

Early in February, Friends of Penny received word about a Min Pin named Hollywood being held at a shelter in North Central Los Angeles. He was scheduled to be put down because he was a fear biter. He had been adopted by a man who signed a waiver, indicating he knew Hollywood was a fear biter, and then dumped him back at the shelter when he decided he couldn't deal with Hollywood after all.

We didn't think much of the shelter's assessment of Hollywood, because dogs in shelters are fearful as a rule, especially Min Pins. Hollywood had been at the shelter for several weeks now, and considering the volume of animals that the L.A. shelter takes

Rhonda flew out to L.A. to retrieve Hollywood from the shelter, and brought him back to her friend's house in Orange County for the night. Hollywood was as sweet as could be, and gave Rhonda no indication of what the next day would hold! In order to bring Hollywood on the plane with her, Rhonda had to place him in a soft sided carrier she could stick under the seat in front of her. She gave Hollywood a sedative to relax him, stuck him in the carrier, and boarded the plane. The first two hours went according to plan, with Hollywood sleeping in his carrier at Rhonda's feet. Then the drugs wore off.

# Hollywood's S T O R Y

in, we knew his time was fast running out. Jeff, one of our co-founders, contacted every rescue group he could think of in California and asked if they would take a look at Hollywood and assess what he was like outside of the shelter environment. Every single one of them refused. Jeff was furious. It was obvious that if Hollywood were to have a chance, that chance would have to come out of North Carolina. Jeff called the shelter and pleaded with them to hold this little dog for us. In a cold voice they told him that Hollywood was on today's red list and may have already been euthanized, would he mind holding while they checked? Terrified, Jeff held the line, hoping for the best, and scheming how he could throw a wrench in their plans from 3,000 miles away if they had already begun Hollywood's execution. After what seemed like a year, a more friendly voice picked up the line and told Jeff that Hollywood was still alive, and how would he like to pay for his boarding until someone from Friends of Penny could fly out to get him?

Rochelle, another one of our co-founders, bought a plane ticket to L.A. and went about the daunting task of tracking down someone who could fly to California on a moment's notice. Our saving grace turned out to be Rhonda -- one of our volunteers who works as a veterinary technician and happened to have a friend out in Orange County she wanted to visit.

Within minutes Hollywood had chewed his way out of the soft-sided carrier and was tearing around the plane's cabin like the Tasmanian Devil. Passengers all around were quick to point out that there was a dog loose on the plane. "Oh, my God! There's a dog! There's a dog!" Rhonda craned her neck around to scout for Hollywood, frantically yelling to the passengers, "Don't pick him up. Don't touch him! He bites!" The flight attendants were not very understanding, "Ma'am, your dog must remain in its carrier the entire flight."

Hollywood was panicked, and Rhonda was crying, but she eventually caught him, and amidst his squirming, growling and biting, she held on. The passenger next to her made the sign of the cross and flattened herself against the wall of the plane. Rhonda took a deep breath, slipped a muzzle on him, and stuffed him back into the demolished carrier, rigging it shut with his leash. The woman sitting next to her murmured a faint "Amen."

The day after Hollywood arrived in Greenville, NC, Rochelle drove over to the vet office and took Hollywood home to meet her foster family. Her two min pin puppies were excited to meet Hollywood, but Hollywood was not excited to meet them. He hid behind Rochelle's leg.



When the pups got closer, he snapped at them. And when Rochelle reached down to pick him up, he bit her. That's when Rochelle realized that he wasn't biting because he disliked her, he was biting because he thought those two puppies were scary! In this flight or fight situation, Hollywood had tried to flee behind her leg, but had defended himself when cornered. And yet, this fearful dog wanted so badly to be loved. When Rochelle's husband picked him up and cradled him like a baby, Hollywood closed his eyes and ate it up.

Rochelle knew that in the right situation, Hollywood could grow into a happy-go-lucky dog. And seeing him change would make the plane fare, the transport, and the stress all worth it. Hollywood needed someone who wasn't afraid of him, someone with confidence who could give him that much-needed love. That someone turned out to be a man named Zach who had applied to act as a foster home for Friends of Penny. Rochelle disclosed everything about Hollywood to Zach, and told him Hollywood would need a lot of work. Zach met this challenge with excitement.

Today, Zach's excitement is shared by Hollywood. Zach gave Hollywood a bunch of toys when he first brought him home. Upon hearing this, Rhonda remembers how Hollywood once growled at her when she reached for a bone she had given him. Rhonda believed this was because Hollywood had never had toys of his own. He didn't trust that he could turn his back and the toy would still be there when he turned around again. Well, he certainly has his own toys now! And as Zach reports, Hollywood has discovered a solution to make sure no one takes them away. He hides his favorite toys! Hollywood loves his toy penguin in particular, and will hide it in different spots all around Zach's room. Then when he's ready to play, he uncovers the penguin from its hiding spot and races around the house with it in his mouth, taking his penguin for a walk.

So what does the future hold for Hollywood? We asked Zach, who provided us with an answer that was music to our ears.

"I'm the type of person who, once I come in contact with a dog I take care of, and who takes care of me, he becomes like family and I can't let him go - especially a dog in his situation. We've both been through a lot so I think it is appropriate that we found each other." How fitting, then, that this little Min Pin's story has a Hollywood ending.