

FAUX PAW

THE TECHNO CAT®



MEETS THE FIRST LADY

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Illustrations by Sandman Studios
Foreward by First Lady Laura Bush

Faux Paw the Techno Cat Series created by Jacalyn S. Leavitt

FOREWORD



THE WHITE HOUSE

Dear Parents,

Recent news stories have made us all aware how sexual predators use the Internet to entrap and victimize children. As part of President Bush's *Helping America's Youth* initiative, we want to reinforce to parents, educators, youth leaders, and law enforcement officials that you don't have to be a computer expert to protect a child from this growing threat. If children learn early to safeguard their personal information and to keep far away from Internet strangers, they will not become victims of this frightening epidemic.

As community members, we can and must work together to ensure that all children receive this urgent message. I encourage all adults to teach children the basic principles of online safety that are found in this book. Thank you for your commitment to our shared priority of protecting children everywhere.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Laura Bush".





Hi, kids. I'm Faux Paw the Techno Cat. I live in the governor's office, but now I'm in Washington, D.C., the heart of democracy, to visit my cousin Ernie.



We're visiting Ernie's good friend, the First Lady. ("First Lady" means she's married to the President of the United States.)



Ernie was named for our great-granddad Ernest, who came from Key West, Florida. He had six toes on each front paw, and so do we! The fancy name for that is polydactyl (polly-DACK-til). Our extra toes make us extra fast on a keyboard. (Of course, Great-granddad used a noisy old typewriter. LOL.)



Since Ernie and I live far away from each other, we use the Internet to keep in touch. I'm much smarter online since I made a big mistake back in the governor's office. I thought I had made a new friend in a chat room, but when I went to meet her, I found out she wasn't a friend at all.

Now I use the Internet for talking to real friends—people I already know—like my best cousin, Ernie!



I sure didn't expect to have another Internet adventure while I was visiting Ernie, but it happened here in the First Lady's office. It started with instant messaging—that's I-M, for techno cats. Ernie and I instant message each other all the time. Sometimes we even I-M the First Lady.

I sat down to send a message back home to my governor, and up popped my good friend, Cursor. "Howdy, Faux Paw, welcome to the Internet."



“While you’re here, remember the rules . . .”

“I know, I know,” I said, “the 3 KEEPs: Keep Safe • Keep Away • Keep Telling. I “keep safe” my personal information, I keep away from Internet strangers, and I keep telling my parents or a trusted adult about everything I see on the Internet!”

“Good remembering, partner,” he said.



As we talked about the 3 KEEPs, the First Lady walked in. “Look, everybody,” said Cursor, “here she comes!” We saluted, and the First Lady met us with a smile.

“Hello, Faux Paw,” she said. “It’s so nice to meet you. Please make yourself at home.”



“Oh—thank you,” I said, and that was all I could say.
So Ernie jumped in. “Howdy, ma’am. We’ll just be doing some computer work here.”

“Hi, Ernie,” she said as she walked past.
I couldn’t wait to tell my governor about this, so I sat down at the computer, and . . .



... up popped the strangest message with Ernie's picture on it. It was from someone named Six-Toe-Ernie.

"What in tarnation!" said Ernie. "I never use my real name on the Internet!"

"Howdy, Faux Paw," the message said. **"This is Ernie."**

"Ernie," I said, "that can't be you. You're sitting right here next to me!"



“Leapin’ lizards! That’s not me! It’s an impostor!” said Ernie.

“Yeah, and he’s *pretending* to be you, but he *isn’t* you!” I said.

“Faux Paw, that’s what an impostor is!”

The impostor kept typing: **“What’s up, Faux Paw? How’s life at the governor’s office?”**

“Oh, no! He knows who I am.”



“Faux Paw, my boots start to pinch when something’s not right,” said Ernie. “This impostor’s making trouble. We need to do something.”

“I’m with Ernie!” said Cursor. “You’d better play it safe. Just turn off the screen, and tell an adult what’s going on here.”

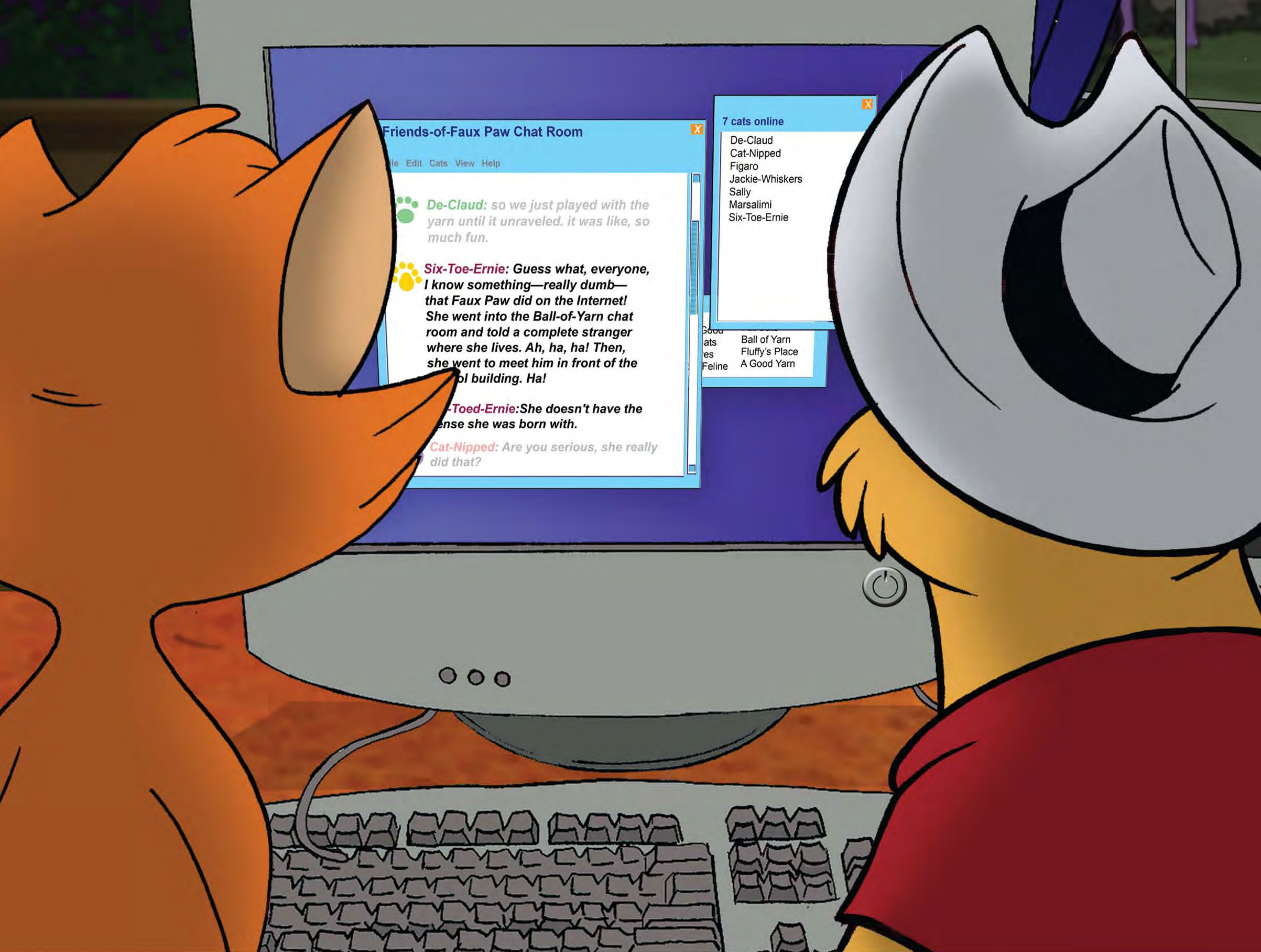


But before I could turn it off, we got another message from the impostor. It said, **“You are invited to join the Friends-of-Faux Paw Chat Room.”**

“The Friends-of-Faux Paw! Well, that doesn’t sound so bad,” I said.

“Careful, Faux Paw,” said Ernie. “You don’t know who this Ernie is.”

I clicked, and there I was in a chat room with Six-Toe-Ernie typing away. But he didn’t sound like a friend.



“Guess what, everybody,” he typed. “I know something—really dumb—that Faux Paw did on the Internet! She went into the Ball-of-Yarn chat room and told a complete stranger where she lives. Ah, ha, ha! Then she went to meet him face-to-face. LOL! She doesn’t have the sense she was born with.”



This was so embarrassing. The impostor knew about my big mistake.
“Jumpin’ junipers,” said Cursor, “this sounds like an Internet bully to me.
You need to tell someone. It could get worse.”

... And it did.



The impostor was still typing for the whole Internet to see: **“Faux Paw *thought* she was going to meet a cute little kitty,”** he wrote, **“but the cute little kitty turned out to be a great big, amazing, strong, handsome bulldog with huge muscles and enormous white teeth! Hee, hee!”**



“And I would have . . . oops, I mean . . . *he* would have had that Faux Paw for lunch, if the governor hadn’t rescued her at the last second.”



“Hollerin’ hot dogs!” said Cursor, “this *is* a bully. Maybe even a bull-doggy. Please, turn off your screen and tell an adult.”

But I didn’t *want* to tell an adult—this was embarrassing, and I was mad. “I’m going to find out who this impostor is.” I started typing:
“Hey, you turkey, I don’t know who you are, but . . .



Cursor interrupted, “Faux Paw!” he said. “Never reply to flame!”
“Flame?” I asked. I didn’t understand.
“Not this kind of flame,” he said as he morphed into a little fire.



“I’m talking about mean things people say on the Internet—we call that flame. Never respond to flame! That’s what bullies want you to do. Just turn off the screen and tell an adult.”



“Okay, Cursor, but I just have one last thing to say.” I kept typing:
“I know you’re not the real Ernie, because the real Ernie is sitting
right here next to me in the First Lady’s office in Washington, D.C.
So, you can just shut your big, fat keyboard!”



When Cursor went crazy, I knew I had done it again. “Noooo, Faux Paw! That’s personal information—don’t tell him where you are! Keep your personal information safe!”



The impostor typed back, “So, you’re right here in Washington, D.C., are you? **How convenient. Hee, hee . . .**”

“Thundering tarnation!” said Cursor, “Listen up, you two! This is eye-popping serious! You need to turn off the screen and tell an adult!”



“I think he’s right,” I said.

“You got it, Partner! I know just the person to tell,” Ernie said as he pushed the screen’s power button and ran out the door.



A few minutes later, Ernie was back, and he brought the First Lady with him. I was glad I could tell her what had happened.



“I really made a big mistake this time.” I said. “I told the impostor where we are—what if he finds me?”



The First Lady knew what to do. “I’m so sorry this happened, Faux Paw. Let’s print your screen and send it to Security. They’ll figure out who this bully is.”



In a few minutes, the big Security man came back with dreadful news: “It looks like the so-called ‘Six-Toe-Ernie’ also calls himself ‘Happy Fluffy Kittyface.’ Have you heard of him?”



“Oh, no! Not Kittyface! He’ll eat me for lunch! Oh, why did I tell him where we are?”

Ernie turned to the First Lady. “This is the big, scary dog that almost got Faux Paw once before,” he said.



The First Lady took quick action. “Security, please search the grounds for a big dog that answers to ‘Kittyface.’”

“Yes, ma’am,” they said, as they ran out the door.



I tried to hide in the First Lady's office . . .





But it was too late. Kittyface reached through the cat door and . . .



... he caught my paw—all six toes—and he wouldn't let go.



I thought I was doomed. “Help! Ernie! Cursor! I don’t want to be dinner!”



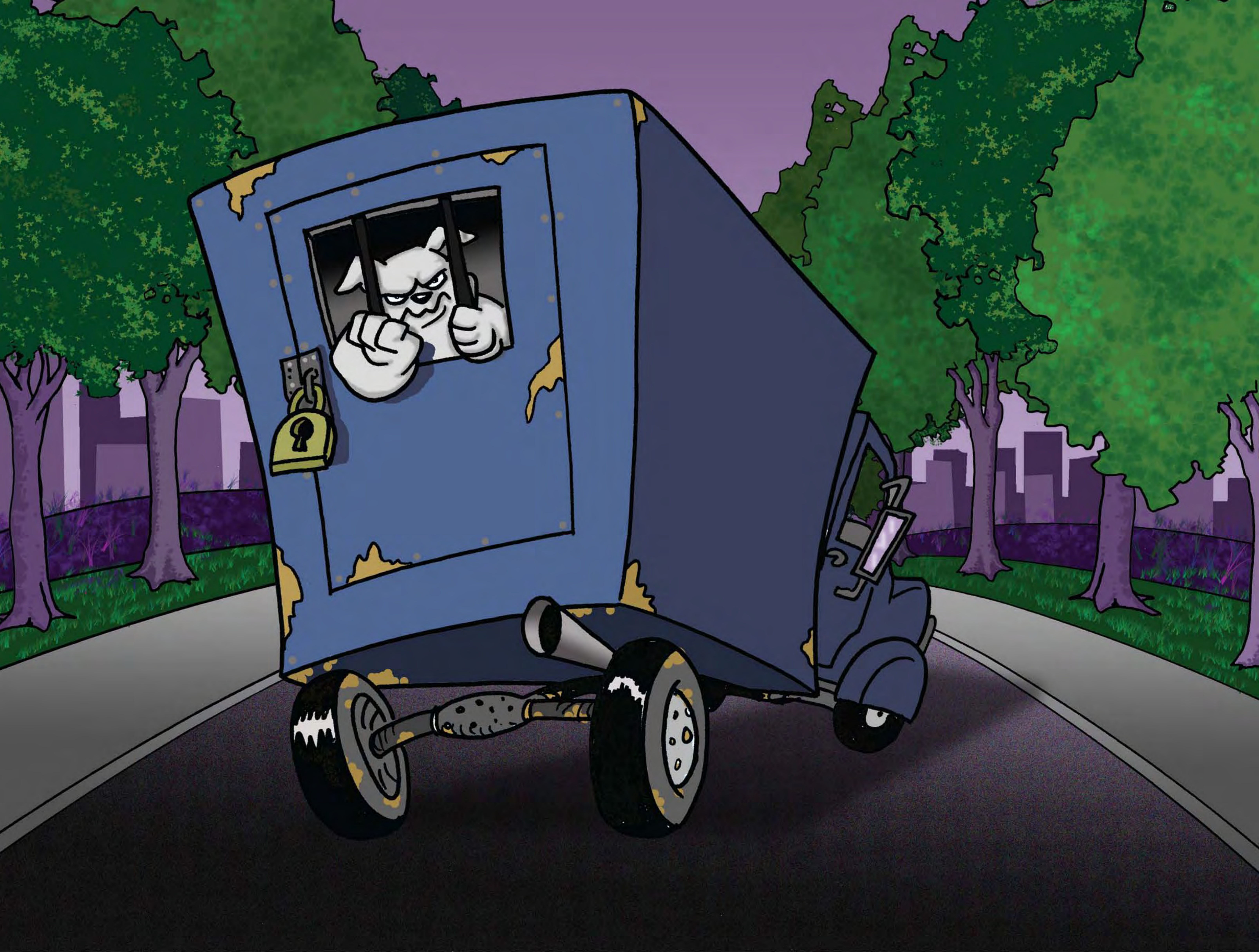
Luckily, the First Lady's Security showed up just in time.



Kittyface tried to get away . . .

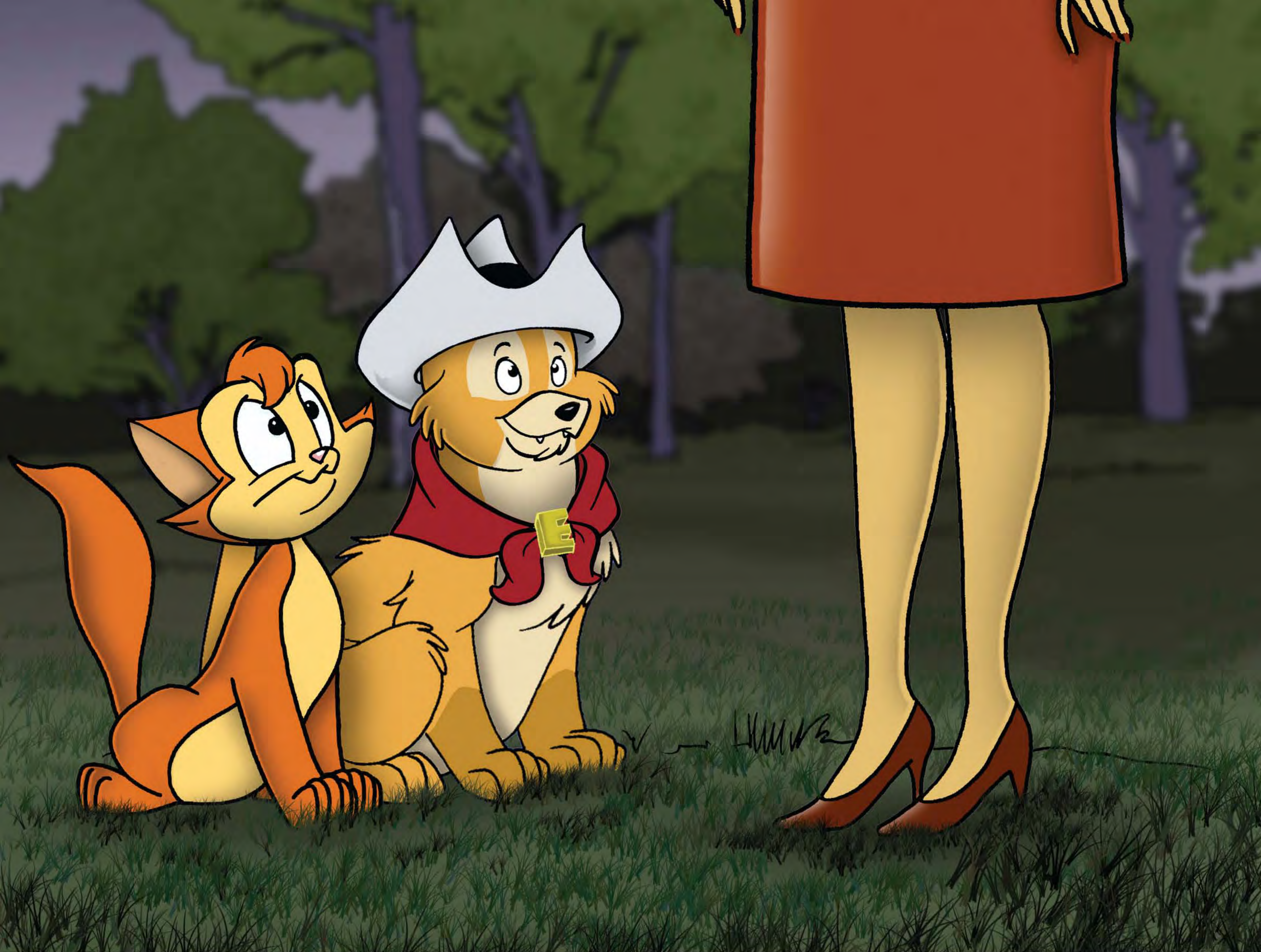


But Security had him bundled up . . .



. . . and trucked out of there in no time.

“Thank you, ma’am. We’re much obliged for your help,”
said Ernie.



“Good work, Ernie and Faux Paw,” she said. “Always tell an adult right away if anything on the Internet makes you sad or worried or uncomfortable in any way. Adults will know how to help you. And, when it comes to your Internet community, be a good citizen. No one likes a bully. Be the good person *online* that you are when you’re *offline*, and when something goes wrong, RUN and tell an adult.”



Well, I guess that was another big mistake! But I'm much wiser now. (Oh . . . I think I said that the last time.) But now I know never to reply to bullying or flame. I just turn off the screen and tell an adult.

See? I'm the Techno Cat for a good reason. TTFN! (On the Internet that's "ta-ta for now.")

Howdy kids, I'm your friend Cursor. Remember the **3 KEEPS™** that will keep you safe online:

Keep Safe • Keep Away • Keep Telling™



I keep safe my personal information—all of it! I never give my real name, address, phone number, the name of my school, or a picture of myself to anyone online.

I keep away from Internet strangers—no matter what they tell me, because I have no way of knowing who they really are.

I keep telling my parents or a trusted adult about everything I see on the Internet—especially when something makes me uncomfortable.

Adios, amigos!

www.iKeepSafe.org

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