

The Adventures of Bear and Tux

"Let's go exploring," Tux suggested. "Why shouldn't we? There's a hole in the fence we could slip through without any problem, and the people aren't even here right now. They left. Again. Don't you think we deserve to see more than this backyard?"

Tux looked at his brother Bear and hoped that he would be willing to join in on this adventure. He sometimes wondered how the two of them could be related, as did many of the people who saw them. Tux had shaggy, long, black, curly hair and got people's attention by barking and whining adorably. In contrast, Bear, with his short black hair and white paws, was definitely the silent type. He normally sat watching everything around him without making a sound. Different though they were, Tux was glad to have his bossy brother around because he was sure things would be very boring and maybe even a little lonely without him.

"I'm not so sure this is a good idea, Tux," Bear replied cautiously. "Do you remember the trouble we got into the last time we went on one of your adventures?" Bear certainly remembered the tangled mess they had gotten into and how mad the people had been, especially the girl.

Several months ago while the people were asleep his brother had suggested that they go explore the house. "There's a smell I just can't figure out," he'd said. "And if they didn't want us out and about, they should have kept us locked up." So, against his better judgment, Bear had followed his brother out into the living room. There, they found all kinds of things to chew on: highlighters, books, paper, and a long, purple thing that left beautiful purple feathers all over the house when they tore it apart. That part, Bear admitted, had not been so bad. But things changed when they somehow locked themselves in the room with the door to the outside. Bear had tangled his back paw in the cord attached to the things covering the window. He had not been able to struggle free. This was how the girl had found them the next morning. Bear was completely tangled up and trapped in those stupid window coverings. Tux lay innocently on the floor. She had spanked them both hard before banishing them outside to the cold winter air. Bear did not want that to happen again.

"Sure I remember," Tux said, bringing Bear back from his thoughts. "But I don't think we'll get in that much trouble. Especially if we make it back into the yard before the people get back. Let's try it. Please!" Tux pleaded.

"Well, the hole is already there. All right, let's give this adventure a try!" Bear barked.

It took a while for the brothers to figure out how to make their escape. First, Tux slipped through the hole in the fence. When Bear followed him, he found his brother eagerly sniffing the ground in front of their house. Sniff, sniff, sniff. Tux was extremely interested in the many smells that rose from the ground. He smelled other animals like dogs, cats, squirrels, and birds. He also smelled many people smells and all types of food.

"Come on, Tux!" Bear said impatiently to his brother. Tux's face was stuck in an ice cream wrapper. "This won't be much of an adventure if we only make it to the front yard. Let's go!" Tux came toward him then. His eyes showed his excitement as his tail wagged happily behind him.

Using their noses to guide them, the two dogs pranced down the sidewalk to where it ended. There, they were forced to stop because of all of the cars driving up and down the street. Bear thought about all of the car rides he and his brother had enjoyed in their man's big car while he was trying to decide what to do next. He wished for a second that he was on a safe, fun car ride instead of on this silly, dangerous adventure. Just then, Tux nudged Bear and directed his attention to the left. The cars had stopped, and they could make it across the street to the other sidewalk if they moved quickly. The two dogs started to walk across the street. But they soon had to run as fast as they could so that the cars that had started speeding down the street again did not hit them.

"Gosh, I hope that was the last time we have to do that," Tux said. He tried to catch his breath. He panted heavily. His tongue hung out one side of his mouth as he tried to cool off and calm down after dodging the cars in the street.

"Me too," Bear said over his shoulder. He continued walking down the street. The brothers stayed together, walking slowly down the sidewalks and stopping frequently to sniff the many different smells that covered the ground. Occasionally, they paused to let other dogs know that they had been there too. They continued their adventure in this way for quite some time when suddenly Bear stopped to sniff and began turning in slow circles.

"What is it?" Tux asked as he continued to follow his nose and scout out his surroundings.

"Would you just stop for a minute?" Bear asked. "I don't know where we are, and we've been walking for so long now I don't think we'll be able to find our way home." He tried to hide the panic in his voice as he looked around and let the scents carried by the breeze fill his nose.

"What? You don't know where we are?" Tux asked loudly. "How will we ever make it home? What about dinner? What if we never make it back, and I never get to play with my ball again?" His voice rose as his panic grew stronger. He ran in fast circles, his nose to the ground as he tried to recapture the scent trail that would lead them back home.

"Come here boys!" a man's voice startled them from their panic. The two dogs sat still, watching the man curiously and trying to figure out what he wanted. They knew this was not their man because this man's voice was deeper. He wore all black clothing and had a shiny thing on his chest.

"Come here boys," the police officer repeated kindly. This was not the first time he had found dogs wandering far from home. If he could just read the address on their collars, he knew he could get them home quickly and safely. Sensing his kindness, the dogs approached the man slowly, sniffing the hand he offered them and letting him scratch behind their ears. As the police officer scratched and the dogs sniffed his new scents eagerly, the man was able to read the address on their collars and discovered that their house was just five minutes away. Because they lived so close, the police officer decided to take them home himself right then instead of taking them to the police station. When he opened the door to his car, both dogs sat, their tails swishing back and forth on the ground. Like the well-mannered dogs they were, Bear and Tux waited until he nodded and snapped his fingers before jumping in the car and sitting on the backseat. The police officer closed the car door, got in the drivers seat, rolled down both of the windows to give Bear and Tux fresh air, and started driving toward their house.

"I'm glad this man found us," Bear told his brother. "We never would have found our way home without him."

Bear looked at Tux. He waited for agreement or an apology for getting them into this mess. But he found his brother with his head hanging out the window, his tongue wagging. Bear turned to look out the window too when Tux gave no response. When they turned the corner and he saw their house, he stood up on the seat, wagging his tail rapidly as his body became tense with eagerness. They pulled into the driveway, and the police officer opened the car door. Bear and Tux leaped out and raced for the front door.

"We're home!" they barked together. "We're sorry we left. We traveled further from home than we thought and got lost. Please let us back in! We're sorry!"

The dogs' noisy barking alerted their man in the house who opened the door and welcomed them with open arms. All he could think about was how happy he was to have them home.

"Thank goodness you're back," their man told Bear and Tux as they jumped on him and licked his face. "Hopefully that will be your last adventure for a while."

- 1. What happened the last time the dogs got into trouble?**
 - A. They were spanked and had to stay out in the cold.
 - B. They were scolded and locked inside their doghouse.
 - C. They had to eat all of their meals outside by the doghouse.

- 2. What did the dogs do most on their adventure?**
 - A. Sniff the ground and the air.
 - B. Look for something to eat.
 - C. Avoid getting hit by cars.

- 3. Why was Bear holding back from agreeing to go with Tux on a new adventure?**
 - A. He thought their owners would be coming back soon, and they would be in trouble.
 - B. He cared more about staying in the yard and not breaking the house rules.
 - C. He remembered what happened the last time he went on an adventure with Tux.

- 4. What was the first problem the dogs ran into after they got out?**
 - A. They couldn't figure out how to cross the street.
 - B. Bear got stuck out in the middle of the street.
 - C. There were speeding cars in the street.

- 5. How did Tux act when he found out that he was lost?**
 - A. He remained in control and started sniffing the ground.
 - B. He began to panic and worry about never getting back.
 - C. He thought it was turning into an exciting adventure.

- 6. What was the biggest problem for Tux and Bear?**
 - A. A police officer made them get into his car.
 - B. They almost got run over by speeding cars.
 - C. They couldn't find their way back home.

- 7. What was something Tux was especially good at?**
 - A. He was a good listener and cared about hearing Bear's opinion.
 - B. He could talk Bear into doing things that he shouldn't.
 - C. He could come up with good ideas for having fun.

8. What did Tux say to try to convince Bear to go out through the hole in the fence?

- A. That they deserved to see more than just their backyard.
- B. That any dog would go out if it had this kind of opportunity.
- C. That it was okay to go out the hole because they didn't make the hole.

9. Why did Tux sometimes wonder how he and Bear could be related to each other?

- A. They didn't look alike, and they didn't think alike.
- B. They looked alike, but they didn't like to do the same things.
- C. They didn't look like brothers because of their different sizes.

10. What was Tux like?

- A. He thought it was okay to get out because he was a dog.
- B. He was mostly interested in having fun adventures.
- C. He liked to get out but was careful to not get into trouble.

11. What reason did Bear come up with to feel it was okay to go with Tux?

- A. The owners wouldn't be back for awhile.
- B. They couldn't get in that much trouble.
- C. There was a hole in the fence already.

12. What was this story mostly about?

- A. How one dog talked the other dog into going outside the yard to explore.
- B. How two dogs who think differently had an adventure together.
- C. How dogs can have a good home and still want to go outside into the streets.

13. What would Bear probably do if Tux wasn't around?

- A. Not go so far from the house that he gets lost.
- B. Go out on his own every chance he got.
- C. Stay in the yard and not cause trouble.

14. What was Bear like compared to Tux?

- A. Tux tried to keep Bear out of trouble, but Bear never listened.
- B. Tux was loud and got noticed, and Bear was a quiet watcher.
- C. Bear always wanted to go on an adventure, and Tux didn't.

15. What will Bear probably do the next time Tux wants to leave to explore?

- A. Tell Tux that he will never go out with him again no matter what.
- B. Remind him how they always get into trouble but then go anyway.
- C. Talk him into staying in the yard by giving reasons for not going out.

16. What was the police officer like?

- A. He wanted to take the dogs away and didn't care where they came from.
- B. He only was nice to the dogs because he wanted to get them into his car.
- C. He knew how to treat the dogs because he had experience with lost dogs.

17. How did Tux and Bear feel when they arrived back at their home?

- A. They were happy to be home and felt sorry for what they did.
- B. The only thing they cared about was getting back into the house.
- C. They were afraid that the owner was gone and couldn't let them in.

18. What was Tux probably thinking on the way home?

- A. The next time they go out he will make sure it is okay with Bear.
- B. Maybe they shouldn't go out any more because it is too dangerous.
- C. Getting lost wasn't such a big deal, and now they were getting a ride home.

19. What was the owner probably thinking when he said that he hoped this would be the dogs' last adventure for a while?

- A. He was tired of the dogs always getting out and getting into trouble.
- B. He knew they would get out again but hoped it would not be soon.
- C. He planned to fix the fence and keep the dogs locked in from now on.

20. What did the police officer understand from the way the dogs acted?

- A. The dogs probably came from a good home and were well trained.
- B. The dogs were not very obedient because they were out in the streets.
- C. The owner of the dogs must not take care of the dogs or they would be home.