

(2) Paw Prints in the Snow

Holly and her family moved into their new house on the Saturday before Christmas. Although she didn't want to leave her classmates, Holly had to keep putting on a brave face - after all, she still had her best friend, Tippy, with her.

As the men unloaded all the furniture, Holly's mother and father unpacked the boxes. Tippy ran around the new house and got under everyone's feet.

"Let's put him outside for a while." Holly's father said, having tripped over the little dog for many times.

Holly took Tippy to the garden. She found an old ball covered in damp leaves. She threw it to Tippy, and Tippy brought it back to her. Tippy loved this game but Holly got bored of it quickly, so she let Tippy stayed outside and went back to the house.

As the removal men said goodbye to the family, Holly went to let Tippy back in. But, Tippy was nowhere to be seen.

"Mum, dad, Tippy is gone." she cried. "He has run away." as Holly staring at the gap in the fence.

Holly's mother and father searched the streets busy with Christmas shoppers. It was starting to get dark. "He won't know his way home" Holly's mum whispered to dad, gripping his hand in panic.

Holly's father jumped into his car. There he found a small bag on the passenger seat. Inside it was the tag he had got engraved with their name and new address. He had meant to put it on Tippy's collar, but had been too busy to get round to it. He

drove fast to the police station. The police contacted the nearby dog shelter, but they were unable to help him. Dad drove back home empty handed. He felt very sorry.

The next day was Christmas Eve. Holly decorated the Christmas tree when her eyes were still blurred with tears. Mum was preparing dinner in the kitchen. She thought to herself of how Tippy had entered their lives two years ago. He's a Christmas present for their little girl. "Tippy, I miss you so much. Where are you now?" said Holly.

That night, Holly went to bed without dinner. She couldn't eat a bite. At midnight, she woke up and felt hungry. She got up and looked out of the window. It was as bright as daytime. A thick coating of snow lay on the ground. She tiptoed downstairs and opened the back door. There were footprints in the snow coming from the fence. They were paw prints! She followed them to a small shed with a broken door. To her surprise, there was Tippy sleeping on an old sack.

"Tippy! Tippy! It's you, Tippy!" shouted Holly. Tippy opened his eyes and wagged his tail excitedly.

"I miss you so much!" cried Holly.

Holly hugged Tippy tightly and they ran back home. She with soaking slippers and he with wet paws - Christmas had begun.