

Finding My Yip: Boomer's Tales: Book 1

Christine Isley-Farmer

Wandering in the Words Press

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Filled with friendship, adventure, and a lot of puppy charm, Finding My Yip is an entertaining children's story about what it means to be brave.

In Christine Isley-Farmer's sweet children's book *Finding My Yip*, a girl and her puppy are determined to find their voices.

Boomer is a little puppy with a big problem: unlike his siblings, he can't seem to find his bark. His human, Chloe, has a similar problem: she's been stuttering, following the loss of her parents. Chloe is scared that she will never be able to fit in again, but is delighted to find a friend in Boomer. With adult encouragement, Chloe and Boomer enroll in puppy training classes, where they are surprised to make new friends who do not care how they speak. With the help of these new companions, the two begin to grow more confidence—and even find their yips.

Boomer narrates, his youthful tone full of excitement and delight. His struggle to understand Chloe's sadness, paired with his determination to be with her no matter what, mirrors Chloe's confusion in the face of her loss, imparting the message that sad emotions are a normal part of life. That families are a source of strength is also emphasized, including families that do not look traditional. Chloe, though she misses her parents, finds a new family with Boomer, her grandmother (whose magic ring lets her speak to animals, and who encourages Chloe's love of poetry and music), and a friend, Robbie. Boomer, who is sad to see his mother and sister go when he is adopted by Chloe, realizes that he can love both his canine and human clans.

Charming full-page illustrations help when it comes to visualizing the characters. Boomer's large puppy eyes, sparkling with mischief, are sure to elicit squeals of delight. The illustrations are drawn in a cartoon style—a lighthearted choice that balances well with the book's serious topics of processing feelings of loss and self-doubt.

The magical elements of the story, however, detract from its sweet messages; they come to feel unnecessary. Boomer is confused by Nana's ring, describing it as a glowing silver circle for the first half of the novel. Until Nana reveals her secret, it is impossible to tell if something extraordinary is happening, or if Boomer is just misunderstanding a human object.

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VIVIAN TURNBULL (January 21, 2021)

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