



The Adventures of **Mo**

Bonus Chapter 51

By Carol Patton

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A Taste of Democracy

What's a pol... pol... how did you say it?" asked Mo.

It's pronounced paw-luh-ti-shin but spelled p-o-l-i-t-i-c-i-a-n," said Finchy, who was showing off his spelling skills. "There's a bunch who work in that building, the one over there."

Mo had never seen such a building before. The giant building was white with very tall pillars and lots of windows.

Mo and Finchy had been traveling on top of the delivery truck for several hours. So much traffic! They were surrounded by two states - Maryland to the north and Virginia to the south. Finchy spotted a sign for the Potomac River, but they still didn't know their location. What city were they in? What state? Were they even in a state?

Mo climbed down from the delivery truck when no one was looking. He was curious. Why did these humans, these politicians, work in the same building? What did they do? Did they play games or sports? Maybe they served on different teams.

Mo and Finchy decided to sneak into the building to find out. The truck driver would be busy for at least several hours delivering the hundreds of boxes that were inside his truck. They ran across the street, hid behind a bush, and then inched their way to the front door. Most people were talking on their cell phones, too busy to even notice them.

They watched two police officers inside the front entrance check people's briefcases, purses, and other stuff they wanted to bring into the building. What were they searching for? Could it be the key that Mo found back home? Then people walked through some type of drab, gray entrance that had no door, roof or even walls. How strange. (Mo and Finchy later learned that this was called a metal detector.)

Mo and Finchy began whispering to each other: Finchy could easily fly into the building, but not Mo. How could Mo get past the two policemen?

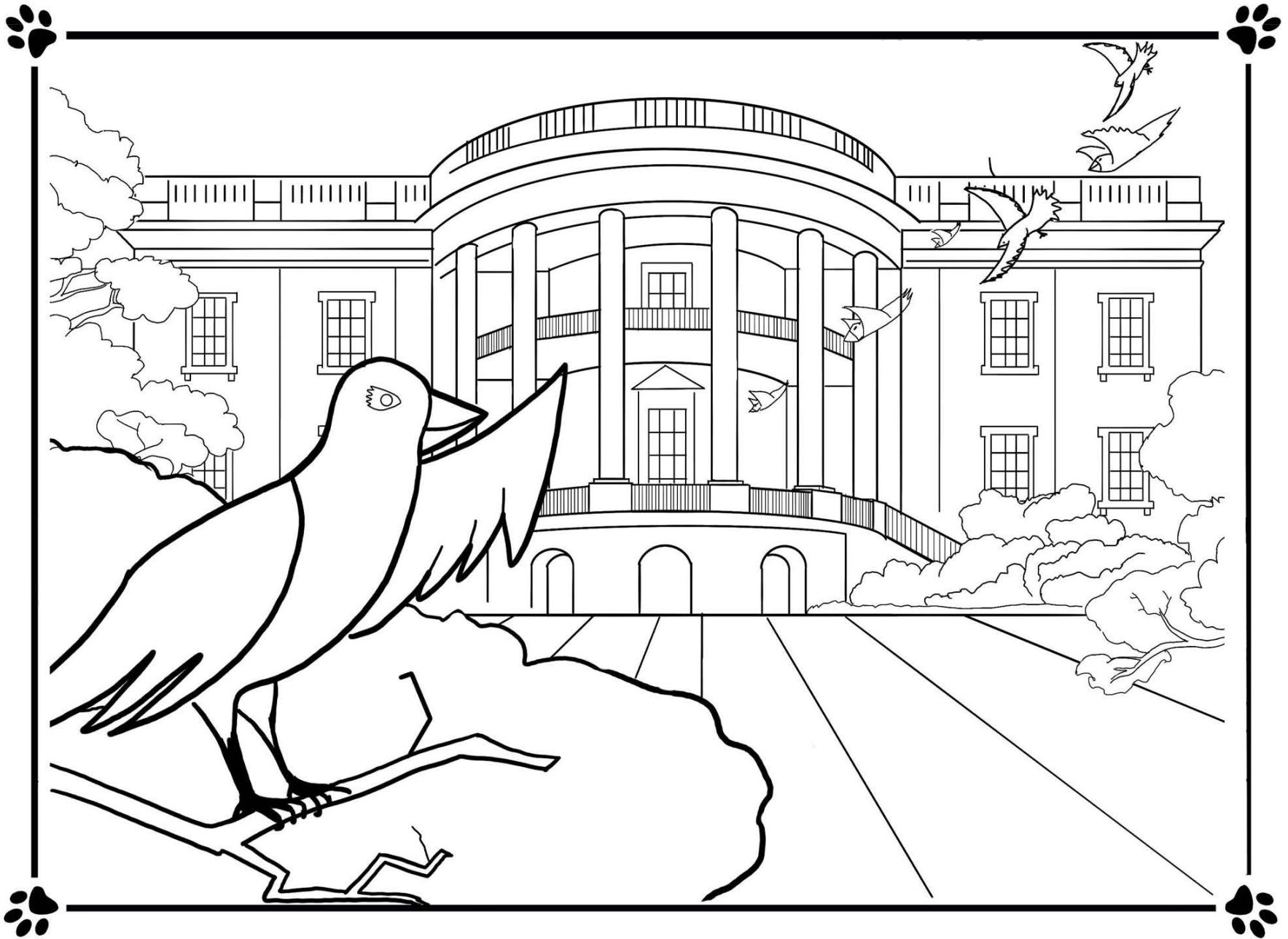
They needed a distraction. Finchy shared his idea with Mo and quickly put his plan into action.

Finchy flew out of the building. Ten minutes later, he returned with a flock of birds that soared into the building at the same time. Everyone looked at the birds flying this way and that way. One even snatched a hat off a man's head. This was Mo's chance. He quickly ran down a long hallway, turned right, left, and then right again until he saw an open door. He looked inside. People were busy talking to each other. Some were on the phone. Mo tiptoed past them to another office. It had a strange shape. It wasn't square like most rooms. It was oval. No one was inside. Still, to be safe, he hid under a desk, out of breath.

"I keep telling you to lose weight," said Finchy, who flew right behind him. "You wouldn't be huffing and puffing so much."

At that moment, two people walked inside. Mo wondered if they were politicians.

"Thank you, Mr. President, for seeing me," said a tall woman to the man walking next to her.



The president sat down in a big, brown chair in front of his desk. The president's feet were just inches away from Mo and Finchy. The woman sat in a chair on the opposite side of the desk.

“You've got exactly five minutes to talk about this bill,” said the president.

Mo and Finchy wondered who or what was Bill? Finchy thought they could be talking about a bird's beak, which is also called a bill. Mo remembered listening to humans complain about bills. This was all very curious.

The president and woman were speaking words that Mo and Finchy had never heard before: Legislation. Administration. Budget. Mo and Finchy wondered what it all meant and why she couldn't just tell the president what she wanted. That's what all the animals did back home in Alaska, where Mo lived. If they ever needed something, even a favor, they simply asked for it.

For the next several hours, more people came into the president's office, speaking about many different things. Some talked about roads while others spoke about jobs, the environment or climate change. They each tried to persuade the president to agree with them and get something done.



The more people talked, the more Mo and Finchy understood that this was how things were done in this country. Important things. This was how people decided what to do and how to do it.

Mo and Finchy were hiding in a place called the Oval Office, which is located inside the White House. It's where the president of the United States works.

They learned that people from each of the 50 states in this country vote to elect a president, two senators to represent their own state, and also other representatives - a different number of people for each state - to create laws that help people and make the country better and stronger. Mo was very impressed with this system of government, which is called a democracy.

By now, it was noon. The president was alone in his office, reading a report while sitting at his desk. Mo and Finchy knew they didn't have much time. The truck driver would almost be finished delivering the boxes in his truck and they didn't want to miss their ride.

They had to leave. Now. But how? Should Mo just make a run for the door? He didn't want to get caught. If he did, what would happen to him? Would they put him in jail?

Mo and Finchy didn't want to take any chances. While under the desk, they tied the laces of the president's right and left shoes together so he wouldn't be able to run and grab Mo.

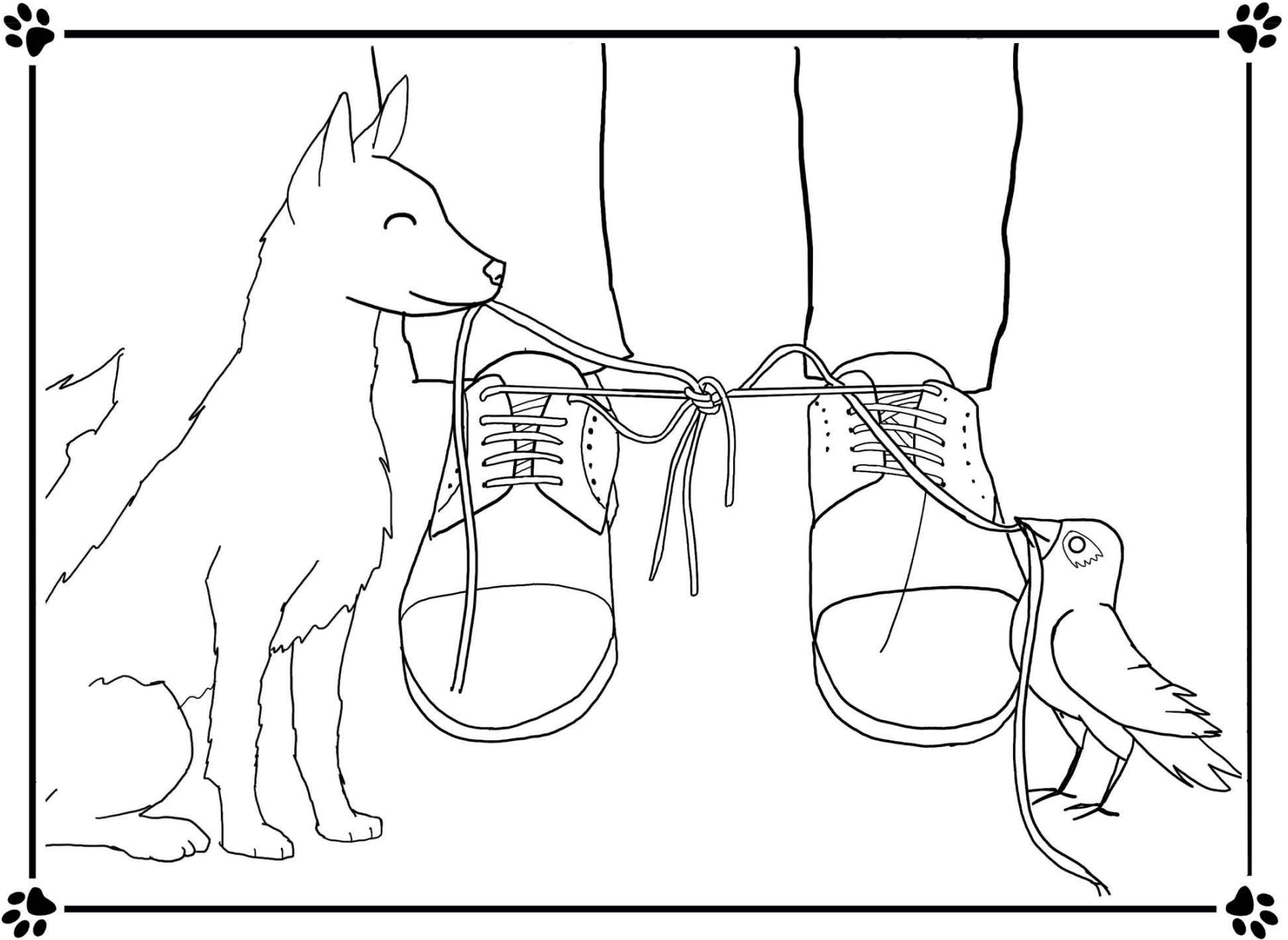
Now it was time . . . to escape! Mo took a deep breath and then another. Suddenly, Finchy flew out from beneath the desk to distract everyone in the office. Then Mo bolted out of the room with Finchy leading the way.

Somewhat startled, the president jumped out of his seat and tried to grab Mo. But instead, he stumbled on top of his desk. He looked down at his feet and saw Mo's and Finchy's handywork.

"What the . . . Jason, come quick!" he shouted. His assistant came running into his office. The president told him that a dog and bird had tied his shoelaces together before running out of his office.

"What dog, what bird?" asked Jason, a bit confused. "I was in the back room." Then he turned to others outside the office. "Did anyone see a dog or a bird?"

They each gave Jason a strange look. But what was even stranger – something that no one could deny – was that the president's shoelaces were tied together.



Jason tried to comfort the president and calm him down.

“You’ve been working so hard this week,” Jason said. “Why don’t I ask the chef to bring you a dish of the spaghetti ice cream you like so much?”

By then, Mo and Finchy had already left the building and were heading toward the delivery truck, which was still across the street. But they had to hurry. The truck driver had just started the engine.

They were now safely back on top of the delivery truck, which had been their temporary home since they began this adventure several months ago.

“Do you know if dogs are allowed to run for office?” asked Mo. “I think I’d make a great president. Maybe the best there ever was.”

“Humans are funny creatures,” said Finchy. “Some of us live with people who tell all their friends how smart we are, but never ask our opinion. And forget about allowing us to vote - or worse - run for office. We should change that. You and me. Every creature should be allowed to vote since all laws impact us in some way. Every creature... except, of course, cats.”