

Pepito looks for a home

Pepito was nine and lived in a neighbourhood where Christmas lights shone each evening like little stars caught on the balconies. Yet that year he felt no spark of happiness. His house was full of arguments and difficult silences. He had begun to wonder whether there was any room for him among all that unhappiness.

One cold night he put on his thick coat, picked up a small backpack and went out. He did not know where to go. He only wanted somewhere he could breathe easily and feel that he mattered. As he walked, snow began to fall gently, as though keeping him company.

He reached the park, where an enormous tree glowed with white lights. Sitting on an icy bench, he sighed.

“I wish I could find a home for Christmas.”

Then he heard timid little footsteps behind him. A small dog stood there, with long fur as white as snow. She was shivering, and her gentle eyes seemed to ask for help.

“Are you on your own too?” he asked.

The little dog wagged her tail hopefully. Pepito opened his backpack and shared the sandwich he had brought.

“We can go together, if you like,” he said with a smile.

He decided to call her Snow.

They walked to the edge of the woodland, where smoke rose from the chimney of a little wooden cottage. A kind neighbour named Margarida lived there. Pepito knocked, feeling rather frightened.

“Good evening, little one,” said the grey-haired woman. “Why are you and this little dog out alone so late?”

Pepito lowered his head.

“I’m looking for a home for Christmas.”

Margarida came onto the porch and listened.

“Everyone deserves a place where they feel safe. Come in. There’s a hot meal and a place at the table. And we’ll get help so people know you are all right.”

The house smelled of soup. Pepito and Snow sat beside the fire. It had been a long time since they had felt so warm.

Margarida listened to Pepito’s story without interrupting. Afterwards she rested a hand on his shoulder.

“The grown-ups’ arguments are not your fault. You need to be listened to and to feel safe. I’ll help you explain how you feel.”

With Margarida’s help, they contacted his parents and arranged to meet. Before long, Pepito heard them calling outside.

“Pepito! We’re here!”

His mum and dad were coming through the snow. His heart leapt. Mum held him close.

“We didn’t know where you were. We were so worried. We’re sorry we made you feel this way.”

Dad knelt beside him too.

“We’ll talk more and listen better. We want our home to be a good place for you, and we’re going to work at making it that way.”

Pepito looked at Snow, wagging her tail, and at Margarida’s warm smile. For the first time in ages, he felt he had three homes: his family, his neighbour’s welcoming shelter, and the faithful heart of the little dog.

That Christmas he returned home. He no longer felt like a visitor, but an essential part of a family learning to do better. And, after they checked that nobody was searching for her and completed the necessary arrangements, Snow stayed too.

Pepito discovered that a home is built through care, listening and people we can turn to for help.