

ALL DOGS GO TO 7-ELEVEN

BRYAN DAVIS

NOT SO FAMOUS DOG TALES - BOOK #1

Books by Bryan Davis

Not-So-Famous Dog Tales

All Dogs Go to 7-Eleven

Mission ImPAWssible

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CHAPTER I

The Slurpee Challenge

Steve set his lips close to his Slurpee straw. Across the counter, a German Shepherd with “Rex” etched into his leather collar rose on his hind legs and propped his paws next to his own Slurpee. Steve smiled. Of course, a dog could never outslurp a 7-Eleven manager. In fact, a dog probably couldn’t suck on a straw at all. Soon, everyone in the store would find out.

“Ready?” Steve asked, grinning. “Or are you too *dog* tired to give it a try?”

Rex let out two short yips that meant, “Ready. Ready.” A flick of his left ear added, “Loser.” Then he set his doggy lips around his straw, ready to begin the race. Nearby in the pet treats aisle, a Doberman named Spike, a golden retriever named Buffy, and a Chihuahua named Titan looked on, their tails swishing.

“Go!” Steve sucked on his straw and swallowed gulp after gulp of strawberry slush

while Rex drew his head back and looked on, his eyes twinkling and his tongue hanging out as he panted.

Pain shot into Steve's head, like icicles stabbing his skull. He jerked back and slapped a hand over his eyes, staggering as he shouted, "Brain freeze! Brain freeze!" Laughing barks filled the store, though Rex stayed quiet.

When the pain finally passed, Steve blinked. Rex's cup lay on its side as he lapped his beef-flavored slush from the countertop. The moment he finished, he barked, "I win. I win." Then his left ear flicked again.

"Yeah, you won, fair and square." Sighing, Steve grabbed a bottle of sanitizer and sprayed the counter. "I'll take you home to meet my family, like I promised."

Rex leaped back and twirled in a circle. "I love kids! I love kids!"

"You love baby goats?" Steve asked with a smirk.

Rex stopped and tilted his head in an I-have-no-idea-what-you're-talking-about pose.

Steve waved a hand. "Never mind." As he wiped the counter surface with a paper towel, Chance, an elderly beagle, walked through the

door, propped open just wide enough to let dogs in or out. His real name was Chancellor, but no one called him that.

Steve glanced at the wall clock—5:50 a.m. He was right on time, as usual. “Good morning, Chance. What’s new in the world of hunting hounds?”

Chance lifted his head and began howling. Spike, Buffy, and Titan each snatched a bag of treats in their mouths and scurried toward the door. “Spike,” Steve called as he grabbed a broom to sweep the floor. “Not the brown ones. Your human says no wheat. It upsets your stomach.”

Ignoring Steve, the dogs whisked through the gap, leaving only Steve and Rex to listen to Chance’s song, a tale about Stomper, the wily one-eyed tomcat who kept the neighborhood awake with late night yowling.

When Chance finished, Steve picked up a cooling hot dog from the cooking rollers. “Thanks for the help. The others cleared out faster than usual.” He tossed the hot dog. Chance caught it and ambled out.

As Rex watched Chance leave, he tapped the tip of his tail on the floormat next to the door,



a sure sign of impatience. Steve put the broom away, crouched close to Rex, and scratched behind his ear. “Ready to meet my family?”

Rex’s tail thumped the mat harder. “Ready. Ready.”

A pink minivan zipped into the parking lot. Marla Buttinsky, the day-shift manager, backed into her usual space, her *Cats Rule, Dogs Drool* bumper sticker in view.

“Uh-oh. She’s early.” Steve reached out through the gap in the door and swiped his handmade *Dogs Welcome* sign off the glass, revealing another sign that read, *No Dogs Allowed! I Mean It!* After closing the door, he hustled behind the counter, grabbed a leash from a shelf, and hurried back to Rex. “Sorry, buddy, but it’s only for a few minutes. Okay?”

Rex panted between barks. “Okay. Okay.”

Steve attached the leash and looked out. Marla strode closer, her cat earrings swaying as she buttoned her 7-Eleven vest over her “I Love My Cats” T-shirt.

Steve pushed the door open and hurried out with Rex at his side, nearly bumping into Marla.

“Steven Barkley!” She fanned her face with a hand. “What in heaven’s name are you doing with that ... that beast?”

“Sorry.” He pulled the leash, drawing Rex closer. “Don’t worry. I’ll find a place for him.”

Marla sneered. “How about the North Pole?”

“He prefers the South Pole.” Steve backed toward the parking lot. “He likes penguins more than polar bears.” He spun and jogged away with Rex at his side. When they were out of sight of the 7-Eleven, he unhitched the leash and fastened it around his waist. “That’s better. Let’s go meet my family.”