



Written by [Raven Clabough](#) on April 22, 2019

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# The Goodness of America

## Love Letters From Dogs

Seven-year-old Emma Mertens of Hartland, Wisconsin, Emma received a devastating diagnosis, and so people all over the country are doing their best to cheer her up.

Little Emma is an avid dog lover, so when a family friend posted on social media that Emma was diagnosed on January 23 with an aggressive and very rare type of tumor called diffuse intrinsic pontine glioma (DIPG), she asked social-media users to send Emma letters and dog photos. The response has been incredible.

Initially, about a dozen friends sent pictures of their dogs to Emma, but the social-media post was shared over and over, and before long, Emma received 100,000 dog love letters, her father Geoff told the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*.

In fact, the response was so overwhelming that the family had to set up a new post office box and an e-mail address. "I've stopped counting, but we were at 20 different countries at one point and every state," Geoff told the news outlet. "We've gotten pictures from Australia, Venezuela, Japan, Italy, Russia — and actually a lot from Scotland and the Netherlands for some reason."

One letter features a dog wearing a bow tie with a note that reads, "Hi Emma, my name is Parker. We live in Woodland, California. It's raining buckets here right now! Our Mom told us what a brave and feisty girl you are ... and we appreciate those amazing qualities!! We are sending you oodles of kisses and hugs. Children are one of our favorite things and we think you are one in a million!!!!"

Another features a very adorable golden retriever named Max from Ohio, who tells Emma, "My family will be thinking and praying for you."

According to Emma's father, the messages have been a major source of comfort for the little girl. "You should see her smile or giggle," Geoff told the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*. "When a dog is doing something silly, she just lights up."

Eventually, Emma and her family were so overwhelmed by the letters pouring in that they had to set up a Facebook page for people to post messages to Emma with photos of their dogs.

"We're getting about 2,800 e-mails each hour and mail by the truckload," said Geoff. "I think that says a lot about dog lovers, that they want to take care of more than just themselves."

In addition to the amazing outreach from strangers all over the world, a GoFundMe campaign has been set up for Emma's family to help pay medical expenses and provide income while Emma's mother stops working to care for her daughter. With a goal of \$100,000, the page raised \$128,000 by the middle of March, in just about one month.

Emma and her family are touched by the show of support from total strangers. Appearing on *Good Morning America*, Geoff remarked, "To see so many people take a few minutes out of their day to put a smile on her face is overwhelming."

Amazingly, the family still has no idea who posted the initial message.



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## Batman Plays Dolls Too

Corporal C.B. Fleming is a police officer in South Hill, Virginia, who was captured on video in a very vulnerable position: lying on the ground and playing dolls with the local neighborhood kids.

Fleming was called for an emergency at Iesha Roper-Boswell's house in response to a suspected gas leak on February 14. The residence was determined to be safe, and Fleming struck up a conversation with Roper-Boswell. She mentioned that her daughter, niece, and neighborhood friend were outside and were afraid of police officers.

Naturally, Roper-Boswell was very surprised when she later glanced outside and saw Fleming lying on the ground with the children and playing dolls. The children, she said, appeared to be happy to have another playmate.

She decided to capture a brief video of the heartwarming scene and uploaded it to Facebook. It's been shared over 180,000 times.

But while Roper-Boswell was moved by what she saw, the encounter with the children came naturally to Fleming. A father of four biological and two adopted children, Fleming said it was his goal to be a positive part of his community. "It's something I've always tried to do," Fleming told WTVR of his interaction with the children. "When I got into this job, I knew there was something different, other than just writing tickets and being the bad person all the time. I figured if I could be that bright spot in someone's day then that's all that mattered."

Roper-Boswell says that Fleming is "amazing" and "awesome." The children trust him and know to call him directly if ever they feel unsafe. They refer to him as Batman.

## Teacher Sets Great Example

When kindergarten teacher Shannon Grimm of Willis, Texas, learned that her student was being bullied over a haircut that she received, the teacher wanted to make her feel better.

Grimm noticed that five-year-old Priscilla Perez had become increasingly quiet and sad, prompting Grimm to approach her to find out what was wrong. She learned that the students were making fun of Priscilla because her new haircut made her "look like a boy." Priscilla even began wearing a hat to class and refused to take it off.

Grimm felt awful for Priscilla and wanted to do something to help, and what she did went above and beyond the call of duty for a teacher. She cut off her very long hair, to give herself a haircut that matched Priscilla's. When she returned to school following winter break, the students were astonished by her transformation.

"I told them, 'I think I look beautiful. Don't you think I do?'" Grimm told *Today Style*. "I had to show them boys have long hair like girls and girls have short hair like boys."

Grimm even bought several matching bows so that she and Priscilla could wear matching ribbons to class every day.

For Grimm, the decision to cut her hair was a difficult one, but she knew it was something she "had to do."

Grimm told *Today* that Priscilla's confidence improved dramatically following Grimm's haircut.



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