

Rory's story by Carley and Jason Clarke-Rushton

Rory's history is a bit of a mystery. We've been told that he had a very sad start to life. He lived in a violent, abusive home, where he was mistreated. Through whatever turn of events, at about five months of age, he ended up serving time in the Dog Shelter, at YAPS (Young Animal Protection Society).

I had been volunteering at YAPs for around a year, walking dogs, without once wanting to adopt a dog. My husband started to volunteer with me, spotted Rory and took him to the office to buy him. I took him back to the kennel! It took four days before I gave in and we had a dog.

We have learnt a lot from Rory, after making the effort to get to know him and develop a true friendship. He might be affected by his past, but he lives in the now. Every morning is a brand new day and he takes each day as it comes. Rory's instinct is to have fun and be happy. Everyone who meets Rory thinks he's handsome and they ask what type of dog he is. We always reply that he was a rescue and we're not sure, Shar Pei cross, something, although the traditional pure bred Shar Pei on the internet look like him. Shar Pei have a reputation for being, dominant, stubborn and aggressive, who need a firm hand. Rory is none of these things.

We take him to The Kennel Club for training, where he is known as 'The social butterfly'. We found he was so quick and easy to train that we have continued through all the certificates and are now training for competitions and agility. Rory is quite clumsy so we call this 'clumsility'. He loves seeing all his friends at dog school and wants to wrestle them all when they are trying to concentrate.

Rory isn't really naughty but he sometimes steals the eggs from the chicken coop and eats them, sometimes he brings them to me on the couch. He modified the cat flap so he could get in during a storm, as he's terrified of thunder. He can forget all his training when playing with another dog and not come back to us, leaving us explaining that he has passed all his exams, honestly!

Our Rory is gregarious, animated, honest, loyal, playful, forgiving, devoted, sensitive, protective, genuine, engaging and smart. He has a huge heart and only wants to love and charm everyone he meets - both dogs and people.

I might have met some people with similar traits, but I'll bet there are more dogs than people with all of these. I'm sure that if I can learn to be a bit more like Rory, I'd be a much better person.

Rory is our friend. Our hero. We love him.

