

Figgy

by Francesca Ryan

My paw hurts. Please could you have a look? It's this one.

Wow, thanks for getting that thorn out, feels much better. Got it chasing that cat again. D'you know the one? The fat ginger one with the cross eyes. It ran right in front of me on purpose. Some cats do that, they hate dogs. I think they just love to wind us up for fun. That's cats for you.

My name's Figgy by the way. Yeah, I know, funny name for a dog. It's the one the Thompson family gave me, when they got me from the rescue centre. It's lovely to live in a home again. I was living behind those big bins at Tesco's for a while. Got cold sometimes but you can find some great leftovers to eat if you're not fussy. I'm not fussy. I'll eat anything, me. Got any doggie treats on you? Are you sure? I could've sworn I smelt some.

First night they took me back to their house, I ate a whole bag of dried figs. To be fair, they'd left them out on the table. What's a dog to do? There they were. Sicked them all up, of course. That's why they called me Figgy. Sometimes I'm called Figgie the Piggy. It's because I'm always begging for food. If I'm being extra annoying at teatime, they call me Figgy-Piggy-Wiggy. Ollie always laughs when I try to lick the dirty plates in the dishwasher. I'm always hungry! If they leave food out by mistake, I'll eat it. Except if it's figs. They make you poo too much.

I expect you know Ollie Thompson. Is he in your class at school? Wears a blue baseball cap and a T shirt with a tiger on the front. He's always trying to get away from his little sister Ruby. She's the one with the curly red hair. She can run faster and scream louder than nearly anyone else.

Ruby can be quite scary for a six-year-old. Yesterday she threw a plate of spaghetti bolognese at Ollie. Just because he said she makes a funny noise when she's eating. She does, actually. But I bet you she did it because she doesn't like spaghetti bolognese. She only likes penne with grated cheese. I don't mind what kind of pasta it is. I gobbled it all up before Mrs Thompson could come back from the kitchen. Bit of a noisy eater myself. I suppose it's because I eat fast. I mean really, really fast. Faster than Ollie, and he can finish his dinner before Mrs Thompson can bring hers to the table. I like Mrs Thompson. She lets me sit on the sofa and watch television with her when Ollie and Ruby are in bed.

Are you sure you haven't got any treats?

We're going to the beach on Saturday. We love going there. Ollie and Ruby always want to go on the big wheel, by the doughnut shack. This time, Ollie wants to go on the dodgems "but not with Ruby, she's too little." Ruby started screaming at him. Mrs Thompson said "we'll have to see." Any kid can tell you that means no. Same thing when she says "maybe later". Or "depends on whether we have time." Always means no, doesn't it? Mrs Thompson won't just say it though. I don't know why adults do that to their children. She doesn't do it to me. It's always a big loud "NO! if I'm nicking something off the table. She never says, "perhaps later, Figgy." Why doesn't she just say what she means? Ollie rolls his eyes at her. Ruby makes that funny whiny noise of hers. I do think it's hard for children when their parents talk that way, it really annoys them. All grown-ups were children once, but only a few of them remember it. Otherwise, they wouldn't use wriggly words to say they mean.

I hope we have doughnuts. I like that lady at the shack. Last time we were there she let me have one that dropped off the counter and didn't shout at me. I suppose I better go now; I can hear Mrs Thompson calling me, and my paw's stopped hurting.

I like you. Are you sure you don't have any treats? Next time?

