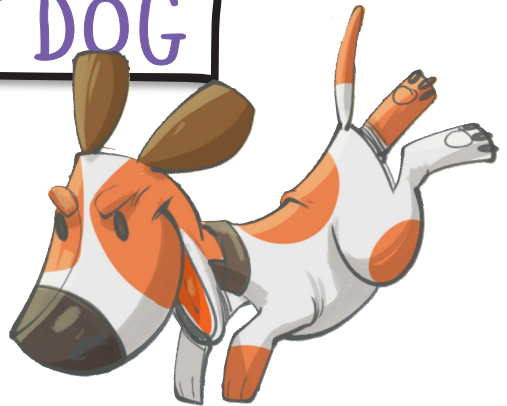


MEATBALL

the

GHOST DOG



Fanie Viljoen
Johann Strauss



www.lapa.co.za

The 1 PERFECT dog

“Wow, Loxie! Did you eat a dinosaur? Where does all this poo come from?” asked Hugo Rudd. He scooped up yet another bum rocket with the shovel and tossed it in the bucket. Loxie, the bulldog, watched him with wide eyes. Then she burped.

Hugo laughed and scratched her head. “Never mind, I’m not angry. I do it because I love you bunch of brats so much!” Loxie licked Hugo’s hand – probably to thank him.

Hugo picked up the bucket and made his way to the next dog cage. POW PARADISE was his mom’s place. He didn’t have a dad any more, so his mom had her hands full with all

the dogs at the animal shelter. It was Hugo's job to clean the cages. After that, he made sure that each dog had food and water.

Suddenly, behind him in the corridor, he heard footsteps. "I want a smart dog that can learn tricks. And can sleep on the bed with me. And help me with my maths," said a girl making her way past the cages. She was with her mom and dad.

Hugo turned to them. This was the best part of working at the shelter: **when one of the dogs was adopted.**

Every dog deserves a good life. And someone who will love them.

Every dog deserves a **forever home.**

The girl stopped at one of the cages. She wrinkled her nose and shook her head. "Too big," she said about Captain, the Alsatian in the cage.

At the next enclosure she bent down. "Too small," she said to Snout, the pug.

"I know the perfect one for you," said Hugo to the girl. "Loxie won't be able to help you

with your maths, but she is the cutest dog. She will watch over you while you do maths.”

“Loxie?” asked the girl. She pursed her lips.

“Come see!” cried Hugo. He led the girl by the hand to Loxie’s cage. “She is very friendly.” He opened the cage door and the girl stepped in. Loxie gave a huge smile. Her fat bottom wiggled. Finally, she gave the girl a super sloppy lick with her pink tongue.

The girl shrieked with pleasure. “Ye-e-es! I want Loxie!” she cried, wrapping her arms around the dog’s neck. Loxie’s eyes popped a little wider. But it seemed as though she had landed in heaven.

Today Loxie found her human!



“You did a wonderful job,” said Hugo’s mom. She had just returned from an inspection of Loxie’s new home. Hugo was still busy, cleaning the last cage. “Tonight, Loxie will be sleeping in her forever home.” Hugo’s mom planted a



kiss on his cheek. He pretended not to like it. But, in truth, he loved it.

“Oh, it was nothing really, Mom,” he said, wiping the kiss from his cheek. “I’m happy for every dog that finds a home.” His eyes wandered down the row of cages. So many dogs, and all of them are looking for a home. It breaks your heart to see them in cages like this.

“I’m going home now, Hugo,” said his mom. “Remember to lock up when you’re done. I know we live right next door, but we still need to be very careful.”

Hugo nodded. He took off his cap and threw it aside. Then he rolled the garden hose out further to clean the last cage in the row.

Finally, he was done. All the dogs now had food and clean water. **POW PARADISE** was quiet, except for one or two dogs barking softly.

Tired, Hugo made his way down the row, back to reception. He switched off the cages’ lights.