

MAXI

Written by

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Based on, If Any

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FADE IN:

INT. BOX - DAY

It's dark. Very dark.

Short, sharp pants are heard.

Through the wall of a box, a light shines onto a bone-shaped blue dog tag.

The letters M-A-X-I illuminate.

MAXI, a Pomeranian/Poodle puppy, cocks his head at the source of the light.

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

His small black nose pokes through the hole.

A little GIRL (5), cute pigtails, precocious face, screams with delight - a total overreaction.

MAXI'S POV:

The lid of the box is tossed aside. The light is blinding.

The Girl peers in. Her face fills the space.

BACK TO SCENE

The Girl pulls Maxi out. He's a tiny, white, fluffy ball of cuteness! She squeezes him. He licks her face. She laughs, drops him, he doesn't mind. He races around the room.

He stops to gaze at his new world.

Whoa!

A Christmas tree - a MOTHER - a FATHER - a Girl - snow! It's everything he ever wanted, a forever home. He sighs.

The Mother is tall, slim, too much make-up. The Father is short, stout, muscly.

Click! A photo. Maxi's face is squished.

EXT. GARDEN - DAY

Maxi bounces like hot popcorn in the flower garden. His tongue flops, his tail wags. He chases the Girl. They both laugh.

EXT. GARDEN - DAY

The Girl colours Maxi's head with a green pen. She holds him up, looks at her handy work, smiles, drops him.

EXT. GARDEN - DAY

A butterfly lands on Maxi's nose. He looks at it curiously.

He smiles. The Girl frowns. She knocks it off with her hand, grabs Maxi, turns away from the butterfly.

The butterfly flies off.

The Mother taps on the window. She waves to come inside. The Girl drops Maxi, runs into the house.

Maxi recovers, follows her. Too late, the door is shut.

He stares at the door, his tail wags.

EXT. FRONT DOOR - DUSK

The door is still shut. Maxi howls.

The door opens slightly, he runs in. All is forgiven.

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Colourful paper and new toys everywhere. The Girl is excited. Maxi is excited.

She blows out her birthday candles. The Mother and Father regard her with love.

Her excitement turns to contempt. She looks at the Mother, hands on hips. The Mother smiles. From behind her back, she reveals one last gift. The Girl screams with delight. A total over reaction.

She rips the paper off. It's a doll. She hugs it. She's so happy.

Maxi, ready to play, grabs the doll's foot in his mouth, shakes it.

The Girl, angry, pushes him off with her foot then turns her back to him. Maxi, head down, walks to his bed. He watches her play.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

The Girl plays with the doll.

Maxi picks up his leash. He faces the Girl, she turns away, looks at the Father, is ignored, looks at the Mother, she points to his bed.

He sees a work boot. It's big, fun. He shakes it.

The Father grabs the boot, hits Maxi with it. He cries, cowers, goes to his bed, obedient, resigned.

EXT. BACK VERANDAH - DAY

Snow blows sideways onto Maxi. His bed is now on the verandah. His leash beside him. His fur scruffy.

Maxi looks through the closed glass door. He barks.

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The Girl plays with the doll, her back to the parents. The Father argues on his phone. The Mother shops online. Maxi is ignored.

EXT. BACK VERANDAH - CONTINUOUS

The snow stops.

Maxi sees a stylish pair of red women's boots left by the door. He shakes one. Lays down, gnaws it.

The Mother rushes out, snatches it from him.

The Father comes out.

The Mother shows him the chewed boot. She tosses it onto a pile of other chewed boots. She waves her arms at the Father, points at Maxi, points to the car.

The Father shrugs, nods.

He attaches the leash to Maxi, jingles his car keys. Maxi's face lights up.

EXT. CAR - CONTINUOUS

As the car moves off, a happy Maxi looks back through the rear window.

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE - DUSK

The car stops. Snow everywhere. It's quiet. It's beautiful, white, pure.

Maxi jumps out, leash in mouth, ready to go.

MAXI'S POV:

The Father walks quickly back to the car.

He closes the door, the car moves off, the red tail lights fade in the distance.

BACK TO SCENE

Maxi lunges after the car but is suddenly jerked back.

He turns to see why.