

Complete Story.

# Snap, the Bull-terrier:

THE STORY OF A CHRISTMAS DOG.

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

BY ERNEST THOMPSON SETON, Author of "Wild Animals I Have Met," "Two Little Savages," Etc.

It was late on Christmas Day when I saw him. Early in the morning I had received a telegram from my college chum Jack: "Merry Christmas. Am sending you a remarkable pup; be polite to him; it's safer." It would have been just like Jack to have sent an infernal machine or a Skunk rampart and called it a pup, so I awaited the hamper with curiosity.

When it landed I saw it was marked "Dangerous," and ther came from within a high-pitched snarl at every slight provocation. On peering through the wire top I saw it was not a baby Tiger, but a small, white bull-terrier. He snapped at me, and at anyone or anything that seemed too abrupt or too near for proper respect, and his snarling growls were unpleasantly frequent. Dogs have two growls—one, deep, rumbled and chesty; that is meant for polite warning the retort courteous; the other mouthy and much higher in pitch; this is the last word before actual onslaught. The Terrier's growls were all of the latter kind.

I was a dogman and thought I knew all about Dogs, so dismissing the porter, I got out my all-round jackknife-tooth-shevel—a specialty of our firm—and lifted the netting. Oh yes! I knew all about Dogs. The little fury had been growing out a new kind of growl for each tap of the tool, and when I turned the box on its side, he made a dash straight for my legs. Had not his foot gone through the wire netting and held him I might have been hurt, for his heart was evidently in his work; but I stepped on the table out of reach and tried to talk to him. I have always believed in talking to animals. I maintain that they gather something of our intention at last, even if they do not understand our words; but the dog evidently put me down for a hypocrite and scorned my approaches. At first he took his post under the table and kept up a circular watch for a leg, trying to get down. I felt sure I could have controlled him with my eye, but I could not bring it to bear where I was, or rather where he was; thus I was left a prisoner.

I am a very cool person. I flatter myself—in fact, I am a traveller for a hardware firm and we are not excelled by any but perhaps the most gentlemen that sell wearing apparel. I lit a cigar and smoked cross-legged on the table while my little tyrant below kept watch for legs. I got out the telegram and read it. "Remarkable pup; be polite to him; it's safer." I think it was my coolness rather than my politeness that did it, for in half an hour the growling ceased. In an hour he no longer jumped at a newspaper, cautiously pushed on the edge to test his humour; possibly the irritation of the cage was wearing off, and by the time I lit my third cigar he waddled out to the fire and lay down, not ignoring me, however. I had no reason to complain of that kind of contempt. He kept one eye on me, and I kept both eyes, not on him, but on his stumpy tail. If that tail should swing sideways once I might feel sure I was winning; but it did not swing. I got a book and put in time on that table till my legs were cramped and the fire burned low. About ten o'clock it was chilly, and at half-past ten the fire was out, and my Christmas present got up, yawned and stretched, then walked under the bed, where he found a fur rug. By stepping lightly from the table to the dresser, and then on to the mantel-shelf, I also reached bed, and, very quietly undressing, got in without provoking any criticism from my master. I had not yet fallen asleep when I heard a slight scrambling and felt "thump-thump" on the bed; then over my foot and legs. Snap evidently had found it too cool down below and proposed to have the best my house afforded.

way that I was very uncomfortable and tried to readjust matters, but the slightest wriggle of a toe was enough to make him snap at it so fiercely that nothing but thick woollen bedclothes saved me from being maimed for life.

I was three hours moving my feet—a hair's breadth at a time—till they were so that I could sleep in comfort, and I was awakened several times during the night by angry snarls from the Dog—I supposed because I dared to move a muscle without his approval, though once I believe he did it simply because I was snoring.

In the morning I was ready to get up before Snap was. You see I call him Snap—Gingersnap, in full. Some dogs are hard to name and some do not seem to need it; they name themselves. I was ready to rise at seven. Snap was not ready till eight, so we rose at eight. He had little to say to the man who made the fire. He allowed me to dress without doing it on the table.

As I left the room to get breakfast I remarked: "Snap, my friend, some men would whip you into a different way, but I think I know a better plan. The doctors nowadays favour the 'no breakfast cure.'"

It seemed cruel, but I left him without food all day. It cost me something to repaint the door where he scratched it—but at night he was very ready to accept a little food at my hands.

In a week we were very good friends. He would sleep at my feet then and allow me to move without snapping at them with intent to do me serious bodily harm. The "no breakfast cure" had worked wonders; in three months we were—well, simply man and Dog. Snap seemed to be without fear. If a small Dog came near he would take the slightest notice; if a medium-sized Dog, he would stick his stub of a tail rigidly up in the air, then walk around him scratching contemptuously with his hindfeet, and looking at the sky, the distance, the ground, anything but the Dog, and noting his presence only by frequent high-pitched growls. If the stranger did not move on at once the battle began, and then the stranger usually moved on very rapidly. Snap sometimes got worsted, but no amount of sad experience could ever inspire him with a grain of caution. Once, while driving in a cab during the Dog show, he caught sight of an elephantine St. Bernard taking an airing. Its size aroused such enthusiasm in Snap's little breast that he leaped from the cab window to do battle and broke his leg.

Evidently fear had been left out of his make-up and its place supplied with an extra amount of ginger, which was the reason of his full name. He differed from all other Dogs I had ever known before. For example, if a boy threw a stone at him he ran, not away, but toward the boy, and if the crime were repeated Snap took the law into his own hands; thus he was at least respected by all. Only myself and the porter at the office seemed to realise his good points, and we only were admitted to the high honour of personal friendship, an honour which I appreciated more as months went by, and by midsummer met Carnegie, Vanderbilt and Astor together could have raised money enough to buy a quarter of a share of my little Dog Snap.

## CHAPTER II.

Though not a regular traveller, I went on the road in the autumn, and then Snap and the landlady were left together with unfortunate developments: contempt on his part, fear on hers—and hate on the part of both.

I was placing a lot of barb wire in

the northern tier of States. My letters were forwarded once a week and I got several complaints from the laudably about Snap.

Arrived at Mendosa, in North Dakota, I found a fine market for wire. Of course my dealings were with the big storekeepers, but I went about among the ranchmen to get their practical views on the different styles, and thus I met the Penroof brothers' Cow outfit.

One cannot be long in the Cow country now without hearing a great deal about the depredations of the ever wily and destructive Gray Wolf. The day has gone by when these animals could be poisoned wholesale and they are a serious drain on the rancher's profits. The Penroof brothers, like most live Cattlemen, had given up all attempts at poisoning and trapping and were trying various breeds of Dogs as Wolf-hunters, hoping to get a little sport out of the work of destroying the pests.

Foxhounds had failed; they were too thin-skinned for fighting; Great Danes were too slow, and Greyhounds could not follow the game unless they could see it. Each breed had some fatal defect, but the Cowmen hoped to succeed with a mixed pack, and on the day when I was invited to join in a Mendosa Wolf-hunt I was much amused by the different Dogs that formed the pack. There were not a few mongrels, but there were also a lot of highly-bred Dogs, in particular some Russian Wolf-hounds that must have cost a lot of money. Hilton Penroof, the oldest boy, "The Master of Hounds," was unusually proud of them and expected them to do great things.

"Greyhounds are too thin-skinned to fight a Wolf, Danes are too slow and heavy, but you'll see the fur fly when the Russians take a hand."

Thus the Greyhounds were there as runners, the Danes as heavy backers, and the Russians to do the important fighting. There were also a couple of Foxhounds, whose fine noses were relied on to follow the trail if the game got out of view.

It was a striking sight as we rode away among the Badland Buttes that December day, the ground bare of snow. The air was bright and crisp and, though so late, there was no frost. The horses were fresh, and once or twice showed me how a Cow-pony tries to get rid of his rider.

The Dogs were keen for sport, and on the plains we did start one or two gray spots that Hilton said were Wolves or Coyotes. The Dogs trailed away at full cry, but at night, beyond the fact that one of the Greyhounds had a wound on his shoulder, there was nothing to show that any of them had been on a Wolf-hunt.

"It's my opinion yer fancy Russians is no good, Hill," said Garvin, the younger brother. "I'll back that little black Dane against the lot, nongrel an' all as he is."

"I don't un'erstan' it," growled Hilton. "There ain't a Coyote, let alone a Gray Wolf, kin run away from them Greyhounds; them Foxhounds kin follow a trail three days old, an' the Danes could lick a Grizzly."

"I reckon," said the father, "they kin run, an' they kin track, an' they kin lick a Grizzly, maybe, but the fact is they don't want to tackle a Gray Wolf. The hull darn pack is scart—an' I wish we had our money out o' them."

Thus the men grumbled and discussed as I drove away and left them.

There seemed only one solution of the failure. The Hounds were swift and strong, but a Gray Wolf seems to terrorize all Dogs. They had not the nerve to face him, and so each time he got away; and my thoughts flew back to the fearless little Dog that had shared my bed for the last year. How I wished he were out here; then these lubberly giants of Hounds would find a leader whose nerve would not fail at the moment of trial.

At Baroka, my next stop, I got a batch of mail and two letters from the landlady—the first to say that "that beast of a Dog was acting up scandalous in my room," and the other, still more forcible, demanding his immediate removal.

Why not have him expressed to Mendosa. I thought. It's only twenty hours; they'll be glad to have him. I can take him home with me when I go through.

## CHAPTER III.

My next meeting with Gingersnap was not so different from the first as one might have expected. He jumped on me, made much vigorous pretence to hate and growled frequently, but his stumpy wagged hard.

The Penroofs had had a number of Wolf-hunts since I was with them and were much disgusted at having no better success than before. The Dogs could find a Wolf nearly every time they went out but they could not kill him, and the men were not near enough to learn why.

Old Penroof was satisfied that "that wasn't one of the hull miserable gang that had the grit of a Jack-Rabbit."

We were off at dawn the next day. The same procession of fine Horses, superb riders, the big blue Dogs, the yellow Dogs, the spotted Dogs as before; but there was a new feature, a little white Dog that stayed close by me, and not only any Dogs, but Horses as well, that came too near were apt to get a surprise from his teeth. I think he quarrelled with every man, Horse and Dog in the country with the exception of a Bull-Terrier belonging to the Mendosa hotel man. She was the only one smaller than himself, and they seemed very good friends.

I shall never forget the view of the hunt I had that day. We were on one of those large, flat-headed buttes that give a kingdom to the eye, when Hilton, who had been scanning the vast country with glasses, remarked: "I see him. There he goes, toward Skull Creek. Guess it's a Coyote."

Now, the first thing is to get the Greyhounds to see the prey; not an easy matter, as they cannot use the glasses, and the ground was covered with sagebrush higher than the Dogs' heads.

But Hilton called: "Hu, Hu, Dander," and leaned aside from his saddle, holding out his foot at the same time. Dander sprang lightly from the ground, touched the foot and reached the saddle, and there stood balancing on the Horse, while Hilton kept pointing. "There he is, Dander, sic him! sic him! down there." The Dog gazed earnestly where his master pointed; then seeming to see, he leaped to the ground with a slight yelp and sped away while the other Dogs followed after, in an ever-lengthening procession, and we rode as hard as we could behind them, losing time, for the ground was out with gullies, spotted with badger holes and covered with rocks and sage that made full speed too hazardous.

We all fell behind, but I was last, of course, being least accustomed to the saddle. We could see the Dogs flying over the level plain or dropping from sight in gullies to reappear at the other side, and we could see that the procession lengthened out. Dander, the Greyhound, was the recognised leader, and as we mounted another ridge we got a glimpse of the whole chase—a Coyote at full speed—the Dogs a-quarter of a mile behind, but gaining. When next we saw them the Coyote was dead and the Dogs sitting around panting—all but two of the Foxhounds and Gingersnap.

"Too late for the fracas," remarked Hilton, glancing at the two Foxhounds. Then he proudly petted Dander. "Didn't need yer purp after all, ye see."

"Takes a heap of nerve for ten big

## A DELICIOUS PINK BATH.

Everyone seeking Health and Strength should add a few drops of Condy's Fluid to the daily Bath or Foot Bath.

A Condy's Fluid Bath imparts a delicious sensation of freshness and purity, it invigorates the body and braces the nerves. The strengthening and health giving effects are Simply Magical.

Condy's Fluid is sold by all Chemists and Stores. Beware of local Substitutes, all of which are inferior in Composition and in Strength. Caution.—Ask for and insist on having "Condy's Fluid."