

## **Puppy Tails**

MIALIE T. SZYMANSKI

As the moon goes to bed, the sun comes up And here we meet a sleepy pup, Who was walking through G-ville one bright sunny day, Then saw The Villager and decided to stay.

Doodle Dog would have loved to continue snoozing the day away, turning the quite pleasant, enchanted eve of quiet midsummer night's dreams into a quite pleasant, enchanted afternoon of quiet midsummer day's dreams, but as the wide eyes of the man in the moon closed sleepily and the bright-eyed gleam of the morning sun warmed the grassy knoll where a little floppy-eared puppy slept, drifting in and out on the lullabies of pixies and sprites, of fairies and nymphs, guarded by the soft, soothing glow of fireflies and nature's night lights, he convinced his drowsy eyes to open and his relaxing paws to stretch out over the emerald carpet, squishy with the dawn dew.

Yes, Doodle Dog would have loved to continue snoozing the day away, but he knew he had lots to see and do and couldn't just spend another whole lazy day in this garden, no matter how beautiful or curious or interesting it seemed. He knew he couldn't stay in this beautiful curious meadow forever - as much as he so very much wanted to! - but he also knew that if he tried hard enough, he would be able to find it again whenever he wanted, too!

So Doodle Dog made his way around the knoll, past the unusual looking tree, and through the bushes and thistles where he was sure he'd heard something during the night that sounded like the laughter

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of the little princess even though she'd long gone home. Just as the sun rose its brilliant colors above the knoll, the tree, and the bushes and thistles and all of the curious creatures that lived in the curious meadow, the floppy-eared puppy made his way down the grassy path that would take him to a new adventure.

As he wandered, Doodle Dog made sure to greet every plant and every flower along the way – one never knows what friendly creature may be living there! – and he minded his paws as they plodded along the sidewalk so not step on any bugs that were just trying to enjoy the day too.

No matter how far he wandered, though, Doodle Dog found himself thinking of the curious meadow and the curious evening he'd spent there. His dream-filled slumber had seemed so real. So real, in fact, that Doodle Dog was sure he could still hear the laughter of the little princess or the tinkling of tiny bells or the chattering of mischievous woodland imps. Doodle Dog had been wandering for so long that it was now nearly evening again. He thought maybe, just maybe, that's what was making him think of his evening on the grassy knoll. But the days were getting longer so it was still light out and even though he was wandering farther away from the curious meadow, the tinkling sounds were grower louder and louder. Louder and louder until, on the other side of the sidewalk, was another park Doodle Dog had not visited in quite a while. And there, on the other side of the trees separating the park from the sidewalk, was the source of the laughter and tinkling and chatter.

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Doodle Dog peered through the trees to see a group of humans standing in a half-circle with a man holding a long thin magic wand and waving in front of them. Whenever the man swished his wand up, the group of humans began to sing. Whenever the man swished his wand down, the humans became quiet. That wand really MUST be magic! The best part of it all was that also in front of the director with his magic wand was a group of cats and dogs singing right along with their humans. A chorus of woof, woof, meow, meow, howl, howl and bark, bark filled the air, the highest of the mews resembling the sounds that Doodle Dog had heard on his walk to the park. Doodle Dog watched – and listened! – as the pets accompanied their owners

in, um, near-perfect "harmony." A German Shepherd kept time with rhythmic barks, following the director's wand exactly. There was a vippy Pomeranian and a yappy Chihuahua, a gruff Husky and a Bassett Hound grumbling down low. To the right of the humans, a fluffy Calico cat meowed in even beats on every other wave of the wand while an orange-striped tiger cat kept up its chattering all the way through without stopping, and a small black cat with white paws on the other side of the group

seemed to speak up only when it had something to say.

As Doodle Dog continued to watch, he noticed a shy little dog was standing nearby, half hiding behind a tree. Maybe the little dog wanted to join in - it looked like it could be fun! Doodle Dog was nervous too but he thought if they were brave together it would be easier to be brave. What if he sounded silly? What if his barks didn't quite match and stuck out louder than everyone else?

The canine choir and kitty chorus continued to echo off one tree and then another, surrounding

Doodle Dog and the shy puppy, enveloping them in the melody of this other meadow and encouraging them to join in. So with a little nudge from Doodle Dog to the shy puppy and a little nudge from the shy puppy to Doodle Dog, the pair went over to take a place in front of the man waving the magic wand. Doodle Dog's barks didn't quite match and they did stick out louder than everyone else, but he didn't in fact sound silly. He fit in his spot just fine, a place no one else's bark or meow or voice could fill!



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We look forward to seeing you!



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