

Bonus episode #081 - Gabby Girl

Episode description

In this episode, Andrew tells a story about receiving a sudden and mysterious DM on Instagram, which led to him and his wife agreeing to watch a dog named Gabby for five days. Listen in to hear all the details while improving your English fluency in a fun and effective way!

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BONUS EPISODE #81 GABBY GIRL



Note: The transcript has been edited for clarity.

Andrew: Hello, and welcome to Bonus Episode 81 of the Culips English Podcast. My name is Andrew. I'll be your host and your English study buddy here for today. And it's great to be back here with you for another English lesson. I hope you're doing well. I hope you had a great week, and I hope you are ready for another exciting week ahead. So, if you're new to our bonus episode series, let me quickly explain what it's all about. I just tell you some stories from my everyday life as a Canadian living abroad in South Korea. And I hope that by listening and learning with these stories, you can improve your English fluency and build your vocabulary and also become more knowledgeable about the culture of English-speaking people.

Now, for each bonus episode, there is an absolutely free transcript. It comes in a PDF version or an interactive version. And it also includes a vocabulary glossary. So, it's a great learning resource for you that we're giving away. And you can check it out just by following the link in the description for this episode. And if you are a Culips member, then I will also create a comprehension quiz and share that comprehension quiz in the member-only channel of our Culips Discord. So Culips members, once you finish listening to this episode, check out the quiz and then let me know what your score was and how you did. And you can do that by posting on the Discord.

And if you're not a Culips member yet but are looking to take your English to the next level, then I want to strongly recommend signing up and becoming a Culips member. Because when you're a member, you'll get access to all of the learning materials that we make for all of our episodes, not just the bonus episodes, but every episode, which includes study guides and transcripts, full access to our member-only series, the Fluency Files, plus much more, like the member-only Discord channel I just mentioned, and an invitation to our monthly livestream.

And by the way, everyone, we do have our monthly member livestream coming up here on Tuesday, December 19th at 8 p.m. Korean Standard Time. I will be joined by our Discord moderator, Alina. She's going to help me co-host. And we're just going to have a fun time hanging out with the Culips member community for about an hour on Tuesday. So, if you are a Culips member, then I hope you can join me. You can just find all the information that you need to join the livestream on our Discord channel. And yeah, if you're not a Culips member yet and you want to participate, then just sign up before Tuesday, and we would love it if you could join us as a new member for the livestream.

So, everyone, I don't know if you can hear in my voice that I'm a little bit **under the weather** right now. In fact, I had a pretty **rough week** last week. I woke up on Tuesday morning with a high fever, with a terrible headache, with body aches, with a really **congested** nose and chest, and I was coughing. It was nasty. It was really bad. And I thought, "Oh my God, do I have COVID again?" I really thought that I probably had caught COVID or the flu, and I went to the clinic, and the clinic was just jam-packed with people. I guess there's something going around here in Seoul because there were tons and tons of sick people waiting in the clinic. And in fact, I had to hang out in the waiting room for over an hour before I could see the doctor. And the doctor also said, "I think you have COVID." And I'm laughing because for those of you who don't know, I have had COVID twice, and the most recent case was in July of this year. So, it hasn't even been that long.

And thankfully, the COVID and the flu test came back negative, but I've just been really, really sick all week. It's been terrible, and I'm not 100% yet, but I am feeling much, much better after taking some of the medicine that the doctor prescribed and after just **taking it really, really easy** this week, trying to focus on my health, trying to rest as much as possible, and trying to get back to normal. So, I think I'm feeling like 80% better right now, but I still have a little bit of congestion in my nose and in my chest, and I think it's coming through in my voice as well. So, because of this, I don't really have any super interesting stories to share from this week. You know, most interesting things in life happen to us when we **get out and about**, right? Not when we stay at home. But I do have one story

that I want to share with you, and it's one of those things that I think makes life worth living, makes life interesting because it just underscores the randomness of life. And that's one of the wonderful things about life, in my opinion, is how unpredictable and random it can be. So, I'm going to tell you that story now. I hope you enjoy it. Let's get started. Here we go.

Regular Culips listeners will know that back in September, my dog, Pinky, passed away. Pinky was a dog my wife and I adopted about three years ago, and he was an old dog when we adopted him, but he was lovely and we loved him, and he was a wonderful pet. And unfortunately, last September, he passed away. So, it's been a tough autumn for my wife and I, having no pet in the house suddenly. And Pinky was our first dog, which I think makes it even more difficult. It's been an adjustment for us to have to switch our lifestyle from having a dog to having no dog.

One of the things that is a little bit different, I guess, on my wife's end, because this is something that she took care of, not me necessarily, was Pinky's social media account. So, my wife created an Instagram account for Pinky, and she would take pictures of him several times a week and upload them to the Instagram account. And I'm not sure about what country you're from or where you live, but here in South Korea, this is quite popular and many, many pet owners have Instagram accounts for their dogs. And well, I would imagine cats as well, but I actually don't know about cat Instagram. But definitely in Korea, dog Instagram is a thing and many, many, many dogs have their own Instagram account.

And Pinky was no exception. Pinky had his own Instagram account, and he was pretty popular. Like he had way, way, way more followers than my Instagram account. So anyways, after Pinky's passing, obviously, my wife hasn't been using that Instagram as much because there's no content to post anymore, right? Unfortunately. But I think she still does log into that account from time to time, just to check out the other dogs that she follows with that account. Obviously, it's always the owners that are operating the accounts, right? The dogs aren't actually operating their own Instagram accounts, but there's like a network of dog owners on dog Instagram. And like I said, Pinky had many

followers, but Pinky also followed many other dog accounts as well. And I think my wife likes to check in on those dogs and see how they're doing and so on and so on. And she can do that through Pinky's Instagram account.

Well, recently Pinky got a DM. And in fact, the message was addressed to Pinky's owners. So, it was to Pinky's account, but to Pinky's owners. And my wife read this DM and then she said, "Andrew, can I talk to you about something? I just got this really random DM." DM is **direct message**. "This really random DM. And I want to talk to you about something." So, she read the DM to me, and it was from another dog's Instagram account. And that dog's name is Gabby. So, Gabby's caregiver sent us a message and it says, "Hello, Pinky's owners. I am a temporary caregiver of Gabby and I have a favor to ask of you." And the message went on to say that Gabby's caregiver is going on a trip overseas for five days and needs somebody to watch Gabby while they're away. She's going on this trip with her family members, and she doesn't have anyone else in her circle of friends or acquaintances that can watch the dog for this long. And so, she had been following Pinky on Instagram and knew that we had recently lost Pinky and didn't have a dog at the moment. And also, she thought that we were very caring for Pinky and loving towards Pinky so that we would be a good fit to babysit the dog while she was away.

And so, my wife says, "What do you think about this? How do you feel?" And at first my initial reaction was a little bit skeptical. Like, "Hmm, I don't know if I want to just help a random stranger." Like, this is a little bit too weird. I'm not sure about this. But then my wife went on to explain that it wasn't totally, completely random. The connection between us and Gabby's caregiver that actually Gabby comes from the same adoption center that Pinky came from originally. So, there's some connection to the same adoption center. And also, Gabby's caregiver is not Gabby's owner. So, she is just temporarily **fostering** Gabby because Gabby is going to be adopted by an overseas family in North America. I can't remember if it's Canada or the USA, but actually this is a really common thing that happens here in Korea is that many Korean dogs are actually adopted out overseas. And so many people, especially in North America, but I think also in Australia, adopt Korean

dogs. So, it's quite an interesting phenomenon, but Gabby will be going overseas at some point in the future. I don't know exactly when. But Gabby's caregiver is temporarily fostering her until that time comes.

So once my wife explained that, I guess I was a little bit more open to the idea. But then also I wanted to find out more about Gabby, this dog, because I thought, well, I need to know what kind of dog it is, how old she is, how big she is, all of these things, right? And so, we went through the Instagram account and looked at Gabby's pictures and she's this cute black dog. She has a white beard, very similar to me, actually. If you've ever seen a picture of me, I have quite a white beard myself. And she's a medium sized dog, a little bit bigger than Pinky was. And apparently my wife said she's also very fast and quick. And you have to be careful when you take her for a walk because she has tried running away before. And in all of the little video clips that we saw on Instagram, Gabby was wearing two or three leashes as the caregivers didn't want her to escape and somehow run away.

So, after reading the message and thinking about the situation and looking at the video clips and the photos on Instagram, my wife and I talked it over. And the first question that we had to ask ourselves was, can we commit to this? Gabby's caretaker is only going away for five days. But if those five days didn't match well with our schedule, then it would be impossible for us to do. So, we checked our calendar, and we didn't really have anything going on for those five days. So, we said, OK, our schedule is open. The next question we had to ask ourselves was, do we actually want to do this? Are we ready emotionally to bring another dog into the house? So, my wife and I talked about that. And although, of course, we still miss Pinky Boy a ton, we felt like, yeah, we can bring another dog into the house. So, then we decided, OK, I guess then our schedule is fine. Our hearts are open to it. The next thing would be to meet Gabby's caretaker and meet Gabby and see if that was a good fit. And again, I have to say that I was still a little bit **skeptical** and my wife also a little bit skeptical because this was just a random stranger from the internet, essentially. And you always have to be careful with random people and strangers from the internet, right.

So, we decided, OK, let's meet Gabby. Let's meet Gabby's caretaker and we'll do it just in a neutral place. So, we decided to meet at a **pet-friendly cafe**, not too far away from our house. And a pet-friendly cafe is just a cafe that allows dogs to come inside. So, we chose this cafe and last Saturday we went, and we met Gabby's caretakers, and it turns out there are two of them. It's a couple, a husband, and a wife. And we also met Gabby and right away we just felt like, yeah, definitely we can do this. The caretakers were really, really friendly, and really, really kind and just seemed like good people with good hearts that were doing this really thankless job of just temporary fostering dogs. And they've done this with several dogs, not just with Gabby, but with several dogs. And I think emotionally for dog people, this is a difficult thing to do to temporarily foster a dog for three or four months and then have to say goodbye to the dog once it gets adopted overseas. Just when you build a strong bond and connection with the animal, then you have to send it away. So, we felt like from our first impression, the caretakers were really good people and we also really loved Gabby as well.

In fact, her personality reminded us of Pinky in several ways. She's not too outgoing, a little bit nervous, a little bit shy and very quiet and didn't really wag her tail very much, which Pinky wasn't a big **tail wagger** either. But Pinky had this very kind and bright look in his eyes and Gabby has that same kind and bright look in her eyes as well. So, after meeting Gabby and meeting the caretakers, my wife and I talked it over again and we decided, "OK, let's do it. Let's babysit Gabby."

And so, we contacted the caretakers and we said, "We can do it. And now we're going to do it." So, this is what I was mentioning earlier at the top of the episode, how life is just so random. We had absolutely no intention of babysitting a dog to kick off 2024. But here we are and in January, that's exactly what we'll be doing. Gabby will be coming over to our house to live with us for five days while her caretakers enjoy some time abroad.

So, I have to say, I think my wife and I are both excited about bringing a dog home again. Of course, it will just be temporary, but I think it'll be a good first step for us to see if we're

ready or not to open our hearts and open our minds to adopting another pet dog sometime in the near future. So as January nears, you know, it's only a few weeks away now, we're going to make all of the necessary preparations that we need for babysitting Gabby. And we're looking forward to welcoming her into our home and experiencing the joy of caring for another furry friend.

So that's going to bring us to the end of this week's episode, everyone. Thank you for listening. I hope that you enjoyed it. And I hope that you found it helpful for building your English language skills. Before I leave you, I want to ask you a question. I'm curious, have you ever had a similar experience of unexpectedly helping someone? I'd love to hear your stories. And the best way to share them with me and with our wider Culips community is by making a post on our Discord channel. Our Discord is free to join, and you can connect and practice English with thousands of Culips listeners from around the world on our Discord channel. So, if you haven't joined us there yet, then come on, what are you waiting for? We'd love to see you on our Discord.

So, I'm going to take off for now, everyone, but have a great week here up ahead. Happy English studies as always. And we'll be back soon with another brand-new episode. And for all Culips members, guys, I will see you on Tuesday for the live stream as well. So, take care and talk to you next time. Bye bye.

Glossary

1. **Under the weather:** Feeling ill or not well.
2. **Rough week:** A challenging or difficult week.
3. **Congested:** Having blocked nasal passages and chest due to mucus, often from a cold or flu.
4. **Taking it easy:** Relaxing and not engaging in strenuous activity.
5. **Get out and about:** To leave one's home and go to various places.
6. **Furry friend:** A term of endearment for a pet, usually a dog or cat.
7. **Direct message (DM):** A private message sent directly to a user on a social media platform.
8. **Fostering:** Temporarily taking care of a child or animal, usually with the intention of returning them to their permanent home or finding them a new one.
9. **Skeptical:** Having doubts or reservations; not easily convinced.
10. **Tail wagger:** A term used to describe a dog that shows happiness or excitement by wagging its tail.
11. **Pet-friendly cafe:** A cafe that allows pets, such as dogs, to accompany their owners.

Episode credits

Host and preparation: Andrew Bates

Operations: Tsuyoshi Kaneshima

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