

1st Draft
03/11/11

A LOVING BOND

Written by
Jamie Press

Based on a true story

Copyright © 2011, Jamie Press

No part of this publication may be reproduced, distributed, performed, used, quoted, published, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means electronic, photocopying or otherwise without the prior written permission of the author

FADE IN:

EXT. BACKYARD, SMITH HOUSEHOLD -- DAY.

PETER, a 13 year old teenager who can be shy at times but is mostly comfortable at home, is playing in the backyard with his pet Dog, COCO, an 8 year old Black Labrador.

Coco is running around the yard with a tennis ball in his mouth. Peter gives chase to Coco, trying to get the ball off of him.

PETER
(laughing; running)
Give me the ball, Coco.

Coco continues to run around the yard, easily getting away from Peter each time he gets close. Peter stops running and sits on the grass, catching his breath.

Coco stops running and awaits for the game to restart. Peter looks at Coco for a minute then he puts his head in his hands and pretends to cry.

Coco, thinking that Peter is crying for real, walks over to Peter and drops the ball and begins to lick the arm of Peter. Suddenly, Peter grabs the ball.

PETER (CONT'D)
Aha! That trick works all the time.

Coco jumps up at Peter, who falls onto his back on the grass, laughing. Coco begins to lick Peter in the face.

PETER (CONT'D)
(laughing)
Okay, okay, you win.

Peter gets up from the floor.

PETER (CONT'D)
Sit

Coco sits. Peter throws the ball up the yard and Coco runs off to fetch it. Whilst he is running to fetch it, Peter turns around and bolts back inside the house.

INT. LIVING ROOM, SMITH HOUSEHOLD -- DAY.

Peter comes running in. He jumps onto the couch and place a cushion in front of his face, "hiding" himself. Coco's paws can be heard charging in from the garden. He enters the room and immediately jumps on top of Peter. Peter laughs.

PETER
Alright, you got me.

Coco climbs off and stands in front of Peter, who reaches out with his hand and begins to fuss Coco.

PETER (CONT'D)
(fussing)
Good boy. Who's a good boy?

Peter's Mom, KATHY, 37 years old and a typical housewife, walks into the front room from the kitchen.

KATHY
Peter, it's three thirty.

PETER
Oh yeah. Come on, boy

Peter and Coco move into the kitchen.

INT. KITCHEN, SMITH HOUSEHOLD -- DAY.

Peter opens a draw where he pulls out Coco's lead. At the sight of his lead, Coco begins to get excited, tail wagging rapidly. Peter attaches the lead to Coco's collar and they head to the front door.

INT. HALLWAY, SMITH HOUSEHOLD -- DAY.

Peter puts on his jacket and heads out the front door with Coco.

EXT. STREET -- DAY.

Peter is walking Coco down the street, passing the school, the library and the church. Every now and then, Coco stops to sniff a wall and urinate against something.

They both reach the end of the road, where a supermarket stands. Peter puts his hand in his pocket and pulls out some change. He counts it up and comes to £1.50. He puts the change back into his pocket.

He walks across the road and comes to a set of railings set up outside the store for the trolleys. He ties the end of Coco's lead to the railing and heads inside.

INT. SUPERMARKET -- DAY.

Peter walks into the supermarket and heads over to the gigantic fridge where all the drinks are standing. He grabs a can of fizzy pop and heads over to the till. There is a rather long queue.

EXT. SUPERMARKET -- DAY.

Coco is standing outside and is not happy, he's scared of the cars going by and the noises from the local pub that is next to the supermarket. Suddenly, BANG!!, a car backfires and Coco jumps back, scared.

INT. SUPERMARKET -- DAY.

Meanwhile, back inside the supermarket, Peter is still in the queue but it's shorter now and he is next. The CASHIER finishes up with another customer and Peter advances to the till and puts the drink on the counter.

CASHIER

Hi.

PETER

Hey.

The Cashier scans the barcode of the fizzy can.

CASHIER

That's one pound forty please.

Peter hands the Cashier £1.50.

PETER

Keep the change.

CASHIER

Thanks, have a nice evening.

Peter takes the can and begins to move to the exit doors. He opens the can and takes a swig.

EXT. SUPERMARKET -- DAY.

Peter comes back outside and heads to the railings, only to find that Coco is gone. His lead has been ripped in half with half of the lead still attached to the railings.

Peter, horrified, grabs the rest of the lead off and looks at it. He turns around and begins to frantically look around for Coco.

PETER

COCO!!

People walking by and standing near look at Peter, wondering why he is shouting. Peter looks to his right and sees a Woman sat on a brick wall, he dashes over to her.

PETER (CONT'D)

Excuse me. Have you seen a black
labrador dog go by?

WOMAN

A dog?

PETER

Yeah. He'll have some of his lead still attached to him.

WOMAN

No, I've not. Sorry.

The Woman takes off down the street. Peter turns around and heads runs across the road and heads to the Chippy.

INT. CHIPPY -- DAY.

Peter enters the Chippy where a queue of people are waiting to be served.

PETER

Excuse me.

People in the queue turns to look at Peter.

PETER (CONT'D)

Has anyone seen a black labrador dog run by?

People in the queue shake their heads Peter leaves the Chippy and heads back outside.

EXT. CHIPPY -- DAY.

Peter is now really worried about Coco. He looks across the street towards the local Pub where many punters are outside drinking. He runs over to the pub.

EXT. BEER GARDEN, PUB -- DAY.

Peter works his way around the people in the beer garden.

PETER

Excuse me. Have you seen a black labrador dog go by at all?

PUNTER #1

Nope, sorry.

Peter tries another Punter.

PETER

Excuse me. Have you see a dog run by?

PUNTER #2

I saw one go by earlier.

PETER
A black labrador?

PUNTER #2
Oh, not a black one. No, this one was blonde.

PUNTER #3
(to Punter #2)
That was a woman.

PUNTER #2
It was? I couldn't tell the difference.

Punter #2 and #3 both laugh. Peter gives up and tries someone else.

PETER
Excuse me. Have you seen a black labrador dog run by?

PUNTER #4
No, sorry. I haven't.

Peter turns around and heads out of the beer garden. He looks over to the park. Perhaps, Coco's there? Peter charges over to the park.

EXT. PARK -- DAY.

Peter races into the park and begins to scan the park. He can't see anything. Then a Black Labrador comes into his sight from around the corner.

Peter smiles and races over to the dog. He gets up close to the dog before he realizes that it's not Coco. The Owner of the Dog comes around the corner and sees Peter with his dog.

DOG OWNER
Can I help you, son?

PETER
No. Sorry, I got the wrong dog.

DOG OWNER
Right.

Peter leaves, the Dog Owner keeps an eye on Peter, suspicious of him. Peter walks around the park, looking in bushes, between and over fences. He stops, realizing he can't be here. He leaves the park.

EXT. STREET -- DAY.

Peter is walking up the street, peaking down side alleyways and looking behind bins and fences, every place Coco might be. He comes to the end of the street. He knows he can't go any further. He begins to walk home.

INT. LIVING ROOM, SMITH HOUSEHOLD -- DAY.

Kathy is sat on the couch, watching television. Peter comes in through the front door and walks into the living room. He's been crying and it's clearly visible something is wrong. Kathy looks at Peter, puzzled.

KATHY

What's wrong?

Peter doesn't answer. Kathy looks behind Peter and can't see Coco.

KATHY (CONT'D)

Where's Coco?

Peter has tears in his eyes. He opens his mouth to say something but can't. He reaches into his pocket where he pulls out the ripped lead and holds it up to Kathy, who is shocked.

KATHY (CONT'D)

Oh no.

Peter begins to cry, Kathy gets up and goes over to hug Peter. JEREMY, 35 years old, Peter's father and a tough Englishman, walks into the living room and sees Peter crying.

JEREMY

What's wrong with him?

KATHY

It's Coco.

JEREMY

What about him?

KATHY

He's gone.

JEREMY

(puzzled)

What do you mean he's gone?

Kathy holds up the ripped lead to show Jeremy, who is also shocked to see the torn lead. Kathy sits Peter down on the couch.

KATHY

Peter, listen to me. What happened?

PETER

(wiping away tears)
Well, I went into the supermarket to
get a drink. So I tied Coco to the
railings outside.

KATHY

How long were you inside?

PETER

Only five minutes. Could've been more
because of the queue. I've searched
everywhere I could.

Jeremy walks through the living room and into the hallway
where he grabs his coat.

KATHY

(to Jeremy)
Where are you going?

JEREMY

Where do you think? To look for him.

KATHY

Well, wait a minute. I'll go with
you.

PETER

I'll come as well.

KATHY

No, you've done enough. Just stay
here and get yourself sorted out.

PETER

No, I want to come and look for him.

Kathy pauses for a moment and sees Peter's desperation.

KATHY

Alright. Come on.

Kathy enters the hallway and grabs her coat and all three of
them head out the door.

INT. CAR -- DAY.

All three enter the car and put on their seatbelts.

PETER

Where are we going?

JEREMY

We'll head down to the lakes. You
know he likes it down there.

EXT. SMITH HOUSEHOLD -- DAY.

The car backs out of the drive and heads down the street.

EXT. CAR PARK, LAKES -- DAY.

The car pulls into the car park and the three of them climb out.

JEREMY

(pointing)

Okay. Kathy, you go down that way.
Peter, you go down there and I'll go
this way. You find him, call each
other straight away.

All three head off down their separate ways.

EXT. LAKES -- DAY.

Kathy is walking down her route, checking in bushes, down ditches and between trees. She comes to a big lake. She scans the lake.

KATHY

COCO!!

No response. She can't see him. She heads off down another route.

EXT. LAKES -- DAY.

Jeremy is searching down his route. He comes to a small lake. He looks to his right at the bushes and he sees something black and lying on the floor.

Jeremy approaches the bushes and pushes the bush aside and looks in only to find a drunk, homeless man, lying on the grass with a bottle of whisky in his hand. Jeremy shakes his head and leaves, heading down the rest of his route.

EXT. LAKES -- DAY.

Peter is walking down his route, also searching in any spot he can. He comes to a long ravine where boats are harbored. He crosses over the bridge of the ravine and comes to a much bigger central lake. He looks around.

PETER

COCO! COCO! HERE BOY!!

No response. Peter heads down the path.

EXT. LAKES - LATER -- NIGHT.

It's now starting to turn into the evening, the sun is setting. Jeremy is walking through a field and sees Kathy heading towards him.

KATHY

Any luck?

JEREMY

Does it look like it? This is pointless. We've been here for ages and we've searched this whole park. He can't be here.

KATHY

(emotional)

We can't give in, Jeremy.

JEREMY

Look, the best thing for us to do now is go home and be patient. We'll call the papers and everyone we know and let them know the situation. We've done all we can do.

Kathy, with tears in her eyes, nods.

JEREMY (CONT'D)

Come on, let's head back to the car. I'll call Peter.

Jeremy puts his arm around Kathy and the two begin to head back to the car.

EXT. CAR PARK, LAKES -- NIGHT.

Kathy is sat in the car, with her hand over her eyes. Jeremy is stood outside, he calls Peter.

EXT. LAKES -- NIGHT.

Peter is heading down a path when his phone begins to ring. He takes it out and answers it.

PETER

Hello.

JEREMY (V.O.)

Peter, it's me.

PETER

Dad, you found Coco?

EXT. CAR PARK, LAKES -- NIGHT.

JEREMY

No, we couldn't find him. You need to come back to the car. We're going home.

PETER (V.O.)

What? Why?!

JEREMY

Peter, we've been here for hours now. We've searched the entire park. We've done our best. We're going to have to go back home and do all we can from there.

EXT. LAKES -- NIGHT.

Peter has tears in his eyes.

PETER

(softly)

Okay.

Peter hangs up. Tear begin to trickle down his cheeks. He turns around and begins to walk back to the car.

INT. CAR -- NIGHT.

The car is heading back home. Peter is sat in the back, looking out the window into the sky, eyes still teary.

FLASHBACK - IN SLOW MOTION

Coco jumps at Peter, who falls to the ground, laughing. Coco licks him in the face.

Peter comes out of the flashback and smiles.

EXT. SMITH HOUSEHOLD -- NIGHT.

The car pulls into the drive way and all three exit the car and head into the house.

INT. LIVING ROOM, SMITH HOUSEHOLD -- NIGHT.

It's much later in the evening now. All three of them look tired from today. Kathy sits on the couch with her arm over Peter, who has red raw eyes from crying. Jeremy is on the phone, talking to the newspaper editor.

JEREMY

(into phone)

Yeah. Okay. Thank you very much. Yep,
thanks for your help. Bye.

Jeremy hangs up and turns to Peter and Kathy.

JEREMY (CONT'D)

The Editor said he will put out a
short article about Coco in next
week's edition. Tomorrow we'll begin
making posters and begin handing them
out.

Kathy nods. Peter just sits there, saying nothing, staring
into space.

JEREMY (CONT'D)

Peter, this wasn't your fault, kiddo.

PETER

Wasn't it? I left him outside, I
should've known he would be scared
out there all on his own. All this
just because I wanted a drink.

KATHY

How was you supposed to know he was
scared?

PETER

Because I should've.

JEREMY

You can't keep blaming yourself,
Peter. It's no one's fault. These
things happen sometimes and I promise
we won't stop until we find him.

There is a moment's silence.

KATHY

Why don't you go to bed? It's been a
long day. Go get some sleep.

Peter nods, gets up and heads upstairs to his room. Jeremy
sighs, exhausted from the day and collapses onto the couch,
next to Kathy.

KATHY (CONT'D)

You think we'll find him?

JEREMY

Coco is out there somewhere and we're
going to find him.

INT. PETER'S BEDROOM, SMITH HOUSEHOLD -- NIGHT.

Peter is in bed, facing the wall. He has his phone open and is using it as a light to look at a photo of him and Coco. Tear trickle down his cheeks. He sighs, closes the phone and places the photo back in the window. He flips over to his other side.

INT. LIVING ROOM, SMITH HOUSEHOLD -- NIGHT.

Jeremy and Kathy are sat on the couch, drinking tea.

KATHY

What if we don't find him?

Jeremy doesn't respond.

KATHY (CONT'D)

If we don't find him, I can't imagine what Peter would be like. He already feels guilty.

JEREMY

(sighs)

I don't know. I need some air.

Jeremy puts his tea on the table and heads to the front door.

EXT. SMITH HOUSEHOLD -- NIGHT.

Jeremy opens the front door and takes a seat on the steps. He sits there for a while, thinking. After a bit, he gets back up and heads into the living room, leaving the front door open.

INT. LIVING ROOM, SMITH HOUSEHOLD -- NIGHT.

Jeremy walks in as Kathy is still sat on the couch.

JEREMY

What if we got him a new dog?

KATHY

We could do. But I don't think that will take away Peter's guilt.

EXT. STREET -- NIGHT.

We're looking down the street from someone's POV. Whoever's POV this is, it's like they're crawling along the path. Or they're some kind of animal with four legs.

INT. LIVING ROOM, SMITH HOUSEHOLD -- NIGHT.

JEREMY

What if we got another black labrador
and just told him that it's Coco.

KATHY

What? We can't do that?

JEREMY

Why not? It's bound to get rid of his
guilt and as long as he doesn't find
out then--

KATHY

--And if he does?

Jeremy doesn't answer. Silence. He shakes his head, sighs and
sits back down on the couch next to Kathy.

EXT. STREET -- NIGHT.

Whoever's POV we're looking from now turns into the Smith's
drive and begins to head to the open front door.

INT. LIVING ROOM, SMITH HOUSEHOLD -- NIGHT.

Kathy sees that the front door is still open.

KATHY

Jeremy.

Jeremy turns to Kathy.

KATHY (CONT'D)

The front door is still open.

Jeremy gets up and heads over to the door to shut it. As he
gets there, he shocked to see Coco casually walk into the
living room. Kathy and Jeremy are gob-smacked.

INT. PETER'S BEDROOM, SMITH HOUSEHOLD -- NIGHT.

Peter is still not asleep, tears in his eyes. Suddenly, he
hears--

JEREMY (O.S.)

COCO!!!

Peter's eyes widen and he jumps out of bed and rushes down
the stairs.

INT. LIVING ROOM, SMITH HOUSEHOLD -- NIGHT.

Jeremy and Kathy are fussing Coco when Peter walks into the room. Peter sees Coco and is shocked, Coco sees Peter and charges over to him.

Peter kneels down to Coco's level and opens his arms. Coco crashes into them as Peter hugs Coco.

PETER

Oh my god! Coco, my boy! I'm so
sorry! I'll never leave you on your
own again! I promise! I love you so
much!

Peter begins to scratch Coco on his belly as Jeremy and Kathy look on, smiling with happy tears. Coco's leg begins to shake, he's enjoying the fuss. Peter stops and Coco jumps at Peter and begins to lick him in his face. Peter smiles and laugh. We freeze on this imagine as we begin to FADE OUT and a QUOTE FADES IN:

Dog is and forever will be man's best friend

The QUOTE FADES OUT and we CUT TO BLACK.

THE END.