



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.*

Sparkle, sparkle, snore. Sparkle, sparkle, snorrrrrre!

The little floppy-eared puppy plopped to the left and plopped to the right, all four paws lazily poked in the air and droopy eyes closed tight.

Twinkle, twinkle, twitch. Toss and turn some more!

Doodle Dog again flopped to the left and flopped to the right, his tail flicking over his nose to shield it from the soon-approaching morning light. For now the stars overhead in the clear sky twinkled with hope to lead the way into the new year, echoing the strings of lights draped all the way through town, linking the houses, the shops and the sidewalks like a series of tiny spots of cheer on the holiday chain encircling all who lived there in the spirit of the season. With his warm, fuzzy blanket wrapped around him in all the right places, surrounding his furry legs, paws and claws with its own special kind of winter bliss, the floppy-eared puppy continued to twitch, turn and snore in his cozy bed, visions of enchanted creatures prancing over head.

Glimmer, glimmer, pitter, patter!

In those few moments before he would have to coax himself out of his slumbering state, the sleepy puppy still saw in his dreams the magical encounters enjoyed this time of year. His friends from way up north were always very busy traveling around the world so it was a treat whenever they came to visit, sure to announce their arrival with the click, clack of dozens of anxious hooves pawing in the air. How they made a sound even before they reached the thick, solid roof, the curious little puppy still hadn't quite figured out!

Each reindeer had something special for Doodle Dog: all eight gifts lined up on the bookcase by the window, plus there was Rudolph's, front and center. It wasn't hard to tell which one he'd brought – wrapped in red paper and tied with sparkly white ribbon, his present shone the brightest of them all. But the best gift was sharing stories with each other about their exotic adventures, whether way up high flying in the sky to somewhere new or scampering along the sidewalks with their familiar comfort of town. Doodle Dog was certainly glad he had plenty of extra biscuit treats on paw – you never know who is going to drop in these days!

As pretty as all the packages were, every one glimmering and shimmering in vibrant, festive hues, the slowly-wakening floppy-eared puppy wasn't interested in them right at this moment as something else caught his eye just past where the presents perched. The large window with its glistening glass pane sparkled and twinkled as it reflected the final glow of the stars bidding the world goodnight as they tucked into clouds for their day-long nap. Once the sun rose it would be quite past their bedtime indeed! But for Doodle Dog, it was time to wake up and enjoy what the new year and the new day decided to bring, so the floppy-eared puppy made his way over to the window, stretching his front paws and then his back ones as he went. His blanket decided to come with him, but Doodle Dog didn't mind because the floor was a little bit chilly and standing on the fluffy fabric helped to keep his paws nice and warm. Reaching up to the windowsill, Doodle Dog rested his front paws on the narrow wood and peered out at his corner of the earth. While the world slept, nature had been busy and now several layers of snow covered every bit of town. It would be an inside day for sure! Brrrr!

Standing as tall as he could with the sturdy wall helping him balance, the floppy-eared puppy watched as nature didn't quite seem to be done decorating the neighborhood. As Doodle Dog watched, a fleck of snow gently drifted down, down, down until it too rested on the windowsill, just on the other side of the clear partition. The floppy-eared puppy imagined it landing on his nose and, as though it actually had, a shiver twitched through his fur all the way to his blanket-covered toes! Next a snowflake a lot larger than a fleck wafted this way and that until it found a spot to stick securely on the glass too. A draft of air brushed by, lifting his floppy ears and Doodle Dog nearly thought he had wound up outside. Several other crystal clusters came, one by one and then none and then some more swiftly sifting from the clouds and through the trees and onto the ground below. The motion of the snowflakes showering down looked like the flour at the cupcakery, raining into the supersized mixing bowl just perfect for biscuits and on the counter and, well, on the floor too...

Now a constant flurry of flakes were floating down gently, wispy as they went back and forth, swaying like the autumn leaves that seemed in no particular hurry to land on the earth. As the waking sunlight began to slowly warm the world, each snowflake glittered and gleamed, twinkled and sparkled like the stars sleeping above them. Soon a soft white moat formed around the office, at least the part of the outside that the floppy-eared puppy could see, and it was as though a cozy blanket had been wrapped around the whole neighborhood, tucking in the inhabitants for a nice winter slumber. While the stars always served as tiny nightlights, the snowflakes now did double duty as tiny daylight drops dropping down among the houses, shops, trees, sidewalks and the grassy knolls around town, shimmering as the sun touched each and every one. The moat reminded the floppy-eared puppy of the pine twigs bordering his little snow house down the lane.

And even though he couldn't see his igloo in the meadow from his window, Doodle Dog was sure it was shining as brightly as them all.