

BAGLETTE & BONTON - #9

THE PICNIC -PART TWO-



1. AT THE PARK



IT'S TRUE THAT SINCE THE PICNIC WAS TO TAKE PLACE AT THE MOUNT WOOF NATIONAL PARK, GRANDPA EAGLE-EYE AND GRANNY PANCAKE MIGHT AS WELL HAVE WAITED FOR THE ENTIRE FAMILY THERE, AT THE RANGER'S CABIN. HOWEVER, GRANNY PANCAKE WANTED TO HELP HER SON AND DAUGHTER-IN-LAW TO PREPARE

THE FOOD TO BRING ALONG (SHE WAS THE BEST COOK IN WOOFLAND, AFTER ALL!), AND GRANDPA EAGLE-EYE WOULDN'T HAVE MISSED THAT MORNING FOR ANYTHING IN THE WORLD... EVERYONE WAS REUNITED AT HIS SON'S HOME!

BUT YOU MAY BE A LITTLE CONFUSED AT THIS POINT, RIGHT?

SO LET'S TAKE A QUICK LOOK AT THE FAMILY TREE.

GRANNY PANCAKE AND GRANDPA EAGLE-EYE ARE THE PARENTS OF DADDY QUILL AND UNCLE CHAMPION. MOMMY MELODY, AUNT NEVADA AND AUNT PLUMBLINE, FOR THEIR PART, ARE THE DAUGHTERS OF GRANNY GARLAND AND GRANDPA DOODLE.

COUSIN UTAH IS THE ADOPTED DAUGHTER OF **AUNT NEVADA**, WHILE **UNCLE ABDOMINO** IS **AUNT PLUMBLINE'S** BOYFRIEND. AND WITH **BAGUETTE** AND **BONTON**, THAT'S THE FAMILY IN A NUTSHELL.

TRUTH BE TOLD, **BAGUETTE** WOULD HAVE LIKED TO ALSO BRING ALONG **ROVER**, WHO WAS NOW OFFICIALLY HER BOYFRIEND, BUT THIS YEAR THE PUP HAD GONE ON HOLIDAY WITH HIS PARENTS IN **CANTERBURY**. SHE MIGHT INVITE HIM THE FOLLOWING YEAR.

THE WHOLE FAMILY STEPPED OUT AND, HAVING GOTTEN IN THEIR VARIOUS DOGMOBILES - INCLUDING **GRANNY GARLAND'S** SIX-SEATED STATION WAGON - HEADED TOWARD THE **NATIONAL PARK**.

HALF AN HOUR LATER, HAVING ARRIVED AT THE PARKING LOT ON

THE SLOPES OF MOUNT WOOLF AND LEFT BEHIND THEIR DOGMOBILES, THEY GRABBED THE BASKETS WITH THE FOOD AND OTHER SUPPLIES AND WALKED TO THE SPACIOUS PICNIC AREA: A WIDE FIELD OF GREEN DOTTED WITH WOODEN BENCHES, STONE BARBECUE PITS, WASTE BINS AND A PUBLIC RESTROOM... ALL THE AMENITIES NEEDED FOR VISITORS TO ENJOY THEIR STAY.

THE FAMILY DIDN'T STOP THERE, THOUGH! THEY CONTINUED INTO THE WOODS.

EAGLE-EYE WAS AT HOME IN THE PARK, AND EVERYONE HAD A MORE OLD-FASHIONED OUTING IN MIND. AND SO, VENTURING INTO THE FOREST, THEY WANDERED FOR ABOUT TWENTY MINUTES UNTIL THEY FOUND THEMSELVES IN

THE OLD CLEARING CALLED "THE FIELD OF BLOSSOMS" WHERE THE FAMILY WOULD GATHER EVERY YEAR SINCE **DADDY QUILL** HAD BEEN BORN (IN EARLIER TIMES, **GREAT-GRANDPA STOCKPOT** HAD OTHER TRADITIONS, BUT THAT STORY WILL HAVE TO WAIT FOR ANOTHER TIME).

EVERYONE KNEW PERFECTLY WELL WHAT TO DO.

UNCLE CHAMPION, AUNT NEVADA, UNCLE ABDOMINO AND AUNT PLUMBLINE (WHO GAVE THE ORDERS IN THEIR FOUR-DOG TEAM) SET THE GIGANTIC TABLECLOTH DOWN ON THE GROUND, IN THE BEST SPOT THE TALENTED ARCHITECT HAD SURVEYED: AN ENTIRELY FLAT EXPANSE OF GRASS, WELL-LIT DESPITE NOT BEING EXPOSED TO DIRECT SUNLIGHT.

GRANNY PANCAKE AND MOMMY

MELODY BEGAN SETTING OUT ALL THE FOOD ON THE TABLECLOTH WITH A HAND FROM **COUSIN UTAH**, WHILE **GRANDPA EAGLE-EYE** AND **DADDY QUILL** PREPARED THE FIRE FOR THE BARBECUE WITH SOME HELP FROM **BONTON**, GUIDED BY THE SURE HAND OF THE EXPERIENCED OLD FOREST RANGER.



BAGUETTE, GRANNY GARLAND AND GRANDPA DOODLE WERE OFF ON THEIR OWN COLLECTING SOME HERBS AND FLOWERS, WHICH GREW ABUNDANTLY IN THE AREA, TO HELP ADD SOME FLAVOUR TO THE FOOD.

TO TELL THE TRUTH, **DOODLE** WAS MORE INTERESTED IN THE ARTISTIC SIDE OF THINGS AND GATHERED THE PRETTIEST PLANTS AND HERBS, WHILE HIS WIFE PICKED THE MOST FRAGRANT AND DELICIOUS.

IN SHORT ORDER, EVERYTHING WAS READY. THEY ALL FINISHED COOKING TOGETHER, AND THEN... TIME TO DIG IN!

2. **A BEAUTIFUL DAY**

THOUGH THEY WERE BASSET HOUNDS (WELL, MOST OF THEM), BY THE WAY THEY ATE THEY MIGHT

AS WELL HAVE BEEN A PACK OF RAVENOUS WOLVES!
AND NOW THEY ALL RESTED CONTENTEDLY.

AFTER LUNCH, HAPPY TO SPEND TIME TOGETHER AFTER LIVING SO LONG APART, THEY SPENT MANY JOYFUL HOURS IN EACH OTHER'S COMPANY ENJOYING THEIR FAVORITE PASTIMES.

NEVADA WAS TELLING HER SISTERS AND **DADDY QUILL** ALL ABOUT HER LATEST ADVENTURES. THEY WERE HANGING ON HER EVERY WORD.

SHE AND **PLUMBLINE** ALSO TALKED ABOUT THE BEAUTIFUL MEXICAN LANDSCAPES, WHERE THE ARCHITECT WAS BUILDING HOMES AND THE ARCHAEOLOGIST HAD OFTEN LED DIGS.

QUILL WAS LISTENING INTENTLY, TAKING MENTAL NOTES FOR FUTURE ARTICLES.



MELODY, IN THE MEANTIME, WAS GETTING EVERYONE INVOLVED IN FUN SONGS OR NOSTALGIC ONES THAT SHE AND HER SISTERS LIKED TO SING AS PUPS.

UNCLE CHAMPION AND **UNCLE ABDOMINO** WERE HAVING A RACE, WHICH **CHAMPION** EASILY WON, MAKING UP FOR HIS EARLIER DEFEAT AT ARM WRESTLING. THEY CHALLENGED EACH OTHER TO A TUG-OF-WAR, A CABER TOSS (A COUPLE OF TREES HAD BEEN KNOCKED DOWN BY A STORM, LEAVING LOGS IN THE CLEARING),

AND MANY OTHER COMPETITIONS WHERE FIRST ONE WOULD EMERGE THE VICTOR AND THE OTHER WOULD TRIUMPH THE NEXT, ENDING IN A PERFECT TIE THAT ENTERTAINED THEM BOTH IMMENSELY.

GRANDPA DOODLE HAD BROUGHT HIS EASEL AND WAS DRAWING QUICK SKETCHES OF HIS FAMILY TO MAKE COMPLETE PAINTINGS FROM THEM LATER, ONCE HE'D RETURNED HOME, WHILE **PANCAKE** AND **GARLAND** DISCUSSED THE CULINARY PROPERTIES OF VARIOUS HERBS AND WHICH KIND OF HONEY WAS THE BEST AMONG THE HUNDREDS OF DIFFERENT TYPES IN THE WORLD.

BAGUETTE, **BONTON** AND **LITAH** WERE PLAYING HIDE-AND-SEEK, AND FRISBEE, AND SNOUTBALL, AND TAG, AND... BASICALLY JUST RELISHING THE OPEN SPACE

MOTHER NATURE OFFERED THEM ON THAT BEAUTIFUL DAY, MAKING SURE TO ALWAYS STAY IN SIGHT OF THE GROWN-UPS.

GRANDPA EAGLE-EYE, ON THE OTHER HAND, WAS ENJOYING A NAP FOR ONCE, KNOWING THAT ON THIS SPECIAL DAY, NO ONE WOULD NEED TO BE LOOKED AFTER BY THE BEST FOREST RANGER IN **WOOFLAND!**

3. **IN SEPTEMBER, THE DAYS GET SHORTER**

AROUND THE MIDDLE OF THE AFTERNOON, HOWEVER, IT BEGAN TO RAIN - AS IT OFTEN DID AT THAT TIME OF THE YEAR - AND THE FAMILY, HAVING STARTED CLEANING AND PICKING EVERYTHING UP AS SOON AS THE FIRST GRAY CLOUDS APPEARED, HEADED BACK TO THE DISTANT PARKING LOT LAUGHING ALL THE WHILE.

A COUPLE OF HOURS LATER, THEY WERE BACK AT HOME, AND AS THE EVENING CAME ON THEY ALL GATHERED AROUND THE TABLE AND CONTINUED EATING THE DELICACIES THEY HAD MADE FOR THEIR OUTING. THEY PLAYED BOARD GAMES, THEY SANG... AND WHEN THEIR WONDERFUL DAY TOGETHER DREW TO A CLOSE, THEY SAID GOODBYE, PROMISING AS THEY DID EVERY YEAR TO SEE EACH OTHER AGAIN AT THE NEXT YEARLY PICNIC.

AUNT NEVADA, COUSIN UTAH, AUNT PLUMBLINE AND UNCLE ABDOMINO SPENT THE NIGHT AT **MOMMY MELODY AND DADDY QUILL'S** HOUSE. **UTAH** STAYED IN **BAGUETTE'S** SMALL ROOM, WHILE THE LIVING ROOM WAS OCCUPIED BY **NEVADA** AND **BONTON**, SINCE THE PUP'S ROOM WAS BEING LENT OUT TO

PLUMBLINE AND ABDOMINO.

AND WITH THIS FESTIVE IMAGE,
WE'LL SAY GOODBYE AS WELL.
SEE YOU FOR THE NEXT
ADVENTURE, PUPS!

WE PROMISE TO TELL YOU
ALL ABOUT THESE NEW FAMILY
MEMBERS YOU'VE JUST MET VERY
SOON!

