

ANIMAL WARRIOR

Written by

Buchi Baravalle & Camila Baravalle

FADE IN:

EXT. ZHANG MEAT FESTIVAL - MARKET - DAY

SUPER: SOMEWHERE IN ASIA

A hot, sunny day. Zhang market is crowded. Sad looking dogs moan in cramped, metal cages.

Hundreds of FESTIVAL ATTENDANTS and UNDERCOVER ANIMAL ACTIVISTS walk through the market. We see sweaty BUTCHERS sharpening their knives.

EXT. ZHANG CITY - DAY

A bus with tinted windows pulls to the curb, parks beside a sign that reads: "ZHANG MEAT FESTIVAL".

INT. PRESIDENTIAL HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY

SUPER: PRESIDENTIAL HOUSE

Luxurious master bedroom. A TV is on. The FIRST LADY, a demure woman, in her 50s, watches the TV as she gets ready and puts on her pumps.

ANCHORWOMAN (ON MONITOR)
Today begins the Ninth Annual Dog Meat Festival in Guangxi. Numerous animal welfare groups are working to stop the festival and the entire dog meat trade industry...

On the television, we see images of ANIMAL ACTIVISTS surrounding the Meat Market Festival facility.

A knock at the door. The door opens and her PERSONAL ASSISTANT enters.

PERSONAL ASSISTANT
Excuse me, Madame. The President will be ready to leave in an hour.

FIRST LADY
Thank you.

Personal Assistant leaves. First Lady checks her watch, opens a drawer, takes out a disposable cell phone, makes a call.

FIRST LADY (CONT'D)
All clear. Go ahead.

She continues to watch TV.

EXT. ZHANG MEAT FESTIVAL - ENTRANCE - DAY

Activists carry signs that read: *"STOP THE MEAT FESTIVAL", "DOGS ARE OUR PETS", "WE NEED AN ANIMAL PROTECTION LAW"*.

EXT. ZHANG MEAT FESTIVAL - ENTRANCE - DAY

ANIMAL WARRIOR - the leader - and The Rescue Patrol, all clad in green military uniforms, with the logo of a doe's head on the chest and thick gloves, get out of the bus. Animal Warrior's uniform is darker than the others. Animal Activists cheer, clap excitedly. Masked Men enter the...

MARKET FESTIVAL

Everybody watches them in astonishment. Inside the market, there are dogs crammed inside wooden crates and metal cages waiting to be butchered.

As Animal Warrior and The Rescue Patrol plant themselves in the middle of the market, Undercover Animal Activists take their jackets off, showing T-shirts that read:

"ANIMALS HAVE RIGHTS TOO"

Animal Activists surround the cages, defending the dogs inside. It's clear they know what they are doing.

ON ANIMAL WARRIOR

He starts walking in the middle of the group of gathered Masked Men. MASKED MAN #1 stands to the side and films everything with his camera.

ANIMAL WARRIOR

This is a raid. We're taking the dogs!

Complete chaos erupts. Some Butchers defend themselves with their knives, fight fiercely against Animal Activists. Pans, pots, cookware, forks and knives smash to the ground.

Some Festival Attendants run away, OTHERS stay behind to watch. Animal Activists shoot dart guns at some Butchers. They pass out.

BUTCHER #1 lunges at ANIMAL ACTIVIST #1, they struggle. Butcher #2 cuts Animal Activist's #1 arm.

ANIMAL ACTIVIST #2 hits BUTCHER #2 with a big pan from behind. Butcher #2 collapses.

TWENTY ANGRY BUTCHERS threaten The Rescue Patrol holding their knives up. They advance towards them in open defiance.

ANIMAL WARRIOR (CONT'D)
Remember what we fight for!

Like a praetorian guard, well-trained, The Rescue Patrol attack the butchers mercilessly. As they clash, they shoot dart guns into their necks, many fall to the floor, knives are thrown...

Animal Warrior taps the shoulder of one of them. BUTCHER #3 turns around to see a tranquilizer dart in front of his eyes.

ANIMAL WARRIOR (CONT'D)
(ironically)
A little nap is not denied to anyone.

Butcher #3 collapses on the ground. Meters away, BUTCHER #4 screams at Animal Warrior.

BUTCHER #4
These dogs don't belong to you!
You'll be hanged!

ON ANIMAL WARRIOR

Butcher #4 lunges at Animal Warrior, they struggle, Animal Warrior knocks him down. BUTCHER #5 jumps on top of Animal Warrior.

Butcher #5 is about to stab Animal Warrior with a large knife, when MASKED MAN #2 comes up from behind and injects a tranquilizer into Butcher's #5 neck. Butcher #5 collapses.

ON ANIMAL ACTIVISTS

They open the dogs' cages. One by one, they put each dog on a leash. The dogs are so grateful. They all lick their rescuers.

Some dogs are very sick and frightened. The Activists stack the empty cages next to the Butchers.

ON THE RESCUE PATROL AND BUTCHERS

The Rescue Patrol grab the Butchers from behind, yank them backwards, inject tranquilizers into their necks and drag the drowsy Butchers over to the big, empty cages. They lock them inside.

As Masked Men #1 films, BUTCHER #6 lunges at him, they struggle. Butcher #6 yanks the camera away and drops it. As he prepares to stomp on it, Masked Man #1 goes ballistic, and attacks him. They fight brutally.

Masked Man #1 quickly pulls out his dart gun and shoots it into Butcher's #6 neck. Butcher #6 collapses. Masked Man #1 picks up his camera and starts filming again.

Animal Activist #1 hands a MALE PUPPY DOG to Animal Warrior. The puppy wraps its paws around him, realizing he's safe now. They both stare at each other with deep connection.

Animal Warrior whispers in its ear...

ANIMAL WARRIOR

The nature and love of the universe
reside within you and me; you and I
are alike. You and I are one.
Welcome to my world.

Animal Warrior with Puppy Dog in his arms, speaks to the camera, claims responsibility for the raid.

ANIMAL WARRIOR (CONT'D)

"As long as there are animals
suffering at the hands of humans,
there will be an Animal Warrior and
The Rescue Patrol. We'll be back!"

EXT. PRESIDENTIAL HOUSE - ENTRANCE STAIRWAY - EVENING

First Lady watches a police car arrive at the presidential residency. She waits downstairs. Police car parks. A POLICE OFFICER gets out with a MALE PUPPY DOG in his arms.

First Lady takes the puppy dog. Police Officer and First Lady look at each other knowingly. First Lady pets the puppy, kisses him. She smiles widely, her eyes wet.

ANCHORWOMAN (V.O.)

Animal Warrior and The Rescue
Patrol have stolen hundreds of dogs
with the help of local animal
activists. It's still unknown why
the police didn't show up during
the raid.

CUT TO:

INT. SAN DIEGO FREEWAY - MICHAEL'S CAR - DAY (MOVING)

MICHAEL GREEN, mid 30s, a mild-mannered man, is driving on the freeway when he sees traffic come to a halt in front of him.

As he approaches the stopped cars, he sees TWO DRIVERS trying to help an INJURED DOG. Michael pulls to the shoulder, turns on his flashers and gets out.

EXT. SAN DIEGO FREEWAY - DAY

As Michael comes over to them, he sees Injured Dog growling and barking at the Two Drivers fiercely.

MICHAEL

I'm a vet. Please, step aside and let me help.

DRIVER #1

Poor thing. I think she got clipped by a car.

DRIVER #2

She's too frightened. Won't let us help her.

Injured Dog barks, bares her teeth, won't let anyone approach her. Michael speaks softly to her as he approaches. He slowly kneels down, looks deeply into Injured Dog's eyes.

MICHAEL

(whispers)

Shh... stay calm, everything is going to be okay. I'll take good care of you.

Injured Dog starts to relax, groans in pain, and lowers her head in submission as Michael pets her. A bond of trust has been created.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Hello, little girl! I'm going to help you.

Driver #1 and #2 watch Michael in awe. As he checks her for injuries, he notices a TINY PUPPY hiding under her.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

You got yourself a puppy. Huh, mom?

Michael gains her confidence, holds Injured Dog. He gestures for Driver #1 to get the Tiny Puppy. Michael and Driver #1 take the dogs to Michael's car.

INT. SAN DIEGO - VET CLINIC - EXAM ROOM #1 - DAY

A burst of activity, VETERINARIANS and ASSISTANTS come and go. As Michael takes a baby bottle of milk and feeds the Tiny Puppy, RACHEL, mid 50s, Michael's loyal secretary, enters.

RACHEL

Michael, we have some schedule changes. The Fisher Family just called me. They cancelled their surgery for the day after tomorrow.

MICHAEL

Are you kidding me?

(beat)

Where's Thomas? I need him to get back to me ASAP. I'm going to be late for my speech.

RACHEL

(staring at Tiny Puppy)

He just called and said he's on his way. Who is this beauty?

MICHAEL

Her mother was injured crossing the freeway. She's in the X-ray room. Luckily, she's not seriously hurt.

Rachel approaches the Tiny Puppy.

RACHEL

May I feed her? Come on now, off you go. You're going to be late.

Michael gives the baby bottle to Rachel.

RACHEL (CONT'D)

Good luck at the conference.

He rushes out.

EXT. VET CLINIC - PARKING LOT - DAY

Michael walks out of the clinic.

MICHAEL
(into phone)
I'm on my way.

Sitting on a bench, ARTHUR LIVINGSTON, early 60s, homeless recluse, the light no longer shines in his eyes, reads a newspaper, grumbles. By his side is PINKY, his tiny, female dog, and a black suitcase.

ARTHUR
(to Pinky)
They lead the Marines to believe
that they are serving their
country, but they only find
darkness and death.

Pinky looks at him not understanding what his owner has just said. Michael approaches them, gives Arthur a sandwich and food to Pinky.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)
God bless you, Doc.

MICHAEL
Arthur, when are you going to come
work with me?

Arthur shakes his head disapprovingly, grumbles, gestures for Michael to leave. Michael just smiles. He likes Arthur despite his gruff temperament.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
The least you can do is let me
spay Pinky.

Arthur scowls.

ARTHUR
Have a nice day, Doc.

Michael shrugs, goes to his car. Arthur looks at the sandwich, opens it and grumbles.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)
(to Pinky)
Vegetables. Always vegetables.
Never a real sandwich.

Unenthusiastically, he eats the sandwich.

INT. RIPPIN'S LAB - CORRIDOR - DAY

FREDDY RIPPIN, late 60s, billionaire founder and CEO of Rippin Pharmaceuticals, and SIMON EDWARDS, 60, his partner, both wearing white lab coats, walk down the corridor.

JAKE O'NEILL, a sensitive scientist in his mid 40s, and Scientist #1 follow behind them.

JAKE O'NEILL

We still haven't found the proper dosage. The toxicity is still too high. Three monkeys have died and the others are expelling black urine. This drug is not working.

Freddy Rippin stops, angrily addresses Jake.

FREDDY RIPPIN

I don't give a crap about the monkeys! We have to get this drug to market before our competition does.

They enter the...

MACAQUES' ROOM

Five sterile cages with Macaques Monkeys inside line the wall. They appear to be sad.

Jake opens one of the cages, takes out a SMALL MACAQUE and sets him down on an exam table. We notice an open sore on one of his legs.

JAKE O'NEILL

He's very docile.

Jake hands a vaccine to Freddy Rippin. Small Macaque stares at him with fear.

FREDDY RIPPIN

(to the animal)

Sorry, baby, but this is going to hurt you more than it hurts me.

Freddy Rippin injects Small Macaque as it screeches while Scientist #1 and Jake hold him down. Jake feels uncomfortable about this.

EXT. OUTSKIRTS OF SAN DIEGO - OPEN AREA - EVENING

ROSE RIVERS, mid 30s, smart and brave reporter, waits for somebody inside her car. A car arrives and parks beside her. It's Jake O'Neill. He parks and gets into Rose's car.

ROSE

Hi, Jake. Did you get the pictures?

Jake hands her an envelope. They both look around to make sure nobody is watching them. Rose opens the envelope, takes out pictures of dead monkeys and a written report.

JAKE

The drug is called "Tierodin" and they're testing it for incontinence medication. The toxicity of the procedure was underestimated. That's why three monkeys died.

ROSE

What happened to them?

JAKE

Two of them died from bleeding ulcers. It was heartbreaking. It took days and they suffered so much. It was unimaginable. The third one bled out.

ROSE

What about the others?

JAKE

Several monkeys are expelling black urine right now. Some of them have open sores all over their bodies. Others can't control their limbs.

ROSE

Poor creatures. My God...

A car passes. Rose startles. The car continues on its way. She reads the headline of the written report: TIERODIN - SIDE EFFECTS.

ROSE (CONT'D)

I can't thank you enough for what you're doing. I'll take everything to the network.

Rose puts the envelope inside her purse.

JAKE
But there's something even worse.

ROSE
Worse than this?

Jake nods.

JAKE
They've created a new breed of
monkey. One with a human brain gene
to make the brain function more
like humans.

Rose opens her eyes wide.

ROSE
We're going to end up like in
"Planet of the Apes". That is
completely illegal!
(beat)
How did they do that?

JAKE
They implanted a copy of a human
gene called MCPH1 into the genome
of macaque monkeys. The human MCPH1
is believed to play an important
role in regulating our brain
development.

Rose looks at him in horror.

ROSE
A human gene? For what?

JAKE
They want to make more human
monkeys.

ROSE
Sounds like the story of the year.

JAKE
The five surviving monkeys went
through a series of tests. It
turned out they did perform better
on short-term memory tasks.

ROSE
What would their end game be?

JAKE

They say their experiments are important to find cures for disorders like Alzheimer's and Parkinson's. But they are many years and too many monkeys away from doing that. If you ask me, it's all bullshit.

Rose ponders.

ROSE

Do you have any evidence?

JAKE

The files are kept in a secret room in the lab. I'll need more time.

Rose nods. Jake opens the door to leave.

JAKE (CONT'D)

You need to keep this information secret. Freddy Rippin is a dangerous man.

ROSE

We're in this together.

Jake heads to his car. Rose starts the engine and drives away.

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