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SCORCHING TRAP: You Went for Coffee — I Barely Survived

How a dog feels when left alone in a hot car

You said, “I’ll be quick.”

You smiled and shut the door.

And I stayed to wait. Like always.

I don’t know what “soon” means. I don’t count minutes. I just lie in the car, where it gets hotter by the second. It’s hard to breathe. I lick my lips, but there’s no water. My paws are burning. My eyes sting.

To you, it’s just coffee.

To me — it’s hell.

A scenario too many know

A typical scene in a mall parking lot: a car in the sun, a slightly cracked window, and a dog inside.

The owner thinks: “Just for a minute.”

But one minute becomes a shopping trip — a coffee, a store next door, a sale, another store.

Time slips away.

You come back — and the dog no longer looks out the window. Doesn’t bark.

Just lies there. Silent.

Because for the dog, it wasn’t just waiting — it was life-threatening.

A dog can’t tell if you went for coffee or left forever.

The danger of overheating

- In just 10 minutes, the temperature inside a car in the sun can reach **43°C (109°F)**
- In 30 minutes — over **55°C (131°F)**
- **Dogs don’t sweat like humans.** Their only cooling mechanism is rapid breathing — and it doesn’t work in scorching air.
- Overheating causes **suffocation, panic, loss of consciousness, and death**
- Just **5–10 minutes** in a hot car can be fatal

Real-life testimony

Last summer, I witnessed a police officer break a car window to save a dog.

The dog didn’t respond. They poured water over him and barely managed to revive him.

A few minutes later — it would’ve been too late.

What to do if you see a dog in a car?

1. Check if the owner is nearby. Is there a note?
2. **Record the situation on video**
3. Call the police: **102** (give car make, license plate, and address)
4. Ask the shopping mall to make an announcement, or inform security
5. **In critical cases — act:** if the animal is unconscious, the law allows breaking the window to save it

What does the law say?

According to amendments to the **Law of Ukraine “On the Protection of Animals from Cruelty” (08.11.2021)**,

it is **forbidden** to leave an animal in a locked vehicle without a person present if the temperature exceeds **+20°C (68°F)** or drops below **+5°C (41°F)** and the animal has no way to shelter.

Owner — don't take the risk!

- **Never leave your dog in the car** — not even for a minute
- **Plan ahead:** bring someone with you or leave the dog at home
- **A cracked window doesn't help**
- “I can see him from the café” — is just an illusion of control

I just waited. Because I trusted you.

I don't know what 'soon' means.

I only know you're my world.

If you go — I wait.

Always.

And sometimes — for the last time.