

## **The Unexpected Place**

By Elaine Xie

Bob the border collie and I were exploring a desert in Africa. Bob and I were looking at all the sandy hills and cactuses when Bob got tired. We leaned against a big rock and took a break. But during that break, Bob jumped up and started to bark rapidly. I looked at the rock and it was shaking! It started to slowly open. I suddenly realized that it was a secret tunnel! I think Bob knew too.

We went into the tunnel and soon found a sign that said, "Open this door and be aware of what is ahead of you. It requires skill. Touch anything but the ground and the wall or set off the alarm. Good luck. you'll need it."

"What.....Does that mean?" I asked Bob.

Bob replied with a bark. "Okay, great answer." I say to Bob.

Bob sits and points his paw towards the door. "So you want us to go in?" I ask.

"Bark!" replies Bob.

He made a nodding motion. "Okay, we'll go in. I'll trust you because you can probably smell whatever's in there." I said.

Bob was a border collie so he's really smart. He grabbed onto the handle himself and opened the door. "Creak!" went the door. I knew nobody had come here recently because of the door's sound and all the cobwebs around Bob and I. We entered and it shut. We walked and walked until a rubber chicken fell out of a spout near us.

"Brace yourselves," I said to Bob, "Get ready to run and dodge."

I was pretty sure Bob understood, but if he didn't, I couldn't explain. My heart was probably racing. More rubber chickens fell out. We started to run. Suddenly, the ground shook and, if I counted, there probably would've been a few hundred rubber chickens blasted out of those poor, old spouts. We ran and ran until we found another door.

"Brace yourselves," said the sign.

"Come on, come on, come on!" I said rushed, "What does that mean?!"

"Bark! Ruff! Awoo!" Bob called out.

"What now Bob? You want us to go in?" I asked.

"Bark!" Bob replied.

"(sigh) Okay Bob." I mumbled.

We entered and a faraway sound popped. "Umm.....What was that?" I whispered.

"Whimper." went Bob.

"Pop...Pop, pop!" The faraway sound went. "Pop!" We started to back off. I tried to open the door.

To my surprise, it was locked.

"We're locked in, Bob." I trembled out.

"Whimper," whined Bob. "Splash!" went a sound right in front of us.

"Get ready to run Bob." I whisper. "3..2..1..Run!" Bob and I raced across the chamber. "Splash!" A big water balloon exploded right behind us! Bob and I ran even faster! More water balloons fell. "Pop, splash! Pop, splash!" went the water balloons. After lots of running and dodging, we reached a door.

"Huff, puff, huff, puff. We reached the door Bob, c'mon let's go." I gasp out.

"Bark!" answered Bob. We went through the door and another sign said, "Beware, beware, don't get hit by a hare."

"(sigh) c'mon Bob, let's go. I don't know what this means, but let's risk it."

"Ruff!!" barked Bob.

We entered and heard a boing. A slightly large boing. More boings. We started jogging and saw rabbits! One rabbit, two rabbits, ten rabbits, fifty rabbits!

"Bob, run, they're coming! C'mon, go, go, go!" I shout. We bolted past the rabbits and weaved through the bunnies. Then, we reached the door. The sign said to be careful not to touch the red kitty laser.

"Bob, what does that mean? I grumble, "First it's brace yourselves, then beware, beware don't get hit by a hare, and now don't touch the kitty laser?!" Bob jumps up and opens the door. Then, he just walks in confidently. I follow and say,

"Sometimes, I just don't understand you Bob. Just sometimes." Bob wags his tail and sits down, ears closely listening for sudden movements. I try too, but if Bob can't hear anything, then I definitely can't either. One minute went by. Two, ten, thirty minutes went by. Finally, I stood up and walked a few steps. Almost immediately, a few hundred red beams shot out, lightening the tunnel. I realized they were those cat toys that cats could chase! Those little red beams.

"C'mon Bob! This one should be easier to do." I say. I think I said that a little too early because suddenly the beams started moving in all different directions.

"Bark! Bark! Bark!" Bob went. He trotted out to where the beams were. Then he looked at me. I started to walk towards him and then jumped over a crazy red beam. Then I announce,

"Let's do it." Bob and I start racing towards the dim lights. Bob starts to weave through the beams, and starts trotting along the sides of the worn out walls.

"You're a genius!" I say to Bob. "We can walk along the sides so the lasers can't get us because they're coming from the pipes!" I zoomed toward the wall, jumping over only one laser beam thing. We kept walking along the wall until we reached the door.

"Another sign, Bob." I exclaim to Bob. "Probably another challenge." It actually wasn't another challenge. The sign said,

"Congrats on passing those passages. Now be prepared to answer a series of riddles. Good luck!"

"Now riddles?! I thought that was the end!" I moan. Bob lays down to take a nap.

"Good idea Bob. We'll need our energy for the next day. Tomorrow, we will solve those riddles!" I announce. Bob doesn't reply, but he perks up his ear.

"Ha, ha!" I laugh. Then I fell fast asleep.

The next day, we ate some food that I had packed: Me - a granola bar, milk, and an apple. Bob ate some wet dog food and drank some water. Then, I packed things up and got ready to go. When we were ready to go, I let Bob do the honors of opening the door, and we walked in. On the sign it said,

"Listen to the riddle on the headphones and solve it." I looked at the rusty old pair of headphones next to the sign.

"Seriously?!" I say in disappointment, "We're trying to solve a riddle with that?!" Bob growls at the pair of headphones.

"Grrrr.... Grrrr....." goes Bob.

"Well, it's worth a try Bob. Let's do this." I explain. I put on the headphones and listened. Surprisingly, they worked really well! When I finished listening to it I told Bob what it was.

"Alright Bob. Ready?" I ask, "Soo... The riddle was that there's a girl half my age and I'm 10, so when I'm 50, how old is she?"

"Bark!" barked Bob, "Bark! Bark! Bark!" Then he pressed his paw on the old dusty keypad and typed in the number 45. Like I mentioned earlier, Bob is a border collie so he's smart.

Unsurprisingly, the locked door swung open, letting us through. Though it was actually a slightly large , "Creak!" We walked on and read another sign with a pair of headphones with it. I put on the headphones and immediately put it on Bob.

"Here Bob, it's for you," I say. "I can't understand all those barks and woofs." Bob was silent as he listened to the barking passage. He was practically as silent as a turtle who lost it's voice. Finally, Bob barked to let me know to take the headphones off. Then, he typed in son, father, and grandpa on the keypad. The door then swung open. Bob trotted through, giving me a friendly dog smile. I laughed and smiled back, and we kept on walking. On another sign it said, "Great job so far! This last one is a real brain teaser. Try it and good luck!"

"L know we can do this Bob. We've already completed this much! We can't stop now!" I say.

"Bark!" barks Bob in agreement. Like we did before, I listened, told Bob, he'd calculate, and then put in the answer.

Luckily he got it right again and we opened the door, surprised to see another door in front of us. We opened that one. Then, we found another one! Another one, and yet another one! On and on, another one behind another one, and so on. Finally, we reached a giant one. I held up Bob and he opened it. A sudden beam of sunlight suddenly hit me. It was so bright, it was like someone had shone a giant flashlight on me! When Bob and I had gotten used to the sunlight, we saw a big city. A really big city in fact. So big that we couldn't even see the farthest point of it.

"Wow, Bob!" I shout. "It's a secret city!"

First, after we found the secret city, we took a break. All that walking was exhausting you know! When we woke up, we started exploring the city. As we strolled across the abandoned streets, we saw lots of amazing sights. Bob ran there, here, and probably everywhere! Then, he suddenly backed off and sat there waiting, looking at the lone bush by a rusty house. I heard a rustle, and a small husky puppy trotted out.

"Yip!" The small husky puppy barked happily, "Yip! Yip!" Then the puppy ran over to me, licked me all over, and cuddled in my lap.

"Awww..." I murmur. "I'll keep you and call you Cocoa." We kept on walking but with a puppy, and explored the place. Whenever Bob sniffed something, Cocoa did too, and when Bob sat and cocked his head, Cocoa followed too. The secret city had lots of things we had; like grocery stores, stadiums, houses, a park, a school, and lots of big buildings. I think we went through almost all the buildings, because by the end of the day, we were exhausted. I don't know how long we slept, but we were up and ready to go when we woke up. We decided to look at some more buildings and then find my small, but comfortable, airplane and fly home.

After lots of exploring, me, Bob, and Cocoa said our goodbyes to the secret city. Suddenly, a bunch of people jumped out, right when we were going to leave.

"Please don't tell anybody about our city." someone pleaded.

"Pwease?" said a young little girl.

"Um.." I say awkwardly. "We were just about to leave and relax from our big journey. We weren't going to tell anybody because we figured this was a secret city. Sorry if we're trespassing."

Then, someone as tall as a kangaroo on its hind legs came over and shook hands with me.

"Thank you," he boomed. "We have been living here for many generations, and you have proved worthy enough to stay."

"Thanks..... I appreciate it. I'm going to choose to go though. But I promise that we'll visit." I explain.

"I understand. We would appreciate you visiting." said the person who I figured was the chief. He led us to a hidden door, and we said our goodbyes again. Then, Bob, Cocoa, and I got on my plane, and we took off. When we got home, I said,

"The adventure was fun, but it's always good to be home." Bob and Cocoa barked in agreement.