

Abusing Animals is Not a Sport: The Cruelty of Animal Fighting

Jaclyn and McKayla are the best of friends. They have known each other since they were babies, and since then, they have never kept any secrets between them. That was why Jaclyn was surprised when she went over McKayla’s house after school on Monday and found her friend flustered and quiet.

“What’s wrong?” Jaclyn asked once they were in the safety of McKayla’s room with the door shut. “You seem so...upset.” She looked up, surprised to find McKayla’s big brown eyes on the verge of tears and looking hesitant, as if she was hiding something.

“You know you can tell me anything.” Jaclyn reassured her best friend. “Alright, but you have to promise you won’t tell anyone,” McKayla pleaded. Jaclyn promised, and McKayla knew her word was strong. “Well, last night,” McKayla continued, the tears beginning to flow. “I overheard Jeremy talking to one of his friends. I couldn’t hear everything they said, but what I got from it was that they’ve been fighting pit bulls in the basement of that old abandoned building on 4th Street. How could my own brother break the law?” McKayla cried. Jaclyn held her friend in a tight hug as McKayla’s tears poured down her cheeks. Jaclyn took a deep breath before she was finally able to speak.

“Alright, here’s what you should do.” She began in the same way she always did when offering McKayla a piece of advice. But for once, she was unsure of what to say.

What solution can Jaclyn offer that solves the problem without compromising their friendship?



Both girls understand how serious an offense dog fighting is, and Jaclyn needs to guide her friend to do the right thing—innocent animals are at risk! Dogfighting and cockfighting are illegal activities which frequently result in the death and maiming of the animals. Often the injured animals do not receive quality veterinary care because of the potential association of the injuries with illegal activity.

The MSPCA takes a strong stance against any type of animal fighting, and its law enforcement division will prosecute all believed to be involved with these illegal activities. On ethical grounds, the MSPCA also believes animal fighting to be cruel and inhumane.

As difficult as this situation is, Jaclyn must tell McKayla to speak with her parents or another trusted adult, like a teacher, animal law enforcement officer, or police officer. Jaclyn should emphasize that dog fighting is illegal and if Jeremy is caught (and he likely will be at some point) he could be fined and sent to jail. She could also reinforce that the people associated with this type of activity may also be involved in other dangerous activities that involve drugs and weapons, putting Jeremy at risk. McKayla should be reminded that the victims of abuse, the dogs, are tortured and taught to be mean. These animals will need the care and protection of animal law enforcement officers.

If McKayla will not speak with an adult about her brother's involvement, then Jaclyn must tell her own parents or another trusted adult; even though she promised not to tell anyone, there are people and animals in danger! She can even make an anonymous call to the police or animal adoption center if she feels she needs to do so. But, under no circumstance should Jaclyn or McKayla approach Jeremy directly or anyone else who might be involved in dog fighting--this is a time when an adult must handle the situation.