

When Little Sister Comes to Play

"Amy, no...!" Brian cried. But before Mother could grab her, baby Amy had toppled the LEGO airport tower Brian and Jane had just built.

"Amy is always breaking our toys and knocking down anything we build," Jane sobbed.

"I don't think Amy means to upset you," said Mother. "She's still young and doesn't understand that she's messing up your hard work. Maybe you can show her how to play with the toys nicely. Why don't you give it a try?"

"Okay, Amy," Brian said. "Come and help me make a tower." He began to take the wooden blocks from the toy box and place them one on top of the other.

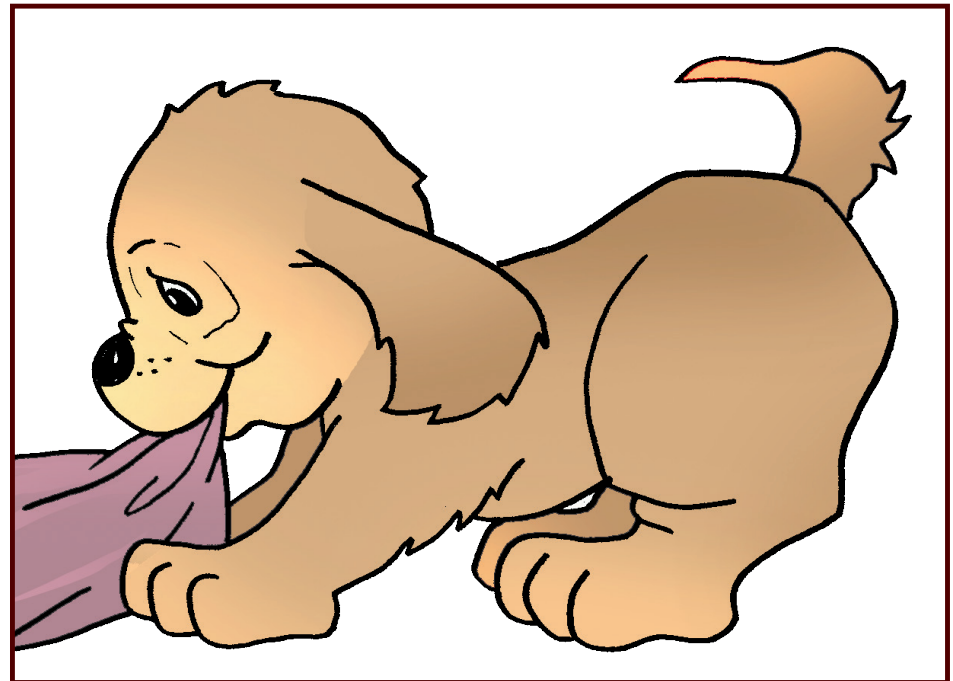
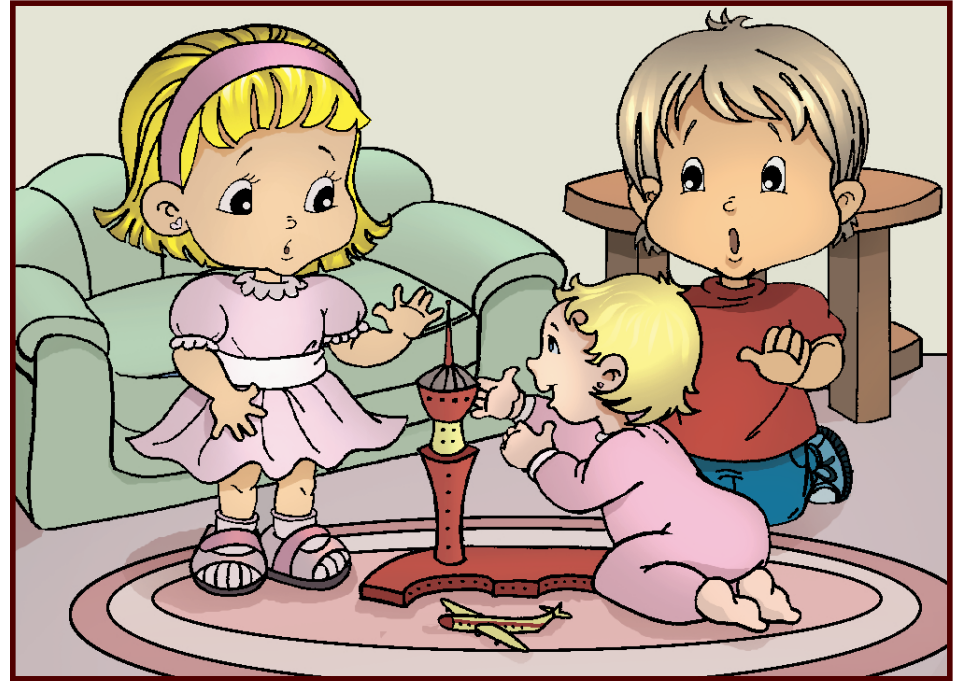
"GACK!" exclaimed Amy as the last block was in place. With a swift move of her arm, Amy knocked the tower and sent the blocks flying.

"Hmmm, I think Amy is a little like Scott the puppy," said Mother.

"Scott the puppy?" Brian and Jane asked.

"When I was young I had a puppy named Scott," Mother began. "He was a cute puppy, but always got into trouble. Before Scott came to our house, my friend Sally and I would play for hours with my dollhouse, but once Scott was around, he would disrupt our playtime. He would bite the dolls, run off with the furniture, and knock down the dollhouse and all the pieces in it."

"One day, just when we had everything set up in the dollhouse the way we liked it, Scott bounded in the room and jumped on the dollhouse and everything was a mess!"



"Sally and I were very angry, and we scolded Scott. But then my father told us that Scott didn't mean to be naughty; he saw us having fun and wanted to play too. You see, Scott was just a puppy and was still learning how to play nicely. He needed attention from us to keep him happy."

"So we decided to take Scott to the garden and play with him, and he was very happy for the attention. After that, any time we were planning to play with the dollhouse, we would first take a little time to play with Scott, and soon we stopped having trouble with him disrupting our playtime and messing up the dollhouse."

"Amy sounds a lot like Scott the puppy," said Brian. "She sees us having fun with our toys and wants to play with us, but since she's still small, she doesn't know how to play without knocking the toys down."

"Maybe if we play with her more and show her how to play with the toys, she'll start learning," said Jane.

"Those are good points," said Mother. "And you can probably find something that you all will enjoy playing together, like dress-up and a tea party."

"Oh yes!" they chorused.

Mother brought in the dress-up box, while Brian and Jane showed Amy how to set the tea cups and plates on the table.

Amy was happy to be part of the fun, and Brian and Jane realized they could have a wonderful time themselves when Amy was around. There would be other times, when Amy wasn't around, when Brian and Jane could play with more delicate toys, but now they knew they could have fun when Amy was there too.

*Contributed and adapted by Shanna Landon,
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