



Chapter 1

THE PUPPY PLAYGROUND



On a warm August day, Molly pushed the kitchen door open. Her five furry puppies ran to greet her.

She dropped to the floor and rolled on her side. One of the puppies played with Molly's fluffy tail. His name was Topaz. He was a golden color and was

very frisky. Another puppy climbed up Molly's leg. Her name was Diamond. She had shiny black fur and seemed very shy. A reddish-brown puppy named Ruby, was sitting near Molly's tummy. She was the smallest of the puppies. Jasper looked over at Ruby. He was



black-and-white. He bent down and wiggled his tail. Jasper was about to jump on Ruby when Lindie Lou ran into him. They rolled on the floor, sat up, and shook their heads.

Lindie Lou reached over and grabbed one of Molly's long floppy ears. Molly swung her head from side to side.



Lindie Lou hung on with her huge front paws. She enjoyed the ride.

“They are so cute,”
said Sherry. She was sitting at the kitchen table.

**“I just love to
watch them play.”**

“So do I,” said Joe. He was standing by the window. “Sherry, I’ve been thinking. The puppies are growing so fast. We’re going to have to find a larger place for them to live. The kitchen is getting too small.”

“Maybe we can fix up the garage,” said Sherry.

Joe looked out the window. The garage was next to the house. He

didn't use it much. He liked to park his truck outside.

Joe and Sherry lived in an orange brick house on the edge of a big green park. On the other side of the park was the city of Saint Louis.

"The garage would be a great place for the puppies," said Joe.



"Let's make it real nice and call it the Puppy Playground," said Sherry.

"Great idea," replied Joe.

Sherry turned and looked at Molly. She was still playing with her puppies.

"Which one should we keep?" asked Sherry.

"I like Lindie Lou, because she looks like her mom," said Joe.

Lindie Lou was sitting on the floor near Molly. She did look a lot like her Mom. They both had soft brown fur, long floppy ears,



and big green eyes. But Lindie Lou was named after her dad, Lynwood Lou Peek-a-Boo, because they both had **huge** paws.

Sherry looked over at the puppies.

"They are all so **cute**," said Sherry.

Joe nodded.

The next day Joe cleaned out the garage. He painted the walls a bright white color and the floor a soft tan.

Joe installed a large window so Molly and her puppies would have more light. Then, he put in a doggy door.

The Puppy Playground needed a bed, so Sherry went shopping. She found a large black one with gray-and-white stripes.

Then Sherry picked out some stuffed animals for the puppies to play with.

The last thing she found was a pile of soft blankets. They had paw prints on them. Sherry picked up five blankets. One for each of the puppies.



Sherry put the bed in the middle of the room. She filled a box with the stuffed animals and pushed it into the corner. Then she tossed the blankets on the floor.



"This place looks great," said Sherry. "It is now ready for the puppies."

Sherry walked back into the kitchen. She watched the puppies play for a few minutes. She picked up the puppies two at a time. Then she carried them into the Puppy Playground and set them on the floor. She brought Lindie Lou in last. Lindie Lou reached up and licked Sherry on the nose.

"You are so sweet," said Sherry. She lifted up one of Lindie Lou's paws. "Look at your huge paws." Sherry rolled Lindie Lou over and tickled her tummy. Lindie Lou smiled and wiggled her legs. Sherry

giggled. Then she set Lindie Lou on the floor. Lindie Lou ran over to one of the blankets. She sniffed it, plopped down, stuck out her tongue, and sighed.

Ruby turned around. She saw the ramp leading up to the doggy bed. She climbed up the ramp and sat down. Ruby was very proud because she was the first puppy to sit on their new bed.

Jasper bounced up the ramp and sat next to Ruby. He pushed her to one side and rolled onto his back.

Diamond climbed up on a wooden chair. She was now taller than all the other puppies.

Topaz looked for something to play with. He tipped his head and looked over at the box of stuffed animals.

The Puppy Playground was a great idea, thought Sherry. I think I'll give the puppies some time to enjoy their new home.

Sherry **smiled** and quietly left the room.

