

THE DAY OF THE DOG

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piece of paper was so different from any other piece of paper, and had he always not laughed at my antics with scraps of paper?

I wanted to crouch by his side and lick his hand, as any other common dog would have done, but I am a pedigreed dog, and blood will tell, so I crept out into the hall and watched for my chance to slip away. Yes, I had determined to leave Master; leave him never to return. It was late when Master got up and put on his coat and hat. When he saw me, he stopped and patted me on the head, and spoke quite gently, 'I'm sorry I hurt you, Wrecker, old boy,' he said; 'I didn't mean it, and you're only a bow-wow, anyway.'

I had been almost ready to forgive him until he added those last few words, 'only a bow-wow.' My very soul cringed.

I followed him for a block or so until we came to a dimly lighted street, and then with one farewell look, and a loudly beating heart, I turned and ran as hard as I could away from Master.

That first night I will not attempt to describe. Homesick, hungry, frightened, insulted on every side by rude and jealous dogs, who jeered at my fine collar, a scrap of some kind on every neck, until at last I crept into an alleyway and, shivering, curled up to try and sleep.

Bright sunshine the next morning somewhat cheered me up, but the arrival of the milkman brought a new terror; he liked my looks and would have carried me off had I not snarled and darted down the street.

I found a garbage can and tried to extract a little breakfast from it, but had no appetite. I kept thinking of Master and the breakfast waiting for me at home.

Pretty soon children commencing going to school and some dreadful boys threw stones at me; I growled at them and showed my teeth, and the little girls all drew away from me and said, 'Oh, he's awful, he'll bite,' and then they ran as hard as they could, me after them, trying to explain what a really gentle dog I was. Then they began to scream, so I gave up the chase for I noticed a big man in a blue suit with brass buttons, who had a club in his hand, and when some one yelled 'Mad dog!' he looked at me, and raised his club as if about to hurl it at me; so I turned abruptly and ran the other way. Mad! I should think I was; they were quite right in calling me mad.

All out of breath, I finally came to a man standing on a corner with a dog—a yellow dog, with a string tied to him, which the man was holding. In his other hand the man held a tin cup, and over his eyes was a green shade. The yellow dog spoke in a language foreign to me, and being of an investigative turn of mind and wanting to know what was in the tin cup, I gave one of my high jumps, hoping to discover its contents. Unfortunately I aimed wrong, and hit the cup instead of looking at it. There was a clatter of small coins to the ground and a curse from the man, his green shade flew off, and unless I had dodged very skillfully his hand would have been on me and the yellow dog's teeth would have been in me, but I made a fine dash up the street and escaped.

It was a long sad day. I attracted a good deal of attention, but avoided being picked up.

My second night out left me stiff and uncomfortable and discouraged, but I could not think of returning to Master; he said that I had ruined all his happiness and I would rather die than go back. I had to resort to theft to obtain food, but I took it from a dog bigger than myself, I am happy to say. I walked and walked, and finally came to a beautiful looking place, called a park, and was strolling along in a meditative sort of a way when suddenly I heard some one say, 'Why, isn't that Dick Sargent's dog?' and another voice said, 'It surely is.' I looked around, ready to run, but stopped short, for I saw a man and a lovely lady, the lovely lady of the automobile. I snarled, for I felt pretty sure the lady, in spite of her loveliness, was the cause of all my trouble, and I didn't feel very kindly toward her.

It's a queer thing, but the lovelier ladies are, the more disturbance they seem to create.

In spite of my bad manners, however, she came straight to me. 'Don't touch him,' warned the man, raising his cane. 'He's awfully savage,' they say; but the lady leaned over and patted me on the head and said in the sweetest, dearest voice, 'Poor little chap—is he a tired lost doggie?—well, I'll take him home with me and let his master know right away,' and with that she picked me up in her arms and held me close, right against a big bunch of violets on her breast, nor would she allow me to get down again,

though I gave a faint wiggle just to be polite.

Oh, the peace and rest just to be in her arms. I was so tired and she knew Master, and that was the best of it, and would take me home to him. I licked her little gloved hands and reached up and licked her pink cheek, and I thought I saw tears in her beautiful eyes, and I'm sure she murmured in my neck, 'Dear Dick.'

She made the man call a hansom, and when he had put us in, he raised his hat and said he had an engagement and wouldn't have time to drive home with us, and the lovely lady said 'Oh, that's too bad,' but I was glad for he looked as cross as a dog that has his tail bone stolen.

We drove down the avenue, the lady's hand on my head, my nose in her lap, and finally drew up before a big house. We hurried in and the lovely lady went straight to a telephone in a cozy room full of books. I close at her heels. Her voice trembled when she gave the number, '1749 Grammery,' and her cheeks got very pink when she asked 'Is Mr. Sargent there?' but her voice was, oh, so sweet and gentle, when, in a few minutes, I heard her say, 'Dick, it is I, Katherine; yes, it is really I, then a little pause; I suppose Master was saying something, for her eyes were bright with tears and there were tears in her voice, too, when she said, 'Yes, yes, indeed, Dick, but I thought you didn't care.' At this point I looked her hand, for I was anxious to be introduced into the conversation; she laughed down at me—'And Dick,' she continued, I have your dog Wrecker, here with me, picked him up in the park, but I don't care to give him back unless the reward is sufficient; will you come up and talk it over?'

A queer sound came over the wire, it almost sounded like a sob, and Katherine said: 'Yes, come right away.' Then we waited together on a big couch, and in just a little while 'Mr. Sargent' was announced, and Katherine said: 'Yes, come right away.' Then we waited together on a big couch, and in just a little while 'Mr. Sargent' was announced, and Katherine picked me up in her arms and went straight to him, and Master, without a word, put his arms around both of us, and I shall dream always of the look in his eyes when he bent and kissed the lovely lady Katherine. I gave them each one wild look and jumped to the floor, but I wasn't long forgotten. Master bent over me and took my head in both his hands. 'Wrecker,' he said, 'you have brought me the only good thing life has ever held for me; I owe this beautiful lady to you, and I owe you to her, since she found you,' here I protested with a growl, but Master protested firmly. 'Hold on, Wrecker, I've not finished. I have given you to Katherine, this lady, and she has given herself to me, so you see we all belong to each other. You ran away from me once because I was a brute to you, but if you run away again it will be because you are tired of being petted.' Then the lovely lady picked me up on the top of my white head. I didn't quite understand it all, but I was very happy, and curled up at Master's feet and went to sleep, for I was very tired.

Since that day I have borne the name of 'The Wrecker,' but I have long ceased to have to play the part. Master says the 'Lovely Lady' has completely tamed us both!

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