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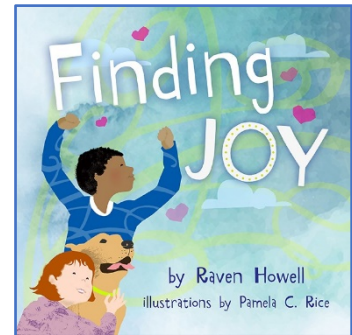
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## Helping Children Find Joy Again After Loss

CHANDLER, Ariz. (September 2022)—Loss is a powerful experience for any child, especially when that loss involves a member of their family. In her latest children’s book, *Finding Joy* (Story Monsters Press), author Raven Howell helps children navigate the painful—and often confusing—feelings that arise from the death of a loved one.

*Finding Joy* tells the story of a little girl and her adopted brother, John, who rescue a sweet old dog, Joy, from the local animal shelter. As the seasons slide past, the children learn how magical it is to have a pet friend by their sides—romping through the winter snow, splashing through spring puddles, and picking autumn apples. But one day old Joy lays down to take a nap and does not wake up. At first, the children are shocked, finding it difficult to process the feelings of sadness they experience in Joy’s absence. With the love and support of their parents, they learn to recall the good memories they shared with sweet Joy, even preparing them to welcome a new pet friend into the family.

“This book is an excellent vehicle for presenting the concept of death to a young child before the need for this discussion occurs,” says Denise A. Angelo, a licensed clinical social worker and contributor of



Raven Howell



Pamela C. Rice

the resource, "How to Talk to Children About Loss," included as an appendage to *Finding Joy*.

The inspiration for *Finding Joy* arose from the current global pandemic, as many children confront loss and grief for the very first time. "Over the past couple of years, with all the emotions we've experienced, children in particular need to know that we are in this together, that they are safe, included, and not alone in how they feel," says Howell, who chose the theme of pet loss because of its timeless ability to capture an experience many children will relate to.

"I have always wanted to add a book to our library that helps children process the passing of a loved one," says Linda F. Radke, publisher of Story Monsters Press and president of Story Monsters LLC. "This story, along with its illustrations, does a tremendous job offering both understanding and hope, and Story Monsters is proud to be the publisher."

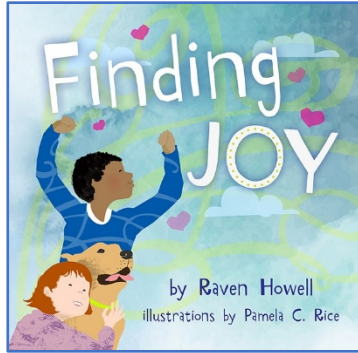
Howell is an award-winning author and poet of more than a dozen picture books and a frequent contributor to *Story Monsters Ink*, *Highlights for Children*, *Cricket*, *Jack and Jill*, *Humpty Dumpty*, *Fun for Kidz*, *Ladybug*, and *The School Magazine*. She was also the director of a poetry contest for Story Monsters and compiled the students' winning poems and artwork in *I am Monster Magnificent*.

Combining simple, yet powerful prose with richly textured illustrations, *Finding Joy* is a collaboration between Howell and artist Pamela C. Rice. Following a decorated career in advertising, graphic design, and visual communications, Rice turned to children's book illustration in 2015 and has since published 12 books, including *When the Brown Bird Flies*, *The Painting Speaks*, *Aaron's Dreams*, and *Rufus Finds a Prize*.

*Finding Joy* and other Story Monsters Press titles are available for purchase in the [Story Monsters online store](#) and Amazon. Story Monsters Press is an imprint of Story Monsters LLC, dedicated to publishing books that offer hope, value differences, and help children build character. Each book also includes a curriculum guide complementing the story for parents and educators to utilize with young readers. **To learn more about Story Monsters Press, or to request a review copy of *Finding Joy*, please visit [www.storymonsters.com](http://www.storymonsters.com).**

## About Story Monsters LLC

Story Monsters LLC is home to the award-winning [Story Monsters Ink®](#) magazine, the literary resource for teachers, librarians and parents. We also help authors of all genres strive for excellence through our award-winning [marketing & publicity services](#), the [Dragonfly Book Contests](#), [Story Monsters Approved!](#), [School Express Press](#) and [AuthorBookings.com](#).



# Finding Joy

By Raven Howell  
Illustrated by Pamela C. Rice

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## The Creative Team

### About the Author • Raven Howell

Raven Howell is a multiple-award-winning author and poet of children's books. She is Creative & Publishing Advisor for Red Clover Reader, and a contributing author for Reading is Fundamental. In addition, she writes for several magazines, including *Story Monsters Ink*, *Ladybug*, *Spider*, *Highlights for Children*, *Hello*, *Humpty Dumpty* and *The School Magazine*. Howell was also the director of a Story Monsters poetry contest for students, and compiled the winning entries featured in *I am Monster Magnificent*.

### About the Illustrator • Pamela C. Rice

Pamela C. Rice has enjoyed a well-decorated career in advertising, graphic design, and visual communications, and now she enjoys creating children's illustrations that are fun, imaginative and educational. Since 2015, Pam has released 12 books, including *When the Brown Bird Flies*, *The Painting Speaks*, *Aaron's Dreams* and *Rufus Finds A Prize*.

### About the Publisher • Story Monsters Press

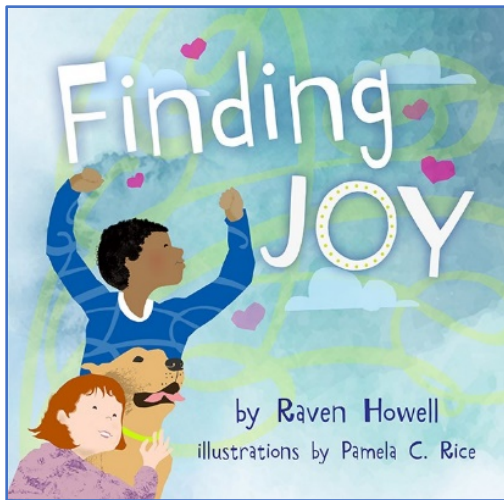
Story Monsters Press, an imprint of Story Monsters LLC, is a publisher of children's books that offer hope, value differences, and build character. Each book also includes a curriculum guide complementing the story for parents and educators to use with young readers.

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## Fact Sheet



**Written by:** Raven Howell  
**Illustrator:** Pamela C. Rice  
**Publisher:** Story Monsters Press  
**Email/Phone:** [publisher@storymonsters.com](mailto:publisher@storymonsters.com);  
(480) 940-8182  
**Retail Price:** \$15.95  
**Pub Date:** September 20, 2022  
**Trim Size:** 8.5 x 8.5  
**Pages:** 32 pages  
**ISBN:** 978-1-58985-012-5 (paperback)  
**eISBN:** 978-1-58985-013-2 (e-Book)  
**Interest Level:** Ages 4-7 years  
**Website:** [www.FindingJoyBook.com](http://www.FindingJoyBook.com)

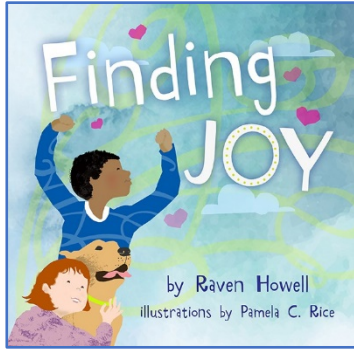
### What is this book about?

When they adopt an old dog from the local animal shelter, a little girl and her brother are excited to have a special new friend to play with. They embark on all kinds of adventures with Joy, romping through the snow and splashing in spring puddles. But one day, while the kids are at school, sweet Joy lays down for a nap and does not wake up.

The family is very sad. It is natural to feel gloomy when you lose someone special, the girl and her brother learn, but it's important to remember the happy times, too. Slowly, the family's hearts begin to heal. Soon it's spring again, and with a new season comes another furry friend in need of a loving home—MEOW!

### What makes this book unique?

Learning to navigate big emotions like grief and loss is a seminal part of growing up. *Finding Joy* includes a resource guide on "How to Talk to Children About Loss" for any child learning to process their feelings and heal after the loss of a loved one. Howell chose the theme of pet loss because of its timeless ability to capture an experience many children will relate to.



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## Book Descriptions

### 10-word description:

A family processes the feelings they experience after a loss.

### 15-word description:

As a family processes their feelings after a loss, they welcome a new, furry friend.

### 25-word description:

A family adopts a dog and enjoys adventures. One day, she doesn't wake up. They learn to open their hearts to a new friend—MEOW!

### 50-word description:

A sister and brother adopt a dog they name Joy. They embark on all kinds of adventures until the day Joy lays down for a nap and doesn't wake up. The family is very sad as they process their feelings. Then they open their hearts to a new furry friend.

### 100-word description:

When they adopt an old dog from the local animal shelter, a girl and her brother are excited to have a special friend to play with. They embark on all kinds of adventures with Joy, romping through the snow and splashing in puddles. One day, Joy lays down for a nap and does not wake up. The family is very sad. The girl and her brother learn it's important to remember both the happy and sad times. As their hearts begin to heal, a new season begins, and they welcome another furry friend in need of a loving home—MEOW!

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## Suggested Interview Questions

1. How did you become a writer? Did you always know you wanted to be a writer?
2. You also write poetry. Who has had the greatest influence on your poetry?
3. How did the idea come about for writing *Finding Joy*?
4. Losing a pet or loved one is such a difficult topic to write about, and yet you do it so lovingly in *Finding Joy*. What was your inspiration for telling this story?
5. What message do you want readers to walk away with when they read your book?
6. Pam Rice's illustrations brought your story to life. Can you explain what your creative process looks like?
7. Tell us about the resource guide on "How to Talk to Children About Loss." Why did you think it was important to include such a guide in your book?
8. Talk about your partnership with Story Monsters Ink. What can readers expect when they read your monthly column, "The Book Bug?"
9. What advice would you offer to aspiring poets and writers?
10. What other projects are you currently working on?

