

Coopers Journey



Grade	<u>7</u>
Fiction	<u>X</u>
Poetry	<u> </u>
Nonfiction	<u> </u>

One day, I'm spinning around chasing my tail, fooling around with all 5 of my siblings. What happened next? Well it's kind of a long story, so sit back, relax, and enjoy my journey becoming one of the best diabetic alert dogs of America!

It all started the day I turned six months old. Me and all of my siblings got lined up in a white room. A tall serious woman in a navy blue suit came in.

"Ok who's first?" she asked. First for what? She then picked us up one by one. Looking us over for something suspicious. What could she possibly want? Wait, does she have treats? Ooh maybe she has treats. Love me some treats! I quickly sat down and gave her the puppy eyes. Usually I get the milk bone treats when I do that!

"Hmm, this one seems different. More attentive. Lay down." She says. Lay down? Well a dogs gotta do what a dogs gotta do to get the treats! I do as she says.

"Wow and he hasn't even been professionally trained yet. You are definitely a good applicant!"

Applicant? Applicant for wha- wait, what is she getting from that pocket of hers? Please be a treat, please be a treat! Wait, hold up. A pen? I did all of that sitting and laying, for a pen? She quickly jotted some notes and put a bright red collar on me.

"Alright, let's move on." She put the pen back into her pocket and moved on. Excuse me? I did everything she said and no treat, no pen, just an ugly collar! Messed up lady, messed up. At that moment, I didn't understand how special that collar made me.

Weeks go by and there's no word from the tall lady. All of my siblings were gone. I wonder what had become of them. Whats going to happen to me?

Another couple of days pass, and she finally returned. She seemed in a better mood than when she was the first day I met her.

"Hello little guy! Are you ready to meet your match?"
Match? What match? She then took me into a room with a small girl and a shorter woman.

"Oh my gosh he's adorable! Well hello there cutie pie! I'm Ann!" The little girl said. "I think im gonna name you Cooper!"

Cooper huh? I like it.

"Ann do you feel alright? You look pale." The other woman said.

"Im fine mom!" Ann replied.

"Please just check your blood sugar." said the woman called, Mom. Ann pulled a case out of the bag she was carrying and pricked her finger. A small drop of blood formed at the tip.

"Soon you'll be helping me with this stuff Cooper!" I wonder what she meant by that. "Im 67." She said. Mom sighed and gave her some juice.

"Well ladies, our time here is up! I have to go take Cooper to start his training. Come on boy." The tall lady tugged on the leash I was attached to. I didn't want to leave. Ann didn't look so good.

"Its ok Cooper, when your all done with your training, your gonna help me with my Diabetes!"

Ok then. I started to follow the tall woman out the door. Soon I'm gonna help Ann with her Diabetes. That's the one and only thought that stayed in my head as we drove to the place, that was going to train me to help that little girl, with her Type One Diabetes.

After driving for what felt like forever, we got to a small building. The tall woman and I walked inside. Little did I know that I would be spending the next 3 months there, in that building. As we entered, a man was there waiting for us.

"Hey Susan! Is this the famous Cooper?" He indicated me. Famous? That sounds pretty cool!

"Yup he knows the basic stuff so he can start with the signals." She said.

"Alright well that's good. Thanks Susan, it was nice seeing you!"

"Yes it was nice seeing you too Chandler." She knelt down, "Goodbye Cooper it was a pleasure, you will do great things in the future." It was sad seeing the tall lady go but sooner or later we were gonna cross paths again, I knew it.

Weeks passed and I learned 19 commands that Chandler taught me. He always tells me that i'm the quickest learning canine he's ever trained. Not to brag but i'm pretty paw-some!

Today, Chandler said I was going to hang out with Ann. I was so excited! I got to go to school with her, soccer practice, and the store! Chandler was there too, he said that I had to go so I got used to being in public. I even got to wear a snazzy vest that said. "Service Dog in Training." It was the best day ever!

Since Ann is only 7 she struggles with Hypoglycemia unawareness. This means her body doesn't trigger symptoms when her blood sugar is low. That's where I come in! The final part of my training is to get used to the smells that Ann produces when her blood sugar is high or low. It was hard identifying them at first, but now they are two completely different smells! It's an easy job too, if I smell one of the two, I just lift my paw and nudge Ann. I have to stay with her all of the time. It's super fun!

Ah, graduation day, the day I get to leave Chandlers training program and venture forth into the world as Ann Smith's diabetic alert dog. I'll miss Chandler, he was a good guy. It wasn't a huge ceremony. I had received a certificate of completion, an even snazzier vest with big white letters saying, "Diabetic Alert Dog," and a bright red leash saying the same.

The first few days with Ann were fun, but bumpy. A lot of kids in her first grade classroom wanted to play with me, but they couldn't, I've got a job to do! I've met new friends though, Ann's dad, her two brothers Damien and Raymond, Grandma Jen, Grandpa Joe, and Rayana, Anns BFF.

The apartment is pretty small and it's kinda cramped sometimes but it's always better in Ann's room. Since she's the only girl she has a room to herself, while the boy's have to share a room. Mom works at a restaurant called Remy's Cafe, and Dad is a dentist. A lot of the time Ann and her brothers stay home by themselves because their parents are always working. Grams and Gramps like to come over sometimes too. They bring candy for the kids and milk bones for me! I am truly loving this life.

Today started as normal, Ann and I went to school, then to Rayana's house, then to the last soccer game of the season.

Ann had been so excited for this all day! To be honest, so was I! Ann is really good at soccer and scores more goals than anyone else on her team. I usually sit on the sidelines and bark if her blood sugar is low. It's worked out pretty well so far!

It's game time! Ann is warming up with her teammates right now. She didn't eat dinner before so I'm kinda worried that her blood sugar might drop.

The whole game was close and we are now in the final quarter. 18-16 with the other team in the lead. I make sure to keep an eye on Ann the whole time. Right now, she's dribbling the ball, and she's about to shoot! Wait hold on, oh no, the smell. I have to stop her. I run over so I'm in her sight and bark. Ann looked at me for a split second and the ball was stolen from her. She shook her head and ran after it. This isn't good, she needs to eat something. I ran over again. I can see the sweat dripping down her face. I bark as loud as possible.

"Hold on!" She screams. She steals the ball and starts dribbling down again. She ran as fast as possible, why won't she listen to me? That's it playtime's over. I ran onto the field.

"Cooper not now!" She yelled. She then kicked the ball as hard as she could and missed the shot.

"Smith! Off the field!" Coach yelled.

"Look what you did." Ann muttered.

"Are you ok? Why did your dog run onto the field?" He asked.

"I just need t-to sit down." Ann replied. She proceeded to run to her bag. She was breathing heavily as she got her meter out of her bag.

"N-Next time l-let me play," She stuttered. Then in an instant, she passed out, and collapsed! I barked as loud as possible I need to get coaches attention! He didn't turn around, come on dude! I ran over to him and barked again.

"Come on Cooper quit." He said. I can't quit, Ann is in danger! I jumped up on him.

"Cooper knock it off!" No I won't knock it off, you want to watch your game, then watch this. I run into the field and bark furiously at the players. As the referee tried to chase me off of the field I ran quickly to Ann. Do I have your attention now?

"Oh my gosh! Someone call 911!" Coach yelled. He ran over to Ann and dumped her bag out to find her glucagon. He injected her and stayed by her side until we all got to the hospital. Not long after we got to the ER Mom showed up. I couldn't go into the room with Ann. What's happening? Is she ok? I ran around frantically, I need to be in there with her!

Coach sat in the waiting room with me. "Cooper I know you have no clue what I am saying but, I am so sorry I didn't listen to you the first time."

I know exactly what your saying, but I don't care right now. Hours passed and coach went home. I sat in the waiting room with Ann's mom and dad. Mom was sobbing uncontrollably and, Dad was there trying to comfort her. After what felt like forever Mom and Dad were approached by a doctor.

"You will be relieved to hear that she's ok, if treated any later she could have died. How did this happen?" The doctor asked.

"Well we had to work so we don't know what exactly happened, but her coach said that she was playing in her soccer game, and when her blood sugar was low she ignored it until the last minute. Her diabetic alert dog Cooper had to run onto the field to get her off." Dad said.

The doctor looked at me, "This is Cooper?" She asked.

"Yes, he's been her alert dog for about 4 months."

"Well I want you to know that if he wasn't there, your daughter could have died. I will be sure that he gets rewarded." She bent down towards me and gave me a scratch behind my ear. "You did good boy, you did good." Soon after, she left.

"Oh Cooper, thank you so much," Mom said, hugging me and sobbing into my fur. I didn't really know what to do so I just sat there. Dad called Gram and Gramps, who were watching the boys and told them what the doctor said. About half an hour later, we were allowed to go into Ann's hospital room.

"Oh honey," Mom said. She was expecting Ann to say something but it was pure silence.

"Sweetheart, what's wrong? Do you need something?" Dad asked.

"No thanks." She replied quietly. Suddenly, she burst into tears. "I could of died Mom, all because I was too stubborn to get off the field." She said, through tears.

"Ann Marie Smith, do not blame this on yourself. You wanted to play, just be grateful that Cooper was there to help you." Mom said, on the verge of tears herself. I jumped up on the bed.

"Cooper, I love you. You are such a good boy." I laid my head on her lap and kept it there until morning, when Ann and I had breakfast.

Ann had to stay in the hospital for 2 more days until she was released. Later that week, I was thrown an award ceremony for my heroic act. I got many awards! The tall lady, Chandler, Ann, and so many more people were there!

"See, I told you that you'd do great things in the future Cooper!" The tall lady said, patting my head.

"I knew from the start didn't I? This one was gonna be successful, had no doubt!" Chandler added. We all took a picture together, Ann has it hung up in her room.

The best part of the whole evening, was when my name was recorded as one of the most successful Service Dogs. Serving as a Diabetic Alert Dog is such a rewarding experience in a dog's life. Being with Ann was an amazing journey and we built a strong relationship, I couldn't have asked for a better life.