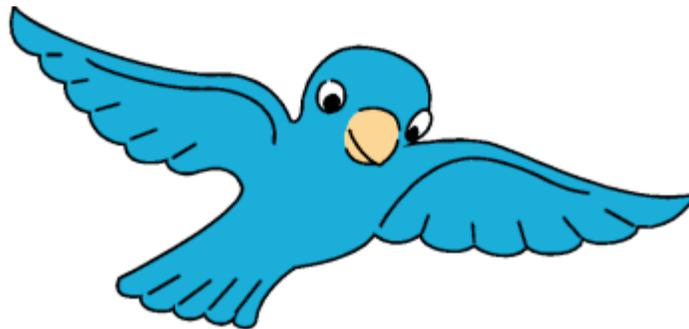


Sparky the Fire Dog and C.C. the Fire Clown and Their Very, Very Nice Day



This is a story about Sparky the Fire Dog and C.C. the Fire Clown and their very, very nice day.

On one bright Saturday, Sparky and C.C. decided to take a walk to their favorite park. It was a beautiful day. The sky was a very pretty shade of blue. All the birds were singing.



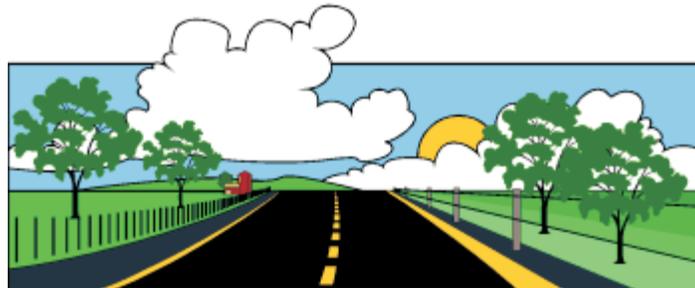
And flowers were blooming everywhere.



It was a good day to go to the park.

It was a short walk to the park, but C.C. and Sparky were very careful to look both ways when they crossed the street.

They looked to the right. They looked to the left.



When they saw that it was safe, they crossed the street.

As they walked, C.C. and Sparky thought about all the things that they would do when they got to the park. C.C. wanted to swing on the swings and pretend she was a famous circus performer.



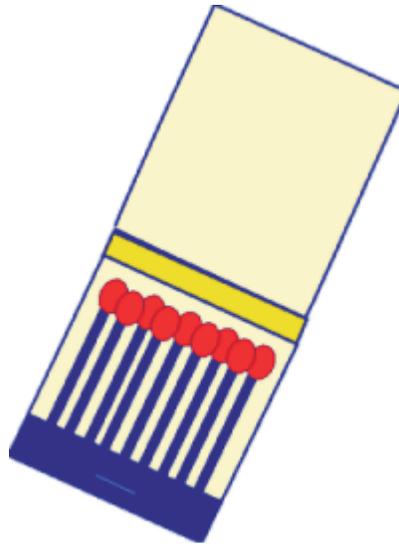
Sparky wanted to slide down the slide.

They had almost reached the park, when C.C. stopped and said, "Oh, no, Sparky, do you see what I see?"

Sparky nodded yes. He did see it. Down on the ground, he saw the same scary thing that C.C. had spotted.

It was lying right there in the dirt, where anybody could find it.

It was a book of matches.



"Oh, no," said C.C. "One of our young friends could find these."

Sparky agreed. He shook his head very sadly. He knew that some boys and girls think that matches and lighters are toys.

They try to light matches and can get burned.

Or they can start a fire in the house.



Because a fire that starts out very small can get very BIG very fast!

So, C.C. said, "Well, Sparky, we can't leave these matches here for kids to find."

Sparky nodded. Just then, they saw their friend Officer Thomas from the Police Department.

"Hi, Officer Thomas," said C.C. Sparky waved hello.

"Well, if it isn't my friends, C.C. and Sparky," said Officer Thomas. She smiled and said, "Hello! What are you doing on such a fine day?"

"We were going to the park," said C.C., "but we found these matches on the ground here. Somebody left them here, but Sparky and I don't want anyone to get hurt playing with them. Would you please take them for us?"

"Of course," said Officer Thomas. "You're both good helpers to show those to me."

"I'll take them with me and put them in a very safe place."

Officer Thomas had to go, so she took the matches and said goodbye.

"Anytime, C.C.," said Officer Thomas, "Of course, a kid can give matches to any grown-up, not just a Police Officer."

C.C. agreed. "Right, kids can give them to moms, dads, teachers, aunts and uncles, grandmas and grandpas, and any other grown-ups."

Officer Thomas left and C.C. and Sparky walked the rest of the way to the park. Sparky went swinging on the swings with C.C. And C.C. went sliding on the slide with Sparky. Then they both played on the jungle gym.

It really was a very, very nice day.

The End.

Some questions for young children:

Did C.C. and Sparky do the right thing when they found the matches?

They sure did!

What would you do if you found matches? Would you show them to a grown-up?

That would be the right thing to do!

Would you ever play with matches?

That would be the wrong thing to do! Matches and lighters are tools, not toys! Matches and lighters are tools for grown-ups to use.

What if you were to see another kid playing with matches?

You wouldn't want another kid to get hurt or to start a big fire, so telling a grown-up about it as fast as you can would be the right thing to do!