



Puppy Tails

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*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.*

Today is going to be a great day! Well, it BETTER be! Doodle Dog thought as he took a quick sip from his shiny silver water bowl and a quicker bite of kibble from his bright red dish, barely stopping to crunch it between his teeth before he zipped off to a corner of the office towering with boxes. There was a lot to do in that little corner and Doodle Dog was excited to check one more thing off his Doggie To-Do List!

The current project on his list was to clean up his area of the office, but over the last couple of years it seemed random objects had decided to make his home THEIR home too and had simply invited themselves into whatever spare space had once existed between Doodle Dog's comfy, fuzzy blanket and basket of chewy toys and his neighbor: the bookcase overflowing with his favorite stories. Doodle Dog didn't want to be unfriendly, but those uninvited objects were starting to overstay their welcome and he really needed his nice clean area back. Perhaps with a little nudge in the right direction, they would migrate back to wherever they had come from or, if not, then find a new place entirely!

With all the right intentions and his goal firmly in mind, Doodle Dog approached his mission at hand with all the gusto of some puppy who knew exactly what he wanted and exactly how to get it, but as the little fluffy form that is Doodle Dog came nearer to the towering stacks of boxes, the little floppy-eared puppy realised just HOW big and menacing this project appeared! His early confidence quickly fading, Doodle Dog gulped and stopped right in his tracks, wrapping his tail around his front paws as he stared up at the mountain in front of him. A mountain that he was sure was growing and expanding into quite a scary kind of monster right in front of his eyes! Doodle Dog hadn't bargained for this! But he knew there was a job to be done and he couldn't back down now, so after he let himself be scared for a moment, the little floppy-eared puppy mustered his courage and imagined that the mound-of-mess-monster was no bigger than a molehill mouse (whether it was true or not!) and, just for good measure, he also imagined that he was not, in fact, a puppy of small size but was actually, for the time being at least, quite a bit braver, stronger and smarter than he seemed a moment ago.

Doodle Dog remembered the checklist he had made and the little steps to take that he had thought of to make the big goals seem not so scary. He thought of what might be the first trail marker on his mental treasure map. And then he dove right in!

Chomping down on the handle of the nearest doggie-level box, Doodle Dog tried to wiggle it out from the very bottom of the tower, but wound up wiggling only his tail in the process. Well THAT was the wrong end! But he dug his paws into the rug and tried again... only to feel his claws slipping behind him. Well THAT wasn't what was supposed to happen! Yet as he was determined not to give up, Doodle Dog dug in his claws once more, settling all his weight – what there was of it! – into his back end and the fluffy tail attached to it and pulled with all his might. His bottom hit the floor with a thud, but the floppy-eared puppy looked up to find that the box had finally worked free from the mountain, leaving a box-shaped hole behind.

The arch created by the rest of the boxes resembled the welcoming stone gates Doodle Dog remembered seeing in the fairytale picture books lined up on his bookcase. It was almost as if the mountain was now inviting the curious floppy-eared puppy to come on in and explore, and that's exactly what he did. Tipping the lid off one box and then the next, Doodle Dog sorted piles of this and that into new piles that meant which new home the objects would find.

Soon Doodle Dog was nose-deep in piles of papers that needed sorting too. The first sheet he found stuck to the bottom of his paw. Ewwwww! Doodle Dog didn't know why the paper was sticky, but he was sure that it wasn't supposed to be like that, so without a second thought he tossed it over to the trash bin so it wouldn't make anything else sticky that wasn't supposed to be! The next piece of paper in the pile wasn't sticky, so Doodle Dog gently picked it up to put it in the file pile, but when he turned it over he

caught sight of a very muddy paw print on the other side. Ewwwww! The mud dried while the paper had been tucked away, but it still looked very dirty and since Doodle Dog's mission was to keep everything clean it too found a spot in the trash bin. That little corner was starting to look quite tidy! Then Doodle Dog turned to another pile of not-sticky and not-muddy papers. He took the first one off the top of the stack and smiled as he saw a familiar paw print that wasn't at all dirty, but was actually quite colorful! But then he saw the next paper and it was the same painted paw print! So on with the rest of the stack. Though they were all quite wonderful, Doodle Dog didn't need as many copies as he had claws! The little floppy-eared puppy kept his favorite and tossed the other identical ones into the recycling bin. Now that only copy was extra special to Doodle Dog and once it was framed it would look quite nice hanging in the completely clean corner!