*Dog is so excited as he watches the group approach. He/she runs back and forth from person to person. Dog shows special interest in any children and is wary of some of the men.*

Hi! Hi, hi, hi! Oh how wonderful it is to see you! I thought you would never get here! But that’s okay. I am happy to wait for you. I am very good at waiting! I also can sit. And fetch. And beg! I am a very good girl! Jamie told me I’m a good girl - and he would never lie!

*(takes in audience again)*

Oh, just look at you! You are all so handsome and smart and wonderful!

*(spots man with a moustache or wearing a hat or some identifying trait.)*

I do not know if I like you though. Men who wear hats (or have moustaches or whatever) can sometimes be dangerous. Are you dangerous? (*sniff, sniff)* You don’t smell dangerous. *(happy again)* I think you’re okay!

Any of you have a furry friend at home? Or two? Or three?? Oh, I wish you had brought them! I love meeting new furry friends! There are lots and lots of furry friends where I live now. I don’t think you are surprised by that. ALL dogs go to heaven! Cats too. And hamsters. And guinea pigs. And goats. There’s a lot of fur here!

I love it here a lot. But sometimes, I miss my boy. Jamie. He’s the best! Before I came here, I lived in a house with him and most days he would go to a place he called “school” and I would wait for him to come home. I am very good at waiting. And when he came home, my tail would wag, all by itself! And he would pet me behind the ears and say, “What a good dog you are, Ziggy! You’re the best dog ever! You’re my Ziggy the Zigster! Zig-a-toni! Zig-zag man (girl)! Ziggy-Zig-Zig! *(Name can be changed to anything the actor has an attachment to.)* He had lots of names for me, but I didn’t care *what* he called me! I was just happy, happy, happy to be with him!

Oh, how I miss those days with my Jamie!

I do not miss those days with Dad so much though. Sometimes Dad was mean. I don’t think he wanted to be mean. He was just so very sad. I think that maybe it was because Jamie’s mom wasn’t there anymore. One day, when I was a puppy, she just left me and Jamie and Dad. Yeah. I think that is what made Dad so sad...

When he was sad, I would jump up onto his lap and sometimes he would pet me and then he would feel better. But sometimes when I jumped onto his lap I could smell a bad smell on his breath. And when I smelled that, he would push me off and yell at me to go away. He would yell at Jamie and tell him to go away too. I did not like it when he did that. I did not like it at all. I would give Jamie some extra kisses when that happened.

That funny smell on Dad’s breath made him do lots of *not nice* things. He would yell at me that I was a bad dog - but I didn’t know why he was saying that to me. He would yell and tell Jamie that he was bad too. When Dad told Jamie he was bad, I would bark at him. And growl. That made him stop yelling at Jamie so he could yell at me instead. He would even try to hit me sometimes. Mostly he missed. I am very fast.

But I think he did not mean to hurt me or Jamie – he was just… sad.

One day Jamie and I were playing in the driveway. Jamie was trying to get a ball through a hoop that was hung up over the garage. He was too short to do it but he was always trying! Some days, after “school”, he would stand in the driveway and try again and again and again – and I would sit and watch and wait for him to get tired.
I am very good at waiting.

Then I heard Dad’s car coming up the street. I could hear that it was going very fast. I couldn’t smell it yet but I knew that he had that bad smell on his breath. Then I saw him turning in the driveway. But he was not slowing down! Jamie thought he would but I knew he would not. So I ran to Jamie and I pushed him hard. He dropped his ball and got out of the way! But there was not enough time for me to follow.

I felt something awful – like Dad was hitting me – but much worse. I flew up into the air and landed on the grass. I heard the car stop and the car door slam. Dad ran to me and I thought I was going to get in BIG trouble for pushing Jamie. But Dad did not yell at me. He just fell to the ground next to me and put my head in his lap. He had that smell on his breath. And he was crying. Jamie dropped to the ground next to him. He was crying too. I licked their faces to dry the tears but they just kept crying. Then my eyes closed.

And when I opened them again – I was at my new place.

It took me a little while to get used to being here. Now I like it very much. But I also still like to go to visit Jamie and Dad sometimes.

The first time I went down to visit, I was so excited that I bumped the dinner table and made it jiggle. Dad had that bad smell on his breath and, since he couldn’t see me, he started to yell at Jamie for the jiggle. That made me upset, so I bumped the table again. They still couldn’t see me – but Dad *could* see that Jamie didn’t do it. He got kind of scared. “Who’s there?” he shouted. “Who did that??” Jamie looked a little scared too, so I gently brushed by his leg and he smiled. “I think it’s Ziggy, Dad! I think it’s the ghost of Ziggy!”

Now Dad looked even more scared. “Don’t be ridiculous,” he said. “There’s no such thing as ghosts” So I bumped the table again – really hard this time – and I made the bad smelling stuff he was drinking spill all over the table. Dad dropped down in his chair. I think he was a little spooked. Then Jamie quietly said, “I think Ziggy doesn’t want you to drink that stuff anymore, Dad. I don’t want you to drink it anymore either. Please?”

Dad looked at Jamie and wet stuff came out of his eyes again. He pulled Jamie over to him in a big hug. “If Ziggy and you want me to stop - I will, son. I will.”

And I’ve never smelled that smelly stuff on Dad’ breath again.

I know Dad doesn’t believe in ghosts, so he never even thinks about it when I visit now - and I’m a lot more careful not to bump the table. But Jamie knows I’m there. At night, he always leaves room for me on his bed and I go and sleep there sometimes. Oh, I want to lick his face so much! (sudden realization) Do you think that would scare him? I do not want to scare him.

Jamie can get that ball through the hoop almost every time now. And Dad hardly ever gets mad or yells anymore – just sometimes when Jamie doesn’t do his homework or he plays his video games too loud.

These days Dad tells Jamie that he loves him all the time. That makes my tail wag a lot.

Some of my furry friends here tell me that one day Dad and Jamie will be with me again. But that will not be for a long, long time.

And that’s okay. I am very good at waiting.