C18

It didn't take long for Judy and Nick to find Assistant Mayor Bellwether in city hall. She was struggling to hold a stack of￼ files while keeping up with Mayor Lionheart.

“Sir? ” said Bellwether. “If we could just review these very important—”

As Bellwether continued to struggle and dodge out of the way inside the busy lobby, she almost stepped on a little mouse.

“Oh, I'm sorry… sir! ”

“I heard you, Bellwether, ” said Lionheart impatiently. “Just take care of it, okay? ” He set a folder on top of her huge stack. “And clear my afternoon. I'm going out.”

“But, sir, you have a meeting with Herds and Grazing… Sir—”

Lionheart continued through the door, letting it slam right in Bellwether's face. All the files she was carrying were knocked to the floor.

“Assistant Mayor Bellwether, ” said Judy, approaching her. “We need your help.”

Bellwether led them to her tiny, cramped office. Judy and Nick looked around, surprised. Bellwether's office was actually a janitor￼'s closet!

“We just need to get into the traffic camera database, ” Judy said as Bellwether typed on the keyboard of her computer.

Nick barely touched the wool puff on top of Bellwether's head and whispered, “Sooo fluffy! ” He was mesmerized￼. “Sheep never let me this close—so fluffy—like cotton candy—”

“You can't touch that! Stop it! ” scolded Judy, swatting￼ his hand away as she tried to keep Bellwether from seeing Nick.

“Where to? ” Bellwether asked as she pulled up traffic cameras for the whole city. She looked up at Judy, catching the rabbit in mid-swat.

“Rainforest District. Vine and Tujunga.”

Nick and Judy shared a smiled. This time, Judy had pronounced Tujunga correctly.

“This is so exciting, actually. Well, you know, I never get to do anything this important, ” said Bellwether.

“You're the assistant mayor of Zootopia, ”said Judy.

“Oh, I'm more of a glorified￼ secretary, ”said Bellwether. “I think Mayor Lionheart just wanted the sheep vote… But he did get me that nice mug.” She proudly pointed to a mug that read WORLD'S GREATEST ASSISTANT MAYOR.

“Smellwether! ” shouted Mayor Lionheart through the intercom￼.

Bellwether cringed as she got up. “Oh, that's a fun little name he uses. I called him Lionfart once. He didn't care for that.” She pressed the button on the intercom. “Yes, sir? ”

“I thought you were going to cancel my afternoon! ” Lionheart yelled.

“Oh, dear… I better go. Let me know what you find. It was really nice for me to—”

“While we're young, Smellwether! ” the mayor's voice boomed again as she opened the door and hurried out.

“Well, I'm gonna need a lint￼ brush, ” said Nick.

“Oh shush, ” said Judy. “Okay. Traffic cameras. Tujunga, Tujunga… we're in.”

Nick and Judy watched the footage￼ onscreen. They saw Manchas acting wild, and then… a black van pulled up, skidding to a stop.

“Who are these guys? ” Judy asked.

“Timber wolves. Look at these dum-dums.”

They watched as wolves got out of the van and trapped Manchas with a net! Judy gasped, but Nick just shook his head.

“Bet you a nickel one of them's gonna howl, ” Nick said.

One of the wolves howled.

“There it is. What is with wolves and howling? ” he asked.

“Howlers. Night howlers, ” said Judy.“That's what Manchas was afraid of—wolves!The wolves are the night howlers. If they took Manchas—”

“I bet they took Otterton, too, ” said Nick.

“All we've gotta do is find out where they went, ” said Judy, examining the footage. As the wolves drove off, they disappeared through a tunnel and didn't come out the other side. “Wait. Where'd they go? ”

Nick squinted at the picture. “You know, if I wanted to avoid surveillance￼ because I was doing something illegal—which I never have—I'd use the maintenance￼ tunnel 6B, which would put them out… ” Nick clicked over to another camera's footage, then another, and another… and then the wolves emerged in the van! “Right there.”

“Look at you, ” Judy said, impressed.“Junior Detective. You know, I think you'd actually make a pretty good cop.”

“How dare you, ” Nick said in mock horror, trying not to smile.

Judy clicked through some more surveillance videos, tracking the wolves through alleys and back roads. “They're heading out of town, ” she said. “Where does that road go? ”

“It's one of two places: it's either that very, very scary old building… or a Beaver Renaissance Faire.”