**More than gold in the goldmine**

‘Don’t be a woos! Pete’s cousin reckons there’s still gold down here, lots of it, **valuable** stuff if you can find it.’ Levi called over his shoulder, Pete holding the lift steady for him.

‘I’m not going down there! Dad told us this place is full of shonky tunnels, and we should be careful.’ Sammy glanced nervously at his **two friends** now both in the wooden **lift.**

Pete prodded at the buttons on the ledge. They heard a crunch of gears, then silence.

‘Hey Sammy, if you’re not coming, at least get us going. Grab a **stick** and give this thing a **thump,** would ya!’

Sammy kicked his boot in frustration, causing a cloud of dust to rise, swirling in the air, making him cough. Looking around for a stick, he noticed tracks.

‘Hey guys, get out of that and come here. There’re some tracks going into this tunnel!’ Sammy’s excited call echoed through the tunnels. His friends clamoured quickly out of the lift.

‘Look, just here.’ Sammy pointing to the tracks. ‘Who do you think made these?’

Pete and Levi crouched down next to Sammy. Three heads crowded together, brown, blonde, and red hair now all the same dusty red of the gold mine.

‘I dunno, a dingo maybe?’ Pete guessed as he placed his hand next to the paw print to gauge its size.

‘Nah,’ scoffed Levi, ‘No dingoes around here, mate! Definitely a dog though, don’t ya reckon, Sammy?’

Sammy knelt on the dirt floor and touched the paw print gingerly with his finger. Like his granddad had shown him, to test if it was warm.

‘Yeah, a dog, not warm, not cold either, so probably went through earlier today.’

They quietly started walking along the path, following the dog’s paw prints.

‘How far are we going to go?’ Pete wasn’t usually the cautious one. That was Sammy, but Sammy seemed lost in some sort of trance.

Roused, Sammy looked up ‘The sand shows the tracks easy. I’m thinking it’s not far at all.’ He said with a wide grin.

Levi looked ahead ‘Don’t ya reckon those posts look really pleased with themselves, sort of saying look at us holding this roof up, if you painted a face on them, they’d look like Trev from the wrestling team.’ Standing with his hands up in a gesture of strength. Pete and Sammy started laughing. Levi always made them laugh at his antics.

‘Let’s have a drink at least,’ Pete said and sat down, pulling his drink bottle out of his backpack. Levi dropped his ‘he-man’ pose, and sat in the sand, drinking from his bottle. Just as he was putting it back down, he noticed movement behind Sammy.

Sammy had felt the dog behind him and heard a low growl. He cautiously turned, offering some water in his hand. Thirsty, the dog warily started licking the water, and slowly 3 rusty golden puppies appeared, bouncing with curiosity, from around the corner.