

I Am A Patriot

Grade 5-6

My name is Patriot, but it hasn't always been that name. I am the most smart, handsome, protective, and courageous friend I know. Well, that is what my best friend tells me anyway. My eyes are blue, like ice on a snowy winter's day. I have medium-length, rough-coated, brown, and black fur. What? You didn't know? I am a border collie and I am a patriot.

Today is a scorching, 98-degree July summer day, and I am starting to regret having such handsomely thick fur. I can hear myself panting loudly like the day I saw a cunning squirrel. He was trying to invade the homeland. "Attack!" I barked as I ran toward the intruder like a B-52 fighter jet. I snap out of this thought from the instrumentation sounds blaring. "O say can you see by the dawn's early light what so proudly we hailed at the twilight's last gleaming..." I open my eyes and jump to attention. I can see my boy standing in the middle of the yard. It was like I was seeing Francis Scott Key from the War of 1812. He is standing tall, chest out, right hand raised to the corner of his eye, and proudly he pays tribute to those who are fighting and have fought for our freedom. I quickly march toward him, and lift myself to stand on two legs. I stand tall, chest out, right paw raised, and I pay tribute to those who are fighting and have fought for our freedom. I glance toward my boy because he makes me so proud. The national anthem ends, and I immediately drop down on all fours.

Now, let me tell you about my boy. He is tall, slender, smart, handsome, and courageous. He has dark brown fur that is slick to his head. I find him quite funny-looking because his entire body is bald. He kind of looks like one of those fancy 4-H goats. The ones where they shave their body, except their head. I think they are called show goats. He has blue eyes that match the color of my dog bowl. His name is Brayden, but that hasn't always been his name.

"Come on, Boy!" calls Brayden.

I bark "Race you!" and I immediately take off running towards the woods. I look back only to see Brayden gaining on me. Brayden yells, "Bang! Bang!" I stop and fall over dead. The second of many tricks that I was taught. My boy Brayden army crawls over to me to scratch my belly. Oh, how I love it. He leans into me. I growl, "Operation Rolling Thunder!"

We both leap to our feet and into the jungle.

Quietly, we sneak through the tall trees and high grasses. We are careful not to be spotted by the enemy. The North Vietnamese are communists and we are there to help the South Vietnamese, ordered by President Johnson.

"Look over there" sneered Brayden.

"Grrr, the Enemy!" I growled. Brayden gestures for me to stay low until the soldiers move past. Brayden remarked, "let's flank them." I snapped, "That's what I said!" I stayed put as I watched Brayden climb the tall mountain in front of us.

It seemed to take forever. I found myself drifting off and dreaming about when I was a young pup. Brayden wasn't always my boy. I had another boy, but he was a much bigger boy. He had a little more fur than Brayden on his body, but he was funny-looking too. You see my big boy's name was Sergeant. Well, that was what everyone called him. One day he explained to me that he had to leave and fight some very bad people in a place called Afghanistan.

"Take care of the homeland 9-11," called Sergeant.

I whimpered "yes sir!" and began licking the single salty tear that ran down his face. Months went by and two uniformed servicemen holding a neatly folded flag knocked on the door. Sergeant was killed in battle. I howled for weeks and would search for Sergeant through the window. On a crisp fall morning, I spotted a boy walking to school. I pressed my warm wet nose to the window to get a closer look. He looked my way and stopped. I watched him stand tall, chest out, and raise his right hand to his eye. He saluted the American flag that had been lowered to half-staff several weeks before. For the first time in a long time, I could feel my tail start to wag again. I watched as the boy turned and continued walking past the house. I spent the next several months watching the boy stop and salute the flag in my yard. My mind began to race, and every day I looked forward to seeing him. "What was his name?" I pondered. I will call him Patriot. Eventually, I made my way to the yard so I could introduce myself. As patriot walked closer, I could feel the excitement bursting inside. My tail was wagging so fast, I thought it would grab wind, and I would hover like a helicopter! Patriot stopped as I knew he would. When he went to salute, I lifted myself up on two legs and saluted. The first of many tricks I was taught. Patriot asked my name and I barked, "9-11."

"What's your name?" I barked. "My name is Brayden," he said. I repeated, "Brayden. Hmmm." he then asked, "Who taught you to salute?"

"You did" I replied anxiously.

Brayden knelt down beside me, rubbing behind my ears as I jumped all over him. I began licking his face. He giggled uncontrollably. I was the happiest dog in the world. Brayden had to continue to school, but he told me he would see me soon. After school was over, I could see Brayden walking toward me in the distance. I couldn't control myself. I began to run at him like a Boeing X-37. Just as I got to him he yelled, "Bang! Bang!" I plowed straight into him. He laughed and said, "You are supposed to fall over and play dead."

"I will remember next time!" I barked. Brayden announced "I'm going to call you Patriot." I liked the name.

Finally, I awoke from my slumber to the sound of my boy Brayden. He was yelling "Attack!" No one messes with my boy. I ran toward the enemy barking, growling, and snapping. "The enemy is eradicated." I growled. Brayden declared, "The war is over!"

We ended our game by honoring those who lost their lives. I watched as Brayden lowered the flag to half-staff. We stood tall, chests out, and saluted. I looked toward my boy, Brayden, and was so proud.

He is a patriot.