



No More Dead Dogs by Gordon Korman

Subjects: Humorous stories—Juvenile fiction; Plays—Fiction; Schools—Fiction; Football—Fiction

Book Lists: Gifted, Grade 6, Middle School, Reluctant Readers

Props: German Shepherd dog, assignment, Wallace's report

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Wallace Wallace (yes, that's his real name) always tells the truth. Haven't you always been told to tell the truth? That sounds like a good idea, right? However, it didn't always work out so well for Wallace. For instance, Wallace and his mom were having cake at a neighbor's house. When the neighbor asked Wallace what he thought of her cake, he said, "It tastes like vacuum cleaner fuzz. And the icing reminds me of antifreeze." That didn't go over too well. Another time he told his cousin Melinda that her clarinet playing sounded like "someone strangling a duck." Ouch. But his real trouble started with an assignment in his 8th grade English class. (*Show assignment*)

This is what Wallace turned in. (*Show paper*)

Mr. Fogelman, his English teacher, could hardly believe his ears. "*Old Shep, My Pal* is a timeless classic," he said. "It won the Gunhold Award. It was my favorite book growing up. Everybody loves it even though it's sad with that heartbreaking surprise ending."

"I wasn't surprised," Wallace said. "I knew Old Shep was going to die before I started page one." "That's ridiculous," said Mr. Fogelman. "You couldn't know that." "Go to the library," said Wallace, "Pick out a book with an award sticker and a dog on the cover. (*Bring out dog*) Trust me, that dog is going down. What about *Old Yeller*, *Souder*, *Where the Red Fern Grows*—2 dogs there! "You made your point," said Mr. Fogelman. "Now, here's mine. (*Put dog down*) Report to detention this afternoon and every afternoon until you hand me a proper report."

Well, detention was a problem. Wallace was supposed to be at football practice. Not only was he on the team, but a hero because by some fluke he'd caught the winning touchdown that had enabled the team to win the championship the year before. But nothing was more important to Wallace than telling the truth. He'd written his report honestly and he wouldn't change it. So he went to detention. However, detention turned out to be play practice because Mr. Fogelman was also the drama coach. To make matters worse, the play they were doing was none other than *Old Shep, My Pal*. As Wallace sat there listening, his honesty forced him to make a few suggestions. The weird thing is—most of the drama students liked his ideas. They started asking Wallace for advice on how to spruce up their lines, how to jazz up the setting and add more action. The more questions Wallace was asked, the more ideas he had. Pretty soon he had added a moped, mechanical dog, rollerblades, dancers, a rock band—Wallace was beginning to think he just might make something of this play! But what was he doing! A football hero hanging with the drama students? What was he thinking? Wait a minute, who were his real friends anyway, drama, football, neither? Would his honesty save him or destroy him?

Read this hilarious tale of a boy who stood up and demanded that there be no more dead dogs! (*Hold up dog, hold up book*) *No More Dead Dogs* by Gordon Korman.