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## What If Earthlings Were Pets?

*A pet earthling boy asks big questions  
in a charming coming-of-age novel.*

**PACIFICA, California, October 17, 2023** — Author Hans Ness has created a world where loving green aliens dote on their little pet earthlings. Zira is an alien girl who finally gets her own earthie, Rolo. His childhood as a pet is filled with play, treats, and naps. But as he grows older, the routine life becomes dull, and Zira doesn't understand his desire for more independence. After encountering alien protestors for earthling rights, Rolo starts wondering where earthlings came from and how they lived before they were pets, but that ancient history is mysteriously missing.



While at an earthling park, the overzealous robots of the Animal Control Force (earthling catchers) chase Rolo because his pet license is expired. He and his best friend run away and get lost in the city. Now off leash for the first time, he goes on a quest to learn about the mythical planet Earth. He discovers clues from a pet store, a museum, and an old alien star captain, and he meets a stray street earthling living a life of freedom. Meanwhile, Zira and her sulky older sister search for Rolo, arguing often while still coping with the loss of their big brother. When they finally find Rolo, he tells Zira he wants to be more than a pet and go find the fabled planet Earth, but she cannot bear to lose him too. Soon the earthling catchers close in, and they must escape to go home, wherever that may be.

*Rolo the Pet Earthling* will be published on October 23rd as paperback, ebook, and audiobook, for ages 8-13. Ness' unique premise is both amusingly absurd and deeply thought-provoking. His clever humor has readers laughing out loud at the reversal of roles, blurring the line between pets and children. The characters' bonds and conflicts feel real as they struggle with growing apart and learning that sometimes love means letting go, while Rolo comes of age to question his place and purpose in the universe. At a brisk pace, the storyline weaves thrilling chases, dramatic scenes, comic relief, and lyrical world-building. Sofia Komarenko's illustrations in her distinctive style enrich the emotional impact of the story.

As a former English teacher, Ness says, "I wrote the sort of story I enjoyed teaching, something with layers and ideas worthy of class discussion." With his degree in psychology, the idea first came when he was writing about the quirkiness of human behavior, which he wrote as a pet guide for aliens trying to understand their pet earthlings. This is Ness' first novel.

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For more information about Hans Ness and *Rolo the Pet Earthling*, visit [zirapress.com](http://zirapress.com) or email [hello@zirapress.com](mailto:hello@zirapress.com).