



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.*

Outside, outside, OUTSIDE! The floppy-eared puppy could smell the wintry snow on the air every time the office door opened. He waited until just the opportune moment to poke his nose through the crack and it shivered as the frosty wind snapped at it. The shiver went from the tip of his nose over his cheeks, through the flops of his ears, down his back and to his tail where it dipped down like a skier on a snowy slope until it exited his fur with one last shake. Brrrrrr!

Doodle Dog wasn't about to let a little chilly breeze stop him from enjoying the otherwise beautiful day, however. No way! Scampering down the porch steps and across the street, he invited the dainty bits of light-as-a-feather flakes to land on his nose as he made his way through town. They were quite a bit gentler than that sharp wind and he didn't mind if they hitched a ride for a while. Nice passengers were always welcome to come along.

Today Doodle Dog took a route he hadn't explored for while. Instead of turning down to his favorite meadow or wandering past the watery lake, which was probably more ice than not at this point, the floppy-eared puppy turned up toward the center of town where he could hear the chimes of the clock tower bonging away. As he passed the shops on the main street and then the houses just a bit farther, Doodle Dog made sure the colorful shining strings of lights decorating each one did not go unnoticed. Even in the sunlight, the tiny bulbs made themselves known, bringing an extra source of beauty to the already charming town. Turning the corner past the last house on the block, Doodle Dog could see a blanket of land so white, so soft and so fluffy that looked as though Santa's beard had grown long enough and wide enough to cover the entire world, or at least this little corner of it.

Soon he reached his destination, the park by the town square where dozens of townspeople had gathered. It seemed, however, the population in the small spot was doubling before Doodle Dog's eyes as the people there were in the process of building replicas of themselves! Almost literally frozen in time, sculptures in various stages of completion were popping up next to where each human stood as though grown right out of the snowy ground. As each person worked, piling a mound of snow here and a squish of slush there, the icy figures started to take a more defined shape. Doodle Dog wove his way through the garden of these still-as-stone statues wondering what stories they would have to tell him. As he wandered between the form of a friendly-looking maiden with a long flowing skirt and a silhouette of a slim man holding a lantern that would never be lit, the floppy-eared puppy imagined the adventures these snowpeople might have if somehow they had the chance to really live for a day. If he sat still for a few moments, Doodle Dog thought he could actually hear them talking in whispered voices about the humans that decorated them!

But the little floppy-eared puppy couldn't sit still as stone like the frozen figures in front of him. He was too excited to stay in one place for too long! Carefully moving in and out among the field of figurines, Doodle Dog didn't notice as one especially tall work of art started to crumble under the weight of a too-wet glob of snow its artist attempted to add. It tilted, then it toppled, then it completely collapsed... right on top of the floppy-eared puppy! Unlike the shiver at the door, Doodle Dog couldn't easily shake this off – the impromptu sort-of snowstorm covering him was too goopy and too wet and too heavy to move. Little by little, however, the gobs of icy mess started to slide themselves down to the ground, layer by layer, until all that remained was a new statue for the collection: a very lifelike version of a certain floppy-eared puppy! Though the Snow Dog is quite a nice addition to the creative grouping of mini monuments, a nice addition indeed, Doodle Dog much preferred his own soft and fluffy exterior and shook the snowy skin

covering him until his brown fur showed through again. Then, continuing on his walk, the floppy-eared puppy thought about everything warm he could think of to help thaw out every inch of him, all the way down to his paws. And as he took each stiff step, he imagined the adventures this snow dog might have if somehow he had the chance to really be still in the middle of a park for a day. Nah... there is too much to do and fun to be had to stay put!