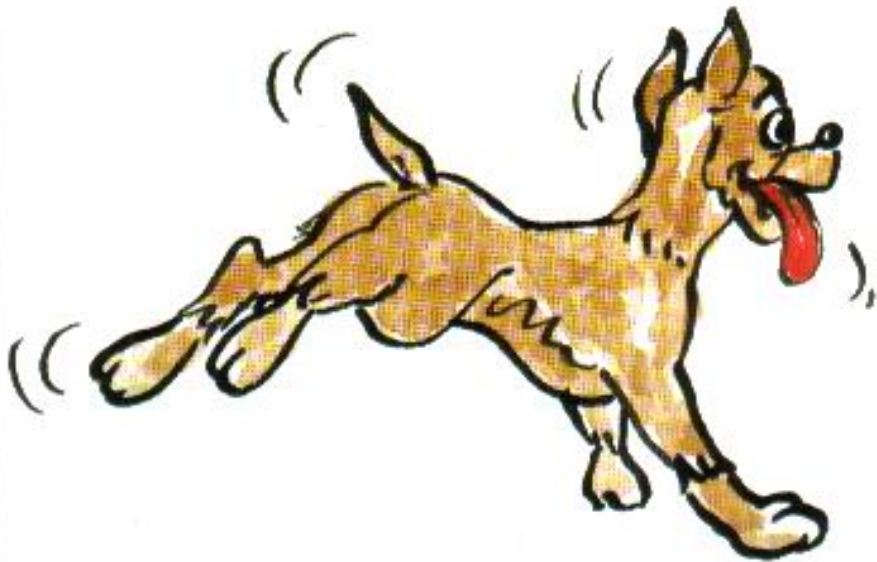


My Best Friend Jason



Jason is a young dog.

He is two years old and he lives with Marios. Marios is very proud of Jason because he is such a strong, healthy and clever dog.

Jason loves to play football with Marios and his friends.

Marios' friends would love to have a super dog like Jason.



"How come Jason is such a fantastic dog?" Yiannis asked Marios. "My dog isn't like that at all."

"Every day, I take him for walks," answered Marios. "We go two times a day! Once in the morning, before school, and once when I get home from school. He loves his walks. He's used to them now, and he looks forward to them every day. And that's the time when I talk to him and when I train him."



"How is it he's so clean? He's so shiny," said Yiannis.

"Simple!" Marios replied. "Every year, I take him to the vet for his injections. Jason has his own Injection Record Card to remind us when we should take him to the vet. And the reason he's so shiny is because I brush him every day."

"You brush him!" Yiannis shouted. "You mean you don't bath him every day?"

"No, silly," said Marios, "don't you know that a dog's hair isn't the same as ours? You harm a dog's coat if you bath him every day. It's enough just to give him good brush."

"Would you like to see my dog, Lassie?" Yiannis asked in a quiet voice.

"Sure. Why not? Maybe she and Jason can be friends," said Marios.



"Poor Lassie! This is terrible! Why do you treat such a pretty dog like that?" Marios was angry. "Why have you tied her up on such a short chain?" Marios shouted.

"My father says it's O.K. to do that," Yiannis replied sadly.

"Why is she being fed on only bread? Marios continued.

"My father says it's all right for dogs to eat only bread," said Yiannis.

"Doesn't she bark all the time, tied up like that?" Marios asked. "She must be uncomfortable and lonely".



"She used to bark a lot and the neighbours would get angry. Now, I don't think she can bark any more. She just lies there looking very sad and unhappy.

"On Thursday, it's my birthday. I remember last year I asked for a dog as a birthday gift. Now I wish I had never asked for her," said Yiannis.



One afternoon Marios was doing his homework with his cousin, Elli. They often do their homework together, for they are in the same class at school.

Elli would usually bring her little dog, Tina, with her.

"What are we going to do, Elli? We have to help Yiannis; Lassie is so unhappy," said Marios.

"Usually you're the one who comes up with good ideas."

"I know," said Elli. "Every morning when I go to school, I see that poor dog lying there miserable. Sometimes I want to cry; other times I get really angry. Winter and summer, she lies there all alone."



WEDNESDAY

"Happy Birthday, Yianni," said Marios, handing Yiannis his present.

"Oh! It's a book. How to Look After Your Dog. I really wish Lassie could be happy like that dog," said Yiannis.

"What are your parents going to give you for your birthday this year?" asked Marios.

"I told you. I don't want anything from them. I don't even want a party. The only thing I want is for Lassie to be happy," replied Yiannis.



THURSDAY

"Hi Marios, Hi Elli."

"What happened?" asked Marios.

"They understood at last!" Yiannis shouted happily.

"We took Lassie to the vet! And just listen to this. They decided to buy proper dog food for her."

"We managed! And the book really helped."

"Come on, lets play basketball," Ellie shouted.

"Come on dogs!"

"Let's play!"



Education is one of the most important methods of ensuring the humane treatment of the other species with which we share this planet.

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