

THOSE BIG OL' PUPPY DOG EYES

Written by

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FADE IN:

INT. APARTMENT/HALLWAY - NIGHT

A pink object whizzes through the air. A tiny, tan and black colored Beagle, Charlie (3), follows right after it.

A beat, as Charlie exits the hallway in pursuit of the flying toy. He then comes bursting back, the pink toy squeaking joyfully in his mouth as he runs on through, back to the other side.

INT. APARTMENT/BATHROOM

Standing in front of the bathroom mirror is KRISTEN BLOOM (31), brushing her hair wildly while simultaneously applying mascara to her eyebrows. She does so with the confidence and grace of someone who has found herself running late many, many times in the past.

Charlie completes his trip to Kristen, the pink little toy (now clearly a latex dog bone) sitting proudly in his mouth.

KRISTEN

Yeah, wow, I have to admit: you
caught on to that whole fetch thing
far faster than I expected you to.

Kristen bends down to pet Charlie, still manipulating the brush with her other hand.

KRISTEN (CONT'D)

Good boy! Yes you are, yes you are!

Charlie looks up at Kristen, his tail wagging with a fury. He almost certainly has no idea what she is saying, but he can still recognize praise when he hears it.

Kristen stops petting Charlie, but his tail continues to wag joyously as she lowers the brush onto the sink.

INT. APARTMENT/HALLWAY - NIGHT

Kristen speed walks out of the bathroom, finishing up her mascara as she goes down the hall. Charlie follows her excitedly, practically running to keep up. He hasn't let go of the toy. Kristen notices this as she approaches her bedroom door.

KRISTEN

Don't get me wrong buddy, I'm very proud of your fetching ability. That being said...

Kristen looks down from the other side of the door. Charlie is sitting right in the middle of the door frame, wagging his tail excitedly. The toy hangs loosely from his mouth.

KRISTEN (CONT'D)

I think you might be getting a tad *bit* clingy.

Kristen gently pushes Charlie aside and closes the door behind her. Charlie panics, dropping the toy from his mouth as he prepares for a new task -- scratching the door vigorously. After a few seconds of this, he stops and lowers his head. Defeated.

KRISTEN (O.S.) (CONT'D)

So maybe tonight will be good for the both of us, you know? Spend a little time apart?

Charlie barks from the hallway, now frustrated.

KRISTEN (O.S.) (CONT'D)

You just wouldn't understand, boy. I mean, you're a dog -- how could you? But, you remember how I came to the dog pound last week and picked you up? Well, there's no dog pound for human beings -- no one is going to come whisk me away to live a comfortable and happy life with them. So if I want to be with someone, I have to go on this crazy thing called "a date."

Kristen opens the door, now wearing a sleek black dress. Charlie perks up, jumping on her legs and acting like they haven't seen each other in years. Kristen pats his head sweetly, while simultaneously grimacing and trying to push him off.

INT. APARTMENT/LIVING ROOM

Kristen walks out of the hallway, expertly putting on her black heels as she does so. Charlie follows just a bit behind her.

Kristen reaches for her purse hanging from a hook near the door. On the adjacent hook is Charlie's bright orange leash.

Clearly taking notice of this, Charlie sits excitedly. Tail still wagging and tongue now flapping out of his open mouth. Kristen rolls her eyes and looks down at the dog.

KRISTEN

Yes, buddy, that's very impressive,
but I told you -- we're not going.
I'M GOING.

All signs of excitement from Charlie cease. His mouth is closed shut, his tail is dead still, and his ears have lowered substantially. He knows he's about to be abandoned.

KRISTEN (CONT'D)

My god, you really are VERY
perceptive.

Charlie looks right up at Kristen, making direct eye contact with the most powerful puppy dog eyes ever conjured. Kristen winces at the sight.

KRISTEN (CONT'D)

Oh come on, boy, it will only be a
couple of hours max! You don't have
to throw those big ol' puppy dog
eyes at me!

Charlie let's out a little whimper now, a whine that by its very sound channels pure sympathy. Kristen deflates.

KRISTEN (CONT'D)

Oh, the whine too? Why do you have
to jump to the whine!

Kristen shakes her head, regains her composure.

KRISTEN (CONT'D)

No, no, no, your tricks aren't
going to work on me! I am your
master, and you're not going to
trap me in this house!

Kristen finally grabs her purse from the hook and quickly bolts out the door, slamming it shut right as Charlie approaches.

KRISTEN (O.S.) (CONT'D)

I am going on my date! And there's
nothing you can do about it!

Charlie sits down, right on the door mat. Tilts his head all the way back, and begins to unleash the dreaded HOWL. Mixed with whimpers and cries and soft little barks - Charlie really pulls out all the stops for this one.

Seven seconds later, Kristen comes barging through the door. Charlie's howling ceases immediately as he jumps up excitedly at his returning owner.

KRISTEN (CONT'D)
Okay, fine, maybe we'll just sit down and cuddle up for like ten minutes but then, *really*, I have to go. No buts about it!

CUT TO:

INT. APARTMENT/LIVING ROOM -- SOMETIME LATER

Kristen is no longer wearing her nice black dress. Instead, she is wearing a pair of unspectacular grey sweat pants and a T-shirt to match.

She contemplatively chews on a handful of Cheetos as the TV blares in the background. Charlie is curled up right alongside her, cozy as can be. He's basking in his victory.

Charlie looks up at Kristen, panting happily once more. Not a care in the world.

KRISTEN
You know what, boy? Fine -- maybe I should just lean into this then. You know, the whole spinster-hood thing? I mean, *really* lean into it. Get a bunch more dogs, gain a hundred pounds, stop shaving my legs...

Kristen shrugs as she pops another Cheeto into her mouth.

KRISTEN (CONT'D)
Who knows? Could be fun, at least.

At that moment, Kristen's phone begins to vibrate furiously on the coffee table. She looks at the screen and grimaces.

KRISTEN (CONT'D)
Ugh, it's him -- he's probably going to be so mad I stood him up. Eek...should I answer?

Charlie just shifts his position to his back, and yawns.

KRISTEN (CONT'D)
Ugh, you're no help.

Kristen picks up the phone and puts it to her ear.

KRISTEN (CONT'D)
Look, before you get mad, I just
want to say --

The voice of THE DATE quickly cuts in, clearly frazzled and distraught.

THE DATE (O.S.)
Kristen? Kristen? Is that you? Oh,
I can't believe you would even pick
up after what happened. I feel like
such a jackass. I've never stood up
someone like that before, I swear--

Kristen's eyebrow raises in surprise, but also interest.

KRISTEN
Stood ME up?

THE DATE (O.S.)
Yeah, yeah, I know -- crappy move
on the first date, right? But I was
walking my dog before heading out
to the restaurant and, as we were
crossing Washington Ave, she got
free from her leach! I had to chase
him five blocks and, even though
she seemed fine, I took her to the
emergency vet, just in case.

As The Date speaks, Kristen's expression turns into a grin.

KRISTEN
I didn't know you had a dog....

THE DATE
Yeah, Chelsea. Had her for two
years now. I didn't tell you that?

Charlie, smelling Kristen's Cheeto dust covered hand, begins to lick her vigorously. Kristen looks down at him, covering the microphone of her phone with the other hand.

KRISTEN
Hey boy...what would you say to a
double date, huh?

Charlie lets out an enthusiastic bark in response.

KRISTEN (CONT'D)
Yup, that's what I thought too.

FADE OUT.