

## The Long Way Home

“Haaah! Haahh!” I woke up panting, I was Kalyn, a one-year-old German Shepherd in scorching heat and a long way from home. I didn’t know how I’d got here, but it was going to be a hard trek back, but no matter what, I was going to get home! Whether by boat, by plane or even by paw.

“Kalyn! Kalyn!”. I was Luke, a worried fourteen-year-old who had been searching since last night. The smash shattered the silence, followed by Kalyn’s yelp. I bolted to the front yard, but it was too late. I frantically rode around trying to find him, but he was gone without a trace.

After what felt like forever in darkness, I saw a sign that read “Welcome to Texas”. Texas? That’s not Seattle. No wonder the heat was relentless. Luke once did a project on Texas, so I knew there were fifteen major rivers running through it, there had to be water somewhere. I ran, past lively neighbourhoods and some not so lively ones. I eventually got to the outskirts of town and heard some kids frolicking and splashing around. I sprinted to get some ice-cold water to quench my thirst.

I rode my bike searching for Kalyn until my chain snapped. Mum and Dad took over, but even after hours of searching there was still no sign of him.

With no Luke to feed me, I searched for food and followed vultures circling above. They led me to a dead horse, but before I could eat, a gunshot cracked through the air. I fled in terror.

After searching every shelter in Seattle, Mum and I boarded a train down to San Francisco, hopping off at every station to put out flyers and spread the word, convinced that if Kalyn was out there, I would find him. As the train clattered along the tracks, my eyes darted, looking for any signs of a dog.

As the freezing night settled over Texas, I searched for shelter until a bakery owner welcomed me inside. I was so grateful for her kindness. As the sun rose, I had to find Luke.

San Francisco was a dead end, but I refused to give up. As we headed back north, Dad called with a breakthrough. An employee’s mother had spotted a German Shepherd in Texas.

“Texas!” I exclaimed.

My flight touched down in Texas, 30 minutes before the bakery closed but the taxi was late.

“Oh no!” I muttered.

I kept checking my phone ten minutes, nine, eight. We got to town with eight minutes to spare but then-no! roadworks. I jumped out and ran a kilometre to the bakery. I got there as the lady was leaving,

“STOP!” I yelled.

She turned around.

“Please tell me the name of the dog in the window”, I pleaded.

She checked his collar.

She smiled. “His name is Kalyn”

“KALYN”

Kalyn bounded towards me, tail wagging wildly.

“LUKE!”.

From that day on, I always slept on Luke’s bed.