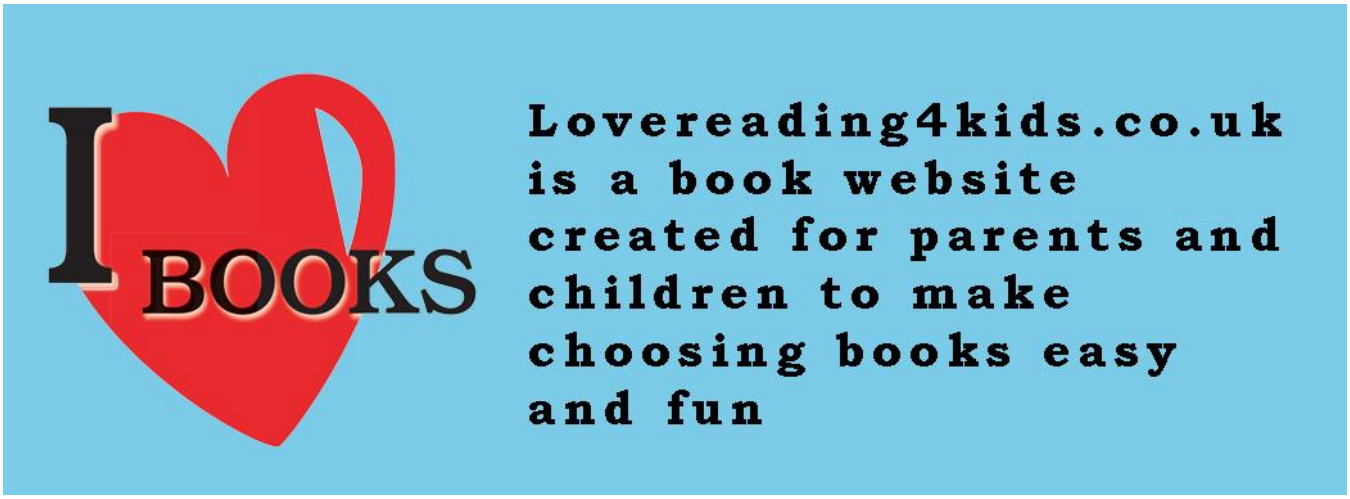


Opening extract from

Pugly Solves a Crime (Manuscript does not include illustrations)

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Chapter 1

The Missing Socks

As soon as I saw the neighbour's new dog I just KNEW that she was going to be TROUBLE.

I mean, she's a POODLE and EVERYONE knows that Poodles can't be trusted. They're too bouncy and pood-ly.

Clem said that I was being SILLY and that poodles were totally HARMLESS and had candy floss for brains.

So I explained that that's EXACTLY what poodles WANT everyone to think and that they are actually EVIL GENIUSES.

But Clem just ROLLED HER EYES (like she ALWAYS does) and said that she didn't think a dog called GLITTERPUFF could be evil OR a genius.

But then LOADS of stuff began mysteriously DISSAPEARING. Like Maddy's (that's our owner) favourite jumper with the pumpkins on it, and LOADS of Tiny the chihauhua's favourites.

But it was when I heard that Big Sal the guinea pig got GUINEA PIG-NAPPED that I knew that it was time for me to become a PUG-TECTIVE!

Chapter 2

It's all about the hat

I told Clem that's she should be my assistant and that she could answer the phone and take notes and bring me snacks.

Once Clem EVENTUALLY stopped rolling around on the floor laughing she said, "I will be the DIRECTOR of the detective agency."

I didn't really know what a DIRECTOR was, but Clem said that it meant she would be in charge and WATCH OVER the investigation and ALL FUTURE INVESTIGATIONS.

So I said ok because I needed someone to watch me VERY CLOSELY to make sure I didn't lose my hat because EVERY good detective needs a HAT. And when crimes DON'T get solved it probably isn't because the detective can't find any clues; it's probably because he forgot to wear his hat!

Clem said that the HAT THING was STUPID. But I just ignored her because sometimes that is all you can do when Clem is being MOANY and UNHELPFUL and she had OBVIOUSLY never heard of Sherlock Holmes.

But then Clem said something that I could NOT ignore. She said that she was going to name our detective agency, 'CLEMENTINE CRIME'!

So I explained that that was a TERRIBLE NAME for our detective agency because MY name wasn't even in it and I was the detective!

But when I suggested 'PUGLY'S CRIME BUSTERS' Clem hissed at me SO LOUD that I almost weed myself!

"Ok, calm down!" I said. "Let's call it 'PUGLY & CLEM'S CRIMES BUSTERS'"

Clem got a pen and wrote the name down. And JUST like I thought she would, she

put HER name first. So I ran around and barked and threw myself against the sofa for AGES because I was having a PUG-TANTRUM.

"Are you quite finished?" said Clem, holding something up.

"What's that?" I said.

"While you were being RIDICULOUS I made a list of VICTIMS. We're going to interview everyone who's had something stolen and try to find out more.

But we don't NEED to interview loads of people, Clem. I already KNOW that GLITTERPUFF is the THIEF.

"Will you STOP going on and on about that poodle. She's basically a GIANT MARSHMALLOW!" said Clem. "There's no WAY she's a CRIMINAL!"

"PLUS you can't actually arrest someone unless you have EVIDENCE, Pugly."

And Clem was right. We DID need to gather evidence because that's what detectives do. And they also look for CLUES.

So we waited until our owner, Maddy, went off the school that day and then I raced into the bathroom and pushed the window open and escaped so we could do our INVESTIGATION.

Clem figured out ages ago that Maddy always leaves the bathroom window open a tiny bit. And one night I caught Clem sneaking out of the window when Maddy had locked her cat flap because Clem was supposed to be going to the VET.

Clem was FURIOUS that I knew about the window now because she said it was HER window and that if Maddy found out that I was sneaking out that she'd probably LOCK the window and Clem wouldn't be able to use it when she needed to.

But she didn't moan about me using her window today because she knew she was going to need a fabulous detective like ME to help solve 'Pugly and Clem's Crime Busters' first ever CASE!

Chapter 3

They were the footprints of a giant hound!

As soon as Tiny opened the door and saw my homemade detective's badge she BURST out crying.

"Thank GOODNESS you're here!" she shrieked. "I've been horribly ROBBED!"

And then she dropped to the ground and kicked her little chihuahua legs in the air.

"That nasty thief has stolen my ball AND my best tartan jacket and loads of my hairdressing stuff! Those are ALL of my favourites, Pugly! ALL OF MY FAVOURITES! WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA!"

Clem narrowed her eyes as Tiny flopped around on the carpet from side-to-side and then she wrote something down in her INVESTIGATION PAD.

"Don't worry, Tiny!" I said, using my BEST detective voice. "Pugly and Clementine Crime Busters are on the CASE! I'll make sure we get ALL of your favourites back. I PROMISE!"

"You WILL?!" said Tiny. "That's FABULOUS!" she yipped as she bounced on the spot.

"Is there anything I can do to help?" said Tiny.

"Yes, actually," said Clem. "You can sit STILL and answer a few questions for us."

"Of COURSE!" said Tiny, "ANYTHING to help you catch this HORRID thief!"

"Can you tell us if you saw anything SUSPICIOUS the night your belongings were stolen?" said Clem.

"I DEFINITELY DID!" said Tiny. And then she started whimpering and shaking LOADS.

So I put a blanket over her shoulders because that's the sort of stuff detectives do when they are trying to help the victims.

"Don't be scared," I said. "You can tell us."

Tiny wrapped herself up tight in the blanket so that only her face was poking out. She looked TERRIFIED!

"I saw something…" she whispered. "A FOOTPRINT. A seriously BIG FOOTPRINT!"

Clem's tail began flicking from side to side.

"Can you show us this footprint, please?" said Clem.

Tiny's eyes started to go WEIRD and I just KNEW that she was about to faint so I lay her down on the sofa and a brought her water bowl over.

"Straw, please," whimpered Tiny as her little chiuhauhau arm flopped over the side of the sofa.

So I brought Tiny a box of straws from the kitchen and she spent AGES looking through them until she eventually picked an orange one.

We waited until she was HYDRATED because dogs can't really speak when they need water because their tongues get in the way because of all the panting.

"Aaaah! That's better," said Tiny. "I'm afraid the footprint it gone. The rain took it away."

"Hmm. I see," said Clem. "Did you happen to take a photograph of it?"

"I don't have a camera," said Tiny. "But it was HUGE," she whimpered.

"And I saw a SHADOW, too! I think it was a WOLF!"

That's when I started shaking a bit, too, because I REALLY didn't want the thief to be a WOLF because WOLVES are TOO SCARY!"

"What about a POODLE, Tiny? Do you think it could have been a really, big and evil

poodle??" I asked, hopefully.

Clem looked at me and rolled her eyes.

"Maybe," said Tiny. "But it would have had to be a really, REALLY evil one!"

"I see," said Clem. "And is there anything ELSE you'd like to tell us, Tiny?"

That's when I noticed that Clem's tail was flicking LOADS so I knew that she was annoyed at something but I wasn't sure what.

"Oh, yes! There is something else," said Tiny, as she jumped up and folded her blanket up nicely.

"I COMPLETELY forgot to ask. Would you like a biscuit? Or a bowl of water?"

"No thank you," said Clem, snapping her notebook shut. "We'll be in touch."

"Oh. One more thing," said Clem. "We got word that Big Sal the guinea pig is missing. Have you heard anything about that?"

"Nope," said Tiny. "Bye bye."

"Ok, thank you for your time, Tiny," I said.

And then Clem pulled me out the door before I even had a chance to ask for biscuit.

"I don't trust that Chihuahua!" Clem hissed at me once we were outside.

"She's going on the SUSPECT LIST."

"What are you TALKING about?" I said, "Tiny is a VICTIM!"

"I'm not so sure," said Clem. "She was a bit DRAMATIC. And did you see how quickly she stopped crying and folded up the blanket? I think she was FAKING IT."

I looked up and saw Tiny at her window, staring at us.

"Look at her, Clem. She's OBVIOUSLY not a suspect."

Just then Tiny shut the curtains.

I explained that Clem should probably just leave all of the detective stuff to me because she was obviously a TERRIBLE detective and didn't even know the difference

between a VICTIM and a CRIMINAL. I mean, Tiny had been crying REAL TEARS and everything! She OBVIOULSY wasn't faking it.

Clem looked like she was wanted to KILL ME.

So I shouted, "Let's get to the next CRIME SCENE!"

And ran down street before Clem could get me.