



Dear Hound

By Jill Murphy

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Alfie the deerhound is a large grey puppy. He loves his boy Charlie, and cheese, and he's very good at digging holes. But poor Alfie has got lost and he's scared - of thunderstorms and being hungry and never seeing Charlie again . . . Meanwhile, Charlie doesn't know what to do - but one thing is for sure: he'll never stop looking for his dear hound. Can Alfie ever find his way back to Charlie - and his great big squashy beanbag in the kitchen?

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Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Gr 2-4—Alfie, a huge deerhound puppy with expressive ears, gets lost in the heath after he escapes from his dog-sitter. As Charlie and his mother wander around town looking for their pet and hanging up posters, Alfie searches for them. For months, owners and dog just miss each other, outside of the local restaurant (with an accessible trash bin) and in the moors. The animal's fur becomes more and more unkempt, and his face is matted and smeared with grease and dirt from his frequent Dumpster meals, making him look less and less like the picture on the posters. By the book's end, Alfie has run into a couple of improbable comrades, two unlikely villains, and finally, his family. This chapter book will appeal to fans of animal stories who have moved beyond Arnold Lobel's "Frog and Toad" titles (HarperCollins) but aren't quite ready for the length and complexity of E. B. White's *Stuart Little*. Murphy's expressive black-and-white line spot drawings (sometimes three to a spread) and deerhound notes ("GARDENING: They are great hole-diggers. Once they've started a hole, they don't stop till Australia") heighten the characterizations and add detail to the settings. *Lindsay Persohn, Crystal Lake Elementary, Lakeland, FL*

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From [Booklist](#)

Alfie is a big, gangly, and innocent deerhound puppy that becomes lost after escaping from a dog daycare center. Some kindly, street-smart foxes take him in, but then hunters capture him and put him to work. Alfie manages to foil the hunters' attempt to shoot his fox friends, but he is injured in the process. Finally, the foxes come up with a plan to lead Alfie's human family to him, and all is set right. Murphy captures the goofy spirit of a deerhound in both words and pencil illustrations that greatly enhance the story. On the first page, for example, she provides a chart explaining how a deerhound's ears convey its moods, and this chart is referenced in each subsequent illustration of Alfie. Young readers will enjoy this lighthearted story, and they may also enjoy the British point of view, where all activities are interrupted for tea breaks. Chris Kurz's *The Pup Who Cried Wolf* (2010) also features a similar canine adventure story. Grades 3-5. --Todd Morning

About the Author

Jill Murphy was born in London in 1949. From a very early age she was drawing and writing stories, and was already putting books together (literally, with a stapler) by the time she was six. She went on to study at Chelsea, Croydon and Camberwell Schools of Art. Jill worked in a children's home for four years and as a nanny for a year, before becoming a freelance writer and illustrator. The *Worst Witch* stories are some of Puffin's most successful titles.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Darcie Hartman:

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