



# STRAY TO STAR!

A Shelter  
Dog Story



by Meish Goldish

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**A Shelter Dog Story**



by Meish Goldish

illustrated by Frank Scherbarth

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## CHAPTER 1

# Rustling in the Bushes

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It was a bright summer day. Cory Davis walked down the sidewalk in his new neighborhood, kicking a tiny pebble. The ten-year-old looked at a row of tidy houses. Each one had a square green lawn. He was hoping to spot a kid his age playing outside, but so far, no such luck.

Cory's family had just moved to Hound Town. But he already missed his old neighborhood and friends. If only Cory could make a new friend in town. Being quiet and shy didn't help. As Cory walked, he heard his mom's voice in his head: *Cory, you'll make new friends once school starts in September.* Sure, Cory thought. It's only July now. September seemed a lifetime away.

Cory walked a few more blocks. As he turned onto Howling Lane, he heard a rustling sound in some nearby bushes. Cory noticed a furry tail jutting out of the greenery. Then, suddenly, a scruffy brown animal popped out of the bushes. It was a smallish dog with messy brown and black fur.

Cory and the dog's eyes met. They both froze. The mutt had a small black nose, friendly eyes, and looked as if she had a slight smile





on her face. Not sure what to do, Cory stood perfectly still. Then with a soft voice he said, "Hey, there. What's your name? Are you lost?"

The dog tilted her head to the side as if she was listening.





Cory took a step forward. The dog backed up. "It's okay. Don't be afraid. I'm not going to hurt you," Cory said gently. The dog stopped. "Where's your owner?" Cory continued.

Slowly, he moved toward the scruffy dog, knelt down, and held out his hand so she could sniff it. After a few seconds, the pooch stepped forward and raised her wet black nose to Cory's fingers. Then Cory was able to stroke her head.

"You must belong to someone in the neighborhood," Cory said to the animal. "Your owner is going to miss you if you don't go home soon." The dog wasn't wearing a collar. And judging from her **matted** fur, it looked as if she hadn't been **groomed** in a while.

Cory petted the dog again. "So where did you come from, huh?" he asked. The dog simply stared at him and slowly wagged her shaggy tail.



Cory decided to go back to his house. He was sure the dog would disappear into the bushes when he walked away. Instead, the pup began to follow him. "Go back to your owner," Cory **commanded** as he shooed the dog away.

The shaggy dog slowed her **pace** but continued to trail the boy. Cory was a little nervous that she was following him. But he was also excited. Maybe this dog would be the friend he was searching for.

