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RUTH'S DOG, TOWSER.

A very funny thing happened at Ruth's house the other day, and brought her into ill-repute with at least one member of the police force.

She is a very serious little girl of five, with great, solemn, truthful eyes. No one would ever dream of her telling what was not exactly true, and she never made a joke in her life.

She was sitting on the bottom step of her stoop on this special morning, when Mr. Smith, the big policeman, came along. He interested Ruth very much by going to the door of every house, a little open book and pencil in his hand. After talking with whoever came to the door for a moment, he turned away, sometimes writing in the little book, but oftener not.

At the minister's door he wrote something, and at Dr. Blake's. Ruth particularly noticed that.

Mr. Smith was a tremendous power in the neighbourhood. Not a boy dared to shout a shout or fling a ball when he was in sight; and as for the little girls—well, they always breathed freer when Mr. Smith had turned the corner.

Ruth watched the big man until he reached her house. Then, with a quaking heart, she saw him mount her steps. Mamma opened the door.

"Do ye kape a dog, mum?" asked Mr. Smith.

"No," replied mamma; and to Ruth the dear voice seemed to shake with fear.

Mr. Smith bowed sternly, and turned to come down.

It was perfectly clear to Ruth now. Mr. Smith was putting the entire neighbourhood under arrest, except those who kept dogs!

The minister had one, and so did Dr. Blake. She meant to save mamma if she could. So she tremblingly faced Mr. Smith on the bottom step, and said gently,

"Yes, sir. Towser is our dog."

Up the steps again went Mr. Smith, and sharply rang the bell.

Mamma replied.

"Where's your dog, mum?"

"I told you that we had no dog. We have never had a dog," mamma answered.

"Oh! this is an old trick, mum; though we don't meet it often in these neighbourhoods. However, you've got a truthful little girl; and she isn't so sure that ye have no dog. I insist upon seeing him, mum!"

A funny little gleam came into mamma's eyes.

"Ruth," she called, "you may as well bring Towser. The officer insists upon seeing him."

Mr. Smith's face grew very red, as Ruth ran upstairs.

Presently she came back. "Here's Towser, sir," she said with a quiver. "Here's our dog!" And she held up to the astonished eyes of the big policeman a dirty Canton-flannel dog, one shoe-button eye quite gone, his tail in shreds, and his detached ears pinned to his head with safety-pins!

If Mr. Smith had been wise, he would have laughed, but Mr. Smith was not on the police force because of his wisdom.

Mamma, though, laughed merrily; while

Ruth hugged Towser, and felt that in some roundabout way he and she had saved the family from an awful fate.

"I am part of God's great plan—I'll cheerfully do the best I can."



BLACKBERRYING.—SEE LAST PAGE.

"Mamma forgot Towser, sir."

Mr. Smith was all attention.

"Is this your house?" he questioned.

"Yes, sir." Ruth's great, honest eyes gazed frankly into the grim face, looking down.

"And you have a dog, eh?"