Autobiography of a stray dog Survival is the most important thing when you’re alone, with no one else to depend on, whether you’re a homeless person or a stray dog. I am an old dog now, at the age of eleven, sitting by the fire place on a rug beside my master. The warmth of the fire warmed up my white fur as the bitter winds of winter swiped the window of the house. I lay there thinking about those days when I faced the harsh winter winds, when I was not well-fed, the days when I lived on the streets of the city. I remember when I ate from garbage bins, sometimes I saw loads of dogs near garbage bins fighting for food. I feared the big dogs with pointed teeth who gave me scars. So I never had the courage to fight against them and had to sleep without any food. I remember my mother, my brother Ram and my best friend Raj. As our family walked the street with our little paws. We met a lot of people, ones who rubbed our fur with gentle hands and one who chased us with stones making our life miserable and careless humans who threw me and my family away.

And now finally this human, the old woman who cares for me now. We are companions, two old ladies together, warm and comfortable. And lying here by the fire, I decide it’s time for me to tell my story, the story of a dog that had to learn to survive on her own. I was born in an old wheelbarrow in an unused gardening shed in the back of a big house where people lived only in the summer. I had four brothers and sisters, but two were born dead, and another was born crippled, and Mother threw him out of the wheelbarrow. But Ram and I were born strong and when Mother knew we would survive, she gave us our dog names—Ram and Ritu. When we were old enough, Mother taught us to hunt and forage for food.

She also taught us to avoid humans, because they could be very dangerous. The day I saw a man kill a dog who lived under the big shed with her puppies, I knew she was right. And then one morning, Mother and Raj were gone. Ram and I were alone. We stayed near the garbage piles, and then one morning we decided to move on. After mother, Ram was my world. I followed him away from our first home. We walked for a long time until it was dark and then a highway, with cars rushing back and forth so fast they were blurred. And when there was a gap in the traffic, we could see a paper bag smelling wonderfully of chicken on the other side of the road. Ram was about to dash across when a car suddenly screeched to a stop near us and a man and a woman jumped out and picked us up.

Their names were Rahul and Smitha, and they took us home with them. But we weren’t used to living with humans in a house, and when we messed on the floor, barked at night, broke saucers and mugs and snapped because we were scared, Rahul decided to get rid of us. The next morning, he took us to what I learned later was a mall, threw us out of the window, and drove off. Ram had a scar on his face as he crashed down on the pavement, and when I landed hard on my shoulder on the uneven road, I heard a small snap. I tried to get up, but my right front leg wouldn’t work.

Ram walked toward me, but two women ran toward us, knelt down, horrified that we’d been thrown away. One picked me up, commented on how cute I was and said she was going to keep me. She didn’t take my brother because he wasn’t as cute and she didn’t want two dogs. The two women walked away, leaving Ram alone. I was horrified at that moment and barked loudly and I tried to get away but they forced me into the car. And that was the last time I saw Ram I never saw him again… I have no clue about my family nor my best friend Raj.

Now I am here by the fire place waiting for my last days remembering the small moments I have spent being obedient with my masters, wondering about my family and of course about Rahul and Smitha!