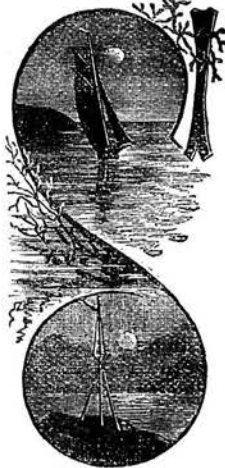


## TWO CHAPTERS FOR THE LITTLE PEOPLE.

By RUTH LAMB.

### CHAPTER II. THE DOGGIE STORY.



AM sure you will like to hear how this Doggie was lost and found. If I could not tell you how he was at length found, I would not write a word about the loss of him, because I do not like writing sorrowful tales for quite children to read. And it seems to me a very sorrowful thing when a dog that loves its master and mistress happens to be lost, and does not find them, or they him.

But I ought to mention that this really not my story

at all. It was told to me exactly as I am going to write it, by a friend who is very fond of dogs, and of whom every dog seems to be fond also.

It is quite curious to see how they follow her, obey her commands, and watch her with mute, worshipping eyes. Under some circumstances she might have perhaps been a "Lion Queen" in a wild beast show, but, as it is, she is just an English lady to whom every dog is a delightful friend, and who is continually being adopted by stray animals of all sorts and sizes.

Now, listen whilst she tells you how the Doggie found her, and how she helped him to find his master.

"I was going to town one afternoon to do some shopping, my huge and loving colley dog 'Scot,' the sole companion of my walk. I meant to go on foot and return in a cab with my purchases. Passing through a certain grove, in which there really are trees, I saw a large, handsome dog stretched under one of them. I could not help noticing his weary, hopeless look; and his shaggy coat was muddy, as if he had travelled a long way.

"Being in a hurry, I did not stop to speak to him, but just gave him a passing pat; but a minute or two later, missing Scot, I turned round and observed that my dog was exchanging compliments with the stranger. They walked solemnly round each other, the unknown moving stiffly and as if he were quite foot-sore. Then they stood face to face, and seemed to be holding friendly converse.

"Everybody knows that dogs have a way of making each other understand; though we do not know what they say or how they say it.

"Now, this is what I think the stranger said to Scot, judging by what he did afterwards.

"You seem to have a comfortable home, if your looks are anything to go by."

"I have," growled Scot.

"Is your mistress a kind person and fond of dogs?" said the stranger.

"The best in the world," said Scot, "and very fond of dogs, as I have cause to say, that have been her dog for five years past."

"Do you think she has room for another?" said the poor, draggled beast with a moan; "I am tired, hungry—in fact, lost! And I had the best of masters if you have the best of mistresses."

"I don't know," returned Scot, hesitating, for the question touched his tenderest feelings, and he was the dog of the household. But in his large-hearted compassion he added, "You can but try."

"This," continued the lady, "is what I imagine the dogs must have said; for as I turned to call Scot, and reprove him for lagging behind, the other poor fellow came too, only just a step or two in his rear, every look saying, 'Please take me with you.'

"I told him to go back. I did more: I reasoned with the stranger dog, pointed to Scot, and asked him if he thought it likely that I could require a second dog when I already owned such a grand fellow? He looked sadly cowed, and hung back a little, as if owning the reasonableness of what I had said. But on my turning round again, he had resumed his weary tramp behind Scot, who I am certain stealthily encouraged him to come on.

"What was I to do? I resolved to be severe, and I shook my hand at him and said, 'Go back, sir, this moment; I have told you I do not want you.'

"For answer the poor beast sat down and extended one great paw. I could not for my life refuse it, and having shaken and released it, I was amused to see him hold out the other. I shook this too, and quite conquered, I said, 'Come, then, poor fellow, I will shelter you for the present, and if I cannot find your master, will get you a good home.'

"It was quite curious to see the change in the beast after I had thus spoken. He waved aloft the tail which a minute before hung between his legs, pricked up his ears, and tried hard to make me believe he could walk any distance; but I knew better than that. I began to think where I could leave him on the road.

"A few drops of rain decided me. I would take a cab from some stables close at hand, and would ask the proprietor to let me leave Doggie, and call for him on my return. This was cheerfully agreed to, and the coachman tried to coax my new friend into an outhouse, where a nice bed of clean straw awaited him. But, no thank you, Doggie was not to be beguiled, and I was obliged to give him a solemn assurance that I would come back for him, and to add that he must rest quietly until my return.

"He lay down as I bade him; but if ever eyes implored a friend to be faithful, that poor animal's pleaded with me not to forsake him.

"I got through my business as quickly as I could, and went home with one huge dog inside and another outside the cab, to the wonder of the passers-by; for Scot always would have his head out at a window, and the effect was unusual, as he seemed to be talking to the stranger in front.

"Doggie was fearfully hungry, but in spite of that he ate like a gentleman, and then I had him well washed, dried, and brushed. A beauty he looked as he shared the hearth-rug with Scot that evening! And how he slept!

"The next morning I said to 'Will'—my husband—'Look if there is an advertisement about Doggie.' He said there was not; but he had given himself no trouble, being too busy with the long speech of somebody or other, but he kindly handed me the advertisement sheet, and in a minute I saw '£5 Reward!' and read an exact description of Doggie, for whose recovery the sum would be paid. Apply Gt. Everywhereshire Railway Station."

"I went to the station, received an effusive welcome from sundry officials, who devoutly hoped my canine guest would turn out to be the dog wanted; some of the juniors having got into trouble about his disappearance. Boys were sent off right and left in search of Doggie's owner—a director of said railway—and in a short time he came. Indeed, I had met him on the way, but had no idea his look of dejection was on Doggie's account, though I had noticed that he was troubled.

"That man deserved to have and to keep

a good dog. His face beamed again at the prospect of recovering his pet, then fell, lest the tidings were too good to be true, as he had been so often disappointed already. He was willing to start, per tramcar, for my dwelling, three miles away, without a moment's delay, and it was truly touching to a dog-lover to see his anxiety, his alternate hopes and fears, while on the road.

"Shall I ever forget the meeting between Master and Doggie? The creature was not fussy; there was no barking, noising, capering round. But he looked into his master's face with a whole world of love in his honest eyes; he licked his hands, his clothes, his very shoes; and then, pushing his great head under the caressing palm, he stood there motionless and contented.

"Do you think he is my old dog?" said the gentleman. "If you have any doubt about it I will give you further proof."

"I had no doubt, and I am not ashamed to say that the sight of the meeting brought moisture to my eyes. I told him how glad I was to be the means of bringing the dog and his master together again, and then the latter would show me some of Doggie's tricks. He put the room door wide open, and told the creature to shut it, which he did at once with his fore-paws.

"Then he told me that Doggie had been dreadfully jealous when he got married, and for six weeks would not be coaxed into taking the slightest notice of his wife. When the thing seemed hopeless he turned round all at once, as if he had made up his mind that she was not to be got rid of, or else that, as his master's companion, he ought to treat her differently. So ever after the dog shared his love between them; and when the husband was from home, was the lady's guard by night and day. He went with her to her room at bedtime, waited till she was ready to put out the light, and then withdrew to the mat outside her door, where he lay stretched until the morning.

"I wanted to know the faithful beast's name, and was told he never had one. He was always called just 'Dog' or 'Doggie'—nothing else. When his master attended railway meetings in different places the dog always went with him by train, and it was during one of these journeys that they missed each other. It was proved that, in the interval during which Doggie was lost, he had more than once taken railway journeys to places where he had before been with his master, but had missed him and gone on again elsewhere, until the gentleman had given up hope of finding him again.

"Before I said good-bye to Doggie and his owner, the gentleman urged me to accept the £5 offered in the advertisement, if only to give away to a charity. Of course I declined, but he was not to be foiled. I went out after he was gone, and was absent for several hours. On my return home I found a little parcel addressed to me; and when I opened it, there was inside a little box containing an exquisite gold brooch, with a single lovely pearl in the centre. On the blank side of a card, bearing the name of my morning visitor, were the words—'A Souvenir from the old Dog.'

"Well, there was no refusing it, so I just wrote and thanked Doggie's master for so delicate a mark of remembrance, and I valued it as much as if it had been the 'Koh-i-noor,' though I grieve to say I afterwards either lost it or was robbed of it in coming out of a concert hall. I spent a great deal of money in advertisements, but never recovered the brooch, though I shall not forget the old Dog, for all that, as long as I live."

There, that is my friend's "Doggie Story." It is quite a true one, and I hope you will like it as well as I did when she told it to me.