For Scruff, Susie and Rosie

-TC

For Steve and Annabelle, two of Michael's biggest fans. Happy reading! x

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MICHAEL THE INCREDIBLE SUPER-SLEUTH SAUSAGE DOG



By ~~Terrie Chilvers~~ *Michael*

Illustrated by ~~Tim Budgen~~ *Michael*

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DEDICATION

THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED TO MY PAWESOME FANS, THE CHIPOLATAS! THANK YOU FOR HAVING EXCELLENT TASTE IN ENTERTAINMENT – WITHOUT YOU I WOULD NOT HAVE BECOME THE ABSOLUTE SU-PAW-STAR YOU KNOW AND LOVE.

– MICHAEL

Chapter 1
AN AUDIENCE WITH MICHAEL!

My name is Michael the Amazing Mind-Reading Sausage Dog. But if you've read my bestselling first book, you'll already know that. And you'll know exactly how I rose to international stardom from small beginnings as a tiny sausage dog from Snuffles-by-Sea. You'll also know about Stanley Big Dog, my best friend and assistant, and the biggest lover of pork chops and rolling in mud you'll ever meet.

After finding fame at *The Canine Spectacular*

theatre show, I was given my own TV series – *An Audience with Michael!* I was exactly where I was supposed to be – king of the hill, top dog and adored celebrity! The first season of the show was live streamed around the world with me interviewing and reading the minds of all kinds of dog stars, including:

- Superstar magician, The Great Houndini.
- Rap sensations, Poop Doggy D and The Notorious F.L.O.O.F.
- Chuck Chompington, founder of Chomp This! Indestructible Dog Toys.



Things were going swimmingly until ... they weren't. After the first season of my TV show, Steve the Stunt Sausage Dog, the new celebrity on the block, got his own show on another channel. When he rode a mini motorbike over five pork-chop ice-cream vans, it created a stir, and everyone was suddenly watching him instead of me. It seemed extraordinary that anyone could prefer silly stunts to my amazing talents, but my ratings plummeted.

'Here's your puppaccino, Michael,' said Barney, one of the crew, a cocker spaniel with his hair slicked back into a quiff. 'And chicken chews for Mr Stanley.'

'Delicious!' said Stanley, wolfing down the chicken chews like he hadn't eaten for days when we all knew that he'd demolished the lunch buffet less than an hour ago.

'How are the ratings looking?' I asked,

desperately hoping there had been some improvement.

'Viewing figures are up!' said Barney.

'That's great!' I said, pumping my paw in the air. I knew it was only a matter of time before my fans saw the error of their ways. 'Did we get more viewers than Steve the Stunt Sausage?'

'Well, when I say ratings are up, I mean we got two more viewers,' said Barney.

My heart sank; this made no sense. I was a serious talent and my show deserved a huge audience.

'But we've got Susan for the next episode!' said Stanley enthusiastically, spraying chicken-chew crumbs everywhere.

I sighed. I'd performed with Susan the Chocolate Labrador on *The Canine Spectacular* and I'd endured way too many nights watching her terribly boring peanut-balancing act. Susan wasn't my first choice, she wouldn't even be my last choice, but she was the only dog who had said yes. Somehow, I was going to have to use my talents to make the interview interesting; we really couldn't afford to lose any more viewers. I wondered, not for the first time, how it had come to this!

But just as I was taking a slurp of my puppaccino, Frankie Floofle Toes, the TV producer, rushed over. Frankie was an Afghan hound with an eye for small details. He was never seen without his doggie tablet and was always on the phone or staring at the schedule.



'I'm afraid Susan hasn't arrived yet so we're running a bit behind,' said Frankie.

Classic Susan – even though I was clearly the bigger star, she was still making me wait! I took an irritated slurp of my puppaccino.

'Are you sure?' I said. 'She's probably just deciding which feather boa to wear or waffling on to one of the junior crew members about how famous she thinks she is!'

'That's what we thought,' said Frankie. 'But I've just got off the phone with Mandy at the grooming salon and apparently Susan missed her blow dry and pawdicure.'

I took another sip of my puppaccino. This was definitely strange. I'd never known Susan to miss her pawdicure. She was often late for work, but never for a pawdicure.

I headed over to Susan's dressing room with Frankie to check for myself and it was

completely empty. There was absolutely no Susan. Just some stray purple feathers on the floor from her feather boa. I sneezed as a feather snuck up my nose. Susan's complimentary sausage sandwich was sitting on the dressing table untouched. Her basket was upside down, a chair was flipped on its side and her bag of performance peanuts was unopened.

Frankie looked concerned. 'Something's not right here,' he said. 'I think it's time to call the police.'