

**Read the story. Then answer the question below.**

## **Buster**

"Dad, may I walk to Belinda's house by myself?" asked Sharon. "Since you are on call for work, I know you can't leave the house to take me."

"Why can't you wait until tomorrow? I can take you then," said her dad.

"Belinda asked me to spend the night with her so we can watch the meteor shower because it ends tonight. She has a telescope with camera equipment, and we want to take pictures of it," replied Sharon. "If you stand on our front porch, you can practically see where she lives."

"That's true," her dad said, thinking about Sharon's request.

"If it will make you feel better, I'll take Buster with me," added Sharon.

"Well, Buster has always taken good care of you. He's a good guard dog," Sharon's dad said.

"Yes, and he'll take good care of me this time!" Sharon replied.

"Okay, you may walk to Belinda's house," agreed her dad somewhat reluctantly. "But be careful when crossing the railroad tracks because it's almost time for the late train. Also, call me from Belinda's house when you get there. Okay?"

"I promise. Thanks, Dad!" Sharon said and happily began to get ready to go to Belinda's house.

Sharon decided to make sandwiches for Belinda and her to eat for a late night snack. She made her favorite kind — ham and cheese, with extra mayonnaise, and put them in her backpack along with her clothes. "I should be ready to go," Sharon thought to herself. But there was one thing missing. Where was Buster? Earlier, Buster had been let out for a walk, but he had not returned.

"Buster!" Sharon called, but Buster was nowhere in sight.

"Buster's not back?" her dad asked. "He must be chasing a rabbit or a squirrel."

"Can I still go to Belinda's?" Sharon asked, worried that now her dad would not allow her to go.

"I guess it will be okay," he said. "I will watch you from the porch, but I still want you to call me the minute you get to Belinda's house."

"Okay," she said, giving her dad a hug. "I'll call you when I get there. Wish us luck on getting good pictures, and don't worry about Buster," Sharon said. "I know he'll show up."

Sharon grabbed her backpack and quickly walked down the porch steps and started toward Belinda's house. Walking **briskly**, Sharon reached the railroad tracks in a matter of minutes. To be sure the train was not coming, Sharon looked to her left and then to her right. That's when she froze. Buster was straddling one of the rails with his right front paw wedged tightly between the rail and a wooden crosstie. He was panting and trying desperately to free his paw. Sharon rushed over to him.

Carefully Sharon tried to release Buster's foot. As she ran her hands over the dog's paw, he let out a soft whimper of pain. For an instant, Sharon thought about running back to her house to get her dad, but she knew it was almost time for the late train. All she could think about was freeing Buster.

Thinking quickly, Sharon unzipped her backpack and took out a paper sack. Removing a sandwich, she took one of the bread slices and began rubbing it against Buster's paw. The mayonnaise on the bread stuck to his paw, making it slippery. Sharon slowly began to inch Buster's paw out of its trap.

In the distance, Sharon could hear the first faint warning of the train's arrival, so she worked a little faster. Soon she was able to pull Buster's paw free from its trap. Sharon quickly gathered Buster in her arms and hurried home to tell her dad what had happened.

When she reached home, Sharon wobbled up the front porch steps and leaned on the doorbell.

"Sharon! Buster! What's going on?" asked her dad as he opened the door.

"Buster got his paw caught in the tracks," Sharon gasped as she tried to catch her breath. "I barely got him out in time before a train came

around the bend. I never made it to Belinda's. Is Buster going to be okay?"

"Let's check out his foot," Dad said. "It doesn't look too bad. I'll clean it and wrap it in a bandage until we can take him to the vet tomorrow morning. You can relax. Buster will be okay. I think you can go to Belinda's now."

"That's okay Dad," Sharon said. "I think I'll stay here with Buster tonight. There will be more meteor showers, but there is only one Buster."

Write an essay explaining how Sharon shows that she is a thoughtful and responsible person. Use evidence from the passage to support your response.