

A close-up portrait of a black dog, possibly a Cane Corso, with striking orange eyes and a white patch on its chest. The dog is looking directly at the camera against a dark, gradient background.

SECOND CHANGES

Every Animal Deserves One

BY NIKAU TAYLOR



Table of Contents

1

INTRODUCTION

2

PERCEPTION

3

THE BASICS OF DOG TRAINING

4

JUDGEMENT

5

UNDERSTANDING

6

YOUR CALL TO ACTION



The Author

Nikau Taylor

Nikau Taylor would be described by The New Zealand Youth Justice System as a recidivist offender with charges ranging from car theft, and burglary to aggravated robbery and police pursuits. And he is only 15 years old.

This book was written while still inside the youth justice system. From a remand house in a local suburb, sitting at the kitchen table and hearing in his soul, a cry for help. A cry he answered.

FOREWORD

DION JENSEN

Clinically Endorsed Author

To write a book of any description is difficult to say the least.

Now imagine being a 15 year old who has been in the youth justice system since he was 9 years old, growing up in and out of youth prison's, family homes and remand homes with his little brother.

Sit yourself at a kitchen table of a remand home in a local neighborhood with this young man and listen to him in conversation with his social worker.

If you could, you would hear in his vocabulary a perception of the world that 'wiggles' in-between logic and reason, into creativity and through to imagination.

This was my first meeting with Nikau Taylor, sitting at a kitchen table in a remand home in a suburb where I had been the Community Police Constable 17 years ago.

Now, as the founder of The Lion Academy, a global empowerment academy, two clinically endorsed books to my name and a third that trended at number 1. on LinkedIn, I find myself looking at unlimited potential.

The book you are about to read, will challenge you as it challenged me working with Nikau...but if you are careful, you may find one of those gaps to wiggle through in your own perception of the world and especially this demographic of our young people, doing that they can to survive. And if you make it here, you will find a very special place in your mind and heart in which to dwell.

On the thirtieth of April 2021, I awkwardly find myself standing before the Palmerston North Youth Court, keeping in mind that I have just left a youth justice facility to appear. There I stand waiting for the judge to make some sort of acceptance, after a mumble of chatter the judge grants me remand status at a community home in Awapuni.

I return to my holding cell on the first floor, about five minutes later I am being escorted to the sally port, a white 2006 Toyota Hi-ace is awaiting my arrival. I am shown my seat at the back, along with an escort next to me and in front of me. Roughly thirty minutes later, we arrive at this house.

It looked like it didn't belong to the suburban area it was placed in. I am shown the house and after the short tour I take a seat at a wooden table. I assess the house next door, there seems to be no sign of and human presence. It's getting later in the afternoon and I'm getting tired so I leave my curiosity for another day, I head towards the sitting room and take a seat on a couch.

My mind is completely adrift, I ask for the time. It's quarter to seven at night. I ask if I can go to my bedroom. A staff member shows me my 'chambers.' (Yes, that's what they called it!) I shut the door and glance at my single bed, it hasn't been made, but there were sheets neatly folded on the end of the bed. So, I make my bed then tuck myself in. My head barely reaches my pillow and the next thing you know I'm out cold.

I wake up in the morning feeling refreshed. I open my windows to let the crisp morning air flow through my room, and I start to hear a faint noise coming from next-door; the sound of a dog whining and barking. I assume the dog has just seen a child or adult walk past, as that's what that noise means to me.

I make my bed and head down to dining area where I can see the neighbour's property in a better view, I can see a grey mesh-metal fence along with a black and white dog scratching at his bowl. I ask the staff if they know anything about the next-door neighbour, they proceed to say that there's a lady who lives next door, but she's never home to take care of her dog. I ask if I can go next door and pat the dog, the staff members agree but on one condition, that I at least try to knock on the door and ask first.

I approach the house it looks like a Housing New Zealand home, a very run-down building. I walk up the stairs and daringly knock on the door. I knock three times. No answer. I walk back down the steps and walk towards the fence, by the time I reach the fence I am gently greeted by a very beautiful specimen, a Blue Nose Pitbull pushes his head through a gap in the fence. His nose gently meets my hand. He is seen as a dangerous breed of an animal, but has the kindest nature.

Some people just can't see the reality of owning an animal, you have responsibilities to uphold. but nonetheless i head back towards the remand home. Walking through the threshold I enter the sitting room; my mind is set to a deep thought state.

Curiosity takes over, can't sleep, overthinking. Why is this beautiful animal being neglected? Who would do this and what can I do about this?

I end up lying on my back, staring at the ceiling until I drift to sleep. In the morning I get up, make my bed, then head towards the hallway. I go to the hot water cupboard and grab a towel and head to the shower.

After what seems to be an adequate time of bodily washing I exit the glass domain of a water spraying chamber and dry myself, get dressed and enter the sitting room. The sitting room is located next to the dining room which is only a couple of steps from the kitchen. From the dining room windows, I can see the worn-down house next-door and the backyard, which by looks of it hasn't been maintained ever.

My stomach urges me to grab a bite to eat, so I steadily make my way to the kitchen, feeling my way around this new environment. I open a drawer to locate a fork and a can opener to create my most favourite dish; corned beef and noodles. As I devour my bowl full of cow fat and noodles, I peer over to see what the dog next-door is up-to.

His head is plopped sadly on the concrete driveway, by the way he looks I can tell that my friend next door is completely lonely, hungry and out of shape. I grab a can of corned beef which was supposed to be my breakfast tomorrow, but I'm not selfish. I open the can and ask a staff member to follow me on my journey next-door.

I head towards the gate and scoop the oily meat into the dog bowl. The dog viciously trots to the metal gate and rushes to the silver bowl. After demolishing the food provided the dog greets me gently once again. I give the dog a satisfying pat and head back towards the remand home.

As I make my way back I hear the dog whining and barking. I turn around and approach the fence. Once again, the little tantrum comes to a halt. From the dog's attitude, I assume that the dog must need some form of positive interaction and attention.

So, I stay for a couple of minutes to give the dog a pat.

My stomach urges me to grab a bite to eat, so I steadily make my way to the kitchen, feeling my way around this new environment. I open a drawer to locate a fork and a can opener to create my most favourite dish; corned beef and noodles. As I devour my bowl full of cow fat and noodles, I peer over to see what the dog next-door is up-to.

His head is plopped sadly on the concrete driveway, by the way he looks I can tell that my friend next door is completely lonely, hungry and out of shape. I grab a can of corned beef which was supposed to be my breakfast tomorrow, but I'm not selfish. I open the can and ask a staff member to follow me on my journey next-door.

I head towards the gate and scoop the oily meat into the dog bowl. The dog viciously trots to the metal gate and rushes to the silver bowl. After demolishing the food provided the dog greets me gently once again. I give the dog a satisfying pat and head back towards the remand home.

As I make my way back I hear the dog whining and barking. I turn around and approach the fence. Once again, the little tantrum comes to a halt. From the dog's attitude, I assume that the dog must need some form of positive interaction and attention.

So, I stay for a couple of minutes to give the dog a pat.

After a couple minutes of pats and scratches I start to notice particular features: the dogs body shape is abnormally skinny; I could feel each individual rib and the dog's fur was rough. From my point of view, I could tell this dog was enjoying every moment. I could tell by the way it kept moving to hit individual spots.

Then the heart-breaking part came and I had to leave.

One more good scratch and I knew I had to turn away. I know I'm not going to be here for long and I'm scared I'll get attached.

However I made a spiritual promise that I would come back tomorrow. He'll be waiting...

