

My Town

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Chapter 7

"For my next trick, I'm going to make this piece of chicken disappear," I announced, using my magician voice.

"You're silly," Chloe responded. "But you're a great magician."

"Only because you're my assistant," I replied.

Mom, Dad, Chloe and I had gotten up extra early this morning and had driven to London – not Princess Kate's London, but our London – so we could be at the World Chicken Festival when the gates opened.

Two days after the Black Gold Festival in Hazard, our family was working on chores at home when I received a phone call.

"You'll never believe it," I squealed once I'd hung up. "A man named Chuck called. He saw our magic show at the Black Gold Festival and wondered if we'd do two magic shows for the World Chicken Festival in London!" Mom, Dad and Chloe erupted into cheers. Since the *My Town Prize Package* contained four free chicken dinners, we'd planned on attending the festival, so I told him yes. So here we were.

"Excellent job, pups," Chuck praised after our first magic show. "Since your second show isn't until this evening, we'll take your magic supplies, lock them up, and keep them safe until your second show. That way, you can go enjoy the festival. I take it this is your first time to attend the World Chicken Festival?" Chuck asked, noticing Mom was reading a brochure.

"It is," Mom answered.

"To give you background," Chuck said. "In the 1940s, Colonel Harland Sanders started selling chicken from his roadside restaurant in North Corbin, here in Laurel County."

"North Corbin?" Chloe asked.

"Corbin is actually part of three counties including Whitley, Knox and Laurel, which is where the Colonel's restaurant was," Chuck informed. "In fact, they have a great festival every August called NIBROC – which is

Corbin spelled backwards. Anyway, Corbin is where KFC began before it became a franchise."

"A franchise?" I asked.

"A franchise is where someone buys a way of doing business," Chuck explained. "Let's say your magic show becomes a success. You can sell the franchise. People will pay you money and in return you'll teach them all your magic tricks and let them use your name. That's how KFC went from being a small café in Corbin to the second largest restaurant chain in the world. In fact, KFC is still using the recipe Colonel Sanders created in the 40s. It's no wonder we have a festival to honor him, but that's not all," Chuck said, clearly proud of what he was going to tell us.

"In the 1950s, Lee Cummings, started his chicken career in Laurel County with his uncle Colonel Sanders. Lee Cummings is the co-founder of Lee's Famous Recipe Chicken. The World Chicken Festival started in 1989 to honor both Colonel Sanders and Lee Cummings. I guess you can see I'm proud of my town and my festival," Chuck said, beaming. "Anyway, enjoy! We'll see you later for the second show."

"I read once where Colonel Sanders had failed countless times in business. He didn't start his chicken restaurant until he was 65 years old." Dad said as we walked around.

"It proves we're never too old to try new things," Mom replied as she pulled the "Free Chicken Dinner" vouchers from the *My Town Prize Package*.

"Look at that enormous skillet!" Chloe exclaimed.

"It's the world's largest frying skillet," one cook said. She had a chicken tee shirt on with a nametag that said Jenn. "It's 10 feet, 6 inches, and weighs 700 pounds. It's huge, but it can cook 600 quarters of chicken at one time."

"How much chicken will you cook during the festival?" Dad asked.

"About 7,000 pieces," Jenn

answered. "We'll use 375 pounds of flour, 75 pounds of salt, 30 pounds of both pepper and paprika and we'll use the World Chicken Festival's secret ingredients."

"Do you know..."

"Nobody does. It's why it's a secret," Jenn said, passing each of us a plate that contained chicken, potato salad, baked beans and a roll.

We presented our vouchers and thanked Jenn and the other volunteers. After we gave thanks for the food and gorgeous weather, we dug in.

"This chicken is delicious," I said. "It must be the secret spices."

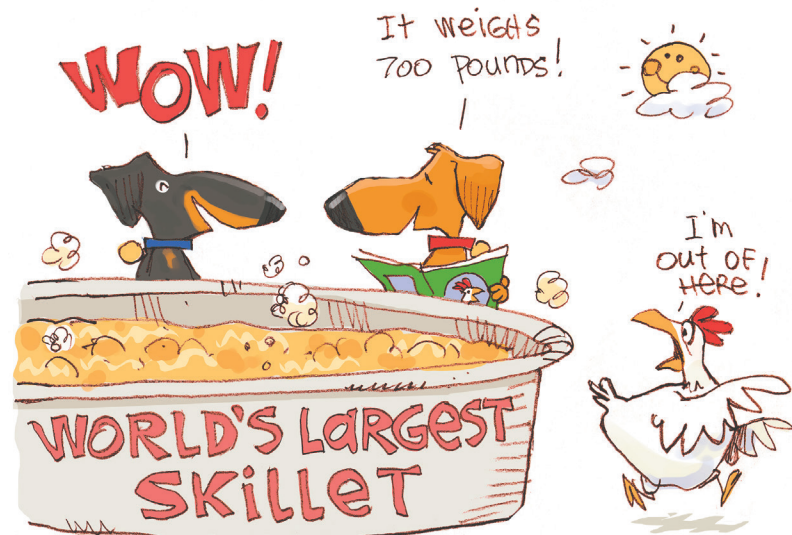
"The commercial says there are 11 of them," Chloe informed.

"If we knew what they were, we could make chicken like this at home," I replied.

"What's next on our agenda, pups?" Mom asked. "We could watch a chicken eating contest. Better yet, you two should enter the karaoke contest. Chloe is an egg-ceptional singer." Chloe and I laughed at Mom while Dad rolled his eyes.

"Excuse me," I heard someone say. We turned around and saw Chuck and Jenn. "We hate to interrupt but we have a big problem. Can we see you for a minute, Woody?"

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