

Chapter 6

**Blanca and Luca go to the dog groomer.**

Blanca, Luca, and Max were enjoying a sunny morning in their backyard when their owners announced that it was time for a trip to the dog groomer. Blanca, with her soft golden fur, pricked up her ears at the familiar word. Luca, sleek and black-furred, tilted his head curiously, while Max, the youngest of the trio, let out a soft whine. Max had heard the word “groomer” before, and it was not his favorite place. He loved running around, playing fetch, and even taking baths, but getting his nails cut was a different story.

Their owners, knowing how important it was to keep the dogs’ nails trimmed, had scheduled the appointment weeks in advance. Blanca and Luca had been to the groomer many times and took the entire process in stride. Max, on the other hand, was still learning that the groomer was nothing to be afraid of.

The three guide dogs were soon on their way, walking calmly beside their owners, harnesses secure. Max, though reluctant, followed along, his chocolate-brown fur shining in the sun. Blanca, ever the calm leader, walked confidently, her golden coat gleaming. Luca, with his usual playful energy, gave Max an encouraging nudge, as if to say, “Don’t worry, it’ll be over before you know it!”

When they arrived at the groomer’s, the familiar scent of shampoo and clean fur filled the air. Blanca and Luca walked in without hesitation, their tails wagging gently. Max, however, hung back, his eyes wide as he looked around the room. The sound of clippers and the sight of other dogs getting groomed made him nervous. He whimpered softly, pressing closer to his owner’s side.

Blanca, sensing Max’s anxiety, gave him a reassuring nuzzle. She had always been the calm and steady one, and she knew how to help her younger friend. Luca, with his mischievous twinkle, tried to distract Max by playfully nudging him, but even that did not seem to help much.

The groomer, a kind woman with a gentle touch, greeted them warmly. She knew Blanca and Luca well, having groomed them many times before. She knelt to Max’s level and spoke to him in a soothing voice, trying to ease his nerves.

First up was Blanca. She stepped up to the grooming table without hesitation, standing perfectly still as the groomer gently lifted her paw and began trimming her nails. Blanca did not mind at all. She trusted the groomer and knew that getting her nails cut was just part of staying healthy. Within minutes, she was done and hopped off the table, giving Max an encouraging look.

Next was Luca’s turn. Always full of energy, Luca wagged his tail happily as he jumped onto the table. He was used to the routine and did not mind having his nails trimmed. The groomer laughed as Luca tried to lick her face while she worked. In no time, Luca’s nails were neatly trimmed, and he bounded off the table, looking pleased with himself.

Finally, it was Max's turn. He hesitated; his eyes wide as he looked up at the grooming table. The groomer and his owner spoke softly to him, encouraging him to come closer. Blanca and Luca, sensing his unease, stood close by, their calm presence reassuring him.

With a deep breath, Max stepped up to the table. His owner gently lifted him onto it, and the groomer began to speak to him in a calm, soothing voice. Max tensed up as the groomer lifted his paw, but Blanca and Luca's steady gazes gave him the courage to stay still.

The first clip of the nail trimmer made Max flinch, but the groomer was quick and gentle. She took her time, trimming each nail carefully and praising Max for being such a good boy. Max's heart raced, but as he felt no pain, only a slight pressure, he began to relax. With each passing moment, the groomer's touch felt less frightening, and Max realized that, just maybe, getting his nails trimmed was not as bad as he had thought.

After what felt like an eternity to Max—but was only a few minutes—his nails were all trimmed. The groomer gave him a gentle pat and handed him a small treat as a reward. Max, now feeling more at ease, took the treat and wagged his tail shyly. Blanca and Luca, who had been watching the whole time, barked softly in approval, proud of their young friend for being so brave.

As they left the groomer's, Max walked with a bit more confidence. He still did not love the idea of getting his nails trimmed, but he had learned that it was not as scary as he had imagined. And with Blanca and Luca by his side, he knew he could manage anything.

The three guide dogs returned home, their nails neatly trimmed and their spirits high. Blanca and Luca lay down in their favorite spots, while Max, feeling proud of himself, snuggled up next to Blanca, grateful for her calm presence and Luca's playful encouragement.

As the day ended, Max knew that the next trip to the groomer would not be so bad. He had faced his fear with the help of his friends, and that made all the difference in the world.