

The Story of Three Friends continued

to Jerusalem, pass an English test, and then, you need to travel to the States or England to get a dog, that only understands commands in English. It's 1987, and we don't have a guide dog school in Israel! It's crazy!"

Their senior year flew by and, after graduation, they found out where each would be doing their army service. Danny was going into the Air Force, Manny a medical unit, and Frannie a computer security unit. The friends weren't stationed near one another and rarely saw each other.

Even during her two years of army service, Frannie kept thinking about getting a guide dog. She wanted freedom! She worked part time and studied English so she could finally take the test in Jerusalem. One day, she heard on the news there'd been a training accident at Manny's army base. When they released the name of the injured soldier, Frannie froze in place—the injured soldier was, Manny. She spoke to his parents and visited him in the hospital a few days later.

"I can't believe it Frannie, it was a freak accident, and now, I can't see a thing. I'm glad to be alive, but my dreams have been taken away from me. I'm blind. Now I have to figure out what to do with the rest of my life," Manny said. "Hey," Frannie said, "I know this is very difficult for you, but you can't look back, or you'll be bitter. Your English is great, so if you want to get a guide dog, I'm sure you'll pass the test. I'll even wait for you, and we'll go together." Frannie was determined to cheer him up, even if it meant she'd have to wait a while longer to take the test herself.

Over the next few months, Manny learned to use his white cane, but he was frustrated and depressed. He asked Frannie to schedule their appointments for the English test. He wanted his independence back. The following week, they travelled by bus to Jerusalem to take the test.

A week later, the results came back; Manny had passed, but Frannie hadn't. That meant Manny could travel to the States or England to get a guide dog, but Frannie, the one with vision problems her entire life, couldn't. It wasn't fair!

Flash forward to 1991. The friends heard someone was trying to set up a guide dog school in Israel, so they decided to wait together. In the meantime, the friends enrolled in classes at Tel Aviv University. Danny, now a pilot, visited them as often as he could. Their friendship never changed. He never considered them as people with disabilities, he just saw them as people with different abilities.

They made plans to meet Miri at a restaurant in Tel Aviv. Manny was excited to finally meet her, and her guide dog, Bonnie. Miri told them she'd also heard rumors a guide dog school would start soon in Israel. She said, "Just think, it'll be so much easier for both of you to get a "Bonnie" for yourselves that will understand Israel and respond to Hebrew commands. Find out more, and get on a waiting list. Having a guide dog will change your lives in such a positive way."

Months later, they were overjoyed with the news: that the school was going to happen! They were the first ones to put their names on the waiting list. Though eager to get their guide dogs, after having waited so long, they were just happy they were on their way to fulfilling their dreams! They promised each other they would do everything to spread the word and make people aware of the obstacles they faced before the new center was created. Their friend Danny, excited for them said, "Finally, you're on your way! Remember, without a navigator, a pilot is useless. When you get a guide dog, you'll have your navigator! I'm excited for you both—and all the other people who are going to be helped."