

# Tutus Aren't My Style

by **Linda Skeers**



pictures by **Anne Wilsdorf**







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# Aren't



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# My Style

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**E**mma spent the morning catching frogs, roping the cat, and digging for pirate treasure.

Then the mailman said, "This is for you." And the day got even better!







Emma ripped open the package from Uncle Leo. She was hoping for a pirate hat or a lizard.

The box was full of pink. No pirate hat.

It was soft and silky. No lizard.



Emma pulled out . . . a ballerina outfit.

What was Uncle Leo thinking?

Emma had never wanted to be a ballerina. But she didn't want to disappoint Uncle Leo. Especially since he was coming for a visit.

"I don't know *how* to be a ballerina," she said.





The mailman grinned. "You float like a fairy," he said, leaping across the lawn. "You flutter like a butterfly." He twirled and whirled. "And you dance like daisies and dandelion fluff!"







Emma floated.  
And landed in the petunia patch.



She fluttered.  
And tripped over the garden gnome.







She twirled.  
And fell into the birdbath.





“I think you twirled when you should have whirled,” said the mailman.  
“What’s so great about floating like fluff?” Emma mumbled.  
She sat and looked at the ballerina outfit. She held up the satiny pink slippers with long dangling ribbons.

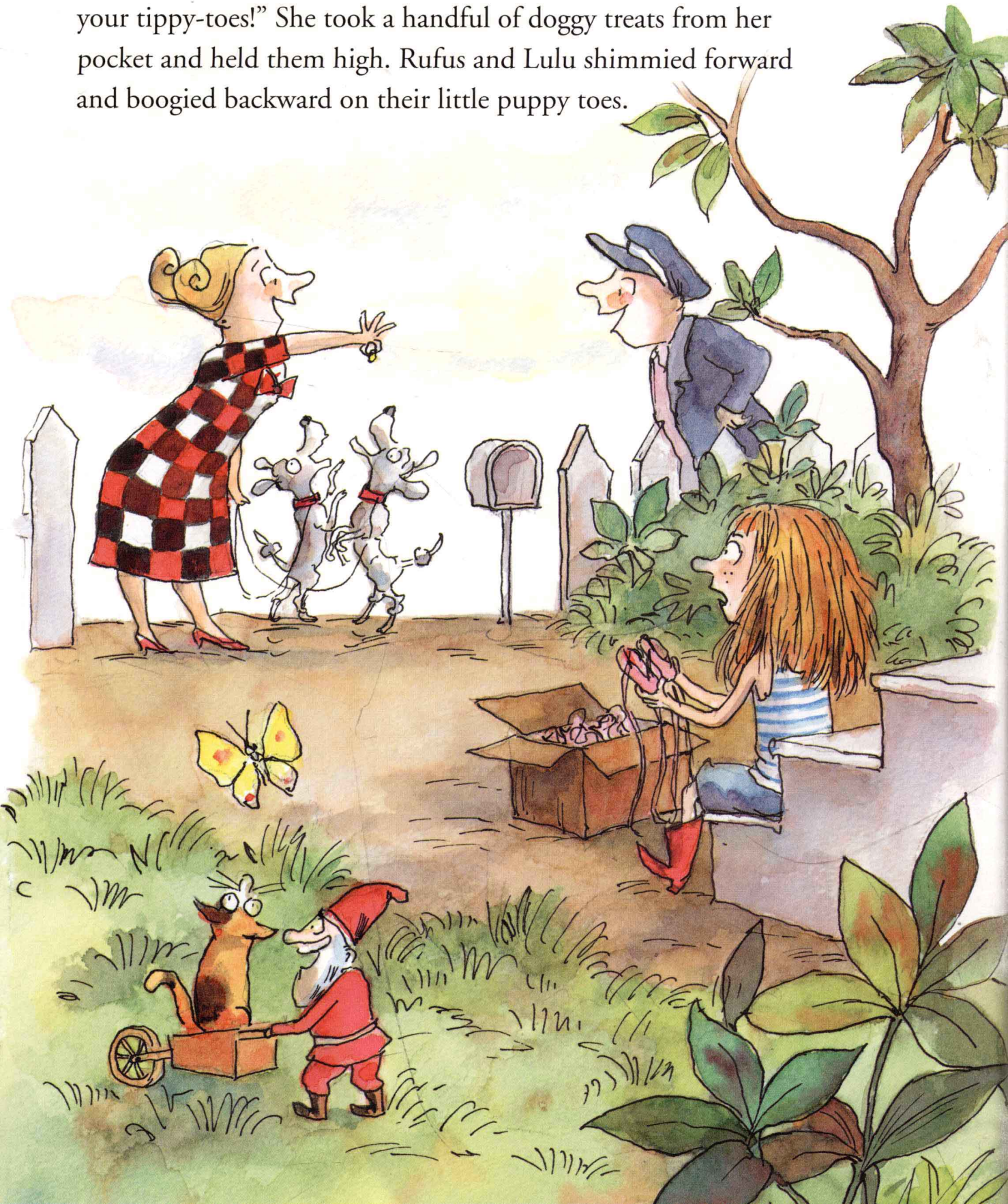




Mrs. Gurkin was walking her poodles. "Oh, Emma!" she said. "You'll make a lovely ballerina!"  
"But I don't know *how*!" Emma said.



“With elegance and grace,” Mrs. Gurkin replied. “And on your tippy-toes!” She took a handful of doggy treats from her pocket and held them high. Rufus and Lulu shimmied forward and boogied backward on their little puppy toes.







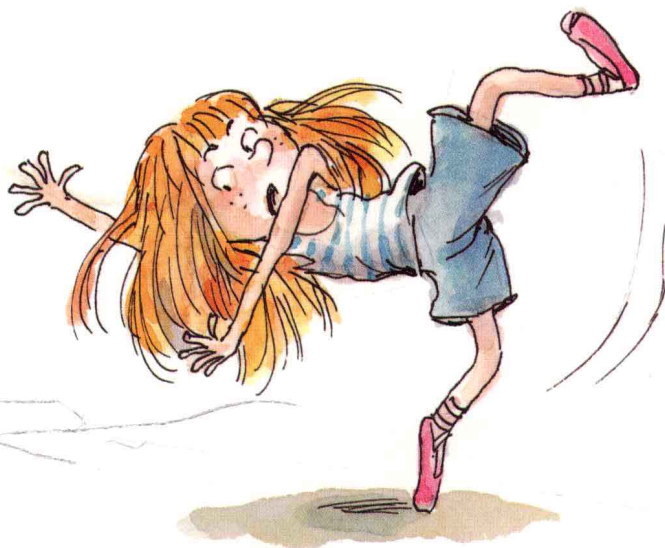
“Looks easy,” said Emma. She slipped off her cowboy boots and put on her slippers. She tied the ribbons in dainty little bows around her ankles.





She stood on her right toe  
and flopped over to the left.  
It wasn't graceful.

She stood on her left toe  
and toppled over to the right.  
It wasn't elegant.



She stood on both toes and  
fell backward. Into the petunia  
patch. Again.



“Tippy-toes aren’t my style,” she muttered.

“Maybe you’d do better indoors,” suggested Mrs. Gurkin.





Emma took the package into the house. If she put the whole outfit on, she might feel like a ballerina.

She slipped into the leotard. The tutu. The sparkly crown.

*"I still don't know how to be a ballerina,"* Emma muttered.

Her big brother, Tony, strolled into the room. "If you want to be a ballerina, you need music," he said. "Flippy-fluttery music with violins, harps, and flutes."

