

Chapter 1

Mango the Hollywood Dog



"I don't believe it!" Kaylia raked elegantly manicured fingernails through her chestnut curls and shrieked into her telephone. Her dark blue eyes were shining with excitement. "Mango will be over the moon!" Joyfully, she tossed her phone into the air. As it came down, it slipped through her fingers, hitting the wooden floor hard and splitting open. The battery slid under the couch.

"Mango, you'll never guess what's happened!" Kaylia kicked the broken phone aside, danced across the room, plucked a rather surprised little fawn-coloured Puggle

from where she was reclining on a bed of bright blue and turquoise silk cushions, and whirled the cuddly dog around in a full circle. "Mango, Mango, Mango! This is the best news ever! They're giving you your own star on the Walk of Fame! They want us to come down to Hollywood right away so you can add your paw print. There's going to be a big ceremony on Friday afternoon."

Mango snuffled her pleasure and her big brown eyes rolled excitedly. She knew all about the Walk of Fame. As Kaylia swung her around, she counted off her achievements. This had certainly been her year. First: her series *Puggle in a Muddle* had gone global and was being shown on television in countries as far afield as Romania and Australia. Second: she'd received the first Oscar ever awarded to a dog for her performance in the big screen version of *Puggle in a Muddle*. Third: Kaylia had released the most gorgeous range of doggie fashion garments, 'Mango's Hollyware' and these were now *de rigueur* for all Hollywood dogs.

Kaylia placed her back down on the floor and Mango felt a little dizzy after all the twirling. She panted a little, ran around in a small circle the opposite way, and felt so much better for it. Then, as she got her breath back, she thought of two more achievements. First: a children's birthday party was a complete failure unless the birthday cake had a beaming

picture of Mango beaming in her yellow life jacket etched into the icing. Second: she now had her own secretary at the television studios to take care of the sacks of mail that arrived for her every day. It seemed that every boy and girl wanted a Puggle with a top knot like Mango's. She had a most unusual curl that flipped to the left and gave her a great deal of character.

Mango wished she could thank Kaylia for bringing so much success her way. If only she could talk, she thought, not for the first time, there would be so much she and Kaylia could discuss. Of course, fame had also attracted its fair share of crazies. There was the strange woman in the green and yellow striped dress who used to sit outside their St. Paul house for most of the day. For a while, Mango had to have her own bodyguard - a very handsome black German Shepherd. And, only last month a scientist had pleaded in vain with Kaylia to allow him to make ten thousand clones of Mango. He had offered Kaylia ten million dollars.

Mango sniffed and smiled to herself. Thankfully, as far as Kaylia believed, there could only ever be one Mango. And now, with this invitation to have her paw print immortalised on the Walk of Fame, it seemed all their hard work had paid off. This really was a dream come true!

"So, what outfit should you wear?" Kaylia mused aloud as she sifted through Mango's extensive wardrobe. She finally settled on Mango's bright yellow life jacket. It was, after all, the outfit synonymous with Mango. She would have loved Mango to wear her Cartier collar, but then she thought that might be a bit showy; after all, diamonds and lifesaving gear probably clashed. Instead, she picked out a bright yellow collar that nicely matched the jacket.

Mango's ensemble chosen, Kaylia then pulled out Mango's designer, tiger-striped doggie carrier and gave it a good brush down while Mango ran off to collect her favourite fluffy toy.

Later that afternoon, Kaylia went on a hunt for Mango's passport. It gave Mango permission to fly as a passenger on any airline. She pulled out drawers and emptied suitcases and handbags until she finally found the dog-eared blue booklet in the pocket of her winter coat. She tucked it in a compartment of Mango's carrier, along with a packet of Mango's favourite doggie travel treats.

Mango was one of an exclusive club of dogs that held a passport. In fact, Mango had never met another dog with a passport. It allowed her to travel on Kaylia's lap in the plane, unlike other poor dogs who had to travel in the cargo section. This was certainly a fabulous celebrity perk.

Just before Kaylia closed the front door to go to the airport, she changed her mind, ran back across the room to her bureau, and pulled a swathe of papers out of the top drawer. "Mango, I think now is the right time to present our new film script to the big bosses," she said and placed the papers in her bulging tapestry handbag.

Mango gave Kaylia's hand a big lick. She knew how hard Kaylia had worked on the project. Kaylia had been writing the script for the movie to be titled 'Mango and Kaylia Take On The Big Apple' for the last year. All through winter, Mango had seen her bent over her laptop all night long as she tapped away at the keyboard. Every morning, dozens of pieces of screwed up bits of paper had littered the floor.

The crumpled paper had made a nice warm bed for Mango, who stayed beside Kaylia as she worked. Finally, Kaylia finished the project and when Mango heard Kaylia read it out to her mother on the phone, she had to agree that it would be a huge success. It had everything: adventure, drama, comedy, a foiled kidnapping, and even love interests for both Mango and Kaylia.

Mango couldn't think of anything more exciting than finally working alongside Kaylia, who was a famous actor herself. Last year, Kaylia had been a hot favourite to win an Oscar for her role in the blockbuster movie *Give a Dog*

a Bone. She would have won too, except that another nominee had fallen off her treadmill and broken her leg, so, of course, that nominee received the sympathy vote.

Mango expected the studio bosses would love Kaylia's film script. She really hoped so anyway. New York was a particular favourite of hers. There was nothing she liked more than horse riding in Central Park. Kaylia would sit in the saddle with Mango sitting in a sling on her tummy. It was the best sensation in the world to feel the fresh New York air ruffling her short fawn coat as they galloped amongst the trees. She knew Kaylia had written in lots of horse riding scenes.

"Isn't that the dog on the TV?" a man in a blue customs uniform asked. "My children love her show."

"Yes, that's right," Kaylia proudly said. She popped Mango back into her carrier and picked up her hand luggage from the X-ray machine. "We're going to Hollywood because Mango's getting a star on the Walk of Fame!"

The man looked around to see if anyone was watching, then handed Kaylia a piece of paper. "Do you think you could send me her paw print and a photo?" he asked. "That's my address. Could you write, 'To Jacqui, Glenn and Alan'? Oh, I'm Alan; Jacqui and Glenn are my children."

Kaylia smiled kindly. "We'd love to do that, Alan. I'll get Mango's secretary onto it for you. Now we really must hurry. Our plane leaves in twenty minutes and I think we're running a bit late. We got caught in a traffic jam."

"Don't worry," the customs officer said. "I'll call security to organise a convenience cart to drive you to the gate. Just hang on."

Kaylia nervously glanced at her watch. She hoped they wouldn't miss the plane. The next one to Los Angeles wasn't until tomorrow and there was so much she had to do once they landed.

A security guard appeared soon after. "You're in luck, Miss Kaylia," he said. "Your cart is on its way. Please follow me."

The guard picked up Mango's doggie carrier. "Let me help you with this," he said, guiding Kaylia out to the waiting vehicle. He tucked the carrier under the seat and Kaylia climbed in next to a thin man wearing spectacles, who was also looking anxiously at his watch.

"Are you late for your plane, too?" Kaylia politely asked him.

"I've had a terrible morning," he said. "I've just come from Boston. The plane was diverted here due to bad weather and now there's something wrong with the engine. So we had to change planes. I'll be lucky to make

my connection to Paris.” He fiddled with a satchel of papers he was carrying, periodically tapping the glass on his watch.

“I’m sure you’ll catch your connection,” Kaylia said to him when they arrived at her gate. “If you ask the driver, he’ll radio ahead and tell them to hold the plane for you.”

The man nodded and Kaylia hopped out. The driver hauled Mango’s doggie carrier out from under the seat, and a few minutes later Kaylia was running down the passageway and onto the plane.