

## First Runner Up

### **AXEL**

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From a very young age I knew I was different than the other pups at Ruthford's Puppy Palace. The obvious reason was that I could talk! I mean, come on, can your dog talk? James, the owner of Ruthford's Puppy Palace, thought that I would sell right away, but it didn't turn out that way. Every girl and boy wanted a playful little puppy to chase around, play fetch, and train tricks. Well, that's not what I am. I am an intelligent, non-athletic dog who can talk, read, write, type, do math, English, science, and practically everything a kid would learn in school. No one wanted a smart dog who doesn't do tricks or play fetch.

As time went on all the other pups left, even my best friend Rufus. A new batch of pups came in, they left before me too. Now, I was already 16 months old. Time for me to make my new home, by myself. James gave me a collar with a bone shaped tag that read:

*Axel*

*If found, he is yours to keep.*

and he sent me off to live on my own.

For about three months I walked the streets, eating scraps that kind people would throw at me. I just wish that they were kind enough to take me in. Every day, a boy named Kenny would bring me food and water. One day he brought me no water nor food, but a large crate. I asked him what the crate was for and he jumped. I thought, "Well now I blew it." I asked Kenny if he was still going to bring me home. Kenny quickly replied with an of course! I was so happy! I told him all of the other things I

could do, nervously because I still wasn't really sure he would like me. To my greatest surprise, he said "I have always wanted a dog that was more smart than athletic, but I never thought that I would ever get one this good!"

When I got to my new home at 113 Maple St., he took me into the house and hid my kennel under a blanket. I thought it was really strange because it was only the summer. When we were half way up the stairs, Kenny's mom Jennifer asked what he was carrying. Kenny lied and said that he was carrying a box of books. As soon as he let me out of the kennel in his bedroom, I asked him why he had lied.

"My mom would have yelled at me and made me take you back. Or even worse." Kenny paused, "She would make me take you to the pound."

"What!?" I exclaimed.

"I don't know. She made this "No dogs" rule for no reason."

"What will you do when you are at school and I need to go to the bathroom?" I replied.

"I don't know we will figure out later. It is only Friday. I have three days to convince my parents to let me have a dog. My dad already said that I could keep you, Axel. He doesn't know that you can talk, but I am sure that he will be fine with it. My mom is the one that doesn't want anymore dogs." He replied.

"Why does your mom hate dogs so much?" I asked.

"My mom loves dogs. Its just that a couple of months ago our puppy Rufus got ran over by a dump truck."

"Rufus?! He was my litter mate. My best friend at the shop. He was the last one to get picked, besides me obviously. I can't believe that he died! Your mom needs to let you keep me."

"Ok, but we have to talk to dad right after super."

"Alright, I'll stay up here. You go down stairs and eat supper" I replied.

"Good idea, then I'll ask dad to come up here and we can talk about you."

"Ok Kenny," I said, "but if you don't mind brining me a piece of that fried steak, I'd really appreciate it. I haven't eaten anything since yesterday!"

"Oh yeah," Kenny said, "I am sorry bud, I forgot about feeding you today because everything has been so crazy."

Kenny snuck out the door and down stairs. I was very surprised how fast he ate and came back up with a juicy slab of steak. He tossed it at me and I swallowed it in two bites! I had never tasted anything so good before! Quickly I remembered the dad situation. "Kenny," I said, "What about dad?"

"Oh yeah," he replied, "I call him up here right now."

He stepped halfway out of the door way, "Dad! I need to talk to you for a minute!"

"Ok, be up in a second!" said Jeffery, Kenny's dad.

Soon he was walking through the door. As soon as he saw me his jaw dropped. Him and Kenny talked about me for a really long time. After a while Jeffery walked out. Kenny looked at me. He looked happy, but also worried. He told me "He is going to talk to mom about it tomorrow! I hope that she will say yes!"

### **Two Days Later...**

Kenny and I woke up early this morning. He went down stairs to eat breakfast. He brought me up a couple of slices of bacon. I have now decided that bacon is my favorite food. When I had finished licking the floor for any bacon crumbles, Kenny said "I have some bad news, Axel."

"What?" I replied. I didn't think anything bad could happen after eating bacon.

"It's Monday, I have school."

"Oh no! What will we do?"

"I won't be able to take you for walks."

"I will try my hardest not to go in your bedroom." I said with confidence even though I wasn't so sure about it.

"Don't worry." He spoke.

"How am I not supposed to worry at a time like this!"

"Because," He said, "My mom will take you!"

"What?! This is so amazing! How did your dad get your mom to agree?"

"I don't know! He said that she said that she really missed Rufus and that she actually wanted a new dog, but she didn't want to get it hurt or killed! He also said that she happy that you could talk and are smart because then you won't get ran over, and will listen better than Rufus!"

"So, it is settled, I have my new forever home!"

The End