

The Girl and the Dog



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Maya zipped up her yellow raincoat and checked the red treat pouch on her hip. Today was the day she would adopt a dog. At the shelter, a scruffy golden-tan dog with one floppy ear and one upright ear wagged his tail. His big amber eyes looked right at her. 'I will call you Biscuit,' Maya said softly. Biscuit licked her hand, and Maya's gap-toothed smile grew wide.



Biscuit wore a red collar with a round brass tag that jingled when he walked. His white chest patch showed as he trotted beside Maya on his short blue leash. 'Sit, Biscuit,' Maya said, holding out a treat. Biscuit sniffed the treat but then flopped down and rolled in the grass. Maya laughed. 'Training will take patience,' she said. 'But we will get there.'



Every morning, Maya and Biscuit practiced in the backyard. Maya held a treat and said, 'Sit.' Biscuit just wagged his tail and chased a butterfly. Maya waited and tried again. 'Sit,' she said gently. Biscuit looked at her, then at the treat. He sat down. 'Good boy!' Maya cheered. She gave him the treat and a scratch behind his floppy ear.



But Biscuit was easily distracted. On walks, he pulled toward every squirrel and sniffed every flower. 'Biscuit, come!' Maya called. Biscuit ignored her and tugged on the leash. Maya sighed. She knelt down and said, 'Let's try again.' She showed him a treat and walked backward. Biscuit trotted after her. 'Good come!' she praised. It was a start.



Maya kept training with treats and kind words. 'Sit,' she said. Biscuit sat. 'Stay,' she said. Biscuit stayed for one second, then two. 'Good boy!' Maya cheered. Biscuit's tail wagged so hard his whole body wiggled. Maya gave him a treat. 'You are learning!' she said. Biscuit barked happily, and they tried again.



One day, Maya and Biscuit went to the park. Maya brought her treat pouch and a big smile. 'Today we will practice everything,' she said. Biscuit looked around at the ducks and the children playing. Maya said, 'Sit.' Biscuit sat. 'Stay.' Biscuit stayed. Maya gave him a treat. 'You did it!' she said. Biscuit's amber eyes sparkled.



Maya taught Biscuit to walk beside her without pulling. 'Heel,' she said, and tapped her leg. Biscuit walked close. When he pulled, Maya stopped and waited. Biscuit learned that pulling made them stop. Soon he walked nicely beside her. 'Good heel!' Maya said, giving him a treat. Biscuit's brass tag jingled as he pranced along.



Each day, Maya and Biscuit practiced a little more. Biscuit learned to sit at crosswalks and wait for Maya's okay. He learned to come when she called, even when a squirrel was near. Maya learned to be patient and to use a happy voice. 'You are doing great,' she told Biscuit. Biscuit licked her hand as if to say, 'So are you.'



One windy day, Biscuit got scared by a loud noise and ran off. 'Biscuit, come!' Maya called, her voice calm and steady. Biscuit stopped and looked back. Maya knelt and held out a treat. 'Come, Biscuit,' she said again. Biscuit ran back to her. Maya hugged him. 'Good come,' she whispered. 'I will always help you feel safe.'



Maya and Biscuit practiced in the rain. Maya wore her yellow raincoat and Biscuit wore his red collar. 'Sit,' Maya said. Biscuit sat in a puddle. 'Stay,' she said. Biscuit stayed. Maya gave him a treat. 'You are a superstar!' she said. Biscuit shook off the water and wagged his tail. Training was fun, even in the rain.



At the park, Maya said, 'Let's try something new.' She hid a treat under a cup and said, 'Find it!' Biscuit sniffed and nosed the cup over. 'Good find!' Maya cheered. They played the game again and again. Biscuit loved using his nose. Maya loved seeing him learn. 'You are so smart,' she said. Biscuit barked with joy.



Now when Maya said, 'Walk,' Biscuit ran to the door and waited for his leash. He sat while Maya clipped it on. 'Good boy,' she said. On walks, Biscuit stayed close and looked up at Maya often, as if checking in. Maya gave him treats and praise. Their walks became smooth and happy. Biscuit's floppy ear flopped as he trotted.



Maya decided to teach Biscuit a fun trick: roll over. She showed him a treat and moved it in a circle. Biscuit watched, then rolled over. 'Good roll over!' Maya laughed. Biscuit did it again and again, wagging his tail. 'You are a natural,' Maya said. Biscuit's amber eyes shone with pride. Training was now their favorite game.



One sunny Saturday, Maya and Biscuit went on a long adventure walk. They followed a trail through the woods. Biscuit stayed close and came when called. They found a stream, and Biscuit splashed happily. Maya laughed. 'This is our best walk yet!' she said. Biscuit barked and wagged his tail. Every walk now felt like an adventure.



At the end of the day, Maya sat on a bench and Biscuit lay at her feet. 'We did it, Biscuit,' she said. 'You listened, and I was patient.' Biscuit put his head on her knee. Maya stroked his scruffy fur. 'We make a great team,' she whispered. Biscuit's brass tag glinted in the sun. They had built a strong friendship.



Maya learned that patience makes everything better. Biscuit learned that listening brings treats and love. Now every walk is a fun adventure. They explore new paths and play new games. Maya's red treat pouch is always ready, and Biscuit's tail always wags. 'Ready for a walk?' Maya asks. Biscuit barks and runs to the door. Their friendship grows every day.