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## PAISLEY

By Lisa Ann Over

Molly is Paisley's best friend.

Every morning, they walk to the park. They splash in the stream...play fetch with sticks...romp through the field...and eat peanut butter sandwiches and ice cream bars.

But one morning, Molly does not take Paisley to the park.

"We'll walk to the park later," Molly says. "Today Mom's taking me to the zoo!"

Paisley tugs at the fuzzy balls on Molly's socks. She nuzzles Molly's hand—the one holding the lunch box with the peanut butter sandwich. Molly giggles and rubs Paisley's ears. Then Molly steps through the gate and latches it behind her.

Paisley whimpers. She jumps on the fence and peeks over it. She watches Molly get into the car without her and disappear down the street.

Paisley sniffs up and down the fence. She jumps on it and watches for Molly to come home. But Molly does not come home.

Paisley finds a loose slat. She pokes her head through and squeezes outside. SQUEAK-IT! SQUAWK-IT! PLUNK! She checks her rump and looks for Molly. She zigzags up the sidewalk smelling Molly on everything, but Molly is nowhere.

At the zoo, Molly snatches up dandelions to take home to Paisley, but goats walk right up to her and gobble them up. Molly wishes Paisley was with her.

At home, Paisley looks for Molly in the field. A little girl blows dandelion seeds into the wind. Paisley runs in circles and snaps them up, but she wishes the girl was Molly. Paisley looks around, but Molly is nowhere.

Molly enjoys a picnic lunch. Her peanut butter sandwich makes her think about Paisley, so she saves half of it for her.

Paisley searches for Molly around corners and in and out of yards. She pokes her nose into a turned-over trash can. SNIFF! SNIFF! No peanut butter sandwich. No Molly. But smidges of peanut butter cling to the sides. Paisley steps inside, but the trash can wobbles—BUMP. BUMP. BUMP! Paisley shakes the wobbles out and remembers Molly. Paisley looks around, but Molly is nowhere.

Molly eats an ice cream cone. She licks and drips ice cream all over herself, but she saves the last couple of bites for Paisley. She carefully places the melting cone in her lunch box next to her sandwich.

Paisley looks for Molly on the playground. She wiggles in and out and around the swings. A little boy shares his ice cream, but Paisley thinks about Molly. She looks around, but Molly is nowhere.

Molly watches chimpanzees play and splash each other in a stream. She smiles as her mind fills with pictures of Paisley splashing her as they leap through the stream in the park.

Paisley hunts for Molly by the stream where Molly takes her every day. She prances around boys and girls and snaps up water droplets. Still no Molly.

Paisley drops her ears and scampers away. She looks for Molly everywhere. She looks around trees...she sniffs along the dirt path...she searches and searches...but Molly is nowhere. Paisley tucks her tail between her legs and hangs her head. She is tired and hungry, and she misses Molly.

Molly is ready to go home.

Paisley is wondering around looking for Molly. She is not in her yard. What will Molly do when she finds Paisley gone?

Molly runs into her yard and calls, "Paisley! Paisley!"

Paisley is not far from home. She hears Molly and dashes over rocks and around trees. She follows the stream all the way home and pushes through her loose slat. SQUEAK-IT! SQUAWK-IT! RAP-TAP!

"Paisley! I have a surprise for you," Molly squeals as she opens her lunch box.

Paisley throws her head back and howls. YAAAWOOO! YOWL!

Paisley does not eat the leftover peanut butter sandwich or the ice cream cone. She licks Molly's hand. It tastes better. It tastes just like Molly with a bit of peanut butter and ice cream. She snuffles the balls on Molly's socks. They smell just like Molly along with a few dandelions.

Molly giggles. "Paisley! I'll get your leash so we can go for our walk."

[ILLUSTRATOR'S NOTE: When Molly returns with the leash, Paisley is curled up fast asleep.]