

Chris Villars

*A Gift for Anna*

A Tale of Two Cities

*Old York & New York*



*Illustrated by*

Four New York City Stuffed Cats

*With a little help from*

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Old York, United Kingdom

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*Four stuffed cats -  
Molly, Emma, Lucy and  
Alex live in an apartment  
in New York with their  
friend Zoey.*

*Zoey's niece, Anna lives in Old York with her  
parents, grandparents and her cousins William and  
Georgina. "Tales of Two Cities: Old York & New  
York" chronicle some of their adventures.*





“September the Twenty First,” Zoey suddenly said out loud one morning when Molly, Emma, Lucy and Alex were all lazily sitting around the apartment, washing themselves, scratching behind their ears, and wondering if anything exciting was going to happen today.

“No,” said Alex, “It’s only August the Twenty First!”

“Yes,” Zoey replied, “which means it’s exactly one month to Anna’s birthday! She will be two years old!”



“Let’s buy her a present!” said Emma, and Lucy agreed, “Oh yes, let’s buy her a present!”

“But we don’t have any money,” said Alex.

“Oh dear!” said Emma. And Lucy said, “We will just have to save up to buy her a present next year!”

“Well,” said Molly, “we could make her a present!”

“Oh yes, yes!” said Emma and Lucy together, clapping their paws in delight, “Let’s make her a present!”

“But what shall we make it out of?” asked Alex.



“Cardboard, paper, string and glue!” replied Emma straight away, “That’s what you make presents out of!”

“And paint!” Lucy added, “I love painting! It makes such a lovely mess!”

Zoey had been trying to work at her computer in the corner, but when she heard the word “mess”, and the squeals of delight that followed it, she decided to lend a hand.



“The first thing you need to decide,” she said, “is what you are going to make! I think you should make something that will remind Anna in Old York of New York each time she looks at it. For example, something like a model of the Statue of Liberty would remind Anna of New York.”

“Something like a model of the Statue of Liberty that would remind Anna of New York,” muttered Alex, trying hard to think of something.

“A model of the Statue of Liberty would make Anna think of New York when she looked at it,” Emma suggested. And Lucy agreed, “Yes, I think it would.”

“Let’s make a model of the Statue of Liberty!” cried Molly, and that’s what they decided to do!

Alex jumped up and carefully put His little paws that across the



onto Zoey’s desk on his spectacles. went this way and laptop keyboard



and a beautiful picture of the Statue of Liberty popped up on the screen.

“We should copy that!” he announced.

Zoey went to the cupboard where she kept all the cardboard, paper, string and glue, and put a big pile on the living room floor.

“Let’s start at the bottom,” said Alex, “and work up!” And the others agreed that was how they would do it.

Zoey watched them busily cutting, gluing and tying as the model started to rise up, then she went to the other room.

When the body was finished, Molly said mysteriously, “It just needs a couple of finishing touches!” and she disappeared into the other room. “Zoey,” she said, “we want to surprise you with our model. Please don’t come in until we call you.”

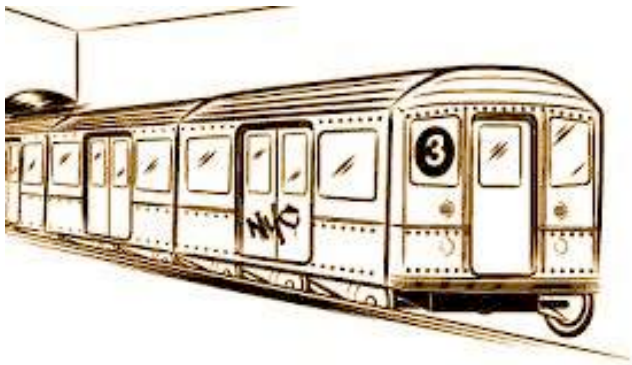
“Of course, Molly,” Zoey replied, “I love surprises!”

Back in the living room, Alex opened the window, and they all tumbled out and set off as fast as they



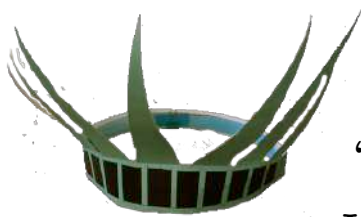
could go.

Come on,” Molly called out, “we must take the subway downtown!”



“Hello little ones!” said Zoey’s artist friend, Lili, as she opened her studio door, “How can I help?”

“We need a torch for our model of the Statue of Liberty,” Molly replied.



“Oh, I have just the thing!” said Lili, and she gave them two she had made for an exhibition, crowns as well!



and two torches



Molly, Emma, Lucy and Alex liked them so much they each jumped up into her arms and gave Lili a big kiss!

“Now run along!” said Lili, “You must hurry to catch the train back!”

“Oh, dear!” said Emma and Lucy together as they saw their train disappearing into the tunnel, “We’ve missed it!”



“No time to wait for the next one,” said Molly, “we’ll catch a Yellow taxi!”

“Oh, dear!” said Emma and Lucy again, “How do we do that?”

“This is how you stop one,” said Alex, as they stood on the curb while all the Yellow taxis flashed by. He stuck his paw straight up as high as he could, and miaowed as loudly as he could. But the Yellow taxis just carried on flashing by!

“You have to jump,” said Molly, “I’ve seen it done. You have to jump!”

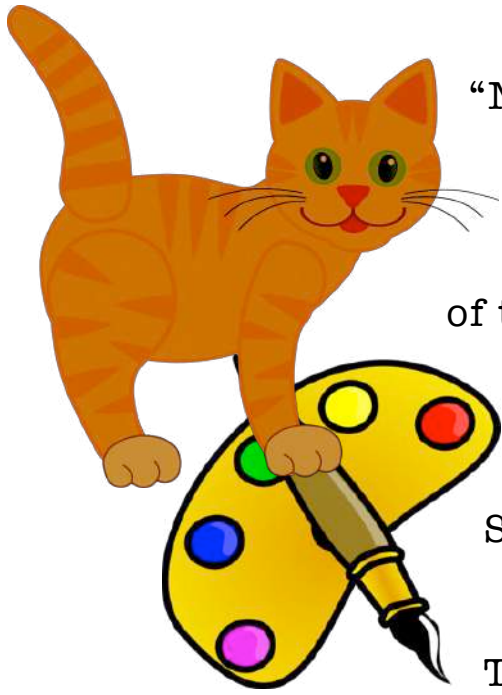
So Alex stuck his paw up as high as he could, miaowed loudly, and jumped as high as he could. And guess what? Straight away a taxi stopped! And the four cats climbed in.

“Home, please,” said Molly, “as fast as you can!”

They arrived back in the living room in time to answer Zoey’s cheery cry of, “How’s it there? You are very quiet!” with an equally cheery, “We’re OK! Nearly done!”

“Phew!” said Molly, “That was close!”





“Now we just have to paint it!” said Lucy. She pulled out a big pot of greeny-grey paint that Zoey had carefully hidden at the back of the cupboard, and they all sloshed away to paint the head, the arms, and the flowing robes of the body in the colour of the real Statue! And they did make a lovely mess!

There was paint on their paws, in their ears, and on their faces, and a big puddle on the floor!

“We’re ready Zoey!” they called out at last.

“Oh, you naughty cats!” cried Zoey when she saw the mess they had made! But as the Statue was so beautiful, and the paint was only water paint, easily mopped up, she wasn’t angry for long. And she enjoyed washing each of them – very thoroughly! – in the kitchen sink!

Soon they were all sitting together on the sofa, admiring their model and eating the scrumptious cake Zoey had made for them to celebrate.

“We’ll send it to Anna using the email Attachment Bag,” said Molly. Suddenly Alex jumped up in alarm!





“It’s too big!” he cried. “It’s too big for the Attachment Bag!”

Zoey measured the model. It was too big! It was four times too big!



“So, if we break it into four pieces, and send them one at a time, everything will be alright!” Alex suggested.

“Alright!” cried Molly, “Would you like to receive a birthday present broken into four pieces!”



“We could break it very carefully,” Alex went on bravely, and to everyone’s surprise, Emma



agreed, “Yes! Break it very carefully! And send the pieces, not to Anna, but to her cousins, William and Georgina. They live in Old York too. They could put the pieces back together and give it to Anna on her birthday!”



William and Georgina had just got home from School when a loud “ping!” from the laptop in William’s bedroom told them an email had arrived. They rushed upstairs to see! The message on the screen said:

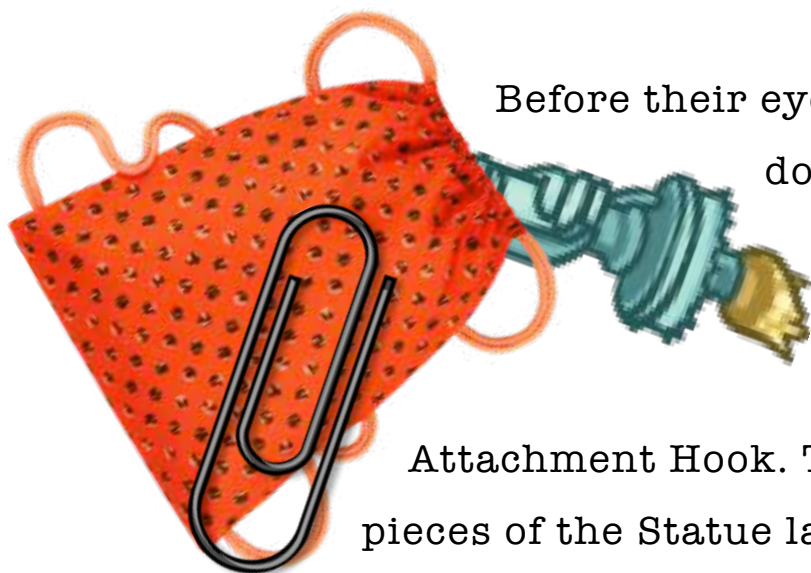
Dear William and Georgina,

We are sending you our gift for Anna. It’s in four pieces. Please put them together and give it to her on her birthday. Watch the Attachment Hook! Here they come!

Thank you!

Molly.

William and Georgina stared at the Attachment Hook on the side of their laptop screen, and waited. It wasn’t long before a loud “ping!” announced the arrival of the first Attachment Bag.



Before their eyes a big red bag with black dots, with a strange object

sticking out of it, appeared out of nowhere hanging by a piece of string from the

Attachment Hook. Three “pings!” later, the four pieces of the Statue lay on the floor in William’s

bedroom. There was an arm with a flaming torch,

another arm holding a book, a head with a crown, and one other big piece that William said was “probably the body.”

“It’s a statue,” said William, “In fact, I think I know which statue it is.”



“The Statue of Liberty!” said Georgina quickly, before he could name it himself, “Our Teacher told us all about it! It’s in New York! And it’s three hundred and five feet and six inches tall!!”

“Well,” said William, “we have to get on with our homework now, so it will have to wait.”

“Oh, William!” Georgina said, “Molly is relying on us! Let’s do it now!”



So, reluctantly and as fast as he could, William helped Georgina put the Statue together. But because they were hurrying they made a big mistake! And when they finished, Georgina said,

“Oh, William! We’ve put the arms on the wrong way around! Look! The left arm is on the right, and the right arm is on the left!”

“Well,” said William, “I have to do my homework now, so you will have to fix it.”

So it was left to Georgina to carefully take the arms off again and fix them back on the right way around.



On September 21, Anna liked all the presents she received for her birthday. At the end of the day she sent everyone a Thank You email. But because she was tired after all the day’s excitement,

she mixed her emails up, and sent some people the wrong one! Molly, Emma, Lucy, and Alex received an email that said:



Thank you very much for the wooden railway set.

I love trains!

Anna.



They all laughed! Anna had sent them the wrong email! Someone else must have her “Thank You” for the Statue of Liberty!

