

Tania's Treasure Hunt



By Kanika G

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It was the morning of 2nd March, 2014; a very special day indeed. It was Tania's 4th birthday, and on a Sunday too. Tania would not have to go to school. She could spend the whole day celebrating her birthday with Mama, Papa and her pet cat Kazoo. Mama had arranged a little birthday party for Tania and her friends in the evening. They would bring her presents. Tania loved getting presents.

Happy Birthday Tania

Mama had planned a special birthday morning treat for Tania. Every year she gave Tania her birthday present after breakfast. This year she decided to add some excitement to the ritual. She said, "Tania, your

birthday present is hidden somewhere in the house. You are going to have to play a game of *Treasure Hunt* to find it. Do you know what that is?"

"No Mama. What is a treasure hunt?"

"A treasure is something that you like very much and is important to you. In a treasure hunt, you search for treasure. I will give you a clue. A clue is a puzzle. You have to work out the puzzle. The first clue tells you where to find the second clue, and the second clue tells you where to find the third clue. This goes on till you reach the last clue. The last clue tells you where the treasure is. Today the treasure will be your birthday present from Papa and me."

"That sounds like fun Mama. When can I start?"

"You can start now. Here is your first clue."

Tania's eager hands fumbled, as she opened the little folded piece of paper her mother gave her. Her eyes shone with excitement as she read the first clue:

I'm a little -----
short and stout,
I'll be happy,
to help you out.

She turned to Mama and said, "That should be, I am a little tea pot, right Mama? So should I go look for the next clue in our tea pot?"

"That is absolutely correct Tania. You are such a smart little girl. The clue in the tea pot will tell you where to find the next clue. Have fun looking for your present. I have to make some arrangements for your birthday party."



Tania happily trotted off to the tea pot. Mama had kept it on the kitchen counter where Tania could easily reach it. She opened the lid, put her hand in and retrieved a folded piece of paper. She opened it and read:

Pussy cat pussy cat where have
you been?

I've been to London to look at
the Queen.

Pussy cat pussy cat what did you
there?

I frightened the little mouse

As Tania read the nursery rhyme out loud, she knew the blank space was

for *under the chair*. That meant she would find the next clue under one of the chairs in the house. There were 6 chairs around the dining table. The living room had two sofas and no chairs. So there were only 6 chairs to search. She searched on the floor under the chairs, but she found nothing.



She couldn't think of any other chairs in the house. So where could the next clue be? As she looked again under one of the chairs, she banged her head on the underside of the seat. "Ouch!" exclaimed Tania, but that suddenly gave her an idea. Taped to the underside of one of the seats was a note. "Ah, ha!" said Tania, and she carefully unstuck it from the chair and read:

There was an old woman
who lived in a -----

Look in there
to find your next clue.

Tania knew exactly where to look. She went to the shoe rack and took out all her shoes and searched for a note inside them. But they all turned up empty. Next, she took out shoes belonging to Mama and Papa. Inside one of Mama's shoes she found a rolled up piece of paper.



She opened up the paper and read it:

This clue is the last one:
Old Mother Hubbard
Went to the -----

To give the poor dog a bone;
When she came there,
The cupboard was **BARE**,
And so the poor dog had none.

Tania knew the nursery rhyme well. She would have to look for her present in a cupboard. But there were so many cupboards in the house. Which one could it mean? There were clothes cupboards, linen cupboards, a toy cupboard, many cupboards in the kitchen. She would have to look everywhere. She went and looked in her clothes cupboard and toy cupboard, and there was no sign of her present. *Humph*, she thought annoyed. I am not going to look in every cupboard. She was ready to tell Mama that the last clue was silly, when she decided to read it again.

This time, she noticed that the word bare was in capital letters. She knew

bare meant empty. Were any of the cupboards in the house supposed to be empty? Of course! Just last week she had helped Mama clean out one of the cupboards in the guest room. They had thrown out or given away most of the junk, and the few things left were put away in other places. So that cupboard was completely empty.

She ran to the cupboard and opened it. To her delight, on the middle shelf stood a big box wrapped in red paper with a bow on top.



She carefully unwrapped the box and opened it. Inside she found, a story book, a coloring book, a set of water

colors, a box of crayons, some candy, a couple of chocolate bars, and some pretty hair clips. It was certainly a treasure chest as far as she was concerned. Thrilled with her loot, she hugged Mama and Papa and thanked them for the lovely presents. What an exciting way to begin a birthday!