

## Henry and Mudge In Puddle Trouble

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### The Snow Glory

When the snow melted and Spring came, Henry and his big dog Mudge stayed outside all the time. Henry had missed riding his bike. Mudge had missed chewing on sticks. They were glad it was warmer. One day when Henry and Mudge were in their yard, Henry saw something blue on the ground. He got closer to it. "Mudge!" he called. "It's a flower!" Mudge slowly walked over and sniffed the blue flower. Then he sneezed all over Henry. "Aw, Mudge," Henry said. Later, Henry's mother told him that the flower was called a snow glory. "Can I pick it?" Henry asked. "Oh, no," said his mother. "Let it grow." So Henry didn't pick it.

Every day he was the snow glory in the yard, blue and looking so pretty. He knew he shouldn't pick it. He was

trying not to pick it. But he thought how nice it would look in a jar. He thought how nice to bring it inside. He thought how nice to bring it inside. He thought how nice it would be to own that snow glory. Every day he stood with Mudge and looked at the flower.

Mudge would stick his nose into the grass all around the snow glory. But he never looked at it the way Henry did. "Don't you think the snow glory has been growing long enough?" Henry would ask his mother. "Let it grow, Henry," she would say. Oh, Henry wanted that snow glory. And one day he just knew he had to have it. So he took Mudge by the collar and he stood beside the snow glory. "I'm going to pick it," Henry whispered to Mudge. "I've let it grow a long time." Henry bent his head and he said in Mudge's ear, "Now I need it." And Mudge wagged his tail, licked Henry's face, then put his big mouth right over that snow glory. . . and he ate it. "No, Mudge!" Henry said. But too late. There was blue flower in Mudge's belly. "I said need it, not eat eat!" shouted

Henry. He was so mad because Mudge took his flower. It was Henry's flower and Mudge took it. And Henry almost said, "Bad dog," but he stopped. He looked at Mudge, who looked back at him with soft brown eyes and a flower in his belly. Henry knew it wasn't his snow glory. He knew it wasn't anybody's snow glory. Just a thing to let grow. And if som eone ate it, it was just a thing to let go. Henry stopped feeling mad. He put his arms around Mudge's big head. "Next time, Mudge," he said, "try to listen better." Mudge wagged his tail and licked his lips. One blue petal fell from his mouth into Henry's hand. Henry smiled, put it in his pocket, and they went inside.

### Puddle Trouble

In April it rained day, after day, after day, after day. Henry was getting bored. Mudge was chenwing up everything in the house. So Henry said, "Let's play outside anyway." HE put on his raincoat and sneakers and went outside with Mudge. Henry forgot to ask his father

if it was all right. When Mudge stepped into the wet grass, he lifeted his paws and shook them. "Too bad you don't have sneakers," Henry said. And he walked in a circle around Mudge. *Squish, squish, squish, squish.*

Mudge listened and looked at Henry. Then he got closer to Henry and wagged his tail and shook the water from his beg wet furry body all over Henry. Henry wiped the water from his face. "Aw, Mudge," he said. The two of them went walking. And down the road they found a big puddle. A giant puddle. A lake puddle. An ocean puddle. And Henry said, "Wow!" He started running. Mudge got there first. SPLASH! Muddy water all over Mudge. SPLASH! Muddy water all over Henry. It was the biggest, deepest puddle they had every seen. And they loved it.

When Henry's father called for Henry and didn't find him, he went outside. He looked down the road. SPLASH! he heard. He put on his raincoat and went walking. SPLASH! he was. Henry's father saw Mudge, with a

muddy face and muddy tail and muddy in between. Henry's father saw Henry, with a muddy face and muddy sneakers and muddy in between. And he yelled, "Henry!" No more splashes. Just a boy and a dog, dripping. "Hi, Dad," Henry said, with a little smile. Mudge wagged his tail. "Henry, you know you should have asked me first," Henry's father said. "I know," said Henry. "I am surprised at you," Henry's father said. "I'm sorry," said Henry. "I don't know what to do with you," Henry's father said. Henry looked sad. Then Mudge wagged his tail, licked Henry's hand, and shook the water from his big wet furry body all over Henry and Henry's father.

"Mudge!" Henry yelled. Henry's father stood there with a muddy face and muddy shoes and muddy in between. He looked at Mudge, he looked at Henry, he looked at the big puddle. Then he smiled. "Wow," he said. And he jumped in. He splashed water on Mudge. He splashed water on Henry. He said, "Next time, ask me along!" Henry said, "Sure, Dad." And Henry splashed him back.

## The Kittens

In May the cat who lived next door to Henry and Mudge had a litter of kittens. There were five kittens. One was orange. One was gray. One was black and white. And two were all black. The kittens sometimes stayed in a box in their front yard to get some sun while the mother cat rested. One day Henry and Mudge peeked in the box. They saw tiny little kitten faces and tiny little kitten paws and heard tiny little kitten meows. Mudge sniffed and sneffed and sniffed. He wagged his tail and sneezed and sniffed some more. Then he put his big head into the box and with his big tongue he licked all five kittens. Henry laughed. "Do you want some kittens of your own?" he asked Mudge. Mudge grunted and wagged his tail again. Whenever the kittens were in their front yard, Henry and Mudge visited the box. Henry loved their little noses. And he had even given them names. He called them Venus, Earth, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn. Henry loved planets, too.

While Henry was at school one day, a new dog came up Henry's street. The five kittens were sleeping in the box in their yard. Mudge was sleeping in Henry's house. When the new dog got closer to Henry's house, Mudge's ears went up. When the new dog got even closer to Henry's house, Mudge's nose went in the air. And just when the new dog was in front of Henry's house, Mudge barked. He barked and barked and barked until Henry's mother opened the door. And just as Mudge ran out the door, the new dog was in the neighbor's yard, looking in the kittens' box. And just as the new dog was putting his big teeth into the box, Mudge ran up behind him. SNAP! went Mudge's teeth when the new dog saw him. SNAP! went Mudge's teeth again when the new dog looked back at the box of kittens.

Mudge growled. He looked into the eyes of the new dog. He stood ready to jump. And the new dog backed away from the box. He didn't want the kittens anymore. He just wanted to leave. And he did. Mudge looked in

the kitten box. He saw five tiny faces and five skinny tails and twenty little paws. He reached in and licked all five kittens. Then he lay down beside the box and waited for Henry. Venus, Earth, Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn went back to sleep.















