

LONG TAIL

By

OTTO RODRIGUEZ,
and BETH RODRIGUEZ

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Otto Rodriguez
17659 SW 136 Court
Miami, FL 33177
305-926-7987
ottorod@gmail.com

EXT. - BACKYARD OF A TYPICAL AMERICAN SUBURBAN HOME - DAY

An irrelevant spider, one of those that live in American backyards is strolling inside a long maze of pipes, slowly, enjoying the walk. We don't know where she is. One empty pipe leads to another and another. There seems to be no end to her adventure. She is definitely lost and does not have a clue of how to get off this endless labyrinth.

QUICK TRANSITION TO:

EXT. - BACKYARD - SAME SUBURBAN HOME - DAY

A family of four: Frank Kipling (Dad, 45), his wife Iri (Mom, 45), and their children Eric (13), and Emma (9) run out of a house to the backyard, shouting and jumping. It's a sunny Saturday, and the Kiplings are ready to enjoy some quality family time.

EMMA

Come on Eric, turn it on... Dad, can you get some sweets?

DAD

Right on! (going back into the house)

EXT. - BACKYARD - SAME SUBURBAN HOME - DAY

Eric's hand is on the foreground, getting closer to a keypad that gets bigger and bigger in the background. Eric presses a button.

QUICK TRANSITION TO:

Our cute spider is sitting inside the pipes, resting from his adventurous crawling.

All of a sudden, a loud sound fills her space and everything around her starts shaking like a dam that is about to break open...

Water, running at supersonic speed is coming towards the spider. She tries to escape by running in the other direction, but the current pulls her with force and entangles her. She is now traveling in the pipes at high speed, riding the waves.

Again, one pipe leads to another pipe, and into another.

She is now enjoying the ride. She feels as though she's riding down a water slide at a water park. Our spider is having fun after all... Water, foam, and bubbles surround her.

The spider, with eyes wide open, sees the light at the end of the tunnel. The end approaches rapidly. Suddenly, our spider makes a splash... in the middle of the Kiplings' jacuzzi.

EXT. - INSIDE THE KIPLINGS'S JACUZZI - DAY

EMMA
Dad, dad, look... A spider!

ERIC
Where?

EMMA
(points to the spider)
Right there...

The spider, soaked and scared is struggling to stay afloat. Dad, who had been relaxing with his arms extended to the side, puts out his hand in the water and allows the spider to crawl on him.

He stands up and leans on the edge of the jacuzzi trying to put the spider onto the ground, but he slips and falls, yet still manages to keep the spider in his hand. With his face squeezed to the ground and his body laid flat out on the floor, he is able to put the spider on the floor.

Emma and Eric look at each other giggling...

DAD
(looking at the children)
Hey, another life saved...

EMMA
Yup!

EXT. KIPLING'S BACKYARD. DAY

Webby, our spider is soaked and is walking slowly along a wood fence. After all she has endured, she is ready for a sun bath.

A tail-less lizard, comes out from the grass...

LONG TAIL
Hey Webby, what happened to you?

WEBBY
A little bath, that's all...

LONG TAIL

Where, the lake?

WEBBY

Nahh..., that thing over there...

Webby points to the jacuzzi, where Dad, Emma and Eric are cracking jokes and savoring snow cones.

LONG TAIL

Oh, that... what were you doing over there anyway?

WEBBY

None of your business Long Tail...
err... well, short tail now...

LONG TAIL

(hiding his severed tail)
Hey, don't you dare call me short tail again. It'll grow nice and long soon... I will have my revenge...
That dog inside the house is going to pay for this...

QUICK CUT TO:

INT. THE KIPLINGS' HOUSE. A FEW HOURS BEFORE

It's dark. Momentarily, we are inside Emma's mouth as she screams at the top of her lungs...

EMMA

Lizzzarrrrddd....!

ERIC

(Coming out of his room)
Daaaad, lizzzarrrrddd...!

Dad, who is taking a shower, gets a towel, covers his body and runs out of the bathroom.

DAD

(Shouting to Iri)
Iri, get me a broom, quick.

A few seconds later, the family is in the dining room trying to find out where Long Tail is hiding.

A SERIES OF SHOTS:

Dad looks under the table and finds nothing...

Emma looks behind a frame with a family picture hanging on the wall. Long Tail is nowhere to be found.

Mom sees a little shadow next to one of the chairs... but it's just a hanging thread.

Eric moves a box full of toys, and still, nothing...

Wait... two pairs of cold, threatening eyes, are fixed on something. On them, appears Long Tail's reflection. Carlota, the family's female long-haired Dachshund has Long Tail cornered, right behind her kennel.

LONG TAIL

Oh, Mother Nature... spare me...

But Carlota is not ready to let him go so easily.

With a hound move, Carlota grabs Long Tail by his lower legs.

He manages to squeeze his legs out of Carlota's teeth, but his tail gets trapped.

In a split second, Long Tail has lost his tail to Carlota. Carlota, disgusted, spits the squirming tail out of her mouth, as he runs for his life toward one of the sliding doors, the same entrance he had used to get into the house.

Before he gets there, a human hand covers and grabds him.

Carlota is furious, barking and begging her master to relinquish the lizard.

DAD

Carlota, quiet!

EMMA

Dad, dad, let me see it. I want to see the lizard...

ERIC

Hey Dad, is it a boy or a girl?

DAD

I don't know, but I know what to do with it.

Long Tail swallows hard while looking first at Dad, then the children, who are staring at him curiously, and then at Carlota, who is still begging for her trophy.

Long Tail's severed tail is still on the floor.

Dad starts to walk slowly toward the front door looking at Long Tail with pity.

Emma, Eric, and Iri follow him.

Already on the porch...

DAD

It's OK lizard, go back to your home now...

Gently, Dad puts Long Tail on the leaf of a bush and goes back in the house.

With a quick and long jump, Long Tail is back at the door kicking and screaming.

LONG TAIL

Hey, hey, I want my tail back!

CUT TO:

EXT. KIPLING'S BACKYARD. DAY

WEBBY

Yeah, yeah... I know the story, and everyone in the neighborhood knows how many times you have triggered their burglary alarm by running in front of the motion sensors while they're out.

LONG TAIL

Well... it's all about natural pest control... see, I eat all the flies in their home... but they don't like that. They only care about the false alarms I cause. That's why I get kicked out of the house all the time.

WEBBY

I have a confession to make... I've been inside many times... and I love it, especially on winter nights. I even had a run-in with the dog once, but she just sniffed me for a while and then let me go. Now, when I go in, she just ignores me.

LONG TAIL

Are you telling me the dog is not aggressive towards you?

WEBBY

Not at all. I'm planning to go in tonight. Do you want to come with me?

LONG TAIL

(sighing)

Yes... If only I knew where to find my tail.

WEBBY

It's most likely in the trash by now.

LONG TAIL

You are a genius Webby! That means I just need to wait until they take the trash out tonight... But my poor tail will be dead by then...

BACK TO THE JACUZZI, CONTINUATION OF PREVIOUS JACUZZI SCENE:

EXT. - INSIDE KIPLINGS'S JACUZZI - DAY

ERIC

So, Dad, where are we going? Come on, spill the beans. We've been waiting for this vacation for months...

EMMA

Yes Dad, tell us, pleasey pleasey lemon squeezy.

DAD

Sorry guys, it's a surprise and you know the rules... you never reveal a surprise, but I can tell you this: it's going to be very special, and we'll bring with us a treasure, like we always do.

EXT. DAY

On the other side of the fence, two shady characters are walking and overhear Dad, Emma and Eric talking ecstaticly in the jacuzzi.

The words "vacation" and "treasure" resonate in their minds.

They look at each other, as they are now determined to hear the rest of the conversation.

They find a spot in the bushes on the other side of the

fence.

EXT. - INSIDE KIPLINGS' JACUZZI - DAY

ERIC
Special how Dad? Come on, say at
least a bit, won't you?

EMMA
Are we going to Muir Woods again
this year?...

CUT TO:

EXT. MUIR WOODS. DAY

Dad and Emma are hiking in Muir Woods, ascending on the trail. They are close to the top of a mountain, where the Pacific Ocean can be seen.

A SERIES OF QUICK SHOTS:

Emma and Dad look at the clouds behind the enormous redwoods to see how much longer is left until the end of the trail...

Another turn in the trail... Emma slips and falls to the ground...

Dad grabs her hand and holds her. She is extremely tired and dehydrated...

Dad and Emma are both drinking water near a small stream coming out of two huge rocks... The top of the mountain is near...

Another turn in the trail... This time they are walking along a narrow path, very close to an edge, from which you can see a 200 feet precipice. They step on the ground as firmly as possible, trying not to slip...

Another turn in the trail... A bear is now watching them from a short distance... Dad and Emma look at each other surprised, and somewhat scared.

Finally, the top of the mountain is within reach...

Moments later, Emma is standing on a huge rock, her arm pointing to the sky screaming and celebrating their reaching the end of the trail. Dad is holding her other hand while the background shows the Pacific Ocean, bathing the California coast.

EXT. - INSIDE KIPLINGS'S JACUZZI - DAY

DAD
No, not there.

On the other side of the fence, the two thieves express disappointment. They keep listening in suspense while glancing through a hole in the fence. In the distance, Dad, Emma and Eric can be seen chatting.

BACK TO THE JACUZZI:

EMMA
Ahhh...

ERIC
I know, I know. Dad, we are going to Arches, aren't we?

DAD
Arches? You mean... Arches National Park?

ERIC
Yeeees...

EXT. ARCHES NATIONAL PARK, UTAH.

A SERIES OF QUICK SHOTS:

Dad, Eric, Emma and Iri are on a trail working their way up to the Delicate Arch. The Utah desert is cold on a June morning.

ERIC
Hey Dad, are we almost there?

DAD
Well, my GPS says we are very close...

They keep walking past a dry tree, the trail turns to the left, then to the right... a big polished rock is suddenly standing before them. There is a huge hole in the rock...

DAD
(looking at Eric and Emma)
You want to go up there?
(Eric and Emma are curious,
they nod)

The three climb the rock. Their soles slip but they manage to get to the top of the rock... They are now walking towards the end of the trail...

The view opens up and the Delicate Arch can be seen about 500 feet away. A multitude of hikers are all around the

arch, taking pictures, telling stories, pointing at the scenery, and simply taking in the view. A breathtaking view of Utah's canyons and mountains perplexes Dad, Eric, Emma and Iri.

EXT. - INSIDE KIPLINGS'S JACUZZI - DAY

DAD

Well, we are going to Arches National Park again this year, but that's not our only destination.

On the other side of the fence, the thieves look at each other. They gesture in desperation. Where else is the family going?

EMMA

Come on, Dad. Give us a hint...

DAD

Hey guys, think harder... It's a place we have been wanting to go since Emma was five, and we are going now because you guys are grown up, and we can finally enjoy the great adventure...

ERIC

I know where we are going, but I'm not saying... Emma, can you guess?

The thieves can't believe they are about to find out the whole itinerary.

EMMA

(Smiling at Dad and Eric with a smirk)

We are going to...

At that very moment, Mom opens the sliding door that connects the house with the family's backyard and shouts...

MOM

Hey guys, lunch is ready, are you coming?

The thieves can't believe what's happening. Are they going to find out where the family is heading today, or not?

DAD

Yes, honey, just a minutes!

EMMA

Alaska Dad, we are going to Alaska,

yayyyy!

DAD

You got it, but that is just the end of the trip. We'll fly to Utah and drive all the way up to Vancouver. There, we'll board the cruise ship and be on our way to Alaska.

Emma And Eric look at each other, surprised. A huge smile draws on their faces... Utah? Alaska? Canada? What an adventure!

On the other side of the fence, the thieves look surprised as well. A huge evil smirk draws on their faces. They know now they will have plenty of time to do what they need to do.

DAD

(Getting out of the jacuzzi and grabbing a towel)

Yes guys, this is going to be a memorable vacation, and we are leaving in just three weeks.

EMMA

(Emma And Eric follow him)

Dad, Dad, can we go see the Delicate Arch again?

DAD

Of course...

All of a sudden, Carlota, who has been sitting quietly next to the jacuzzi, not far from where the thieves had been hiding, comes out barking ferociously and runs toward the fence. All her senses are screaming that something is not right: the family is leaving soon for an extended vacation and she knows she is not going. She knows the routine: she will be sent to the Kiplings' friends a mile and a half away. And to make things worse, those thieves she has been sensing for the last 30 minutes are determined to break into the family's home. She can sense it, but is not quite sure what she can do to protect the family. In the meantime, she continues barking and growling as the thieves leave their hiding spot quietly.

DAD

(With one foot inside the house and the sliding door open)

Carlota, get inside girl! Quit chasing lizards!

EXT. - A CUL-DE-SAC WHERE THE KIPLINGS HOUSE SITS. DAY

A view from above show the cul-de-sac with the Kiplings' home. Eleven other houses sit along the nearly circular street. One big oak tree sits in the middle of the neighborhood. A glistening, rounded lake is just about 200 feet from the tree. This is a beautiful suburb, a mile shy off the coast, with lots of colorful flowers, all kinds of trees, and sunny weather almost year round. It's the perfect place for birds and critters to thrive. Among them, a couple of adult peacocks that appeared in the neighborhood out of nowhere two years ago.

The ground view gets closer and we stop right in front of Fowley and Lulu, the peacocks. They are wandering around and foraging.

LULU

So Fowley, when is Uncle Joey coming to visit?

FOWLEY

Well Lulu, they said this weekend. Joey is still looking for the exact place where his grandfather used to live.

LULU

We were lucky Fowley... (points to the big tree nearby). Thanks to that tree you were able to bring us back to where our ancestors lived. That's why I love you so much. There is nothing like a peacock with a good sense of direction.

FOWLEY

This tree was the only thing left after the humans decided to level the area to build yet, more houses.

LULU

Hey Fowley, I just remembered... your brother Lui is coming to visit today with his wife and the chicks, and we don't have anything to offer them.

FOWLEY

Well in that case, we'll stop by the corner house (points to the Kiplings' home) to get something to eat, but remember, don't get too close to them.

LULU

The girl came out the other day to feed me while you were fooling around... she got very close to the eggs and I even let her stand there for a while... She just smiled at me and seemed to be happy that the Twins are going to have chicks...

FOWLEY

You let her stand close to the eggs?! Lulu, what has gotten into you? You know very well humans can be extremely cruel.

LULU

But not all humans are mean. We get food from at least two houses in this neighborhood.

FOWLEY

Yes, but that's different. They give us food because we adorn this place with our colors and beauty (Fowley opens and shows off his feathers)

LULU

Well, for quite some time we've been getting food from them at least twice a week and the girl enjoys being with us...

At that very moment, the family's car enters the neighborhood and passes close to where Fowley and Lulu are wandering. Emma signals to them.

EMMA

Dad, Dad, the peacocks... (imitating the peacocks sounds) Kkkwahh... Kkkwahh...

MOM

Get closer honey, I love when they open the feathers... So beautiful...

EMMA

Mom, it's just the male peacocks who do it. Dad, stop for a minute. I want to see what they're doing...

Lulu, who had been fed by Emma many times before, gets closer to the car while Fowley ignores the family and starts walking away from the vehicle. Emma gets out of the car and heads toward Fowley, who now walks at a hurried pace the

other way.

EMMA

Hey, come here... I've fed you many times before...

Fowley totally ignores Emma and keeps walking.

DAD

Come on girls! It's getting late for the barbecue...

EMMA

What are we cooking Dad?

MOM

Chicken and ribs...

(Lulu runs away frantically from the car as if to say "I won't be your dinner". Fowley is looking at Lulu like as if saying "I told you so.")

EMMA

Ummm, yummy.

(Emma, Mom and Dad get back into the car)

CUT TO:

EXT. THE DECK OF A HUGE CRUISE LINER. NIGHT

It's the last night of a transatlantic journey at sea. It's almost sunrise and a few people are still partying on the top deck. We can hear them in the distance, all euphoric, after hours of drinking. Robie, a small Robin is sitting next to a colorful glass. There is still some cocktail residue in the glass and Robie has been drinking it.

Robie is talking to himself in an endless monologue.

ROBIE

Weird... they say life is better at sea. Sure, it's been fun and all aboard this beautiful ship and the food and drink... unbelievable (hiccup), but I need some land.

Robie pauses for another sip. From here, you can still see and hear a couple talking loudly and enjoying their last night at sea.

ROBIE

I've been here too long... six months... and I'm depressed and lonely... with nobody to talk to... And humans don't seem to care about a bird... they're just enjoying themselves...

Robie takes a look at the distant harbor lights. The land seems to be getting closer.

ROBIE

What is this land, anyway...? I think I've lost count of ports... Let me see...

(extending one of his extremely short wings)

Uhhh. It's warm. This must be the tropics... I think I'll fly anywhere my wings take me...

(trying to stand up and fly, but he falls on the ship's deck)

Well, this fluid surely is strong... (standing up now and tumbling towards the deck's edge)

I'm done on this ship, at least for a month... I need some water from a natural spring... No more beverages from cups and glasses...

(reaching the deck's edge)

I need some seeds and worms, I mean real bird food... (hiccup)

Robie falls to the sea and just before hitting the water below, manages to start flying erratically toward the shore. The sunrise is showing on the Eastern horizon as Robie gets farther away from the ship in a zigzagging trajectory.

CUT TO:

EXT. - A BUSY STREET IN DOWNTOWN MIAMI - DAY

Robie, who has been flying to the shore for a while, is tired of flapping his wings and decides to take a short break at the first site he sees on land. This is a big city's downtown, with its skyscrapers, hordes of people getting into offices buildings, and cars honking abruptly in the middle of rush hour.

Robie is flying very low and does not notice the huge delivery truck coming toward him. Robie hits the windshield and falls 200 feet away, in the middle of the street. He is lying now, almost dead. In no time, the truck is approaching

again. This time, at a higher speed.

Robie watches in horror what's about to happen and with his last breath, shakes his wings and whole body. Pushing himself up using his beak, Robie manages to stand up and starts flying with difficulty just before the truck passes right below him.

ROBIE
Gotta fly high, gotta fly high...

About 200 feet in the air, Robie is now flying toward a wide highway, trying to orient himself. He sees the highway in the distance. He looks left and right. It's weird, he can see his reflection on the highway, like it's a giant mirror in front of him. Robie's image is getting bigger and bigger. It's no mirror, it's the enormous glass window of a high-rise. He tries an evasive and desperate maneuver, but hits the glass hard and falls to the ground.

ROBIE
(while falling)
Oh Mother Nature, is this really
the end? Please give me some
strength to fly... I need it
nowwww... Oh my, I miss my ship.

Right below, there is a park with small trees and bushes. In a total free fall, Robie hits one branch, then another, and a third, before hitting the ground. Two pigeons sitting on one of the branches who had been watching Robie's ordeal, look at each other.

PIGEON 1
We have to save that kid...

PIGEON 2
Yup...
(flying to the ground, right
where Robie is lying
unconscious)

PIGEON 2
Hey, where did you fall from?

PIGEON 1
He is not responding, we need to do
CPR, now!

PIGEON 2
CPR? What's that?

PIGEON 1

It's basically... like reviving...

Robie is still lying on the grass...

PIGEON 2

Reviving...?

PIGEON 1

It's when you are about to die and somebody revives you.

PIGEON 2

Where did you learn that?

PIGEON 1

Well... You end up learning a lot when you spend so many hours sitting on the windows of these huge buildings... You know how many CPR trainings I've seen?

ROBIE

(opening eyes, babbling)

Si vous plais...

PIGEON 2

Hey, aren't we saving this guy here with GPS?

PIGEON 1

No, GPS is something else... it's CPR...

PIGEON 2

Ooops, and how do we start the CPR?

Pigeon 1 gets on top of Robie and starts applying pressure to his chest.

ROBIE

(still blabbing)

"Si vous plais..."

PIGEON 2

How about some to-the-point revival...?

(slapping Robie's face)

Robie comes back to life, his eyes wide open.

ROBIE

"Merci, beaucoup..."

PIGEON 2

Hey kid, I think you landed on the

wrong side of the ocean. This is America. We don't speak French here.

ROBIE
What is this place then, what language do you speak here?

PIGEON 1
This is Miami kid and we speak tons of languages, English, Spanish, Creole, Portuguese..., but not usually French...

ROBIE
(finally standing up)
That's not a problem for me. I've traveled to many places so I can speak all those languages.

The pigeons look at Robie in disbelief.

ROBIE
See I've been living on an enormous cruise ship for half a year and I...

PIGEON 1
Hey kid, what are you trying to prove here? We've been living in this town since we were born and I can tell you this is just as fun...

At that precise moment, three cars collide other at a nearby intersection. The three drivers can be seen from here arguing in different languages.

PIGEON 1
See what I mean? This is a crazy town pal...

ROBIE
You know what guys... I really appreciate your reviving me and all, but I think I prefer a less stressful environment.

PIGEON 2
What kind of words are those my friend? (looks to the other pigeon and mimics Robie's way of talking) "less stressful environment". I have never seen a bird so full of himself.

PIGEON 1

Well, you can always go to the suburbs. It's much more quiet there, and there is plenty of food. We like it here because of moments like that... (points in one direction as Robie turns his back)

One hundred feet away, three thugs are trying to rob an old, innocent-looking lady, but the old woman is strapped and responds by pulling out her gun and shooting at the thieves.

Robie becomes scared and hides behind a tree.

PIGEON 2

(trying to find Robie with her eyes)

See, we love this daily circus.

ROBIE

(getting out of his hideout)

So, which way is the suburbs...?

PIGEON 1

We have suburbs here in every direction but you have to fly at least 20 miles.

PIGEON 2

If I were you, I would go South, it's closer to some small islands... You'd like it there...

ROBIE

In that case, I think I have to get going. Thank you guys. I don't know how to pay you back for the information and bringing me back to life.

PIGEON 2

Ahhh, don't even mention-

ROBIE

Actually, yes. I have something for you both (pulling from his feathers a pastry he had brought from the ship.)

PIGEON 1

(tasting it)

Oh, that is so sweet. Thanks. (inviting her partner to share the pastry)

Robie gets closer to the pigeons and extends his feathers. They do the same. Robie looks at them and smiles.

ROBIE
Goodbye friends...

PIGEON 2
(biting first on the pastry)
This... is yummy!

CUT TO:

EXT. BUSY BIKE TRAIL IN A SOUTH FLORIDA SUBURB, ABOUT A MILE FROM OUR CUL-DE-SAC

A group of lizards is lined up next to a bike trail. They are ready to get into some kind of action. As two bicycle riders are approaching, the first lizard in the line up gets ready to cross the bike trail from one edge to the other crossing the cyclists' path. It's something lizards seem to enjoy in real life. It's probably their way of communicating, interacting and playing with humans, like saying: "Hey, we live on this planet too."

The group of lizards has a leader. It's a rather large chameleon that changes his color with the reflections coming from the passing bicycles. He is ready now to give the go-ahead to the first two lizards in the line up as two cyclists approach the imaginary line set by the lizards.

CAMEY
Humans on sight. Get ready and...
Goooooo!

The two lizards start crossing the trail right in front of the cyclists, who try to avoid the running reptiles on the ground. The humans riding the bikes are Dad and Iri.

DAD
Careful honey, lizards crossing.

MOM
Oh, look at that one... (looking at the group of lizards ready to run in front of her) There are more...
Don't they see us?

DAD
I'm sure they do, but that's probably their way of communicating and playing with us.

MOM

Look, look, that one is even
bigger... (pointing to a large
iguana about to jump in front of
them)

The large iguana starts running right in front of Mom's
bicycle using just her rear legs as Iri starts to lose
control. Dad catches up and extends his arm to try to keep
her from falling.

MOM

Oh my God...

DAD

Easy honey, I'm still here...
(grabbing her arm and helping her)

MOM

(breaking hard)
Sweetheart, I need some water...

CUT TO:

EXT. BUSY BIKE TRAIL IN A SOUTH FLORIDA SUBURB, ABOUT A MILE
FROM OUR CUL-DE-SAC

Riders keep coming on the trail as the same group of lizards
keep doing their stunt. One of the lizards is Camey, who is
about to unleash another round of lizard-running. Suddenly,
the hands of another lizard touch his back. It's Long Tail,
who had walked almost half a mile to visit his cousin Camey.

LONG TAIL

Having fun, eh?

CAMEY

Cuz, what are you doing here? I
haven't seen you in so long...
(looking at Long Tail's short tail)
And what happened to your tail, man?

LONG TAIL

I had a run-in with a dog.

CAMEY

A dog? A pet dog or a street dog?

LONG TAIL

Pet dog...

CAMEY

Ha, ha, ha..., that's
embarrassing... (showing an
aggressive face and pointing to the

group of lizards still playing tricks on riders) Hey, are you looking for some kind of lizard revenge?

LONG TAIL

Well, not really, I just came to spend some time with you. See, I need some comfort from someone who cares... I've been sad recently... You know how important a tail is for us. Besides, we have history together.

CAMEY

No kidding! Of course we have a history of fun. Oh man, all those afternoons by the lake changing my skin color and chasing flies, but nothing like that day I...
(reminiscing)

QUICK FADE TO:

EXT. - THE KIPLINGS DRIVEWAY - DAY

The Kiplings are in the family van, on their way to a baseball game. Eric and Emma are enjoying the ride, watching a movie in the backseat. As Dad starts the vehicle, we follow the electric signal from the ignition all the way to the engine, under the hood. It's kind of dark in here and Camey has been taking a nap. He wakes up scared when the engine rumbles. Is this a dream? No way, Dad has already pulled out of the driveway. Camey knows he is quickly running out of options. He looks down and is desperately considering jumping onto the pavement. The car is now going too fast and the temperature is rising. Back inside the vehicle, the family is enjoying their trip to the ballgame.

ERIC

So Dad, do you think the Marlins will win today?

DAD

Could be, but the Yankees are tough to beat.

EMMA

Hey guys, do you know what I think the best part of going to the stadium is?

DAD

(looking at Mom, playfully)

The cheerleaders?

MOM
Don't even try...

EMMA
Are you jealous of the cheerleaders
Mom?

MOM
(looking at Dad)
Not at all sweetheart. So what's the
best part of going to the stadium?

EMMA
(opening her mouth)
Sunflower seeds... and bubble gum...
Eric, want some?

ERIC
Sure... (extending his arm and
looking ahead to the traffic)...
What's that?

DAD
What's what?

ERIC
On the windshield, Dad.

Camey, who had been busy trying to escape from under the hood, managed to exit through some vents that go straight to the outside of the windshield. It's definitely better now. It's not so hot anymore and he can look up and see what a beautiful afternoon it is. He finds it difficult to crawl on the glass because the wind is hitting the windshield at 65 miles per hour. Camey turns his head against the wind. He panics when he realizes the van is going at high speed on a busy highway. On the other side of the glass, Emma is pointing at him. For now, it's best to hold on to the glass for dear life. With a quick move, he turns around and faces the traffic with his legs stuck to the windshield.

EMMA
Dad, Dad, you need to stop the car.

DAD
I don't think I can stop just like
that in the middle of the traffic.

ERIC
Hold on to the glass lizard, we'll
do something!

MOM
Is this another Nature's rescue
mission by Mr. Kipling?

Camey, tired of facing the wind and the horrible scene of the oncoming traffic, decides to jump, but the force of the wind and the inertia force him back to the glass. Inside the vehicle, Dad's foot is gently pressing the brakes. As he does this, Camey feels less air pressure on his face and body. He thinks he has a chance now... and jumps with all his strength. As the vehicle moves away, Camey rolls on the ground several times.

QUICK FADE BACK TO THE PREVIOUS SCENE:

EXT. BUSY BIKE TRAIL IN A SOUTH FLORIDA SUBURB, ABOUT A MILE FROM OUR CUL-DE-SAC - AFTERNOON

CAMEY
...when I jumped from the van that afternoon... you were supposed to be with me, enjoying Nature, but noooo... you always preferred to be inside the house.

LONG TAIL
Well...

CAMEY
But you know what? We lizards are so adaptable, that I made new friends here and though I miss the lake and the big tree and the fun moments we had together, this is home now.

LONG TAIL
I see...

CAMEY
Hey, (points to two approaching cyclists) wanna run across in front of those?

LONG TAIL
(Smiling, because he is about to get a taste of this stunt for the first time in his life)
Oh, yessss...

Long Tail starts running to the other edge of the bike trail as Eric and Emma, who were riding behind their parents, are passing by. Emma looks down and see him crossing, doing his

stunt in front of them. It's hard for Emma not to recognize Long Tail. She looks at Eric, he is also watching Long Tail's maneuver.

EMMA

Hey Eric, isn't that.....?

Eric and Emma keep pedaling as they pass by the lizards. Long Tail recognizes them. He looks at Camey, who is on the other edge of the trail marveled at Long Tail's first act.

CAMEY

Hey cuz, aren't they.....?

CUT TO:

EXT. - A CUL-DE-SAC WHERE THE KIPLINGS HOUSE SITS. DAY

Fowley and Lulu have been foraging for food around the cul-de-sac when they see a black spot in the sky. Something is falling or flying towards them. They both look up.

LULU

Hey darling, I think that is your brother Lui coming to visit, but is he alone?

The black spot is bigger now. It definitely has wings. It's a bird, but it's not Lui...

FOWLEY

Is that Lui?...

It's Robie, who after flying for about for 20 miles, is ready to land near that beautiful place he saw from the sky, full of trees and a lake. Though Robie is tired, disoriented and scared, he manages to land right between Fowley and Lulu.

LULU

What in heavens? This place is already overpopulated and we just got another mouth to feed.

ROBIE

Don't worry sweetheart, I'm just a visitor.

FOWLEY

Who are you, boy?

ROBIE

(Extending his right wing as to shake Fowley's)

I'm Robie, traveler of the
seven seas.

LULU AND FOWLEY

Whaaat?

ROBIE

I'm just here for a while and then
I'll return to my ship.

FOWLEY

Hey, hey, what ship? You have a
ship?

LULU

First time I see a bird who owns a
ship.

FOWLEY

Is that true, do you own a ship? You
gotta tell me about that ship-thing.

ROBIE

Well, technically it's not mine, but
it's as if it were. See, I get to
sail on it whenever I want, and I
get to travel.

FOWLEY

(Finally extending his right
wing, gets closer to Robie and
embraces him)

I like this guy Lulu, do we have
something to offer Robie?

ROBIE

Well, I got something to offer you
both...

(reaches under his wings and
shows two delicious cupcakes)

Here, try...

FOWLEY AND LULU

(doubtful)

And that is?...

ROBIE

Try it.

LULU

(biting on the pastry)

Oh my, this is delicious...

FOWLEY

(biting on the pastry)

Can we get more?

ROBIE

(grabbing Fowley's and Lulu's wings as he walks with them)
Well, those were the last two I had..., but aren't you guys going to show me around?

CUT TO:

INT. - INSIDE KIPLINGS'S HOME - EMMA ROOM - DAY

Emma and Mom are packing for their upcoming vacation. Emma's is the typical American girl bedroom: pink walls, rock star posters, ballet awards. A carry-on suitcase sits empty on the bed and Mom and Emma are ready to fill it up. It's a quiet Saturday morning.

MOM

Well, what else do you need to put in your luggage?

EMMA

Mom, I can't believe we are going to Alaska. It's going to be so much fun. Are you bringing your hiking boots?

MOM

Yup, are you getting yours?

EMMA

Oh yes (reaching for hiking boots inside a closet). Mom, I was reading the other day about this place in Alaska called Exit Glacier... in the Summer, plants and flowers bloom right next to the ice. Isn't that cool?

MOM

Yes, it is. Have you talked to Dad about your plans to make a short movie to show Alaska to your friends?

EMMA

Yes, and he said I'd be in charge of the video camera all the time. Oh my goodness!, I'm so excited.

All the while, Carlota has been listening to the conversation near the bedroom's door. Emma notices Carlota

and approaches her. Carlota returns the girl's loving look.

EMMA

Are you going to miss us?

Carlota starts growling softly. She's upset with the idea of the family going away and the menace of the thieves she had sensed on the other side of the fence a few days earlier.

EMMA

Hey Carlota, why are you growling girl? Are you alright?

MOM

Carlota, do you want to go for a walk? (brings Carlota up to her arms)

MOM

(looking at Emma)
Ok girl, just finish packing. We are leaving in 10 days.

EMMA

Mom, what are we going to do with Carlota?

MOM

No worries sweetheart, we are taking her to Lissy's.

EXT. - A LAKE NEXT TO THE CUL-DE-SAC WHERE THE KIPLINGS' HOUSE SITS. DAY

Fowley has been showing Robie around the neighborhood: the favorite trees, bushes, hidden spots for nurturing the chicks. They are now standing on the lake's shore. Sonny, the swan, and two ducks, Henry and Donny can be seen at a distance.

FOWLEY

And... this is the lake, where you can find good water, pleasant evenings and some fun characters. Hey Donny, Henry, Sonny, come meet Robie.

ROBIE

How about the people... (pointing to the houses near the lake)

FOWLEY

Some of them are good. Others don't want us here.

ROBIE

What do you mean? They don't want any of the animals?

FOWLEY

Well, I don't know about the other animals, but (points to two neighbors talking on the front porch of a home located two houses away from the Kiplings) you see those? They don't like peacocks, only because Lulu and I take naps on their roofs... and cars.

SONNY

(coming closer with Donny and Henry, and showing something on the tip of his feathers)
Hey Fowley, want some fish? (to Robie) Nice to meet you. Where did you come from, North?

ROBIE

No, from the East...

FOWLEY

He's just staying with us for a while. He's a traveler and he owns a ship.

DONNY

Ohhhh...

While they have been talking, Emma and Carlota get out of the house for a walk around the lake. Henry is the first to see them walking towards them.

HENRY

Hey guys, trouble approaching.

FOWLEY

Robie, we better hide... (to the other three) see you later guys.

ROBIE

But... why do we have to run?

FOWLEY

(Grabbing Robie's wing and pulling him towards the bushes nearby)
The girl is not the problem... It's the dog.

Carlota chases them until they hide in the bushes.

ROBIE
Phew!... that was close! (breathing
a sigh of relief)

FOWLEY
Yes it was.

Out of nowhere, another large animal is looming. It's getting closer to Robie, and now even closer...

ROBIE
(jumps scared, falling on his
back against the ground)
Whaaat's that?

FOWLEY
(comforting Robin, next to him
as a brown cat passes by close
to them and then rushes
towards one of the houses)
Oh, don't worry. That's just Pumpkin
the cat. He's a snob.

ROBIE
(sitting on the ground)
Uhm, too many frights in one day...

INT. - INSIDE KIPLINGS'S HOME - KITCHEN - DAY

While cooking, Mom grabs the phone to call her friend Lissy, who will take care of Carlota while our family goes on vacation.

The screen splits into two. Lissie on the left, Mom on the right. Lissy is also cooking. Next to her, a medium white poodle is trying to jump to get a piece of bacon hanging from a counter. Lissy is a housewife who leaves two miles away from the Kiplings.

LISSY
Prince, be quiet...

MOM
Hi Lissy, how's everything?

LISSY
Well my dear, I'm cooking and fixing
some treats for the party tonight.
You guys are coming, right?

MOM
Sure we are, what time?

LISSY
Seven, sharp!

MOM
You never miss a chance to party my dear...

LISSY
Surely not, sweetheart, life is too short, and we gotta party.

MOM
Lissy, I need a small favor from you.

LISSY
Of course, what do you need? More of that anti-aging cream I got you for Christmas? Wasn't it wonderful?

MOM
No, I still have some left... it's great by the way. You know, it's about our pet Carlota. We are going on vacation and I wonder if you can take care of her for a few days, actually about three weeks. We will pay you, of course.

LISSY
No worries dear, we are friends, and you know we love animals, and... (looks to Prince, who finally managed to get the beacon) Prince wouldn't say no to that request. When are you bringing her?

MOM
We're leaving in 10 days, but I'll stop by like two days before to break her in.

LISSY
Oh sure, sure. By the way, I'm going to the spa this afternoon, I've been so stressed out getting this party ready that I need some relaxation... Hey, wanna join me?

MOM
Well, I've got my own share of suitcases and backpacks to fill, so I'll pass with the spa, but we won't miss the party.

LISSY

Ok, I'll see you soon then (hangs up and looks at Prince). My baby, you are going to have company... The Kiplings are bringing Carlota for a few days. Aren't you excited?

PRINCE

Ruff, ruff...

EXT. A COASTAL AREA NOT FAR FROM OUR CUL-DE-SAC - DAY

Reny and Humber, our two thieves are driving around a nearby neighborhood. They spend most of their time doing odd jobs and preying on innocent people; A break-in here, some shoplifting there. They are behind most of the recent robberies in this part of town.

RENY

What are we gonna need for the job, yo?

HUMBER

Which job you talking about?

RENY

The one in the house with the jacuzzi, maaan. We need to hit that house maaan, they leaving soon and we still ain't got no plan. And remember, they talked about some treasure.

HUMBER

Oh yeah, yeah, the morons that were talkin' a family vacation right in their backyard and we happened to hear everything... ha, ha, ha.

RENY

Those...

HUMBER

Plan is easy yo, we make sure they're not at home and we hit... With such a nice jacuzzi outside, I wonder what they have inside... Oh, I love easy jobs, my man.

RENY

What if they have an alarm?

HUMBER

We cut the phone wire...

RENY

What about the dog? don't you remember?... dog was barking at us on the other side of the fence...

HUMBER

You so stupid yo, who would leave a dog for weeks inside a house? Dog is not staying home... but we could check before and if it's inside the house we throw a bone or something. We the real thing man. We'll check on the house in a few days to see what's going on.

RENY

Hey Humber, how are we going to find the treasure in the house?

HUMBER

Easy... we look for it. We're breaking in that house, and we're gonna empty it.

EXT. THE PORCH OF THE KIPLINGS HOUSE - DAY

Since the peacock colony came to the cul-de-sac two years ago, Emma has been feeding Fowley, Lulu, Limpy, Lorey, Morey, the Twins (two male peacocks) and the chicks (five little peacocks) three times a week. Feeding time always starts with a peacock-like call Emma has perfected over time.

EMMA

(Coming out of the house) Mom, I'm going to feed the peacocks. I'll be outside for a while. (walks towards the middle of the cul-de-sac, right where the old oak stands)
Cooaak! Cooaak! Come on guys, I've got something yummy here (holds up rice and pieces of banana)

This has been a different afternoon for the peacock colony: Fowley and Lulu have been showing Robie around the neighborhood and the lake. For Robie, this is definitely the place to stay, at least for a while. Right now, Fowley, Lulu and Robie are enjoying a beautiful sunset at the lake, while the Twins are chasing one another in the background, and Limpy (Lulu's sister and a female peacock who limps) and Lulu are foraging.

ROBIE
(hears Emma calling)
Hey Fowley, who is calling us?
should we hide?

LULU
No Robie, we don't hide for now.
That's the girl we saw the other
day. If you see the dog, then run.

ROBIE
Does she always feed you?

FOWLEY
Kind of, regularly... She fed the
twins when they were chicks and now
they love her...

QUICK FLASHBACK TO:

It's the previous winter and the twins were chicks. On a sunny afternoon, Emma is feeding them. They jump to her knees to get small pieces of bread. A moment later, she is sitting and the twins eat from her hand. They are innocent and seem comfortable being fed so close by the girl. Fowley and Lulu appear younger and they keep their distance, especially Fowley.

FOWLEY
(to the chicks)
Not so close, kids...

BACK TO SCENE:

LULU
And she's fed Limpy too...

QUICK FLASHBACK TO:

It's a stormy summer afternoon and about to rain, and Limpy is making her way to the bushes when she hears Emma calling. She turns around and approaches the girl. Keeping the distance, she lets Emma throw some rice in front of her.

BACK TO SCENE:

LULU
And Dorey and Morey too.

QUICK FLASHBACK TO:

Lorey and Morey, the other two adults in the peacock colony are shown guarding a spot inside the bushes where Lorey's eggs are. It's early in the morning, right before Dad takes Emma to school. When Lorey hears Emma calling, she looks at her partner.

LOREY
(Looking at Morey)
Please take care of the eggs
for two minutes. I've got to
eat (runs to Emma)

BACK TO SCENE:

LULU
(talking to Robie)
This girl has been good to us Robie,
would you care to meet her?

ROBIE
Sure, why not?

FOWLEY
Come on Robie, let's see what the
menu is for today, but don't get too
close to humans, just in case.

EXT. - THE KIPLINGS BACKYARD. DAY

Webby has been busy weaving all night long. From here she can hear the girl talking to the peacocks. The first morning rays are showing on the horizon and...

WEBBY
Haaa! I've been working all night to
catch one fly and these peacocks
have everything spoon-fed to them.
Just because they have colorful
feathers? Who do they think they
are?

LONG TAIL
(coming out of the bushes in
the backyard)
Webby, have you gone crazy? Are you
talking to yourself? What kind of
flies have you been eating recently?

WEBBY
Well, I was saying that these
peacocks get free lunch everyday
while I have to work all night
weaving to catch one fly. It's not
fair.

LONG TAIL

Nothing you can do about it. Humans are easily deceived by looks. Have you seen a bird more boring than a peacock? What do they do? They don't sing, they are not passionate animals like you and I, yet they get all the food they want from humans because of their feathers.

WEBBY

(showing her belly)
I'm colorful too. Look.

LONG TAIL

I know Webby, everyone has colors. (shows his dewlap) Have you seen mine?

WEBBY

(Webby looks at Long Tail delighted, her eyes opened wide, discovering Long Tail's colors. She starts showing emotions. She is in love)
Do... you... want... to share a fly with me?

LONG TAIL

Come on Webby, we don't have a chance, don't you see I'm a lizard? Totally different for Nature's sake... Hey, how about we catch a fly together?

WEBBY

(collecting herself after the love moment)
Well at least we have something in common. We both love insects... I say yes, we catch a fly now, but where? Outdoors or (pointing to the Kipling's house) in there?

LONG TAIL

For now, let's try here... (glancing back at his tail) I can't afford to lose it again.

The sound of flies. Some of them are approaching fast where Webby and Long Tail stand.

WEBBY

Incoming... Are you ready?

LONG TAIL

I have never been more ready...

The camera slowly gets away from Webby and Long Tail, it goes over the house and shows the other side.

V/O

LONG TAIL

You see Webby, this fly is a natural catch. Forget processed food. That is for peacocks...

Dad slowly opens the door and shouts.

DAD

Sweetheart, time to get in. It's dinner time.

EMMA

Wait a second Dad, the chicks haven't had enough to eat...

Carlota, who has been behind Dad all this time, manages to squeeze between his legs and runs toward the peacocks, barking ferociously. The peacocks flee in all directions. Robie, who had been watching from a nearby wooden fence, intersects Carlota before she can get to the chicks. Emma is running after Carlota.

EMMA

(yelling)

Carlota, you stop right there!

ROBIE

(standing in the middle of Carlota's path)

Don't you dare harm my friends!

With her nose, Carlota hits Robie and sends him flying to the side, then continues chasing the peacocks, who manage to get away as fast as they can. Robie starts flying away toward the lake. The birds are safe now. In the background, Emma and Dad are seen reprimanding Carlota for her behavior.

QUICK TRANSITION TO WHERE THE BIRDS ARE HIDING IN THE SMALL BUSHES, NOT FAR FROM THE HOUSE.

ROBIE

(to Fowley and Lulu)

Is this always like this? Is this your paradise?

LULU

No, it's just the dog, the family is fine.

ROBIE

Family is fine? Are we safe now? (shudders)... It gives me the goose bumps, though I'm not precisely a goose. I think I miss my travels. This land is dangerous.

LULU

Hey Robie, no exaggerations, please. Is this the first time you see a dog?

ROBIE

Well, not my first time in front of a dog, but definitely my first time in front of one as mad as this weenie.

FOWLEY

(Embracing Robie, almost comforting him)
Come on friend, we have better things to do. Today is sky night and we need to get ready.

ROBIE

Sky night? What's that?

LULU

You'll see.

SLOW TRANSITION TO:

EXT. - THE LAKE NEXT TO THE CUL-DE-SAC WHERE THE KIPLINGS HOUSE SITS. NIGHT

A beautiful starry night is upon us. The peacock colony and Robie are laying on the grass looking up at the stars. Sonny, the swan, is here too. Webby and Long Tail are nearby, sitting on a tree, looking up. Two raccoons, who live in the neighborhood's bushes are roaming together with a family of squirrels, and Pumpkin, the neighbor's cat. All the animals are fascinated by the full moon and bright stars. Fowley is sitting next to Robie.

FOWLEY

Do you know what the best part of being an animal is Robie?

ROBIE

Well, you get to...

FOWLEY

It's nights like this... looking at the universe. No limits, no roofs, nothing covering your head. It's the pure essence of life.

ROBIE

I know what you are saying... I've experienced moments like these before on my ship, but all alone.

LULU

And it's much better to enjoy moments like these with friends, right?

ROBIE

You got that right... Say Fowley, what makes us birds so special?

FOWLEY

You probably mean, what "makes some birds so special."

ROBIE

What do you mean?

FOWLEY

Well, I mean that not "all" birds are special. There are birds that have gotten very close to humans, like macaws, parrots, lovebirds, parakeets and others. They are not special at all...

ROBIE

Because they have lost their freedom?

FOWLEY

That's right. We animals need to be free, and when you are very close or depend too much on humans, you lose your sense of free will. I mean, when have you seen a peacock being pet?

ROBIE

Aren't bird pets happy?

FOWLEY

They seem to be... but they are not... I admire those birds that despite being captive, won't dance

on their owner's hands and would bite them if given a chance.

ROBIE

I see...

FOWLEY

But you know what is the most despicable animal of all?

ROBIE

Who?

LULU

(anticipating Fowley's answer)
The dog...

ROBIN

(looking back and forth to Lulu and Fowley, confused)
What? Why? What do you mean?

FOWLEY

The dog, Robie, is the worst creature in the animal kingdom... if there is an animal that has lost free will it's the dog... Come here, follow me... a scene is worth a thousand words.

Fowley and Robie walk toward the Kiplings' house. We now get to see more critters contemplating the stars: owls, squirrels, raccoons, frogs, cats, possums. Fowley and Robie reach the Kiplings' fence and fly onto it. From here they can observe the Kiplings, sitting on a couch watching a family movie. Dad is caressing Carlota, who reacts by licking his hand. An action scene on the TV makes Carlota bark. Emma, Eric and Iri react by petting her.

FOWLEY

See what I mean? Dogs are not animals, yet they are not humans. Do you realize how docile dogs are? I'm proud of not having surrendered my heart to humans.

ROBIE

You are right, it's like giving up your soul...

FOWLEY

Exactly, your soul... and dogs have already given up their souls to humans. That's why dogs treat us

birds and other animals with total despise. Humans hunt us and their dogs finish the job by bringing us to their masters in their jaws.

ROBIE

Is that the reason why you never get close to the girl when she comes out to feed you guys?

FOWLEY

You could say so...

ROBIE

But the girl is loving and sweet and she seems to care for you and other animals...

Fowley and Robie have been so immersed in their dialogue that they do not realize they have company: Reny and Humber, our two thieves, have been silently approaching the fence to spy on the Kiplings, check on the family and see how things are going with their vacation planning. They were hoping to catch a glimpse of one of them preparing their luggage. As they get closer to the fence, Fowley notices the pair and flies away, Robie following him.

ROBIE

Who are they, what are they doing?

FOWLEY

None of our concern, it's just human stuff...

EXT. - THE KIPLINGS BACKYARD. NIGHT

RENY

Hey yo, you see anything?

HUMBER

(peeking through the fence)
Nah, they're just watching a movie.

RENY

Do you see suitcases anywhere?

HUMBER

You idiot! Who would put luggage in front of a TV?

RENY

Are they talking about the vacation?

HUMBER

Can't hear them from here.

RENY

What if we jump the fence and get closer?

HUMBER

Yo, you need to read some more... Haven't you read about the "castle doctrine?"

RENY

Oh, yeah, I know what you mean...

Slow transition into the house.

V/O HUMBER

We need to hit when they are not at home. We'll keep checking on the house... they should be leaving soon... Come on let's go hit somewhere else.

Carlota, who has been sensing the presence of the thieves growls louder and louder. On the TV, an action scene shows two thieves breaking into a house.

EMMA

(petting Carlota)

What's wrong girl? It's just a movie.

CUT TO: THE NEXT MORNING

EXT. - A CUL-DE-SAC WHERE THE KIPLINGS HOUSE SITS. DAY

Our cul-de-sac is quiet on this beautiful sunny morning. Spring is here and trees and flowers are starting to blossom. The peacocks are foraging around the lake and Robie is playing with two possums that live nearby. A delivery truck drives into the cul-de-sac to bring a package to the Kiplings. A cold breeze and sunshine bathe the neighborhood. It's one of those ordinary Spring mornings, but not for Long Tail, who is now coming out from some bushes next to the Kiplings home. Long Tail seems preoccupied, something is bothering him. Webby is looking at him from a brand new spider web she had weaved during the night between the fence and a sugar apple tree the Kiplings had planted a few years ago.

WEBBY

Hey, Long Tail, what are you up to?

LONG TAIL
I'm going in tonight...

WEBBY
Where?

LONG TAIL
Into the house...

WEBBY
Why? What happened?

LONG TAIL
Look at your spider web. That's what happened...

WEBBY
What do you mean?

LONG TAIL
Your spider web is empty Webby,
don't you see it? How many flies or
insects have you caught lately?

WEBBY
Not many...

LONG TAIL
See... It's always the same in
Spring... with this breeze, the food
is scarce, so I'm going in today.
Maybe I can catch some flies or
mosquitoes inside.

WEBBY
But, (pointing to her behind) have
you forgotten what happened to you
the last time you went into the
house?

LONG TAIL
Don't worry, this time I'll make
sure to stay out of trouble and
avoid "The Beast."

WEBBY
Do you want me to go with you? The
dog is nice to me... and besides, I
really could use a fly or two.

LONG TAIL
Get ready, we are going in at dawn.

WEBBY

Okey, dokey... Oh...(looking up)
what's that?

As Long Tail and Webby talked, they hadn't noticed the presence of a black hen who'd gotten to the neighborhood the night before.

LONG TAIL

A hen...? What's she doing here?

WEBBY

I don't know, it's the first time I see it... Hey watch it... (the hen, who has been foraging in the grass very close to them, is suddenly coming straight to Long Tail inadvertently)

LONG TAIL

(getting out of the way quickly)

Oh Mother Nature... (as the hen gets by him)... Aren't they supposed to be somewhere, far away, laying eggs?

WEBBY

(scared)

I know... but she is here...

LONG TAIL

Aren't hens cousins to peacocks? Maybe they invited her.

WEBBY

Well, all I know is food has just gotten harder to find around here... and now there is even more competition with this hen.

LONG TAIL

(both walking away)

Webby, forget about the hen. We are going in tonight.

CUT TO:

EXT. - A LAKE NEXT TO THE CUL-DE-SAC WHERE THE KIPLINGS HOUSE SITS. DAY

Fowley and Robie are sitting near the lake, enjoying the morning's breeze. Lulu and the other peacocks can be seen not too far away.

ROBIE

Oh Fowley, I love being a bird...
and most of all I love that we can
fly. It's a gift... we go places, we
escape from the cold, and we travel
distances other animals can only
dream of.

FOWLEY

Oh boy, you're so right.

ROBIE

Say Fowley, since when do you live
here?

FOWLEY

I brought Lulu here four Springs
ago... my ancestors lived in this
place much before humans started
leveling the terrain to build yet
more houses.

ROBIE

When was that?

FOWLEY

About 40 years ago... great great
grandpa and great great grandma came
from the big mountains of the warm
seas and settled here. This was
gorgeous Robie, nothing but bushes,
trees, small lakes and creeks.

ROBIE

Ahhhaaa...

FOWLEY

That's what mother told us... When
humans started to build, she had to
leave with my father and went to the
small islands of the warm seas for a
while. I was born and lived in the
islands until Lulu and I decided to
come back and reclaim what was ours
in the first place.

ROBIE

Ummm...

FOWLEY

The only thing standing from those
times were the trees. (points to one
big oak tree that adorns the center
in the cul-de-sac) There were three

back then but powerful hurricanes
destroyed two of them. You see this
lake? It wasn't even here before.

ROBIE

But the lake is nice Fowley...

FOWLEY

Well, it's artificial...

Robie stands up and walks toward the lake. Fowley is having trouble standing up. Maybe he was too comfortable. Robie goes back and lends him a hand. Dusk is almost here...

CUT TO:

INT. - INSIDE KIPLINGS'S HOME - DINING ROOM - DAY

Carlota, the family dog, is alone in the house. The family has not gotten home yet from the daily routines of work and school. Whenever the family is out, Carlota is left inside a dog kennel, with the latch on. Carlota is all quiet inside her kennel. She is dreaming. In her dream, she is growling and barking. She is also running after the thieves. The thieves are running, zigzagging around the cul-de-sac. She manages to corral them against a tree, until a friendly neighbor calls the police. The police is here, they are arresting the thieves now, right when the family is coming back from their extended vacation only to see Carlota, the hero, standing proudly next to the police cruiser watching the bad guys be taken to jail. She is a superhero, she is something else. The family is revering her, probably like never before... But she is just dreaming.

Something wakes her. That something has spoiled her sweet dream of being a hero. She realizes that her fame is just a dream and she is aware of what the thieves are planning; they are going to break into the house as soon as her owners leave. She knows she does not stand a chance of stopping them because she is being taken away to Lissy's. She needs to do something, quickly. Her barking and growling every time she has sensed the thieves on the other side of the fence have failed to alert her owners. Carlota realizes that she needs help from the outside: possibly all the animals that live in the cul-de-sac. But wait, aren't they the same animals she has been harrassing and barking at since the Kiplings moved here a few years ago? Aren't they the same critters whose odors and spottings make her chase after them every time she has had the opportunity to? Haven't they been the intruders in her territory all along?

But now, those animals are her only hope, and she needs to convince them to help the family. After all, they will suffer too if the Kiplings are in distress; no more food for

the peacocks, no more saving the lives of spiders in trouble, and no more bringing food or providing shelter to critters in need.

She needs a plan; she needs to communicate with the animals. But that's silly. How can she communicate with them, when she has harassed them for years? Even if she tries to approach them nicely, they would flee in all directions; she has been their villain for a long time.

"What can I do?", Carlota thinks to herself. She needs to do something drastic.

That's it, she needs a messenger. Someone the animals can trust. Someone they won't fear. Someone that can deliver her message to them.

That someone has just entered the house, and Carlota is looking at it. That someone is right in front of her, passing by, thinking she is locked inside the kennel. Sometimes she has managed to open the kennel by herself when the Kiplings have not been careful enough to close both latches on her kennel before leaving. Today, one of the latches is open and she has the opportunity to get out and talk to that messenger. She wonders how the messenger will react to her approach. Will the messenger be receptive? It's all a matter of trying. Just open the other latch, catch the messenger, and start the dialogue.

Carlota is pretending she is still asleep while the messenger crosses right in front of her kennel. She is ready to jump, and she knows she can do it; it's now or never. Her contact with the outside world is now inside the house and just passed by right in front of her nose: Long Tail.

Long Tail goes around a wall that is out of sight from Carlota's kennel. She moves her right leg and claws, and with the expertise of having done it a hundred times before, she opens the latch and silently follows Long Tail, who is now too busy trying to find an insect around the kitchen. With just one more step, Carlota has Long Tail cornered as she waits for him to turn around.

A dead fly is lying next to the baseboard in the kitchen and Long Tail is determined to eat something, even if it's dead. He approaches the fly, but a huge something overshadows the insect.

Long Tail turns his head slowly, only to see Carlota's eyes fixed on him. In a desperate move, he turns to the fly and starts shaking it.

LONG TAIL
You gotta help me, please help me. I

don't want to die.

Carlota gets closer to Long Tail as he closes his eyes and put his arms over his head. He is ready to die.

CARLOTA

We need to talk...

LONG TAIL

(opening one eye slowly in total disbelief)

Talk? What about? What do you mean? Just eat me and take me to your masters. Stop the suffering...

CARLOTA

I won't harm you...

LONG TAIL

(finally opens both eyes)

You... gotta ... be kidding me. The last time we saw each other I lost my tail and now you're telling me that you want to talk and that you won't harm me? You know how long it took for this new and imperfect tail to grow back?

CARLOTA

That's right. I need to talk to you and I promise not to put one claw on you.

LONG TAIL

Are you serious?

CARLOTA

Yup... And I apologize for my behavior last time...

LONG TAIL

(pinching himself, this has to be a dream)

I gotta be dreaming... This can't be true. The bully of all the animals... The Beast... apologizing?

CARLOTA

That's right. I'm talking from my heart, and I can prove to you that I mean it.

LONG TAIL

(acting emboldened)

Well... in that case, before we can continue talking, I want back my original tail...

CARLOTA

But, that is impossible... it's been weeks... I don't know what my owners did with it. Besides, your new tail looks great.

LONG TAIL

But it's not the same. I still have a scar that won't fade. (she turns her back on Carlota.) I won't talk to you anymore, let me go...

CARLOTA

(growls and shows her teeth)
Come on... don't push the envelope now...

LONG TAIL

Eat me! I'm ready to die.

CARLOTA

(embracing Long Tail, like inviting him to walk together and making him feel safe)
You got it all wrong, friend... I know I have acted a bit extreme and that all the animals out there don't like me...

LONG TAIL

Don't like you? They despise you. You can't imagine...

CARLOTA

I know, I know... See, most of you don't understand us dogs... you only see a menace...

LONG TAIL

(still not convinced of Carlota's intentions)
But you are a menace! Who's been chasing everyone around... for years?

CARLOTA

Well, let's say I have been a little rough, but I repent. All I've been doing is protecting my owners. And for dogs, that's the most important

thing.

LONG TAIL

Hey, hey, rectify, your masters...

CARLOTA

Call them as you please, but they are family to me and I have to protect them. That is why we, dogs, are so territorial and our humans are the greatest thing.

Long Tail nods in disbelief. It's still hard for him to comprehend all that apologetic reasoning from Carlota. Suddenly, two mosquitoes start flying near Carlota's ears and she senses them. Long Tail sees the insects too but he is too close to the ground. Long Tail looks avidly at the mosquitoes. He would die just to get a taste of one. Carlota is scanning Long Tail's expression. Here is a good opportunity to show some camaraderie and finally get Long Tail involved in helping her.

As Carlota tenses her body, Long Tail panics. He's now convinced she will swallow him immediately, if not sooner. With a rapid movement, Carlota shakes her head and slaps the two insects with her large ears. They both fall in front of Long Tail.

CARLOTA

(smiling)

Would you care for a snack?

Long Tail looks at her and smiles back. He feels safe now. How could this have happened? The Kiplings' dog is now his buddy. If only Webby and the others knew.

CARLOTA

Come on Long Tail, I'm going to show you how a loyal dog shares a good meal with a friend.

Webby, who followed Long Tail into the house but got stuck under the sliding door's mechanism, was turning now the same wall that led to the kitchen, where Carlota and Long Tail are sharing their prey and a few pieces of beef jerky. Looking at them from a distance, Webby shakes her head. She is perplexed, opening and closing her eyes, and rubbing them in disbelief.

WEBBY

(to herself)

What did I miss?

CUT TO:

EXT. INSIDE THE KIPLINGS' CAR - DAY

The Kiplings are returning home; Eric and Emma from school and Dad and Iri from work. Dad is driving and while Eric and Emma are watching cartoons on a tablet, Mom grabs her phone to place a call.

MOM
Hello, Lissy?

LISSY
How are you doing?

MOM
Listen, just calling to remind you about Carlota.

LISSY (V/O)
Oh, we know sweetheart... We are all looking forward to it... When are you bringing her?

MOM
In a couple of days, you know, to break her in, like we always do.

LISSY (V/O)
Sure, sure. Just call me the day before to make sure we have everything ready for her, right Prince?

MOM
Thanks Lissy, I'll call you then.

LISSY (V/O)
Hey Iri, haven't you heard about this new product for cellulite? It's fabulous!

MOM
No, I haven't.

LISSY (V/O)
Oh, it's unbelievable, you need to try it. When you come to leave Carlota I'll give you a sample.

MOM
Great, I'll see you soon.

INT. - INSIDE KIPLINGS'S HOME - KITCHEN - DAY

After some beef jerky and two mosquitoes, it's time to talk

business.

LONG TAIL

So, what's going on? What's troubling you?

CARLOTA

My owners and the house are in danger... two thieves are going to break in here...

LONG TAIL

What?... When?...

CARLOTA

My owners are going on a long vacation and these two thieves are planning to rob the house...

LONG TAIL

But, how do you know that? How can you be so sure?

CARLOTA

See, dogs know danger very well, especially when it has to do with owners and territory. We sense things other people or animals can't see.

LONG TAIL

But... come on, you have to give me some facts here...

CARLOTA

I've seen them around the house and I know what they are up to. I've heard them talking about robbing the house while the family is gone on vacation.

LONG TAIL

Haven't you told them?

CARLOTA

Have you seen a dog speaking human language?.... I've barked and growled all I can whenever I've seen the thieves, but they can think I'm simply barking at lizards.

LONG TAIL

Sounds familiar....

CARLOTA

Well...

LONG TAIL

But, can't you stay in and protect the house?

CARLOTA

No way. Whenever they go on vacation, they always take me to a friend's.

LONG TAIL

And where do I come in?

CARLOTA

You have to convince all the animals out there that my owners are in danger. The animals need to protect the house...

LONG TAIL

But that's impossible... I don't see how I'm going to pull that off.

CARLOTA

Come on Long Tail... you are my last hope, animal to animal...

LONG TAIL

But there is no way the other animals out there will agree to that. Not for the house, not for your owners, not for you, for Nature's sake.

CARLOTA

I wouldn't be so drastic. All the animals and critters that live around this house have a lot to lose.

LONG TAIL

Really?

CARLOTA

Who has been feeding the peacocks for years? Who has brought food in the middle of a storm to their chicks? And who's saved the spider that almost drowned in the jacuzzi? And who puts food outside for the birds in winter time? And who's fed

the baby raccoons?... and saved the big tree from falling down during the hurricanes. And who spares your life and puts you outside, carefully, every time you trigger our burglary alarm...?

LONG TAIL

Your family has done all that...

CARLOTA

See my point?

LONG TAIL

You're right, but precisely... even if all the animals agree, we're no more than a bunch of peacocks, lizards, raccoons, birds, spiders, cats, squirrels and... lately... a hen.

CARLOTA

If you all work together you can protect the house while I'm gone. I see it all the time with my owners. When they unite, they can accomplish anything, and when they don't..., well that's another story.

LONG TAIL

Yeah, easier said than done... See you won't even be here... You'll be comfortable somewhere else.

CARLOTA

I would stay if I could, but I have to obey my owners. Promise me you'll try to get help from the animals.

LONG TAIL

But...

CARLOTA

I promise I will be your friend forever...

LONG TAIL

Ok, ok I promise (realizing only what he had just said),... but I don't even know where to start with the animals...

Webby had been watching and listening from the counter's edge. She had sat there enjoying the conversation. Suddenly,

with a rapid descent, just like fire fighters do when coming down from the upper quarters, Webby slides to the floor using her silk.

WEBBY
(dropping right in front of
Carlota and Long Tail)
But I know how...

CUT TO:

EXT. - A LAKE NEXT TO THE CUL-DE-SAC WHERE THE KIPLINGS HOUSE SITS. DAY

The peacocks are foraging near the lake. Limpy, leading the charge, is the only one of the female peacocks that has never laid eggs. Robie, who has been resting on a branch, flies down and lands near Fowley and Lulu.

ROBIE
So, who's the new bird in the neighborhood?

LULU
(in a jealousy tone)
You mean that hen? (points to the hen, who's pecking in the distance)

FOWLEY
I don't know... She hasn't introduced herself.

ROBIE
But, isn't that weird? A hen in the suburbs?

LIMPY
Well, nature is free and you have to accept all beings, even those who are different.

FOWLEY
Limpy, you are always so opinionated.

LIMPY
Of course, I've been frowned upon all my life for limping...

ROBIE
And why do you limp?

LIMPY
When I was just a chick, my mother

thought I was too weak and she
pecked at my legs so I couldn't walk
and eat, but I managed to survive...
and I'm still here, and I know I'm
different but I know I still matter
because it's not about genes, it's
about your heart, and your drive...

The peacocks and Robie have been so busy talking that they
didn't notice the black hen had approached them...

PECKY
Hello... I'm Pecky.

LULU
Hi there... we're the peacocks...

ROBIE
And I'm Robie, the Robin...

PECKY
I've been meaning to say "Hi" to you
all, but...

FOWLEY
...you've been pecking for the last
24 hours.

LIMPY
Fowley???!!! Don't be so rude!

FOWLEY
What I mean is that you haven't had
the time to introduce yourself...

PECKY
I know. See, it hasn't been easy for
me lately. I had to escape this
cruel place I was born in...

LIMPY
What place?

PECKY
A hens house...

LULU
Uhhh... what's that? What happened
there?

PECKY
I was going to be sacrificed but
I...

FADE TO:

INT. A HUGE HENS HOUSE AT A RURAL AREA, SOMEWHERE. - DAY

Pecky is seen inside a huge hens house with thousands of hens. Suddenly, she is grabbed by a worker and put into a crate with other hens; the poultry slaughter plant is waiting. A few moments later, the crates are being loaded into a truck. Pecky's tearful eyes can be seen in the dark. Only a miracle can save her. The other hens look resigned. She is the only black hen there. She is different.

The truck is driving now, following a winding rural highway. An ugly and scary building can be seen in the distance.

When the truck gets to its destination, the crates are unloaded one after the other; it's the usual procession of hens being delivered to the slaughter house. The crate where Pecky is being carried away in has a small opening. The driver, rushing, does not have the time to notice that a hen is missing from one of the crates. When he unloads the last crate, a pair of big, fearful eyes appear in the back of the truck. Pecky was able to get out of the crate and is now hiding from the driver, who is about to slam the door shut.

Inside, all dark, the hen breathes a sight of relief. She is free now. She has one more thing to do; she has to get out of the truck... somehow. But there are no windows, no orifice to escape through. Pecky realizes she has just one choice: open the back of the truck. One push, another push, nothing. The clock is ticking and she's still trapped inside the truck. The truck should be back in the hens house soon, and she knows she does not have much time. The truck stops. It must be the only red light in this rural town. Pecky is pushing harder each time. One squeaky noise, then another; she is actually opening it. Just as she opens a little bit more, the truck begins to move and Pecky falls out onto a car's hood behind the truck.

Pecky jumps, and skewing away from the road, hides behind some bushes.

QUICK FADE TO PREVIOUS SCENE:

EXT. - A LAKE NEXT TO THE CUL-DE-SAC WHERE THE KIPLINGS HOUSE SITS. DAY

LIMPY

And how exactly did you manage to get here? I've never seen hen houses around here.

PECKY

It's a long story. From there, I

took a train, hid inside a bus, and after 10 long days of walking, sometimes at night, I got around to this lake.

FOWLEY

Well, that explains why you've been pecking endlessly since you got here. You must be hungry...

ROBIE

(sounding compassionate to Pecky)

Don't worry... I'm a newcomer myself... I just got here a few days ago... We'll bring you up to speed.

PECKY

Thanks... I hope my life here is going to be quiet and peaceful...

ROBIE

Well, that will depend on a little grouchy dog that lives over there (points to the Kipling's house.)

PECKY

I don't think anything would be worse than the slaughter house...

FOWLEY

Oh, believe me, it could be worse than that. That dog is something else. Just stay away from the house and you should be fine.

EXT. - A CUL-DE-SAC WHERE THE KIPLINGS HOUSE SITS. DAY

Long Tail is walking away from the Kiplings' house and Webby is walking next to him. Long Tail seems worried. He had promised Carlota he would try to rally all the animals and save the house from the thieves, but he knows it won't be easy.

LONG TAIL

Well, where do we start?

WEBBY

Easy. We put up a sign on the Big Tree and around the lake, and we'll call on all the animals...

LONG TAIL

(talking almost to himself)

Do you think they will listen to a lizard?

WEBBY
(continuing her thoughts)
...we'll discuss a plan, and I know they will help us.

LONG TAIL
(louder now)
Do you think they will listen to a lizard?

WEBBY
Of course they will. Hey, you need to trust your heart. Besides, you promised to help... and animal promises are not to be broken!

LONG TAIL
You're right. I need to trust my heart, but my heart is telling me it's almost impossible.

WEBBY
Ahh... nonsense... (picking up from the soil one long colorful peacock feather) ...here, you write the note with this and I'll get a big leaf...

Webby shoots her silk to one of the branches that adorn the big oak tree sitting in the middle of the cul-de-sac. She then starts to climb slowly to get a leaf while Long Tail is waiting below with the feather in his right hand, looking at the colors in amazement. He starts writing ideas in the air.

In no time, Webby descends slowly and stops in front of Long Tail's face. They stare at each other. They both understand they are together in this, and that animal promises are not to be broken.

WEBBY
(showing Long Tail a huge green oak leaf)
Are you ready now?

LONG TAIL
Yes, ma'am.

INT. - THE KIPLINGS' FAMILY ROOM. DAY

With the first light of the day, the Kiplings are up. They are leaving in two days and final preparations are due. Eric is seen packing up and organizing his things. Mom is next to

him, supervising the final touches. Dad and Emma are working on their luggage too, and Carlota is inside her open kennel. She is staring at her owners. They seem so happy, but are unaware of what's to come. She growls to herself for not being able to communicate her feelings and the impending danger. She feels guilty.

EMMA

Dad, I've never seen Carlota so sad.
Look at her.

DAD

Yeah, she always gets sad when we leave for a few days. But she's going to be alright... (to Mom, who is now walking to the garage with a few clothes in her hand) When are you taking Carlota to Lissy's?

MOM

Tonight. Why? Is she OK?

DAD

Well, she's kind of sad but Lissy's dog will surely make her happy.
(walking towards Carlota's kennel)
Besides, Lissy always takes very good care of her... (petting Carlota now) right girl?

EMMA

(coming from behind)
Dad, I'll double Carlota's ration of treats for Mom to take. That'll make her happy, don't you think?

DAD

Sure, why not?

MOM

(coming back to the family room)
Honey, are you sure you packed everything we need?

DAD

(looking at Emma and giggling softly)
Yes I did.

Carlota looks outside. The sun is out completely and she can see and hear a few birds through the glass. A squirrel passes by jumping restlessly across the fence. Her eyes are looking for Long Tail but he's not there. Carlota is now

resigned. She's not going to be there tonight, she'll be two miles away, and the thieves will rob the house. Unless Long Tail pulls a miracle, her owners are going to be terrified when they return.

Carlota now looks at the clock in the kitchen. The clock is ticking. Maybe she should have done something else... another plan, but it's too late now...

LONG FADE TO:

EXT. - A CUL-DE-SAC WHERE THE KIPLINGS HOUSE SITS. DAY

We are staring at a pair of open, assertive eyes, giving us a mean and dirty look. The camera moves away slowly, showing a decisive and determined Long Tail. He now seems stronger, walking on two legs, and his tail has grown wider and longer. He's moving it almost like a whip that's about to break the silence in our quiet cul-de-sac.

Long Tail is now well equipped. With his left upper leg, he's holding a huge green leaf with words on it; his right upper leg shows a worn out toy hammer, and across his mouth, he holds three long nails.

Long Tail is walking toward the Big Tree. As he gets closer, he lifts the hammer, grabs one nail from his mouth, and starts hammering his statement onto the tree.

The note reads:

"To all the animals:

Our neighborhood is in danger. Your help is needed. An animal Summit is set for tonight, at first moonlight. Do not dare miss it."

When finished, Long Tail turns his head around. He is looking at a spot in a nearby bush. He knows Webby is there. She had been following his steps all along. With watering eyes, Webby stares at Long Tail. He winks at her and she gives him thumbs up.

INT. THE KIPLINGS CAR. NIGHT

MOM

(to Carlota, who is traveling inside her kennel in the rear seat)

Who is going to be a good girl while we're out?

CARLOTA

(growls and barks)

MOM

I know... you're going to be a good girl. Lissy and Prince will take good care of you... (she is pulling in now at Lissy's house.)

The door bell rings once, then twice...

LISSY

(opening the door)

Prince, Prince, look who's here...
Oh my God. You look fabulous dear...
Hey have you been using the cream I gave you?... and who do we have here?... (Prince is already all over Carlota's kennel.)

MOM

Oh Lissy, thanks for taking care of her once again. We really don't know how to thank you for that.

LISSY

Oh, don't worry... Listen, it's a shame you couldn't come to my recent party. We had so much fun... we danced and sang, and I met a new friend, his name is Roland... Can you believe it? He is so cute... and we are going out on a date tomorrow night...

MOM

That's so nice...

LISSY

And tell me, where are you going?

MOM

A week in Alaska, on a cruise ship, and a few days of hiking in national parks...

LISSY

Oh my God, that sounds exciting! I wish I could come with you guys...

MOM

You're more than welcome...

LISSY

Maybe next summer. Is Carlota still eating dry food?

MOM

Yes... and I brought this huge bag of treats so she forgets we are away. She's been sadder than usual, I don't know why...

LISSY

It's the years, dear. How old is she now?

MOM

Only eight...

LISSY

Well, then it could be... she is in love... (looks at Prince, who is still smelling Carlota's kennel)...

MOM

Could be... Well Lissy, thank you again. You have our phone numbers, just in case you need to call. I hope there is signal where we are going.

LISSY

Hey, who needs a cell phone ringing in the middle of a nice vacation anyway? I'm sure I won't have to bother you.

MOM

(to Carlota)

Be a good girl... Bye Lissy.

LISSY

No worries dear, she is in good hands.

Door closes.

CUT TO:

EXT. - A CUL-DE-SAC WHERE THE KIPLINGS HOUSE SITS. SUNSET

All the peacocks, Robie, a family of squirrels, two possums, ducks, the swan, Pumpkin the cat, Pecky, two raccoons, pigeons, a bunch of ravens, and other critters are all gathered around the Big Tree. They're reading the notice that was left by Long Tail and Webby.

FOWLEY

"Don't dare miss it?" Who dared to post this notice here?

PECKY

Danger? What danger? Oh my god, I just got here escaping from danger only to find more danger...

SQUIRREL 1

No news to us. We live in danger all the time and we don't mind. (pointing to a nearest main street that can be seen across the lake) I mean, just look at all the cars we have to avoid every day... and night.

SQUIRREL 2

That's right, we really know everything about danger...

POSSUM 1

Danger? Most of the time we see danger from below, right where nobody can see us...

POSSUM 2

Or we just "play possum", ha ha ha. (starts playing possum, mimicking the appearance and smell of a sick or dead animal. The look is grotesque: its lips are drawn back, teeth are bared, saliva foams around the mouth, and a foul-smelling fluid is secreted from the glands. After a few instants, the possum stands up and laughs) Got you!!! Ha, ha, ha!

RAT 1

Well, my babies are in danger right now if I don't go back to my 2-car garage...

ROBIE

Hey, what if all this is true? What if we're really in danger?

LULU

That's right... but who posted the notice and what kind of danger is it?

PUMPKIN

Buahh, I wouldn't pay much attention to it... it's probably just a hoax...

FOWLEY

If it's a hoax, we need to find the culprit right away. Hoaxes won't be tolerated here.

RAVEN 1

You're right. We need to find out who did this...

RAVEN 2

(starts flying around in circles, like performing an air military mission)
Yes, let's find the culprit...

RACCOON 1

Hey, it could have been one of us...

They all look at each other in distrust.

PIGEON 3

But, why? what's the use of all this?

FOWLEY

I say we find right now who posted this notice, hoax or not.

LULU

Easy Fowley, and all of you guys. If we wait a little bit longer, we'll know who posted the notice. Just read. It says "tonight, at first moonlight."

A family of ducks, who has been foraging around, gets to the gathering late.

DUCK 1

(talking to Raccoon 1, the closest to him)
What's going on? I've never seen a reunion of animals so diverse.

RACCOON 1

Hush, just read the note...

RAVEN 1

What if it's a trap?... Just to get us all.

FOWLEY

That's right, that's right. What if it's a trap...

Limpy, limping his way to the group coming from some nearby bushes, approaches the Big Tree.

LIMPY

Trap? What trap? Where is the trap?

LULU

There is no trap, Limpy, at least we still don't know. We're just talking about this notice.

LIMPY

(getting close to the notice)

"Our neighborhood is in danger. Your help is needed. An Animal Summit is set for tonight, at first moonlight. Do not dare miss it..." And what are we going to do about this? I haven't seen anything unusual around here lately. Have you?

All the animals move their heads from side to side. No, they haven't seen anything unusual lately.

FOWLEY

That's why we need to find who did this...

PUMPKIN

...because it can be a hoax...

RACCOON 2

Could it be a human hoax?

ROBIE

Not really, humans don't speak our language. I've tried many times before on different lands.

FOWLEY

Well, we keep going back to square one, and that is, WHO DID THIS?

LONG TAIL

(who had gone unnoticed,
standing behind them)

I did!

All the heads turn around at once, and all the animals' eyes are fixed in diminutive Long Tail who, despite his small stature, is showing resoluteness from head to toe. All the animals start looking at each other in disbelief.

FOWLEY

(with a smirk on his face)
YOUUUU?

Webby, who is witnessing the commotion while hanging from the Big Tree, descends rapidly and stops right in front of Fowley's face. She is now giving him a few seconds so Fowley can focus on her tiny body and legs. He's having trouble focusing on Webby; she is small and too close to his eyes. Fowley, while squinting, moves his head back a bit. Webby is now in perfect sight.

WEBBY
(she is enjoying the view)
And me.

The camera moves 180 degrees, from facing Webby, to facing Fowley and the rest of the animals, all of them in focus. They're looking in total disbelief.

QUICK CUT TO:

INT. LISSY'S HOUSE. THE FAMILY ROOM - DAY

Carlota has been here less than 24 hours. She is laying inside her kennel while Prince is relentless in his romantic advances. Prince is in love and he's determined to win over Carlota's heart. It's a shame she is not for it.

PRINCE
(acting all Casanova)
Want a kiss sweetheart? What about a lick?

Carlota is not paying attention. The only thing she's thinking about is the house, her family, the two thieves and their planned break-in. The family is leaving first thing tomorrow morning. Carlota has only a few hours to attempt something. She is now looking at Prince, who's standing out of her kennel.

PRINCE
(his voice tone is all
Elvis-like)
What do you say we share some semi-moist food? I wouldn't mind if you eat straight from my dish.

Carlota doesn't even lift her head.

PRINCE
(with the same fake tone)
Hey, have you tried my water? It's not plain faucet water. It's vitamin water. It gives you strength, if

that's what you need.

Prince goes to his water dish and drinks some, then comes back to Carlota's kennel.

PRINCE
(showcasing his muscles)
See, this is what I mean...

CARLOTA
I don't need that. All I need is your help escaping from here.

PRINCE
(with his regular poodle voice)
Escape? What do you mean? Are we treating you bad? My owner has been nice to you.

CARLOTA
No, you don't understand... My house is in danger. Two thieves are going to break in while my family is away.

PRINCE
Ohh, I see. Well, I have just the plan for you.

CARLOTA
(she is now listening)
And what's that?

PRINCE
Easy. I go to my owner and tell her what's happening and she'll take care of the rest.

CARLOTA
And how you do that? I've been trying to get my family's attention since I sensed the thieves evesdropping on the other side of the fence.

PRINCE
Sweetheart, you have underestimated Prince. Watch me!

While Prince is decisively walking away from Carlota toward Lissy, who can be seen on the background talking on the phone, Carlota slowly moves her tail out from between her legs and wags it happily. Hey, maybe she has a chance now... you never know when it comes to humans.

LISSY
(still on the phone, seeing
Prince getting close to her)
Oh, who's my little Prince... Hey
Ada, can you hold on a second?

Prince gets closer and starts growling. At times, the sounds
are different in tone and rhythm, but still a growl.

LISSY
I know my love, I know. You are so
happy that Carlota is here with us.
Go, go and get all cozy with her.
(looks at Carlota who's still in her
kennel and no longer wagging her
tail) You both look so adorable...

Prince's growls get higher in intensity and volume. He's now
mixing the sounds with barks.

LISSY
(her friend still holding on
the phone)
Oh, my poor baby, is there something
wrong? Are you hungry? Ada, can I
call you back in a few? I think
there's something wrong with
Prince... we're taking care of a
friend's pet and he's probably
nervous... (hangs up) (to Prince
now) Come here, you brat. Does your
tummy hurt? You want to go out for a
walk?

A walk? Did she just say a walk? Enough for Prince to wag
his tail.

LISSY
A walk it is. I knew it! Of course
we'll go for a stroll (from here,
she looks at Carlota, still in her
kennel, looking sad)... but Carlota
needs to stay. I can see she's not
in the mood. I'll leave her kennel
open so she can roam a little... I'm
sure then she'll start to adapt.
(grabbing Prince's leash from a
table near the door). Come on boy,
let's go!

Prince happily follows his owner outside, as the door shuts
behind them.

CARLOTA

(talking to herself)
Oh poodles, short attention span.

EXT. - A STREET LEADING TO THE CUL-DE-SAC WHERE THE KIPLINGS HOUSE SITS. CLOSE TO SUNSET TIME.

From here, Reny and Humber can see the Kiplings' house. They have been parked for a while on a side street facing the cul-de-sac. Dad comes out carrying two pieces of luggage from the house to the trunk of the car and Emma follows. They can hear her.

EMMA
Dad, easy with my carry-on, I've got my iPod in there.

DAD
Don't worry sweetheart, I'll put it in the side pocket.

Eric comes out of the house too.

ERIC
(passing a camping tool to Dad)
Hey Dad, grab this, we might need it.

DAD
Sure.

MOM
(standing on the front door, almost shouting to Dad)
Honey, what time did you put the alarm on for tomorrow? Remember, we need to get to the airport early.

DAD
(loading now another piece of luggage) Five in the morning dear. We'll get there in time.

Reny and Humber look at each other, smirking...

HUMBER
So easy. They are leaving tomorrow.

RENY
Up top (Reny high-fives Humber) .. I say we hit the car when they go to sleep, I mean they just put their luggage in the car, man.

HUMBER

Are you stupid? We don't need all that crap they just put in the car.

RENY

So, we hit tomorrow?

HUMBER

I'd give it two or three more days, just to make sure they are far, far away. In the mean time, we'll watch the area.

RENY

Hey, hey, how about the girl's iPod? It's in the luggage... didn't you hear her?... I say we break in the car later when they go to sleep.

HUMBER

You so dumb Reny. Forget the iPod. Soon, we'll have the entire house.

Dad has just gone back into the house after locking the car. Reny and Humber had been watching his every move for the last half hour. The thieves were being watched too. Long Tail, now camouflaged, had been sitting and listening to their conversation on top of their old pickup truck. When Humber starts the engine, Long Tail, like a furtive ninja, jumps onto the grass and disappears into the bushes. Humber, at the wheel, drives around the cul-de-sac pretending he's looking for an address. When passing right in front of the Big Tree they see the same group of animals gathered around the tree that had been discussing the notice posted by Long Tail. They see a cat gesturing indifferently to the rest of the animals.

HUMBER

Ha!, friendly cat... hanging out with birds and critters. Who would believe it?

CUT TO:

INT. - INSIDE KIPLINGS'S HOME - EMMA ROOM - DAY

The sun has just set and the Kiplings go to bed early.

EMMA

(staring at the wall, where there is a photograph of the Delicate Arch, in Arches National Park, Utah)

Dad, can you tuck me in?

A few moments later, she can hear Dad's footsteps getting closer to her room.

DAD

I'm here...

EMMA

Can you read me a story?

DAD

Sure, which one do you want to hear?

EMMA

Actually, can you make one up?

DAD

Humm, let's see. Hold on, I need to call on the muses.

EMMA

Muses? What's that?

DAD

Well, long long ago, in Greek Mythology, muses inspired people.

EMMA

(daydreaming)

Well, can you make up a simple story in which we're the heroes?

DAD

Of course...

EMMA

(keeps daydreaming, Dad's voice now sounds very distant)

Dad? You know I'm gonna have trouble sleeping tonight, right?

DAD

Why sweetheart?

EMMA

Because I'm very excited about tomorrow and our vacation... and all the places we'll go. (points to the Delicate Arch) It's like I'm already there...

DAD

(smiles and caresses her)

You know what? It happened to me too, when I was a child... Uncle Raul and Aunt Mary used to plan Summer excursions and I couldn't sleep at all the night before. They would wake up very early to catch a boat that sailed from an old harbor and I remember standing on the boat looking at dolphins jumping in and out of the water...

EMMA

Really?

DAD

Yup, and when we'd get to this small island I would spend the whole day looking for fresh, wild fruits while Uncle Raul and Aunt Mary went fishing and came back with all kinds of seafood.

EMMA

Can we go there some day?

DAD

Of course, do you want to go next Summer?

EMMA

Yes...

DAD

Ok, we'll plan it...

EMMA

Dad? Do you like to travel?

DAD

Yes, a lot...

EMMA

Why?

DAD

I don't know... it's like... you feel free... you leave all your worries behind and you just go, you know, to explore new places and see new things... and people... and... I feel that somehow new doors open for you while you are away...

EMMA

What's your favorite place?

DAD

My favorite place? Well... (long pause) we've been to many places, but I can tell you that there is nothing like home sweet home. Every time we travel, don't you feel like you want to come back to your room, your books, school, friends?

EMMA

Yes, you're right, I like home... (yawning) ...besides, I feel safe here with you guys... I always feel safe at home.

DAD

(smiles)

Of course you do, and tomorrow we'll be going on a wonderful vacation together... (kisses her good night)

EMMA

Good night Dad... Love you.

DAD

You too, baby. I love you too...

Lights out...

CUT TO:

EXT. - A STREET LEADING TO THE CUL-DE-SAC WHERE THE KIPLINGS' HOUSE SITS. DUSK

Fowley, his eyes wide open, is still facing Webby, while Long Tail is standing in close distance...

FOWLEY

(composing himself)

And who are you to post this notice here?

LONG TAIL

Well... this is my neighborhood too...

FOWLEY

Since when? I barely see you around.

LONG TAIL

You barely see me around because you're always too busy looking at

yourself trying to impress everyone
by showing your feathers like a
diva. And look, I have a tail too.

FOWLEY

How dare you to talk to me like
that.

Fowley moves aggressively toward Long Tail. Webby, still
hanging from her silk, makes a quick move to protect Long
Tail. After all, any possible fight between them two would
mean doom for Long Tail.

LONG TAIL

(standing firm)

How dare you say I can't post a
notice in my own neighborhood when I
believe danger is coming...

LULU

Fowley!? Let him explain himself...

ROBIE

Yeah Fowley, let the guy talk...

Fowley backs up to the group of animals. It's still Long
Tail and Webby against them all. Long Tail knows he's facing
a tough job in convincing the animals to help Carlota and
ultimately save the house.

LONG TAIL

(speaking solemnly)

We are all in danger... because that
house (points to the Kipling's
house) is going to be robbed...

PUMPKIN

(interrupting and looking at
the others)

Are they stealing the dog too?...
Ha, ha, ha...

LONG TAIL

You're not seeing the big picture
here because you live over there
(points to Pumpkin's owner's house),
and you don't eat what they eat.

FOWLEY

Well, that's not necessarily true.
The Fancy Feast that guy (referring
to Pumpkin's owner) puts outside
sometimes for him (pointing to the
cat) surely tastes good.

LONG TAIL

But you won't live long enough
eating Fancy Feast. That's against
your nature. Come on, you know how
much animal fat that thing has?

RACCOON 1

Hey, is that true?

SQUIRREL 1

I don't know, I haven't tried it. I
stick to my diet every day.

LONG TAIL

My point is that if that family
suffers, and their life gets
disrupted... or they are harmed...
you're all going to suffer.

PUMPKIN

Not me...

LONG TAIL

(pointing one by one)

But you, you, you, and you will.
Because believe it or not, every
time they feed the peacocks or a
squirrel or a bird, we all benefit
from it. Don't you see?

PECKY

Was it them who left some rice for
us to eat last night?

RAT 1

Yes it was... one of my favorite
dishes.

PECKY

It's the first time I see humans
feeding a hen out of kindness. Back
at the hen house, they fed us... but
the purpose was to make food of
us... Oh Mother Nature, it sounds
like a tongue twister.

LONG TAIL

How about the bread Fowley? The many
times they have given you bread and
grains, and rice, and fruits, and
you Lulu? and you Limpy?

LIMPY

How does this little guy know my

name?

LONG TAIL

Because while you, peacocks, waste your time acting like big shots (looking at Fowley) showing off your colorful feathers all day, we the little guys, pay attention to what's going on around us.

FOWLEY

What do you care? You just eat insects. Those people there (points to the Kipling's house) don't feed you...

RACCOON 1

(to Raccoon 2 and the rest of the animals)

Have you seen a lizard eating bread, rice, or fruits?

LONG TAIL

Well, sometimes I do eat bread and rice, and fruits... and there is nothing wrong with that.

DUCK 1

Stop your talking about food! Let the lizard talk. (Looking at Long Tail) How do you know what's going to happen there?

LONG TAIL

The family's dog told me she knows two thieves are going to break into the house while the family is away, and they are determined to steal, and kill if necessary.

FOWLEY

The... dog...? Are you out of your mind? Are you talking to that monster?

LONG TAIL

Well I did talk to her... and Carlota is not the monster you think she is...

WEBBY

Forget about the dog. It's the family. Oh, you peacocks are so full of yourselves. What if the family

gets hurt or killed... and what if they move somewhere else because of fear?

All the animals look at each other. There is confusion in the air. They simply don't know what to say or do.

FOWLEY

But... that dog has been terrifying us for the last eight years. Not only me, the peacocks and the chicks, but all of us. And you know that!

This is it! I, the most senior animal here, consider this (lifts his feathers like quoting, unquoting) "Summit" over. I've lived here way too long to be summoned by an ordinary lizard, whose lifespan is just three years.

LULU

Fowley?!...

FOWLEY

Yes, it's true. When you and I got here Lulu, we were probably after his great great great great... God only knows how many great grandparents.

PUMPKIN

I think I'm going home... There is no much left here to see... (starts walking to his house)

SQUIRREL 1

And how exactly are we supposed to save the family and the house... and the food they give us?

SQUIRREL 2

Hey, anyone here have a buddy or a good connection at the Metrozoo? That'd be cool. Lions, zebras, giraffes, (in a louder, fearless voice) rhinos, and elephants... coming down here to save the house, and us... Ha, ha, ha!

RAVEN 1

Keep dreaming...

RAVEN 2

And we don't really want to mention
the long story of birds dying
because of bb guns.

All the attention goes back to Long Tail and Fowley's verbal
battle...

LONG TAIL
(talking to all the animals)
It's not about lions or ferocious
animals saving us. We need to unite
to save that family, and
ourselves...

Long Tail is scouting all the animals' faces to see their
reactions. Unfortunately, they look as confused as before.
They are all waiting for Fowley to say something.

LONG TAIL
(looking at Fowley)
I see, big guy... There is only one
thing left for you to do now: eat
me! After all, that's in you. That
family is the reason why you have
not eaten a mice or a lizard in
quite a while. Thanks to them, your
diet has been refined.

RAT 1
(to Rat 2)
Do they eat mice? I gotta go.

RAT 2
This is not good. Not good.

Fowley turns around and grabs Lulu's feathers. They start
walking towards the bushes. Limpy follows them. Robie is
standing there too. His friendship with Fowley tells him he
should support his friend and walk out. One by one, the
animals start walking towards their hideouts. A few moments
later, it all goes back to how it started: Long Tail and
Webby by themselves. Fowley, Lulu, Limpy, Robie and the
chicks can still hear what Long Tail is about to yell out:

LONG TAIL
Ok Fowley, go on and hide. Just
remember how many times the little
girl has come out here to feed you
and your chicks... (in a softer
quiet voice, like he's talking to
himself) Please?!...

EXT. - BUSHES NEAR THE LAKE, NEXT TO THE CUL-DE-SAC WHERE
THE KIPLINGS HOUSE SITS. NIGHT

A powerful array of thunders can be heard. The rain is now falling hard, and the wind is breaking the weakest branches off the trees. Fowley and Lulu are soaked and scared, sitting on a tree near the bushes. On the grass, they can see six eggs Lulu laid two days before, and Limpy can be seen in another branch. Other peacocks are hiding in an another tree nearby. They are all scared and unsure if they will live to see another day. Another huge roll of thunder shakes them to the bone. Fowley and Lulu fly down to the grass to save the eggs; the water is rising: a flood is coming.

FOWLEY

Lulu, just stay here a little longer, I'll go get help from the others.

LULU

Hurry Fowley, the water will drag the eggs to the lake.

FOWLEY

I'll be back soon.

The camera follows Fowley to some nearby bushes on higher ground. He looks up to one of the trees where the other peacocks are sitting all together, frightened. A powerful lightning bolt strikes one foot from where Fowley is standing. The peacocks on the tree turned away and close their eyes. They think Fowley has been hit. Miraculously, Fowley stands up and continues his search to find a better place to relocate the eggs. Suddenly, he hears human voices right near the spot he has chosen. He's got to be dreaming, humans are never out in this weather. This has to be a hurricane. He finally gets closer to the spot and stays quiet. No voices now. He was probably hallucinating. He decides a hill-like area near the lake is the perfect spot; it's high enough for the eggs to survive the flood. Now he has to return to Lulu, and time is of the essence. The camera keeps following Fowley along the bushes and trees while he's running to Lulu. Powerful thunder and lightning strike again, and rain and wind are as strong as ever.

Twenty more feet to go. Fowley is so scared and stressed out he has not realized that for the last few feet he has been walking on running water. Only now he looks down and sees the running water passing fast through his legs. Making a tremendous effort to go against the water, he finally approaches the spot where he had left Lulu and the eggs, just minutes earlier.

To his surprise, they are not there! A few soaked branches of what was the nest are floating on the water. Now a new torrent of water wipes the area clean. There is no end to

the water. Fowley looks around, desperately, trying to find Lulu and the eggs. He's lost them. He starts running around trying to find them. The water is approaching faster and faster now. He tries to fly but the rain and wind keep him from getting off the ground. With the water level touching his waist he has just one thing to do: save himself. Fowley is crying now, screaming, mad. The only escape route he has is back to the small hill he had chosen. That place is his last hope. He needs to rush there quickly, before the flood drowns him. At times swimming desperately, and at others moving his legs erratically on the mud and the grass, Fowley manages to get closer to the hill. As he approaches, he hears human voices once again.

FOWLEY
(to himself)
I must have gone crazy...

He can see the small hill already but Fowley has become exhausted. With his last breath, Fowley tumbles to the grass as he hears:

EMMA
Dad, dad, there is the male. We need
to save him!

Fowley squints to try to identify the shadows. Two human silhouettes are approaching him. He makes an effort to stand up and run, with no luck. He's now taken to the same safe place by four human hands. The same human hands had placed Lulu and the six eggs just minutes before in that same spot.

DAD
Let's put him here Emma, next to the
female and the eggs.

EMMA
Are you sure they are going to be OK
here?

ERIC
(coming from behind them)
Hey guys, I couldn't find more eggs
there. You got all of them. Are the
peacocks OK?

EMMA
They seem to be...

DAD
Yes, this is a safe spot. The water
won't reach this high.

ERIC

Is the male OK?

DAD

He's just tired. Hopefully, he'll be
OK tomorrow...

Fowley opens his eyes and sees Lulu and the eggs next to him. Is he dreaming? Lulu touches his face, caressing and comforting him. He looks to the grass: the eggs are safe. He counts them one by one: six there are.

FOWLEY

Who brought you here?

LULU

(pointing to three human
shadows, as they are walking
away in the middle of the
storm

Them...

EXT. - A SMALL HILL, BY THE LAKE, WHERE THE KIPLINGS HOUSE
SITS. DAY

Fowley is sitting on the grass. He's asleep and he is jumping in his dream. Meanwhile, Lulu, Robie, Limpy and the Twins are watching him. Lulu is certain Fowley is having a nightmare about the terrible night in which he, Lulu and their first generation of chicks had almost lost their lives to a storm and then a flood a few years ago. After all, they have been together for a long time now and this has been a recurring nightmare for him.

Robie is worried looking at his friend. Suddenly, Fowley opens his eyes and shakes his head, as if he is trying to get rid off all the horrible memories. Slowly, he looks at Lulu, the Twins and Robie. They are all relieved that Fowley is now awake.

LULU

(speaking softly)

Do you still remember that night?

FOWLEY

(scratching his head)

I wish I didn't.

LULU

Fowley, we have to help. We owe that
family for rescuing us.

FOWLEY

I don't think we owe them anything.
It's true: they feed us, they saved
our lives once, but we adorn their
neighborhood and that does not come
cheap.

ROBIE

Come on Fowley, you need to be
humble.

FOWLEY

...For one family like them
(pointing to the house) there are
many that are cruel to animals.
(pointing to other houses.) Take
that house over there for example,
they hate us, and don't want us
here.

LULU

But, I mean, we do poop on their
cars and their roofs.

FOWLEY

Well, we have the right to exist
here, this was our land before
anyway. They are the invaders.
Nature was here first, and humans
have destroyed most of it... and
look what they do to our cousins
every "Thanksgiving" day.

LULU

But they have planted many trees
here and they built this lake too...

FOWLEY

I would rather have the little creek
my great grandpa used to take me to
for a splash around in when I was a
chick.

ROBIE

Come on friend, don't be so grumpy,
that's not healthy.

FOWLEY

Who are you to say anything? Do you
want to side with that lizard? Be my
guest! I won't lift a finger to
help. (starts walking away from Lulu
and Robie) After all, I have a
family to protect and care for.

ROBIE

But you can do something to help that family... you guys are the biggest animals around.

LULU

(talking to Robie quietly)
Leave him alone Robie. He's so stubborn.

EXT. BUSY BIKE TRAIL IN A SOUTH FLORIDA SUBURB, ABOUT A MILE FROM OUR CUL-DE-SAC - SUNSET

Long Tail has been walking and strolling all day long to go visit his cousin Camey and get their help to try to foil the break-in in the Kipling's house.

He finally gets to where a bunch of lizards are cheering and acting playfully.

CAMEY

Hey cousin, what brings you here?...
It's been a while.

LONG TAIL

I've come on a mission...

CAMEY

(ready for combat)
A mission? I love missions! What's it about?

LONG TAIL

Well... it's kind of complicated.

CAMEY

There are no hard tasks for a lizard...

LONG TAIL

You gotta help me stop two thieves from breaking into a house.

CAMEY

(opening his eyes widely)
Are you nuts?

LONG TAIL

Well... kind of. See, I gave my word to a dog.

CAMEY

(now Camey is convinced Long Tail has completely lost it.)

His face shows it with a
smirk)
Thieves? a dog? Hey, what's in those
flies you've been eating?

LONG TAIL
I know, I know it sounds crazy, but
can you at least listen to my story?

FADE TO:

EXT. BUSY BIKE TRAIL IN A SOUTH FLORIDA SUBURB, ABOUT A MILE
FROM OUR CUL-DE-SAC - SUNSET

Long Tail has been filling in Camey with the details about
his trying to rally the animals to save the house from the
thieves.

He's seen mimicking all his efforts with the sign he had
posted on the Big Tree and the animals' reactions. In the
background, a bunch of lizards, Camey's buddies, can be seen
playing, tanning and having fun.

CAMEY
So, they let you down, huh?

LONG TAIL
Well... not all of them. Webby is on
my side...

CAMEY
Who's Webby?

LONG TAIL
A spider.

CAMEY
(laughing out loud)
Ha, ha, ha....

LONG TAIL
She is a good friend and she's ready
to help.

CAMEY
(putting up his front legs,
like reading the headline of a
newspaper)
"Bunch of Lizards and a Spider Save
House from Thieves" Do you really
think that's possible?

LONG TAIL
I don't know if it's possible, but

you are my only hope, cousin.

CAMEY

(calling out to his buddies)
Hey boys, come over here! We need to talk. (turns around and starts walking toward them, as they walk towards Camey. Long Tail stays behind. They make gestures, colluding for a while, then return to Long Tail.)

LONG TAIL

I know what you are gonna say...

CAMEY

We say yes, we'll help...

LONG TAIL

(can't believe it)
Really?

CAMEY

Sure. Do you have a plan?

LONG TAIL

(he has been totally caught off guard and his face shows it)
Plan? Ummm, No?!

INT. LISSY'S HOUSE. THE FAMILY ROOM - DAY

Carlota is sleeping inside her open kennel. It's the first time she has been able to get some sleep since Mrs. Kipling left her there. She looks exhausted after giving much thought to how to escape Lissy's house and try to get to her home to defend it.

She feels something on her nose. One lick, two licks. She jumps only to see Prince right in front of her trying to get her attention. In the background, Lissy can be seen in the kitchen, fixing a meal.

CARLOTA

(talking to herself)
Oh, Mother Nature...

PRINCE

Hey, you wanna play?

CARLOTA

No, I'm tired...

PRINCE
Come on, let's play...

CARLOTA
(seeing an opportunity)
Well... actually I do want to play,
but I want to play outside. Can you
tell her to take us to the backyard
so we can roam freely?... You know,
no leash involved.

PRINCE
Ah, clever girl, such a great idea.
We can even share a special treat I
hid by the pool a week ago.

CARLOTA
You got it. When do we start
enjoying the outside?

PRINCE
Watch me...

Prince walks to Lissy and to get her attention, rolls on the floor several times. She knows him; that's his signature move for when he wants to play in the back yard. While Prince is rolling on the floor, Carlota's eyes are fixed on a wide gap between the soil and the wooden fence in the backyard. She turns her head now to see Prince still rolling on the floor, while Lissy says:

LISSY
Oh, you brat, do you want to go play
in the backyard?

PRINCE
(barks and growls musically)

LISSY
Ok, do you want to show our guest
the backyard too?

PRINCE
(moves his head, almost
nodding)

LISSY
Let's go boy. Carlota, are you
coming?

Disguising her excitement, Carlota starts walking slowly out of her kennel, while Lissy and Prince, walking together from the family room, join her. Lissy opens the sliding door to the backyard and lets both dogs out. She then closes it

behind her and sits on a chair under a tree.

Carlota looks at Lissy and then the gap on the fence. She is hoping she'll have a chance to squeeze herself through the hole and run home, but Lissy is keeping an eye on Prince and her.

LISSY

Prince, bring your big bone, the one
mama gave you last week.

Prince is now all over Carlota, jumping on to her. His playing around is becoming rough.

LISSY

Prince! Easy boy. You don't want to
scare her. Ooops, I forgot to turn
off the stove. Prince, behave and
watch out for Carlota. I'll be
back...

As Lissy walks toward the house, Carlota looks again at the gap while Prince is trying to lick her face. Lissy is opening the sliding door. Carlota looks at the fence. She can run away now but doing so wouldn't be smart. She needs more time. She needs to wait until Lissy gets in the house. Carlota lays quietly on the ground. She hears the squeaky noise of the sliding door and sees it open. Another squeaky noise and Lissy closes the sliding door.

Right then, Carlota runs for the fence and in no time starts squeezing her long body through the gap. With her head and one leg on the other side of the fence, Carlota tries to pull herself out completely.

Carlota's quick movements and determination have left a speechless Prince, who now opens his eyes in disbelief. He runs to the fence and starts pulling Carlota in the opposite direction.

PRINCE

(pulling hard Carlota's legs)
Girl, what are you doing? You are
going to get run over in the street.
Come back now!

CARLOTA

(with her front legs and half
her body against the fence
trying to break free)
Let me out! You don't understand
what's going on...

PRINCE

I know what's bothering you, you want to save your family, but there is no use... it's too far and you won't get there in one piece... I promise I'll give you my big bone if you get back inside (loses now one of Carlota's legs)

CARLOTA

Thanks for the bone buddy... but I need to run (growls ferociously). Quit pulling my leg, idiot. Go back to your owner... I have to save mine. (one more hard pull and Carlota is rolling now off the fence after a last big effort to break free.)

PRINCE

(shouting from the other side of the fence)
You're going to get me in trouble, don't you see?

CARLOTA

(talking to herself)
I'm sorry pal, gotta save my family.

PRINCE

Come back here. You're going to get killed!

Lissy, who had been hearing all the commotion and noises coming from the backyard, walks out of the house to the backyard only to see Prince barking and growling next to the fence.

LISSY

(shouting frantically)
Prince, what's happening? Come here now... (looking around) ...hey, where is Carlota? Hey, what happened to Carlota... (she is running now to the fence, getting closer and seeing the gap and fresh mud on the fence from Prince's and Carlota's tug-of-war. She panicks.) Oh my God, Prince, where is Carlota...? did she run away? Oh my God, oh my God, oh my God (she scales the fence to see the outside, but Carlota is gone.) Oh my God, I need to call the police, but why did she run away? Come here Prince, get in the house

now! Ay, Ay, Ay... How am I going to
tell Iri this?

QUICK CUT TO:

EXT. - A LAKE NEXT TO THE CUL-DE-SAC WHERE THE KIPLINGS
HOUSE SITS. DAY

Fowley has been sitting alone for a few hours at the lake's
shore. It's a nice, breezy afternoon.

ROBIE
(coming from behind)
Hey buddy... you OK?

FOWLEY
(looks preoccupied, as though
he is dealing with a great
dilemma)
Well...

ROBIE
Is that true? Did that family save
your life, and Lulu's and the
chicks'?

FOWLEY
Yes, they did...

ROBIE
What are you waiting for then?
You gotta help somehow...

FOWLEY
They may have saved our lives, but
you know how many turkeys, our
cousins, and other birds humans kill
each year?

ROBIE
And we do it too... we eat insects,
reptiles, amphibians, and other
creatures... it's Nature's cycle.
Come on Fowley, for God's sake,
sometimes, you eat reptiles too!

FOWLEY
But... humans... they took over our
land...

ROBIE
Oh, get over it. It's time for you

to lift a feather and help a human family that has shown nothing but love and respect for animals and Nature... You are the biggest chap around here. The lizard can't do anything without your help...

FOWLEY

That's part of the problem too... I don't want to take orders from a lizard.

ROBIE

Come on, the lizard is not the leader here; he's part of the group. Hey, we could have some fun battling the thieves... and besides, you can avenge all your grievances about bad humans.

FOWLEY

And how about their dog, the villain of this place?

ROBIE

This is the perfect chance to befriend her. She could be your best ally ever.

FOWLEY

(nodding)

So... shall we go after the lizard?

ROBIE

Fowley!? What do you mean "go after the lizard"? Come on, change that attitude already...

FOWLEY

(nodding)

Let's go find the lizard...

Lulu, who had been watching the two friends talking from a distance, smiles and lifts her head. Fowley is making her proud. With her eyes fixed on Fowley and Robie she sees them now passing by in front of her, just like a war parade. Fowley looks at her and smiles back. They know each other well and understand that they are now in this together.

As they pass in front of Lulu, Webby comes running out of some nearby bushes and rushes to intercept Fowley and Robie.

WEBBY

Can I go find Long Tail with you

guys?

FOWLEY
(looks surprised)
You seem to be everywhere...

ROBIE
It's called ubiquitous...

WEBBY
(sounds mad)
Ubi what? My name is Webby...

FOWLEY
Hey, hey, no more
misunderstandings... Yes, Webby you
can come with us, we're a team now.

WEBBY
(smiling and proudly following
Fowley and Robie)
Oh Nature!, pinch me, I've got to be
dreaming...

CUT TO:

Carlota has been wandering for a few hours, depending on her sense of smell to take her back to the house. The sun is setting on the horizon, soon it'll be dark, and that will work to her advantage. Carlota is now walking now on a sidewalk. She lifts her head to look ahead. A curve on the road is coming, and an intersection follows. She scouts the area once again, looking in all directions. One takes one more long sniff: she senses something... the street near the end of the curve seems familiar to her... she knows she's is close. She needs to cross to the other side and this is the moment to run. Hey, that's the smell of Pumpkin, when he goes wandering out of the cul-de-sac, and that's the neighbor's orchids on the other side of the street and... she stops and lifts an ear: that's a familiar sound. She is trying hard to listen... and in the distance, can hear the peacocks calling each other as the sun is about to set. She listens even harder. All her senses are fixed on the sounds of the evening. Now she senses the racoons, the other birds, and the ducks, and even the swan's splattering in the lake. Then, she hears the sound of a squirrel and her baby, both running for shelter along the fence. She is definitely near the house, her home and knows she now has a shot at defending it. A little bit further, and the curve on the road ends. Carlota knows exactly where to go; the smells, the sounds and the neighborhood are all waiting. It's almost nighttime. From here, she can see the lights of the cul-de-sac in the distance. "It's now or never", Carlota thinks to herself, while she starts running slowly to the

other side of the road. Hey, she can sense another sound... and another light, real bright this time... "That's weird", she thinks, "the sound and the light are coming at me". Oh... noooo...! A squeaky breaking sound is near...!

SLOW TRANSITION TO:

Something terrible happened and Carlota now has a tune stuck in her head. Barney, the purple Dinosaur, is singing:

"Look both ways, when you cross the street.

Look both ways, when you cross the street.

Look both ways, don't move your feet.

Till you look both ways, when you cross the street."

Carlota knows the song very well. It was one of Emma's favorite rhyme songs when she was a child. Extremely slowly, like in a bad dream, Carlota looks both ways now. Is she dreaming? Is she awake? What just happened?

SLOW TRANSITION TO:

Carlota is laying on the street. She has been hit by a car. A couple gets out of the car.

ANN

Oh my God, Reynold... What have you done?

REYNOLD

I didn't see the dog coming...

ANN

(getting closer to Carlota)

Oh, Ernest, we need to get it to a vet, right away.

REYNOLD

Ok, ok, don't touch it. It might bite you. (going back to the car)
Let me get something to lift it.

Thunder is heard in the distance. Drops of rain fall onto the pavement. Carlota is lying on the street, her eyes fixed on the distant lights. She can still smell the familiar scents. She was so close... A teardrop runs down her face and gets mixed in with two raindrops.

CUT TO:

Lissy has spent the last few hours looking for Carlota

everywhere. She's now in the local supermarket with a picture in her hands, her eyes watering, showing Carlota to the supermarket's customers as they enter. She hears, sadly, one "no" after another, as people walk by her, look at the picture, then at her and shake their heads. Prince looks sad laying on the ground, next to her.

LISSY

Have you seen this dog? (one more time, another "no") Oh Prince, I don't know what I'm gonna do.

She is dialing a number on her phone, once again to get a hold of the Kiplings.

LISSY

(to Prince)

And they won't answer the phone...

Thunder is heard in the distance. It's raining. Lissy looks up to the sky as she pulls a small umbrella out of her purse. She can see lightning strike in the distance.

LISSY

Oh Prince... I feel like dying...

EXT. - A STREET IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD NEAR OUR CUL-DE-SAC. A RAINY AND STORMY NIGHT

Humber and Reny, our two thieves, are determined to strike tonight. They're driving toward the house in Humber's pickup truck.

HUMBER

(smoking a cigarette)

Tonite's the night yo.

RENY

You right, bro.

HUMBER

We're gonna empty that house in no time. My pal at the pawn shop is waiting to give us cash, cash, cash...

RENY

Hey Humber, did you bring everything? I mean, we ready for this?

HUMBER

You got it. From rope and bags to (pointing to his waist) "you know

what".

RENY

You brought your gun? Are you crazy man? The house is empty, what do you need a gun for?

HUMBER

You're a freaking moron, man. You don't deserve me. Of course we need my "lil buddy". You don't know what we might find in there: a relative, a nanny, a pet sitter, you know what I mean...

RENY

You a wise bad boy, yo...

HUMBER

Of course I am. I haven't been in the "tank" for nothin', man.

Thunder strikes loudly. It's now pouring...

RENY

Hey yo, are you sure tonight is right? It's raining like hell, man...

HUMBER

Are you chicken o' what? Don't tell me rain and thunder are gonna stop you?

RENY

You know I'm a tough guy. I don't care about nothing... But did you bring a poncho?

HUMBER

What? A poncho? Are you kidding?... Hey, hey what's that? (pointing in front of him)

They get to a complete stop and in the middle of the rain and thunder, see a police car flashing its lights a few yards ahead on the road. Some cars are also stopped in the middle of the rain, waiting for their turn to continue.

RENY

What happened here man? Are those cops? Hey Humber, we better turn around.

HUMBER

Don't be chicken man, let's stick around here to see what's going on... maybe somebody broke into that house before us?

RENY

(opens a window for a better look)

Wait a second... it's just an accident... no, it looks like someone got run over... the cops are helping someone move something from the street...

Another police, flashing lights, is coming from behind and passes the thieves' pick up truck.

HUMBER

You know what bro?... We better leave... it's too hot around here tonight...

RENY

And rainy too...

HUMBER

(making a u-turn, sees a car coming from the opposite direction. The other car stops to let Humber and Reny complete the turn.)

Reny, open your window...
(talking to the other driver)
Hey, do you know what happened there?

DRIVER

I heard the cops saying somebody ran over a dog...

HUMBER

Uhhh..., ok, stay dry buddy.
(Reny closes the window)

RENY

Ha, ha, one dog less barking at us.

HUMBER

You got that right, yo...

EXT. A BEAUTIFUL TRAIL INSIDE A CANYON IN ZION NATIONAL PARK. DAY

The Kiplings have been hiking for a few hours in Zion National Park. They're inside Refrigerator Canyon, on their way to Angel's Landing. They are fascinated by the gorgeous views of the canyons and mountains that can be seen along the trail.

EMMA

Dad, I'm pretty tired... can we rest for a while?

MOM

Don't drink too much water.

EMMA

I know, I know... but I need some.

ERIC

Hey Emma, here's a bottle.

DAD

Ok guys, drink some water, but we need to keep the pace, otherwise we won't be back in the visitor's center before they close at night.

EMMA

Ok, Dad. Let's get moving, it's so hot here.

MOM

You are right, last time we hiked here it wasn't that hot.

DAD

Yup, and it was June too. We'll check the weather report when we get back to the hotel... Maybe there is record heat today... But I bet you'll enjoy the views from up there.

Three hikers are approaching them. They are coming back down.

ERIC

Hi there... is there too much left to Angel's Landing?

HIKER 1

Well, a few sharp turns uphill after you get out of Refrigerator Canyon and that'll be it. It's not Angel's Landing yet though.

DAD

How's so?

HIKER 2

That's just Scout's Overlook, then you have a tough half mile ahead to Angel's Landing...

HIKER 3

You guys have enough water?

MOM

Yes we do, thanks...

DAD

Well, it looks like we have some more calories to burn...

EMMA

Some more? It looks like a million to me.

ERIC

Come on Emma, stop complaining. Just think about the other part of the vacation...

EMMA

You mean, the cruise in Alaska?

ERIC

Yup, you'll have the time to replenish all the calories you are burning now...

EMMA

Ahh, stop Eric...

DAD

Hey guys, didn't you want to see some animals? Well, that's a fox over there.

EMMA

Where? Where?... oh, so cute!

ERIC

(pointing in a different direction)

And that's a deer on that side...

MOM

Oh, I love deers. Honey, take a picture, hurry.

ERIC
(jokingly)
And there is a bear over here
(imitating a bear's sound and trying
to scare the others) Grrrrrr!

INT. A VET'S CLINIC. MIDNIGHT

VET
(coming out of the surgery
room, walks down a hall and
meets the couple that had hit
Carlota)
You guys, are lucky fellows...

ANN
Is the dog going to be OK?

VET
She is definitely going to survive.
Are you sure you ran over her?

REYNOLD
Well, that's what it looked like...
I mean it was very dark and... it
felt like I hit something and the
first thing we saw was the dog lying
there...

VET
Well, then this is the luckiest dog
I have ever seen. She is responding
so well and I don't see why I should
keep her here for more than just a
few hours.

ANN
(hugging the vet and crying)
Oh doctor, that is such good news...

REYNOLD
Phew!

VET
Do you know the owners?

ANN
Not really, we just happened to be
driving in that area while visiting
some friends.

VET
There is a family name written on
her tag, with a phone number... I

tried calling, but they won't answer.

REYNOLD

We can certainly take the dog with us and we'll try to find the owners.

VET

Can't do that...

ANN

What do you mean?

VET

She is not your pet, ma'am. I'll have to keep her here until tomorrow morning and report it to Animal Services.

REYNOLD

And what will they do?

VET

They will try to contact the owners and give her back to them.

ANN

Are you sure she's going to be OK?

VET

Yes, I'm... I injected a muscle relaxant and she's just sleeping.

REYNOLD

Ok, here is our phone number, just in case you need to contact us.

VET

Sure Mr...

REYNOLD

Reynold Rossi

VET

Ok, Mr. and Mrs. Rossi, thanks for all you did to save (pointing to the back room) her.

ANN

Oh, don't mention it.

CUT TO NEXT MORNING:

INT. A VET'S CLINIC. DAY

Animal Services is here to pick up Carlota. The vet is signing papers and Carlota is growling and barking while being carried away by an Animal Services rep...

ANIMAL SERVICES MAN
Is she always like that?

VET
Well, she was quiet last night...

ANIMAL SERVICES MAN
Uhhh...

VET
Are you sure you are going to contact the owners today?

ANIMAL SERVICES MAN
We're a bit backed up at the facility but somebody will surely make a phone call today. Does she need any medication?

VET
(standing at the clinic's door while the rep puts Carlota inside a minivan)
Well... not really, I mean... this dog seems to have more lives than a cat.

ANIMAL SERVICES MAN
(to himself)
Let's see how those tough boys and girls I have there like her...
(waving and smiling to the vet) Bye now...

CUT TO:

INT. COUNTY'S ANIMAL SHELTER - LATE AFTERNOON

It's total darkness for a few moments. We can hear sounds of doors opening and closing. A small door opens in front of us. It's the door of an enclosed kennel, sitting on the floor, where Carlota has been transported into the Animal Shelter. She has a hard leash around her neck. When Carlota's head comes out of the kennel there is barking from every corner in the room. She then moves her head around to see a large square room full of metal kennels with bars, where over 100 dogs are confined. They are barking and

growling loudly. Carlota is still assessing the situation when her transporter locks a long wood bar to her leash.

ANIMAL SERVICES MAN

I got you now girl. Come out and say
"Hi" to your new friends...

The man takes Carlota out of the kennel and takes her to an empty one. Two dogs, confined to two contiguous kennels stare at Carlota as the man puts her inside and locks the door. Carlota looks frightened, her eyes looking around her new reality.

ANIMAL SERVICES MAN

Well, let's see how well you do in
here...

Carlota growls and barks at the man.

ANIMAL SERVICES MAN

That's what I always say... Tough at
the beginning... Wimp a little
later...

Carlota barks once again at the man, this time ferociously, as he walks toward the door.

ANIMAL SERVICES MAN

(turning his head to the
crowd)

Be nice to the little lady, guys...
she is probably missing home now...

Carlota's eyes are fixed on the door as it closes behind the man. She looks around slowly, sizing up the place and her fellow prisoners. Some of the looks she's getting are troubling and scary. One of the dogs, a pitbull, encaged towards the end of the room and close to the door is looking at her nastily, showing his teeth, ready to fight. Two doors down from him, another dog is laughing and enjoying Carlota being afraid. Another dog, a cocker spaniel, almost in front of her, is already making love advances and blowing her kisses.

DOG 1

(from a distant side of the
room)

Hey gggirl, what are you doing
here? Your mommy left you out?

All the dogs, except for a few, laugh.

DOG 2

No, her papa left her out, hahaha...

Another round of loud laughs.

ROLAND - THE PITBULL
What are you gonna do now, ah?

DOG 3
Forget about your comfy couch and
the delicious Purina chow or
homemade meals, and oh, the treats,
forget about that too. Wait till you
see what they serve here.

Yet another round of laughter, while Carlota looks one by
one at the dogs that speak.

DOG 4
Welcome to your new home babe.
You've been abandoned.

CARLOTA
Hey, hey, I was not abandoned...

DOG 1
Uhhh... Not abandoned? Just checked
in for tonight?

Another round of laughter.

CARLOTA
Not really. Necessity brought me
here.

ROLAND - THE PITBULL
Necessity? Ha, a fancy girl full of
big words.

CARLOTA
Shut up, you bully... What a circus
this is!

DOG 1, DOG 2, DOG 3
Ooohhhh...

A sharp silence floods the room. None of the dogs expected
Carlota to talk back to the ferocious pitbull.

ROLAND - THE PITBULL
What did you just call me? A bully?
I'm going to teach you girl... with
my teeth (growls)

CARLOTA
(showing her teeth and
growling)

I'm gonna teach you a lesson too big
boy...

Unexpectedly, the pitbull breaks open his cage and an instant later is biting Carlota's kennel, trying to open it. His barks were the loudest Carlota had ever heard. Totally afraid, Carlota moved to the back of her kennel to avoid the pitbull's charge. The pitbull was mad and Carlota could see in his eyes a kind of viciousness she had never seen in another animal. Carlota's eyes are fixed on the pitbull's mouth, who's still ferociously biting the door. He's at least six times her size.

As some of the dogs start screaming: "fight", "fight", "fight", one of the employees at the animal shelter opens the door and comes swinging a large wood bar to scare the unruly pitbull. Behind him, the door is left open.

JUAN

Order! Order! What are you doing out of your kennel? (immobilizing the animal with the bar and yelling to another employee that was on the other side of the door). Hey Bobby, you need to fix this kennel. The pitbull broke the door again.

BOBBY

(yelling from outside the room)
Ok man. I'll get some tools.

JUAN

(to the pitbull)
See, I'm going to put you now back here, where you won't be able to move one leg...

As the man is taking the pitbull to the end of the large hall where there are two bigger and more solid kennels, Carlota decides to make her move. After all, she was an expert at opening kennels. Quickly, moving her head and sensing every situation like only hounds know how to do, Carlota scouts every corner of the room. With the door open she could try to escape now by getting out of her crate and hiding somewhere in the building until the end of the day, and then find an exit.

Carlota looks to the other side of the room, where the man is still pulling the pitbull to a more secure kennel. Carlota has one of two options now: try to escape or straighten things out with the bully. "Forget the pitbull, home awaits," Carlota thinks to herself. Using her mouth and right leg she manages to open her crate in no time, leaving

no sign of force or breakage. She glances once more to the right to make sure the man is still struggling with the pitbull, and he still is. Nobody is paying attention to her. The other dogs are following the man and the pitbull.

With her head out of the crate, Carlota is about to jump to the floor...

BOBBY

(coming into the room abruptly
and closing the door behind
him)

Hey Juan, where is the broken crate?

JUAN

The first one on the left...

Carlota barely has time to get her head back to her crate and move the door back into position without closing it completely. She does not have a chance of escaping now and she knows it. There is just one choice: face the bully. It's the call of the wild now. As Bobby is going back to where the pitbull was originally caged, Carlota jumps out of her kennel and runs to the end of the room where Juan and the pitbull are. While Juan is on his knees and about to close the bigger and solid kennel, Carlota jumps onto his head and makes him fall. He then loses his grip of the pitbull and Carlota gets inside the crate. The other dogs can't believe their eyes. Immediately, estrident sounds, barks and growls can be heard.

JUAN

Bobby, Bobby, come over here now.
What in heavens is this? The new dog
and the pitbull are fighting! I need
help here!

BOBBY

Coming over...

As Bobby runs to the end of the room, Carlota and the pitbull are still fighting. At one point Juan manages to get Carlota out of the kennel, while Bobby impedes the pitbull from getting out. Carlota is bleeding from one of her ears, but has the look of a winner that has just fought a good fight. With a scar on his face, the pitbull tries one more time to get out of the kennel to continue the fight, but Bobby manages to finally close it. The pitbull is showing his face now behind the bars. Everyone is looking at him and Carlota, who is still held by Juan. The pitbull has just lost his image of invincibility.

JUAN

This girl is something, man. How did

she get out of the kennel?

BOBBY

(checking Carlota's crate,
opening and closing it. It
works perfectly)

Don't know. It closes OK.

JUAN

Maybe the other guy left her door
open. It's OK, we'll fix the
pitbull's kennel tomorrow and have
the vet check on these two... Come
on Bobby, it's time to go home...
Hey (pointing to Carlota) did you
finally run her tag number on the
database to call the owners?

BOBBY

I did, but nobody answered...

As Juan and Bobby leave the room, all eyes are on Carlota.
She is still bleeding from her ear, but her honor is intact.
She looks defiant, and her mind is somewhere else.

LIGHTS OUT.

INT. COUNTY'S ANIMAL SHELTER - THE NEXT MORNING

With the first lights of the day filtering through the only
window of the big room where the dogs are kept, Carlota is
still sleeping after the terrible fight with the Pitbull the
day before. She is now moving her head with her eyes closed,
as though she is reliving all the biting and pulling.
Raymond, a golden retriever who was confined in the kennel
right in front of Carlota and had witnessed her ordeal,
opens his mouth for the first time since her arrival. Most
of the other dogs are still sleeping, including the pitbull,
who is still confined at the end of the room.

RAYMOND

Hey, that was a good fight, you have
a strong heart girl.

CARLOTA

(opening her left eye only)
Thanks...

RAYMOND

I've never seen a girl fighting like
that...

CARLOTA
Well, I didn't want to, but...

RAYMOND
I know, I know, you don't have to explain. There are some rabious souls in every animal species that deserve to be taught a good lesson.

CARLOTA
Since when are you here?

RAYMOND
Last winter...

CARLOTA
What happened? How did you end up here?

RAYMOND
My family lost their home and they had to move to an apartment building... (showing his full body)... See, I'm too big and couldn't stay with them.

CARLOTA
So, they put you here?

RAYMOND
No, they sent me to live with some relatives, but I fell ill and they couldn't pay for the vet... a guy then came and picked me up, and here I am.

CARLOTA
How old are you?

RAYMOND
12, and you?

CARLOTA
I'm eight...

RAYMOND
Why are you here?

CARLOTA
It's a long story. I don't want to bother you with that.

RAYMOND
I know how it feels to be

abandoned...

CARLOTA

Oh no, I was not abandoned. See, my owners went on a family trip for three weeks... They sent me to a friend's and I escaped.

RAYMOND

Weren't they treating you well?

CARLOTA

It's more complicated than that... There are these two thieves that are planning to break into my home and I escaped. I was just trying to go back to my place and defend it...

RAYMOND

I see...

CARLOTA

... and I need to get out of here, before it's too late.

A long pause...

RAYMOND

(whispering)

Do you really want to get out?

CARLOTA

Of course I do...

RAYMOND

I can help you with that...

CARLOTA

Why haven't you escaped yourself?

RAYMOND

I'm too old to live on the outside. In here, at least I have food, water and...

CARLOTA

some noisy friends...

RAYMOND

Right...

CARLOTA

So, what's the secret, you know the way out?

RAYMOND
Well, the first thing is to have
that ability...

CARLOTA
What ability?

RAYMOND
Didn't think I noticed? I'm old, but
still not blind... (mimicking with
his fingers Carlota's ability of
opening kennels)

CARLOTA
(smiling)
You know that?

RAYMOND
Behind every smart human, there is a
smart dog.

CARLOTA
(mimicking with her fingers
the ability of opening
kennels)
Nobody taught me that, I learned
that...

RAYMOND
Of course you did. It's a trait
that's in you.

CARLOTA
And you know the best part of it?

RAYMOND
That you almost never use it, that
you stay in the cage out of pure
obedience...

CARLOTA
You're an expert...

RAYMOND
Nah, I'm just old... and with age
comes wisdom.

CARLOTA
So, what else is there to know about
getting out of here?

RAYMOND
A guy that sleeps too much...

CARLOTA
Really???!!!

RAYMOND
Remember Bobby? One of the two guys
that came here during your brawl
with the "tough" lad?

CARLOTA
Yyyeess?

RAYMOND
Once a week he has to stay until
midnight and when everyone leaves at
the end of the day, he just goes to
sleep.

CARLOTA
Where?

RAYMOND
Right on his desk...

CARLOTA
For how long?

RAYMOND
Long enough for every single
creature here to flee if they knew
how to open a kennel...

CARLOTA
Do you want to escape with me?

RAYMOND
Nah, I'm too old to take chances.
Food here is not precisely the best
but it's there every day, and my
sight is not as good as before. I
really wouldn't know what to do on
the outside...

CARLOTA
But how about your family? Don't you
miss them? They might take you back
if you go to them.

RAYMOND
(smiles with resignation)
I don't even know where they are...
(now with watery eyes)

CARLOTA

It's OK, you have your reasons...

RAYMOND
(collecting himself)
Well... are you ready to work on a
plan?

Some of the dogs can now be heard waking up, growling and barking.

CARLOTA
I sure am, but not now (pointing to
the awakened dogs)

RAYMOND
(winks)
Got it.

EXT. - SMALLS BUSHES. NOT FAR FROM THE CUL-DE-SAC WHERE THE
KIPLINGS HOUSE SITS. AFTERNOON

Long Tail, Camey and a bunch of lizards are approaching the neighborhood. They have been walking for more than half a day and exhaustion is starting to show on their faces. They can see the cul-de-sac up ahead. Rapidly, like lizards move, they line up to cross a small passage between the bushes. They are so busy zigzagging and negotiating along the branches that they don't realize a big animal shadow awaits for them on the other side. Camey, leading the group, is the first to see what's in front of them...

CAMEY
(shouting)
Stop and get ready to fight... There
is a huge bird at your twelve
o'clock.

Long Tail, who has been following Camey all along, and the rest of the lizards, lines up immediately and gets ready to fight... or maybe run. Moving his head to the right behind Camey's shoulders in order to see well what's ahead of them, Long Tail finally sees whose shadow they are seeing: it's Fowley, who is staring at all the lizards curiously.

LONG TAIL
(whispering behind Camey)
Camey, I know this lad well. He's
been rallying all the animals here
against me.

CAMEY
(whispering back)
Well, then this is war. Do we have a
chance against him?

LONG TAIL

Well, I haven't seen him eating a lizard in the last... um... four years.

LIZARD 1

Four years? That's not that bad... How about this other lad? (points to Robie, who is standing next to Fowley)

LONG TAIL

He's... more of a peaceful guy...

ROBIE

Hey, good perception my friend.

LONG TAIL

Friend?!

ROBIE

You got that right.

Unaware of what had been happening because she'd stayed behind while Fowley and Robie walked to the bushes where the conversation is taking place, Webby finally gets there and jumps onto Robie's head.

WEBBY

You guys walk too fast... (now realizing the lizards are all there too) Long Tail???

LONG TAIL

(looking surprised)

You're a traitor Webby. Hanging out with them now?

WEBBY

Haven't they told you? We're all friends...

CAMEY

(looks totally confused)

Friends?? Hey, hey, can somebody explain to me what's going on here?

FOWLEY

You heard right... We're all now on the same side of the fence...

LONG TAIL

Wait, wait, which fence? Yours or mine?

ROBIE
Yours and mine, pal. We're a united
bunch now (extending his right wing
to Long Tail)

WEBBY
(nodding)
Yep!

CAMEY
(talking softly on Long Tail's
ear)
Hey cuz, could this be a trap?

LONG TAIL
(looking as confused and
speaking softly to Camey)
I don't know... (extending now his
upper right leg to Robie)

In the blink of an eye, Fowley extends his long right wing and with no effort at all, starts nudging all the lizards onto his wing, one after the other. Camey and Long Tail make a sudden move, hesitant to be lifted like that by somebody who was an enemy up until yesterday, but still accept Fowley's amicable gesture. When all the lizards, but one, are on Fowley's wing, he lifts it up, as if to invite them to hop over his body. Webby is laughing and enjoying the scene, especially because Robie is now her own personal ride. The whole gang is now walking toward the lake.

CAMEY
Hey cuz, I never thought this was
going to be so much fun, not even in
my wildest dreams...

LONG TAIL
Me neither.

WEBBY
(talking to Camey)
Never underestimate the power of a
spider.

ROBIE
(looking back trying to make
eye contact with Webby)
Hey, hey no bragging here!

Pecky, who had been wandering nearby, suddenly comes out of the bushes. She is now perplexed at the eerie sight of birds mingling with lizards...

PECKY

Errr... What did I miss here?

LIZARD 2
You haven't missed a thing, babe.
Why can't we be friends? Why can't
we simply be friends?...

LIZARD 3
You got that right, we all came from
an egg after all, right? ha, ha, ha.

Lizard 2, the only one still on the ground, approaches
Pecky... gesturing for her to be his ride.

LIZARD 2
May I ma'am?...

PECKY
(extending her own right wing
and looking at Fowley and
Robie. She is now part of the
group and ready for the fight)
Well... why not... I mean...

LIZARD 2
(moving decisively from
Pecky's wing to her back)
Thank you. And remember, no more
eating lizards... Oh, what a sight!

As the group starts moving toward the cul-de-sac:

LIZARD 1
Hey fellows, did we just domesticate
these birds?

FOWLEY
Don't push the envelope, pal...

CUT TO:

EXT. ZION NATIONAL PARK, UTAH. SCOUT LOOKOUT, NEAR ANGEL'S
LANDING. DAY

A huge finger tip is pointing to the camera. The camera gets
away slowly and makes a panoramic 360 degree turn, showing
the immense beauty of Scout Lookout, at Zion National Park.

ERIC
(pointing below)
Guys, look over there... the Virgin
River, it looks so small from here.

EMMA

This is so beautiful. Dad, I want a picture here.

DAD
Who is going to Angel's Landing with me?

EMMA
I'll go.

ERIC
Me too.

MOM
Honey, don't you think it's too dangerous? Look at the chains. That's all there is between you guys and the Virgin River down below.

DAD
We'll be OK sweetheart, don't worry.

MOM
(taking out some energy bars from her backpack)
Here, why don't you eat some bars? Come on guys, stay here, relax and enjoy the view.

EMMA
But I want to go to the top.

ERIC
Come on, mom, come with us.

MOM
(laughing)
No, no, I'll stay here with the chipmunks. Look, there is one there.

DAD
Ok, guys, get some bars, drink water and let's go. (to Mom now) Are you sure you don't want to come with us? We'll help you get there.

MOM
Not really, you know I don't like heights. (Softly now, like conspiring) I don't think they should go either. (pointing up to a group of hikers far away struggling with the chains to get to the top) Look at those people... they make it

look like it's dangerous.

DAD

Ok, stay here. We'll be back soon.
Guys, are you ready?

ERIC AND EMMA

Let's do it!

As Dad, Eric and Emma start negotiating the final stretch to Angel's Landing, Mom looks to the precipice down below. She stands up and yells:

MOM

Hey, wait for me. I'm coming with
you!

She hurries to where they're standing. Eric, the closest now to her, extends his right arm. In his left hand he has a camera. Emma and Dad are a few feet further trying to get a good grip of the chains.

ERIC

Come on Mom, you can do it!

MOM

(grabbing Eric's hand)
I hope so. Hey, don't push your
luck, put the camera in your pocket,
young man.

ERIC

Come on..., everything will be OK...
Woohh... Look out Mom!

A huge golden eagle is flying almost straight towards them. When Mom looks up, the eagle flies less than 10 feet away from her. The camera is now on the eagle's eyes. The eagle is looking at the family from the sky as they climb the long and strenuous stretch to Angels Landing.

CUT TO:

INT. LISSY'S HOUSE - FAMILY ROOM - EVENING

Lissy and Prince are sitting on a couch. It's been three days since Carlota run away and they are still extremely worried. A missing sign showing Carlota's photo is laying on the sofa too.

LISSY

(sobbing)

Oh my God Prince. I'm so sad. How
many days have passed since we

posted the signs?

PRINCE
(growls)

LISSY
It's been three days already and we haven't gotten a single call. I don't know what to do. Should we go to the police?

The phone rings...

LISSY
Oh Prince, let's see who it is. Maybe someone found Carlota. (runs to the other side of the family room and grabs the phone). (Nervously) Hello?

The screen splits into two and the Vet appears on the left side. Lissy is on the right.

VET
Hello, ma'am?

LISSY
Yes, who's this?

VET
Well, I just saw a poster about a missing dog in the supermarket...

LISSY
Oh yes, I put it up, do you have the dog, have you seen her? (now talking softly to Prince) Prince, I think we found Carlota.

VET
I don't have the dog, but I treated a dog a few days ago that looks just like the one on the poster.

LISSY
What do you mean you treated her? When? Why?

VET
I'm Dr. Casin, a vet... she got hit by a car... and I treated her at my clinic, here in Hailin Mill Rd.

LISSY
(yelling almost hysterically)

Oh my God, oh my God, don't say that... Is she dead? When was that...? Oh my God (now talking to Prince), Prince, Carlota is dead!

VET

Well, if you let me finish, I can explain...

LISSY

(sobbing and crying)

I'm so sorry, please do...

VET

She is not dead. As a matter of fact, she was very much alive the last time I saw her. I treated her in my clinic for a few hours until Animal Services came and picked her up. We didn't know who her owner was and in those cases we have to transfer the animal to the county's animal shelter. If only I knew you were the owner.

LISSY

I'm not...

VET

What do you mean?

LISSY

I was pet sitting her, but she ran away. How can I get her back?

VET

If you prove to Animal Services that you were the caretaker, they will release her to you. Can you call the owners and have them verify the identity of the animal?

LISSY

That's the thing. They went on vacation... I've been calling them but they won't answer.

VET

Why don't you call Animal Services and explain to them what happened?

LISSY

I'm heading there now... Where are they located?

VET

I think they are closed now, but the number is 926-7987. Main offices are by the Government Center, right on Sunset Blvd.

LISSY

Thank you Dr. Casin. I'm sooo glad you called.

VET

Good night ma'am (hangs up).

LISSY

Oh Prince, I think we found Carlota. (starts dialing the number given by vet)

RECORDED VOICE AT ANIMAL SERVICES

Hello, you have reached Animal Services, our office hours are from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday thru Friday...

Lissy looks at a wall clock in her kitchen: it's 6:30 p.m... on a Friday...

LISSY

Let's go Prince, we have to get ready for tomorrow morning. We are on a mission now...

CUT TO:

INT. THE APPARTMENT THAT HUMBER AND RENY SHARE - DAY

Humber and Reny are chatting about the burglary they have been planning for the past few weeks. Humber is sharpenning a huge knife while Reny is counting the bullets of a handgun.

HUMBER

We are so ready for tomorrow...

RENY

Nice, yo.

HUMBER

And with this knife and that gun, we'll bring some terror to the neighborhood, ha, ha, ha.

RENY

Do you think that family is still

out?

HUMBER

Of course homie. They said they were going to be out for three weeks, remember?

RENY

Yeah, but what if they came back early for some reason?

HUMBER

Na, and if they did, we have these... (points to the knife and gun). Come on, let's go see our buddy at the pawn shop.

CUT TO:

INT. INSIDE THE COUNTY'S ANIMAL SHELTER - ALMOST EVENING -
END OF THE DAY

BOBBY

(opening the door of the room
where the dogs are)

Ready for bed pals? Here is some
food for your bellies.

Bobby starts pulling a cart behind him with food and water for the dogs. Usually, he starts from last to first, which would take him very close to the pit bull kennel, located at the end of the hall. It takes him some time to pull the cart all the way to the end. As he walks, he slowly looks at every one of the dogs.

BOBBY

(in front of Carlota's cage)

How's the princess doing this evening? No hard feelings with your friend the pitbull? (looking the other way now, facing Raymond) How about you old timer? Same old routine? (now looking to a golden retriever), and you boy... hey, you look sad today... I'll double your ration, that'll cheer you up.

As Bobby passes by, he is showing now his back to Carlota and Raymond...

RAYMOND

(speaking very softly, almost
whispering, and using his
front legs to signal Carlota

the meaning of his words)
Today is the day...

From the back of the room we can hear Bobby talking to the pitbull:

BOBBY
What about you big boy? You got a surprise yesterday, ah?... Are you still upset because the princess put up a good fight?

CARLOTA
(answering back to Raymond in a softly voice)
How are we going to do it?

RAYMOND
You'll see. We'll hear him snoring...

CHIHUAHUA
(waking up in a cage next to Raymond)
What are you guys talking about?

RAYMOND
None of your concern, pal...

CHIHUAHUA
Hey, don't be rude, I just wanna know.

Working his way back to the entrance, Bobby is back near the kennels where the conversation is taking place. To him, these three dogs are just growling weirdly.

BOBBY
And here is the food and water for the princess... and here's some for the old timer... and for my favorite chihuahua...

JUAN
(stepping in briefly into the room)
Hey Bobby... all yours buddy, we are leaving now... See you tomorrow... and don't forget to check the latches. You don't want any of these friends running around.

BOBBY
Sure thing Juan, no worries. I'll

see you Monday...

Carlota and Raymond keep looking at Bobby as he finishes chatting with Juan. An instant later, Bobby turns off the lights and closes the metallic door behind him. The big room is in shadows now.

CARLOTA

What now?

RAYMOND

We'll just wait.

CARLOTA

Are you coming with me?

RAYMOND

I don't think it's a good idea.

CARLOTA

Please, I'll have my masters adopt you. Trust me.

RAYMOND

I told you already... I'm too old for adventures.

CARLOTA

(smiling)

But this will be a great journey...

RAYMOND

See, when you are old, it's not easy to take chances... You know, old dogs can't learn new tricks...

All of a sudden, loud snoring can be heard from the other side of the door; most of the dogs are already asleep.

RAYMOND

(speaking softly as Carlota has her eyes fixed on Raymond's fingers)

On my mark... one... two... three

With the precision of an action repeated hundreds of times, Raymond and Carlota manage to open their cages almost simultaneously. When they start descending carefully, a squeaky voice coming from the shadows can be heard.

CHIHUAHUA

(mimicking Carlota's and Raymond's movements when opening their kennels, but

without results)
Hey, hey, where are you going? I
wanna go with you guys.

RAYMOND
Will you stay quiet there? You are
out of this league, lad.

Some of the dogs lift their heads or wake up, curious about
the commotion and the screaming Chihuahua.

CHIHUAHUA
Don't leave me here, I don't want to
stay here... I wanna go home.

CARLOTA
(going to the Chihuahua's
kennel and talking to him a
sweet, almost caring, voice)
I can't take you with me now, but
I'll make you a promise: I'll be
back one day to set you free.

CHIHUAHUA
(growling softly)
How can I trust you?

CARLOTA
Dog's honor... (talking to the other
dogs, who have been witnessing the
dialogue), ok guys, go back to sleep
now... nothing's happened here.

RAYMOND
(opening the main door
cautiously)
Hey, hurry... time to get out...

Carlota and Raymond start walking slowly out of the room
while Raymond leaves a little space open. From here, we can
see Bobby sleeping and snoring with his head resting on a
desk. Carlota and Raymond keep walking and get to another
long hall that connects to the main building. There are
windows in this hall and through them, they can see the
night sky. Suddenly, a roll of thunder roars in the
distance. Carlota and Raymond look at each other. As Carlota
stands on two legs against the wall in the middle of the
hall, Raymond runs back to the other end to check on Bobby.
Raymond is standing now in a corner where he can see Bobby.
Another roll of thunder can be heard, and Bobby sluggishly
opens one of his eyes. He lifts his head and reaches for his
glasses...

BOBBY

It looks... like it's going to
rain...

... and rests his head again on the desk. Raymond has been watching the whole scene with fear on his face. As Bobby closes his eyes again, he runs towards Carlota, passing her...

RAYMOND

Come on... follow me... it's now or
never...

The storm is getting closer and the scene is too familiar to Carlota. She and Raymond are negotiating the long pavilion to the animal shelter's main building as they get close to the main door. Raymond extends one of his legs and reaches for the lock. This is not a latch you can open with a fingernail; the lock is round and big. Carlota reaches up too to the lock and presses it with one of her legs. Raymond follows with the same gesture to grab the opposite end. Together they now have a good grip. Another roll of thunder, this time closer as Raymond and Carlota struggle to twist the lock... until they finally open the door. Outside, it's raining hard and the sound and lights of cars are all over. Carlota steps outside and looks back to Raymond with watering eyes. She owes Raymond big time.

CARLOTA

I guess we part now...

RAYMOND

Are you sure you want to do this?
You can get killed outside on your
own. They won't see you in this
storm.

CARLOTA

I know what I'm doing...

RAYMOND

Go... find your owners and take care
of them. After all, that's what we
do best...

CARLOTA

(kissing him on the cheek)
You take care, good friend... If you
ever need me, here's my scent
(Carlota rubs her nose with
Raymond's for two or three seconds
and starts walking away into the
night)

As another loud roll of thunder and lightning shake the

night, Raymond turns and starts walking back into the building. Before closing the door behind him, he glances again at Carlota's shadow, which is now negotiating carefully a long, winding path that leads to the street.

RAYMOND
(softly to himself)
Crazy girl...

Outside it's poring hard.

CUT TO:

EXT. - THE COUNTY'S ANIMAL SHELTER - DAY

Lissy's hand can be seen reaching for the doorbell, her finger pressing the button. She is holding Prince with her other arm. Nobody answers; it's Saturday morning after all. She is now knocking on the glass door. She knocks harder as a shadow emerges from the interior of the building. Bobby is seen now walking toward the door.

BOBBY
Who could possible be here at this time on a Saturday morning? Don't they realize government does not work on weekends? (opening the door, sees Lissy standing outside.) Yes ma'am?

LISSY
Good morning... I'm here to pick up a dog that ran away from my house.

BOBBY
But ma'am, today is Saturday, I mean we are closed for-

LISSY
You don't understand, I need you to help me...

BOBBY
There is no way that I can help you today, the shelter is closed on weekends...

LISSY
(about to cry)
Listen, I've driven 22 miles from home... I'm trying to locate a dog that could be here. I just need to make sure she's fine.

BOBBY
Well..., please don't get upset,
please don't cry... I'll let you
in... you are the owner, right?

LISSY
No, I'm not... her owners left her
under my care but she ran away...

BOB
(looking outside from left to
right, making sure nobody is
watching him)
Come inside ma'am, let's take a look
at the animals we have here... but I
can't release the dog... See, we
need to contact the owner first.

LISSY
Oh, thank you... (steps inside of
the building as Bobby closes the
door behind her. They start walking
down the long corridor that leads to
the annex, where the dogs are kept.)

BOBBY
How are you so sure the dog you are
looking for is here?

LISSY
I got a call yesterday from a vet
saying he had handed a dog to Animal
Services recently.

BOBBY
What kind of dog is it?

LISSY
She is s daschund, you know, a
wiener dog...

BOBBY
Black and tan? Long hair?

LISSY
(All excited)
Yes, yes, is she here?

BOBBY
I think we have your dog here ma'am,
she was brought here like two, three
days ago, I believe.

LISSY

(holding Prince harder)
Oh, thank God... I knew we were
going to find her...

BOBBY
(opening another door that
leads to an interior patio.
The annex is right there)
And she is brave too, ma'am... She
fought a pitbull...

LISSY
(as Bobby opens the door to
the annex)
A pitbull? Is she hurt?

BOBBY
Nah... she was bleeding a bit,
nothing big... here we go...
(opening the door)

We are now inside the long hall. Almost all the dogs lift
their heads curiously after hearing an unfamiliar voice and
smelling an unfamiliar scent as the visitors walk alongside
Bobby.

BOBBY
Come this way, please... just follow
me... (the dogs start barking as
Lissy, Prince and Bobby pass by)...
the daschund is right in this...
kennel... there (points to where
Carlota was kept until the night
before)... (desperately, Lissy
hurries and gets to the kennel
before Bobby, just to realize that
it's empty)

LISSY
(as Bobby catches up with her)
There is no dog here....

BOBBY
(looking as confused as Lissy,
just like the warden at
Shawshank's prison the morning
after Andy Dufresne escaped.)
But she... she... she was here last
night... (looking in all directions
and walking back and forth checking
all the kennels in desperation)

LISSY
(sobbing)

Ohhh my God... this can't be. What do you mean she was here last night... where is she now? I mean, the kennel is locked. You meant to tell she just vanished into thin air?! Oh Prince, I think I'm going to die... (Lissy faints as Prince jumps from her arms to the floor and starts running to the end of the room, right where the pitbull is confined. All the dogs start barking loudly. Hell has just broken loose. In the middle of the commotion, just one pair of eyes are quiet and indifferent: Raymond's)

BOBBY

(trying to avoid her falling to the floor and yelling to Prince)

Hey, you better come right back here. That boy (pointing to the kennel where the pitbull is barking ferociously) will eat your for breakfast... (and now holding Lissy near the floor) I better call 911...

INT - A PAWN SHOP IN A SHADY PART OF TOWN - DAY

HUMBER

So, yo... What can we bring you in exchange for cash?

PAWN SHOP OWNER

Are you asking me that? You know well what sells here, I mean jewelry, computers, iPads, iPhones, GPSS.

HUMBER

See, we can bring you all that soon, but I want to make sure we get top cash for the stuff we'll carry here.

PAWN SHOP OWNER

Well, you know it all depends on the quality of the items, man. You know the house policy: "No good stuff, no top cash."

HUMBER

Leave that to us and we'll bring nice stuff, right Reny?

RENY

Yeah, dawg, good stuff always...

HUMBER

(back to the owner)

Hey listen man, I need a favor...

PAWN SHOP OWNER

What favor?

HUMBER

A shotgun...

PAWN SHOP OWNER

Well, I got one here I'm selling for \$285...

HUMBER

Hey, do you know what a favor is?

PAWN SHOP OWNER

What do you mean?

HUMBER

A favor is that you lend me the shotgun and I pay later... see you can deduct the amount from whatever we bring to you...

PAWN SHOP OWNER

Well, how can I be sure you'll come back?

HUMBER

Don't I keep coming back here to sell you stuff? I'll come back, especially after this job... (Humber is getting aggressive) We are going in a house that's full of...

PAWN SHOP OWNER

I know what you mean... you can take the shotgun... let me pack it for you... but what do I get out of it?

HUMBER

If you come with us we give you 20 percent... If you don't, five percent and I pay you for using the shotgun... plus, you'll pay top cash for whatever we bring...

PAWN SHOP OWNER

Ok, I'll take my five percent... I

know you two are going to handle things well out there. (finishes packing the shotgun)... Here's your piece...

HUMBER

See homie, you and me, you know, we understand each other. Hey Reny, let's go, dawg... We've got things to do.

EXT. - NEAR LAKE NEXT TO THE CUL-DE-SAC WHERE THE KIPLINGS HOUSE SITS. DAY

Fowley, Robie, Lulu, Limpy, Pecky, Long Tail, Camey, the other lizards, and Webby are sitting in a circle near the lake as other peacocks and peacock chicks run and play naively nearby. Fowley and Long Tail are sitting next to each other.

A few yards away, squirrels, rats, ravens, pigeons, raccoons and ducks are minding their business. When the curious squirrels notice the group sitting in a circle around the lake, they start calling the other critters.

SQUIRREL 1

Look, look (pointing to Fowley and Long Tail) are they friends now?

RACCOON 2

They seem to be. I saw all the lizards riding on Fowley's back the other day.

PIGEON 3

Isn't that amazing? I mean a lizard riding on a peacock...

DUCK 1

Should we join them?

RAVEN 1

Well, weren't invited...

SQUIRREL 2

When the lizard posted the original sign on the tree it said "all", so we are invited. Besides, I really want to see what comes out of all this.

SQUIRREL 1

Ah, don't be nosy.

RACCOON 1
Come on, let's get closer.

The animals start walking toward the lake where Fowley, Long Tail and the others are.

QUICK TRANSITION TO:

LONG TAIL
So, where do we start?

FOWLEY
Who has the best chances to protect the house?

LONG TAIL
Us!

ROBIE
Nope...

CAMEY
What do you mean? We haven't even started yet and you chickened out already...

PECKY
Hey, can you stop the offensive language?

LONG TAIL
I would say Carlota, the dog, has the best chances, but she's not here. That's why we are doing this together, right?

FOWLEY
If you would listen... (makes a pause and waits till everyone is quiet and attentive)... It's the family, they have the best chances to protect their own house.

WEBBY
But they're not here...

LONG TAIL
Right, it's only us now...

ROBIE
Just listen... Come on Fowley, spill the beans...

FOWLEY

We have a secret weapon...

LONG TAIL

(Long Tails eyes spark with
curiosity)

A secret weapon? What do you mean?

FOWLEY

We can communicate...

LONG TAIL

Communicate?

CAMEY

Communicate? We can communicate too,
for Nature's sake, that is what we
are doing now...

FOWLEY

We, birds, can communicate long
distance... we can send a far-away-
message to birds located hundreds,
even thousands of miles away.

LIZARD 3

Come on, don't tell me you are
whales now...

ROBIE

And Fowley and I think that if we
send an SOS message to the area
where the family is right now, a
nearby bird can alert them.

LONG TAIL

And where are they now?

FOWLEY

We've been doing our research and
collecting some intel sent by other
creatures and the family seems to be
aboard a cruise ship.

LIZARD 1

What is that?

ROBIE

A huge boat...

CAMEY

Awesome...

ROBIE

...sailing now in the cold seas of

the Northern mountains, Alaskan waters...

PECKY

That's far...

FOWLEY

If we send them a signal, they might get it and come back quickly.

LONG TAIL

Ok, I'm in, let's do it.

As Fowley, Lulu and Robie start holding hands, Fowley realizes the other animals (squirrels, ravens, ducks, rats, pigeons, and raccoons) have been listening to them. Moving his right wing, he invites them to join.

SQUIRREL 1

Could we get some help from the guys at the zoo, I mean they are ferocious... Anyone here have a good contact there?

Most of the animals laugh at the idealistic proposition.

LULU

You pigeons, please get close to us. We definitely could use your special energy and sense of direction. (she offers her wings to one of the pigeons as the whole group starts accomodating themselves, one next to the other)

LIZARD 3

Hey, before we start... Can we send a signal to get a special delivery of Alaskan black flies? I've heard they're yummy...

After a long pause, they all close their eyes... Fowley, Lulu and Robie start mumbling sounds and words. The sounds get distant, and more distant, as we transition to:

EXT. EXIT GLACIER, ALASKA - DAY

It's a gorgeous morning here, and Dad, Mom, Eric and Emma are negotiating a long, winding path from the visitor's center in Exit glacier, to the glacier slopes, located half a mile farther.

EMMA

Hey Dad, are there lions here?

DAD
I've read there are mountain
lions...

ERIC
How about bears?

MOM
Oh yes, lots of them...

They have been so immersed in the dialogue they don't see a
park ranger approach them.

PARK RANGER
Hi there...

DAD
Hi...

PARK RANGER
Enjoying the view?

MOM
Oh, it's gorgeous... how far is the
glacier from here?

PARK RANGER
Not far, about half a mile. It's a
nice and beautiful walk but you have
to be careful...

ERIC
Why, what happened?

PARK RANGER
There is an angry bear roaming
around, we saw it a while ago...

EMMA
(softly to Eric)
Angry bear? That's cool.

MOM
Should we go back?

PARK RANGER
Well, not really... I mean, all you
have to do is talk loud and make
noise as you walk. That should scare
the bear away.

MOM
Honey, I don't think I want to scare
the bear...

DAD
(to the park ranger)
Thanks for the tip... we'll see you
later. (grabbing Mom's hand) Come on
honey...

EMMA
Look, look, I can see the glacier
from here. I wanna touch it. Dad,
can we get like really close?

A few yards away, they approach the end of the trail and the vast monumental sight of Exit glacier appears in front of them. Some other people are walking to the glacier too. Between them and the glacier there is a valley where the freezing cold water from the melting glacier is running. Emma starts running toward the glacier only to come across the obstacle of running water in a small creek coming from the glacier. She stops and puts her right hand in the water.

DAD
(yelling from behind)
Is it deep?

EMMA
About a feet. I want to cross it.
Look at the glacier... so pretty.

DAD
Just take your shoes off!

MOM
Be careful...

ERIC
Come on Mom, I want you to come with
us.

MOM
(touching the water)
I don't think so... It's too cold.

DAD
Come on honey, it'll make you even
happier.

MOM
(starts removing her shoes)
Ok...

EMMA
(yells from the other side of
the small creek, running now
to the glacier)

Look ma, is not that bad. I already
crossed it. Come guys, aren't you
excited? Eric get the camera out!
Dad, you gotta film!

DAD
(helping Mom cross the creek)
As soon as I finish with Mom here...

MOM
Oh my goodness, this water is so
cold.

ERIC
(running towards the glacier)
Yes mom, this water has been there
frozen for thousands of years, can
you believe it?

MOM
Oh, yes, I do believe it.

ERIC
(running and yelling)
And did you know that a glacier is
not a solid piece of ice, but more
like a puzzle of small interlocked
pieces?

MOM
Where did you learn all that?

ERIC
In school Mom, in school...

As Dad and Mom follow Emma and Eric towards the glacier, a
huge moose with her baby passes by very close.

DAD
You know what all this reminds me
of?

MOM
What?

DAD
That license plate...

MOM
Which license plate?

DAD
The one that says "Alaska, The Great
Adventure"...

EMMA
(standing already on the slope
of the glacier)
Hurry Dad, take a picture of me on
this glacier!

MOM
Hey, don't go too far, we need to
back on the ship no later than 7.

ERIC
(yelling next to Emma)
Come on, Mom, stop worrying and
enjoy the view!

As Mom and Dad join Emma and Eric in the glacier, a mountain
bluebird crosses the sky chirping. Emma points it out.

EMMA
(to Eric)
You know about glaciers, but I know
stuff about birds. That's a mountain
bluebird.

The mountain bluebird comes around and lands on one of the
leaves of a bush near the glacier. He looks at Emma and
Eric, chirping with a sense of urgency.

EMMA
(getting closer to the bird)
Isn't he cute? Come here little
guy...

QUICK CUT TO:

EXT. - A LAKE SHORE NEXT TO THE CUL-DE-SAC WHERE THE
KIPLINGS HOUSE SITS. DAY

All the critters and birds are sitting in a circle with
their eyes closed, while Fowley, Lulu, Robie and the pigeons
are still mumbling while invoking something divine to send
the SOS signal to the family.

LONG TAIL
(opening his eyes)
Is it working?

ROBIE
(with his eyes still closed)
Not really, the girl thinks our
messenger is just playing cute.

WEBBY
Can the bird speak human words?

FOWLEY
(opening his eyes)
You're asking for too much...

LONG TAIL
Hey Robie, can you try harder?

ROBIE
Let me see... There is still a
chance with the expert flyers of the
Far North.

All the animals in the circle go back to holding hands, and Robie starts to mumble something.

QUICK TRANSITION TO:

EXT. - THE DOCK OF A CRUISE SHIP IN WHICH THE KILPINGS ARE
VACATIONING. ALASKA - DAY

This is the Inside Passage in Alaska. Glaciers, mountains, extraordinary rock formations and the wilderness mingle here in perfect harmony of natural wonder. Our cruise ship can be seen from afar navigating through the pacific waters of the Inside Passage. The cruise ship seems to be a natural touch inserted in all the beauty that sorrounds it. The camera gets closer and our family can be seen out on one of the decks, just having a good time. They are immersed in their surroundings and admiring the Inside Passage's natural wonders. A closer look now and Emma is seen pointing at something in the water.

EMMA
Look guys, sea lions!... They are
huge!...

ERIC
(pointing in a different
direction)
And a whale over there... Look look,
it's black and white...

DAD
That's a killer whale.

EMMA
Killer? Do they kill?

DAD
Yes, they do.

EMMA
That's not nice, what do they kill?

DAD
Usually large marine animals...

EMMA
They surely look beautiful to me,
but I don't like them...

DAD
...it's just the natural cycle.

MOM
And what are those little black
spots on the side of the ship?

ERIC
(stands up and gets closer to
the handrails)
Oh, those are birds...

A group of seven birds are flying next to the ship, and they are keeping their speed. Their effort is amazing.

EMMA
Let me see, let me see... Oh how
cute. How long can they fly like
that? Don't they get tired?

DAD
Those are waders, known as
bar-tailed godwits, and they fly
miles at a time. Notice how they fly
without flapping their wings...

ERIC
That's so cool...

EMMA
And how can they do that?

ERIC
And why do they follow the ship?

DAD
I don't know for sure but they are
definitely taking advantage of how
the ship breaks the wind and opens
up some easy air for them to fly...

As Dad, Mom and Eric glance in other directions, Emma keeps her eyes on the birds. She finds something odd about their behavior. All of a sudden, despite the distance between the family and the birds, the leader of the flock starts moving its head in Emma's direction and flaps its wings rapidly.

EMMA

Look guys, I think he's trying to communicate with us.

QUICK TRANSITION TO:

EXT. - A LAKE SHORE NEXT TO THE CUL-DE-SAC WHERE THE KIPLINGS HOUSE SITS. DAY

The animals are still holding hands in a circle and all eyes are on Robie. He looks exhausted because of the communication effort. With his eyes closed...

ROBIE

(mumbling and speaking in a weird voice, he's in a trance)
I have a lock on them, what is the message?

FOWLEY

Message is: Find a medium onboard the ship: a bird that has been very close to humans regularly and relay this: "you need to pay attention, find a family from the warm seas, who live in the corner house of lake 13,722, 1.8 miles off the warm coast of parallel 77 and tell them their house is in danger. They need to return home immediately."

QUICK CUT TO:

EXT. THE DECK OF A HUGE CRUISE LINER IN WHICH THE KIPLINGS ARE VACATIONING - ALASKA - DAY

Emma's eyes are still fixed on the waders, especially the leader of the flock, who starts chirping as it flies very close to the ship where the family is still sitting.

EMMA

Guys, guys, the bird is flying very close to us... Look how beautiful...

The bird is chirping now louder and louder, and moving its head, inviting Emma to comprehend its sounds.

EMMA

Dad, that bird is trying to get our attention, don't you see it?

DAD

He's probably trying to get some other bird's attention I guess...

QUICK TRANSITION TO:

EXT. - A LAKE SHORE NEXT TO THE CUL-DE-SAC WHERE THE
KIPLINGS HOUSE SITS. DAY

Robie's face is red. He's making a tremendous effort,
concentrating on the SOS message. All of the animals still
have their eyes close, giving Robie moral support.

PIGEON 3

Robie, you need to send the message
quickly. You're running out of
transmission energy, I can sense it.
Just find the bird that will deliver
the message!

ROBIE

I know, I know, but our wader can
only relay the message to another
bird on the ship...

At this point, some of the lizards, including Long Tail,
open their eyes to see what is going on among the birds.
They too, want to comprehend what is going on.

FOWLEY

Just tell the wader to find the
other bird... you are about to faint
from exhaustion... Are you getting
any signal back from the expert
flyer?

ROBIE

That's the thing, I can't seem to
find the other bird... too many
signals in the air now... Oh well I
think I found the other bird...
*Message is: Find a medium onboard
the ship: a bird that has been very
close to humans regularly and relay
this: "you need to pay attention,
find a family from the warm seas,
who leave in the corner house of
lake 13,722, 05.13 miles of the warm
coast of parallel 77 and tell them
their house is in danger. They need
to return home immediately."*

As Robie finishes mumbling the message, all animals stay
silent for a few seconds...

LONG TAIL

So, did you finally send the message
to the right bird now that-

ROBIE
(interrupting Long Tail and
speaking in a different voice)
I'm the bird onboard the ship,
message received and confirmed...
"Birds will always fly south and
north and all across."

PIGEON 3
(as Robie faints)
There is something wrong here, he's
talking like he is the other bird.
Those are the words and the passcode
used by bird-receptors when they get
and confirm a message.

LONG TAIL
So, what does that mean? Did we
deliver the message or not?

WEBBY
Fowley, Lulu, can you explain what's
going on here, please?

ROBIE
(slowly waking up)
I'm the other bird... I was supposed
to be on that ship. Believe it or
not, I was the only bird that could
have brought the message to the
family, if only I were on that ship
today, but I'm not. I'm sorry
guys...

QUICK TRANSITION TO:

EXT. THE DECK OF A HUGE CRUISE LINER IN WHICH THE KIPLINGS
ARE VACATIONING - ALASKA - DAY

Emma is looking around, moving her head trying to find
something in the distance. She finally sees what she's been
looking for and points out into the distance...

EMMA
They're flying away, they are
finally flying away Dad! The birds
are leaving us.

DAD
Come on sweetheart, they are not
leaving us, they just probably need
to catch a break... They have flown
for so many miles with us... it's
amazing... Hey, would anyone here

care for some sushi?

QUICK TRANSITION TO:

EXT. - A LAKE SHORE NEXT TO THE CUL-DE-SAC WHERE THE
KIPLINGS HOUSE SITS. DAY

As Robie collects himself after his tremendous effort, all the animals are looking at each other in disbelief and confusion. The birds know well they have missed their best shot at contacting the family. The other critters are still confused about what they've just witnessed.

CAMEY

Hey, can someone translate for us
what's just happened?

FOWLEY

We couldn't deliver the message,
there was no bird on the ship. Robie
was supposed to be that bird but
he's here with us.

PIGEON 3

And he's probably so exhausted
because he was acting as sender and
receptor at the same time using the
expert flyers of the Far North.

LONG TAIL

Oh Mother Nature, damn it! Why are
things with humans always so
difficult? We animals understand
almost every act they mean, but they
can't get a simple SOS signal from
us.

WEBBY

What are we going to do now?

LONG TAIL

Any thoughts?

PECKY

Ahh... didn't someone mention the
Zoo? We can bring lions and tigers
here to protect the house...

SQUIRREL 1

Oh, forget about that... Those
ferocious beasts don't roar any
more. They're too tamed.

CAMEY

Well, I'll break some news to you
all...

LULU
You're leaving us...

CAMEY
Not at all... Do you really think us
lizards came unprepared?

Long Tail is curious now. He was not aware of any surprise
from his cousin...

FOWLEY
What do you mean?

CAMEY
We have a secret weapon too...

All the animals open their eyes... What's in store now?
Another convoluted communication breakdown?

CAMEY
(turning his head back and calling
loud with a whistle) Hey Torny, come
over here. Come on now boy, get
close to us. Don't be shy!

As all the animals turn their heads curiously, Torny, a
large, ugly Iguana comes out of bushes and starts walking to
the group. The birds and other critters can't believe their
eyes.

INT. INSIDE THE ANIMAL SHELTER - AFTERNOON

BOBBY
I'm calling to report the
disappearance of a dog.

OPERATOR 911
Are you the owner sir?

BOBBY
No, I'm calling from the County's
Animal Shelter.

OPERATOR 911
And how did it happen?

BOBBY
I don't know... she just dissapeared
a while ago.

OPERATOR 911
Can you describe the dog?

BOBBY
A long hair daschund...

OPERATOR 911
A long hair what?

BOBBY
Daschund, you know, a wiener dog, a
hot dog...

OPERATOR 911
Color?

BOBBY
Black and tan.

OPERATOR 911
Approximate size and weight?

BOBBY
She's miniature, I would say around
11 pounds...

CUT TO:

EXT. - A BUSY EXPRESSWAY IN DOWNTOWN MIAMI - DAY

After escaping from the pound, Carlota has been walking and running for several hours. She is walking now along a route that her sense of smell has taken her to: a long expressway where cars are traveling at over 75 miles per hour.

CARLOTA
(talking to herself as
vehicles pass by at high
speed)
This is surely the shortest route,
but I don't think I'm gonna get home
in one piece... just don't forget,
look both ways, look both ways, as
you cross the street.

A large SUV is approaching her and the camera is inside the vehicle, where a family of five, including three children are chatting away and singing songs.

CHILDREN 1
Lookie here mom, lookie, a weenie
dog is walking on the street.

CHILDREN 2

Where, where? Oh yes, it's there, we just passed it.

WOMAN 2

Oh my God, Richard, can we stop and get her? She's probably lost... Oh my God, I don't want to imagine what could happen to her.

MAN 2

No sweetheart, I can't stop here, don't you see the traffic? We could get into an accident. I can't back up on this highway... What if we call the Highway Patrol? Maybe they can get her...

WOMAN 2

I'm calling now...

CHILDREN 1

Do it, mom, hurry. Poor dog...

The camera is now out of the vehicle and as it elevates, Carlota appears as a diminute spot on the edge of the highway, while hundreds of cars speed past her...

CUT TO:

EXT. - A CUL-DE-SAC WHERE THE KIPLINGS HOUSE SITS, NEAR THE LAKE. ALMOST DUSK

Back in the neighborhood, the same group of animals that took part in the failed SOS are still discussing. The most active are Long Tail, Camey, Fowley, Robie and Webby. Most of the other animals listen carefully, some of them nodding at times. By looking at the group and seeing their gestures, you can tell war is looming.

A closer look reveals Long Tail and Fowley pointing at the pavement, where there is a very rudimentary map of the area. They are planning something.

WEBBY

How about the neighbors? Can't we get their help somehow?

LULU

It's not that easy...

LONG TAIL

I like that idea. If we can get the neighbors' attention, maybe they can call the Police and we save

ourselves the battle.

FOWLEY

Do you really want to try?

LONG TAIL

Of course. Hey Camey, come help us.

FOWLEY

Ok, let's go. Which house?

LONG TAIL

(pointing to one of the houses
in the neighborhood, the one
next to the Kiplings')

That one...

FOWLEY

Ok, let's do it, you guys knock on
the door and Robie and I will try to
get their attention (extending her
feathers to Webby and signaling for
Robie to join them). Would you care
for a ride?

WEBBY

(climbing to Fowley's back)

Thank you, Sir...

As the other animals make way for them, Fowley, with Webby riding on him, Long Tail, and Camey head for the house. When they get to the porch, Long Tail clears his throat and with much devonair, knocks on the door three times.

They can hear voices inside the house from outside.

Another round of knocks by Long Tail. The door opens slowly and a lady covered in a towel steps outside. Fowley is determined to get her attention, and starts opening his tail and moving as males peacocks do when wanting to attract a female.

LONG TAIL

For Nature's sake, Fowley, not that
kind of attention. Come on, make a
noise, do something.

JANE

Oh my goodness, what is this? John,
come see this. These damn peacocks
are here again. Last time they
pooped on your car... (looking now
at Long Tail and Camey) and there
are two lizards too (and now looking

closer at Fowley's back)... and a spider on top of the peacock!

JOHN
(as he approaches the door from inside the house)
What's happening honey? (jumping back now while looking at the scene)

JANE
See, I've been telling you... No matter what you put in the grass to kill all these pests, they keep reproducing... and these damn peacocks... I'm fed up already! I'm calling the association tomorrow to have them removed from here! (goes inside and slams the door behind her)

ROBIE
(looking around and scouting the faces of Fowley, Webby, Long Tail and Camey)
Not good...

CUT TO:

EXT. INSIDE THE THIEVES APARTMENT - NIGHT

HUMBER
Hey yo, are you ready for this?

RENY
Oh yeah...

HUMBER
(gets a shotgun out of a pillowcase)
Show me your little helpers...

RENY
(searching in his pocket and reaching for a pistol and a long knife)
Here they are, just in case... ha, ha, ha, ha

HUMBER
Ha, ha, ha. Come on buddy, let's bring some terror to the other side of town.

LIGHTS OUT.

EXT. - OUR CUL-DE-SAC WHERE THE KIPLINGS HOUSE SITS. NIGHT

It's a dark night. As the camera goes around showing the neighborhood and the Kiplings' house, not a single noise can be heard. It's the calm before the storm.

From the lake shore, you can now see a pickup truck moving very slowly toward the cul-de-sac. The thieves are finally here to strike. As the pickup truck passes by the street near the lake, you can see Humber and Reny's eyes, their faces covered by black masks. It's close to midnight and everyone in the neighborhood is asleep.

The truck continues, moving slowly toward the Kiplings' house and stops in front of it. A close up reveals Humber and Reny's evil eyes, this time closer. They are ready to break into the house. As they look around to make sure nobody is watching, Humber, at the wheel, makes a maneuver and parks head out in the Kiplings' driveway.

As they open the vehicle's door furtively, they show in their hands two pillowcases, that they carry to the house. They are in the porch now. An instant later, Humber is messing with the lock, trying to open it without too much noise or force. As he keeps trying, a coconut, launched from somewhere, knocks him down to the ground, and he almost loses his mask.

RENY

What the hell? Humber are you OK?
(helping him get on his feet) What
was that yo?

HUMBER

(looking around desperately)
I don't know, get the gun out.

RENY

(taking a gun and a knife out
of the pillowcase)
Here they are.

Incoming! Another coconut goes flying, this time hitting Reny in the face. He tumbles.

HUMBER

Where are these things coming from?

About 10 feet away, behind some bushes, Fowley, Robie, Lulu and other peacocks are launching the coconuts using some of the lizards' tails as slingshots. Next to them is Long Tail giving the orders and timing the projectiles' intervals. He's gone "all Napoleon" directing the troops.

RENY
(with the gun in hand ready to
shoot at the spot where the
coconuts are coming from)
Whoever is doing this will know who
they're messing with...

HUMBER
(stopping Reny on his tracks)
Yo, you idiot! Put the silencer on.
You'll wake up the neighbors.

RENY
We have a silencer? Where?

HUMBER
Just find it, while I finish with
the door...

Two more coconuts hit Reny and Humber in the head. They
tumble again.

HUMBER
Just shoot that spot over there!

RENY
I have the silencer on... (shoots
two shots)

The camera follows the second shot to where the animals are
throwing coconuts at the thieves. That second shot hits
Fowley. He falls to the ground, severely injured. The
animals' offensive action stops for a moment. Everyone is
looking at Fowley.

LULU
Fowley, what happened?

FOWLEY
I got hit... here...

ROBIE
(calling to the squirrels)
Quick, quick! Bring some of those
herbs over there.

With the action over, the two thieves have time to scout the
area and are walking slowly to where the animals are. Humber
is holding a shotgun and a knife while Reny is holding the
gun with the silencer on. They are getting closer.

HUMBER
Go, shoot more, over there...

Three more shots are shot... This time, three lizards manage to intercept the bullets with their tongues. All the animals, including Robie, Lulu, Long Tail, the lizards, Limpy, squirrels, pigeons and ravens are evacuating the area and pulling Fowley out of there. They disappear into some bushes as the thieves get to the animal's original spot.

RENY

There is nothing here... I can't see nothing...

HUMBER

Wait a second, point the flashlight here... See... there is something... (touching the ground) Uhmmm, fresh blood... could have been a fresh kill by a cat. Come on, let's go back to the house!

CUT TO:

EXT. - A LAKE NEXT TO THE CUL-DE-SAC WHERE THE KIPLINGS HOUSE SITS. NIGHT

ROBIE

We need to do something with Fowley (looking at Fowley, who's still unconscious) Are you OK buddy?

LULU

(crying)
Come on baby, don't die on me now...

Two pigeons land very close to them. They bring some medicinal roots in their beaks. Webby is working her magic wrapping Fowley's feathers in her web, trying to stop the bleeding.

PIGEON 3

(to Lulu and Robie)
Here, give this to him...

LONG TAIL

(who had been absent from this scene, is coming out of nearby bushes. He's definitely in charge of the offensive)
Quickly, we need another archer, the thieves are back on the house trying to break in.

PECKY

(who had been there quietly)

I'll be the archer, where are the coconuts?

LONG TAIL
(pointing to a nearby coconut tree)
Over there...

LIMPY
And I'll be a second archer...

SQUIRREL 2
We'll cut some coconuts... Get them down here...

LONG TAIL
Ok guys, I'm with Camey and the others behind the bushes near the fence, the front fence. (to the squirrels now) Send the coconuts and some rocks too, hurry!

ROBIE
(to Lulu and Webby)
Stay with him until he wakes up... and don't get too far away from here... (to Long Tail) Wait for me guys, I'll go with you.

EXT. THE PORCH OF THE KIPLINGS HOUSE - NIGHT

Back in the house after shooting Fowley and scaring the animals, Humber and Reny are determined to finally break into the house.

HUMBER
(using some tools)
Come on yo, let's finish this...

RENY
(using the flashlight)
Here, some light.

HUMBER
Good, you are not that dumb after all...

Suddenly, a rock hits Reny on the head. He tumbles next to Humber as the flashlight goes flying out of his hand.

HUMBER
(putting the tools on the floor)
What the hell... What was that...?

Are you OK yo? Damn it! Now I have to start all over again with the door...

RENY
(standing slowly)
That hurts man... I think this house is haunted... Somebody really doesn't want us get in there...

HUMBER
Ah, nonsense... Come on, get the net from the truck. We'll have to first take care of whoever is doing this...

RENY
All righty...

HUMBER
Do you still have the gun?

RENY
Yup...

HUMBER
Ok, go get the net... I'll wait for you here... and don't make too much noise, moron...

QUICK TRANSITION TO THE BUSHES, WHERE LONG TAIL AND THE OTHERS ARE NOW POSITIONED.

CAMEY
Look, look, one of the thieves is running to the truck, maybe they are leaving...

LONG TAIL
Maybe, let's see. (to Thorny) Hey Thorny, great shot with the rock. You are now our third official archer.

The two squirrels, the raccoons and two ravens are pulling a large branch full of coconuts. The pigeons are also helping, lifting the other end of the branch with their beaks.

LONG TAIL
(to the lizards in a soft voice)
Come on guys, prepare your tails... Limpy, Pecky, Thorny, get ready for another round... let's show these

invaders who rules this neighborhood. (looking up to the heavens now and talking to himself) Mother Nature, help us now, for the Family, for Carlota.

LIMPY
I'm ready here...

PECKY
Me too!

CAMEY
(bringing Long Tail down to Earth again)
Hey, hey, where are the thieves? I don't see them now... Do you?

All the lizards, Pecky, Limpy, Thorny and the other animals stop their offensive preparations.

LONG TAIL
The truck is still there... hey Thorny, Robie, can you guys move to the other side and check if you see them?

THORNY AND ROBIE
(speaking at the same time)
On our way...

As Thorny and Robie move silently about 50 feet away from the group, Long Tail signals to launch another coconut onto the porch to make the thieves move. With his right arm up, Long Tail is waiting for Thorny and Robie's signal. The animals look at each other in suspense.

CAMEY
(standing in the opposite direction of where Long Tail is looking, trying to get a signal from Thorny and Robie)
Hey, maybe we scared them and they left...

LONG TAIL
(moves his head to the left to answer Camey)
It could be, but I'm not sure. Are we that good?... (moving his head to the right, he suddenly sees Thorny and Robie signaling desperately to the group)

LONG TAIL
What are they trying to say?...

CAMEY
(gesturing silently to Thorny)
Whaaat???

SQUIRREL 1
I think they're saying that we
better... run...

LONG TAIL
(to Camey)
Is that what he's....

It's simply too late to do or even say anything, because suddenly, out of nowhere, a large net, with extremely small orifices, engulfs them all. In the confusion, some coconuts and rocks go flying in different directions. Three of the coconuts land near Thorny and Robie, who are now hiding behind some plants looking in desperation at how their friends were captured. Not even the little Long Tail, Camey and the other lizards can escape through the small orifices in the net.

HUMBER
(pulling to close the net with
a rapid movement)
So, these are the ones throwing
rocks and coconuts at us, ah?

RENY
But who are they? Let me see
(pointing the flashlight to the net)
peacocks? squirrels? raccoons?
pigeons? lizards? and a hen? We
gotta be dreaming Humber. This house
is definitely haunted...

HUMBER
(pulling the net towards the
porch)
Ah, shut up you idiot. Nobody is
dreaming. These are just damn
critters playing tricks on us. When
we're through with the house, we'll
take them and cook them all for
dinner!

LONG TAIL
(speaking solemnly to the
other animals, all inside the
net)
I'm sorry guys, I think we are

doomed.

RACCOON 2

I don't think these guys will ever eat a raccoon...

RENY

Ok, let me see. I'm fine with the hen, the peacocks, hey did you know that peacocks are like turkeys?...

HUMBER

Well, I'm fine, especially with the raccoons. I haven't eaten one in a while... and they are tasty.

LIMPY

(from the net)

These guys are bad...

PIGEON 3

And yet, we were here, trying to help some humans.

LONG TAIL

You got that right... "some humans", "different humans" than these two jerks.

CAMEY

(talking to Long Tail and the pigeon)

Hey, hey, let's not start with that again. I thought we were beyond that. Guys, let's focus here, see it through... We are going to get out of here in one piece...

SQUIRREL 1

I really don't see how.

LONG TAIL

(looking and pointing through a very small hole in the net)

Wow! Look at that! Thorny and Robie... What are they doing?

After Humber and Reny captured the animals with the net and while they were busy pulling it back to the porch, Thorny and Robie were trying something desperately: throwing the three coconuts that landed near them at the doors of the three houses located right next to the Kiplings'. It was a desperate attempt to get the neighbors attention, especially Robie had to make a tremendous effort to lift the coconuts

and use Thorny's tail as a slingshot.

CAMEY

Look, they are throwing the coconuts
to the houses.

The noise of the three coconuts hitting each door alerts Reny and Humber of what's going on. They now turn around to face the houses where the noise was coming from. Lights turn on inside those houses, as Humber and Reny, with no choice left, pull the net behind their backs to face the neighbors that are about to appear on their porches. Humber and Reny smile, as the three neighbors, two men and one woman emerge from inside their homes almost at the same time Humber lifts his tools.

HUMBER

Cable man...

NEIGHBOR 1

At this hour?

HUMBER

Yup.

NEIGHBOR 2

My cable was working fine last
night...

HUMBER

It's just this house, bad wire, we'
almost done.

NEIGHBOR 3

What about the noise? It seemed like
somebody knocked on my door...

HUMBER

Ummm... maybe a cat. We didn't see
anything. Sorry.

The three neighbors shut their doors in unison.

RENY

Do you really think they swallowed
that?

HUMBER

Of course they did. Look...
(pointing at how the lights turn off
one by one in the houses)

HUMBER

Come on, leave the net here for now.
We need to get whoever is still
throwing coconuts.

RENY

Yo, it's almost 2 in the morning
already. We don't have much time
left.

HUMBER

Don't worry homey. We'll finish with
the house soon. Look, there is
something over there. (pointing to
where Thorny and Robie are) Shoot
now! Shoot!

RENY

(shooting his gun with the
silencer on)
I got 'em I got 'em. Bad critters!

HUMBER

Come on, we have things to finish
here. (both start walking stealthily
back to the house).

CUT TO:

EXT. THE PORCH OF THE KIPLINGS HOUSE - NIGHT

After their ordeal with the animals, Humber and Reny have
been busy trying to break in through the front door using
locksmith tools.

HUMBER

(moving his fingers slowly,
with precision, he has just
finished using one of the
tools)
And now, we open the door without
too much noise. (he's about to turn
the door knob)

RENY

Come on yo, just open the door and
let's get done with this.

HUMBER

Wait, wait, we are missing something
here... If there is an alarm... we
need to cut the outside wire,
otherwise the police is alerted. Go
around, find the phone box and call
me.

RENY
(coming back)
Found it!

HUMBER
Let's go see it.

An instant later...

HUMBER
Ok, now we cut here, and here, and
that's it. The house is ours!

Back on the porch...

HUMBER
Now, when I open the door, just run
to wherever you hear the siren and
rip it out... Ready?

RENY
Yup!

HUMBER
Oh, and bring inside the net with
all those damn critters... We'll
just put them in a room until we
finish.

CUT TO:

EXT. - A LAKE NEXT TO THE CUL-DE-SAC WHERE THE KIPLINGS
HOUSE SITS. NIGHT

ROBIE
(running, Thorny running also
behind him, talking
desperately)
They got them all... they just got
them all...

LULU
(standing, Fowley is lying
next to her with his eyes
close)
What do you mean? What happened?
Where is Limpy?

ROBIE
The thieves, they threw a net and
got Long Tail and the others.

LULU
How about you? How did you two

escape?

ROBIE

Thorny and I were scouting the area around the house and we got separated from the rest.

FOWLEY

(trying to stand up with tremendous effort)

We need to do something, where are the animals now?

THORNY

The bad guys took them into the house and were saying they would cook all of them.

LULU

Oh, we gotta do something!

ROBIE

We even tried to wake up the neighbors, but all these people around here are comfortably numb.

FOWLEY

Where can we get help now? There are no animals left here to turn to.

ROBIE

How about Pumpkin, the cat?

FOWLEY

I wouldn't even try...

LULU

Robie, go around the house and peek through the windows, maybe you can see what's going on with Long Tail, Limpy and the others.

ROBIE

Come on! Let's go Thorny.

QUICK TRANSITION TO:

Robie has been busy flying around the house and peeking through the windows, only to find the animals thrown on the floor, covered by the net, in one of the bedrooms. They all look miserable and discouraged. He can see from here Camey trying to push Long Tail through one of the very small orifices of the net, but failing. Thorny is standing next to Robie, outside the window. From here, they can also hear the

thieves ransacking the house. Thorny makes a crying sound.

THORNY

Our friends are doomed. Can we think of something?

ROBIE

We need to...

INT. - INSIDE KIPLINGS'S HOME - EMMA ROOM - NIGHT

It's pitch black here and loud noises can be heard... Drawers opening and closing violently; the same with doors and cabinet doors. The sound of broken glass can be heard as well. The thieves have been going at it for two hours.

LONG TAIL

Limpy, Pecky, can you try opening a hole on the net with your beaks?

LIMPY

I've tried, but it's too tight in here, I can barely move...

PECKY

Me either.

LONG TAIL

(to Raccoons Bernie and Raoul)
Bernie, Raoul, can you bite into the net?

BERNIE

We tried, but it's too strong!

LONG TAIL

Camey, try again, push me through one of the holes. (to the squirrels now) Hairy, Fasty, come on guys, you are small and agile. Try to get closer to Camey and help him push.

FASTY

I'll try, but I'm stuck here between Limpy's leg and Pecky's neck.

Suddenly, the lights in the room turn on...

HUMBER

Well, critters, it's your turn now. The pots and pans are all ready...

RENY

Hey yo, do you really think this is

a good idea? Let's just take the animals with us and get the hell out of the house. We got plenty already... and daylight is almost here.

HUMBER

Nope, we gotta finish this business now. I won't even bother to put these damn critters in my truck. They die now! Besides, I'm mad we couldn't find any treasure in the house. Only plenty of electronics for the pawn shop.

RENY

What about the neighbors? What if they see us in plain daylight?

HUMBER

Ha, we are cable men, remember? Hurry yo, bring them to the kitchen, ha ha, the net is full!

As Reny starts pulling the net out of the room, the camera follows him to the door, and then points to the window, where Robie and Thorny are still outside looking helplessly at their friends' horrible fate.

QUICK TRANSITION TO:

All the animals inside the net are being carried now through a corridor that leads to the kitchen. When Reny gets there, Long Tail and the others peek through the net only to see three large pots, two casseroles and one pan, from which smoke is rising. Limpy and Pecky start to pray.

LONG TAIL

(speaking solemnly)

Guys, it was a tremendous honor to fight these monsters with your help. Camey, any last idea before we all get fried?

CAMEY

If only we could move...

Suddenly, the doorbell rings once, now twice...

Reny drops the net as Humber gestures for him to be quiet...

With a quick movement, Humber the shotgun in hand, and Reny

is holding the gun...

They start to move slowly from the kitchen to the living room, negotiating their way along boxes that are ready to be loaded onto the truck.

REN
(speaking softly)
I told you... We should have gone
already...

HUMBER
(responding quietly and
softly)
Shut up, don't be a freaking
chicken. Let's see who it is.

As they get close to the peephole, Humber lifts his head and looks through it.

HUMBER
There is nobody there... (turning
his back now)

The doorbell rings again...

They both jump and turn back...

Humber peeks through the peephole again, but sees nobody.

He then puts his hand on the door lock and opens it slowly.

Reny is behind him.

At their knees' level, two pairs of black fierce eyes are looking up to the thieves.

It's dark and only the pair of eyes on the porch can be seen. A loud growl follows.

As Humber looks down, he fixes his eyes on the animal as well. He quickly kneels down and puts the tip of his shotgun between the eyes that have been staring at him. He can see now very well who it's: a long hair wiener dog that keeps staring at him and now barks once and growls ferociously.

It's Carlota against the thieves. But even she is at a disadvantage, trying to fight two heavily-armed thieves.

With the shotgun pointing at her head, Carlota is now planning her next move...

REN
(speaking softly)

And now a wiener dog? I'm telling
you yo, this is definitely a
nightmare...

HUMBER

I'll take care of the dog myself.
Slowly, put the gun with the
silencer right where I'm pointing
with the shotgun at...

As Reny starts to move his hand slowly, a tremendous force coming from behind Carlota rips the gun out of his hand and made Humber's shotgun go flying. They did not see it coming. The same force is now coming back at them. This time making them fall loudly to the ground. When the shotgun falls too, it goes rolling underneath the couch in the living room. When they get back to their senses, Humber and Reny see a huge pitbull in the middle of the living room staring at them both, and growling ferociously.

Carlota, who had stayed all the while petrified on the porch seeing what had just happened, looks at the scene in disbelief. She is as surprised as the thieves.

CARLOTA

Roland? What are you doing here?

ROLAND - THE PITBULL

Quiet girl, this is between me and
them now...

CARLOTA

But, how did you get here? Did you
follow me?

ROLAND - THE PITBULL

We followed you...

CARLOTA

We, who is we?...

Another dog comes running from the street and flies over Carlota only to land in the middle of the living room, right next to Roland... He turned her back facing Carlota now...

CARLOTA

Raymond?

RAYMOND

Yes!...

CARLOTA

But guys, how did you get here
anyway?

Three more dogs come running and do the same maneuver, landing next to Roland and Raymond. They now make a circle around the thieves. The bad guys simply can't move. The third, fourth and fifth dogs are a German Shepherd, a Pomeranian and the chihuahua: all dogs from the animal shelter.

ROLAND - THE PITBULL
You girl, taught me a lesson that day, and Raymond... (pointing to Raymond) here... filled in the rest of the story...

RAYMOND
We followed you and it took us quite a few hours to track you down.

MARCUS - THE GERMAN SHEPHERD
But we finally did, and we are here to help...

Seeing the dogs involved in such a friendly dialogue, Humber tries to make a move to get the shotgun from under the couch...

CARLOS - THE POMERANIAN
(running to Humber's hand, biting it ferociously)
And we pomeranians are meaaaannn...

RAYMOND
(extending his hand to Carlota)
Come on, get inside... this is your house after all...

As Carlota steps inside the house... she hears some noises coming from the kitchen...

LONG TAIL
We are here!, we are here!

CARLOTA
Long Tail?

LONG TAIL
Yes, and my cousin Camey and Limpy and Pecky and the squirrels and the raccoons...

CARLOTA
(biting ferociously on the net and letting all the animals

out)
All of you guys?

LONG TAIL
Yes... finally... can someone turn
off the stove please?

CARLOTA
Long Tail, you did it!

LONG TAIL
Well, we tried...

CARLOTA
No, you did it!... You guys were
here inside the house before I could
get here...

LONG TAIL
We were about to be cooked... for
Mother Nature's sake!

LIMPY
This is my first time being so close
to a dog.

RAYMOND
(joining Carlota in the
kitchen and talking to Limpy
and Pecky)
Hey, we can be friends.

PECKY
Are you going to be friendly with me
too?

CARLOTA
Of course, we are all friends now,
forever.

RAYMOND
(calling out from the living
room)
Hey guys, you have some visitors
here... (an instant later, Fowley,
Lulu and the other animals that were
tending to him, walk slowly in the
kitchen and start hugging each
other)

MARCUS - THE CHIHUAHUA
(coming to the kitchen)
Hey, what are we going to do with
the bad guys over there?

CARLOTA
We'll teach them a lesson or two.
(calling out) Roland?

ROLAND - THE PITBULL
(responding from the living
room)
Yes ma'am...

CARLOTA
Let's wake up the neighborhood! But
not too rough, please.

CUT TO:

INT. - THE KIPLING'S FAMILY ROOM - AFTERNOON

The Kipling family is sitting in front of the TV, watching a newscast. From behind the couch we can see just the heads of Dad, Mom. Eric and Emma.

NEWS ANCHOR
In an incredible story coming from the East part of the city, a group of critters and some dogs that escaped from the County's Animal Shelter thwarted a burglary at a residence while their owners were on vacation. As part of the confrontation, a male peacock was injured and then treated at a local vet clinic. Two thieves captured during the robbery were also charged in a string of recent burglaries. If convicted, they may face up to 25 years in prison.
In a happy twist of events...

DAD
(we are now looking at the faces of the family and Carlota, Raymond, Roland, Marcus and Carlos are also lying on the couch. On the wall, we can see two poster-sized photos of the family while adventuring in Alaska and Utah. It's the treasure Dad spoke about at the beginning: the family's memories)
...the family adopted all the dogs that "mysteriously" got into the house while the burglary was taking

place...

They all look at each other and smile... as something catches Emma's eye...

That "something" is crawling on the wall...

Emma turns her head slowly... and yells:

EMMA
Lizaarrd...!!!

LONG TAIL
(crawling on the wall)
Oh, no. Not again!

LIGHTS OUT.

THE END

POSSIBLE SONGS FOR SCORE:

Bubbles in the Wine - Lawrence Welk

Just in time - Jule Styne

Just One of Those Things - Lester Lanin

Deed I do - Les Elgart

Lulu's Back in Town - played by Billy May

Old Devil Moon - Lester Lanin

Young at Heart - by Johnny Richards and Carolyn Leigh