

NEWS@WEEKLYVILLAGER.COM



Puppy Tails

MIALIE T. SZYMANSKI | CONTRIBUTING REPORTER

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.

Tucked cozily in his blanket, the warm fabric wrapped extra tightly around his toes, Doodle Dog peered out the window to the town streets where the fluffy snow was falling again. Spring would be here soon, at least that's what he heard from the neighborhood groundhog, but for now the sidewalks were still covered in white flecks and the townspeople continued to hurry along about their business all bundled up in thick coats and fuzzy scarves. As much fun as it usually was to watch the world bustling about, the floppy-eared puppy was getting just a bit bored with being inside. His recent trip to the park was indeed very exciting, but Doodle Dog wasn't about to go back out in that chilly air or the even chillier icy cold water. His toes were finally warming up again, thankyouverymuch!

Glancing around the office for something to entertain him, Doodle Dog saw his favorite bookcase with all the pretty drawings on the covers. The office was empty of humans, nice and quiet which would be perfect for reading, but it also meant there was no one to read Doodle Dog a story. He could go to the library and find a little boy or girl to read to him, but that would mean going outside. Brrrrr! Doodle Dog shivered just thinking about it. No... he would have to figure out something else.

As he looked at the painted images decorating each cover, Doodle Dog thought about the beautiful princess walking through the forest on the green book sitting on the top shelf and about the knight in his shining armor riding his horse down a dirt path on the cover of the blue book nestled right in the middle of the bookcase. Would their paths ever meet? What problems would try to stand in their way? The floppy-eared puppy didn't have to open the book to figure out what happened – he decided he could make up his own tale!

Curling up even deeper in his blanket, Doodle Dog closed his eyes and imagined what it would be like to walk down the forest path next to the princess, her long dress the color of daffodils in sunshine floating in the gentle wind that blew through the trees. He could almost feel the soft grass and dirt under his paws as he padded along and hear the woodland creatures scurrying about from their lush hollows. Together the floppy-eared puppy and the princess greeted the friendly animals who lived among the vines and brush, and they had made their way nearly to the edge of the forest where the sunlight broke through the leafy canopy overhead, when a very loud rumble startled Doodle Dog and made him jump behind the princess's skirt. Being brave was sometimes overrated. The princess didn't look too worried, but she stopped walking and peered around the last tree bordering the forest. Doodle Dog decided it was safe enough to peer around the princess as she peered around the tree, and as he tried to figure out what was making such a noise, he heard it again! This time there was no mistaking it – the thundering sound was coming from a nearby cave just to the left of the forest's path. Not only that, but coming from the entrance of the cave with the thunder were billowing clouds. No, not clouds... smoke!

After a few moments, the princess slowly unwrapped herself from the tree and, once the floppy-eared puppy unwrapped himself from her ankles, she began to cautiously approach the cave. Doodle Dog swallowed his fear and followed her brave example to find out what was causing the noise and the smoke. Inside the cave, among the puffs of cloudy smoke, the floppy-eared puppy saw a shining pile of brilliantly-colored jewels and other treasures. Pretty! And right behind the giant mound of shimmering objects was... NOT one of the friendly woodland creatures: a very large, very scaly, very grumpy dragon! The mean old dragon thrashed its tail, knocking a layer of jewels in an avalanche to the floor.

But why do dragons have to be so mean? Doodle Dog wondered. The floppy-eared puppy remembered this is HIS story and he didn't want the dragon to be mean. So he thought of what might happen to make the dragon be not so mean and before he knew it, the princess marched right up to the large, scaly, grumpy dragon and wrapped her arms around it and gave it a big, squishy, friendly hug, sort of like she'd hugged the tree in the forest. As Doodle Dog watched, the cave stopped echoing thunder and spewing smoke that looked like clouds, and the large, scaly, not-so-grumpy dragon reached down to one of the jewels that had tumbled to the floor and nudged it toward the princess. The sunlight from outside the cave glinted off the heavy jewel and the dragon ducked its head into the sunlight itself, spread its wings and flew out of the cave and up over the trees. The princess and the floppy-eared puppy stepped outside to wave at the dragon and at that moment the sunlight glinted off a knight in his shining armor who was riding his horse down the dirt path. The knight took off his helmet and the princess could see he was a prince in disguise!

Before Doodle Dog's imagination could get away from him again, the floppy-eared puppy decided he better give the prince and princess a happy ending and one for the curious guard puppy too! Safe at home in the office, he nuzzled his nose in his blankets and finished his story before anything else had a chance to slither out of the cave...