

ANIMAL ARK



Scaredy-Dog

With special thanks to Caryn Jenner

To LXL

Illustrations by Jo Anne Davies for Artful Doodlers

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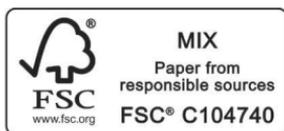
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Scaredy-Dog

Lucy Daniels





STORY ONE: Dog Detectives



CHAPTER ONE – Page 9



CHAPTER TWO – Page 21

CHAPTER THREE – Page 31

CHAPTER FOUR – Page 49



CHAPTER FIVE – Page 69



CHAPTER SIX – Page 83





STORY TWO: Puppy Hero



CHAPTER ONE – Page 101

CHAPTER TWO – Page 115



CHAPTER THREE – Page 125



CHAPTER FOUR – Page 135

CHAPTER FIVE – Page 151

CHAPTER SIX – Page 163





**STORY ONE:
Dog Detectives**



Amelia Haywood gave a little bone-shaped biscuit to the spotty Dalmatian crouched obediently at her feet. “Don’t worry,” she told the shaggy English sheepdog next to him, who looked up at her with round, pleading eyes. “I haven’t forgotten you!”

Amelia couldn't stop smiling. It was Dog Day at Animal Ark. She and her best friend, Sam, were in the reception area, handing out treats to the dogs and information sheets to their owners, with tips on canine care. The morning sun streamed in through the window.

Amelia was glad it was the school



holidays. Now that she and Sam were the veterinary surgery's official young helpers, they would get to spend a whole week with the animals. It was going to be brilliant!

Mac, Sam's West Highland terrier puppy, darted out from behind a lanky whippet. His stubby tail wagged as he licked Amelia's hand.

Amelia laughed. "Is Mac allowed another biscuit?" she asked Sam.

Sam rolled his eyes. "Just one more!"

"Sit," said Amelia. She'd helped Sam to train the puppy and she was pleased to see that Mac sat obediently. "Good boy," she said, giving him the treat.



Amelia looked up as a tall, strong-looking man entered, carrying a German shepherd in his arms. He had short grey hair and a worried look on his face. Amelia saw that a patch of fur on his dog's foreleg was matted with blood. *Oh, no*, she thought, hurrying to close the door behind him. *This can't be good ...*

Mr Hope, one of the vets, crossed the reception, smiling kindly. "Hello," he

said to the man. “I don’t believe we’ve met before. What’s happened here?”

The man nodded a greeting. “I’m Kent Jacobs. I’ve only just moved to Welford.” The man stroked the dog’s head gently. “And this is Sherlock ... He went to explore some bushes near our new cottage and came out with this wounded leg. I’ve no idea how it happened.”

Mr Hope turned to Amelia and Sam. “Do you two want to help me in the consulting room?”

Amelia and Sam nodded. “Yes, please!”

Julia, the receptionist, steered her

wheelchair around her desk. “I’ll keep an eye on Mac,” she told Sam, winking. “He can help me hand out the treats – that’s if he doesn’t scoff them all first!”

“Thanks, Julia,” said Sam, as he and Amelia followed Mr Hope.

In the consulting room, they watched as Mr Hope and Mr Jacobs gently laid the German shepherd on the examination table. Sherlock had a mixture of brown and black fur, a long nose and pointy ears. Amelia knew that German shepherds were particularly calm and intelligent dogs. *Even though they look really fierce!*

Sure enough, Sherlock was patient as

Mr Hope used a tweezer to move some of the bloody fur away so he could get a better look at the wound. A trickle of blood dripped on to the examining table.

Amelia leaned forwards so she could see better. *I've got to learn as much as possible if I'm going to become a vet one day,* she thought as she watched.



Mr Hope cut away some of the matted fur on Sherlock's leg. Then he gently cleaned the blood off with a cotton pad, which Amelia knew was soaked in hydrogen peroxide to kill any germs that might give Sherlock a nasty infection.

Now Amelia could see the wound clearly. She gasped. There were two small holes in the dog's skin!

Mr Hope gave a low whistle. "It looks like Sherlock's been bitten!" he said.

"Bitten?" said Mr Jacobs, frowning.
"How strange!"

"By a fox?" asked Sam.

"Or a badger?" asked Amelia.

“Actually, I’m pretty sure it was another dog,” said Mr Hope. “Luckily, the wound isn’t too deep.”

“Wow,” said Sam. “Sherlock’s a big dog. The dog that bit him must be really tough!”

Mr Hope finished cleaning the wound and rubbed on some antibacterial ointment. Sherlock just licked his lips nervously.

“Dogs don’t usually bite, and when they do it’s often because they’re scared,” said Mr Hope. “Amelia, can you please pass me that bandage?”

Amelia reached for the supplies at the end of the table, handing one to the vet.



She leaned down over the German shepherd, who was calm and still as Mr Hope applied the bandage.

“Nearly done, Sherlock,” she whispered. She looked up at Mr Jacobs, who was softly stroking his dog’s head. “He’s very calm.”

“Well, he’s a retired police dog,” said Mr Jacobs. “His job was to sniff out suspected criminals, so he’s used to stressful situations.”

Sam's eyes lit up with excitement.

“A crime-fighting dog? Awesome!”

“Very cool!” agreed Amelia. “How did Sherlock learn to do that?”

“I trained him myself,” said Mr Jacobs, proudly. “Training police dogs used to be my job. Then I retired and moved here. I just bought Scarecrow Cottage.”

“That place down by the village shop?” Sam asked.

Mr Jacobs nodded.

“Well,” Amelia said, frowning, “I think the dog that bit Sherlock could use some training.”

“Hmmm,” said Sam thoughtfully.

“I wonder who the mystery biter is?”

