

The Boy and the Little Dog



Aysel Banu YAVUZAL

The Boy and the Little Dog

Aysel Banu YAVUZAL



Sam was seven years old, with messy sandy-brown hair and a cowlick that never stayed down. He had warm hazel eyes and freckles across his nose. One sunny morning, Sam and his mom drove to the rescue shelter. Sam carried a small green treat pouch on his belt, just in case. He hoped to meet a dog who needed a friend.



At the shelter, a tiny puppy peeked out from behind a blanket. He was cream and tan, with scruffy fur and one floppy ear and one upright ear. His big dark brown eyes looked scared, and his little tail was tucked. The puppy wore a red collar with a round silver tag. Sam knelt down and spoke softly, 'Hi, little one. I'm Sam.'



A helper told Sam the puppy's name was Pip. Pip was only four months old and very shy. He had been found alone and was still learning to trust people. Sam's heart went soft. 'Can I try to be his friend?' he asked. The helper smiled and nodded. 'Go slow,' she said. 'Gentle wins the day.'



Sam sat quietly on the floor and opened his hand. A tiny treat rested on his palm. Pip crouched low, his tail tucked, and watched with big round eyes. Sam didn't move. He just waited. After a long moment, Pip took one small step forward. Then another. Sam's freckled face lit up with a gentle smile.



Pip sniffed the treat, then gently took it from Sam's hand. His little tail gave a tiny wag. Sam's heart felt like it might burst with joy. 'Good boy, Pip,' he whispered. That was the very first time Pip had come close to anyone. Sam knew this was the start of something special. He promised to be patient.



The next day, Sam came back with more treats and a soft blanket. He sat on the floor and waited again. Pip remembered him and crept a little closer. Sam showed Pip a simple trick: he held a treat near Pip's nose and slowly moved it up. Pip's bottom plopped down, and he sat. 'Sit!' Sam said softly. Pip got a treat and a gentle scratch behind his floppy ear.



Every day, Sam visited Pip. He taught him to sit, to stay, and to come when called. Sam never rushed. He used calm words and tiny treats from his green pouch. Pip learned that Sam's hands were safe and kind. Sometimes Pip even licked Sam's fingers. Each small lesson built a little more trust between them.



One afternoon, Sam brought a soft red ball. He rolled it gently across the floor. Pip watched it wobble, then pounced! He batted it with his little paws and chased it under a chair. Sam laughed, and Pip's tail wagged fast. For the first time, Pip looked playful and happy. Sam felt proud of his little friend.



Sam's mom watched them play and smiled. 'Pip is a different dog when you're here,' she said. Sam nodded. 'He just needed someone to be gentle,' he replied. Pip trotted over and sat right on Sam's sneaker. Sam bent down and stroked his scruffy fur. 'I think Pip is ready to come home,' Mom said. Sam's eyes went wide. 'Really?'



The day finally came. Sam and his mom filled out the papers, and the helper handed Pip's leash to Sam. Pip looked up at Sam with his big brown eyes and gave a tiny bark. Sam laughed. 'Let's go home, Pip!' he said. Pip's tail wagged so hard his whole back end wiggled. They walked out together into the sunshine.



At home, Pip was nervous at first. He hid behind the sofa and wouldn't come out. Sam didn't pull or shout. He just sat on the floor nearby and spoke softly. 'It's okay, Pip. This is your home now.' He placed a treat on the floor and waited. Slowly, Pip crept out, took the treat, and curled up in Sam's lap.



Sam showed Pip his new bed and his food bowl. He taught Pip where to go and what to do. Pip made mistakes sometimes, but Sam never got cross. 'That's okay,' he said. 'We'll try again.' With every gentle lesson, Pip trusted Sam more. Soon Pip followed Sam everywhere, his little tag jingling. They were a team.



One evening, Sam sat on the porch with Pip. 'You're my best friend,' Sam said. Pip licked his nose. Sam giggled. 'I'm glad you trust me,' he whispered. Pip put a paw on Sam's knee. It was like he was saying, 'I trust you, too.' The sun set softly, and they watched the stars come out, one by one.



Now Pip wakes up happy every day. He wags his tail and runs to Sam's room. They play fetch in the yard and practice tricks. Pip can sit, stay, and even roll over. Sam always says 'Good boy!' and gives a treat. Their days are full of laughter and wet-nose kisses. Pip is safe and loved.



Sam learned something important. Kindness and gentle training can help a scared dog feel brave. Trust grows one small treat at a time. He told his friends, 'If you're patient and quiet, a rescue dog will learn to love you.' Pip wagged his tail as if to say, 'It's true!' And Sam smiled his gap-toothed smile.



So if you ever meet a shy little dog, remember Sam and Pip. Be kind, be patient, and use gentle training. A rescue dog just needs someone to trust. With love and treats, even the shyest puppy can become your best friend. Sam and Pip play together every day, and their tails wag with happiness.