

# A Prayer for Muffie

BY PAM BOSTWICK  
(Based on a true story)

*Worlds so great and sparrows small; God is watching over all (Children's Songbook, 229).*

**E**ric sat down on the couch next to his mom and wondered why she looked sad.

"We need to talk," Mom said.

"Let me guess. It's something about the move, right?" Eric asked. It seemed to Eric like almost everything had to do with the move.

"Well, yes," Mom said. "It's about Muffie."

"What about Muffie?" Worry crept into Eric's voice.

Mom sighed. "We can't have pets in the new apartment."

"But she's my dog!" Eric patted Muffie's head as she lay beside him. "She goes with me wherever I go."

"I'm sorry, Eric. We can't take her with us, but . . ."

Eric didn't hear any more. He ran to his room and flung himself on the bed as Muffie followed. Eric buried his face in the quilt Grandma had made him. He didn't want Muffie to see him cry. Muffie whined softly and wiggled her small honey-colored body next to Eric. She did that whenever he was confused or upset.

Eric thought about the first day Muffie wandered into his yard. She had bounded up to him, her stub of a tail wagging like she knew him. He and his mom tried to find the dog's owner, but they couldn't. Mom let Eric keep Muffie. Now, everything seemed so unfair. Eric wondered why this was happening.

Eric didn't sleep well that night. In the morning, Mom asked, "Would you like to talk about it?"

Eric swallowed the lump in his throat. "I'm too sad."

"I don't blame you for being sad or even angry."

Mom put her arm around him. "When I was little, my dog Pancho ran away. I never knew if he found a good home. It's different with Muffie. We'll find her a place to live."

"Muffie's home is with me," Eric said. "Why can't we get a place where we can keep her?"

"I can't find an apartment that will allow pets," Mom said. "Besides, Muffie wouldn't be happy in a crowded place where she can't run around."

"If I were Muffie, I wouldn't like that either," he admitted. "But I'll miss her."

Mom spoke gently. "I have an idea. When you pray tonight, ask Heavenly Father to help you feel better and to help us find a good home for Muffie. After all, He loves Muffie too."

After his prayer that evening, Eric was filled with warmth and peace. He felt that Heavenly Father

would help take care of Muffie.

Mom put an ad in the paper, but days passed and no one called. In the meantime, Eric spent every spare moment with Muffie.

The move was only a week away, and Muffie still didn't have a new home. Eric prayed harder than ever. He hoped that Heavenly Father would not forget about Muffie.

The day before the movers came, Mom said, "I don't know what else to do except take Muffie to the animal shelter."

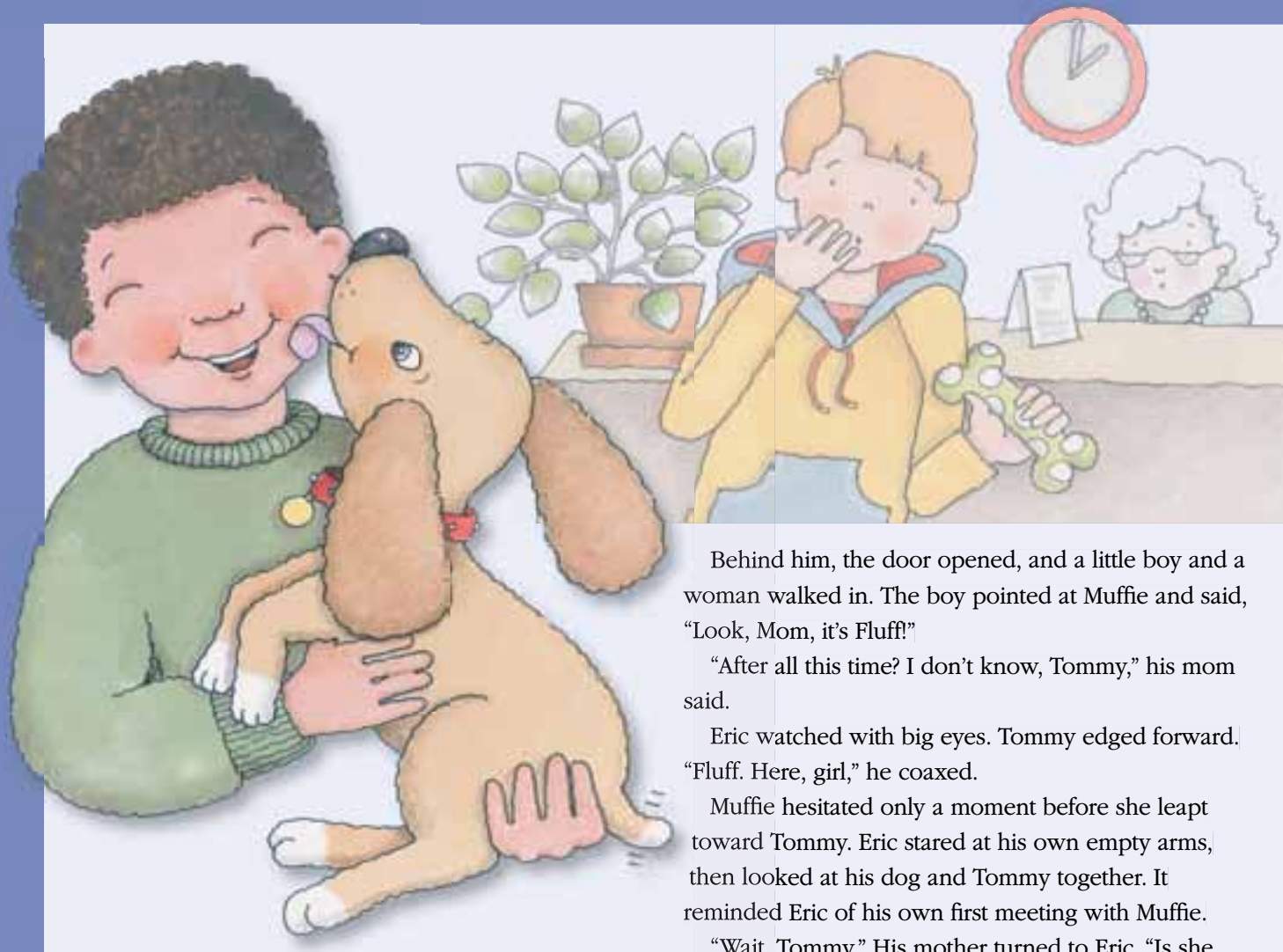
Eric's stomach tightened.

"Don't worry," Mom said. "Someone will adopt her, and she'll find a good place to live."

Eric wasn't listening. He couldn't understand why—after so many prayers—he still had to take Muffie to the animal shelter.

The next morning, Mom and Eric rode in silence to the shelter. When they arrived, Eric slowly tugged Muffie on her leash toward the shelter. Muffie jerked back as Eric tried to move her through the door.





“Come on, girl. It’ll be OK,” Eric said, but he wasn’t convinced.

While Eric’s mom signed papers, Muffie squirmed and barked. Afterward, Eric knelt and held Muffie close to him, then ran out of the room. He couldn’t bear to say good-bye. It was bad enough hearing her yelps.

Eric threw himself into the car. As they drove away, Mom offered comfort, but Eric remained quiet. He felt numb inside. “Why is this happening?” he wondered.

Suddenly, he noticed the toy dog bone still in his pocket. It was the good-luck bone he had wanted to give Muffie.

“We have to go back, Mom. I forgot to give Muffie the bone.”

At the shelter, Mom waited in the car while Eric went inside. A worker was trying to put tags on Muffie’s collar. Her barks of protest changed to a yip of glee when she saw Eric. She jumped into his arms. Eric wished he could stop the tightness in his throat.

Behind him, the door opened, and a little boy and a woman walked in. The boy pointed at Muffie and said, “Look, Mom, it’s Fluff!”

“After all this time? I don’t know, Tommy,” his mom said.

Eric watched with big eyes. Tommy edged forward. “Fluff. Here, girl,” he coaxed.

Muffie hesitated only a moment before she leapt toward Tommy. Eric stared at his own empty arms, then looked at his dog and Tommy together. It reminded Eric of his own first meeting with Muffie.

“Wait, Tommy.” His mother turned to Eric. “Is she yours?”

“Well, she, I . . .” Eric stammered.

“She can’t be yours. I lost my Fluff months ago, and now she’s back.” Tommy patted Muffie, and she nuzzled his cheek.

“Could she really be Tommy’s lost dog?” Eric asked himself. Eric was still sad, but the look in Tommy’s eyes made it not hurt so much anymore to let Muffie go. “Bye, girl,” he whispered.

When Eric told his mom what had happened, she hugged him tightly. “It’s all right, Mom,” Eric said. “Muffie is OK because Heavenly Father really does love her too.” ●

“I recognize that, on occasion, some of our most fervent prayers may seem to go unanswered. . . . I know the fears and tears of such moments. But I also know that our prayers are never ignored.”<sup>2</sup>

**Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles**

