NEWS HOUNDS

THE PUPPY PROBLEM



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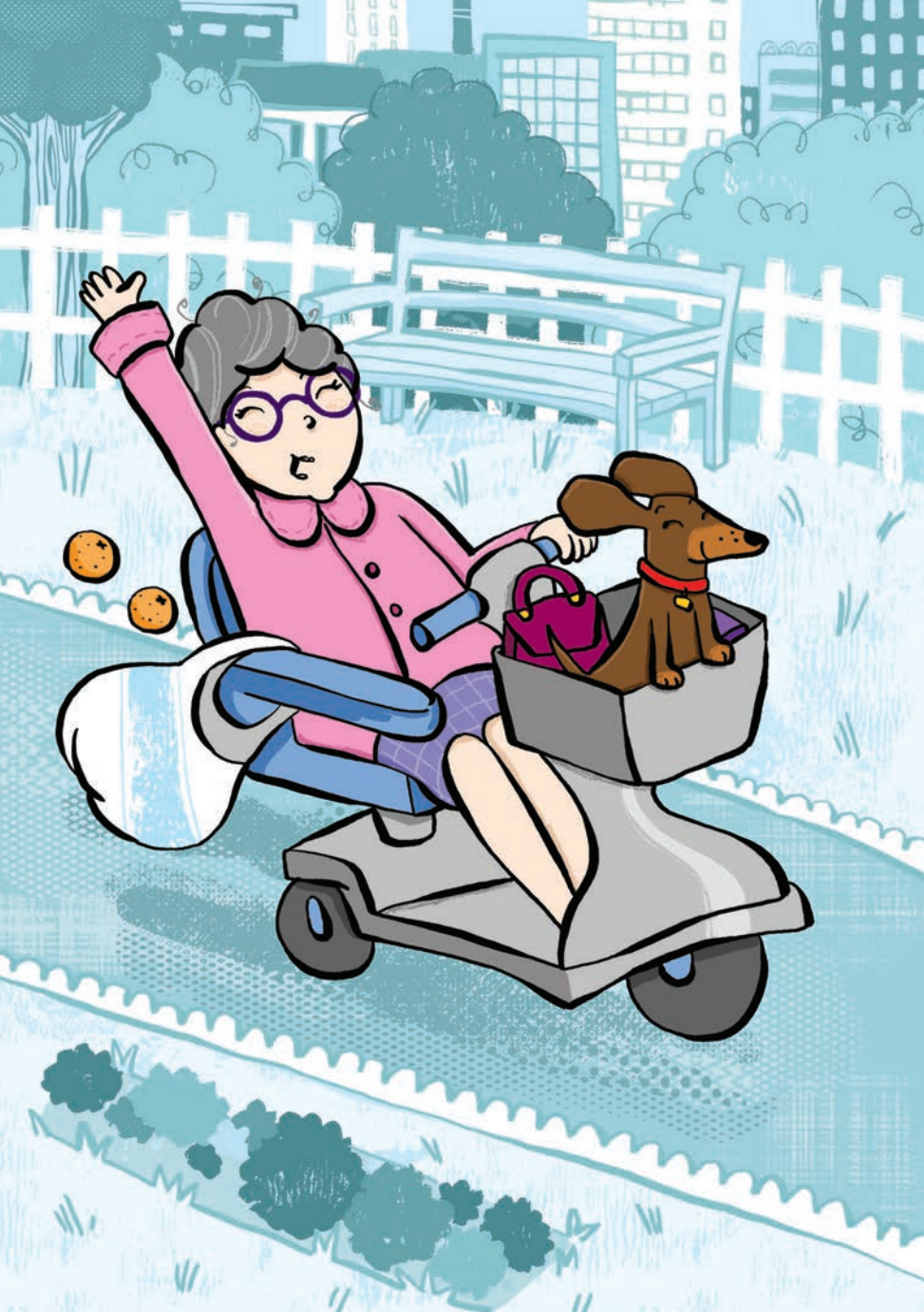
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For Sienna and William – L.J.

For J&W ... no, you can't have

a dog ... yet – C.A.







Gizmo was a city dog. A prince of the urban jungle. His paths were clear, and his lawns were mown. He and Grannie owned the streets they…

STOP PRESS!

Grannie makes surprise move to the country to write memoirs! Gizmo shocked!



Gizmo worried as he and Grannie drove away from the only home he'd ever known. They were going to a place called Puddle. That didn't sound good – he hated getting his

paws wet. But where Grannie went, he went.

Gizmo had finally managed to nap, when a bump in the road woke him. They'd arrived. He sniffed the air. It smelt ... different. Too clean.



His worry deepened.

As Grannie made her way to the house, Gizmo explored the garden. It seemed very strange to him. For a start there wasn't a smartly dressed park attendant.



There were no fountains, no rows of benches, and where were the rubbish bins? To him it seemed wild and unruly. He was carefully edging his way around a flower bed when he heard a voice.



‘Hello there!’

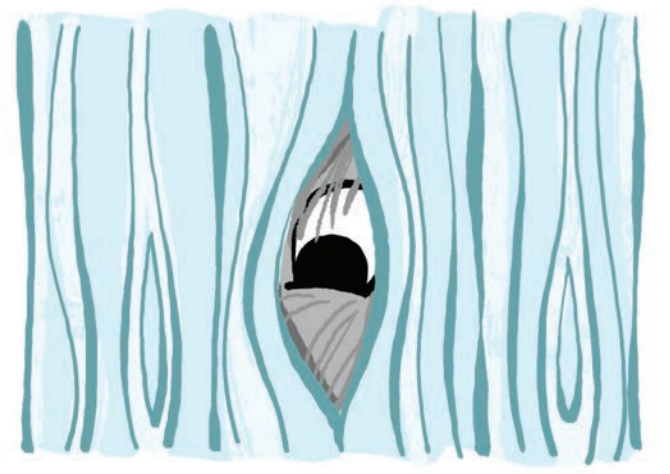
Was it the great dog in the sky?

‘Over here!’ said the voice.

Gizmo looked all around but he couldn’t see anyone. Ahead of him was a white fence with a small hole in it. He peered through. More wilderness. All he could see were shrubs and bushes and four strange hairy tree trunks.

‘Is there anybody there?’ he asked.

‘Yes, me!’ came the reply.



Suddenly his gaze was met by an enormous eye. He jumped back, startled, and the eye blinked.

'I'm Jilly,' it said. 'Pleased to meet you.'

Gizmo tried to wag his tail in a friendly way, but he was shaking.

‘Um, hello,’ he replied. ‘I’m Gizmo. I’ve never met an enormous eye before.’

‘Up here,’ insisted the voice. ‘At the top of the fence.’

Gizmo craned his head back as far as he could and saw the biggest, furriest face he’d ever seen. He recognised the eye.

‘What are you?’ he asked, amazed.





‘I’m an Irish wolfhound!’

‘What are you standing on?’ Gizmo asked. He couldn’t work out how she could be looking over the fence when it was so high.

‘Nothing,’ said Jilly, confused.



Gizmo looked back through the hole in the fence and realised that what he'd thought were tree trunks were in fact Jilly's very long legs. She was the biggest dog he'd ever seen! He took a nervous step back.

'What are *you*?' Jilly asked.

'I'm a dachshund,' Gizmo replied. Despite his nerves he couldn't help showing off his long, smooth body. 'Or a sausage dog. It's easier to say.'

‘Mmm, sausages!’ said Jilly, salivating. A droplet landed on Gizmo’s head as Jilly leaned over the fence.

‘Don’t eat me! Don’t eat me!’ Gizmo cried, covering his eyes with his paws. ‘I’m not a sausage! I’m a sausage DOG!’

