



Charlie's Rainy Day

1/7/08

By Juliana Carter



"It's raining, Mom!" Charlie woke up to the steady pitter-patter of rain. He had been waiting patiently for rain. A few weeks earlier, Charlie and his parents had gone to their favorite secondhand store to search for new treasures. Almost always, they would find something that they couldn't live without but didn't know they needed in the first place. On this trip, Charlie found a very special raincoat and boots. He immediately envisioned the adventures they would have together, his raincoat, boots and he. Bright yellow, the raincoat was covered with blue and green daschunds and was rubberized so that the rain wouldn't soak through. There was also a big hood to keep his head dry. The rain boots, with matching daschunds, had thick rubber soles. He couldn't wait for the next rainy day so he could test them out.

On this wet Saturday, Charlie and his sheepdog, Ruby, made their way into the wet backyard. Charlie leaned his head back and stuck out his tongue, trying to catch the fresh rain water. By the time a few drops landed on his tongue, his face was soaked. Ruby ran alongside Charlie, quickly getting soaked herself. Ruby didn't mind. When enough water accumulated on her coat, she'd shake, shake, shake the water off.

Charlie grabbed his garden spade and began to dig in the back corner of the yard. Charlie considered himself a budding archaeologist and took playing in the dirt seriously. The rain-soaked ground easily gave way under his spade as Charlie shoveled the wet earth. With his rain hood on, wearing his new-to-him daschund coat and daschund boots, Charlie could now search for dinosaur fossils to his heart's content.

"Charlie," Dad called from the front yard, "how would you like to sail some boats?"

Charlie and Ruby quickly made their way down the path leading to the front of the house. With every step he took, Charlie's boots made a little squeak, which sounded to

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Charlie just like the sound a daschund would make. Charlie considered this an added bonus.

In the front of the house, they found Charlie's dad who had fashioned two sailboats out of construction paper. Dad put a "C" for Charlie on one and an "M" for Mark on the other. Mark was Dad's name. The gutter in front of the curb had collected enough water for the two to launch their boats.

"Ready?" Charlie and his dad carefully dropped their boats into the water. Just like that, the boats were carried away by the current. Charlie excitedly ran alongside on the sidewalk, trying to keep up. Charlie's dad raced along with him, running past the houses on their street. The two laughed as they tried to catch their boats. As they reached the streetcorner, the boats came to a stop, caught in a pile of leaves and twigs that had gathered.

"It looks like we tied," said Charlie's dad.

"Let's do it again," cried Charlie.

Charlie and his dad sailed their boats again and again as Ruby ran with them, barking happily.

"I think it's time to go in and warm up," said Dad.

Charlie was about to protest, but thought of how good a cup of hot cocoa would be in front of the fireplace.

"Can we roast marshmallows?"

"It's a deal," said Dad.

After collecting their soggy boats, the three made their way to the house. Mom met them at the front door.

"Don't let Ruby come back into the house until you dry her first," said Mom, handing Charlie a bath towel. Too late. Ruby, very wet and slippery, foiled Charlie's attempts to catch and dry her. The drenched dog ran into the house and let loose.

"Oh, no," cried Mom. Ruby's shake started at the tip of her nose and ran down her back to the end of her tail. She shook and shook. Water droplets flew through the air, coating the living room -- couch, carpet and everything else -- with water. Feeling invigorated and happy, Ruby ran over to Mom and gave her a slobbery kiss.

"Ruby!" Mom loved Ruby and quickly gave up, knowing that the combination of a rainy day plus a large long-haired dog meant her idea of a clean house would have to wait.

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Sitting with his cup of hot chocolate, Charlie leaned against his now-drying dog who was lying on her bed in front of the fireplace. As he watched the fire, he happily thought to himself, "Rainy days are the very best days." Ruby, the sheepdog, agreed.

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