

A Farewell Appearance

A Dog Story for Children

By F. Anstey

‘Andy, come here, sir; I want you.’ The little girl who spoke was standing by the table in the morning-room of a London house one summer day, and she spoke to a small silver-grey terrier lying curled up at the foot of one of the window curtains.

As Dandy happened to be particularly comfortable just then, he pretended not to hear, in the hope that his child-mistress would not press the point.

But she did not choose to be trifled with in this way: he was called more imperiously still, until he could dissemble no longer and came out gradually, stretching himself and yawning with a deep sense of injury.

‘I know you haven’t been asleep; I saw you watching the flies,’ she said. ‘Come up here, on the table.’

Seeing there was no help for it, he obeyed, and sat down on the table-cloth opposite to her, with his tongue hanging out and his eyes blinking, waiting her pleasure.

Dandy was rather particular as to the hands he allowed to touch him, but generally speaking, he found it pleasant enough (when he had nothing better to do) to resign himself to be pulled about, lectured, or caressed by Hilda.

She was a strikingly pretty child, with long curling brown locks, and a petulant profile, which reminded one of Mr. Doyle’s charming wilful little fairy princesses.

On the whole, although Dandy privately considered she had taken rather a liberty in disturbing him, he was willing to overlook it.

‘I’ve been thinking, Dandy,’ said Hilda, reflectively, ‘that as you and Lady Angelina will be thrown a good deal together when we go into the country next week, you ought to know one another, and you’ve never been properly introduced yet; so I’m going to introduce you now.’

Now Lady Angelina was only Hilda’s doll, and a doll, too, with perhaps as few ideas as any doll ever had yet—which is a good deal to say.

Dandy despised her with all the enlightenment of a thoroughly superior dog; he considered there was simply nothing in her, except possibly bran, and it had made him jealous and angry for a long time to notice the influence that this staring, simpering creature had managed to gain over her mistress.

‘Now sit up,’ said Hilda. Dandy sat up. He felt that committed him to nothing, but he was careful not to look at Lady Angelina, who was lolling ungracefully in the work-basket with her toes turned in.

‘Lady Angelina,’ said Hilda next, with great ceremony, ‘let me introduce my particular friend Mr. Dandy. Dandy, you ought to bow and say something nice and clever only you can’t; so you must give Angelina your paw instead.’

Here was an insult for a self-respecting dog! Dandy determined never to disgrace himself by presenting his paw to a doll; it was quite against his principles. He dropped on all fours rebelliously.

‘That’s very rude of you,’ said Hilda, ‘but you shall do it. Angelina will think it so odd of you. Sit up again and give your paw, and let Angelina stroke your head.’

The dog's little black nose wrinkled and his lips twitched, showing his sharp white teeth: he was not going to be touched by Angelina's flabby wax hand if he could help it!

Unfortunately, Hilda, like older people sometimes, was bent upon forcing persons to know one another, in spite of an obvious unwillingness on at least one side, and so she brought the doll up to the terrier, and, taking one limp pink arm, attempted to pat the dog's head with it.

This was too much: his eyes flamed red like two signal lamps, there was a sharp sudden snap, and the next minute Lady Angelina's right arm was crunched viciously between Dandy's keen teeth.

After that there was a terrible pause. Dandy knew he was in for it, but he was not sorry. He dropped the mangled pieces of wax one by one, and stood there with his head on one side, growling to himself, but wincing for all that, for he was afraid to meet Hilda's indignant grey eyes.

'You abominable, barbarous dog!' she said at last, using the longest words she could to impress him. 'See what you've done! you've bitten poor Lady Angelina's arm off.'

He could not deny it; he had. He looked down at the fragments before him, and then sullenly up again at Hilda. His eyes said what he felt—'I'm glad of it—serves her right; I'd do it again.'

'You deserve to be well whipped,' continued Hilda, severely; 'but you do howl so. I shall leave you to your own conscience' (a favourite remark of her governess) 'until your bad heart is touched, and you come here and say you're sorry and beg both our pardons. I only wish you could be made to pay for a new arm. Go away out of my sight, you bad dog; I can't bear to look at you!'

Dandy, still impenitent, moved leisurely down from the table and out of the open door into the kitchen. He was thinking that Angelina's arm was very nasty, and he should like something to take the taste away. When he got downstairs, however, he found the butcher was calling and had left the area gate open, which struck him as a good opportunity for a ramble. By the time he came back Hilda would have forgotten all about it, or she might think he was lost, and find out which was the more valuable animal—a silly, useless doll, or an intelligent dog like himself.

Hilda saw him from the window as he bolted out with tail erect. 'He's doing it to show off,' she said to herself; 'he's a horrid dog sometimes. But I suppose I shall have to forgive him when he comes back!'

However, Dandy did not come back that night, nor all next day, nor the day after that, nor any more; for the fact was, an experienced dog-stealer had long had his eye upon him, and Dandy happened to come across him that very morning.

He was not such a stupid dog as to be unaware he was doing wrong in following a stranger, but then the man had such delightful suggestions about him of things dogs love to eat, and Dandy had started for his run in a disobedient temper.

So he followed the broken-nosed, bandy-legged man till they reached a narrow lonely alley, and then just as Dandy was thinking about going home again, the stranger turned suddenly on him, hemmed him up in a corner, caught him dexterously up in one hand, tapped him sharply on the head, and slipped him, stunned, into a capacious inside pocket.

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'I thought werry likely I should come on you in 'ere, Bob,' said a broken-nosed man in a fur cap, about a week after Dandy's disappearance, to a short, red-faced, hoarse man who was drinking at the bar of a public-house.

‘Ah,’ said the hoarse man; ‘well, you ain’t fur out as it happens.’

‘Yes, I did,’ said the other. ‘I met your partner the other day, and he tells me you’re looking out for a noo Toby dawg. I’ve got a article somewheres about me at this moment I should like you to cast a eye over.’

And, diving into his inside pocket, he fished out a small shining silver-grey terrier, which he slammed down rather roughly on the pewter counter.

Of course the terrier was Hilda’s lost Dandy. For some reason or other, the dog-stealer had not thought it prudent to claim the reward offered for him as he had intended to do at first, and Dandy, not being of a breed in fashionable demand, the man was trying to get rid of him now for the best price he could obtain from humble purchasers.

‘Well, we *do* want a understudy, and that’s a fact,’ said the hoarse man, who was one of the managers of Mr. Punch’s Theatre. ‘The Toby as travels with us now is breakin’ up, getting so blind he don’t know Punch from Jack Ketch. But that there animal ’ud never make a ’it as a Toby,’ he said, examining Dandy critically: ‘why, that’s bin a gen’leman’s dawg once, that has—we don’t want no amatoors on our show.’

‘It’s the amatoors as draws nowadays,’ said the dog-fancier: ‘not but what this ’ere partic’lar dawg has his gifts for the purfession. You see him sit up and smoke a pipe and give yer his paw, now.’

And he put Dandy through these performances on the sloppy counter. It was much worse than being introduced to Angelina; but hunger and fretting and rough treatment had broken down the dog’s spirit, and it was with dull submission now that he repeated the poor little tricks Hilda had taught him with such pretty perseverance.

‘It’s no use talking,’ said the showman, though he began to show some signs of yielding. ‘It takes a tyke born and bred to make a reg’lar Toby. And this ain’t a young dog, and he ain’t ’ad no proper dramatic eddication; he’s not worth to us not the lowest you’d take for him.’

‘Well now, I’ll tell you ’ow fur I’m willing to meet yer,’ said the other persuasively; ‘you shall have him, seein’ it’s *you*, for—’ And so they haggled on for a little longer but at the end of the interview Dandy had changed hands, and was permanently engaged as a member of Mr. Punch’s travelling company.

A few days after that Dandy made acquaintance with his strange fellow performers. The men had put the show up on a deserted part of a common near London, behind the railings of a little cemetery where no one was likely to interfere with them, and the new Toby was hoisted up on the very narrow and uncomfortable shelf to go through his first interview with Mr. Punch.

When that popular gentleman appeared at his side Dandy examined him with pricked and curious ears. He was rather odd-looking, but his smile, though there was certainly a good deal of it, seemed genial and encouraging, and the poor dog wagged his tail in a conciliatory manner—he wanted some one to be kind to him again.

‘The dawg’s a fool, Bob,’ growled Jem, the other proprietor of the show, a little shabby dirty-faced man with a thin and ragged red beard, who was watching the experiment from the outside; ‘he’s a-waggin’ his bloomin’ tail—he’ll be a-lickin of Punch’s face next! Try him with a squeak.’

And Bob produced a sound which was a hideous compound of chuckle, squeak, and crow, when Dandy, in the full persuasion that the strange figure must be a new variety of cat, flew at it blindly. But though he managed to get a firm grip of its great hook nose, there was not much satisfaction to be got out of that—the hard wood made his teeth ache, and besides, in his

excitement he overbalanced himself and came suddenly down upon Mr. Robert Blott inside, who swore horribly and put him up again.

Then, after a little highly mysterious dancing up and down, and wagging his head, Mr. Punch, in the most uncalled-for manner, hit Dandy over the head with a stick, in order, as Jem put it, 'to get up a ill-feeling between them'—a wanton insult that made the dog madder than ever.

He did not revenge himself at once: he only barked furiously and retreated to his corner of the stage; but the next time Punch came sidling cautiously up to him, Dandy made, not for his wooden head, but for a place between his shoulders which he thought looked more yielding.

There was a savage howl from below, Punch dropped in a heap on the narrow shelf; and Mr. Blott sucked his finger and thumb with many curses.

Mr. Punch was not killed, however, though Dandy had at first imagined he had settled him. He revived almost directly, when he proceeded to rain down such a shower of savage blows from his thick stick upon every part of the dog's defenceless body, that Dandy was completely subdued long before his master thought fit to leave off.

By the time the lesson came to an end, Dandy was sore and shaken and dazed, for Bob had allowed himself to be a little carried away by personal feeling. Still it only showed Dandy more plainly that Mr. Punch was not a person to be trifled with, and, though he liked him as little as ever, he respected as well as feared him.

Unfortunately for Dandy, he was a highly intelligent terrier, of an inquiring turn of mind, and so, after he had been led about for some days with the show, and was able to think things over and put them together, he began to suspect that Punch and the other figures were not alive after all, but only a particularly ugly set of dolls, which Mr. Blott put in motion in some way best known to himself.

From the time he was perfectly certain of this he felt a degraded dog indeed. He had scorned once to allow himself to be even touched by Angelina (who at least was not unpleasant to look at, and always quite inoffensive): now, every hour of his life he found himself ordered about and insulted before a crowd of shabby strangers by a vulgar tawdry doll, to which he was obliged to be civil and even affectionate—as if it was something real!

Dandy was an honest dog, and so, of course, it was very revolting to his feelings to have to impose upon the public in this manner; but Mr. Punch, if he was only a doll, had a way of making himself obeyed.

And though in time the new Toby learnt to perform his duties respectably enough, he did so without the least enthusiasm: it wounded his pride—besides making him very uncomfortable—when Punch caught hold of his head, and something with red whiskers and a blue frock took him by the hind legs, and danced jerkily round the stage with him. He hated that more than anything. Day by day he grew more miserable and homesick.

He loathed the Punch and Judy show and every doll in it, from the hero down to the ghost and the baby. Jem and Bob were not actually unkind to him, and would even have been friendly had he allowed it; but he was a dainty dog, with a natural dislike to ill-dressed and dirty persons, and shrank from their rough if well-meant advances. He never could forget what he had once been, and what he was, and often, in the close sleeping-room of some common lodging-house, he dreamed of the comfortable home he had lost, and Hilda's pretty imperious face, and woke to miss her more than ever.

At first his new masters had been careful to keep him from all chance of escape, and Bob led him after the show by a string; but, as he seemed to be getting resigned to his position, allowed him to run loose.

He was trotting tamely at Jem's heels one hot August morning, followed by a small train of admiring children, when all at once he became aware that he was in a street he knew well—he was near his old home—a few minutes' hard run and he would be safe with Hilda!

He looked up sideways at Jem, who was beating his drum and blowing his pipes, with his eyes on the lower and upper windows. Bob's head was inside the show, and both were in front and not thinking of him just then.

Dandy stopped, turned round upon the unwashed children behind, looked wistfully up at them, as much as to say, 'Don't tell,' and then bolted at the top of his speed.

There was a shrill cry from the children at once of 'Oh, Mr. Punch, sir, please—your dawg's a-runnin' away from yer!' and angry calls to return from the two men. Jem even made an attempt to pursue him, but the drum was too much in his way, and a small dog is not easily caught at the best of times when he takes it into his head to run away. So he gave it up sulkily.

Meanwhile Dandy ran on, till the shouts behind died away. Once an errand boy, struck by the particoloured frill round the dog's neck, tried to stop him, but he managed to slip past him and run out into the middle of the road, and kept on blindly, narrowly escaping being run over several times by tradesmen's carts.

And at last, panting and exhausted, he reached the well-remembered gate, out of which he had marched so defiantly, it seemed long ages ago.

The railings were covered with wire netting inside, as he knew, but fortunately some one had left the gate open, and he pattered eagerly down the area steps feeling safe and at home at last.

The kitchen door was shut, but the window was not, and, as the sill was low, he contrived to scramble up somehow and jump into the kitchen, where he reckoned upon finding friends to protect him.

But he found it empty, and looking strangely cold and desolate; only a small fire was smouldering in the range, instead of the cheerful blaze he remembered there, and he could not find the cook—an especial patroness of his—anywhere.

He scampered up into the hall, making straight for the morning-room, where he knew he should find Hilda curled up in one of the arm-chairs with a book.

But that room was empty too—the shutters were up, and the half-light which streamed in above them showed a dreary state of confusion: the writing-table was covered with a sheet and put away in a corner, the chairs were piled up on the centre table, the carpet had been taken up and rolled under the sideboard, and there was a faint warm smell of flue and dust and putty in the place.

He pattered out again, feeling puzzled and a little afraid, and went up the bare stone staircase to find Hilda in one of the upper rooms, perhaps in the nursery.

But the upper rooms, too, were all bare and sheeted and ghostly, and, higher up, the stairs were spotted with great stars of whitewash, and there were ladders and planks on which strange men in dirty white blouses were talking and joking a great deal, and doing a little whitewashing now and then, when they had time for it.

Their voices echoed up and down the stairs with a hollow noise that scared him, and he was afraid to venture any higher. Besides, he knew by this time somehow that Hilda, her father and mother, all the friends he had counted upon seeing again, would not be found in any part of that house.

It was the same house, though stripped and deserted, but all the life and colour and warmth had gone out of it; and he ran here and there, seeking for them in vain.

He picked his way forlornly down to the hail again, and there he found a mouldy old woman with a duster pinned over her head and a dustpan and brush in her hand; for, unhappily for him, the family, servants and all, had gone away some days before into the country, and this old woman had been put into the house as caretaker.

She dropped her brush and pan with a start as she saw him, for she was not fond of dogs.

'Why, deary me,' she said morosely, 'if it hasn't give me quite a turn. However did the nasty little beast get in? a-gallivantin' about as if the 'ole place belonged to him.'

Dandy sat up and begged. In the old days he would not have done such a thing for any servant below a cook (who was always worth being polite to), but he felt a very reduced and miserable little animal indeed just then, and he thought she might be able to take him to Hilda.

But the charwoman's only idea was to get rid of him as quickly as possible.

'Why, if it ain't a Toby dawg!' she cried, as her dim old eyes caught sight of his frill. Here, you get out; you don't belong 'ere!'

And she took him up by the scruff of the neck and went to the front door. As she opened it, a sound came from the street outside which Dandy knew only too well: it was the long-drawn squeak of Mr. Punch.

'That's where he come from, I'll bet a penny,' cried the caretaker, and she went down the steps and called over the gate, 'Hi, master, you don't happen to have lost your Toby dawg, do you? Is this him?'

The man with the drum came up—it was Jem himself; and thereupon Dandy was ignominiously handed over the railings to him, and delivered up once more to the hard life he had so nearly succeeded in shaking off.

He had a severe beating when they got him home, as a warning to him not to rebel again; and he never did try to run away a second time. Where was the good of it? Hilda was gone he did not know where, and the house was a home no longer.

So he went patiently about with the show, a dismal little dog-captive, the dullest little Toby that ever delighted a street audience; so languid and listless at times that Mr. Punch was obliged to rap him really hard on the head before he could induce him to take the slightest notice of him.

But in spite of all this, he made the people laugh; most, perhaps, at night, when the show was lit up by a flaring can of paraffin, and he sat with his feet in Punch's coffin, howling dolefully at the melancholy strains of Jem's pipes, which Dandy always found too much for his feelings.

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It was winter time, about a fortnight after Christmas, and the night was snowy and slushy outside, though warm enough in the kitchen of a big Belgravian house. The kitchen was crowded, a stream of waiters and gorgeous powdered footmen and smart maids was perpetually coming and going; in front of the fire a tired little terrier, with a shabby frill round his neck, was basking in the blaze, and near him sat a little dirty-faced man with a red beard, who was being listened to with some attention by a few of the upper servants, who were enjoying a moment's leisure.

'Yes,' he was saying, 'I've been in the purfession a sight o' years now, but I don't know as I ever heard on a Punch's show like me and my mate's hem' engaged for a reg'lar swell evenin' party afore. It shows, to my mind, as public taste is a-coming round—it ain't quite so low as formerly.'

The little man was Jem; and he, with his partner Bob, and Dandy, were in the house owing to an eccentric notion of its master, who happened to have a taste for experiments.

He agreed with many who consider that some kind of amusement in the intervals of dancing is welcome to children; but it was one of his ideas too that they must be getting a little bored by the inevitable lecture with the dissolving views, and find a conjuror (even after seeing him several times in a fortnight) as a rule more bewildering than amusing; although as a present-producing animal, the last has his compensations.

He was curious to see whether the drama of Punch and Judy had quite lost its old power to please. He could easily have hired an elegant and perfectly refined form of the entertainment from some of the fashionable toy-shops or 'universal providers,' only unfortunately in these improved versions much of the original fun is often found to have been refined away.

So he had decided upon introducing the original Mr. Punch from his native streets and in his natural uncivilised state, and Jem and Bob chanced to be the persons selected to exhibit him.

'Juveniles is all alike,' observed the butler, who, having been commissioned to engage the showmen, condescended to feel a fatherly interest in the affair; 'igh or low, there's nothing pleases 'em more than seeing one party a-fetching another party a thunderin' good whack over the 'ead. That's where, in my opinion, all these pantomimes makes a mistake. There's too much bally and music 'all about 'em and not 'arf enough buttered slide and red-'ot poker.'

'There's plenty of 'ead whackin' in *our* show,' said Jem, with some pride, 'for my partner, you see, he don't find as the dialogue come as fluid to him as he could wish for, so he cuts a deal of it, and what ain't squeakin' is mostly stick—like a cheap operer.'

'Your little dog seems very wet and tired,' said a pretty housemaid, bending down to pat Dandy, as he lay stretched out wearily at her feet. 'Would he eat a cake if I got one for him?'

'He ain't, not to say, fed on cakes as a general thing,' said Jem drily, 'but you can try him, miss, and thankee.'

But Dandy only half raised his head and rejected the cake languidly—he was very comfortable there in the warm firelight, and the place made him feel as if he were back in his own old kitchen, but he was too tired to be hungry.

'He won't hardly look at it,' said the housemaid compassionately. 'I don't think he can be well.'

'Well!' said Jem. '*He's* well enough; that's all his contrariness, that is. The fact is, he thinks hisself a deal too good for the likes of us, he do—thinks he ought to be kep' on chickin in a droring-room!' he sneered, wasting his satire on the unconscious Dandy.

I tell you what it is, miss: that there dawg's 'art ain't in his business—he reg'lar looks down on the 'ole concern, thinks it *low*! Why, I see 'im from the werry fust a-turmin' up his nose at it, and it downright set me against him. Give me a Toby as takes a interest in the drama! The last but one as we had, afore him, now, *he* used to look on from start to finish, and when Punch went and 'anged Jack Ketch, why, that dawg used to bark and jump about as pleased as Punch 'isself; and he'd go in among the crowd too and fetch back the babby as Punch pitched out o winder, as tender with it as a Newfunland! And he warn't like the general run of Tobies neither, for he got quite thick with the Punch figger—thought a deal on 'im, he did—and if you'll believe me, when I 'ad to get the figger a noo 'ead and costoom, it broke the dawg's 'art—he pined away quite rapid. But this 'ere one wouldn't turn a 'air if the 'ole company went to blazes together!'

Here Bob, who had been setting up the show in one of the rooms, came into the kitchen, looking rather uneasy at finding himself in such fine company, and Dandy was spared further upbraidings, as he was called upon to follow the pair upstairs.

They went up into a large handsome room, where at one end there were placed rows of rout seats and chairs, and at the other the homely old show, seeming oddly out of place in its new surroundings.

Poor dragged Dandy felt more ashamed of it and himself than ever, and he was glad to get away under its ragged hangings and lie still by Bob's dirty boots till he was wanted.

And then there was the sound of children's voices and laughter as they all came trooping in, with a crisp rustle of delicate dresses and a scent of hothouse flowers and kid gloves, that reached Dandy where he lay: it reminded him of evenings long ago when Hilda had had parties, and he had been washed and combed and decked out in ribbons for the occasion, and children had played with him and given him nice things to eat—they had generally disagreed with him, but now he could only remember the pleasure and petting of it all.

He would not be petted any more! Presently these children would see him smoking a pipe and being familiar with that low Punch. They would laugh at him too—they always did—and Dandy, like most dogs, hated being laughed at, and never took it as a compliment.

The host's experiment was evidently a complete success: the children, even the most *blasés*, who danced the newest valse step and thought pantomimes vulgar, were delighted to meet an old friend so unexpectedly. A good many had often yearned to see the whole show right through from beginning to end, and chance or a stern nurse had never permitted it. Now their time had come, and Mr. Punch, in spite of his lamentable shortcomings in every relation of life, was received with the usual uproarious applause.

At last the hero called for his faithful dog Toby, as a distraction after the painful domestic scenes, in which he had felt himself driven to throw his child out of window and silence the objections of his wife by becoming a widower, and accordingly Dandy was caught up and set on the shelf by his side.

The sudden glare hurt his eyes, and he sat there blinking at the audience with a pitiful want of pride in his dignity as Dog Toby.

He tried to look as if he didn't know Punch, who was doing all he could to catch his eye, for his riotous 'rootitoot' made him shiver nervously, and long to get away from the whole thing and lie down somewhere in peace.

Jem was scowling up at him balefully. 'I know'd that 'ere dawg would go and disgrace hisself,' he was saying to himself. 'When I get him to myself; he shall catch it for this!'

Dandy was able to see better now, and he found, as he had guessed, that here was not one of his usual audiences—no homely crowd of loitering errand boys, smirched maids-of-all-work, and ragged children jostling and turning their grinning white faces up to him.

There were children here too—plenty of them—but children at their best and daintiest, and looking as if untidiness and quarrels were things unknown to them—though possibly they were not. The laughter, however, was much the same as he was accustomed to, more musical perhaps, and pleasanter to hear, but quite as hearty and unrestrained—they were laughing at *him*, and he hung his head abashed.

But all at once he forgot his shame, though he did not remember Mr. Punch a bit the more for that; he ran backwards and forwards on his ledge, sniffing and whining, wagging his tail and giving short piteous barks in a state of the wildest excitement. The reason of it was this: near the end of the front row he saw a little girl who was bending eagerly forward with her pretty grey eyes wide open and a puzzled line on her forehead.

Dandy knew her at the very first glance. It was Hilda, looking more like a fairy princess than ever.

She knew him almost as soon, for her clear voice rang out above the general laughter. 'Oh, that isn't Toby—he's my own dog, my Dandy, that I lost! It is really; let him come to me, please do! Don't you see how badly he wants to?'

There was a sudden surprised silence at this—even Mr. Punch was quiet for an instant; but as soon as Dandy heard her voice he could wait no longer, and crouched for a spring.

'Catch the dog, somebody, he's going to jump!' cried the master of the house, more amused than ever, from behind.

Jem was too sulky to interfere, but some good, natured grown-up person caught the trembling dog just in time to save him from a broken leg, or worse, and handed him to his delighted little mistress; and I think the frantic joy which Dandy felt as he was clasped tight in her loving arms once more and covered her flushed face with his eager kisses more than made up for all he had suffered.

Hilda scornfully refused to have anything to do with Jem, who tried hard to convince her she was mistaken. She took her recovered favourite to her hostess.

'He really is mine!' she assured her earnestly; 'and he doesn't want to be a Toby, I'm sure he doesn't: see how he trembles when that horrid man comes near. Dear Mrs. Lovibond, please tell them I'm to have him!'

And of course Hilda carried her point, for the showmen were not unwilling, after a short conversation with the master of the house, to give up their rights in a dog who would never be much of an ornament to their profession, and was out of health into the bargain.

Hilda held Dandy, all muddy and draggled as he was, fast in her arms all through the remainder of the performance, as if she was afraid Mr. Punch might still claim him for his own; and the dog lay there in measureless content. The hateful squeak made him start and shiver no more; he was too happy to howl at Jem's dismal pipes and drum: they had no terrors for him any more.

'I think I should like to go home now,' she said to her hostess, when Mr. Punch had finally retired. 'Dandy is so excited; feel how his heart beats, just there, you know; he ought to be in bed, and I want to tell them all at home so much!'

She resisted all despairing entreaties to stay, from several small partners who felt life a blank after she had gone—till supper came; and so her carriage was called, and she and Dandy drove home in it together once more.

'Dandy, you're very quiet,' she said once, as they bowled easily and swiftly along. 'Aren't you going to tell me you're glad to be mine again?'

But Dandy could only wag his tail feebly and look up in her face with an exhausted sigh. He had suffered much and was almost worn out; but rest was coming to him at last.

As soon as the carriage had stopped and the door was opened, Hilda ran in, breathless with excitement.

'Oh, Parker, look!' she cried to the maid in the hall, 'Dandy is found—he's here!'

The maid took the lifeless little body from her, looked at it for a moment under the lamp, and turned away without speaking. Then she placed it gently in Hilda's arms again.

'Oh, Miss Hilda, didn't you see?' she said, with a catch in her voice. 'Don't take on, now; but it's come too late—poor little dog, he's gone!'