

MY BOO
Beauregard Jackson Pickett Burnside

How could there ever have been a time without you in my life? They said that you were a mistake. That you were not planned to be alive, and so you almost came to an end before you had barely started. It was Fate that brought us together- I saw your picture and knew instantly that we were meant to be as one Family. It happened so naturally.

You were a Southern Boy, from Georgia and no other name would fit you but Beauregard. BJPB.

Whenever I looked into your eyes, I saw that Love does exist- I saw God. I needed no more proof. You were always a wild thing- a tiger caught in my trap. But as the years went by, you became more and more like a human. No, better than a human could ever be. You became patient with me, and were always there to hug and return my affection ten-fold. Like the first moment we met. You licked my right hand on that cold snowy day as if to say, "Thank You for saving me."

How could there have ever been a time without you in my life? Had anyone in this world ever had as good a friend as I had in you? You would always look at me, as if to say, "What's the next thing for us to do?" You filled the void in me after Oliver, and took away the hurt inside from being without any man to love. You were better than a man to love. And to think that you started off- a skinny, stinky, hunched-over mess with fleas and ticks... How you blossomed! How everyone, everyday would say how beautiful you were, what kind of dog is that?... I wished I had a Tee-shirt saying what mix you were. You were a Phoenix rising from the fire of forgetfulness, shining brighter than the sun. How could there ever have been a time without you in my life?

I always tried to plan on the day when you would go... When God would call you, and ask you to leave this home of ours. How quiet and lonely it feels right now. I wish that I was mistaken, that you are still there in the front room, waiting for me to take you outside. To play ball, to go for a walk to Ft. Tryon Park and take another hundred pictures of you- and the flowers. There is no substitute for you and never will be. And all the hair of yours I shall find for years to come will be a remembrance.

I pray and pray and pray that my Angels of Mercy- Mom, Marion and Marjorie are holding you. That they tell you how much you are still loved and that you will never, ever be forgotten.

Oh God, please forgive me for leaving you- ever... I regret every moment that we were apart. No person could ever take my attention away. All those hours that we might have spent together. But life gets in the way. I always, always wanted to get home to you quickly, knowing that you would greet me. I knew, because of you... that I *was* home.

I miss your soft freckled nose, always wet. I miss your smell, the smell of a dog- but it was you. The softness of your coat, the need for me to scratch your left ear. How you loved to have me rub the bottom of your chin, anything to be in contact. I miss the cuddles in bed. How you would fall back into my arms before rising, if only for a moment or two. I am so glad that I have video of you playing with the ball- late at night in the hallway, after our 1am. walks. You- being forever the puppy. Puppy energy, as I call it. Your deep innocence and youth shining through, as you danced and paraded around the ball- no matter how old you became. How you always made me smile! And at 107 years in dog aging, you were still perpetually young. As if you could live forever. The contentment you offered me, someone who needed me, asking for so little in return. My remaining years will be marked with your passing. And when my novel is finally published, even though I prayed everyday that you would be there at our moment of success, I shall call your name. We shall celebrate that moment, my Boo. I shall see your smiling face, your bright eyes, your ears perked up and full of life once more...

How could there ever... ever have been a time without you in my life?

2/20/23