



Jolene

11 x 14 inches
Photography

Susan Taylor

Bio

I'm your fave bi/queer, vegan, autistic, feminist, shelter volunteer, marathoner, who makes rescue doggie merch. Unapologetically me in my head; unmasking in real life. I was laid off from Big Tech and am now pushing my creative world forward. I launched Pits & Chis Whiz, a super queer, doggie-theme sticker and tee brand that donates to animal rescues, advocates for dogs languishing in shelters, and loud, big-hearted people who will be their voices. Volunteering at my local shelter is my passion and where I capture my art: moments of hope and moments of heartbreak. I then put my art to use; I use social media to tell the dogs' stories and bust them out of kennel life. (My video and photos led to a collab with The Dodo that got Hashbrown, the pittie stuck in an anti-pittie city shelter for 700+ days in the shelter, into his forever home.) I recently held my first photo exhibit entitled *The Waiting Room: Lives on Pause*. It was a story told through the eyes of shelter dogs and a love letter to the ones still waiting and to the ones who wait for us at the Rainbow Bridge. I care deeply about creating work that centers on inclusivity, equity, and transparency. I'm drawn to the kind of storytelling that makes space for the voices most often overlooked. I ask big, sometimes uncomfortable questions. I think in systems that make clear paths for service to this world. I occasionally spiral (don't we all?), but I show up and create and work so that I can leave things better than I found them.

Artist Statement

A meditation on waiting, resilience, hopelessness, love—all told through the eyes of shelter dogs I've known and served and will always love who are caught in life's cruel waiting room. My photos are not portraits; they are moments of hope, heartbreak, quiet endurance, and forever grief. Each image captures the stillness of waiting. The way a dog looks past the kennel door, or curls up in the same corner day after day. Soulful stares, hesitant tail wags, fear, and a deep, unspoken longing for connection. In Arkansas, we are battling an animal overpopulation crisis we can't rescue our way out of, a broken and underfunded shelter system, community leadership that doesn't give a fuck and won't fund more than the driest of life's essentials for a very vulnerable population, a backwards "it's just a dog" mindset, and community hardships that hinder many of those who want to help. I can't save them all. But I can serve up my very best efforts to save them and tell their stories. My work is a love letter to the ones still waiting and the ones at the Rainbow Bridge. I won't forget their names. You won't either now.