

5 Friendship **ANSWERS**

Reading

My best friend

By Clare Wong

My mum and dad separated when I was six. Dad went to live in Shanghai. I remember that I waved goodbye bravely and then cried when Dad's plane left. It was very difficult. I couldn't talk to any of my other friends about it, but Ted has always been there for me. He is the most loyal friend ever.

Ted and I spend a lot of time together. Sometimes we play. Sometimes we just sit quietly. When I am feeling sad or lonely, Ted pushes his cold wet nose into my hand. He always understands how I feel. We never quarrel.

When we go to the park, other kids want to play with him. He is very popular! He always looks at me eagerly with his big brown eyes, as if to ask 'Is it OK?' before he runs off. When it is time to go home, he always comes when I whistle.

When I first met Ted, he was quite shy. These days he is very confident – Mum says he walks around our flat like he owns it! He has been with us for five years now. He doesn't move as quickly as before. He sleeps more too, in the armchair, curled up with his nose on his paws. But every day he still waits at the door when I come home from school, until today ...

Now I am at the clinic because the vet told me last week that Ted was sick and needed an operation. My heart is breaking as I wait outside the vet's room. If the operation goes well, Ted will be full of life again, like a puppy. If the operation goes badly ... I don't want to think about it.

Here is the vet now. She smiles warmly and gives me the thumbs up. The nurse is carrying Ted in her arms. His golden tail hangs down towards the floor. Ted lifts his head and barks weakly. Everything is going to be OK!

