

# RUFFY

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Inspired by: *Untitled (Black Flood)*, 2001 – by Dirk Skreber



It was a dreary, rainy Tuesday. I drove home from the funeral in silence. Well, except for the constant whining coming from that awful, ugly, smelly dog in the back seat. I stared blankly out the window into the endless sheet of rain, allowing the tears to stream freely down my cheeks without wiping them away. My knuckles turned white, clenched around the steering wheel. I was angry! My dear, sweet, beautiful grandmother was gone, and I was left with a broken heart and this...creature.

Ruffy is a 7-year-old, 8-pound Yorkie with missing teeth, bad breath, fur that is greasy in some places and bald in others, and a face only a mother could love. Nobody else wanted him, and he needed a place to stay while we find him a new home. He starts howling in the back seat. "Quiet down!" I snap. "You're staying with me, and I don't care if you don't like it!"

When we arrive home, Ruffy slowly sulks into the house. He sniffs and sniffs, then lies down and starts to whimper. "No! Bad dog! You be quiet!" I bark. Ruffy slinks over to the Christmas tree, lifts his leg, and pees all over the wrapped Christmas presents. "Are you kidding me! You dumb dog! Grandma's funeral wasn't hard enough? What are you trying to do, ruin Christmas AND my life?!" I slump down on the couch and put my head in my hands, sobbing in grief and frustration.

Ruffy jumps up on the couch and huddles next to me for warmth. I move to the side. "Leave me alone!" I shout. He tilts his head, then moves again next to me. I stop for a moment to look down at this stinky pile of fur next to me. Ruffy looks up into my eyes, and there is such sadness there. Didn't he just lose Grandma, too? Every day for the past 7 years, he's loyally completed his one, single job on this planet – sit on Grandma's lap, and give her comfort and peace. They were best friends, and he mourns her passing just as I do.

After a moment, Ruffy slowly starts snuggling his way onto my lap, where he curls up, closes his eyes, and begins to breathe heavily as he drifts off to sleep. "This is where he feels safe," I think to myself. "In a strange new house, this is what is familiar to him."

I wipe my tears away and get a better look at him, up close. He is so warm, and his tawny bluish grey fur is really beautiful. I reach down and put my hand in his back. He is soft. What a beautiful, sweet creature he is. He loved my Grandma so dearly, just as I did, and he reminds me of her in a way. Gentle, warm. Ruffy begins to snore quietly. Maybe I remind him of Grandma, too? You know, maybe this could be his new home, and maybe we could be good friends after all.