

A DOG'S TALE

A Dramatic Reading

by
Mark Twain



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My father was a St. Bernard, my mother was a Collie, but I am a Presbyterian. That is what my mother told me. To me it was a fine large word meaning nothing. My mother had a fondness for such.

You can see that she was of a rather frivolous character; still she had a kind heart and gentle ways. She never harbored resentments for injuries done her, but put them easily out of her mind; and she taught her children her kindly way.

When I was grown, I was sold and taken away. We said our farewells through our tears. The last thing she said was: "In memory of me, when there is danger to another, do not think of yourself. Think of your mother and do as she would do."

It was such a charming home!--my new one; a fine great house, with spacious grounds around it. And I was the same as a member of family; and they loved me, and petted me, and did not give me a new name, but called me by my old one that was dear to me because my mother had given it me--Aileen Mavourneen.

Mrs. Gray was thirty, and so sweet and so lovely, you cannot imagine it; Sadie was ten, and just like her mother; and the baby was a year old, and plump and dimpled, and fond of me, and never could get enough of hauling on my tail, and hugging me, and laughing out its innocent happiness; Mr. Gray was tall and handsome with that kind of trim-chiselled face that just seems to glint and sparkle with frosty intellectuality! He was a renowned scientist; and every week other scientists came there and sat in the place and discussed, and made what they called experiments and discoveries; and often I came too, and stood around and listened, but I was never able to make anything out of it at all.

Other times I lay on the floor in the mistress's workroom and slept, she gently using me for a footstool, knowing it pleased me, for it was a caress; other times I spent an hour in the nursery, and got well tousled and made happy; other times I watched by the crib there, when the baby was asleep.

The servants in our house were all kind to me and were fond of me, and so, as you see, mine was a pleasant life.

By-and-by came my little puppy, and then my cup was full, my happiness was perfect. It was the dearest little waddling thing, and so smooth and soft and velvety, and had such cunning little awkward paws, and such affectionate eyes, and such a sweet and innocent face; and it made me so proud to see how the children and their mother adored it, and fondled it, and exclaimed over every little wonderful thing it did. It did seem to me that life was just too lovely!

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