

Ben

by

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Sure I had a lot to say... I could just never say it in words. How did I say it then? I knew you were going to ask that. Well, a tail wag is the most obvious. It signals a lot for a dog like me. If it's wagging real hard then I'm really really happy. If it's tucked between my legs protecting the family jewels, then I'm afraid. There are levels all in between too but you have to be familiar and understand what they mean. These levels, coupled with other things, like ear position, eye rolling, sneezing, and the verbal indicators like barking, whining, and growling are how we communicate.

Do not say butt sniffing. That's not talking, that's just a handshake. 'Hi, how ya do'n?' Now I want you to think about this real hard... what can you tell from a handshake? Is it strong? Then he's an Alfa. Is it weak and gushy? Then he's a pushover. Is it one of those sneaky ten point things... high slap, low slap, fist bump, wiggle the thumbs around each other? Then he's an ass hole who goes along with the crowd yelling stupidities like 'WAZZZUPPPP?' or 'DUUUUDE!'

What you're hearing here on this recording is me. I'm a dog. My name is Ben. Since this is a simple recording and not a video I'm sure you're not going to believe I can actually talk like this. This is just a prank done up by some college kids right? No... that's not right. I'm a dog. I can lick my own nuts. Can you do that? I didn't think so.

So now that we've gotten the introductions out of the way you'll be wanting to know why this recording was sent to you. That is to say, someone kinda special is sending it to you. She doesn't want me to mention her name, nor does she ever want any money or anything like that. She simply has a job to do and you're on her short list. We reached an understanding and we just

want to let you know animals have feelings too. All them jokes about kicking the dog... they're not funny. Neither is the expression 'Screwed the Pooch'.

Now then, that aside, my owner is a sick kid. I'm talk'n ill here and not the other kind of sick you see on the news every night. Yeah, I watch the news when it's on and just maaaaaybe I know a lot more about things than you'd ever think I did. No; my favorite show is not 'Lassie'. You want the truth... I like the dog food commercials cuz they show the good side of you people. Back to my owner... he wasn't doing too well if ya catch my drift. Strange as it might sound, some nice old lady asked him one day if he had just one wish what would it be?

"Ah... (choking sound)... sorry, I get a little emotional sometimes. You think he would wish to get better or something. No... he says, 'I wish Ben could talk.' I looked up at her and give her an eyeball smile with my ears up just enough to let her know that I know that's not what a wish should be used for. Well... later that night she comes back around to tell me it's not my say so in the wish department. Presto change and Ben the dog can talk. All those years of sitting up and begging just to get a milky bone; and now all I have to do is say, 'HEY! GIMMIE A BONE!'

I have to admit I kinda like that. You should have seen my owner's dad when I did that to him. He looked at me and then at the kid and then back at me and just says, 'Noooo... ain't no way you just said that.' Imagine his surprise when I said 'Yeah there is.'

Oh yeah... that also reminds me. That owner thing. Let's get something straight right now. Nobody owns Ben the Dog. It's actually the other way around. I own my owner and should you think otherwise you just watch how it goes someday with your own pet. Who feeds who? I mean... I might run after a stick or a ball just to make you smile, but who feeds who?

I digress.

The day had been great. I woke the little guy up with kisses and a snuggle. Then I tell him it's time to get up for his Shredded Wheat.

"What did you just say?" he asked me all gawky eyed like.

"I said it was time for your Shredded Wheat. Yuck I don't know how you can eat that stuff. The milk is good, and I like when you leave the bowl for me to finish... but shredded wheat? You need meat to make you strong."

I thought he was going to choke me to death he hugged me so hard. "Don't tell anyone you can talk," he tells me real quick like.

"Why not?"

"Because I want you all to myself," he says. "All those times I talked to you and never an answer to my questions."

"But I answered them... just in dog."

“Now I want you to tell me the answers in human. Besides, no one would believe you could talk and if they did they’d have you on TV and the scientists would come and take you away and I wouldn’t want that.”

“You mean a scientist like in the old movie you watched the other night?”

“You understood that?”

I sounded out with a raspberry and then told him, “It wasn’t all that hard to follow. The monster spoke a kind of pidgin Dog thing and the scientist was off his nut. What more was I supposed to get out of it?”

I got hugged again and then we went downstairs for the Shredded Wheat. Needless to say we had a ball all day, and I ain’t talking tennis ball here. We talked and talked and talked and talked. Before you knew it lunch rolled around and it was tomato soup with peanut butter sandwiches. Peanut butter is good but it sticks to the roof of your mouth and being I don’t have a finger to use it took me forever to get it all cleared out... and the mom owner gave me my very own bowl of soup too.

So... the rest of the afternoon and evening goes incredibly barkish with a lot of tail wagging on both sides. I was exhausted by the end of the day. My owner was too... except he wasn’t looking so good. We were in the back yard when he just sat down and told me he didn’t feel so good.

Needless to say I ran right into the house and began yelling for help. “JIMMY’S SICK! JIMMY’S SICK! CALL AN AMBULANCE!”

His mom didn’t even hesitate. She’d been expecting this for a long time and she was well practiced. In all of that, I was totally forgotten; not that I cared. My owner was everything to me... is everything to me. The ambulance came and went and the mom went with it. I was left in the house to pace and worry and pace some more.

Then I got an idea. My owner said the scientist would want me. That being the case; maybe I could make a deal.

I’m telling ya... finding a for real scientist when you’re a dog is some sort of tough; but I did it. Let’s just say that part of the story is just a bit short of fantastical and I’ll just leave that one to your imagination. We made us a deal. They fix the kid and then I talk to them and tell them whatever they want to know.

That, of course, was how it was supposed to be. I even got to be on really good terms with the head scientist guy. He assured me, because I did ask, that he was not trying to create a monster out of body parts. They kept their end of the bargain so now I had to keep mine.

Butttttt... things change.

That same old lady showed up one day dressed like one of the lab workers. I actually had it pretty good; but I was not a happy puppy.

‘If you had one wish,’ she asked me, ‘What would it be?’

“My owner’s fixed,” I told her, “No thanks to you. That’s all I ever wanted so take your wish and stick it in your ear.”

“Did you say rear?” she asked me, looking all indignant.

“EAR! EAR! I SAID EAR!”

“Ear, ear, shed a tear,” she says with a smile, “Tell the truth without fear. You have a wish, so use it well, though your story you will have to tell.”

I give her the rolled eyeball look for that one, and she tells me, “Sorry, but I had to do that. It’s all a part of the job requirements.”

She then explained to me that she’s limited to what she can do with the wishes she’s allowed to give away. “In the case of your owner, I could not make him well as that is against the rules. As soon as he asked that you could talk, I knew that you, as his best friend in the world, would find a way... and it would seem I was right. So now, Mr. Ben the Dog; make your wish. You’ve earned it.”

OK... so that’s the reason for this recording. It was part of the deal. That you got it in the mail is not my doing. I have no idea who it’s to be sent to but as soon as the machine gets turned off I get to go back to my owner who I am assured is on the mend and in good spirits. That was my wish.

Oh yeah... I asked about the scientists who helped and she assured me all was well. “They did their job,” she told me in that Fairy Godmother voice of hers, “And they will be amply rewarded while you will not be remembered at all. It’s a fairy tale ending all the way around.”

That’s it... that’s my story. What you do with it is up to you. For starters, might I suggest you learn how to speak dog; it’s a heck of a lot easier than human. Oh... and hug your pet. Best friends like that are hard to come by.

