



PERIL IN PARIS





# KC FRANTZEN



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ILLUSTRATED BY TW VANYA

RUSHJOY PRESS

**MAY THE K9 SPY: BOOK 2**

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Illustrations by TW Vanya at <http://twvanyafineart.com/>

Cover design by Kimberly Van Meter at [www.kimberlyvanmeter.com](http://www.kimberlyvanmeter.com)

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**Manufactured in the United States of America.**

**ISBN 978-0-9833563-1-8**



RushJoy Press,

an imprint of Bottom Line Clarity, LLC

## ***For Dad & Mom:***

*Congratulations as another big milestone approaches.*

*You've kept your focus on the Lord, worked hard and as a result, experienced success in many areas. You are truly inspirational and I love you.*

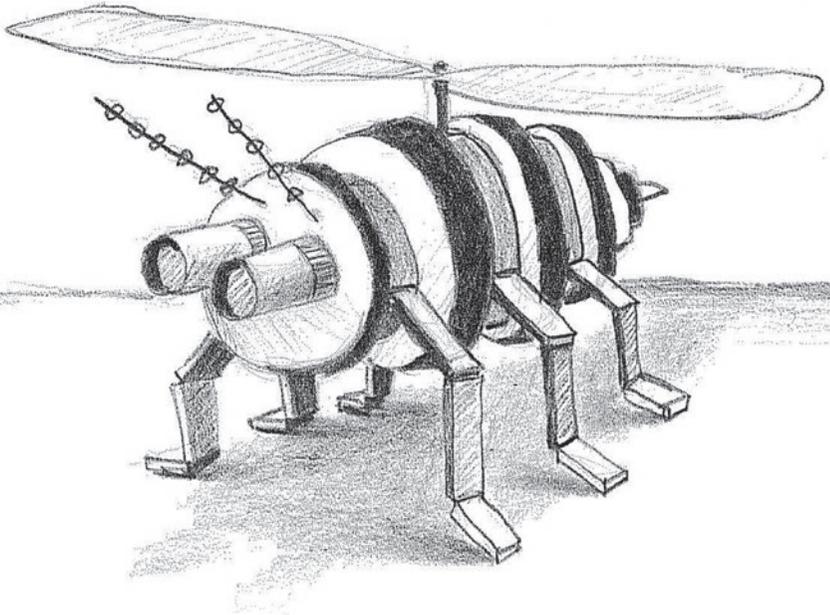
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## ***For my teachers:***

*I dedicate the illustrations in this book to my teachers: Mrs. Morgan - first grade, Mrs. Miller - 3rd grade, Mrs. Funderburk - high-school; Professors John Alexander, Bill Anzalone, and John Simple from the University of Houston and most recently to Joe Parker, John Erickson and Joyce and Roland Jones for all they do in helping artists' dreams to come true.*

TW Vanya





## *Chapter 1*

*P*lop!

*Wshew.* That last step was a doozy.

I shake it off. *Sniff.* Edgrr's scent has vanished. And uh oh, my infrared goggles aren't working. Can't see a thing.

"When lost, stop. Assess the situation." Ms. Schwind just taught that in survival class so, okay... I dislike the dark, but don't panic. What are my knowns?

I'm participating in a timed agility exercise and dashed past the correct turn. Obviously. I dropped down some kind of metal tubing, it gives a bit when I push. Landed okay, but not much room to maneuver. Infrared goggles on the fritz. All in all, status not so good.

On the other paw, I'm not injured. Nose and ears functional.

I *really* want to make Miss Sandy and Sassy, her K9 partner, proud they picked me for the program. With twenty days of K9 Service boot camp behind me – almost half-way – I'm near the front of the pack. And bonus points if I'm the one to find the mole!

Me, a chance to graduate Top Dog!

Well, wrong turns are an automatic deduction in this test, but maybe I can earn extra credit for “creativity and resourcefulness.” I'll need both to graduate and for sure if I land the assignment to nab Rukan. Please-please-please!

I almost got him last time, and that was without any training.

Okay. Time for further assessment.

Things smell new here – drywall, paint, linoleum. I faintly detect human scents and voices below. Donuts too. Yum.

Maybe I'm near the renovated offices. Somewhere... inside an air duct?

Our instructors keep telling us to “improvise and use any resources at your disposal.” Would it be cheating to remove these goggles? But how? The straps are still on tight.

I stamp my paw, listening. Sounds like a big open space ahead.

I'll test each step while practicing my stealthy cat walk. It'd sure help if we had an actual feline instructor instead of video. But this is the K9 Service. Dogs only.

I scrape alongside something. A latch? And I aced the latch exam. Hey. Maybe if I turn my head a little, and back up I can use it to ditch these goggles.

I squirm around, hook the strap near my ear, and step back...  
Starting to give...

YANK.

The goggles pop off, hurtling me backwards. Not again! I fling all four paws out to slow my fall.

*Wham!*

So much for incognito. I stand and shake it off.

*Blink, blink.* Righty-o, goggles are gone.

I'm looking down into an office through a vent grate. From the photos I'd say it's General Jim's, Administrator of Special Services, K9 Division. I don't know him – yet – but I like his kids. They brought treats for all us recruits. I like treats!

The desk is far away but I think that's Miss Sandy's agent file, I mean, *dossier*. Yep. There's a photo of Sassy too, with her jagged ear, won in a Venezuelan street fight.

I squish my whiskers up to the grate.

Drat. No way in.

I turn around and scramble up the shaft.

My goggles! At least I'm back where I started *this* part of the journey.

“Leave no evidence. Pack it in, pack it out.” I almost hear Edgrr's gruff voice as I tuck the goggles into my collar pouch and start to search. Here's another metal tube, branching downward. I see a little glimmer of light through another vent grate. And I hear... Buzzing? Let's go!

Few overhead lights are lit in this office, but my eyes adjust quickly. Look in that flat glass case. Bees, working as a team. And they seem content, like they don't mind being cooped in a crate like I used to be. April, my grouchy sister, said she ate bees to survive, before coming to live with Dad and Mom. Can't imagine.

The wall calendar has this week crossed off with letters: V-A-C-A-T-I-O-N. Great! Since nobody's here, I can exit incognito... when I figure out how to get down. I'm going to check out those bees, bee-sides.

Dad would say something silly like that. I sure miss him and Mom and Hans, and my Lobbie. Okay admit it. April too. Though she always thinks she's so smart.

Well, I think I could travel along the shelves, so how do I remove this grate?

I notice small screws on the sides. Dad says "Lefty loosey, righty tighty." Using my underbite, I take the end of a screw and twist left. Drat. It's tighter. Wait – he used that device on the flat part, not the pointy end. Must twist it the other way.

After several twists and a little nudge, one side swings open. Pawsome! Thanks Dad.

When I look straight down at the shelf, I notice awards for beekeeping and an old mesh helmet. Wonder if this is a hobby or another special branch of the Service? Maybe both.

Good thing I'm not afraid of heights. I position my front paws over the edge and glance at the clock. I'll make good time if I report in soon. Let's go... No, wait. There might be extra points if it's like I was never here.

I scootch out further, nosing a trophy out of the way. ACK! It wobbles and tilts. I catch it with my paw and tip it back into place.

I push off, then balance on the narrow shelf. Steadyyy... I stand on my hind legs, nose the grate into position and twist the screws. Okay, I'm on my way!

I dodge trophies and some plaques, jump to another shelf, dodge two large dead cow gloves, dodge books, dodge – What's this?

It's bee-shaped, though a little larger than the real thing. Definitely mechanized, with little rotors and tiny colored wires. I suspect that's a camera where the eyes should be. This resembles that dragonfly Miss Sandy and Sassy use for surveillance and communication. And that piece is probably the controller.

One day I'll use devices like this on a real mission!

Three more shelves before I make it to the credenza – vault to the swivel chair – steaaadyyy – now leap onto the desk. Don't slip on the folders.

Ooh how thoughtful, a half-full glass of water. I'm parched.

Piffle. This glass is narrow and a bit tough to navigate since we dogs use our tongues to toss water back. A bowl would be easier. Still, I'm thankful for something to drink while I “improvise resourcefully and apply lessons creatively.”

*Lap lap lap.* I stuff my face deeper inside, extending my tongue farther and farther and...

My eyes pop open wide. Panic rises from my toes.

I jerk my head and feel liquid dribbling down my neck. When I look through the glass, the overflow is spreading across the desk. Quick! Must get this off without breaking it.

I lurch to the desk lamp, positioning the glass rim at the edge of the metal shade and carefully pull back.

Good. It didn't break. I nudge the glass into place.

Now guess I'll have to use my fur like a towel.

When I stand back, it's clear I'm only making a bigger mess. The ink is blotchy on some of the papers and the folders are curling. Sorry Mr. Bee Man.

I arrange the files so the contents will dry – I hope – and jump onto a chair and down to the floor. I trot to a coat rack and



inspect a white over-suit. Same scent as the dead cow gloves. Here's some boots and...

Yikes, the time. Gotta go! But how to exit? That door handle is way high.

I spy a wall panel marked "Electrical." Maybe...

I push and it springs open. Lots of wires and circuitry inside, and hey. I think that's another latch. I stretch and tinker.

Yep. I can just fit. There *are* benefits to being small.

I use my underbite to shut the panel into the office, wedge in between the conduit and circuit boards, and... I'm through. I push on the panel cover and hear it click into place. Now to the finish line!

I look down two long empty hallways.

Drat. I've completely lost my sense of direction.