



Puppy Tails

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It had been quite a while since Doodle Dog had fallen asleep for a pleasant nap in his favorite meadow and just as long since he had woken up from one, so the floppy-eared puppy was in no hurry to uncurl himself from the soft mounds of grassy green surrounding him. But the new day awaited with enticing adventures and the sun shining above him was already very much awake and ready to play. Doodle Dog couldn't keep his optimistic friend waiting!

Stretching one paw and then the next and then the third and fourth, Doodle Dog managed to untangle himself bit by bit, shaking out his floppy ears last and all the snips of grass sticking to them. He knew he would return to this spot again someday but for now there were other places to go and other places to play! So the little curious puppy scampered up over the knolls one by one until he reached the point where the meadow meets the sidewalk and continued on his way home back to the office. Too busy enjoying the sun warming up his fur and the breeze gently wafting over his nose, Doodle Dog didn't quite notice that although most of the grass clippings had shaken from his ears, many were still very much sticking to the bottom, sides and tops of his paws. As he bounded along from sidewalk square to sidewalk square and across the main street when it was safe to do so, the little floppy-eared puppy's paws collected more than just tiny pieces of grass. A particularly pretty tree in front of one of his favorite neighborhoods dropped dozens of itty bitty red buds from its branches that decorated the trail in front of it. Well, had decorated the trail, that is, until Doodle Dog darted by it and now those ruby blossoms decorated four very quickly prancing paws! A surprise shower from a passing yard sprinkler catching the puppy in its rainy rotation, a lawn mower spewing shreds of leafy weeds and dandelion tips from a safe distance, and the plethora of posies depositing bright yellow puffs of pollen every which way contributed to quite the selection of souvenirs attaching themselves to the puppy's paws as he pattered past on the path.

Soon Doodle Dog arrived at the office and was about to go inside but just before he could, something small, red and in flight caught his eye. The little ladybug dipped and dived above the shiny blue car parked in the driveway beckoning the curious pup to come and play. Hello there again! The floppy-eared puppy took a detour from the open front door and in one smooth motion leapt up on the hood of the car to greet his flying friend nose to nose. All that bouncing on the backyard trampoline had paid off as he landed quite perfectly indeed! His friend flitted just in front of him, zipping now even higher than the hefty hood, up over the slick glass attaching the front of the car to the top and resting on the roof rising above it. Doodle Dog didn't hesitate to follow, slipping slightly on the smooth slanted surface but soon sitting side by side, er, wing to paw with the itty bitty critter. The view from up here is quite grand indeed! But the floppy-eared puppy didn't have the chance to get too attached, as the ladybug zoomed again on its way somewhere new, ducking behind the trunk of the car and out of Doodle Dog's view. The curious little puppy placed his paws down over the back window and peered as low as he could but the ladybug had disappeared to wherever it goes whenever it floats on the wind. No matter! A spot of sunlight glinting off the shiny silver bumper below almost made Doodle Dog think there were fireflies from the forest hiding there and he decided to investigate that instead.

Just a few moments later, Doodle Dog's paws made it to the back edge of the trunk and his floppy ears flipped over the side of the car as he stretched his neck as far down as it would go to see what made the frame so sparkly! Almost immediately the sunspot shining this way and that, reflecting off the silver bumper, now moved to the wide window behind Doodle Dog and headed up, over

toward the roof. Trying to keep up with the swift sunspot changing its mind, Doodle Dog whipped around too, doubling back over himself, and headed up, over toward the roof too! Up and down and up and down, over the window and the roof and the front windshield too, the floppy-eared puppy spent the afternoon playing chase with his very lively, quite energetic companion, his paws pounding like summer thunder across the rooftop as he tried his best to stay in step. Soon the blue of the automobile could hardly be found as the blanket of patchwork posies that once decorated the meadow and then prettied the puppy's paws now covered the car from hood to taillights, the emerald shreds of grass clippings, squishy, crunchy red buds and pockets of golden pollen leaving a clearly marked trail of paw prints up and down and all around the bottoms, sides and tops of all the vehicle's parts. Maybe a summer rainstorm would follow the trail soon too... the car and this creative canine both most certainly needed a bath!