

CHAPTER ONE -- Never Talk Again



“Mom, I’m not going to s-s- school today! I HATE school. Please let me s-s-stay home.”

Yesterday was the first day of class. All day long seven-year-old Nicki had trouble talking. She knew what she wanted to say. The words just got stuck on the way out of her mouth. Reading out loud was the worst. Some of the kids in her class laughed at her. She felt like crying.

“Nicki, honey, don’t be silly. You have to go to school,” her mom said and started the car.

On the drive to school, Nicki said to herself, *I’ll just never talk again. Then, no one can make fun of me.*

“Good morning, Nicki,” her teacher said.



Nicki waved, smiled, and walked to her desk.

“Hi, Nicki, want to hang out at recess?” Anna asked.

Nicki nodded her head up and down.

“Hey, Nicki, have you seen Joe?” Josh asked.

Nicki shook her head from side to side.





“Did you watch the Charlie Brown special on TV last night? Wasn’t it funny?” Kayla asked Nicki.

Nicki gave her a thumbs-up sign.

Hey, this no-talking is great! Nicki thought. As long as I don’t talk, everyone is nice to me.

“Okay, children, it’s time for reading class,” her teacher said.

Uh, oh, Nicki said to herself. “Nicki, please see me first,” her teacher added.

Double uh, oh. Nicki walked up to her teacher’s desk.

“Nicki, you have been selected to read with Buddy. Please go to the library.”

Nicki nodded. She wanted to ask “Who is Buddy?” but that would mean talking.

She walked slowly down the long hall and peeked into the library. There was a DOG in the room!

