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Opening extract from

Bumper Book of Humphrey's Tiny Tales 2

Written by

Betty G. Birney

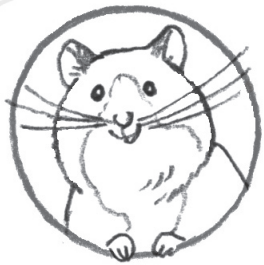
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Welcome to MY WORLD

Hi! I'm Humphrey. I'm lucky to be the classroom hamster in Room 26 of Longfellow School. It's a big job because I have to go home with a different student each weekend and try to help my friends. Luckily, my cage has a lock-that-doesn't-lock, so I can get out and have BIG-BIG-BIG adventures!

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BIRTHDAYS-BIRTHDAYS-BIRTHDAYS

There are lots of exciting things that happen in Room 26 of Longfellow School.

I see them all because I live there. I am the classroom hamster.

But I think the best part of the day is when my friends come bursting through the door in the morning.

‘Hi, Humphrey Dumpty!’ A.J. always shouts.

A.J. has a LOUD-LOUD-LOUD voice, so I call him Lower-Your-Voice-A.J.

‘Hi, A.J.!’ I squeak back.

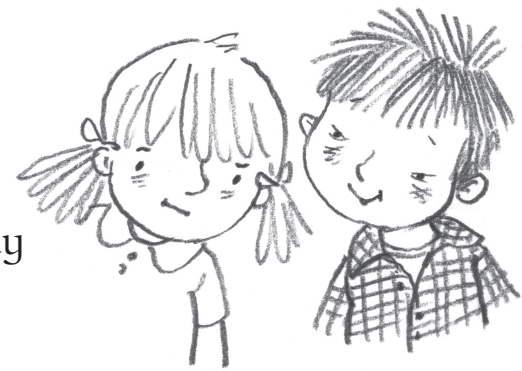
Garth is usually with A.J. because they’re best friends.



I call him Wait-For-The-Bell-Garth because he's always out of the door first at the end of the school day.

Then one morning, I-Heard-That-Kirk-Chen came into our classroom and said, 'Happy birthday to me!'

'It's *not* your birthday, Kirk,' Mandy said.



Mandy Payne is a nice girl but she does like to complain.

I call her Don't-Complain-Mandy-Payne.

'It's *almost* my birthday,' Kirk said. 'It will be on Friday.'

Mandy looked up at the row of cupcakes above the chalkboard. She shook her head.

Sometimes when I look at those cupcakes, my tail twitches and my whiskers wiggle.

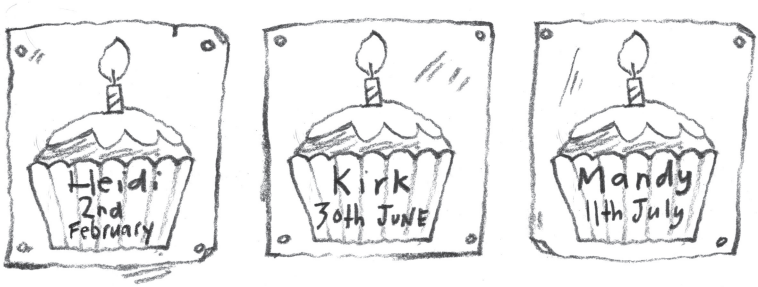
They look so YUMMY-YUMMY-YUMMY!

The problem is they're not real cupcakes.

They're just pictures of cupcakes with candles on top.

Each one has a name and a date.

The cupcakes help us remember when a classmate has a birthday.



One thing I've learned from humans – birthdays are unsqueakably important!

'No, it's not!' I heard Mandy insist loudly.

Our teacher, Mrs Brisbane, asked, 'What's the problem?'

'Kirk says it's his birthday on Friday, but it's not.' Mandy pointed to the cupcakes. 'See? His birthday is on Saturday.'

Mrs Brisbane nodded. 'Yes. But since we don't have school on

Saturday, we're celebrating Kirk's birthday on Friday.'

'Fine,' Mandy said. 'But he shouldn't say it's his birthday when it's not.'

'Please Don't-Complain-Mandy-Payne,' Mrs Brisbane said.

'Hey, Mandy, I've got a joke for you,' Kirk said.

He *loves* to tell jokes and I think he wanted to make Mandy smile.

'What do you give a 900-pound gorilla for his birthday?' he asked.

'I don't know,' she answered.

'Anything he wants!' Kirk said, howling with laughter.

Some of my other friends laughed,

too, like Stop-Giggling-Gail, who is always laughing.

'Anything he wants!' Repeat-It-Please-Richie said.

Richie, A.J. and Garth beat their chests and made grunting sounds.

I think they were pretending to be gorillas.



Just then, the bell rang.

School was starting and my friends all sat down.