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석사학위논문

# Edge, The Giving Dog

(헌혈견 엣지·번역논문)

제주대학교 통역번역대학원

한영과

장 광 섭

2017年 2月

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지도교수 박 경 란

장 광 섭

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제주대학교 통역번역대학원

2017年 2月

헌혈견 엣지  
Edge, The Giving Dog

Kwang-Sub Jang  
(Supervised by Professor Kyung-Ran Park)

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Interpretation and Translation

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Department of Korean-English  
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF INTERPRETATION & TRANSLATION  
JEJU NATIONAL UNIVERSITY

## Edge, The Giving Dog

From a sniffer dog to a dog blood donor.

A True Story of a Black Dog Named Edge that Shares Love

Author Yun-Sun Won

She holds a B.A. in Child Welfare, Childcare and Education, and an M.A. in Psychological Consultation for Children from Sookmyung Women's University. She loves writing, so she works as a writer for both TV and radio. Her works on TV include *Children's Privacy*, *Mystery of Linguistic Development*, *Tok! Tok! Boni Hani*, and children's programs on EBS TV. Her works on the radio include *Korea, Time to Rise* and *Music High*. She pursues a career in writing beautiful children's books.

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## About Edge

Name: Edge

Sex: Male

Year of Birth: 2000

Place of Birth: Northeast of the United States

Breed: Labrador Retriever

Vocation: Drug-sniffing Dog, Dog blood Donor

Appearance: Good-looking with shiny black coat and cute folded ears  
placed a little further up

Character: Curious, active and caring

Favorites: Tennis ball and dummy (a towel shaped like a bone)

First Love: Hyori, the dog he met at the vet's office

## The Chronicles of Edge

2002 Born a pure-bred Labrador Retriever in the US and officially adopted to Korea in 5 months. Settled in Detector Dogs Training Center and received a training for puppies.

2003 After going through the challenging process including drug recognition, memory training and on-site training, he successfully received the certificate for a sniffer dog.

2004~2007 While working at Incheon International Airport, he managed to sniff out 8 cases of drug smuggling, keeping thousands of people from danger.

2008 Moved to the Veterinary Medical Hospital, Seoul National University to start his new life as a dog blood donor.

2009~2011 As the best dog blood donor, he saved the lives of 52 dogs.

2012 He became popular when the Jungang Daily published the story of his journey in search of a new family. Now he lives a happy life with a loving family.

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Edge! Have you seen the ocean?

It is just like you.

## The Story of a Puppy Named Edge Begins

Before I could open my eyes, I sniffed out my mother's breast and started suckling at her breasts. Her milk is warm and sweet. While I was sucking milk, she licked me with her tongue.

My mom had given birth to seven puppies. I was the seventh.

"My babies."

She calls us in a soft low voice.

"Mom."

My siblings and I also call our mom in our heart. We cannot respond to her call by barking *Bowwow*. We cannot open our eyes yet, but we can feel our mom: body heat, gentle stroke, whisper, etc. In my mom's arms I felt snug, warm, and cozy.

"Can't thank you enough for what you have done."

Dad expresses thanks to Mom for bringing seven healthy pups into the world. Then they look at each other smiling.

We grew fit and healthy thanks to our parents' unconditional love. We toddled around on four legs with our eyes twinkling. I tag after my brothers and sisters exploring our new world. We drink milk and have dog food that people give to us instead of mom's milk.

One day, a crowd of people rushed in to see us, seven puppies. Some people took pictures of us running around and eating food while others picked us up, running their eyes over our bodies and taking some notes on white paper with black pens.

A month after we were born, some people took us to a big grassy field with a fence all around and started training us. When they ordered 'Down,' or 'Up,' I did so.

I could understand quite a lot of orders people gave such as 'Stop,'

'Search,' or 'Run.' Whenever we followed the orders, they either gave us treats or stroked our bodies with a lot of words of praise.

I liked when people said, 'Good Job,' or 'You're the best' with their eyes and mouth wide open. I liked it best when they lifted me up high in the air and hugged me tight.

Meanwhile we got along well with people as we learned how to run and jump. We became highly trained dogs that understood when not to eat, play or bark. People looked at us and clapped their hands in admiration.

One night after completing the training, as usual, we went into the cage in which my parents lived. Our mom welcomed us with open arms. I was the first one to bury myself in my mom's arms and I rubbed my cheeks against hers.

*Mmm. I love my mom's scent.*

I closed my eyes and smiled with satisfaction.

"It's my turn now. Out of my way!" says the sixth, my older sister.

"No way. It's me next."

The fourth, the fifth, and the other sister bark and growl at one another claiming his or her turn.

We always fiercely compete for our mom's hugs. The oldest and the second oldest brothers would rather sit by our parents and talk to them than act like puppies.

"Dad. How can I be a great, brave drug-sniffing dog like you?"

"Please tell us. I want to be as great a sniffer dog as you are."

"Ha ha. I'm so proud of you. You want to get the training to become sniffer dogs?" says Dad, wearing a smile in his face.

"Ho ho. The apple never falls far from the tree."

Mom is also proud of my brothers.

"Since we are drug-sniffing dogs, our babies seem somehow different from others."

Mom and Dad said they were proud of us. *Sniffer dogs*. I did not know what exactly it meant, but it occurred to me that I wanted to be a great drug-sniffing dog just like my parents.

"Mom. I will be a sniffer dog like you." I said softly burying my face in her arms.

"Ok, my baby. You will."

Mom kissed me on the cheek.

"Bow wow." I said with a big smile.

My mom and dad exchanged glances, and then Dad finally spoke with a serious look on her face.

"Babies. I have been hesitating and waiting for the right moment for this. I think the time has arrived." said Dad.

He closed his eyes for a moment and then opened them again.

"As you know, your mom and I have been serving as drug-sniffing dogs for the past eight years. We have been in love for a long time, and people knew it and wanted us to get married and give birth to puppies with our genes.

"That's how we have come to this world." said the third oldest sister.

"Right." said Mom, gazing lovingly at us.

"So all of you were born to be sniffing dogs." Mom continued.

"This is the best training institute in America for great drug-sniffing dogs. After a three-month training, you'll be sent to various places around the world.

"Around the world?"

"You mean places outside the States?" asked my brothers and sisters with their eyes wide open.

"Yes, dear," said Dad this time.

"Some of you to somewhere in Europe and others to Asia. Sooner or later, all seven of you will be sent to different parts of the world, but

remember this one thing. You have the same roots, so you all will be great drug-sniffing dogs no matter where you are and no matter what you do. Whatever hardships you face, never let them stand in the way of being the greatest sniffing dogs."

Dad gazed into Mom's face. Tears have gathered in her eyes.

"My babies. I have faith that each one of you will fulfill your assigned duty. I'll keep on rooting for you every day."

"Mom and Dad, nnn...nnn..."

We were so sad thinking of being separated from one another.

"Why are you crying? Everything's going to be fine with you," said Mom and Dad hugging us tight.

"Promise me that you'll do the best," Mom asked looking at us.

"Of course!" said my brothers and sisters bravely.

"My youngest boy. You aren't answering," said my mother.

"Yes," I said hesitantly. Then Mom gave me another hug, and she gently patted me on the back until I fell asleep.

*Mom. I promise I'll also be a great sniffing dog.*

"You're already a great sniffing dog in my heart. I love you, my boy." Mom whispered in my ear as if she heard me.

Next day Ms. Trainer lifted me up high and said, "Edge. You are going to Korea. Are you ready for it?"

*What?*

From that moment on, I got into the habit of pricking up my ears.

## **A New Relationship, First Encounter with a Drug Dog Handler**

On hearing the news that I had arrived at Incheon Airport, the Korea Customs Service sent someone to pick me up. As soon as I was handed

over to Manager Park from Detector Dogs Training Center, he scanned every part of my body.

"I think he can make it. I mean with a proper training."

Manager Park, putting on a big smile, took the leash and led me somewhere in a hurry.

"Whoa! Can't believe this. You're on the pin chain for strong dogs not on the regular one. I wonder how strong a 4-month-old pup should be on the pin chain!"

As if I understood what Manager Park said, I took the lead, showing no signs of being tired.

"Hey, stop where you are. By the way, what is your name? Let me see. It says Edge. What kind of name is that? Sounds a bit like 'Easy.' Ha ha! What a fun name."

"Bowwow," I barked.

I barked to protest that there was nothing wrong with my name.

*Edge means cool and trendy. You just don't know it yet.*

Manager Park stoked down my hair and then headed toward the parking lot. The car started purring away with the loud engine sound.

Tied tightly to the leather seat in the car, I started feeling tired and sleepy. The heating in the car due to the cold weather seemed to contribute to it, too. I even blinked my eyes to fight sleep but my eyelids got heavier and heavier.

"Wake up, Edge. We have just arrived."

Manager Park's low, deep voice woke me up.

"Oh, boy! You must have been really tired, but we didn't come here to relax. In fact, it is tomorrow that you have to start the training to be a drug-sniffing dog."

He gave me a light slap on the butt as he set me free.

*Huh? The training for sniffing dogs?*

Not Knowing how I felt about it, Manager Park took me to a big blue gate. The sign on the gate said 'Detector Dogs Training Center.' I took a deep breath.

The intercom buzzed. As soon as Manager Park revealed himself, the gate slowly opened with a heavy sound. I followed in his footsteps.

When I got in, a few people had already come out of the tightly packed offices to see me.

"You are the dog, Edge."

"Wow. Aren't you very handsome?"

Each of them said a few things about me either lifting me up in their arms or petting me on the head. A guy, however, looked at me through his glaring eyes.

He had a round face with a pair of black horn-rimmed glasses on. He walked up to me and grabbed the leash and looked me in the eye and finally started talking.

"Hi, Edge. I'm a dog handler, and I'm the one who's going to work together with you. Nice to meet you, and I hope we can make a great team."

*Dog Handler? What is that? It's not something I can eat, right?*

Not knowing what that was, I tilted my head, but I could not just stand there gawking because the handler was rushing me somewhere.

We exited the building with closely-knit offices and went past the playground, then long low-rise buildings came in sight. Dog houses were so closely spaced, and there were shower facilities dotted around. The handler suddenly took me to one of the shower rooms. He was about to give me a bath, I thought.

*Sir. Am I going to get clean?*

I stared at him with a look of surprise on my face.

"Edge. It's time for a bath. I made it a habit of giving a bath to a dog

on the first day. It's a great way for us to bond with each other."

In fact, I love water so much. Sprinkling water is great, but splashing one for having fun is the best. I am not sure about it though. It makes me feel uncomfortable to play in the water with someone I just met.

"Edge. Let me rub soap onto your body first."

The guy did not understand how I felt. Instead, he started scrubbing me.

"Edge, you are still a little puppy but have quite a strong and good physique. It's funny that you have ears farther up, but still you look just adorable. After the shower, doesn't it feel refreshing?"

"Bowwow," I responded to the question he asked.

The handler took me out and showed me the dog house and the training ground where I would stay and get trained. I cocked an ear toward him not to miss anything he said.

"Edge. Don't worry. This is not as difficult as you might think it is, so as long as you follow my lead, everything is going to be okay. Call me 'Dad' from now on."

*What? Dad?*

I was a little confused.

*My dad is in America, My parents are currently in the training center where I was born. I remember things clearly and vividly; kind expressions on my dad's face, my mother's arms in which I used to cuddle up, my sisters and brothers who adored me, and even my mother's scent and her friendly voice.*

I started thinking of my family, my beloved family.

That saddened me, and the handler probably noticed that I was thinking about my parents. He covered my face in his hands and said this:

"I don't want you to feel vulnerable since you are about to get intensive



training as a drug-sniffing dog. I know you are still a puppy, but your life is completely different from other regular dogs."

And then he spoke to me in a commanding yet cheerful tone.

"You enter the intensive training starting from tomorrow. Brace yourself! It may not be easy, but together with me, there's never 'give up.' We can only take on challenges or step forward. Got it?"

"Bowwow," I answered bravely gazing at his determined face.

*Right, Everything is going to be all right. I can really do this. Of course, I can.*

## **Robin, Rival at the Training Center**

It was a pitch-dark night. The first day at the center had been long. It seemed as if I completed adjustment training. Other dogs appeared to be older and bigger than me. It hit me that I was alone, so I felt lonely. I tried to remember what the handler said earlier.

"Call me Dad from now on."

It echoed in my head and reminded me of the memories back in America: smiling from ear to ear while sucking at my mother's breast, my mom licking all over my body with her soft and warm tongue. Tears welled up in my eyes, and I started sobbing.

"Mom. I miss you."

It might have been the sound of my weeping, a dog started talking to me.

"Who are you and what keeps you awake and makes you weep like a baby?"

"I am so sorry. I miss my mom so much."

"Mom? Gosh. You are a soon-to-be sniffer dog. I heard the news that a

retriever pup came from America but never thought it would be a coward like you."

"What?"

"It seems that you are going to start the training tomorrow. Do not shame other dogs with your actions here."

"I won't."

"My son has just entered this training camp, and it's a disgrace for him to have you in the team."

His severe discipline embarrassed me, and it even made me blush. However, I felt something burning in my chest. My face turned red.

*What? I am not a coward!*

I could not contain myself, but it is the middle of the night now. I should not interrupt others' sleep. What he said is too harsh but true after all.

I could not suppress a sudden rush of anger, so I bit my front paws. It hurt, but after shaking my head in disapproval, I grumbled about the poor treatment.

*So bad. Even if I had been a little too loud, there was no need to yell with such an overbearing voice. Your son and I might end up being friends, so it's not very nice to call me a coward.*

The next morning handlers took their assigned dogs and gathered at the training center. Young puppies including me are from different parts of the world. Some from other countries and others from Korea. There are even cloned dogs.

Adjusting training to a new environment is needed for puppies from other countries like me. Sniffer dogs have to smell out drugs from passengers as well as goods, so it is vital to establish a harmonious relationship with people and learn not to attack them.

Handlers give a dummy for the dogs that take the training well. The

dummy is a towel shaped like a bone. We like to chew on it or play games with it where we get to snatch it out of a handler's hand.

I have a great liking for the dummy now. I find myself doing the best at the training to get it. I run and run as fast as I can and ran again until I am out of breath.

My parents would be proud of me if they saw me. I cried a little because I had a soft spot for my mom. I, however, devoted myself to the training and proved that I was not just a young puppy.

Even the handlers said that I definitely stood out among all my fellow puppies. I felt small after I had been told off by the dog last night, but I swelled with pride.

However, a dog named Robin gave me a dirty look.

"Hey, Edge or Edgy! whatever your name is." He said, "YOU!"

That sounded offensive, so I turned around with a frown on my face. Robin was staring at me.

"If you have something to say to me, you'd better know my name. Didn't you take the intellectual development training yet?" I hit back at him.

"Dummies and praises that you have been rewarded with may have spoiled you too much."

"Say what?"

I felt a sudden urge to jump on him and bite his ass, but I contained myself to maintain my dignity as a sniffer dog.

"You just flinched," he said. "Come on, bring it on. What? Are you scared?"

"Robin. That's your name, right? I never forget the name that I hear once. I'm not such an idiot that doesn't even remember his friend's name like you."

I tilted my head to the side to make fun of him.

"What? Damn!"

Robin lost his temper and rushed toward me. Handlers dashed over to us and pulled us apart.

"Whoa, whoa."

"Look at these two. The rivalry is so intense. You two need to compete fairly and squarely at the training. Do you understand? Ha ha!"

The handler pinched Robin and me on the cheek and separated us.

"Hey, Edge's dad. Take good care of him. A dog that has barely been here for a day is already stirring the pot."

"Mind your own dog, Robin's dad. My Edge is just full of energy."

They talked half jokingly to each other, and then took us out of the training ground. Robin, however, still growled at me, baring his teeth.

"Yelp, yelp! Let's see who's going to win in the end."

I decided not to pay attention to him. Instead, I followed the handler to the doghouse to eat food.

As I went through the training for the day, I promised myself that I would be the best sniffer dog here. I hoped that I could make the handler who stood by me proud.

*Who knows?* If I ever become so famous, my parents might hear about me. That would remind them of me and make them happy.

## **Hard Training to Be A Sniffer Dog**

The midwinter when the training began passed, the spring was over, and now summer is just around the corner. The views inside the center has changed, too. Some days it snowed heavily, and other days fresh green sprouts shoot up. I saw the red, yellow, and orange flowers blooming.

"Arf, arf!"

Bigger sniffer dogs are off to work, each dog paired up with its handler, are getting in the car for the airport. I wonder when I can go to the airport to work.

The training is gaining momentum, and I wish upon the moon and the stars.

"The moon and the stars! Please let me complete the course successfully and be an excellent sniffer dog."

Sometimes I even have a dream, in which I sniff out drugs at the cargo terminal of Incheon International Airport. Then the handlers there hug and lift me proudly in the air, kiss me on the cheek and praise me with the dummy. Just the thought of it makes me feel great.

Out of ten dogs, only two or three can receive the certificate by the Commissioner of Customs and be deployed to the field. Therefore, the training we are taking is not an easy one. I have to do my best to score above the average and get the stamp of approval.

I truly devote myself to the training because my mom said, 'However hard it gets, You have to do as you are told.'

Summer is just around the corner. All of us have taken the training without much trouble so far. The final sixteen-week training program has begun. For the next sixteen weeks we are going to take people-friendly obedience classes, as well as other programs such as, remembering the smell of drugs after sniffing them out and checking the travelers' bodies and their baggage.

I was very excited because practical exercises that could work in real situations were about to begin.

Together with the handlers, we entered a room that just looked like the airport cargo terminal. Travelers' bags were being poured onto the conveyer belt. Without even realizing it, I jumped onto the belt because I

smelled something from there. A handler came running and he sounded urgent.

"Edge, no! Your feet can get stuck!"

He paced around anxiously worrying that my feet would get caught if I hastily jumped off. Instead I felt rather relaxed and kept pace with the moving belt. To be honest, I was taken aback by the fast-moving belt because it seemed slow.

As I watched his face turning pale, I lightly jumped down onto the ground. He then looked relieved, took a deep breath, and scolded me with a serious look on his face.

"Bad boy! You could have hurt yourself. Don't ever do anything without my order. Understand?"

"Woof woof." I responded loudly.

I found it hard to control myself from time to time. I understand why the handler is worried because when I see something intriguing, my body reacts to it right away.

I can definitely sniff out drugs now. My nose reacts to them sensitively. If I smell out drugs, the handler will give me the dummy as a reward. I know it for sure.

I sense something from the black suitcase over there. Robin seems to sense something from a red suitcase.

*Good for him.*

"You saw what I just did?" says Robin.

That is Robin. He has to show off. I just stare at him with a blank expression on my face. Even if I say something back, we will end up fighting. I do not want to waste my energy or time on anything else. Soon we will have the final evaluation.

I went to the next course with my handler to check the travelers' bodies and belongings. Mannequins that looked like travelers were in

line. I started smelling on the items that the handler pointed to.

*Sniff sniff*

I found nothing here, but I could smell something coming from a female mannequin.

*Sniff. It's right here.*

I sat in front of the mannequin and looked at the handler. He quickly took the drug out its pocket and praised me, stroking my head.

"Good job, Edge. Way to go!"

"Woof, woof."

It is the day for the final evaluation tomorrow. I have given it my all, so I feel confident. I do not just want to pass the test but come out on the top sniffer dog. I believe I can do it.

## **Receiving the Honorable Stamp of Approval**

After the drill, I came to the doghouse. The dog near me asked a question.

"Is your training going well?"

"Yes," I said indifferently.

"You and Robin aren't getting along well, are you?"

I felt embarrassed that even other dogs knew our relationship.

"It's not that I want it that way."

"That means you are not the problem but Robin is, right?"

"I don't care much about it. I just want to do well with my handler tomorrow."

"Is that so? Then let me tell you something important. Stay up all night and keep moving so that your muscles won't stiffen. You'll be able to move fast."

"I shouldn't get enough sleep?"

"No. You should be alert all night, so you can smell out drugs better. If you loosen up, you might forget the smell of them."

*Oh, I see.* I have been concerned about not being able to tell the smell tomorrow. Unless my handler double-checks with me before the final evaluation, I am afraid that I may forget the smell. I should stay up and keep moving all night in order not to forget the smell.

The dog was giving me such useful advice, and pigs might fly. I hear a clock ticking away, and it sounds like a lullaby. I forced myself to stay awake; moving around my room, scratching my body even when it was not itchy, licking my tail for no reason. When it still did not work, I stood on my front feet leaning against the iron gate secured with bolts. After 3 a.m, it was next to impossible to stay awake, so I became drowsy.

I woke up to the sound when the door creaked open. I must have fallen asleep.

"Edge, why are you so jumpy? You must have been very tired to sleep so deeply."

Unable to bark at my handler, I flopped down on the floor. For some reason, it ached all over my body. Far from feeling refreshed and agile, my muscles stiffened.

*What happened to me? Did he lie to me?*

Not having energy to blame him, I dropped to the floor and went back to sleep.

"What's wrong, Edge? Are you okay?" said my handler urgently, but I was so sleepy that I could hardly keep my eyes open.

I wondered how much time had passed. When I woke up, the sun was up and high. I could hear other dogs outside.

*Oh, boy! The final evaluation!*



On the final exam, I was sleeping in my room let alone warming up. *Oh my!* My head was a mess. I could not just be eliminated like this.

I started barking with all my might to get attention from the handler.

"Are you up, Edge?"

"Woof, woof"

"What happened last night? Let's go get the test. Hurry up."

Pleased to hear that I could take the evaluation test, I ran to the field barking. Some of the dogs were going through the assessment procedure, and others had already passed and received the stamp of approval. In the middle was Robin.

"Ha ha. Look! The dog that has slept in on the test day is coming."

I was embarrassed but unable to deny it because it was true. Not able to lift my face out of shame, I proceeded to the obstacle course. The handler looked me in the eye and said,

"You have been the best out of all the dogs in the training. I believe you can do so today, too."

Handler has been there for me when I need him the most, so I have to pass to repay him. I closed my eyes and reminded myself

*I can't disappoint my parents who gave birth to me. Ever since I came here, my handler has fed and taken good care of me, so I want to return his favor by doing my best. I can do this.*

After taking a deep breath, I jumped over the first hurdle. It was easy but it got harder as I advanced through the course. I had to measure the distance well not to stumble over the next one. One, two, three and Jump. I made it.

*What a relief!* Handler petted me on the head trying to encourage me. The next test was to sniff out drugs on the conveyor belt and people. Unlike the worries I had, Handler reminded me of the smell of the drugs.

*This was it! The BAD odor of drugs.*

I could pass the test if I found this odor. I did not feel well today but I sniffed around as hard as I could.

I paid close attention to the finger pointing of the handler. To interact with the handler I closely observed Handler's hands, feet, and directions. And yet various smells such as food and cigarettes combined with unknown ones irritated my nose.

*No, I have to concentrate. Find the drugs. I must detect that bad odor.*

I sniffed again and again. Not much left to the limited time. All eyes were focused on me. Among them was arrogant Robin. His teasing eyes were saying that I could not do this.

I felt heavy pressure on my shoulders. Not knowing what to do, my handler was nervously touching his hands.

*Mom and Dad, please help me. I have to find the smell. Where is it? Please let me find it.*

I smell something coming out of the wooden box there. I guess it is the case for wine, but something is not right.

*Handler! Open that box over there.*

I impatiently clawed the trim of the box. My handler jumped in and opened the box and took out a small plastic bag containing drug.

*Yes, I found it. I finally found the drug.*

The handler ran and hugged me tight. I started chewing on the dummy given as a reward and running around the field.

I had never seen him become so excited. He grinned from ear to ear.

*Good Heaven!* I am on cloud nine. What a great feeling! I am on top of the world.

I will get the stamp of approval by the Commissioner of Customs. I have become a proud sniffer dog. I made it. I am so happy.

"You've done a great job, Edge. Now you have become an honorable

sniffer dog in Republic of Korea. Let's fulfill our duty together." brightly smiled my handler.

## **My Heart Fluttering on the First Day of Work at the Airport**

La la la. It is the first day to go to the airport to work. I anxiously wait for my handler to come to my room and finally see him coming. Of course, he is on time.

I wagged my tail to him.

*How do I look, Handler? Do I look nice? Do I have something on my face?*

I could not sit still, so I bounced around him singing for joy.

"Ha ha. Look at you. You look so excited about your first day of work. Now as a warm-up, why not go for a walk?"

"Woof, Woof."

I tagged along with him. As we moved along, I saw Robin and his handler coming towards us.

"Hey, Robin's dad! Came out for a walk?"

"Yeah, Edge's dad! You too?"

"It's also Robin's first day, right? You must be nervous."

"Nervous? I have Robin."

"Ha ha. Now you're bragging about him."

"Is that so? Ha ha."

Two handlers exchanged jokes trying to loosen up on the first day with new sniffer dogs.

Robin and I, on the other hand, did not exchange words. Robin said a lot of nasty things at me and meddled in every single thing I did, but he seems quite nervous today.

I saw the dog living in the next house approaching. *Was he coming to apologize to me?* I wondered whether I should accept his apology. It still gave me a chill whenever I thought about the day. Because of his lie, I could have failed the test.

Instead he went to Robin wagging his tail and started talking to him.

"I'm proud of you, Robin. Have a great day at your work."

"Thanks, Dad."

*What? Dad? He is Robin's dad?* I could not believe what I had just heard. Robin just called him Dad. Did he lie to me because I was Robin's rival?

I became speechless when it all made sense to me. Robin and his father had planned the whole thing: He said harsh things at me on my first day to the training center, Robin did such wicked things to me, and Robin's dad lied to me the night before the final evaluation.

*Why? No. How? How can they do that to me? What have I done wrong?*

I stood still panicked, but Handler set off to go somewhere. My legs were so numb that he had to drag me along.

"What's wrong, Edge?"

He looked into my face. My head was about to explode because of too many thoughts whirling around in my mind, but it was my first day to work, so I would not let it get to me. I decided to put myself together as I drank the water that my handler had fetched me. I would not fail to carry out the first duty given to me because of Robin and his dad.

*Robin is bad, but his dad was really bad. They are both very bad. They are such horrible dad and son!*

My handler drove me to the airport. The road to the airport made my heart flutter, but today it was not. After talking the bark off a tree to them, I felt better. I tried so hard to shake it off of my head, but the shock still remained. As the old saying goes, 'Like father, like son.'

In an effort to forget about it, I looked at the scenery out the window. Even if fellow dogs like Robin trouble me, I will not give in. On my first day, I try to stay positive.

Buildings and trees flashed past the car window. Looking back on the past, time had flown like an arrow: flying from America to Youngjong Island, Incheon, one-year training at the center. I did not want to miss a thing on the way to the airport from the center, so I kept my eyes fixed on the road.

*Finally I am a sniffer dog.*

All of a sudden, I felt proud and appreciative.

We came to the airport. As we were about to enter the airport, I felt my heart pounding and my legs trembling. As if my handler noticed it, he started petting me on the back explaining work schedule.

"We work 24 hours every other day, which means we have to sleep here at the airport. Now let's work hard for half an hour. After that we can drink some water and take a rest in the mobile kennel."

He showed me the way to the cargo terminal. Inside was filled with baggage of passengers.

Wheeled-trunks, backpacks, briefcases, suitcases with handles were pouring into the moving conveyor belt.

As I had practiced with my handler as a team many times, I started sniffing at the cargo. As I focused on the work, the shock I had earlier was gone as well as the tension and fear.

I smelled about the cargo with no fear. I hopped on higher places and had no fear of stepping onto the moving conveyor belt. My mom said that I have to do my best whatever I do.

"We are heading for the passenger terminal building, Edge. We have various people. Let's be careful so as not to frighten children and pregnant women. Understand?"

"Woof, woof."

I honestly like going to a crowded area. I love people especially children. When I see them, I want to run and play with them.

"This is a sniffer dog. Don't worry. He doesn't bite."

My handler introduced me to people passing through the crowd, and got down to my level for fear I fall over obstacles on the way.

I restrained myself from watching people gathered around and devoted my full attention to looking for drugs. I followed the handler's finger and also smelled anything pungent. I smelled every inch of it not to miss anything.

"What a good-looking dog. Its sleek black fur looks great."

A girl passing by smiled at me giving me the thumbs up.

"Woof, woof."

I gracefully wagged my tail to show appreciation.

I honestly felt great. I think most people are afraid of me because I have black fur unlike other yellow-white sniffer dogs.

It makes sense, though, large black dogs like me are rare in Korea. I guess there are few of them. Many Korean households keep small dogs as pets. That is probably the reason why I look different and strange to them. It is natural for them to be afraid of my big, burly figure.

On further acquaintance, I am quite a nice dog. I not only smell and run well but never bite or bark. I can also give little friends a ride on my back and go for a walk.

*Is that a bit exaggerated? He he.*

A flood of thoughts coursed through my mind, my handler gave me a warning to keep me vigilant.

*All right, sir.*

I refocused my attention on sniffing at passengers' bags, pockets, and belongings.

I was struck by the smell of cosmetic products. *This is not!* I was looking for drugs. Bad drugs! *I will find you.*

The sun was going down toward the horizon.

"You make me proud, Edge. You are successfully carrying out the obligations you've undertaken from day one. I thank you for that," said the handler looking at his watch.

### **A Boy Holding a Tennis Ball**

Since day one, I have become familiar with the work at the airport. It is not as difficult as I thought it would be but it turned out to be fun. I especially like the way to the airport by car because it is the only time I can see the ocean.

Light blue glistening on the water calms me down. The car not knowing my admiration for the sea, whizzes along the way.

We finally came to the airport. We started at the passenger terminal building today. the handler said with his hand holding the leash around my neck.

"This is a drug-sniffing dog. He never bites, so don't worry. He's sniffing around this area."

I pay attention to his steps and indications of fingers and directions. However, I see a ball in front of my eyes. It is a tennis ball. my favorite kind, which is bouncing on the ground.

*It's a BALL.*

It is going up and down. I am enchanted by it.

In panic, the handler pulled the leash, but to no avail. I did not budge an inch. I tried hard to prick up my ears, which I could not normally do, and remained seated looking at the ball.

The ball belonged to a white boy. The more I paid attention to the ball, the more the boy, who seemed in grade school, bounced the ball. The higher it went off the floor, the louder noise it made.

*I want it. I wish I could hold it in my mouth and play. Kid! Throw the ball as hard as you can, and I'll run and fetch it with lightning speed.*

I liked the cute boy, too. He looked like a boy who would let me loose in the yard and play with me until I was beat to the ground.

At the thought of playing, the chain on my neck felt tight all of a sudden.

I no longer cared about sniffing out drugs. I wanted to stop and follow him. I wish I could run with the ball in my mouth!

The handler must have been pulling the leash quite a few times while I was preoccupied with something else.

"Stop it, Edge." said the handler in a stern voice.

I remained unmoved.

"We have to get back to work!"

I stayed motionless even when I heard him scold me severely. People gathered around me like clouds to see what was going on.

"Oh boy! The dog is distracted by the tennis ball."

"Look. It is only looking at the foreign child and the ball."

"By the way, what is the dog for?"

"It is a drug-sniffing dog or something."

"Oh my god! Doesn't it look so distracted?"

All eyes were fixed on us.

"Edge's Dad! Bring him inside quickly. I'll take care of the rest."

"Thank you."

My handler exchanged eye signals with another handler, and dragged me toward the portable kennel. He enticed me away from the tennis ball and went a round-about way.



When we were alone, he let out the anger that he had been holding back.

"You! Such a fool! How can a sniffer dog serving the country forget its duty because of a tennis ball? How can you do that? Huh?"

I could not say a word. Now that the boy and the ball disappeared from sight, I was awfully embarrassed.

"Yap, yap."

I hung my head in shame. The tennis ball seemed better than specially prepared food that I occasionally enjoyed or brighter than the stars in the sky. Now that I thought about it, it was nothing.

"You are a government employee working for the government. Did you already forget the stamp of approval by the Commissioner of Customs? What happened? If you lose your focus so easily like that, what can I do with you? Huh?"

I agreed with him. The more I thought about it, the harder it got for me to hold up my head from shame. I dropped my head lower and lower and now my forehead almost touched the ground. The handler dragged me in the portable kennel. I grew infuriated by the fact that I had to go into the kennel, even before I started working, so I burst out crying while taking steps backwards.

*Nnn...nnn..nnn*

As I cried loudly, the handler shook his head in disbelief to look at a big dog crying like a puppy.

"Ok, I give up. I'll try not to take you where there's a child or a ball."

He pushed the food bowl toward me. Even when I had made an unforgivable mistake, he did not want me to starve. I left it untouched, for I was not in the mood for food. I pushed the food bowl aside.

"Why?" asked my handler.

"You are not eating to express your deep regret for the mistake?"

"Yap, yap." I responded in a low voice.

"I got it. It's ok as long as you don't repeat the same mistake. I know how much you like a bouncy ball. You've been in training since you were very young, so you didn't have time to play. I sometimes feel sorry, but you're doing something important. You're not only a brave sniffer dog that protects Korea, but also my special partner, you know. Let's keep it up and focus on work. Understand?"

Looking at the worried look that he had on his face, I decided not to let my mind wander while working. To show my determination I started licking his hand with the promise that I would successfully fulfill my duties next time.

## **The Grand Prize Winner for the Sniffer Dogs**

After the rainy season was over, the raindrops gathered on the leaves everywhere. As I watched raindrops falling onto the ground, it suddenly occurred to me that I had worked as a sniffer dog for a year.

"It has been a year already."

I heaved a deep sigh.

"Phew. When can I ever sniff out drugs?"

I felt rushed but at the same time relieved. It meant the bad drugs did not sneak into the country. However I heard some cases of drug smuggling caught by other dogs from time to time.

One day the handler and I were working at a special cargo storehouse. I smelled around as usual.

*Sniff sniff*

I smelled something suspicious from one of the declared items from the Philippines. A golden opportunity finally came to me. I instantly snapped

at the edge of the item and dragged it on the ground.

"Look! I think Edge smelled something. Let's open it up."

The Handler called people together and told them to quickly tear the box open.

"Aren't these toys for children?"

"Uh-huh. Toy drums for babies."

"Let's check inside, though. If they put their mind to it, they could put it anywhere. Besides, Edge is giving us a signal."

"Ok."

When they took one of the drums apart, drug wrapped in black carbon paper appeared.

"Oh, now they are smuggling drugs inside toys."

"Tell me about it. It's so wrong that they are using the items for innocent children, too."

"By the way, what Edge did is highly praiseworthy."

"What a clever dog!"

*Oh, yeah! Hooray!* I screamed with joy inside.

People praised me over and over again. Hearing all the great comments about me, my handler put on a happy face, the kind that parents have when their children get a perfect score.

Without a word, he kept stroking my back. It grew a bit tiresome, so I wriggled around. In my mouth was a big dummy, of course.

At the doghouse he brought out a special meal, canned food full of meat. The intensive work had made me hungry, so I gorged myself on it.

He did not lift me high up in the air but petted me on the head while I was working on the food. He and I kept on playing with the dummy, which he normally did for a short time. Furthermore, he gave me a bath in a bathtub, which was a monthly event.

"Thanks to you, I won recognition as a handler. Thank you, Edge," said my handler with a twinkle in his eyes behind the glasses.

I felt how proud and how happy he was. It seemed we understood each other and were united as one.

I continued to smell out drugs after that. When you dig up a potato, more potatoes dangling from the stem are followed by it, as is the case for drugs.

Detecting drugs comes as a surprise sometimes. People at the airport look all pretty and handsome, and I wonder who is behind such terrible things.

Drugs are bad, foul-smelling powder. They make you addicted and cloud judgment. Under the influence you are likely to commit crimes, and once you start taking drugs, you get addicted to them. The drugs are so expensive that people do whatever it takes to get them, and as they become more daring in the ways they commit crimes, they resort to drugs, causing a vicious circle. If the world is full of people on drugs, the society will be infected with crimes and diseases.

Other dogs kept themselves busy while I moved about in search of drugs. They did their best to fulfill their duties. Among them were my friends: Dodger, Noma, Neo, Rodie, Sandy and even Robin.

Robin and I are not friends because true friends do not hate, become jealous of, lie to, or be cruel to each other. Friends love and wish each other well. Ever since the incident, I have kept my distance with Robin.

Other dogs and I, however, get along well. Sandy, yellow-white female Retriever, is one of my friends who really likes me.

"Edge, I hear you've found drugs again," says Sandy while working out in her free time.

"Yeah. They were inside the candy bags from California, the USA."

"Inside the bag of candy?" Sandy asked again glaring at me with her

kind, brightly shining eyes.

"Those bags smelled sweet and sour, but the smell of bad drugs was hidden inside."

Recalling the moment instilled some confidence in my voice.

"Oh, no! What did you do then?"

"What else is there to do? I wagged my tail to grab the attention. Some dogs sit at the spot where they find drugs, but I don't think I can do it probably because I'm not patient enough. I made a fuss by wagging my tail and shaking my head frantically."

"And then?"

"Then my handler asked other guys to open up a candy bag. Inside was the drug."

"Oh, I see. You and your handler make such a good team. He he," said Sandy smiling, which put me in a good mood and I smiled back.

"You are a great sniffer dog, Edge. Ho ho."

"Nah. So are you, Sandy. Ha ha."

I often heard through my handler that other dogs had also sniffed out drugs. Of course Robin was one of them. As we performed our duties successfully, Korea Customs Service decided to award Grand Prize for an excellent sniffer dog.

"Edge! The dogs including you have been detecting drugs well and working hard, so the Customs Service is going to present a citation to a dog with the best track record in sniffing out drugs."

"Woof, woof," I answered, wondering what citation was.

"Citation is a piece of paper that recognizes what great achievement the dog has accomplished, and the dog chosen gets to receive the award in presence of other dogs. Edge, you have been doing really well, so I have high expectations of you."

Seeing him getting more excited than I was, I wished he could receive

the award not me. Whether he knew how I felt about it or not, he went on with the award ceremony.

I thought about the citation, lying inside the dog house. Receiving compliments in front of handlers and other dogs would make me feel great about myself. I fell asleep in anticipation of becoming the winner of the honorable prize.

A week passed. I was taking a rest in the doghouse. For some reason, the handler came to me with a glum look on his face.

"Let's go somewhere, Edge."

"Woof, woof"

I wondered where he would take me.

"Today they will award the Grand Prize for the Excellent Sniffer Dog, so everyone has to be there."

"Wood, woof."

Out in the field, many handlers and other dogs had gathered around. Far away, Sandy greeted me with a nod.

"Hi, Sandy."

Guided by the handler, I stood in the crowd. A stranger in the middle of the platform announced that the award ceremony was about to begin.

"The Grand Prize for the Excellent Sniffer Dog for the first half of the year goes to the dog that sniffed out drugs hidden in the form of tea bags at the International Mail on April 23, thereby keeping about 300 people safe from danger. That is Robin."

*Wait. Robin?*

People started clapping their hands except for my handler. I saw Robin stepping onto the platform gracefully.

*It's Robin. Robin is getting the citation.*

I understood why my handler was not clapping along with others. He did not want to hurt my feelings. I gave Robin a big hand in my heart.

He once troubled me, but he became an excellent sniffer dog after all.

*Congratulations!*

My handler started talking to cheer me up.

"You want to go for a walk, Edge?"

"Then what about playing with the dummy?"

"Huh?"

I could not say anything. It was childish to be upset about Robin's receiving the award.

*Why on earth is Robin the winner? Why?*

I stamped my feet in anger and made a face. Robin approached me and talked to me repulsively.

"Did you see me up on the platform and get the award?" asked Robin in a provokingly manner.

"Yup," I answered showing no sincerity.

"I came in an easy first again. Find it hard to swallow?"

"Bah."

The handler saw Robin teasing me, so he said something loud enough for Robin to hear.

"I am very proud of you, Edge. You are the best dog to me."

"Woof, woof," I raised my head and barked gallantly to thank him.

Robin pouted his mouth and walked away.

## **In Hot Pursuit**

*Sniff, sniff.*

I could smell drugs, a large amount of them.

*Calm down. I have to locate them. I can do this.*

I moved so urgently that my handler could not catch up with me. I

quickly walked through a crowd: tourists in sweat suits, students going abroad to study, and foreigners.

"No, not this person."

There was a guy in a suit with strong fragrance. The smell was so strong that I could barely remember the drug smell. His fragrance made me dizzy.

*Remind me of the drug smell, please.*

Noticing the pitiful expression on my face, my handler petted me on the back in an effort to cheer me up.

*That's not it. I'm not exhausted.*

I twisted my body to show dissatisfaction.

*This doesn't work. Then I have to do it myself. I'm going to pull myself together and distinguish the smell.*

I could not fight the urge to smell the laptop bag of the guy in a suit. My tail started wagging in spite of myself. I became impatient and shook my head side to side.

"You smelled something, Edge."

"Woof, woof," I cried.

*Make people step aside so I can get close to him, please. He keeps squeezing in between people in order to hide himself.*

He sensed something and then stood with his arms out to block people letting me pass by.

"The dog is sniffing around, so step aside, please."

I was only a few steps away from the man's bag.

He suddenly swung the bag from his shoulder into his arms. I put my front paws against his legs and looked up at him. Then he gave me a hard kick screaming at the top of his lungs.

"What's wrong with this dog? Keep your dirty feet off of me. Go away."

My handler pushed me aside and said,



"It's a sniffer dog. Put your bag down, so he can check."

The guy quickly let out a scream and ran off.

"Darn it!"

Everything happened so quickly, so my handler and I were startled but instinctively in pursuit of him.

"Yap, yap."

I chased after him with loud sharp yaps that echoed through the airport.

He was fast. He was running for his life but not fast enough to shake me off. His plan seemed to throw us off at the airport limousine station and made an escape by taxi. Behind me, however, were my handler, police officers, and other sniffer dogs running after him.

I ran as fast as I could, but Robin ran ahead of me and after his heels. I was extremely thankful that Robin had come to my aid.

"Here comes the Excellent Sniffer Dog. Move over! Since you can't do this on your own, the fixer, Robin has come to your rescue. Ha ha," laughed Robin, Mr. Know-It-All.

"Oh my! A joke in this situation? Really?"

I was too flabbergasted to speak, but with all my strength I bit his heel. With a scream he pitched forward. Robin rushed over and fastened his teeth in the guy's other leg. He struggled to remove us, but we endured it to the end.

People thronged towards us. Seeing a running man and dogs chasing after him, they had become suspicious and come to help us. The guy then quickly grabbed a stone and threw it at us.

*Uh-oh. A stone!"*

A heavy stone came flying and fell on me.

"Ugh."

I could not breathe. Everything reeled before my eyes and I slowly got

drained of energy letting go of his heel. Another stone hit Robin on the head and knocked him unconscious.

Meanwhile, he pushed us aside. Only after did he turn his body to run away, he realized that he was surrounded by the police.

"Freeze! You are under siege."

He had seemingly given up, he flopped down on the ground. People stormed in the scene and surrounded the guy. The police siren filled the air followed by the sound of heavy ambulance and footsteps of people. My eyes were really heavy and I could hardly keep my eyes open.

*Mom!*

Opening my eyes in the bright sunlight, I found myself to be in the animal hospital.

"Can you hear me, Edge?"

I wanted to answer the question but was unable to say a word. I must be really sick.

"Do not move, Edge. The wounds haven't completely healed yet."

I recalled being hit by the rock the drug smuggler had thrown at me.

"Thanks to your hard work, we have discovered quite a large quantity of drugs. This is the first time to confiscate drugs by the kilogram."

"Woof, woof."

"Korea Customs Service appreciates your great achievement, Edge."

Listening to my handler made me realize that I had done something great. The guy in a suit must have possessed drugs. It took a lot of nerve to board the plane with that much amount.

"You smelled something fishy from his laptop bag, right? When we opened the bag, drugs, as much as half a sack of rice, wrapped in a square carbon paper occupied the place for a laptop."

*I knew it!*

"Edge, you've become an expert in sniffing out drugs," said Handler

laughing loudly. He looked very happy.

"We could have won the award if we had known this would happen, right?"

Handler always talked about the award, the ceremony of which took place a long time ago.

He popped open a can filled with meat, poured it into the bowl, and passed it to me, which tasted really delicious.

"Eat a lot, so you can recover your strength again. According to the doctor, you have bled a lot, so a dog named Hyori gave you a blood transfusion."

I pricked up my ears to listen to him better.

"You shed too much blood already, and due to severe bleeding during the surgery, another dog had to give you blood they way people often donate blood."

*Oh, giving blood. It is what blood donation is.*

"Edge, eat well and focus on rehab exercise, and you'll become healthy again. I know it hurts now, but you can do it, right?"

"Woof, woof."

The areas around the wounds ache, but I did not want him to find that out because he was deeply concerned about me.

"I have to go. Take care."

The handler grabbed the doorknob to leave the room. I wondered what had happened to Robin.

"Oh, as for Robin, he is doing well."

That was a relief.

"But Robin is no longer in our team. He's moved to another department. You know he is quite a popular sniffer dog, so they took him to the department where he was most needed."

I opened my eyes wide open in surprise.

"You cannot meet him any longer. That's all you need to know now."

*All of a sudden, why?*

I wondered what had happened. My eyes widened by the unexpected and startling news and he opened the door and hurried out.

*Robin has been transferred to another department? He is not here any more?*

## **Farewell to My Handler and Sniffer Dogs**

After spending a month recovering at the hospital, I returned to the center. It had been a long time, so it felt somewhat strange to come back. The handler took me to the doghouse and said that I would start working next week.

"Take some rest, Edge."

On his way out, he stopped and went to the doghouse where Robin's dad was.

"You're the dog that is retiring tomorrow. We'll all miss you. You've done a great job. I hope you have a happy life with your adoptive family," he said.

*What? Retirement? Robin's dad?*

I thought of Robin all of a sudden. Robin was somewhere else, and so would Robin's dad soon.

When he was out the door, I heard someone calling me near my doghouse.

"Are you feeling better?"

It was unusual for Robin's dad to ask me whether I was fine.

"I'm okay now."

"Glad to hear that."

There was silence for a few seconds.

"I heard Robin moved to another department. What happened?"

"Well," paused Robin's dad and went on with hesitation.

"Robin was hit on the head by the stone that the criminal threw at him, which caused him to suffer from amnesia."

"What? Amnesia?"

"Unfortunately yes. He lost all his memories of the past 4 years as a sniffer dog and became a puppy all over again."

"No, how is that even possible?"

"So he is in charge of taking care of newly-born puppies."

"Robin is looking after puppies?"

I was afraid if Robin, who liked to tease his friends and show off, was suitable for caring for puppies.

"He is doing it surprisingly well. He thinks of him as a puppy, so he gets along with other puppies and looks happy."

"Does he recognize you?"

"Oh, my! He is so clingy like a little puppy and call me 'Daddy' again and again."

"Oh, I see," I said nodding my head.

"Edge. There's something I've wanted to tell you."

I noticed a certain hesitancy in his voice.

"Ok. Go ahead."

"I think I owe you an apology."

"Pardon?"

I could hardly believe my ears.

"I'm so sorry. Robin and I have been giving you a hard time. We know you've done nothing wrong. Soon I'm about to retire and will no longer be here. Robin is not doing well. How can I leave him here alone? I'm so worried about him."

"I understand."

"So I know I have no right to ask you this, but I hope you can check on Robin sometimes to see if he's doing well. Telling him the memories you shared with him when he was a sniffer dog might help him recollect the memories."

"Sure. I'll do that. Robin's dad."

"You're doing me a huge favor, and I can't thank you enough for that."

"I hope you have a happy life after the retirement."

After saying good-bye to Robin's dad, I hurried my steps towards the collective kennels for puppies where Robin was.

*So Robin is like a nanny looking after puppies.*

I grinned inside. It was a pity that he was suffering from amnesia, but the thought of Robin, who had liked to act big and show off, was with puppies made me smile somehow.

The closer I got to the kennels, the louder the noise of the puppies could be heard. I saw Robin fooling around in the middle of whimpering and whining puppies.

*My goodness!*

My mouth just dropped. With a bright face, Robin was having fun with other little dogs rolling around on the floor. When he was thirsty, he went to the area for water and milk bottles and sucked at the bottle sprout.

*Ah! Now I understand why Robin's dad is worried,* I clicked my tongue.

Robin came to me from the distance.

"Hey, sir! Who are you and why are you here?"

"Huh? Um."

"Want to play with me?"

"Oh my!"

My head ached.

Every now and then when I was not busy, I went to Robin and told him about the time when he was a sniffer dog.

He slowly retrieved the memories. It took a month for him to be his old self, who liked to show off.

"You're fully recovered now. Congratulations!"

"Thanks."

"Is anything wrong? You look worried," I asked because the look on his face worried me.

"Huh? Um. Can you promise me one thing?"

"Promise? What is it?"

"Promise me that you won't tell other dogs that I was in the kennels for puppies."

"Aha! That was it!"

I played innocent to tease him.

"Why not?"

"It's embarrassing. I'll never pick on you from now on, so keep this to yourself, will you?"

"Then you won't do anything naughty?"

"I won't."

"You're not going to act so arrogant, either?"

"Of course not."

"No more telling a lie or messing around?"

"I promise."

"Ok, then. I'll keep it a secret."

"Thanks, man. You are awesome."

He seemed very pleased to hear that. He gave me a tight hug and went off humming. Robin was on his best behavior and nice to me after that.

On such a sunny, pleasant day, I got up late and bathed in the sun at the barb-wired doghouse outside. It had been a long time to feel this

way in the sunshine, and the sun reflected off my fur making it appear shiny and sleek.

"Edge. You know It's a regular checkup day, right? Let me see," said a drill instructor.

"Your fur has turned gray. You are old now, too."

*Huh? gray fur? It's not shining but turning gray?*

My eyes were wide open with surprise.

"Now let's check on your sniffing and physical abilities. Come on out," said the drill instructor opening the door of the doghouse. I sniffed around and scampered across the field.

"Um."

He scribbled something on the paper tilting his head a bit.

"Everything is finished, so you can take some rest now."

After the checkup I went back to sunbathing again. What the instructor said earlier popped in my head.

*Gray fur. My fur is turning gray. Am I getting old?*

I looked up the sky and closed my eyes and felt the sun all over my body.

Darkness fell. When I got ready to sleep, my handler called me.

"Edge."

"Arf arf."

"It's been hard recently. hasn't it?"

"You are growing old, too. Not as fit as you used to be. Oh, look at your gray hair! I guess it's about time for you to retire."

"Arf, arf."

I cocked up my ears to clearly listen to what he was saying.

"After the checkup the other day, the instructor told me so. He knows you are not eating much but taking plenty of nutritional supplements instead."



"It's been about six years. Time does fly. You've done it exceptionally well. From next week, I'll be paired up with another dog for work. You'll stay here for a while and move somewhere else."

*Oh, I see.* I nodded my head.

After my retirement, he was going to work with another dog, and I would transfer to another place.

"I think you'll go to an ordinary house. That's what happens after retirement. Or you may stay here, but for your happiness, I do hope you can go to a happy family where they can take good care of you. It's better to have a family."

*Family?*

He said that I would have a family that I had always wanted.

"Throughout my career, you've been the best dog, Edge. I'm so proud of you."

"Arf, arf."

"By the way, Edge."

After a short silence, he went on.

"Remember this. You are the best and nicest dog in the entire world, and I take great pride in you."

Tears welled up in my eyes.

"It's been a long day. Go to bed."

It was a sad farewell with my handler.

The moment of parting is bound to come along at one point. However, I would cherish this moment: a bright starry night and warm clasp of his hands.

*Take care, my handler. Good-bye.*

**Edge, Blood Donor**

"Good-bye, Edge."

People working at the training center came out to see me off. I glanced along the crowd looking for my handler, but he was not here.

"He is at work, Edge, but he asked me to say goodbye to you."

I wanted to see him one last time but I could not.

*I know I'll miss you a lot. Goodbye and take care.*

*I shouldn't look back. If I ever do, I might turn into pillar waiting for my handler.*

I got in a car without looking back.

*Burr.* The car rumbled as it started up. The driver let the window slightly open for me, which I appreciated a great deal because I wanted to have some fresh air.

I wonder where I am headed for. *Am I going back to my hometown?* I see the ocean out the window.

*I wish I could take a dip in the ocean.*

A flock of seagulls look like white pellets fallen out of styrofoam. The grand ocean and the nature surrounding it is as picturesque as a painting beautifully drawn by a world-famous artist.

I drift off to sleep while looking at the beautiful ocean.

When I opened my eyes, the car was approaching some building.

"Here you are, Edge."

I became alert the moment I heard it.

*This is where I'm going to stay from now on.*

As I looked around, people in white gowns poured out all at once. Among them, a tall, thin man examined my body from head to toe with his glasses upon his forehead.

This brought a smile to my face because people at the training center had done the same when they first saw me.

"What a good-looking dog! Other than his odd-looking ears, his head, nose, mouth, and everything else are ideal features of a Retriever," said the tall guy.

"Arf, arf."

*Really? Am I that handsome?* I asked cocking up my ears.

"He's well-behaved. Ha ha! He will get along well with other dog blood donors. By the way, is his doghouse ready, Dr. Lee?"

"Yes, Deputy Director."

*Deputy Director? Ah! The tall guy is a deputy director.*

I wondered what a dog blood donor was. I wanted to know what I would do here.

While a flood of thoughts coursed through my mind, Dr. Lee came to me and winked at me.

"From now on, you are a dog blood donor that gives blood to other dogs. Your help is invaluable here. Of course you may go through some difficulties in adjusting to the new environment, but I hope we can get along well. I'm looking forward to working with you, Edge."

*Oh, blood donation! When I was in the hospital, another dog gave me blood. Now I am going to share my blood with other dogs.*

I came to understand what a dog blood donor does and what I would do as one of them here. I used to sniff out drugs, but I was assigned to another responsibility, which was to donate my blood.

Even though the target has changed, I am about to undertake an equally important assignment. I served the country before, but now I am going to serve other dogs with my blood. My heart is swollen with pride by the thought that I can do something helpful to other puppies and dogs.

The place I was going to stay was a little different from that of the training center. It felt warm and cozy here. It was probably because I

was inside the building. I could tell if it is day or night not by the sun but by an on-off switch.

This was also a place where several animals called their home. Each had its own cage, so I did not have the opportunity to exchange greetings with each and every one of them yet. I was curious who else lived here, but I decided to go to bed early for the next day. Lying down at a new place, I grew tired all of a sudden.

I heard someone calling me in the darkness.

"Hi, I'm Hyori! Are you a new dog blood donor?"

"Huh? Hyori?"

It was the voice of a girl. She said that her name is Hyori.

"Yes. Did you donate your blood for me before?"

"For you? Well, maybe. I am a universal dog that can donate blood to any blood type. Therefore, I donate blood the most at this hospital."

"Wow. Then it must be you. I stayed in this hospital once. My handler told me that a dog named Hyori donated blood for me. "

"Did he? Then it should be me," said Hyori laughing.

"Are you a Retriever, too?" I asked.

"No. I am a Great Pyrenees, a large dog with white coat."

"All right. Were you a sniffer dog, too?"

"Sorry? What is that?"

"Huh? Um."

"I was abandoned on the street. Dogs like me are also known as stray dogs."

"Abandoned?"

"Yes. I guess the owner found it difficult to raise me, so one day he put me in his car and drove out to the highway, and then left me there. I wandered about for a while searching through the trash cans whenever I got hungry. Maybe that's why I like living here. Compared to that, this

place is like heaven."

"Is that so?"

"You are a Retriever, right? We have quite a lot of Retrievers here. About five?"

"Oh, really?"

"Yes, What color is your coat?"

"Black."

"Black it is. Some of them are black and the others are yellow-white."

"Is that right?"

"You don't talk much. By the way, how old are you?"

"I am seven. What about you?"

"We are friends then. I am seven, too."

"You are!"

"Let's be friends."

"OK."

"I think we will go out to the rehabilitation playground to exercise tomorrow morning. See you then."

"OK."

"Have a Good night."

"So do you."

I got red in the face. I did not understand why but it was embarrassing the whole time I was talking to Hyori.

The room fell silent. My heart, however, pounded wildly. I wished the next morning would come right away because I could not wait to see a big, white dog named Hyori.

## **Friends at the Hospital and My Love, Hyori**

"Arf, arf."

"Meow meow."

The sound of dogs' barking and cats' meowing echo through the hall.

"Arf arf. Hurry up, Dr. Dad. It's an exercise day. Arf arf," said a dog.

"Dr. Dad? You have your father here?"

People in white gowns, including the tall guy that I saw yesterday, stormed in. His appearance threw the whole house into utter chaos with the dogs and cats greeting him. Everyone here called the people in white gowns Dad.

"Whoa, whoa. Calm down. Wait. Hyori is here."

"Arf, arf. Here I am."

"Did you sleep well, Suri?"

"Arf, arf. Yup!"

"And Edge, Edge?"

*Edge?* Some guy was calling me.

"Here you are. Let's go out and exercise in the rehabilitation ground. You are in the same group with Hyori and Suri. Understand?" he said while pulling me out and putting a leash on me.

He took out Suri and Hyori one by one.

"He he. You are Edge. Nice to meet you."

Hyori looked exactly the same as I had imagined. Her white coat sparkled brightly and so did her smile.

"Nice to meet you, too."

When we greeted each other, a yellow-white Retriever cut in our conversation.

"Hi, I'm Suri. As long as you get along with me, you won't have any trouble living here."

When Suri insisted that I trust her, Hyori rolled her eyes.

"Gosh, Mind your own business, Suri."

"You always get in my way, Hyori. Bah!"

"It's because you say a lot of nonsense."

Seeing them having a petty quarrel reminded me of sniffer dogs at the training center.

*I hope they are all doing fine.*

Many trees and obstacles were in the playground fenced all the way around. There were various paths covered with different materials: pebbles, sand, and dirt. I ran around the ground for joy.

As I jumped over the obstacles with lots of energy, Hyori looked at me in admiration.

"Wow. How great! Your jumping does show that you used to be a sniffer dog. You look very nice," said Hyori clapping her hands, which made my cheeks flushed.

"Oh, no. Edge's face has turned red. Are you sick? Do you have a fever? Hyori! Look at Edge. His face is red like an apple."

Not knowing what was really going on, Suri told everybody, drawing attention to me.

*Ugh! How silly!*

I was worried if they could find out the real reason.

"It's because I have been running a lot. Whoa. It's hot."

I swung my hand like a fan to cool down and left in a hurry. Chasing me around, Suri kept asking me questions.

"What does a sniffer dog do all day, Edge?"

"We just sniff out drugs," I said flatly.

I had a lot on my mind because of Hyori.

"What are drugs?"

"sort of bad powder."

"Powder? Is it edible? What does it taste like? Have you tasted it?"

"No, it's bad for your body. You should never eat it."

"Why not? What happens in case you eat it?"

I was annoyed by Suri at that moment. I could not stand his endless questions.

"Stupid worms will eat up your brain causing death at the end."

"Oh my! Worms? Eww. Sounds disgusting."

"Right, so enough of drug talk. Go and get some exercise, and you won't have worms in your body."

"Aargh! I hate worms. I got to go and work out."

Shivering as if a worm got stuck in his body, Suri ran away. Left alone, I looked around. When I looked up the sky, a large cloud turned into Hyori's pure white face. I tried to shake it off my head. When I looked at the trees, those tall trees became large, and puffy Hyori and the thought of her kept going round and round in my head.

"What's happening to me?"

"Why do you keep looking at Hyori, Edge? There are other friends around including me."

"Huh?"

"Wait. You are ..."

"Nah, No way. It's not true!"

"Oh, What is not true?"

"Huh?"

"You are hiding something. Do you like..."

"No, I don't," I shouted suddenly.

"What? You are now losing it. You know what they say, 'A strong denial is an affirmation.'"

I did not say a word. When he noticed my true inner feelings, my face blushed with embarrassment.

"No. I don't like her."

I pushed him away and escaped. Suri fell on his back but started



singing to my back.

"Hyori and Edge sitting in a tree, K-I-S-S-I-N-G. First comes love, then comes marriage, then comes baby in a baby carriage."

"It's so annoying."

*I do not like Suri at all.*

## **Sharing Love and Blood for the First Time**

I feel like at home. I have never had these many friends around me before. Everyone here is warm-hearted. They have opened up to me and treated me nicely. By donating their blood to other dogs, they share love.

I want to help other dogs with my blood. I want to support those who are in trouble just the way Hyori helped me when I underwent an operation after I had been hit by the stone that day.

It had been a week since I first came here. I waited and waited for the day that I could donate my blood.

The opportunity finally came along.

"Let's go, Edge. It's your turn."

Dr. Lee who was in charge of me walked me down the stairs on a leash. I could hear my heart pounding in the chest. My heart did not beat this much even when I detected a large quantity of drugs.

Dr. Lee took me to a room and put me on a lift table. No sooner had I stood on it than the table went up with a boom. He stroked me by the scruff of the neck in an effort to comfort me.

"It's alright. It stings just a bit. You have nothing to worry about. Dr. Kim and Dr. Park! Hold on to Edge, will you?"

A couple of them grabbed my body and Dr. Lee walked up to me

holding a syringe in his hand. The needle looked quite long and thick.

I shut my eyes tight.

*Ouch! That hurts.*

The vet stuck the needle in my skin and started drawing some blood.

"Good boy. Be a bit more patient. Let's do this slowly so that it won't wear you out."

"Wow, Dr. Lee! I can't believe this is his first time. He tolerates it quite well."

"Yeah. He's a well-trained dog. I don't think we need to hold him tight. He does this so well."

People who seemed to be Dr. Lee's colleagues paid me a compliment.

"It's amazing that he takes it so well."

Dr. Lee looked quite amazed himself, too. It stung when the needle entered the skin, but other than that it did not hurt at all. I remained seated on the lift table and patiently waited half an hour to pass.

*Vets like it when I sit still while having my blood taken. I'll stay as still as a stone from now on.*

"Tick-tock!" I could hear the clock ticking.

Finally, Dr. Lee came to me and told me that blood-gathering was over.

"There, it's done. Well-done, Edge."

He lowered the lift table and when I was about to stand, he said,

"Oh, no! You'll feel dizzy. You'll have some snacks after IV injection. Then we can get out, ok?"

He gave me the IV injection on the front paw. The injection has nutritional supplements in it, so it is meant to supplement the nutrition and water lost during the process.

I was delighted to be in the room filled with vets. When I was in the doghouse, I felt lonely and bored, but the vets here stroked me when they passed by.

"Edge. Eat some canned meat, too."

I heard Dr. Lee open a can. Even when I sniffed out drugs at the center, I did not receive such a can heavily filled with meat.

"Here's a canned meat full of protein. Dig in!"

It had been a long time since I had meat last time, so it helped me feel more energetic and active. Since it was loaded with lots of meat, I had to chew it well. I wished I could save some for Hyori and Suri.

I spent a couple of hours in the room relaxing and eating, and then went back to the third floor. It was my first donation ever in my life. It felt strange, but just a little bit of pain was followed by sweet snacks and rest. Above all, it made me happy that I had done something rewarding.

I slept all day long even the day after my blood donation. It was probably because I ate a lot of meat and my body needed some more rest.

I was half asleep when Suri started talking to me.

"How did it go yesterday, Edge?"

I did not respond.

"Are you still mad at me because of what had happened last time? Childish! I'm sorry. I didn't know you were serious about Hyori."

"Why didn't you say it over a microphone?"

"That could have been a good idea. Edge likes..."

"Hush!"

"I'm kidding. There's only you and me here. Everybody else went to donate blood or out to exercise."

"Still, watch what you say."

"Ok. When are you going to tell her how you feel?"

"how I feel?"

"You have to tell her that you like her."

"I don't want to do it yet"

My heart started pounding again after hearing the word, 'like.' I felt as if I had declared my love to her.

"Yet? When are you going to do it, then? Ha ha!"

"Are you making fun of me now, Suri?"

"No, I'm not. You can always come to me when you have any worries about Hyori."

"Ok, I will."

"If you and Hyori get married, the color of your puppies... Let me see. White and Black makes ... Um. It's grey. I don't think grey looks good on dogs, but it does look good on cats, though."

"Cut that out, Suri."

I was a bit irritated by Suri's joke.

"Ha ha. I'm sorry."

"Go to bed. I'm going to sleep, too."

"Ok. Now that I see you are no longer mad at me, I can shut my eyes and relax."

Suri started snoring loudly. He not only talked too much but also snored too much. My head was a mess, so I could not sleep.

*Why is it Suri who had to find this out?*

I scratched the back of my head blaming myself for being such a fool.

## **The Tears of Dabin's Mom Who Made Me Realize the Importance of a Family**

Since I came here, I have developed a new habit: when I hear the siren of an ambulance, I sincerely hope nobody would die or the patient would get well with the right treatment. Whenever I donate blood, I imagine

that other dogs can get a surgery or blood transfusion with the blood I have donated.

One night, a vet urgently looked for me.

"Get up, Edge! We have a dog in critical condition. We need your blood right away."

She seemed quite urgent. She took me out of the cage, passed by the elevator and ran down the stairs in a hurry instead.

When I entered the Room for Blood Collection, there were other vets who had been waiting for me. I was transferred to the lift table quickly. Everyone was busy doing their work.

While I was donating my blood, I heard someone weeping loudly on the first floor. It sounded like an aged woman.

"Please. save Dabin's life, Doctor. Poor Dabin. boohoo."

The old lady clung to the vets, sobbing.

"Dabin? How sick is she to come here this late night?"

I pricked up my ears. Her sobbing continued, so the vet grew more and more impatient. She told me that she would draw blood more quickly than usual. She asked me to endure the pain because some dog was in urgent condition.

During the 15-minute blood donation, I could hear Dabin's mom whimpering and begging for Dabin's life unceasingly.

"Please Dabin. My Goodness! Pull yourself together. Doctor, save Dabin. Please! I'll do everything if you can save her. Please."

Hearing her weeping urged me to do this quickly.

*Doctor. It's all right with me, so please hurry, will you?*

15 minutes felt like 15 hours. When it was finally over, she left me with another vet, took the blood and went to the first floor in a hurry.

*What happened to Dabin? and why does the woman keep crying?*

I put my left paw, which the needle is inserted into, on my face

"What happened to the dog, Dabin?" I heard vets talking to one another.

"When she went out for a walk, she got infected by parasites, which led to an incurable disease. When Dabin is in good condition, they lie dormant until the body's resistance weakens, and then it becomes active and destroys red blood cells. Therefore, if she can't receive the transfusion in critical condition, she will die. Ah! The dog is quite old and I'm sorry for that old lady, too."

The vet let out a sigh.

*Oh! I see.*

My heart ached.

*If it means your full recovery, I can donate blood whenever you need it. I can easily endure momentary pains. You'll be fine. Don't worry.*

I looked at the vet, wishing for Dabin's health.

*Tell the lady that her dog is going to be fine, please. She'll get well soon.*

That night, Dabin got through the critical moment and went home. She may have to overcome these sorts in the future again. Regardless, I hope this is be the last one, and after this she will be healthy again.

I know one thing, though. The old lady would never give up on Dabin. Even if that meant going in and out of the emergency room several times and a lot of money spent to save Dabin, she would never let Dabin die. Maybe that is the meaning of a family. Only family can do so.

*Yes. It's because we are family. Family sticks together. They would never abandon just because one is sick or ill.*

Some may dump their dogs on the side of the road because their small, cute puppies grow big and eat more or become sick, which eventually weakens their eyesight or bodies. They want their dogs to die or disappear from their sight.

I am afraid of becoming useless or worthless. *What if I can no longer*

*sniff out drugs or share blood? Where should I go then? What will happen to me?*

*Family.* I wished I had a family that could take good care of me even if I fell sick, or old and diseased. I want to meet my family again.

That suddenly reminded me of my handler.

*Handler!*

The rims of my eyes were red with tears.

"Edge! What's wrong?" asked Hyori surprised.

I was going to wipe my eyes quickly, but Suri showed up out of nowhere and started fussing around.

"Why? Something happened to Edge?"

"Huh? No..." Hyori slurred the end of her sentence with a worried look on her face.

"Something's going on between you two," said Suri giving a wrong guess.

"Edge, you confessed your feelings to Hyori but got rejected? That's why I told you to come to consult me first."

"My Goodness."

I struck myself on the head with my hand. He was giving me a headache.

"Confession? What confession?" said Hyori in dismay.

"Um. That is..."

"What else can it be other than Edge likes you?" said Suri interrupting me.

"Edge likes me?"

Hyori looked startled. I was so shamed that I wanted to crawl into a hole. I couldn't stay there any longer, so I ran off to the vet.

"Arf, arf."

I rushed over and jumped into the vet.

"Oh, Edge! You've come to see me."

Not knowing what was going on, he kept petting me on the behind.

*Oh, no! What should I do? How can I face Hyori from now on?*

## Sharing Love and Growing Friendship

Spring swiftly flew by, summer followed, and then the autumn arrived with wind gently blowing. When it snowed heavily, I realized that it had unnoticeably deepened into winter. Four seasons passed and then Spring came before I knew it.

It was my fourth year here, and I became 11 years old. When a dog reaches the age of eleven, it is already sixty years in human years, but since there are few physical activities around here, I do not have a chance to test my physical strength. Furthermore, I have eight close friends here, so I do not feel my age.

I have become the best dog blood donor by the vets here. They say I remain calm and follow the instructions well when donating blood. That is the reason why they come to me first in an emergency.

I donate blood on a monthly basis and today is the day. Of course, when there is an urgent patient, I go downstairs to share my blood, too. Fortunately, there was no dog that needed my blood urgently. That was the reason why I went to the room for blood collection on the designated date.

"Edge is here," said the vet in charge of me.

"Hi, Edge."

"Here comes Edge."

"When it is Edge's turn, it is an easy day for everyone here."

Everyone welcomed me lovingly.



I climbed onto the lift table by myself and took a good posture for vets to stick the needle into my paw. It is just a scratch that I have to deal with, so I decide to remain still until the end.

"Dr. Lee. Dabin regularly comes back, right?"

"Yes. She keeps coming to receive blood transfusion from Edge."

"Oh, I'm really sorry for Dabin's owner."

"Is Princess' anemia getting better?"

"Princess?"

"Yeah. The female Maltese. You know the dog that got the urgent blood transfusion from Hyori because of her serious anemia."

"Oh, the Princess. Ever since that, her condition has gotten better. Cutie worries me more than Princess, though. He has blood in his stool as well as anemia. His anemia level went down to 15 percent."

"Right. If my memory serves me right, he is coming to receive blood transfusion this week, too. Do you want me to check the schedule?"

"Yes. I believe he is scheduled to get it from Suri this Thursday. Hyori has done more than her fair share, so she can get it from Suri this time. Hyori has donated more than 300 ml, which went a little over the limit. Hyori is getting older, so we need to take that into consideration."

"I got it."

I listened in on their conversation.

*Hyori has donated a lot of blood this month. It must have been hard for her. I hope she is not sick.*

I was worried about her. I wanted to see her later before entering my cage. Seeing her doing well with my own eyes would relieve my anxiety.

I barely touched the snack the vet gave to me and just impatiently waited to go back to my cage.

Hyori was not there, so I asked Suri.

"Suri. Where did Hyori go?"

"She went to get an IV. Since Hyori was sick, a vet wanted to give her some nutritional supplements."

"Do you think she is in a lot of pain?"

"I guess so. The blood they drew out of her exceeded the limits."

"I see. I'm really worried about her."

"So am I. Is there anything we can do for her?"

"Um... It might be somewhat difficult for you, but can we save our food little by little and then give it to Hyori. What do you think?"

"Food? My food?"

Suri seemed to hesitate for a few moments after hearing it. Suri liked to eat, so it would not be easy for him to reduce the amount of food he ate.

"OK. That's what friends are for. I'll do it."

"Suri. If it is too hard, I'll just do it alone."

"No. Hyori and I have been friends for a long time. Let me help her, too."

"Sure. If you say so."

We started saving a little bit of food that the vet gave to us once a day. I put it under the towel on the floor, and Suri hid it at the corner of his cage. Hyori will be plumpy after eating the food we have saved for her. It will be just a matter of time for her to be healthy again.

A few days later, three of us met again at the playground.

"Hyori!"

"Suri and Edge. How have you been?"

"We are fine," said Suri and I, smiling at each other.

"You seem to have formed a special bond while I was gone," says Hyori smiling.

"Does it seem like that way? Ha ha."

"We have always gotten along well, right?" I said with a mischievous

look on my face, putting my arms around Suri's shoulders.

"By the way, are you alright, Hyori?"

"Of course, thanks to all the food you two have saved for me, I have gained weight. I feel heavy now. Ho ho."

"Good."

We felt great that she became healthy again.

"What do you think about the noise of the air conditioning and heating system in our room? Isn't it too noisy?" asked Suri.

"Air conditioning and heating?"

"Yeah. My cage is right under the machine, so I feel like I'm going deaf. Reducing the amount of food has made me dizzy, and now the whirl of the machine is driving me crazy."

"Well. I haven't noticed that. What about you, Edge?" asked Hyori.

"I'm fine with it. It doesn't bother me that much."

"Really? Well, I want to move to another cage. Dogs around me are not happy with the noise, either."

"Oh, Suri. I'm sorry about the inconvenience you are going through now."

Suri seems to be having a hard time sleeping because of the noise of the machine. *Is there any good solution for this?*

## **Troublemaker's Ado**

Dog blood donors share the room with cat blood donors. The room is filled with cages for both dogs and cats. There is nothing much other than a small window. Under the window is a pot with dying lavenders even though my vet water them everyday.

I frequently gaze at the flowerpot on the window sill.

After watering the plants, he leaves the room and the door clicks shut behind him. I hear the click again soon after.

"Did the vet come back in?"

I saw Suri coming out of the cage and roaming around the room. Suri was walking along the cage, keeping eye contact with the dogs in cages.

"What do you think? I am here looking inside your cages. Don't I look like Dr. Dad? Call me Dad. Ha ha!"

"Arf, arf."

"Meow, meow."

The animals inside the room were howling at the same time.

"How did you manage to come out of the cage?"

"Did you open it yourself?"

"Are you going to sneak away?"

"Let me out, please. Suri."

"Wow. It's going to be so much fun."

The whole room was thrown into utter disorder.

"Calm down. Mighty Suri will grant all your wishes. I was able to come out because Dr. Dad didn't shut the door tight by mistake. I didn't bite off the door handle to escape. Besides, I'm not even thinking about running away."

"Why did you let yourself out then?" asked the cat named Big Mouth.

"Big Mouth! Don't you think the sound of the machine too noisy? I mean the sound of the air conditioner and heater."

"Huh? Well, I didn't notice that."

"You don't know because you never keep your big mouth shut, but it's really loud."

"Watch your mouth, Suri. Do not call Big Mouth names, or I'll scratch you with my claws," said Vicious siding with Big Mouth.

"Claws of a cat? What? How dare you talk to me like that?"

Irritated by Suri's haughty attitude, Big Mouth and Vicious revealed their sharp teeth and claws.

"You need to grow up, Suri. Come back in the cage, right away," said Hyori.

"Don't worry, Hyori. I can take care of this."

"Unless you want to startle Dr. Dad, come on in right now. We need to talk about the noise all together. We'll figure something out," said Hyori a bit worried.

Suri acted like he did not hear it at all. He was onto something.

"Mighty Suri is going to tear apart the noisy machine. Ha ha."

"Yap. I agree."

"Yap. I can't sleep because of the noise, either."

"Go for it. Gnaw it off!"

Other dogs cheered him on enthusiastically.

"What's the problem with you? You are supporting him instead of stopping him?" I said agreeing with Hyori.

"Right, Suri. Do not rush in. You need to calm down. Get in the cage first of all. We can sort this out together," I spoke in a furious tone.

"Edge and Hyori! You don't know because your cages are far from the machine. Do you know how painful it is to live with the noise?"

"But..." grumbled some dogs.

I couldn't say anymore.

Suri seemed to be quite determined. He was not going to back down with other dogs' support.

"Now I'm biting it off."

I closed my eyes and shouted at Suri.

"Wait!"

"What now?" said Suri irritated.

"If you bite it off alone, what will the vets do to you? You'll be harshly

punished. You're doing it not only for yourself but for other dogs. It's not fair then. Come here and open up my cage. Let's do this together."

"What are you doing, Edge?" said Hyori with anger in her eyes.

I gave Hyori a signal to set her at ease without Suri seeing it.

"Suri, hurry up."

"Are you sure about this? You are definitely going to help me, right?"

Suri was a bit suspicious, but, in the end, let me out of the cage. I started chasing after him right away, for I was planning to push Suri back in his cage.

"You said you were going to help me. Were you lying?" Suri yelled running away from me.

"Helping you? I'm not a fool. Come here right now. Go back into the cage."

I ran after Suri, and Suri ran away from me, which turned the room into utter chaos. However, Suri managed to shake me off and nibble at the temperature controller.

"Hey. Stop it!"

I almost caught up with him with his tail right under my nose, but he kept slipping out of my grasp.

"Wow. It feels good now. Ha ha!"

Suri seemed quite pleased to see the destroyed pieces. I ran out of breath and heard footsteps approaching. The vets dashed into the room.

In front of the group stood Deputy Director with glasses on, widemouthed in astonishment.

"Oh, no! Suri! Edge, you too?" he shrieked.

Suri was so surprised that he fell on his back. I was afraid that he fainted.

Deputy Director grabbed both of us and started crying at the top of his lungs in anger.

"You two are troublemakers. Do you know how much this thing costs? How will you survive on hot summer days without it? You'll suffer from heat stroke. Is that okay with you?"

Suri went pale with his mouth wide open, and I went silent with my head down.

"How much will it cost to fix this?"

I was afraid if he might cry.

"Deputy Director. I think this is beyond repair, so we should buy a new one," said my vet.

"What? I can't stand it! Dr. Lee, how can this happen? Are you managing dog blood donors properly? Look at them. Both Suri and Edge belong to you."

"Yes."

"Like father, like son. What are you going to do about this? Are you going to take full responsibility? Can you pay for everything?"

"Sorry? Um..."

"For God's sake, what am I going to do? You two! Go over there and stand on your hind legs, and Dr. Lee, you need to file a report about this."

Deputy Director, fuming with anger, stomped out of the room. The other vets, with their heads down, followed him except for my vet.

"You two!"

We were terrified by his call. However, he just gave us a light slap on the behind and pushed us back in our cages.

Forced to enter his cage, Suri spoke in a quiet voice, whimpering.

"I'm so sorry."

"Uggh."

I looked at him sideways with narrowed eyes.

*Ah, Suri! You are such a troublemaker.* I let out a deep sigh.

It had been a silent, trouble-free clinic for quite some time. Something big had been waiting to happen just like the calm before the storm. I had to watch out for a while because no one knew what was going to happen after that.

*Hush!*

### **Click! Click! Edge, Big Star**

"Knock, knock."

"Who's there?"

"This is Dr. Lee. I'm coming in."

My vet went inside with the report which he was forced to file.

"Did you complete it?" asked Deputy Director adjusting his glasses.

"Yes. Here it is."

"OK. Let me take a look. You do know we have lost a lot of money due to the incident."

"Yes," said my vet in a faint voice.

"I want you to manage those dog blood donors well."

"Right. I'll do so."

"By the way, how's Edge doing?"

"Edge?"

"Edge is so helpful. He follows the instructions and donates blood well, too. But look at these results of the regular checkup. He's quite aged now," said Deputy Director handing me the result paper.

"Right. He is eleven years old already."

"So I think we need to put him up for adoption."

"Adoption?"

"I want to keep him here, too, but we can't keep drawing blood out of



him. We have to take his health into consideration, It's time for Edge to find his family and spend the rest of his life relaxing."

"True. We have to send ... him."

"Why? Are you sad that he has to leave?"

"Yeah. Thinking of sending him makes me sad."

"Well, but it's our duty that when they are here, we take good care of them and when the time is due, we send them to good families. "

"You're absolutely right."

"We're posting up a notice on our homepage and starting to receive application forms for adoption. I'll keep you updated."

"OK. I've got to go back to work now."

"Dr. Lee."

"Yes?"

"I'm sorry about what I happened the other day. I was too mad back then. Do not take it too seriously. We have dog blood donors here. They're not regular dogs. Since they are here to save others, I did so to remind everyone to pay more attention to our dogs, so please do understand."

"Of course."

My vet looked for me as soon as he came out of Deputy Director's office.

"Edge!"

"Arf, arf."

"Soon you'll have your own family."

I pricked up my ears after hearing the word, family. Having a family means having a person like Dabin's owner who devotes herself to taking such good care of Dabin. I leapt for joy as I heard the good news.

"You look happy to leave the hospital."

He looked sad for a brief second but stroked me on the head and then

left the room.

"Meow, Edge! Are you leaving? Where are you going?" said Big Mouth, a cat blood donor.

"I think I'm going to have a family."

"You are going to be adopted, too. When animals here get old, they move to an adoptive family."

"I see. I guess it's me this time."

"There's not much time left for three of you to hang out together. Are you excited about the adoption?"

"I don't know."

"I don't want to get adopted. I'm going to spend the rest of my life here with my friend, Vicious."

"Right. Vicious!"

"Do Hyori and Suri know about this? About your leaving?"

"No, not yet."

"Do you want me to tell them instead?"

"Yes, please."

I didn't have the courage to say that to Hyori and Suri. I couldn't face their kind and innocent faces and say that I should leave them behind in search for a new family. That would make me cry like a baby.

The following day my vet took me to a shower room early in the morning.

"Let me give you a bath, Edge."

He squirted soap onto a soft towel and lathered my body.

*Wow, it feels so refreshing.*

I broke into a smile.

"Does it feel that good, Edge? I'm sorry that I didn't bathe you more often. I wanted to play with you and give you a bath every day, but you do understand me, right? Sometimes we don't even have time for lunch."

"Arf, arf."

"A newspaper reporter is coming to see you today. He's going to take some pictures of you for the newspaper, so you need to look clean and handsome."

*Huh? Newspaper? Reporter?*

I did not fully understand what he was saying, but I felt great to soak my body in warm water.

*Aha, A photo! They took pictures of me several times when I was a sniffer dog. That must be it!*

I remember people yelling *Kimchi or cheese* in an effort to make me smile when they take photos of me. I tried to smile for practice. *Cheese, Kimchi!*

*Click, click!*

*Goodness! What a surprise!*

A guy with a big camera around his neck started taking pictures of me. He seemed to be the newspaper reporter. He wanted to capture natural scenes, so he kept clicking the shutter of his camera at me.

I was a bit embarrassed at first but eventually grew used to it and got into some poses for photographs.

"Wow, he looks great in these photos. He is a very talented dog," he praised me.

"Now I'll take a picture of you both facing each other. You're Dr. Lee, right? Come here and look at Edge."

He appeared a bit embarrassed but looked at me scratching his head in the end. Feeling awkward, I couldn't help laughing despite myself.

"Great. Edge is doing it better than his vet."

I smiled with embarrassment, but the photographer liked my smile.

"Dr. Lee. If you feel awkward, say 'Edge' with a gentle smile."

"Edge," said my vet in a mellow tone.

*Just act normally, please.*

It was so funny that I could no longer do it.

"OK! All done! Great job today," said the reporter. He moved somewhere to ask questions to Deputy Director and Dr. Lee, and I went back to the cage. It had been a long day, so I was tired.

I used to be full of energy, but now I felt tired and old.

The next day, my story entitled, *Once-finest sniffer dog/ blood donor looking for someone to save him*, was published in the newspaper. The hospital was flooded with calls and inquiries of people who were willing to adopt me.

*R-r-ring.*

## **Retirement Ceremony for Edge, Farewell!**

"Deputy Director. We've been swamped with phone calls inquiring about the adoption of Edge. The number of phone calls reached about five hundred. I can't do other work. What should we do?" says a nurse exhausted.

"Wow. Edge! You are a super star. With one article, you are getting a lot of attention. Nurse Um. It's a good thing, so let's proceed this project with great appreciation and happiness."

Deputy Director seems pleased that people show their interest in me.

"There are more than 100 adoption documents for me to review let alone all those calls. On the one hand, there's too much work to do, but on the other hand, I feel great and touched by all the support. What about you, Nurse Um?"

"You're right. Edge has been dedicating his lifetime to helping others. This is nothing compared to what he has done for us. I will gladly deal

with this from now on, so don't worry. Deputy Director."

"Yeah. Let's do this together."

People have expressed their great interest in me after reading my story on the newspaper.

According to Deputy Director, other vets, and nurses, a wide range of people from elementary school kids, former lawmakers, foreigners to celebrities from other countries were willing to adopt me. I was stunned by the news that many people wanted me to be their family.

"How's it going with checking documents of adoptive families?" said the vet in charge of me.

"We have received over 100 application forms, and now we should choose the families that meet the requirements. A good candidate should have an experience in raising a large dog and a house with a yard."

"Right. It's completely different from raising a small sized dog."

"Also it would be better if the family has the same breed of dogs as Edge."

"An elementary school kid sent you a letter. What was it about?"

"A kid, who wants to be a vet when he grows up, sent me a letter after reading the article. He sealed 50,000 won in the envelope asking us to use the money to buy things that Edge needs."

"How kind!"

"Dr. Lee. While preparing for Edge's adoption, I've come to realize a lot of things. What about you?"

"Me, too. These dogs serve the community, but I don't think we give our best effort in taking care of them. I regret it very much."

"From now on let's pay more attention to these animal blood donors."

"Alright, Deputy Director."

I was taking a rest when I heard all the surprising yet great news. As the evening deepened, my vet came to our room as usual.

*He might have come to water the plants.*

He came in holding a cup in his left hand and then began pouring water into the pot as expected.

"Wow, The leaves have that bluish-green hue again. It may come back to life." said Dr. Lee looking excited.

*Right. When you devote yourself to taking care of something you love, it returns to life.*

I was quietly musing about it when the vet called me.

"Edge."

"Arf, arf."

"We've chosen your adoptive family. The family has a house with a big yard where you can run around. Plus, they have two other Retrievers. Luckily, they all love dogs. Just like there's a light at the end of the tunnel, you've jumped through hoops and finally something great come along. I'm really happy for you."

"Arf, arf."

I couldn't sleep that night because my heart began pounding upon hearing the news: a house with a yard, Retriever friends, dog lovers.  
*How long I have longed to have a family!*

"Edge!" Suri and Hyori called me.

"Congratulations on the adoption," said Hyori.

"You should've told us first. Not cool, man! Did we have to hear it from Big Mouth?" Suri sounded a little sullen about it.

As if I got caught doing something wrong, I spoke in a faint voice.

"I'm sorry."

"Tee hee! We're just kidding. I know how you feel. I would've done the same thing," said Suri tapping on my shoulder.

"It's alright. We understand you, Edge," said Hyori.

"By the way, I hear you are going to a good house. A yard and

Retriever friends, right?" said Suri forcing himself to smile, trying not to feel sad about it.

"Good for you. Congrats! Our vets will throw you a retirement ceremony tomorrow. I overheard them saying that while donating blood earlier."

"Retirement ceremony?"

"Yes. It's the ceremony to show their appreciation to you for having saved more than 50 dogs for the past 4 years."

"Oh, OK."

"I am so proud of you," said Hyori.

"You should never forget us. Understand?"

When Suri said the word, 'forget' he burst out crying.

"How can I ever forget you? You know I can never do that."

Tears gathered in my eyes.

"Live a happy and healthy life there, Edge."

Hyori hugged me tight.

"Alright. Thank you so much."

We were all choked up and unable to talk.

Early next morning, the hospital lobby was noisy. The people there were busy preparing for the ceremony.

A number of chairs were set up side by side. The presence of owners of other dogs graced the event.

In the middle stood Deputy Director speaking into the microphone.

"Thank you all for coming to celebrate the retirement ceremony for Edge. Edge worked as a sniffer dog serving the country for 6 years. He helped disclose no fewer than 8 cases of drug smuggling, keeping dangerous substances out of reach of thousands of people. Moreover, after his retirement as a drug-sniffing dog, he came to this veterinary hospital and has saved over 50 dogs by sharing his blood. Working for the good of the country and the community all his life, he is about to

retire now. Under the care of his new family, he will embark on a new life. Now let's give Edge a round of applause."

The audience broke into rapturous applause. *Clap, clap, clap.* The sound of thunderous applause confounded me. Guided by the vet, I stood next to Deputy Director. There was a large number of people in the crowd. After taking a deep breath, I faced the people in the crowd. No sooner had I blinked my eyes than I saw the owners of Dabin and Cutie whose dogs received my blood.

*Dabin, Cutie, and other dogs that received blood transfusions from me are there. May you all be healthy!*

When I blinked my eyes again, the vets, the nurses and the trainers of the clinic stood before me.

*Thank you everyone.*

The newspaper reporter taking photos in the distance was among them, too.

*Thank you for publishing my story. Thanks to you I will have a family soon.*

I blinked my eyes another time. Then there was ...

*Handler, my handler!*

"Arf, arf." I barked at the top of my lungs.

He ran towards me from the distance.

*My handler. I've been missing you so much.*

He threw his arms around my neck and brushed away tears.

"Edge. You still remember me. Thank you for that."

"Arf, arf."

*How long has it been?* It has been four years. Never did I think I would meet him again.

*How much have I missed you, my handler! I have wanted to see you so much. It's really nice to see you again.*



"I heard you got adopted by a very nice family. I'm so happy for you. Be happy, Edge."

*Yes, I will. I think I will have a happy life there. It's exciting to have a family.*

He seemed to be reading my thoughts. Watching us exchanging warm greetings, Deputy Director spoke again.

"In appreciation of his 10-year service and in celebration of his new life, why not give Edge a big hand again?"

*Clap, clap, clap. People gave me a standing ovation.* The vet put a wreath around my neck.

"Arf, arf," Suri and Hyori congratulated me.

"You have my heartiest congratulations."

"I'm extremely proud of you, Edge."

"Thank you so much, guys."

I sense love from everyone there. They have brought great honor to the ceremony and cried and laughed with joy with me.

## **Home, Sweet Home**

After the retirement ceremony that brought tears and laughter to everyone, I went into a quiet room along with Deputy Director, Handler, and Dr. Lee. They were quiet, which made me nervous.

"You heard that. A family that will adopt Edge is chosen," Deputy Director said to the handler.

"Yes, I did. The family loves dogs. Good for Edge."

"Right. The family's house is suitable for large dogs. It not only has a big yard but also is in good surroundings with fresh air and lots of trees around."

"Besides, they already have two other retrievers," added the vet.

"It perfectly meets all the requirements. Great, Edge. Good for you!"

"Arf, arf," I answered happily.

"May I have them in now? They are waiting outside," said Dr. Lee putting his hands together.

"OK."

"Edge, are you ready?" asked Deputy Director stroking my head.

Dr. Lee pushed the door open. A middle-aged woman with a warm smile and a cute boy came in smiling brightly.

"You must be Edge. I saw you at the ceremony and on the paper, too. It's great to meet you. I'm your mom from now on."

She opened her arms and gave me a big hug. I could feel her warm body temperature. The boy next to me, seemingly an elementary school kid, was all smiles.

"Is he your son? He seems to like dogs," the handler asked the woman.

"This boy? Ho ho! He's my nephew. My son is in his twenties. He couldn't come with us since he is studying in the U.S. He can come over and meet Edge during his school break."

*Oh, she has a son studying in America.*

"He really wants to see you, Edge. He demanded that I send him a picture of you right away. Your father wanted to participate in your retirement ceremony, but he had to go back to work. Something urgent came up, but you'll see him tonight."

She told me a lot about her family while petting me on the front paws. I really wanted to see my brother and father even though I had never met them yet.

"Can we go to the car? It's time to say goodbye to Edge."

All kinds of emotions seemed to be going through Deputy Director upon looking at me.

"It's about time," said Dr. Lee slurring the end of the sentence.

*Farewell.* It was time to say my farewell to people in the clinic. I went inside the car with the woman.

"Wow. Edge easily gets in a car by himself. It can be very challenging to put your little brothers, Balin and Blanc in a car. They squirm their way out not to get in the car. Ho ho."

Although she said such things, I could see her attachment to her dogs.

*Vrrrm.*

When the engine started, Deputy Director and Dr. Lee knocked on the window from outside.

"You are not going to turn around and wave goodbye to us, are you?"

"We get it. You like your new mom more than us."

"It's been hard to remove plaque and food that's stuck between your teeth. You should never forget us."

They were teasing me, but I didn't turn around to see them because I was afraid that I was going to cry. Instead I looked straight ahead.

"Edge, goodbye! Take care."

"Be a good son to your new mom and dad and be happy."

*I will.*

I was comforted by the gentle stroke of the woman's hand.

*Goodbye, Hyori and Suri. Goodbye, everyone in the clinic!*

It took two hours to finally enter a residential area with a cluster of suburban houses. Brightly colored houses were studded over the area. Contrary to colorful houses, the neighborhood was quiet. Maybe too quiet. It echoed with the barking of the dogs that heard the car passing by.

"Look. They are Balin and Blanc, your younger brothers, Edge."

The car pulled up alongside a house with a sign that said *Sweet Home*. As the woman pulled me in the yard by the leash, Balin and Blanc ran

over at full speed from the distance.

"Look at these two. What an enthusiastic welcome. Ho ho," she said smiling the whole time.

"Edge. The retriever with golden coat is Balin, five years old and the one with black coat is Blanc, four years old."

Just at a glance, I knew Balin is calm and gentle, but Blanc is mischievous and playful. They both looked cute to me, though.

"They are all boys, so they'll run around and roll on the ground together. Edge, now join and play with them."

She let go of me, giving me a tap on the bottom. I dashed across the middle of the yard and ran about frantically. Without hesitation, Balin and Blanc jumped in and three of us licked, played and chased one another.

I enjoyed my freedom to the fullest. I felt like a puppy all over again while playing in the fresh air and eating snacks that the woman gave to me.

How long had I played? It was getting darker and darker. Balin and Blanc noticed their father had arrived, so they waited for him to enter the house sitting right next to the entrance. I kept my eye on them in the distance.

As he pushed open the gate and stepped in, Balin walked up to him right away and stood against his legs wagging his tail. Blanc barked in delight and jumped on his body inviting him to play together.

"Settle down, Balin and Blanc. You two give your dad some time to greet Edge," said the woman opening the front door.

"Come to your dad, Edge."

I went near him.

*He is my new dad.*

The man, no, my dad held me in his arms, tapping me on the back.

Without realizing it, I wagged my tail.

"It's the first night, so I'll spread a blanket out on the floor so you can get some shut-eye."

My new dad brought a thick blanket and put it onto the floor before the front door.

"Sleep tight, Edge."

He ran his hand down my fur. Then he turned off the light in the living room and went into his room. I could get some sleep on the warm blanket. It was as warm as new mom and dad.

Time flew by at a new house with new mom and dad, and summer arrived. I made myself at home here.

As usual I had snacks after breakfast. I climbed onto the wooden bench in the middle of the yard since I liked the morning sun beaming down on me

Balin and Blanc spoke to me.

"Edge, have you been to the sea?"

"Huh? The sea?"

"On a hot sunny day like this, it's great to feel the cool breeze brushing your cheeks," said Blanc.

"Right. I think our mom and dad will take us to the sea this year, too. I hope to go there really soon."

Balin kept talking about the sea as well.

My heart pounded upon hearing the word, *sea*. I want to go to the sea, too. I hope to run on the sandy beach. Our father will definitely take us to the sea. Then, I will leave about 1 million footprints of mine behind on the sand. Just the thought of a family trip to the beach in summer makes me excited.

The day goes by peacefully. Through the glass door in the living room, I see my mom cooking and dad vacuuming around the house.

My mom and dad are very nice. *I love you, mom and dad. Home sweet home.*

## Goodbye to Everyone Who Loves Edge

My parents' son came back from America during summer vacation. Mom, Dad, my older brother, and three of us had a great summer vacation together.

In the morning we went to a near hill for exercise and played with a ball in the garden in the afternoon. We went out for a walk to get some fresh air in the evening.

My older brother teased Balin and Blanc saying that my physical strength was better than theirs. No matter how many times he threw a tennis ball as far as he could, I would never get tired of fetching it to him. I was worried what I would do if he went back to America.

Every time my dad saw me, he said he felt sorry for me. He was sad that I had served the country all my life. He also said it made him happy to see me live in a happy family. I think he feels sympathy and compassion for me, which he rarely does for Balin or Blanc.

So is my mom. I know she is more concerned about my health than that of my brothers, so she pays more attention to my health.

I remember hearing a conversation at the hospital.

"Who would adopt a 11-year-old dog?"

"Right. He would live three or four more years at most. It's quite a burden then."

Had it not been for the reporter who let people learn my story, I might have been put to sleep. Otherwise, I would have been kept in the cage at the hospital just sleeping till death. Things have turned around when I

finally get to enjoy my freedom to the fullest after meeting such great parents. I can do whatever I want to: I sleep when I feel sleepy, I eat when I am hungry, and I play when I feel like doing it.

There is something that I want to tell my parents who have pity on me: Edge is never unhappy.

My life has been great to live as a dog serving the country half of my life and the other half as a dog that saved other dogs. It has been physically demanding, but It has been rewarding and I know I have done the right thing. There are some dogs that want to live the way I did but cannot. My life has been special after all.

There is something I want to tell the readers and large dogs. A healthy dog weighing more than thirty kilograms needs to donate blood on a regular basis. As with people, dogs need blood when they receive treatments or operations. Periodical blood donation is beneficial to their health, too.

I understand it is not easy to raise a large dog in Korea, but if we care for each other a bit more, the world will be a better place to live in. We can be healthier by sharing blood and love.

I hear someone calling me outside. My family is going to the sea today. Since the beach is not open to bathers yet, our father will take us to the beach, so we can run and play on the sand.

*Yay! Hooray!* I will finally get to the sea.

*Wide and clear blue oceans!* I feel like I am already at the beach running as fast as my feet can carry me. I have to get there right away since I can hear the waves gently lapping the shore.

I appreciate you for reading my long, long story. I want to thank everyone who helped me all the way even if I do not remember every one of them. Thank you for helping me live my life.

Love you all!

Sincerely Edge at the seashore

## **A Letter from the Handler to Edge**

Dear Edge,

It's me, your handler, your partner and dad for a short time. I can't forget the day when you first came to the training center to become a drug-sniffing dog. You were full of energy.

We relied on each other during the training, encouraging each other. While you were doing your best, trying to get used to drug smell, I also tried to work on my physical strength.

We were good partners and friends at the same time. While we were working together at the Incheon Airport Customs, you were my pride and joy. I was so proud of you for being down to earth even after exposing a number of drug-possession cases. Come to think of it, I regret not having been able to spend more time with you. You have no idea how much I missed you when I was in charge of another dog after your retirement. In the meantime, you were giving hopes to other sick dogs in the clinic. Attaboy!

During the retirement ceremony as a dog blood donor at Veterinary Medical Hospital, Seoul National University, my heart was choked with emotion. I felt sorry that I didn't pay you a visit when you were at the hospital. It's a relief to hear the news that you were adopted to a nice family.

Thank you for the precious time you shared with me, Edge.

I want you live happily with the new family. It's my personal wish that you can think of me sometimes. Ha ha!



Thank you for your hard work!

Love you, Edge.

Handler Won-Jik Lee, the Training Center for Drug-Sniffing Dogs

## **A Letter from Deputy Director to Edge**

How are you doing, Edge? You have been such a reliable yet kind dog. This is the doctor from the hospital you stayed before you moved out to live with a new family. The thin, tall doctor with glasses.

How are you with the new family?

Your new parents are very nice people. The two dogs there, similar in size and appearance with you, are not really your brothers, but you like them, don't you? According to your parents, you are getting along with them as well as you did with your friends here.

Everyone here always spoke highly of you because you shared your blood for other sick dogs patiently without complaining even once. We all thank you for your great sacrifice by donating your blood to save more than fifty dogs. Although it was not the life you chose for yourself, but you have done great things.

You have always done your best even at difficult times, so I can't thank you enough for that. You are truly the best, Edge.

Have you seen the sea, Edge?

The sea reminds me of you. The vast spread of water over the horizon is as soft and comfortable as what's inside your heart. Enjoy your freedom as you go about the sea. I want you to think the world we live in is full of happiness.

One last thing, I hope you can stay healthy and work out with your

brothers. When flowers bloom and leaves turn green in spring, I'll pay you a visit with your favorite doctors here.

Love you, Edge!

Deputy Director Chul-Yong Hwang, Veterinary Medical Hospital, SNU

## **Author's Afterwords**

Hi, everyone! Did you find Edge's story interesting? I have had such a good time writing this book. I think Edge is an amazing dog. He has been working as a sniffer dog for six years and dog blood donor for four years. It is not easy to serve others. Even people find it hard to do it, but Edge has done it for ten years. I applaud Edge for fulfilling his duties without any resistance.

I want you to pay more attention to sniffer dogs and dog blood donors. There are other dogs trained to help people, too. You may not know this, but different types of animals do their best to help us around. In that sense, what we need to do is to take better care of them. If you look around, you will see all the beautiful things in the world.

I have learned a lot of things such as voluntary service, sharing love, and gratitude from Edge. I hope you can also learn a lot from Edge's story.

A lot of people have helped me publish this book. I would like to extend my gratitude to everyone involved from the Korea Customs Service, Customs Border Control Training Center, Detector Dogs Training Center to Veterinary Medical Hospital in SNU. Special thanks to Handler Won-Jik Lee and Deputy Director Chul-Yong Hwang. I would like to thank the reporter Won-Yup Jung for publishing Edge's story to the

public, and Editor So-Jung Kim for helping me from the beginning to the end, and the family who adopted Edge. Last, I want to show my appreciation to my family and my daughter, Jiho, who started to walk.

Last but not least, Thank you, Edge, and I love you so much.

Author Yun-Sun Won

## **Edge, We Will Remember Your Love Forever!**

We were good partners and friends at the same time. While we were working together with you at the Incheon Airport Customs, you were my pride and joy. I was so proud of you always being down to earth even after exposing a number of drug-possession cases.

-Handler Won-Jik Lee, the Training Center for Drug-Sniffing Dogs

Everyone here always spoke highly of you because you shared your blood for other sick dogs patiently without complaining even once. We all thank you for your great sacrifice by donating your blood to save more than fifty dogs.

-Deputy Director Chul-Yong Hwang, Veterinary Medical Hospital, SNU

Edge came from a distant country leaving his own family at young age. He has served as a drug-sniffing dog and dog blood donor but he did not have a family. I believe he lives happily with his adoptive family now. I hope many people can remember Edge because he is a beautiful dog that deserves our love.

-the Jungang Daily reporter Won-Yup Jung

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