

Neves Wishes

Chapter 5

“Let me look at that box.” Joe stomped across the bedroom. “This Neve Genie isn’t playing fair,” he complained, picking up the box and examining it closely underneath for clues.

Jess was pretty cross, too. She could’ve done lots of things with that money! Her expression was concerned. Try as she might, she couldn’t think of any stories where the wishes had a time limit. They weren’t supposed to have sell-by dates, like food bought in the supermarket. On the other hand, they had been granted everything they’d asked for until now. Plus the never-ending wishes one must’ve worked because they’d already had four. It was time to think more carefully about what had they asked for. “If the wishes don’t stick around,” she began, thinking it through, “then we should only ask for something where it doesn’t matter if it only lasts for a few minutes.”

“Like what?”

Jess glanced around the bedroom for inspiration. Frisk, picking up on her concentration, padded across the wrapping paper towards her. He put his head on her lap and gazed lovingly up at her. She petted his ears and his tail slowly beat from side to side. “I’ve got it,” she said. “Hand me the box.”

Joe, slightly reluctantly, passed the box to his sister. Jess, wasting no time, opened the lid and said, “I wish for Frisk to talk.” She grinned at her brother; this was going to be amazing.

Once again, the box began to vibrate, feeling warmer in her hands. Jess kept hold of it and stared down at Frisk.

The dog looked unaffected at first. He merely sniffed a bit at the box and continued with his steady tail wagging. Then came his first word.

“Food?”

His voice was not really anything like a person speaking. Despite being somewhere between a growl and one of those noisy yawns that dogs do, the twins understood him instantly. Jess squealed with delight, jumping up and knocking the wishing box to the floor, which lay forgotten whilst the twins revelled in their latest wish.

“Hello, Frisk,” said Joe, kneeling down to eye level with his pet.

“Joe,” said Frisk and licked the boy’s cheek.

With each lick came a word: “Lick, lick, lick,” he said in his odd, gruff doggy voice.

Joe laughed. “What’s it like being a dog?”

“Dog,” said Frisk. “Lick, lick, lick.”

“Stop licking me Frisk. I want to talk to you.”

“Treat?” asked Frisk.

“No,” said Jess. “No treats.”

“Treat?” Frisk asked Jess, turning his head to look at her. He then shifted his whole body around, focusing on Jess. “Sit?” he said, before sitting. “Paw?” He put his paw in the air, cocked his head to one side and provided her with his best sad eyes look. “Treat?” he asked again.

“Ask him something,” said Joe. “He won’t be able to talk for much longer.”

“What?”

“Walk?” asked Frisk, misunderstanding what Jess had said.

Jess laughed.

“Walk?” asked Frisk again, heading hopefully towards the door and looking back at the twins over his shoulder.

“Humans,” Frisk said and this time it was Joe who laughed.

“Itchy,” Frisk said and used his back leg to scratch behind his ear.

Jess shook her head at Joe, “I thought he might have a bit more to say.”

“Out,” said Frisk and scratched at the door.

“If we let you out, you’ll only scratch to come back in,” said Joe.

“In,” agreed Frisk.

The twins laughed together. This made Frisk bark out his next word as he trotted towards them. “Fun,” he said, then, “Play, play, play.”

Bouncing about, Frisk didn’t notice the box until his paw was inside it. “Box,” he said. “Hot.”

Jess picked up the box. Frisk was quite right; it was hot, but there was something else, something they’d missed.

“Look at this, Joe,” said Jess, showing her brother the tiny cloth pocket glued underneath the lid.

“Joe,” said Frisk. “Box.”

Jess stuck a little finger inside and hooked out a folded up piece of paper.

“A clue,” said Joe.

“Food?” asked Frisk hopefully. It was the dog’s last understandable word, not just on the matter, but forever. The twins didn’t even notice that the wish had finished and Frisk was back to normal; something new and equally exciting was happening.

Jess unfolded the paper. The writing was so small it was difficult to read and the twins squinted at it for so long that Frisk finally sank down on top of the recycling bag and went to sleep, his moment of fame over forever.

“Get your magnifying glass,” said Jess. “The one in the spy kit you got from Sean.”

Joe rummaged through his presents and pulled out the magnifying glass, which made things a lot easier. Eventually the twins realised that the note was indeed a clue as to the secret of the wishing box, for it read:

Neves Wishes

You have been gifted this magic box

Try and release the secrets it unlocks

Remember that neves holds the key

For quantity, duration, apostrophe