
The Great Wiener Dog Adventure

How to play:

Everybody starts on 1. Take turns making a story choice and move your marker to the number of your next choice. (Use coins or Bingo markers or whatever you have for game tokens!) When it is your turn again, read the story section for the number you are on, and make your next choice. If your story ends, decide whether to start a new one from Spot # 1.

If you have nobody else to play with, you can just read the book like any choose-an-adventure book.

There are no winners or losers. Who can find a story ending the fastest? Who lasts the longest before finishing a story? Who rescues the most puppies? Who rescues the least puppies? Who has the best ending? The worst ending? Just have fun on your Wiener Dog Rescue Adventure!



By Colette Bezio

1. The Story Starts!

When you joined the Do-Gooders Detective Club, you thought you'd be helping the community by hunting down bank robbers, solving mysteries, and investigating crimes. Instead, you've spent your weekends helping seniors carry things, cleaning up graffiti in the public parks, and picking up trash on the sidewalks. You're glad you can help your community, but it isn't really what you had hoped for.

When the club is called together for a special meeting, you groan. Last night there was a terrible storm, and you're pretty sure your detective skills will be put to work picking up fallen branches from the streets and parks and city parking lots.

But when all the club members are together in the park, Mrs. Vandehoot, the club coach, makes an announcement. "Last night, lightning struck the kennel on the hill and damaged a wall," she says. "Several dachshund pups got out, and the kennel owners have not been able to find them."

"What's a dachshund?" someone yells.

Another kid yells back, "It's a wiener dog! This is a wiener dog hunt!"

"That's right," says Mrs. Vandehoot. "I'm counting on you, my brave, smart detectives, to put your skills to the test and find these lost puppies! And just for added incentive, the kennel is offering a reward."

Oh, boy! Finally a chance to test your skills and prove what a great detective you can be! Mrs. Vandehoot hands out bags of puppy treats, and you make sure to get some. As the excited group breaks up, you head out quickly for where you think a Great Wiener Dog Hunt should start.

2. The trail into the woods
 3. The town dumpsters
 4. The creepy haunted house
-

2. The Trail into the Woods

If nobody has found the pups, they have probably headed for the wilderness. You know how dogs love to sniff around and explore wild places. You quickly stroll down to the trailhead. The trail starts in a small park full of picnic tables and benches. You stop to tie your shoe. Just as you are ready to move on, you hear the scrape of bike tires skidding to a stop nearby.

It looks like you are not the only one to think of the trail. Buzz, the meanest kid in your school, glares at you as he throws his mountain bike down on the grass. "Beat it, this is MY spot!" he growls.

You didn't count on competition. Do you go back and try somewhere else, or stick with the trail?

3. Go to the town dumpsters
 4. Go to the haunted house
 5. Stick with the trail.
-

3. The Town Dumpsters

Dogs are always hungry. If the puppies got out last night, they will be looking for food. There are plenty of places where way too much food gets thrown away. The biggest question is where exactly to start? The best choices would seem to be the local restaurants, or the grocery store.

93. Go to the restaurant dumpster
 84. Go to the grocery store dumpster
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4. The Haunted House

You are pretty sure you're the only kid brave enough to investigate the haunted house. It is a spooky, abandoned house, way on the edge of town. You have heard so many scary stories about it that you have no idea what the truth is...most of the stories talk about some kids who died there, but in every story they died a different way. Other stories talk about ghosts or vampires or curses...

By the time you get there, it is weirdly dark. Heavy clouds fill the sky, and rain occasionally spatters your face. There is a high fence of black iron spikes and overgrown hedges around the house. You can only see the crooked, pointy rooftop and chimneys. The iron gate has fallen,

but it takes you a while to work up the nerve to squeeze between the scratchy branches of the hedge to the yard.

Now you can see the house. Every bit of paint peeled off its wooden slats years ago, and all the windows are shattered. The house looms over you, dark grey with an empty stare. Even its door is broken down, leaving it gaping like an open mouth inviting you in.

9. Go inside the haunted house.

75. Maybe check out the back yard instead.

5. Stick with the trail

“You don’t own the trail, Buzz,” you say bravely. “I have as much right to be here as you!”

Buzz snorts. “Yeah, but you don’t stand a chance against me. I’ll be faster than you, because I have my bike. And I’m going to buy some BACON. I will walk through those woods smelling to high heaven, and every dog in the county will come running to ME!”

Buzz stomps off toward the nearby convenience store. You don’t have any bacon money. How can you compete with Buzz’s master plan?

86. Get a head start

11. Sabotage Buzz’s bike!

6. Sneak toward the pups.

The T-Rex is making so much noise and concentrating so hard on the pups that it can’t hear you approaching. You crouch low and crawl through the ferns, freezing every time it looks away from the log. You notice that when it tries to chew the log, it closes its eyes.

Scary as it is, you get closer and closer. The next time the T-Rex tries to bite the log, you dive into the hollow center, grabbing the pups!

You instantly feel a tingling sensation, and the log vanishes. You are kneeling on the seat of the time car, clutching two shivering puppies!

“That was incredibly brave and clever,” says your time-traveler friend. “Now let’s get out of here before that dopey dinosaur figures out where its lunch has gone.” She hits some levers, and the prehistoric scenery fades away, soon to be replaced with old lady’s back yard.

As you get out of the time car, the old lady says, “The name is Crumplesnark. I could use a partner with nerves of steel and a cool head. Drop by anytime, if you want a part-time job. It’s dangerous, and you never know where or when we’ll be traveling...but the pay is amazing.”

“Thanks, Mrs. Crumplesnark!” you say. “I want the job!”

You return the rescued puppies, but being a dog detective does not seem quite as exciting as it did earlier today. You go home and pull out your history and science books. If you are going to be a real Time Traveling Detective, you need to know what’s going on!

Mrs. Crumplesnark sends you a memento of your first time travel mission...a 3D photo of you, holding two puppies, while a T-Rex tries to chomp through the hollow log you are crouching in. Your friends all think it’s fake, but that’s fine. You know the truth. And you know you will probably have even more amazing ‘fake photos’ in the future!

END

7. Shelter in the library!

You charge into the library! Soon you are surrounded by comforting walls of books. Libraries are great places to learn about anything. You are sure you can find a way to get out of this mess! But the library closes in just a little while. You do not have much time to find a solution to your problem!

You ask the librarian for a book about vampires, and you are soon studying their weaknesses. Sunlight—no chance of bringing any of that on your path. Holy symbols. None of those with you today. A wooden stake through the heart. That doesn’t seem like something you are able or willing to do to a flock of flying puppies. Garlic? Dang, maybe you should have gone to the pizza place.

At last you find something interesting. Vampires are obsessive, the book tells you. If you throw a handful of beans on the floor, vampires will stop until they pick up and count every one.

Puppies can’t count, and you don’t have beans. But you do have a bag of puppy treats! As the librarians prepare to close for the night, you head outside, the vampire book tucked under your arm and the bag of puppy treats in your hand.

You start running as soon as you get out the door. The flock of vampire puppies rises from the small tree across the street and comes after you.

You fling the puppy treats as far and as wide as you can! The flock descends, eager to snap up every single treat.

But there are a lot of pups. The treats are gone in a flash. You keep running, but you can hear the flapping wings getting closer. What else are dogs obsessive about? Suddenly you notice a baseball lying in the grass beside the sidewalk. You grab it and throw it, yelling, “FETCH!” at the top of your lungs. The puppies fly away after it, and you go on running.

As you get closer to home, you find sticks and other objects to throw, and the pups go after every one. Finally you are on your own street, only a few blocks away from home and safety!

But...there’s nothing here to throw. No balls or sticks or old, forgotten toys. You leap forward, picking up as much speed as you can, but you know it’s not going to be enough. You hear them coming closer, closer. You are still a block from home when you feel their leathery bat wings fluttering against the back of your neck.

“FETCH!” you scream one last time, and you fling the vampire book as hard as you can! The flock swerves to fly after it as you run up your own front walk and through the front door, slamming it behind you.

You made it home safe! You have survived the vampire puppies!

But there is another perilous task that still lies in your future. Your book is out there in the rain, being chewed by a pack of vampire puppies. It is not going to be in good shape when you get it back. You may have escaped the vampires, but soon you must face...the librarian.

END

8. Start digging!

Under the glare of the lead goblin, you pick up a pick. She points to a wall, and you start hitting it, breaking off chips of stone, along with some of the other goblins. The goblins with shovels scoop up the stone chips and toss them into the carts. Whenever a cart is full, one of the little goblins runs away, pulling it, and then returns with the empty cart.

They are digging a new tunnel, you realize. You wonder where it will go. You wonder, as the day goes on and your hands get sore and blistered, and your arms start to feel like noodles, how long it will take. You wonder how long the work shift is. As soon as they let you go, you plan to take off and find a way out to freedom.

But they do not let you go. When goblins are tired, they sleep on the stone floor while others work. The little cart goblins bring food and water. And for potty breaks, there is a bucket.

Once you try to stroll away casually back down the tunnel. The big goblin leader stands in your way and snarls something at you. You don't understand Goblin, but you're pretty sure it's "Where do you think YOU'RE going?"

This is your life now. Every day you wake up and you dig until you drop. You take turns between the pick and the shovel. The tunnel gets longer and longer. Your arms are getting stronger, and you don't think about home any more. You only think about finishing the tunnel.

Because when the tunnel is done, you will be the first one out of it, running, and free at last.

No matter how many years it might take.

END

9. Inside the haunted house

The inside of the haunted house looks just as creepy as you expected it to. The partially-boarded-up windows are dim with years' worth of dust. Heavy cobwebs hang from the ceiling, and drape the bannisters. There are a few pieces of furniture covered by thick, white sheets. At least, you THINK it's furniture. You are not going to lift the sheets and look.

But you are on the right track! You see wet spots on the floor shaped like puppy prints. After a few steps, the tracks fade away.

18. There is a dark, silent door leading down into the basement. You go that way.

50. Upstairs, there seems to be a pale, flickering of light...you go to check it out.

10. Take the puppy.

"Sorry," you say. "I don't think it's a good idea. How could ghosts take care of a puppy? How would you feed it or take it for walks? The puppy will be much happier going home, and if you really cared about it, you would want it to go home, too."

You walk down the stairs with the puppy in your arms. The ghosts plead and beg and threaten, but you don't slow down until you hear them crying. You look back. They are sitting on the bottom stair together, and they do look so sad.

"Well, I can't leave the puppy," you say. "But maybe I can visit you sometimes. Would that be okay?"

"Will you really?" The girl ghost looks up smiling through her tears. "That would be wonderful."

"Yeah, that would be great. But I'll believe it when I see it," says the boy ghost. "Nobody who leaves ever comes back. Nobody."

"I will," you promise. You leave to return the puppy to its owners. You are the first to find one of the missing pups! Everyone congratulates you, and you appear on the local news in a story about the puppy hunt.

The next day, you return to the haunted house. You can't play catch or video games with the ghost children, but they are great at tag and hide-and-seek. You learn all sorts of interesting information about ghosts, too. You return almost every day, all summer.

Then, one day, you arrive to discover that the haunted house is gone. The yard is full of construction vehicles. It looks like the haunted house has been torn down. They are already starting to build a new house on the lot.

You wonder what has happened to your friends. Are ghosts destroyed when their haunted house is destroyed? Or do they stay around to haunt the new house? When the new house is built, and new people move in, you will have to visit them and find out.

END

11. Sabotage Buzz's bike!

Buzz thinks he's so cool! We'll see how far he gets without his wheels, you think. Quickly you unscrew the cap on the mountain bike's back tire and push in the stem. Air hisses out of the tire. You hold on, squeezing the tire until it's good and flat, then put the cap back on and walk away, doing your best to look innocent. Even if Buzz fills his tire at the convenience store, it will slow him down a little.

You walk down the trail, whistling and calling for the missing pups. Before long, you hear Buzz shouting. You think he is probably using naughty words, but you don't recognize any of them, because YOU are a Good Kid.

Feet run up behind you, and a furious Buzz catches up, holding a greasy paper bag. Uh-oh. But luckily, Buzz doesn't seem to blame you for his problem. "Stupid bike!" he growls. "Stupid flat tire!" He stomps down the path at your side. He reeks of bacon.

You did not really think about the bad part of your plan. Now Buzz is walking, and you are stuck walking with him. He starts to pick up speed, trying to pass you. You go faster to keep up. Pretty soon both of you are running, glaring at each other.

The path forks. Buzz turns down the left path, the one that circles around the edge of town. The right path goes into the wilderness. "Stop following me, loser!" Buzz yells back over his shoulder.

22. Follow Buzz down the left trail—he can't tell you what to do!

73. Go down the right trail, into the wilderness...alone.

12. The Left Path

You quickly jog down the left path. The puppies won't have run too far from the town, you feel sure. They have short little legs. You watch the dirt for tracks, and now and then you call and whistle.

You hear the buzzing sound of a bike chain behind you. Buzz seems to be taking the same path you are. There's no way you keep ahead of him on that bike! "Out of my way, loser!" he yells as he approaches.

64. Try to block Buzz from passing.

24. Get out of the way.

13. Prehistoric Puppy Hunt!

"I can't go back yet," you say. "I'm on a mission to find some lost puppies, and it looks like they brought your time machine here. We can't just abandon them in the prehistoric jungle!"

The old lady makes a face, but she does not argue. "Be careful, and be quick," she says. "And take this." She tosses what looks like a large glass marble at you. You reach out to catch it, but it doesn't drop—it floats in the air, making circles over your head. "It's a sort of camera.

I'll be able to watch what's going on around you, and if you get in trouble, I can teleport you back," she says. "But don't take unnecessary risks."

You hurry away, following the puppy tracks. They are easy to follow in the soft ground. You hear the heavy, deep rumbling growl again. It's ahead of you. That's not good.

You come to the edge of a clearing and are stunned to see...a Tyrannosaurus Rex! It doesn't roar like the ones in the movies, just keeps making that growl that seems to vibrate right through all your bones. You try to keep hidden among the ferns, but the T-Rex doesn't seem to be looking in your direction. It's sniffing and chomping at a big hollow log. It sinks its teeth into the log, lifts it, and drops it. You hear yelps of terror. Inside the log you can see two frightened wiener dog puppies, about to be a T-Rex snack!

The log is big, but not big enough for the dinosaur to get its head in far enough to grab the pups. The way it's biting and stomping on the log, though, it seems likely that the puppies' shelter will soon be smashed. Maybe if you're really careful, you can get to the pups, and your time-traveler friend can teleport you out. But that seems really dangerous. Maybe if you make a lot of noise, you can distract the T-Rex and the puppies can escape on their own.

6. Sneak in and get the pups

87. Distract the T-Rex.

14. Howl along with the pack!

The sound of howling is so thrilling, you can't help wanting to join in. You lift your head up and howl to the rain-soaked sky, putting all your heart into it.

The wolf and puppies are silent. The pups look nervous and confused. Fur bristling, the wolf stalks toward you, stiff-legged, its eyes full of suspicion and wary anger.

68. Run away!

37. Hide!

15. Open with Caution

You certainly don't want to frighten the puppy. Slowly and gently, you lift the lid of the dumpster. Just as you are about to call and whistle, a beam of sunlight hits the furry critter inside.

It is not a puppy. It is a skunk, looking back at you with confused curiosity.

You yell and jump back, dropping the lid of the dumpster with a bang! A minute later, the lid bounces up and closes again, as the skunk squeezes out and drops to the ground. It shakes itself, gives you a dirty look, and waddles away along the bushes.

80. Follow the skunk

54. Go find another dumpster.

16. Run away home!

Nooooooo! You did not sign up for ghosts! You scream and run out of the room and down the stairs, ghostly laughter following you out the front door! You don't stop until you get home, dive into your bed, and pull the covers over your head.

But you don't sleep. You think it will be a long, long time before you can ever sleep again.

END

17. Helping out

"I know where you can get some old computers and stuff," you say. "My friend's dad has a bunch he's waiting to recycle." You take the old lady to your friend's house, and they are very happy to have someone take away the broken electronics. The old lady pulls a strange disc out of the pocket of her lab coat and presses a button. The disc grows larger, and actually floats above the ground as she stacks the old gadgets on it.

"Thank you for being so helpful," she says. Then she leans over and whispers, "I need these to fix my time machine. Do you want to see it?"

55. Get away from this loony stranger.

31. Time machine? TIME MACHINE? OH, YEAH, I WANNA SEE IT!!

18. Haunted Basement

You head for the cellar door. Whatever is flickering upstairs, you want no part of it. And dachshunds are tunneling dogs, right? Underground seems like a good place for them. You step on to the rickety, splintery stairs leading down. They creak with every step, and you can feel them bending under your feet. Suddenly you hear a loud crack, and the stairs fall from under you!

You land on the basement floor in the middle of a pile of broken boards. You are bruised and scraped, but after carefully picking yourself out of the rubble, you are pretty sure there are no broken bones. You're not sure how you're going to get back up out of the cellar, but since you are here, you might as well explore. You make your way through the darkness, waving your arms in front of you to ward off the curtains of cobwebs that keep trying to cling to your face, leaving little spiders to scramble away down your neck. You don't even notice the box until you bump into it.

It is long and polished, with brass handles, resting on a table. It looks a lot like a coffin. It is certainly the size of a coffin. As you stand staring at it, you begin to hear the soft, muffled sound of snoring. It's coming from inside the box.

78. Open the lid and look inside.

33. FIND AN ESCAPE, NOW!

19. Dumpster 2: Slowly you open the lid...

You have no idea how many skunks may live in your town. Or raccoons. Or venomous garbage monsters. So you are very cautious and quiet as you open the lid.

Inside the dumpster is not a puppy. Three hungry stray cats scramble among the garbage, looking for something to eat. They look thin and uncared for, and when they notice you, they freeze in terror. Poor kitties.

47. Leave the kitties in peace and find another dumpster.

71. Give your puppy treats to the cats.

20. Hide from the bear.

You back away slowly into the bushes and crouch down, hoping the bear doesn't notice you. Maybe you can sneak away and go back down the trail. Suddenly the bear stops pawing through the garbage. It raises its nose into the air and sniffs interestedly. Buzz, who was standing frozen with terror, starts to back away down the path. You can smell the bacon fumes all the way from your hiding spot! The bears must be able to smell it, too, because it licks its sloppy lips and starts strolling toward Buzz.

Buzz gives a sudden yell of terror and runs down the trail. You are amazed at how fast he can run! It's like watching a world-record Olympic sprinter. The bear is fast, too, but Buzz manages to get to a large tree and climb up it just before the bear reaches him.

The bear looks hungrily up the tree. It looks like it's thinking of climbing, but it's a very big, heavy bear. You think Buzz is probably safe if he climbs high enough.

26. Run away into the woods! Save yourself!

65. Run to town and get help for Buzz!

21. The Open Grave

You lean over the open hole in the ground. "Here, puppy!" you call nervously, and whistle. Your call seems to echo strangely. Suddenly the wet earth gives way under your feet and you slip into the grave. Only...it is a LOT deeper than you thought! You slide down a slick, muddy slope, yelling and trying to claw at the wet ground. But it does no good. You do not stop until you land in a puddle at the bottom of a cave.

It is very dark. Only a little light filters down from above. Luckily, you have a flashlight with your detective kit! It is not a very good one...more a toy than anything. But in its light, you can see that you are in a tunnel. From the passage that goes north, you can hear the sound of rushing water. From the south you hear strange, far-away echoes you don't understand.

69. Take the tunnel north.

38. Take the south tunnel.

22. The left path...with Buzz.

"I'll go wherever I want to!" you glare at Buzz, staying on the path near town. The pups probably didn't wander as far as the wilderness. If Buzz doesn't like it, let HIM leave.

The pair of you stomp down the trail glaring at each other. You almost forget to watch for puppy tracks. After a while, you start to notice a bad smell in the air.

"Ech, what's that stink?" you ask. "It smells really putrid."

"All I smell is you," says Buzz. "Yep, putrid is just the perfect word. Like always."

"You're the one that stinks, Bacon Boy," you growl. "You smell like a breakfast burrito."

The two of you keep arguing and insulting each other until you go around a bend in the trail and stop in shock. There is a pile of old trash bags here that someone has been dumping. And ripping them open and chomping down the garbage is the biggest, shaggiest bear you have ever seen.

39. Run from the bear!

20. Hide!

23. Disguise yourself.

There is junk and equipment piled all over the place. You find a holey blanket and stick your neck through the biggest hole, tying an old hunk of rotten rope around your waist for a belt. You grab a helmet that looks like it was made by bending an old bucket and punching holes in it. It will hide your entire head. Your hands are the only parts left not covered at all, and you manage to find two big, bulky armored gloves to wear. They do not match, but that's not important.

You rush to catch up and take your place at the end of the marching goblins. Other goblins cheer as you walk past. You wonder what's going on. Are these heroes of some underground goblin war? Or are they going now to fight one? That makes you a little nervous, but none of the goblins seem to be carrying weapons, so maybe not.

You leave the well-lit large cavern and march down a smaller tunnel. As you go on, it seems like the tunnel becomes more smooth and even, as if it has been dug by goblins, instead of being a natural cave.

After a long walk, you see a light ahead. Is it the end of the tunnel and a way out?

No. It is a torch. A large, grumpy-looking goblin stands at a dead end. Beside her are some picks, shovels and wooden carts. The grumpy goblin shouts, “Yargger snad graddak mitzkix!” She points to the tools. Your fellow marchers pick up picks and shovels. A couple of the smaller goblins grab the carts and harness themselves to the shafts.

You don’t understand goblin, but it’s clear now what’s going on—they are digging a new tunnel! The grumpy goblin glares at you as you stand, watching the others get to work.

8. Grab a pick and start digging.

85. Refuse to dig.

24. Let Buzz pass

You step off the trail to let Buzz whiz past you, pedaling as fast as he can go. “Na-na-na Boo Boo, I’m faster than you!” he calls back over his shoulder as he zips ahead along the trail.

What a brat! You can’t help feeling angry as you trudge along the trail. But then you realize—going as fast as he is, Buzz may cover more ground, but it’s not likely he will see any tracks or puppies in the bushes. You continue more hopefully, calling and whistling and looking for puppy prints.

You walk down the path for a couple of hours, with no sign of any pups. You are starting to get tired and discouraged. Also, rain clouds have built up, and some scattered drops have been spattering down on you.

You come to a wooden foot bridge over a stream. Usually the stream is small, and in dry summers it almost disappears. Now it’s swollen with all the rainfall from the storm. It is almost as wide as a river, with swift, angrily churning water. As you stand on the bridge, you think you can hear a voice calling out faintly over the sound of the rushing stream. It sounds kind of like Buzz.

41. Follow the voice and investigate.

88. Keep on walking.

25. Eat the Soup

It's goblin soup.

You're not totally sure it isn't dachshund goblin soup.

But it smells all right, and the cook looks kind, and you are hungry. You take the soup and lift the wooden spoon out of the bowl and taste it.

The soup tastes really weird. Not bad, exactly. But not quite like anything you have had before. You go on eating it, though, as the goblin watches. You like it more and more as you get used to it.

When you are almost finished, the cook's assistant comes back. He is carrying the basket the puppies were in. And they are still there! They have been washed, and each is wearing a little goblin collar. The collars are strange. They all seem to have been made out of bits of odds and ends and junk. One is made with braided shoelaces, one with what looks like part of a bicycle tire, one is woven out of grass. Each of the collars has a string attached so that the pups can be tied up out of trouble.

You are so relieved to know that the puppies haven't been cooked that you hold your bowl out for another helping of soup. The cook fills your bowl again.

He points to the puppies, then to you, and says something that you don't understand, but it sounds like a question. "Yep! The puppies are mine." You nod and take hold of the leashes. The cook looks relieved. You guess it's hard to run a goblin kitchen with a lot of puppies running around getting into everything and underfoot.

When you have finished your soup, the cook leads you down another tunnel, to a door that opens to the outdoors. You thank him and he waves as he closes the hidden door. The door is amazing—it's cut into a hollow tree, and once it's closed, you can't even tell it's there. You lead the puppies back to the park, and turn them in for the reward.

All that night you dream about the goblin tunnels. When you wake up, you wonder if you should go looking for more pups...or maybe visit the goblins again. But when you look in the mirror, you stare. Is it your imagination? Or is your skin a little greener? Are your ears a little pointier? Is your nose a little blobbier?

Maybe it would be better not to eat any more of the goblins' soup...

END

26. Running into the wild!

You run as fast as you can, deeper into the woods. In a panic, you pay no attention to where you are going, tripping over branches, splashing through puddles, and tearing through thorny brambles! You run until your legs feel like wobbly noodles, and the next time a tree root snags your foot, you crash onto the forest floor.

Panting for air, you sit up. Nothing here is familiar. You have lost all sense of direction. You don't know where you are, or how to get home. You have heard that moss grows on the north side of trees, but you can't find any trees with moss on them. You know that the sun sets in the west, and it's getting late, but rain clouds cover the sky, and you have no idea where the sun is. It's getting darker. You stagger to your feet and try to decide what to do now.

45. Keep running. You're bound to get somewhere soon. The woods can't go on forever.

90. Sit and rest for a while.

27. Climb up the shaft.

You tuck the puppy inside your shirt and tie the waist tight, shifting the pup to your back. Luckily, it is a very small pup. Once you are sure it's not going to fall out, you reach up and start climbing the rock shaft.

It is a difficult climb. You try not to think about what will happen to you if your hand or foot slips. Once, the rock you grab for a handhold comes loose from the wall, and you almost fall to the bottom. Your heart pounds as you hear the rock fall and crack against the stony floor far below. You have to stop for a while until you calm down enough to go on. The puppy gets impatient and starts to wiggle. You know you have to go on, and start feeling for rocks to hold on to, terrified that any one of them might also break loose and fall, taking you with it.

You finally reach the top, but it does not seem like it will be easy to get out. Around the top of the hole, above the rock, there is a layer of dirt. That dirt is wet and soft. When you try to get a grip, you only pull out handfuls of mud and clay.

You reach up as far as you can, to where the grass is growing over the dirt. The grass seems tough. You dig your fingers down in the mud, deep in the grass roots, and strain to pull yourself up. You are almost up over the top, when you feel the grass tearing free! You grab wildly with your other hand, and catch something solid.

You pull yourself up at last. You managed to grab a metal post that had been pounded into the dirt near the hole. It is part of a small fence that surrounds the shaft. Once you climb over the fence, you see that the fence is covered with signs saying DANGER and KEEP OUT. There is a pile of wood and metal parts nearby. It looks like someone is planning to build a cover over the dangerous hole. Lucky for you, they didn't do it yet.

There is a small, dirt road nearby. As the sun rises, you follow the road back to your town. There is a lot of excitement when you return—you were missing all night, and search parties are out searching for you! The poor, hurt puppy is rushed to the vet. You have a bath to wash off all the cave mud, get bandages put on your cuts and scrapes, and sleep for two days.

But...you are a hero and a puppy rescuer! Hooray!

END

28. Throw puppy treats at the vampire.

You have no weapons to fight the vampire. You've got nothing on you at all but a pocket full of puppy treats! It's not much, but you throw them in the vampire's face defiantly.

"Yack!" says the vampire, brushing away the kibble. "Look at the mess you've made!" He starts picking up the little bits of dog food. "I'll clean up, then I'll deal with YOU." He glares at you in fury.

Suddenly there is a burst of excited yapping! Bat-winged puppies explode from the rafters and descend on the puppy treats, knocking down cobwebs and spiders! The vampire shouts at the puppies and tries to push them away as they swirl around him, snapping up treats, flapping around his head, and trying to play tug-o-war with the vampire's cape.

You have found the puppies you were trying to rescue, but it seems they have already met a gruesome fate. (Or not so gruesome. They seem to be having fun.) Now you have to rescue yourself. While the vampire is distracted, you search for a way out, and find a broken window high on the wall, covered with a tarp. You scramble up some old crates, smash the rest of the glass, drag yourself outside, and run like the wind. You don't stop until you get home, listening with terror for any sound of flapping bat wings or angry vampire shouts behind you.

Nobody will ever believe you, so you don't bother telling your story. The mystery of the puppies' disappearance is forgotten after a few

months. You become known as the weird kid who refuses to ever go outside unless you have a head of garlic in your pocket. You don't care if they think you're strange. Garlic keeps vampires away, and you know they are out there...and maybe looking for you.

END

29. Crawl through the hole

The hole is narrow, but you're pretty sure you can fit. Those puppy whines sound so sad and frightened and lost, you want to get to the poor animal as soon as possible. Getting down on your knees, you poke your head through the hole into the darkness. Your shoulders don't quite fit until you twist sideways and push through. One of the metal bars rips your shirt and gives you a nasty scratch, but you don't give up. You get through to your waist, and you think the worst is through.

Then your pants snag on the metal bar. You try to push, but you can't go forward. You try to back up, but that doesn't work, either, just rips a hole in your pants. You are good and stuck!

You waste time yelling for help for a while, before remembering how little traffic goes down this street. So you wait and listen. Suddenly you feel something cold and wet touch your forehead. You yell and look up, to see a dachshund puppy sniffing at your head. You reach out to pet the little doggy, and soon it is covering your face with puppy kisses. At least you have company.

You hear the sound of a car approaching. You yell and kick your feet wildly. "HELP! HELP! I'M STUCK!"

Luckily for you, the car stops. "Oh, my. You are really stuck, aren't you? I don't know how to help you out of this," says a concerned voice. "Hang in there, I will call for help."

It's easier to wait now that you know help is on the way. Before long, you can see flashes of red and blue light shining through the cracks in the concrete as the police and fire department show up to try to get you out of your predicament. As the firemen chop at the concrete, you can hear a newscaster behind you. "In a new development in the lost dachshund story, this brave child attempted to rescue one of the missing pups, and ended up needing to be rescued instead!"

It must be a slow news day. That evening, every local station shows footage of your kicking feet and ripped pants, and highly visible underwear. Congratulations! You have successfully rescued one of the lost puppies...but you're not looking forward to hearing what the rest of

the neighborhood kids are going to say about this tomorrow. And the next day. And probably for the rest of your life.

END

30. Leave Buzz

“Help me!” Buzz calls again, sounding desperate. But why should you? Buzz is mean and rude and a bully. It serves him right. You walk back along the trail, whistling to the pups. As you get further away, you hear Buzz’s calls change from pleading to angry threats. The pups look back at him nervously once or twice, but you never do.

You are the first to return with any pups! What’s more, you found four of them! You are a hero, and get a reward. The local news interviews you holding the four puppies and asking about your plans to be a detective someday.

That night, as you go to bed, you wonder if Buzz ever got out of that mud. And if he didn’t, if he’s going to be okay. And if he did...what he’s going to do the next time he sees you.

You do not get much sleep.

END

31. TIME MACHINE!

You know it’s not safe to go off with a stranger, but if there’s really a real, working time machine, it’s worth taking a little bit of a chance. That weird floating disc of hers is enough to convince you that something amazing is going on with this person. You make sure your friend and their parents know exactly where you are going before you follow the strange old lady home.

“A time machine? Really? Seriously? A REAL time machine? That lets you travel in time?” you babble as you walk along with the lady and her floating disc of trashed electronics. “I mean, we’re not going to get there and you’re going to prank me with an old clock, right?”

“A real time machine,” she says. “That lets you travel in time. If I can fix it.” She turns down the walk of a big old house at the end of the street and goes around to a hedged-in back yard. There, under an awning, stands a strange looking machine. It looks like it has the body of a really, really, old-timey car, but with no wheels or top, and spare parts and electronics and tanks and scrap metal of every kind welded onto it.

“This is my OLD time machine,” the lady says as she starts prying open the old computers and pulling out drives and circuit boards. “The new one seems to have gone off somewhere, and I need to fix this to go after it. Whoever took it may be in more trouble than they could have possibly imagined they were getting into.” Soon she is adding parts to the crazy machine. Soldering irons and robotic welding torches float around in the air, working like magic.

“Can I help?” you ask.

“Not with this. But if you want to come along with me to get the old machine, it’s always good to have someone as back-up.”

“Go with you? Traveling in time? Really?” You hesitate. Going to a stranger’s house is one thing. Taking off to some other time is a whole new level of trouble to get into.

51. “I’m sorry, not today.”

60. “I will gladly be your sidekick on a time journey!”

32. Climb out of the river

The rocks are slippery and scratchy at the same time. It’s a struggle to pull yourself up out of the water. You feel wet and heavy, and keep sliding down. By the time you get out of the water and safe on dry rock, your hands and knees are scraped and bloody.

Luckily, that flashlight of yours is still working. It must have some really good waterproofing! You make your way across the cavern to the tunnel you saw leading out.

The tunnel twists and turns. It is all rough, natural rock, and does not have a very comfortable walking path. You have to climb through it as much as walk, always watching out for sudden drops and bottomless pits. It starts to feel like you will never find a way out.

After a while, you come to a cave that’s less rugged. It seems to be shaped like a smooth dome, with a flat, sandy floor. As you search the walls for another way out, you see something amazing. The walls are covered with drawings! Drawings of deer and long-horned cows, and little stick men with spears and bows and arrows. You have seen photos of prehistoric cave paintings before, but you never would have dreamed there might be some near your home! You wish you had a way to take some pictures.

But you are still trying to find a way to escape the cave. So, after a short rest, you move on through another tunnel. This one seems less

wild. Maybe, long ago, it was a tunnel that people used all the time. Now the floor is littered with fallen rocks. It is still a rough walk, but there are no more sideways climbs and unexpected pitfalls. You feel like you've walked for hours, and your flashlight is starting to get dim, when you notice the air seems to smell different. Less rocky, somehow, and more foresty. You think you smell a whiff of pine trees, and hear the ripple of a stream. And at last, shortly afterward, you see a light ahead!

You find yourself in a small cave. It looks like some sort of animal den...maybe a bear lives here, or a wolf. More importantly, there is an opening, partly covered by tree roots and ivy, through which you can see the sun rising over a forest clearing!

Something makes a rustling noise in the underbrush. For a moment, you are afraid the animal that lives here is returning. But what finally comes out of the bushes is a pair of dachshund puppies! You pull the forgotten bag of puppy treats out of your pocket. The plastic bag didn't keep them totally dry, but the pups don't seem to mind them being soggy.

It takes you a little while to find your way home. Everyone is glad to see you! You have been missing all night, and the police and all your neighbors have been searching for you. The cave paintings you discovered turn out to be big news. They are thousands of years old! Teams of paleontologists and archaeologists come to study the amazing cave.

You not only rescued two of the lost puppies, but you have found something incredible! You will be listed in history books. The cave is even named after you. That's a kind of famous that lasts forever!

END

33. Find an escape!

Normal people do not sleep in coffins. You need to get out of here! The stairs are completely destroyed, so you hunt around the rubble in the basement, stumbling and knocking things over in the dark. The dust you disturb makes you sneeze uncontrollably. Bat-like wings flutter among the rafters, and little glowing red eyes watch your search. You pull down an old canvas tarp that's hanging on the wall, and are relieved to see a filthy window high on the wall. You pull some of the crates to the wall, and as you climb them, you freeze in terror at a new sound...a yawn.

The snoring has stopped. Whoever is in the coffin is awake! As you hear the coffin lid slowly creak open, you scramble up the crates,

smash the window to bits, and dive out to freedom! The jagged edges of the glass scratch you as you wriggle through, but you don't care. You stagger to your feet on the wet grass. Cold wet rain pounding down on you never felt so good as you pick up your feet and run for home with all the speed you can manage. Small dark wings flutter behind you as you run, but you don't turn to look.

You make it home safely. You did not find any of the missing pups, but you don't really care anymore. Maybe being a detective is not for you, especially if it involves a lot of haunted basements.

END

34. Grab the Ghost.

Knees shaking and mouth dry, you sneak quietly toward the open door. You leap through with a yell and grab the mysterious, fluttering white thing!

You find yourself with an arm full of cloth. A long, white curtain hangs from ceiling to floor, and it has been moving in the breeze from the broken window behind it. At the base of the window a dachshund puppy cowers, terrified by your sudden attack. You let out a long, slow breath as your heart stops pounding with fear.

But just as you are about to reach down and comfort the lost puppy, a voice whispers in your ear, "What did you think that was, a ghost?" The hair on your neck stands up as you whirl. Between you and the door stand a boy and a girl, laughing. They are pale green, glowing, and you can see right through them! Ghosts! Real ghosts!

16. Scream and run home!

74. Talk to the ghost children.

57. Ignore the ghosts. Get the puppy.

35. Run away! Run away!

With a yell of horror, you drop from the tree! You land running. There is a whoosh from the tree as many flapping wings dislodge raindrops from the leaves. Looking back over your shoulder, you see that a flock of bats is chasing after you.

No, not bats—VAMPIRE DACHSHUNDS! You're not sure exactly what happened to the missing pups, but you know what they are now, and they look deadly dangerous! Fangs gleaming, they flap after

you. You put on an extra burst of speed, and duck inside the first building you come to—a gas station. Trying to catch your breath, you see flapping wings and wet dog bodies slapping against the big glass window. It's horrifying.

You jump when a voice speaks behind you. "Sounds like that rain is really coming down," the guy at the cash register says with a smile. "Do you need to call home for a ride? It's a bad night to be caught outside."

"You don't know the half of it," you answer him hoarsely. You take him up on the chance to call home. By the time you get off the phone, the doggy undead are gone. Either they got bored and went looking for something else to chase, or they didn't like the rain. Soon your ride home arrives. You can't help looking nervously at the sky as you get into the car.

You survived your adventure! You did not rescue any pups, but you found them, and you have an incredible story to tell! If anyone will believe you...

END

36. Swim the underground river.

You are a good swimmer. You decide that crossing the river and getting to the tunnel on the other side is your best choice. You hold your breath and jump in.

As soon as you're in the water, you realize you've made a terrible mistake. The water is deeper than it looked, faster than it looked, and way, way colder than it looked! The water whisks you along so quickly, you can't reach the other side before the river pulls you out of the cavern into a narrow tunnel with barely enough room to keep your head above water. You are smashed into rocky walls and boulders, pulled under, and tumbled around. Miraculously, your flashlight keeps working. It must be VERY waterproof!

Finally the cave opens out again, and you catch hold of a rocky shelf. It looks like you might be able to climb up out of the river, but you can't see what's above.

32. Climb up the rocks.

79. Stay with the river.

37. Wait for the wolf.

The wolf's eyes blaze in the night as it approaches your hiding place, but you can't leave the puppies out here, in the wild forest. You crouch in the bushes, hoping the wolf will go away.

But it does not. It comes closer and closer, and the next time you blink, you open your eyes to find the wolf's eyes inches away, staring straight at you. This is the end, you think, and you close your eyes and wait for the finish. You feel the wolf's warm breath on your face. Then you feel its tongue lick your forehead.

You jump back in surprise. The wolf watches you, mouth open in a wide, wolfy grin. The puppies crowd around you, pawing at you and licking your hands. You kneel down to pet them. Then you reach out, wondering...if you can pet the wolf as well.

As time goes by, people start to tell strange stories about the forest near your town. They say that people who walk the trail at night hear eerie howling, and see strange creatures flickering through the shadows.

You never hear those stories...because you never went back. Some nights, as you lie staring up at the moon, with the enormous wolf pack leader as your pillow, and wild dachshunds lying in a heap around you and over your feet, you wonder if anyone misses you.

But this is your life now. Your forest is now ruled by a fierce pack of wiener wolves. They are strong, they are smart, they are fast...and you are one of them.

Perhaps one day, you will be the pack leader.

END

38. The South Tunnel

You head south through the stony tunnel. It grows wider and taller, with stalactites hanging overhead. Then even bigger, with arches and stone bridges. You wish your tiny light could illuminate more of the cave. It's amazing to think this is under your own little home town. Maybe it could be a tourist attraction.

But it seems that you're not the first one to discover it. Ahead of you, you hear what sounds like marching feet, and one of the tunnels

glows in a flickering, yellow light. You think of calling out, but decide not to. What if they are criminals, and you've discovered their hideout?

But then they come out of the tunnel and you can see them, and it's even more shocking. Monstrous looking creatures, about four feet high, with green skins, knobby hands, long, pointed ears and misshapen faces—goblins! You didn't believe they were real! You thought they only existed in fantasy books and fairy tales! From everything you've heard about them, they are dangerous, or at least unfriendly. But you don't know a way out of the cave, and maybe they do. You follow them quietly, keeping out of sight.

Soon you come to caves that are more populated. Goblin families walk around, teams of workers build things and argue together, and there are piles of equipment and trash. More goblins run into the cave from side tunnels. They all seem very excited to welcome the marching goblins home. Someone is likely to see you if you keep walking after them, and you're pretty sure bad things will happen if they do.

63. Find a place to hide.

23. Disguise yourself as a goblin.

39. Run from the bear.

With a yell of fear, you turn and run! The bear gives a startled snort. It sees you running. Prey runs, and predators chase. The bear instantly comes after you. You can see it catching up quickly, and put on a burst of speed. There is a big tree ahead. If only you can reach it, you will climb up like a monkey, to the thin branches where the heavy bear can't follow!

But bears are fast and strong. You never make it to the tree. Your adventure ends in a fury of teeth, claws and fur. Good luck with your next life!

END

40. Climbing the Spooky Tree

You figure that from up in the tree, maybe you can get a good view of the whole yard. And down the open grave. And maybe even into some of the windows of the house. The tree is very knobbly and twisted, which makes it easy to climb. There are lots of hand- and foot-holds, even if they are a bit slippery and slimy from the rain. It doesn't take you long to get high up into the branches.

The view is not as good as you had hoped it would be. Thick clumps of dark purplish leaves block your view in every direction. As you try to stare through the clumpy foliage...you notice it is staring back at you. A pair of little, red glowing eyes stares at you from between the leaves. Then another...and another...and more.

35. Run away!

61. Investigate the glowing eyes.

41. Investigate the calling voice.

You frown as you look in every direction. You're sure you heard a voice, but you see nobody. You look up in the trees—maybe it was a bird that just happens to sound like a calling human. Then you look down and notice something metal gleaming down under the bridge. When you lean over, you see Buzz's bike! You leave the bridge and slide down the steep bank to the bottom of the bridge.

“Hey! Help!” It's Buzz's voice. Now you can see him. In the middle of the stream, a big metal barrel is pressed up against the bridge supports. The high current holds it there, and splashes of water wash over the barrel, and over the four wet, shivering, frightened puppies sitting on it. Buzz is next to the barrel, hanging on in water up to his neck. Strange, even with the extra rainwater, you didn't think the stream was that deep.

In any case, Buzz seems to have found the missing pups before you did. “What happened, Buzz? Are you okay?” you yell.

“I saw the puppies were trapped here on the barrel. It looked like it would be dangerous for them to swim away, so I waded in to try to rescue them,” Buzz says. “But under water, it's all soft goo, and I sank in. I'm up to my knees in mud. I can't even move my feet!” You see him try to struggle free.

“Hang on!” you tell him. “I'll try to help!” You run around looking for a rope or anything else useful—this near the town, you can often find things people threw away in the woods, or things hikers dropped on the trail.

In time you find something useful—an old plank, long and grey and almost overgrown with weeds and grass. When you pry it up from the ground, the bugs and worms that had been sheltering under it scramble away in haste. You take the plank to the river. It's long enough to reach from the bank to the barrel! You get it set down, and whistle for the puppies. Nervously, they put their tiny paws on the board and make

their way across your makeshift bridge. Soon they are joyfully on solid ground, snuffling around your feet and putting muddy paws on your knees. You drop some dog treats for the little rescued critters.

“Great!” Buzz yells. “Good job! Now pull me out!” He is holding on to the board. You could pull on it, and probably help him out of the mud. Or...you could take the puppies back and get all the credit and reward. Buzz doesn't deserve them, anyway.

66. Save Buzz.

30. Leave Buzz where he is.

42. Dodge the cook!

You run and twist, doing your best impression of a football player dodging a tackle! You scoot past the cook and race through the kitchen and into the goblin tunnels! You hear shouting behind you, and goblins you pass turn to stare in astonishment and confusion. If anyone is chasing you, though, you have left them behind.

You come to a tunnel that slopes upward, and you hopefully run up it. It ends at an overhead trap door. You put down the puppy basket for a minute to push up on the round door, and it opens. You have never been so happy to feel the rain falling down on your face! You grab the puppies and run away into the night. To your surprise, you are right next to your school!

You hear shouting behind you and turn to look. One goblin is looking after you and shaking its fist. Then it pulls the trap door shut again. You see that the door is disguised by a thorny bush attached to the top of it. Nobody would suspect that the scratchy shrub concealed a door to an underground goblin lair.

You arrive home late, and very wet. Five happy dachshund puppies snuggle with you for the night. In the morning, you return them to their owner, and receive a generous reward. As you walk around town, wondering what you will spend it on, you pass by your school. Suddenly curious, you return to the thorny bush that you think you saw last night, hiding the goblin door. You take a firm hold on it and pull. Nothing happens, except that you get a hand full of thorns. Maybe this is the wrong bush. There are a lot of these little thorny bushes around. Or maybe someone locked the door.

You wonder why the goblins have a door near your school. You wonder what they do here when they come out. And where else in your town the Goblins might have secret doors.

Maybe even in YOUR basement or back yard.

END

43. Call and whistle for the pups

Bravely, you stand and call out to the puppies, whistling and shaking the dog treat bag. The wolf looks startled, and vanishes into the bushes. Some of the pups look like they want to follow, but most come running to you, and soon the rest join them.

You have an interesting walk home through the woods and trails, trying to keep six puppies together and under control. Every now and then, you get the feeling you are being watched, or think you see a glint of eyes from among the bushes, or a flash of grey fur out of the corner of your eye.

Finally, you make it home. You have rescued six of the missing puppies! You're sure nobody else can have done as well as that. Congratulations, you are a hero-level puppy finder!

END

44. Fling open the lid!

This puppy will not escape you! You throw open the lid of the dumpster and make a wild grab, catching something warm, black and furry!

But...it's not a puppy.

You and the skunk stare at each other in shock for several seconds. Then there is a hissing noise, and the worst smell in the world hits you. It's like a nuclear missile right to your nose. You drop the skunk, stagger home, and get right into the shower, without even taking your clothes off. You stay in the shower the rest of the day. The next day, you don't smell any better. Or the next. Or the next. In fact, everybody you know finds any excuse they can to NOT be anywhere near you...for weeks and weeks and weeks.

Your adventure has ended! Maybe your next one will have a happier ending. It certainly can't be smellier.

END

45. Keep running.

You're not in a panic any more. At least, you don't think you are. If you can just keep going in a straight line, you're sure to find a house, or a road, or SOMETHING. You run, not as wildly as before, sometimes slowing to a walk, but just trying to cover as much ground as you can. No matter how far you go, nothing looks familiar...and at the same time, everything does. Did you pass that tree before? Or is it just that all trees look alike? Is that a rock somewhere you've been already? Are you going in circles? Or is your brain playing tricks on you?

It gets darker and darker, as you grow more and more desperate. You can barely see where you're going, and there's not a speck of light anywhere—no house lights, no street lights, not even a star. The rain pounds down harder.

Suddenly, your foot snags on a root, and you tumble down a rocky, slippery slope to land at the bottom of a small depression in a puddle of water and mud. You are soaked and cold and hungry. Your throat and lungs burn. When you try to stand up, a terrible, stabbing pain shoots up your leg, and you fall again. Did you break something?

You wonder if they are missing you at home, yet...if they are looking for you...if they will come out this far on their search. How far did you run? What if nobody finds you? Ever?

Maybe you will never leave the woods...

END

46. Investigate the howling.

The eerie howling continues as you leave the trail and creep through the forest, trying not to make a sound. The steady patter of raindrops helps disguise the sound of twigs snapping under your feet. The howls are closer and closer, until you can tell they are just ahead of you. Lying down among the wet leaves, you crawl over a small bank, staying hidden in the underbrush.

On the other side of the bank is a small clearing in the forest, and you can hardly believe what you see there. An enormous grey wolf sits among the bracken. No less than six dachshund pups sit in front of it, in a semicircle facing the wolf. The wolf's long, silver muzzle tilts up to the sky, and another ululating howl echoes through the forest. The puppies all howl along eagerly. It's like they're having singing lessons!

You never expected to deal with a situation like this. What should you do?

43. Call and whistle to the pups.

14. Howl along with the pack.

47. Find Dumpster #3.

You keep on going. You know your idea was a good one, and there are more restaurants in town to check.

Your determination and persistence are rewarded when you find two puppies sniffing around the fast food place's dumpster, scarfing up dropped French fries. You return proudly to hand in the pair of scavenging pups!

You have proved your detective skills and rescued two puppies! Good work!

END

48. Catch the puppies!

Oh, no! You charge toward the puppies! They seem to think you are joining them on their skunk hunt, and they rush forward. You catch them both, just before they reach the skunk!

But the skunk decides it has had enough. It turns on you and cuts loose with a blast of odorous musk! You and the pups are doused in skunk stink!

The skunk scurries away into the bushes, giving you a dirty look over its shoulder. You trudge home to wash the stinky pups and your stinky self in tomato juice. Congratulations! You have successfully found and rescued two of the missing puppies! And the smell of victory will cling to you for a very long time.

END

49. Dumpster 2: Grab the Critter!

You fling open the lid of the dumpster and make a grab for the furry critter! It isn't a skunk! It's not a puppy, either. Three frightened and angry stray cats squall and scramble out of your reach, kicking slimy, gross garbage all over you, and scratching you as they escape your grip!

As the cats run away, a puppy comes out of nowhere, barking happily and chasing the fleeing cats! As fast as you can, you chase after the puppy! You have to run five blocks down the busiest sidewalk in town, covered with garbage, before you catch the puppy!

You have successfully rescued one lost puppy! You try to feel good about that as you go home, scratched and sore and smelling like a dumpster, while the puppy wiggles furiously in your arms, trying to escape and get back to its cat chasing. Maybe you don't like animals after all.

END

50. Up the haunted stairs.

You cautiously climb the stairs. The steps feel old and creaky under your feet, but still sturdy. You hold tight to the bannister, and your hand is soon black with dust and tickly with cobwebs. You follow the flickering motion you noticed from below. At the top of the stairs, you see a partially open door. Beyond it, something soft, white and ghostly moves back and forth in the dim light.

34. Grab the spooky white thing!

83. Wait and try to figure it out.

51. No thanks to time travel.

You shake your head with regret. "Sorry, I have a mission of my own. And I kind of think I'm probably not allowed to time travel without asking permission first."

The old lady nods. "I respect your decision. And I wish you good luck on your mission. And I wish me good luck on mine." She climbs into the seat of the weird contraption and starts pulling levers and pressing buttons. Before your eyes, the strange vehicle shimmers, then dissolves into a curtain of sparkling golden lights.

She is gone.

You continue your puppy search. By the end of the day, your diligent detective work has uncovered the location of three puppies! You are very proud of yourself.

You stop by the strange old lady's house a few days later, but nobody answers your knock on the door. You wonder if she's just still

busy time travelling, or if something went terribly wrong with her time journey. Maybe your choice not to go along saved your life.

All the same, you can't help wondering what you missed...

END

52. Run from the Vampire Puppies!

You drop out of the tree and hit the ground running. Behind you, you hear a burst of flapping wings and shaken leaves. A flock of vampire pups is chasing you, flying through the air like a cloud of pure nightmare! You run as fast as you can, but they can fly even faster! You can tell they are getting closer!

You look for a safe place to get away from the danger! There is a pizza takeout place nearby, and the library across from it seems to be open as well.

92. Run to the pizza place.

7. Run to the library.

53. Fight the Vampire!

You charge at the vampire with your fists clenched! He doesn't look scared. He just looks into your eyes.

You slow down. You don't feel like fighting any more, for some reason. You just stare back at the vampire, as if your brain has turned to cotton stuffing. You can't think what to do. You can't even think that you can't think. You can only stand there with your mouth hanging open as the vampire smiles and walks up to you.

"I was wondering what to feed my new minions," the vampire says. There is a stirring of wings in the rafters, and some small, bat-winged shapes flutter down. You realize that these are some of the missing puppies. But they have changed. Their fangs are extra long and shiny. And their eyes glow red, staring at you.

Like the vampire's eyes. He is close now, and leans over you, drawing back his lips from sharp fangs. "Thank you for your timely visit, Breakfast!"

You have met a horrible end! Maybe go find a better one.

END

54. Find another dumpster

You quickly leave the first dumpster and head for the restaurant across town. It's not as fancy a place, but you guess a puppy won't be too fussy about whether the garbage is prime quality or not. As you approach the second dumpster, you hear rustling inside it again. Jackpot! It can't be another skunk. No way. The odds are totally against it. Right?

49. Quickly open the lid and catch the animal!

19. Open the lid slowly and peek inside.

55. The side street

You put your hands in your pockets and quickly stroll away along the narrow side street for a while, and turn down an alley. Old, abandoned warehouses are on both sides of you, with concrete foundations. Suddenly you hear a whimper. It sounds like a puppy, but it seems to echo. You call and whistle, and soon the whining turns into yapping. The puppy does not sound happy at all.

You follow the sound to an even narrower gap between two buildings. There is a hole in the concrete wall of the warehouse, and the puppy noises seem to be coming from there. The pup must have gone inside and is now trapped somewhere!

You look at the hole in the wall. It is jagged, and the ends of twisted metal posts stick out of the concrete. But you think you just might be able to fit through it.

29. Go through the hole

67. Go and get help.

56. Something amazing.

You are really curious. Is there something even more amazing in this house than a ghost? Treasure? Something magical? You slowly put the puppy down.

"Weeeeelll," you say slowly. "You'll have to show me what it is. I'll leave the puppy, if it really is amazing enough."

"That's fair," the boy says. "Come this way. It's SO amazing!" He and the girl run, laughing, through the house. You follow. You are much slower. There are fallen boards in your way and rotted holes in the

wooden floor. You have to be careful. Also, you keep trying to brush spider webs out of your way, and all the dust makes you sneeze.

“What a slowpoke!” the girl laughs. Come on, just a little bit further! It’s up here! And it’s amazing!” The ghosts are standing at the top of a narrow stairway, beside a dark door. You climb up, sneezing and trying to rub spiders out of your hair. “Through there.”

The ghosts watch eagerly as you pull open the door. It creaks as if it hasn’t been opened for a hundred years. On the other side of it is a dark attic full of old crates and trunks. It’s dark, because all the windows have had boards nailed over them. Every now and then, you see a flash of lightning through the boards. There is now a thunderstorm going on outside, and you can hear waves of heavy rain beating down on the roof.

“Over in that corner,” the boy points. You stumble across the cluttered floor. Drops of rain fall on you from leaks in the roof, and you think you hear the flutter of bat wings. You finally arrive in the far corner. You see...

Nothing. You spin as you hear a creak behind you. The door slams shut. You run to the door, tripping and falling over the rubble. You grab the handle, but the door won’t open! “Help!” you yell. “I can’t get out! Let me out!”

“Don’t worry,” says the girl. “You’ll be able to get out soon.”

“Right,” says the boy. “Soon you’ll be a ghost, and you’ll be able to walk right through that door. Or even the walls.”

You shake the door handle until it falls off as the girl continues, “And when you’re a ghost, too, we can play together all day...you and us and the puppy...forever.”

Together they say, “It will be...AMAZING!”

END

57. Ignore the ghosts.

“I don’t believe in ghosts,” you say. You pick up the puppy calmly, turn around, and walk down the stairs.

“Wait! Wait!” The ghosts rush past you down the stairs. You only feel a cold wind as they pass. “Don’t take our puppy away! It’s so lonely here with just the two of us!”

You keep walking toward the door. You hear them crying behind you. It must be terrible to be all alone in a haunted house forever...even if you are a couple of ghosts.

76. Just keep walking.

77. Let the ghosts keep the puppy.

58. Stay in hiding

As the assistant cook takes the pups away, you stay hiding. What is going to happen to the pups? Are they going to be cooked? Are they being taken somewhere to be goblin pets? You don't know...but you do know that getting yourself caught and maybe killed won't help them. You can try to find where they have gone later.

You wait in your hiding place as the cook goes on cooking. The big soup pot gives off a very strange, but delicious smell.

After a while, the assistant returns with a bucket, which he hands to the cook. The cook pours it into the soup pot. You really, really hope that was not a bucket of wiener dog meat.

After stirring the pot for a while longer, the cook starts adding what look like spices. A large handful of dried leaves is crumpled and crushed over the pot, and dropped in. Some roots are grated over the pot. Then the cook grabs a box off a shelf, and starts shaking it over the pot. Clouds of some sort of dust fill the air. The dust reaches you, and you can smell that it's pepper! Your eyes start to burn. Your nose starts to twitch.

And then—you sneeze!

It's only a little sneeze, muffled in your hands, but the goblin notices, and comes to look. You crouch down behind the box as far as you can, but he looks over and stares at you, a big rolling pin in his hand! But when he sees you, his expression seems to soften. He goes away, and comes back, handing you...a big bowl of soup.

25. Eat the soup.

91. Run away!

59. Call the Vampire Wiener Pups

The pups have been transformed into something creepy and horrible...but underneath it, they are still the missing puppies, and your job is to find them. Nervously, you whistle and rattle the treat bag.

Bat-winged pups fly from every direction! Startled, you drop some puppy treats, and the vampire pups race to catch them out of the air. Soon you are playing a game—throwing treats and watching the pups fly to chase after them.

When you run out of treats, you climb down the tree and walk home. The pups follow you, some on the ground, some in the air. You think you have around fifteen of them, though they are kind of hard to count, since they are always running or flying.

In the morning, you take the pups back to the kennel. Strangely, the people there don't want them anymore. They take one look at the flock of canine vampires, lock the door, and yell at you that you can keep them.

You did not rescue any pups, but you have a bunch of new pets! At night you take them out walking on leashes as they fly above your head. During the day, they sleep in the basement. How odd, you think sometimes. This is not how you imagined your mission ending. But you definitely have the coolest pets in your town. Maybe in the whole world.

END

60. Time travel!

"Where...I mean, when are we going to?" you ask as you climb into the strange vehicle.

"I don't know yet," she says. "We will home in on the tracking signal from my other machine, and follow where it went. Maybe someday I'll add a feature so I can tell when and where it is when I'm not in it. Yeah, that would be a good idea."

She slaps another circuit board into place, and calls out to you, "Push the red button."

You find the button and hesitate. "It won't take off with me right away to the other time, will it?"

"Of course not. I think not. It shouldn't. Probably not." Not very reassured, you still press the button. The dashboard lights up, and the time car starts crackling and humming. Then it floats up off the ground! Music starts playing from the speakers. It's a weird tune that sounds like people beating on hollow trees, smacking rocks together, hooting, and blowing grass whistles.

"Good!" says the old lady, hopping into the driver's seat. "Looks like everything's back in working order! Hope you like Australopithecus

music, I always make new recordings when I visit.” She flips some switches and pulls some levers. “Hold on to your socks!” she says as she stomps on the accelerator. A glowing, flickering light engulfs the car, and the humming grows louder, and the whole car shakes. You hold on tight, wondering if you should have attached your seat belt. When you grope around looking for one, you can’t find it.

“Does this car have any safety features?” you shout over the sound of the time engine and the prehistoric music. “Air bags? Restraints? Seat belts?”

“Nope!” she yells back cheerfully.

“None at all? What happens if we crash?”

“We die!”

You clutch at the side of the car. “Don’t crash, then,” The car gives another, even more violent shake before stopping. The humming noise whines away into silence, and the bubble of light that surrounds you fades and disappears.

But the music continues. All around the time car is a wilderness of strange plants and huge ferns. The air is hot and sticky, as if you’ve walked into a greenhouse. Nearby you can see another time car. It looks much more modern and serious than the one you are in, and a lot less like something that has been slapped together out of junk and old parts.

“Oh, dear. It looks like the late Cretaceous.” The old lady jumps out of the time car and goes to the other one. You join her. “It looks like I left it on automatic, and some animal tripped the starter,” she says. “Oops.”

You see muddy puppy prints on the seat and floor of the time car!

From somewhere nearby, you hear a deep, grumbling growl from something that sounds very, very big.

“I think it’s time to go home,” says your time traveling friend.

72. Back to the Future!

13. Prehistoric Puppy hunt!

61. Investigate the glowing eyes.

“That’s nothing normal,” you think nervously. But you are brave, and climb out further on a branch, moving a cluster of leaves

aside. You finally see what has been watching you. Hanging upside down from a branch is what you first think is an enormous bat, until you realize...it's a dachshund puppy. With bat wings. All dogs have fangs, but when the pup yawns, its teeth look especially long, sharp and gleaming.

The lost pups are now...vampire wiener dogs!

59. Call the puppies.

52. Try to run home.

62. Find another way.

The river looks dangerous. You hunt around the cave for another way. After a while, you find a tiny, narrow crevice in the rocks, just wide enough for you to squeeze through. You decide to see where it goes. The crevice eventually widens into a tunnel

This is a very rough and craggy tunnel. You have to climb through it more than walk. More than once, you come to a place where a deep drop suddenly appears in front of you. There are no paths or signs of life, and you wonder if anyone else has ever been here.

The cave turns into a honeycomb of tunnels leading in all directions! You choose a tunnel that seems like an easier path than the others, but it soon becomes difficult. There are more branching tunnels, and you keep choosing the one that looks safest, wondering if you are going in circles, or if you will ever find the way out...or the way back.

You have become used to hearing nothing but the drip of water and the sound of your own breathing and footsteps, when you are surprised by a high-pitched whine. You follow the sound, and discover a dachshund puppy. It stands up, tail wagging and happy to see you, but it is holding one paw up off the ground. Looking up, you can see the cloudy sky. Raindrops come down, hitting your face. The pup must have fallen down through a deep hole and hurt itself.

The way up looks difficult and slippery with rain, but it's rough, with lots of hand and footholds.

27. Climb up the shaft.

81. Keep looking for another way out.

63. Find a place to hide

There are torches burning everywhere, lighting up the open central area. You keep to the shadows as you look for a more permanent place to rest until things quiet down, dodging to hide behind stalagmites and junk piles whenever a goblin gets too close.

You have almost forgotten the missing pups, when you hear whining and high-pitched yapping coming from a dark side tunnel. You go down the tunnel and find yourself in a cave with blazing fires in little alcoves along one wall. You stay on the opposite side of the room—there are lots of things to hide behind. Barrels and big jars and jugs and crates and huge pots. Strings of garlic and onions and sausages hang from wooden brackets on the ceiling, and pots and pans hang from the walls. An old goblin stirs a huge, round pot hanging over the fire. This must be the goblins' kitchen, and he must be the cook.

In a basket near the fire, five dachshund pups are just curling up to rest. They seem to be spattered with flour and batter and other kitchen slop. As the goblin pours some weird green fluid into the soup pot, some spills on the floor. The pups run to lap it up, getting splashed with more of the green goo. They are a mess.

The goblin cook sighs and puts the burping pups back in their basket, then shouts something you don't understand. "Snadgart! Trazz ketzix maato u slongitts!"

A big, burly goblin comes into the kitchen. He wears a stained apron, and you guess he is the cook's assistant. The cook picks up the basket of puppies and hands them to the other goblin, speaking in the strange language again. The assistant turns to leave the room with the puppies.

82. Grab the pups and run!

58. Stay in hiding.

64. Blocking Buzz's Bike

"Get out of the way!" Buzz bellows again as you stand in the middle of the path, dodging from side to side as he tries to steer around you. At the last second, you dodge to the side, but then you ram Buzz with your shoulder as he whizzes past. Buzz's bike goes out of control off the side of the trail, and smashes into a tree stump, sending Buzz flying over the handlebars and into a big mud puddle.

You see that he isn't too badly hurt, as he gets up and goes back to get his crashed bike. He picks it up, and you can see that the front wheel is bent. Really bent. Like a taco shell.

Red-faced and furious, Buzz throws his bike to the ground and shoves you. "You wrecked my bike!" he shouts.

You shove him back. "You should watch where you're going!" Pretty soon, the two of you are rolling on the muddy ground, punching each other. Buzz has a lot more practice fighting than you do, and it's clear who is going to win this fight. After you give up, he smacks you in the head with a few extra-soggy mud pies and heads for home, carrying his twisted mountain bike.

A little later, you pick your bruised and mud-covered self up off the ground and drag your sorry feet home. It seems that fighting Buzz was more important to you than your mission of puppy rescue. Maybe your next detective job will go better. At least you didn't let Buzz push you around.

END

65. Get help for Buzz

You quietly leave the hungry bear to sniff longingly at the bacon-scented Buzz up in the tree. You run at top speed back up the trail and into town. "Help!" you yell to someone you see walking their dog. "A kid's on the trail and a bear has him trapped up a tree!" The dog-walker seems to think you're playing a prank at first, but since you continue to insist it's the truth, they call the police.

You and the dog-walker wait by the head of the trail. Soon the county sheriff drives up. He gets out of the car and asks if you are the one who made the call. You tell him the whole story. He nods. "How far down the trail?" he asks. "How long ago was this?" You're not sure, exactly. You don't have a phone or a watch.

Then a couple of game wardens drive up in a big pick-up truck marked Forest Service, with a huge cage on the back. The sheriff climbs aboard, and they speed off down the trail...without asking you along! As the dog-walker goes on with their walk, you run down the trail, following the cloud of dust the Forest Service truck left behind.

By the time you catch up, the bear is sound asleep and Buzz is back on the ground. The game wardens put away their tranquilizer gun, and hoist the big bear onto the back of the truck and into the cage. The

sheriff lectures Buzz about roaming through the woods smelling like a bear snack.

You admire the huge, strong bear. It is much less scary asleep and in a cage. You are almost tempted to reach in and feel its rough fur.

After making sure you're both okay, the game wardens and sheriff drive away to take the bear deep into the wilderness, so it won't come back. You are left to walk home along the trail with a surly, scowling Buzz. He doesn't thank you for rescuing him.

"Hey, Buzz," you say. "I couldn't believe how fast you ran! That was amazing! You should join the track team." Buzz turns to glare at you, fists clenched up, and you say, "No, really! I mean it!"

"Oh, yeah? Let's see how fast YOU can run!" he growls, and lunges at you. You run all the way back to town (again!) Buzz doesn't catch up to you, but you don't think he was trying.

He does join the track team, though. And he wins a lot of races. After your school's track team goes to state, Buzz becomes a school hero. And he starts being nicer to people. Especially you. Maybe he was grateful for your rescue after all.

You didn't find any of the missing puppies, but you did have an interesting adventure!

END

66. Save Buzz from the river.

Buzz might be mean and horrible, but you're not. And after all, he did wade into the river to try to rescue the puppies.

"Hold on to the board!" you call. Buzz hangs on tight to the plank bridge as you get a good grip and start pulling the other end as the puppies frolic around your feet. The board is old, and splinters dig into your hands. You lean all your weight into the pull, but Buzz doesn't seem to budge. You keep pulling. "Try to wiggle your feet!" you shout.

"I AM trying!" Buzz yells back. You take a deep breath and try again.

Finally, Buzz comes loose! You fall on your back in the wet grass as Buzz lets go of the board and half-swims, half-crawls ashore. Both of you lie there catching your breath, with rain drops splattering down on your faces and puppies jumping on you and licking your nose.

“Aw, man!” Buzz says, suddenly sitting up and looking at his feet. You look, too. They are covered with mud...and nothing else. “My shoes and socks are still down in the mud! I am going to be in so much trouble...”

“Well, you could try to get them out, but I’m not pulling you out if you get stuck again,” you say, looking at your hands. They are scratched and bloody and full of splinters. You see Buzz’s hands look about the same.

Buzz decides not to go fishing for his lost shoes. The two of you walk home, wet, muddy and exhausted, but with four pups running behind you. “I guess you found the puppies,” you say to Buzz. “You get the reward.”

“Let’s just say we found them together,” Buzz says. “And...you don’t have to tell anyone you saved me from being stuck in the mud. Deal?”

“Deal!” You would shake hands, except for the splinters.

You and Buzz are the first to return with any puppies, and you rescued four of them. You are heroes! Better yet, you are now friends. You and Buzz have many more great adventures together, and he stops being so mean. (But he does get grounded for two weeks for losing his shoes.)

END

67. Go find help

The hole looks dangerous and probably a little too narrow for you—you have grown a lot the past year. You run back to a busier street and borrow a phone. You call your coach. She comes to meet you by the concrete hole where you’ve been gently calling the crying pup.

“I think this is a job for professionals,” she says. She gets on the phone again, and before long, the street is full of police cars and fire trucks. A couple of firemen break in the concrete wall, and enter the enlarged hole to bring out the pup, as a news crew films the rescue. They also take a film of you holding the happy little creature, which covers your face with puppy kisses as you are interviewed. It’s a slow news day, and every local channel carries the story.

Congratulations, you have not only rescued a very grateful puppy, but you are a local hero!

END

68. Run away from the angry wolf!

The wolf's eyes blaze in the night. You do not wait for it to get near—you turn and run! Back to the trail! Through the rain and darkness! Back to the town! Back to your home! You jump in bed, shivering under the covers. Wolves are very fast, and you are lucky this one did not chase you. You decide you have had enough detective adventures for one day, and maybe forever.

As time goes by, people start to tell strange stories about the forest near your town. They say that people who walk the trail at night hear eerie howling, and see strange creatures flickering through the shadows. You keep your mouth shut. Nobody needs to know about the night you ran all the way home in terror. The puppies are long gone and grown, and now, your local forest is inhabited by a fierce pack of wiener wolves!

END

69. The North tunnel.

You head north, toward the sound of rushing water. The stone walls of the tunnel drip with moisture. Eventually, the tunnel opens into a wide cavern. You can see another tunnel on the other side, but the cavern is divided by a rushing underground river. The water seems fast and deep, churning into white froth where it hits boulders and stalagmites, probably swollen by all the water from the rainstorm. You don't see any way to get to the other side of the cavern except across the river.

36. Swim the underground river.

62. Look for another way out.

70. Call the puppies

You have to stop the pups from getting skunked! "PUPPIES!" you shout, trying to sound as happy and excited and dizzy as one of those crazy adult actors on a TV program for toddlers. "PUPPIES PUPPIES PUPPIES PUPPIES PUPPIES!" you squeal. The pups look at you, interested but confused, and clearly not sure whether you are more fun than a skunk hunt. The skunk looks at you like you are out of your mind, but you don't care what a skunk thinks of you.

“Whee, puppies! Who’s a good dog? You are! You are!” You shake the bag of dog treats, and that seems to make up their mind. The puppies bounce toward you, tails wagging and tongues hanging out. You feed them puppy treats, then pick them up and hold them tight. The skunk shakes its head as if to say, “Now I’ve seen everything.” It waddles off to go on minding its own business as you carry away the two puppies you have rescued from a fate stinkier than death. Success!

END

71. Give the puppy treats to the cats.

Without the treats, it might be harder to catch the puppies, if you find them. But these poor cats might not have eaten for days. You toss them the puppy treats, and they pounce on them and crunch them, purring loudly.

You turn away, heading to the next dumpster. Before you get far, you feel something rub against your leg. You look down. The three kitties have followed you, and are now rubbing against your legs and purring. “Shoo, go away, I don’t have any more treats!” you say. But the kitties follow you, purring.

You give up the search. You take the cats home with you and buy them some cat food. You brush them and clean them up. They want to follow you everywhere you go.

You did not rescue any of the missing puppies. But you have rescued some homeless cats. They will be your friends for life.

END

72. Back to the Future—NOW!

You hear the earth shake, as if a huge foot has stomped the ground nearby, and the strange, rumbling growling in the air again. It seems to vibrate through all your bones.

“What is that noise?” you ask as you get into the new time car. Your time traveling friend runs back to the old time machine and presses a few buttons. It disappears in a shimmer of light as she runs back to join you.

“It’s a T-Rex,” she says. “Nasty creatures to deal with. Very bitey.” She presses some buttons and twists some dials, and the car is enveloped in light, just as you see a real, live, tyrannosaurus stomp into the clearing! The vision fades out, as the time car hums. It runs much

more smoothly than the old model, and it's quicker, too. You find yourself back in the old lady's back yard. The older, empty time car shows up about five minutes later. "Thanks for the back-up," the old lady says. "You kept a cool head, obeyed orders, and didn't cause any trouble. You'd be welcome to join me on future time trips. Maybe I'll let you pick the destination next time. Ancient Greece? Aztec city? Mars colony? Atlantis? Think about it. I'm Mrs. Crumplesnark, by the way. Ephiginia P. Crumplesnark."

You did not find any puppies. But that seems unimportant now. You have an amazing set of wild adventures ahead of you!

END

73. Right-hand trail: Into the wilderness.

You walk down the trail into the wilderness. The trees and bushes grow thick here, and the path is twisty and rocky. Before long, you can't even see any sign of the nearby town. Your whistles and calls seem to echo into the empty woods, and the only answers you get are the occasional flutter of a bird's wings or the pop of a falling twig hitting the earth. The light gets dim. Between the thick leaves above, you can see dark clouds filling the sky.

Then a light spatter of rain taps onto the leaves, and soon onto you. You carry on bravely. As long as you stick to the path, you won't get lost. Just a little wet, maybe.

Then a new sound makes your hair stand up and a shiver runs along your spine. It is a long, wailing howl. Soon more voices join in the howling. It sounds nearby.

46. Investigate the howling

26. Run away into the woods!

74. Talk to the ghosts.

"Hi," you say. "Sorry I came into your house. I was just looking for this little guy." You pick up the puppy.

"Awww, don't take our puppy!" the girl ghost pleads.

"It's not yours, it belongs to someone," you say. "I have to take it home."

"Yeah, but it came to us," says the ghost boy. "It's ours now!"

“Please,” says the girl. “We’re so lonely...it’s just been us here for years and years and years.”

“If you leave the puppy here, I will show you something really, really amazing,” says the boy with a sly smile.

56. Go see something amazing.

10. Take the pup and leave.

75. Out in the back yard

No way are you setting foot inside that creepy house. You sneak through the narrow space between the overgrown hedge and the splintery wooden wall. Long branches seem to stretch out to scratch at you. You hold your arms up to protect your face and push past.

The back yard is just as creepy as you expected. Tall hedges surround the small space, and a huge, dark old tree leans ominously over a private graveyard, blocking most of the light. A handful of gravestones stands above the uncut grass, so old and weathered any writing that had once been engraved on them is long worn away. At the end of the row of headstones is an empty grave.

40. You climb the tree to get a better look at the surroundings.

21. Investigate the open grave.

76. Just keep walking.

You ignore the pleading of the two children. “There’s no such thing as ghosts,” you say firmly as you walk down the stairs and out the door. The two ghostly children running after you pleading and begging must be some kind of trick, or your crazy imagination, or something. The dachshund puppy shivers in your arms and snuggles close, as if it’s happy to be rescued. “Don’t worry,” you comfort the little animal. “There are no such things as ghosts.” You walk straight back to the park and return the lost puppy to its owners. You are the first one to have rescued a missing puppy! You are a hero! You appear on the local news when they come to do a story about the great puppy hunt.

“There’s no such thing as ghosts,” you repeat to yourself that night when you go to bed. “There’s no such thing as ghosts. There’s no such thing as ghosts!”

You don’t believe in ghosts. But you sleep with the nightlight on...for the rest of your life.

END

77. Let the ghosts keep the puppy.

It must be terrible to be dead and a ghost, trapped forever in a haunted house with only your ghost sibling, you think. “Well,” you say, looking down at the shivering puppy. “I guess it can’t hurt if just ONE puppy never returns to the kennel.”

You go down the stairs. The puppy whimpers and tries to follow you, but you close the door behind you. “Don’t worry,” you say. “I’ll bring food and water every day.” You feel sorry for the puppy and its old owner, but even more sorry for the ghosts.

You give up on the puppy hunt, and scrape together enough money to buy some puppy food. You go back that night and leave a bowl of food and a bowl of water. Every day, you stop at the haunted house to feed the pup. The ghost children run and play with the puppy, and it seems to get used to its weird, haunted life.

Months later, you are coming to bring the daily dog food, but are shocked to see that the house is gone. The yard is full of construction vehicles, and the haunted house is nothing but a big pile of broken boards and cement chunks. They are already pouring a new concrete basement in the hole in the ground where the old house was, and offloading piles of new lumber. Oh, no—what if they tore the house down with the puppy inside?

There is a man standing in the yard wearing a hard hat and vest, who seems to be giving the orders. “Excuse me,” you yell to him over the roar of construction engines. As he turns to look at you, you are relieved to see he’s holding the ghosts’ puppy in one arm. The puppy seems happy to be with someone that can hold him.

“Is this your dog?” the man asks. You shake your head no. “I might keep him, if nobody else claims him” he says. “It looks like he was trapped in the house. I just bought the place. Tore down that old wreck, and now I’m building my dream home. They say that old house was haunted. Maybe I’ll name this little guy Phantom.” He laughs as he scratches the puppy’s head, and the puppy wiggles and licks his face.

As you walk away, you see a flicker in the shadow of the hedge. Barely visible, the two ghost children stand watching the construction. “I’m sorry,” you say. “You lost your home.”

“We’re not sorry,” says the boy. “This is more excitement than we’ve had for a hundred years!”

“That man said he might build a swimming pool!” the girl says, hopping up and down. “I’ve never haunted a swimming pool before!” You stand with your friends for a while, watching the builders work and haul away the wreck of the old house. The construction guy seems nice. You hope he will be happy to have a couple of ghost kids coming to live in his new dream house!

END

78. Open the coffin lid.

This has to be a joke, you think. You lift the lid of the coffin and look inside. A man is lying there, asleep. He has very pale skin, a long sharp nose...and long sharp teeth, which you see when he yawns and his eyes flutter open.

The man sits up, looking confused and annoyed. He’s wearing a cape—how strange. Then he sees you and looks even more annoyed. “What does a vampire have to do to get a decent day’s sleep anymore?” he growls. “If it isn’t noisy puppies jumping all over my lid, it’s annoying, curious children. But...at least breakfast has been delivered.” With a cruel smile, the vampire floats up out of his coffin and gently lands to stand looming over you. You have no weapons on you...except your fists...or maybe...

53. Fight the vampire!

28. Throw puppy treats at the vampire!

79. Stay in the river

Climbing up that ridge will be too hard, with the current pulling at you. The river is going somewhere. Sooner or later, it’s bound to come to a place where it will be easier to climb out.

You keep going with the flow, as the swift water tumbles you among the rocks. You just concentrate on keeping your head above water, and breathing whenever you can.

Suddenly, the word seems to drop you. You are falling down a vast, underground waterfall. Your stomach flutters and your arms wave wildly. Then you hit an underground lake, hard, and the falling water above you hammers you down to the bottom. You struggle to rise to the surface again, but the current is still pulling you along. Suddenly you are pulled down a narrow tunnel. You try to get your head above water, but

your head just smacks against the low ceiling. You keep struggling to get to the air, but you can't reach any.

Your lungs finally let go of the breath you've been holding, and breathe in. But there is no air. You inhale cold water. You gasp and struggle, but it's no use. Soon you don't have the strength to fight any more.

You will never see the sunlight again.

END

80. Follow the skunk

It's not every day you get a chance to observe a wild animal. You keep your distance and slowly walk along behind the skunk. It doesn't seem to be aggressive. It mostly ignores you. Now and then it stops and looks back at you with a suspicious stare. You stop, too, and keep your distance, watching as the skunk ambles along, turning over rocks and sniffing for juicy bugs underneath, or examining pieces of litter for anything edible.

You are enjoying your peaceful wildlife walk when you hear a yap of excitement. You've almost forgotten about the dachshund pups, and there's one looking eagerly at the skunk. It seems to be ready for a game of Chase The Critter. Another pup comes bounding up to join it, and they both start running toward the skunk. The skunk looks alarmed, and turns toward the onrushing puppies, starting to stomp its feet. This could end badly!

70. Call the pups.

48. Catch the pups before they reach the skunk.

81. Keep searching the cave.

The shaft is straight up, and you're pretty sure any attempt to climb it—especially carrying a pup—will end with you splattering on the stone floor after a terrible fall. So you pick up the injured puppy, and spend a few minutes petting and comforting it before you continue exploring the cave.

You make your way through more tunnels and more caverns, some filled with amazing and dazzling displays of stalagmites, stalactites and stone draperies, some plain and filled with chunky boulders. Some echoingly vast, some so narrow you can barely squeeze through. Some lonely and empty, some filled with flocks of bats that drop from their

upside-down perches to wheel in a panic as your footsteps echo through their caves. There are pools of water, and you are eventually so thirsty you drink from them, though you are never quite hungry enough to try eating the pale, white, blind fish that swim in the pools.

Your flashlight batteries finally die, leaving you in complete and utter darkness. You go on, because there is nothing else you can do, expecting to fall down some unseen bottomless pit at any moment. You find your way by feeling along the rock with your hands and feet. In time, you learn to find passages by listening to the echoes of your footsteps. You forget what it is to see the light, because your whole world has turned to darkness.

When you see something, you almost don't know what it is. It has been so long since you saw anything. But there is a strange paleness in your vision, and you move toward it.

You find an opening to the world above, under the huge roots of a fallen tree. You can barely stand the brightness, and part of you wants to retreat back into the cave. But you are half-starved, and the puppy you have been carrying is even worse off, sick and miserable.

You stagger out into the light. You hear an almost forgotten sound—the sound of a car passing along a road. You walk toward it. Eventually, you come to a country highway passing through an unfamiliar forest. There is not much traffic, but after a few minutes, you hear another car approaching, and try to wave for them to stop. They keep going, and so do the next couple of cars.

Finally, a family stops. They ask if you are all right. You are not. They drive you to the nearest town. It is not your town. You are taken to the police station, then to the hospital. The puppy is taken to the vet.

Your family comes to visit you in the hospital. You have been missing for days, and you ended up miles from home! Everyone is amazed at your story. You realize how lucky you are to have finally found your way out. You could have been trapped forever, lost underground. Nobody would have ever known what happened to you.

You have rescued a puppy, and you have survived! The kennel owners feel so bad about what you went through that they allow you to keep the puppy. It is good to have a friend who went through your terrible adventure with you, and who knows what it is to be trapped underground, away from the light. You name her Darkness.

END

82. Grab the pups and run

You can't let the goblins take the puppies away from your sight—you might never find them again! You jump up out of your hiding place with a yell and grab the basket! The astonished goblin gapes at you stupidly as you jerk it out of his hands and run! But the goblin cook is standing in your way

42. Dodge the cook

89 Fight the cook

83. Wait and Watch

You hold still, staring at the waving, white thing behind the door. It doesn't seem to be moving anywhere...just fluttering.

Then a little black puppy pushes out from under it. The pup turns around, sinks its teeth into the white thing, and pulls. A curtain rod crashes down to the floor, revealing a tall window with broken glass! The wavy thing was only a curtain.

You quickly scoop up the scared puppy, who seems very happy to see you. You call and whistle to see if there are any more, but no other pups come running. Your whistle echoes strangely through the empty house, and you suddenly feel nervous, as if somebody or something is watching you.

It's time to leave, you decide. You make your way back down the stairs and home. In the morning, you can return the lost puppy to its owner. Tonight, you will have a furry friend to cuddle with.

Congratulations! You have rescued one puppy!

END

84. The Grocery Store dumpster.

There is only one grocery store in your town, and you head for it at once. You make your way to the back of the store, past the loading dock where a refrigerator truck is unloading pizzas. The dumpster sits on a broken patch of asphalt, on a small side street hardly anyone ever uses.

You aren't the only one interested in the dumpster, though. Standing on a pile of crates, an old lady in a white lab coat is rummaging through the trash, muttering to herself. You don't know whether she's also looking for the puppies, or if she's broke and looking for food. It seems rude to ask.

“Wilted lettuce leaves, mushy potatoes,” you hear her grumble. “Nothing remotely technological.” Suddenly she looks up and notices you. “Oh. I suppose this looks terrible,” she says, her face turning red. “The truth is, I am desperate for some old electronics. I need spare parts in a hurry, and everything at the hardware store is just too new. I don’t suppose you’d know where I could find some old, discarded computers or cash registers or even calculators?”

55. Nope. It isn’t your problem. You have puppies to find.

17. It sounds like she needs help. You decide to help her.

85. Refuse to dig.

No way! You didn’t climb down that hole in the ground to become a goblin slave! You’re a detective, not a digger!

Goblins pick up picks and shovels. They start whacking away at the wall. You turn to walk away back up the tunnel.

The big goblin chief grabs you by the shoulder and says something that sounds angry. She points at the picks and shovels. You cross your arms stubbornly and shake your head.

The goblin smacks you on the side of the head! Your helmet falls off! The goblins gasp in fear and anger as they see your face. You are not one of them! At once, all the goblins pounce on you. You are tied up hand and foot, so you can hardly move, and are loaded onto one of the carts. Two of the little goblins pull you up the tunnel, with the big goblin and the diggers marching behind.

As you cross the large cavern, crowds of goblins gather to stare at you in shock and fear. The biggest goblin you have ever seen comes to look at you. He is wearing armor and carrying a club. He says something in Goblin, and the little cart goblins start pulling you toward one of the side tunnels.

You are locked in a cage. You are in goblin prison! There doesn’t seem to be any way out, and nobody seems friendly,

You wonder if goblin jail gives you time off for good behavior.

END

86. Get a head start!

Buzz may have a bike, but you're fast on your feet. You start running down the path, splashing through last night's puddles. Now and then, you slow down to look for puppy tracks, or to call and whistle. There's enough mud that you think Buzz's bike tires might just sink in and slow him down. After a while, the sky clouds over, and a few stray raindrops spatter on your face. Looks like more weather is on the way!

You come to a fork in the path. The left path runs along the edge of town. The right goes deep into the wilderness. Which do you choose?

12. The left path

73. The right path

87. Distract the T-Rex.

The puppies yelp in terror as you try to think of a way to lure the T-Rex away from the log.

When you were four years old, you used to sing a stupid song called the Dizzy Dinosaur Dance, and dance along to it. You know, because SOMEONE took a video and showed it off to everyone "Because it's soooo cuuuute!" You died with embarrassment every time.

But now, somehow, that's the only thing that comes to mind. You stand up in the ferns and sing at the top of your voice, "Dizzy Dinosaurs shine their scales! Dizzy Dinosaurs wag their tails! Is he Dizzy? Fizzy Wizzy! Dizzy Dinosaur never fails!" As you bellow out the song, you do the whole dance, with the hand-waving, the butt-wiggling, and the big, stupid prehistoric grin.

The T-Rex stops attacking the log and stares at you, jaw hanging open. Even the pups stop cowering in fear and look at you as if you're embarrassingly crazy and they're not sure they want to be rescued by you. Then the spell seems to break, as the T-Rex takes a step toward you.

You suddenly stop. You have distracted the dinosaur from the pups, all right. But who will distract it from you? You yell in terror and run. The pups run after you at the speed of light! With a growl of rage, the T-Rex charges!

It's way faster than you are. Luckily, the way back is full of big, thick ferns. You and the pups can dodge between them, but the T-Rex has to crash and stumble through.

“Hurry! Hurry!” yells the old lady as you run toward the time car. You leap in, followed by the pups. The T-Rex disentangles itself from the foliage and lunges at the time car, jaws open. You can see right down its throat as its jaws start to snap closed!

Then the prehistoric world disappears as the car is surrounded by light. The old lady slumps back in her seat, wiping sweat off her forehead. “That...was the stupidest, most reckless thing I’ve ever seen,” she says.

“Yeah, but I saved the pups. And we lived. All’s well that ends well,” you say cheerfully.

She doesn’t say anything more. You arrive back in your own time, and she glares at you as you get out of the car and take the puppies home.

You have rescued two puppies and successfully defied a T-Rex! But you never get to time travel again. You try visiting the old lady’s house the next day, but she will not answer the door, and the gate to the tall fence around her back yard is locked.

Oh, well. If you’ve seen one T-Rex, you’ve seen ‘em all. Right?

END

88. Keep on walking.

You look around a bit, but you don’t see anything. It was probably just a bird. You walk on and on down the trail, looking for puppy tracks, whistling, and calling until you’re hoarse. The rain comes down harder. Soon it’s too dark to see any tracks, even if they were there.

The trail comes to a road. You know you are really far from home, now. You’re wet and tired and hungry, and it’s darker still. Maybe this would be a good time to admit failure and head back home.

A pair of headlights come down the road, and a car stops nearby. You are about to head back up the trail, away from this new arrival, when a familiar voice calls out your name. “What are you doing out here this time of night, in the rain? Do you need a ride home?”

It’s a neighbor and a friend of your family, someone you know very well. You are very grateful to accept the ride home. Soon you are dropped off and quickly find yourself in a nice, hot shower, washing away all the mud and dirt from your trail hike. You did not find any of the puppies, but you are home, safe and warm and dry. And you can always try again tomorrow!

END

89. Fight the cook.

Clutching the basket of puppies, you ram the cook with your shoulder, trying to knock him over. The cook falls, but your legs get tangled up with his. You fall, too, spilling yelping puppies all over the floor, and knocking over the huge pot of soup!

You and the cook jump up quickly to avoid the wave of scalding soup that covers the floor! The puppies run away from the splashing soup, then run back and start licking it up eagerly.

A big, meaty hand grabs you by the scruff of the neck. The cook's assistant picks you up, glaring at you. The cook shouts at you angrily, and you are stuffed inside a large, empty pot. A lid slaps down over the opening, shutting out all the light. You try to push the lid open, but it is fastened tightly. You feel the pot being lifted and carried away. What now? Are you going to be cooked? You yell and kick at the metal walls of the pot. You make a lot of noise, but nothing changes.

After a while, you can feel the pot being put down. The lid opens, and a lot of unfriendly goblin faces look down at you. The cook seems to have brought you to some goblin guards. They wear armor and carry clubs and crude spears. The guards drag you out of the pot and clamp manacles around your wrists and ankles—heavy metal circlets with heavier metal chains attached. Then you are taken down to a dim cave with a stream running through it.

The guards stand by as the cook furiously points to a huge pile of dirty pots, pans and dishes heaped on the cave floor. Then he points at you and the stream. He points at the pots again, and hands you a scrub brush.

You get the idea. Kneeling beside the stream, you grab one of the dirty pots and start scrubbing it until it's clean. Then you grab the next one. And the next. The cook leaves with an expression of satisfaction, but the guards remain to watch as you wash the goblin dishes.

Sometimes, goblins come to take away the clean pots. Sometimes they come to deliver more dirty ones. The pile of dishes to wash never gets any smaller.

It looks like it's going to be your turn to wash the dishes...forever.

END

90. Keep calm and rest.

The worst thing to do when you're lost in the woods is to panic, you know. You find a fallen tree and sit down on the trunk to rest and pull yourself together. You have no food or water. Almost. If it's a real emergency, you have puppy treats! And they are in a plastic bag—you can use that to catch some rain water. But the most important thing is to find shelter, especially since the rain is coming down harder, and night is coming fast!

You pour the puppy treats into your pocket and hang the bag up on a tree to catch falling rain. Then you gather fallen branches. You stack them up against the old tree trunk, covering them with chunks of bark, clumps of grass and old leaves. You crawl underneath. It's not totally dry, but it keeps out some of the rain.

You are starting to fall asleep when a sound snaps you wide awake. Something is moving outside! You stay very quiet, not knowing what kind of wild animal might be lurking in the darkness. Then you see them—a pair of lost, miserable dachshund puppies snuffling toward you. Maybe they smell the puppy treats in your pocket! You softly call them, and give them the treats. The puppies seem happy to see you, and very happy to snuggle into your shelter. With their bodies pressed up against you, you soon feel warm and dry, and drift off to sleep.

You wake early in the morning. The sun is shining, rising in the east. You know the woods are north of town, so you must go south. You drink your little plastic bag of rain water, and set off walking, making sure to keep the rising sun on your left side. The puppies scamper along behind you. You see deer and rabbits as you walk quietly through the morning wood. The birds sing in the trees with wild gusto, sounding as happy as you are that the rain is over.

Then you hear something even better—voices calling your name! You shout back and run toward the search party that has come out looking for you. You have rescued two lost pups...and now, you are rescued, too!

END

91. Run away from the soup!

You can't eat the goblin's soup—it might have puppies in it! And it looks weird and gross! As the cook reaches out to you with the soup, you smack the bowl from underneath. Soup splatters all over the cook's face! You dodge away, running down the goblin tunnels, yelling, "YOU

EAT PUPPIES! YOU EAT PUPPIES!” Goblins stare at you in astonishment, but none of them try to stop you.

You finally find a way out and run in panic out into the forest, and then all the way home. You jump into your bed and cry yourself to sleep.

You wake up in the morning feeling miserable. Every time you think of your experiences in the goblin underground, you shudder in horror. You droop around the house all morning. When you finally open the front door to go outside, you find a surprise. There is a goblin basket with five puppies in it. They were not made into soup after all!

Your whole day feels brighter. Maybe the goblins aren't monsters after all. You feel kind of bad about how you misjudged them. Not only did they not eat the puppies, they brought them to you.

Of course...that means they know where you live...and how to find you. It might take you a while to decide exactly how comfortable you feel about that.

END

92. Shelter in the pizza shop!

You run into the pizza place and slam the door behind you! It looks like a quiet night here. The only person you see is a teenage girl at the counter, leaning on the cash register and staring at her phone. “Hello, what can I help you with tonight?” she says tonelessly, without looking up from the video she's watching. You can hear the music and cats meowing along with it.

“I, uh...I'm just getting out of the rain for a minute,” you say. Outside the window, you can see the flock of vampire pups settling in a small tree, their red eyes glowering at you hungrily.

The girl looks up. “You seem really young to be out this late alone,” she says. “Did your parents send you for a pizza? Garlic bread is on special today.”

Garlic bread? Suddenly you have a great idea. “Can I buy just garlic?” you ask. You know that vampires hate garlic.

“I don't think we sell garlic on its own,” the girl says.

“Please? It's all I need. I need as much as I can get!”

“Well, I think there's some expired stuff we were going to throw out,” she says. “I can let you have that.” She goes into the back room and

comes out with a mesh bag with a bunch of garlic heads in it. Some of them are starting to sprout leaves. Others have black, squishy spots on them.

“Great!” You grab the bag. “How much do I owe you?” You hope it’s not much. You think you might have a few coins in your pocket, but that’s all.

The girl waves her hand. “Just take it. We were going to throw it away anyhow. Are you all right to get home in this weather?”

“I am now!” you say. The pizza girl watches as you break up the garlic heads. You shove garlic cloves in your pockets, in your socks, in your shoes, even in your underwear. You even chew on a couple of the less rotten-looking ones. You are soon totally vampire-proofed!

“Get home safe,” the girl says as you step out the door. You look at the tree full of vampire pups. You walk slowly past. One or two of them dive toward you, but flutter right back to the tree. You are able to walk all the way home, and arrive safely!

All in all, it has been a pretty good day. You’ve had an adventure, you got home alive, and you know to never, never go near the haunted house again. On the down side, you did not succeed in finding any puppies, and you smell like garlic for weeks, no matter how much you wash. What lasts even longer than the smell is your new nickname at school: they call you the Garlic Dragon.

END

93. The Restaurant Dumpster

You head for the biggest restaurant in town, and walk around the back to find the dumpster. It’s a big, rusty tank in the parking lot, pushed halfway into the thicket of bushes that run along a small stream, with an empty lot and some woods beyond. The dumpster is full to the top, so that the lid does not close quite all the way. It smells terrible. You can hear something rummaging around in the trash, and catch a glimpse or two of something black and furry moving around between the trash bags.

The puppies don’t know you, and might try to run away. You wonder, what is the best way to get them out of the dumpster?

44. Fling open the lid and grab them quickly, before they can run!

15. Open the lid very slowly, so as not to scare them.

Thanks for playing!



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