

A German Shepherd puppy is the central focus of the image, sitting on a grassy area. The puppy's ears are large and pointed upwards, and its eyes are looking directly at the camera. The puppy's fur is a mix of tan and black. The background is a soft-focus green, suggesting an outdoor setting. The overall tone of the image is calm and gentle.

# Trust!

The story about a dog  
and a life changing experience

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# Something Happen

Max woke from the sudden rush of a train on the tracks overhead. He shivered. His mom and sister were still asleep and it was now raining. As the train passed over head, Max watched the rain fall swiftly down into the river below. Beyond the sheet of rain car lights from the town kept shining in his direction. It was raining too hard for the drivers to see him but Max ducked behind his sleeping mom every time he saw a car light. He had learned from his mom that humans were not to be trusted. He had heard stories on how she had been locked in a cage barely big enough for her to lay down in and forced to breed with the other dogs. As Max lay in the dark he snuggled deeper into his Mom's fur. Eventually, he fell asleep.

In the morning Max woke up before his mom and sister. He walked down to the river and started to drink. As he was drinking a chipmunk scurried out of the bushes. As soon as the chipmunk saw Max it froze and slowly turned and ran back into the bushes. Max sat and watched the leaves float down the river. It was a beautiful place and in the mornings the sun shone just right to make a beautiful reflection on the river. Max sat and started daydreaming.

Suddenly Max heard a noise and turned around just in time to have a big round ball of fluff run into him and knock him into the river. The water was so cold he literally flew out of the water and landed on top of his sister. He growled as he bit her in the neck. She whined and bit him back. As Max and his sister Maggie play fought their mom went and looked for food.

When their mom got back they ate the Chinese food mom had dug out of the dumpster. Max ate his food as soon as possible. He knew as soon as his sister was done she would steal his. Luckily for Max he finished his food before his sister and started to walk around. He went and sniffed around the base of the bridge looking for something interesting to do. Max came to one of the rocks that were around the bridge. He jumped on top of it. Much to his surprise a squirrel was on the other side. The squirrel was so startled that it forgot its

acorn it had had in its mouth. Max pawed the acorn until he accidentally swatted it into the river.

As Max watched the acorn drop, he couldn't help but wonder if anything else would happen to him, or if he would spend every day startling squirrels and walking in circles. Around noon, Max and Maggie started play fighting again. Max won as usual.

# Captured

The squirrel didn't sense a thing. Max slowly approached it from downwind. He got closer and closer and pounced. He grabbed the squirrel and killed it quickly.

Two years had passed, and Max was full grown. He was a beautiful dog— muscled shoulders with dark brown fur. He was a pure bred German Shepherd. Any person who saw him wouldn't be able to tell he was a stray.

Since he was older, Max was allowed to go walk around town. It was a fun place to walk around and people sometimes gave him food, but the dogcatchers were usually out and he had to be careful.

One day while Max was walking around town, something didn't seem right. He stopped walking and started to sniff the air. All of a sudden a ring went flying around Max's neck. Max turned and tried to attack the guy he saw holding the stick that he was stuck to, but he couldn't. He wriggled and squirmed until the guy dragged him to a van. Max had seen the kinds of vans before and he knew they meant bad humans. Like the ones who had kept his mom all those years. Max was lifted into a crate and the door slammed behind him. It was dark and it smelled awful, of fear and misery. A lot of dogs had been in here before him. The van started to growl at him, so he growled back. The van then lurched and sped off. Max was trying to keep his balance, but it was hard, because the van kept making sharp turns. After a while, the van stopped. The door then opened and a man stood there.

Max growled at him and lunged towards him only to get a face full of metal. The man opened the cage and immediately put another stick around his neck. The man led Max towards a building that looked, to Max's surprise, not that bad. Max was led around to the back and brought in through a black door. As soon as the door opened Max heard the barking of dogs, inside the barking was much louder.

Max was led to a cage in the back where he was shoved in. Memories of his mom's stories flooded to his mind as he saw the many dogs in cages. To Max's surprise, none of them looked hurt. The cages were big enough for them to run around in and each dog had its own cage. All the dogs were barking at Max so he started to bark back. Max started to doubt what he had been told. It didn't seem so bad. He barked until he couldn't anymore. Max stayed awake all night wondering what was going to happen to him.

# At the pound

In the morning, Max watched all the others dogs wake up. A man dressed in the same uniform as the man from yesterday came around and gave each dog food and water. Max growled as the man neared his cage. Max didn't like the man so close to him. Max didn't touch the food he was given, but finally drank some water. He just sat in his cage wondering what his mom and sister were doing.

A few days passed and some people came and looked at some dogs. They then left with a puppy. Max wondered why they took the dog. He pondered this for a while. They had looked like nice people, they wore smiles on their faces and they treated the dogs very nicely, so this place couldn't be that bad. A man came to feed the dogs. Max let the man pet him and it reminded him of when his mom would lick him. It was soothing and comforting, and he liked it.

The people at the pound started being nicer and nicer to Max. Max seemed to be their favorite. When they came to clean cages or feed the dogs they would sneak him treats and scratch his head. One day a few of the men came and attached a rope around his neck. Max wasn't sure what to think about it. The men led Max out of his cage and into the kennel in the back. They then let him off his leash. Max just sat down. The men took out a ball. The men threw the ball. Max wasn't sure what to do. The men went and got the ball and brought it back. The man threw the ball again. This time when they went to get the ball they took Max with them. After doing this for a couple of days Max finally got the hang of it. Every day after work the men would come and play fetch with him. Max was having a great time. He loved it at the pound.

And then one day a man came to look at the dogs. Max didn't really notice when the man came in. He was getting used to people. The man looked at several dogs but kept coming back to look at Max. Max got the uneasy feeling that the man didn't care about him when he looked at him. The man finally asked if he could look at Max out of the cage. The man that worked at the pound let Max out and put him on a leash.

# Adopted

The man looked Max over. He rubbed his hands up and down his legs and looked at his teeth. Max did not like this man. He smelled bad and was not very gentle. He inspected every inch of Max. "I'll take him. He is a beautiful dog and is just what I need. How much is he?"

"The adoption fee is \$120. You will have to fill out a form up front, and in 3 weeks we will come see how he's doing."

As Max was led to the front desk, he felt uneasy about where he was going. He trusted the people here, and he didn't want to leave. As his new owner filled out the adoption form Max looked around the room. The only part of the pound he had ever seen was the kennels. Max looked at all the pictures of dogs and there was a big sculpture of a dog and the child. It was very beautiful and the dog and child wore big smiles on their faces. Max hoped he was going to like his new home and people would be nice to him like the ones

here. But deep down inside Max knew this was not a man like the ones at the pound. He didn't treat the dogs very nicely and he smelled funny. Max didn't like him.

When the man was done, he led Max to a van parked near the exit. Max was led to the back and slammed into a crate. Max instantly knew this man was not to be trusted. He started barking and barking. The van door was slammed shut and the car started off to Max's new home. Max was in the car so long that he started to cramp up. The crate was so small that he could barely lie down. Suddenly stories that his mom had told him as a puppy flashed into his mind. Of being locked up for endless hours. Never getting to see daylight. Being crammed into crates with other dogs just to breed, and then the puppies being taken away from you as soon as they were three weeks old. Max hoped that the stories weren't true but he knew they were. Max started to slam at the doors of the crate. He had to get out.

# At the Mill

The car stopped and the door opened. The man stood there with a leash. It was made of chain. The man slipped the leash onto Max and pulled him into a shed behind his house. As soon as the door opened the stench of urine and fear hit Max and he lunged back. The man smacked Max and pulled him into the building. Max was led over to a crate near the middle of the shed. All around him dogs were hovering in the corner trying to get as far away from the man as possible. Max knew this could not be a good place to be.

All the dogs were crammed into cages way to small for them. They had to drink out of these bottles that hung from the cage, and the water was brown and stale. Everywhere Max looked he saw dogs crammed in cages. For now, Max was in his own small cage, but he knew it wouldn't be long before he was stuffed with someone else. After a while the man came and fed them a quarter cup of food. Max hadn't had anything to eat that day so he dug right in. The food was

nasty. It had bugs in it and it tasted months old. Max watched as the other dogs scarfed down their food. Max got the idea that they weren't fed that often. He managed to eat his food in about two bites. After they ate, all the dogs curled up and fell asleep. Apparently they had been here for a while and were used to the hard wire cages that dug into his feet.

Max squished himself into a laying position and tried to fall asleep. It smelled so bad and he was so squished that he never did. How could the people at the pound do this to him? He had trusted them. All those hours of playing in the kennel. Of fetch and tennis balls. How could they. Max lay awake all night thinking about what was in store for him.

In the morning Max watched all the dogs get up. He sat there not knowing what to expect. Max was so hungry his own stomach was growling at him. Max had always been fed whenever he wanted to. The dumpsters near his home under the bridge had always had food in them. He sat and waited for the man to come and feed them and give them water. The man didn't come that day, or the next. Max was so hungry and thirsty, when finally, on Max's fourth day there; he was given stale food and brown water. The food tasted horrible and he the water was nasty. He didn't care. He was just so glad to have something to eat and drink.

Max watched as the man grabbed the dog in the crate next to him and threw it into a different one. Max growled and started barking at the man. How could he treat a dog like that? Max was furious. Pretty soon all the dogs were barking. Max was proud of himself until the man started coming towards his cage. Max stopped barking at once and tried to get into the corner. The man smacked Max and then left. Max didn't know what to think. All the man had done was hit him. Max was going to test his boundaries.

# Visitors

Max never got his chance to escape because the man started being nice to him, very nice to him, surprisingly nice to him. The man fed him every day and his food seemed more appetizing than the other dogs. One day the man took Max out of his cage and let him walk outside. Max was so surprised he wondered what was going on. The man let him out in a kennel and was kept there for several days. Max was so confused. Why was the man being nice? Maybe he should reconsider this guy.

And then Max got the answer to why the man was being nice to him. One day a car drove up to the house. A guy from the pound stepped out of the car. Max was so happy to see him that he nearly jumped out of his pen.

The man who had bought Max walked out of the house and started talking to the man from the pound. They chatted for a while and then they came over to look at Max. Max jumped up and down. He couldn't believe it. His friend from the pound was here.

Although Max jumped for joy at seeing his friend he knew that the man had only been nice to him so the man from the pound thought he was taking care of Max. There was no way for Max to show the man from the pound that the man was mean and that the man from the pound should take him back.

As the two men talked and pet Max, Max was thinking of an idea. How could he bring the man from the pound to the back of the house to show him the sheds? Max decided that if he acted like he wanted to be let out to play fetch that the man would have to let him out in front of the man from the pound. Max could then run around back and the men would follow. It was perfect.

Max started jumping up and down and running in circles. He started barking. "Looks like he wants to play." Said the man from the pound. "Do you want to let him out?"

"No. How about we go inside and talk about fifty two... I mean buddy?" Max's number was fifty two but the man was calling him buddy while the man from the pound was here. Max decided to play along. It might raise his chances of being let out. He barked.

"He wants to come in," said the man from the pound. "Can we bring him in with us?"

The man hesitated for a second and the smiling said, "Sure."

Max couldn't believe it. He was going to be let inside. He had never seen the inside of the man's house. When the man brought Max inside Max ran around and jumped on the couch. He had been in one on the pound people's

houses once. He knew the couches were comfortable. The man sat down on the other couch and the man from the pound sat by Max.

Max listened in to their conversation as the man from the pound pet him. Max fell asleep. When he woke up the man from the pound was gone. Max got up and ran for it. The man caught Max and threw him back into the cage in the shed. Max was just glad he had gotten out once.

# Escaped

Max waited a couple of weeks so the man didn't expect anything. When the man came to feed them one day, Max knew it was the day. Max stared at him while he fed all the dogs. When the man was almost done feeding all the dogs, Max started barking. All the dogs stared at Max like he was crazy. They had been at the mill longer and probably knew what the man was capable of and willing to do.

When the man opened Max's cage, Max made a bolt for it. Max was out of his cage but trapped in the shed. Max started running around under and through all the cages. The man kept tripping over things while he was trying to catch Max. At this point, all the other dogs were barking. They didn't care that

they could potentially be beaten. They were all cheering for Max. If one dog could escape than there was a chance for all of them.

It was now a game of who could run the fastest the longest, and Max was in favor of winning until he stepped funny and because he had been in the cage so long without exercise his leg broke. All the other dogs saw it as Max running in and out of cages while their torturer was trying to catch him, and then Max fell down with a sudden yelping. All the dogs stopped barking as the man approached Max.

Max was not going to give up his fight just because he was injured. Max growled at the man as he approached. The man turned away, to Max's and the other dogs surprise. The man walked over and grabbed a chain from the wall. Max was ready to fight. As the man walked towards Max, Max got an unsteady feeling about this. His leg really hurt and he didn't want to get beat with a chain. Max just laid down.

The man walked over to Max and stood over him. All the dogs stared at Max and the man not making a sound. The man beat Max and then dragged Max over to his cage and threw him in. Max just lay there.

The man then left after he had shut Max's cage. All the dogs waited till the man left to start making sure Max was ok. He didn't want to be bothered so he told all the dogs he was fine.

# Help!

As soon as Max's leg healed the man led Max to a cage that was a little bigger. In that cage were three other German Shepherds. As Max was shoved in the cage he realized they were all females.

Max wasn't sure what to think about moving into a different cage. Max said hello in his own doggy way. Max liked his new cage. The man came and fed them every day. Max didn't even know that the food was bad anymore he was so used to it.

One day when the man came Max was surprised to see him smile when he came and checked on them. Mind you it wasn't a friendly smile in fact it was sort of a devious smile like 'I got you now,' or 'You've done what I want with you.'

Six months after Max had gotten there one of the dogs had puppies. There were 7 new bodies in the cage Max lived in. As soon as the puppies were born the man took Max out of the cage and put him in a smaller one with another German shepherd female.

Max liked being moved from cage to cage. He got to meet a lot of different dogs. Max didn't know that the man was using Max to make money. But then he started to get moved every week.

As soon as Max started getting moved to a different cage each week the man stopped feeding him as often. The man didn't seem to care as much anymore even though Max had never really seen him care at all. Max probably got fed twice a week and he got water once every week.

Max was getting malnourished and he didn't really have any hair on his back. It had all been rubbed off against the metal sides of the cage. Max was so underweight that he could barely walk. He now understood how all the other dogs had felt when he first got there.

# Rescued

One day people came to look at puppies. Max was so excited to see new people. As soon as the people walked in the shed they started yelling at the man. Max and all the other dogs watched from the corners of the crate. The people yelled at the man for several more minutes and then left.

The people that had come were in all the dogs minds especially Max's. Why had they come and why had they just left? Especially, why did they yell at the man like that and then just leave? And then they got the answer to their questions.

Max woke up to the sound of trucks coming up the driveway. Max heard the door to the house slam as the man came to greet the visitors. All of a sudden a blinding light came from the door that had been opened. A bunch of people in

uniforms came in and started taking dogs from the cages. The guy that came to get Max picked him up gently and carried him to a cage that was cushioned in the back of one of the vans.

Max was so glad to have a loving hand touch him he didn't care that he was put in another cage. This cage was soft and comfortable. Max fell asleep in the back of the van and woke up when it stopped.

The same people came and took the dogs inside to a pound. On the way in a bunch of people stood alongside the path. They were all cheering and clapping. The man holding Max was approached by a man with a thing behind him that was pointing at Max. Max was worried at first but the man holding him calmed him down. The man with the 'camera' asked the man a lot of questions. He then pet Max on the head. Max liked it and licked his hand.

## At the pound again

The man led Max into a building that looked familiar. Max was put into a cage with a soft blanket and some fresh clean water. Max lay down and drank some water. The water was so good after the brown stale stuff he had had. After a while a man came in with a camera and took pictures of all the dogs.

Max was fed food out of a can. It was so good. Max had never had anything like it. Max then fell asleep. The next day Max was taken out of his cage and led into another room. Max was helped onto a silver platform and was told to stand still. Max was given a treat and then led into a different room yet again.

In that room was a silver table like the one he had just been put on but it was higher off the ground. The room smelled like a bunch of dogs. It also smelt like fear. Max started to get nervous. He didn't know what these people were going to do to him. A man in a white coat came into the room and started walking towards Max. Max shied away from the man. Max was still on a leash though so

he couldn't get far. The man holding his leash squatted down and started petting Max and that it was ok. Max was a still a little worried but not as much.

The man in the coat bent down and put a thing to Max's chest. It was cold but it didn't hurt. The man held it there for a while and then moved it to a different spot and held it there for a while. The man then left for a second and came back with something else in his hand. Max couldn't see what it was. The man then leaned over and wiped of a place on Max's back with something cold. It smelled weird to Max. The man then got one of the things he carried in and stuck it into Max.

Max was so surprised at this that he tried to get up but the men were holding him down. Max started to struggle and get loose while the men tried to calm him down. The man held out a treat in front of Max and Max calmed down. The man then stuck Max three more times, each one hurting less. Max watched as the man wrote on a piece of paper and then left. The man holding onto Max's leash led Max back to his cage.

The next morning Max was let out to run and play with some other dogs in a kennel. It reminded Max of when he played fetch with the men at the other pound. Max ran around and played games like tug-a-war, wrestling, and fetch! After a while some men came out and started throwing the ball for the dogs. Since there were so many dogs the men threw a bunch of different balls and Max didn't know which one to chase.

Max's days were pretty much the same. Wake up to a delicious breakfast of canned food and then going out to play with the dogs and people in the kennels. Come back in and watch people come and look at dogs for adoption.

When adoption times were over he would go back outside and play. He would then come in for dinner. After dinner he would be let out one more time and then he went to sleep.

On the weekends Max and a few other dogs would be packed up and put in a van. They would drive to a pet store for adoptions. Max especially liked these days because there were a bunch of people that would play with him, especially the kids. They would get in his kennel and play tug-a-war or something like that.

# New People

One day when Max was at the store for adoptions a little girl walked up to his crate and started petting him. She stayed there for a long time. Finally her parents came up. "Can we keep him?" Max only understood the keep him part. He was curious about what this meant. He just figured he went to the store to play with the kids.

The kid stayed and pet Max while the parents went and talked the runner of the adoptions. The parents filled out a form. The runner of the adoptions put Max on a leash. She handed the leash to the mom and then opened the kennel. Max was confused. He had been taught not to leave the kennel when the door got opened for a child to come in.

The runner of the pet adoptions told Max it was ok. That he was going with them. That he was now their dog. What? Max didn't want to leave. He liked

it at the pound. Last time someone adopted him he was almost killed. These people looked, smelled, and acted a lot nicer but Max wasn't taking any chances. The runner of the adoptions explained to the people that he had had a rough lifetime and that last time someone adopted him he was brought to a puppy mill.

After this was said the family got on their hands and knees and started gently talking to Max all the while getting closer to him. When they reached him they started petting Max. They pet him with kind caressing hands. Max decided that it was ok to leave.

Max walked on the leash very nicely since he had been taught how to at the pound. The family walked around the store getting everything they needed for the welcoming of their new pet. Max watched as they put colorful toy after colorful toy into the cart. Max liked these people. Max watched as they bought treats, food, toys, and all sorts of other necessities of a dog. When they were done Max went and stood in line with them at the cash register.

When they were done paying, they walked out of the store towards their van. Max had never been inside of the actual car. He had always ridden in the back in a cage. The little girl opened the cage and patted inside the car to show that it was ok for Max to get in. Max jumped in the car and the door closed

behind him. Max was a little nervous at first but that soon ended when they were driving down the road and Max's head was out the window. Max couldn't believe how much fun this was, all the smells and the sights. Max's tongue kept drying out so he kept sticking his head back inside so he could get it in his mouth. Max loved the car ride and all to soon it ended as they pulled into the driveway of a house.

## Part of the family

Max watched the house get bigger and bigger. Max thought it was the most beautiful thing he had ever seen with its bricks shining in the sun and the red window shutters. The door was big and made of wood. As his new family opened the door Max smelled the most wonderful smell. He followed it and came to a room with tile floors. It had cabinets and a big metal thing that people kept food in. He knew about these from the pound.

Max walked around and started sniffing everywhere. When Max had finished sniffing every inch of the house the girl took Max outside and threw the ball for him. Max was so excited. His new house had everything he liked.

When he came back inside the girl's parents took something out of one of the bags that they had brought. It was red and had a jingling shiny thing attached to it. The little girl put it on his neck. The tag said Otto.

“Welcome to your new home Otto.” Max knew that Otto was what the little girl had decided to call him. The little girl bent over and pet Otto on the head. They then went into the kitchen and fed him a can of food. Otto liked his new home and looked forward to staying there.