



LEONARD
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Lucky

Special Thanks to Mary Leonard.

Mary and her husband Jim had a dog, Lucky. Lucky was a real character. Whenever Mary and Jim had company come for a weekend visit they would warn their friends to not leave their luggage open because Lucky would help himself to whatever struck his fancy. Inevitably, someone would forget and something would come up missing. Mary or Jim would go to Lucky's toy box in the basement and there the treasure would be, amid all of Lucky's favorite toys. Lucky always stashed his finds in his toy box and he was very particular that his toys stay in the box.

Sadly, Mary was diagnosed with breast cancer. Something told her she was going to die of this disease; she was just sure it was fatal. She scheduled the double mastectomy, fear riding her shoulders.

The night before she was to go to the hospital she cuddled with Lucky. A thought struck her...what would happen to Lucky?

Although the three-year-old dog liked Jim, he was Mary's dog through and through. If I die, Lucky will be abandoned, Mary thought. He won't understand that I didn't want to leave him. The thought made her sadder than thinking of her own death.

The double mastectomy was harder on Mary than the doctors had anticipated and Mary was hospitalized for over two weeks.

Jim took Lucky for his evening walk faithfully, but the little dog just drooped, whining and miserable.

Finally the day came for Mary to leave the hospital. When she arrived home, Mary was so exhausted she couldn't even make it up the steps to her bedroom. Jim made his wife comfortable on the couch and left her to nap.

Lucky stood watching Mary but he didn't come to her when she called. It made Mary sad but sleep soon overcame her and she dozed. When Mary woke for a second she couldn't understand what was wrong. She couldn't move her head and her body felt heavy and hot. But panic soon gave way to laughter when Mary realized the problem. She was covered, literally blanketed, with every treasure Lucky owned!

While she had slept, the sorrowing dog had made trip after trip to the basement bringing his beloved mistress all his favorite things in life. He had covered her with his love. Mary forgot about dying. Instead she and Lucky began living again, walking further and further together every night. It's been 12 years now and Mary is still cancer-free.

And what about Lucky?

He still steals treasures and stashes them in his toy box but Mary remains his greatest treasure.

Live every day to the fullest. Remember it is a blessing from God.

The people who make a difference in your life are not the ones with the most credentials, the most money, or the most awards. They're the ones who care.

Be kinder than necessary, for everyone you meet is fighting some kind of battle.

Live simply. Love generously. Care deeply. Speak kindly. Leave the rest to God.

The best and most beautiful things in the world cannot be seen or even touched. They must be felt with the heart.

With love,

Ben Leonard



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