

THE PUPPY PLACE

JAKE



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For Maria and Luna
Many thanks to my horse specialists, Pat and Jamie

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CHAPTER ONE

“I don’t know,” said Lizzie. “I guess I’m still not getting it, but how can it be any fun when all you do is work?”

“Trust me,” said Maria. “It’s so much fun. More fun than Disneyland. More fun than Halloween.”

Lizzie raised an eyebrow. Sometimes Maria exaggerated. Could horse camp really be better than Halloween?

Lizzie Peterson and her best friend, Maria Santiago, were on their way to Appletree Farm, a horse camp in the country. Maria had been to Appletree twice before, once for an introductory weekend and once for a whole ten-day session in

the summer. Maria was horse-crazy and had been riding since she was three years old.

Lizzie, on the other hand, was not quite so horse-crazy. Until recently, in fact, she had pretty much been afraid of horses. They were big, they were unpredictable, and their hooves and teeth were huge. Who wouldn't be afraid? Now that she had taken a bunch of lessons at the stable where Maria usually rode, Lizzie felt a lot less nervous around horses, but she still liked dogs better.

Lizzie was even crazier about dogs than Maria was about horses. Her goal in life was to spend as much time as possible around dogs. She helped out at her aunt Amanda's doggy day care. She volunteered at Caring Paws, the local animal shelter. She had even started her own dog-walking business (Maria was one of her partners). That would have been plenty for most people. Not for Lizzie.

