

Walking Lucky

(Story words: professional, loyal, worry)

Ben had a job walking an elderly lady's dog after school. Mrs. Payton was now in her eighties, and she needed help walking Lucky.

Lucky was a very friendly dog who always seemed happy to see Ben. Ben was supposed to walk Lucky for at least forty-five minutes, as this was Lucky's big opportunity to get a long walk. Mrs. Payton could take him on the leash for short walks, as long as the streets were dry and not slippery.

At times, Ben would find it hard to keep Lucky walking. Lucky would pull on his leash and look back at the street where Mrs. Payton lived. It was as if Lucky were saying, "We need to get back now." It wasn't very satisfying to walk a lazy dog who always wanted to go home.

One day, Ben met a professional dog walker who walked lots of dogs—sometimes five or six at a time. When Ben complained about Lucky wanting to go home, Allison, the dog walker, asked, “Does Lucky want to go home even when his owner is not home?”

Ben thought about this. He realized Lucky was happy to walk longer if Mrs. Payton was out shopping or doing something else.

Allison said, “Some of my dogs are like this. They are so loyal to their owners that they worry their owners need them. Making friends with some of the other dogs distracts them, and it becomes less of a problem.”

Allison’s perspective helped Ben to be more sympathetic. When Lucky wanted to go home, Ben still had to coax him to go farther. This time he said, “Come on, Lucky, Mrs. Payton is fine, and she will be happy to see you in just a few minutes.”

When he dropped Lucky off, Mrs. Payton typically would be at the door to welcome them. Today, she opened the door just as Ben and Lucky were climbing the steps. “Did you have a good walk?”

Ben answered, “Yes, we did, but Lucky sure is happy to be back with you.”