

DIVA
and
FLEA
A PARISIAN TALE





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A PARISIAN TALE

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TONY DI TERLIZZI



WALKER
BOOKS





DIVA *and* FLEA

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Pour mes amis parisiens

Mo

For Mimi, who is part Diva and part Flea

Tony

Le
DÉBUT





*T*his is Diva's story.
For as long as she could remember,
Diva lived at 11 avenue Le Play in Paris,
France.

11 avenue Le Play was a grand old
apartment building with a small gated
courtyard in front. Many people lived in
the building: children, parents, old ladies,
even an artist or two.



Like most grand old apartment buildings in Paris, there was a *gardienne*, who lived on the ground floor. It was her job to make sure that everything inside and outside the building was neat, tidy and safe.

Diva was the *gardienne*'s dog, which meant that Diva was practically responsible for the whole of 11 avenue Le Play, including the courtyard. It was a very big job for a very small dog.



Diva took her job seriously. Every day she would exit the grand front door, trot across the small courtyard and stand at the building's front gate. From there she watched and guarded, and guarded and watched.

And if anything ever happened, no matter how big or small, Diva would yelp and run away.

Diva was very good at her job.



This is Flea's story.

For as long as he could remember, Flea also lived in Paris, France. But at no fixed address. Flea lived wherever he was, which usually was somewhere different from where it had been the day before.

Flea did not even have a fixed name. Some people called him "Puss" or "Midnight" or "Richard", but he didn't care too much about what people called him. He liked the name "Flea". He thought it was a funny name because he was a large cat, and a flea is a small animal.

Also, he may or may not have had fleas.

Flea did have a fixed occupation, however. He was a *flâneur*. A *flâneur* is someone (or somecat) who wanders the streets and bridges and alleys of the city just to see what there is to see. A great *flâneur* has seen everything but



still looks for more, because there is always more to discover.

Flea was a really great *flâneur*.