

Ode to Rudi

Rudi Dude Dog, aka the Brick Pile Dude, Dudeski, Wunderkindt, the Boy & Wonder Dog (because you often made me wonder). Thank you for being the greatest dog a man could ever want. You as the runt of the litter & the only one left, because you were so small & black, not looking like the rest that showed their proud King German Shepherd heritage from birth, but you who grew to be big & strong & looked every bit like a true champion.



I remember the day I brought you home, like it was yesterday, not the almost twelve years we have shared since then & your passing. The little black ball of fur that I could hold in one hand, that cried so much that first night that I slept with you in the box that I had brought home from work for you to live in as a pup. Little did I know the puppy with the floppy ear until maturity was as special as you were or would become in my life.

Special not because you were the most talented dog, after all it took two sessions of dog training to learn even the basics, but special because of the companionship & love you shared with me. You were not the smartest dog, although quick to learn. As in the time that you chased & caught a porcupine in the bush as a youngster, I remember carrying you home because you were so frightened & panicked & taking you to the vet. You gave porcupines a wide birth after that.

As the guard dog you were meant to be, you would get an “F” for friendliness not ferocity. You did not even growl at people or even bark for that matter. Instead you sat on that pile of bricks left over from the building of our house & looked menacing enough that few dared pull up the driveway let alone get out of their car. Little did they know you were the biggest mush puppy I knew.

I am proud that you never bit anyone & were so loveable that children who were daunted by your sheer size would love to pet you after their initial fear passed away. You showed them that big does not mean a mean dog. After all few dogs weigh 81 kilos (178 lbs) & do not have one of those fancy reel in leashes because they do not make one big or strong enough to accommodate him. Or there are few dogs that could pull a grown man on skis up a hill like you did & would be so gentle & loving.

No you were not prolific at fetching. Yes you would get the ball or stick & return to me but we had some epic struggles getting the ball from you. You were never a swimmer but would walk into the lake until your back became wet & then retreated. It still amazes me that you acted like a pup your entire life, sniffing & exploring on your walks like you had never been there before even though you had made the trip hundreds of times.

You always greeted other dogs with the excitement & anticipation of a young puppy & even though you often dwarfed them or scared them with your largeness they were always safe. Lassie & the other dogs that would bark at you as you meandered down the street will miss you. You made me wonder what you were up to when you would run around & around in circles over & over again as fast as you could dodging trees & shrubs & fences. Was it the pup in you even though you were 84 in people years?



Thank you for being Mom & Dad’s security blanket while I was away. For giving Mom something to look at out the kitchen window & for dad to cuss at as you walked across his garden. They both love you & will miss you as much as Lonnie & I. Thank you for teaching me the meaning of loyalty & companionship, your picture should be in the dictionary for these words. Thank you for being my bestest friend for all those years.

You never complained or made a fuss even & at the end when the cancer was within you, no one knew for your strength hid it well. May you rest in peace knowing that you made an incredible impact in all those you touched & that touched you. You will be missed.

Andreas