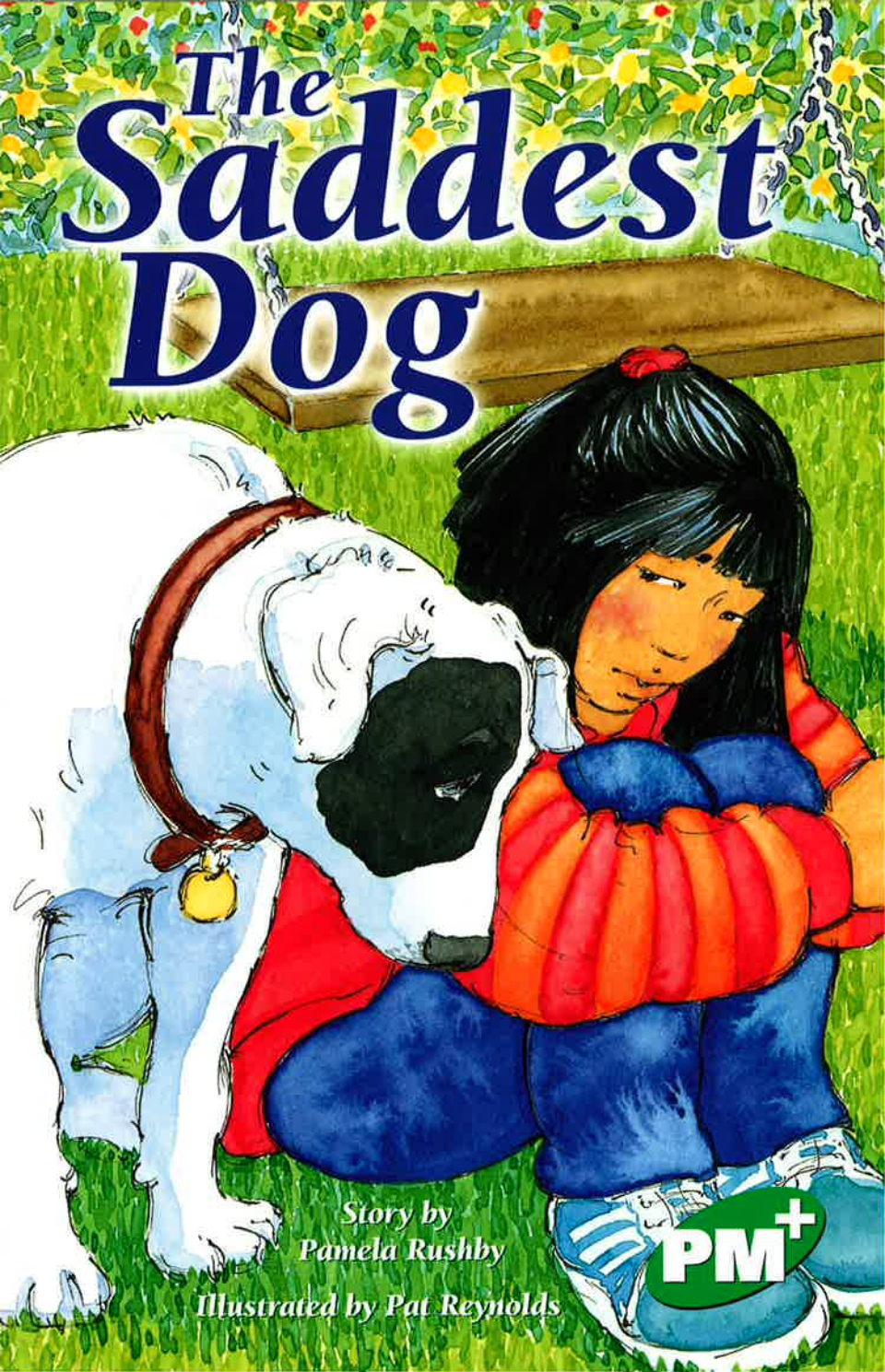

The Saddest Dog
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PM+

For teachers' inspection ONLY

Contents

Chapter 1	A Dog Arrives!	4
Chapter 2	"He Can't Stay Here!"	10
Chapter 3	Samson?	18
Chapter 4	Doing the Right Thing	26
Chapter 5	Sad No More	30



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Chapter 1

A Dog Arrives!



"There's a dog in our yard," said Mum.

Kim stopped eating her cornflakes and went to look out the kitchen window.

"Our side gate must be open," said Mum. "Do you know whose dog he is?"

"No," said Kim. She'd never seen the dog before.

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He was a big white dog, with a black patch over one eye and another on his back. He was sitting under Kim's old swing set. His head was drooping.

"He doesn't look very happy," said Kim.

Mum stopped packing her briefcase and looked again. "You're right," she said. "He does look a bit sad."

Mum opened the back door gently and slowly approached the dog with her hand held out towards him. "Good dog," she said. "Where are you from, boy? There's a good dog."

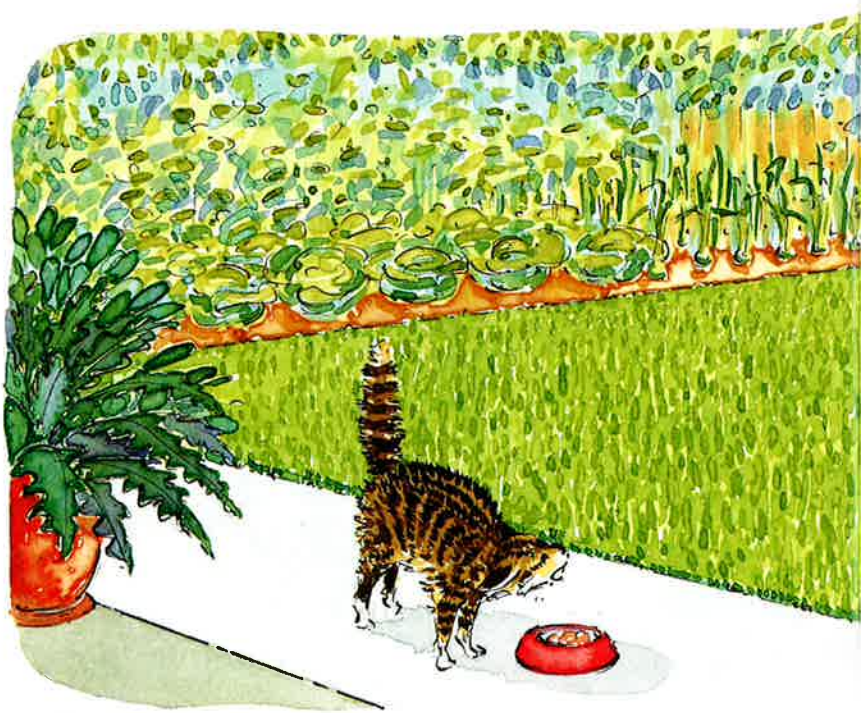
The dog looked up slowly at Mum, then licked her hand.

"Well, he looks healthy enough, and he's certainly used to people. But what a sad-looking dog he is!" said Mum. "He'll probably go home soon."

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But the dog didn't go home. When Kim went out into the backyard to feed the cat, the dog was still sitting under the swing. The cat raised the fur on its back and hissed at the dog.

"Hello, boy," said Kim. The dog looked up. "Why don't you go on home?" The dog didn't move, but he seemed to look hopefully at the tin of cat food in Kim's hand.

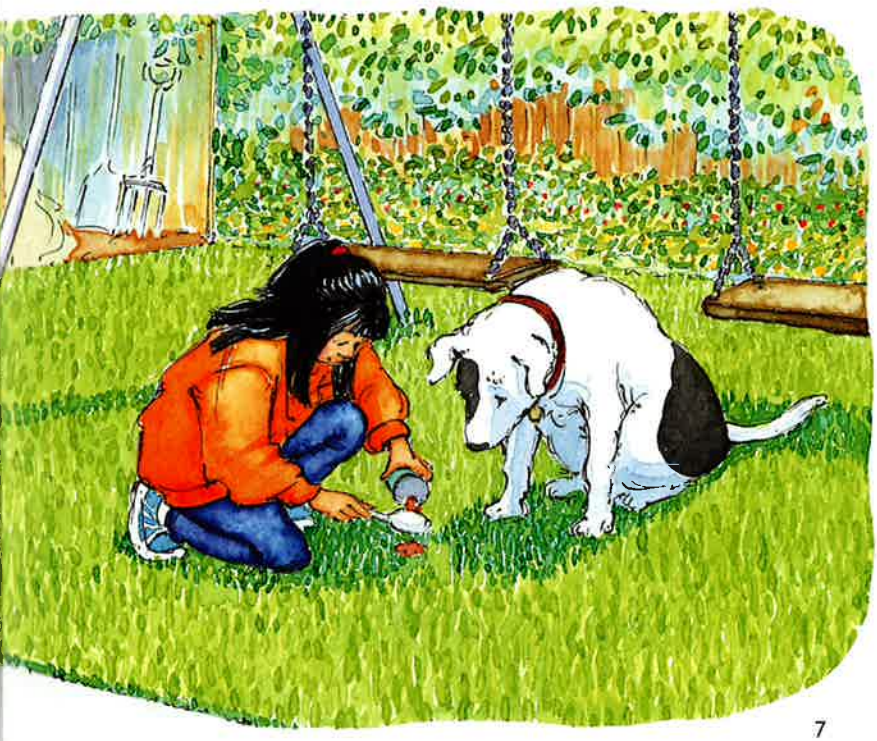


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"Are you hungry?" said Kim. She looked in the tin. She'd filled the cat's dish, but there was a little bit left over.

"Here you go, boy," said Kim. She scooped the remains of the cat food out, and stepped away from the dog. The dog sniffed it and took a little taste.

"Now, go on home, boy," said Kim. Then she went to get ready for school.



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When Mum and Kim came out to the car to go to school, the dog was still in the yard.

"Kim," Mum said, "I hope you didn't give that dog anything to eat."

Kim nodded. "Well, I did," she said. "Just a little bit. He looked hungry. But he didn't eat much."

"Oh dear," said Mum. "Maybe that wasn't such a good idea. He might decide to stay if he thinks we're going to feed him."

She looked at the dog doubtfully. "I hope he's gone by the time we get home today."

He might decide to stay? Kim liked the sound of that! She'd always wanted a dog. She wouldn't mind a bit if the dog were still there when they got home.