

Life According to Juno, the Dog

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It started with a sneeze. That's all it started with. Hazel's sneeze made her lose her memory. She looked around to take in her surroundings. There was a pretty evening sunset in the sky. Texas cedar trees were swaying in the wind. She was in a small, but fairly new neighborhood with many houses. The signs told her there were five blocks.

She looked down and saw a fat Weiner dog with a collar that had the name Juno on it.

"Hey Juno?" she asked the dog. "You know where I live?" She smiled.

Juno on the other hand, was thinking about dinner, wishing that Hazel would be gracious enough to give her kibble with that white stuff the adults would always spray in Hazel's mouth. Ice cream? No, whipped cream. She wanted that on top of her kibble. Juno once got a taste of that once. It was amazing. Juno stared at Hazel-who-didn't-know-she-was-Hazel blankly.

"How helpful," Hazel said. She looked at the leash in her hand. "Lead the way, Juno."

Here she was, hoping this fat Weiner dog would lead her to the place she made a sanctuary. At least, according to the proud dog.

Juno wanted a good, long walk. So, she walked around the same block twice, and then went to the place called "home."

The house was two-stories tall, with white siding and black window panes. There were also pansies planted in the ground by the front door. On the sidewalk, there were drawings of things Juno would never understand, nor should she ever *want* to.

But back in Hazel's mind, she must've read that the neat handwriting wrote the name Hazel in blue chalk. The scribbly handwriting wrote the name Emily in pink chalk.

Juno was now drooling with hunger. Juno took Hazel for this super long walk, and now Hazel wasn't going to feed her. NOT fair. Finally, after a few minutes, Hazel asked, "Juno, are you hungry?"

"Yesss!" Juno barked. "I thought you'd never ask."

Hazel sneezed, and said, "I'll take that as a yes." She walked inside.

"I'm home guys!" she shouted. Her sister Emily came racing down the stairs and hugged Hazel.

Meanwhile, Juno was thinking about how Hazel got her memory back. It happened every time she sneezed. Oh yeah! Before Hazel said 'I'll take that as a yes,' she'd sneezed. Sheesh, what a way to live.

Now Juno felt like her stomach was on fire. In dog, she barked, "Am I going to eat dinner or what?"

"Yeah, all right, all right, I'll get you food, Juno, just sit tight," Hazel said.

Sit tight! What kind of an answer is that? Juno thought. She'd been waiting for a long time, went on an extra-long walk, and now she had to wait *still*. Hazel better figure it out before Juno went ballistic.

"Alright! Food for the fat dog," Hazel said. She placed Juno's food bowl next to the kitchen counter.

Juno shot over to the food. Now that it was in front of her, her hangry thoughts floated away as if they never existed.

Hazel likes to joke that Juno finishes her food in 30 seconds.

Hazel was probably right. Once the 30 seconds of wasted time was finished, Hazel let Juno Outside. This time, Outside was the most annoying thing that had ever happened to her.

After Juno had relieved herself, she walked over to the fence and sat. She barked, "Sam! Come out! I can smell you."

Her friend trotted over to the fence from behind a random bush.

"Do I smell bad?" he asked.

"Ugh, now you're talking like a human," Juno replied, annoyed.

"You're in a bad mood. Did Hazel lose her memory again?"

"Yes. She is my person, so naturally, I have to take the proper precautions for her," Juno remarked proudly.

"What's that got to do with Hazel losing her memory?"

"I guess nothing," Juno admitted.

"You, know, I think you're imagining Hazel losing her memory. I mean, according to my humans, who are doctors, that doesn't usually happen in young people," replied Sam.

"Well, maybe your doctor humans are wrong. Maybe dog detectives know more about humans," Juno snapped.

"Whoa, hold it. I'm not saying you're wrong, because it may be true. I just thought humankind would know humankind better than- well, I guess I won't say."

"And they might," said Juno, grumpily. "Anyway, I should probably go. Hazel's probably going to think I've died or something."

Sam looked around the neighborhood. With the Texas cedar trees swaying in the evening wind, and the purple-orange sunset, everything seemed perfect for that short moment.

He laughed. "I guess I'll see you later then," he said.

"Yeah, see you 'round," Juno barked back as she trotted away.

Juno walked up the steps to the back porch and scratched at the door.

Hazel opened it and inquired," Juno, were you talking to your boyfriend?"

Juno wished she could scowl.

Hazel laughed as Juno trotted away from her.

"Not in the mood for that kind of talk, eh?"

No, Juno thought. She wished that Hazel could know what she thought about, because she would be asking Hazel this: How long have you been joking around about this?

Juno snuck one more peek outside the door, and it wasn't to look at Sam. She looked at the sky. Dark, with tints of purple. Texas was the best place to see sunrises and sunsets, in her opinion.

Time for bed.

She walked over to Hazel and Emily who were now sitting on the couch, which was in front of the big screen box. They watched stuff on that a lot. This time it showed a cat turning into a lady dressed in green. Whoa, kay, wayyyy crazy. Juno decided not to think on that. Next, a baby was in the arms of some giant dude, who had flown in on something called a mo-toar-cycle. Then a really old man with the longest chin furr Juno had ever seen, took him and put him on the doorstep of a "home." The baby had a lightning bolt on his forehead. Then the old

guy said, "Harry Potter!" Okay, Juno thought. NOT watching this anymore. It's too weird.

Juno put her paw on Hazel's foot since she couldn't reach her lap. Juno was jealous of the big dogs she saw on that big-screen box.

"Going to bed?" Hazel asked.

Juno let Hazel and Emily pet her for a bit longer until she shook herself and walked over to her bed, which was in a small room with these giant boxes that shake, rumble, and make beeping noises. The humans put the things they wear inside of them when their clothes smell *good*. When the clothes come out, they smell terrible.

Juno was so tired. She laid down, closed her eyes, and listened to the big boxes shake, and the crazy show on the big screen box. Soon after, she fell into a dreamless sleep.

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Juno woke up listening to Emily shouting.

"No! No! I don't want to get out of my pajamas, mommy!"

She also heard kibble pouring into a bowl. Food! She thought. She scrambled out of her bed and over to her food bowl. She started chowing down.

"So now you wake up!" Hazel said.

Well, what could you expect from a fat Weiner dog?

Hazel checked her watch.

"22 seconds, new record!" Hazel said as Juno finished licking her bowl.

"Well Juno, I think—" Hazel cut herself off with a sneeze. Oh, no! Not here or now! Juno thought.

"Sorry Juno! I was trying to say that I think I need to help Emily get situated. Is that what woke you up?" Hazel asked.

Juno didn't even care to answer the question in her head. Hazel remembered!

Then Juno thought about what Sam had said yesterday in the backyard. He was right, but she wasn't going to let him have it right away. How could she be so stupid to let something like that get into her head?

Finally, Juno answered her question. Of course, it was in dog language, so Hazel would never understand what Juno had said.

"You go help Emily stop making me go deaf. I need to go outside." Juno barked. She ran to the back door and scratched it hard.

"Alright, Alright! I'll let you outside. Please stop scratching the door! It's making the paint fall off and my parents will get mad."

Hazel walked over to the door and let Juno out. Juno went over to the grassy area where she would usually relieve herself, which was not on the side where Sam lived. Hazel looked at Juno suspiciously and closed the door. Then Juno bolted over to the fence of Sam's backyard.

She sniffed the air. Yeah, there was a trace of him, but he wasn't outside right now. In fact, it was like he..... wait. His scent says that he went out of his fence with his humans. Dang, they go on walks early! Juno thought.

She decided to get a little exercise too. So, she zipped around the backyard and finally got tired after about 20 seconds. The time did not go by fast, so she started digging holes in random places around the yard.

After about two minutes, she heard Sam and his humans walk in their back gate. They left Sam outside.

She trotted over to the fence.

"What are you doing here at this early time in the morning?" Sam asked.

"Well, I came to tell you something about Hazel," she replied, licking dirt from her face.

"Oh my gosh, have you finally figured out that she doesn't lose her memory?" Sam asked in an annoying tone.

"Why must you always guess the things that I want to tell you, but always say it so annoyingly?" Juno asked, exasperated.

"That's what I do," Sam replied.

"Well,-" Juno got cut off by Sam.

"It turns out that you were right, Sam, because when Hazel sneezes, she doesn't lose her memory," Sam imitated.

"Ugh! You imbecile! I was trying to say that number 1, Hazel doesn't actually lose her memory, and 2, you need to listen to me!" Juno barked.

"Well, I did," Sam said. "Welcome to reality, miss Juno!"

"You know, I despise you sometimes," Juno said.

"Glad to know," Sam replied, trotting to his back door. "See ya later!"

"Yeah, see you!" Juno barked back.

She wandered up to the back door and scratched it lightly this time. She didn't want the parents to yell at her. *That* would end badly. The door opened. It was Emily.

"Juno!" she shouted. Then she sneezed. She looked around the yard. Her eyes held the reflection of the holes Juno had dug all over the yard.

"Umm, Juno? Did you do this?" Oh, boy, Juno thought.

Juno had four paws, right? She could handle it. Couldn't she?

The end.

At least, for the time being.