

# The Dog Who Wasn't



## What He Thought He Was.

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Illustrated by Ernest A. Aris.

MONDAY.



**T**HIS has been a great day for me. I have left my mother, and have taken a situation. My master is an ugly little fellow named Pretyman. In spite of his conceit, he seems a bit of a fool. Nor has his

wife, who is not a bad-looking woman, many brains, I should say. They have a baby—a hideous lump of lard named Chicky. He is aged about a year and a half, and is a bachelor, I believe. Apparently I am to be companion to this. It is not much of a career for me, and whether I shall be able to consort with one who is so immeasurably my intellectual inferior remains to be seen. Besides, now that they have a nice little dog I do not see that they need a baby. They live in a flat, but I should say they are fairly well-to-do. I am not quite sure whether Mr. Pretyman is a gentleman, or whether he earns his living. They have provided a rather handsome kennel for me at the end of a long passage. It seems queer to have a house within a house, but I

am glad to have it, as it gives one the tanded proprietor feeling somehow. I daresay I shall be all right here. It is a great thing to be independent at last, and to be free of my fussy old mother and her eternal lectures. Dog-tired after my journey from the country, I slept like a top as soon as I turned in.

TUESDAY.

Things do not look quite so bright to-day. My kennel, on a more careful inspection, turns out to be a cheap, jerry-built affair. It has no door which I can lock up when I go out—no security whatever, in fact, against dishonest persons. Then my master has given me the absurd name of Gibus, because, he says, my face reminds him of his opera hat when it is shut up. I only know one name more absurd, and that is Chicky. Which reminds me that it is pretty evident that I am intended to play second fiddle to that brat, and I don't intend to do it. Lastly, these ignorant Pretymans don't even know what sort of a dog I am. They were discussing it at breakfast. "I wonder what he is?" said Mrs. P.

"Yes, I wonder," said Mr. P. "I must find out. Anyhow, it was very kind of Uncle John to give him to us." Imagine their not knowing what I am! And the annoying part of it is that I don't know myself. My mother allowed me to go out into the world without telling me this. I suppose she knew—though I often surprised her staring at me in a puzzled way. I was one of eleven, and every one of us different. My dear mother was very versatile.

After breakfast my mistress took me out for my first walk in town. It seems a terrific place. Some of the streets are chock-full of dog-killing vehicles which seem to be shot from catapults. However, they missed me every time. I was pleased to see what extreme care my mistress took of me crossing the road. It showed that she, anyhow, had an idea of my value. We went part of the way in an omnibus, my mistress placing me inside her muff, on her lap, with my head just peeping out. This was rather *infra dig.*, but very comfy. By the by, I was highly amused at a short-sighted old lady opposite who kept staring at me until I thought her little peepers would jump out of her head. Finally she said, "Well, lawks-a-daisy me, I've never seen a dog like that before! What a tiny head for such an enormous body!" Ultimately we came to a place they call the Park. This was a bit of all right. It had evidently been constructed especially for dogs, and no vehicles were allowed inside, and it was just like the country. It was ripping there, and I scampered and ran about so much that my mistress had the greatest difficulty in keeping up with me at times, especially when I raced with other dogs. Evidently she has not had much training in learning to follow. I did not find the town dogs anything like so stand-offish as I had expected. Lots of them talked to me and proposed games of touch-last, and so forth, especially great big dogs, which pleased me. Many of the small dogs were, frankly, jealous little beasts, and made nasty personal remarks about me, such as "Who sat on your face?" or "Who's been putting his nose in the ink-pot?" Though boiling over with indignation, I treated these with silent contempt, but when one or two of the catty little things actually snapped at me I did not know what to do, and I would run to my mistress and she would take me up and, to my huge delight, give the little bullies a sound rap on the nose with her sunshade, and then they would run off yelping.

By the way, one of the big dogs who talked

to me asked me what I was. I said I was ashamed to say I did not know. "Are you a thoroughbred?" he said. "Of course," I answered. "Open your mouth and say 'Ah!'" he said. I did so, and he said, "No, you're a very nice little fellow, but you ain't a thoroughbred. Thoroughbreds have black roofs to their mouths." "Where can I get one?" I asked. "Oh, you can only get one from your mother," he said. This rather upset me, as now that I had left home I did not want to be beholden to my mother for anything, and I decided that I would die rather than go begging to her. On my way back I felt very tired, and finally sat down and refused to go a step farther. After dragging me a little by the lead in a sitting down position, my mistress decided that she would have to carry me, and as my feet were muddy she was quite angry about this. Which shows what unreasonable creatures women are, for it was she who had made me tired by taking me too far.

In the afternoon a happy thought struck me. I would become a thoroughbred without troubling my mother. I was alone in the library, and it was the sight of the coal-box that put the idea into my head—and thence into my mouth. Towards the close of the banquet my master suddenly came into the room. "Oh, you bad dog!" he cried. "How dare you? And with coal the price it is! If I catch you doing this again I'll beat you within half an inch of your life!" Then he seemed ashamed of his cowardly threat, and said, "One does not eat coal, you know." This was a lie, for I had heard his wife asking him only the night before for the address of the Coal Consumers' Association. However, I was not inclined to argue with one who does not know how to control his temper, so I let the matter drop. After all, if he likes to have a dog who is not a thoroughbred, that's his affair. I shall eat no more of his coal. He also said if I did not follow better—he was referring, I suppose, to his wife having to carry me—he would have to glue each of my paws on to a wooden stand with wheels, and I should be dragged through the streets like a toy. Silly ass!

I had rather a lark with him later on. I woke up in the middle of the night, feeling somewhat lone and lorn and miserable, and wondering what mother was doing; so I gave a howl. I rather liked the sound of it—it sounded important, and was, so to say, company for me, so I gave another, and then a whole series of them. After a time this brought Mr. Pretymen along, looking an



"THEY ALL CAME DOWN LIKE SNOW."

absurd sight in pyjamas, with a candle. He tried being sort of funny at first. "Halloa!" he says. "Coals not agreeing with us? Dear, dear! Sh-h! Small people, you know, ought to be seen and not heard." I felt inclined to say, "What about that beastly baby of yours which is crying all day?" but I kept on howling instead. Then he tried being tender. "Now, go to sleep, there's a good Gibus, do." But still I howled. Then he raised his hand as though to beat me, but refrained on my growling as well as howling. "I can't stop him," he cried, helplessly, to his wife. "Try giving him a lump of sugar," she said. He went and fetched some sugar.

I love sugar. He gave me a lump. "Now, you really must be quiet," he said, "or we shall have the people upstairs and downstairs complaining." I quite saw the importance to him of my being quiet—and, as I have said, I love sugar. So I went on howling. He gave me a second lump. I ate it and continued to howl. When he gave me a third lump I decided that that would do for to-night, and became a good Gibus. Good biz!

WEDNESDAY.

This has been the day of my life. First I went into my mis'tress's boudoir and destroyed two extremely pretty cushions.

It was grand the mess I made with all the feathers. Then I visited my master's library, and crippled his favourite pipe and tore up a number of letters into thousands of fragments. It was such a pretty effect when I nozzled these up into the air and they all came down like snow. Next I thought of that baby. Why the dickens should he be "Master" Chicky and I plain Gibus? The nursery door chanced to be open, and the brat was alone for once. The miserable quadruped was crawling about the floor with a rattle in his hand and making a stupid crooning noise. He stopped his crooning on catching sight of me and stared at me in the rudest way, not even having the common courtesy to pass the time of day to me. Then a broad smile appeared on his ugly face, as though he had never seen such a funny sight as me. At this insult, although he was considerably my senior, I closed with him, and, wrenching his beastly rattle from him, bit it through and through. At this Master Chicky raises such a hullabaloo—never in my life have I heard such yells—that the nurse and his mother come rushing in and make ever such a fuss of the little coward, while I, if you please, am ordered to be beaten! I can quite see that either I or the lump of lard will have to leave soon. So Mr. Pretyman—to whom, meanwhile, one of the servants had sneaked about the cushions and his pipe and the letters—is fetched with a whip, and the bullying father of a cowardly son gives me a thrashing which really hurts. After that I retired to my kennel and sulked, and reflected what a rotten thing life was; thoughts of suicide even entered my mind, and I would have awfully liked to see mother again.

After lunch I felt a bit brighter.

And now for the great and glorious tidings. I have found out what I am. *I am a bloodhound!*

This is how I found out. I was lying down in the library after lunch, half-inclined, after all, to renounce my renunciation of coal, when some unaccountable impulse made me look up at the pictures on the wall. They were rather a mixed lot. Some of them good, others, I should say, wedding presents. Suddenly my eye alighted on one which made me start. It was called "The Bloodhound—After Landseer." *It was me grown-up!* The brow a little nobler, perhaps, the forehead rather more wrinkled, the ears somewhat fuller, the nose a bit longer—but all that would come with time. I was wildly excited. It seemed incredible. I rushed to my

mistress's bedroom; fortunately the door was ajar, and I nozzled my way in and looked in the big glass again. There was no doubt about it. A bloodhound! Oh, it was grand—too grand for words!

What a difference it makes to my life having a future. I feel that nothing will ever make me lose my temper again. Why, I even found myself disliking the baby less. Indeed, I began to feel quite sorry for him, for *he* could never be a bloodhound, poor little fellow!

Oh, it's splendid, splendid, splendid!

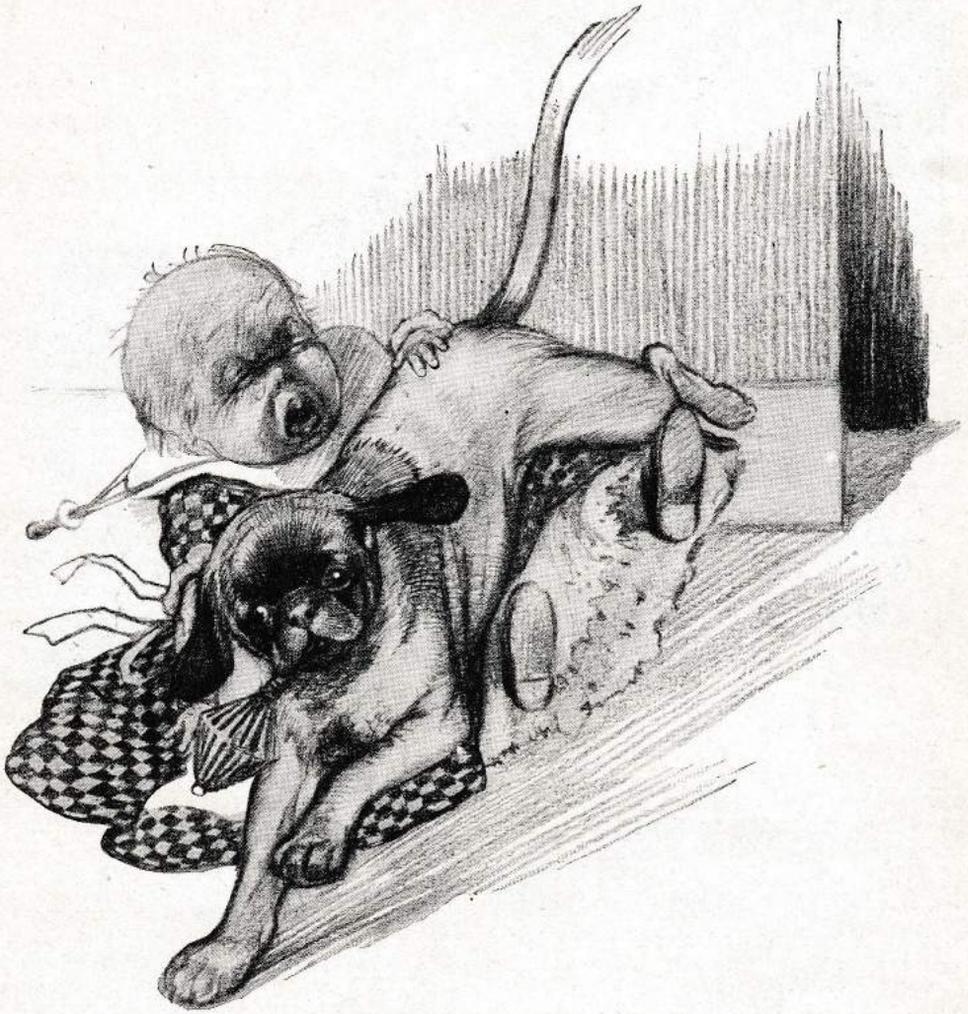
When my people came in they could not understand why I gave them such a nice greeting. "Been up to some more mischief, I expect," said my clever master. I did all I could to explain to them that they were entertaining a bloodhound unawares. I kept gazing at the picture and wagging my tail; but all they said was, "Look at him staring at that print of Landseer's; it's like 'Dignity and Impudence,' isn't it?"

Blind fools! As a matter of fact, there was nothing impudent about the dog in the picture. However, I did not say anything. Only I did make this resolve: that when I was grown up, if Mr. Pretyman dared to try and beat me, I would take him in my mouth and shake him like a rat. Also I should refuse to answer to the name of Gibus.

It had been my intention to-night to have further voice trials, and to blackmail the little man to the extent of six lumps of sugar, but in the circumstances I refrained. As a matter of fact, I was so happy that I slept without waking till the maid called me in the morning.

THURSDAY.

A glorious day, in keeping with my spirits. My mistress announces after breakfast that she intends to take me into the Park again. She is, after all, rather a dear, I think. It was good to get out into the open once more. Evidently my news has not leaked out yet, for not a hundred yards from my house I saw a tiny kitten, about half my size, sunning herself at the top of the area steps. For fun I pretended to make for her, expecting her either to fall down in a palsy or to run shrieking indoors. Instead of this, the impudent little baggage refused to budge an inch, but arched her back and actually spat at me. At that, after noting the address, I left the little fury with the words, "One day, my lady, you shall know whom you have insulted!" Not that I really minded, only I had to say something. It was perfectly ripping in the Park. I met most of my big dog friends,



"I CLOSED WITH HIM AND WRENCHED HIS BEASTLY RATTLE FROM HIM."

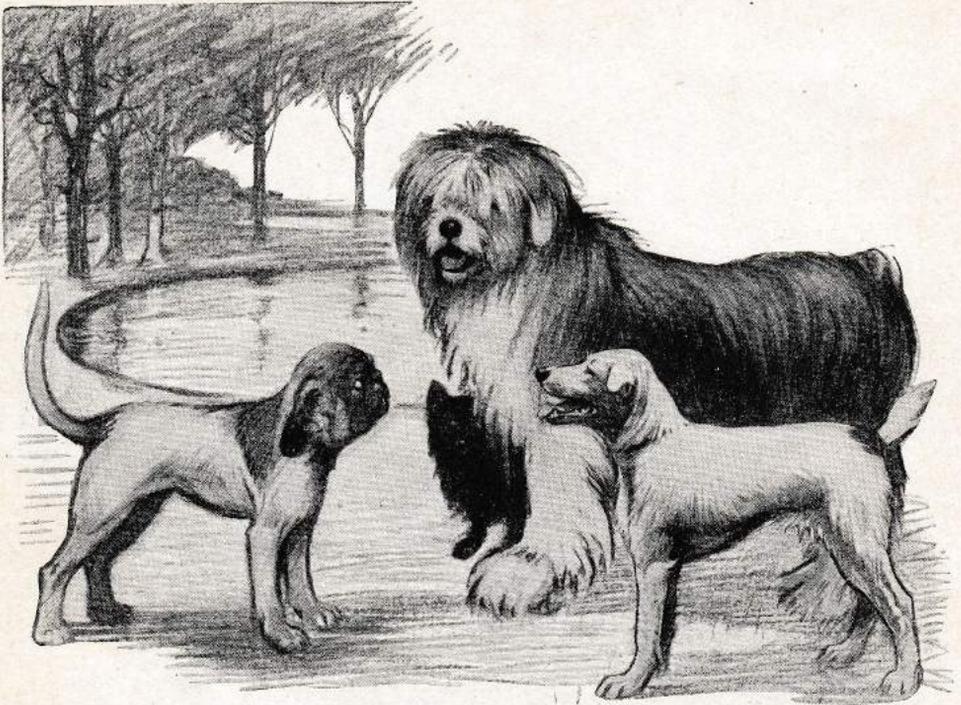
and they were as chummy as ever, and all smiles when I told them my great news. And what was so nice was that I no longer felt that these big chaps were patronising me, but that I was now their equal. The thought was most bracing. I even made a joke with one great, springy fellow, who looked as if he was dressed in ill-fitting black trousers. He came bounding up to me. "Halloa!" I said. "What are you?" "I'm a bob-tailed sheep-dog, ignoramus," he said. "What!" I said. "Surely you never gave a bob for that little, tiny stump of a tail?" "And, pray, what are you?" he asked, without relaxing a muscle. "Bloodhound," I said. Then, and not till then, did he laugh loudly at my joke. Oh, my spirits

Vol. xlv.—66.

were wonderful; so much so that I cared not a rap for the nasty remarks of the small dogs—the riff-raff. The bloodhound breed are above noticing petty insults.

On my way home the most pleasing incident of the entire day happened. I was sniffing the heels of a working man as he walked along when suddenly he kicked out and cried to my mistress, "'Ere, miss, call your blood'ound off of me. I don't want to be bit." Now, the lower classes are doggy to a man, and this man knew. Curiously, my mistress, who called me to her, did not seem to realize the significance of the remark; but, as for myself, I was more than delighted. If confirmation were needed here it was!

Indeed, I was so bucked up that I took



"SURELY YOU NEVER GAVE A BOB FOR THAT LITTLE, TINY STUMP OF A TAIL?"

quite quietly what would have ordinarily thrown me into a paroxysm of rage. In my absence someone had cleaned out my kennel. It was a confounded impertinence. Gone were all my little savings, including several bones of considerable value. This was scarcely the way to encourage thrift, but I said nothing.

Most of the rest of the day I passed in the library opposite the Landseer picture, which I gazed at from time to time. What mean-looking creatures men were compared with him!

Mr. Pretzman noticed the alteration in me. "How that dog's improving," he said. "It must have been the thrashing I gave him yesterday." Blind fool!

#### FRIDAY.

Black Friday.

All is over. I am undone, and have no wish to live.

It was raining in the morning, and my mistress said, "No walk to-day," and so I was left to my own devices.

There was one room in the house which I had been forbidden to enter. It was my master's dressing-room. Now, no dog can ever settle down and get the restful feeling

until he has thoroughly explored his surroundings. The door of the dressing-room was open, and the devil tempted me. I entered.

I am a dog of few and simple tastes. One of them is shoes. Pulling shoes to pieces and eating bits of them is a passion with me. I like them best when there are feet in them, as they squeak then when you bite them. But even when they are empty I love them.

As soon as I was in the room I discovered why it had been forbidden me. It contained my master's larder. On the shelves of a cupboard, which happened to be open, were as many, I should say, as thirty pairs of boots and shoes! I was on them like a hawk.

One pair—brown leather—disagreed with me. My own idea is that they had been poisoned. My master is just the sort of man to wear poisoned shoes. I remember now that there was a peculiar taste about them. Soon after sampling them I was overtaken by agonizing pains in my underneath. I managed to crawl to my kennel, where I was violently sick. But the gripey pains still continued, and my groans soon brought my mistress to see me. With woman's instinct

she realized at once that I was seriously ill. Indeed, her concern was quite pretty to behold. She consulted her husband and persuaded him to send for the vet. "And we mustn't forget to ask him, when he is here, what sort of dog it is," said my master. "He'll know." Of course he would, for vets. are experts. The thought that my master and mistress would soon know the truth about me had a wonderful effect on me, and I began to feel better at once. I longed to see the effect of the revelation. One result seemed pretty certain to me. I should be transferred to the bassinet, and that rotten baby would be put in my kennel.

It was a long time before the vet. came. Would that he had never come!

They brought him to my kennel. The brute dragged me out with scant ceremony, and held me up by the loose skin at the back of my neck. "Nothing much the matter with him," he said, "except that he's been a bit careless in his diet. All puppies are greedy little devils." Polite, I thought, saying this before me. "I'll send him some physic," he said. "Oh, and doctor," said my mistress, "what sort of dog is he? Will he be a big

dog?" Now for the sensational disclosure, I thought, and I wagged my tail violently. The vet. looked at me in his arrogant way. Then he spoke with deliberation. "Well, I daresay he's a very nice little fellow," he said, "and I expect you are fond of him; but he's the most terrible little mongrel there ever was, and he's full size now. His value, I should say, is exactly twopence-halfpenny. Halloo!" he added, a second later. "I've never known a dog to do that before. I believe he has swooned."

They brought me round with some difficulty, and I am beginning to feel better now, but I think I would rather die. For I shall never, never be able to face my friends again. Oh, the difference—the cruel difference—between yesterday and to-day! What does life hold for me now? Nothing—absolutely nothing. I am a dog without a future. Why live? Indeed, a few minutes ago I had made up my mind to starve myself to death, and I would have done so, only I found myself getting so beastly hungry. I must think things out. I wish I could see my mother. Oh, it's a difficult world for little dogs!



"OH, IT'S A DIFFICULT WORLD FOR LITTLE DOGS!"