

JP and his Animal Detectives

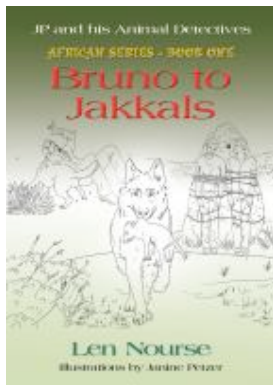
AFRICAN SERIES - BOOK ONE

Bruno to Jakkals



Len Nourse

Illustrations by Janine Petzer



A kid, JP, could talk to animals. He joined the police to work with dogs. JP and his first lieutenant, Bruno, imprisoned many gangsters in action packed adventures of crime solving. Bruno, via JP, was tops in telling these stories. Tragedy struck when a gang they had imprisoned took revenge, but not before Bruno brought JP a Jackal pup, Jakkals. Their next adventures show how they built a team of animal detectives; Eagle the first.

JP and His Animal Detectives

African Series

Book One

Bruno to Jakkals

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Your free excerpt appears below. Enjoy!

**Book 1 - JP and his Animal
Detectives – African Series**

Bruno to Jakkals

Len Nourse

Illustrations by Janine Petzer

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First Edition

Part 1: JP – The Kid who spoke to the Animals

“Chappie! Bingo! Get back inside the gate you naughty dogs!” shouted Len

“Too late,” said Joe, as two boys jumped off the back of a truck. “I hope the dogs don’t bite those boys. The dogs don’t know who they are.”

“Woof bark growl...,” said the younger boy.

“Look Joe, the dogs have stopped barking viciously, and have fallen in behind the younger boy. And now, look, they are licking his hand.”

Gentle growling was being exchanged between them and the boy.

“It’s almost as though he is talking to the dogs,” said Joe.

The visitors settled on the front verandah of the house. The father of the boys said in Africans: *Engelsman! Ek neem aan dis jou kinders met daai twee honde wat rondwaal by die dongas op my plaas? Ek het duur stoetskape en hou nie daarvan dat vreemde honde op my plaas rondloop nie.*”

Interpreted this says; “Englishman! Am I to understand that it’s your children and two dogs I see roaming the dongas on my farm at various times? I have valuable stud sheep and I don’t like strange dogs

around.” said Johannes Koubus Pietersen to Len’s and Joe’s Dad as he sat in a chair and pointed to our dogs, Bingo, the mischievous naughty black mongrel, and Chappie, the fawn coloured Great Dane puppy.



Dad, a bit red faced, replied, “My name is Joe Nourse.” and continuing in Afrikaans, added, “*Ek sal met die kinders praat.* [I will talk to the children.] As you know, I’m new to the area so will you not come in and we can talk over a cuppa. *Tee of koffie?*”

Dad, replying half in Afrikaans and offering a cuppa, eased the tension implied by Johannes' harsh use of the word '*Engelsman*'.

"Thank you Joe, I'll enjoy a cup of coffee." Then, addressing his two sons, he added, "Jacques and Jaapie go and play with Oom Joe's children. Maybe you should speak to them in English as it's unlikely they can speak Afrikaans."

"*Ons kan* [We can]" quipped my elder brother Joe walking away and saying. "Dad, may we go and play at the riverside."

"Sure, if Johannes doesn't mind."

"That's fine with me too, but just keep the dogs away from my sheep," said Johannes.

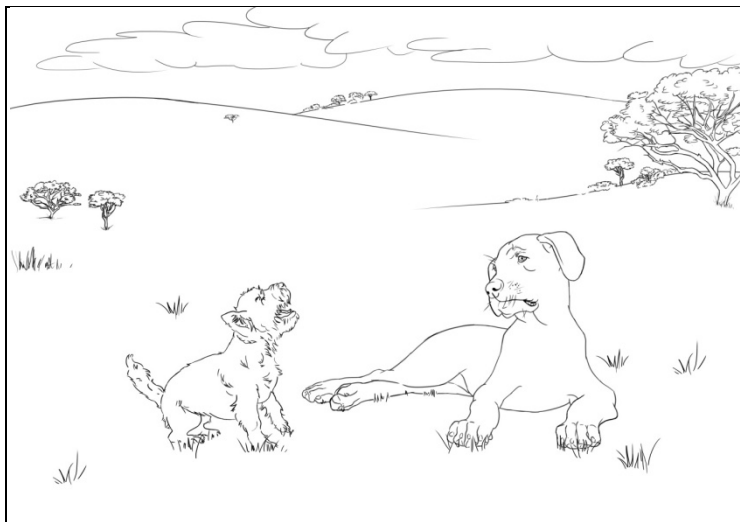
That's how, in December, 1942; I met JP, then still known by his nickname Jaapie, and his older brother, Jacques. At that time Jacques and Jaapie were more proficient in English than Joe and I in Afrikaans, so conversation was predominantly in English. We practiced Klayaat and slingshot. We all became very proficient in these arts as do most kids growing up on farms.

JP was especially good in languages, and could speak all the local African tongues, even at the tender age of eight. On the weekends and school holidays

during those initial years, we four new friends, and sometimes also my younger brother Phillip, only three years old at that time, wandered the two farms with our dogs playing in the streams and dongas. JP is about nine months older than my older brother Joe, but as things turned out, Joe and Jacques did things together, especially hunting pigeons, guinea fowl and quail. I spent more time with JP, because neither of us enjoyed hunting birds and animals. We instead just watched and listened to the voices of the birds and animals. This we did from tree tops, and luckily we both were very good at climbing trees.

JP watched and listened very intently with his lips moving continuously while mimicking the animal and bird sounds. On one particular day when out in the fields with the dogs barking very excitedly, JP said, "Bingo is urging Chappie to join him to chase sheep".

He said a bit more than this, but at that time I didn't listen to what he said, or ask why, other than silently note: "Hmm, it seems as though JP can understand what the dogs are saying."



Sadly, when in high school, we Nourse boys later found out that our dogs did chase sheep, but mistakenly did not tell Dad, as we knew that he would then get rid of them. Later this got Dad into trouble with the neighbours, all who had sheep on their farms. In one swoop Chappie killed thirty three sheep, including prime breeding stock, belonging to JP's father. Bingo was too small to pull down a sheep by himself, but he taught Chappie to do so. This cost Dad a lot of money so he gave Chappie to a friend who lived in the middle of the

city of Pietermaritzburg – the capital of what was then Natal province.

JP's first Case

The four of us at times went out into the dongas to practice *Clayaat*; an art whereby a flexible stick is used to hurl balls of clay at targets. One day while the four of us, now all in high school, were out practicing *Clayaat* we heard Bingo excitedly barking at Chappie.

On this JP said, “Bingo is saying there are some sheep across the river where two men with dogs are chasing them. Let’s go and join them.”

Jacques, giving JP a sidelong glance said in Afrikaans, “They are probably Pa’s sheep, let’s go and investigate.”

As the dogs were running off Jaapie barked, telling them in dog language, “Wait dogs, it sounds like sheep theft so keep back behind us. We don’t want the people to know we’re here.” Bingo and Chappie immediately obeyed.

I, at the time, made a mental note to ask Jaapie about the dogs and his barking, but this was not the time because action was needed, so said nothing. We crossed the river and came to the field where we saw two sheep dogs rounding up sheep. They were obeying the

instructions of two men near a van. Jacques said, “Those are Pa’s sheep and some are his breeding stock. We’ll have to do something.”

Jaapie said, “Len, from school sport, we know you are a fast runner so run back to your Dad’s house and tell Pa and your Dad what’s happening. The three of us, with the dogs, will divert the proceedings until they get here.”

As I ran off I heard Jaapie again barking at Bingo and Chappie, and saw our two dogs run into the pack of sheep. At the same time I heard Jacques say, “We’ll pepper the two men with our *Klayaats*, but this time we’ll load our clay with stones.”

My brother told me later: “The commotion caused by our dogs in the rounded up sheep distracted the two men enough to allow the three of us to get within twenty meters of them. We then let them have it with our *Klayaats*. As you know I’m pretty good, but Jacques and Jaapie are even better. The first stone laden clay missiles hit the men at the back of their heads, and stunned them. Unknown to Jacques and me, after the first shots, Jaapie had run to their truck. He saw their guns lying on the front seat, grabbed them and gave one each to Jacques and me. We two then held the two men at gunpoint until our parents arrived in Johannes’s Jeep. They then dealt with the poachers. Jaapie had moved off to deal with the

dogs and the sheep. Later we heard some barking, and a while later he returned with the four dogs at his heels.”

When I was alone with Jaapie I asked him, “How were you able to get Chappie and Bingo to listen to you? They never listen to us, and why did the sheep dogs then also follow you?”

He said, “I just barked at Bingo and Chappie, and the sheep dogs saying, ‘*Stop chasing the sheep now. You two sheep dogs come here.*’ All the dogs immediately obeyed. In time you will learn that I have a special skill.”

After that I didn’t get much more time to spend with JP on the farm because our family moved house to the village of Camperdown, some 24 km outside Pietermaritzburg; about 300km from our farm near Newcastle. JP was 3 years ahead of me at school, so at school we spent little time together. There big boys did not mix with little boys!

Despite this social drawback, JP did seek me out at weekends or after school to spend time on the river-bank where we watched the birds and animals drinking water. He became very proficient in mimicking their voices. Although I did not realize it at the time, I later learnt he was actually practicing speaking to them.



During one such moment in his year 12, JP said, “Len, I don’t understand this indiscriminate killing of animals and birds, and nor can they. Our experience in capturing those two poachers with the help of your dogs was very motivating for me. So I’m going to study at the police college to become a police officer working with police dogs dealing with animal cruelty and poaching.”

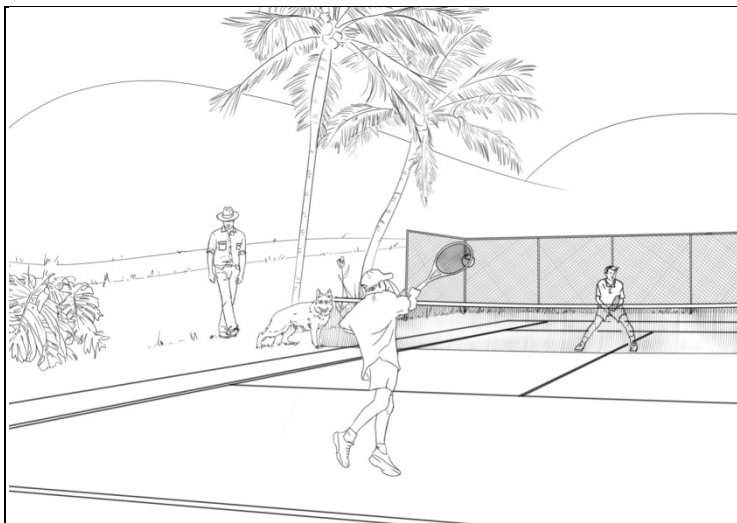
Part 2: Lieutenant Johannes Andre' Alexander Pietersen of Camperdown

“Len, I see you haven’t lost your argumentative nature.” JP said as he strolled past the Camperdown tennis courts with his police dog Bruno, an Alsatian colleague at his side.

This was said while Brian and I, playing a hard fought game of tennis, argued a line decision:

“It was out!”

“It was in!”



That was how JP and I met again.

“Gee, is that you JP? What are you doing here? What a lovely dog you have.”

“Yes, his name’s Bruno. I belong to the special police branch that has been assigned to sort out illegal crop growing in the valley. I’ll be stationed in Camperdown for 3 months.”

“That’s great. What are you going to be doing?”

“We need to find out who’s involved with the growing and production of dagga - the name used for cannabis in South Africa - in the Valley of a Thousand Hills. Bruno. I only arrived two days ago, and we’re going for a walk down into the Valley. I assume you have just finished your Matric year – did you pass?”

“I hope so. These are my friends Brain, Peter and Marilyn, who also have just finished their Matric. Friends, this is JP, my Newcastle school friend. His real name is Johannes Andre’ Alexander Pietersen, but his school friends and I call him JP for short.

JP, may we come with you because I can show you the way? We can follow the many footpaths used by the local Africans.”

As expected, Brain, Peter and Marilyn simultaneously said, “I can’t go”. I expected this, since both boys don’t like going down the steep inclines into

the valley, and Marylyn's father will not allow her to go — although I know she'd love to.

This pleased me since I wasn't keen on sharing JP's company.

"You are welcome Len. But you must come now because Bruno needs a long walk every day, and we'd like to get back before dark. I trust your parents don't mind it if you go down into the valley, like in the old days when we were children, but it would be nice if one of your friends would let your mother know."

"Good idea, JP. Will one of you please do that for me?"

"No problem," they said in unison.

"We'll be gone for about 4 hours," he told them.

So the others continued with their tennis while I went off with JP. That's when the real adventures of JP and his animal detectives began.

Camperdown borders the upper part of the Valley of a Thousand Hills, and it wasn't long before JP, Bruno, and I were on the steep dirt road and paths leading down into the Valley.

On the way, JP said, "Bruno's specially trained to locate areas where dagga is grown."

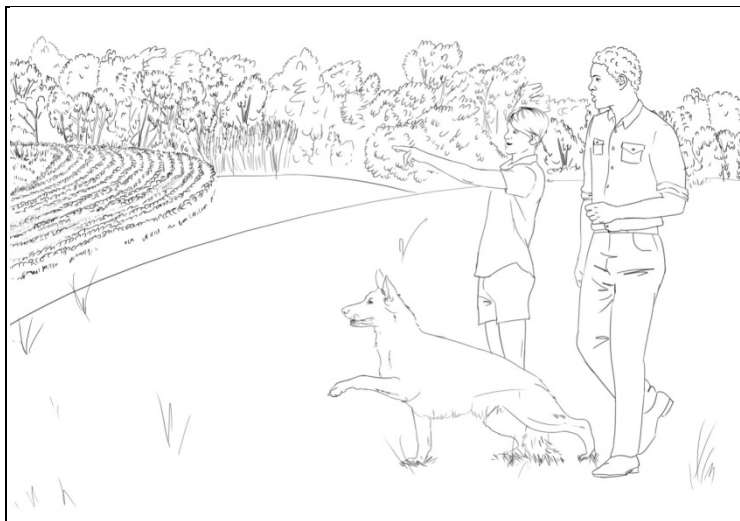
“While my friends were away I had nobody with whom to play, so I often went down into the valley by myself. I gathered clay from the eroded dongas to make models of animals.” With a grin I added, “I often sneaked into the mealie (corn) fields to pick raw cobs that I cooked over a fire in the dongas. It was then that I saw dagga growing in-between the rows of mealies.”

Noticing a questioning look on JP’s face I added, “Well, I think it was dagga.”

“Do you still know where this was?” said JP. “Do you think you could find the area again?”

“Yes, we need to get on that road down there, because most of it was near the bottom of the first valley. There are some sheds down there too.”

“Growl...” said Bruno, pointing his nose and ears at a maize field.



“Bruno can smell dagga in that field over there. We need to hurry. We’ll deal with that later because, as you know, we are primarily after the dealers and not the small growers.”

“JP, it seems to me you can understand what Bruno is saying, and he you. From your comment I take it he told you that that field contains dagga. I remember thinking you could do this when we were just kids – wow, that’s awesome!”

“Yes, I can speak to Bruno, as well as some other animals and birds. Please don’t let anyone else know or I’ll be confined to a circus act.”

“It’s our secret, JP.”

Just as we were about to move onto the road JP put up his hand, and said, “Wait, Bruno’s ears are pricking, and I hear a truck coming. Let’s hide behind this bush because I don’t want the driver to see me, and especially Bruno. If the driver is a wrongdoer he’ll immediately recognise Bruno as a police dog and thus me, even though I don’t wear a police uniform.”



About a minute later, a red truck with a large canvas covered carrier passed us, and I said to JP, “I’ve seen this truck come down here many times before.”

“Growl ...” said Bruno very softly.

“Bruno says the truck smells of cannabis, so let’s get down there quickly.”

When I showed JP where the shed at the bottom of the valley was, he said, “Len, this looks like it’s going to be more than just an investigational trip into the valley to give Bruno some exercise. It’s now police business, so I want you to return home now before it’s too dark. I don’t want your parents worrying about where you are. If they send the local police down into the valley looking for you they will make a noise and disturb my investigation.”

“I want to stay, because I can help you.”

“No, you’ll probably get in our way or betray our presence through ignorance of procedure. It could also be dangerous for you. On your way back please don’t let anyone see you, but thanks for your help. I’ll let you know the outcome. Now go, and be careful.”

I slowly walked a little way back along the track and then crept off the track and into the bushes and hid. I would stay here quietly and watch, but JP and Bruno were out of sight. I couldn’t see what was happening. If I went any closer someone might see me. After some

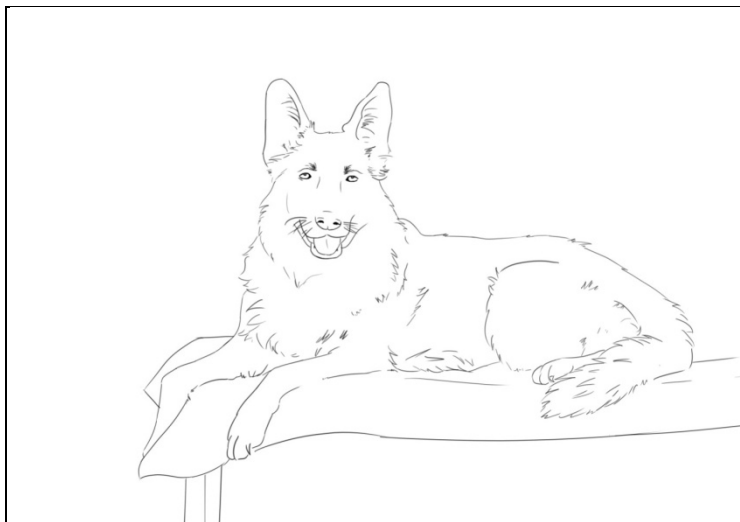
time I gave up and went home. JP would tell me what happened.

Some weeks later, I was about to take up a job in Ixopo, Natal, when JP arrived at our home with Bruno at his side, and said, "Please come with me to my sleeping quarters at the Camperdown Police Station. If you recollect, I promised I'd tell you what happened in the valley."

Part 3s: Bruno's Story

When we arrived at his sleeping quarters, JP sat on the side of the bed and Bruno jumped up beside him. He said, "Sit down Len and I'll let Bruno tell the story; especially as he's the main character here. I know you won't understand what he is saying, but I'll interpret as he goes along. With Bruno telling the story you'll be able grasp his excitement and enthusiasm in what took place from the tone of his barking. From this you'll learn to appreciate the value of our dogs, and that they too feel proud of a job well done. They are not just dumb creatures."

"Growl... Of course we're not. JP could not have caught these poachers without my help. I'll tell it as though it's live so that you can live the story."



When I was seated Bruno continued with his barking; now very enthusiastically telling me the story, with JP translating. It was so real as if I was there watching all the time, just like I had wanted to do.

“Growl... The shed was locked. I scratched a hole and wriggled under the door. It was filled with dried dagga, already baled.

JP said, “Can you open the door from the inside?”

“Growl...Of course I can.”

JP, using his walkie talkie called Camperdown headquarters saying: “Come in Camperdown

headquarters; we've found the warehouse where the dealers keep the dagga they buy from the local growers. We need backup now. We're at the bottom of the road that goes over the rail line past the railway station goods shed."

"Growl... Let's have a look in those other sheds. I can hear some voices."

Approaching one of the sheds JP stopped quickly and said in a whisper, "I think the voices are coming from in here."

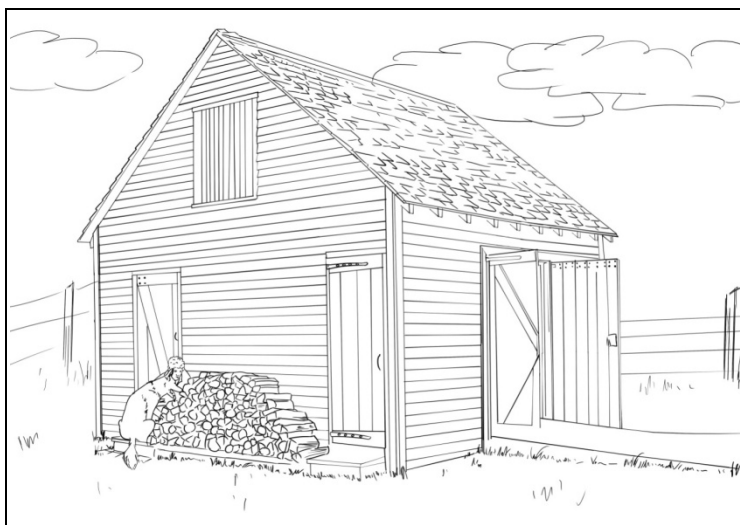
Bruno crept to the open door and looked in. "Growl... There are about ten mean looking men sitting around a table listening to one dressed in a smart suit. We called the man in the suit, '*Suit-man*', because he looks as though he should be in an office. In appearance he was out of place among the ruffians keeping him company."



In varying tones of growling and barking, Bruno continued, “JP, I just heard Suit-man say: *‘I’ve word that the police have wind of our operation here, so I’ll be leaving at the end of this meeting when the trucks arrive. The rest of you must load all the dagga in them as soon as possible. You mustn’t leave a trace of dagga behind.’*”

JP stepped out of hearing range and again talked to headquarters on his walkie talkie, saying in Afrikaans. “There are at least ten thugs here so please bring a strong force.”

“Growl...JP I just heard Suit-man say: ‘Our lookout has just informed me that he saw a man creeping around our sheds. Go and find him and bring him to me. If he resists, kill him. He also tells me the trucks have arrived, so quickly load them. We can’t wait for midnight now because I’m sure the police will soon be here.’”



Bruno, barring his teeth continued, “That was careless of you JP to allow yourself to be seen, but then you are still a young investigator and will learn. You’re

lucky I'm always so careful! From Suit-man's conversation it's obvious they didn't know I was there."

JP whispered, "Yes Bruno, so stay hidden, because it's obvious they don't know you're here. Only come at my calling, or if I'm in trouble! We have to keep them busy until the police reinforcements arrive. One of your first jobs is to puncture the tyres of all their trucks and cars. There are six tyres per truck, but you need only damage the front ones — both if possible."

"Growl...There is no need to talk softly JP. Seeing that we are both speaking in dog language, I'd be surprised if these crooked humans realize our barking and growling is anything other than that of two dogs in grunting play! But yes, in correction I suppose we have to growl softly because we don't want them to know there are dogs around and surmise that these could be police dogs."

"Are your teeth strong enough to do that?"

"Grumph...Now that's a silly question JP; of course my teeth are strong enough to puncture and rip the tyres of the trucks. You know how good our training is! Our dog trainer would not have let me go out into the field and work with a novice officer if I'd not proven I can do this. My jaws are very tough from all the training we're put through!"

“OK Bruno, my apologies. I’ll leave you to tyre puncturing while I divert these thugs in the opposite direction. Remember, puncture the boss’s car tyres first because I’m sure he’ll try to make a dash for it and leave all the dirty work to his thugs. It’s him we really want to capture.”

“Growl...Gruff!” Bruno grumbled to himself, “Imagine JP asking me if my teeth are strong enough, and then thinking he needs to tell me which vehicle’s tyres must be punctured first! We police dogs are well trained in matters such as puncturing tyres. Anyway, we have animal instinct to know what to do – you humans underestimate our intelligence, we dogs are not dumb like cats. I don’t like leaving the inexperienced JP to deal with the ten mean looking thugs alone, so I better hurry.”



Again joining JP, Bruno said, “Growl... I half expected you to be killed. I quickly flattened the car’s tyres — all four. None too soon either because no sooner had I finished when Suit-man came dashing out with his briefcase.”

JP said, “I hope the briefcase will contain valuable incriminating evidence against them.”

Bruno continued, “Growl...He didn’t see me and jumped into his car and tried to make off. Ha, ha - little hope he had. He could make little progress with four

slashed tyres, especially on the uneven ground and soft sand where he was parked.

“His wheels sank until the sump touched the ground. He couldn’t go anywhere. After I fixed his car I got busy with the tyres on the trucks parked on the other side of the building, and they were quite some job. I was halfway finished with the second truck when I heard gunshots. I quickly punctured the front left of the third truck — well I should say ripped it — because I knew that would cripple the truck for some while, and ran to see if I could be any help to you, JP.”

“That’s good of you Bruno because I could do with a distraction of sorts,” said JP.

“Growl...At first I couldn’t see you JP, hiding behind a pile of logs. Have you still got bullets in that gun in your hand?”

“Yes I have some but I’m getting low.”

“Growl...There are seven of the thugs hiding behind those stacks of wood over there. They all have guns in their hands ready to shoot you.”

“I know, Bruno, that’s why I’m hiding.”



“Growl...JP, are those three thugs lying face down on the ground wounded and alive, or dead? I’ll run among the remaining thugs to make a nuisance of myself by biting their legs. That will divert their fire from you to me.”

JP said, “That’s good Bruno — so get moving because I’ll soon run out of ammunition. I don’t know if the three downed thugs are alive or dead, but they are out of action.”

“Growl... It was funny watching the thugs thinking they could shoot a fast moving dog like me. In the chaos

that followed, they wounded each other when they tried to shoot me as I ran all over the place! This deviation of their gunfire gave JP the opportunity to down three more of them without wasting bullets with pot shots. The remaining thugs stopped firing at JP and sought shelter.”



“Growl... I hear the whirr of helicopters.” Bruno commented about ten minutes later.

Three helicopters appeared overhead carrying police reinforcements. As they landed, the officer in command gave the order: “Lay down your weapons.”

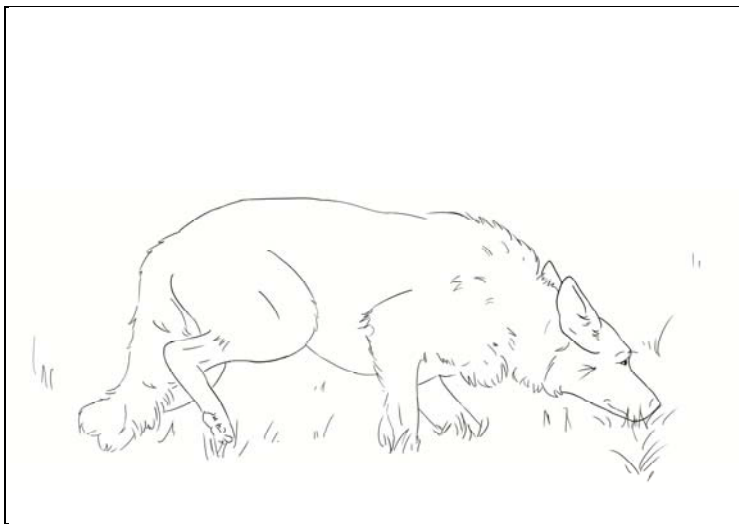
The remaining thugs, now bewildered, came from behind their shelter and dropped their weapons. Six more lay scattered among the wood piles. Only one was dead because JP had shot to wound and not to kill. He wanted them alive to extract evidence about the organization's headquarters. He expected them to talk to save their own skins as they were only the lackeys.



The Police Chief then asked, “Where’s JP?”

Knowing the police chief could not understand me, I said to myself, “Growl... He must have ducked off

when you arrived to look for Suit-man. I was having such fun I didn't see him leave, and only noticed his absence once you had rounded up the remaining thugs and asked where he was."



I then said to the police, "Growl...Follow me and I'll find him by following his scent. I must hurry because I think JP could be in danger. I trust you'll be able to keep up with me."

The Police Chief said, "I don't really know what you are saying Bruno other than that the growl and moving

off rapidly means I must follow you, and that you think it's urgent. We'll do the best we can."

"Growl...Yes, and I think JP could be walking into a trap. Suit-man will not give up easily."

As Bruno raced round behind the shed he saw JP being held at gunpoint by Suit-man.

JP in dog language said, "Woof growl...I'm glad you're here. Suit-man thinks we have a truck and is forcing me to take him to where we have parked it."



I knew that once at our truck, Suit-man would kill JP, but also saw that JP was deviously leading Suit-man in a roundabout way towards the police, so I said: “Growl....I want you to fake falling by tripping over a bush to distract Suit-man. This will enable me to get behind him without him seeing me.”

JP interjected here saying, “The barking with me stumbling bewildered and distracted Suit-man sufficiently for Bruno to run behind him and bite his backside. Suit-man reacted by trying to whack him with a backswing of his gun. This enabled Bruno to bite his arm, sending the gun flying. This gave me the chance to down Suit-man with an uppercut.”

“Growl...Hey JP, I’m telling the story!”

“We soon overpowered him once JP had downed him. I held him down with my jaws around his throat while JP went back and fetched the police.”



“While JP was away I decided to have some fun with Suit-man. Firstly I relaxed my grip on his throat. He took this as a chance to get away by pushing upwards with his hands. I was expecting this, so just tightened my grip ever so little. As he pushed upward his own thrust caused pain and tears in his eyes. It only needed two such attempts on his part before he realized it was futile. From then on he lay quietly until the police arrived, handcuffed him, and put him in one of their vans.”



JP took over the story saying, “I’ll briefly tell you the outcome of these arrests. Since at the time we weren’t sure about what evidence Suit Man would have in his briefcase, we, well Bruno and I, wanted confessions from the thugs right then and there because from previous experience documented by older officers, we knew that once at the police station the thugs would close rank and get a good lawyer. They would end up with a light sentence or none at all. So I told the police at the site this and that we had plans on how to extract information from them right there and then.”

“Growl...Hey JP, ha-ha, wont they now expect you to perform in a circus as you previously said could happen. That would be funny. May I please now tell the police our plan?”

“Sure you now may, but I had to firstly explain to the police our special rapport. These officers are from the special force so I don’t mind them knowing of my ability to speak to dogs. It will in the long run make my work much easier.”

“Growl... That’s a joke and worth a chuckle expecting these officers not to make some gain from your ability. My experience with humans suggests otherwise. Look how they exploit the skills of us police dogs by showing off our skills at dog shows.”

“Yes. Well?”

“Growl...Len this is where the fun started. As you’ll see, JP was very thankful I was at his side, although initially I was still hiding. But I have to give JP credit, and as you’ll gather it’s where I found out he’s a very clever fighter and thinker.”

Our Plan

Having told the officers of their special rapport, JP said, “Officers, Bruno is going to tell you our plan to

extract information from this unruly bunch of thugs. I'll interpret."

"Growl...I'm going to extract the information from the thugs each in turn, with Suit-man being the last. We want you to place a recorder in your police van that can be switched on and off when necessary. JP tells me you always carry this equipment with you. This must be done unknown to the thugs. It must be on when the thugs are babbling incriminating evidence against the leaders of the gang, and off during when they are saying things we are not supposed to do — things that could get us in trouble in the courts.

"Growl...The Police Chief said, 'Bruno that's a good plan. JP, I find that most interesting so I take it Bruno will understand any conversation we have. We will let you know when were ready and have set up the recording tapes."

JP interrupted, "Bruno jumped up into the van occupied by one of the thugs. His jaws set around the thug's throat; he asked questions while I interpreted."

"Growl...Hey, JP It's my story. I said to the thug, '*I'm sure this hurts! Who's the leader of your gang?*'

"With each thug questioned in turn this way, all eventually babbled: '*Suit-man. That's all we know.*'

"When it was Suit-man's turn, he at first sneered at us, saying: '*What you are doing is illegal; babble,*

babble, babble. I'll report this torture when I'm on trial'.

“When I tightened my grip, Suit-man, in pain and wetting his pants, looked shocked and squealed and babbled like all the other thugs: *‘Ouch, ouch, ouch, your torture is horrible and must be stopped immediately or, as I said, I'll report you.’*”

“But, despite wetting his pants, he was tough; well so I thought!

JP again interrupted and said, “I’d like to put a different angle to this. Suit-man was not being tough, but rather he was trying his best, despite the pain, to hold on to his ill-gotten wealth, and, something more, even though I’ve not yet put my mind to what it is.”

“Growl... JP, how many times must I tell you it’s my story! Almost at the point of death, Suit-man eventually admitted: *‘I’m the leader of the gang’*. So we had his confession collaborated by his thugs. We’ll that’s what I thought, and was proud.”

“The police only had the tape on when Suit-man and his thugs confessed who he was. That’s how JP operates, but later I discovered how really smart he is. It didn’t end there. At the end of that first torture session, JP had another idea.”

“Bruno, I’m going to interrupt you again. Although we now had the confessions that Suit-man was the onsite operations leader, we needed to know who else was involved, and he hadn’t revealed that yet. As I see it, there’s a piece of the puzzle missing. I think it’s this: He’s using the wailing and threats, and eventual capitulation of accepting he was the leader, as a smoke screen to hide something.”

“Growl... Okay JP, I accept your interruption this time. I think you could be right. Carry on.”

“This gave me the impression that his whole performance was actually a distraction to prevent us asking more questions. We need to work on him some more. We needn’t bother Suit-man’s thugs any further because they won’t be able to tell us more, but he can. So Bruno, are you up to it? We need to know the whereabouts of their headquarters, and who else is involved. Okay, Bruno, carry on with your story.”

And Bruno did. Len said later that it was just as if he was there with JP and Bruno.

“Growl...That I can and will do with pleasure! Shouldn’t I just nip his jugular because he’s such bad person and shouldn’t be allowed to live?”

JP quickly said, “No Bruno, not yet, we still need to get a lot more information out of him.”

“Growl...Spoilsport. I’ll bet one day you’ll regret not letting me do what I want. So let’s return to Suit-man so that I can deal out more painful torment. I’ll really make him sweat, this time.”

JP said, “Now don’t be too hard on him. Just scare him enough so he’ll talk.”

Gently moving his jaws in the severing motion that Suit-man could feel on his jugular Bruno said, “Growl...I’ve had enough of this! I’m just going to sever his jugular.”

On hearing and feeling that Suit-man babbled: “Stop I’ll talk! Operation headquarters is situated at Warf F in Durban Docks, and the leaders are...”

After hearing several names, JP said, “I don’t know these people, but we have it all on tape.”

“Growl... Woof... Did I have fun doing this! It took all my training and will-power to not just end it all by biting through his jugular once we had the information we needed.”

“I’m glad you exercised the necessary restraint, Bruno.”

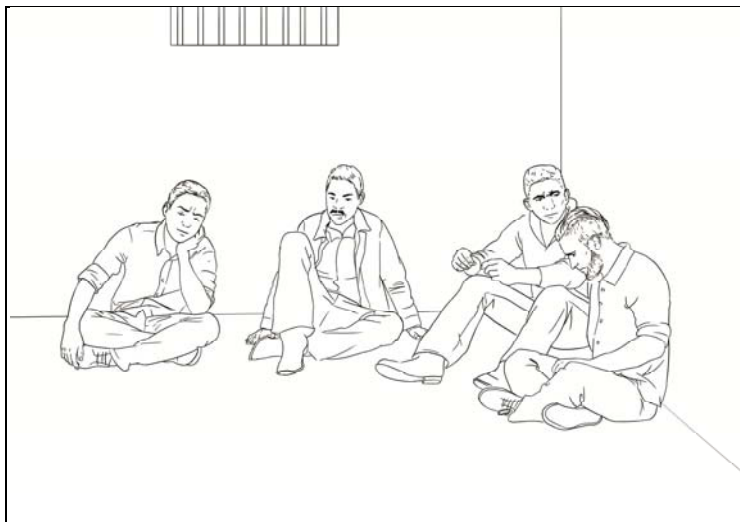
“Growl...I can’t understand why you humans keep these nasty people in society, albeit in prison. They are costing money better spent on improving the lot of all us

working animals, including those kept in zoos. Even more especially, give us police and other service dogs more meat in place of dreadful dog pellets. In the animal world such delinquent beasts would just be eliminated.”

“Bruno, I’ll talk to the administrators and see what I can do, but you’re not too badly done by. I’ve made arrangements with the head of the Camperdown police not to announce that we had Suit-man and his cronies in prison. I don’t want the press, or the general police, to know of our operations to date. We placed them in isolated cells under specialized guards in the Camperdown Prison to ensure no word of their capture got out.”

“Growl... Just make sure they don’t escape.”

“Bruno, like you, I’m sceptical and uneasy about this whole operation and the information we’ve gotten out of it. Something more is amiss, but I can’t yet place it. None of those names revealed by Suit-man fits in with the Camperdown situation. We’ll need to be more diligent from now on.”



“Growl...JP when we get back just let me loose to wander around the jail and courts in Camperdown.”

“Good idea Bruno, but no. As you know, the prison grapevine is rife in spreading news. We don’t want to let the leaders know that their onsite boss is in prison, and that their latest operation was truncated. If you’re seen wandering around, they, whoever they are, might smell a rat because they know you work with me.

“Now knowing from where this gang operates, we will go down to Durban harbour to see what we can do about cleaning up the operation.”

The day after Suit-man was imprisoned, JP and Bruno went to down to Durban docks to look for and sight out the gang’s headquarters at Warf F.

JP said, “Bruno, I’m going to stay in the shadows to avoid being seen, so this is a job for you. I want you to sniff out where dagga and other drugs are kept. Do also try to find the gangs conference room. See how many guards there are, and where they are stationed.”

“Growl... JP, you’ve not got your thinking cap on. Just like with you, if there are guards they will recognise me as a police dog, especially because I look so groomed — and I’m an Alsatian. As I am, I look more like a policeman than you.”

JP answered: “Yes, that’s true, but do it we must.”

“Growl... JP, I have a brilliant plan. You must ruffle me up so that I look like a scraggly dog. We police dogs call that ‘Dog Camouflage Type 1’, where those who see me will think I’m just a dog scrounging for food.

You too must ruffle yourself up so you look like a hobo.”

JP said, “Good plan, Bruno,” and then they spent the next few minutes rubbing dirt and debris over each other.

“Growl... JP, follow me at a distance and walk like a poor lost soul. When I sniff out where bails of dagga, as well as many other drugs, are stored, I’ll causally point them out using my tail. If you can’t make out where it points to, don’t worry because my nose will always be able to find it later, or at another time.”

A little later, JP said: “Did you find out which is the conference room? We need to get in there to place a microphone.”

“Growl...Yes, I smelt stale smoke, contaminated with foul human sweat and dagga coming from under a door that I would say is their conference room. It wasn’t very big but well isolated. Unluckily the door is locked because I tried to open it with my mouth. There were three guards lingering around the sheds close by, so we won’t be able to get in there tonight.”

JP asked, “How do you know they were guards and not just hoboes?”

“Growl...JP, they must be guards to be there at that time of the night. Hoboes would be lying down sleeping under something, or lingering near eating places to scrounge a meal.”

JP said, “Right again Bruno. I’m learning a lot from you. Yet we have to get in there somehow to place a remote controlled microphone so that we can record what they say. Maybe you can somehow divert the guards in some way so I can get in.”

“Growl... Grumble... Nope, you won’t have enough time to do that because they are locked and it’s unlikely I could distract the guards for long. But I’ve just thought of another brilliant plan.”

“And what is that brilliant idea?”

“Growl... Tomorrow you must again ruffle me up but in addition also smear me with a foul substance to make me stink. We police dogs call that ‘Dog Camouflage Type 2’, where those who see me will think I’m just a stinking dog scrounging for food. It’s most effective because those humans I’m close to will just shoo me off because I smell.”

“And what do you plan to do then, may I ask?”

“During their meeting I will indiscriminately wander into the conference room with a microphone in my mouth. Those in conference will obviously see me, and smell my stink too. This will cause a bit of a disturbance as they shoo and chase me out of the room. As you know I’m very fast and very observant, and in a flash I’ll drop a microphone in a suitable place while I dash around and out of the room.”

“Yes. I can see you do have good ideas, Bruno. You make me look like a real amateur.”

“Growl... That you are.”



“Growl...This worked perfectly, JP. What made it even more exciting for me was when the guards fell over each other while trying to chase me out as I dashed around and placed the microphone in a vase. How silly of them, it was so comical!”

The recordings received of their conversation told all that was wanted. One thug inadvertently dropped a hint that the magistrate in Camperdown might be one of the leaders of the gang. This was a locally operated organization that distributed and sold cannabis and other

drugs to ship crews. With the help of the tapes the Durban and other police were able to find out all they needed to know to put the whole of the operations gang away for good, well at least for a long time.

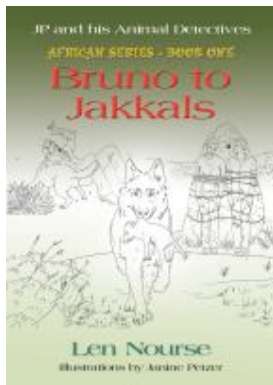
“We are keeping a close watch on the Camperdown magistrate, but as yet we have no real proof of his guilt,” said JP.

“Growl..,” interjected Bruno with his dog-grin, “JP and I both think putting them in prison is silly because we know they will continue dealing from prison, and have new onsite managers installed. They should just let us police dogs do what we know we can do best – rid the country of such scruffs. But then I suppose there would eventually be no need to have people and dogs like us. We special police dogs will then just become extinct — probably all becoming fat lap dogs!”



JP concluded with, “Now that’s an interesting way to put it. I just would like to add one point; I have absolute admiration for you Bruno, because it’s a pleasure working with such an intelligent dog as you, or as your story indicates, I should say, it was my pleasure to work for you on this case”.

“Growl... Yes, you served me well in our last case. I especially enjoyed it afterwards when you washed me with that nice dog soap in the shower to rid me of that horrible smell we used in Dog Camouflage Type 2. I’d like more of those washes.”



A kid, JP, could talk to animals. He joined the police to work with dogs. JP and his first lieutenant, Bruno, imprisoned many gangsters in action packed adventures of crime solving. Bruno, via JP, was tops in telling these stories. Tragedy struck when a gang they had imprisoned took revenge, but not before Bruno brought JP a Jackal pup, Jakkals. Their next adventures show how they built a team of animal detectives; Eagle the first.

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