The Girl and the Puppy School

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Sophie skipped down the sunny sidewalk, her curly hair bouncing in two puffs. In her arms, a tiny puppy wiggled with excitement. His name was Teddy, and his floppy golden ears flopped as he looked at everything. Today was a very special day: Sophie and Teddy were going to puppy school for the very first time. Sophie wore her yellow t-shirt and denim overalls, and a small green treat pouch hung at her waist.

At the puppy school, a friendly teacher named Ms. Hazel welcomed them with a wide smile. She wore a teal polo shirt and round glasses, and a whistle hung from a lanyard around her neck. 'Welcome, Sophie and Teddy!' she said. 'We'll learn simple cues today, like sit and come. We use treats as rewards.' Sophie felt a little nervous but mostly excited. Teddy's fluffy tail wagged so fast it was a blur.

Ms. Hazel showed the class how to hold a treat near a puppy's nose and slowly move it up. 'When Teddy sits, say yes and give the treat,' she explained. Sophie knelt down, her red canvas sneakers squeaking on the floor. She held a treat right at Teddy's tiny black nose. Teddy sniffed, then plopped his bottom down. 'Yes!' Sophie cheered, and gave him the treat. Teddy's tail wagged with joy.

The next cue was come. Ms. Hazel stood a few steps away and called, 'Teddy, come!' But Teddy was busy sniffing a spot on the floor. Sophie tried again, crouching low and patting her knees. 'Teddy, come!' she called in a happy voice. Teddy looked up, his big shiny eyes curious. He took a wobbly step, then another, and finally toddled over to Sophie. She rewarded him with a treat and a gentle scratch behind his floppy ears.

Practicing was fun, but Teddy got distracted easily. A bright red ball rolled past, and Teddy dashed after it, his cream-coloured paws skidding on the floor. Sophie laughed and gently guided him back. 'It's okay, Teddy,' she said. 'Let's try again.' She never got cross, even when Teddy chased his own tail instead of sitting. Ms. Hazel smiled and said, 'Patience is the best treat of all.'

Each time Teddy did something right, even a little bit, Sophie gave him a treat and praised him. 'Good sit, Teddy!' she said when he plopped down. 'Good come!' when he wobbled toward her. Teddy's tail wagged constantly, and his brass tag jingled on his red collar. The other puppies in the class were learning too, but Sophie only cared about Teddy. Every small success made her heart feel warm and proud.

During a break, Sophie sat on the floor and Teddy climbed into her lap. She stroked his soft golden-brown fur and whispered, 'You're doing great, Teddy.' Teddy licked her cheek with his tiny pink tongue. Ms. Hazel came over and said, 'Sophie, I love how gentle you are with him. That builds trust.' Sophie beamed. She gave Teddy a tiny treat just for being cute, and he wagged his tail so hard his whole body wiggled.

Back to practice, Ms. Hazel set up a little obstacle course with cones and a low tunnel. 'Let's practice come with a fun game,' she said. Sophie stood at one end and called Teddy. At first, Teddy sniffed a cone and got sidetracked. But Sophie waited patiently, calling in a cheerful voice. Soon Teddy remembered the game and came running, his ears flapping. Sophie rewarded him with a treat and a big hug.

Teddy still didn't learn everything right away. Sometimes he sat when Sophie asked him to come, and sometimes he just looked at her with his head tilted. But Sophie never sighed or frowned. She just tried again, using a happy voice and yummy treats. 'We'll get it, Teddy,' she said. Teddy trusted her more with each gentle try. Ms. Hazel nodded approvingly. 'That's the spirit, Sophie!'

By the end of class, Teddy could sit almost every time Sophie asked. He could come too, though sometimes he took a detour to sniff something interesting. Sophie didn't mind. She knew learning took time. She packed up her green treat pouch and clipped on Teddy's leash. Teddy looked up at her with his big dark eyes, and Sophie could see he was proud of himself. His tail kept wagging all the way to the door.

Ms. Hazel called the class together. 'Great job, everyone! Remember, short practice at home, lots of rewards, and always be patient.' She gave Sophie a special sticker for being so kind. Sophie stuck it on her overalls pocket. Then Ms. Hazel knelt down and gave Teddy a gentle pat. 'Teddy, you're a brave little pup,' she said. Teddy licked her hand, and his brass tag jingled softly.

On the way home, Sophie practiced 'sit' at the corner before crossing the street. Teddy sat right away, and Sophie gave him a treat. 'Good boy!' she said. Teddy's tail wagged so fast it made a little breeze. Sophie felt proud of both of them. She had learned that being patient and using rewards made training fun for Teddy. And Teddy had learned that Sophie was always kind, even when he made mistakes.

At home, Teddy explored the living room with more confidence than before. He walked past the vacuum cleaner without hiding, and he even climbed onto his little bed by himself. Sophie watched him and smiled. 'You're getting braver, Teddy,' she said. Teddy wagged his tail and brought her his favorite squeaky toy. Sophie giggled and gave him a treat. Every day, their trust in each other grew stronger and stronger.

That night, Sophie sat on her bed with Teddy curled up beside her. She thought about puppy school and how much Teddy had learned. He wasn't perfect, but he was trying, and that was what mattered. Sophie had stayed patient and never got cross, and Teddy had learned to trust her. She kissed his soft head and whispered, 'We make a great team, Teddy.' Teddy sighed happily and closed his eyes.

The next morning, Sophie woke up to a wet nose poking her cheek. Teddy was ready to play and practice. They went into the backyard, and Sophie pulled out her green treat pouch. 'Teddy, sit!' she said. Teddy sat immediately, his tail sweeping the grass. 'Good boy!' Sophie cheered. She gave him a treat and a big hug. Teddy's eyes sparkled with joy. Learning new things was fun when you had a patient friend.

Sophie learned that gentle, patient guidance helps a puppy grow brave and happy. Teddy learned that Sophie was always there to help him, with treats and kind words. Together, they practiced a little every day, and each small success made Teddy's tail wag with joy. Sophie knew that with patience and rewards, Teddy could learn anything. And Teddy knew that with Sophie by his side, he could do anything too.