

Runaway

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This is a story about a beagle named Chance who runs away from home to find out what his purpose in life is. But can he make it through...alive?! Rated PG.

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1 - A Restless Beagle

Chapter One: A Restless Beagle

“Aww, you're so cute!” was the first comment that was heard by the small beagle as he was picked up gently. He looked up to find himself staring into a pair of dark green eyes.

The eyes belonged to a girl with hair that hung down to her shoulders, apparently dyed dark red. She wore a black t-shirt, black pants with a chain, and white and red sneakers. She looked to be in her early teens.

Walking up to the cash register while still carrying the young beagle in her arms, she asked, “Excuse me sir, but how much does this puppy cost?”

The young man standing behind the register looked at the puppy. “That beagle's worth five hundred and ten dollars.”

With her free hand, the girl slipped it into her pocket where her wallet was and took out five one hundred-dollar bills and a ten-dollar bill. She placed the money on the counter. The young beagle stared at her in awe, wondering how she managed to get all of that money.

“Thank you very much miss, and have a nice day!” The cashier swiped the money quickly from the counter, opened the cash register, and organized the money inside.

The young girl and the beagle puppy walked outside of the kennel. “So, how does it feel to be free at last?” she asked the puppy, who was still clutched in her arms. The girl hesitated for a second, and then she placed the beagle down next to her. He walked beside her obediently.

“Wow, you sure are tame, even without a leash,” the girl said to the beagle as they walked over to the small wooden building next door to the kennel- the pet supply shop. The beagle watched as the girl carefully picked a dark red collar and a bright purple leash off of the shelves. She paid for them and walked out of the store with the items and the beagle.

As the girl wrapped the collar around the puppy's neck and clipped the leash to the collar, she spoke to the beagle once more. “My name is Akira, and your name is Chance. You got that?”

The beagle barked once to signify that he understood her.

“Good boy,” said Akira. “Now, my house is only a few blocks away from here, so let's go.”

As Chance and Akira walked around the town, Chance barked occasionally at random dogs and their

owners. Sometimes, Akira would stop and chat with the dogs' owners, giving Chance the opportunity to make some new puppy friends.

"Well, we're here!" Akira exclaimed while pointing at a small house. Gee, that was awfully quick, Chance thought as Akira opened the door and the two stepped inside.

Akira rushed into the living room with Chance following close behind her. They saw a beautiful tan-colored Labrador Retriever curled up on the rug, sound asleep.

"This is your adopted older sister, Daisy," Akira told Chance. "I'll go get you guys some dinner, okay?" Akira walked out of the small living room.

2 - The Insulter and the Insulted

Chapter Two: The Insulter and the Insulted

“Wake up, Daisy! Wake up!” Chance yelled as he pounced on top of his new sister playfully. Daisy lazily opened one eye to find out who it was. She sprang up to her feet immediately and clamped her mouth around Chance's front leg, squeezing as hard as she could in a sharp bite.

“Yeowch!” Chance squealed in pain. “What was that for?” He glared at the Labrador who wore purple pearl ribbons on her ears and a pretty white collar with pink flowers on it on her neck.

“You woke me up from my beauty sleep,” Daisy growled, moving towards Chance. The little beagle backed away from her, whimpering in fear.

“I don't know who you are, flea-brain, but anyone who wakes me from my beauty sleep shall regret that they even got NEAR ME!” The huge labrador now cornered Chance. “You got that?” Daisy sneered. Chance whimpered but nodded slightly. He stared at Daisy for a long time, and then he scratched her in the nose, surprising her.

“I'm not afraid of you!” Chance yelled at Daisy. He then shoved her out of the way and spotted a window, slightly opened. Chance sprung onto the windowsill and squeezed himself through the tiny space in the window.

“If you are not afraid of me,” Daisy started, “then why are you running away from me?” She just sighed. “What have I done? I shouldn't have been so hard on him, the poor guy.” She yawned bluntly, and curled up on the carpet. “I should have apologized. Oh well, it's too late now.” Daisy closed her eyes. Just as she was about to fall asleep again, a voice was heard. “Dinner's ready! Come and get it!” Daisy rushed into the kitchen. She saw two white dishes on the floor and began to munch heartily on the dry, meaty food inside one of the dishes.

“Huh, that's strange,” said Akira. “Where's Chance?” she asked Daisy, not really expecting an answer since she was a dog. “I better go find him.”

Akira examined each room carefully, occasionally calling, “Chance! Chance! Where are you?” She then walked to the living room, sat down in a chair, and sighed. “Great, now he's gone,” she muttered sarcastically. Daisy walked into the room with a feeling of guilt in her heart, knowing that this was all her fault. She tried to comfort Akira by licking her hand, but it didn't seem to work. *Perhaps I should go look for him myself*, Daisy thought.

3 - A Lonely Husky

Chapter Three: A Lonely Husky

“Why?” Chance asked to no one in particular. “Why does she hate me so much?” He continued to run around the town, tears filling up in his soft brown eyes and then falling gently to the cold, hard sidewalk. He was running away to nowhere, and he knew it. Lying down in front of a large tree to catch his breath, he then stared up at the sky, which was now a mix of orange, pink, and red from the beautiful sunset, showing him that day was almost over and darkness would soon cover the land.

“Who are you?” came a voice. Chance jumped to his feet, abruptly searching for the sound.

“Over here, silly,” the same voice was heard again. Chance looked behind him to see a gorgeous black and white puppy, slightly larger than him. She wore a purple leather collar with a green bow attached to it. Her green leash was tied up to the large tree.

“Well, aren't you going to say something?” the black and white puppy asked politely. “I am so bored and I need someone to talk to.”

“Same here,” Chance replied. “My name is Chance, what's yours?”

The other puppy paused for a moment and looked down on the ground, and then she looked back up at Chance and answered quietly, “Éclair. I'm a Siberian Husky.”

“You don't sound so happy. What's the matter?”

Éclair sighed. “I didn't think you would care, Chance. My owner has forgotten me.”

“What do you mean by that?” Chance asked out of curiosity.

“Well,” Éclair began, “My owner, Audrey, tells me that she needs to go grocery shopping, or something. She ties me up to this tree to make sure I don't run away, right?” Chance nodded. “Well, she's been gone for about an hour now, and has she come back yet? NO!” Éclair screamed. “She's forgotten about me! She has forgotten...” Tears began to well up in Éclair's eyes, making her unable to finish her sentence without sobbing to death.

“Please don't cry...” Chance gave Éclair a friendly lick in hopes to cheer her up.

“Thanks Chance,” Éclair replied with a small smile on her face. “You're a good friend. So, where is your owner?”

Chance sighed, but he decided to tell her anyway. "I ran away from home."

"Why?"

"My older sister. She treats me like dirt. I cannot tolerate to be around someone who wants to murder me."

"That's it?" Éclair asked. "That's the only reason why you are running away from home?"

Chance nodded sadly.

That was when, all of a sudden, Éclair burst into strange laughter. Tears of laughter were about to stream down from her eyes, but she prevented herself from doing so just in time. Chance stood there, confused, giving her a blank look.

"Wh-what's so funny about that?" Chance asked her.

Éclair stopped laughing and looked at Chance. Then she spoke. "I am sorry. I didn't mean to offend you in any way. I just find that the weirdest reason for running away."

"Why?"

"Chance, don't think that your sister being mean to you is not a normal thing. Brothers and sisters are supposed to be like that. It is in their nature to annoy and be mean to each other."

"Really?"

"Yup. Haven't you had any brothers or sisters in your litter?"

"Actually no," Chance stated. "It's a long story. There were supposed to be four other siblings in my family. I was supposed to have two brothers and two sisters. However, something strange had happened. When my mother gave birth to the five of us, my four other siblings could not breathe when they were born. The doctors desperately tried to get some oxygen into their lungs, but not a single one lived. I was the lucky survivor, so I was raised as an only puppy all my life."

Tears were beginning to leak out of Éclair's dark eyes. "That is so sad. Life must have been rough for you, with no one to talk to, no one to play with. You must have been so lonely and miserable! So, is that how you got your name, Chance?"

Chance shrugged. "I guess so."

"Hey, can you do me a small favor?"

"Sure, anything for you Éclair."

"Can you figure out how to break this leash? I am desperate for my freedom."

“Okay, I'll give it a shot.”

Chance knew that the leash was tied too tightly to one of the lower branches on the tree for him to untie with his mouth, so he would have to bite on the leash.

As he began to gnaw on the thick green leash, he thought to himself, *Man! This material is too hard to crunch through! It's times like these when I wish I had opposable thumbs. Then I could just untie this stupid thing.* Éclair noticed that Chance's jaws were aching, so she said, “You take a break. I think you've weakened it enough for me to finish the job.” Chance moved out of the way quickly, allowing Éclair to gnaw on the part of the leash that Chance had weakened for her. Snap! The leash broke in two.

“Thank you Chance. I really appreciate it.” Éclair began to walk away.

“Where are you going?” The little beagle asked.

“I am running away from home,” Éclair replied. “I will find a better home with a better owner who loves me much more than stupid Audrey.”

“If you are running away, then I shall come with you,” Chance said as he followed Éclair.

“No way Chance, you should go back home to your sister and your owner. You don't have a reason to run away. I, on the other hand, do.”

“Who said I didn't have a reason?” Chance asked, trying to get in the husky's way. “I am running away not because of my sister, but because of my purpose.”

Éclair gave him a confused look. “And just what do you mean by that, exactly?”

“Well, every dog has a purpose, right? I am running away so I can find mine.”

Éclair let out a sigh of annoyance. She was not in the mood to argue with the little rascal, so she just said, “Follow me.” She then ran off.

Chance chased after Éclair as the two disappeared into the starry night.

4 - The Sleepy Escape

Chapter Four: The Sleepy Escape

Daisy had it all planned out. I shall leave once Akira falls asleep, she thought. She climbed up onto the foot of Akira's bed, and curled up.

“Goodnight Daisy,” Akira said as she flicked the switch to her lamp. Darkness settled into the room immediately after the lamp shut off.

Daisy was more tired than ever, despite the fact that she had taken a quick nap during the evening. It was like a war between the two halves of her mind.

You cannot fall asleep! Her mind seemed to yell at her inside her head. *Your brother could be in grave danger!*

This time another voice came to her, a rather soothing, calm voice. *You need your beauty sleep, Daisy,* it said. Daisy yawned, falling into a trance. *Why worry about your stupid brother? Just close your eyes, and you'll feel ten times better...*

Daisy gasped, opening her eyes abruptly. How long had she been sleeping? It could have been no more than twenty minutes or so. She turned to the other side of the bed, and heard Akira snoring softly. Daisy leaped off of the bed, swiftly yet silently.

Trotting into the kitchen, Daisy navigated the front door even through the pure darkness. Chance never saw that doggie door, I'll bet, she thought. She turned back to look at the interior of the house, knowing that this may be the last time she set her eyes on it.

I sure hope I don't get killed out there, was Daisy's last thought before slipping through the opening in the doggie door in search of her dear brother, Chance.

5 - The Nocturnal Dogs

Chapter Five: The Nocturnal Dogs

"You are now leaving Nintendoville."

Éclair was reading the sign she had noticed along the way. The sign was very ornate. It was golden with a bunch of loops and twirls to the shape, yet it still had a rectangular base. The letters were boldly printed in black, making the message clear and stand out among the landscape.

"I didn't know you could read," Chance replied.

"Hmm, what? I didn't hear you." Éclair was so busy admiring the work of art that she had failed to pay attention to Chance when he spoke.

"I said," Chance began again with a sigh of annoyance, "I didn't know that you could read. How did you learn?"

"A friend of mine," Éclair replied bluntly, not really getting into detail about it. "Come on, let's keep going."

Chance obeyed. The two puppies were silent for a moment as their paws moved them across the ground. Occasionally, they would step on some of the red, orange, yellow, and brown leaves scattered across the ground, making crinkly noises as the two puppies moved on.

About ten minutes of this passed, when Chance broke the sounds of nature by stifling a yawn and asking, "Éclair?"

"Yeah Chance?"

"The sun is up now. Shouldn't we find someplace to sleep?"

"I guess you are right," Éclair replied. "After all, I am tired."

Well, that's no surprise, Chance thought. They had been traveling all night long for ten hours straight!

It was a long story. Éclair suggested that they travel at night and sleep during the day. Chance, of course, had questioned why they should do this. Éclair explained that if they weren't careful, humans would spot them and they would be taken back to their homes. Since there were fewer humans around at night, the chances of the two puppies getting caught would be slimmer if they traveled at night rather than at daylight. Neither of them was very excited about being nocturnal, but they would give just about

anything not to get caught, so it was decided that way.

The beagle and the husky noticed a small acre of bare autumn trees up ahead, the perfect place to crash for the day and to hide from the humans. Éclair got a brilliant idea of gathering a pile of leaves and burrowing themselves into it in hopes of blending in with the scenery. After five minutes of the two pushing and shoving colorful leaves around with their noses and making a nest in the pile of leaves, the two dogs finally dozed off to sleep.

Meanwhile, Akira was just waking up from her slumber. She yawned and stretched out, making her feet almost touch the edge of the bed. She turned to look at her digital clock, the numbers 8:35 printed on it boldly in red. She yawned again and got out of bed. She did not see Daisy on her bed. This was normal since the Labrador usually woke up before Akira did.

Akira slipped down the wooden stairs and into the kitchen to prepare herself some breakfast. As she popped two slices of white bread into the toaster, she called out, "Daisy! Would you like some breakfast?" To her surprise, the Labrador did not show up. Akira just shrugged and waited five more minutes until she heard a Ding! And the pieces of white bread that were now light brown popped out of the toaster.

Akira took out a stick of butter from the fridge and began to slather some of the yellow stuff on her toast. Putting the butter back in the fridge, Akira grabbed a chair next to a small table, sat down, and started to munch on her toast.

When she was halfway done with her toast, Akira began to worry about Daisy. The Labrador, with her acute sense of hearing, would have heard the sound of the toaster and would have raced into the kitchen with hopes of a bite to eat. Akira finished off her toast very quickly and searched the entire house, calling for Daisy. With no luck, Akira stopped in front of a phone.

"First Chance, then Daisy, and now what?" Akira picked up the phone and dialed a few numbers on the phone. After ten seconds of silence, Akira said, "Yes, please. I would like to report two missing puppies."

6 - Chance's Futuresight

Chapter Six: Chance's Futuresight

The little beagle was confused. Where the heck was he? What kind of city is this? And where is Éclair?

Chance could not see very well through the fog, but he thought he eyed another dog in the distance. He turned to see a familiar Labrador Retriever with the purple pearl ribbons, the pink and white flower collar, and the scar on her nose. *It's Daisy*, he thought. The Labrador dashed into a nearby alley desperately, as if she were trying to hide from someone. As soon as she disappeared from his view, Chance saw a black and brown German Shepherd with an angry expression on his face, sniffing the ground for Daisy's scent. He had a spiked collar around his neck.

"You can't run forever, little Labrador," said the shepherd. "When I find you, you are going to die!" The huge dog growled in a low and menacing tone, as he rushed into the same alley that Daisy had disappeared into.

"No way!" Chance yelled. "You cannot hurt Daisy! I won't let you!" He sped into the alley as quickly as his short and stubby legs could carry him.

He then suddenly paused for a moment, thinking. *What am I doing? Why do I care about her, the one who despised me the second I walked through the door to Akira's house? Why am I trying to save her?* He was silent for a moment, before he started to run again. *Because she is my sister, and I know she didn't mean to hurt me*, his mind answered.

Sweat was now pouring down his white fur with brown and black splotches. The adrenaline gave him the special ability to run even faster. As soon as he reached the dead end of the alley, Chance froze as the sight he saw.

Daisy was lying down on her side, motionless. There was a deep wound in her neck, where blood was oozing out.

"N-no, D-Daisy..." Chance stuttered, tears filling up his brown eyes as he walked up to his dying sister slowly.

"I'm sorry Daisy," he sobbed. "I didn't save you in time." The tears from his eyes came pouring out and stained the Labrador's beige fur.

Chance then heard footsteps out in the distance. He turned his head to see a small Shetland Sheepdog about his size standing there. She had gray fur from old age with a brown stripe that went down the center of her face.

“There is a way you can prevent this from happening,” the sheepdog said.

7 - Farewell, Friend!

Chapter Seven: Farewell, Friend!

Chance opened his eyes abruptly. *Thank God that was just a nightmare*, he thought. His stomach then began to growl. When was the last time he had eaten something? He had forgotten how hungry he was. The beagle turned around to see his black and white husky friend curled up in the colorful nest of autumn leaves with her eyes closed, signifying that she was still sleeping.

I might as well get some breakfast for the both of us, he thought before staring up at the sky, which was stained with many different bright colors, showing a sunset. *Or should I say, dinner.*

After wandering around the small forest for a short time, being extra careful not to get lost, he saw a special treat that made him drool with excitement. Lucky me! There was a fat and delicious rabbit, standing there with its back facing towards the beagle. Chance licked his lips.

Chance, like all beagles, was known to have great hunting ability. He had never hunted before, but he knew that like all good hunters, he would have to be patient and silent. He creped closer to the gray rabbit until he was about four feet from his meal. The rabbit, which seemed to be lost in thought, still did not notice the beagle. Two seconds before Chance was about to pounce on the rabbit, both creatures heard a howl pierce the evening sky.

The rabbit turned around to see Chance, and he quickly scampered away. The beagle allowed his prey to escape, for he was more concerned about the creature that caused the howl than the rabbit.

Chance dashed back to the leaf nest to see that Éclair was sitting there, wide-awake.

“Were you the one that howled?” Chance asked. Huskies like Éclair never barked, but howled instead.

“Yep. I was worried about you, you know.”

“Well guess what? Thanks to you, I lost our meal, which was a plump rabbit. I could have killed it if it weren't for you.”

“Well excuse me for caring about you!” Éclair said in a huff.

“You wanna know what, Éclair?” Chance asked. “You're the reason why I am going to starve to death! Can't you keep still for just one minute?”

Éclair said nothing.

“If I am to starve to death, then I shall die, all because of you! You-”

“Shut up!” Éclair interrupted. “If you don't need me, then fine! I'll go by myself!” Éclair walked away, not daring to look back at the beagle that she had loved so much over the little time that they had spent together. Although she wanted to erase him from her mind now, Éclair knew that she would never forget Chance.

“I guess this is the end, Éclair,” Chance muttered, whom had not dared to look back either. Instead, he just whispered, “Goodbye.”

8 - The Wandering Spirit

Chapter Eight: The Wandering Spirit

Chance wasn't sure where he was now. There were only two words present in his mind right now: *Find Daisy*.

Judging by the golden sun that was just peeking its head slightly above the horizon, he must have been traveling all night long. Now he was tired, hungry, and...freezing to death. Strange, it felt so cold all of a sudden. That didn't matter right now to him though. He needed to save his dear sister before she would face a tragic death just like in that nightmare. He needed to prevent this from happening, just like that Shetland Sheepdog told him.

Chance, however, felt weaker and weaker as his paws moved him on. The coldness was starting to get to him. Every next step for him was like a challenge that could only get harder. His body was too stiff to move him forward any longer, and he collapsed on the dirt ground.

It seemed like hours before Chance opened his eyes. However, he could see the sun still rising, so he couldn't have been sleeping for too long.

"So, you're finally awake," a familiar voice was heard. The little beagle turned his head and gasped. There she was, the sheepdog from his nightmare. The dog had unusually light gray fur, perhaps caused from her old age, and a thick tan stripe that went down the center of her face. However, unlike the image of her in his nightmare, she wore an aqua blue scarf around her neck.

"I...recognize you," Chance said in a sleepy tone of voice. "Who are you?"

"Did you not see me in your futuresight?" The sheepdog changed the subject rather quickly.

"My what?"

"Your futuresight. Not many dogs have it."

"Is it a disease or something?" The beagle questioned with a worried look on his face.

The old dog chuckled a little. "No, my dear. Futuresight is a special ability that very few dogs are born with. It allows you to predict the future when you are dreaming."

“So are you trying to tell me that my sister will be murdered by that German Shepherd?”

“Not exactly, dear. The future isn't always correct since it hasn't happened yet. You can still change it.”

“How?” All of these questions were pouring out of Chance's mouth like rain pouring from gray clouds.

The old sheepdog, however, did not seem to mind answering the young beagle's questions. “You must hurry to the city that was in your futuresight, young one. Only you can save your sister from this tragedy.”

“Only...me?”

“Yes, my dear. Only you. You must fight the German Shepherd by yourself.”

“What about you?” Chance questioned.

“Alas,” the sheepdog began, “I am too old to fight. However, I can take you there. Follow me.” The sheepdog motioned for Chance to come with her.

Chance tried to move his stiff body off of the cold hard ground, but he could not. “I can't get up,” he told the sheepdog.

“Keep on trying to get up,” the sheepdog encouraged Chance by licking his face. “You must, my dear. Get up now.”

Right after the sheepdog said `now,' Chance immediately sprung up to his feet, as if from magic.

Just before the beagle and the sheepdog were about to begin their long journey, the old sheepdog grabbed her aqua blue scarf with her mouth and wrapped it around Chance's neck as best as she could. “There,” she said. “You're going to need it more than me.”

Chance smiled at her. “Thank you.”

“You're welcome. Now, let's get going.”

The journey seemed long. However, chats about their lives between the beagle and the sheepdog made the adventure seem a lot shorter and quicker.

“Well, we're here at last,” the sheepdog said as the two dogs approached a small cliff. Under this cliff was a city that was much bigger than Nintendoville, the town that Chance was raised in.

“Can you make it down by yourself?” The sheepdog asked Chance.

The beagle looked down. It didn't seem like too far of a fall, only about a few inches, really. “Yeah, I'll be fine.”

“All right, I'd better go,” the sheepdog replied.

Just as she was leaving, Chance shouted out, “Hey!”

The old dog turned her head to Chance.

“What's your name?”

“Spirit. But you can call me Granny.” The sheepdog smiled. “Hurry, though. Once the sun sets all the way, your sister will die unless you change the future.”

Chance looked up at the sky. Indeed, the sun was setting. “Shoot,” he replied, jumping off the cliff and landing on his feet gracefully.

Spirit watched as Chance ran away. “Goodbye, and good luck,” she whispered.