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Opening extract from

If Only We Had a Helicopter

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Chapter 1

Take Your Puppies Home

One day was just like any other day. And the next wasn't.

One day I got up, had my breakfast and went to school. I came home, had my tea, went out to play with my best mate Midge, came home and went to bed.

The next day was almost the same until I came home from school. There in the kitchen was a shivering lump of a little thing. A bundle of black and white hair with a stubby

tail at one end and a shiny black nose at the other.

You've guessed.

It wasn't a hippo or an elephant. It wasn't a snake or a baby giraffe. It wasn't even a kitten.

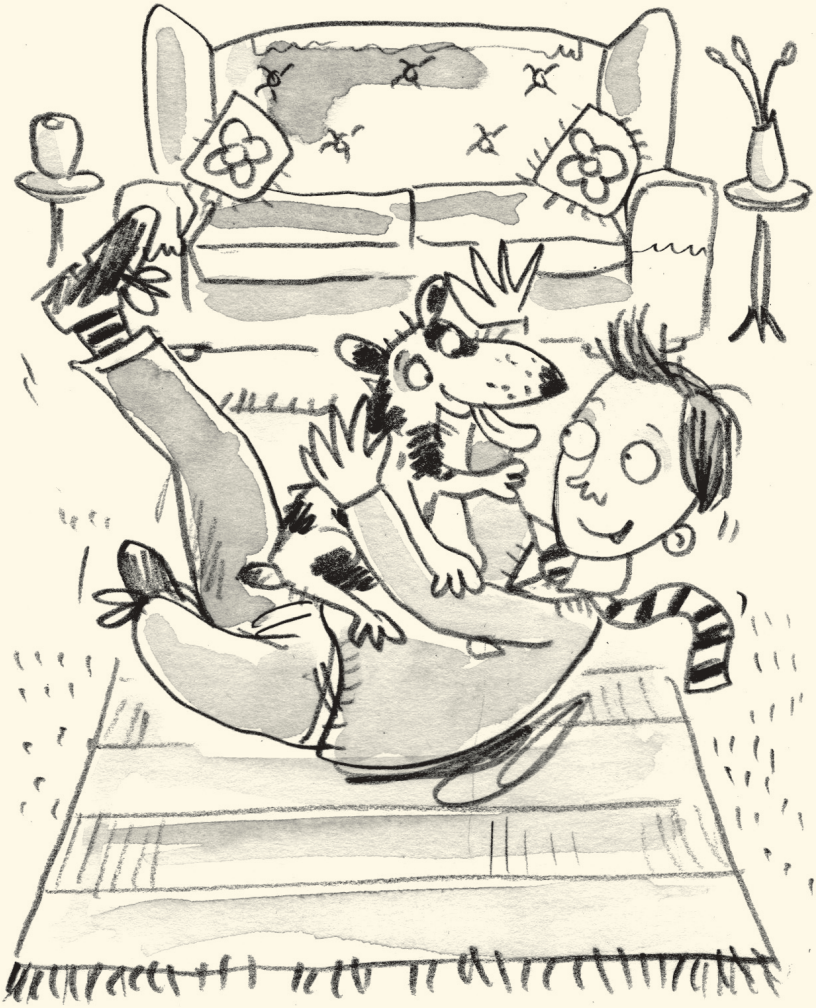
It was a dog. Dog.

D-O-G spells what it was.

It was love at first sight. As soon as I walked into the kitchen, the D-O-G opened his eyes, waggled to his feet and trotted over to me. I was so surprised I just stood there with my mouth open. He looked up at me and wagged his tail. It was as if he had been waiting for me all his life. If I'd had a tail I would have wagged it as well.

Instead, I picked him up and hugged him. I ran with him into the living room where

we rolled around on the carpet and chased each other and played puppy games until Dad made me sit down for tea.



It turned out that one of my dad's friends had a dog that had just had puppies. It wasn't Christmas, or within shouting distance of my birthday, but Dad had still chosen one of the litter as a present for me.

That's a silly word to describe new-born puppies, isn't it? 'Litter.' It makes them sound like rubbish. Imagine the adverts –

"Keep Britain Tidy – Take your puppies home with you."

"Penalty for dropping puppies – £25."

And so on.