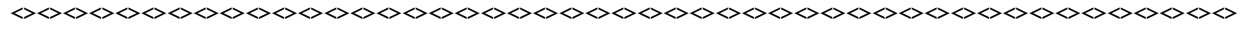


JESSICA
by Kevin Henkes

Parts(9):	Narrator 1	Narrator 2	Narrator 3	Narrator 4	Narrator 5
	Dad	Ruthie	Mom	Jessica	



Narrator 1: JESSICA

Narrator 2: Ruthie Simms didn't have a dog. She didn't have a cat, or a brother, or a sister. But Jessica was the next best thing.

Narrator 3: Jessica went wherever Ruthie went. To the moon, to the playground, to Ruthie's grandma's for the weekend.

Mom and Dad: "THERE IS NO JESSICA,"

Narrator 4: said Ruthie's parents. But there was. She ate with Ruthie, looked at books with Ruthie, and took turns stacking blocks with Ruthie, building towers.

Narrator 5: If Ruthie was mad, so was Jessica. If Ruthie was sad, Jessica was too. And if Ruthie was glad, Jessica felt exactly the same.

Narrator 1: When Ruthie accidently spilled some juice, she said,

Ruthie: "Jessica did it, and she's sorry."

Narrator 2: When Ruthie's parents called a babysitter because they wanted to go to a movie one night, Ruthie said,

Ruthie: "Jessica has a stomachache and wants you to stay home."

Narrator 3: And when Ruthie turned five, it was Jessica's fifth birthday too.

Mom and Dad: "THERE IS NO JESSICA,"

Narrator 4: said Ruthie's parents. But there was. She went to bed with Ruthie, she got up with Ruthie, and she stayed with Ruthie all the while in between.

Narrator 5: On the night before the first day of kindergarten, Ruthie's mother said,

Mom: "I think Jessica should stay home tomorrow."

Narrator 1: Ruthie's father said,

Dad: "You'll meet a lot of nice children. You can make new friends."

Narrator 2: But Jessica went anyway.

Narrator 3: Jessica wanted to go home so badly that Ruthie had to hold her hands and whisper to her. When the teacher announced everyone's name, Ruthie and Jessica weren't listening.

Narrator 4: Jessica crawled through a tunnel with Ruthie, she took a nap with Ruthie, and she shared Ruthie's paintbrush during art.

Narrator 5: When all the children lined up two-by-two to march to the lavatory, Jessica was right next to Ruthie. A girl came up to Ruthie and stood by her side.

Jessica: "Can I be your partner?"

Narrator 1: she asked. Ruthie didn't know what to say.

Jessica: "My name is Jessica,"

Narrator 2: said the girl.

Ruthie: "It is?"

Narrator 3: said Ruthie.

Narrator 4: The girl nodded.

Ruthie: "Mine's Ruthie,"

Narrator 5: said Ruthie, smiling. And they walked down the hallway hand-in-hand.

Narrator 1: Ruthie Simms didn't have a dog. She didn't have a cat, or a brother, or a sister. But Jessica was even better.

Scripted by Jill Jauquet