

# GONE DOGGY GONE

Buzzworm Films

Written and Directed by Kasi Brown & Brandon Walter

Produced by Rebecca Hu and Adriane Zaudke



TRT: 89 MINUTES | HDCAM | COLOR | ENGLISH | MATURE | BLACKMAGIC CINEMA

## **LOGLINE**

A couple stuck in a lackluster marriage treats their dog like a baby... and then it gets kidnapped.

## **BRIEF SYNOPSIS**

GONE DOGGY GONE is a comedy about a couple stuck in a lackluster marriage who treat their dog like a baby. Working the grind in Los Angeles they leave little time for each other and what free time they have they spend doting on the dog... until it gets kidnapped! What ensues is an outlandish cat-and-mouse adventure as they hunt down the kidnapper, enlist a slick dick P.I., find a renewed love for each other, and conquer their fear of parenthood.

## **LONG SYNOPSIS**

The HARMONS – ABBY (33) and ELIOTT (36) live in hipster-ville Los Angeles. They work hard and play hard, but leave little time for each other outside of babying their Teacup Yorkie, LAILA. No strangers to eccentricity like other LA parents, they take special liberties with their dog such as carrying Laila around in a baby Bjorn, dressing her in pearls and dresses, and pushing her around in a stroller.

They assume Laila appreciates the babying, but to JILL (25), their socially awkward, lonely dog-sitter, the outfits and stroller are demeaning. So, when Jill is alone with Laila she breaks all of the Harmons' rules for her BFF (Best Friend Forever).

Just when life is looking pretty good for everyone – calamity strikes. While dog-sitting Laila during a party at the Harmons, Jill learns they are moving to San Francisco. This horrible news comes at the end of a horrific day for young Jill. That morning her boyfriend dumped her, her unappreciative boss fired her, and now her BFF is moving away!

Jill offers to watch Laila one last time and shows up the next day claiming Laila was kidnapped from the park. Abby and Elliott go berserk and launch into full panic mode (ala Mel Gibson's "Ransom"). Abby reports to the police that her "child" has been kidnapped. They organize a search party and post missing dog fliers all over the city. Things rapidly fall apart as Abby and Elliott blame each other for what has happened. Finally, the dog-napper e-mails a video demanding a \$30,000 ransom.

But before they can rendezvous to pay it – they surprise Jill at her apartment and catch her red-handed with their precious Laila. A heated chase ensues, but Jill escapes with the dog.

Oh, this is on! Abby enlists her adventure loving best friend KAT (and Kat's much younger boyfriend DEVON) to pursue Jill with them. Launching into a full-on car chase, they track Jill via an iPhone app and speed onto the highway towards New Mexico, where they finally catch up with Jill at a seedy desert motel.

They think they've got her now, but she devilishly pepper sprays them and once again escapes.

Realizing they are in over their heads and in need of a Real Professional, they hire DAN (Schlubby loser) and his father STAN (a slick dick P.I.), whom they saw on a local commercial. Dan turns out to be less professional than they thought, but out of desperation they hire him anyway.

Despite his ineptness, Dan manages to catch up to Jill. Instead of apprehending her, he falls for his mark, snapping sexy surveillance photos of her and convincing himself there's NO WAY a pretty girl could commit such a crime.

Back at the motel, the Harmons impatiently wait for Dan's update. They unwittingly find that without the dog acting as an emotional buffer, they end up spending quality time with each other. And just when things are smoothing out, Kat makes a shady drug deal and gets them robbed of not only the ransom money, but their clothing as well.

Stranded, half naked and broke, they take Kat's advice to go to her friend ZELDA's hippy dippy artist commune nearby. Meanwhile, Dan finds Jill's broken down car on the side of the road and offers to give her a ride with the intent of grabbing the dog. Instead, he ends up enjoying her company and understanding her broken ways. When he drops her off at her mother RUTH's home, he witnesses how similar Jill's mom is to his own browbeating, overbearing father. He changes his mind and lets Jill keep Laila. Stan becomes furious with his son's inability to close the deal. He needs that goddamn money! Stan finally admits that he's in debt to a loan shark.

Dan relents and tracks down Jill at a bar, where they get to know each other. After they laugh and drink all night, they end up having sexy-time at Dan's motel. Afterward, he stupidly reveals to her that he is a private detective. He explains that he was hired by the Harmons to arrest her, but that he really likes her and wants to help her now.

Back at Zelda's commune the Harmons are uncomfortable, and completely out of their element. After too much wine (per usual), Kat kisses Elliott and an emotional fight breaks out. Kat expresses how ludicrous it is that they treat their dog like a baby and Abby finally reveals that she is actually scared of human babies - mainly because she's afraid she'll drop them!

The next day, Dan and Jill call the Harmons to arrange Laila's exchange and the whole entourage winds up at Ruth's. While Abby, Elliott, Kat, and Stan confront Jill and Dan, gun wielding MORTY (loan shark) demands the money! Jill's mom Ruth clobbers him over the head and the Harmons escape with their dog.

Denouement - months later Abby is pregnant. A package arrives. She opens it revealing a life-like baby doll. In order to overcome her fear, she carefully holds it, rocks it... and it accidentally drops to the floor.

## **DIRECTORS' STATEMENT: KASI BROWN & BRANDON WALTER**

There are many films about dogs as beloved pets, police partners, even basketball stars, but few films about dogs as babies. Over the last few years we began to notice an alarming rise in Los Angeles pet owners pushing their fully clothed dog "babies" around in strollers and stuffing them into Bjorns for "walks". Which begs the question, why the hell would they do this?

We observed closely and deduced that for some these pets are "starter babies". They get to practice at being parents before actually making the leap into the ultimate responsibility. For others, the attention they place on babying their pets takes the heat off of dealing with their lackluster marriage. But mainly, the way people baby their dogs is hilarious to us.

With *Gone Doggy Gone* we set out to comically explore how people use pets to avoid dealing with their relationship issues. With this film, we hope to illuminate how people use their pets to avoid communicating with each other in the hopes that they stop acting like idiots... oh, and heal.

## **ABOUT THE PRODUCTION**

### **PERSONAL JOURNEY**

We met in an Upright Citizen's Brigade Improv class and spent three years feeding our passion for exploring bizarre human behavior with our web-based sketch comedy show, *Mother Approved*. The natural progression from there was to write and direct our first feature film. We thought that it would be interesting to apply very serious iconic kidnapping movies, *Ransom*, *Silence of the Lambs*, *Gone Baby Gone*, to a couple stuck in a lackluster marriage who considered their dog to be their "baby". We also knew that it could be a small film, something we could make ourselves with limited resources utilizing the skills we acquired from producing our sketch comedy show. The time was also ripe. Kasi suffered a back injury that had her laid out for six months and when she finally healed she was eager to grab life by the balls. At the same time Brandon and his fiancé announced they had a baby boy coming. We knew it was a now or never situation. Time to kick the fear of tackling a feature film in the butt. We went into high gear, campaigning on Indiegogo for funds, scrapping from friends and family, pursuing private investors and once we had enough funds to shoot, we built a creative team that was able to support our vision. We shared our experience by hiring people who were also looking to grow creatively, or learn a new position on set that big budget productions would not allow them.

## LOCATIONS AND HARD WORK

We never knew how we were going to make this film at any stage along the way. We only knew that we were determined to succeed. Like most small films, we intended to shoot locations that we already owned: friends homes, apartments, our own vehicles, etc. But we quickly realized that we wanted to expand our film visually. We started to brainstorm about who we knew or had worked for in the past that owned a location that was more exciting than our own backyards. Kasi worked as a set medic in IATSE local 767 for 12 years and remembered that the place she gets her oxygen tanks filled was a perfect office for the detective character of STAN (Richard Riehle). So one day she took her tanks (and Laila, her cute teacup Yorkie) into Leeper Brothers Oxygen and pretended to need a refill. She pleaded her case to the owner, Pat, and in the end shook hands over a very reasonable fee for the location!

One week before production we (Brandon, Kasi, Producers Rebecca and Adriane) heard that our film could only have 10 people total in the park that we permitted including cast and crew for scenes that called for over 20 Background artists, 10 cast, and a crew of 15. It involved a huge scene with a crane shot and a "police line" of people holding hands through the trees searching for the missing dog. We quickly brainstormed and came up with an ingenious plan. The producers would wear surveillance headsets under their long hair and pretend to be having a reunion in the park with the PA's and some of the park background children and parents. Brandon and Kasi couldn't direct them directly because then the park monitor would know they were part of our production, so we relayed info to the producers who told the actors what to do. Background artists that were going to be in the "police line" scene later in the day pretended to have picnics in the park. When it came time for that scene, we pretended to ask them to randomly take part in our film. Not only did it work, but we got the park monitor to join in the "police line" and at the end she said, "I've never seen people come together like that for a film!"

## VISUAL INSPIRATION

Along with our DP, Garrett O'Brien, we chose a shooting style for our film that visually serves the story of the couple as they rapidly unravel after their dog is kidnapped. In the beginning, they live in a "perfect", sterile environment that masks the underlying tension of their relationship. We chose to express this visually with static camera shots on sticks. Then, as the couple deteriorates on the road while they pursue the dognapper, the environment becomes more raw. Dirty, gas stations, desertscapes and dingy motels become enhanced by hand-held camera movements. With these stylistic choices, we hope to help the audience get lost in the world we have created.

## ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS

### **KASI BROWN** WRITER/ DIRECTOR

Kasi Brown graduated from the University of Kansas with a degree in Theater and Film. She produced and starred in *A Woman Reported* (Sundance 2004) and co-wrote and starred in *NEXT!* (best comedy web-series NextTV 2010). Kasi has acted on various TV shows including *Miami Medical*, *ER*, and *Monk*. For the last three years, she and her writing/directing partner Brandon Walter produced *Mother Approved* a web sketch comedy show.

### **BRANDON WALTER** WRITER/ DIRECTOR

Brandon Walter graduated from Indiana University and went on to produce his own films including the documentary, *Ray Dell Tubbs Gets Famous*, chronicling a homeless man's journey home and short films, *Kalu Kala*, *Girlfriend*, *2%* and *Better Unsaid* which premiered at the Florida Film Festival. He has starred opposite Jim Carey in *Yes Man* and can be seen nationally in commercials.

### **ADRIANE ZAUDKE** PRODUCER

Adriane worked in development at Lionsgate before leaving the studio world for indie filmmaking, co-founding Alleged Industries with her directing partner. In the independent feature world she has completed two features - *Random Encounters* starring Sean Young, Meghan Markle, and Michael Rady; "Teddy Bears," starring Gillian Jacobs, Zachary Knighton, David Krumholtz, Melanie Lynskey, Ahna O'Reilly, and Jason Ritter. *Gone Doggy Gone* is her third feature.

### **REBECCA HU** PRODUCER

Rebecca hails from Toronto, Canada where she established the production company Kungfu-Barbie Productions with the core mission of creating "kickass" films from a female's perspective. Her past producing credits include the independent feature films *1,001 Ways to Enjoy the Missionary Position*, *Pretty Rosebud* and *Muffin Top: A Love Story*, as well as the feature length documentary *I Heart Hollywood*, and TV show *Red Bull's Rock the Route*.

## **GARRETT O'BRIEN** DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY

Garrett O'Brien grew up in Maryland, where he would go on to receive his undergraduate degree at Mount St. Mary's University. After filming professional snowboarders for a documentary, he later found his calling in narrative filmmaking as a cinematographer. While obtaining his master's degree in film from American University in Washington, D.C he shot several award winning short films such as, *Waiting on a Train*, *Fractured Legacy* and *Constant*. Those films premiered at local and foreign festivals, also winning 'Best of Local short' for DC Shorts Films Festival, winning Lucerne International Film Festival and even receiving distribution. Over his years of experience Garrett has come to find a common thread in his cinematography; "when we're able to pursue the film's inherent visual language, then it becomes possible to invoke pathos within our audience."

## **MELANIE ANNAN** EDITOR

Melanie is a passionate and dedicated editor whose work spans narrative film, documentary, music videos and television. She has edited over 17 short films which have screened internationally and won numerous awards including an ASE award for Best Editing for *Something Fishy*. *Spine* won Best Short at the Melbourne International Film Festival and *Danya* won the Rosemount Diamond award at the Jackson Hole Film Festival as well as Best Editor at *Hatchfest*. Her television work is also highly regarded with the six-part ABC comedy *At Home With Julia* being nominated for an AACTA award for Best Television Comedy Series. Melanie has recently completed the narrative comedy feature *Gone Doggy Gone* and is working on *Ordinary Wonderlands* her third feature documentary.

## **THOMAS VINCENT** MUSIC/ COMPOSER

With a degree in Biology and years of experience in cancer research, it may be a head-scratcher that Thomas Vincent is scoring movies. However, since he started a band writing original music with his friends at the age of ten, his passion has always been in music. Hailing from the indie-rock world with his band The Sea of Cortez, Thomas has dabbled in composing for film and Television. *Gone Doggy Gone* is his first feature score.



## ABOUT THE CAST



### **Laila the Teacup Terrier**

Laila (playing "Littles") was born to Baxter Blu and J's my Teddy Bear in Hays Kansas on December 23rd. She comes from a long line of oddly named pure breeds like Kala's Victor Plum, Boyle's Wee Willey, Zerger's Bingo Toy, and Freeman's Rowdy Rastus. She is super smart despite the size of her head and will work for food and occasionally love...when she feels like it - she's a terrier after all. And a super, bitch-diva on set.



### **Shaina Vorspan**

Shaina (playing "JILL") earned her B.A. in theatre from the University of California, San Diego where she performed in and helped produce a number of productions. At Knightsbridge Theatre in Silverlake, she co-produced and co-starred in *Twenty-Two*, an original play by Julia Morizawa, along with performing in dozens of shows and co-starring in the award-winning feature film *Redemption*.



### **Kasi Brown**

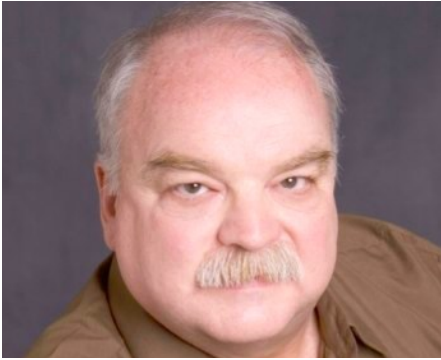
Kasi (playing "ABBY") has a BA in theater and film from the University of Kansas. She is also a graduate of the Upright Citizen's Brigade improv school, who has performed at Improv Olympic and various comedy houses. Her acting credits include: *Miami Medical*, *ER*, and *Monk*, *Mother Approved*, and various national commercials.



### **Brandon Walter**

Brandon (playing "ELIOTT") graduated from the Sandford Meisner Center and studied improv at the Upright Citizen's Brigade in Los Angeles. He has appeared in: *Yes Man*, *Global Sports Fraternity*, *Mother Approved*, and various national commercials.





### **Richard Riehle**

Richard (playing "STAN") is best known for his trademark bushy mustache and heavysset frame. Richard has acquitted himself as one of the best, and busiest, character players on TV and in the movies; probably best known for *Office Space* and *Glory*. Richard has had extensive experience as a stage actor on Broadway.



### **Kate Connor**

Kate (playing "KAT") most recently starred with Eric Stoltz in the upcoming *Fort McCoy* which they produced and she wrote/co-directed. Kate won Best Actress at the Milan film festival and the film has won numerous Best Feature awards around the world. Some of Kate's television work includes roles on *Mad Men*, *Criminal Minds*, *Lost*, *Brothers & Sisters*, and *Heroes*, as well as improv and sketch comedy on "Punk'd," "Lovespring International," "The Jamie Kennedy Experiment," "Late Night with Conan O'Brien" and "The Tonight Show with Jay Leno."



### **Jeff Sloniker**

Jeff (playing "DAN") is a writer/performer who can be seen improvising with Cabbages and Kings as part of UCB's weekly Harold night. He has also appeared in the shows: *The Back Room*, *Beer Machine*, *The Flying Medicine show*, and *Great Adventure*. He has a recurring role on "Parks & Recreation".

# **GONE DOGGY GONE CREDITS**

**WRITTEN, DIRECTED, AND PRODUCED BY**

KASI BROWN & BRANDON WALTER

**PRODUCED BY**

REBECCA HU AND ADRIANE ZAUDKE

**COSTUME DESIGNER** BRIANNA FRANCIS

**MUSIC BY** THOMAS VINCENT

**EDITED BY** MELANIE ANNAN

**PRODUCTION DESIGNER** SCOTT M. EVANS

**DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY** GARRETT O'BRIEN

## **CAST**

JILL TOZER - SHAINA VORSPAN

KAT - KATE CONNOR

ABBY HARMON - KASI BROWN

ELIOTT HARMON - BRANDON WALTER

STAN JANSON - RICHARD RIEHLE

DAN JANSON - JEFF SLONIKER

RUTH TOZER - MARSHA WATERBURY

LAILA HARMON - LAILA/LITTLES

DEVON - EDWARD WINTERS

KENT - JORDAN HENDRICKS

ZELDA - LIZZIE PEET

MORTY - MILES STROTH

ESMERALDA - ELIZABETH LAMBOY-WILSON

BOB - MARK TEICH

# SOCIAL MEDIA OUTREACH

## WEBSITE

<http://www.gonedoggygone.com>

## TWITTER

<https://twitter.com/gonedoggygone>

## FACEBOOK

<https://www.facebook.com/gonedoggygone>

## WATCH THE TRAILER HERE:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kYVed6SGWRw>

## PRESS

Gone Doggy Gone Wins Top Award at FirstGlance Film Fest Los Angeles

<http://www.prweb.com/releases/2014/04/prweb11782609.htm>

PR RELEASE: Independent Feature Film Gone Doggy Gone Accepted by FirstGlance Film Fest Los Angeles, Opening Night Will Be Comedy's World Premiere

<http://www.prweb.com/releases/2014/03/prweb11677557.htm>

Gone Doggy Gone Film Parodies a Yorkie Dognapping

<http://www.dogster.com/bolz/gone-doggy-gone-film-parody-yorkie>

KU grad goes from on-set medic to filmmaker

<http://www2.ljworld.com/news/2013/jul/14/ku-grad-goes-set-medic-filmmaker/>

Lawrence native producing her first feature-length film, 'Gone Doggy Gone'

<http://www.gonedoggygone.com/blog/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/LJW-indiegogo-article.pdf>