

Walk In the Park

by Alan Elliott

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When I visit my grandparents' house,

I can't wait until my Grandfather says,

"Let's take the dog for a walk."

Honey leaps to her feet when she hears those words.

She's a big Golden Retriever with long silky hair and a kind face.

Honey darts off into another part of the house

And fetches her leash.

"Where do you want to go?" asks my grandfather.

And I always say, "To the park."

While Honey is jumping and running around the room
Waiting to go on her walk,
Grandfather and I put on our walking shoes and hats.
He takes a yellow frisbee off a shelf,
Clips the leash onto Honey's collar,
And we head out the door with Honey leading the way.
"Have a good time," says Grandmother as we leave.

Grandfather's street is covered like a tent with tall trees.
All of the houses have big front porches.
And the neighbors sit on their porch swings and say,
"Nice day for a walk!"

Mr. Higgins used to be a policeman,
But now he grows big red and yellow roses.
When we pass his house he tells us,
"Be careful crossing the streets."

Mrs. Withers is an architect,
She's always fixing up her house,
Climbing up on ladders, painting, and hammering.
But she stops and waves when we walk by.

The park has a big stone arch at the entrance,
We walk under it and up a wide red brick path.
People sit on benches on both sides of it
Talking and reading newspapers. Some feed the pigeons.

A breeze that blows the leaves in the big overhead trees
Carries the smell of fresh popcorn,
Grandfather buys me some without me even asking.

In the middle of the park there's a large field covered in freshly mown
grass.

We unclip Honey's leash and she runs ahead of us,
Then turns and stops,
Looking at us with a smile on her face and her tongue hanging out.

"Catch!" I yell, and throw the frisbee high into the air.
Honey runs after the flying yellow disk,
Jumps, and catches it in mid air.

"Here, girl!" I call, and Honey brings me back the disk.

Grandfather and I take turns throwing the frisbee,

And Honey never seems to get tired of the game.

But we get tired, and Grandfather says,

“How about a cold drink?”

We sit on a bench next to the small lake sipping our drinks.

Honey laps at the water while the ducks look at her with curiosity.

“Quack!” says one very loudly, and Honey answers with a bark.

“Come sit here,” says Grandfather to Honey.

“I don’t think they want to play with you.”

He puts her leash back on,

Then pulls two slices of bread from his pocket.

We break the bread into little pieces

And toss them one at a time into the edge of the water.

The ducks quack loudly as they paddle in a race

To be the first to the bread.

One brave duck comes up onto the grass and quacks at us for more.

Honey barks once and this time the duck scrambles back to the water, flapping its wings as it moves.

“What do you want to do next?” asks Grandfather.

“Let’s go to the fort,” I say.

There is a big wooden fort just my size.

Honey and I climb up to the lookout,

I wave to Grandfather below and Honey wags her tail.

In one room there’s a big wheel I can turn,

Just like on a pirate’s ship.

“Aye, Aye, Captain!” I tell Honey.

Another room has a funny shaped mirror

That makes Honey and me look very tall.

From the top room, I slide down a slide into a bed of gravel,

And Honey slides down right behind me.

“Time to go back for lunch,” says Grandfather.

“I promised I’d get you back on time.”

“Okay,” I said, even though I didn’t want to leave.

Honey also seemed sad to have to leave.

Grandfather lets me lead Honey
As we walk back down the red brick path,
Under the arch, across the street,
Down the tree covered block,
And back to the house.

Grandmother has tomato soup and grilled cheese sandwiches ready
for us,

And gives Honey a fresh bowl of water and a snack.

I lick my lips and Honey licks hers.

“Yummy!”

After lunch, Grandfather sits in his big chair.

He starts to read the newspaper,

But soon we hear him snoring.

He’s fast asleep.

I sit with Honey and look out the window at the sunny day.

“What do you want to do now?” I ask Honey.

But she just puts her nose in my lap and looks up at me

With her big brown eyes.

Grandmother goes out of the room and comes back with something in her hand.

Honey follows her out to the front porch and I follow Honey.

Grandmother clips the leash to Honey's collar, winks and whispers to me, "Now it's *our* turn to go for a walk in the park."