



Every 100 years or so, as legend has it, a very special dog is born into the world. And so it was, one chilly March day in Northern Wisconsin, a Labrador retriever was born into a litter with her four sisters. At first glance there appeared to be nothing uncommon about her. She was neither bigger nor smaller than the rest of the pups and, like her sisters, for the first week after her birth she rooted and nestled close to her mother. But specialness comes in all shapes and sizes and cannot be seen with the naked eye. What makes a dog uniquely special is something inside that shines through in a dog's character. The legend goes on to say that the dog's special gift is awakened only if she is kissed by a rabbit. So you can understand why these dogs are so rare.

Over the weeks, as the pups grew bigger, they ventured around the barn playing on the fresh hay that covered the floor. Sometimes one of the pups would get covered up and hide from the others until her squeal revealed her hiding place. Their mother watched them closely and made sure each night before she went to sleep that they were all accounted for. If you had watched the pups play together you would have noticed that the special one was the shyest. She liked to play with her sisters, but sometimes she seemed overwhelmed by their rough-and-tumble ways. Mostly, she just stayed by her mother's side and napped as her sisters explored the far corners of the barn.





Therefore, it was most surprising that one day, when the dogs were about five weeks old, the special puppy wandered off through the open barn door, into the woods on the other side of the farm. As the pup wandered around the woods exploring all the new sights and barking at all the new sounds, she lost her way back to the barn.

She didn't realize it until very late in the day when the sun began to set in the west. As darkness covered the woods the little pup began to whimper for her mother. She was scared now and realized that she was all alone. She whimpered louder but her mother, who could not hear her, did not come.

