



DEWLOGIC

**BECKY ALLOY:  
THE MARK OF THE  
GOLDEN RETRIEVER**

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Becky Alloy: The Mark of the Golden Retriever

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## CHAPTER ONE

### HUMAN MACHINES

As time drifted into silence, its silence merged with theirs. And eight year old Becky Alloy clasped her arms onto her Aunt Simone's.

“Never grow your daffodils in the fall,” Simone told her, forcing a smile.

The smile was out of place, and they both knew it. They lay, front glued to the floor under the strategically placed kitchen countertop table. They faced each other, Aunt to Niece, and the smile she held on to felt more out of place.

Simone liked to keep the conversation going at moments as that they were in. She didn't want to think about the effect of the

Primer Revolution on Becky. She didn't want Becky to think of it.

The silent Profiler Primer roaming overhead was mainly detectable by the Prime Resurger given to them by Jonathan, her brother, an employee of Primer Industries Inc. And it had always kept them out of trouble.

Becky always knew more than she ever cared to say out loudly; that there were things her Aunt could only try to keep from her, things her Uncle Jonathan never kept. "Why not Aunt Simone?" she asked in an attempt to follow the line of conversation. And her tone failed her in her attempt to hide her discomfort.

Simone sensed it immediately, the upbeat note to her natural voice was amiss.

"You know," she said, slightly surprised.

“I knew we were not playing hide and seek under here. There’s no one coming to find us,” Becky replied.

“All the time you knew?”

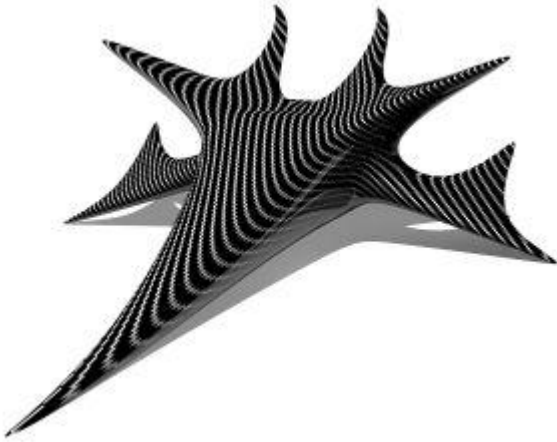
Becky nodded. “Tell me I’m younger than my eight years Aunt Simone, but do not tell me we are hiding under a kitchen table without a reason for it.”

Simone exhaled, and remained silenced briefly. “Daffodils...” she continued, “...never grow daffodils in the fall.”

“Why not?” Becky asked.

“Because...” Simone started and was instantly silenced by the certain shadow thrown across the kitchen curtains.

# PROFILER PRIMER



The Machine! Inaudible but loudly present. Simone's hold on Becky's arm tightened. And Becky knew she wasn't to make a move. She was never to speak in the presence of any of the Primers. She was never to speak, that is, unless spoken to.

They hung on to silence as if it enveloped them and as soon as the shadow lifted off the curtains, Simone spoke. "Never grow

daffodils in the fall because you can never reap them in the spring.”

“Why not just grow them in the spring?” Becky asked, wishing the Profiler Primer away that instant. But it wasn’t her first time wishing it, although her mother mainly taught her to pray.

Simone forced a delicate smile. “Because you can never keep them in the fall.”

Becky frowned as she tried to understand what her Aunt said. “Is it true what they say? The Primers grow children?”

Simone nodded and closed her eyes briefly. “Yes, yes, it’s true. But not in the way they say it...they think they can grow and mold children into anything they want, doing experiments with them. And I’m afraid they may take you. Any stupid thing we do,

or anything at all Becky...I can never let that happen.”

Becky exhaled, her hold on Simone’s hand tightening. “We will make sure that won’t happen...” Becky spotted Martina, the Orfy, an engineered butterfly form doll-sized playmate Primer her Uncle took from work and graduated for her as a companion. And Becky did most of the graduating on her own afterwards.

If the Primer scanned Martina and finds her acquired, graduated illegally, and unaccounted for, the family will be in trouble. Her Uncle could be arrested; or worse, killed. Also equipped with easily graduate-able level intelligence, diction and understanding, Martina knew to maintain her distance when the Profiler Primer roamed the skies.

## AN ORFY!



Was Martina malfunctioning?

But Martina did not retreat. And Becky's heart raced at the thought of it, the vulnerability assumed in the moment; that Martina could be the one to betray her family.

Her Aunt Simone froze at the sight of Martina, holding on ever so tightly to Becky's arm

But Becky soon realized as Martina got closer that she was trying to say something.

Martina drew her small hands over one side of her face, covering her eye, and mouthed something as lowly as she could. When she repeated the action, she pointed towards the ceiling and Becky heard and understood. “An Orfy!”

Shaken beyond her resolve momentarily and wondering what could possibly be done in the newness of the danger they faced, “They’re sending in an Eye-patch Orfy,” she told Simone.

An Eye-patch Orfy, made in the same butterfly form as the Playmate Orfy Martina is, but ideally and considerably smaller, is small enough to penetrate under doors, and into the smallest of holes.

## EYEPATCH ORFY!



They are used to gain entry into places the Primer Companies would rather not defend legally or otherwise for occupying. As highly efficient spies, they are the ears and eyes of the Profiler Primers. If there was something detectable within an interior, they will sense, see and hear it. And once the information is processed by the Orfy, the Profiler will instantly have it.

“To the cold room...” Simone whispered, “...on your face and fast.”

The cold room, a tiny room kept isolated and insulated unlike the rest of the house by her Uncle Jonathan, was sometimes used as a storage room for large meat, a strangely act because they had a reasonably sized refrigerator. The cold room, Becky was now becoming convinced, was kept for such moments as they were in. Once they get to the cold room, the Eye-patch Orfy will not be able to read their vital signs; the cold will allow the necessary bypass on their signs of life.

Simone drew her back against the vaulted cold room and pushed as hard as she could, crawled in before helping Becky in. Martina, who could sense the other Orfy

and could be sensed as well,  
followed them.

Simone pressed a button to increase the temperature of the room significantly, and pulled Becky very close to her.

“Inside,” Martina mouthed, and rushed to gently touch on Becky’s chest, implying that her heart was beating too fast and needed to be slowed.

Simone held Becky closer, decreasing her own breathing rate. And once she saw Martina pull both her hands downwards before shutting her own self down into sleeping mode, the nearness of the Eye-patch Orfy couldn’t be missed. She clasped her hand over her nose, and covered one of Becky’s nostrils.

She retained her stiffened fearful state of mind until Martina flapped her wings back to life, an

indication her sense connection to the Eye-patch Orfy was weakening.

And there Simone breathed a cautious sense of relief. Once a month! The once a month unscheduled, uninformed visits from Primer Inc., one which requires proof of life and accountability of states of welfare was always dreaded. And if the visit left the citizen or citizens unaccounted for and unquestioned, there was to be a personal appearance at the Welfare Building of Primer Inc. She had always chosen to appear there personally without Becky. It was safer that way.

Martina had made several attempts to get their attention before they noticed her. Simone had dismissed her alerts instantly, in a state of her own, wanting to

ensure a thorough passage out of danger with time. They weren't going to die of hypothermia anytime soon.

But Martina's urgings were ceaseless. She was moving back and forth, pacing in flight.

"Now what Martina?" Becky asked.

"Tango," Martina mouthed.

Becky's eyes flared. Tango! The Golden Retriever her Uncle owned and she sometimes requested and took care of! She had left it in the backyard! If the Profiler Primer took it, there was nothing but trouble to follow. It was marked. Registered to her Uncle Jonathan, although untagged, was marked for Primer recognition at any primer pet care facility.



But it was what was on it that was more important and it frightened her momentarily. She had played with it in the last two days. It had slept in her bed. It was marked with her genetic material, her D.N.A. And once the Primers thoroughly ravaged him for identity, inducing a thorough check which her Aunt Simone's constant absence may have necessitated, they'll find the girl who had died alongside her mother two years earlier; alive!

Becky faced her Aunt Simone with the understanding of what may happen if the Profiler Primer took Tango.

They both rushed out of the cold room and began the search.

It wasn't in the backyard where Becky had left it to feed. They searched the rest of the house frantically, ignoring Martina's urgings momentarily about the inevitability of the event they were trying to prevent.

# Gone!

# Gone!

“Gone! Gone!” Martina mouthed repeatedly.

Breathless, they faced Martina when they were certain she was right.

“I’m going after...” Martina mouthed.

Simone shook her head.

“No...no...”

“I’m going after...” Martina repeated.

Simone shook her head vehemently. “No...no...you are not going after. You are not.” She realized in the moment that Becky was not objecting to Martina’s suggestion of going after the Profiler Primer, and faced Becky. “She can’t.”

Becky hesitated briefly, held her Aunt’s eyes before exhaling. “It is the only chance we’ve got to save the situation.”

“She’s not going after!” Simone said adamantly.



Becky held her Aunt's eyes unwaveringly.

“She can't!” Simone said.

Becky exhaled, hesitated briefly and spoke in a low self-assured tone. “Aunt Simone, we can't. We can't if we do not know where they're taking it. My guess is that they will drop it off the nearest of their pet centers for proper identification. They took Tango

for a reason. But we can't know if Martina can't."

"I'm going after..." Martina repeated, anxious.

But Becky realized Simone was more shocked at the possibility that Martina could go after the Profiler Primer than at the very notion of her objection. She didn't know the extent of Martina's trainings. "I've trained her...I think she can."

Her Aunt was silenced.

Becky faced Martina. "Catch up...and then follow at a safe distance...never play smart...you were never made for that or like that Martina...and if you are ever noticed or caught, play dead, play homeless and dead, flicker out."

Martina nodded in agreement.

And Becky opened the back door to let her out.

They watched her fly out of sight before Simone took her seat to calm her nerves, Becky beside hers.

Simone was silent for a while and when she spoke, did so as if she were in a soliloquy. “Forever seems a dream when a Primer says, “Hello...,” it feels like an halo demoralized. “

Becky sometimes wondered where her Aunt gets her thoughts but in the moment she was more concerned about one of her own. “Aunt Simone,” she called to pull her out of her thoughts. “Are they aliens?”

“Who?” Simone asked, coming out of her hopeless thoughts. “You mean the Primers?”

Becky nodded. “Yes. Why are they so wicked?”

Simone exhaled, held Becky's eyes. "They are indeed wicked aren't they?"

Becky nodded. "Yes, they are."

Simone nodded in agreement. "They have believed wrongly that their dawn is the dawn of machines. And they forgot to ask themselves where the human fits. And slowly they began to assume the roles of machines. And the more they filled our lives with machines the more they became it...until they woke up one day wondering who they were. Then they also believed wrongly that the new revolution was that of a human and machine relation. And so the human was left behind. Primer Inc. ran our lives before they decided to run it. The civil war was just an excuse. Are they aliens my darling child? No...they're human machines.

And they're a most deadly habit to kill."



Becky frowned. "But there must be a way."

"A way?" Simone asked.

"A way to get rid of them,"  
Becky replied.

Simone held Becky's eyes.  
"Can you kill Martina...Do you think you can?"

Becky deepened her frown.  
"Why would I ever want to do that?"

Simone smiled, sarcastically.  
“When you figure out the why,  
then you may attend to the how.”

## CHAPTER TWO

### REC B

Glued to the window while Simone maintained her seating position, Becky spotted Martina’s return before Simone could. She motioned Martina towards her room and excused herself momentarily from Simone’s presence.

She let Martina in through the window in her room. “Where?”

“Rec B.” Martina replied.

Becky exhaled. Rec B was a familiar location because it was where her Uncle Jonathan took Tango for its usual check up as well as recreations. It was also a

Primer Inc. facility a walking distance from the house. “Is he tagged for identification?”

“Yes,” Martina replied grimly.

Becky paced. She had time, a little to none it seemed at the moment, but she had time. If Tango was going to be processed for identity, it’ll have to be properly admitted, accommodated. And her mistake which had been a most terrible mistake for that particularly most terrible day was leaving Tango in the doghouse in the back to feed.

Although tagged, if Tango was never checked, there will be no record of the occurrence; none, whatsoever, unless the very same Profiler Primer came back in one month. The odd of that happening was very high. Besides, she could punish herself by not having Tango over for a month or two in

an attempt to make sure the two events do not connect or overlap.

But the problem she faced in the moment was in getting to Rec B, doing it without so much fuss over the danger involved as the time window for the rescue ticks away. She didn't have the moments in spare to rethink the decision.

And Becky made the split second decision not to tell her Aunt Simone before turning to hold Martina's eyes. "We go. We don't tell Aunt Simone. We go."

Martina drew herself back in hesitation, squinting. "We don't tell?"

Becky nodded, moving closer to Martina. "We don't tell Martina. Not this once. And don't worry. If anything goes wrong, I'll take the fall. We don't tell."

And Becky applied the thinly veiled Stort, a powder which

would make her face difficult to read by Primer scanner machines, sneaked out behind her Aunt Simone, and out into the backyard she went, Martina in tow.

## CHAPTER THREE

### “EXCUSE ME.”

PPC Rec B, a Rec B division of Pet Primer Care, is also a cheap pet care facility founded by Primer Inc.

Primer Inc. employees like her Uncle Jonathan mainly used it freely. Others not under Primer Incorporated’s employ used it because it was cheap.



There was nothing cheap about the building or their services, its single floor seeming like a million as they approached it.

It was daunting; the possibility of simply getting Tango back and going home unquestioned and unruffled, as if the incident never happened. So they walked in without any reasonable or visible mutter of strength, Martina dead weight in Becky's hand, playing normal playmate Orfy with a few

return-on-command words to offer.

But when Becky got to the reception desk in the front, she was too short to see across the tall table. “Excuse me,” she said, and didn’t get a response. Reaching the desk seemed of dinosaur strength and time, as she tried to hold on to its edges.



But the “RECEPTIONIST,” labeled desk assured her there ought to be someone there.



“Excuse me,” she repeated.

She pulled her arm over the reception table, and pulling herself up, came to face the receptionist.

“Excuse me.”

The receptionists stood and forced a smile. “Hi there little one. Can I help you?”

Becky nodded, spoke in strained vulnerable tone. “Yes Miss, you may. I came for my dog Ta...Drago...”

“Tadrigo?” the receptionist asked.

“Drago,” Becky re-assigned. “I turned my back and before I knew what was going on, he was gone.”

The receptionist leaned across the table. “Where’s your mother?”

Becky shrugged giving an answer to the questioning she knew was protocol. “I’m just here to pick Drago up. I just lost him...just now...I don’t want to get into trouble or anything...”

The woman nodded, feigning a sense of understanding. “I understand...one minute it’s there, the other its gone. But I will need the tag coder so I can read the registrar’s information, identify and give back Drago.”

Becky’s expression grew more pitiful. “But it’s my dog...”

The woman nodded, patted Becky’s hand. “I know dear, but dogs are never registered to

children. Do you want me to call your mother?”

Becky retrieved her hand and pulled backward slowly. “You don’t have to call her. She’s outside.”

The receptionist smiled. “Good. Go get her.”

Becky counted her steps as she walked back towards the entrance from which she came, a thousand thoughts floated in her head. And one was resolute. She needed to get Tango, and she had hardly tried. As she walked the length of the decorative green flowery plants on the side, she dove behind the last of them. If she could make her way away from the reception area, she could find her way to Tango and rescue him.

And the moments seemed longer than the distance it took for her to get close to the entrance of

the corridor as she dove behind one flowery plant after the other to escape detection. When she was finally able to get away from the reception area, she chased after a closing door, slammed her face in it and muffled the pain. The lady who had the right of way apologized and kindly opened the door for her.

## CHAPTER FOUR

“SD!”

She dashed towards the backend corridor which backed the first set of rooms she suspected Tango was, and ran until she got to the extreme end. There, she faced a locked entrance door.

Martina flapped her wings back to full lucidity.

And Becky backed the length of the corridor, as Martina retrieved a metallic string and went to work on the locked door. A few clicks later, the Primer lock was unlocked, the door opened. Becky and Martina stepped inside to face another locked security door, before Becky noticed the face scanner above and lowered her head. But it was too late. It took merely seconds before the reality of it kicked in.

The Stort she had applied had done its job; she was sure. The Profiler scanner must have tried and failed, and it was becoming apparent it had initiated its first security protocol at the event of the unknown intruder, or one, in her case, unknowable without the ability of being scanned.

It blinded her.

Like the blow of smoke to the bellowing of a wind, it blinded her instantly. And although she had only read about it, been briefed about it by her Uncle Jonathan, she recognized the symptoms immediately. SD, the Soul Detector others outside Primer Inc. called it; an anti-theft, anti-burglary device made by Primer Inc. in which the invader is transpositioned onto a psycho-visual imprisonment of space in space. And the intruder, thus transpositioned will begin to walk around in broken circles until the security Primers arrive for the arrest.

“I can’t see,” Becky announced.



Martina stiffened instantly.  
“Can’t see...or can’t see?”

“I can’t see what I saw merely seconds ago Martina,” Becky replied. “So can’t see.”

“SD!” Martina confirmed.

Becky nodded, agreeing to the confirmation. SD worked on signs of life, signs of human life mainly and Martina and other Primers had never been affected.

“Frame of reference!” Martina said pacing in flight. “Frame of reference.”

“Frame of reference?” Becky asked.

“Movement...” Martina replied.

“Movement is what triggers the alarm yes,” Becky said.

Martina shook her head.

“No...not with not frame. Not frame anywhere...Particular...”

Becky frowned. “I need to be part of a particular frame of reference?”

“Yes!” Martina said. “Stand there...where you are...so we think.”

“That’s exactly what I’m doing Martina ...” Becky replied. “I can not see what you see.”

Martina flew back and forth, pacing. “That’s it. That’s where...the trap...frames of reference this and that.”

Becky exhaled thinking as well. “From what I read, the difference between the space I see and the real space is what triggers the alarm.”

Martina shook her head. “No soul there...no soul...”

Becky frowned. “The space I see has no soul, and the real space must have the signs of life. So what triggers the SD Martina?”

“Difference...” Martina replied.

Becky narrowed her eyes, thinking. “The difference between the two...Then the Particular frame of reference is the only one with the sign of life?”

“Yes,” Martina replied.

“The other one, as Aunt Simone says, is chasing rainbows...no soul...”

Martina nodded. “No soul there...yes.”

Becky exhaled. “So what do we do now Martina; other than stand here waiting for someone to catch us doing a break in?”

Martina hesitated briefly. “How many?”

“How many what?” Becky asked.

“How many before...”

Becky recognized the moment as one in which Martina, knowing fully well what she wanted to say, was fighting for diction, and took a few seconds to reconsider the possible meaning of the statement.

“Do you mean how many steps I took before the SD blinded me?”

Martina exhaled. “Yes...that.”

“Two...” Becky replied, “...I took two steps.”

“What do you see?” Martina asked.

Becky quieted her nerves briefly to study the trans-

positional atmosphere clearly.  
“I’m in a field. A large grassy field.”

“Grassy field...” Martina repeated. “Patterned?”

Becky frowned. “Grassy field Martina, grassy field...of course it is patterned...as grasses in a field will be patterned.”

Martina stopped pacing and her tone when she spoke was more adamant. “Patterned?”

Becky shook her head. “Martina this wouldn’t be the right place or situation to have a fight. It is a grassy field!”

“Patterned?” Martina asked again.

“You said to stay the frame of reference...to become the frame...”

“Be in...” Martina interrupted, “...not become.” Martina quieted; her anger against the path to being

dissimulated momentarily.

“Patterned?”

Martina was throwing a fit at a most unseemly moment, and in the moment she felt her Aunt Simone’s words come back to haunt her. She could never think of some reason why she would want to get rid of Martina. She needed her for this world she was in. She wanted her in the world she was in. So she allowed herself to think about the intent of the word she had chosen to repeat until properly understood.

Becky exhaled, and took the moment to focus on the transpositional sight. “it is patterned as I will expect a grassy field to be...”

“The patterns?” Martina asked.

Becky exhaled, yet unsure of Martina’s intent.

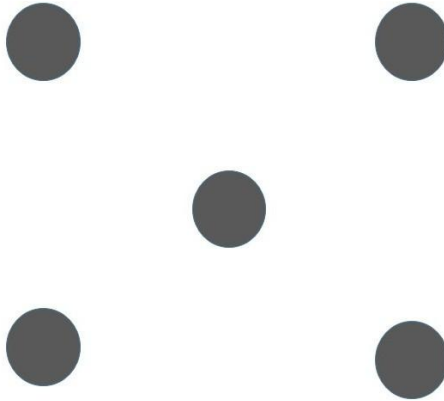
“How many?” Martina asked.

“How many what?” Becky asked before hesitating. “Oh! It’s a repeated pattern...a patterned world.”

“One soul...one person...no soul there...” Martina hesitated briefly while making a realization. “A minefield...a soulless minefield...”

Becky frowned. “Oh, just great! I take two steps and steps in a minefield. And the minefield is the trigger for the frame.”

“All minefield...That’s why...” Martina added.



### Soul-less Minefield

“I move against the real direction and I trigger the alarm. So I stay put.”

“Yes,” Martina replied.

“So what to do now?” Becky asked.

Martina was silent.

“What to do now Martina? I’m standing on a minefield here.”

Martina flapped her wings nervously, flew back and forth in a

non-rhythmic pace. “You have to...”

Becky deepened her frown. “Have to what?”

“You have to...” Martina repeated.

Realizing her intent in the moment, Becky shook her head. “It can’t be! You said I have to become the frame of reference.”

Martina shook her head. “Be in...not become...Be in...”

Becky nodded. “Okay, be in and not become. You also said I’m standing on the frame of reference that’s how you know what it is.”

“Yes,” Martina replied.

“So we both understand this...I’m standing on a minefield and to be in it, I have to let it explode?”

“Yes...virtual...” Martina said.

“A virtual explosion that will feel real. Now, of what good is that under heaven?” Becky asked.

“You’ll be in it,” Martina replied.

“But I’ll still be in it afterwards...” Becky replied.

“What does that really achieve?”

“I’ll see it...pattern,” Martina replied.

“You’ll be able to see the patterns?” Becky asked for the purposes of confirmation.

“Yes,” Martina replied.

Becky exhaled with the relief she finally understood the intent of what Martina was asking her to do. “You’re saying I have to...”

Martina nodded nervously.

“Yes...have to...only pain. Must keep on...”

“I have to let the minefield explode, retain my stand and

absorb the pain as if nothing really happened.”

Martina nodded. “Yes...if no...trigger.”

Becky thought about all the disadvantages the moment entailed. If she triggered the intruder alarm, the managers of the facility will also be alarmed. What they would be left with will be time to find their way out of the facility; time, which she was almost absolutely certain they didn't have.

She closed her eyes to absorb the thought of the virtual pain there was to come and slowly opened them. “Okay Martina...okay.”

Martina hesitated, wondering if Becky knew exactly what it would take to achieve what she agreed to. “You must stand...you must.”

Becky exhaled. “Yes I know. I must stand.”

“Raise leg...” Martina added.

“Raise leg...” Becky agreed.

“Must not fall...” Martina added.

Becky exhaled, envisioning the amount of strength it would take to withstand the pain of the sensational blast and stand. “Must not fall,” she agreed.

Martina covered her mouth with both hands.

Becky held two fists, slowly released it before covering her mouth with her hands as well. She inhaled, exhaled, lifted her leg slowly to trigger the minefield, and painfully dropped it.

“Soul-less minefield!” she heard Martina exclaim.



And she was besieged with more than pain. The visual imagery of seeing the explosion overwhelmed her as well. And it was the mind trick meant to truly fool her into a sense of the transpositional world she was in, send her into a panic, blind her resolve as it blinded her field of view. Instead she clenched her teeth to withstand the pain, and a few seconds later, she was shaking vigorously but the pain was lessened.

“Did you get a read on the minefield?” Becky asked Martina.

“Yes...Stay there where you are,” Martina replied, and went to work on the second door as Becky stood in the same spot, yet blind.

“I’m sure the minefield is still trigger-happy,” Becky said.

Martina ignored her statement as she focused on opening the other door. And when she was finished, “Can walk now...” she said, holding the door open for Becky.

Becky frowned. “How? The soul-less minefield is still here.”

“Yes...it is...” Martina replied, “...act the walk.

“Act the walk?” Becky asked.

“Act the walk...” Martina repeated. “The walk straight...act the walk...straight... open door.”

“Act like I’m not blind, walk straight, you already opened the door?”



*"Act the  
walk..."*

“Yes,” Martina replied.  
Becky began a series of near perfectly straight steps forward, and began to feel the subsiding

effect of the SD as she walked through the door.

They rushed through the rooms in the back where they managed pet care and grooming. They saw two workers busy grooming dogs. Tango wasn't there. Next they went to the health division, snooping from one dog stall to another before she heard, "Hey little girl, looking for your dog?"

Martina turned useless immediately and Becky picked her off the floor.

Becky looked up to find a pair of adult eyes staring down at her. "Hi there Mr. I was looking for my doll. I dropped it when I and my mother came here."

The man smiled. "Where is your mother?"

Becky retreated quickly. "Out there waiting for me."

And at the nearest corner, Becky shook Martina into a waking state. “Did you sense Tango?” she asked.

Martina flipped her wings. “It wasn’t there. No sense of it. No smell of it. And it smells.”

“So nothing?” Becky asked.

“Traces...” Martina replied.

“Traces of it?”

“Traces of something...”

Martina replied, and made her way away from Becky.

Becky followed obediently. They made significant strides and faced an isolated corner with writings which read:

*RESTRICTED AREA*

*EMPLOYEES ONLY*

“That seems like some place Primer Inc. may hide a secret lab,” Becky commented.

“Can hide a lot...” Martina commented.

Becky backed the corner as Martina went to work on the lock, and more than a few clicks later, they were inside the restricted area.

“It’s here,” Martina announced as they turned the corner to face a set of caged dogs. And as Tango took to barking excitedly, they heard the sounds of footsteps, and dove behind the long lab tables. The footsteps grew close, too close for comfort momentarily before Martina threw herself in the path of the stranger’s leg. Becky saw the woman’s shoes before she turned the corner to avoid being detected.

The hard throw against one of the dog’s cages was a tough call. And the woman bent down to see what she had kicked. Martina was lifeless and doll-like again. “How did this get here?” the woman

asked no one in particular. She was alone in the restricted area. She walked away from the area holding Martina carelessly in one hand. And in moments, the door they had come in through was locked behind them.

Becky moved quickly as Tango was yet barking. “Shush!” she said to silence Tango, now more excited than scared, unlocked the hinged cage that housed him, took him by the collar and dragged him a few feet before she saw the exit door that led through the back rather than the front of the facility. She exhaled, reassuring herself, Martina will soon get out of the cuffs of some woman’s hands and out of the *lost and found* section of Rec B.

Becky and Tango had barely walked a block before Martina caught up with them.

Becky smiled. “It seems you were lost and found at the very same time.”

Martina smiled. “And we found Tango...”

Becky widened her smile. “We sure did...”

“Simone...” Martina started with a questioning gaze.

“We found Tango wandering the park...” Becky replied, holding Martina’s eyes. “They didn’t take it. It jumped the fence and took a walk.”

## CHAPTER FIVE

### THE LUCKY POT OF GOLD

Becky had said the longest goodbye to Tango when her Uncle Jonathan came to take him, and

neither she nor her Aunt Simone mentioned the incidence.

And Becky and Martina were smuggled up in bed some time later when her Aunt Simone came into her room.

Simone smiled. “In bed to sleep or read?”

“Both...” Martina replied.

“Can’t be at the same time,” Simone commented.

“I’m going to read Martina some bed time stories,” Becky replied.

“And yet you’re the one to fall asleep,” Simone commented, smiled. “You’re going to be fine without the Golden Retriever for a month or two, aren’t you Becky?”

“Small price Aunt Simone,” Becky replied.

And as Simone tried to leave, “Why?” Martina asked.

Simone frowned. “Why what?”

“Why golden...retriever?”

Martina asked.

And as Simone wondered what Martina meant, Becky explained.

“She wants to know why you call Tango a Golden Retriever.”

Simone softened her frown.

“Oh that!” she said, taking her seat by the side of the bed. “There’s a story for that.”

“There is?” Becky asked.

“There’s a story for everything if you get to it,” Simone replied.

“Once upon a time, a master usually walked a Golden Retriever down by the shore. On one of such fateful walks, the dog found a golden coin there by the shore and this led the master to a sunken ship. And there, in that sunken ship, they found it; a large pot of gold.”

“Treasures...” Martina said.

Simone nodded. “Indeed treasures...a whole lot of it...it’s like the story of Primer Inc.”

Becky raised an eyebrow. “Is it?”

Simone nodded.

“Because of the treasures?”

Becky asked.

“That didn’t even matter to Primer Inc.,” Simone replied.

“What mattered?” Becky asked.

“That they found a pot of gold at the end of some rainbow and called it Luck-pot,” Simone replied.

“So the story mattered?” Becky asked.

Simone shook her head. “No. The pot of gold mattered.”

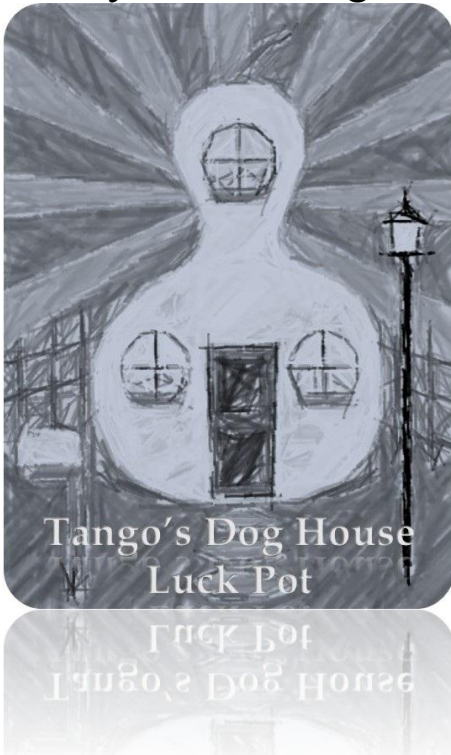
Becky frowned. “Why?”

“Because it contained the gold,” Simone replied.

Becky squinted, now suspicious of the story. “Is that one of your made-up stories?”

Simone smiled. “Why would you say that?”

Becky studied her Aunt Simone. “Because when you make a story up, you smile, like you’re smiling now. And Luck Pot is what you call Tango’s dog house.”



Simone widened her smile.  
“But the story is not too different  
with what is happening with  
Primer Inc. Not too different my  
dear.”

Martina smiled.

And Becky smiled too; happy  
things were back to the normal she  
knew.

*Fiction Series Books by Dew Platt*

The Phoenix Risers

The Adventures of Silli Page

Parable-Play

Transverse

Becky Alloy

Dawnbreaker

Rin

Roma&Retina

