

## Daddy

Okay Doogie, we just had a good food and a bath so we are all set to go for night-night. Daddy is such a good one. He took off work to help buy me stuff to play with me today. He got me a do-nut; not just a regular do-nut, a princess one. It's got pink icing and spwinkles. Those are the best Doogie.

Daddy gave you a bath too! He put you the big machwine to wash your doggie ears and hat. You were getting a little stinky Doogie, but I still wuv you. Pretty soon mommy will be home from work. Until she comes back we should just play on the floor. You want to play Stwaberry Shortcake? I love her, she smells so nice. You can be a pony.

I heard something...I think it's Daddy sitting down on the creaky couch. I got yelled at today because I was bouncing on it. I didn't know not to. Daddy is holding his head. I wonder if he's okay. "Da-da" I say, but he doesn't see me. It's like I am talking but no one understands me. You understand me, don't ya Doogie? I hope he is all wight. He seems not to be himself today. He likes to play with me but he don't want to today.

My daddy taught me how to smile. The first thing I remember is my goofy daddy smiling at me. I thought he was so funny. I couldn't see all that gwate but my daddy's smile is big and bright. I didn't see that today. Sometimes when I don't feel good, I cry and take a nap. Maybe he should go to bed; what do you think Doogie?

Oh no...I don't feel good. My tummy hurts very bad. Do you feel bad too Doogie? It just started up. It feels like someone is squeezing my tummy. I can't help it. I have to tell daddy. I don't want to bother my da-da. Oh, it feels so bad. DADDY!

His eyes don't look happy. He isn't moving very fast. Come on daddy get up, please! I just want you to hold me and cuddle. I just want you to tell me that everything is going to be all right.

Goody, you are coming to me. I'll just put my arms up in the sky and my daddy will pick me up. I am trywing not to cry but it hurts more if I don't. Please pick me up! Why aren't you picking me up? You are just standing over me; why? You asking me what's wrong, but I'm trying to tell you my belly hurt! Why are you asking me the same thing over and over? Wait! Where are you going? Are you going to get me some medicine? That might help. My daddy is so smart.

Okay, it will okay Doogie. My daddy will help us. He is in the part of the house where they keep all the yummy stuff; but I don't want to eat. My tummy hurts, why would I want num-nums? He's bringing up some apple in a jar and he is handing a spoon. Okay, he is sitting down with me and trying to give me apples, but I don't want the apples, I want something to make me feel good! Why doesn't he understand? I keep moving my head away but he still tries.

Why is he getting mad? When he gets mad he just scares me more. I'm scared! I'm going to tell you that I am hurting and scared by yelling louder. He is just laying his head in his hands and shaking. Why is he doing that, Doogie? He is just tired, I am sure of it.

My tummy hurts so bad Doogie! I thought that maybe the milk tasted funny. I still drank it. I was thirsty! Why would something so good feel so bad? It doesn't make sense; does it Doogie?

Daddy's coming back! He is walking really fast! MY TUMMY HURTS! STOP YELLING AT ME DADDY! Why is he yelling? I can't help it daddy, you are scaring me really bad! I want my mommy!

The door is opening where we go in and out at. Mommy is home now Doogie! She'll know what to do Doogie, my mommy is smart too! She is doing what she usually does. Mommy comes in and sets her bag of stuff down. Can you hear me Mommy? I really hurt and daddy is yelling.

Mommy is asking what is wrong and daddy is saying how he doesn't know and then he just walks away. Mommy is getting upset. She walks away from me and starts yelling at my daddy. You two, stop fighting, it's not very nice. I'm crying here and no one is paying me attention.

Why is my daddy putting his clothes in a bag? Where is going? I keep on hearing things like, "I can't do this" and "I am not good enough". What is he talking about Doogie?

He is coming out of their sleeping room! My daddy is throwing on his shoes and mommy is still yelling at him. Stop yelling at my daddy!

Oh, wait...I just went to the bathroom and now my belly feels much better! It's okay daddy! I am better now!

He is still putting on his shoes? Why? He doesn't have to go get me medicine or anything; he can just stay and play with me!

He's standing up and getting his bag. He's looking at me! He's going to come pay me attention now! He turned his head and he is walking to the door where we come in at. My mommy is still yelling at him and saying "Don't bother coming back". Why is she saying that, Doogie? I just want my daddy!

Don't go daddy! I won't cry again! It was just the milk! I know you can't understand me right now, but don't go away. I need you to stay! Say that you'll stay with me forever! I'll make it right! You can have my Doogie if you stay! Please don't go away! I want my daddy!

Stop looking at me cry Doogie! This hurts me more than my belly. He is not listening to me cry anymore. He hates me doesn't he?

The door is starting to close, Doogie. I lost my daddy.

“DA.....DA”

Bryan W. Dull, author of “Solstice”