



Doglexia

By Rylie

It was the first day of puppy kindergarten and Ruby was excited. Big Sister had told her that it was easy and she'd do great. Ruby was going to learn how to read, write, add, and spell.



Mommy and Dad walked Ruby to school as she scampered along beside them. She wondered what her new friends would be like, and who her first teacher would be.

As soon as they arrived, Ruby gasped in amazement because the school was so big.

Then she saw kids running across the field. She heard the children playing on the playground. It looked like lots of fun. She hugged her Mommy and Dad goodbye and started lining up for class.



When the teacher came out, he introduced himself and told his new students to follow him inside. Everybody seemed so excited. But suddenly Ruby felt nervous. She wondered why.



The first thing Mr. Winston had his students do was introduce themselves to him. Ruby felt shy but she was brave and spoke up in her boldest voice.

Next, Mr. Winston told the students he wanted to find out who had already begun learning to read. They all sat down on the rug and took turns reading from the simplest book he could find.



Ruby felt ashamed. Most of the puppies knew how to read, but she didn't know how yet. At home, Big Sister read to her. Ruby only picked out the books.

Ruby watched all the other puppies take their turn. Finally, the dog before Ruby said, "I don't know to read." Mr. Winston gave a simple nod and said it was Ruby's turn.



Ruby didn't want to look bad, so she looked at the pictures and took her best guess at the words. "The cow...put his toy...on his head, and...he...got...in...next...to...it...?"

A puppy named Buddy barked, "It's BED, not head! Can't you read?"

The rest of the class started giggling...all except for Ella, a white puppy with gentle brown eyes, floppy ears, and curly fur.

Ruby's little puppy nose began to quiver and sniffle.



Mr. Winston said, "Quiet! What if you made a mistake and the class laughed at you? How would that make you feel?"

Buddy crossed his paws stubbornly and snickered.

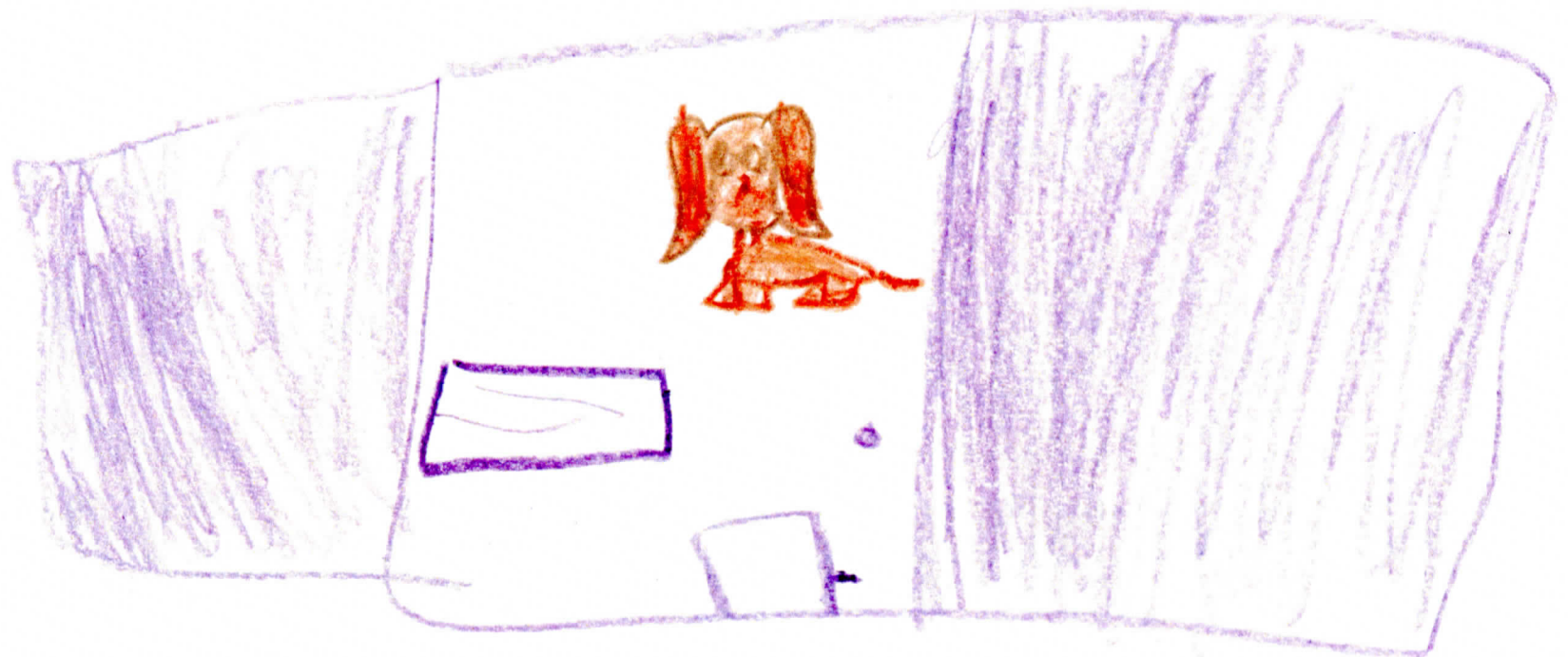
Ruby felt embarrassed and thought to herself, "I'm not very smart. I wish I could hide, so that no one could see I can't read."



At lunchtime, Ruby hid in the bathroom to avoid Buddy. Ella found Ruby and saw her whimpering quietly.

“Don’t let that bad dog, Buddy, bully you,” Ella encouraged. “Why don’t you come out and play with me?” She held out her paw.

Ruby paused. She gave Ella a faint smile and said, “Sure.”



As the two girls trotted out of the bathroom, Buddy and his gang approached them from behind and tapped Ruby on the hind leg. He started laughing again and said in a mean voice, "I can't believe you almost cried in class!"



Ruby sucked in her breath anxiously. Then Ella whispered, "I'll distract Buddy and you run to the field. I'll catch up with you."

"Hey Buddy," taunted Ella. "I bet you can't catch that squirrel by the bushes!"

Buddy retorted, "Oh yeah? Just watch me!" He turned and ran towards the bushes, with his gang lagging behind.

Ella rushed to Ruby earnestly. Ruby felt grateful to Ella, but she thought to herself, "I wish I could go home."



That night, Ruby couldn't sleep. Her parents asked her if she was upset about something. Ruby answered, "I'm not very smart and I don't want to go back to school."

When Ruby's parents found out what had happened that day, they felt sad. "Of course you're smart," they reassured her. "Let's find out why it's hard for you to read."



So Ruby's parents took Ruby to a specialist who tested her and found out that she had Doglexia. Ruby learned that she was actually very intelligent, and it wasn't her fault that reading was hard for her. What Ruby needed was a special tutor who could teach her to read, using a system designed for puppies with Doglexia.

Ruby felt relieved to know that she was smart after all, and she was happy to know that she COULD learn to read!



This book is dedicated to Karen Isaacson,
Certified Barton Reading and Spelling Instructor.

Thank you for helping me learn to read and spell and always making it FUN!

