

My Brother Otto and the Birthday Party

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GIBBS SMITH



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Before bedtime, Mom tells me to show Otto pictures of other birthday parties we've been to. This will help him be ready for tomorrow.



Mom says it's Otto's own way of understanding things—it's like instead of his ears he uses his eyes to understand.

Mom also reminded me that birthday parties have a lot of stuff going on—that ALL our senses are at work! There are many sights, sounds, and smells to take in. Otto is autistic, and he experiences birthday parties in his own way.



I take the first piece Ruthie's mom offers me. They're all huge! But Otto looks the cake up and down to find his perfect piece—one with **yellow** icing or **yellow** sprinkles.



If there's no **yellow** on it Otto won't eat the cake. Who would want to go to a birthday party and not eat cake?



I'm pretty sure all other colors must be too much for Otto. I wonder if they make his head hurt. I wouldn't like other colors either if they hurt my head.



Ruthie goes up to Otto and puts her forehead on Otto's forehead.



Ruthie's mom told me this is a way that Ruthie shows she is very thankful for something or someone.



Mom comes inside and tells us we'll be going home in ten minutes. Otto sets the timer on his tablet. Otto likes to know when something is going to change so he can be ready.



The timer goes off. Ruthie gives us our party favors and hands a yellow balloon to Otto. She begins to rock back and forth.



Otto starts flapping his wings again. They both are very happy.

I am very happy, too.