She has a name now

Eight weeks old, white as a sheet of paper, already in charge of the apartment and, apparently, my socks.

NOV 2–8, 2026

4 MIN READ

So she's here. Eight weeks old, pink nose, those pale eyes that look kind of see-through in the morning light. Albino Doberman. People keep asking if she's going to get big. Yeah. She's going to get big.

Right now though she fits in the crook of one arm, and she's about the weight of a bag of groceries. I picked her up on Sunday and carried her down the block like that, wrapped in my flannel, and three different people stopped me. One guy outside the bodega asked if she was a baby goat. I said no. He didn't look convinced.

I asked you guys for names and you went crazy, honestly. I read every single one. Some of them were great. Some of them were just the word Ghost, like forty times. Moro won. It just sounded like her the second I said it out loud, and she looked up, so that's that.

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First night was rough. She cried at like 2am and I ended up on the floor next to her crate with my hand through the door until she fell asleep on my fingers. I didn't move for an hour. My arm's still recovering.

I'm up most nights anyway, so it's not like she ruined some perfect sleep schedule. I just usually spend those hours writing at the kitchen table with one lamp on. Now I spend them on the floor of the living room, whispering to a dog. Which is kind of the same thing, if you think about it.

Night two was better. I put one of my old t-shirts in the crate and a ticking clock wrapped in a towel, which is a trick my neighbor told

me about. Linda, from downstairs. She's had dogs her whole life and she has opinions about all of them. The clock worked. Or Moro was just tired. I'll take it either way.

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Tuesday was the first vet visit. There's a little clinic off Manhattan Avenue, maybe ten minutes from the loft, and the waiting room smelled like cat food and floor cleaner. Moro sat in my lap and shook the whole time. Not from fear, I don't think. She just shakes when she's thinking.

The vet was really nice. Older guy, glasses on a string. He looked at her eyes for a long time with a little light and told me what I kind of already knew from reading about it. Albino dogs are sensitive to sun. Her eyes don't love bright light, and her skin can burn, especially on the nose and the belly. So I'm that guy now. I own dog sunscreen. I'm also looking at those little dog sunglasses, which I promise I'll only use when it matters and not for content. Mostly.

He said she's healthy though. Good weight, good heart, ears clean. She got her shots and didn't even notice the needle because she was busy trying to eat the paper on the exam table. They gave her a treat on the way out and she held it in her mouth all the way home without eating it, like she was saving it for later. She put it under the rug. It's still there, I think. I'm scared to check.

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Okay so the rug. It's this big woven thing I got secondhand when I moved into the loft, kind of beige, kind of grey depending on the

light, and she drags every single toy onto it. If I put a toy somewhere else she goes and gets it and brings it back to the rug. She's very organized for a baby.

She hates the vacuum, loves my socks, and has decided the rug in the living room is hers. I'm fine with it. I didn't really like that rug anyway.

The socks thing is getting out of hand though. She doesn't chew them, she collects them. I found four in her crate yesterday, all different pairs, all mine. One of them I hadn't seen since summer. I don't know where she found it. I don't know how she reached it. I've started thinking she has a second apartment somewhere.

The vacuum is a whole separate story. I turned it on once, just once, and she ran behind the big plant by the window and barked at it from there. Little tiny barks. Like a squeaky toy that's angry. Then she came out and stared at it after it was off for a solid five minutes, just to make sure. It lives in the closet now. The floors are a little hairy. We're working on it.

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The light in here is different with her. That sounds weird. But the loft has these huge old factory windows, and in the morning the sun comes in low across the floor, and she lies in the edge of it where it's warm but not too bright. Like she already knows. She's pale enough that she kind of glows when she's in it. I keep trying to take a picture of that and none of them look the way it actually looks.

We did our first real walk on Thursday. Just around the block, then a little bit of McCarren Park. It was cold and windy and she sat down

on the sidewalk every twenty feet to look at stuff. A leaf. A pigeon. A guy on a scooter. She doesn't really walk yet, she visits things. Took us forty minutes to go three blocks. Best forty minutes of my week, probably.

I have to go to Miami for work in a couple days, which I'm already a little stressed about. Linda said she'll watch her. She said it like she'd been waiting to be asked. I think she's more excited than Moro is.

Anyway. The apartment feels different with her in it. Less quiet. I think I needed that.

— Shay

Thanks for reading. There are more of these on my site, one every couple of weeks.