

Acquaintance of a Murderer

By Brandi Beckett

My name is Roy and I am the dog of a mass murderer. Denny, my owner, has finally been caught and locked up for good. I have been home alone since the night they came to arrest him. Since no one in Denny's family wanted me, the police officers are taking me to the local dog shelter. I have never been in a car before, or any vehicle for that matter, Denny had never owned a vehicle, not while I was around anyway. It was strange in this patrol car, it's like I'm in a cage! There are bars on the windows, and I can't get to the police officers in the front seat because it's barricaded. It makes me feel sick to look out the windows and see everything moving so fast. I'm just going to lay in the seat with my eyes shut until we get to the shelter. I'm excited to be around other dogs again, it's been so long since I have been able to play with another dog! I will miss Denny so much though! He was a good owner to me, just a bad human towards other humans.

He got me as a puppy. My first owners had my litter in a box, selling us at the local grocery store's parking lot. Denny walked by me that day and just had to take me home! He lived in a two-story house on Washington Dr., in Oklahoma, Oklahoma, it was perfect. It had a backyard surrounded by a ten-foot fence and plenty of room to play! He put my bed next to the fireplace in the living room. It was always warm and cozy there. On the main floor there was the living room, kitchen, dining room, and a washroom under the stairs. Upstairs was a laundry-bathroom combined, and two bedrooms. I was never allowed up there though. That was fine by me, it was pretty homey having my bed next to the fireplace. He lived on a street with lots of

other two-story houses. Most of them seemed to have families living in them but Denny just lived alone. He might wave when we would walk past his neighbors but never really talked to them. I like to think it's because now, he had me to talk to. He had always wanted a lab and I was close enough. I was a mutt, my mom was a Great Dane, and my dad was a Lab-BloodHound mix. I look so much like my dad, my hair is short and brown, I have blue eyes, my ears are long and floppy and I'm tall, just not as tall as my mom was. In Denny's eyes I was his dream dog, even though he knew I was a mutt, he didn't care. He wasn't very creative with my name, he named me after my dog food, Ol'Roy, it could be worse though. Denny trained me, played with me and took me everywhere with him. We walked everywhere! Sometimes he would even take me to the dog park, that was my favorite place to go! I loved playing with the other dogs and Denny seemed to enjoy talking with the other dog owners.

You wouldn't expect him to be a murderer, in fact, he was a normal guy for many years. It wasn't until I was about 3 years old. Denny's mom had passed, he was expecting a large inheritance but that didn't happen! Before his mother had died, she rewrote her will to leave everything to her niece, Britt. Britt had helped his mother in her sickened days, and she was married with kids. Denny's mother felt bad for her, with all she had on her plate, and appreciated her help. Denny on the other hand hadn't talked to his mother in years, because they never had the greatest relationship. He was furious when he found out that he didn't get a dime! After this, Denny hated the world! He was not the same and his demeanor started to change, especially towards women. He wanted nothing to do with his distant family and his mom was the last immediate family he had. I was the only thing Denny truly cared about.

For a while he quit taking me on walks, just took me out to go potty. He would just lay around the house and didn't leave for weeks. He was depressed and because he had big plans

with that money. He felt defeated and lost. Eventually he had to go back to work at the post office or he was going to lose his job. Going back to work helped him get back on a regular routine and we started to go back on walks again, but something was off. He started taking me to grocery stores, coffee shops and any place that would allow pets. For some reason we never went back to the dog park. While we were out, he would talk to women who showed any interest in me, or him for that matter. He enjoyed telling them all about me. He would also come off with a charm to make the women interested in him. Some women would just give him their number and others would be willing to come home with us. At the time, I didn't understand it. Why was he doing this? He was never this worried about women before.

At first, it was typical behavior, he would have the women over and they would have a drink, talk or watch a movie. Sometimes, I would get left downstairs and he would take the women upstairs, they would make all kinds of concerning ruckus. I hated when this happened, especially when the girls never came back downstairs with him. I wasn't allowed upstairs, so I could never go investigate, even though I wanted to. The times he came back down alone, was when he was up there the longest. It was during these times it also sounded like he was messing with power tools. Eventually he would come down the stairs with zip lock baggies full of a red substance and put them in the freezer. Sometimes if he grew somewhat fond of a woman, he would keep them around for a while it would all end the same way. They wouldn't come back downstairs, and I would never see them again. From the time I was four to five years old, I had counted about 8 women that never came back downstairs.

I wasn't neglected, Denny still spent just as much time with me, as he always had. I just couldn't help but to reminisce the simple times when we would just go to the dog park. This new version of Denny was giving me a bad feeling. On the upside, Denny had become a really good

cook! I hadn't seen a can of Ol' Roy dog food since we started going on walks again! It smelled like that stuff he would bring downstairs and put in the freezer. Whatever he would cook for himself, he started sharing it with me. Another thing I noticed was when Denny let me out into the backyard. He would also be back there digging holes and putting bones in them and covering them back up. I would dig up so many bones! He would get so mad, and I didn't understand why? I was so excited to have so many new bones to chew on. Every time I would find one, he would take it away from me and bury it again. To me this was becoming a really fun game, but I knew Denny didn't see it that way, regardless, I was having a blast.

By the time I was six years old it was up to 11 women. Kylee was my favorite, he kept her around for quite a while. I thought that maybe she could be the one that would end this but after three or four months, one evening she didn't come back down the stairs. This made me sad. Kylee would bring me treats and she kept trying to get Denny to take me to the dog park. Denny would always come up with a reason not to go. I think I figured out the real reason. It was because of how much he loved me and how much I meant to him. He knew that the other dog owners cherished their dogs just as much as he cherished me. He also knew the dogs loved their owners just the same. He could never kill another dog owner. He always went after women who didn't own any pets. It was part of his spiel when he would pick them up. The day after Kylee didn't come down the stairs, he did take me to the dog park, and we stayed for a couple hours. I had a blast. Denny didn't talk to anyone; he just sat on the bench and watched me play. Maybe Kylee did get to him?

One month after Kylee, we ventured off to a coffee shop and he brought a girl home. She came down the stairs and eventually went home. Something felt unusual this time and it was because she never came back either. We went off and brought another girl home and same thing,

she went home and never came back. Was this spell dying? I feel like this whole phase started out of anger towards his mother and cousin. Maybe, Kylee did end it? She was the first girl I feel he had cared about and now she is gone. I'm glad this might be coming to an end but what he had been doing was terrible, I knew that for sure. I just worry about what might happen if it catches up to him, with a change of heart or not.

New neighbors had moved in next door, a couple months after the last girl had come over. Susan and Tim were a newly married couple, they had a little white yippee puppy. Its name was Tilly. I Hated that dog. It would bark and bark and bark, to no end! They would put clothes on it and little bows in its hair. Denny didn't even notice. My whole life Denny never paid much mind to the neighbors. I bet he didn't even notice that they moved in. A couple weeks after they got all moved in, they were planning a BBQ. I know because I had heard them on their back deck, while I was outside going potty. All I could think, for the love of God, I hope the guests don't bring more dogs like Tilly!

Well, it had been a week since I had heard them in the backyard and the guests were arriving. I watched them through the front window. No sight of any more little dogs! My prayers had been answered! Tonight, me and Denny had plans for a boy's night. Just me and him and a movie. I was so excited! What he made for dinner smelled great, but I was back to Ol'Roy dog food. It had been that way for a couple weeks. It made me pretty sad and disgusted. I'm the dog, I get slim picking, there was nothing I could do, and I had to settle for whatever I got. After dinner Denny let me out to go to the bathroom, in the backyard. As I went out and sniffed around, I saw that little turd, Tilly! She had one of my Bones that Denny would hide from me! No, that was my game! I barked at her to give it back! But she took off back under the fence with

it, over to the neighbor's yard. I was devastated, she never brought it back. 10 minutes later Denny called me inside. He was done with the dishes, and it was time for us to watch a movie.

The next morning, there was a cop car in front of the neighbor's house. Denny and I went out for a morning walk. When Denny saw the cop car, he got nervous, I could tell by the look on his face and his sweaty hands. We walked Blocks away from the house until the cop had left. When we got back to the house Denny got ready for work and left. When he got back home that night, he went into the back yard with a shovel. He started digging up the bones, as many as he could find and put them in a Trash bag. After he had put all that he could in the bag. He put that bag in another and taped it tight. He then put them in a box with a bunch of foam peanuts and taped that up. He was muttering his plan out loud the whole time. He had a friend named Joseph that lived in Iowa. He was going to get this box past security at the post office and send it to Joe. Joe owned a dog cremation business. He was going to tell joe, since he lived in the city, he couldn't burn anything but just knowing this stuff was burned would help him mentally. He was going to tell him it was a bunch of stuff from people in the past and just knowing it was burned would help him. Yes, just a mental health exercise, he reassured himself. He was going to make it clear to Joe, not to open the box, just burn it!

The next morning on his walk to work he had taken the box with him and followed his plan exactly the way he had talked it out that night. A couple days later Joe had called to tell him he received the package and would get to it as soon as he could. Meanwhile, I knew this was not going to fix Denny's problems, there were still bones in the backyard! I could smell them! In fact, Tilly came over that night, same issue as last time, she stole a bone and took it back under the fence! This time Susan was outside, she saw where Tilly had come from this time because not too long after Tilly ran back to her yard the cops were at our steps with a warrant. While the

cops were looking around in the house and the backyard, over their walkie-talkies there Sargent had insisted Denny be brought in for questioning and called off the search! There was an anonymous report from Iowa, saying they had received human bones from the suspect! That was the night I got left alone. There was nothing more Denny did to try to fix this, he had been caught and the police officers were only a couple minutes from the shelter with me.

I have been at the dog shelter for about a week now, I have made so many friends and I love being able to play with other dogs every day! The owners of my mom and dad heard about Denny on the news and about me. They came today to see me, and I think they are going to take me back home with them tomorrow. I am so excited to be with my mom and dad again! No matter what, I will always miss Denny.