Sniffy a screenplay by Dan Fiorella

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### Sniffy

# By Dan Fiorella

EXT. JENKINS HOUSE -- DAY

Neat, well-kept house in a neat, well-kept suburban neighborhood. The Bennett house is to the right and a house for sale on the left.

A REAL ESTATE AGENT is placing a "For Sale" on that front lawn. But our interest is drawn to the Jenkins' home.

> RONNIE (O.S.) Mom!!!! Mooooooooom!

INT. JENKINS LIVINGROOM -- CONTINUOUS

It's a well-kept room but lived-in. There's a love seat that straddles a corner. Something's going on, but we can't work out what. MOM is passing with a full laundry basket. Ten-year old Girl, RONNIE, goes running by. DAD walks by with a grill spatula. A young toddler in a baby walker, DEBBIE, carrying her doll, rolls by.

> RONNIE (O.S.) Mom! Something's wrong with Cookie!

> > MOM (0.S.)

What?

RONNIE (O.S.) She won't come out from behind the couch!

DAD (0.S.) Does she have my slipper? She always hides when she takes my slipper.

DEBBIE (O.S.)

Cookie?

Debbie goes over to the love seat and crouches to look.

MOM Get one of her treats and call her out.

DAD (0.S.) Isn't she fat enough!

RONNIE (O.S.) Where are the treats?

DEBBIE

Puppy!

2.

MOM (0.S.) In the cupboard!

DEBBIE (O.S.)

More puppies!

Mom's head pops in, she's still got the basket.

MOM What? Puppy? What?

Ronnie comes in with a doggie treat. She climbs on the love seat and looks over the back then does a take.

RONNIE

Mom!!!!

MOM I'm right here.

RONNIE Cookie's having puppies!

Mom drops the basket. Dad enters.

DAD Who's having what-sies?

They all look over. There, curled up, tending to her business is COOKIE, a small golden lab, giving birth to five mixedbreed puppies, one notably smaller than the others.

DEBBIE

Puppies!

MOM Puppies, Dave.

DAD

Noted.

RONNIE Can we keep them?

DAD For six to eight weeks we have to.

MOM I'll get some newspapers.

DEBBIE

Puppies!

DAD Oh, Cookie, what have you been doing?

Cookie is licking her puppies clean. The puppies begin to crawl around, looking for food.

The smallest raises his oversized nose and starts sniffing.

INT. BEHIND THE COUCH -- CONTINUOUS

Cookie is licking the puppies. Puppies keep saying "Mom?" In children's voices.

COOKIE Oh, come here you. That's right. Eat, puppies.

The smallest, Sniffy, has a bigger nose and is sniffing, sniffing instead of calling out. He makes his way to his mother's teat. The others soon make their way there.

> DAD Oh, good, the little guy got there first.

> > MOM

Good?

DAD I always root for the underdog. Get it? Underdog.

MOM

Got it.

MONTAGE:

INT. JENKINS LIVING ROOM -- DAY

Cookie comes out from behind the couch and the puppies follow. They are a mixed-breed lot; BAILY, PEPPER, JAZZ, ROCKY, and the smaller SNIFFY.

EXT. JENKINS DRIVEWAY -- DAY

Dad carries bag of Puppy Chow out of minivan.

INT. RONNIE'S BEDROOM -- DAY

The girl's room with soccer posters up and light-wood furniture. Ronnie plays with the puppies.

MOM (O.S.) Ronnie! Where are the puppies??

RONNIE

(pause) I dunno.

INT. JENKINS KITCHEN -- DAY

Mom attempts to feed the growing puppies, pouring the bag of food into multiple bowls. The puppies keep switching bowls to see which is better. EXT. JENKINS DRIVEWAY -- DAY

Dad carries a bigger bag of Puppy Chow out of the car.

INT. NURSERY -- DAY

Debbie's bedroom. Toy chest, crib still up. Circus motif. Debbie is on the floor, overwhelmed by puppy kisses.

INT. JENKINS GARAGE -- DAY

The door is up and the car is in the driveway. Dad builds a box bed for the puppies on his workbench.

INT. JENKINS LIVINGROOM -- DAY

Cookie runs out of a room. The puppies chase her into the next room.

INT. JENKINS DINING ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

The puppies are just standing there, confused. No Cookie to be seen. Sniffy trots in and sniffs her out behind a drape.

INT. JENKINS GARAGE -- DAY

Dad points to the completed box bed. The puppies just stare at him.

Then Jazz goes over, grabs the cushion from it and drags it off. The puppies follow.

Dad just shakes his head.

INT. RONNIE'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

A soccer ball night light is on.

The puppies are all in bed with Ronnie.

INT. JENKINS KITCHEN -- DAY

A ball rolls into the room. The puppies all follow it. There much sliding and skidding.

The dogs tussle for the ball, with it changing owners a couple of times, then rolls toward the basement stairs.

Sniffy gets it. Suddenly all the puppies charge and knock him down the stairs.

There's banging, crashing and YELPS. The puppies all stand and watch, tails wagging. There's nothing in response, so they get bored and leave.

Cookie comes in and sniffs around. She goes downstairs. A moment later, she comes back up holding a dazed Sniffy by the scruff of his neck. He's still got the ball in his mouth.

Cookie puts him down. The ball rolls out. The puppies reappear, grab the ball and are gone.

COOKIE Are you all right?

SNIFFY Who put those there?

COOKIE They were always there. You have to be careful.

#### SNIFFY

Okay.

He runs off in the wrong direction.

COOKIE They went that way.

Sniffy corrects course and runs off after the others.

EXT. JENKINS YARD -- DAY

Grassy yard with a swing set in back and a sand box. There are toys scattered around.

The puppies are 6 weeks older and romping.

There's a rope pull toy being chased and fought over, but Sniffy is always bringing up the rear. Cookie watches, laying in the shade. Inside, a doorbell rings.

The dogs wrestle over the ball, with Sniffy, again, in the back, looking to get involved.

SNIFFY Hey! Hey! I'm open!

Dad comes to the back door. A MAN stands beside him.

DAD Cookie! Puppies!

Cookie gets up and goes to the puppies.

BAILY What's going on, Mom? What?

JAZZ We want to play!

### COOKIE

Now, now, it's getting time for you to go out in the world. I want you all to look your best. I want you all to get good homes. ROCKY

It's time?

COOKIE It's time, dear.

Sniffy lifts his head to the breeze.

SNIFFY I smell hamburger.

BAILY It's the new person! I bet he's carrying ground beef!

SNIFFY No, I don't think so. It's coming from---

Too late. All the dogs run to the back door, where Dad and The Man smile. They sit by the back door and wait to be picked.

DISSOLVE:

Baily is gone, the others sit and wait to be picked.

DISSOLVE:

Rocky is gone, the remaining puppies sit and wait.

DISSOLVE:

Pepper is gone, the remaining puppies sit and wait.

DISSOLVE:

JAZZ is gone. Sniffy is waiting, expectantly. Then the back door closes.

SNIFFY (CONT'D) No body picks me.

COOKIE You just don't want anybody.

SNIFFY I'd like somebody.

COOKIE There's a person for every pup, dear.

SNIFFY

I guess. (suddenly) Squirrel!

He runs off.

6.

Dad's barbecuing some burgers, as the kids sit at the table. Cookie is laying in the shade, Sniffy going back and forth between the grill and the table. Dad is lost in thought, watching Sniffy, as the burgers flame up. Mom brings over some cheese slices and nudges Dad, who has to move the burgers around.

> MOM What are you thinking about? DAD I think we're going to have to name the puppy.

RONNIE Mr. Barkington!

DAD

No.

RONNIE George Constanza!

DAD We're not naming any dog, or any animal, George Constanza.

DEBBIE

Puppy!

MOM Yes, dear, but what will be call him?

DEBBIE

Puppy!

RONNIE

Snuggleface!

#### MOM

No.

## RONNIE

But he has a snuggle-face! Don't you boy? Who's a Mr. cutie snuggleface?

MOM

We've waited this long. We should name him for what he does or what he's like. Like my sister named her dog.

DAD

Snappy?

RONNIE

Why Snappy?

DAD Because he keeps trying to take a bite out of me.

EXT. JENKINS' HOUSE -- DAY

Dad and Ronnie are on the front lawn with Sniffy on a leash. Sniffy is sniffing the lawn.

# RONNIE

Walk?

DAD

Walk.

RONNIE But you never walked Cookie.

DAD A puppy needs exercise.

RONNIE Why me? Can't Debbie do it?

Dad glares at her.

RONNIE (CONT'D) It was worth a shot.

INT. JENKINS KITCHEN -- DAY

Dad is getting a drink. Mom walks in.

MOM Where's Ronnie?

DAD Walking the dog.

MOM What? You let her walk the dog alone?

DAD Just down the block and back.

MOM Are you crazy? Why not just let Debbie take him?

DAD I said no to that.

They hurry to the front door.

They open the door. They see Ronnie and Sniffy in front of the house, Sniffy sniffing the lawn.

DAD

See, they're back already.

RONNIE Back? We never left. The dog just keeps smelling the front lawn! It's like he has to smell every blade of grass! This is so boring!

DAD He's a sniffer.

MOM

Sniffy.

DAD

Really?

INT. JENKINS FRONT ROOM -- DAY

It's several months later. Sniffy is a year old, bigger but undersized still.

Sniffy is at the window, looking out, when a taxi pulls up to the house next door. A young man, STEVE BENNETT, in an army uniform gets out, pays the CABBY.

EXT. BENNETT HOUSE -- DAY

As he gathers his duffel bag and turns to the house, the Cabbie blows his horn. Steve cringes and turns to give the Cabbie a look.

Suddenly, MRS. BENNETT, his mother, comes running out, screaming and excited. The Cabbie waves and drives off. Mrs. Bennett runs up and gives Steve a massive hug.

INT. FRONT ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Sniffy is standing at the front window, looking out, tail wagging, barking. Cookie trots over.

COOKIE What is it, dear?

SNIFFY Somebody new! Over there! See him?

COOKIE Oh, that's Steve. He lives next door. SNIFFY New guy! I don't know him!

COOKIE He's been away for some time. In the army. Overseas.

SNIFFY What does he oversee?

COOKIE No, he was fighting in a foreign country. Afghanistan, I think.

SNIFFY Is that where that Afghan Hound up the block comes from?

COOKIE No, he came from "Pets R Us."

SNIFFY

(suddenly) Car!

A car pulls up and the Real Estate Agent gets out, talking on a cell phone. She smiles and puts a SOLD sign over the FOR SALE sign.

INT. JENKINS KITCHEN -- DAY

Sniffy is at his bowl, munching away. A piece of kibble springs out of the bowl. Sniffy jumps on it. It pops out from under his paw and slides toward the staircase to the basement, landing on a small scatter rug. Sniffy charges it and pounces. He and the rug go skidding across the floor and down the stairs. There's crashing and banging and yelps. Cookie comes running over, as does Mom.

> MOM What now? Sniffy?

She goes to the stairs and heads down. She comes up holding a dazed Sniffy.

MOM (CONT'D) Oh, you poor man.

Mom puts him down.

MOM (CONT'D) I can't leave you alone for a minute, can I? Come on, I'm making the beds upstairs. I'll let you watch. Come on!

Mom leads him down the hall.

INT. HALL -- CONTINUOUS Mom and Sniffy go to the up stairs. Mom starts up. Sniffy just looks at the stairs, uneasy and nervous. MOM Come on, Sniffy. What's the matter? Sniffy sits and whimpers. MOM (CONT'D) Did you get hurt? Are you afraid of stairs, now? Oh, Sniffy, go outside, I have chores to do. EXT. JENKINS YARD -- MOMENTS LATER Cookie and Sniffy are ushered out of the back door. COOKIE Are you okay? SNIFFY I'm fine. Why? COOKIE Because you like going upstairs. SNIFFY I'm done with them. They hurt too much. COOKIE So you're not going on the stairs any more? SNIFFY What for? All the good stuff is down here. Ball! Sniffy suddenly darts off, after a ball. He gets it and plops down, chewing on it. He looks up and looks in the Bennett's back yard. Steve, looking disheveled, is sitting on a lawn chair, drinking a beer and just staring into space. Sniffy looks at him intently. He sits up, sniffs and barks once. Steve looks at him. The just stare at each other a moment. Sniffy's tail wags just a bit.

Suddenly, there's a squirrel in a tree and Sniffy goes after it.

SNIFFY (CONT'D) I'm gonna get you!

EXT. JENKINS HOUSE -- DAY

A moving van pulls up to the sold house, followed by a minivan. A Mysterious-looking couple, MR. WHITE and MRS. WHITE, step out, with sun glasses and floppy hats obscuring their faces.

Mr. White takes out the house key and opens the door, allowing Mrs. White to lead the MOVERS to carry in their sparse, plain furniture. Mr. White pulls out a remote and opens the garage door. They step in.

Mom steps out carrying trash. Sniffy is dogging her heels. She manages to open the door and keep Sniffy in. Sniffy stays by the door.

As she heads for the trash cans, she sees the couple. She waves. The couple merely looks back as the garage door closes.

MOM

Man, just when you think the neighbors can't get worse.

She starts to go back then notices Mrs. Bennett trimming some bushes. She goes to the fence.

Sniffy watches from inside.

MOM (CONT'D) Hi, Mrs. Bennett.

MRS. BENNETT Hello, dear.

MOM You meet the new neighbors?

MRS. BENNETT No, I haven't. Did you? How are they?

MOM

Well, they seem---quietly intense.

MRS. BENNETT Quiet is nice. Steve isn't much for noises lately.

MOM

How is he?

## MRS. BENNETT

Home and safe. But still not himself.

#### MOM

What's wrong?

Sniffy overhears.

### MRS. BENNETT

He's withdrawn. His friends call but he won't take the calls. He won't talk about what happened over there. It's just eating away at him.

MOM

I'm so sorry. You two want to come over for dinner? We can barbecue. It's not much of a change of scenery but it is a change. My family has a great belief in the curative powers of grilled meat.

MRS. BENNETT

I can ask.

INT. JENKINS FRONT ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Sniffy holds up his nose, sniffing, then darts off into the house.

INT. JENKINS HOUSE -- CONTINUOUS

Just then, Steve in old clothes carrying a beer, steps out of the house and sits on the stoop. He looks distracted.

MRS. BENNETT Steve? Steven, honey, the Jenkins want to know if we'll go over for a barbecue.

MOM Hi, Steve. This weekend, if you're up for it.

STEVE (considering it vaguely) Maybe.

When, suddenly, there's a crash in the house.

DAD (O.S.)

Sniffy!

Some BARKING. Ronnie comes to the front door and opens it.

RONNIE

Mom!

Now what?

Sniffy comes darting out the door.

RONNIE

Dad!

## DAD

Sniffy!

Sniffy runs around the front yard. Mom tries to grab him. He runs behind the garbage cans and they fall over.

# MOM

Sniffy!

Sniffy darts around, suddenly leaps over the fence onto the Bennett's property, runs up the stoops and lands in Steve's lap. Steve takes a hold of him.

> MOM (CONT'D) Oh, Steve, I'm so sorry!

Steve and Sniffy just look at each other. Each tilts his head. Then Sniffy starts licking Steve. Steve hugs Sniffy.

Dad (who is carrying a sandwich), Ronnie and Cookie are all at the door, watching.

COOKIE

# (quietly) Some one.

INT. BENNETT LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

Steve is asleep on the couch. Sniffy comes over and sniffs him, then stands on the couch to lick Steve's face.

Startled, Steve jumps up, panicked.

This startles Sniffy, who backs up, tail between his legs.

Steve finally becomes aware of his surroundings. Then he notices Sniffy, still wary.

STEVE Sniffy? You okay? Sorry, boy. Come here, fella. Sniffy---?

Sniffy comes over, slowly. Steve has his hand down. Sniffy smells it then starts to lick it hungrily.

Sniffy goes to the door and whimpers.

STEVE (CONT'D) What? Out? Now? Reluctantly, he gets his shoes on.

STEVE (CONT'D) Good thing you're cute.

INT. BENNETT KITCHEN -- NIGHT

It's a lived-in space, will many of the original appliances still in place, a real "If it ain't broke don't fix it" motif.

As Mrs. Bennett does the dishes, Steve is at the table, hutched over his dinner plate, slowly eating.

There's a slight whimper. Sniffy is sitting on the floor looking up. Steve shifts himself to face the other way and eats.

A moment later, another whimper and now Sniffy is on that side. Steve does a quick look to the other side and shakes his head. Then Sniffy goes all puppy-eyes on Steve.

Steve slips a piece of meat from his plate and gives it to Sniffy.

MRS. BENNETT Steven! Don't feed the dog from the table!

STEVE What? It fell! You want me to eat stuff that falls on the floor? That's harsh, mom.

Mrs. Bennett goes back to washing the dishes, smiling.

EXT. JENKINS BACKYARD -- DAY

Cookie is in the yard, by the Bennett fence, short chainlink fence.

On the opposite side, WORKERS are putting up an 8-foot privacy fence between the Jenkins' yard and the Whites.

Sniffy is let out into the Bennett's yard and goes over to Cookie.

SNIFFY

Hi, Mom!

COOKIE How are you doing?

SNIFFY Okay. Steve is nice. But...

COOKIE

But?

(MORE)

## COOKIE (CONT'D)

Is he hitting you with a rolled up newspaper? Is he pulling your tail? Is he grabbing you by the scruff of your neck?

### SNIFFY

No. It's some times he gets afraid. I can smell it. For no reason.

## COOKIE

They say he had a very bad time in the army. It's hard to forget sometimes.

## SNIFFY

That's weird. People are weird. They should just live in the moment. Moments are the best.

COOKIE Oh, really, Mr. Scared-of-Stairs?

### SNIFFY

That's different---Did you have steak today?

#### COOKIE

Yesterday.

#### SNIFFY

Smells good.

COOKIE You and that nose of yours.

Some banging. They both look. It's the Worker putting up the last section of fence.

SNIFFY They don't smell right to me.

#### MONTAGE:

EXT. STREET -- DAY

Steve is walking Sniffy, who is smelling every blade of grass.

EXT. ROAD -- DAY

Steve walks Sniffy, passing by other DOG WALKERS. No interaction. Sniffy stops to try and go to another dog, only to have Dave pull him onward.

EXT. PARK -- DAY

Steve is sitting on a bench, reading, with Sniffy's leash tied to the bench.

A small POODLE comes trotting up to Sniffy.

POODLE You're new around here.

SNIFFY We're just passing through.

A WOMAN, the owner, comes up to get the Poodle. Steve looks up, nods and smiles. The Woman smiles back, then goes off.

EXT. BEACH -- DAY

Steve is jogging along, Sniffy running along side. Steve goes ahead. Suddenly the leash goes taut and Steve goes down.

Sniffy is sniffy a crab. Steve and only look and chuckle.

EXT. PARK -- DAY

Steve is wandering along with Sniffy. Sniffy looks at Steve and is bored. Just then he starts pulling and brings Steve over to a fenced-in dog park where PEOPLE have their dogs off leash.

Reluctantly, Steve puts Sniffy in. As he watches with others, he nods and acknowledges the other Dog Owners.

EXT. PARK -- DAY

Steve is now talking to OTHER DOG OWNERS, petting their animals.

EXT. JOGGING TRAIL -- DAY

Steve is in sweats and jogging as Sniffy trots along on the leash. Steve is looking better, Sniffy is maturing and filling out a bit.

EXT. PARK -- DAY

They play with a flying disc. Steve throws it. Sniffy gets it and starts back. He sees a squirrel, drops the disk and chases the squirrel.

INT. BENNETT LIVING ROOM -- DAY

A phone rings. Mrs. Bennett walks in with the phone, covering the mouthpiece. Steve is seated, eating a snack.

MRS. BENNETT Steve, it's Kenny again. Are you going to talk to him?

STEVE

(pause) Okay. She gives him the phone and exits, crossing herself.

STEVE (CONT'D) Hello? Kenny, hey. No, no, it's great to hear from you. I've been a little out of the loop. When did you get stateside? That's great.

Sniffy comes over, sniffing around.

STEVE (CONT'D) So, you're done, right?

Steve begins hiding a bit of his snack in his fists to fool Sniffy. Sniffy sniffs out the correct hand.

STEVE (CONT'D) You? Homeland Security? Gee, I feel safer already. What's that about?

INTER-CUT:

INT. KENNY'S BACHELOR PAD -- CONTINUOUS

KENNY WATTS, Steve's age, is a bit more unkempt and fancyfree. The pad is a man-cave, except of a photo of Kenny in uniform with a German Shepherd.

> KENNY Turns out my experience with the K-9 unit is a valued commodity.

> > STEVE

How's that?

KENNY

They have their own unit of K-9s. Bomb sniffers. They're practically begging me to come.

STEVE Oh, are they in need of horn-dogs?

KENNY

Jealous much?

Steve continues the game with Sniffy, who is now finding the snack, taking it and giving it back to play again.

STEVE What, me living the good life, jealous of a broken-down dog whisperer? Hardly seems likely.

KENNY

Hardly.

I'm just feeling sorry for the poor mutt that gets assigned to you.

Now Steve finds 3 paper cups. He begins doing the shell game with Sniffy, putting the treat under a cup and sliding them around the coffee table.

Sniffy's tail is wagging, he likes this game.

Each time Sniffy finds it, nudging the cup over with his nose.

KENNY Those dogs could do a lot worse. Like, say, have you join. So, you up for a night out?

STEVE Definitely, we need to hang. Let me get back to you. So, Kenny, where do they get these dogs?

KENNY Don't know, really.

STEVE Can you come over? I think I want to show you something.

EXT. BENNETT BACKYARD -- DAY

There are several of bed sheets spread out all over the yard.

Just then Steve comes out of the back door with Sniffy, no shoes and one sock. Kenny meets him at the door.

STEVE

You hid it?

KENNY

Yes.

EXT. JENKINS BACKYARD -- CONTINUOUS

Cookie is by the fence, watching, tilting her head.

EXT. BENNETT BACKYARD -- CONTINUOUS

Steve puts Sniffy down.

STEVE Okay, Sniffy, go find it!

Sniffy runs over the sheets. He sniffs each one then stops at one and paws at it.

Steve runs over and pulls out a sock. Sniffy darts around, happy, trying to get it.

Mrs. Bennett comes in the yard with some groceries

MRS. BENNETT Steven, what are you doing?

STEVE I needed to show Ken something

Steve puts on his sock and starts picking up everything.

MRS. BENNETT See what? How quickly you can double my laundry load?

KENNY Hello, Mrs. Bennett.

MRS. BENNETT Hello, Kenneth. Are you part of this?

KENNY

Who, me?

STEVE Sorry. It was a game I was playing with the dog. We kinda got carried away.

SNIFFY

We?

MRS. BENNETT Aren't you a little old for games?

STEVE Well, it's not exactly a game. Let me explain.

Steve leads Ken and his mom inside.

STEVE (CONT'D) So, you see what this dog can do, maybe we can join up together. He could do the job---

Sniffy goes to the fence to join Cookie.

COOKIE What was that all about?

SNIFFY Steve wanted to know how sniffy my sniffer is. COOKIE Whatever for?

SNIFFY He's thinking of joining Homeland Security and wants me to come!

COOKIE

What??

SNIFFY

He says his friend works with a dog pack that works to protect humans. They sniff out bad things. And I'm a good sniffer.

COOKIE So, Steve's found his way.

SNIFFY Do you think it's a good idea?

COOKIE Good idea? It's a family tradition!

SNIFFY

It is?

COOKIE Oh, yes, dear. Your great-grandfather Spot was a Dalmatian. He was a firehouse dog.

CUT TO:

EXT. RURAL FIREHOUSE -- DAY

It's a lazy day at the volunteer fire department, a rusticlooking wooden structure. A FIREMAN is leaning back in a chair, napping. SPOT, the Dalmatian, is lying at the front, dozing. Suddenly, his head pops up, his ears prick up and he sniffs. He sits up and sniffs some more. He jumps up and starts barking.

The Napping Fireman is startled and falls out of his chair. Spot continues to bark and the Firehouse comes to life as the MEN suit up.

When Spot sees the FIREMEN are ready, he runs and the Firemen drive after him in their old-timey fire truck.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD -- MOMENTS LATER

A farm house is on fire as Spot leads them to it.

CUT TO:

EXT. BENNETT BACKYARD -- DAY

Cookie and Sniffy talk through the fence.

SNIFFY Wow, I never knew that.

COOKIE Oh, indeed. And your Cousin Daisy was a seeing eye dog.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET -- DAY

Cousin DAISY, a black lab, leads a BLIND MAN down the sidewalk.

A bunch of CATS are sitting on a wall, tormenting her.

CAT 1 Peek-a-boo! I see you!

CAT 2 Hey, want a ham bone?

CAT 3 Hmm, is that a mailman over there?

Daisy fights to contain herself and leads her owner down the block.

CUT TO:

EXT. BENNETT BACKYARD -- DAY

SNIFFY Cats? Really?

COOKIE It's harder than it looks.

SNIFFY I don't think I could do that.

COOKIE

Oh, you'd be surprised at what you can do. Of course, there was your Uncle Buford, the most renowned bloodhound in the South.

EXT. WOODS -- EVENING

SOUTHERN SHERIFF, his DEPUTY and POSSE make their way through the forest, with BUFORD, nose to the ground, straining at the leash and dragging them forward. They come to the edge of the woods.

Buford suddenly starts circling a large tree.

DEPUTY Ah, Sheriff, I think he done lost the scent!

Buford stops and looks up and howls. The Posse looks up to see THREE PRISONERS, recently from a chain gang, sitting in the branches above, in their stripped prison garb.

CUT TO:

EXT. BENNETT BACKYARD -- DAY

SNIFFY

I like Buford.

COOKIE Yes, you take after him. Oh, I can't forget about Great-Uncle Bernie.

CUT TO:

EXT. MOUNTAIN SLOPE -- NIGHT

It's a snow-covered outcrop and a blizzard is blowing. A SKIER is laid out in the snow, barely conscious. There's some deep-throated barking and BERNIE, a St. Bernard, comes loping up. He has a small keg of liquor around his neck.

He nudges the Skier until he takes a drink of the keg. Then Bernie sits on him to keep him warm.

CUT TO:

EXT. BENNETT BACKYARD -- DAY

SNIFFY Gosh. I hope I can live up to that!

COOKIE They would all be very proud of you and what you're doing.

SNIFFY But Steve said we'll have to go away. For training.

COOKIE Training is how you learn. Remember when you used to pee anywhere?

SNIFFY Yeah. I miss that. Kenny is at his car.

Steve comes out of the house with Sniffy on a leash and carrying his army duffel bag. Mrs. Bennett comes out to see them off.

The Jenkins come out as well, with the kids going to Sniffy.

Steve opens the front passenger door of the car and Sniffy leaps in.

STEVE No, I called shotgun. In the back, you.

Steve puts Sniffy in the back seat with the window open. Kenny throws the duffel bag in the trunk. Sniffy has his head out the window and is ready to roll.

Cookie is at the front door. She barks. Sniffy responds.

And they drive off.

## DEBBIE

Puppy!

EXT. CAMP LACKAMORE -- DAY

Out in the sticks, it's a former air force military base, fenced in, secure and a little foreboding. Kenny drives up to the front gate.

Sniffy's head is still out the window.

Kenny shows the HOMELAND SECURITY GUARD some papers and he lets them pass.

A moment later, a Mr. Softcone ice cream truck pulls up, and the guard goes over to get a cone.

INT. KENNY'S CAR -- MOMENTS LATER

Sniffy's tail is wagging excitedly. Then they pass an obstacle course where dogs are climbing, crawling through muck and mire, over logs and wire and climbing some more.

There's an explosion in the distance.

Sniffy's tail slows down. Then stops.

Steve's face registers the same "What have I done" reaction.

EXT. HEADQUARTERS -- DAY

Kenny, Steve and Sniffy and SEVERAL OTHERS; WALLACE the tough guy, MANNY the ladies man, WILMA, the serious minded and

NANCY, the flirt. Sniffy is very still, eyes darting back and forth.

DOLORES FRANKLIN, an attractive Homeland Security Agent is collecting their paperwork.

Then the Senior Agent, ALEX JOHNSON, steps out of the building. He's former military and carries himself as such.

#### JOHNSON

So, we got ourselves some new applicants, have we? Welcome to Homeland Security's K-9 Corp. We are the country's first line of defense. We literally sniff out the bad guys. You'll be assigned a partner for those of you who didn't bring one.

He eyes Steve, who's looking uncomfortable. Sniffy seems okay with it.

JOHNSON (CONT'D) It'll be six weeks of training. You and your dog. Together and separate. This is not a dog run. This is not Obedience School. These dogs are going to be more than pets or companions. They are going to be your partners. Our nation is counting on us 100% and anyone falling short of that will be dismissed. We'll let you settle in, locate your quarters then have you meet and socialize your animals with our squad. Report back here at 16 hundred hours.

The people look blankly. Dolores signals Johnson by pointing to her watch.

JONHSON Five o'clock. Dismissed.

They head over to the dog yard.

EXT. DOG PEN -- CONTINUOUS

A large, fenced-in area, with a number of doghouses set up.

The group gathers outside the pen. Steve unleashes Sniffy, leads him into the pen.

Sniffy trots over to a group of dogs. Some mutts and some pure breeds: NIKO, a lively, brown and gold shepherd collie mix boy, PUP-PUP, a Golden Retriever boy, SHADOW, a black coated lab boy, DIAMOND, chocolate Lab girl with a white mark on her chest and, SHADY a big, mean German Shepherd. NIKO

Me, too! Me, too!

SHADOW So, what's your name?

SNIFFY

Sniffy.

DIAMOND

Diamond.

SHADOW

I'm Shadow.

NIKO Niko! Did I mention that yet? Niko!

They all look at Pup-Pup.

PUP-PUP

Pup-Pup.

Snickering.

PUP-PUP (CONT'D) What can I tell you, the kid was two when he named me.

SHADY

So, they decide to let in some barkin' mutts and this is what we get.

SNIFFY

Mutts?

DIAMOND Shady just means we were born to work here. Our moms and dads worked here.

SNIFFY Wait? This is a puppy mill?

SHADOW No, it's not a puppy mill.

DIAMOND Well, actually---

SHADOW Shut up, Diamond.

### SHADY

Look, pooch, I'm sure you're a delightful pet. But we were bred for this. We are from an elite pack of canines, hand-picked for this assignment.

# SNIFFY

So, what's the deal? You all good sniffers? I'm a good sniffer.

NIKO I can smell a female from next door.

PUP-PUP I can smell a pork chop at 500 feet.

SHADOW Dawg, I can smell noon.

SHADY I can smell the ace of spades in a deck of cards.

SNIFFY Can't wait to get started. It's like I was born to do this!

DIAMOND Again, we were all born to do this.

SHADY So, you think you're good, huh?

SNIFFY

Yup!

SHADY Then tell me what I had for lunch.

Shady turns and farts.

Sniffy is overwhelmed. The other dogs laugh.

SHADOW Oh, dawg! The old "pull-my-tail" gag! A classic.

The humans watch the dogs interact.

STEVE They seem to be getting along okay.

KENNY

Yeah.

EXT. PARADE GROUNDS -- DAY

Dolores has her clipboard. The Trainees are lined up.

DOLORES Well, people, it's time to be paired with your new partners. Let's head over to the dog pen, shall we?

The group goes to the dog pen. Barking and enthusiasm reign. As Dolores opens the gate, Sniffy goes running straight to Steve.

DOLORES (CONT'D) So, Mr. Bennett, I believe this is yours. I hope you appreciate how unusual this is.

STEVE He has an unusual sense of smell.

DOLORES It'll take more than a keen nose, Mr. Bennett.

STEVE I'm sure he's up to it. Aren't you boy?

Sniffy rolls over to await a belly rub.

DOLORES That's what training will determine.

Steve leashes Sniffy and pulls him back to the line. Kenny gets his dog, Shadow, and returns.

STEVE Yeah, she likes me.

KENNY Dude, she barely likes your dog.

Shadow and Sniffy are beside each other.

SHADOW I'm watching you, dawg.

SNIFFY Oh, are you a watch dog, too?

Shadow starts barking at Sniffy, who ducks behind Steve and Kenny restrains Shadow. A WHISTLE blows. It's Alex Johnson, who has shown up. EXT. WAREHOUSE -- DAY

Johnson has the group, people and dogs, lined up, paired off; Wilma & Niko, Manny & Diamond, Wallace & Shady, Nancy & Pup-Pup. Each person now has a fanny pack. There is a table with various containers.

The warehouse has a tinted viewing window.

## JOHNSON

We'll start with the basics. We will have your dog sniff one of these containers which contain various ingredients used in your average explosive device. You will then be brought inside and command your dogs to sniff the room to locate the container contained within. If your partner does locate it, you will reward your canine. You've each been issued one squeaky toy, one peanut butter plastic tube and one doggie treat. As we continue training you'll note which item your dog prefers.

#### NIKO

Did he say peanut butter?

SNIFFY Yeah. What's that?

DIAMOND It's like doggie crack.

JOHNSON Okay, Wallace and Shady, you are up first.

WALLACE and Shady approach the table. Dolores hands him a container. He lets Shady sniff it and gives it back.

Shady's tail is wagging. They go to the door of the warehouse. Dolores has out a stop watch. She opens the door, Wallace and Shady enter. She shuts the door and starts timing them.

We hear barking. Then silence. Then more barking. Then it stops.

Johnson is watching at the tinted window. He signals Dolores, who opens the door. Wallace and Shady step out.

Shady has a chew ball in his mouth.

JOHNSON (CONT'D)

Excellent.

# DOLORES Bennett and Sniffy, you're up.

They approach the table. Dolores gives them the container.

# STEVE I don't suppose we could start with a dirty sock first?

Dolores merely glares. He lets Sniffy give it a whiff.

She leads them to the warehouse. They step in.

INT. WAREHOUSE -- CONTINUOUS

It looks like something out of Indiana Jones. Huge warehouse, stacked high with crates of all shapes and sizes.

Steve can only stop and stare. As does Sniffy.

STEVE Okay, Sniffy, find the bomb.

Sniffy stares at him.

STEVE (CONT'D) Come on, Sniffy, get the bomb. Good boy, find that smelly old bomb.

Sniffy rolls onto his back for a belly rub. Looking around to see if it's clear, Steve bends down to give a Sniffy a belly rub.

Just then, in the distance, a rat scurries across the floor. Sniffy sees it.

### SNIFFY

Squirrel!

Sniffy dashes off, dragging Steve with him. Steve stumbles a few steps and trips onto a moving dolly. And he whizzes behind the running Sniffy.

EXT. WAREHOUSE -- CONTINUOUS

Johnson is at the window, observing and shaking his head. He signals Dolores to join him.

She does. She shakes her head and returns to the door. The others are trying to rubberneck a view.

Sniffy is bearing down on the rat, who cuts to the left and ducks between some boxes. Sniffy reaches the spot, stops and starts barking at the rat.

Steve goes speeding passed. Suddenly the leash goes taut and Sniffy gets yanked away.

The dolly crashes into some crates, which come crashing down on Steve and Sniffy. One box comes down and lands on a crate, knocking its side open. A container is there.

Sniffy gets up, goes over and sniffs it. He starts wagging his tail and barking at it. A treat gets tossed to him.

Steve is climbing out of the wreckage and he looks up to see Johnson and Dolores there. Dolores hits the stop watch.

JOHNSON

Next.

They head out. Steve and Sniffy watch them go.

SNIFFY That was a really ugly squirrel.

EXT. DOG PEN -- EVENING

The food trough is filled and the dogs, all laying around, slowly get up to feed and drink.

PUP-PUP Man, I hurt in places I can't lick.

SHADOW That was some work out.

SHADY I've had worse. Not worse than Sniffles over there but enough.

Sniffy is still in his dog house. He looks depressed.

SHADY (CONT'D) You made a rookie mistake.

SNIFFY

What?

SHADY You enlisted. Ha!

DIAMOND Oh, lay off the pup. He's new. SHADY

He had his choice. He wasn't barkin' drafted like us.

SNIFFY I came because Steve needed me to come.

SHADY Look, Cul-de-sac, you want to run with the big dogs, you'd better step up your barkin' game.

DIAMOND Don't let the pack mentality get you down, pup.

PUP-PUP

What?

#### DIAMOND

Not you, Pup-Pup. Sniffy, come on, eat your kibble. You want to be ready for tomorrow.

SNIFFY (wagging tail) Why? What's tomorrow, Diamond?

SHADY More of the same.

Sniffy's tail ceases to wag.

INT. MESS HALL -- EVENING

Steve, Kenny and others eat.

KENNY

You okay?

STEVE No. I'm thinking maybe it's too soon.

KENNY

Too soon for what? Protecting your country?

STEVE I've been protecting my country. Maybe I needed more time to protect myself.

KENNY From what? Memories? STEVE

Bad memories.

## KENNY

Past don't go away, bro. You can only put distance between you and them by heading forward.

STEVE Eating all those fortune cookies has really paid off for you.

At another table, Johnson and Dolores eat.

DOLORES What's Bennett's story?

JOHNSON Strictly need to know.

### DOLORES

Really?

### JOHNSON

No, of course not. What do you need to know?

# DOLORES

Single?

JOHNSON Not only single. Lives with his mom.

# DOLORES

Oh.

JOHNSON Served in Afghanistan.

# DOLORES

I figured something like that. He's not the usual wanna-be. He carries himself like he's been through action.

JOHNSON He saw some. Some bad stuff.

DOLORES Damaged goods. Figures. But---

JOHNSON

But?

DOLORES You see him with that dog of his. He could turn out okay. EXT. PARADE GROUNDS -- DAY

There are several barrels set up in a row. Wilma and Niko walk along them. Niko gets a whiff and starts pawing the bottom of one of the barrels.

Dolores comes over and pulls on the leash.

WILMA Sit, Niko, sit.

MONTAGE:

The dogs each walk around the barrels, circling them.

Manny and Diamond walk the barrels. Diamond gets a scent and sits at attention. Manny slips him a treat. Johnson tips the barrel to reveal the chemical pack.

Steve and Sniffy come out. A breeze comes up and Sniffy's nose is up and he gets a whiff. He starts pulling and dragging Steve to the middle barrel and starts barking at it.

Dolores comes over and points to Diamond, who is sitting before a barrel.

Steve tugs on the leash.

Wallace and Shady walk the barrels. Then they walk by them again. Finally Shady gets a whiff and sits at one of the barrels. Dolores makes a note on her clipboard and reveals the chemical pack.

Steve still trying to get Sniffy to sit. Then Sniffy sits. Steve pumps up his fist in victory. Sniffy jumps on him.

EXT. DOG PEN -- NIGHT

The Dogs are lying around both in and out of their houses. Growling is heard.

> DIAMOND Niko, what are you growling at?

NIKO Me? I'm not growling.

Growl is heard.

PUP-PUP

Who is that?

#### SHADOW

That's my stomach. I'm starving, dawgs. They're not feeding us enough.

SHADY How do they expect us to keep up our barkin' strength on these measly rations?

NIKO Actually, Diamond, I'm kinda hungry, too.

DIAMOND Duly noted. Now go back to sleep.

Growl.

DIAMOND (CONT'D) Will you put a lid on it?

SHADOW With what? It's not like there's any food around.

SHADY So it would seem.

NIKO You have food, Shady?

SHADY No. But I know where they keep it.

DIAMOND We all know where they keep it.

SNIFFY Where do they keep it?

DIAMOND

You, too?

SNIFFY All this talk about food got me hungry now.

SHADY The food shed over there.

He nods off to a wooden shack on cinder blocks, with a locked door and window.

DIAMOND And we're over here, Shady. SHADY For the moment, Diamond, for the moment.

Shady goes to behind the dog houses. The others follow. There's a section of fence that's not flush to the ground.

SHADY (CONT'D)

There.

PUP-PUP "There" what?

SHADY We dig under that.

NIKO

With what?

SHADOW With our paws. We're dogs. That's what we do.

NIKO Right. I forgot. I used to get scolded when I dug in the backyard.

SHADY This ain't your backyard now, is it?

The dogs, except for Sniffy and Diamond, start digging under the fence.

DISSOLVE:

EXT. COMPOUND -- NIGHT

The hole's completed. The dogs are trotting to the food shed.

EXT. DOG PEN -- CONTINUOUS

Sniffy starts under. Diamond is there, giving him a look.

SNIFFY

I am hungry.

He's off.

EXT. FOOD SHED -- CONTINUOUS

The dogs reach the shed.

NIKO Oh, man, we made it! This is awesome! We're here, baby! At the food shed! (MORE) NIKO (CONT'D) I can't believe it. This is so cool. Now what?

PUP-PUP It appears to be locked.

SHADY Don't just stand there, look around for a way in.

Sniffy catches up.

SHADY (CONT'D) You, runt, go under, see if there's a loose board or gap.

SNIFFY

Me?

SHADY You want to be part of the pack or not?

EXT. UNDER THE SHED -- CONTINUOUS

Sniffy crawls under. He keeps raising his head, against the floor boards. He sees a knot hole and sniffs it.

SNIFFY

Food.

He sniffs harder and harder and pushes up, the floor plank gives and he's able to climb in.

INT. FOOD SHED -- CONTINUOUS

Bags and cans and bags of dog food. Sniffy is in awe.

SNIFFY Wow. Guys, guys, I'm in!

SHADY (O.S.) You in there, Cul-de-Sac?

SNIFFY Yes! I'm in!

SHADY (0.S.) Open the door.

He looks at the door and its knob. Then his paws.

SNIFFY

What's plan B?

He sees the window open a crack.

SNIFFY (CONT'D) Open window! Open window!

SHADY (0.S.) Keep it down in there! Wanna wake up the whole barkin' camp?

EXT. FOOD SHED -- CONTINUOUS

The other dogs gather under the window.

Some cans drop down to them.

SHADOW Not the canned stuff!

SHADY Someone get under there and help him.

Niko goes under the shed.

INT. FOOD SHED -- CONTINUOUS

Sniffy drops the can he was holding in his mouth. He looks and sees a bag of dry food on a shelf next to the window.

Niko's head pops up through the floor board.

NIKO Where's the food?

Sniffy points to the food on the shelf. Niko climbs up and drags it to the window.

EXT. DOG PEN -- CONTINUOUS

Diamond is pacing, looking off at the food shed. Then he hears voices, Manny and Wilma.

MANNY Ah, come on sweetie. Nobody will miss us.

WILMA Oh, where are we going? Back to your place?

MANNY Kinda. I got the keys. We head back to the food shed for some privacy.

Diamond hears this and gets agitated. She goes to the side of his dog house and starts to thump it with his tail. INT. FOOD SHED -- NIGHT

Niko has torn the top of the bag open and tips it out the window.

EXT. FOOD SHED -- CONTINUOUS

There's dry dog food spilled all over the ground outside the window. The dogs are eating it up.

SHADY

All right, mutt, you're proving yourself useful. See if you can get the liver kind.

NIKO

Liver?

INT. FOOD SHED -- CONTINUOUS

Sniffy turns to raise his nose and take a sniff. There it is, a bag of liver-flavored dog chow on the top of a pile.

SNIFFY

Up there.

NIKO

Go get it.

SNIFFY

Me?

## NIKO

Why not you?

EXT. FOOD SHED -- CONTINUOUS

As they feed, they hear the thumping.

PUP-PUP What's that banging?

Pup-Pup focuses in on it.

PUP-PUP (CONT'D) It's from the pen.

SHADOW It's Diamond! She's signaling!

SHADY Okay, quick, back to the pen.

The dogs quickly take off.

A moment later, Manny and Wilma reach the door. Suddenly there's a crash. Quickly they open the door. Niko dashes out and disappears. There, in a pile of fallen bags, boxes and loose food is Sniffy, shaking his head.

INT. JOHNSON'S OFFICE -- NIGHT

Johnson at his desk in his sleepwear, boxer shorts and tshirt. Dolores standing nearby in a robe, still trying to wake up. Steve, in his pajama bottoms and t-shirt, and Sniffy stand before them.

## JOHNSON

We've told you about controlling your dog.

#### STEVE

Look, sir, technically, the dog wasn't under my control. He was under Homeland Security's. Their pen.

JOHNSON He...he has to be taught restraint!

STEVE

He never acted like this at home. Maybe the other dogs are a bad influence on him.

Sniffy wags his tail.

JOHNSON

You're claiming there was puppy peer pressure?

DOLORES Well, there is pack mentality.

STEVE And it's pretty obvious that Sniffy wasn't the only dog there.

JOHNSON That dog's on report!

STEVE Do you tell him or do I?

JOHNSON One more crack and you're on report.

#### STEVE

Yes, sir.

# JOHNSON

Make sure that dog pen is secure. And no more awakenings until the morning.

He waves them off.

Steve is moving cinder blocks to the fence base to block the hole. Dolores is standing by, talking with him.

DOLORES Yeah, technically we're not military but Johnson is ex-army and he takes it very seriously.

# STEVE Oh, trust me, I get it. But he's coming down kinda hard on the dog. I mean look at him.

They turn to look at Sniffy. He's laying there, paws crossed, with a simply happy, panting expression on his face.

STEVE (CONT'D) How do you stay mad at that mug?

DOLORES

A rescue?

# STEVE

Yes, he did.

DOLORES No, I meant did you get him from a shelter?

#### STEVE

Oh, no, our neighbor had puppies. Not the neighbor. Their dog.

DOLORES

Understood. And you chose ---

STEVE

Actually, I think he chose me.

DOLORES So when you said he rescued---

## STEVE

Me. I was in a bad place. You go into something thinking you'll bounce back like you always do. But I didn't have much bounce left in me, as it turned out.

## DOLORES

Rough tour?

#### STEVE

Oh, yeah. Lost some buddies. I couldn't get passed it. Then this knucklehead jumped into my life.

DOLORES

They do that.

STEVE So long story short; he rescued me.

DOLORES

Good dog.

Niko wanders over by Sniffy and plops down beside him, continuing to watch Steve and Dolores talk and work.

NIKO Yeah, she likes him.

SNIFFY How can you tell? Nothing's wagging.

NIKO It seems like it.

SNIFFY I wished they'd sniff each other and be done with it, already.

EXT. OBSTACLE COURSE -- DAY

The Trainees are running through the course with their dogs; over logs, under lumber. There are wooden steps that head up to a steep slide. Steve and Sniffy, who've been trotting through the course at a pretty good clip, reach the stairs and Sniffy pulls up short.

> STEVE What's the matter, boy? No, not the stairs thing again. Come on, up.

Wallace and Shady push them out of the way.

STEVE (CONT'D)

Hey!

WALLACE You're holding up the process, chuckles.

STEVE There's no prize for first place. There's no first place for that matter.

SHADY What's the matter, Cul-de-sac? Are you part scaredy cat, too?

Sniffy sits. Before it can turn into a big deal, a whistle blows. Everyone halts. Johnson is there, whistle in mouth. Dolores is approaching with a pig, TRUFFLES, on a leash. Somebody new? NIKO That's some ugly dog. Is it a pug? DIAMOND

SNIFFY

(sniffing) Close. Not pug. Pig.

SHADOW

A pig, dawg?

DIAMOND

Oh, yes.

PUP-PUP How do you know?

DIAMOND My foster family were farmers.

SHADY Bacon on the hoof?

PUP-PUP What's a pig doing here?

INT. WAREHOUSE -- LATER

The people are assembled at one corner, the dogs are corralled in the back, with the pig.

NIKO Who are you?

SHADY No, what are you?

TRUFFLES Truffles. I'm a pig.

SHADY You're a barkin' pig!

TRUFFLES I just said that.

NIKO

I'm Niko!

SHADY Put a muzzle on it, rookie.

PUP-PUP What are you doing here? TRUFFLES I'm going to be a bomb-sniffing pig. I'm a trial program.

#### INTERCUT:

Johnson and the troops:

MANNY

Trial program?

JOHNSON Congressional funds were allocated.

STEVE Oh, government pork.

KENNY It's like you can't help yourself.

STEVE

Sorry.

NANCY He's kind of cute.

WALLACE He's a refugee from a BLT. My government dollars at work.

Dogs & Pig:

SHADY This is a barkin' embarrassment.

TRUFFLES Well, I can smell truffles in the dirt, so someone figured pigs could sniff out other things.

SHADY You're a pig.

TRUFFLES Again, I'm aware.

SHADOW This is a K-9 unit, dawg.

PUP-PUP I don't think there are any letternumber combinations that denote pigs.

People:

STEVE The mind reels with pig and dog puns.

# KENNY Who gets assigned the hog?

JOHNSON As we are already paired off, the pig has been assigned to Ms. Franklin.

Applause breaks out, Dolores takes a bow. Nancy's hand goes up.

JOHNSON (CONT'D)

Questions?

NANCY How come hog doesn't rhyme with dog?

Truck horn sounds from outside. Johnson goes to the door.

WALLACE What was that?

JOHNSON Ah, our new training facility has arrived. (calling) Bring it around back!

EXT. JET -- DAY

In the back of the camp, being towed behind the warehouse, is a DC-10 commercial jetliner. The group is standing before it, as a CREW locks it down and installs a gangplank.

> MANNY Hey, your ride's here!

EXT. JENKINS HOUSE -- DAY

Dad is mowing the lawn. Mom is up to her elbows in replanting bulbs. Cookie is lying on the top of the stoop, taking it all in.

Mrs. Bennett comes out carrying her laptop.

MRS. BENNETT

Liz!

MOM Hi, Mrs. Bennett.

MRS. BENNETT I just got an email from Steve. He included some photographs.

Mom goes over. As Dad comes to the White side of the lawn, Mr. White pulls into the driveway in a Mr. Softcone truck. He pulls into the garage and gets out. Dad waves. Mr. White merely stares as the garage door closes.

Dad's wave turns into a nose salute.

DAD That's about as opposite of "Good Humor" as you can get.

INT. WHITE'S GARAGE -- CONTINUOUS

As the garage door closes, Mrs. White steps in from the house while Mr. White is still standing, glaring out the door. Once the door is shut, Mrs. White hits Mr. White with a rolled up wall map.

Turns out Mrs. White is a British guy in drag, while Mr. White comes from the American South.

MRS. WHITE What is it with you and glaring?

MR. WHITE I'm trying to look intimidating.

MRS. WHITE You look insane.

MR. WHITE Said the dude in the dress.

MRS. WHITE Be quiet. How else were we supposed to blend in to a suburban neighborhood?

MR. WHITE I don't know why we just couldn't move in together as-is.

MRS. WHITE And have everyone assume we're a gay couple?

MR. WHITE They would assume that?

MRS. WHITE It's all they assume about anybody out here.

MR. WHITE But, Willy---

MRS. WHITE No real names! How many times have I told you that? MR. WHITE Sorry Will...er, Mrs. White. Wait, why would I call my wife Mrs. White?

Mrs. White hits Mr. White again with the rolled up map.

MRS. WHITE Just get the supplies inside. We have a ton of work to do.

Mr. White pulls some boxes out of the truck.

MRS. WHITE (CONT'D) Any trouble with the lorry?

MR. WHITE Who's lorry?

MRS. WHITE Lorry. The vehicle. The truck. Any trouble with it?

MR. WHITE Not a bit. I was kinda hoping I could take it home afters...

Mrs. White rolls his eyes.

EXT. JENKINS HOUSE -- CONTINUOUS

Dad joins Mom and Mrs. Bennett.

MRS. BENNETT How do I open this photo?

Mom leans over to help.

MOM

Just click here. There you go. Oh, look, Cookie, come here!

Cookie trots over as Mrs. Bennett displays the screen.

DAD Honey, she's a dog.

MOM

She's a mother.

Mrs. Bennett tilts the laptop to show a picture of Sniffy and Steve with the group.

MOM (CONT'D) They look good.

DAD What's with the pig? Cookie looks at the PC screen. Her tail wags. INT. JET -- DAY Diamond and Manny enter the plane. Manny signals for Diamond to search. She starts sniffing around, between the seats, working her way down the aisle. EXT. JET -- NIGHT Manny and Diamond emerge from the plane, Manny holding up the container. Johnson stops his stop watch and shows it around. Wallace gives Nancy a ten dollar bill.

> JOHNSON Fifteen-forty-seven. Wallace, you're up.

WALLACE (to Nancy) We beat it, double or nothing.

# MONTAGE:

EXT. JET -- DAY

Steve starts up the plane but Sniffy won't go up. Steve pulls and pulls.

Wallace and Shady are working the plane already.

INT. JET -- DAY

Kenny and Shadow get to a spot. Shadow sits and looks up at the overhead. Kenny opens it. There it is.

INT. GALLEY -- DAY

Wilma and Niko go over the kitchen area.

EXT. JET -- DAY

Steve is pushing Sniffy up the stairs. Sniffy is resisting.

INT. COCKPIT -- DAY

Dolores and Truffles make their way into the cockpit.

INT. JET -- DAY

Steve enters the jet with Sniffy under his arm.

Diamond sniffs the rows.

Steve and Sniffy go into a restroom. The door shuts behind them. Steve can't get it open.

Pup-Pup paws at a duffel bag under a seat. Nancy tugs on the leash to get him to sit. He does. Nancy gives him a treat.

The closed bathroom door is banging.

Dolores comes by and opens the door. Steve looks embarrassed as Dolores shows him the stop watch. Sniffy is happy to see her.

EXT. CAMP LACKAMORE -- NIGHT

LONE GUARD at the gate, which is closed. Camp is dark.

EXT. DOG PEN -- NIGHT

There's now a second pen constructed adjacent to the dog pen, a pig pen, holding Truffles, who is sleeping in a mud puddle.

The dogs are all asleep. Niko is on his back, legs twitching.

Sniffy's nose starts twitching. His head pops up. He goes over to the fence, sniffing all the while. He starts barking.

The other dogs wake up.

SHADY What are you barking at? It's the middle of the night!

SNIFFY Don't you smell that? People?

DIAMOND Sweetie, we're surrounded by them.

SNIFFY No, Diamond. Different. But--familiar.

PUP-PUP Come on, you mongrels, I need my beauty sleep.

SHADOW How long is that in dog years, Pup?

EXT. CAMP LACKAMORE -- CONTINUOUS

At the parameter of the camp, peering through the fence are a couple of people, obscured in the shadows, spying on the camp. It's Mr. and Mrs. White.

Through the field glasses they see Sniffy, looking right at them. Startled, they break camp and sneak off. EXT. DOG PEN -- CONTINUOUS Sniffy is at the fence. SNIFFY I think they left. SHADOW Or they were never there. SHADY Let's tunnel, pups. EXT. DOG PEN -- LATER As the dogs crawl out, Truffles goes to the fence. TRUFFLES Hey, hey, hey, what about me? SHADOW What about you? TRUFFLES I want to come. SHADOW Later for you. TRUFFLES You leave me here and I'll squeal. SHADY I believe you would. He nods to Shadow and Pup-Pup, who start digging. TRUFFLES Wait a second, geniuses. Truffle trots over to the gate, to the latch. TRUFFLES (CONT'D) Pull down that latch. Pup-Pup and Shadow look at each other, then jump up against the gate until one hits the latch, pulling it down. Truffles pushes the gate open. TRUFFLES (CONT'D) (shaking head) Man's best friend.

50.

He trots off. Pup-Pup and Shadow shrug and follow.

EXT. CAMP LACKAMORE -- NIGHT

At the far end of the camp, the dogs and Truffles squeeze under a fence.

EXT. FIELD -- NIGHT

There's a couple of bunnies nibbling on some leaves. Suddenly Niko comes poking through the bush and barks at them, scattering them. He runs after one.

Shadow and Pup-Pup chase each other around the field.

Sniffy is sitting, watching. Niko comes by and stops.

NIKO This is like a dream come true! Literally, I dream about chasing rabbits all the time!

He runs off.

Truffles joins Sniffy.

TRUFFLES Don't let them push you around.

SNIFFY

I don't. Much.

TRUFFLES

I know you guys have that whole "Top Dog" thing going on but we're not a pack. We're a team.

SNIFFY

They were picked. I'm an interloper. You wouldn't understand.

TRUFFLES No, I wouldn't know anything about that.

## SNIFFY

At home, I was special. I had an excellent sense of smell. But here, everyone does. So I'm not a big deal.

The dogs are running back and forth.

TRUFFLES Big Pig in the small pen. Hey, you do what you can do. How do you do it?

# TRUFFLES

It's tricky. After I find truffles, I try to eat them. That's why I look for them in the first place. These chemicals aren't very tasty. I'm not very motivated.

SNIFFY You ever have the peanut butter?

TRUFFLES No, what's that?

SNIFFY Oh, man, it's awesome. You gotta get some.

Suddenly, a large stick drops in front of them.

NIKO

Fetch!

Sniffy grabs the stick and runs off.

## TRUFFLES

Dogs.

Later:

The Niko comes upon a big old plastic jar. Niko starts barking at it. Shady and Shadow come over.

SHADY Oh, stop your yapping.

NIKO I thought it moved.

SHADOW It's a jar. It's doesn't move. (a thought, then calls) Hey, Smelly!

Sniffy trots over.

SNIFFY That's Sniffy.

SHADY Whatever. You have a sharp nose, right?

# SNIFFY

You bet.

SHADY We can't figure out what the inside of that smells like. Tuna or shrimp. Give it a whiff, will ya?

## SNIFFY

Sure.

Sniffy sniffs the jar.

SNIFFY (CONT'D) I don't smell anything like that.

SHADOW

You sure?

SHADY Well, you're not going to smell anything on the outside.

Sniffy edges his head into the jar.

SNIFFY

No, nothing.

SHADY All the way, at the bottom.

Sniffy puts his head all the way in.

SNIFFY This has been out here too long. There's no smell.

SHADY

Oh. Okay.

Sniffy goes to pull his head out. It's stuck inside the jar.

SNIFFY

Hey!

EXT. DOG PEN -- MORNING

The next morning. The group assembles outside the pen, leashes in hand. The dogs are lined up, sitting, waiting. And at the end is Sniffy, head in the jar.

Steve and Kenny stare a look. Steve shakes his head as Johnson glares.

Sniffy is wagging his tail.

INT. JOHNSON'S OFFICE -- NIGHT

Johnson is reading a file. Dolores enters with a clipboard.

JOHNSON They're going to have to do better.

He pulls out a box.

## DOLORES

What's that?

JOHNSON Our next generation of trouble.

He opens the box. It's a jar of gel-filled capsules.

EXT. COMPOUND -- DAY

The group is now looking at the jar.

JOHNSON Internet chatter is pointing to a change in tactics and explosives of choice.

# STEVE

What is it?

JOHNSON New. A jelled nitro glisterin. Safe to transport in capsules.

NANCY Looks like Vitamin E.

MANNY More like Vitamin B. For Boom.

Steve starts to speak. Kenny gives him a look.

KENNY

Don't even.

Steve rethinks speaking.

They look at the jar again.

INT. WHITE'S KITCHEN -- NIGHT

The Whites are looking at a jar of the nitro-pills. Mrs. White is in a house dress, sans wig.

MRS. WHITE So this is the stuff with the kick?

MR. WHITE That's what they said. Highly explosive.

## MRS. WHITE

This will teach the government to keep secrets from us.

MR. WHITE

Yeah.

# MRS. WHITE

They deny that aliens even exist, then they set up a base her for them. There's no way I'm going to let them give this planet away.

MR. WHITE Earth for earthlings!

MRS. WHITE You know it! We have a timetable yet?

MR. WHITE Expect an email, they said.

MRS. WHITE

We'll be ready.

The PC dings. They rush over and go to email. They open it up.

MR. WHITE Oh, look, I won a sweepstakes in Nigeria!

MRS. WHITE Did you enter a sweepstakes in Nigeria?

MR. WHITE No. But I helped a prince once who needed some cash.

MRS. WHITE Don't be an imbecile.

MR. WHITE Why are you in your dress still?

MRS. WHITE It's actually quite comfortable and cool.

EXT. DOG PEN -- NIGHT

Shady, Shadow, and Pup-Pup are by the fence, watching Truffles.

SHADY You think he tastes like bacon? SHADOW

I was thinking ham.

SHADY Think we could get him to put an apple in his mouth?

PUP-PUP What are you saying? He's serving with us.

SHADY

Serving with us? He's a barkin' freak. It's bad enough we get that mutt assigned here. At least he's a dog. But this? It's a joke. It makes a mockery of my family heritage. I was---we were born to do this. We let in the mutts, we water down the bloodlines. No, we have to watch out for ourselves. The people aren't going to do it.

SHADOW What do we do?

SHADY

Well---

LATER:

The hole under the fence is re-dug around the cinder blocks. There's some distant barking, getting closer.

Then a skunk comes toward the pen. Shady, Shadow and Pup-Pup are herding it toward the pen, to the hole.

Sure enough, it scurries under the fence. The dogs pause, then make their way under.

The skunk scurries around and the dogs drive it into Sniffy's doghouse. Then they close the door.

We hear Sniffy startled.

SNIFFY (O.S.)

What??

Some barking then a cloud of stink seeps out of the door frame. Shady and the others back off. The door opens, the skunk hustles out and leaves the pen.

Diamond comes over, starts to go in. Then backs away. She starts howling.

We see the lights in the dorms come on.

In the middle of the yard, far from all, Steve is with Sniffy in a plastic tub, scrubbing him down. Neither looks happy.

> SNIFFY They have the weirdest squirrels around here.

EXT. JET -- DAY

The Group is gathered around Johnson's table and the nitrogel pills.

> WALLACE So, how do we approach this?

NANCY Do we smell the capsules? Open them?

#### DOLORES

Both.

INT. JET -- DAY

Dogs and Truffles run through their paces, sniffing out the containers with the new explosives.

EXT. JET -- DAY

Shady and Truffles are at the jet dog. Sniffy is at the bottom of the stairs.

Truffles and Dolores start down. Shady trips Truffles. Truffles tumbles down the stairs. Dolores and Sniffy rush to Truffles.

## SNIFFY

You okay?

## TRUFFLES

I guess. But I'm catching onto your bathmophobia. Your unreasonable fear of stairs seems less unreasonable now.

#### SNIFFY

Exactly.

EXT. DOG PEN -- EVENING

Once the dogs are put into the pen, Sniffy goes over to Shady.

SNIFFY You tripped Truffles on purpose. That was mean. And vicious. And really mean. And uncalled for. SHADY Who asked fro your opinion?

SNIFFY Who asked Truffles if he wanted to fall down the stairs, huh? Ha!

SHADY He had it coming.

SNIFFY Oh, because you can't do better, you make sure everyone else does worse? That's really team spirit.

SHADY My team, my spirit. Now back off.

SNIFFY No. You apologize!

SHADY I am not apologizing to a barkin' pig.

SNIFFY You'd better. I'll make you.

SHADY You and what pack?

Sniffy starts growling. Shady growls back. Sniffy growls again. Shady jumps Sniffy. They wrestle around. The other dogs form a circle.

DIAMOND Stop it! Heel! Heel!

SHADOW Sic him! Sic him!

NIKO You okay, Sniff?

Suddenly they get hit by a solid stream of water and the fight breaks up.

They all look over.

Dolores is there with a hose. Once the fight breaks up, she walks over to Truffles' pen and starts soaking his mud.

DOLORES (to dogs) Get to sleep. Now. Sniffy and Steve poke their heads out the door with the container, in record time, Johnson showing him the stopwatch and raising Steve's arm.

The others are watching. Shadow leans over to Shady.

SHADOW The kid's showing you up bad, Shady.

SHADY Nobody asked for your barkin' input, biscuit breath.

PUP-PUP You gotta admit it, the kid's got skills. And I mean, like, spelled with a "z."

SHADY This mutt gets in and maybe the rest of us get sent to Korea for appetizers.

SHADOW No more special programs.

PUP-PUP Bye-bye foster homes.

SHADY Special diets. Special care. All gone if they let anyone in.

PUP-PUP Well, you know what they say about too much inbreeding.

SHADY You a traitor to your breed?

Diamond trots over.

DIAMOND What's the big pack meeting about?

## PUP-PUP

Shady here---

SHADY Just sizing up the competition, sweetie.

DIAMOND They're not competition. They're your allies. SHADY

Everyone's competition. Especially the mutts.

## DIAMOND

Really?

SHADY Just do your job and there's nothing else need concern you.

DIAMOND Well, see that you don't make it my concern.

Diamond leaves.

SHADY

Bitch.

SHADOW So, we going to do something about it?

SHADY That stupid chocolate lab, she---(suddenly) Yes, we are going to do something.

PUP-PUP We are? What?

SHADY We're going to have a party to celebrate the runt's progress here.

PUP-PUP Oh, great, I love parties! Wait, that doesn't see like something you would do.

SHADOW And just how are you going to do that?

SHADY

Piece of cake.

EXT. FOOD SHED -- NIGHT

Shady, Shadow and Pup-Pup exit the food shed with a bag of dog food.

EXT. KITCHEN -- NIGHT

Shady, Shadow and Pup-Pup creep up to the back door of the kitchen. Shady and Shadow hide behind a dumpster.

Pup-Pup sits several yards away from the door and whimpers. A moment later the COOK comes out the door.

COOK Oh, so it turns out you like my cooking!

Pup-Pup wags his tail.

COOK (CONT'D) Okay, stay there. I'll get you something.

The Cook goes back in then comes out with a ham bone.

COOK (CONT'D) You're lucky. You got me on split pea soup night.

While Cook teases Pup-Pup with the bone, Shadow and Shady slip into the kitchen. A few moments later they slip out carrying a cake box on a string.

Pup-Pup gets the bone and leaves with it.

COOK (CONT'D) Okay. Don't tell anyone where you got that!

EXT. DOG PEN -- EVENING

It's the next evening. The dogs and Truffles are led to their pens and put in.

NIKO Final testing tomorrow. I can't believe it.

SNIFFY You don't know what this means to us. Me and Steve.

DIAMOND You should both be proud. You've done wonderfully.

SNIFFY

Thank you.

SHADY Well, then, we need to celebrate the success of our little Nasal-dictorian.

He nods to Shadow and Pup-Pup. They go into their dog houses then return with their stuff; Shadow has the cake while Pup-Pup carries the bag of food.

Truffles is looking on from his pen.

Pup-Pup knocks over the bag and the food spills out. The dogs pounce to it.

TRUFFLES

Pigs.

Diamond looks, shakes her head and goes to her house.

PUP-PUP (aside) The fix is in.

SHADOW (aside) Never use that word around here.

Then Shady opens the cake box. The dogs all look.

TRUFFLES

What is that?

SNIFFY It smells good.

SHADY Just a reward for our keenest nose. Have some.

SNIFFY It's not peanut butter.

SHADY No, it's better.

Sniffy goes over and sniffs it again. He loves it, his ears twirling about his head. Then he takes a bite. Then he begins eating it up.

Diamond pokes her head out of the house.

NIKO Wow, that smells good. Can I get a piece?

SNIFFY

Sure---

Diamond hurries over.

DIAMOND Wait, what is that? Where did you get it?

Sniffy looks up, face covered in cake. Then he looks ill.

SNIFFY I don't feel so good. Diamond sniffs it.

DIAMOND Chocolate? Are you crazy? You could kill him with that!

SHADY Chocolate? Are you sure?

SNIFFY I feel sick. Like someone is playing fetch in my stomach.

DIAMOND

Niko, get me grass, stat!

Niko runs over to the grassy patch and tears up some grass. Sniffy sits, then lays down. Niko drops the grass in front of him.

Diamond pushes him to eat it.

DIAMOND (CONT'D) Sniffy, listen, eat the grass. It'll help. Come on, Sniffy, eat up. Good boy.

Sniffy takes a mouthful and starts chewing it.

Pup-Pup, Shady and Shadow are snickering in the corner.

DIAMOND (CONT'D) You three should have your ears clipped for this!

PUP-PUP

Hey!

## NIKO

Sniffy?

Sniffy is chewing the last of the grass. Suddenly he gets up and goes to the far corner of the pen.

He starts vomiting. Diamond follows him.

DIAMOND You're good. You need to get that cake out of your system.

Sniffy looks up at her and briefly smiles then heaves again, with vomit coming out of his nose. He goes back to throw up in the corner.

DIAMOND (CONT'D) Get rid of the rest of that cake! Shady, Shadow and Pup-Pup go back to their dog houses. Niko looks around. He goes to the fence dividing the dogs from Truffles' pen and back into it, bending the fence off the ground.

Truffles hurries under the fence and gobbles up the cake.

SHADOW

Pig.

Truffles then trots back into his pen. Niko lowers the fence.

NIKO

Done!

Sniffy is still throwing up.

EXT. DOG PEN -- MORNING

Everyone is asleep. Sniffy looks passed out.

Slowly the dogs come to life. Truffles comes to the fence.

TRUFFLES

How's Sniffy?

Diamond nudges Sniffy.

## DIAMOND

Sniffy?

NIKO He's not dead, is he?

DIAMOND No. He just had a bad night. Sniffy. Get up. We have the final tests today.

Sniffy comes to. When he talks, he's all nasally.

SNIFFY Oh, right. I'm up, I'm up.

He gets up and goes to sniff. A look of panic hits him.

SNIFFY (CONT'D) Diamond! Niko! I can't smell anything!

DIAMOND

What?

SNIFFY My nose is broken!

Diamond goes in close and she sniffs Sniffy's nose.

DIAMOND You got sick and some of it went up your nose.

SNIFFY

I remember.

DIAMOND I think it inflamed your nasal passages.

SHADY What are you now, Doggie Howser, M.D.?

SNIFFY No, no, that can't happen.

They hear a whistle. Dolores is at the gate.

DOLORES All right, dogs, up and at 'em!

The others show up with the leashes.

SNIFFY

Oh no.

EXT. PARADE GROUNDS -- DAY

The barrels are set up. The dogs go through their paces finding the containers.

Sniffy circles the barrels again and again. Finally he stops at one. Dolores shakes her head no.

Johnson lifts it up. It's empty.

INT. JET -- DAY

Sniffy and Steve go up and down the aisle. Nothing.

EXT. WAREHOUSE -- DAY

The group is lined up. Kenny leans toward Steve.

KENNY What happened?

STEVE I don't know. It's like his nose went blind.

Shadow starts snickering.

SNIFFY What's so funny?

SHADOW

Nothing, Cyrano.

SNIFFY It's not funny. You did this to me. You and your stupid cake.

SHADOW Nobody told you to jam it up your nose.

SNIFFY

You set me up.

Sniffy lunges at Shadow. Shadow bares his teeth. The other dogs start barking and growling.

Johnson starts blowing his whistle as the group separates the dogs.

JOHNSON Bennett, come with me!

EXT. JOHNSON'S OFFICE -- DAY

Steve, dejected, comes out of the office. Dolores is there, holding Sniffy.

## DOLORES

What?

#### STEVE

Sniffy washed out. His performance was bad and I couldn't control him around the other dogs. No place for him in this outfit.

Steve takes Sniffy.

STEVE (CONT'D) Come on, boy. We're going home.

DOLORES

Steve, Sniffy's out, not you! You can get another dog.

STEVE There is no other dog. Sniffy got me here.

DOLORES If this was the first incident, they might have over looked it. But it's not. I even broke up a fight the other night between Sniffy and--- STEVE

Oh, really. And did you put that in his report?

DOLORES Well, I'm obliged to---

STEVE Of course you are.

## DOLORES

Look, Steve, Sniffy is a great dog. He has an amazing nose, despite what happened today. But he did not get you here.

Sniffy is between them, watching them back and forth.

STEVE

He did. I was wallowing...no, sinking. He came along and slowly life got better.

## DOLORES

So, the dog has a misstep and you backslide? If you can't handle it, don't put it on the dog.

STEVE I tried. I failed.

DOLORES Then you try again.

## STEVE

Not today.

Steve and Sniffy walk off. Sniffy looks back at Dolores. Sniffy hesitates. Dolores sees it. Steve tugs on the leash and Sniffy follows Steve.

They walk pass the pen. The others watch them as they head to the barracks.

SHADY See, I knew he wouldn't measure up. When push came to shove---

DIAMOND You were the one doing all the pushing and shoving, you flea-bitten mutt.

SHADY You can't say that to me.

DIAMOND You're timing is off. I already did. She turns, scrapes back dirt on him with her rear paws and walks off.

SHADOW She really ticks me off.

SHADY Don't say "ticks" around here.

EXT. BENNETT HOUSE -- NIGHT

Kenny's car is pulled up in front of the house. Steve gets out with his duffel.

KENNY Steve, you don't have to do this. Drop Sniffy off and ride back with me.

STEVE I can't start from scratch again, Kenny. I just don't have it in me.

Steve and Sniffy walk to the door. Kenny pulls away.

Steve turns the knob. It's locked. He rings the bell. The wait is interminable.

Finally, Mrs. Bennett answers. Steve hugs her tight.

EXT. BENNETT BACKYARD -- DAY

Sniffy is lying down in the grass. Steve is back in his lawn chair with a beer.

A SQUIRREL crosses the yard. Sniffy barely acknowledge it. The Squirrel shrugs and continues.

Cookie is let out of the Jenkins' house into the yard. She goes to the fence and woofs. Sniffy goes to the fence.

SNIFFY I failed, Mom. I got us both kicked out.

COOKIE Oh, Sniffy, I'm so sorry. What happened?

SNIFFY I couldn't find the bomb. I couldn't smell anything.

COOKIE

Are you sick?

SNIFFY I don't know. I just can't smell. I let everyone down. What good am I?

COOKIE You're a good dog, a good dog. You just had a set back.

SNIFFY I'm useless to everyone, Mom.

Steve comes over and scratches Sniffy's ear.

STEVE Come on, Sniffy, let's eat.

COOKIE Maybe not everyone.

Sniffy nods and follows Steve into the house.

INT. WHITE'S GARAGE -- NIGHT

The two are working on kitchen timers, converting them into detonators.

MRS. WHITE ---I was paralyzed. Next thing I know, I'm on this table.

MR. WHITE Oh, man, the table. There's nothing worse.

MRS. WHITE The probes never cease.

MR. WHITE They just keep coming!

MRS. WHITE And then they just keep returning for more.

MR. WHITE Who can you tell? Where can you go? Everyone thinks we're nuts.

MRS. WHITE I vowed I would make them pay. And make sure they could never do it to anyone else.

MR. WHITE Amen to that. If we don't do it, who will? Precisely!

The PC pings. Mrs. White looks up and goes to it.

MRS. WHITE (CONT'D)

Email!

He checks it.

MRS. WHITE (CONT'D) It's us. The target is... (reading) Camp Lackamore. The warehouse is an extraterrestrial storage facility. (finished) I knew it!

MR. WHITE This it then.

MRS. WHITE This is it. Finally.

Mrs. White puts out a fist bump while Mr. White goes to slap five. Then Mrs. White goes to slap five while Mr. White switches to a fist bump. Disgusted, Mrs. White goes back to work.

EXT. BENNETT YARD -- DAY

Steve sitting, talking on phone.

INTERCUT:

EXT. PARADE GROUNDS -- DAY

Kenny's sunning himself in the middle of the grounds, beach chair, cooler of drinks and his music. He's on his cell phone.

KENNY No, we're still here, awaiting assignment. You?

STEVE

Same.

KENNY Dude, you can still do this. It wasn't you. You brought in a stray and it didn't work.

STEVE He wasn't a stray. No, we're a team. We still are. KENNY Oh, you going to freelance bomb sniff? Maybe you can hunt bedbugs.

STEVE All options to us.

KENNY Think hard on it. I think the pig is available now.

STEVE You're a funny guy, Ken. Oh, wait, I meant the opposite.

KENNY Think on it. Later, dude.

STEVE

Later.

EXT. WHITE'S HOUSE -- DAY

A Mr. Softcone truck is parked in the driveway. Mr. White has some boxes on a hand-cart and rolls them up a ramp into the back of the truck and unloads them. He exits and goes back into the house.

INT. JENKINS FOYER -- CONTINUOUS

The main door is open, but the screen door is shut. Debbie is at the door and sees her ball on the front lawn.

Cookie is laying in the livingroom.

Debbie manages to get the door open and walks out.

Cookie sees her and runs to the door. It is shut on her. She starts barking.

EXT. WHITE'S HOUSE -- CONTINUOUS

Debbie comes wandering over, bouncing her ball. It takes a bounce and goes into the truck.

INT. MR. SOFTCONE TRUCK -- CONTINUOUS

Debbie finds the ball and bounces it out. Then she sees the ice cream pictures and climbs behind some boxes to see them.

EXT. WHITE'S HOUSE -- CONTINUOUS

Mr. White comes out with the remaining boxes and loads them into the truck. He shuts the doors and removes the ramp. Mrs. White walks out with the last box. Inside the house, Cookie is barking and jumping up on the front door, frantic. Finally, her paw hits the screen door handle and the door pops open. She hurries out.

EXT. WHITE'S HOUSE -- CONTINUOUS

Cookies comes up to the truck and starts barking.

MR. WHITE Get lost, you mutt.

MRS. WHITE Shut it up before people come around.

Mr. White takes the box and drops it on Cookies' head, knocking her out.

The box opens and some gel tablets spill out. Mrs. White grabs them but misses one that rolled under the tire.

MRS. WHITE (CONT'D) What was that?

MR. WHITE It's quiet now, right?

They get into the Mr. Softcone truck and pull out.

MRS. WHITE Now, don't take a direct route. Drive around, make sure we're not followed.

The tire of the truck crushes the capsule as it rolls over it.

The truck is soon gone.

We heard Mom from inside their house.

MOM (O.S.) Debbie! Debbie! Ronnie! Where's your sister?

EXT. JENKINS HOUSE -- CONTINUOUS

Mom comes to the front door and sees it ajar and comes out.

MOM

Debbie!

She looks over and sees Cookie laid out.

MOM (CONT'D)

Tony!!!

She runs over to Cookie.

MOM (CONT'D) Cookie! What happened?

Dad comes out.

### DAD

What?

MOM Something happened to Cookie! I can't find Debbie.

Dad runs over. Ronnie comes out.

EXT. WHITE'S HOUSE -- CONTINUOUS

Dad sees Cookie is still breathing.

MOM I bet those lunatics did this. I never liked them.

DAD Stop, we don't know what happened.

EXT. BENNETT HOUSE -- CONTINUOUS

Mrs. Bennett opens her door to shake out an area rug. She sees the Jenkins.

MRS. BENNETT What's the matter?

MOM

Cookie's hurt.

At that, Sniffy comes out the door and runs over to them.

EXT. WHITE'S HOUSE -- CONTINUOUS

DAD Easy, Sniffy. Give us some room.

EXT. BENNETT HOUSE -- CONTINUOUS

MRS. BENNETT Steve! The dog's got out!

Steve comes out.

STEVE

What happened?

He trots over. Mrs. Bennett follows.

Steve reaches them.

DAD Ronnie, get a dish of water. We don't know. Found her like this.

Sniffy is sniffing around. Suddenly he gets attracted to the crushed capsule. He sniffs, then again. Then he sits at attention.

MOM Should we take her inside?

DAD I don't know if we should move her.

Ronnie comes over with a bowl of water.

RONNIE What's wrong with Sniffy?

DAD He's scared stiff.

STEVE

No, that's his training. If he smells something suspicious, he's supposed to sit.

MOM Something suspicious?

Steve goes over to the spot. He sees the crushed capsule.

STEVE This can't be right.

Cookie starts whimpering, getting their attention.

RONNIE Cookie, are you okay, girl?

She woofs lightly. Sniffy turns.

SNIFFY

What?

COOKIE Debbie. She's in the truck. The ice cream truck. I couldn't stop them. You have to get her.

SNIFFY

Where? How?

Sniffy starts barking.

### STEVE Sniffy, what is it?

Sniffy raises his nose. He starts going down the driveway. He paws at another spot and then moves down.

> STEVE (CONT'D) It's a trail! Sniffy follow!

Sniffy tears down the street.

STEVE (CONT'D) Wait! I'm supposed to be with him!

Dad pulls out his car keys.

DAD

Come on.

They jump in Dad's minivan and rush out, following Sniffy.

STEVE He's going to get killed.

Ronnie sees Debbie's ball by the garage door.

RONNIE

Mom?

Mom sees it.

INT. MINIVAN -- MOMENTS LATER

Dad's cell phone rings. He pulls it out and hands it to Steve.

MOM (0.S.) They've got Debbie!

STEVE They've got Debbie.

DAD Who are these people?

EXT. INTERSECTION -- MOMENTS LATER

Sniffy reaches the intersection. Traffic is light. He raises his nose and circles. He pulls his nose to the ground and gets the scent and runs down road that leads out of town.

The minivan speeds through after a moment, tires squealing.

EXT. SUBURBAN ROAD -- CONTINUOUS

Sniffy is running, nose low.

INT. WHITE'S KITCHEN -- MOMENTS LATER

Mom shoves the door open.

MOM

### Who are these people?

Ronnie, Mrs. Bennett and Cookie, still a little shaky, follow.

There are maps on the wall, anti-government pamphlets on the tables, books and research. Pictures of UFOs, the DVD set of "The X Files."

Mom goes to the map. There, circled in red is Camp Lackamore, outside town. Mrs. Bennett comes up behind her.

EXT. ROAD -- MOMENTS LATER

Sniffy sees the ice cream truck ahead as it turns a corner. Sniffy turns up a drive way and leaps a fence.

EXT. YARD -- CONTINUOUS

A FAMILY barbecue is interrupted by Sniffy running through and jumping the back fence.

EXT. STREET -- CONTINUOUS

Sniffy comes running out into the street just in time to see the truck go by. He starts after it, barking.

INT. SOFTCONE TRUCK -- CONTINUOUS

Debbie gets up from behind the boxes and goes to the window to see Sniffy running along side.

### DEBBIE

Puppy!

Mr. and Mrs. White's eyes bug out and they turn to see Debbie.

MRS. WHITE Pull over! Pull over!

Mr. White pulls over.

EXT. STREET CORNER -- MOMENTS LATER

The truck pulls away.

Debbie is trapped in an upside-down street trash receptacle.

Sniffy reaches Debbie. He stops and barks at the truck. Then he wags his tail at Debbie. Then barks at the truck.

Dad and Steve pull up and jump out of the car. Dad races to get Debbie out, while he's on the cell.

DAD

I got her! I got her!

DEBBIE

Puppy!

Steve's cell phone rings.

STEVE

Hello? Mom??

INT. WHITE GARAGE -- CONTINUOUS

Mrs. Bennett is looking at the map.

MRS. BENNETT Hello, dear. We think we know where the truck is headed.

EXT. STREET CORNER -- CONTINUOUS

STEVE

Lackamore? (to Dad) I gotta get to Lackamore!

Dad tosses him the keys.

EXT. PARADE GROUNDS -- CONTINUOUS

Kenny and the others are now sunning themselves. So are the dogs, all off the leashes. Truffles is there, as well.

KENNY What did I tell you?

WALLACE About time you had a good idea.

NANCY Now I'm sorry I didn't bring my inflatable pool.

His cell phone rings. He sees it's Steve.

KENNY

And another thing---Wait, what? No, I don't know what channels to go through.

Dolores comes out, in uniform with the clip board and looks annoyed.

DOLORES What are you people doing---? INT. MINIVAN -- CONTINUOUS

Steve is driving, Sniffy is in the passenger seat.

STEVE They are headed your way.

Steve takes a sharp turn and drops the cell phone. It lands in front of Sniffy. Sniffy sniffs it then starts barking into it.

EXT. PARADE GROUNDS -- CONTINUOUS

The barking is heard over the cell, as Kenny pulls the phone away from his ear.

The dogs' heads all pop up.

NIKO Sniffy? Where are you? I hear you but I don't see you!

PUP-PUP What did he say?

DIAMOND You heard him.

The dogs all jump up and start running to the front gate.

TRUFFLES Wait! What did I just miss?

Truffles hurries after.

DOLORES What is going on here?

EXT. FRONT GATE -- CONTINUOUS

Lone Guard is there, checking his watch.

LONE GUARD Where's that ice cream man?

EXT. ROAD -- CONTINUOUS

The Mr. Softcone Truck approaches the camp.

INT. TRUCK CAB -- CONTINUOUS

MRS. WHITE Almost there!

Suddenly all the dogs reach the front gate.

MR. WHITE What's that? What's that? The group comes to the front to get the dogs.

MRS. WHITE Abort! Abort!

MR. WHITE Is that a pig?

EXT. MAIN GATE -- CONTINUOUS

The ice cream truck makes a sharp u-turn before it reaches the gate. Lone Guard is holding up his dollar and is disappointed as it leaves. The dogs start barking.

> KENNY Stay, Shadow, stay!

DOLORES Anyone what to clue me in?

KENNY

My car!

The group runs back in.

INT. TRUCK -- CONTINUOUS

MR. WHITE

Now what?

MRS. WHITE Back to home base. Report in. Reschedule.

In the distance is the minivan.

MR. WHITE Hey, it's the neighbor's minivan again!

MRS. WHITE We have to turn off.

MR. WHITE Where? Where? Oh, look!

He points off.

MRS. WHITE

Brilliant!

EXT. FRONT GATE -- MOMENTS LATER

The group and animals drive out in a Homeland Security van and Kenny's car and give chase.

LONE GUARD Man, if they were going to make an ice cream run, they could at least asked me what I wanted. EXT. ROAD -- MOMENTS LATER The cars reach the minivan. Everyone stops and gets out. DOLORES What is going on? STEVE Unfriendlies. In a Mr. Softcone truck. He pulls out the crushed capsule. STEVE (CONT'D) Hauling these. KENNY Dude. STEVE Exactly. WILMA They doubled back this way. WALLACE Dogs scared them off. NANCY You didn't see them? STEVE They didn't pass me. They must have turned off. Sniffy leans out the window. SNIFFY Where are they? SHADOW We scared them off. DIAMOND They doubled back this way. SNIFFY Then what? NIKO They disappeared!

80.

Sniffy jumps out the window and starts sniffing the area. He gets the scent and runs off toward the camp.

> NIKO (CONT'D) Hey! Wait for me!

Niko follows.

#### DIAMOND

Sniffy!!

Shady, Pup-Pup and Shadow chase after them. Diamond and Truffles remind.

DIAMOND (CONT'D)

You coming?

TRUFFLES What am I, a greyhound? I'll catch a ride.

Diamond runs off.

# WILMA

Hey, the dogs!

STEVE

Sniffy!

They all pile back into their cars and drive off after the dogs. As the dust settles, Truffles is still there and ticked off.

TRUFFLES Do the indignities ever cease?

He shakes his head and trots off after them.

EXT. SOFTCONE FACTORY ENTRANCE -- MOMENTS LATER

Sign reads "Softcone Inc. Home of Mr. Softcone!"

It's a parking lot for the fleet of Mr. Softcone trucks, dozens and dozens of them, parked.

Sniffy runs pass the parking lot. He screeches to a halt and doubles back, getting the scent that leads into the parking lot. He runs in.

A few moments later, the other dogs reach the entrance. They stop to get their bearings and the scent.

EXT. PARKING LOT -- MOMENTS LATER

The Softcone building is in the distance, a whimsical 5 story building/factory/warehouse. There's a fire escape visible at the corner of the building.

# SHADY

Terrific.

SNIFFY The capsules, that's the smell we're looking for. The truck has the smell of the capsules.

Sniffy runs off.

### DIAMOND

Okay, Niko, Pup-Pup, take the first row. Shady and Shadow take the second row. Truffles and I will take the third. Truffles?

NIKO

Where's Truffles?

EXT. ROAD -- DAY

Truffles is trotting along, muttering to himself.

TRUFFLES Join the service, Mom says. Travel, see the world, she says. You don't want to spend you life on the farm. Stupid, barkin' dogs.

EXT. PARKING LOT -- DAY

The dogs are sniffing around each row of parked cars.

Sniffy's tail goes up and he moves toward a truck.

EXT. MR. SOFTCONE TRUCK -- CONTINUOUS

Sniffy smells the tires, then starts barking at it.

EXT. PARKING LOT -- CONTINUOUS

The other dogs all stop what they're doing and hurry over.

EXT. MR. SOFTCONE TRUCK -- CONTINUOUS

Sniffy is now in the truck, sniffing it.

SNIFFY

Yeah, she was in here. This is it!

Diamond jumps in.

INT. MR. SOFTCONE TRUCK -- CONTINUOUS

Diamond finds the boxes and sits.

DIAMOND These are the explosives!

SNIFFY

You're sitting.

DIAMOND Oh. Force of habit.

EXT. SOFTCONE FACTORY ENTRANCE -- DAY

The cars come to the entrance then stop. Wallace is standing through the sun roof, looking at the factory.

WALLACE Oh, get a load of this!

The group all strain to look and see the parking lot full of Mr. Softcone trucks.

MANNY In plain sight.

NANCY

Let's go there.

They drive in.

INT. MR. SOFTCONE TRUCK -- CONTINUOUS

Sniffy is sniffing the floor of the cab of the truck and pedals. Satisfied, he jumps out of the truck.

EXT. MR. SOFTCONE TRUCK -- CONTINUOUS

Sniffy scans the ground. He gets the scent and starts trotting off.

Diamond pokes her head out of the truck.

DIAMOND Sniffy! We're are you going? We've got the explosives!

SNIFFY They're making a run for it.

NIKO

What?

PUP-PUP The bad guys are trying to flee!

SHADY Don't say flea around here.

# What? No peanut butter?

Sniffy is now running down the row of trucks. He stops and bends down.

He sees a pair of running feet going between the trucks. Sniffy barks.

Mr. White and Mrs. White pick up the pace and run to the factory entrance.

EXT. SOFTCONE FACTORY ENTRANCE -- CONTINUOUS

They reach the front door, but they are locked. They see the fire escape and run to that.

Sniffy sees them and gives chase.

EXT. FIRE ESCAPE -- CONTINUOUS

They pull down the stairs and start climbing up.

Sniffy reaches the bottom of the steps. He looks up and gets a "Vertigo" lens/zoom for his trouble.

EXT. SOFTCONE FACTORY ENTRANCE -- CONTINUOUS

Truffle comes trotting to the entrance. He gives a whiff and trots in.

EXT. FIRE ESCAPE -- CONTINUOUS

Sniffy can't seem to move.

Up the stairs, Mr. White stumbles, banging the railing as he goes down.

The banging snaps Sniffy out of it. The hair on the back of his neck goes up, his tail stiffens and he starts up, slowly at first, carefully taking each step.

He looks up and sees the two getting away. Shaking it off, he picks up the pace.

EXT. MR. SOFTCONE TRUCK -- CONTINUOUS

The cars pull up and everyone gets out.

The dogs are all still sitting at attention by the truck.

STEVE That must be it.

Nancy and Manny get in it. Manny pokes his head out.

MANNY

Affirmative.

WALLACE

Good dogs.

STEVE Call this in. The perps are still at large---Where's Sniffy?

Shadow gets up and starts barking, first at Steve, then at the factory.

STEVE (CONT'D)

What?

KENNY Either he knows where Sniffy is or Timmy's trapped in the well again. Shadow. Shadow! Eyes here.

Shadow stops and looks to Kenny.

KENNY (CONT'D) Go, fetch. Get Sniffy.

Shadow runs off toward the building. Steve and Kenny follow.

DOLORES Just don't stand there, call it in!

Then Dolores follows them. Wilma gets out her cell.

EXT. FIRE ESCAPE -- CONTINUOUS

Sniffy is steadily making his way up the stairs.

Mr. White is pulling on Mrs. White, whose heel is stuck in the grating of the steps.

MR. WHITE Just take them off!

MRS. WHITE

Oh, right.

At the bottom of the fire escape, Steve, Kenny and Dolores arrive.

STEVE Go to the front. Get security to let you up there. Cut off the exits.

Wallace and Wilma join them.

# STEVE (CONT'D) Get to the other side of the building,

make sure there's no other way down.

Kenny, Wallace and Wilma head off. Steve starts up the fire escape.

# DOLORES Steve! Where are you going?

#### STEVE

To get my dog.

Steve climbs up the fire escape.

INT. ENTRANCE LOBBY -- MOMENTS LATER

The door is open now. Truffles comes trotting in. Niko follows. They look around and see the elevator bank. One elevator door is open. Niko and Truffles walk in.

TRUFFLES Yo, Rin-Tin-Tin, hit the buttons.

NIKO

Okay.

Niko jumps up against the panel and hits the buttons. The doors close and up they go.

EXT. FIRE ESCAPE -- DAY

Sniffy is making his way up the stairs.

SNIFFY Happy thoughts, happy thoughts. Belly rubs, dropped food, rawhide---

EXT. ROOF -- DAY

Mrs. White has his dress caught on a vent, while Mr. White tugs at it.

Sniffy comes over the top. He gets his bearings and sees the duo as Mrs. White gets loose.

Sniffy begins a low, menacing growl, hunches down and begins approaching the Whites.

Mrs. White grabs a iron pipe leaning against the vents and raises it to strike.

Sniffy keeps approaching. The two, huddled close, keep backing away.

Steve reaches the top of the escape.

STEVE

No!

MR. WHITE Do it! Do it!

MRS. WHITE Get out of here, you mangy mutt!

As they back up yet again, they drop down.

Oh, they've tripped over Truffles, who was standing behind them.

The Whites are sprawled out on the roof. Kenny and the SECURITY GUARD are at the roof down.

Niko is there, wagging his tail.

Kenny pushes the Security Guard forward and they each grab a White.

Dolores climbs onto the roof from the fire escape.

DOLORES Is anyone going to explain this to me?

Steve squats.

STEVE

Sniffy!

Sniffy turns.

SNIFFY Hey! Where'd you come from?

Kenny and the Security Guard have Mr. and Mrs. White cuffed.

MR. WHITE We're on a mission! Or are you part of this? Don't you care?

MRS. WHITE How can you allow the government to house space aliens that prey upon your fellow earthlings?

SECURITY GUARD What? What are you talking about? We make ice cream.

MR. WHITE The government plans to allow an alien race to colonize earth! KENNY How did you two find each other?

MRS. WHITE On the internet.

KENNY

Figures.

They lead them to the exit.

### STEVE

Sniffy. Come!

Sniffy runs over to Steve.

STEVE (CONT'D)

Stay.

Sniffy stays a moment, then rolls over for a belly rub.

Dolores comes over to Steve and Sniffy, bends down and starts rubbing Sniffy's belly.

STEVE (CONT'D) What about me?

DOLORES You still have to earn it.

She pats him on the head.

EXT. PARADE GROUNDS -- DAY

There's a group of FRIENDS and FAMILY on folding chairs, including the Jenkins, and Mrs. Bennett, attending the graduation of the group; Wallace & Shady, Wilma & Niko, Manny & Diamond, Nancy & Pup-Pup, Kenny & Shadow, Dolores & Truffles and Steve & Sniffy, who are all standing at attention to the side.

They are dressed in new uniforms, the animals have bandannas tied around their necks.

Johnson is at a small podium.

JOHNSON We are proud to have these newest members of Homeland Security join us. Each of us have decided that protecting our country is what we want to do. Nay, it is what we have to do.

(MORE)

JOHNSON (CONT'D) It is a natural desire to want to protect what we love; our family, our friends, our nation. And you are each now formally charged with your duties to do just that. We have a special presentation to one of our teams: for serve above and beyond the call of duty to protect this very camp. Steve Bennett and Sniffy, please step forward for a special commendation.

Steve and Sniffy go up. Johnson hands Steve a certificate. Steve shakes Johnson's hand. Then he hands Sniffy a ham bone. Sniffy give Johnson his paw. Applause.

Wallace and Shady are next to Dolores and Truffles. Shady is looking annoyed. Then confused. He looks over toward Truffles. Truffles has his hind leg up and is peeing on Shady's back leg. He finishes.

#### TRUFFLES

See? I have been paying attention.

Steve goes back to the line, slapping palms on the way down the line. He gives Kenny a bro-hug.

### SHADY

Nice job, runt.

Then Steve gets to Dolores and gives her a big kiss.

Sniffy and Truffles are beside each other now. They look at Steve and Dolores kiss.

# SNIFFY Are we related now?

The audience applauds. Debbie in the crowd holds up her hands.

DEBBIE

Puppy!

89.

The end