



# Puppy Tails

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Peeking around the corner of the office building, Doodle Dog leapt back before a hurried woman rushing past him stepped on his paws. That was close! What was all the excitement about? The curious floppy-eared puppy crept out again, certainly not nearly as quickly as the two-legged traveler dashing down the driveway in front of him. Even at his easygoing amble, Doodle Dog soon came upon the very center of the town which seemed unusually busy, busy even for it being the most popular place at the most popular time of day. Keeping an eye out so not to get squished, the little floppy-eared puppy made his way down the sidewalk, weaving around ankles of lampposts and between the legs of the iron benches parked at various helpful points along the main street for weary shoppers to sit and peruse a while. But there was no time to be a spectator today as there was too much to see and too much of a chance of getting swept up in the current of activity! Well, that is, of course, unless you are a little puppy who has a talent for blending into the scenery and quietly observing.

Doodle Dog did just that, effectively disappearing into a crevice of wall between two shops. Melting into the impromptu mold, the puppy may very well have always been a fixture in that part of the structure rather than a momentary visitor to the architecture. From this vantage point, Doodle Dog was able to safely survey the scene on the sidewalk. At each section of every so many concrete squares, a table was set up with various merchandise and artistic wares. One table had wonderful smells wafting from it, scenting up the air with lilac one minute and fresh citrus fruits the next and chocolate chip cookies the next as a lady stirred a small pot filled with what appeared to be gelatinous, goopy crayons. Really yummy smelling gelatinous, goopy crayons! As she continued to swirl the little wand in the pot, the goo changed color and with it the scent in the air. Quite curious and magical indeed! Another table held similarly deliciously-smelling items, but these ones were not dissolving into a jar rather were being devoured by customers sampling the treats. Real edible ooey-gooeys like brownies and cinnamon buns, carefully crafted by a chef's talented hands, were disappearing just as quickly as they appeared on an array of plates and platters arranged on the portable counter. On and on down both sides of the street the town's delights were on display.

Meandering safely from his melted-in perch, the floppy-eared puppy's nose found a particularly intriguing exhibit that did not include smelling sweets or tantalizing treats. Instead a stack of books next to a table caught his attention as he recognized the characters on the covers and the spines. He knew the legends were from an assortment, some written, some gathered, all collected by a pair of brothers who loved fairytales just as much as the little curious puppy and loved sharing the stories just as much as he did too. Sitting at the table next to the stack of books were two men busily hunched over their work. Though their facial features were similar enough that Doodle Dog figured they were brothers, that's where the similarities ended. One had longish blonde hair that swished into his eyes as he peered over his glasses focusing on what was in his hands. Working quickly, he carved and etched something into a metal strip, fashioning it a bit here and then working the edge a bit there. Soon a set of stripes appeared and then a pair of giant eyes and some spindly legs and several wings. It reminded Doodle Dog of the shadowy shapes of the puppet show bugs. Ew! At least these ones wouldn't bite! While the blonde brother worked, the other man concentrated on his own projects, just as varied from his cohort's as their appearance. He had short dark hair which showed off a zealous expression in his eyes as he centered his attention on making tiny sculptures out of colorful clay. Soon a herd of miniature horses galloped in unison, the ponies prancing across the table in a dainty dance, some with wings, some with tiny spikes on their foreheads like a mythological unicorn in one of those fairytales, all with beautiful, unique markings on their multi-hued backs.

Doodle Dog stopped to indulge his curiosity for a while and as he watched the clay squishing between the artist's fingers, soon they were not forming hooves and swishing tails, rather a paw suddenly appeared and then two floppy ears. Within moments it was no longer a ball of clay – it was a tiny Doodle Dog! The itty bitty floppy-eared puppy settled onto a clay fairytale book, the perfect perch for the petite pup! The artist gave Doodle Dog a kind smile

as he gently placed Clay Doodle Dog into a small bag, tucking him into a cushion of plastic bubbles. And, just before offering the handle to the real floppy-eared puppy, the other artist dropped a tiny silver bumblebee into the bag too. It wasn't as scary as the other kind of creepy crawly critters in the collection so Doodle Dog gave a grateful bark and continued on to explore the rest of what the fascinating setting had to offer!