

## The Lone House

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on her knees beside the dog, and touching it gently here and there.

The creature wagged its tail feebly, as if it understood and appreciated her sympathy; then uttered a whining cry.

"Thirsty, are you? I'll get you drink, and rig up a little curtain to keep the flies from bothering," she said in the soothing tone one would use towards a child that had been injured.

"Couldn't you help me to carry Pip indoors, granfer? I could look after it so much better there," she said, when she had brought the water, which the creature feebly lapped.

"The dog will be cooler out here, and we can bring it in at nightfall. I've got some work to do down beyond now, and can't be bothered."

It was characteristic of Doss Umpey that he had always work to do down beyond whenever Nell wanted any assistance from him, so she made up her mind that when he was safely out of the way she would manage somehow to get poor Pip into more comfortable quarters.

Despite the work he had spoken of, the old man seemed in no hurry to go, but stood leaning at ease against the bole of a great redwood tree, talking in the dreamy fashion which always seemed to suit him much better than hard work.

He was not a really old man, being only about sixty-five, strong and hearty, but with a constitutional aversion to sustained effort of any sort.

"There's no mistake but you are right-down handy at tending critters that are ill. A first-class nurse you'd make, Nell, if only you'd got the chance," he said,