



Monday – Friday The Two Paths

Be Patient

An adaptation of Five Short Chapters by Portia Nelson

Paul has to walk home from school. There are two paths he can choose to get home. One path travels down a busy street with no sidewalks, but is a very short distance to his apartment. The second path takes twice as long as the first one, but there are plenty of sidewalks and there is hardly any traffic on it at all.

Monday

Paul decides to take the much shorter path on Monday. As he walks home, Paul trips on the root of a tree and falls, scraping his knees. He's not seriously hurt, but the scrapes on his knees are bleeding. Paul looks around for help, but no one notices him. Paul finally gets back up on his feet and limps home. Even though it was a shorter path, it takes Paul longer than he thought to get home.

Tuesday

On Tuesday Paul decides to take the same path as Monday. As he walks down the path he sees the same root he tripped on the day before. He decides to run and jump over it this time. Since his attention is on clearing the tree root, he doesn't notice some sprinklers spraying onto the ground. As he's running down the path, Paul slips on the water from the sprinkler and falls flat on his back. He's hurt worse than Monday, but he is okay to walk home. Again, no one on the path notices Paul or offers to help him. It takes Paul twice as long to get home as it did on Monday.



Wednesday

Paul doesn't even look down the second path, he heads straight for the same path he walked home on Monday and Tuesday. He knows it's a dangerous path and he might get hurt again. He doesn't really care about the tree roots or the wetness from the sprinklers. He slips on the water, trips on the root of the tree, and almost gets hit by oncoming car. The only person who speaks to him is the man who almost hit him with his car (and he didn't say anything nice to him). Paul has blood on his knees, scrapes on his back, and the words from the man driving the car sting. He feels like everything is his fault. He walks home sad, hurt, and dejected.

Thursday

Paul is determined to get home following the first path. He sees the root of the tree and tiptoes around it without tripping. Then he notices the sprinklers; he decides not to run, but walk. Paul gets a little wet, but he doesn't slip and fall. Finally Paul cautiously looks for cars. He gets home safely.

Friday

Paul decides to walk home using the second path.

Many times the easy thing to do is not always the right thing to do. Instead of being patient and taking the safer route, Paul chose what he thought was the easier path. Famous broadcaster Howard Cossel said it best, "What's right isn't always popular. What's popular isn't always right."