

10th MY MICHIGAN HERO

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My Michigan hero sounds a little funny at first, but he has been there for me when I need someone the most. He helps me when I feel depressed and lonely. My Michigan hero is my dog, Arlo. He has been there for me at times that I felt no one was. When I feel like there is no cure for my emotions, I look at his sweet little face and comforting eyes sitting next to me.

When my grandma passed away, the only thing I felt for weeks was sadness. She was very important to me. One minute I was in her arms as happy as can be, then slowly she became sick and sicker. It just wouldn't stop! Then she fell into a sleep-induced coma. Every time I sat next to her I wondered if she was still in pain, if she could hear me.

For some reason, one night, I felt the need to sleep in her room. It was calling me. So, I slept on the chair ottoman close to the foot of her bed. My mom was sleeping on the pull-out chair. During the middle of the night I felt a horrible feeling in my mouth. It was like people from the dentist's office were sticking needles in me with no numbing. I woke my mom up and said, "Mom, I think I have a toothache." She awoke and said, "Try and fall asleep, you will be taken to the dentist tomorrow morning." I said, "ok," and eventually fell asleep. The next morning, Melvin, my mom's boyfriend at the time, had taken me to my set appointment. After the job was done, it was time to head home.

The whole time he seemed quiet and disappointed at something. But I didn't know what. Was it something I did? When we got home, I walked in first. My sister was waiting for me at the door. "Haley, I'm so sorry but your grandma passed away this morning in her sleep." She told me this with her eyes filled with tears. I could barely tell what color her eyes were. When she gave me a hug, I soaked up her emotions. It was mostly sad, but I could feel some anger, too. I didn't want to believe that she was truly gone. Months passed and the thought still hurt. My mom and sister

didn't take it any better. They spent most of their time smelling the sweet scent of my grandmother's clothes and pretending she was still here with us.

I convinced my mom to get me a therapy dog. Even though I had my big family, it just wasn't enough. No one could fill that empty spot in my heart that my grandma left. Then we found him, my little jelly bean. It has been three years since her passing. Ever since, it has been getting easier to cope. All because of him. My Michigan Hero, Arlo.



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