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# Timmy in Trouble



Holly Webb

Illustrated by Sophy Williams

**stripes**

For Eddie and Jamie – keep writing!

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# Chapter One



“How’s yours coming along, Katie?”  
Dad asked.

“I’m just thinking...” Katie doodled in the corner of her Christmas present list. A little dog’s face, with big long ears and round, dark eyes. She smiled to herself. He was cute!

“Well, it’s only four weeks until Christmas,” Dad pointed out. “Both of

your grans want to know what to get you as well, you know. You'll end up with socks, if you don't give them some ideas."

Katie's list wasn't very long. Just a couple of books, some new trainers and a mobile phone, which she knew she wouldn't get because her mum thought she was too young.

"Is that all?" her dad asked in surprise, looking over her shoulder.

Katie looked at him thoughtfully. Was now the right moment to ask?

Dad glanced over at Jess's list. Katie's older sister was sitting on the other side of the table, and her list was enormous. It was also very messy. "I can't read any of that!" he complained. "You'll have to copy it out, Jess."

Jess looked down at her paper and grinned. "It's not my fault. Misty kept coming and sitting on it, you know what she's like! I had to write around her."

Misty the cat stopped washing her paws when she heard her name, and looked at them all innocently. *Who me?* she seemed to be saying. She adored pieces of paper, and if anyone was writing, or reading a newspaper, she was never happy until she was sitting right in the middle of the page.



Jess leaned across the table to look at Katie's list, too. "You're not getting a phone," she pointed out. "Mum won't even let *me* have one. You can't only want a pair of trainers."

"Sounds like a nice easy Christmas shopping trip," Mum said, coming into the kitchen.

Katie smiled hopefully. She'd only put the phone on the list so her parents would say no, and then hopefully they'd be more likely to say yes to what she *really* wanted. "So I can't have a phone, then?" she sighed.

"Absolutely not!" her mum said.

"Oh," Katie said, crossing it out. She tried to sound disappointed, but it wasn't very convincing. "Well, there is one other thing..."

Her dad folded his arms, smiling at her. "I knew it! Go on, break it to me gently, Katie. What is it, an elephant?"

Katie smiled back. "Not quite. But ... it is an animal." She took a deep breath. "I really, really want a pet."

Mum and Dad exchanged a thoughtful glance, and Jess stopped chewing her pen and sat bolt upright.

"A pet! We can't have another cat, what about Misty? She'd hate it."

Katie shook her head. "I know. I don't want a cat. I want a dog. A puppy. That's what I'd absolutely, definitely, more-than-anything like for Christmas. Please?" she added, smiling as sweetly as she could at her dad. She knew how much he loved dogs...

"I'm not sure it's a very good idea,

Katie,” Mum said slowly. She looked at Misty, who’d gone back to washing herself. “Jess, please don’t let Misty sit on the table. Her paws are dirty.”

“They can’t be, she spends the whole time washing them!” Jess pointed out. “Anyway, she’ll just jump up again when you aren’t looking, Mum.”

Mum picked Misty up, and tickled her under the chin. “Not on the table, Misty,” she said firmly.

Misty stared at her, waiting until she turned round. Then she leaped straight back up again. Katie, Dad and Jess giggled, and Mum peered over her shoulder and sighed. “I think I’ll just pretend I didn’t see that,” she muttered.

“Mum, why isn’t it a good idea?” Katie asked pleadingly. “It would be

brilliant to have a dog. You can train dogs,” she added persuasively. “I’m sure a dog would be better-behaved than Misty!”

Misty glared at Katie, then jumped on to Jess’s lap. “Misty’s very well-behaved,” Jess protested, stroking her gently.



“Anyway,” Jess continued, “I don’t think Misty would like us having a dog. She hates dogs. Remember how cross she got when Meg from next door got under the fence? She hid up at the top of the apple tree for hours!”

Mum nodded. “I know. Misty might not be keen. We’d have to make a lot of extra fuss over her. And who’d look after this dog when the two of you were at school? Me, I suppose!” But she was smiling.

“Well, if we did get a puppy, we’d certainly have to be careful. We’d have to introduce the puppy to Misty slowly, so they got used to each other.” Dad smiled thoughtfully. “I had a dog when I was your age. It was great fun – we went on lots of walks together, in the

park and down to the woods. And now you’re eight, Katie, I think you’re old enough to help care for a puppy, feeding it and grooming it. Having someone else to look after would help you to be more responsible.”

“You mean we *can* have a puppy?” Katie cried, jumping up excitedly and nearly knocking her chair over.

“No,” Dad said firmly. “I mean we’ll think about it. Not no, but not yes. We need to think it through very carefully, it’s not something you can just decide in a moment.”

But Katie had seen the wistful look in Dad’s eyes when he was remembering those walks with his dog. And she was almost sure that really he meant yes.