



ALEX MILWAY

HOTEL  
FLAMINGO

FROSTY FIESTA



## A Quiet Hotel

The nights were growing long and dark, and Hotel Flamingo was preparing for a winter without many guests.

‘Why is it so quiet?’ asked Anna, hovering near the reception desk. ‘We could really do with more bookings.’

Lemmy shrugged. ‘Less sun means less fun. See it as a chance to put your feet up, miss.’





Anna sighed and surveyed the empty hotel foyer. It was as sad and lifeless as a party after everyone had gone home. Perhaps a rest *would* be good for her, she thought.

But at that very moment the lift chimed and Mrs Turpington – the hotel’s resident tortoise – appeared.

‘Good evening, my dear,’ she said to Anna. ‘I was wondering if you might help me?’

‘It would be my pleasure,’ said Anna, excited to have something to do. Mrs Turpington had been Anna’s first guest at Hotel Flamingo, so she always felt extra fond of her.



‘At this time of year I must hibernate,’ said Mrs Turpington, ‘and before I go to sleep for the cold winter months all my fellow long-sleepers and I like to throw a little party. We give presents – usually nice treats to eat upon waking – and talk about our hopes for the coming year.’

‘That sounds delightful,’ said Anna.

‘It always is,’ agreed the tortoise, ‘so, you see, I was hoping we could hold it in your restaurant.’

‘We’d be honoured,’ said Anna – never one to pass up a business opportunity.

‘I hoped you’d say that,’ said Mrs Turpington joyfully. ‘We’ll need gentle food to line our stomachs, of course – nothing spicy or gassy that might make us restless.’

‘Of course!’ said Anna. ‘A green salad perhaps?’

‘Oh yes,’ said the tortoise. ‘And maybe a *little* cake?’ Mrs Turpington gave a naughty smile.

‘I’m pleased to hear it!’ laughed Anna. ‘And how many guests would it be for?’

‘Oh, let me see,’ said Mrs Turpington. She took out a little address book from her handbag and flicked carefully through the pages. ‘There would be Svetlana, Henri, Tinks and Winnie. I may have forgotten a few; my memory isn’t what it was . . .’

‘So let’s say ten for safety’s sake,’ said Anna.

‘Perfect,’ said Mrs Turpington. ‘I’m getting sleepier by the day, so is Friday suitable? That should be enough time for

me to send out invites. Perhaps if I pass the details to you, you could contact everyone for me?’

‘Certainly. I’ll write it in the diary now,’ said Anna.

‘Good, good,’ said the ageing tortoise, and with a satisfied nod she walked through the reception and into the restaurant for supper.

‘Well, that’s something!’ said Anna.

‘I’ll book it in and make arrangements with Madame Le Pig,’ said Lemmy, a bit annoyed that *his* plans for a lie-down had to be put on hold.

As Lemmy wrote down the details in the diary, Stella Giraffe came running down the staircase with her toolbox swinging at her side.



‘Have you heard the news?’ she said.  
‘We’re in for a cold snap! A real arctic storm is coming in tonight!’

‘Urgh!’ said Lemmy. He hated the cold.

‘I suppose it *is* almost winter, after all,’  
said Anna.

‘They say it won’t be just any old cold spell,’ said Stella. ‘Blizzards, freezing temperatures, the works! It’ll be unlike

anything Animal Boulevard has ever seen – and it could last for weeks, so they reckon!’

‘Goodness,’ said Anna. ‘That does sound serious.’

Stella jabbed the air with a spanner. ‘Nothing wrong with being prepared,’ she said. ‘I’ll check the boiler and start lagging the pipes. This old place isn’t cut out for proper cold . . . It may also be worth cleaning out the chimneys and fireplaces!’ She continued ticking off an invisible list of chores on her hooves, and then, with her plans in place, marched away.

‘Winter is the worst,’ said Lemmy. ‘It’s too cold to do anything, let alone think!’

‘I’m sure it won’t be as bad as Stella

