Little Dog, Lost
by Marion Dane Bauer

Readers (9):

- Narrator 1
- Narrator 2
- Narrator 3
- Narrator 4
- Boy/Mark
- Boy’s Dad
- Boy’s mother/Mark’s mother
- Buddy (the little dog)
- Woman (Buddy’s new owner)

Reading time: approximately 10 minutes

SCRIPT

All: Little Dog, Lost

Narrator 1: by Marion Dane Bauer

Narrator 1: Buddy and her boy were perfectly matched

Narrator 2: and perfectly happy

Narrator 1 & 2: together

(Pause)

Narrator 1: Buddy was a little dog

Narrator 2: with brown paws

Narrator 3: and a brown mask

Narrator 4: and a sweet ruffle of brown fur on her bum.

Buddy: Ruff!

Narrator 2: She also had ears like airplane wings
Narrator 3: that dropped
Narrator 1 & 3: just at the tips.
Buddy: Ruff! Ruff!
Boy: I know she’s a girl,
Narrator 1: the boy often said,
Boy: but she’s my buddy anyway.
Narrator 2: And then he would take Buddy’s pointy face between his hands
Narrator 3: and kiss her on the lips
Boy: SMACK! (kissing sound)
Narrator 4: just like that.
Narrator 1: When Buddy was quick
Buddy: Ruff!
Narrator 2: she could get in a lick
Narrator 3: at the exact moment of the kiss.
Boy: Arghhh!
All: But nothing,
Boy: not even the sweetest love,
Narrator 1: can be certain of lasting forever.

(Pause)

Dad: We’re moving,
Narrator 2: said the boy’s father.
Dad: We're moving to an apartment in a big city,

Boy: What?

Narrator 1: The boy cried.

Dad: And an apartment in a big city is no place for a dog.

Buddy: Ruff?

Boy's mother: We'll have to find a new home for Buddy.

Boy: No! Buddy....

(Pause)

Narrator 2: The family piled into the car.

Narrator 3: Buddy was excited.

Narrator 4: She loved car rides.

Narrator 3: And here she was with her bowl

Narrator 2: her bed

Narrator 1: her bone

Narrator 4: her ball

All: And

Boy's mother: the orange-marmalade stuffed cat she liked to toss into the air and catch again,

Boy: (still slightly weepy) the orange-marmalade stuffed cat she liked to rest her chin on when she slept.

Narrator 1: They drove to a town called Erthly,

Narrator 2: stopped in front of a strange house....
Narrator 3: And got out of the car, with Buddy on her red leash.

Woman: I’ll take good care of her,

Narrator 1: Her Buddy’s new owner said.

Narrator 2: But when she looked down at the little black dog,

Narrator 3: at his bowl

Narrator 1: and his bed

Narrator 3: and his bone

Narrator 1: and the orange-marmalade stuffed cat,

Narrator 2: she said,

Woman: Oh, my. I know nothing about dogs. How will we manage, you and I?

Buddy  

(Pause)

Narrator 1: Another boy, Mark,

Narrator 2: lived in Erthly.

Narrator 1: Mark had no dog at all.

Narrator 4: He had asked for a dog.

Narrator 3: He had begged for a dog.

Narrator 2: He had pleaded and prayed and whined for a dog.

Mark: Once I even tried barking for a dog.

Narrator 4: But his mother always said

All: No!
Narrator 3: Still . . . Mark dreamed about dogs

Narrator 2: He spent hours and hours reading about how to care for a dog.

Mark: You have to give a dog food, fresh water, exercise....

Narrator 1: He even pretended that he had a dog.

Narrator 4: Every night, he’d pat the side of his bed and say,

Mark: Here you go. Come on up now.

Narrator 4: And the little dog

Mark: who lived in my mind

Narrator 4: always jumped right up.

(Pause)

Narrator 1: Mark often lay in bed thinking about the dog he wanted:

Narrator 2: And one bright summer morning Mark woke, thinking about dogs.... again.

(read the following lines faster with each line)

Narrator 3: Big

Narrator 4: or small,

Narrator 3: rough-coated

Narrator 2: or soft,

Narrator 1: black

Narrator 2: or brown

Narrator 3: or white

Narrator 4: or red

Readers theater script for Little Dog, Lost by Marion Dane Bauer, illustrated by Jennifer A. Bell (Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 2012) ISBN: 978-1442434233. Copyright © 2012, Marion Dane Bauer. This script may be copied for educational use but may not be reprinted or resold for commercial purposes.
Narrator 3: or brindled.

(Slow down again)

Narrator 2: This time, though, he was thinking about his friends' dogs.

Mark: Wouldn't it be fun to have a place in town where dogs and kids could run free... together?

Narrator 1: We'd step through the gate,

(read the following lines faster with each line)

Narrator 3: unsnap the leashes,

Narrator 2: and watch the snarl of dogs untangle

Narrator 1: and bound away,

Narrator 2: scattering rabbits

Narrator 3: and squirrels

Narrator 4: (reading more slowly) like leaves before a rowdy breeze...

Mark: What we need in this town is a dog park!

(Pause)

Mark's mother: A dog park?

Narrator 1: Mark's mother was the mayor of Erthly, and if anyone could get a dog park,
Narrator 1&2:  

*she* was the one.

Mark's mother:  
This is a small town, Mark. The budget has no *room* for dog parks.

Mark:  
*(Big sigh)*

Mark's mother:  
What do you want with a dog park anyway? You don’t have a dog.

Mark:  
But my friends have dogs, I could play with them there. See, that’s the point. Because I don’t have a dog of my own, I need a dog park!

*(Pause)*

Narrator 1:  
Sometimes Buddy woke in the night feeling so alone in the world that she pointed her muzzle toward the darkness where the ceiling lived during the day and howled.

Buddy:  
*Howl*

Woman:  
*Quiet, Buddy!*

Buddy:  
*Howl*

Woman:  
*Please, be quiet!*

Buddy:  
*Howls louder*

Woman:  
Buddy! Shut up!

Narrator 1:  
Buddy always shut up... but that didn’t keep her *heart* from howling.

Narrator 1 & 2:  
Lost.

Mark:  
Lost.

Narrator 3 & 4:  
Lost.

*(Pause)*
Narrator 1: Buddy lay curled in a corner of the yard, tight against the picket fence thinking about her boy.

Narrator 2: He must be out there somewhere.

Narrator 3: Some of the dirt in the corner was loose

Narrator 4: Easy to dig.

Narrator 2: Buddy tested it.

Narrator 3: One paw full.

Narrator 2: Two.

Buddy: Woof!

Narrator 3: Buddy was free! She trotted along in the gathering dark

Narrator 4: Searching for her boy.

All: Searching.

Narrator 1: She passed a school,

Narrator 2: three churches,

Narrator 3: a grocery store,

Narrator 4: a post office,

Narrator 1: a hardware store,

Narrator 2: a bank.

All: But she found no boy.

(Pause)

Narrator 3: The night grew darker.

Narrator 4: Buddy grew tired,
Narrator 3: discouraged

Narrator 1 & 2: .... lost.

Mark: Little dog

All: lost.

(Pause)

Narrator 1: A cry drifted along Walnut Street,

Narrator 2: more mournful than any tears.

Buddy: Bark! Bark! Bark!

A-woo00000-00000-000!

Mark: I was lying in my bed, awake, and I heard,

Buddy: Mark! Mark! Mark!

I need yoooooooooooooo-ooo-ou!

Mark: I slipped from my bed,
tiptoed into the hall,
through the living room,
and out the front door.
Quietly.

All: Quietly—quietly—quietly (read as if an echo)

Buddy: Mark! Mark! Mark!

I need yoooooooooooooo-ooo-ou!

Narrator 1: Mark followed his pounding heart toward the sound.

Narrator 2: a small black dog with a brown mask.

Narrator 3: Just sat there.

Narrator 2: Waiting

Narrator 1: There, beneath an oak tree
Narrator 4: In the night dark,

Narrator 2: waiting.

Narrator 4: waiting.

Narrator 3: She seemed to be waiting.

Narrator 4: for him.

Mark: Here little dog!

Narrator 4: Mark whispered.

Narrator 2: Mark stretched a hand toward the waiting dog.

Narrator 2: Buddy stretched her cool, damp nose towards Mark, touching his palm lightly.

Narrator 3: It was a boy hand ... a good boy hand.

Narrator 4: And Mark,

Narrator 2: feeling the coolness,

narrator 4: the dampness

Narrator 2: of the nose

Narrator 4: and the snuffle of warm breath against his palm

Narrator 2: fell instantly,

Narrator 3: deeply,

Narrator 1: helplessly

Mark: in love.

Narrator 3: But

Narrator 2: when he took a step forward... that step,
Narrator 4: that one step,

Narrator 3: was too much for the lonely, tired, frightened little dog.

Narrator 1: Instead of remembering all the good boy moments that had filled her life,

Narrator 1: Buddy remembered

Narrator 2: Shoo!

Narrator 4: and go away!

Woman: and Buddy! Shut up!

Narrator 2: The spring that held her tight,

All: sprung,

Narrator 1: and she ran

All: fast away

Narrator 1: toward anywhere.

Mark: And I ran

All: fast away

Mark: toward home.

(Pause)

Narrator 1: Sunlight danced across the kitchen table.

Narrator 2: It glinted in Mark’s orange juice

Narrator 3: and skittered across his bowl of cereal.

Mark’s mother: What are you going to do today?
Narrator 4: Mark’s mother asked.

Mark: Ride my bike,

Narrator 1: Mark said.

Narrator 2: And that’s exactly what he was going to do.

Narrator 3: He was going to ride his bike all over town to talk to his friends about a dog park.

Narrator 4: even if his mother said it couldn’t be done

Narrator 3: because you never know what can be done

Narrator 2: until you try.

Narrator 1: And he was going to ride his bike all over town

Narrator 3: looking for a lost little dog.

Narrator 4: A small black dog with ears like airplane wings

Narrator 2: Because you never know

Mark: when a lost little dog might be calling your name.