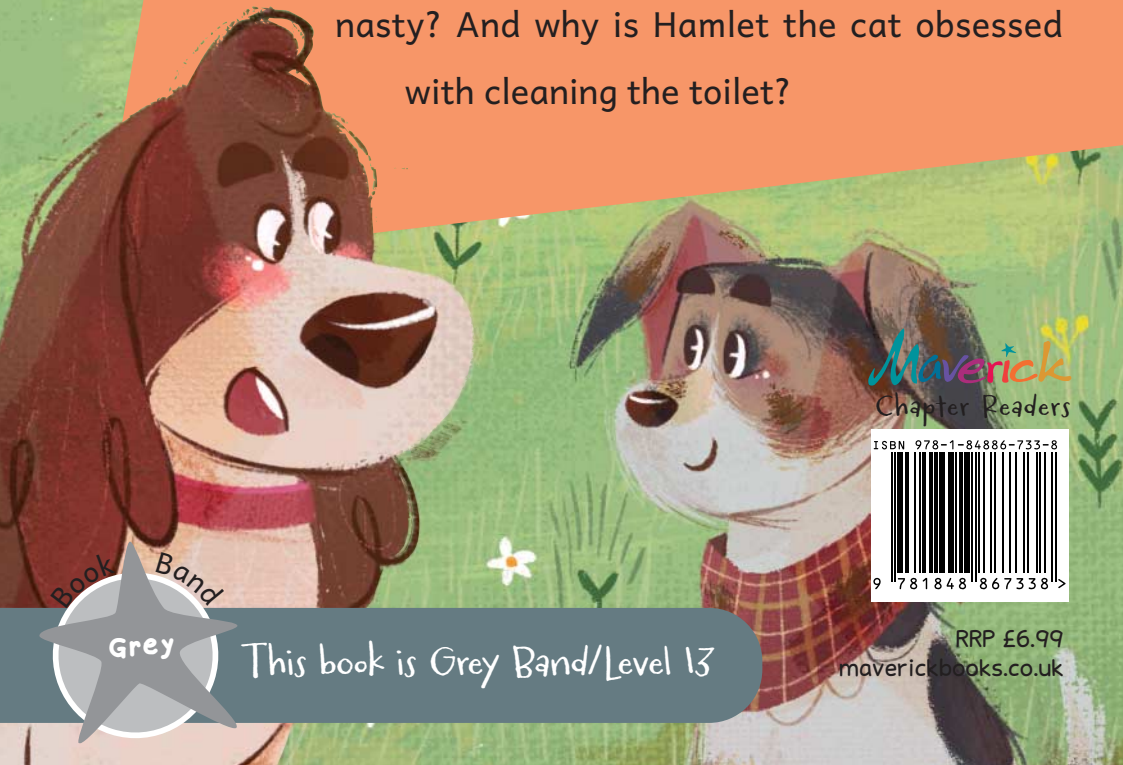


Secret Spaniel

Maddy the Springer Spaniel finds herself playing detective when the local Dog Show winner, Brutus the Boxer, asks her to investigate rumours of a celebrity dog entering this year's show. But who is this celebrity dog and why is she coming to the Dog Show? Can Maddy stop Brutus turning nasty? And why is Hamlet the cat obsessed with cleaning the toilet?



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Lou Treleven

Maverick

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Written by
Lou Treleven

Illustrated by
Antonella Fant



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This book is Grey Band/Level 13

'Secret Spaniel'

An original concept by Lou Treleaven

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Illustrated by Antonella Fant

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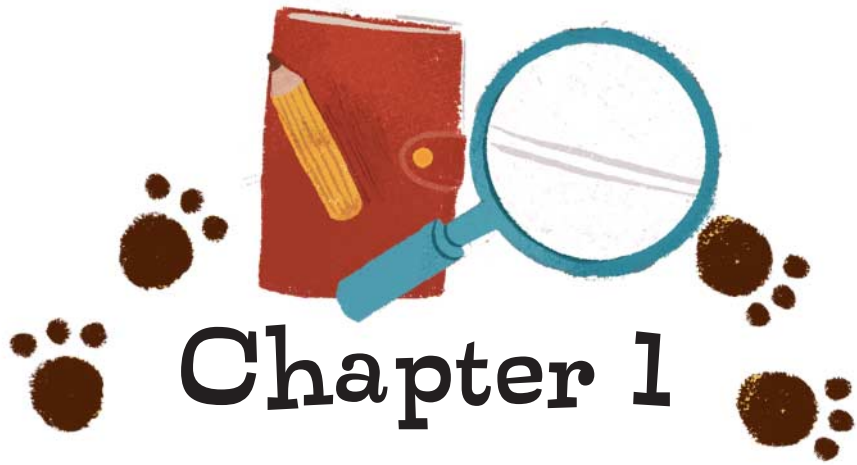
Secret Spaniel

To the real Maddy and Hammy,
with fond memories.

Written by
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Chapter 1

“Maddy! Over here!” Brutus the Boxer dog was talking to me. I wandered away from where my owner was standing, to find out what he wanted.

“I hear you’re good at finding things and solving problems,” Brutus said. “They call you ‘The Nose’. When you found that missing pup, it even got into the papers.”

I wagged my tail. It was nice to be famous!

“I need your help,” said Brutus. “I’ve got problems.”

I looked at him. “What problems?” I asked.

“It’s the Dog Show. The one at the Village Fete. I’ve won that show twice—and I could win it again this year.”

Brutus edged closer. “But they say some out-of-town



hound is going to steal the show.”

“So another dog might win. Big deal,” I said. Every dog in the village had imagined winning the Dog Show at some point. Even I’d pictured myself with a gorgeous red rosette.

As if that could ever happen after last time.

“But this isn’t a village dog. I’ve heard this dog is from London,” Brutus growled. “There’s no way I’m going to lose to a dog from London. So you have to help me, Maddy. I need to find out who the mystery dog is.”

“And then what?” I asked.

Brutus’s hackles rose. “We take action.”

I didn’t like the way he was talking. But maybe this mystery dog was a local one after all. If I could find that out, Brutus wouldn’t need to take his ‘action’, whatever that meant.

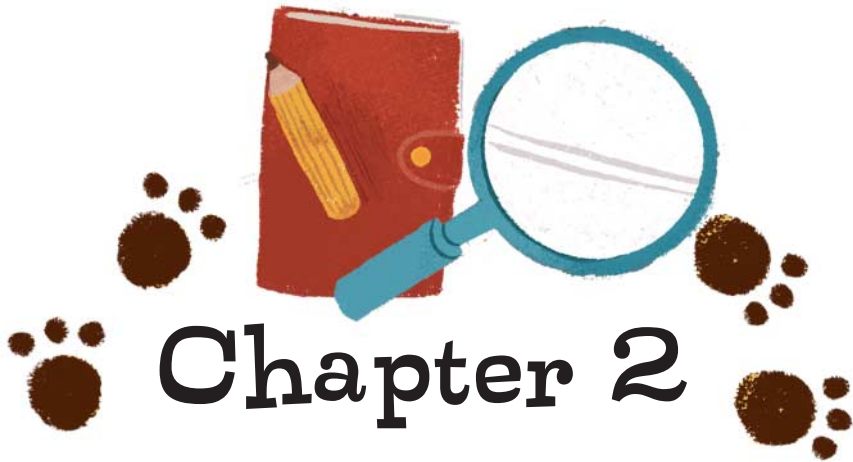
“Okay, I’ll do it,” I said. “But if it turns out to be a local dog, you have to promise you’ll back off.”

Brutus wagged his tail. “They don’t call you ‘The Nose’

for nothing.”

“They don’t call me ‘The Nose’ at all,” I pointed out. But it wasn’t a bad nickname. I did have a pretty nose.

We walked back to our humans. Mike was telling Brutus’s owner all about the engine he was restoring for his model railway. He hadn’t noticed her yawning. I dragged him away. Poor Mike.



Chapter 2

When I got home, Hamlet the cat was waiting for me.

“I know what you’re doing,” he smirked. “You’re trying to find out who the mystery dog is—the one who’s going to enter the show. Archibald overheard the gossip at the dog toilet.”

“That old fleabag,” I said, hunching over Mike’s notebook with a pen in my paw.

“You’ll never work it out. Finding that missing puppy was a fluke.”

“You’re just jealous because you’ve never been in the newspaper.”

Hamlet ignored me, hooked his claws around the door of the tumble drier and began dragging clothes into a basket. Hamlet was not your usual cat.

And I was not your usual dog.

Mike was brilliant at his job (designing fancy logos) but the clumsiest human ever. We did as much as we could to help. He thought he had a cleaning lady who he never saw. Only we knew the truth: ‘Mrs Goodboys’ wasn’t real and her name came from a tin of dog food.

“Don’t you want to know what Archibald said?” Hamlet purred, folding a t-shirt.

“Okay, what did Archibald say?”

“The Village Fete Committee is meeting at the café tomorrow to discuss an important guest who’s entering the Dog Show.”

“The café? I’ll be there!” I raised an ear as a key turned in the lock. “Mike’s coming! Get ready!”

Hamlet curled up on the laundry. I shoved the vacuum cleaner into the cupboard and raced up the hall.