

A Puppy's Tale in Cayo



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Cayo Animal Welfare Society

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like a princess. He got to see her and play with her a few times every day, but she lived inside, and was very happy. That happened only after Gonzalo brought the story about puppies that he read in school home, so

his parents could read it too. His father yelled a lot and said it was garbage. At first. The following day, Gonzalo's father started thinking about Jefe, their big guard dog that died a few weeks ago, and realized that he had treated Jefe terribly. It changed the way they all thought about puppies and dogs, and nobody yelled and screamed any more.

Every day, Buddy, Lulu, Bitsy and I all met at the fence and played a little while, and every single time we told each other how lucky we all were.

They call me Scruffy

My Mama

They call me Scruffy, and I have a story to tell.



We lived under a wooden house in San Ignacio. Mama always told me and my litter-mates Buddy, Bitsy and Lulu to be quiet, because the people that lived above us in the house did not know we were there, and she didn't want us all to be discovered by those people who did a lot of yelling and screaming.

They were mean people and Mama was scared of them, and that's why she always hushed us when we got loud when playing. Mama told us that Papa was the mean people's guard dog.

My Papa

When I was still a tiny puppy, I got a good look at Papa one day when Mama didn't notice me crawling close to the edge of the house. From behind an empty paint can, I could see Papa at the corner of the yard. He was panting and

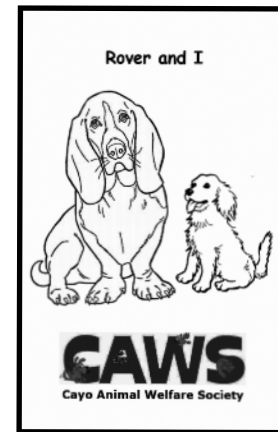


he looked sick, with his ribs and hip bones sticking out.

Papa was a very big dog with a big head and very sad eyes.

He had a chain around his neck, and another huge chain was attached to it. He spent a lot of time scratching around his neck and ears with his back paw, and shaking his head, which rattled the chain and made a loud noise. The mean people yelled at him to be quiet.

Buddy said that Gonzalo---that was the boy's name--- wasn't mean anymore. He said that one day, Gonzalo went to school as the mean boy, but when he came back from school, he hugged him. The boy gave Buddy a flea bath, and



just started being nicer after that. Now, Buddy always had enough food and fresh water, and now they were best friends. Gonzalo told him that a story he read in school made him realize that dogs and puppies had feelings

just like he did, and he realized that it was wrong to be mean to animals.

The Happy Ending

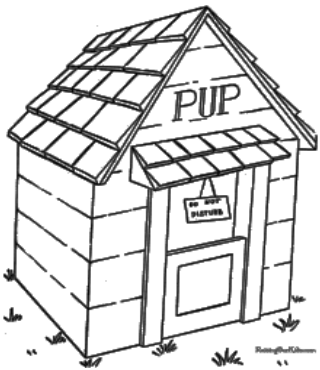
So, what's the best part of my story? I'll tell you. We saw Bitsy in the window inside the mean people's house. Buddy said that the people inside treated Bitsy

We have a Home!

Guess what? Lulu and I were adopted together, and as we were getting close to our forever home, we both got very excited because we had been in that area before.

Our new home, our forever home, was next door to where we were born. We would surely get to see Buddy and Bitsy again!

When we got in the yard, we started barking by the fence. Buddy was there! And he came running to the fence to greet us! We were all wagging our tails like crazy. No longer was he on a chain! I saw through the pickets that that mean boy was in the yard, building what looked like a doghouse for Buddy.



The sun was very hot that day. Papa had no water to drink, and his chain was too short for him to get under the Neem tree for the shade. I was very scared when I heard footsteps on the porch above, and a large boy with a sneer on his face jumped the rail and landed in front of me with a thud. I saw the boy run over to Papa, and he kicked him hard, then yelled "Daddy say you shat op, stupid, lazy bwai!" and ran away laughing.



I was shocked, and very, very sad. Then something weird happened--- my eyes started to leak. Before long my eyes were all watery and I could barely see through all that stuff! But I could still see that Papa did not look like the proud, happy and handsome dog that Mama had talked about. My nose was runny then, too. I sniffled and turned away.

That was the last day that any of us pups saw Papa, and Mama was always very sad after that.

Family Time

Another two weeks had passed. All of us were getting bigger, and I was proud to be the biggest of us. Mama used to laugh and say: "My sweet Scruffy, you look just like Papa!" But I remembered what Papa looked like, and I thought Mama was a little crazy. I didn't know that Mama was remembering an earlier time when Papa was a handsome, muscular dog with a twinkle in his eye and a kind heart. Mama told us lots of fun stories about Papa that evening, and all of us went to sleep and had sweet dreams about Papa being there with us, protecting us and playing with us.

neuter". I was upset to learn that it wasn't a party with cake. Instead, Dr B gave us another shot that made us sleepy.

As I was waking up later, the CAWS lady --- Dr B called her Miss Susanne --- came over to me and started petting my head in a very tender way. She whispered softly in my ear; "Scruffy pup, you will never have to worry now about getting that horrible doggy disease called TVT." Oh, boy! Great news! And I was really happy when Miss Susanne told Lulu the same thing, although I had no idea what TVT was.

Miss Susanne took us back to her house where we played happily with Emma and the others. When Miss Susanne wasn't looking, we chased chickens. We also barked at little chirpy things in the trees that Emma called birds. Just two days later, we met our forever people and they took us bouncing back down the hill for the last time. Bye, Miss Susanne! We will miss you!

something. The puppies that were there in the beginning were now gone. The CAWS lady said they were adopted and were already living in forever homes with people that loved them.

Visiting the Vet



We were taken for a visit with Dr B about a week later. He gave each of us a loving pat on the head, remarked how big we had grown, and said we were healthy and ready for adoption after our spay or neuter, and vaccine.

He took a long needle out of his bag and asked the CAWS lady to hold me so I wouldn't move in case I felt a pinch. I felt it, alright, but I was a big boy and didn't cry at all! Next came the "spay or

The next day, I woke up with an odd feeling in my belly. Mama was not there, and the other pups were asleep. I found



a piece of coconut husk that lay next to where Buddy, was sleeping and started shredding and chewing it. "I'm so bored!"

After chewing the last piece of coconut husk, I sighed. My brother and sisters were still sleeping. I put my cold nose on Buddy's belly and nudged him to get him up to play, but he just grunted and rolled over.

There was a little whining sound, and I was surprised to hear it was coming from me! "C'mon, Buddy, play with me! Please?" Buddy and Lulu picked up their heads to look at me, but did not get up to play. Buddy said, "shhh, Scruffy! Let me sleep! I don't feel good." Bitsy

didn't even look up. I really, REALLY wanted to play, even though my tummy was gurgling and I didn't feel too good either.

Mama had been gone for a very long time. She went out once a day to try to find food, but she usually returned in a short while, although sometimes she came back without finding anything to eat. Poor Mama! Sometimes, when I was snuggled up close to Mama, I could tell she hadn't eaten because her tummy made a lot of weird gurgling noises, but no matter what, Mama made sure that all her puppies were fed and she made sure we were warm. She was a great mom!

Later that day, after we had a long nap, we got a visit from a man that the lady kept calling Dr B. I liked Dr B a lot. He was very nice to me and Lulu. He looked us both over, and told the lady that we needed a wormer, some vitamins, and that within a couple of weeks, we'd be old enough for a spay or neuter, and a vaccine. I had no idea what that was, but I was hoping that it was something like a party and a cake! Then he cleaned up my cut and put something oozy on it that made it hurt less.

We played every day at the CAWS lady's house. Her dogs were gentle with us and really knew how to have fun! She did not like it when we chased the chickens, but it sure was fun. The CAWS lady fed us some really yummy stuff, and plenty of it. A couple of weeks later, she said that Lulu and I were growing like weeds and we would be ready for adoption soon. I didn't know what adoption was, but it sounded nice. A few days before, Lulu noticed

My first Bath

The water was warm and it smelled nice, a bit like flowers, but I did NOT like being in water! This thing she called a "bath" was a terrible thing and I did not like it AT ALL. At first. Then she started rubbing me all over and I didn't care that I was wet anymore. It felt great! She was very careful around my face,



trying hard not to get soapy water in my eyes or ears, or the cut on my head. She got me out of the water again, and rubbed me dry with something she called a towel. She didn't put me back in the box with Lulu. Instead,

she put me on a very soft pillow and that's where I waited for Lulu. I liked this lady. She had a nice voice, nice dogs, and I just knew that everything was going to be ok.

Where is everybody?

But now Mama was gone and it was beginning to get dark. And it was cold. I was scared and started to whine a little louder. Buddy hushed me, remembering what Mama had said about the mean people above. I settled in between Buddy and Lulu. With a heavy sigh, I put my head down to sleep. More than anything in the world, I hoped that when I woke up again, Mama would be back. In truth, without Mama, all of us were in trouble, hungry and scared.

But Mama wasn't there when we woke up the next morning. I yawned, got up and stretched, and looked over at the others. What!? Buddy was gone! He must have sneaked away in the night to go try to find Mama! I nosed Lulu until she woke up, and said "Mama's still not back and now Buddy is gone too!"

"Oh my, oh my...what are we gonna do, Scruffy?" Lulu asked. After a short discussion, Lulu and I decided to go look for Buddy and Mama. Bitsy wanted to stay and wait, and was too weak to go help them look, anyway. It had been more than a day since we last ate, but Bitsy had it worse. Bitsy was the runt of the litter, and was not as strong as the rest of us. I hated the thought of leaving Bitsy behind, but she insisted that we go without her.

On the Run

With a very heavy heart, we started on our journey, but as we cleared the edge of the house, I saw that the mean, sneering boy was waiting right there for us! I just stood there, frozen in fear while Lulu growled then yelled "Run, Scruffy,



to live. She was taking us inside the house, not under it where I expected to be.

There were other dogs and puppies inside her house. The biggest one was a bit scary-looking, but she was very sweet to us. The lady called her Emma. Emma stuck her big face in our box and licked the both of us. Hahaha! It really tickled!



Then the lady did something really, really awful... she said we were full of fleas and needed a bath. I didn't know what that was until she picked me up out of the box and put me in a big bowl of water!

Lulu liked it too. Then he put us in a big box with something soft on the bottom and Lulu and I both took a nap. That was the best sleep we had since Mama went away. We were fed, and we felt safe.

When we woke up again, we were bouncing around a lot although we were still in the box. Lulu's nose was sniffing the air and she looked really worried. She said we were somewhere new, and much farther away from where Buddy and Bitsy were! We peeked over the top of the box and saw a lady with a ponytail that was bouncing just like we were. I have to admit that I tried to be brave, but I was crying and whimpering, and so was Lulu. I think we both knew right then that we weren't likely to see Buddy and Bitsy again.

When we finally stopped bouncing, this CAWS lady that Mr Bob had called picked us up in the box and walked to a wood house like the one where we used

run!!" as she ran straight for the big hole in the fence as fast as her chubby little puppy legs could take her.

My eyes were locked on the mean boy. I wanted to growl and look mean, but all that came out of my throat was a whimper, and the mean boy laughed at me. Then, from somewhere deep inside, a low growl began to rumble. The growling got louder, and as the mean boy looked away to find a rock to throw at me, I slowly started to back up, until I was deep under the house with Bitsy again.

I blew it! If I stayed there, the boy would discover Bitsy and hurt her since she could not run, so without another thought, and summoning all the courage I had, I made a run for it!

Mean boy saw me when I came out, and threw a handful of gravel and rocks at me just as I got to the hole in the fence. I think there was glass, too, because I got a big cut on my head. I turned

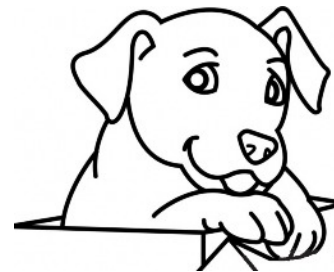
quickly and took one last look at that mean boy, and behind the boy, thought I saw Buddy with a rope around his neck over where Papa used to be! Oh, no! That was the last thing I remember thinking before I passed out. I woke up again with Lulu licking my face, but I don't know how long I was laying there. I noticed right away that I wasn't where I thought I was, just outside the fence



around the mean people's house. I was so dizzy, and thirsty, and hungry, and sad, and confused, but I was also so happy to see Lulu. She told me she dragged me quickly under some

bushes before the mean boy made it to the hole in the fence to get me. Lulu saved me! When I told her I thought I saw Buddy, she said that she had seen him too, but there was nothing we could do. We both cried for a long time.

Lulu and I walked down the street, busy talking to each other and ended up bumping into some tall, skinny, people legs! We looked up and gave the man our best "I'm sorry!" look and started around him, but he scooped us both up before we knew what happened. He walked into an office next to him, carrying us both. He told a girl at a desk in there to call something called CAWS.



She picked up a flat little black box and put it to her ear and started talking. Then she lowered the little box and said, "Mr Bob, they are sending someone."

Mr Bob was sitting now and had both of us in his lap. He was petting my head and behind my ears, then rubbing my belly. All of it felt so good! I could tell

not bothering to look up. He was very skinny and a lot of his hair was missing. He had a lot of scars, too. No one was tossing him food.



My sister Lulu has a heart of gold. I watched her go sit near one of the tables and stare at a nice older man with a cap on his head. In no time at all, he tossed her a big chunk of something that he called a "burrito." Lulu picked it up carefully and took it to the old dog, dropping the food right by his nose. He ate it quickly and gave Lulu a big smile. A lot of the people started slamming their hands together and made a big, happy-sounding noise.

Market

I found out that Lulu had a good nose. She could smell food from a long distance away. She took me to a place called "The Market" and the smells there were wonderful! People food! My new favorite smell! My cut was hurting a lot. Lulu walked through the market weaving a path through people's legs and feet, and I followed her. I hoped they were not more mean people. Mama said that most people were nice, so I was not afraid.



Lulu took us to a tent with a long table with people seated around it. They were eating and the food smelled so good.

We both sat down and watched them. There was a big lady that smiled at us, and the boy next to her smiled too. We gave them our

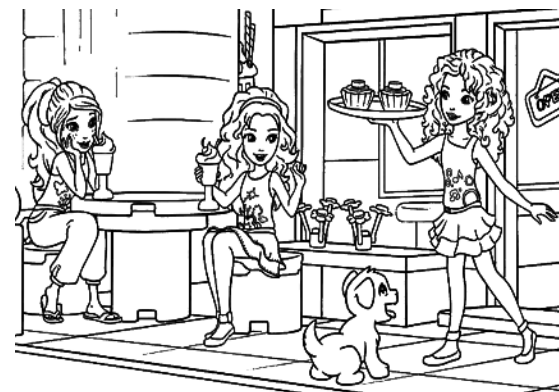
best puppy dog eyes, and the boy tossed a large piece of his food to where we were.

Success! We were eating for the first time in two days and it was heavenly. There were puddles of water everywhere, so we were no longer thirsty. The market was a very busy place and there were people everywhere. When the big lady and her boy got up, we started to follow them because they gave us food and seemed very nice, but then we remembered Buddy and Bitsy, so we tried to find our way back to where we used to live.

Burns Avenue

We wandered for a long while. We saw big things called buses that moved on the street. They were very scary and smelly things. And those things called taxis were not as big, but they were fast! Two of them almost hit us the first time we tried to cross. We went up a small

alley and found ourselves in a place called Burns Avenue. It was like other streets, except that there were no scary buses or taxis, only people walking.



At one part of it, there were interesting smells where a lot of people were sitting around tables, eating.

Well, that certainly explained why there were so many other puppies and big dogs around us. Most were sitting quietly staring at the people expectantly, hoping that food would be tossed out to them.

A few were already full and wandering away, and one older dog that reminded me of Papa was lying on the ground and