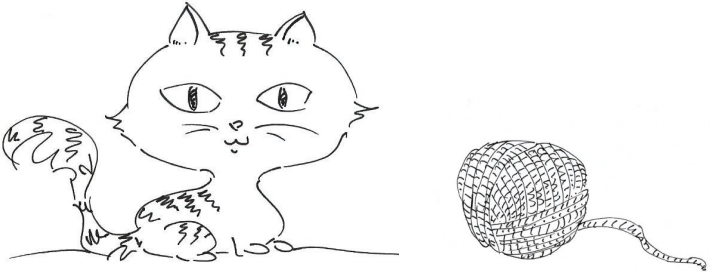


The Adventures of Furry and Friendly —Part 2—



Imaginary Story

The Adventures of Furry and Friendly —Part 2—



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Chapters:

Chapter 1—Climbing Trees

Chapter 2—Frizz bee

Chapter 3—Chicks and Eggs

Chapter 4—Bears in the Forest

Chapter 5—A Little Child in Her Arms

Chapter 6—By the Cosy Fire

Chapter 7—Dwelling Place

Chapter 8—Snowy Times

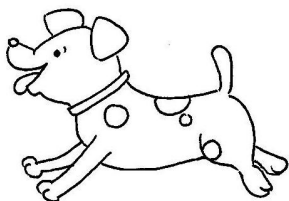
Chapter 9—Shennela

Chapter 10—Something Good

Chapter 11—A Ball of Yarn

Chapter 12—Mr. And Mrs. Knightly

Chapter 1



Chapter 1—Climbing Trees

Furry was scratching in the soil near the house, it was where she did her ‘business’. She was a clean kitten and liked to take good care of herself.

It made her feel real big to use the outdoors when she needed to. She still stayed very close to the house, and was inside most of the time, but these trips when ‘nature called’ showed her she was getting bigger.

“Maybe I can learn to climb a tree one day!” she thought. “It could be quite exciting!” Furry the Kitten was getting all kinds of fun ideas. Going outside every now and then made ideas spring up like flowers do in the spring.

As she was imagining how cool it would be to be looking down at

Friendly from up above on a tree branch, “plop!” suddenly something hit her head, rather gently though.

“What was that?” she wondered and looked up.

“Oh, sorry. It was just me. I think I accidentally knocked an acorn down while climbing.” It was Kitty the Cat who was up in the tree, doing just what she had been thinking about.

Furry the kitten took a mental note. “If I climb trees I’ll need to be aware that I don’t knock things down on those below.”

Then she said:

“How did you get up there?”

Kitty climbed down one branch that led to a spot in the tree where she could then climb onto a lower branch,

and so on, and eventually could leap down from not too high a place on to the ground.

“Hi!” she said. “I was just taking a look at things, checking out the roof of the house and such. Gotta keep an eye on what’s happening.

Furry asked, “Can you please teach me how to get up there?”

Kitty replied:

“It’s not as easy as you think. Many a fun loving cat has gotten stuck up in the tree. It’s easier going up than coming down. I think you best grow some longer legs and practice your landing. It’s a challenge you’ll need to be ready for.”

“Oh, I see,” Furry nodded. “I guess I’ll wait until I get a bit older.”

Kitty the Cat explained another thing: “The birds don’t take a liking to me coming around however, so I try to stay away if they are in the tree—especially during nesting time. It’s only considerate to do so.”

“Are they scared of you, Mama?” Furry asked.

“Well, let’s just say they have sense that with creatures of my sort, it’s best they and we stay apart. Some of our type have bothered a good many bird. So if I do get too close, they let me know, usually with their wings and beaks that it’s time I move on,” Kitty the Cat explained.

“Oh,” said Furry, realising that there was more to climbing trees than just having fun. Some things that seem fun while watching others doing them, actually have quite a bit of challenge involved, as well as danger.

Together they walked over to the wooden bench beside the door to the house.

“Let’s climb up here and I’ll tell you some adventures from my life,” Kitty the Cat said.

“Yippee!” said little Furry, for she loved stories. Maybe she couldn’t run free everywhere, and maybe it was best she didn’t climb tall trees yet, but stories and snuggles was something she could enjoy any day, at any age.

Kitty the Cat began:

“When our masters first got me, I was real young. We used to live down the mountain, far away from here, right near a river. This river had a stream that led into it. I liked exploring around. But I didn’t always make it safely back home at night.

“One night I was stuck up in a tree, and it was dark and cold, and there were all sorts of sounds coming from the wooded area. The next morning our master took Rusty, the trusty dog, out with him to find me. I could hear them coming and was very relieved.

“I was so tired and hungry too, that I couldn’t meow so loud. But when they got closer to the tree that I was in, I saw Rusty’s ears perk up. I knew he had heard me.

Again I tried with all my might to make as much of a sound as I could. This was promptly followed by a bark.

‘What is it Rusty’ our master asked. ‘Do you know where Kitty might be? Show me!’

Rusty kept barking and walking until he was directly under the branch that I was on.”

As Furry listened to the story, the very Rusty came and joined them, lying on the wooden porch just under the bench.

“Good for you Rusty, you rescued my Mama!” purred Furry.

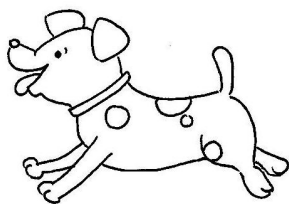
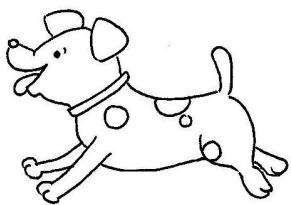
Rusty just yawned, smiled a bit, and then settled for some rest. He had been up a good part of the night. The foxes had given him a bit of trouble. They never did get in and get the chickens. Rusty protected them the best he could, but now he did need a rest.

“Did the foxes keep you up again?” Kitty asked before Rusty was fully asleep.

He nodded briefly, and soon was catching up on what he’d missed in the night.

Chapter

2



Chapter 2—Frizz bee

“Tell me more, please tell me more,” Furry asked Mama Kitty. “How did you get down from the tree? Did you have to leap down a long way? Did you get hurt?”

“So many questions. Well, as you can see I did make it, and was safe enough too. I made my way, just like you saw me do today, to the lowest branch. Then our master was able to reach high up and lift me out. He carried the cold and scared little me back to the house.

“Rusty wagged his tail and was so pleased that he had done that important job of helping our master to find me. He felt like a real helpful dog now, who was getting bigger and more depended on by the day.

“He was still rather young, but this made him feel rather important. Isn’t that right, Rusty?”

To this, he just nodded sleepily and carried on resting.

“See, he wasn’t doing it to be noticed, just like his work in the night while guarding the chickens. He just does what his master needs his help doing. Not everything can be done with machines, you know.

“Sometimes a good and wise, intuitive animal can be heaps better. Our farmer knows that. Why a machine can’t lay an egg! Nor grow wool, nor do a good many things that we farm creatures and home pets can help do.”

Just then, a couple of ducks flew in and landed in a big puddle of water. This was the puddle that the natural spring flowed into.

It was hooked up to a pipe that led to the veggie garden on the side of the house, that lay lower than the spring, and was pulled by gravity to water the garden, and the orchard trees.

This water was also pumped by a hand pump to fill buckets to be used around the farm, and in the house.

“Do ducks help with something here?” Furry asked.

“Hello! Nice to see you,” Kitty greeted Mallard the duck.

“Well, there’s something in the vegetable garden that likes to eat the farmer’s food. But it just so happens that ducks love to find those slimy garden munchers and take them away. Do you know what it is?” Kitty the Cat posed the question.

Furry shook her head. She didn't know much about the outdoors. But this is how she would learn.

Mama Kitty then said the answer: "Slugs!" she continued telling of how the garden was managed.

"There is another creature, somewhat similar, but all rolled up in a roll it looks like, and covered with a shell, it's called a snail.

"Sometimes Mr. Dweller takes some of the chickens from the coop and brings them up here to clean up the garden. They really like to find those garden munching bugs, and others as well. And their droppings have an amazing way of making the soil richer in nutrients. So birds are often the biggest helper to plants."

"But how do they help plants?" Furry asked.

Kitty the Cat replied,

“Well, not only do they help by removing the type of bugs that could be harmful to the farmers edible plants, but they do help in spreading seeds of new plants in all kinds of places.

“The flying type of the winged creatures, who have claw type of feet and can sit in the branches of trees and in bushes, like to pick berries and seeds. Sometimes they drop bits of what they ate, and a new plant will grow from that seed.”

By this time Rusty was starting to stir. He'd heard his master calling and had perked up. In his hand the farmer held a frizz bee and was calling.

This was not a time to be missed.

“When the master has time for fun, Rusty has strength to run!” was a

motto Kitty spoke as Rusty dashed off to catch the flying frizz bee.

The farmer depended on the great help of his trust worthy dog, and tried to reward him with a good bit of fun whenever he found the time. Many days were too busy, but usually at least once a day, he'd have a time of play with his faithful pet.

With the dog now off the porch, and the cats in a restful state, the ducks waddled over the porch as they made their way on this much smoother pathway to the other side of the house.

They were always curious what was going on around here, and they were good for bug removal and checking.

If you had been sitting there on the porch listening you might have only

heard, “Quack, quack, quack, quack.” But actually there was an important discussion going on.

“Did you check around the garden yet?” said one duck.

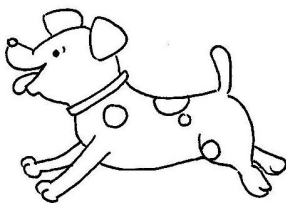
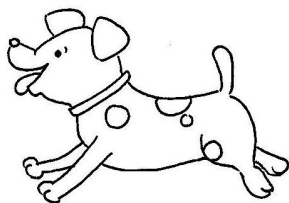
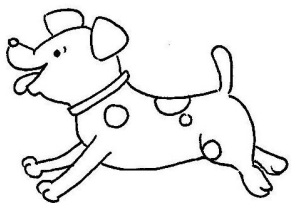
“Yes. Did that yesterday. And what about under the chairs by the outdoor table. Spiders and other crawlers like to make that their home,” the second duck returned the question.

“Nope, but since we are going in that direction, let’s make sure we monitor that area. You know it’s really nice that the farmers set up this mini duck pond for us here. How thoughtful.

“Maybe they use it too, but personally I think it’s great and plan to put it to good use when we come here for our daily inspection.”

Chapter

3



And so they waddled off, looking here and there and just generally cleaning things up a bit—as in, bird style.

Chapter 3—Chicks and Eggs

Friendly was wide awake now, having heard the quacking. He popped his head out of the pet door of the house and saw their tails at the other end, nearly all the way off. He leapt out and gave them an extra incentive to move on off of “his” porch. With a yap and a bit of a run he got them making a speedy exit towards the other side where the outdoor table was.

Rusty arrived on the scene.

“So you like chasing the ducks, do you?” Rusty said in a somewhat non complimentary way.

Friendly replied, “Well, maybe they’ll get hurt by the rag ball I hope someone will throw to me...”

“I see...” came the reply. “I hope you can learn to appreciate them too.”

“Though they are very different than you, and probably aren’t well acquainted with balls and such other essential items in the life of a dog, we can still be glad for whatever it is that the farmer needs them for.

“Remember, just because we might not see the reason why a new animal or piece of equipment is bought and brought to the farm, it doesn’t mean it doesn’t have a very good reason for being here.

“Come, I’ll tell you a story,” Rusty said. He was ready to rest now, after all his playful running round catching frizz bees and such.

Together they sat on the far end of the porch, right where the ducks were seen quacking and bug picking.

Friendly liked to hear whatever story was to be told. Somehow he knew it

would help him to grow up faster—at least to be wiser, which was a big part of growing up.

“When I was young, the farmer got a whole lot of little yellow baby chicks. They were to be chickens one day. He kept them warm and fed them things to nibble on. They grew bigger and fatter and more fluffy with feathers. These were to be laying chickens for where we used to live.

“But before they grew up, when they were still small and couldn’t make more than little peep peep noises, I started to wonder if the farmer had really made the right purchase for the farm.

“I looked around and saw all the equipment for harvesting, and for ploughing and planting. I could see good use for that.

“And well, he had bought me too, and that was an extremely wise purchase of course...” Rusty laughed a bit at his joke.

“Anyway, I looked at the sheep and the wool they could produce, the goats and cows and the buckets of milk they gave each day, but when I looked at these little tiny peeping things, I could see no benefit. They were just eating food and taking the farmer some time. But he was much wiser than I.

“He had vision for the future. He knew what they were going to become, and the help they could be one day, if he was patient. If he got these chickens when they were young, then he could ensure they got all the right kinds of nutrition and care to make them healthy.

“But I didn’t see that at the time, so I thought I’d save us all time and try to set them free from their cage. I thought they should just run free and find themselves their own food.

“I was pretty selfish and thought way too highly of myself. I forgot that once I was a very young and untrained dog that caused the farmer a whole lot of trouble at first—many messes to clean, and chewed up shoes. But I forgot all that.

“So, anyway, when I tried to let them free, his wife came in just then to check on their water and to see if they were warm enough.

“Since they didn’t have a mama hen to keep them warm, they needed another way to feel snug, especially at night. I was whining and pawing at the cage.

“She seemed to understand that I didn’t understand what these little ones, and so many of them, were doing. She sat down and showed me something from a basket she held. It was an egg.

“See this egg? Maybe sometime you’ll even like to have one for supper. Well, one day we’ll have lots of these. And we need them. But if we don’t have patience to wait and care for these chickens when they are young, we’ll never reach the goal. We cared for you too, when you were young, you know?’ Mrs. Dweller explained.

“Somehow I understood, at least I thought I did. I knew she was saying, in her own way, that she loved me too and cared for me, and also needed to care for other creatures.

“I decided then, that just because I didn’t understand everything that my master was doing, or the young ones he brought to the farm, young ones I was to help protect also, still I would trust that he knew what was best and just who and what was needed.

“He wouldn’t do things that really were a waste of time and food and hard work. He had a plan and would do what was best. I just needed to do my small, and humble job, and let the farmer make the decisions that were for him only to make.”

Rusty finished telling this story of a very important lesson he learned that day some years ago. Friendly Puppy liked hearing about things that happened in this older and wiser dog’s life. And then, all of a sudden he realised how important it was that Rusty learned that lesson, to care for

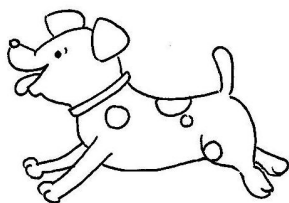
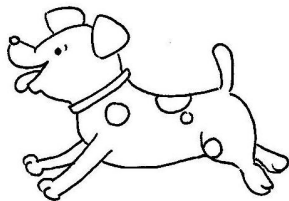
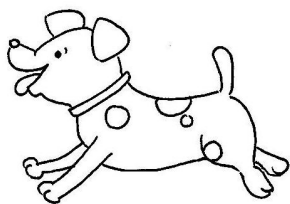
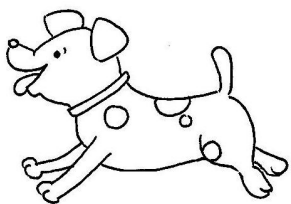
the young ones, even if they can't do much yet to help on the farm.

It was important to him, because he was just that, right now, a young one that was still in the growing and learning part of life. And because Rusty had learned that lesson, now Rusty could be nice and caring to Friendly, a little puppy.

Perhaps that is why Friendly was so friendly, as he'd learned it from the older ones around him who had learned to be that way.

Chapter

4



Chapter 4—Bears in the Forest

There was some stirring in the woods, however, as the farmer's presence was made more known to all the animal life in that part of the woods.

The animals weren't quite sure what to make of it. They hoped both they and the farmer's family could live in peace, without troubling each other. Now, for some animals it was easy, and they found it rather beneficial to have these humans around.

Take the racoons for example. Any scraps and trash in a can meant fast and easy snacks. However, these weren't particularly appreciated by Mr. and Mrs. Dweller, but it was just something that came with living near the wooded area.

Also, the birds were glad for the new supply of seeds, some of which

were meant to grow in the ground. They made it easy for the little flying creatures to have fast food for dinner. But all in all, either side, animal or human side, weren't too troubled by each other. That is until a new family of bears decided to move in for a while.

The birds tried to warn them, but they wouldn't listen. They thought they owned the forest, or should. After all, weren't they the biggest and strongest creatures around? They ought to be able to come and go wherever and whenever they pleased.

But this wasn't really appreciated. Over time, the creatures helped those bears to see that the forest was meant to be shared and that everyone needed their space to live. And over time the bears explained what had happened that made them feel grumpy to begin with.

“I had been living, happily, I thought, with my family down by a nice river. That is until it flooded in the rainy time. I guess I had chosen a cave a bit too close to the river’s edge, and the water came in and we were homeless for quite some time.

“We travelled around looking for a place. But when we at last found one place, we’d discover another family of animals was already living there. And so on we went. It’s not easy for a bear, who loves his sleep, to lose his living place and feel rather lost,” the Papa bear expressed.

This helped the other animals to understand him more.

“But I’m sure it’s not still flooded now...” said a bird. “We don’t mind you being here, but wouldn’t you rather be back where you use to be living happily?”

“Well, I suppose I could, but I don’t trust that river any more. If it’s ruined things once, who knows what will happen next!” he explained.

The animals nodded.

Then a little squirrel came up and told the cubs a story, about a different bear cub that used to live nearby there. “His name was Beary Little Cub, and he lived here for a long while with his family. They too had to move and find a new place to live.”

This caught the Papa bear’s attention, and the Mama bear asked,

“Why did they move away?”

A bird who was always very attentive to what the other animals were doing, feeling, and talking about, knew the whole story.

She said, “It’s because of this new farm nearby. They wanted to not trouble the humans, and not have the humans trouble them. I guess they didn’t want to wait until they were driven away, but rather do a kind deed and leave space for others.”

It was a new thought. This family of bears rarely had thought of it.

“Hmmm,” the papa bear thought. “Maybe that is what made things tough for me, for us, we wait too long. We wait until folks don’t want us around, rather than giving space, if space is needed.

“We’ve thought all along that others need to make room for us, rather than ever wishing to make room for others. We’ll have to talk about it as family, but perhaps there is a better place we can go. Maybe it just takes a bit of searching.”

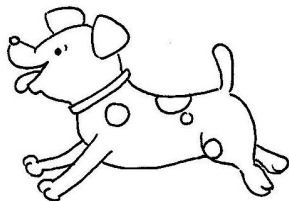
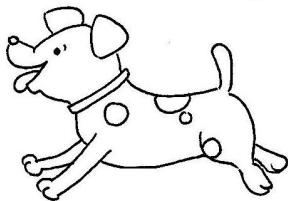
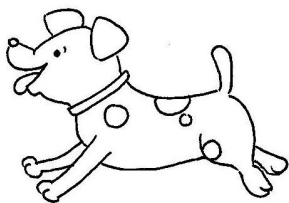
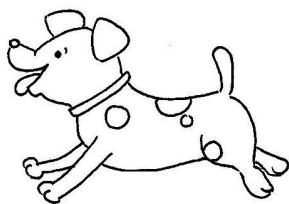
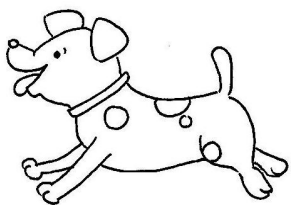
“Yes,” added in a racoon that woke to join in the discussion. “I heard there is a place on the other side of the river, between the river and large rocks. It hasn’t been lived in for years. Folks that used to be there—bear folks that is—moved to another place also. I don’t see why you couldn’t give it a try. You’d have to cross the river first, but that’s no problem for you, is it? Big as you are.”

With that, the raccoon returned to his hollow log and fell fast asleep again. He wanted to make sure he was never noticed during the day. He had food to find at night, after all.

And so it was that this bear family took the step to move to a new place, not because they were chased away, but because they wanted to give others space.

Chapter

5



Chapter 5—A Little Child in Her Arms

One day while Mr. Dweller and his boys, along with Rusty, were walking back home from fishing up the river, they spotted something that caused them to freeze. But then Rusty burst out with a loud bark. They saw this family of bears as they were on their way out of the river, and climbing up the hill to find their new home.

When they were out of sight, Mr. Dweller said, “I thought I’ve been hearing some growling in the woods near our property. I didn’t want to make anyone feel unnecessarily worried. But now we know.”

One of the boys said, “I think I saw a bear one day when we were getting firewood. I didn’t see it so good, but it looked like a group of birds were chasing it away from us.

“I was glad for that. I thought it was a racoon, but now that I’ve seen them, I think it was the baby bear.”

The younger boy said, “And I’m glad that I didn’t see it. I don’t think I would have liked to. I hope they are moving away.”

Rusty added his consent to the idea of them moving away. He had enough to keep him busy with foxes and raccoons, and even keeping Friendly Puppy learning what he should and not wandering away.

He would have a good story to tell to Kitty the Cat, Friendly the Puppy, as well as Furry the kitten, when they had their chat time today. He was eager to do so as they reached the door of their happy abode.

However, before he could tell his friends about the fishing adventure that

ended with seeing the team of bears, the home team had a story of their own to tell. It was almost more interesting than what had happened to him. In quietness he listened.

Kitty the Cat started out, “I was prowling around the property, like I usually do. I was on extra alert since you, Rusty, were gone. I couldn’t bark, but I was sure there was something I could do. For awhile everything was going very smoothly, hardly a leaf fluttering, until I heard Mrs. Dweller calling out to the horses to come quickly to where she stood at the gate of the paddock.”

Rusty was eagerly listening. What could have happened while both he and the man and the boys were gone?

Furry the kitten added, “I saw them too, both Friendly and I did. We were

on the porch and could see right down to the paddock.”

“Well, what happened then?” Rusty was eager to find out, and so the story of the day continued.

Kitty the Cat said: “It wasn’t long before Mrs. Dweller was up on a horse, riding bare back of course, as she is so good at, and off she went. Off into the woods she disappeared, going where, I didn’t know. Whatever could have happened, was rather abrupt. Or perhaps what needed to happen, had to be done rather promptly.”

Furry the Kitten continued the next part, as she was in the house and could observe the next part of the event.

“I was rather disturbed too, with everyone gone, nearly, but just us animals. What were we to do if anything went wrong?”

“Just then, in came Mrs. Dweller, carrying a little child in her arms.”

“A child! Whose child? Where are they now?” Rusty asked, most alerted. He knew the woods were no place for a child to wonder alone.

Friendly Puppy, who was the first of the animal dwellers to greet this little child, spoke up.

“She belongs to a travelling team of campers, I found out, by the smell of the child. A mixture of the smell of their family, as well as a campfire, and food that is cooked on a fire.

“I tried to be real friendly of course, as anyone would do when helping a lost child, or lost sheep, or anyone.”

Furry the Kitten added, “She is asleep now, in Mrs. Dweller’s arms.”

“Oh,” added Rusty, putting some things together.

“That must be why Mr. Dweller left on his horse so soon after we got back. He must be out looking for the child’s family. I could be a help I’m sure. If I could just smell the little one, then I could pick up the scent of the rest of them in the woods.”

It was a good idea, and just as he thought that, the same idea came to Mr. Dweller, who had come back to get him.

“Rusty, come with me! And Barol, please put the horse in the barn, and keep watch over the animals. Shane, be on hand if Mama needs you, okay? Thanks boys. Come on Rusty.”

Each one agreed and would help in any way they could.

Rusty then first entered the house, a very rare event, and silently sniffed the child, and then followed Mr. Dweller out to begin the search.

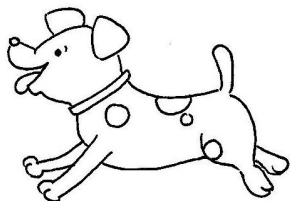
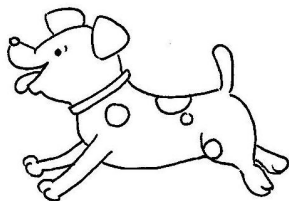
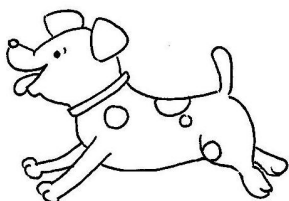
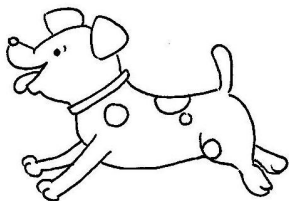
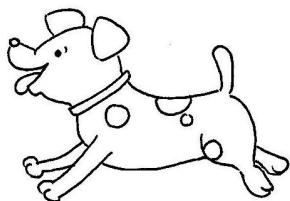
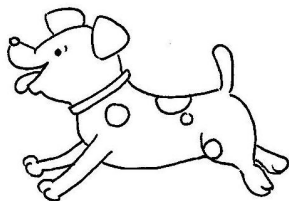
Furry the Kitten said, “Mama what can I do to help?”

Kitty the Cat answered, “If we are real quiet, that might be the biggest help now. For we don’t want the little one to wake, or Mrs. Dweller need to do anything else. We won’t disturb her or the child. Perhaps we should rest out here for now.”

Furry didn’t mind. She’d be beside her mother anyway, and would be looked after.

Chapter

6



Chapter 6—By the Cosy Fire

Shane poured some milk into a bowl for them, and then brought his mother a glass of water, every so silently. He also added a log to the fire, and then sat nearby to read and be on hand should there be a need.

It was a good while later before a very tired and hungry Mr. Dweller and a certain Rusty came back.

When they entered the home, a little child was sitting at the table, being read a story by Shane, and Mrs. Dweller was saying “Would you like some more warm milk with honey?”

Furry the Kitten certainly wished that was being asked of her, and was about to reply with a big meow “yes”, but a look from her mother helped her to keep to herself.

They had both come into the house to be beside the fire and to be on hand if there was a need, not to start eating the human's snacks.

Mrs. Dweller was able to have Shane bring his brother Barol some food too, along with a jug of water, a book and a blanket. They both felt rather grown up today. Everyone was depended on for helping in times of need.

But Mr. Dweller wasn't the only person who entered the house now. In walked a mother and father, the parents of the little one.

"Mama! Papa!" said the child, who started again to cry, for joy at seeing them and remembering the sorrow of being lost in the woods.

"Thank you so much, Mrs. Dweller, for rescuing my little one. Who know

what would have happened if you hadn't had such keen eyes and ears, and quickly went to bring her to safety." The mother started to tear up, but felt very glad indeed that all was well now.

This couple was invited to sit down and enjoy some warm and fresh milk, freshly boiled after being milked that day. It was nice to have new company to chat with, though the circumstances had been rather unsettling to begin with.

"If you'd like to see around the farm, please stay. I'm sure we can find room for you to stay the night if you need to also." Mrs. Dweller was so warm and accommodating, and this invitation was well appreciated.

Of course it would take some creative thinking to come up with a place for them, but it was better than to

have them get lost in the woods while trying to make their way through the night—and need to be rescued once again.

Mrs. Dweller had the idea of clearing a spot for them in the loft area. The stuff holding that place could be temporarily moved. “Stuff is just stuff, but people are people,” she would tell herself, while keeping things in perspective and keeping priorities in the right order.

Mr. Dweller had gone to take Rusty to the chicken’s place and bring Barol back for a time of company. They had a good chat as they walked, speaking about what had happened with the animals while he was gone. Thankfully, not much, but it was good to talk about it and get questions answered.

After a tour around the farm, the two families sat by the cosy fire, cosy indeed in that small living place.

In commenting on the small living place, Mrs. Dweller said, “If we had a few more pairs of hands around, we could make the building extension we’ve been wanting too. But then again, extra helpers would fill it up too, ha!”

She didn’t always know what the solution would be to their many needs and with few people to help out. But perhaps it would be good if someone, sometime, would come to stay with them. But she never thought of it as a real possibility. Though today she began thinking it just might be, one day.

They sang songs and told stories about life there on the farm, and the challenges and adventures so far.

Seeing that space in the house was sparse, the teams of cats and dogs, who were there for a feeding, were out

on the porch looking at the stars and having their own chats.

“Did you see that?” interrupted Kitty. “I thought I saw a mouse...”

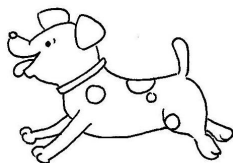
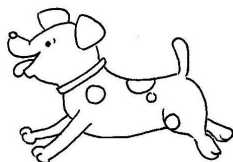
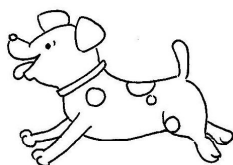
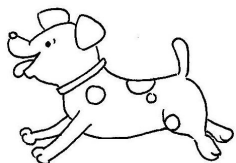
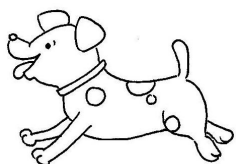
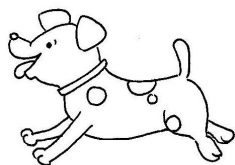
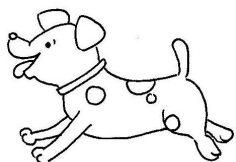
“Rascal. But together we can keep the home safe,” added Rusty, “Right?”

Furry and Friendly, replied in chorus, “Right! Together we can.”

In the morning, after animal care duties, Mr. Dweller helped the couple and their child to ride out to join the rest of their team, who were waiting for whenever they would get back. But the parents were having interesting thoughts. What if that couple chose to be the extra pairs of hands needed and helped out at the farm one of these day? It might just be what would be right, and what they’d enjoy. It was worth a think about it.

Chapter

7



Chapter 7—Dwelling Place

A few weeks later there was an unexpected visit.

Mrs. Dweller had just put on the soup for supper, when she heard a knock.

“My, my! What a surprise. You both are most welcome,” she said to those at the door.

The couple had come back, with their child, and one other person—a certain Mr. Carpenter! It was a fun surprise indeed.

They were offering to help out at the farm for awhile, at least until a new room could be built, and most of the crops harvested.

They couldn't have come at a better time indeed. As they related, the rest of

their team would stay with Mabel and her family, while Mr. Carpenter was here giving his help in the building project.

Mrs. Dweller was so thrilled. But her first thought, as any good host would think was, “Do I have enough supper to share with them all?”

But that wasn’t a worry anymore, as the team had brought with them a large container of fresh goods. They could supply their own humble meals, and just be there to lend their time and strength.

It was a good day indeed.

Furry and Friendly were a welcoming team as well, and made friends quickly as well. “More people means more pats—if we are friendly, that is,” they mused and whispered.

By the end of the week the house had two new rooms added on, and one big loft for storing of goods and supplies.

Furry and Friendly wasted no time at all exploring around. It was good to have more space to sleep, crawl, and play around.

It was nice of these people to come and make them a bigger and better house to live in! –Well, them, and the people of course too.

At their final meal together, Mr. and Mrs. Dweller thanked them heartily. “You’ve all been such a help. I really don’t know how to thank you. I don’t know what we would have done without you.”

Furry who had come back in and was weaving her way among the legs

was glad for the company, and didn't really want them to leave.

Friendly was yapping like he wanted the little girl to stay, the little one, who had become a good friend. The child was always there to throw the ball for him, even when Shane and Barol were busy. She was a good friend to have around.

Mr. Carpenter was off on his horse and got a good fast start to head home. The others lingered a while more. They too didn't really want to leave. It was starting to feel like home. A home they didn't have. They were travelling around, visiting here and there, trying to decide just where to make a home.

"Perhaps our help would be needed a while more," they thought.

Thinking that it was impolite to even suggest that they offer to stay on longer, they were about to say good-bye, when they heard their little girl laughing at a game with Friendly and Shane.

“If you’d like we could come back again sometime...” the woman started off saying, a bit shyly.

Being somewhat bolder, the man added, though somewhat hesitantly, “Or... we could just not leave, quite yet, if you like.”

It was a new thought, though a pleasant one. The Dwellers would think it over.

“Well, that is a pleasant idea,” Mrs. Dweller said. “Why don’t you at least stay one more night, and give us time to think it over. We can talk it over in the morning.”

Everyone agreed this was a good suggestion.

When morning came, the Dwellers couldn't think of letting their friends go, without a place yet to stay, and when they clearly had a need for help. It seemed the perfect set up.

At first they could stay in the house extension, then later, if they really did want to live here on a more long term basis, they could build themselves a house on the property.

This way they would have a place to stay for now, and all preparations could be made to make it through the coming cold winter—and spring crops would be off to a hearty start with their help as well.

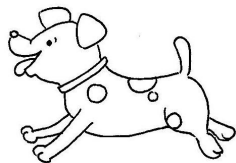
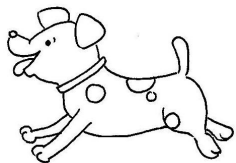
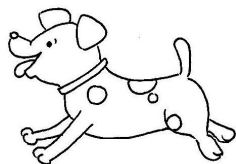
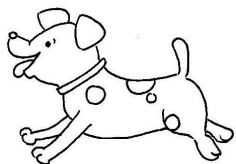
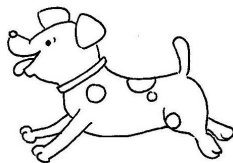
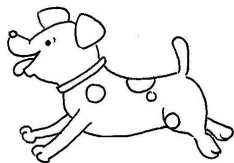
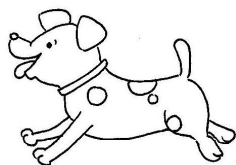
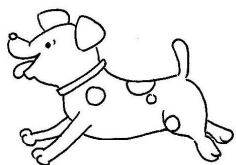
If by summer, they all wished to continue living there, then work on another house would begin, and perhaps more visitors would come to help out with that, for a time.

Life was looking better and better, the Dwellers thought.

The boys were happy for a new young one to help look after and to share their toys and pets with, and the farm would surely benefit from a bigger team—especially a team that enjoyed working together.

Chapter

8



Chapter 8—Snowy Times

The weather began to turn rather cold, but the family was plenty cosy now. With more of them tucked in the house together at night somehow it seemed to keep things just a bit warmer, so they didn't mind the tight living quarters.

There was an extra pair of arms to chop the wood, as Mr. Nightly, for that is what he was called, helped out with it as well. The women took turns cooking the meals, caring for and teaching the children, as well as helping with the animal's needs. There were wool blankets and scarves to make so all would be warm enough.

“How would I have ever made it without you here?” Mrs. Dweller said to Mrs. Nightly.

“I’m sure you would have gotten by in some way or another, but I don’t know where I would have been able to stay so warm and living comfortably with my family. I’m forever thankful for you,” Mrs. Nightly responded.

It was good to have others to work with.

The cold weather seemed to bring a few new friends their direction too. Since food was often on the front porch or nearby, for the pets and hungry birds, soon some other wood dwelling creatures ventured to help themselves, when food seemed scarce. Squirrels, a deer or two, birds of various types, and even a wild boar came once.

Friendly Puppy learned to keep his ears perked up, even when he was half asleep by the fireplace. He never knew when a new and curious creature was going to show up.

As soon as he heard the slightest new sound, or smelled something new that was living, he'd poke his head out the pet door and take a look. If he was real quiet he could often observe them without chasing them away. Well, unless he happened to sneeze!

The snowy air and cold wind did make him sneeze once and a flock of birds peacefully nibbling crumb took off with a start. It always amazed him how birds could do that.

“I guess they need to be, as small and delicate as they are. I guess we all have a way to stay safe, as well as a way to look nice and cute or attractive, or something that makes us a help to the natural world around us,” thought Friendly.

He would always tell Furry about any new animals he got to see. He was

good at describing things as he had seen them. This was part of his learning, to observe and then remember, and then try to tell others. He remembered things better for longer when he had a chance to talk about them.

He might not have had a very big job to do, but being a friend—for that was his name indeed—was his responsibility for now, and he was trying to do a great job of it.

“What’s for dinner?” Mr. Dweller asked, though he didn’t really need to. He already knew. For in these winter months there wasn’t a whole lot of variety. What they had been able to preserve and grow for long term storage, was what they had available to eat.

It was usually potato and pumpkin soup with beans, pickled veggies and some bread dough cooked on sticks over the open fire, with a little oil and salt to dip it in. This was always a warm and satisfying way to end the day.

Usually some songs and stories were shared, thoughts and ideas, as well as a read of something inspirational. Then it was off to early bed under the warmest blankets they could make.

The fire was kept burning well through the night, as they took turns keeping it going. Each of the rooms had a fire place, so everyone was kept good and warm.

Since the visiting family brought with them a large batch of grains, breakfast was often warm cooked cereal with

preserved fruit, and fresh milk. Mid day meal was often rice and canned veggies and yogurt with nuts, or perhaps bean spread on bread instead, if they had time to make it.

While Mrs. Dweller was doing the washing of the dishes, in a pot of melted snow on the wood stove, she was feeling particularly glad for all that this new family had brought to them. Not only food supplies and company, but their friendship and stories were heart-warming. This made the winter pass by much more quickly than it would have if they were all alone.

Mr. Dweller would still take the horses out for their daily ride, but took turns with others.

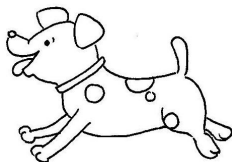
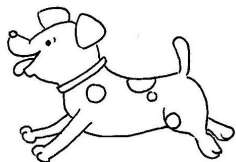
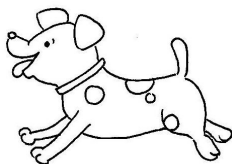
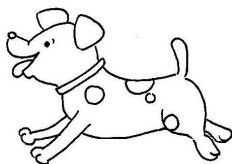
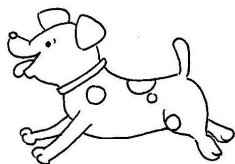
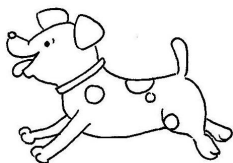
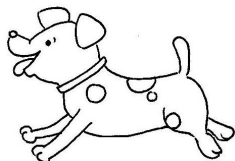
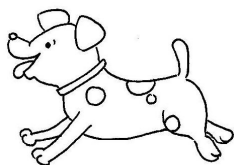
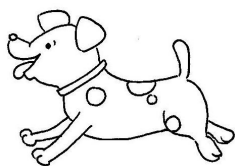
Sometimes Mr. Knightly came along with him, other times one of the women, or sometimes one of the boys—or both of them.

He did this in the warmest part of the day. Not only was it good for the horses, but it helped him and the others get enough fresh air and exercise. This was needed for their health.

They worked together to ensure the best health of each one on the team. They each would need to be in good working order when spring time came. There would be plenty to do, and they would need every bit of strength to do it.

Chapter

9



Chapter 9—Shennela

Mrs. Knightly had bundled up her little girl good and warm, and Shane as well as Friendly Puppy on a leash, came along. The sun was starting to warm things up and it looked very beautiful outside.

They took a walk a short distance a way and discovered all the various animal foot prints they could, and tried to identify each of them. Some were easy—such as bird prints, but others were harder to know.

It was fun trying to guess just what had been walking around their place when they weren't looking.

“Oh, look that's a deer's foot print!” Shane exclaimed.

“And I see a fox foot print over here!” Mrs. Knightly said.

Shennela, for that is the girls name, threw a handful of breadcrumbs that she brought with her, in case some birds were around. When she saw one in a leafless tree that is when she tossed out the treasured nibbles.

Down the bird flew on to the ground where there was a patch nearly free of snow. It was fun to see how happy this little one was. Over came another to join in the delight and then another and another.

Oh my! Shennela didn't know if those few crumbs would be enough. And she was surprised that there were other birds around that she didn't notice, but who were obviously carefully watching what these people were doing. They were happy for a little unexpected treat, and thanked the girl by then sitting in the tree and singing a happy song.

Perhaps the birds noticed that Friendly Puppy was on a leash and couldn't come and chase them away, and that is why they felt comfortable landing on the ground just then, and so close to the people. It was brave of them, but for a bit of food it was worth it.

"I'll bring more to you tomorrow," Shennela said, after her mother told her this would be a nice thing to do, and would save some crumbs for them.

As Friendly Puppy made his way, obediently back to the house, he had a treat too. Shane had made him a snowball and he happily caught it in his mouth, and then asked for it to be thrown again.

Well, usually it would break after one throw-and-catch and a new one

would need to be made. But there was enough snow for that.

When they got back to the warmth of fireplace, and Friendly was drying off, Furry the Kitten came to inspect him. Well, he wasn't muddy, but he was wet.

"I guess that's one good thing about lots of snow," she said, "if you know where to walk, though your feet and body get wet, there isn't a bunch of mud, like there will be soon, when the rest of the snow melts. And besides, one more thing that I like is the snow is as white as a cat!"

She had only seen two cats in her life, herself and her mother, so she thought that was the colour of all cats and kittens. Her mother later explained to her that it just so happened to be that way.

“But,” Kitty the Cat had said, “some cats and kittens are completely black; some are grey; some are even rather red; and some brown or light beige in colour; and some are a mix of all of these.”

“Oh!” Furry took in the information. “I guess they can’t hide in the snow very well then, if they wanted to.”

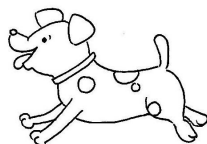
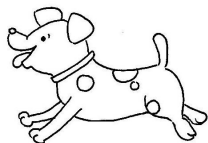
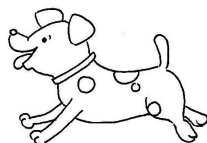
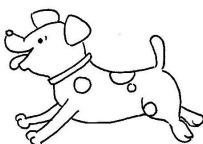
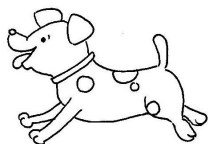
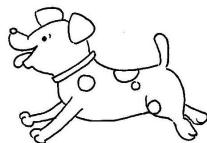
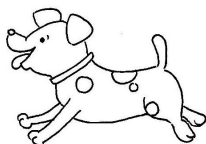
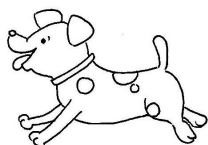
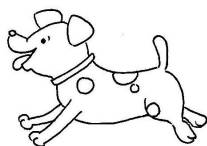
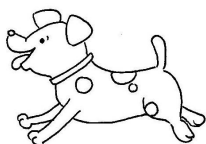
“I guess that is one thing we can do,” replied Kitty the Cat, with a smile, “We both can hide in snow. Speaking of it, do you want to go for a little walk nearby. We won’t go far, but we could play a hide and seek game. Perhaps Rusty would like to join us. He’s back now from the barn.”

And so they did. Barol took Rusty for a little walk, and the cat and her kitten joined them. There were bushes to hide in and snow to roll in, snow

balls to grab, made by Barol who has having fun making and throwing them to each of the pets. He'd even brought a coloured string to drag along in the snow, that the cats like to chase.

Perhaps they hoped there was a big ball of yarn at the other end of it, a fun ball to play with. It wasn't there this time; probably because most of the yarn had all been used to make scarfs and mittens for children.

Chapter 10



Chapter 10—Something Good

While others were having walks and caring for the pets, and dinner was being cooked, Mr. Knightly was taking a turn in the barn. He cleaned it, fed the animals, and did the last milking duties.

There was plenty of hay that had been stored up in the summer and autumn, and he put new hay for the horses, goats, cows, and sheep to nibble on.

What was hard was making drinking water available for them, as sometimes the temperature in the barn could make the water freeze.

Thankfully there was a wood stove that could be used to heat the barn when needed, and Mr. Knightly would melt snow in a pot there and pour it on the frozen water in the metal water

dishes and troughs. This helped to keep the water in a liquid state when things got just too cold.

Mr. Dweller came to call him to supper, as it was now ready. It was to be a special meal. Though the weather was still cold, it actually was the first day of spring, and they were glad it was.

“Come on to the house. Something good is cooking for us. Bean and beet stew, with apple crumble and whipped cream!” Mr. Dweller announced, since he had just personally checked on it.

“I can’t tell you how thankful I am for your help, but I think that will only grow as we enter spring. That’s when we’re going to really feel the benefits of having you here,” Mr. Dweller said with heartfelt thanks.

“I’m just so grateful to your family. I haven’t enjoyed a winter more than this year,” Mr. Knightly replied sincerely.

Shennela danced and played her mother’s tambourine, while the boys used pots and lids, spoons and sticks to make the merriest music they could. It was a day to be remembered.

They made it happily through the winter, and would soon see more days of sun and warmth, and yes, hard work too for the grown-ups. But that was going to be much better this year than any year before, for they had more help. It might even be fun, they thought as they heard the children singing cheerily a song about spring and new life and growth.

Even Friendly Puppy got with the mood of the festive night. He started barking in time—or what he thought was in time to the music.

Everyone thought he was just happy, and they didn't mind.

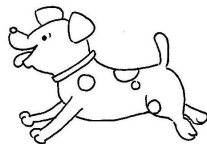
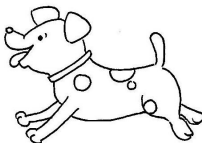
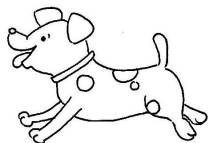
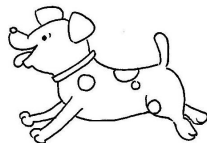
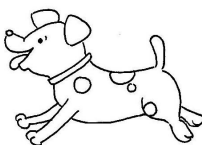
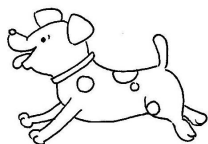
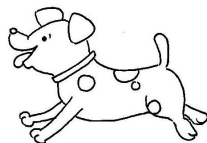
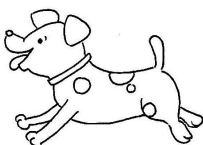
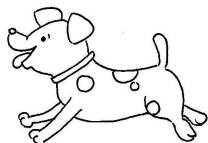
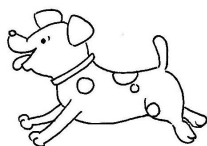
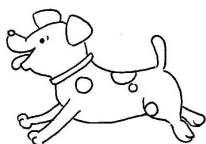
Furry, well, she took the time to enjoy a warm bowl of milk and curl up to sleep, holding a precious item she had found after diligent search through the bags and crates of stuff—a whole ball of yarn. She knew there weren't many if any of them left. So this was very special to her.

This would keep her happily entertained for part of the night, when she didn't know what else to do. Well, I guess she should be sleeping, but just thinking about a bit of cat fun made her look forward to the night.

And perhaps it was good that she was in the mood for a wakeful night, as it was the right night for it.

Chapter

11



Chapter 11—A Ball of Yarn

The weather was warming and stored winter supplies were getting low for the resident mice who tried to not keep all that far away from the house, just in case there was a chance they could come in for a midnight snack.

Of all nights, this was the one they chose to make their next exploration trip into the big people house, with mice-catching dogs and cats. It was a brave move, but they figured they were hungry and quick enough to give it a try.

When at last all the people, men, women, and children had settled for a good night's sleep, along with some pets, each in their own bed, the mice made their plan.

“I bet they have opened up new bag of grains to work with, since they are

starting on new season. They've been able to keep it from us all this time, but if it's now open, I think we could just slip inside, grab what we want, and be gone without them even knowing," laughed one naughty mouse.

"But just make sure to not leave a trail of food when we leave. We don't want to be discovered. If we pick the right timing, and do it right, we might be able to return again and again without ever being found out, or at least not for a long time," replied the other accomplice to this deed.

"When we are sure all is quiet, that is the time to go in," the first one gave the order to the two others.

"There is to be no sharing. Just take what you can and get out. Those who grab the most get the most," he said, revealing that their instincts of just

taking and selfishness were part of their sneaky bad behaviour.

So when all was still, the mice worked their way through a hidden hole in the wall that they had been working on for some days.

Now at this very moment, Furry decided it was time to get playing with that ball of yarn.

She had a fun idea. “I want to see it roll down across the floor. It will be silent anyway, and then I can leap and catch it. I’ll pretend it’s my training for being better at catching mice. But where would be a good place for this game?”

“That’s it! On the bag of grain I’ll go,” she said. Taking the yarn in her mouth she did a little leap and climb and got up onto it.

“This is great. The yarn ball will go far from here. One-two-three, go!” she told herself and let it go. Down it rolled very quickly, and just about as fast, down leapt Furry the Kitten to capture it.

“Again! That was fun!.. Oops I better be quiet or someone might wake.”

Again she leapt and hopped up on the big sack, and down quickly rolled the yarn. She was about to pounce on it, when something better just made its way across the floor. “A mouse! Indeed it’s good I was doing my training. I’m ready. I’m not going to let them spoil this bag of grain.

So Furry the Kitten sat very, very still and waited. Even though she actually would have rather played her fun game a few more times, there was work to be done and she was going to be grown-up now and do it.

“Hmm, perhaps I’ll try a little something,” she thought, and took a small handful, as quietly as she could, out of the bag, and tossed it down on the floor.

She then remained very still again. Before too much longer a mouse, seeing this easy food, made his way over and began to munch.

Just at that moment when he was distracted by his own desires, Furry the Kitten leapt off the bag and with a pounce arrested, in her own way, the intruder and took him off and away. He wouldn’t be returning.

Seeing the unhappy end of their leader, the rest chose to make a speedy exit while they still could.

“Guess it’s not safe to try that; not with that fur ball on duty. Thought she’d be sleeping, but you never can know

who might be on guard when you least expect it,” one mouse said to the other as they were forced to merely eat the remains of the dog’s food crumbs before returning to their home.

In the morning it was spotted that the bag hadn’t been fully closed, and some grains were on the floor.

Mrs. Dweller took note and tied it up well. “I think we need to keep a better watch on our open bags of food, so we aren’t attracting unwanted visitors,” she suggested at the breakfast table.

Friendly the Puppy noticed, that rather than being perky and having her milk right then, Furry was still napping.

“I wonder what happened in the night.... I bet Furry knows. I’ll ask her about it when she gets up.”

Chapter 12—Mr. And Mrs. Knightly

Sometime, half way through the spring, an unexpected team of visitors came by to see how things were going.

“Mabel!” called out Mrs. Dweller, as she saw her at the door of the house with her youngest.

And Mr. Carpenter and the girls went to find Mr. Dweller and the boys. They were in the barn doing their jobs.

But when Mr. Carpenter looked out to the field he saw another couple there working. He first had a questioning look on his face, but then remembered them as the couple he had worked with to add more rooms to this house.

“I see they’ve come back... or have come to stay?” he said. Mr. Dweller nodded and handed a fresh glass of water to each of the visitors.

“I’m very glad you have help. Very glad indeed.”

While the men chatted, the boys took the girls around to see all the new baby animals and see the improvements in the farm and property.

“Wanna go for a race?” they asked the girls, but then noted it might not work so good with the dresses they put on, to look nice for a visit.

“Or how about soaking your feet in the stream and we’ll pick you the nicest mountain flowers around we can find!”

Now that sounded a bit more right, and the girls agreed. They told their father, who together with Mr. Dweller, wandered on over to the stream to continue chatting as the children enjoyed the company and the sunshine.

Soon Mabel came out of the house with a basket of fresh berry buns. Mrs. Dweller had just baked a bunch for them to share for a lunch, but there was enough for all three families to share.

While Mabel carried the basket and her little one, Mrs. Dweller brought some fresh milk to go along with them, as well as a few old blankets to be used on the bright green grass.

They looked around and found the children and fathers by the stream, and set up the snack there. Mrs. Dweller called out for Mr. and Mrs. Knightly to come and have lunch.

Their girl was with them, having fun picking flowers too. They put down their tools, took a drink of water, and made their way over to the other families.

“Hello, good to see you again,” Mr. Carpenter and Mr. Knightly shook hands while the ladies hugged.

The older girls let the young one sit with them as they looked at each other’s flowers and tossed pebbles into the stream. A lot of chatter, laughter and splashing was going on.

“These buns are sure good, Mrs. Dweller,” said her husband. “You sure know how to perk up a work day and make it feel like we are feasting!”

“Well, it wouldn’t have been this fun if the children didn’t help lead us to the stream and inspire us for a picnic,” she said.

And the girls said, “And we wouldn’t have come if our parents didn’t want to see how you all were doing.”

It was a great time they all had.

Hearty fair wells, as well as ‘see you some time again, hopefully not too long from now” comments were shared.

But before the family had a chance to leave, Mr. and Mrs. Knightly suddenly realised this was a wonderful opportunity to make plans for the near future.

This was the very man they were going to need to meet with and ask if he could help them to build a home for them on this property. They had decided, just the day before, that they did want to stay on living here for as long as possible.

So, after a brief look at each other, Mr. and Mrs. Knightly quickly made their way over to the buggy.

“Say, got any plans at the start of summer?” Mr. Knightly asked Mr. Carpenter.

“What’chya got in mind, friend?” he replied with a question.

Mr. and Mrs. Knightly then explained about their plans to stay here and their need for help in building themselves a simple and small abode. And they said how the timing of seeing him was so perfect, so they could ask, if he would be free to help them.

“I think it could work out... in exchange for a favour,” Mr. Carpenter replied.

Mr. and Mrs. Knightly were happy to hear that, and were glad to help with anything that they could, in order to help them.

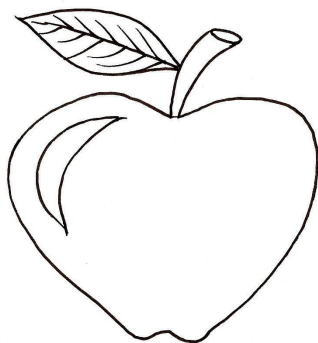
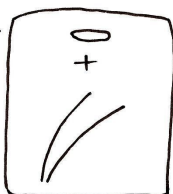
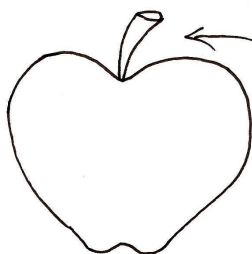
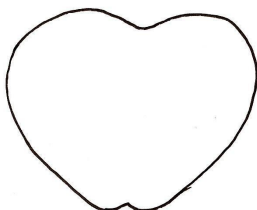
And so it was arranged that in about 6 six weeks there would be a swap of personnel. Mr. Carpenter would come to help build the house together with the other men, and Mrs. Knightly and

her girl would stay with Mable and her girls, for that week, so they wouldn't be left alone. They could then do all the gardening and pickling that they could, and preserving of fruits and berries.

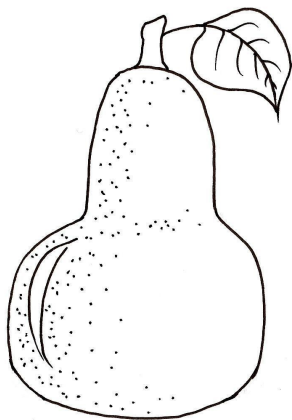
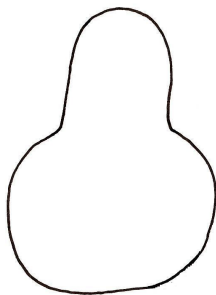
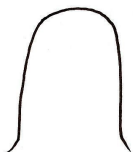
It was a wonderful plan and worked out well. And that is when the "Dwell-Nigh" farm was named, when Mr. and Mrs. Knightly came to form a good teamwork with the Dwellers. And for years later, the "Dwell-Nigh" farm helped to supply much of the goods needed by the mountain-living families.

They built rooms for guests to stay in, and it became a place for families to visit. Their boys had children for company in this way, as did everyone else, including trusty Rusty, Friendly Puppy, Kitty the Cat, and Furry the kitten. When everyone pulled together, they had a great time.

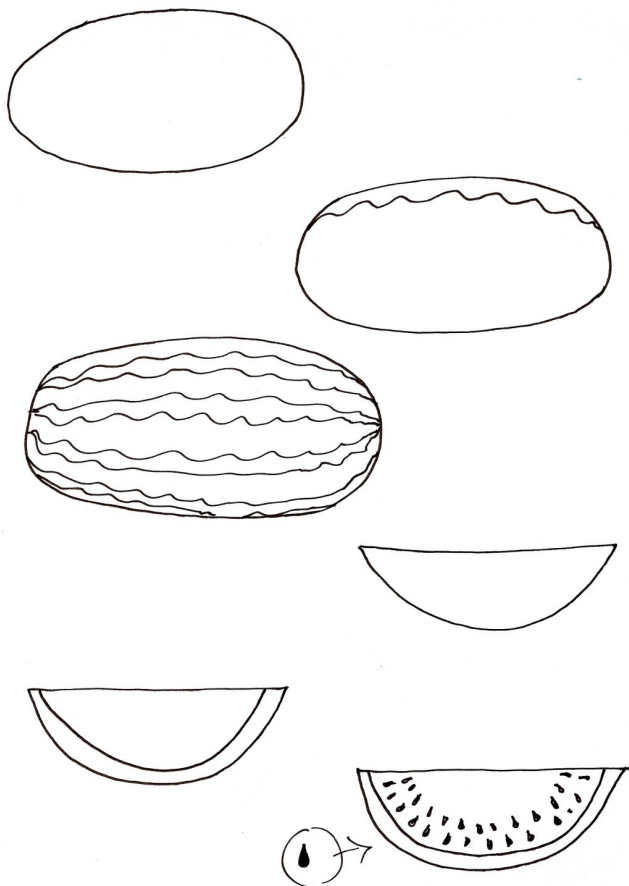
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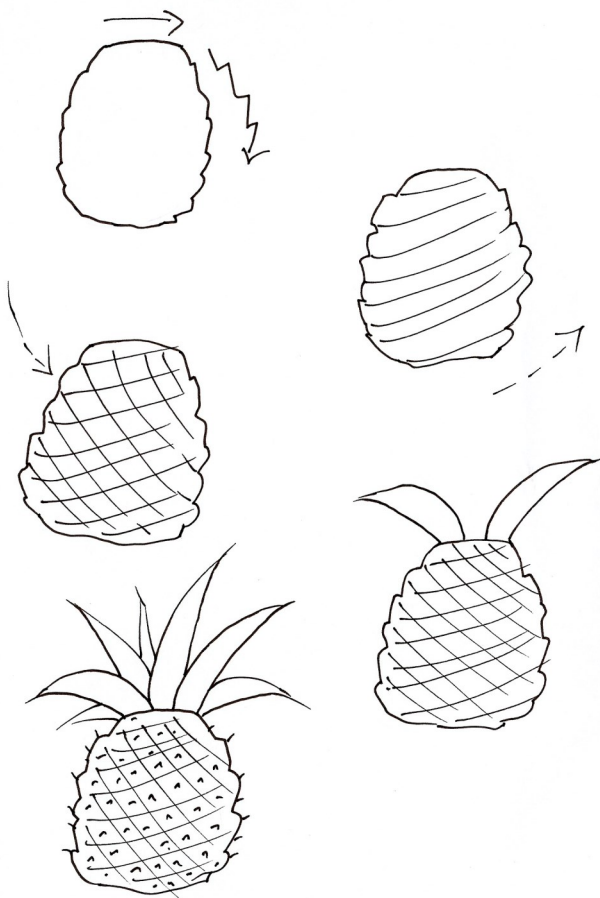
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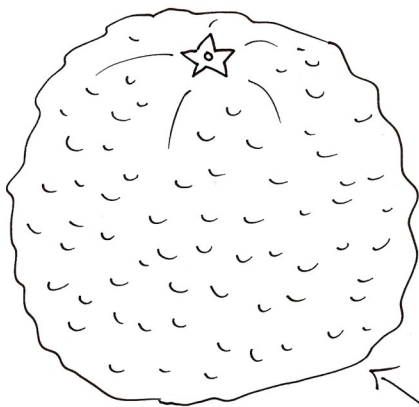
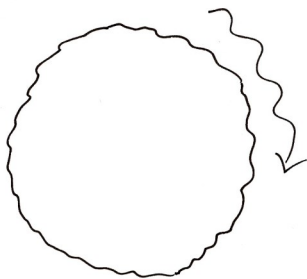
How to draw watermelon:



How to draw pineapple:



How to draw an orange:





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