

Timmy the Super Sleuth

Timmy the Super Sleuth investigates unusual apparitions across the magnificent South West, and visits some noteworthy old inns. Copyright © Timmy, 2020. All rights reserved.



Timmy explores some tantalising scents along the River Fowey at Respryn in Cornwall

Introduction

You know I'm a sheepdog, watching over my human flock every Thursday evening. I'm from Washbourne in the South Hams, but only my mum Zoë is from Devon. She's a small, tri-colour Border Collie, but she's much faster than you might think! But my dad is Welsh: Bailey is a real sable Welsh Collie, and it's from him that I get my golden colouring. And my name, well, let's just say that Enid Blyton's Kirrin Castle has something to do with it, and should I ever get a furry companion, he'll definitely be a spaniel called Scamper.

Now I love to be out and about, running after a ball, or occasionally my big red bone, or kong stick, or if I'm really lucky, frisbee. But there's no such thing as 'going for a walk': it's a hunt, it's a journey where something *has* to be carried—that's the point. You lay it down as human feet approach, but then you pounce to make sure they don't reach it. Maybe they briefly gain possession—but they have to wrestle me for it—yes, I let them win, because then they throw it away and it's mine again. And this is how I make new human friends everywhere. They always join in—it's my thing, they don't even realise they've fallen for it. Like the wolf, for me it's always about the *hunt*.

Back at home we do scent work all the time when they shout 'find it', and I always find it, quicker than they expect. Mr Moose is my current cuddly friend, replacing Miss Lobster who eventually yielded to my probing teeth. Donald Pleasant the Plucky Pheasant didn't last long, come to think of it, nor did J. G. Mallard. Thirty-five Shekel Sheep managed a slightly longer innings, perfecting my waiting, but eventually I couldn't resist finding out what was on the inside. You should have seen my work with Thirty-five Shekel Sheep: down, wait, slow, go; Daddy in a tweed cap from Kirkwall. It should have been the climax of my graduation from Puppy University, but you know what, that day I didn't fancy putting on the show. But it's always about fixing my eyes on the target, and *making sure* I get it.

With me, it's no good telling me what has already happened, or what is going to happen; I live in the 'now'. Ivan Pavlov thought he knew about past, present and future. Dogs struggle with past tense, as did Wagner, who failed when composing 'Siegfrieds Tod', realising that music had no past tense. To tell that story, he had to invent the *Leitmotiv*. So music has become one of my favourite human things. I can just about do art, but joining in with music is the most fun. I'm not too good, either, on the future tense. Tell me: 'We will go on a walk', or start your message with: 'Would you like...?' and I want it NOW! I can make plans, of course, but they need careful execution. When you're hungry or in need of a snack, going into a graceful sit will—without fail—deliver a tasty morsel. But beware, an unexpected fart on the way down could easily ruin the plan. So it's always about *right now*.

Statues come from somewhere distant, which we can't feel until we come up in front of the past frozen for us, *right now*. They always scare me, because I feel the past through them. Richard Hooker sits outside Exeter Cathedral, but I don't trust him. He always gets a growl and a bark from me when I walk past: 'What shall become of man who sees not plainly that obedience unto the law of nature is the stay of the whole world?' The Deer Stalker in Northernhay Gardens is the other statue that spooks me. What did they do to be frozen? So come with me on some exploring around the counties of the South West: it's my homeland, my heritage. And with my scent work, I can sniff out a mystery or two...