

Hoo's Writing Corner



A quiet day.

All was quiet in Pinkleton for a change and Hoo was enjoying a day off. So far, Mr Z from Brains Broadcast hadn't gotten in touch, and as far as Hoo was concerned, the day was his to enjoy.

So far, Hoo had been to the Pickles, the vegetable store and picked himself up tonight's dinner. Greens, greens and more greens, with a carrot for Zebby. He couldn't forget his dear friend.

Just as Hoo was about to go and visit Poli the Mayor about some official newspaper business, he realised that he hadn't seen Zebby all morning. It was unlike his friend to vanish, even on a day off, like today, the pair mostly spent it together enjoying the garden or cooking.

'Time to investigate.' Hoo said to himself while wandering off in the direction of the lake.

Swimming was Zebby's favourite pastime. Whenever he had any free time, which wasn't often, he'd race down and jump straight into the cooling waters and fill many an hour splashing around.

As Hoo approached the lake, all was calm. No splashing and no Zebby.

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Hoo scratched his head. Time to rethink.

Hoo spent an hour walking to all of Zebby's favourite places, the grazing field, the barn, the treat shop. But nothing. Where was he?

As Hoo ambled back to his house feeling confused, he didn't notice Dotty approaching. And Dotty didn't notice Hoo either. Suddenly the pair collided and Dotty's bag exploded across the road. Streamers and balloons littered the hard floor as Dotty scrambled to get everything, shoving it all swiftly back into her bag.

'Are you OK Dotty?' Hoo asked, attempting to help her with her things.

'Oh yes quite OK. Please Hoo, I'm fine with this.' Dotty replied turning a deep shade of red as she affectionately patted away Hoo's hand in a hurry.

'I've got to get on.' Dotty replied as she picked up the last of her balloons.

'You haven't seen Zebby by chance?' Hoo called out. Dotty gave him the strangest of looks and shuffled off as quickly as she could.

Hoo scratched at his head again. What on earth was going on?

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Just then, Poli the Mayor hopped out of his car.

'Hoo! Just the person I wanted to see, come this way.' Poli said with a grin.

'But Poli, I was just about to...' Hoo was about to explain about Zebby being missing, but Poli wouldn't hear of it. When Poli was on a mission, he was on a mission! Nothing would stop him.

As Poli led Hoo across town, Hoo noticed how strange everyone was acting. All the townsfolk were rushing ahead of them with big bundles in their hands.

Poli was trying to distract him, that much he knew. As they walked Poli rambled on discussing the weather, the vegetables growing in his allotment and the price of juice.

And then it all became clear.

In the distance, Hoo could see the town hall. It had been decorated with streamers, balloons, bunting and fairy lights. All the townsfolk had gathered around and the bundles they had been carrying were presents, that had been neatly placed on a beautifully arranged trestle table.

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There in the centre of the group, stood Zebby, with his lopsided grin firmly in place.

As Hoo approached, Zebby started belting out a chorus of *happy birthday*, with everyone else joining in.

'Of course,' Hoo said. 'How silly of me to forget my own birthday!'