



Best Friends

The person is homeless and sitting down and the dog has come along and started to befriend them. I don't think he's homeless because there's none of the... what we could call 'detritus', none of the luggage that homeless people seem to carry with them. I wonder if the dog's a stray and he's begging for food. Looking at the bus shelter and the trees lining the street, I think we're in London;

not the centre of London, more like somewhere in the suburbs.

I think it's a female. It's her dog and she's sharing her food; she's about to hand it a bit of her sandwich. I think the body language suggests a familiarity between them. Collies are very, very intelligent, so it's going to be extremely obedient. It's a well-kept dog: the hair is well maintained, but the claws are a little bit long so perhaps she hasn't been to the vet to have those clipped in a while. This is a very attentive dog, judging by the way it's looking up. I'm going to say 'she' because I want to make the dog a she. And she is looking up to, I don't like the word 'master' or 'mistress', but she's looking up to the person she responds to.

A lot of people would look at this dog and think 'Lassie'. The woman's wearing shoes that have a kind of buckle on the side of it. She has quite small feet. She's called Judith and she's going back home. She brought the dog to town with her to go to the vets. She lives in the countryside somewhere. The dog hasn't got a lead, so it's obviously a very obedient dog. Its claws are long because it's not wearing them down on tarmac paths and things like that and is instead racing around the fields herding sheep. She had to take the dog for a routine test, like a blood test, or perhaps to test if she was pregnant (the dog, not the girl) and now she's waiting for the bus to go home.

If we're in London, parts of Ruislip and places like that do have fields. She'll probably have to travel for about half an hour to get home. I'm not sure if the bus driver will allow a dog on that's not on a lead.

I think Judith is a little bit of a loner. Her main relationship is with Lassie and she probably spends more time with her than with anyone else. I wonder if she's an only child. I think she has difficulty socializing with people. Looking at everybody else, the fact that her hood's up indicates enclosure: she likes to keep things to herself. I'm not sure about is how old she is; there's a part of me that thinks she's quite old.

She's a very responsible dog owner, and I think she has got a lead around her neck. She trusts this dog; she trusts Lassie so much that she doesn't need to use the lead. I must say that my experience with Collies has been precisely that: they'll do whatever they are trained to do.

I think she's feeling lonely. If she wanted to socialise with people, she would have stood nearer to the others at the bus stop, not on the seat on her own. If she lives in the countryside, it could be that her parents have died and now it's just her and the dog living there and that's it. She could be very, very lonely.

I think the weather is quite chilly and she's shrugged up in her parka and gloves, trying to keep warm. She's just resigned to waiting for this flipping bus and wishing it would hurry up and come!

The man at the back is called Tom. He's late 40s maybe early 50s. He's well wrapped up. His footwear is not boots because he's not in a heavy job where you would need steel toecaps. He's a back-of-house hotel worker. He's not smart but neither is he scruffily dressed. He could do with a haircut at the back a bit. He's saying: "It's just another day, mate. Here we go again."

It's autumn or early winter; sometimes sunshine, but very cold with it. It's about 11 o'clock in the morning because there's not a huge amount of people around. There's no litter; in a town and there's no litter? Goodness me! And no sign of a litter bin either.

This place is quite austere. It's quite cold: that chap waiting at the bus stop has got a scarf around his shoulders and he's got his hands in his pockets. The chap behind him has got his hands in his pockets too. I think he's perished because he didn't bring his jacket out with him.

I think this is a European town. It's possibly somewhere in Germany or Poland partly because of the language on the poster, but also because..., if you look through the bus stop and, past the timetable, there is one of the news units that they have in European cities. This town or city has a tram. Well spotted! It could be Sheffield or Birmingham. I don't know languages well enough to know what the poster's saying, but it's definitely not English.