

# THE PUPPY PLACE

ANGEL



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# CHAPTER ONE

Ms. Sharma stopped suddenly in the middle of the path and held up her hand to let everyone else know that they should stop, too. She turned her face to the sky. “*Spshsh!*” She made a funny noise with her mouth. “*Spshsh, spshsh!*”

“What’s she doing?” Lizzie Peterson leaned over to whisper into the ear of her friend Maria. “What is that noise?”

Maria put a finger over her lips, reminding Lizzie that they were supposed to be on a silent hike. But then she leaned in close to Lizzie’s ear and whispered back, “She’s calling that bird. See?” She pointed to the crown of a nearby tree.



“That noise is like one that birds make to let each other know that danger is near. When she does it, the birds come out to see what’s happening. Birdwatchers call it ‘spishing.’ My dad does it, too.”

Lizzie squinted. Way up in the highest branches, she saw a tiny blob that might have been a bird. Yes! It was moving. It was a bird. It flitted down to a lower branch, then flitted again, perching at last on a branch right over their heads, so Lizzie could see it clearly. It was brown, with white feathers on its chest. It seemed almost as if the bird was responding to Ms. Sharma’s noise.

Lizzie shook her head. It couldn’t be. Dogs came when you called — that is, they did if they were properly trained — but not wild birds.

“*Spshsh, spshsh,*” said Ms. Sharma again. Another bird popped out of the leaves, and Lizzie froze in place. So did everyone else in her group.

