

Lost Dog
an original screenplay by
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FADE IN:

EXT. GROCERY STORE - NIGHT

CLOSE UP - STORE WINDOW. A flier depicting a WHITE DOG is taped to the window. The words 'Lost Dog' frame the dog's photo copied image.

GREG NELSON (33) waves to a CASHIER then hurries into the rain soaked parking lot toward a rough idling CIVIC. He tries the door. Locked. He scowls, knocking against the window.

INT. CIVIC - CONTINUOUS

MEGAN PARKER (30) sits in the driver's seat glaring straight ahead. More KNOCKING. She turns to Greg and glares.

GREG
Megan. Come on.

A BEAT. Megan unlocks the car door. Greg hops in, soaking wet.

GREG (CONT'D)
What gives?

MEGAN
At least you have a jacket, Greg.

Greg wipes the water from his face. Restrains himself from retaliating.

GREG
I'm just as desperate to find her as
you are, Meg.

Meg humphs. Lowers Greg's power window. He flinches as the rain falls into the car.

MEGAN
Start calling.

OFF GREG. Struggling for restraint.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - NIGHT

The Civic pulls away. Greg leans out the open window, hands cupping his mouth.

GREG
Snickers! Snickers!

EXT. STRIP MALL - NIGHT

The Civic circles the empty parking lot.

GREG
Snickers! SNICKERS!

EXT. STRIP MALL/BACK ALLEY - NIGHT

The Civic descends the desolate back alley passing dumpsters and pallets.

GREG
Snickers!

INT. CIVIC - NIGHT

ON GAS STATION THROUGH WINDSHIELD

Megan watches from the car as Greg stands at the counter inside, flashing the lost dog flier. The CASHIER shakes her head no. Greg pays her and grabs two coffees from the counter. He hurries to the car and gets in.

GREG
I thought we could use a little warm
me up.

He offers a coffee to Megan. She doesn't take it. He sets it on the dashboard.

MEGAN
You are so irresponsible.

GREG
I should have checked the gate,
alright? I know. I should have
checked it...

Greg simmers for a moment, fighting to restrain his next words, but it's no use. He let's them slip.

GREG (CONT'D)
...but if you would've just hired
someone English speaking to clean up
the lawn.

MEGAN
I wouldn't have to hire anyone if
you just did your job, Greg! It's
ridiculous. You can't even walk
back there without stepping in poop.

GREG
Why is that my job?

MEGAN
Because we agreed.

GREG
No. You agreed.

MEGAN
There you go again, dodging
responsibility.

GREG
I am not dodging -

MEGAN
Act like an adult. Please?

GREG
I didn't even want a dog.

Meg glares daggers. A pronounced pause.

GREG (CONT'D)
What? I didn't.

MEGAN
Get out.

GREG
Meg -

MEGAN
Get out of the car.

GREG
But this is my car.

This infuriates Megan even more.

MEGAN
You are such an asshole.

Megan takes the car keys. Gets out and slams the car door.
The rocking car causes the dashboard poised coffee to spill
in Greg's lap.

GREG
Ow! Jesus Christ.

EXT. GAS STATION - CONTINUOUS

Greg gets out of the car.

GREG
Meg!

Megan keeps walking. Greg brushes coffee from his pants. Hurries up beside her.

GREG (CONT'D)
Megan, come on. I'm sorry. All
right? I made a mistake.

Megan keeps walking.

MEGAN
A mistake.

GREG
Yeah. You know, a mistake. Like
what Snickers did to my new shoes?

MEGAN
Keep on digging.

GREG
Seriously, Megan? Sometimes I think
you love that dog more than you love
me.

Megan stops walking.

MEGAN
Maybe that's because she's easier to
love.

GREG
She's a dog!

Megan turns and hurries off.

GREG (CONT'D)
Megan. Come on.

Megan keeps walking. Greg starts toward the car then suddenly realizes something. Turns.

GREG (CONT'D)
HEY! You've got the keys!

Megan keeps walking. Greg slumps his shoulders.

GREG (CONT'D)
For Christ's sake.

CUT TO:

EXT. GAS STATION - LATER

Greg stands outside the gas station next to the Civic. A LUXURY SEDAN pulls into the gas station. Greg gets in.

GREG (V.O.)
I'm in deep shit.

INT. LUXURY SEDAN - NIGHT

MITCH NIELSON (35) drives. He's catalogue good-looking. Rakish good looks accentuated by designer duds. Mitch is clearly the more successful of the two brothers.

MITCH
What do you want to do?

GREG
Find the damn thing. Stupid dog.

MITCH
You don't find this ironic? On today
of all days the dog runs away?

This catches Greg off guard.

GREG
Ironic?

MITCH
Uncannily the opposite of the desired
outcome.

GREG
I know what ironic means, Mitch.

MITCH
This is the universe trying to give
you a hint, Greg. The two of you
are completely incompatible.

GREG
What are you talking about? We're
plenty compatible.

MITCH
Megan doesn't want the kind of life
you have to offer, little brother.

GREG
And how would you know what Megan
wants?

Mitch shifts, redirecting the conversation.

MITCH
My point is that she isn't attracted
to you. She's just attracted to the
challenge of you.

GREG
The challenge of me.

MITCH
The challenge of fixing you. It's
only a matter of time before your
gutter charm wears off.

Off Greg's look.

MITCH (CONT'D)
You're a novelty, Greg. Like corn
dogs and cotton candy. They're nice
once in awhile, but eat 'em everyday
and they make you sick.

GREG
Turn here.

EXT. PAWN SHOP - CONTINUOUS

The sedan pulls into the sketchy parking lot. Two BLACK MEN
in jump suits talk outside the store.

INT. LUXURY SEDAN - CONTINUOUS

MITCH
Where the hell are you taking me?

GREG
I'll just be a minute.

Greg gets out.

MITCH
I swear to God if I get car jacked.

Mitch locks the doors. The two BLACK MEN look up from their
conversation, glaring. Mitch throws a nervous wave. The
Black Men turn away.

THROUGH WINDSHIELD - Greg hurries into the PAWN SHOP.

Mitch watches as Greg speaks with the CASHIER. Greg flashes
the lost dog flier. The cashier shakes his head no. Greg
hurries out of the store to the car.

GREG
No sign of it.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - NIGHT

The sedan pulls up to the curb. Mitch kills the engine and
gets out. Greg follows. Mitch pops the trunk and pulls out
a FLASHLIGHT, handing it to Greg. He lights a cigarette.

GREG

Okay. So we've had a rough patch lately. But relationships have a way of wanting to go somewhere.

MITCH

What you don't see, dude, is that you're going somewhere you don't want to go.

GREG

What's that supposed to mean?

Mitch grabs his own flashlight from the trunk and closes it.

MITCH

It means -
 (gesturing to the street)
 Where do you want to start?

Greg looks up the street to the corner.

MATCH CUT TO:

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET/FLASHBACK - DAY

The same street corner. SNICKERS rounds the corner and runs past. A BRIGHT RED RIBBON is tied around her neck.

GREG (O.S.)

Stop! God Damn It! Stop!

Greg rounds the corner. Barefoot. Dressed in boxers and a tee shirt.

GREG (CONT'D)

SNICKERS! STOP!

He runs past, feet smacking painfully on the asphalt.

MATCH CUT TO:

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - NIGHT

Greg stands in the same spot. He turns, staring down the street to where a guard rail marks a dead end.

GREG

It ran that way. So let's start here.

Greg and Mitch shine their flash lights on the pavement, scrutinizing the path of the dog. They continue to search the pavement as they speak.

Flashbacks to early dates...to him being himself versus being who she wants him to be. Big cars televisions etc. Being trained to conform to society...wear a tie work a job...etc. Finds out brother and her slept together.

Trying to hold on so tight to everything and missing the point. Changing and not being himself. Worried about things all the time. She slept with slovenly Mitch...an escape...wrong thing, and she's taking it out on him because he's so perfect...

Have to train a dog. Can't just let it be. Dog doing bad stuff.

GREG (CONT'D)

So answer the question.

MITCH

What question?

GREG

Where do you think it's going? Me and Megan.

MITCH

Domestication.

GREG

And that's a bad thing because...

MITCH

Because people weren't meant to be with one person their whole life, Greg.

GREG

So you're what, going to just keep hopping from girl to girl for the rest of your life?

MITCH

What's wrong with that?

GREG

You don't want someone there with you through it all? Someone to share in the trip?

MITCH

No.

GREG

Well, I do.

Something twinkles in the beam of Mitch's flashlight.

MITCH
Wait. What's that?

Mitch kneels down close to the pavement. Greg hurries to see what it is. He picks up a discarded bottle cap.

GREG
Trash. Keep looking.
(beat)
Damn dog.

EXT. PARKING STRUCTURE - NIGHT

The sedan is parked on top of the park, overlooking the twinkling lights of suburbia.

INT. SEDAN - CONTINUOUS

Mitch and Greg sip long necks staring out at the view. Mitch smokes.

MITCH
All I'm saying is that you've changed, man. You're more serious. Like you're always worried about something.

GREG
That has nothing to do with Meg, Mitch.

MITCH
It doesn't?

GREG
No. My job sucks.

MITCH
There you go. That's what I mean.

GREG
What?

MITCH
The old Greg would've never taken that job.

GREG
Yeah, well the old Greg was sick and tired of eating Ramen in a one room efficiency.

Mitch shakes his head side to side.

MITCH

Do you even remember some of the
shit you used to tell me, man? The
shit she put you through? And now
you just take it.

GREG

Yeah well, I had some growing up to
do.

MITCH

Fuck.

Mitch shakes his head side to side.

MITCH (CONT'D)

Look at you. She's got you all metro-
sexualized, man. I bet you're even
using some dandy shit like pomade or
something.

Greg shies away.

MITCH (CONT'D)

I knew it. You're not a boyfriend,
man. You're a pet.

(beat)

Fuck me. I gotta piss.

Mitch gets out of the car. He crosses the parking structure
to relieve himself. Greg flips down the visor. Contemplates
his reflection in the visor mirror. He pulls at his hair.

MEGAN (V.O.)

No seriously. It looks good.

INT. HOUSE/FLASHBACK - DAY

Greg stands in front of the mirror, bare chested. Megan
styles his hair, admiring the reflection of her handiwork.

MEGAN

Perfecto.

CUT TO:

INT. HOUSE/FLASHBACK - DAY

Megan brushes Snicker's hair, fluffing it as she admires the
reflection of her handiwork in a full length mirror. Greg
watches from an adjoining room.

MEGAN

Perfecto.

CUT TO:

INT. HOUSE/FLASHBACK - DAY

Megan holds up a sweater in front of Greg as he steps into the room, brushing his teeth.

CUT TO:

INT. HOUSE/FLASHBACK - DAY

Greg watches as Megan dresses Snickers in a doggy sweater.

CUT TO:

INT. HOUSE/BEDROOM/FLASHBACK - NIGHT

Megan and Greg lie face to face in bed. Megan peers longingly into Greg's eyes.

MEGAN

I love you.

CUT TO:

INT. HOUSE/BEDROOM/FLASHBACK - NIGHT

Megan lies in bed. Snicker's lies on her chest. Megan peers into Snicker's eyes.

MEGAN

Who loves you? Momma loves you.

CUT TO:

INT. HOUSE/FAMILY ROOM/FLASHBACK - DAY

Megan sits on a couch watching television. Snickers steps close on the couch. Licks Megan on the lips. Megan makes a face. Pushes Snickers away.

MEGAN

Snickers!

CUT TO:

INT. HOUSE/KITCHEN/FLASHBACK - DAY

Megan sits at a counter, working on her laptop. Greg steps up behind her and plants a kiss on Megan's neck. She pushes him away.

MEGAN

Greg!

CUT TO:

INT. HOUSE/BATHROOM/FLASHBACK - DAY

Greg styles his hair in a mirror's reflection. He is dressed up in a shirt and tie. Snickers watches him from the floor. BIG RED RIBBON tied around her neck.

GREG (O.S.)

Come on.

INT. HOUSE/FLASHBACK - MOMENTS LATER

Greg bends over Snickers, obscuring the dog from view. He fusses over the dog for a moment then quickly stands. He looks around, nervous. The dog BARKS o.s.

GREG

Okay. Okay. Come on. Outside.
Hurry up.

Greg opens the back door. Snickers runs out. Greg closes the door. He hurries about the kitchen lighting candles. He returns to the back door and opens it.

GREG (CONT'D)

Snickers. House.

The dog doesn't come.

GREG (CONT'D)

Snickers! House!

No response. Greg steps outside.

EXT. HOUSE/FLASHBACK - CONTINUOUS

Greg steps out into the fenced yard. The dog is nowhere to be found.

GREG

Snickers?

Realization hits Greg like a kick to the groin.

GREG'S POV - The fence gate hangs open.

GREG (CONT'D)

Shit!

We hear a CAR DOOR open (o.s.) as we...

CUT TO:

INT. BEAT UP SEDAN - NIGHT

Greg snaps out of it. Mitch gets into the car.

MITCH
What do you want to do?

GREG
I don't know what else to do.

MITCH
Right.

Mitch starts the car.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - DAWN

The sky blues with pre-dawn hues. The sedan RUMBLES down the street.

INT. BEAT UP SEDAN - DAWN

Greg watches the SUNRISE through the window.

CUT TO:

EXT. HOUSE/FLASHBACK - MORNING

Greg stands in his robe while the dog does its business. He walks into the house with Snickers...

INT. HOUSE/KITCHEN/FLASHBACK - CONTINUOUS

...And finds a cup of coffee waiting on the table. Megan sits down across from him, opening the newspaper. She looks at the dog. Snicker's pants happily: what passes for a dog smile.

MEGAN
Look at that.
(cutesy voice)
Look at that!

Megan bends down and pets Snickers on the head. Snickers hunkers down and does circles then stands on her back legs, sniffing at Megan merrily.

MEGAN (CONT'D)
This dog loves me. No matter what I do. She loves me just the way I am.

Greg is not sure what to say. He flashes a smile. Megan turns to him and just stares. A slow languorous smile crosses her lips.

GREG

What?

MEGAN

You do too, don't you? No matter what.

Greg smiles.

CUT TO:

INT. BEAT UP SEDAN - DAY

Greg stares out the window at passing suburbia. He suddenly jumps to attention.

GREG

Wait! WAIT!

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - DAY

The sedan SQUEALS to a stop. Greg jumps out. Rushes a TEENAGER with a WHITE DOG - SNICKERS!

GREG

HEY!

The TEENAGER starts walking faster away from Greg.

GREG (CONT'D)

Hey! Where did you get that dog?

The teenager scoops the dog up into her arms.

TEENAGER

It's my dog.

GREG

Let me see it!

The teenager pulls the dog away from Greg's grasping hands.

TEENAGER

Get away!

GREG

THAT'S MY DOG!

Pandemonium. Snickers BARKING. The teenager runs, clutching the dog in her arms. Greg chases.

GREG (CONT'D)

HEY! HEY!

The teenager runs toward a house, SCREAMING now. A MIDDLE AGED MAN hurries out as the teenager jumps onto the front porch. Greg rushes after the teen.

GREG (CONT'D)

Give me that dog!

The middle aged man intercepts.

MIDDLE AGED MAN

What the hell is this?

GREG

That's my dog! Damn it!

MIDDLE AGED MAN

BACK OFF!

Greg tries to push past the middle aged man. The man spins Greg. Punches him in the face. Greg collapses to the ground.

GREG

OW! Ow ow ow!

MIDDLE AGED MAN

Mandy! Call the police!

OFF GREG. He looks up. A series of PHOTO BULB FLASHES illuminate him.

FLASH CUT TO:

INT. JAIL - DAY

Greg poses for a mug shot. His eye is puffy, black, and blue. He is somber.

EXT. JAIL - MOMENTS LATER

Mitch walks with Greg to his car.

MITCH

There is more than one white dog in the world you know.

GREG

Fuck off, Mitch.

EXT. HOUSE - DAY

The sedan pulls up to the house with a SQUEAK of brakes.

INT. BEAT UP SEDAN - CONTINUOUS

Greg stares out the windshield.

GREG

When Meg got Snickers from the rescue she was a mess. She used to nip. Piss all over everything. But she got better. With time and careful attention she got better, and now she's a sweet dog. A really sweet dog.

He turns to Mitch.

GREG (CONT'D)

You're wrong. All the shit Megan does, she does because she cares about me. I'm a better person because of her.

MITCH

Whatever, man. It's your life. To each his own, right?

GREG

For crying out loud, Mitch. Be a friend. Wish me luck.

MITCH

Yeah. All right. Good luck then.

EXT. HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Greg hurries to the apartment. The sedan pulls off, fan belt WHINING.

INT. HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Greg steps into the foyer.

GREG

Megan?

He hurries through the home. Megan steps out of the kitchen, frantic. On the phone.

MEGAN

It' okay, Cindy. He just walked in.

Megan hangs up the phone and slams it down.

MEGAN (CONT'D)

Christ, Greg! Arrested?

GREG
I thought they had Snick -

A BARK outside.

GREG (CONT'D)
Snickers?

MEGAN
Mrs. Paulson found her eating the
tomato plants.

Megan opens the door and Snickers runs in. The dog flashes its trademark panting smile. Greg kneels down. Checks the dog's collar.

GREG
Where is it?

Greg frantically turns over the collar.

GREG (CONT'D)
WHERE IS IT!

The dog flinches.

MEGAN
Where is what?

Greg stands.

GREG
Jesus Christ!

MEGAN
Greg, you're scaring me. Where's
what?

GREG
THE RING!

A beat.

MEGAN
What ring?

Greg looks into Megan's eyes. Defeated.

GREG
The one I was going to propose with.

A beat. Megan stares at Greg. She suddenly explodes.

MEGAN
 You tied it around the dog's neck?
 ARE YOU NUTS?

GREG
 I thought it would be romantic.

MEGAN
 Jesus Christ, Greg.

INT. HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Snickers watches out the window as Megan and Greg crawl around on their hands and knees. They frantically scour the yard. Voices muted through the window.

MEGAN
 You're sweet, Greg. You really are.
 But sometimes you just don't think.

GREG
 That's what I have you for.

Greg flashes a strained smile. Snickers let's out a WHINE.

Greg slumps back to a seat. Wipes his brow, staring back at Snickers. The dog cants its head to the side. WHINES, staring back.

CLOSE UP GREG - He cants his head to the side, mirroring the dog's movement. A sudden look of concern grips him.

MEGAN (O.S.)
 Wait! Wait! I think I found it!

EXT. HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Megan holds up the ring, caked in dirt. She beams with excitement. Greg doesn't turn around.

MEGAN
 Greg?

Greg turns to Megan. Somber. Megan's smile fades.

THE END

