

Big Sis and the Askew Plane





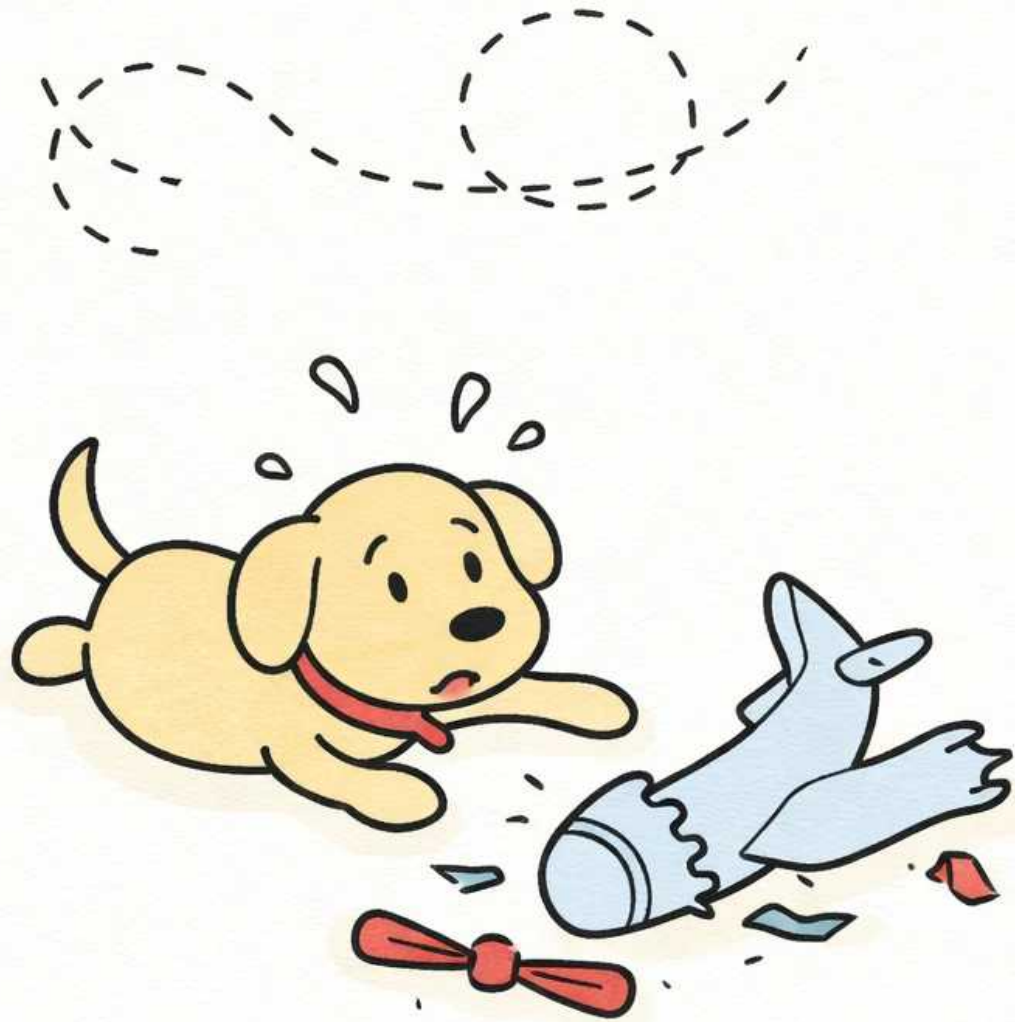
It is **true**. My big sis is the coolest kid in all the land.

She lies way up high on a branch in the big oak tree. One arm hangs down and sways. She hums a **tune** and does not fuss.

I grab the low branch with both hands. My legs kick at the sky. 'Big Sis!' I yell. 'How do I get up there?'

Big Sis stands right up on the branch, like it is a path and not way, way up. She holds her toy plane up to the **blue** sky and squints at it. 'Look at this,' she says. 'The best fling ever.' I stand at the base and look up. One day, I think, I will be just like Big Sis.





The plane loops up, up,
up... then it goes **askew...**
then down, down, down.

Crash! It smacks the
ground, and red parts
fly all over. And right in
the mess sits our dog.
He blinks. Poor pup.

Dog is not glad. He jumps up and barks his big, bad bark. The kind that says, I will not let this go. I grip my branch. My legs shake. But Big Sis? She just leans on the trunk and crosses her arms. 'Hush, Dog,' she says. 'The plane did not even hit hard. What a fuss.' Dog huffs and stops. **Phew!** Big Sis never flinches. Never.



'I need wood,' Big Sis says.
She digs in the dirt with a
little spade. 'And **glue**. And
some string too.'

I sit next to her. I do not
know what to dig for, so I
just look on.

Behind us, Dog finds a rope.
He leaps and tugs and
growls and **chews** it. No one
tells Dog to stop. No one
ever tells Dog to stop.



On the path back, Big Sis stops to pat Dog. 'Are we good now, Dog?' Dog wags his tail so hard his bum sways. I stand behind Big Sis and hold her arm. Dog's mouth is very big and very wet and very close to my face. 'Dog is tame,' Big Sis says. 'Dog wants a **chew,**' I whisper. 'And I am the **chew.**'



Then Big Sis trips on a root. Down she goes! I hold her arm, so down I go too.

We roll in the dirt. A **few** leaves fly up all round us. Dog just stands there and looks at us, like we are the silliest things ever.

But does Big Sis cry? No way. Not even a bit.

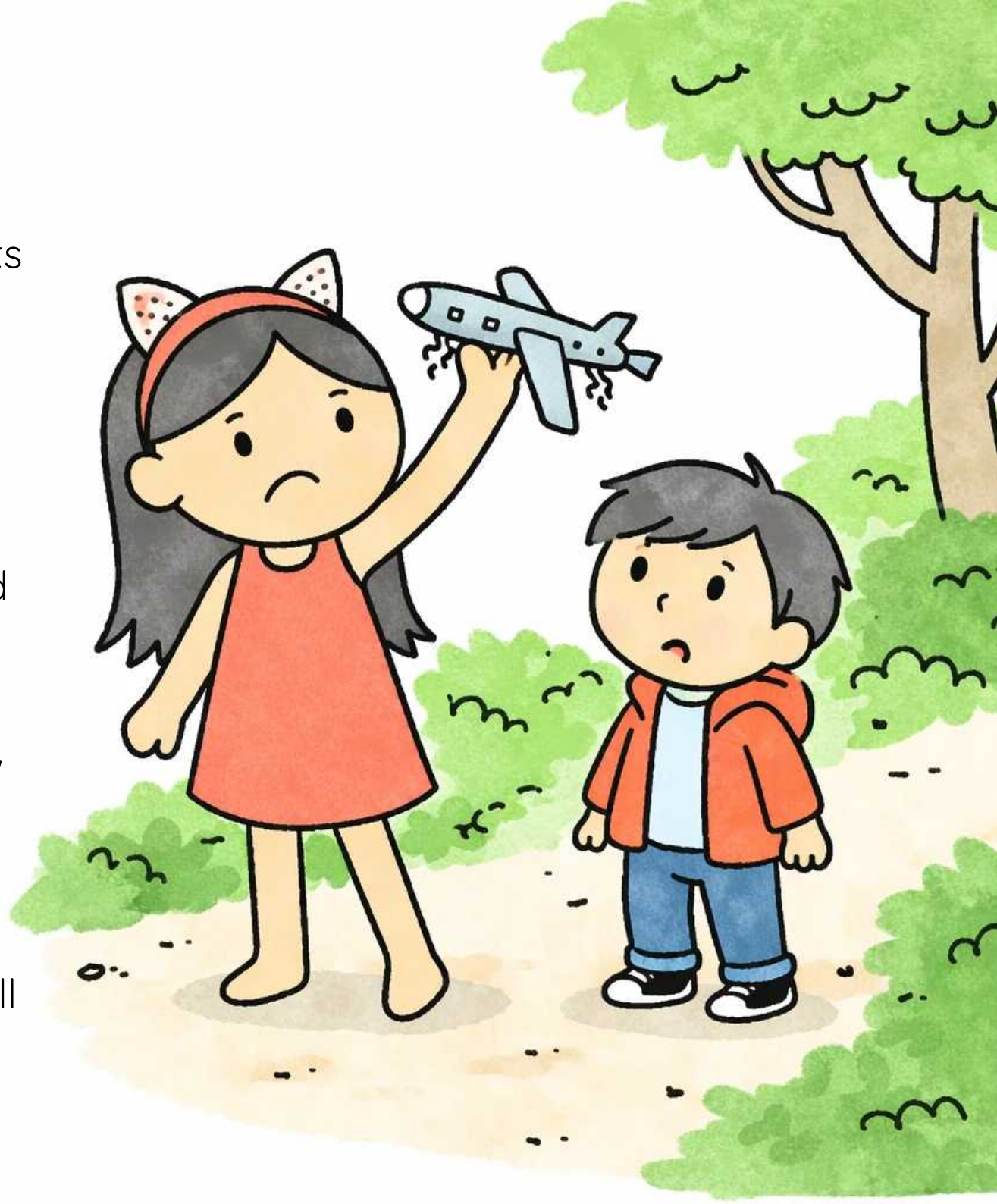


Big Sis gets right up. She brushes off her dress and picks up the plane. She squints at the crack in the wing. Tap, tap.

'We can fix this,' she says.

'Some wood, some **glue**, good as **new**.'

I have a scrape on my elbow and a leaf on my ear. I want to cry a bit. But if Big Sis does not cry, then no way will I cry.





No one is home to cook yet,
and my belly growls like
thunder.

'I will cook,' Big Sis says. She
pulls a big book off the shelf
and flops it open on the
counter. 'I will **brew** us a big
pot. A **stew!**'

I sit and look on. Big Sis can
do it all, I think. Lie on high
branches, fix planes, cook **stew**.
She could face down a storm.

I put one foot on the stool and peek over the counter. And then I see it. It can not be **true**.

Big Sis is crying. Real, wet drops roll down her cheeks.

My mouth falls open. My big sis. The best in all the land. Crying?





It can not be right. I tap
my chin and ponder. I need
a **clue**.

Big Sis never cries on a
high branch. She never cries
when Dog barks his big,
bad bark. She did not even
cry when she fell smack in
the dirt!

So what could make Big Sis
cry?

I step up close. Very, very close. Big Sis looks down at me, grins, and holds up half an onion. 'Onions,' she says, and shrugs.

I **squeal** with glee and just about fall off the stool.

Onions! **Phew!** Because Big Sis does not cry. Not if she falls off the moon. Not if the moon itself comes crashing down.

Big Sis never cries.





Big Sis and the Askew Plane

Big Sis is the coolest kid around - she climbs the highest branches without a wobble and never, ever cries. When her toy plane crashes and their dog barks his biggest, baddest bark, Big Sis just laughs it off. But then her little sibling spots something impossible in the kitchen: real tears. What could possibly make fearless Big Sis cry? Written for Jolly Phonics classrooms (Step 3, Unit 8: /ue/ mixed), this book practices words like 'glue', 'true', 'askew', 'stew', 'pew'.

Phonics Focus: <mixed>

askew, blue, brew, chew, chews, clue, few, glue, new, pew, squeal, stew, true, tune

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