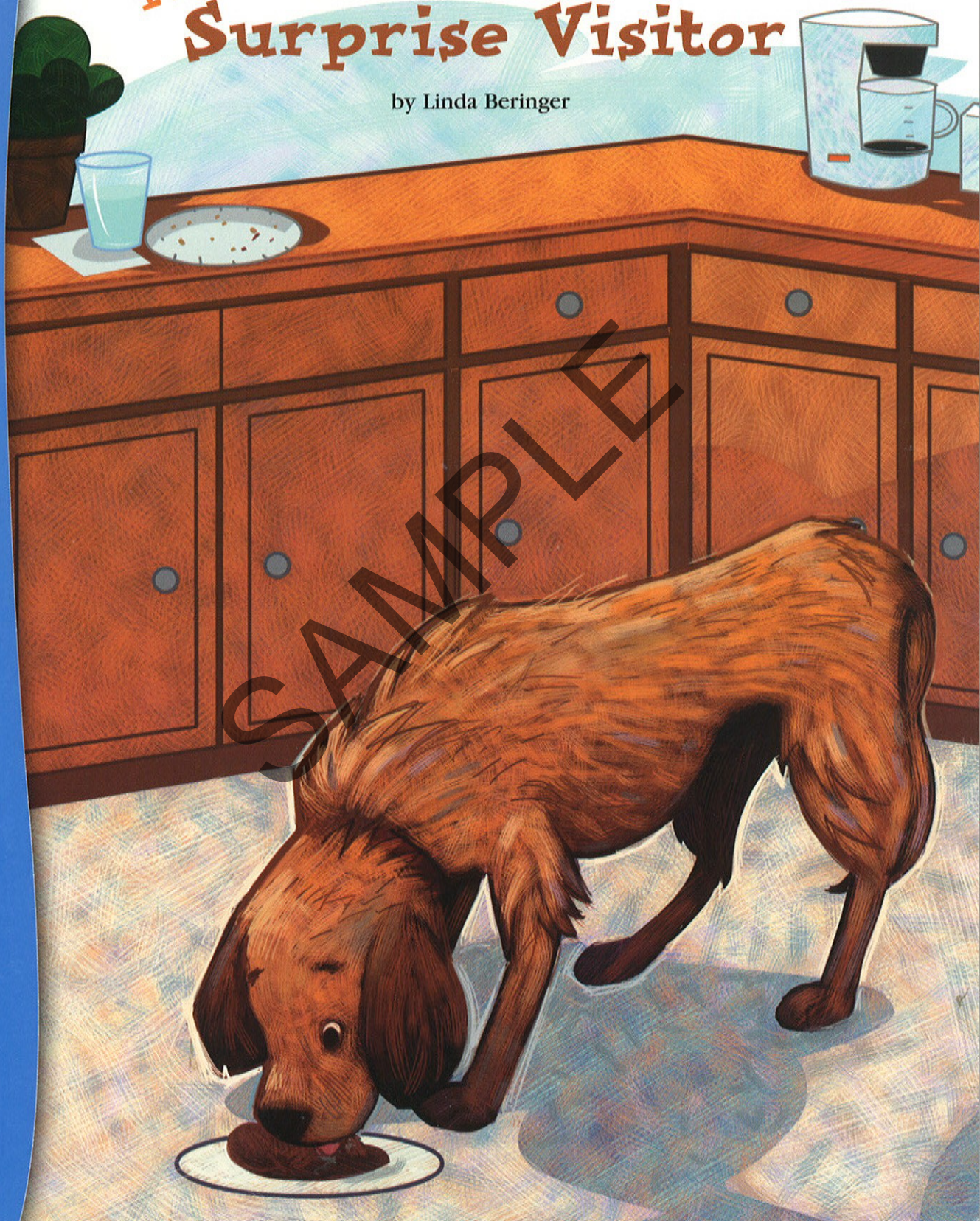


The Surprise Visitor

by Linda Beringer



- 1 "Please cheer up, Toma. You're going to make lots of new friends," my mother promised. "We've lived here only for a week. It takes time to feel comfortable in a new town and to make new friends."
- 2 "I know, Mom," I mumbled.
- 3 "Why don't you call Carla?" she asked. Carla lives in the apartment below ours. She's nice, but it seems like we don't have much in common.
- 4 "Maybe later," I said. I thought about Mia and Angela, my two best friends back in Canton. I missed them a lot. But the friend I missed more than anything was Soto, my dog. He couldn't come with us because our new apartment doesn't have a big enough backyard. I had given Soto to my cousin back in Canton. It was not an easy decision, but I knew I had to do it.
- 5 The phone rang. "Carla says she has a big surprise for you, Toma," Mom said as she hung up the phone. "She wants you to come downstairs and see it."
- 6 I couldn't imagine what Carla wanted to show me. "I'll go later," I said. I turned on the computer and started replying to an e-mail message from Angela. I heard the phone ring again.
- 7 "Toma," Mom said with a laugh, "That was Carla again. She's more worked up than before. She says if you don't come down right now, she's going to rent a crane and hoist you down!" I managed to summon up a smile for a few seconds.
- 8 Then I sighed and headed for Carla's apartment. I was certain that whatever she was so excited about was not going to thrill me. I knocked on Carla's door, and it burst open. "Wait until you see what I found!" Carla said as she dragged me toward the kitchen. On the kitchen rug, I saw a skinny, dirty dog gobbling food from a plate. But it wasn't just *any* dog! It was Soto! I called his name, and he trotted toward me.
- 9 "Wait a minute!" Carla protested. "I was going to ask my dad if I could keep the dog!" she said. "I just wanted to show him to you!"
- 10 I couldn't believe what I was hearing. "Carla, this is *my* dog, Soto," I said excitedly. Hugging Soto, I realized I missed him more than ever. How did he ever find us? If only dogs could talk! I couldn't help wondering if there were some way I could keep him, even if it meant moving to a new place. I decided to ask Mom as soon as I went home.
- 11 "Well, he *was* sitting by your car," Carla admitted sadly. She was wiping her eyes with the back of her hand. Then I had an idea. Of course, it all depended on what Mom said about keeping Soto. "Carla, if Mom says Soto can live with me, would you like to help take care of him?" I asked. "Because we live so close to each other, it would be easy for us to do that."
- 12 Carla was overwhelmed with gratitude. "That would be so much fun," she said. "Besides, my dad probably wouldn't let me have a dog anyway."
- 13 "I'll be right back," I told Carla. With Soto beside me, I ran up the stairs two at a time. I couldn't wait to show Mom my surprise visitor! And I hoped that I could return to Carla and tell her that Soto was in his new home.

COMPREHENSION

- 1 The narrator of this story is
 - a Toma's mother.
 - b Toma.
 - c Carla.
- 2 The narrator tells the
 - a most important points in the story first.
 - b story in the order it happens.
 - c story as it happens to Carla.
- 3 Which of these happened last?
 - a Toma saw Soto in the kitchen.
 - b Carla found Soto and fed her.
 - c Toma's mother learned that Carla found Soto.
- 4 Toma discovers that Carla has her dog when
 - a she sees Soto in the kitchen.
 - b Carla calls the first time.
 - c Carla calls the second time.
- 5 Carla keeps calling because she wants
 - a to give Toma's dog back to her.
 - b to tell Toma about her spelling test.
 - c Toma to come and see the dog she found.
- 6 Soto most likely found his way to the new home by
 - a following the family's car.
 - b being dropped off by someone who found him.
 - c following a map to Toma's new home.
- 7 At the end of the story, Toma probably felt better about having Carla as a friend because
 - a Carla seemed older.
 - b taking care of Soto would be something they could do together.
 - c she met Carla's father.

LEARN ABOUT WORDS

- A** Often you can tell the meaning of a word from other words and ideas in the story.

In each paragraph shown in parentheses, find the word that best matches the meaning below. Write the word.

- 1 the result of making up one's mind (4)
- 2 answering (6)
- 3 call forth (7)
- 4 eating quickly (8)
- 5 thankfulness (12)

- B** One good way to learn words is to use them.

Read each sentence. Look back at the paragraph, and find the word that best completes each sentence below. Write the word.

- 6 I could hardly hear her because she _____. (2)
- 7 I could not _____ what was taking her so long. (6)
- 8 They will _____ the flag during the annual festival. (7)
- 9 Jeff _____ he forgot the tickets. (11)
- 10 My mom was _____ with the amount of work in front of her. (12)

WORD STUDY

- C** Some words appeal to the sense of smell, taste, hearing, or touch. For example, *sugary* appeals to the sense of taste.

Select the one word in each sentence that most appeals to the sense of smell, taste, hearing, or touch. Write the word.

- 11 The spaghetti sauce was too spicy for me.
- 12 The crowd hushed as the flag was carried by.
- 13 The baby whined after she dropped her bottle.
- 14 The milk in the bottle had become sour.
- 15 On the bumpy road, we were tossed from side to side.
- 16 A frog splashed into the lily pond.
- 17 The log was slimy after being underwater so long.
- 18 The diamond ring sparkled in the sunlight.

- D** green circle yellow pink

Of the four words, *circle* does not belong because it names a shape, and the other three words are names of colors.

In each list, one word does not belong with the other words. Write the word that does not belong.

- 19 shark octopus ocean whale
- 20 football player baseball golf
- 21 daisy oak maple pine
- 22 cake sandwich pie cookie
- 23 Tuesday Saturday holiday Monday
- 24 refrigerator stove microwave couch
- 25 talk walk shout whisper

Comprehension

- | | |
|-------------|------------|
| 1 b | 5 c |
| 2 b* | 6 a |
| 3 c* | 7 b |
| 4 a* | |

If you missed any of the answers marked with a star (*), go to **Skill Builders Card** 153. Then come back to the Blue level.

Learn about Words

- | | | |
|----------|-------------------|-----------------------|
| A | 1 decision | 4 gobbling |
| | 2 replying | 5 gratitude |
| | 3 summon | |
| B | 6 mumbled | 9 admitted |
| | 7 imagine | 10 overwhelmed |
| | 8 hoist | |

Word Study

- | | | |
|----------|------------------|--------------------|
| C | 11 spicy | 15 bumpy |
| | 12 hushed | 16 splashed |
| | 13 whined | 17 slimy |
| | 14 sour | 18 sparkled |

If you missed three or more answers in Part C, go to **Skill Builders Card** 98. Then come back to the Blue level.

- | | | |
|----------|--------------------|-------------------|
| D | 19 ocean | 23 holiday |
| | 20 player | 24 couch |
| | 21 daisy | 25 walk |
| | 22 sandwich | |

If you missed three or more answers in Part D, go to **Skill Builders Card** 54. Then come back to the Blue level.