

The background is a light gray gradient filled with numerous small, bright white stars. Scattered throughout are various sports-related icons: a basketball, a trophy, a ladybug, and a spring. The text is centered on the page.

# Love Puppies

WE'RE HERE  
TO HELP!

Dream Team

By JaNay Brown-Wood

SCHOLASTIC INC.

*To all the coaches who taught me what teamwork really means. And to the Rainbow Rangers—one pup-tastic soccer team!*

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## **Chapter 1**

### **Puppy Play**

“Hup, hup! Go loooooong!” shouted Barkley just before he took flight.

Barkley was no regular dachshund puppy—he was one of the magical Love Puppies. And his special skill was transformation, which he had



used to turn himself into a purple Frisbee. His friend Rosie, a golden retriever, was currently holding him gently between her teeth. With a flick of her head, Rosie let go of Frisbee-Barkley and he flew through the air.

“Send him my way, Noodles!” called Clyde the Shar-Pei. Noodles, a labradoodle, used her magic to whip up a wind. Frisbee-Barkley twirled and floated right up to Clyde, who used his power of flight to soar up into the sky and catch the purple Frisbee with his paws. With a flying flip, Clyde landed on the ground, Frisbee-Barkley in tow.

“Now that was un-Fris-bee-lievable!” called Clyde with a yip.

Rosie grinned and activated her own flower magic, sending a shower of petals dancing over her Love Puppy team. Each of the puppies giggled and nipped at the twirling petals. Then they fell into a doggie pile, overcome with joyful laughter.

“What should we do now, Pups?” asked Rosie. The pups rested under the warm sun in the backyard of their Love Puppy Headquarters. Rosie lay on the top of the pile, belly up.

“We could play a game of ‘What’s That Smell?’” said Clyde.

“Nah,” said Barkley as he transformed back into his regular body. “With Noodles’s new





nose, she could smell almost anything from ten miles away.”

It was true. After one particular Love Puppy mission, Noodles’s nose had changed into the shape of a heart and glowed whenever she felt strong emotions. It also heightened her ability to smell and helped her know if someone was in need.

And Rosie, who was the leader of the puppies, had gained a new talent, too. A heart on her chest glowed vibrantly to alert her to children who needed the Love Puppies’ special brand of help. It also let her keep an eye on friends they helped in the past. All she had to do was

activate the glowing heart and it allowed for her to check in on those friends, just like a window into their lives. So far, all the humans they had assisted in previous missions were doing very well.

As for Clyde and Barkley, they hadn't developed any new powers. Yes, Clyde could fly and Barkley could transform into just about anything. Not to mention that when they combined their powers with Noodles's and Rosie's, they could open the Doggie Door portal, giving them entrance to the human world.

But other than that—no new superpowers for those two.





“How about we eat a nice tuna fish sandwich?”  
asked Clyde.

“We just *ate* lunch, silly pup,” responded Rosie.

“Did we?” said Clyde. The giant bowl of Bones and Bits he had just finished up had clearly slipped his mind.

“Well, maybe we could—” began Barkley, but he stopped mid-sentence. Right at that moment, Noodles’s nose glowed bright orange and Rosie’s chest heart illuminated pink.

“Guess we won’t be needing something to do,” said Rosie, jumping to her feet. “Looks like we’ve got a new mission. Come on, Pups! Let’s head inside.”

They knew that the Crystal Bone would be flashing and vibrating with urgent news of the next mission. All the puppies jumped right up and chased after Rosie.

Except for Barkley. He hadn't moved. He stayed back for a moment more, scratching at his ear with his hind leg.

Usually, new missions got Barkley so excited. But even with the possibilities of this new adventure, Barkley could not help but wonder if he'd ever get a new gift like Rosie and Noodles had.

Would he learn something new about himself that would open up a new talent for him to





share with the Love Puppy team? Without a new talent, would he really be helpful to the already powerful team of pooches?

“Come on, Barkley Boy,” called Rosie, who had already made it to the front door.

With that, Barkley bounded her way, pushing the thought out of his mind.