

THE STORY OF A DOG

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The Story of a Dog by Mrs. Perring

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MRS. PERRING

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OF A DOG**



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Front.



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CHAPTER I.

OUR LITTLE DOG CARLO.

It was a fine evening in the month of March, when the family of Mr. Percival were all gathered round a bright fire ; the cheerful glow combined with the crimson-papered walls to give a deepened colour to the usually rosy cheeks of the children.

The young party had been for a long walk in the country, and were now sitting after tea in the gentle twilight, telling their mamma how much they had enjoyed their visit to the beautiful ruins of the fine old Abbey which was situated on the banks of

a river three miles from the large manufacturing town of —.

Let me introduce the family of Mr. Percival to my young readers by their Christian names. Mrs. Percival reclined in an arm-chair ; and by her side, on a low stool, his accustomed seat, sat the youngest of the children, little Edwin, a fair-haired boy, whose soft blue eyes wore a pensive expression which seemed to betoken gentleness and trust, rather than the energy and confidence which glowed in the darker and more lustrous eyes of his three elder brothers, Norman, Philip, and Harold. Two sisters, both older than the boys, completed the family group, and a very pleasant one it was to look upon.

“So you have been gratified with your walk and ramble among the ruins of the old Abbey, have you, my dears ?” said Mrs. Percival, addressing the young ladies, Annie and Helen, rather than their brothers.

“Oh yes, mamma,” replied Miss Percival ;

“we had a delightful walk, and the old Abbey looked beautiful in the bright sunlight, with its wreaths of ivy, and the dark matting of the same, which covers some of its crumbling walls on the outside. We should have enjoyed ourselves very much indeed, if Philip had not frightened us ; but he really is so tiresome, mamma, I almost wish you would not let him go with us again. Do you know, he would, in spite of all we could say, climb up those dangerous steps ; and once, when we had been looking all over for him, and had begun to think that he had fallen into the river, he shouted to us from the large ivy-covered oriel window, where he was standing, looking just like a picture in a frame. Perhaps he thought that we should admire him, but he was mistaken, for we were all too much frightened to do that ; and how he scrambled down again we cannot tell, only I am sure it must have been at the risk of breaking his neck ;

and this I fear he will do some day, mamma, so please don't let him go to the Abbey with us any more."

"What a fuss you do make, Annie," replied Philip, who, to say the truth, felt proud of his exploit; and certainly would not have scrupled to repeat it whenever another opportunity should offer, for he was a very daring boy, and as such, was continually getting into trouble. "Do you know, mamma," added Philip, "that the old steps are so worn, that I had to catch hold of the straggling brambles to keep myself from falling; it would have been a bad job if they had given way,—I don't think they are very safe."

"Norman is such a coward," continued the loquacious Philip, "I couldn't persuade him to go up the steps with me: there he stood at the bottom, begging and praying me not to venture, when I was more than half way up; but he lost the splendid view

of the country that I had. Oh, it was so beautiful all round, mamma, for miles. I know *you* would have been delighted to see it. I was well rewarded for any risk I ran."

"But supposing you *had* fallen, and broken your neck," said the matter-of-fact Norman, "*we* should not have had a very pleasant prospect before us, I think; we should have had a sad tale to bring home to mamma. It is not right to venture where there is so much danger, just for the sake of a fine prospect, Philip."

"Well, I confess that I did not mount the old steps *only* for the sake of a prospect," replied Philip; "I like to do things that other boys would be afraid to do; I don't think there are many boys who would have scrambled up where I did. I heard old John Taylor say that the steps were so loose that they were sure to fall before long."

"A strong reason, Philip," said Mrs. Percival, seriously, "why *you* should not have