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CHAPTER ONE

# Puppy Days



“Come and see,” the farmer called to his family. “There are eight puppies, and they’re all well.” His children quickly found their shoes and warm coats, and went out with him. How exciting! They ran through the cold yard to the little shed behind the house.

It was a winter night when the eight little dogs were born, and because the farmer’s home was in Akita, in the north of Japan, there was a lot of snow. But the puppies were warm in the shed, next to their mother.

The farmer put his hand on the mother dog’s beautiful yellow-white coat.

“You did well,” he said. “You must sleep now.”

The children watched their father, and they smiled. Akita was famous for these big dogs, and their father loved them.

Soon, the farmer’s wife came and looked, too. “They’re beautiful puppies,” she smiled.

“Yes,” the farmer said. “My friend in Tokyo, Professor Ueno, is going to be happy. He’s waiting for a nice Akita puppy, and he’s going to pay us thirty *yen*. He can have the best one.”

“Oh, yes,” his wife said. “Professor Ueno must have the best puppy for his thirty *yen*.” She smiled at the children. “Now come and eat. Dinner’s ready.”



*The puppies were warm in the shed, next to their mother.*

For the next two weeks, the puppies drank their mother's milk and slept. Then they began opening their eyes, and they wanted to chew everything. They chewed their mother's ears and coat, and they chewed their bed, too!

After one more week, the puppies began to walk. Everyone laughed when they watched the little dogs, because they could not walk well. Then, two or three weeks later, when the puppies were bigger and could walk better, they began to play. They played a lot, and the children loved playing with them.



*The puppies began to walk.*

Once, when the puppies were about six weeks old, three of them began playing by the shed door. When the farmer came in with food and water for the mother dog, the three puppies ran through the open door into the yard. The farmer did not see them, and they began to play in the snow. They played and played, but soon they were very cold. There was snow on their coats and on their paws, and the puppies got colder and colder. Soon, they could not move.

In the house, the family heard the mother dog. She never usually made a noise, but now she barked and barked from her bed. The children ran out to the shed.

“Why are you barking?” the little girl asked.

Then her brother looked at the puppies and said, “Where are all your puppies? There are only five here!”



*“Why are you barking?” the little girl asked.*

The children went into the yard, and soon they found the three puppies in the snow. They called to their father.

“Oh, dear,” the farmer said when he saw the cold little dogs. “Bring them into the house quickly. It’s warm in there.”

The children brought the puppies into the house. Two of the little dogs sat and cried. But one of them was interested in everything, and he did not sit down or cry.

“Look at this puppy!” said the farmer. “He’s braver than his brother and sister! He’s a very nice Akita dog – let’s give him to Professor Ueno.”



*“He’s a very nice Akita dog – let’s give him to Professor Ueno.”*



Soon, the puppies were bigger, and they needed to leave their mother and go to their new homes. So one day, the farmer went to the train station with the professor's puppy in a box, and spoke to the driver of the Tokyo train.

"My friend Professor Ueno lives in Tokyo," he said, "and this puppy is for him. The professor is going to meet the train at Shibuya Station."

The driver carefully took the box and put it in the train. At first, the little puppy cried, but the driver opened the box, put his hand on the dog's head and said, "It's OK, little puppy. You're going to your new home." Then the dog slept.

After many hours, the train arrived at Shibuya Station in Tokyo, near the professor's house.

"Thank you," said Professor Ueno when he took the box from the train driver. He looked at the dog's yellow-white face and dark eyes. "Oh, he's beautiful," the professor smiled.

"Yes, he is," said the train driver. "You've got a nice dog there, Professor."

## Chapter Check

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**CHAPTER 1** Choose the correct words to complete the sentences.

- 1 The farmer's Akita dog had *ten* / *eight* puppies.
- 2 The farmer's friend in Tokyo, Professor Ueno, wanted to pay *thirty yen* / *sixty yen* for a good Akita puppy.
- 3 Three of the puppies played in the yard and got *warm* / *cold*.
- 4 One of the three puppies was *braver* / *smaller* than his brothers and sisters.
- 5 The professor's puppy went to Tokyo by *train* / *car*.

**CHAPTER 1** Complete these sentences with the correct people.

*Professor Ueno    the farmer    the farmer's children*  
*the farmer's wife    the train driver*

- 1 \_\_\_\_\_ said, "They're beautiful puppies!"
- 2 \_\_\_\_\_ wanted to give Hachiko to Professor Ueno.
- 3 \_\_\_\_\_ brought the puppies in from the snow.
- 4 \_\_\_\_\_ took Hachiko from Akita to Tokyo.
- 5 \_\_\_\_\_ saw Hachiko for the first time at Shibuya Station.