

Doggy Day Care

by

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FADE IN:

INT. CORPORATE OFFICE ROOM - DAY

ELIZABETH, 24, is sitting at her cubicle desk in a fancy NYC office building, typing viciously. It is clear she is functioning on coffee by her jittery leg movements and the bags under her eyes.

Her desk is messy with work papers and an old Chinese takeout container. On the desk sits one framed picture with her parents.

By her high messy ponytail and the scornful look on her face, it's clear this girl needs a vacation. Or a new job.

A woman is standing over her.

SHANNON

Are you ready to present?

Shannon, 45, with a chin and heels too high, talks slowly, with a snooty, almost-British accent, and never seems to make eye contact with anyone. Think Cruella De Vil meets Miranda Priestly.

ELIZABETH

Present what?

SHANNON

The report I asked you to write up for our conference call in 20 minutes.

ELIZABETH

I don't think you ever told me about that...

SHANNON

(Looks at phone)

Oh, well looks like I forgot the send you the assignment email. Whoops. Well, you're going to present to corporate.

ELIZABETH

But isn't that your job?

SHANNON

Well, I'm telling you to.

Elizabeth rolls her eyes at her uneaten sandwich and groans under her breath. She looks up at her boss.

ELIZABETH
Okay, I'll be ready.

Shannon walks away swiftly, bumping into her coworker, ELIZABETH'S BEST FRIEND, unapologetically.

Elizabeth's Best Friend, 25, is energetic and outgoing. She approaches Elizabeth's desk. Elizabeth doesn't notice.

ELIZABETH'S BEST FRIEND
Hey Liz.

Taps her. Elizabeth looks up angrily.

ELIZABETH
What's up? I have this report Shannon just assigned to me and if it's not done in...

ELIZABETH'S BEST FRIEND
(Cuts her off)
Chill. I just came over to see if you wanted to join us for karaoke tonight at Joey's? It's Four Loko Friday, your favorite. Well, actually it's my favorite, but you'll like it too.

ELIZABETH
Um,

She considers it.

ELIZABETH (CONT'D)
I don't know.

ELIZABETH'S BEST FRIEND
C'mon Liz, take a night for yourself. It's the fuckin' weekend. You deserve it. Shannon works you hard enough.

ELIZABETH
Something work-related might come up, and I'm really tired anyway. Thanks though.

ELIZABETH'S BEST FRIEND
Alright, well, if you change your mind, opening song's at 11.

Elizabeth's Best Friend walks away.

Elizabeth clicks out of her work document and searches Joey's Karaoke Bar on Facebook. She sits there, staring longingly at the screen.

CUT TO:

INT. OUTSIDE CORPORATE MEETING ROOM - DAY

Elizabeth exits the room where the corporate meeting was just held. She is holding a work portfolio and looks relieved, even smiling. A rarity.

SHANNON

Hey Elizabeth, can I talk to you
for a second?

Shannon approaches her and pulls her aside. Elizabeth looks up for recognition from Shannon.

But instead...

SHANNON (CONT'D)

I need you to watch my husband's
dog this weekend. I'm flying to
London. A spot opened up at this
spa for a desperately needed
mid-quarter retreat.

Elizabeth's face sinks. Anger starts to brew.

SHANNON (CONT'D)

Oh, honey, there is no one else in
the office I trust more than you,
which is why you are the one I
want to watch CHEWY.

Elizabeth's frown softens a bit. She doesn't let herself completely buy into her boss's bullshit.

ELIZABETH

You know, I've never watched a dog
before. I didn't grow up with one
as a kid.

SHANNON

That's fine, that's fine. Chewy's
usually pretty quiet.

Shannon hands Elizabeth everything.

SHANNON (CONT'D)

Here are the spare keys to the apartment and my spare credit card. I left all instructions on the kitchen counter.

Elizabeth stands in disbelief.

SHANNON (CONT'D)

Oh, and here's the receipt for my dry cleaning. Pick it up for me on the way home. You two will have a blast!

EXT. SIDEWALK OF MANHATTAN - EVENING

Elizabeth has the dry cleaning draped over one forearm and the dog leash in the opposite hand.

It's peak rush hour and people fly up and down the sidewalks. On top of that, an UNKNOWN MAN approaches the dog.

Unknown Man, 27, is wearing a fanny pack with dog treats inside.

UNKNOWN MAN

(in a high-pitched voice
as though talking to a
baby)

Chewy! Whooo's a good boy?

Unknown Man pets Chewy, an aged sheltie, 14 in dog years. Chewy greets him.

Elizabeth quickly puts her arm out to separate the two.

ELIZABETH

I'm sorry, but who are you?

In the process, the dry cleaning falls to the ground.

Unknown Man picks it up.

JULIO

I'm Julio, Chewy's dog walker.

Julio is the best friend you seek in a dog, but in human form, apparent by his infectious smile.

Julio bends down to give Chewy a treat from Julio's fanny pack.

JULIO (CONT'D)
 (in that weird voice
 again)
 Isn't that right, Chewy?

Elizabeth is taken aback by the accent and takes a slight step back. His connection to the dog makes her uncomfortable.

ELIZABETH
 Oh.

JULIO
 (in a normal voice)
 I see you've been subjected to
 doggy day care?

ELIZABETH
 Yeah.

JULIO
 Was it the Mr. or Mrs.?

ELIZABETH
 Shannon. Per her orders, I have to
 pick up Chewy's dinner, so I
 should probably get going.

Elizabeth inches away.

JULIO
 (sarcastically)
 Oh, the Friday night steak
 special?

Elizabeth's stance loosens. She stops.

JULIO (CONT'D)
 That's a tradition in the Cibliani
 household. Every Friday night they
 buy steak for three: Shannon,
 Joseph, and Chewy.

ELIZABETH
 I wish I were treated that well.

Julio smiles.

ELIZABETH (CONT'D)
 I've never done this, as you can
 probably tell.

JULIO
 What? Suck up to your boss or buy
 a dog a \$100 filet for dinner?

ELIZABETH

Like, how does he like his meat cooked? Medium-rare, well-done? And what type of wine do I pair it with?

Julio laughs.

JULIO

Well, Elizabeth,

ELIZABETH

(interjects)

Call me "Liz"

JULIO

Okay, Liz, if you need anything, here's my number.

Puts his number in her phone.

JULIO (CONT'D)

But that dog shouldn't need much. I mean, look at him.

(in that weird voice)

Bye you two!

CUT TO:

INT. KITCHEN OF SHANNON'S PENTHOUSE APARTMENT - NIGHT

Elizabeth is in the kitchen within unboxing the steak. She serves it to him on Shannon's fine china.

ELIZABETH

(to Chewy)

Here you go.

Chewy looks at it, but doesn't eat it right away.

ELIZABETH (CONT'D)

C'mon Chewy.

(trying to imitate

Julio's weird dog voice)

It's steak! It's so yummy. Look I'm gonna eat it if you don't!

She turns her head, embarrassed and surprised that noise just came out of her mouth.

Chewy starts to eat. Once he's done, he walks away and plops into bed.

Elizabeth looks over at the note on the counters which reads: "Elizabeth, feed the dog, walk him around the block right after he eats."

She turns the note over.

"He MUST go for the walk before he gets into bed after dinner, or he WILL have an accident. Cheers, Shannon."

Elizabeth looks up, wide-eyed.

ELIZABETH (CONT'D)

Shit.

She runs over to the bed to find a large wet spot in the middle of Chewy's bed.

IN APARTMENT AND AROUND BUILDING - MONTAGE

Elizabeth brings Chewy into the elevator. As soon as the door opens, a dog starts attacking him. There's lots of barking and mouthing. Terrified, Elizabeth pulls Chewy from the doors.

Elizabeth walks down 17 flights of stairs with Chewy from the penthouse.

Elizabeth takes Chewy outside onto the street. Chewy picks something sticky off the street. Elizabeth realizes it's dog shit and yells at him to drop it.

She picks up a stick and tries to push it out of his mouth, but he's growling viciously.

With dog shit still in Chewy's mouth, Elizabeth drags him back up the stairs to the apartment.

She runs to the pantry and picks the first thing she can find, a bag of truffles. She taunts him with one and little pieces of shit sprinkle the floor.

Finally, he drops the last big piece and takes the truffle. Elizabeth drops the stick.

Chewy is now covered in pee and shit.

She picks him up reluctantly, puts him in the bath, and gets into the tub to keep him from jumping out. She washes him, and brushes his teeth. Bubbles are everywhere.

Once Chewy is out, she uses a blow dryer to dry herself and Chewy off.

Exhausted, she sits down in relief on couch next to Chewy with truffles in hand.

END MONTAGE

INT. LIVING ROOM OF SHANNON'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

ELIZABETH
 (to Chewy)
 You like chocolate? Better than
 dog shit, huh?

Elizabeth pets the dog. By some twist of fate, they've bonded.

ELIZABETH (CONT'D)
 Who wouldn't like mommy's special
 Jacques Torres truffles? What's
 not to like?

Dog looks up at Elizabeth and the food in her hand.

ELIZABETH (CONT'D)
 One more can't hurt, right?

Gives the dog a truffle. He licks his chops.

Chewy jumps off the couch and walks into the kitchen where his bowl is.

Elizabeth stays on the couch, eating her boss's truffles, watching TV. She gets up to throw the empty box away.

KITCHEN - CONT'D

She sees Chewy laying on the ground next to his bowl.

ELIZABETH
 Takin a little nap? I'm exhausted
 too. Long day at work?

She bends down to pet him. He doesn't react.

ELIZABETH (CONT'D)
 Chewy wake up. Wanna play?

Grabs the ball and throws it across the kitchen.

Chewy doesn't move. Panic starts to set in.

ELIZABETH (CONT'D)
 Chewy, wake up. C'mon don't play
 dead.

The dog starts to WHINE. Elizabeth panics and looks at her phone with Julio's number up. She calls him.

ELIZABETH (CONT'D)

(on phone)

Hey Julio, Chewy is making some weird noises and I don't know what to do. I gave him his steak dinner as ordered and then gave him some of Shannon's truffles to get the shit he picked up off the street out of his mouth...

JULIO

Wait, you gave him chocolate?

ELIZABETH

Yeah. Just a few pieces. Why? Is that bad?

JULIO

Chocolate could kill dogs if they consume too much of it!

The panicked work Elizabeth reappears.

ELIZABETH

I just thought that since he had such a refined palette, that he would like her fancy truffles. Like what dog eats steak for dinner? I don't know. Can you please help?

JULIO

Yeah, meet me at the vet in 10.

CUT TO:

INT. VET'S WAITING ROOM - NIGHT

Elizabeth is pacing back and forth in the waiting room without the dog. It is unclear whether or not she is talking to herself or Julio, who is also there.

ELIZABETH

Shannon's gonna kill me when she finds out I killed her dog. What am I gonna do?

JULIO

Calm down. It will be alright.

Julio takes Elizabeth's hand and, for a split second, they lock eyes, until Elizabeth's nerves jolt her back to reality.

ELIZABETH

Should I call Shannon? I need to tell her. But she's on vacation at a chocolate spa, go figure, and is not to be bothered.

JULIO

I think you should call her.

Elizabeth looks at her phone with Shannon's contact open. She takes a deep breath and initiates the call. When she does, the VET, 47, wearing a white lab coat, walks into the room. She puts the still-ringing phone in her lap.

Both Elizabeth and Julio look up at the vet desperately.

VET

(in a soft, yet professional voice)
I am so sorry but Chewy has passed.

Pause. Then, in a softer voice...

VET (CONT'D)

I know he has been suffering for a while, so this was expected. It was just a matter of time.

Shannon picks up.

SHANNON

(from phone)
Hello?

ELIZABETH

(to the vet)
Wait, so this dog has been sick for a long time? It didn't die because I gave it chocolate?

VET

Unfortunately, Chewy was diagnosed with cancer six months ago.

SHANNON

(from phone)
HELLO? Elizabeth? Why are you calling me???

Elizabeth is enraged. Elizabeth picks the phone up.

ELIZABETH

Shannon, you knew that Chewy was sick all along! You knew he was going to die and made me handle it! That's why you went away this weekend!

Meanwhile, Julio and the Vet are standing there watching this unfold.

ELIZABETH (CONT'D)

I thought I was going to get a promotion! I do so much shit for you like present my research to corporate under your name, and now you repay me by making me send off your dying dog while you're off vacationing in Europe.

SHANNON

(passively)
Sweetie...

ELIZABETH

(cuts her off)
You know what, Shannon? I QUIT. By the way, good luck cleaning up the dog shit all over your sheepskin rug.

She hangs up determinedly. Looks to Julio.

ELIZABETH (CONT'D)

Let's go to Karaoke.

CUT TO:

INT. JOEY'S KARAOKE BAR - NIGHT

Elizabeth grabs a microphone and storms onto the empty stage. She pulls Shannon's platinum credit card out of her pocket and waves it around.

ELIZABETH

Hey everyone, drinks on me!

The crowd erupts. Elizabeth lets her hair down. Looks to the DJ.

ELIZABETH (CONT'D)

Hit it!

FADE OUT