

THE PAWSVILLIE MYSTERIES

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The Mystery of the Stolen Stick

Down in the country, by the river and through the bushes, lies a small-town unseen by human eyes. Pawsvillie. A place occupied by the feathered, the fluffy, the furry, the scaly, the slimy, and the slithery. On any day you might find an emu and a pigeon talking over a cup of coffee. Or a wisdom of wombats flying some kites at the local park.

Yes, the town of Pawsvillie is a rather peaceful and sedate little town. And this is all due to two remarkable and resourceful little dogs. Belinda, a retired greyhound and Snowy, a Maltese Shih-Tzu. And no, they aren't police officers. That job belongs to Percival. A rather hard-working pig.

For you see, Snowy and Belinda are amateur detectives. Solving crimes too small for the police to deal with yet too big to be left alone.

Belinda and Snowy are happy to accept any cases that the animals of Pawsvillie bring to them. However, they will only take on a case under three conditions. Firstly, that any crime that they investigate that turns out to be more serious than they thought will be handed straight over to the police. Secondly, that they will be paid in dog biscuits. And lastly, that they will only take a case for up to twelve hours.

“Any longer than that and we don't deserve to call ourselves detectives,” they would say to their friends.

Each and every day they set up office in Snowy's loungeroom. Waiting to fix a problem or solve a case.

One such case was brought to them on a Tuesday afternoon. Snowy and Belinda were sitting at their desks when the doorbell rang.

"Would you get that?" asked Snowy.

"No, I'm busy," replied Belinda, putting down some papers and glaring at her friend.

"Ok, fine, I'll go."

Snowy went to the front door and opened it. There he was greeted by Charlie. A tabby cat with pale blue eyes.

"Ah, Charlie, how are you?" asked Snowy, bumping paws with his friend.

"Not good, I've just lost my lucky stick," replied Charlie.

"Come in and tell me all about it. Can I get you anything?"

"No, I'm fine."

Snowy showed Charlie to the office where Belinda was sitting waiting with a notepad and pen.

"Hey, Charlie," said Belinda.

"Hey, Belinda," said Charlie, sitting himself down on a chair.

“Ok, tell me everything,” said Snowy.

“It only happened a couple of hours ago,” said Charlie.

“Between ten and eleven?” asked Belinda.

“More like between ten twenty-five and ten thirty. Only took a few minutes.”

“You want anything?” asked Snowy.

“No, I’m good. Anyway, I was in my backyard with my lucky stick when I heard someone knocking on my front door. So, I put my stick down on the outside table, went inside, and opened the door. But there was no one there.”

“What did you do next?” asked Snowy.

“I went back outside and saw that my special stick had disappeared from the table. I looked underneath the table, thinking it might have dropped off and rolled under there. But when I crouched down to look, I couldn’t see any sticks. So, I went back inside, thought of your detective agency, and decided that I would go to you two for help.”

“I’m sorry, but why is that stick so lucky?” asked Belinda, trying to get her pen working.

“Because it’s helped me win the last three tuna cooking tournaments,” replied Charlie.

“Hey, that’s tomorrow,” said Snowy.

“Yes, which is why I went to you two because you guarantee that you will solve cases in under twelve hours. I know without my lucky stick I won’t be able to win the competition.”

“Do you have any idea of who might have wanted to take your stick?”

“Well, there’s my next-door neighbour, Martin the magpie. He’s always complained about my stick. Said it ruined the neighbourhood. And there’s my cousin, Simon, who I’ve been looking after for the past couple of weeks. I’ve caught him looking at the stick before. But the thing is that none of them two were even near my backyard when the stick was stolen.”

“How do you know that?” asked Belinda.

“Because about five minutes before, I’d sent Simon out to get some milk.”