
BATHTIME



At supper time, Kaden gave me a large bowl filled with dog food. I ate some of it, but I wasn't very hungry. The rest of the family sat at the table and ate hamburgers. I put my nose on the table a few times to suggest they might share one, but each time, someone hollered at me, "Hank, get back."

Kaden finished eating, stood up, and was two steps downstairs when Mom called. "Are you forgetting it's your night to load the dishwasher?" He slumped back upstairs and proceeded to rinse the dishes. I would have gladly cleaned them off for him, but he didn't offer. "And after you finish with the dishes, fill the bathtub in Sloane's bathroom. We'll give Hank a bath."

I perked up when I heard my name. A bath? Was it something to eat? To chew on?

The Girl came roaring into the kitchen. "Mom, why do you have to bathe that smelly dog in my bathroom? Can't you do it outside?"

"Calm down. It's getting a little cold outside to use the hose. Your bathroom is the only one with a tub. We'll clean it

afterward.” Mom finished wiping the countertops and folded and hung up the towel. “Please find one of those raggedy towels in the hall closet. Unless you want us to use yours to dry Hank.” Mom snickered a little.

“I’ll get a towel.”

Dad took hold of my collar. “Come on, Hank. This will be fun.” He led me to the bathroom, where Kaden stood by the half-full tub of water. Dad swished his hand through the water. “Good job, Kaden. The temperature is perfect.” He patted the edge of the tub.

I tugged back a little. *I don’t think so.*

Dad pulled harder. I set my four paws and held my ground, but the floor was slick, and I slid closer and closer, my toenails scraping on the floor.

“Nice warm water. Jump in, boy,” Kaden coaxed.

Mom appeared in the doorway with a pitcher. “We can use this to pour water over him. What’s the matter? Won’t he get in? Here, James, you lift his front half, and I’ll push back here.”

Before I knew it, my front paws stood in the tub, the warm water sloshing around them. Dad slid back his hands, lifted my hindquarters, and then all four feet were in the water. Kaden sat on the edge of the tub and poured a pitcher of water over my head.

This was definitely not fun.

“Use this shampoo.” Mom shoved a bottle of sweet, flowery-smelling stuff in Kaden’s hands, and he squirted it over my back. He and Dad used their hands to rub it in all over my body, making bubbles and foam everywhere.

I’m covered in slime. What are they doing? I shook, spraying soap over Kaden, Dad, Mom, and the entire bathroom. Then I leaped out of the tub, squirmed through Dad’s legs, around Mom, and out to the family room. I shook thoroughly, then rolled on the carpet. As Mom, Dad, and Kaden ran after me, I

jumped on the couch and over the back. I raced downstairs and back up, heading for the door. *I'm getting out of here.*

Then Mom got a bite of a leftover hamburger. I stopped, raised my nose, and sniffed. Next thing I knew, I was back in the tub, with Dad holding my collar and Kaden pouring pitchers of water over me. Then, they towed me off and let me go.

Mom looked around at the wet soapy trail I'd left and burst into tears.

Dad patted her back. "I'll clean up. You just go relax. Kaden, take Hank downstairs with you until he dries off."

"Come on, Hank." Kaden thundered down the stairs with me at his heels.

He sat on the floor and held a little thing that caused lots of noise on a TV screen. He pushed levers and buttons and jerked every which way. Sometimes, he leaped up and shouted, "Yes! I got him!" or "Come on, Sam!"

I nosed around the entire room, found some dried pizza crust and a cookie under the bed, and chewed a little on one of Kaden's tasty shoes. Then I climbed on the bed and stretched out. It had been a long day, and I was tired.

The next thing I knew, the moon was shining through the window. Mom stood in the doorway. "Kaden! Turn that game off, and get to bed. Don't forget to take Hank out one more time. And brush your teeth. Are you listening to me?"

Kaden sighed. "Yeah, I heard you. Time for bed. Even if I'm not tired." He turned to look at me. "The dog's on my bed."

"Well, move him off." Mom leaned over and gave Kaden a kiss. "Don't forget to say your prayers too. God loves you, and so do we."

After Mom went upstairs, Kaden muttered. "If God loved me, he wouldn't have given me ADHD." Then he went back to his game but turned off the volume so we couldn't hear the

explosions and noises. Much later, he pulled off his clothes, kicked them under his bed, and brushed his teeth in the bathroom next to his room. He took hold of my collar and pulled, “Get off my bed, Hank. You sleep on the floor.”

I stepped down to the floor, and Kaden climbed in. “Ew. You got the bed wet.” He rolled over to the edge and pulled up the blankets. A few minutes later, I heard his soft snoring and knew he was sleeping. *He forgot to take me out.* I really needed to use the grass. I went upstairs.

I paused in front of The Girl’s room. She must be asleep too. Mom and Dad lay in their bed, but they were still awake.

Dad laid down his iPad and propped himself up on his elbow. “I just don’t see how a dog will help Kaden cope with Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder.”

“Miss Kathleen said it would force him to be responsible. He’d have to care for something.”

I hated interrupting them, but I really needed to go. I whined.

“There’s Hank. I bet Kaden forgot to take him out.”

Dad swung his legs out of bed. “I’ll take him. But that’s my point. How is this making him more responsible?”

After I used the grass, I went back downstairs. Kaden had left a little room between him and the wall. I squirmed into the spot and snuggled up to him.

*What was Attention Deficit/Hyperactive Disorder anyway?
And could I catch it?*