

Fanny Aunt

**The Third Little Pet Book, with
the Tale of Mop and Frisk**



Aunt Fanny
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with the Tale of Mop and Frisk

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PART I

THE DOGS LEAVE HOME

On a small town by the side of a lake, there once lived two dogs named Mop and Frisk.

Frisk was a pert black and tan dog, with a tail that stood bolt up in the air, and a pair of ears to match; while Mop was a poor old cur, with a head like a worn-out hair-broom; ears like bell-pulls; a mouth that went from ear to ear, and a great bush of a tail. Then he had to drag the cart of an old rag-man round the town, to earn his meals; while Frisk, who lived with a pie-man, had a fine ride in the cart each morn; and all the work he had to do was to bark at the bad boys who tried to steal the pies. The rest of his time he spent in play.

One day the old rag-man, who was as cross as ten bears, and

far too fond of beer, came out of a shop where he had been to drink, while poor Mop had to wait in the cold. The rag-man's legs went from side to side; he could not walk; so he got in the cart, on top of all the rags, and cried to Mop:

"Come, go on, you bad cur, or I'll make you!" and with these words, he let fall a great stick on the back of the poor dog, and gave him a kick with his thick hob-nail shoes. Mop tried to start, but it was more than he could drag. Down came the stick once more; and this time, made quite wild with pain, he gave one yelp and one jump, broke the old ropes that held him to the cart by a great jerk, and made off down the road like a flash. The bad old man did bawl to him to come back; but Mop was too wise for that, and did not stop to see if the wind was west or not, till he came to a part of the town which was quite new to him.

The place where our dog now found him-self was a sort of blind court, with the blank wall of a house on each side, and, worse than all, with not the sign of a thing to eat to be seen.

"A fly to snap at would be a good thing," said the poor dog with a sigh. "I think I could eat a bit of brick, if I could get one up. But cheer up! it will all come right in time! I'm *free* at least – that is one good thing!" and he gave three jumps and three barks for joy, so loud that they most took the top of his head off.

Just then there came up, at a smart pace, Frisk the pie-man's dog. He held his head in the air as proud as you like. When he saw Mop, he tried to turn up his nose at him, but it was so flat, there was no turn up to it. Then he gave a loud sniff, and said

with an air:

"Who are you? Where did *you* come from?"

"I am as good a dog as you," said Mop. "My coat is not quite so fine to be sure, and my ears don't stick up so much; but I'm a nice sort of chap for all that. Shake a paw."

"What! shake a paw with such an old flop-ear as you? You must be mad."

Mop did want to say, "You are a pert, stuck-up cur," but he was too well-bred; so he made a bow, and put his paw on his heart; and said: "I meant no wrong; but I took you for Frisk, the pie-man's dog."

"Well, so I am – or so I was, I mean; till last week; but, you see, the trade was too low for a dog of my style – with such ears and such a long tail. I was not made to bark out of the back of a pie-cart at all the rag-tags in town; so I have cut the pie-man, and mean to try high life in some big house. My own aunt lives with a judge; and it will be odd if some rich man does not like my looks, and take me home with him. But I must be off; it would not do to be seen with you, if I hope to rise in the world. A good time to you, my boy. He! he! you are such a beau, you can't fail to cut a dash. G-o-o-d day!"

"Stop a bit!" cried Mop, as Frisk ran off. "You don't think much of me *now* I see, but time may show me to be the best dog yet. What if we were each to try to find a new place, and meet here in a month from now, to tell what has past in the mean time? Don't you think that would be a nice plan?"

"Oh! I'll do so if you wish!" said Frisk; "but don't ask me to bow when we meet, I beg; it won't *do*, you know."

"Shake a paw then," said Mop.

Frisk, very loth, put the tip of one claw on Mop's paw. Then the two dogs stood back to back, and, with a one! two!! three!!! off they went as if a mad bull was at their heels.

PART II

THE DOGS MEET ONCE MORE

On the last day of the month, Mop and Frisk, true to their word, came to the place where they last said good-by. But how each one did look to see if his mate were the same dog he last saw!

Mop's coat was rough no more – it shone like silk; his ears were cut; he wore a fine brass neck ring, with a new name on it; and his whole air was that of a dog in luck.

Poor Frisk was so thin that you could count all his ribs. His tail stood up in the air no more. He hung his head and crept close by the wall, as if he did fear some one would beat him if he dared to run or jump.

Good Mop did not look on him with scorn when he saw him in this sad way; but ran up to him on three legs, with one paw held out for "How d'ye do," and his great fly-brush of a tail a-wag for joy.

"Why, Frisk, old dog!" he cried, "how glad I am to see you! How have you been this long time?"

"O Mop!" said Frisk in a sad tone, "will you speak to me now I am so poor? It is I who am not fit to be seen this time."

"Frisk, my good dog," said Mop in a grave tone, "*real* worth

is not a thing of looks. Let me tell you that if I knew you to steal a bone, you would lose my good-will in truth. But I do not look down on dogs if they are poor and good. Come home with me; we can talk more at our ease in my nice house, where you will find some first-rate bones, if you would like them."

"O yes! I guess I would!" cried Frisk.

So the dogs set off on a trot by the side of a fine lake, on the banks of which the town was built. They soon came to a large house, with a court-yard in front, tall green rails all round, and a great gate by which to go in. There was a small gate near the large one, the latch of which Mop could lift with his nose, for Frisk and him-self to pass; and then the dogs ran round to the back of the house. On one side of the yard Frisk saw a fine dog-house, fit for the king, with a roof that ran to a peak, a porch in front, and a dove-cote on a pole on top. In-side there was a heap of clean, warm hay, and on a blue plate were some nice bones.

"There!" said Mop, "don't you call that prime? Help your-self to the bones, Frisk; I can get lots more."

Frisk did not wait to be asked twice, but fell to, and soon made way with the legs of a fowl. When these were gone, kind Mop ran to the house and got a beef-bone for him. Poor Frisk ate as if he was not used to such fine fare, and the good dog Mop, who gave up his own meal to feed Frisk, felt as glad as if he had had it all him-self.

When Frisk had made an end of the bones, he and Mop laid down in the dog-house; and as Frisk had asked him to do so, Mop

told his tale, as you shall hear.

But first he asked Frisk to rise, so he could put more of the soft hay on his side. "Do you feel quite warm?" he asked.

"O yes! thank you, dear Mop," said Frisk; "as warm as a toast. You will make me cry, if you are so kind to me. When you were poor, I was a cross dog to you. Oh! I can not bear to think how bad I was;" and a great big tear came out of each of Frisk's eyes, and ran off at the end of his nose.

"Oh! that is all gone. We will be kind old dogs now, and do all the good we can in the world. And now here goes for the grand tale of all my joys and woes since I saw you."

MOP'S TALE

"You know, Frisk, that when we left the court, you chose to go in the town, and I by the lake. I felt sad to think I had no one to care for me in the world. But my watch-word is, 'Don't give it up!' and I could not think that all would leave me to want a bone. So I laid down by the road-side, in hopes to see some one who would take care of me.

"First, I saw a man on a fine horse; and as he had no dog, I said to my-self, 'Who knows but what he wants one to keep the flies from his horse's legs!' So I ran by him a short way, when – would you dream the man could be so bad? – he gave me a cut with his whip, that made me hop and yelp for pain. 'Serve you right for a vile cur!' he said with a loud laugh, and on he rode.

"Next came a blind man; but he had a dog to lead him. The blind man's hat was laid on the ground, and when a cent was put in it, the dog gave one bark; when two cents were put in, he gave two barks, and so on. So, you see, there was no room for me there, and I had to trot on.

"At last I saw a small boy and girl trip down the road, hand in hand, with their nurse close by them. They wore such fine coats and hats, that it was plain they were rich; but when the boy put his small hand on my head, and said, 'Good dog,' and the girl did the same, I knew they must be kind too.

"So I ran by them, in hopes they would speak to me once more.

"There were some wild rose-buds on the bank of the lake, and when the girl saw them she cried: 'O Hal! just see those sweet rose-buds! How nice they look! They have just come out! Won't you pick me a few?'

"'Yes, dear May,' said the boy; and he let go her hand and ran to where the rose-buds grew.

"'Don't go there, dear child,' cried nurse; 'you may fall in the lake.'

"'No I won't! I'll take care,' cried Hal; and as he spoke he bent way down the bank. O me! the earth gave way, his foot did slip, and ere the nurse could run to his aid, the poor child fell, with a loud cry, in the lake.

"There was no time to be lost; and, more glad than I can say, that I was on the spot, I leapt in the lake, swam to the side of the child, and in as short a time as it takes to tell, I had his coat in my teeth, and got him safe to shore.

"The nurse took her dear boy in her arms and cried for joy; and May was so glad that she put her arms round my wet head, and gave me a long hug.

"'We must take the good dog home with us, Miss May,' said nurse, 'and tell your pa-pa what he has done for Hal. And now let me wrap my shawl round you, Hal, and then we must all run home as fast as we can, for fear you may take cold.'

"We were soon at this house, where Mr. and Mrs. Grey, the pa-pa and mam-ma of Hal and May, live; and nurse soon told them how I had saved the life of their dear son.

"You may think how great was my joy to have them call me, 'Good dog! brave dog! the best dog in the world!' and give me a hug and say I must live with them from that time.

"So Mr. Grey sent me out with Hal to the yard; and he got Jim, the groom, to wash and trim me, while May ran to ask the cook for some meat to feed me. The dear child did wish so much to make me glad, that she tied her own white bib round my neck to keep me neat while I ate, and fed me with her own hand; while Hal, and a wee bit of a girl, who came to see them, did look on.

"It was not quite as much to my taste as hers to be fed; but she was so full of the fun of it, that I would not for the world have made one growl.

"Next day their pa-pa got me this nice house, and Hal put round my neck the brass ring you see me wear; which they say has on it: 'To Dash, the good dog, from Hal and May.'"

When Mop, or Dash, as we must now call him, had come to an end, Frisk drew a deep sigh, and said: "Well, Dash, as that is your name, if I had been as good as you, I might be as well off by this time; but I think, when you hear what a sad life I have led for the past month, you will say I am well paid for my fine airs to you. So now to my tale."

FRISK'S TALE

"I made haste to the best part of the town, when I left you and the court, and, late in the day, found my-self in a fine place. Near the best house was a group of three small boys; they were at play with some small, round, smooth stones; and when one stone hit the next, a boy could cry out: 'That is mine!'

"Well, for my sins, I came to a halt just in front of these boys.

"'Oh! oh! look at that nice dog!' cried one whose name I found was Bob. 'I guess he is lost. I mean to have him for my dog.'

"'No, you shall not,' said Ned, the next in size. 'He shall be my dog.'

"'No, he shall be mine,' said Sam. 'I want him! I *will*

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

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