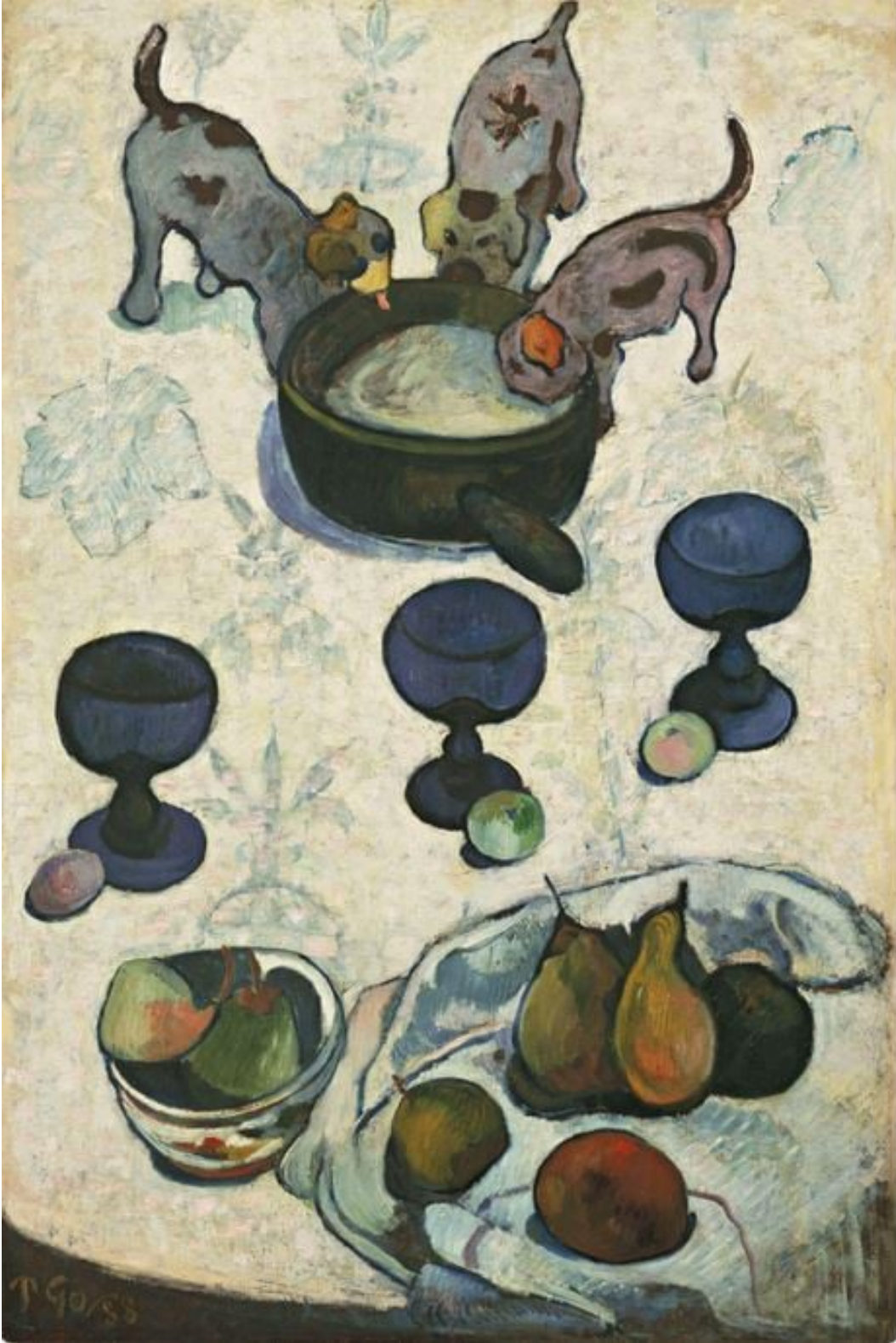


Elegy for My Friend, Hank

by [Paul H. Yarbrough](#) (May 2024)



Still Life with Three Puppies –Paul Gauguin, 1888

I have had more than one dog in my life but Hank was a special treasure. I took him from a lady in Dallas (she could not keep him due to circumstances) on the suggestion of one of my old high school classmates. Hank was 5 when I took him in and I had him for just over 4 and a half years.

He was smart (smarter than me, for dang sure), loyal, and as good a friend as a guy could want. I am only sorry my wife did not live to see him. She loved pooches as much as anyone.

I had to put Hank down. Broke my heart.

He was 9 and a half. A 27 Ib. Sheltie.

Long story, but the short version is that as a result of a bacterial infection, his kidneys began to shut down. He was suffering. I couldn't allow that. And that js that.

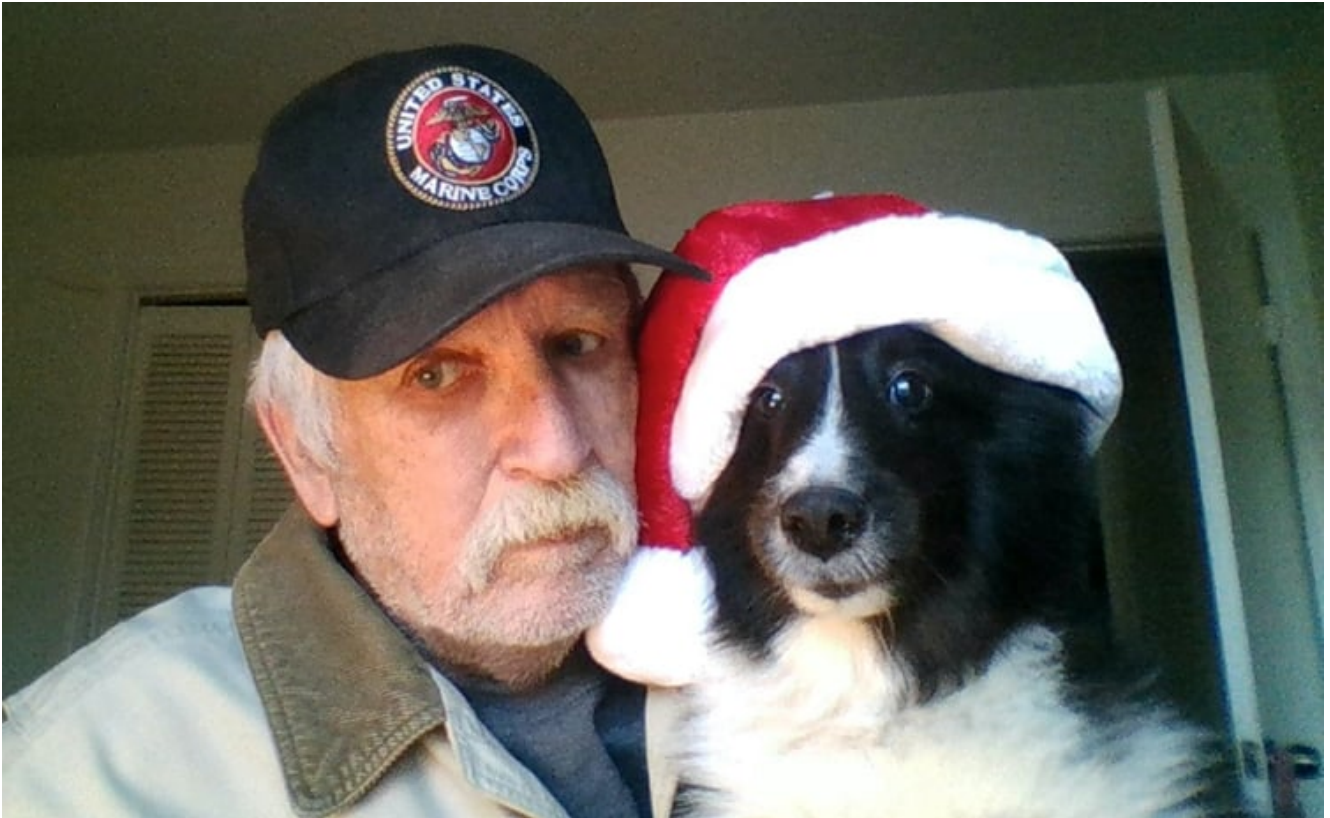
Though I'm a bit of an old timer, when it comes to pooches (especially Hank), I am closer to a young puppy. I got a bit teary at the loss of Hank. Sorry guys.

Every morning he'd be at the side of my bed when I awakened. I got up, patted his head and always said, "Luv ya, Hank." Hell, I don't know if he understood the words or not. But he acted like he did, so I pretended he did.

The enclosed picture of Hank and me is one of several, but *he* liked this one best. The added poems are from my "Whittlin" stock—for me that means "as an amateur" but a fun hobby. But then the word amateur is from the Latin, *Amor*, "to love." Well, Hank and I were mucho amor, for dang sure.

The first poem, "Song of Hank" was written when I first brought him home. The second, "A Couple of Old Puppies Walking Along" was written after one of our many Dog Park journeys. The third, "The Magnificent Way of the Master's Dog" was written the day after I had to say goodbye to my magnificent friend, Hank.

Luv Ya, Hank.



Song of Hank

He rises each morn,
To follow with care;
To the kitchen for chow,
His black and white hair.

Outside for his business,
Which he makes with great flair,
He returns to the house,
His black and white hair.

While I coffee with news,
He lies by my chair.
Within comfort and reach,
His black and white hair.

We walk mid-morning

To the sun's early glare.
He struts and prances,
His black and white hair.

He rides in the car,
While I go here and there;
Proudly sitting behind me,
His black and white hair.

Our park trip is later,
Which forbids any snare.
He jumps and frolics,
His black and white hair.

As I work at my desk,
He curls at side chair.
He rests in a heap,
His black and white hair.

As night becomes late,
Like a soft honey bear,
He gathers by my bed,
His black and white hair

A Couple of Old Puppies Walking Along

A couple of old puppies out for a walk,
Moving along with steppin' and talk.
Down a short street or into the park,
Laughing together, one with a bark.

One looks up, with smiling grace,
The other grins down to a happy face.
Their days are filled, always as friends;
Together as one the two seem as blends.

The clouds roll over the clear blue sky,
The two puppies below, step, marching by.
Contented in their delightful pursuit,
Their routine appeals for a stable salute.

Homeward bound they do not grieve,
Two puppies; friends, who both believe.
They are so eager by life's chanced call;
Forever they walk, puppies, Hank and Paul.

The Magnificent Way of the Master's Dog

Such has been scripted for this friend,
That has but put him to the test.
No more than all that his man needs
While his baying voice shall hardly rest.

He lives for man and will heel to him;
But will not surrender to the day
In the struggle against any foe,
Who may, now, at once, come his way.

Rudyard's level voice cries out for
All heartfelt desires of reach within.
After all, who is master of the home?
Though master will become as one akin.

To raise his cry of howl or growl.
His eyes declare in tandem with
That noise of crying round his stance.
His spirit speaks through storied myth.

This creature God placed in the care
Of master who views him close-as-son.
This brave flesh from dust himself
Will raise his throated call with metered run.

Oh, drive and dart and hunt and curl,
Beside and for the master whom he'll die.
And then there comes that steadfast time,
When the hound grows taller or' than I.

His adduced attendance: chisel-face, carved,
Guarding with strength he will impart.
Alerted stirrings facing all foes, though
If need, face death, such is his heart.

He braces master along their road,
And cries with such a sturdy bay;
On point, to that engaged lane for them,
The perfect path for both, to their final day.

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Paul H. Yarbrough has written for *The Blue State Conservative*, *NOQ*, *The Daily Caller*, *American Thinker*, *The Abbeville Institute*, *Lew Rockwell*, and more. He is the author of 4 [novels](#): *Mississippi Cotton*, *A Mississippi Whisper*, *Thy Brother's Blood*, and *The Yeller Rose of Texas*, in addition to many short stories and poems.

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