

SHELTERED

17-DE01-W06

A bullied puppy's dreams come true when he saves his animal shelter from fire.

FADE IN:

EXT. ANIMAL SHELTER - DAY

The SHELTER is the Town's modest home for lost or abandoned pets.

The one story facility is organized around forty cinder block walled kennels for dogs and forty small steel cages for cats.

A tall PINE TREE shades the building.

The Shelter is across the parking lot from the Town's POLICE STATION.

The sign over the Shelter's front door features silhouettes of a dog and a cat with the text "Each One a Special Gift."

INT. KENNEL 12 - DAY

KENNEL 12 is the home for four puppies from the same litter. They are six-month old black/brown terrier-mixed mutts. Each wears a red collar.

The three large BROTHERS push their noses out through the steel bars of the Kennel and BARK!

JOJO, the smallest brother, is curled up in a ball in the back corner.

The KEEPER, a mid-forties dark-skinned woman in an old faded blue uniform, brings a bowl of kibble to Kennel 12.

The Brothers push and nip at each other to establish dinner's pecking order.

IZZY, the largest, wins and eats first. He leaves half the bowl for BROTHER #2, who leaves one quarter for BROTHER #3, who leaves one kibble for JoJo.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

The sun shines through a screened WINDOW to illuminate the OFFICE.

It's a cramped, paper-cluttered, bureaucratic work space for the Keeper.

Under the window is a filing cabinet and an old wood DESK.

On the desk is a coffee mug that reads "I heart my dogs." A second mug reads "I'm not single, I have a cat."

The CAT, a gray and white big-boned female tabby, sleeps on the desk.

The Keeper enters with a "gift" for the Cat. It's a red and white "bandit" SCARF. She ties the Scarf around the Cat's neck. The Keeper smiles. The Cat is not amused!

The Cat jumps from the desk to the top of the filing cabinet to look out the window. He presses his nose up against the screen.

The Keeper walks to a corner of the Office to feed a red and green PARROT in a gold bird cage. The Parrot SQUAWKS!

INT. KENNEL 12 - DAY

The Keeper returns to Kennel 12. She picks up the empty bowl and fills it with kibble. She places the full bowl directly in front of JoJo. The Keeper walks away.

As soon as she is out of sight, the Brothers storm the bowl and knock JoJo out of the way.

They repeat the pecking order: Izzy gets half, then Brother #2 gets a quarter, then Brother #3 gets a quarter, but this time JoJo gets NOTHING, not even one kibble.

The Keeper walks by and sees JoJo lick the empty bowl.

She steps into the Kennel to pick up JoJo. She leaves the brothers behind to fight and BARK.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

In the Office, the Keeper feeds JoJo his own bowl of kibble.

The Keeper removes JoJo's red collar.

She opens her desk drawer. She examines various collars of different colors and shapes. She settles on a NEON RAINBOW COLLAR for JoJo.

Adorned with his new collar, JoJo joyfully licks the face of the Keeper. The Cat licks his bottom. The Parrot SQUAWKS!

INT. ANIMAL SHELTER - DAY

A MOTHER, early-forties, and her pre-teen DAUGHTER, stroll the rows of the Shelter to meet the adoptable dogs and cats.

INT. KENNEL 12 - DAY

Brothers #2 and #3 jump to the front of the Kennel. They bounce and wag their tails.

JoJo, in his new collar, is pinned in the corner by Izzy.

The Daughter kneels down to pet Brother #2. He wags his tail and licks her hand.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

Daughter holds Brother #2 in her arms. The dog licks her face.

The Cat sits on the window ledge to avoid the dog.

Mother signs the final papers. Mother shakes Keeper's hand.

The Parrot SQUAWKS! Brother #2 is adopted.

INT. KENNEL 12 - DAY

A HIPSTER WOMAN, mid-twenties kneels down at Kennel 12.

Brother #3 wags his tail and licks her hand.

Izzy pins JoJo in the corner again. He struggles to get free, but Izzy is too strong.

EXT. ANIMAL SHELTER - DAY

The Hipster Woman walks out of the Shelter with Brother #3 in her arms. Brother #3 looks back at Izzy and JoJo sitting in the Kennel.

INT. KENNEL 12 - NIGHT

Moonlight shines on Kennel 12. Izzy is asleep, curled up nose-to-tail, in one corner.

JoJo is asleep, on his side, in the opposite corner. He unconsciously kicks his legs back-and-forth.

JOJO'S 1ST DREAM SEQUENCE: EXT. ANIMAL SHELTER - DAY

JoJo, in his neon rainbow collar, struts around a grassy field. Izzy lies prone before his little brother.

END SEQUENCE

INT. KENNEL 12 - NIGHT

JoJo, still asleep, unconsciously kicks his legs more violently until he WAKES UP and runs head-long into the Kennel's steel bars.

BANG! He bounces off the bars. He's STUNNED. He wobbles back to his corner.

He curls up in a nose-to-tail ball. He shuts his eyes.

EXT. ANIMAL SHELTER - DAY

JoJo walks with the Keeper as she makes her daily inspection of the grounds.

The CAT looks out the screened window. The BRANCHES of the Pine Tree reach under that window.

The Keeper and JoJo walk behind Kennel 12. On the wall is an old creaky ELECTRICAL BOX above a patch of tall dry grass.

The Keeper opens the electrical box. The wiring is archaic. She uses her phone to take a photo of the bad wiring. She also takes a photo of the tall dry grass.

JoJo finds an old TENNIS BALL in the tall dry grass and offers it to the Keeper. She throws the ball. JoJo chases it and returns it. She throws it again, JoJo returns it again.

She puts the ball in her pocket and she returns to her inspection of the grounds.

A police car drives into the parking lot separating the police station from the Shelter. The car is driven by the OFFICER, a mid-forties Hispanic man.

The Officer waves to the Keeper. She waves back.

The Keeper walks JoJo back to Kennel 12 where Izzy has just devoured the last kibble in the bowl. He growls at JoJo.

The Keeper evaluates Izzy. He growls again.

The Keeper walks JoJo back to her Office.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

The Keeper digs through a closet. She extracts an old dog bed. She places it under her desk. She puts the tennis ball next to the bed. The Keeper points to the bed.

JoJo evaluates the Office. The Cat is on the window sill. The Parrot is in the cage. The bed looks comfortable.

He wags his tail and lays down in the bed.

INT. OFFICE - LATER THAT NIGHT

JoJo is asleep in his new bed under the desk.

JOJO'S 2ND DREAM SEQUENCE: EXT. ANIMAL SHELTER - DAY

JoJo and the Keeper are outside in the grass. The Keeper throws the tennis ball. JoJo happily chases it and brings it back. The Keeper takes a white silk napkin from her back-pocket and polishes JoJo's rainbow collar.

END SEQUENCE**INT. OFFICE - NIGHT**

The Parrot is asleep in his bird cage.

PARROT'S DREAM SEQUENCE: EXT. ANIMAL SHELTER - DAY

The Parrot's dream is identical to JoJo's except the Parrot flies lazy circles around the Keeper and JoJo as they play ball in the grass. The Parrot settles on the top branch of the pine tree. SQUAWK!

END SEQUENCE**INT. OFFICE - NIGHT**

The Cat is asleep on the desk overlooking JoJo's bed.

CAT'S DREAM SEQUENCE: EXT. ANIMAL SHELTER - DAY

The Cat is inside the bird cage. The bandit scarf is on the floor of the cage. The Cat has red and green feathers protruding from the corners of his mouth.

END SEQUENCE:

INT. OFFICE - DAWN

The Cat wakes up. She hops from the desk to the filing cabinet to the window ledge. Outside, she sees the Keeper park her car.

She hops back to the cabinet, to the desk, to the floor. JoJo sleeps peacefully under the desk.

The Cat paws at JoJo. He doesn't move. She tries again. JoJo remains asleep.

The Cat slips out of her red scarf. She picks the scarf up with her teeth and places it on JoJo's bed.

The Cat waits for the Keeper to arrive. When the Cat hears the key UNLOCK the door, she BARES HER CLAWS and swipes hard across JoJo's nose.

JoJo bounces up to GROWL and LUNGE at the Cat.

The Cat SCREECHES. JoJo chases her. The Cat jumps up on the desk. JoJo BARKS.

The Keeper enters and tries to calm BARKING JoJo.

The Keeper picks up the scarf from the dog bed and looks at JoJo with a frown.

The Keeper puts the scarf back on the Cat. The Cat purrs and nuzzles the Keeper.

The Keeper wags her finger at JoJo.

INT. KENNEL 12 - LATER THAT NIGHT

The full moon shines its light on forlorn JoJo as he sits and looks through the Kennel's steel bars.

Izzy sleeps in the back of the Kennel.

EXT. KENNEL 12 - NIGHT (2 MONTHS LATER)

JoJo sits in the same spot, same position, as he looks through the Kennel's bars.

Izzy and STRAY DOG #1 sleep in the back of the Kennel.

INT. OFFICE - DAWN

The Cat tap-tap-taps the keeper's "I heart my dog" coffee mug until she knocks it on the floor and it SHATTERS!

The Cat looks down at the shattered mug, then licks herself.

The Keeper opens the Office door to find the shattered mug. She frowns as she picks up the pieces.

INT. KENNEL 12 - NIGHT (3 MONTHS LATER)

JoJo sits in the same spot, same position, as he looks out through the bars.

Izzy and STRAY DOG #2 sleep in the back of the Kennel.

INT. OFFICE - DAWN

The Keeper opens the Office door to hear the Parrot SQUAWK!

The Cat is on top of the bird cage. The Cat's paw is stuck in the cage's bars. Her claws are just an inch away from the frenzied SQUAWKING Parrot.

EXT. ANIMAL SHELTER - NIGHT (4 MONTHS LATER)

The Shelter is adorned in Christmas lights strung around the outside of the building.

The pine tree is decorated with an elaborate display of Christmas lights. A long extension cord runs from the tree's lights to the old electrical box.

INT. KENNEL 12 - NIGHT

JoJo is now nine months older. He sits in the same spot, same position, as he looks through the bars. The Christmas lights shine red and green patterns on the Kennel's walls.

Izzy and STRAY DOG #3 sleep in the back of the Kennel.

INT. CAT CAGE - NIGHT

The Cat is in one of the shelter's outdoor steel cages. Her bandit scarf is around her neck.

She scrapes at the wall with her claws and MOANS.

INT. KENNEL 12 - LATER THAT NIGHT

JoJo is asleep on his side. His legs unconsciously move back and forth.

JOJO'S 3RD DREAM SEQUENCE: EXT. GRASSY FIELD - DAY

A field of tall grass burns in flames.

Izzy, and other kennel dogs, are terrified.

JoJo runs around the burning field and BARKS.

The Parrot SQUAWKS. The Cat licks his bottom.

END SEQUENCE**INT. OFFICE - NEXT MORNING**

The Keeper sits at her desk and signs papers. She moves her feet to get comfortable and accidentally kicks something.

She reaches down and finds JoJo's tennis ball.

She throws it in the air and catches it. She does it again. She pauses to think.

She looks at the Parrot. He SQUAWKS!

She grabs a spare leash and exits.

INT. OFFICE - THAT NIGHT

JoJo is back in the Office, curled up in the dog bed under the desk. His tennis ball is next to him.

The Keeper polishes JoJo's rainbow collar.

She checks the Parrot. He's asleep.

She shuts off the lights and locks the door as she leaves.

EXT. ANIMAL SHELTER - NIGHT

The Keeper opens the electrical box behind Kennel 12.

She plugs in the extension cord to turn on the Shelter's Christmas lights.

She walks away. She gets in her car and drives out of the parking lot.

The Christmas lights start to flicker.

The electrical box SPARKS!

The sparks land in the tall dry grass.

A flame starts. It expands and emits a cloud of smoke.

The flames spread to the adjacent areas. Dogs BARK! Cats SCREECH!

INT. OFFICE - NIGHT

The Parrot SQUAWKS! JoJo is startled awake.

JoJo sniffs the air. He looks up at the screened window.

SMOKE flows through the screen into the Office.

The Flames outside shine an eerie orange light against the walls.

The Parrot SQUAWKS as smoke fills the bird cage.

JoJo jumps on the desk, then LEAPS onto the bird cage. He knocks the bird cage to the floor. As it CRASHES, the door to the cage pops open.

The Parrot escapes and flies headlong into the screened window.

He SMACKS into the screen and pushes it out the window. The screen falls into the burning grass below.

The Parrot flies away.

INT. KENNEL 12 - NIGHT

SMOKE fills Kennel #12 Izzy COUGHS. Stray Dog #3 BARKS!

They race around the Kennel looking for a way out. But they're trapped.

INT. CAT CAGE - NIGHT

SMOKE surrounds the Cat's cage.

She now wears her bandit scarf over her mouth and nose like a dust mask. She scratches at the cage's door.

INT. OFFICE - NIGHT

JoJo makes a short jump to the desk.

He makes a longer jump to the top of the filing cabinet.

He measures the distance between the cabinet and the window -- it looks too far!

He hears BARK, BARK, BARK from the panicked dogs in the kennels.

He turns back... then turns again... to make a running LEAP for the window.

He reaches it... almost. He gets his two paws on the window ledge but he has to PUSH his legs to spring his whole body up to the ledge.

The grass below is in FLAMES!

SQUAWK! The Parrot is on the top branch of the pine tree, just as in his parrot dream.

The SQUAWK draws JoJo's attention to the tree branches below the window. Is there enough of them to break his fall?

The Parrot flaps his wings.

JoJo LEAPS and lands on the first branch. But it can't hold him... and he falls to the second... and the third... and the fourth... and the fifth... and finally HITS THE GROUND!

He is stunned, but he gets up wobbling, and BARKS!

He races to the front door of the Police Station. He BARKS but no one comes to the door.

INT. POLICE STATION - NIGHT

The Officer files papers and listens to music through his headset. JoJo JUMPS against the window and BARKS.

The Officer dances to his headset music with his back to the window. JoJo JUMPS and BARKS again.

The Officer makes a DANCE SPIN to face the window. He's STARTLED when JoJo's desperate face fills the window.

The Officer removes his headset to hear JoJo's LOUD BARKING.

The Officer looks out the window to see the flames and smoke.

EXT. POLICE STATION - NIGHT

The Officer races out of the Police Station. He makes a call on his dispatch radio.

JoJo bolts back to the kennels. The Officer follows him.

A police DISPATCHER, mid-twenties female, arrives to help.

EXT. KENNEL 12 - NIGHT

Izzy and Stray Dog #3 COUGH. The Officer tries to open Kennel 12's door... but it's STUCK.

JoJo TUGS and TUGS on the door until it SPRINGS OPEN!

Izzy and Stray Dog #3 escape.

JoJo and the Officer repeat the process for the other kennels.

JoJo leads a pack of dogs away from the fire. The Dispatcher herds the dogs safely into the police garage.

Izzy runs the other direction. He lies down, exhausted, under the pine tree.

INT. CAT CAGE - NIGHT

JoJo leads the Officer to open the cat cages.

Some cats run away. Some meander through the smoke as if nothing was wrong. One cat chases a bird. One chases the shadows of the flames. One rolls around in the dirt. One scratches dirt on the fire as if he left a litter box.

The Officer opens the last cat cage to find the CAT with the bandit scarf over her mouth and nose.

The Cat slowly walks out of the cage and looks around. JoJo BARKS. The Parrot chases the Cat down the street.

EXT. ANIMAL SHELTER - LATER THAT NIGHT

The FIREFIGHTERS arrive to extinguish the fire.

INT. POLICE STATION - NIGHT

The Dispatcher has converted a jail cell into a cat rescue center. She sits on the bench in the cell, surrounded by twenty-four rescued cats.

INT. POLICE GARAGE - NIGHT

The Officer carries three chihuahuas - each has a doughnut in its mouth. A shih tzu sleeps on the hood of the SWAT truck. A bulldog sits in the driver's seat of a police cruiser. His passenger is a dachshund. The Police SUV's seats are occupied by three poodles and three pitbulls.

EXT. ANIMAL SHELTER - NIGHT

JoJo searches outside for his big brother. He finds an exhausted Izzy lying under the pine tree. Izzy COUGHS.

Izzy crawls to the prone position in front of JoJo. JoJo responds by licking Izzy's ear.

Izzy rises and licks JoJo's face. After a few seconds of affection, the brothers jog back to the garage until...

SQUAWK! The Parrot lands in front of them. The Parrot drops the Cat's bandit scarf at JoJo's feet. JoJo BARKS!

EXT. ANIMAL SHELTER - NIGHT (ONE YEAR LATER)

The old Shelter is gone. A new modern clean spacious Shelter has replaced it. The only thing that remains from the prior building is the sign that reads "Each One a Special Gift."

The Keeper's new uniform is crisp and bright.

The Officer and the Keeper EMBRACE.

JoJo (one year older) sits at attention at the Officer's side. JoJo's neon rainbow collar is polished and shiny.

JoJo proudly displays his new DOG TAG that reads:

"JOJO - POLICE DOG."

FADE OUT

ROLL CREDITS

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