

moment into his great, wise eyes, and impulsively threw his arms around his shaggy neck. Tiger, on his part, was pleased with Tom's bright face, and most affectionately licked his smooth cheeks. So the league of friendship was complete from that hour.

Tom soon gave his schoolfellows to understand that Tiger was a dog of superior talents, and told them that he meant to give him a liberal education. So when Tom studied his lessons Tiger too was furnished with a book, and, sitting by Tom's side, he would pore over the pages with an air of great profundity, occasionally gravely turning a leaf with his paw! Then Tiger was taught to go to the post-office and bring home the daily paper. He could also carry a basket to the baker's for crackers and cake, and putting his money on the counter with his mouth, he would wait patiently till the basket was filled, and then trot faithfully home. Added to all these graces of mind, Tiger had shown himself possessed of a large heart, for he had plunged into the lake one raw spring morning and saved a little child from drowning. So the next Saturday Tom called a full meeting of his schoolmates, and after numerous grand speeches to the effect that Tiger was a hero as well as a "gentleman and scholar," an enormous brass medal was fastened around his neck, and he was made to acknowledge the honor by standing on his hind legs and barking vociferously. Old Major White had offered Tom ten dollars for Tiger; but Tom quickly informed him he "wouldn't take twenty!"

As I have already told you, Tom had a pleasant, round face, and you might live with him a week and think him one of the noblest, most generous boys you ever knew. But some day you would probably discover that he had a most violent temper. You would be frightened to see his face crimson with rage as he stamped his feet, shook his little sister, spoke improperly to his mother, and, above all, sorely displeased his Father in heaven.

To be sure, Tom was soon over with his passion, and was very repentant; but then he did not remember to be watchful and struggle against this great enemy, and the next time he was attacked he was as easily overcome, and had many sorrowful hours in consequence. Now I am going to tell you of one great trial on this account which Tom never forgot to the end of his life. As I was saying a little while ago, Tiger and Tom were walking down the street together when they met Dick Casey, a schoolfellow of Tom's.

"O Dick!" cried Tom, "I'm going to father's granary a little while. Let's go up into the loft and play."

Dick had just finished his work in his mother's garden, and was all ready for a little amusement. So the two went up together and enjoyed themselves highly for a long time. But at last arose one of those trifling disputes in which little boys are apt to indulge. Pretty soon there were angry words, then (O how sorry I am to say it!) Tom's wicked passion got the mastery of him, and he beat little Dick severely. Tiger, who must have been ashamed of his master, pulled hard at his coat and whined piteously, but all in vain. At last Tom stopped from mere exhaustion.

"There, now!" he cried; "which is right, you or I?"

"I am," sobbed Dick, "and you tell a lie."

Tom's face flushed crimson, and darting upon Dick, he gave him a sudden push. Alas! he was too near the open door. Dick screamed, threw up his arms, and in a moment he was gone! Tom's heart stood still, and an icy chill crept over him from head to foot. At first he could not stir; then—he never knew how he got there—he found himself standing beside his little friend. Some men were raising him carefully from the hard sidewalk.



"Is he dead?" almost screamed Tom.

"No," replied one, "we hope not. How did he fall out?"

"He didn't fall," groaned Tom, who never could be so mean as to tell a lie; "I pushed him out."

"You pushed him, you wicked boy!" cried a rough voice. "Do you know you ought to be sent to jail, and if he dies maybe you'll be hung."

Tom grew as white as Dick, whom he had followed into the warehouse, and he heard all that passed as if in a dream.

"Is he badly hurt?" cried some one.

"Only his hands," was the answer. "The rope saved him. He caught hold of the rope and slipped down; but his hands are dreadfully torn—he has fainted from pain."

Just then Tom's father came in and soon understood the case. The look he gave his unhappy son, so full of sorrow, not unmingled with pity, was too much for Tom, and he stole out followed by the faithful Tiger. He wandered into the woods and threw himself upon the ground. One hour ago he was a happy boy, and now what a terrible change! What had made the difference? Nothing but the indulgence of this wicked, violent temper. His mother had often warned him of the fearful consequences. Tom fell on his knees and prayed God to spare Dick's life; and from that time forth, with God's help, he promised that he would strive to conquer his wicked passion.

Then, as he could no longer bear his terrible suspense, he started for Widow Casey's cottage. As he appeared at the humble door Mrs. Casey angrily ordered him away, saying, "You have made a poor woman trouble enough for one day."

But Dick's feeble voice entreated: "O mother, let him come in. I was just as bad as he."

Tom gave a cry of joy at hearing those welcome tones, and sprang hastily in. There sat poor Dick with his hands bound up, looking very pale, but Tom thanked God that he was alive.

"I should like to know how I am to live now," sighed Mrs. Casey. "Who will weed the garden and carry my vegetables to market? I am afraid we shall suffer for bread before the summer is over," and she put her apron on her eyes.

"Mrs. Casey," cried Tom eagerly, "I will do everything that Dick did. I will sell the potatoes and beans, and will even drive Mr. Brown's cows to pasture."

Mrs. Casey shook her head incredulously, but Tom bravely kept his word. For the next few weeks Tom was at his post bright and early, and the garden was never kept in better order. And every morning Tiger and Tom stood faithfully in the market-place with their baskets, and never gave up,

no matter what sort of day, till the last vegetable was sold, and the money placed in Mrs. Casey's hand.

Tom's father often passed through the market and gave his little son an encouraging smile, but he did not offer to help him out of his difficulty, for he knew if Tom struggled on alone, it would be a lesson he would never forget. Already he was becoming so gentle and patient that every one noticed the change, and his mother rejoiced over the sweet fruits of his repentance and self-sacrifice.

After a few weeks the bandages were removed from Dick's hands; but they had been unskillfully treated, and were drawn up in very strange shapes. Mrs. Casey could not conceal her grief. "He will never be the help he was before," she said to Tom; "he will never be like other boys; and he wrote such a fine hand, now he can no more make a letter than that little chicken in the garden."

"If he had only had a great city doctor," said a neighbor, "he might have been all right. Even now his fingers might be helped if you took him to the city."

"O I am too poor, too poor!" said she, and Dick burst into tears.

Tom could not bear it, and again rushed into the woods to think what could be done, for he had already given them all his quarter's allowance. All at once a thought flashed into his head, and he started as if he had been shot. Then he cried in great distress:

"No, no, anything but that; I can't do that!"

Tiger gently licked his hands and watched him with much concern. Now came a great struggle. Tom rocked backward and forward, and, although he was a proud boy, he sobbed aloud. Tiger whined, licked his face, rushed off into dark corners, and barked savagely at some imaginary enemy, and then came back, and putting his paws on Tom's knees, wagged his tail in anxious sympathy. At last Tom took his hands from his pale, tear-stained face, and looking into the dog's great honest eyes, he cried with a queer shake in his voice:

"Tiger, old fellow! dear old dog, could you ever forgive me if I sold you?"

Then came another burst of sorrow, and Tom rose hastily, as if afraid to trust himself, and almost ran out of the woods. Over the fields he raced with Tiger close to his heels, nor rested a moment till he stood at Major White's door, nearly two miles away.

"Do you still want Tiger, sir?"

"Why, yes," said the old man in great surprise; "but do you want to sell him?"

"Yes, please," gasped Tom, not daring to look at his old companion.

The exchange was quickly made, and the ten dollars in Tom's hand. Tiger was beguiled into a barn and the door hastily shut, and Tom was hurrying off, when he turned and cried in a choking voice:

"You will be kind to him, Major White, wont you? Don't whip him, I never did, and he's the best dog—"

"No, no, child," said Major White kindly. "I'll treat him like a prince, and if you ever want to buy him back you shall have him."

Tom managed to falter, "Thank you," and almost flew out of hearing of Tiger's eager scratching on the barn-door.

I am making my story too long, and can only tell you in a few words that Tom's sacrifice was accepted. A friend took little Dick to the city free of expense, and Tom's money paid for the necessary operation. The poor crooked fingers were very much improved, and were soon almost as good as ever. And the whole village loved Tom for his brave, self-sacrificing spirit, and the noble atonement he had made for his moment of passion.

A few days after Dick's return came Tom's birthday, but he did not feel in his usual spirits.