

# TO THE RESCUE

—By Albert Payson Terhune

Illustrated by HAROLD LUND

THE big collie was making a gallant fight of it.

Nesta had beheld the entire scene. She was walking along the River road, in the frozen slush of that muddy byway, when first the rabbit flashed across her path and scurried out on the frozen surface of the stream. Hard at bunny's heels galloped a half-grown hound puppy.

Out upon the treacherous early March ice the pup followed his fast-escaping prey. Then, thirty yards from shore, a patch of rotting channel ice swayed and cracked and disintegrated under the young hound's feet. In the grey expanse appeared a patch of black water. In the middle of it the pup was floundering helplessly.

Once and again the puppy reached the broken edges of the water-hole and strove to lift himself up to safety. But the decaying channel ice kept crumbling under his wildly clawing fore-feet and he slipped back, his whole head submerged.

Then something brushed harshly past her toe. She looked to see what it was. A collie had come upon the scene from nowhere in particular and was dashing across the firmer shore ice toward the exhausted puppy.

As he heard the ragged gasp, the ice began to bend and crack under him. He came to a sliding halt at the edge of the hole and braced his white feet, leaning far forward to catch the frantic puppy by the scruff of the neck and to draw him out of the water.

Before his jaws could close on the wriggling victim, the ice had given way under him. The gap was larger than before. In it now two dogs instead of one were struggling.

The collie secured his hold on the pup's neck. With an effort that carried his own head and shoulders far out of water he swam to the edge of the hole and fairly thrust the hound upward over the edge.

Perhaps here the ice was less weak than at the point where both had fallen in. At any rate it did not break under the puppy's fore feet. With a last effort of strength, the little fellow clawed his way to the surface of the ice and dashed off at top speed for shore.

The impact of the youngster's jump drove the collie's head far under. He came up beneath the ice, whether by instinct or by luck or by brain, he swam up-stream a yard or so. Once more his head appeared in the gap, dripping and gasping. To the edge of the hole he swam, at the place where the puppy had clambered to safety. But his own weight was far greater than the hound's. The ice broke under him as he heaved himself up. Down he went, far below the surface, only to rise and strike out for another point.

### Finding a Worshipper

THIRCE he had lifted half his tawny body over the edge and was drawing up his hindquarters when the ice collapsed under him. The fourth time he came up, more feebly, yet undaunted, his white paws cut and bleeding, and he swam from end to end of the gap as though seeking some firmer spot for his next effort. It was then that Nesta Boyce, through no volition of her own, found she had left the road and was hurrying out onto the frozen river toward the hopelessly battling collie. Common sense bade her turn back. But the strange glint of hope in the dog's eyes, as he saw her come to his help, outweighed sanity.

Yet she kept enough presence of mind to stoop and up-end a long plank which some boys had left lying on the ice when they had been seeking bonfire material.

Nearing the gap, she placed the plank in front of her on the ice, and crawled face downward along it. The rotting ice cracked and heaved; but thanks to the distribution of leverage, it held. Presently she was able to reach forward to the dog.

The collie had swum close to her side of the pup; and as she reached he made one supreme effort to lift himself over the edge. The ice crumbled again under him. But this time Nesta had firm hold of his ruff. The ice groaned and chuckled and bent as she pulled him toward her.

Right valiantly did the dog second her efforts. Scrambling, heaving, writhing, he drove forward and upward as she tugged him to her.

And now both of them lay on the flat plank—panting and worn out.

Then, inching her way, Nesta began to retreat toward shore, still on the plank. Even after she had come to the landward end of it, she continued to lie face downward, arms out, and to work her way toward the bank in that fashion, until she felt beneath her the thicker and rougher ice on which she had made the first part of her short rescue journey.

Then only did she venture to stand up and to make the rest of the few yards on foot. She was sick and shaken and dizzy. But most of all, she was astounded at herself and at this insane thing she had done. She could not understand it.

Throughout the shoreward trip the collie had accommodated his pace to her snail-like motions, remaining close at her side.

The water was freezing on his shaggy coat; he was bleeding from ice-cuts on paws and chest. He was panting and tired from the terrific exertion. But his care seemed to be wholly for the woman who had saved him from death. Through her own sense of self-astonishment, Nesta observed this. She caught the look of



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utter worship and gratitude in his deep-set dark eyes. It gave her an odd feeling of happiness. And again she fell into a wonder at herself.

The puppy had scuttled away as soon as he had gotten out of the water. But the collie did not stir from the girl's side. Up into her face he was looking with adoration. A wry smile twisted Nesta's lips.

"You're wasting your time," she told him, unconsciously speaking as if to another human. "I got you out of the water. That's all I can do for you. There's no sense in your hanging around me any longer."

As she spoke, she resumed her fast homeward walk. The collie's plumed tail had wagged appreciatively at her tart words whose purport meant nothing to him. Now he fell into step at her side, once more accommodating his pace to hers, thrusting his cold muzzle lovingly into her cupped palm. The touch started Nesta, so tender was its caress and so full of trusting affection. She stopped short, eyeing the dog demurely. Then she said more sharply:

### Seeing Behind Her Words

G home. I don't want you. I told you there's nothing more to be gotten out of me. A man wouldn't have needed to be told that twice. A man didn't need to. You're only a dog, so you're stupider than he was. Go home!"

Steadfastly the collie gazed up into her face as she harangued him. His look gave her a queer feeling that he was not deceived by the coarseness of her words but that he read past them into the lonely soreness of her heart. The fantastic notion would not be laughed away. Moreover, as she moved on he trotted again at her side.

"I don't like dogs," she told him grumpily. "I don't want you with me. Go home."

As before, she felt he was disregarding her command because he read past it and because of the unhappiness in her heart. She shrugged her shoulders and walked faster. Presently she stopped before the gate of a shabby bungalow, deep in a shabby lawn.

"I live here," she said, turning on the collie. "Now that you have seen the house, perhaps you'll be wise enough to do as the man I told you about. He called her only once, after we had to move down to this place from the Terrace. Once was enough."

She hurried up the frozen walk. On the veranda steps she paused.

"I'm a fool!" she announced to the dog. "If I wasn't, I'd drive you away with a stick. And if you weren't a fool, you wouldn't wait to be driven away. Come in, if you want to."

She unlocked the front door and passed into the living room. An elderly woman glanced up at her from a chair beside the fire. At sight of the collie the woman stared in blank astonishment.

"Ernesta Breen!" she exclaimed. "You haven't—you surely haven't been wasting any of your tiny income on a dog?"

"No, Aunt May," answered Nesta. "Only wasted a chance of drowning. Nothing as precious as money. I pulled him out of the river. He fell in, trying to save another dog from being drowned. I don't know why I bother to do fish him out. But I did. And he seems to think that he belongs to me. I didn't ask him in. He came."

"But you're never going to keep him? Why, a great big brute like that eats as much as—"

"As the people who forget to come and see us since we went broke? Perhaps he does. But he's ever so much more welcome to it. I never thought about keeping him till you spoke of it. But I am going to. If he'll stay—"

Nesta Breen found something to be keenly and non-morbidly interested in. Despite herself, she realized she had

### Inseparable Comrades

DOG-MAN would have classified March merely as a well-trained collie of high type, with all a true collie's brain and pluck and gentleness and humor. But to Nesta he seemed the embodiment of everything marvelous. Her first careless fondness for him grew to a devotion. He was her inseparable comrade, indoors and out; her guard and chum. The lonely girl's heart expanded under his companionly air. Her hard-acquired, youthful bitterness softened strangely under his splendid normalcy. She ceased for days at a time to brood morbidly over her loss of money and position.

One morning in early summer Nesta and March were awing along the river road, the dog trotting some yards ahead. A cloud of dust heralded a motor car chugging toward them down the stretch of un surfaced byway. As always, the sight of a distant car made March drop back to his mistress's side.

Nesta drew to one side of the road to avoid the on-coming motor's dust. The car lurched onward over rut and bulge. It was passing the girl and the collie when its passenger, a stout man on the rear seat, called to the chauffeur for help.

By the time the machine was at a standstill he had jumped out onto the road and was hurrying back toward Nesta.

A glance told her that the stout intruder was nobody she knew. So, with the mildest curiosity, she awaited

him. But as the man came closer she had saved. In her gross ignorance of canine nature, the collie's quickness of brain outshined her.

She had no way of guessing his name. After trying in vain to make him sho' recognition of such hackneyed appellations as Towser and Tig and Rover and the like, she named him anew. She chose "March," from the month wherein she met him. Then, studiously, she set to work to teach him the new name. To her amazement, in less than a day he had learned the name.

In like manner he picked up with bewildering speed and much enjoyment every simple thing she tried to teach him. Already, she found, he had been trained as a house dog; and to lie down and to shake hands and to perform other ordinary feats. He was wise and gentle and unobtrusive; eagerly playful when she was in the mood to romp with him, yet ready to lie quiet for hours at her feet while she read or wrote.

"It is my dog," she made answer, voice and eye level in spite of a sinking in her heart.

"For months she had had an undefined fear lest March's owner might show up and claim him. It seemed impossible that the possessor of such a marvelous chum would not scour the whole world in search of him. But as the man came closer, she had saved. In her gross ignorance of canine nature, the collie's quickness of brain outshined her.

"What dog is that?"

"It is my dog," she made answer, voice and eye level in spite of a sinking in her heart.

"Same dog?" snapped the man anxiously. "I can take oath to that. I saw him at the Madison Square Garden show—Westminster, you know—in February, and again at New Haven. I made a close study of him both times. My cousin had to go to Europe the morning of the New Haven show. So he asked me to take charge of his dog after the show and bring him home. My cousin lives at Paignton, about a mile from me. About five miles from here. I got the dog from the handler and tied him in my car. I've told you and I lost him. Pretty position I was in when my cousin got back to America and found I'd let his three-hundred-and-fifty-dollar dog get away! I've advertised all over. And now here I blunder on him by sheer good luck!"

"You seem determined to think—or to pretend to think—that this is your dog," interposed Nesta, a trifle wearily. "I have told you he is mine. I think that is all. Come, March!"

"Squire!" called the man.

"At sound of the name, March quivered and turned about.

"March!" said Nesta softly.

Instantly the collie wheeled and ran to her, thrusting his nose into her hand and wagging his great plume of a tail.

"You see," commented Nesta, as she moved off.

"I see," retorted the man hotly. "I see he recognized his kennel name when I spoke it. He—"

"I saw he answered to the name of 'March,'" corrected the girl with amused tolerance. "If he showed interest when you called him, it was because you stepped forward as you spoke. I really wouldn't advise your coming any nearer, Mr.—Mr.—"

"My name is Vanden," supplemented the man, as she hesitated. "I'm acting in this for my cousin, Mr. Derek Royce. This is his dog, 'Derek,' stubbornly. I saw he recognized his name of 'Squire.' Not that I needed any more proof. I suggest you give him to me and save trouble."

Nesta did not reply. The last part of Vanden's speech had gone unheeded. Her attention had stopped short and jarred at Derek Royce's name. She stared stupidly at the stout man. He repeated more truculently:

"I suggest you save yourself trouble by giving him to me at once."

"Certainly!" reported Nesta, a gust of rage sweeping her. "Certainly, if you want him, take him, March!"

At the anger and appeal in her voice, the big collie stiffened. Facing Vanden, he crouched slightly, his lips upturned from his white tusks; his eyes ablaze, his mighty body tensed as for a spring. Nesta laughed in nervous excitement.

"If he's yours or 'your precious cousin's," she taunted shrilly, "take him! If I give the word, he'll take him! If you want him, take him. This is the last time I shall give you the chance to do it. If you follow me or try to get him, I'll say only one more word to him. That word will be enough. Now, do you want him—or don't you?"

pected his American championship at the New Haven show this year. He is International Champion Harrowgate Fearless. His kennel name is 'Squire.' My cousin paid three thousand five hundred dollars for him in England. His American championship makes him worth an easy five thousand dollars. This dog here is one of the greatest collies on either side of the Atlantic. He—"

"This dog of mine?" queried Nesta innocently. "I'm glad you like him. But I thought you were talking about an English collie that—"

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March had begun to move stealthily toward him in a sly, sly motion that carried a world of menace.

"Call him back!" said the man thickly.

"Good!" assented Nesta. "Come March!"

She walked away, March bounding along beside her. Vanden turned upon his chauffeur.

"Drive me to the postoffice," he commanded, "and then to one of the shops. It ought to be easy to find who she is and where she lives. There can't be two women in this suburb with such a dog. Anyone ought to be able to tell me who—"

"I can tell you, sir," said the chauffeur, "and save you all that trouble. She's Miss Ernesta Breen. Lives down on the Wickoff turnpike, about two miles south. Used to live up on Park Terrace till her father died. Folks thought her dad was worth all the cash in the treasury. But he died just about flat broke. She and her aunt went down to a bungalow of his in lives. They—"

"How in bliss of Heaven you know all that?" asked Vanden in surprise.

"I knew it when I drove for Mr. Royce," answered the chauffeur, "because I came to work for you last autumn. He used to be at her house a lot of times when she lived up on the Terrace. I only drove her there once after she moved down to the Wickoff pike. He—"

"No," refused Derek, "not quite yet, if you don't mind. I have been doing a good deal of wondering this past year—especially at night. Then, yesterday, in my woods, I found a sparrow that had got caught by one wing in a mesh of vine-tendrils. He was half dead with pain and fright. I set him loose. But as soon as I touched him he pecked furiously at my hand. I understood why. He was so terrified and harrowed that he thought the whole universe was his enemy. He—"

"I am not interested in ornithology," she intervened, "or in poetic speculations as to the heart-throbs of sparrows. Will you please get on with the key to something else," pursued Royce. "I remembered how bitter you were when a crowd of worthless parasites dropped you after your—your misfortune—and how you got to looking morbidly for a sign, even when there were no signs to find. You were sick with grief over your father's death, and you were incredulously angry over the way some few loaded dice treated you afterward, and you got to thinking the whole universe was like those loaded dice. So—"

"May I ask you once more to—"

"No, not yet. I call back which things were at their worst and when you were most on the lookout for signs. You blazed out about some mighty good friends of mine who weren't in that category at all. I defended them. I remember. It made you still angrier. You turned on me and hinted that perhaps I might care to drop away, too, since I could stand up so eagerly for other people who did that started our quarrel. I suppose I said a lot of rotten things; and I know you said things that made me vow I'd never see you again. The sparrow pecked at my hand when I was having it from the vine-tendrils. I wasn't angry at the sparrow, because I understood what it must be suffering. Then I got to wondering how I had been such a fool as not to understand why you—"

"Sportsmanship Wins

FROM the gateway was issuing a most prodigious racket.

March had followed the hopping toad across the grass to the gate, where the toad ended the chase by slipping into a hole under a post. Vanden, from the tonneau, had viewed the slow approach of the collie.

Into the stout man's brain seeped a really brilliant idea. How simple to end the whole dispute by making the collie into the tonneau and bidding the chauffeur drive off! Royce could get a taxi from the village station to take him home. On the way he would find his dog in his kennel. Possession was nine points of the law.

While March was angling with his toad-trailing Vanden, the ground, collar and leash in hand. With great swiftness he swooped down on March from behind, setting him with one hand by the nape of the neck and lifting him bodily over the fence.

Skiffled was his grip; and it rendered the growling dog impotent to bite or to escape. It was this growling that attracted the notice of Royce and Nesta. By common consent they started for the gate at a run. Vanden heaved the dog aloft to thrust him into the tonneau. The man's toe stubbed against the corner of the gate-post and he fell. He fell off balance. He thrust out both arms instinctively to right himself. The collie tore free from the loosening fingers.

Scarcely had March touched ground when he was at the man who had sought to kidnap him. He buried himself roaringly at Vanden. The latter, his balance still uncertain, slipped and fell with a crash in the roadside ditch.

Like a furry avian, March was after him. Half-stunned by the impact of his head against a stone, Vanden lay helpless, his throat exposed to the ravaging laws.

Then, almost in mid-air, the dog came down and no longer could help himself. March ceased his attack on an enemy who had been rendered impotent and prostrate. He stood gazing down at the dazed Vanden, making no move to renew the charge.

"Good sportsman, Squire!" applauded Royce, vaulting the fence. "Good, good sportsman! You're not doing to punish him when he's down and out. Get up," he went on, far less approvingly to his cousin. "Get up and climb back into the car. We don't care if you do such an abominable thing!"

"And now," said Nesta, trying to speak calmly, "will you please get up of my dog and go away?"

"Her dog?" snorted Vanden scrambling back into the safety of the car. "Her dog? We can get a hundred reliable witnesses to prove—"

"Shut up!" ordered Royce. "We can't do anything of the kind. From your description I thought maybe this dog might be Squire—my Champion Harrowgate Fearless. That's why I came here. Well, I came on a wild-goose chase. I didn't get— I didn't get anything I came for. The dog looks a bit like Squire. But it isn't Squire. I never saw this dog before. So—"

"You're crazy!" shouted his cousin, agitated. "Why I saw Squire time and again! I can swear to him."

"He was my own dog, and I saw him much oftener than you did," declared Royce. "And I can testify this isn't the dog. We've made fools of ourselves by coming here after him. I never saw this dog before. I tell you, Miss Breen, will you try to forgive my intrusion if I promise never to repeat it? I congratulate you on owning such a fine collie. Good-bye."

He got into the car, forbearing to meet Nesta's wide-staring eyes. As he heard a stifled little voice begging tremulously:

"Will—you please come back here—just a minute?"

Unbelievably, Derek stared down at her. Then he was on the ground and following her into the garden. As soon as they were out of earshot from the car, Nesta turned to face the eager man.

"Take him," she said, her eyes on March, who was standing protectively beside her. "He's your dog. You see. But he—it was a beautiful lie. I see, too, when I said he was mine. And it was a disgusting lie. You and I—March—I mean Squire—you two aren't going to be the only clean sportmen in the world. I've been earning something—from both of you."

"He belongs to you!" cried Royce, his face alight with a wondering hope. "I won't take him—without you. I—"

"Derek Royce!" sobbed the girl, her hands tight in his, but her tea-mistaken eyes focussing on the fat figure in the car. "Derek Royce, did anyone ever tell you—you have the most atrocious taste in coats that I ever saw!"

(Copyright, 1926)

If dogs could sing their repertoires would probably consist of barks, growls, and whines.

### Nesta's Dog Claimed

HE belongs to a cousin of mine," said the man. "My cousin bought him from an English kennel, and had him sent to a handler, to take on a circuit of the American shows. He'd won his championship in England before he came to this country. Won it at eighteen months. He com-



David L. Lowe, of Berlin, brother of the famous Dr. Sigmond Lowe, the famous scientist, has evolved on this continent with a radio tube that is really three tubes in one, performing three functions simultaneously. It is at once a detector, a stage of normal audio amplification and a stage of power amplification. The tube operates as a complete detector and two stage resistance coupled amplifier entirely by itself, and so all that is necessary is to use it in connection with any tuning coil to have a complete set. It is claimed for it that it is non-microphonic, will last indefinitely and is absolutely noiseless.