

Pup, Jet, and the Great Big Forest

Thomas, Kate, Mother, Father, and Pup were on vacation! It was summer, and Mother's younger brother, Ben, had invited them to visit his farm in the countryside.

Kate and Thomas loved helping Uncle Ben do chores. They milked the cows and made a game out of gathering the eggs from the hens, seeing who could find and collect the most.

Today was a special day: Uncle Ben's big black Labrador had a litter of puppies, and the puppies were now old enough to take to town to sell.



"Oh, Daddy, please can we keep one?" Kate asked, looking at the puppies that Father had put into one box.

"What about Pup?" asked Father.

"Pup is Thomas' pet," Kate said as she stroked an especially cute, black puppy.

Father and Mother looked at each other and then smiled. "All right," agreed Mother. "Just be sure you take good care of him and don't let him wander off into the forest. He's still young and could easily get lost."

Kate immediately chose one of the little puppies from the litter and named him Jet. He was jet-black.

"I'll take good care of Jet!" said Kate.

"And I can help too," Thomas chimed in.



Father and Uncle Ben went to the nearby town to find homes for the other puppies, and Kate and Thomas hurried through the chores they had agreed to do. As soon as they were done, they could go outside and play with the new puppy.

When they had finished their chores, Mother gave them permission to go play outside. "Be back when you hear the dinner bell ring."

Kate carefully carried Jet outside. Thomas and Pup followed. They all went past the chicken coop, past the goat pen, past the stalls where the horses were kept, and out to the very edge of Uncle Ben's farm.

They played with Jet, throwing sticks and teaching him to bring them back so they could throw them again. Pup chased and tumbled and played with Jet too. Kate brought both dogs a little snack.



It seemed barely any time had passed when they heard Mother ring the dinner bell from the porch. "Mother told us to go in when the dinner bell rings," Kate said.

"Aww. We barely had any time to play," said Thomas.

"Okay, let's just play for a few more minutes," Kate said as she picked up a stick and threw it as far as she could. Jet bounded off after the stick. But instead of picking it up and coming back, he ran into the forest and didn't stop. Kate yelled for Jet to stop. Thomas chased after Jet till he reached the edge of the forest. He couldn't see Jet anywhere. Pup barked at the dark forest.



Thomas began to run again, when Kate, remembering what Father had said about the forest being a dangerous place, cried, "No, Thomas! Don't follow him into the forest!"

Thomas went just a little farther, then turned around and came back. "I can't see Jet anywhere."

"We should have gone inside when we heard the dinner bell," said Kate sadly.

They waited and looked for a few more minutes, but Jet was nowhere to be seen. They walked sorrowfully back to the house where Mother was waiting for them.

Kate tearfully explained how Jet had run into the forest and hadn't returned. They were both sorry they had not come inside when they should have.



As they ate supper that evening, they heard rumbling overhead. Soon rain began to splatter on the window panes.

Before going to sleep that night, Kate prayed, "Jesus, please keep Jet safe. Please help him to find his way home."

"Amen," Thomas whispered.

Early the next morning, the rooster crowed, and Thomas and Kate went to help Uncle Ben milk the goats and collect the eggs. But this time they didn't run and play their usual games. Even Pup, who was usually so playful, was quiet.



Thomas and Kate thought about Jet, the forest, and the rain, and how next time they would be sure to obey right away when Mother asked them to do something. And then they heard Pup making a ruckus in the chicken coop.

"Pup should know better than to disturb the chickens," muttered Kate to herself as she walked over to find out what was happening. Following Pup's excited barks to the corner of the chicken coop, she looked down and ... there was Jet! He looked wet, cold, and dirty, but he was alive and unhurt.

"It's Jet!" shouted Kate to Thomas. "Jet has come home!"



Kate picked up the puppy and held him in her arms.

Thomas joined the little circle that had formed around Kate and Jet. Mother and Father and Uncle Ben had heard the commotion and had come outside too.

“Jesus answered your prayer,” said Thomas, petting Jet on the head.

Kate was overjoyed. And from that day on when Mother would ask Kate and Thomas to come in for dinner, Kate and Thomas, Jet and Pup, would race each other to see who could get home first.

The End

