

Finding Otis

The Mystery of It



Beth Lord

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DEDICATION

To Otis and his family as well as to anyone who has lost a loved one.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Thank-you reader for wanting to read the story.



1 GETTING INVOLVED

It was last Thursday when Grant and I passed him after coming back from having breakfast at The Dacoma Diner. We didn't know him, so we didn't stop when we saw him in our neighbor's yard. When he came into our field the next day, that's when I got involved.

So there he was, Dog. Grant called me out of the kitchen to come outside to see him because Dog didn't move. He sat and watched us; we stood and watched him; he sat and watched us and we stood and watched him. He didn't move. He appeared to be a sweet, calm bloodhound who was lost. First things first, I ran into the farmhouse to get some dog food and water for him. He was hungry, thirsty and ate it all up. I ran and got more food for him. He ate it all up. He came in closer to where I was

because the food communicated safety and connection. Then I named him Gentle Soul because he felt and behaved like this. He had to have learned this from a loving family because of who he was. He wore a beautiful, leather halter around his neck but no tags on it. It is a warm day, but the night is going to be cold and he needs a place to stay, so I sprang into action.

Notice, this dog's genuine nature was giving me a chance to be genuine which was opening me up as I committed to Gentle Soul. Grant helped secure him snugly in the pick-up so I could drive into town with him in the back without him falling or jumping off this moving vehicle. JC saw him at our Vet Clinic, and Gentle Soul doesn't have a chip; tough luck. He thought he was maybe six years old and affirmed to me he was a beautiful dog, and had the look and feel of being loved.

I went to pick pizza up for the men who were working with Grant on getting his workshop up before the real cold hit. While waiting for the pizza to cook, I pondered the next step for Gentle Soul; there were no shelters in town, it was getting late in the day and the sun would be going down soon. Suddenly, my heart took control over my mind maze of what if's, and I came home with pizza and A Gentle Soul.

2 TERMS OF ENGAGEMENT

Grant was happy to have the pizzas but not Gentle Soul. Hadn't I dropped him off already for someone else's concern? But, my husband knows me well enough to let sleeping dogs lie when I have a wild look in my eyes, and I'm wearing my heart on my sleeve and so he bit his tongue. He went off to eat pizza and work on his building. I brought our two dogs out to play and keep Gentle Soul company. Grant came back to tell me he was on his way into town to get some hay for Gentle Soul so he could sleep on a warm bed in his shop.



When Grant came back, he had the hay, so we put styrofoam on the newly laid cement floor first and then the hay on top of it. We put up boards with a brown tarp over them to make a comfortable, warm home for him, complete with his water & food bowls. When we put him



in his new home, he was asleep within minutes.

So I was shocked and horrified the next day when I saw his door open and no Gentle Soul. He was there when I checked in on him earlier before running errands with Grant all morning. How did his door get open? That's when Grant told me he had opened it before we left so Gentle Soul could come and go as he pleased.

Come and go as he please? The weather wasn't summer; it was the beginning of Arctic Cold Spell, and this was a serious breach in our assumed contract with this Gentle Soul. Now I would never know what happened to him. It's a farm; this is what happens on a farm, if he comes back, he comes back Grant said in his defense but this doesn't make sense to me, I am pissed. My blood was boiling over, and I was so mad I took off in the pick-up to look for Gentle Soul. No use, I let him down and felt shame and sadness around such a betrayal in trust. How was he going to find his family now?

Grant kept a look out for him till he stopped working in his workshop late into the night but no sign of Gentle Soul so he left the shop open with his home in it just in case.

3 GRIEVING IS PART OF THE MYSTERY

Grieving is a place that has no time. Minutes seem like hours and days like lifetimes. My heart was breaking. Nowhere to turn but prayer for Gentle Soul and his family.



Please God, help him survive the cold and find his family for him. My prayer became my mantra and my focus as I fell asleep. In the middle of the night, it snowed. Cold under the down blanket, crumbling in the residue of my dreams about Gentle Soul.

*Why did he come to me?
Why didn't Grant close his door?
Why didn't he come back?*

I died in my heart.

Grant's early wake up alarm woke me up from a wonderful dream about Gentle Soul, who was back with his family. I heard a young man's voice telling me that Gentle Soul was fine. He's love and love only dies to be reborn after a physical death or what had happened to me last night when I crumbled. Who was this guy - God?

Grant turned off his alarm and went to sleep. I tossed and turned but couldn't sleep, so I got up to dress by seven. Pearl had to go out, so I headed out towards Gentle Soul's home. I don't know why I headed out that way - a hunch or something more. Were my eyes deceiving me because I could swear there 's a shape out there? I couldn't make it out but as I got closer I thought my eyes were still playing tricks on me but they weren't, Gentle Soul was back!

I did a Happy Dance and would have woken all the neighbors if we had more of them around us I was so happy to see him safe and alive. I hugged him, thanked him for coming back, thanked God. *Thank-You, Thank-You, Thank-You! We have another chance. We have another chance.* I was delirious in the head, but my heart was wide open in gratitude - such a great space for feeling the awesome amazingness of this mysterious life we live.



4 BONDING

I led Gentle Soul with his halter into our kitchen where Mason and Pearl were sleeping. Gentle Soul needed no coaxing to stay in our hearts and home. No ifs, ands or buts, forever if need be. God had given us a second chance to help this Gentle Soul, and we were going to do it. When Grant woke up and saw all 3 dogs sleeping in the kitchen, he rubbed his eyes and did pretty much what I did when I saw Gentle Soul again. We were giggly and giddy as we made a complete plan now of how to help Gentle Soul.

Throughout the day, we bonded and enjoyed our time together. It was fun to see the dogs and cats take to Gentle Soul.



We decided that if his family didn't show up, we'd adopt him and bring him into our family.



5 MONDAY - FOUND

On Monday, we ate breakfast at Dacoma Diner and asked Deb if she could keep the flier up on the door and ask people if they knew of a missing dog. We went into Alva and put fliers up all over the place and put an ad in the paper with Gentle Soul's picture. When we got back to the farm, Grant went back to building his building, and I settled down in the kitchen to write with Gentle Soul, Pearl, and Mason.

I was cleaning the living room early in the afternoon when I got an incoming call from a South Carolina phone number. I answered hello. A hesitant, reticent woman on the other end asked me if I had a dog with a leather halter on. When I said yes, we both cried out in joy as we realized we were talking about the same dog.

So the rest of the story goes like this:

Gentle Soul had broken away on Thursday morning that coincided with when Grant and I first saw him. Slow, that's what she said from when he was a puppy and their other dog, back then, had taken a bite out of his skull. Diane and Roger thought Gentle Soul was going to die, but he didn't. His head is a different shape because he's missing part of his skull. He has a brain injury. They're working as crane operators on the rigs for the oil company and have come from South Carolina to make money to move closer to their daughter and grandkids in North Carolina. They had

gotten as far as their minister helping them with a prayer chain from here to back home. Is Gentle Soul gone forever? How would they cope? I could barely get out the words to ask her what his name was and how old he was as I was beginning to cry now.

His name is Otis she replied, and he's four years old.
Otis is a perfect name for him I thought.

They'd be by after work and I told them where to find us. They didn't live too far from The Dacoma Diner. I hung up and let my crying cry because I felt relief that I did what I was supposed to do. I ran outside crying and telling Grant that Gentle Soul, Otis, has parents. I went back into the



kitchen still crying for the better part of the afternoon, saying, "good-bye" to Otis.



6 AND NOW THE MYSTERY GETS EXPLAINED

I saw the sunset and went outside to be with Grant. Diane and her husband pulled up and got out of the truck. Anxiously Diane came with me into the kitchen while the men talked outside. We walked into the warm kitchen and Otis was sleeping on his pad. Groggy from sleep, it took Otis a few moments to recognize his Mom but when he did there was joy that they had found each other again. Diane held up some folded money for me and tried to put it in my hand, and I backed away and told her to put it away. I couldn't take money for what I knew God and my heart had wanted me to do. I was supposed to find Otis, love him and get him back to his family. I went through all the details

of the past few days. It was a miracle that he found his way back to our home Saturday night as Diane confirmed he didn't have any logical or directional abilities since the bite to his skull.

Chit chatting, finding out about each other. Money was good working on the oil rigs, so this was their second year in Oklahoma. They would go home in May, hopefully, with enough money to build a home close to their daughter and grandkids in North Carolina. Dead silence. Then, in a quiet, sad sort of way she said they also had a son who was twenty- two years old, but had been killed by a drunk driver three months ago. It was the other vet clinic in town who recognized Otis in the flier (because that's where he was boarded when they had to go to their son's funeral) and called Diane immediately to see if she was missing Otis.



Diane looked at me and asked, do you think my son helped us find Otis?

I looked at her in a way that only two mothers can know about the joy and agony of giving life and the incredible, impossible pain of losing a child. The loss of Otis would have been too much after this. Of course, he helped and told her the dream I had. I forced my tears to hold until all three got in the truck and left. Then I bawled and got out the story to Grant. I went into the kitchen where both cats and dogs were laying down as if nothing unusual had happened but I had been changed forever because I opened my heart and took a risk to care.

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7 EPILOGUE

Heart is a gentle, courageous soul that waits for me to move into action. Mind tries to convince me otherwise with an unstoppable fear that works to keep me contained in its invisible box with imaginary walls, windows, and doors so my heart can't escape. My heart escapes when I feel it and mind moves out of the way of her truth, wisdom and love. I am so much more than who I thought I was when heart helps me along. No amount of money, fame or rebuttal can take this away from my memory of heart moving mind into its appropriate place of thought.

Beth Lord

THE END

8 ROYALTIES & DETAILS

If there are any royalties that come from this. Otis's Family will get 75 percent and Write Heart Memories® will get the remanding 25 percent.

This would be the same for you and your stories.

As the royalties got paid to our company, you would get paid. This is for whether you decided to be public with your story or private. Either way, I order through Amazon (because it's much easier for them to do it) and we would see what happens. It's a monthly royalty and depends on if people have bought your book so the more people you tell, the more support there is for you to have royalties.

I'd also put your book on our website with links to Amazon.

9 GETTING STARTED

The book is a (6x9) paperbound book.
You get (1) free book in each Facebook Offering
Standing First Time “Get To Know Us” Offer
and Signature Stories

At the time of this order you may order any amount of
books at a cost of \$9.99 each.

Decide if you want your book private or public.

WHO
WHAT
WHERE
WHEN
WHY
HOW

MEMORIES

WHAT'S THE STORY YOU WANT TO REMEMBER
FOR YOURSELF OR GIVE TO A LOVED ONE
THAT HAS TO DO WITH LOSING SOMEONE?

THIS IS OUR ONGOING "IN HOUSE" SPECIAL
FOR YOU TO GET TO KNOW US SO WE CAN
BUILD OUR RELATIONSHIP TOGETHER STORY
BY STORY.

10 ABOUT THE AUTHOR

1-3 PARAGRAPHS ABOUT WHAT YOU WANTED
TO SAY.

AND I WOULD BE THE CO-AUTHOR WITH MY
BIO

Beth is a Licensed Occupational Therapist and a Guild Certified Feldenkrais Practitioner. She's owned a Therapeutic Toy Catalog Company and worked in Corporate America in pharmaceutical sales. Now, she is an expert writer and loves to publish your stories.



It's Just The Beginning With Our Story Telling.....