

My Birthday Wish

by RV staff writer J.C.

I was sitting at the dinner table with my family. Without warning, my brother smiled and turned down the kitchen lights so we all were sitting in partial darkness. Then my mom walked over, carrying a big, chocolate cake decorated with red icing and sprinkles. The cake was lit up with ten birthday candles, and everyone started singing to me!

My favorite part of birthdays is getting the chance to make a wish. Sometimes they come true, and sometimes they don't, but the fun of waiting and hoping makes me happy. It's like magic is in the air or something. Maybe I'm too old to believe in magic and wishes, but I don't care. I still do it.

I closed my eyes, made my wish, and blew. My grandparents clapped and my little sister stuck her chubby finger into the puffy clouds of icing. She's always doing dumb things like that. Mom took the cake away to cut it into slices. She gave me the first piece, and it was awesome. Chocolate with vanilla cream in the middle – delicious.

Ding, dong! The doorbell rang. We weren't expecting anybody else. "Why don't you go answer the door, kiddo?" suggested Dad. He likes calling me kiddo. Mom says it's because he's always calling us kids by the wrong names. I frowned, trying to think. Was this a trick? Was I about to get pranked?

"Okay," I said slowly and headed for the door. I couldn't see anybody through the glass window. Cautiously I opened the door. There was a large box on the doorstep decorated with a tag on it that read, "Happy Birthday! Open me!"

"What's this?" Now I was confused, but excited. The box wasn't very heavy, so I brought it inside. My family crowded all around me.

"What is it?" asked my grandma.

"Open it!" My brother was impatient, as usual.

"Box, box!" yelled my little sister, trying to get her hands on it.

"Hold on, everybody," I said. I took a deep breath to calm myself down.

I put the box on the floor and knelt over it. Slowly I opened the top flaps. I peered into the darkness. It looked like the box was empty. Except – except that it wasn't. There were a pair of big, beautiful brown eyes staring back at me. And a pair of floppy ears. And a wagging tail that seemed like it would never stop.

My heart melted as I picked it up and cradled its warm, wiggly body in my arms. "A puppy," I

whispered. My eyes stung as I felt tiny pricks of happy tears gathering. I couldn't believe it. I had been wanting a dog forever.

As I cuddled the pup and it licked my nose, I knew that, no matter what anyone else says, wishes sometimes do come true.

Questions

1. Which family members were at the birthday party?

2. Put the events of the story in order:
 - a) I put the box on the floor and opened it.
 - b) My brother turned down the lights.
 - c) The pup licked my nose.
 - d) I blew out the birthday candles.
 - e) I brought the box inside.
 - f) The doorbell rang.

3. How did the birthday child feel when they saw the puppy?

4. If you could have a birthday wish come true, what would it be?