



**July 7, 2018**

**Dear Oona:**

**Why do my humans  
makes such a big deal out  
of my birfday? What is  
this thing anyway?**

**Smoochy**

**Dear Smoochy:**

Just go with the flow,  
Smoochy. Look, it's a  
fancy word that means you  
get extra petting and maybe

something crazy like ice cream or cake! Don't mess with it  
by overthinking things.

Okay, to be frank, I'm not sure what a birfday is either. But  
I'll take every one I can get. I just had one. It started out like  
any other day except Dad and Mom petted me a lot more and  
kept saying, "Happy Birfday!" They say a lot of things I just  
pretend to understand. I smiled warmly just to humor the  
humans. If they're feeling good, they usually leave me alone.

Then they brought out the ice cream! I haven't had ice cream  
since....well, I don't remember. Humans see time differently  
than us. They remember things that happened a long time  
ago. Like, last week. Dogs? Not so much. We remember not

to touch a hot stove or how to find our way home but we have no memory of *when* we learned it or the details of *how* we learned it. It's just something that happened....back then...

Sure, we can tell you to the minute when our humans are going to come home but you'll notice not a single one of us wears a wristwatch. We remember the angle of the light, the sound of a certain car going by the same time every day, our own internal rhythms and just know when it's time for mom or dad to pull into the driveway. That's why weekends or holidays or Daylight Savings Time throws us for a loop. Our world has gone maaaaaad....Every day is full of surprises to a dog.

Dad tells me my birfday is the Fourth of July and I smile and nod and roll back over because he talks a *lot* of crazy talk. But then the ice cream comes out and there are all those loud bangy things outside and, hey, it must be my birfday!

I tuned into Dad this time and he was saying something about my birfday is the day I was borned. Sure dad, whateverrrrr you say. So he said, "Oona, this is the day your mother HAD you!" Right daaaaad....jabber on while I riffle through your pockets. No, don't stop explaining....

I remember my mother. Well, I remember how she *smelled*. That smell, if I ever come across it again, will make me very happy and feel safe and loved. I remember she was a giant. Of course she *had* me. She *had* me at the get-go. Mom had teeth the size of trees! I'm sure I did everything she told me.

I was tiny. Was choice did I have? Only I don't remember anything else but her smell. It's my happy smell.

Smoochy, just eat your ice cream and make the humans happy. If they insist, wear the stoopid hat, too. Try not to poke anybody in the eye. Try not go get brain freeze by eating too fast. Just be glad they love you. They do weird things because they think it makes you happy. Humor them like we always do. They'll leave you alone shortly and you can go take a nap.

**Love, Oona**

***Got a question? Send it to [bob@thewildstare.com](mailto:bob@thewildstare.com) and Oona will get back to you as soon as she gets her nails done or she can prod the old guy to take dictation.***