

Cutiecorns

Lost and Found

by Shannon Penney

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A decorative frame with a light gray, glossy appearance. It features a central white oval containing the text 'Chapter 1'. The frame is adorned with three small hearts: one at the top center, one at the bottom center, and one at the bottom left. The frame has elegant, flowing lines that curve upwards and downwards.

Chapter 1

“Oof!” Flash yelped as the ball bounced off her snout.

Sparkle raced over to her friend. “Are you okay? I didn’t mean to let go. I’m just no match for your shifting magic!”

“I’m fine,” Flash said with a laugh, rubbing her nose. “It’s not the first time Magic Tug-of-War has ended that way!”

Sparkle gave Flash a squeeze and breathed a sigh of relief. The first-year pups were practicing their shifting magic in Mr. Magictail's class at Cutiecorn Academy. After all, Sparkle and her friends weren't just regular pups—they were Cutiecorns! All the dogs on Puppypaw Island had colorful horns between their ears that gave them special magical powers.

As a special treat, Mr. Magictail had brought the class outside for a round of Magic Tug-of-War! The rules were simple: Each pair of pups would use their shifting magic to pull a small ball through the air toward them. No paws allowed! Flash, a Yorkshire Terrier with a shimmering purple horn, was especially good at shifting magic. Sparkle had put up a

good fight, but she wasn't surprised that her feisty friend had gotten the ball in the end!

Mr. Magictail clapped his paws. "Okay, class! Furbulous job today. Your magic skills are really growing!" He collected the balls in a big mesh bag. "It's almost time to go home, but Mrs. Horne would like to meet with all first-year Cutiecorns in the courtyard. She has a special announcement!"

The air filled with excited barks and yips. Mrs. Horne was the head of Cutiecorn Academy. If she was making a special announcement, it must be something ter-ruff-ically exciting!

Glitter, a white Maltese with a pink horn, bounded over to Sparkle and Flash. "A

special announcement? What do you think it could be?”

“It is getting near the end of the school year,” Sparkle said thoughtfully as they walked inside to collect their things. “Maybe she’s throwing us a barbecue to celebrate! Or an ice-cream party!” As if on cue, Sparkle’s stomach gave a loud grumble. She giggled. “Or maybe I’m just hungry.”

“Tug-of-War with Flash really took it out of you, huh?” her Beagle friend Twinkle teased. “I got paired up with her last time. It made me hungry enough to eat a whole bag of bones!”

Flash grabbed her backpack from her locker and zoomed off down the hall. “Last

one to the courtyard is a dawdling dog!” she called over her shoulder.

Sparkle smiled as she collected her things. Her friends were all so different—and had different magical strengths, too! That was what made them a pawsome team. Sparkle couldn’t imagine life on Puppypaw Island without her three best buddies.

Sparkle, Glitter, and Twinkle trotted down the hall, through a giant stone archway, and out into the sunny courtyard. They sat with the rest of their classmates under a flowering tree. Everyone was barking up a storm about the announcement, but when Mrs. Horne stepped outside and waved a friendly paw, they fell silent immediately.



“Hello, first-year pups!” Mrs. Horne smiled, and her turquoise horn glittered in the sunlight. She held a folded piece of paper in one paw, but Sparkle couldn’t see what it said. “As you all know, I have a special announcement for you today.”

Sparkle’s stomach flip-flopped in anticipation. She couldn’t wait much longer, fur real!

“Your teachers are all so pleased with your progress this year,” Mrs. Horne said kindly. “You’ve been working hard! We feel it’s important for you to learn about different kinds of magic—and different cultures, too.”

Sparkle glanced down at her charm bracelet. A charm with two paw prints twinkled up at her, and she remembered receiving it after helping with the Cutiecorn Carnival. Cutiecorns of all kinds had come to visit Puppypaw Island—cats, birds, goats, bunnies, and even hedgehogs!—for a pupstastic carnival and talent show. Sparkle had loved meeting the new animals!

Mrs. Horne went on, “I’m happy to announce that tomorrow, you’ll be taking your first overnight field trip. We’ll get on the ferry bright and early.”

Sparkle could hardly believe her ears. Hot diggity dog! A field trip!

While the rest of their classmates whispered breathlessly, Glitter raised a polite paw. “Where are we going?”

Mrs. Horne unfolded the paper she held to reveal a big, beautiful map. All the pups leaned forward eagerly, trying to get a better look. What was this place?