

FOR HEAVEN'S JAKE
an original screenplay by
Jupiter J. Makins
SCRIPT SAMPLE

Jupiter J. Makins
59b Longboat Ave
Toronto, ON M5A 4C9
416-888-1551
makinsent@gmail.com

EXT. CITY PARK -- DAY

A large, beautifully sculpted city park. It's Sunday. COUPLES and FAMILIES enjoy the park.

We sweep across the grass and find a brown squirrel, NICKEL, standing on his hind legs chewing a nut. Past him, we stop on a stray yellow Labrador, JAKE. He SNIFFS the air, picking up the squirrel's scent.

JAKE

Ah ha!

Jake turns his head in the direction of the squirrel. The squirrel's wiggling nose stops, his eyes widen.

NICKEL

Uh oh!

A full speed chase ensues. Nickel zigzags to get away from Jake. Jake BARKS, running after him--a terror in the park. He causes a ROLLERBLADER to fall, a CYCLIST to run off track into a tree, a LITTLE GIRL to lose her balloon.

Nickel scurries up a tree onto a branch, thinking he's safe but Jake takes a giant leap at the low branch. His teeth latch onto the leaves, his body weight pulls the branch down like a catapult. The leaves SNAP from the branch, releasing the branch up into the air and sending Nickel flying. Nickel YELPS but manages to tuck, roll and land. He stands, shakes the dizziness from his head, looks towards Jake and races away. Jake bounds after him.

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD STREET -- DAY

Nickel races out of the park between two parked cars onto the neighborhood street. He looks to the left as he darts across the street--his eyes widen, he GASPS as he realizes... Nickel jumps on the opposite curb, turns to face Jake as he stands on his hind legs and YELLS...

NICKEL

STOP!!!

It's too late. Jake bounds into the road. Nickel scrunches his eyes closed, braces himself--WE HEAR car brakes SCREECH; then THUMP. Nickel rushes to Jake's side--they had their differences but they weren't enemies. A large teardrop rolls from Nickel's eye.

We HEAR the car door open.

WOMAN (O.S.)

Help! Oh no!

Nickel looks up at the WOMAN rushing to Jake; then one last look at Jake.

NICKEL
 You had a great life, Jake. Rest
 well ol' pal.

Nickel scurries to the sidewalk by the park, watches, CRYING.

We CLOSE IN on Jake, the white of the sky drowning him out as well as all the SOUNDS of the Woman CALLING FOR HELP.

EXT. DOG HEAVEN -- DAY

ANGELIC MUSIC PLAYS

Jake lies on a white cloud. He wakes up. Stands. Looks around. Everything is white. We HEAR HARP MUSIC.

JAKE
 (confused, scared)
 Where am I?
 (verge of tears)
 So... Alone.

Jake lays down and puts his paws over his nose.

JAKE (CONT'D)
 Happy place. Happy place.

DOG
 Jake. Jake.

The voice echoes. Jake opens his eyes.

DOG (CONT'D)
 Jake.

Jake sits up and looks to his left.

DOG (CONT'D)
 (echoing)
 Over here.

Jake looks right. There is no one there.

DOG (CONT'D)
 (matter of fact)
 Down here.

Jake looks down to find an old shih tzu with white and grey hair. The hair is long on its head and around its mouth forming a beard that cascades to the ground. He is ALMIGHTY DOG. He wears a white toga and a collar with a gold name tag, engraved 'Eli'.

His voice is deep, low, powerful unless otherwise noted.

JAKE
Who are you? Where am I?

Dog gives a grim look. Jake looks around frantic.

JAKE (CONT'D)
No, no, no.

He stops to look at Dog.

JAKE (CONT'D)
Are you--

DOG
Yes.

JAKE
Am I--

DOG
Yes.

Jake WHIMPERS and lays down.

JAKE
I'm too young. I had such a promising
life.

DOG
(matter of fact)
Actually, you didn't.

Jake WHINES, looks at Dog with puppy eyes.

JAKE
What do you know?

Dog tilts his head as if to say 'are you serious?'

JAKE (CONT'D)
Oh. Ya.

Jake lifts his head.

JAKE (CONT'D)
I always pictured you a lot bigger.
More like an Irish Setter or a white
shepherd. After all, the lord is my
shepherd-

DOG
Ah-hem.

Jake lowers his head.

DOG (CONT'D)

Walk with me.

Jake follows the small shih tzu across the white clouds to golden gates. Dog stops, turns to Jake, sits and puts his paw up to stop Jake.

DOG (CONT'D)

You can come no further.

Jake's ears flop forward. Dog looks over at where they started.

A few paces away a white sign reads: "QUESTIONABLE ARRIVALS". A quick swipe to the right another sign reads: "GOOD DOG ARRIVALS". Suddenly a German Shepherd, BAXTER, appears, lying down in front of the sign. He looks up. FOUR WHITE FEMALE POODLES walk up to him.

POODLE

Welcome Baxter. Come this way.

The Poodles guide Baxter through the golden gate that opens toward Jake keeping him on the outside. Jake follows the gate as it slowly closes, watching the Shepherd with envy.

DOG

I want you to look through the golden gates and see what you can be missing.

The gate LOCKS. Jake sticks his nose between two bars. Jake's POV: a playland for dogs, with balls, treats, socks, a table with delicious food. Jake licks his nose.

Baxter sits on a velvet cushion with the Poodles around him. One holds a link of sausages in her mouth, another a fan.

Jake WHINES. He turns to Dog.

JAKE

I'm sorry I judged you back there.
I'm sure all 10 pounds of you are
very powerful. Can I go in now?

DOG

No!

Jake's ears sink down.

JAKE

But why?

DOG

Because you need to earn this.

Dog lifts his front paw. Draped over it is a gold collar with a circular gold tag dangling from it. Etched in the tag we read: GOOD DOG.

JAKE

But I was a good--

DOG

Sit!

Jake sits.

DOG (CONT'D)

It's not wise to lie to me. I know all things.

Jake MOANS, lowers his head.

DOG (CONT'D)

I know you stole food off the table.

JAKE

I thought they left it for me.

DOG

You peed in the house.

JAKE

I have a small bladder.

DOG

You chased that poor squirrel every day.

JAKE

Who? Nickel. It gave him purpose in life.

DOG

Lay down!

Jake lays down.

In Dog's mouth is a scroll. He flicks his head, unrolling the scroll. The paper lands beside Jake, continues to unroll, past Jake, disappearing in the distance.

DOG (CONT'D)

If I was to list everything, we would be here until hell freezes over!

Jake WHIMPERS, his ears twitch.

DOG (CONT'D)
 You almost belong...
 (points with nose)
Down there!
 (beat)
 But!... I'm giving you a chance to
 do good.

Jake's head springs up.

JAKE
 I'll do it!

He crawls on his belly towards the shih tzu and clasps his
 paws at Dog's leg.

JAKE (CONT'D)
 (in tears)
 I'll do it! Please don't send me
 down there. I never liked fire.
 Got burned once when I was a pup and
 boy did it hurt! Please Dog! I
 promise to do good!

DOG
 I will give you this chance because
 I believe in you. Don't let me down.

Jake nods his head. Dog looks up.

DOG (CONT'D)
 I will send you back to earth and
 you will be--

JAKE
 An angel?!

DOG
 No. An Apprentice. You must earn
 your collar to be an angel...
 (matter of fact)
 And fill out a lot of paperwork with
 Michael the Bark Angel first.

Suddenly, we HEAR a YAPPY BARKING. Jake is startled to his
 feet; he looks beside him. MICHAEL, a small Chihuahua BARKS.

MICHAEL
 Did you call?

Michael continues to BARK - a frantic Chihuahua type of bark.
 Dog looks at him.

DOG
 (unconvincingly)
 Me? No. No. Fetch.

Dog lifts his paw and swipes it down throwing nothing. Michael looks quick in the direction of the gate and runs off after what he believed Dog threw, BARKING. He jumps through the bars of the gate where he fits easily.

JAKE
 (gasps)
 You lied!

DOG
 It was a little white tale.

Dog's little white tail stops wagging. He looks at Jake, shakes his head.

DOG (CONT'D)
 He's a good dog but a yappy fellow.
 Got quite the ears on him. Can hear
 his name from miles away.
 (whispers)
 So don't say it, or he'll be back.

They look in the direction of Michael as he disappears in the white of a cloud, his BARKING FADES OFF in the distance.

DOG (CONT'D)
 Now, where was I? Oh yes. If you
 want to enter Heaven's Gate you must
 do something very important: You
 must help a family.

Jake nods. Dog stands high on his hind legs.

DOG (CONT'D)
 Your mission will reveal itself.
 Now roll over and play dead.

Jake rolls over, plays dead. Dog comes down to all fours and there is a FLASH.

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD STREET -- DAY

Jake lies on the road in front of the grill of the car. The woman is on her knees checking Jake.

Nickel is on the sidewalk, head hung low, SOBBING and CRYING.

The woman looks up at the sky in a moment of desperation.

WOMAN
 Please God, let him be okay.

Jake opens his eyes. He groggily stands up.

WOMAN (CONT'D)

Oh, thank heaven!

Jake shakes vigorously. A sheet of newspaper blows across the road and slaps him in the face, sticking to him. He pushes it off his face with his paw, stepping on it.

A headline reads: MILLIONAIRE WIDOWER SIMON BONES IS TYING THE KNOT.

Jake reads the local paper:

JAKE

Millionaire widower Simon Bones is tying the knot. Rumor has it his nine year old daughter Emily still doesn't know... *Emily?*

Jake steps back off the paper, looks at the sky.

JAKE (CONT'D)

Nope. Can't do it. I'm not good with kids. Especially girls. But, I promise to be good. Thanks for the second chance.

Jake steps backwards. The paper flies up and whacks him in the face. The Woman reaches out, pulls it off and pets him.

WOMAN

Oh such a good dog. Yes you are.

Jake's tail wags rapidly.

A FLASH - The woman's head turns into the gold 'good dog' pendant and suddenly the pendant bursts into flames.

Jake blinks, looks at the woman, WHINES. His tail tucks between his legs. He looks up to the sky.

JAKE

Oh. You're a literal kinda guy. I thought you meant it more figuratively.

Jake gives an apologetic CHUCKLE as he uneasily looks at the flaming head of the woman.

JAKE (CONT'D)

Fine. I'll do it.

The woman's head extinguishes back to normal; she's smiling at Jake.

Jake turns, sees Nickel. Nickel's head still hangs low; he SOBS uncontrollably. Jake is touched; BARKS. Nickel looks up.

NICKEL
 (joyously)
 You're alive!
 (fearfully)
 Oh no...You're alive!

Nickel runs away. Jake chases after him.

INT. A CITY PARK -- DAY

Nickel runs zigzagging. Jake chases him. Nickel passes a VENDOR selling various nuts. Jake jumps on the stand, snatches a bag in his mouth and jumps off the other side. The Vendor is frazzled.

VENDOR
 Bad dog!

Jake looks at the sky as if lightening will strike.

JAKE
 (mouthful)
 Wait for it...

Nickel runs up a tree and looks down. Jake lunges at the tree and stops with his front paws on the trunk, standing tall on his hind legs. Jake drops the bag from his mouth. It lands on the ground, spilling some of the peanuts out.

JAKE (CONT'D)
 For you, Nickel!

Nickel cocks his head sideways, confused.

JAKE (CONT'D)
 I always liked you kid! Climb high!

Jake hops from the tree and races away. Nickel watches after him, then scurries down the tree to the sack of peanuts. He jumps around the bag HOOTING and LAUGHING - it's a pot of gold for him. He picks up a peanut and puts it in his mouth.

NICKEL
 (through a mouthful)
 So long Jake! Thank you!

EXT. LANDSCAPE -- EVENING

The rolling hills, the trees, the beauty of the landscape where a long road cuts through.

We find Jake running along the road--a tiny figure as if we are Dog watching down. We move past Jake, far along the road to

EXT. BONES HOME -- EVENING

We move across a large wealthy estate where we come down on the house and look in the upstairs window.

THROUGH THE WINDOW we see into a girl's dream bedroom - dollhouse, toys, dolls, etc.

Sitting on the bed is EMILY, a cute nine year old girl, playing with her doll.

BACK OUTSIDE we descend below the window down the brick to the window below to look into the large lavishly decorated living room.

SYLVIA, thirties blond--pretty but overdone with too much makeup, fake nails, lips, boobs and attitude, stands in the room by the bar.

THUNDER CRACKS and it suddenly starts to pour rain.