

DOG SQUAD!

BUSTER FINDS A FRIEND

Written by

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EXT. HOUNDLY HOUSE - DAY - ESTABLISH

EXT. HOUNDLY BACKYARD - CONTINUOUS

GRANDPA HOUNDLY is <SNORING> in a rocking chair on the back porch. He wakes, stretches, and stands creakily up.

GRANDPA HOUNDLY
(to himself)
Ahhhh! Good nap. Wonder what
everyone's doing...

SFX: Cleaning sounds from the garage.

Grandpa H. heads towards the garage.

INT. CANINE CAVE (GARAGE) CONTINUOUS

ON: JETT is bustling around, tidying up as Grandpa H. enters.

GRANDPA HOUNDLY
Hi, Jett.

JETT
Hi, Grandpa.

GRANDPA HOUNDLY
What are you up to, young fella?

JETT
Just tidying up the canine cave.

GRANDPA HOUNDLY
Need some help?

JETT
I'm OK, thanks.

GRANDPA HOUNDLY
Well, then...
(looking around)
Maybe I'll see what your sister is
doing.

JETT
(absently)
OK, Grandpa.

Grandpa Houndly exits.

EXT. HOUNDLEY BACKYARD - CONTINUOUS

JILLY is trimming Zaza. The other dogs are waiting their turn.

ZAZA
Not too much off the pompoms
please.

Grandpa H. enters.

GRANDPA HOUNDLY
Hi, Jilly. What's going on?

JILLY
It's dog grooming day, grandpa.

GRANDPA HOUNDLY
Need some help? I used to groom my
old dog, Bingo.

JILLY
Sure!

Jilly finishes up on Zaza and hands her grandpa the trimmers.

JILLY (CONT'D)
You're next, Vlad.

VLAD
I should not have to get groomed. I
am a wild wolf.

KETUS
You're only *part* wild wolf, buddy.

VLAD
The part that should not have to
get groomed!

BASIL
We need to look sharp. We're the
Dog Squad, after all.

FLO
(sensitively)
Vlad... are you scared of getting
groomed?

CLOSE ON: Vlad.

VLAD
No. What makes you say that?

FLO
Because you're hiding behind a
bush.

REVEAL: Vlad, hiding behind a bush. Everyone can clearly see
his lurking head.

ZAZA
We can still see you, by the way.

Vlad ducks. The dogs <GRIN>.

CLOSE ON: Grandpa H. grooming something.

GRANDPA HOUNDLEY
Just sit still, Vlad. This won't
hurt a bit...

ON: Jilly and the dogs looking surprised.

JILLY
Uh... Grandpa... you're grooming
the bush.

REVEAL: Grandpa H. is merrily trimming the (arguably Vlad-
shaped) bush instead of Vlad.

GRANDPA HOUNDLEY
(chuckles)
Oh, gosh. My eyesight's not what it
used to be. Maybe you better do it,
Jilly.

Grandpa H. hands over the clippers to Jilly.

A distant DOG HOWL is heard, O/S.

<BIRDS-EYE VIEW OF NEIGHBORHOOD>

AROUND THE COMMUNITY - The <HOWL> is picked up by a network
of dogs and passed around like a relay: An akita on a walk...
a dachshund on an apartment balcony... a terrier on a
motorcycle side car... until the sound reaches the Houndly
home.

EXT. HOUNDLY HOME - BACKYARD - CONTINUOUS

The dog's ears all prick up at the <HOWLING> sound.

KETUS
Hear that? There's a pup in
trouble!

Jett comes hurrying out of the garage.

The dogs interpret the howl for Jilly and Jett.

30

BASIL

A dog named Buster needs our help.

30

FLO

He's at the Barkley Bend Animal
Shelter.

JETT

C'mon, squad... to the canine cave!

Everyone <bolts> towards the ramshackle garage, past Grandpa
Houndly.

JUMP CUT TO:

IN A FLASH the squad burst out of the garage. Jilly and Jett
are suited up in their doggy utility belts and helmets, on
their bikes, with the dogs racing after them.

Grandpa H. waves at the departing squad. He looks around at
the now deserted yard. Distant <LONELY BIRD CHIRPING.>

GRANDPA HOUNDLEY

(sighs)

EXT. BARKLEY BEND PARK - CONTINUOUS

Jilly calls over to Jett, on their bikes, as the dogs trot
beside them through the park.

JILLY

Do you think Grandpa is OK?

JETT

What do you mean?

JILLY

He's kinda different this visit.
He's always looking for something
to do. And he seems... sad.

JETT

Yeah. I noticed that, too. Wonder
why.

ON: Jilly. She looks thoughtful.

EXT. HOUNDLY BACKYARD - CONTINUOUS

Grandpa Houndly is settling back into his rocking chair. He removes an old <PHOTO> from his breast pocket and regards it.

ON: Photo of Grandpa H. with his arm around BINGO, his old dog.

GRANDPA HOUNDLY
Sure do miss you, Bingo.

EXT. BARKLEY BEND ANIMAL SHELTER - LATER - ESTABLISH

The squad roll up outside the shelter.

INT. BARKLEY BEND ANIMAL SHELTER - MOMENTS LATER

The squad are greeted by MRS. KETTEBEE who runs the shelter.

MRS. KETTEBEE
Thanks for coming. I need your help
with Buster.

Mrs. Kettebee turns to REVEAL BUSTER, a mangy old mutt,
looking kind of bored and fed up.

MRS. KETTEBEE (CONT'D)
He's been here a long time now.
Such a sweet boy, but at his age,
it's hard to find him a family.
Most people want younger dogs.

JILLY
Young or old, all dogs deserve a
home.

SQUAD
(agreement!)

Jilly pets Buster who wags hopefully.

MRS. KETTEBEE
Buster can be a bit of a...
challenge.

FLO
He seems like a good boy!

The dogs all <SNIFF> Buster and wag.

KETUS
He smells OK.

MRS. KETTEBEE
He sleeps most of the day.

Buster starts <SNORING>.

MRS. KETTEBEE (CONT'D)
And snores.

Buster <FARTS!>. The sound wakes him with a start! (*He is otherwise oblivious of his flatulence.)

MRS. KETTEBEE (CONT'D)
And... *that*.

Everyone starts waving their hands and paws around as Buster's <FUNK!> permeates the place.

KETUS
He no longer smells OK.

VLAD
My eyes are watering...

Jilly clips a leash on Buster.

JILLY
We're going to find you a home,
Buster.

JETT
You're in good hands. And *paws*.

Buster <WAGS> hopefully as Jilly begins to lead him out. He walks into the side of the door.

MRS. KETTEBEE
His eyesight's not what it used to
be.

JILLY
(to herself, thoughtfully)
Just like Grandpa...

MRS. KETTEBEE
Oh, and, watch out for hats.

Jett turns to Jilly, puzzled, as they exit.

JETT
Did she say "watch out for hats"?

Jilly shrugs.

EXT. RANDALL HOUSE - LATER THAT DAY

The squad, with Buster, stand outside the Randall's front door. The RANDALLS open the door. (Mr. Randall wears a baseball cap.)

JILLY
Mr. and Mrs. Randall? We're the Dog Squad. We called about Buster.

JETT
And here he... *is!*

The squad dramatically part to REVEAL Buster.

POV: Buster, seeing Mr. Randall's ball cap. He begins to <HOWL!>.

MR. RANDALL
Why is he howling like that?

JILLY
(realizing)
I think... it might be your hat.

Mr. Randall takes off his hat and stares at it, puzzled. Buster stops howling.

JETT
(to himself)
Buster howls at hats. Good to know.

JILLY
Would you like to take him for a walk and get to know him?

Mrs. Randall takes the leash from Jilly and leads Buster around the yard. Buster is *verrrrry* slow.

FLO
(to Mrs. Randall)
He can't walk very fast.

Buster bumps into a tree.

ZAZA
Or see very well.

Mr. Randall regards the <FUR> practically flying off Buster. She waves it away from her eyes.

MR. RANDALL
Wow. He sheds. A *lot*.

Ketus tries to dig some grass over the fur to hide it.

KETUS
No more than your average... uh...
goat.

The others eye Ketus warningly. *Shush!*

Buster yawns and lies down, instantly fast asleep and
<SNORING>.

VLAD
He sleeps a lot, too.

BASIL
And snores.

Buster <FARTS>.

FLO
And... *that*.

Everyone begins waving away the funk! Mrs. Randall pats
Buster (holding her nose!)

MRS. RANDALL
Sorry, Buster. I don't think we're
the right family for you.

JETT
(rubbing his watering
eyes)
Totally understand.

INT. CANINE CAVE - LATER

ON: Elaborate cork board with photos of prospective Buster-
adopters (all crossed out). Threads from the photos are
connected to photos of Buster doing Buster-y things. It looks
like one of those crime case boards.

JETT (V.O.)
Let's review the "Finding Buster a
Family" file...

REVEAL: Jett, regarding the board along with the squad as
Buster sleeps and <SNORES>.

Jett points to photos of prospective adopters then to the connected photo of the reaction from Buster.

JETT (V.O.)
Joyce and Jackie...

ON: Photo of two women in fancy hats... and follow the thread to Buster howling.

VLAD
Too many hats.

ON: Photo of a family, sneezing feverishly... and follow the thread to Buster in a heap of shedded fur.

JETT (V.O.)
The Chungs...

ZAZA
Too much fur. So why get a dog? Get a fish.

ON: More photos of Buster basically asleep.

JETT (V.O.)
And if he's not howling and shedding, he's sleeping.

ON: Buster, <FARTING>.

FLO
And... *that*.

Jilly and Jett turn to each other, perplexed.

JETT
What are we going to do?

BASIL
(clearing throat
authoritatively)
If I may say. With a bit of training, and grooming, perhaps we can make Buster more... presentable.

JILLY
(unsure)
Maybe...

JETT
Worth a try!

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CANINE CAVE - NEXT MORNING

Basil is holding up a dog blanket, hiding something behind it. Zaza holds grooming clippers nearby.

BASIL
Drumroll, please...

Flo bangs the floor with her paws, <DRUMROLLING> and Basil whips the blanket away to REVEAL Buster. He has had a celebrity makeover. His fur is floofed (but he otherwise looks pretty much the same.)

BASIL (CONT'D)
Meet new and improved Buster! I did some training, Zaza did some grooming, and I must say I am reasonably satisfied with the results.

ZAZA
Oh! One more thing...

Zaza plunks a big <BOW> on Buster. The others regards him skeptically.

BASIL
Jett, if you would, please...

Basil gives Jett a hat. Jett puts it on. Basil distracts Buster with treats.

BASIL (CONT'D)
Here, Buster. Have a treat. Remain calm and chew on.

JETT
He didn't howl!

As soon as Buster is done with the treat, he sees Jett in the hat... and <HOWLS!>

VLAD
(clamping his ears)
Until he *did*.

Everyone clamps their ears.

BASIL
This may take a *bit* more work.

EXT. HOUSE - LATER

The squad pull up to a house with Buster in his fancy bow.

JETT
OK, these are the last people in
Barkley Bend who are looking to
adopt a dog right now.

JILLY
Let's hope they love Buster.

Flo hugs Buster.

FLO
Of course they will. He's a good
boy!

Buster wags hopefully as they all head to the door. Basil
trots beside Buster, offering advice.

BASIL
Remember what we went over, Buster.
Hats are your *friend*. And try not
to fall asleep.

ZAZA
And shed.

Buster <FARTS> quietly.

FLO
And... *that*.

Jett takes a nervous <BREATH> and <RINGS> the doorbell. The
sound of the doorbell sets Buster off and he races around the
yard in crazy circles, <BARKING> and chasing his tail... as
the FAMILY open the door and stare, perplexed at the sight.

JETT
(quietly, to himself)
Buster freaks out at doorbells.

Jett snaps a photo of Buster for his records.

JETT (CONT'D)
Also good to know.

Buster finally collapses, fast asleep and <SNORING>. Then he <FARTS> for good measure. The family quickly close the door on the sight! The squad <DEFLATE>.

INT. CANINE CAVE - LATER

The squad are debriefing in the canine cave. Jett is pinning the latest Buster <PHOTO> onto the crime-scene board.

BASIL

I guess you really *can't* teach an old dog new tricks.

JILLY

Buster is set in his ways, but that's what makes him special. He shouldn't have to try to be something he's not.

FLO

And we won't give up, right? We're the dog squad!

SQUAD

(general agreement)

JETT

(looking around)

Where *is* Buster?

The squad look around.

EXT. HOUNDLY HOME - BACKYARD

The squad enter the yard to REVEAL Grandpa Houndly, asleep on his rocker, with Buster asleep at his feet, both <SNORING>.

ON: Jilly. She notices a PHOTOGRAPH on the table beside Grandpa H. She picks it up.

ON: PHOTO of Grandpa H. and Bingo.

Jett peers over Jilly's shoulder.

JETT

Hey, that's Bingo, grandpa's old dog.

JILLY
(thoughtfully)
Maybe *that's* why grandpa hasn't
been himself this visit. He always
used to bring Bingo. He must miss
him.

JETT
I guess so. C'mon, squad, back to
the canine cave. There's gotta be
someone who wants Buster.

The squad begin to head back to the garage.

ON: Jilly looks from the photo... to Buster and her grandpa.

JILLY
(slowly smiling)
I think.... there *is*!

The squad turn back to Jilly, puzzled.

EXT. HOUNDLY HOUSE - FRONT YARD - NEXT DAY

ON: The squad are all lined up at attention near the door.

MOLLY and DESMOND exit the house, carrying Grandpa Houndley's
bags, followed by Grandpa H. and Buster.

JETT
Jilly, you are so smart - of course
- Buster is *perfect* for Grandpa!

MOLLY
Ready to go, Dad?

GRANDPA HOUNDLY
Sure am. I can't wait to show
Buster his new home.

Grandpa Houndly puts his arm around Buster who wags and
smiles to beat the band!

BUSTER
And I can't wait see it.

KETUS
(quietly, to the squad)
I didn't know Buster could speak.

VLAD
I'm so happy I could howl!

Grandpa Houndly puts on a hat to leave... and Buster begins to <HOWL!>. Everyone covers their ears.

ZAZA

I think we have enough howling for now.

JILLY

It's probably better not to wear your hat around Buster, Grandpa.

Grandpa H. looks puzzled, but removes his hat. Buster stops howling.

Molly and Desmond head into the car with Grandpa H. and Buster.

SQUAD

Bye, Grandpa! Bye, Buster!

JETT

Come visit again soon!

GRANDPA HOUNDLY

Thanks for the great visit and thanks for finding me my new best friend!

ON: Flo, wiping away a happy tear.

FLO

I just love a happy ending.

Everyone <WAVES> as the car drives off.

ON: Jilly. She removes a PHOTO from her pocket and regards it, smiling. It's Grandpa H. with his arm around Buster.

THE END