

## **Astro's Adventures: The Great Escape**

by

Susan Day

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## **Astro's Adventures: The Great Escape**

### DEDICATION

This book is dedicated to all the dogs of the world that don't have a warm bed to curl up in, toys to play with or a cat to chase.

Proceeds from the sale of this book will go to rescue shelters to help you all.

### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The author would like to acknowledge the nagging efforts of Georgina Barrot without which this book would never have been finished. She would also like to acknowledge her wonderful family who believed in this project and helped by adding their ideas and suggestions and put up with her creating alternative lives for the family pets.



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For many many years the good people of the planet Earth have shared their homes, their back yards and most of their food with one special species: The Dog. The importance of this symbiotic relationship has been well documented by humans in poems, movies and even on internet sites such as facebook, dogtree and twitter. As many people are becoming wealthier, they have generously given their dogs more care and comfort at unprecedented levels.

For the most part, dogs seem to be on the receiving end taking what is given and doing their part in the areas of home security, general obedience and licking the dishes clean.

However, there is a special organisation responsible for the wellbeing of dogs. Its main goal is to make sure that all dogs are provided with a proper home, a nice warm bed and a cat to chase. This organisation is kept secret from every human being and operates, as you are about to see, right under our very noses....

Email:

**From:** Astro's Mum  
**To:** J. E. Daily  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 25, 6:24 PM  
**Subject:** Hi

Hi Julie,  
Hope you're ok?  
Wanna hear something funny? This is what my silly dog did today.

I took Astro for his doggie massage to heal his leg. In the rain, "Mr. Agile" came bounding up the veranda stairs slipped and stacked full force into the top stair – yep, full force on his sore leg – you know, the one he'd injured on the off leash walks.

It shames me to admit but I did not play the heroic role. I became hysterical and completely embarrassed poor Astro. He has to stay inside for two weeks – doctor's orders. I have never seen him so sad; he is not even trying to put Nigel's head in his mouth!! You remember Nigel, my beautiful snow white cat!

Astro says hi to your dogs. He wants me to pass on a message to Spot.

Astro's words – "Hey Spot, my mum won't let me out to play. She says that until my leg gets a lot better I am not allowed to run off leash with you and the other dogs. I think she is trying to punish me for eating her book - She claims she is not

but it sure feels like I am imprisoned. I haven't had a walk in over a week! I am a PRISONER!!!!"



*Meanwhile, in an underground building somewhere in a quiet suburb a computer sounds an alarm and a dachshund named Hans let out a yelp of excitement.*

"Sir, Sir! Our electronic detection monitor intercepted this email. Sir? It's urgent!"

Hans spun away from his desk and skittered over to Commander Rocky.

"We only have part of the message; the rest hasn't come through. It's completely scrambled, but you can clearly see the last line: *I am imprisoned. I haven't had a walk in over a week! I am a PRISONER!!!!*

Commander Rocky read it carefully and shook his head. "Leave it to me. I'll take control of this one," he said. "We will get word to him immediately."

Commander Rocky turned away from the bone he had been gnawing on. Hans glanced at it longingly but quickly averted his eyes so as not to incense his commander.

Commander Rocky was a large black Border collie. He was in charge of the Canine Release Program. He had worked his way through the ranks of The Organisation throughout his life and, now, at six years of age was considered one of their highest ranking officers.

Commander Rocky glared down at the Dachshund, "Oh and Hans, assemble my team. We will not tolerate humans who treat their dogs like cats! No walk! This is inhumane!"

Hans cocked his head in confusion.

"I mean, Un-canine!" Commander Rocky corrected himself.

Hans spun around so fast he hit himself in the face with his own tail and his short legs slipped on the floor as he scurried quickly out of the Control Centre.

Commander Rocky took a deep breath, calmed himself and sat in front of the computer and wrote the following email.

**From:** The Organisation  
**To:** Prisoner Astro  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 25, 6:34 PM  
**Subject:** Top Secret

Dear Prisoner Astro,

It has been brought to our attention that you are being held prisoner against your will. Please note The Organisation will act on your behalf and will issue a writ or something that sounds very important, and demand your release. There is also a team being assembled immediately to ensure your escape.

I understand from your captors that "it is for your own good".

We know this is a common tactic by humans who don't like going out in the rain and getting their feet wet even though they wear shoes! It's maddening!

We will continue the fight for your freedom, and the freedom of many other dogs stuck inside "for their own good", and would like to offer this advice: don't trust the cat, he may taste delicious but he is full of hidden spiky things that will hurt you.

Yours in Paws,  
Commander Rocky  
The Organisation

In a cocktail bar in a risqué part of the city many dogs danced together and it was noisy and overcrowded. The microchip of a small terrier gave a pulse. Operative Digger slipped from the bar stool and made his way to the toilet to receive his mission.

Microchips were originally implanted in dogs and cats as an identification device by humans. The Organisation has been able to re-calibrate them so they can be used to send and receive messages.

Digger put one paw on the door and checked there was no one else inside the toilet. Once he was sure he was alone, he scratched at his collar seven times vigorously to activate the antenna and receive his orders.



*Meanwhile, Control Centre received this email:*

**From:** Astro's Mum  
**To:** J. E. Daily  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 25, 7:15 PM  
**Subject:** How's ya day?

Hi Jane!

My stomach muscles are hurting - I cannot stop laughing at your previous email - it was hilarious! That one paragraph is a great basis for a book. Do you know how to write? It will make you a fortune. Astro has requested a small part as an extra; he really looks up to Benji and Lassie and we all know he was born to act; he's such a drama queen! ROFL!!!!!!

Commander Rocky nearly fell off his chair in surprise; the humans had somehow intercepted his email.

"How quickly these humans seem to be on to us," he mused to himself. The rest of the dogs in the Control Centre looked up from their computers and nodded in agreement.

"They are quite clever and no one can doubt their usefulness to Canine-kind but we must always be one step ahead of them."

Rocky acted straight away to fix this interference from the human and began to type a coded email back to Astro.

**From:** The Organisation  
**To:** Prisoner Astro  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 25, 9:45 PM  
**Subject:** Top Secret

Prisoner Astro,

It has come to our attention that these emails are being intercepted by your human. We will send further messages through the secret method.

Go to your place of sleeping, turn clockwise three times; turn anti clockwise 2 and a half times and then collapse. Your weight will trigger the sensor and turn the device on. Remember to sigh loudly to hide the sound of the beep as you fall.

Astro charged into his owner's bedroom and jumped on her bed. He followed the directions given by Rocky and a hologram computer screen appeared in front of him. On it he read the following:

We are planning your release now. One option is to tunnel you out. However, our intelligence has revealed that your human's house is built on a concrete slab – confound these modern buildings. Please begin to scratch up the carpet in various spots. When we know the exact location of the tunnel's exit you will be required to do your bit and dig furiously through the carpet and then the concrete. In the meantime, your insistent digging may also result in an early release based on insanity.

We are also trying to exact our revenge on those humans who do not exercise their dogs sufficiently. Operative Alfie has devised an ingenious plot to gas them by emitting a terrible smelling wind from the tail area. Experiments to date show while this leaves them choking and gagging and has resulted in the complete exodus of cats from the household; it has not, as yet, led to their demise.

However, we can take some solace from the fact that many of these cruel humans have developed asthma from emptying several cans of air freshener on their dogs.

I feel that a face to face meeting is crucial in the next few days: Whinge and whine at your human and make her bring you to the meeting place where the humans consume their caffeine based refreshment: that terrible brown liquid. I will give you further instructions.

As always, rage against the machine or at least an empty food bowl...

Yours in Paws,  
Commander Rocky



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In the conference room a crack, elite team was assembling under the directive of Commander Rocky. In the middle of the room was a large table. In one place Digger, subterranean and escape expert sat cross legged. His dark green beret sat askew on his head. He was sharpening his nails with a diamond encrusted nail file.

Commander Rocky glared at him disapprovingly.

“I have to keep my nails nice for tunnelling,” Digger protested in his defence. “You have no idea how much damage a twenty foot tunnel can rip and tear at one’s cuticles.”

Digger stopped and looked at Commander Rocky and knew he had gone too far. He slipped the nail file behind one ear, uncrossed his legs and re-crossed them the other way.

Commander Rocky drummed his paw on the table. He looked at Hans who was seated next to him.

“Where’s Operative Alfie?”

Hans cleared his throat nervously, “Eh, he’s on his way.”

Commander Rocky narrowed his eyes and let out a deep guttural growl. He did not like to be kept waiting. He looked around the room at the rest of the team. They were far from perfect but they were dedicated and loyal to The Organisation. And pretty much all he had to work with.

To the left of Digger sat Operative Indy; she was a stocky Blue Heeler whose special skills involved unarmed combat, designing commando courses and arm wrestling. She wore her trade-mark khaki vest and a utility belt complete with large hunting bone and stink grenade. Of all the members of the team, she was the toughest. No one spoke to her unless it was absolutely necessary because the wrong word could result in a sharp bite to the leg.

Across from her sat, Operative Dingo. He was an incredibly small rat terrier and yet he was able to command a legion of rats to be his spies. His special skills were listening devices on account of his bat like ears. He also had an irritating nervous twitch which he used as a cunning device to elicit sympathy and fool humans. He stood up on his seat with his front paws on the edge of the table. It was the only way he could see what was happening.

Next to Dingo, Sumo sat motionless. Sumo was a large brown dog of indiscriminate breed. He was very old and spent most of his days in semi-retirement as a security dog at the Canine Museum. Unfortunately, after only several minutes on duty he would fall asleep and appeared for, all intents and purposes, to look like a Seeing Eye Dog coin deposit statue. He complained bitterly from the pain caused by small children trying to force their parents' loose change into his back because they thought there was a slot there. To correct this most unfortunate confusion, The Organisation had supplied him with a money box, placed it in front of him and then forwarded the contents to the Blind Dog Association.

Commander Rocky pushed a button on the panel in front of him and a large screen lowered at the other end of the room. Also, from the seemingly flat surface of the table a bowl of water rose in front of each dog and another bowl containing dog biscuits.

Digger moved the biscuits around disapprovingly with his nail file and couldn't bring himself to eat one. Indy devoured hers immediately and Dingo gnawed on the corner of one. As Sumo had fallen asleep by this stage, Indy eyed his biscuits longingly but just as she was about to snatch them, Alfie bowled in, jumped into the chair next to Sumo and ate all of his biscuits, then he ate his own.



The kafuffle woke Sumo and he looked around dazed. He blinked several times and rubbed his eyes.

“You know something, young fella?” he leaned towards Alfie who was wiping the crumbs from his mouth. “They used to give us biscuits at these meetings. Cheapskates!” He shook his head in disgust and then drifted back to sleep.



Alfie was a large Doberman whose massive size and strength was not comparable in any way to his intelligence which was, on the other hand, quite insignificant. Nonetheless, he was young and enthusiastic and his ability to break into buildings with his head was legendary. He was controlled by his appetite and an overwhelming need to play.

Eager to start the meeting, Commander Rocky cleared his throat and tapped at the keyboard.

“Canines!” he announced in a loud voice, “You have all been updated with the details of the mission thus far.” He shot a disapproving look at Alfie who was thumping the table trying to get more biscuits.

He continued, “This is the last message we received from Astro.”

**From:** Prisoner Astro  
**To:** The Organisation  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 26, 10:00 AM  
**Subject:** My Progress so Far...

Dear Lads,

I have tunneled as you have directed. I cannot believe my luck in this devious scheme. You are correct my human thinks I have gone insane. I did not foresee my good fortune in this matter because it has sent my human insane as well. She continually stares at the floor mumbling something about wrecking her carpet.

I too emit a terrible smell from the tail area, although I must admit the idea of revenge never occurred to me - ingenious lads! On these occasions thump my tail wildly. This serves as a fan for all to share the smell.

I am usually disappointed with my human’s response. Instead of the predicted pride I would expect at baking such an odor to perfection, she shakes her head, clicks her tongue and starts mumbling about the disgusting smell. I have noticed my human is prone to mumbling more and more often. I am beginning to suspect she is developing a speech impediment.

I have my human completely bluffed. I act heartbroken when she leaves my house but this is just a smoke screen. I do not want to create any suspicion as to my true purpose of escape.

Cabin fever has set in, for a while I thought my human had re-named me "Pain in the Backside!" I was responding accordingly to my new name, having heard it so frequently but now it seems she has reverted back to my house name of Astro.

The day of escape is approaching,  
Prisoner Astro.

Commander Rocky quickly typed a response:

We await your imminent release, oh Scruffy One... Will it be today?

A few minutes later Astro replied:

YES!! My human has granted day release. We're about to leave any minute! I am so excited I nearly peed on the cat. However it does come at a cost, I will have to walk in my shackles as she thinks I am not to be trusted off leash. My human does not know of our true plans. I am so excited!

Commander Rocky shut down the computer screen.

"Here is our chance, Team. The human is leaving the house with Astro. While they are gone we will be able to find the evidence we need. You will break into the house and take pictures and video the torture devices used like the shackles he mentions. You will all collect as much intelligence as you can. I will meet with Astro and we will plan his escape from there."

Dingo looked around nervously. "What about the cat, Nigel?"

"Leave the feline to me," snarled Indy. "I will chase it up a tree so fast it won't know what happened. Then I will climb up the tree and chase it down again!" Indy chuckled at her own devious plan. "And then I will chase it right back up the tree again." She threw her head back and laughed ominously. Only Commander Rocky noticed her stroking the hunting bone that hung from her belt.

Alfie burped very loudly. Digger glared at him in disgust and Hans nearly fainted from the terrible smell.

"Listen to this!" Alfie grinned, "I can burp the alphabet!"

He then proceeded to belch out each letter, "AAAaaaaaaaaaaa,  
burrrrrrppppppppBBBBBBBB, ccccccccaarrrrrrrrhhhhhhh."

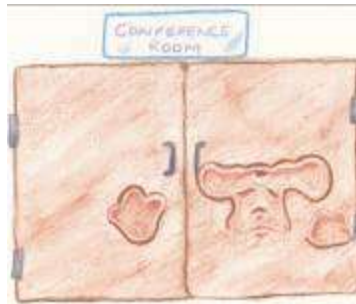
"Enough!" barked Commander Rocky loudly. Everyone in the room stopped.

He stood up and looked at each of his Operatives sternly. "This is an important mission, Canines. It is the one goal of The Organisation to free all of our fellow dogs from mistreatment. You all know what you have to do. Good Luck."

He turned and left the room with Hans tottering along behind him. The others followed.

Alfie, who gets distracted easily, was under the table trying to find out where the biscuits were and didn't notice everyone else had left the room.

"Hey wait for me," he bellowed. The doors had already started shutting but this didn't stop Alfie. He lowered his head and crashed straight through them. Once on the other side, he looked around and saw the others further up the corridor.



"Hey, Diggs!" he called out. "Did you see that? I broke right through the door! It was awesome!"

Alfie bound up the corridor and the walls shook. Several picture frames bumped and slipped and hung crookedly. The last one fell and smashed to the floor.

In the car park, Digger continued to ignore Alfie who he considered to be a big oaf and hopped into his little racing car. With the top down, he waved good bye but did not look over his shoulder. Alfie waved back enthusiastically and suddenly realised he didn't have a lift. Then he heard a loud roar and Dingo pulled up alongside him on a large motorbike. Alfie bounced onto the back and hugged Dingo so tight he gasped for air.

"Back off, Duncle!" cracked Dingo and Alfie put his paws behind his head and lay back. The large chopper nearly rocked off balance and it took all of Dingo's strength to keep it upright.

*Meanwhile back at Control Centre Commander Rocky sent this message.*

**From:** The Organisation  
**To:** Prisoner Astro  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 26, 2010 11:08 AM  
**Subject:** Top Secret

Dear Prisoner Astro,

We are all very excited with this news of your release.

Try not to look too excited. We don't want to alert the human to our plans. You may, however, pee on the cat whenever you like.

This latest research may be of interest to you. Alfie has devised another plan to upset the humans. He drinks from the water bowl and then, filling his mouth with water, dribbles it all over the floor. This has made the floor slippery and a hazard. This would result in them falling over, which amuses Alfie no end!

-Commander Rocky

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An hour later, in a quiet suburb, a group of people were gathering outside a café with their dogs. Astro's owner was amongst them. Astro pulled on the leash and looked around for Commander Rocky.

An old Holden Ute pulled up at the traffic lights and tooted its horn. Commander Rocky leapt out of the tray. He barked, "Thanks mate!" and trotted along the footpath towards the café.

Astro began to wag his tail in uncontrollable anticipation. Thankfully, his owner was too busy laughing and talking with her friends to notice the change in her dog's behaviour.

"Prisoner Astro?" whispered Commander Rocky.

"Yes!" yelped Astro loudly and he pulled on his leash. His owner turned around to see what was wrong with him.

"Leave that big dog alone, Astro," she said. "He looks lost and he might bite you."

Commander Rocky looked at her and rolled his eyes then he turned his attention to Astro.

"Settle Astro; give me the details of your imprisonment," he said.

Astro threw his head up in the air and took a very deep breath, "Oh My Goodness! You are not going to believe how bad it is. Day after day I'm kept in solitary confinement. It's been terrible. I am only allowed out to pee. I haven't felt the sun on my face or the wind in my hair for days and days!"

Commander Rocky listened intently then shook his head disapprovingly.

Astro continued.

“And to make matters worse my human is so lazy she makes me do ALL the gardening. Me?! I fertilize at least 3 times a day, I am constantly watering and I dig out all the weeds. And what do I get for all my hard work? Chastisement, that’s what. I must say the human and I have very different ideas as to what constitutes a weed. It is our civil duty as canine ambassadors to create awareness of our plight to the doggies of the world.”

“This is remarkable,” said Commander Rocky. “You are right.” He turned and he raised himself up on his back legs. “Let the fight to free all mistreated dogs continue!!”

Astro jumped about thrilled with excitement and nearly pulled his owner off her chair, “You said that with the same passion as Mel Gibson did on the battle field in *Braveheart* and without the gas I just emitted due to all the excitement!”

*Meanwhile...* at the residence of 114 Ronald Way the crack team of Operatives arrived. Sumo took up his post as lookout at the letter box and promptly fell asleep. Digger slipped around the side of the house to find a way inside.

Indy jimmied the garage door, then she and Dingo slipped under it. Alfie tried to follow them but his head got jammed. He tried to pull it back but he was stuck and the roller door began to rattle noisily. Indy leapt six feet into the air, twisted herself into position and hit the electronic controls and the door began to lift slowly. Alfie jumped up and ran into the door. He left a large indentation the same shape as his head. He did this three times before the door was high enough for him to get under. When he finally got into the garage Dingo growled at him to be quiet and Indy glared at him and stroked her hunting bone.

Operative Digger stuck his head around the back door. “The coast is clear,” he announced. “Follow me.”

They walked into the home of Astro. They were expecting to see shackles, electronic shock collars, chains, irons, manacles and other devices of torture. All the dogs were a little scared too because it was well known that the cat, Nigel, that lived there was vicious and cruel to both humans and dogs.

“It’s clean as a whistle,” Digger noticed.

They stood together in a very clean and tidy house. Nice curtains hung at the windows and there was a rug at the door with “wipe your paws” stamped on it.

“They have hidden the torture chamber well,” Dingo said, “I’m going to search the other rooms.”

“I’m going to find the cat,” chuckled Indy.

Alfie had his head in the pantry cupboard. He suddenly leapt back with excitement. "I've found it!" he screamed.

Digger rushed over, "What? What have you found?"

Alfie stepped back with his eyes wide open, his bottom jaw hanging down near his knees. "The... the... there," he stuttered, "Look, Diggs."

Digger put his paw on the door and gingerly opened it. He held his breath and quivered in fear. Slowly he peered around the corner. He looked at the well-stocked shelves quickly glancing from box to jar from jar to box. It all appeared to be harmless. He was expecting to see terrible devices used for hurting dogs.

"What do you see, Alfie? What is it?"

"There," Alfie pointed to the top shelf, "Homemade chicken liver Happy Snappy Shapes! Oh My Goodness, I haven't tasted them in years! Oh, Diggs, let me have 'em. Just one, c'mon, pleeeeeeeeeeease?"



"Pull yourself together," growled Digger slamming the pantry door shut.

Just then a terrible high pitched scream came from another part of the house.

They all rushed at once and found Dingo held by one of the true enemies of all canines, the cat called Nigel. The three Operatives stood in the doorway. The cat stood in front of a window with one paw holding Dingo off the ground by his neck. Nigel had extended his claws of the other paw and held these shiny blades just above Dingo's face.

"Don't move or the rat gets it!" scowled the cat.

"I'm not a rat," gasped Dingo but the grip on his throat was so tight he could hardly breathe.

Nigel was a large white cat. He had a glorious mane and a thick plume of a tail. His coat was so clean and soft; Digger felt a little jealous and wished that one day he might achieve the same luxurious richness with his own coat. Nigel's large green eyes narrowed as he glared at the Operatives.

Indy went to rush in but Digger put up his paw and stopped her. "Steady," he whispered.

"What are you doing here?" demanded Nigel.

Digger stepped forward, "It has nothing to do with you, feline. We are here on official business that concerns the canine with which you share this residence."

"Astro?" Nigel frowned. "What would you want with that big sook? Did he hurt his widdle paw getting out of bed again? Or did he choke on a big piece of his gourmet dog food?"

"You don't know what you're talking about," snapped Indy. She moved in closer, her hand on her hunting bone, "We are here to release him from his shackles. He is a prisoner!"

Nigel threw back his head and laughed loudly. Alfie began to snigger too but a steely glare from Indy soon stopped him.

Nigel laughed and laughed and laughed while Dingo choked and choked and choked.

"Enough!" barked Indy, "Let Operative Dingo go, I demand it!" She had pulled her hunting bone out of her belt and was reaching for her stink grenade. Digger moved quickly to stop her.

"Let him go, puss, and we'll let you go," he said calmly. He straightened his beret and placed his hands on his hips.

Again Nigel laughed, "You are fools, stupid, stupid fools!" He pushed Dingo away from him with one hand, flicked up the blinds and was gone through the window in a spilt second.

The three dogs ran to the window. No one thought to help Dingo who was rolling around on the floor gasping for air.

Nigel stopped on the front lawn; he looked back over his shoulder and sneered at them all.

"No doubt, we will meet again, my canine enemies, until then I bid you adieu!"

He made an exaggerated salute and bowed to them all. He turned sharply and ran straight into the back of Sumo, stumbled backwards, shook himself and galloped across the road and was gone. Sumo stood up, looked around for what had hit him but fell asleep as he was sitting back down again.



*Meanwhile outside the café...*

Commander Rocky leaned towards Astro, "I must go soon do you have anything else to report?"

Astro was so excited, "Yes! Yes! Later on today I am to be taken by my captor to her head office for a party."

"Head office? A party?" Commander Rocky queried.

"Yes, I assume it is her head office because she continually receives orders from the older humans there. She just repeats, 'yes mum, no dad, yes mum, no dad'. It just goes on and on like that for hours."

"What else happens at this place?" asked Commander Rocky.

"Well," continued Astro looking over his shoulder to make sure he wasn't being heard. "I have noticed that there is a great consumption of a thing they call 'a drink'. I can tell you that it can make humans pickled. I have seen evidence of this in the older humans consuming a strange liquid they call sherry, and I must say they obviously have lots of it to keep their appearance constantly pickled. What is just as baffling is the consequence of this liquid. I have seen some humans believe they have the dance moves of the late great M. Jackson when ordinarily they have the co-ordination of a cat without whiskers!"



Commander Rocky nodded and listened intently, “Yes, to date we understand that ‘a drink’ renders most humans illiterate, nonsensical and another term we’ve come across, “legless”. We are very interested in how this liquid removes the legs from humans. With this kind of information our struggle to free dogs from imprisonment will be a huge success.”

“Oh, I can’t wait,” whined Astro. “When will you free me?”

“Soon,” Commander Rocky already had a clever plan forming in his head. “We will meet here again tomorrow and I will free you myself, Astro.”

Astro’s owner stood up. Astro was summoned to her side. When he turned there was no sign of Commander Rocky. It was as if he had vanished into thin air.

Astro limped towards the car.

“Oh, you poor thing,” his owner cooed. “Do you want me to lift you up and carry you?”

Astro coughed and limped more.

As his owner struggled to carry a 30 kilo dog to her car, find her keys and not tip the contents of her handbag all over the car park, Astro was sure he could hear the sound of Commander Rocky barking on the back of a ute some way off in the distance.

#### 4

Nigel usually ignored the antics of dogs as nothing more than the foolish actions of the largest group of sycophants known in the world. Cats were far more superior. While they tolerated humans and let them provide food and shelter, it was only by the cat’s choice. Many cats live happily catching their own food and surviving in the wild and have no use for human beings. While other cats see no need for such strenuous exertions and are happy to allow humans to provide for their every whim. Nigel was one of these cats.

Nigel hovered over the neighbour’s fish pond deciding which goldfish to eat when he heard a low rustle in the ferns behind him. Before he could turn around he heard a harsh voice.

“Nigel the Cat, it is time we did something about those dogs, don’t you think?”

Nigel spun around to see an old tabby cat standing amongst the shrubbery. His top teeth were missing and he had a crooked back leg. He had heard many scary tales about this wild cat who didn’t belong to any human and yet lived like a king.

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