Brutus down in the front yard he just layed in the grass and whimpered a little. Looking down at him I felt bad. This wasn’t fair. He was in pain and shouldn’t have to suffer. Picking Brutus back up in my arms I carried him through the front door and placed him down on the carpet where he was laying previously.

Walking towards my family now all seated at the table my dad said, “Girls I think this is the end for Brutus. He is in a lot of pain and this is not fair for him.”

“I know this is going to be hard to do. But it’s the right decision. We can’t leave Brutus in his suffering because we don’t want to say goodbye”, said my mom

Silence had fallen around the table as everybody processed and digested what my parents had just suggested. Turning my head away from the table my brown hair covered the side of my face as tears began to fall down my cheeks. I couldn’t believe it was actually time to say goodbye to Brutus. He was our family dog for the past thirteen years, more than three quarters of my life. He was with my family through so much. He’d been on every family vacation, he would go to all of my softball tournaments on the weekends and he was always in the front yard running back and forth while my sisters and I had a catch. The thought of walking through the front door of my house and not seeing him sitting there waiting to greet me made the tears fall faster.

“Remember that time we found him sitting on the dining room table eating the pasta”, Courtney said with a laugh.

“Or when he put himself in moms pajama shirt”, I chimed in.

I smiled thinking about all of the good times we were able to enjoy in the past thirteen years that we had Brutus. Sitting in my chair watching as each member of my family said their goodbyes to Brutus. I was the last of my siblings to say my goodbyes since Brutus was technically my dog. My parents bought me him for my fourth birthday.

Walking over to Brutus I stopped and knelt down next to him giving him a soft kiss on his head. I rubbed his belly one last time because that was his favorite place to be scratched. He would always shake his leg when you scratched his belly, he didn't shake his leg today. Feeling the tears starting to form in my eyes again. I bent down so I that I was closer to his head and whispered in his ear.

“You are a good boy. I'll see you again one day. Hopefully not too soon. Once you get to heaven you will be pain free and will be able to run around and play again. Thank you for the past thirteen years.”

Taking a step back my dad reached down and picked Brutus up. I stood with my three sisters watching my parents and Brutus walk out the front door, we followed them onto the porch. Watching as my dad put Brutus in the truck. My dad held up Brutus' front paw to wave towards us and said, “Say bye bud, we love you.”

We watched them pull out of the driveway and down the road towards Brutus' new life.