

Further Adventures of Lad

Further Adventures of Lad by Albert Payson Terhune continues the heartwarming tale of Lad, a loyal and courageous collie, as he embarks on more thrilling and touching adventures that showcase his intelligence, bravery, and devotion to his family.

CHAPTER I. The Coming Of Lad

The quiet village of Hampton and its surroundings are disrupted by a series of professional and amateur burglaries, igniting fears and leading to an epidemic of increased security measures among the residents. Amid this unease, the Mistress and Master of "the Place," a serene thirty-acre homestead isolated by its surrounding landscapes, feel the absence of a family dog acutely. To address their safety concerns and fill the void left by their recently deceased pointer, they compromise on getting a collie, despite differing opinions on the breed's suitability for security purposes. The collie, named Lad, arrives in a cramped crate, complete with an impressive pedigree, and is introduced to his new home with expectations that his presence will resolve the burglary issue.

Lad's appearance, a beautiful blend of mahogany-and-white, immediately captivates the family, but his arrival reignites their security concerns when he steps out, deceptively small and friendly, far from the imposing figure they anticipated. Despite this, his aristocratic bearing and the promise of his physical potential earn him a place in their hearts and home, even as he promptly adopts the Mistress as his own and develops a fastidious obedience to the household rules.

One night, a burglary attempt at the Place provides Lad with an unexpected adventure. As the thief approaches in the darkness, Lad, still innocent and friendly, sees him as a potential playmate rather than a threat. The ensuing events are narrated through the joyful and naïve perspective of Lad, who plays a daring game of chase with the bewildered thief. Excited by the interaction, Lad fails to understand the peril he is in, even as the thief eventually resorts to firing a pistol in desperation to retrieve his loot.

By pure serendipity, Lad leads the chase to a ditch that incapacitates the thief, not through an aggressive attack, but by evading him with playful innocence until the man's own momentum results in injury. The aftermath sees Lad, now somewhat more wary but still blissfully unaware of the gravity of his actions, returning to the safety and comfort of his family, satchel in mouth — unaware that he has prevented a theft and aided in capturing a criminal.

In the light of day, the Master and Mistress reflect on the night's inexplicable events, with the Master skeptical of Lad's understanding and intentions, and the Mistress praising the dog's supposed resourcefulness and bravery. Despite the differing interpretations of the incident, it is clear that Lad has not only endeared himself further to his family but has also unwittingly established himself as a competent guardian of the Place. As the community ponders over the curious circumstances that led to the burglar's capture, Lad relishes in his newfound role, albeit with the same innocent enthusiasm that marked his unintended heroics.

CHAPTER II. The Fetish

The last twenty yards of the ordeal were covered in silence except for the steady splash of Lad's paws. Reaching the dock, the Master extended a hand, grasped the constable's soaking collar, and hauled the inert mass of humanity up onto the stringpiece. Then he reached down for Lad.

The collie was almost as inert as the man he had saved. His mighty effort, coupled with the stunning shock of fear that had clutched him when he felt both their bodies sinking beneath the lake's surface, had drained his strength for the moment. But, under the Master's hands, he scrambled to safety.

With water streaming from his sodden coat, Lad shook himself vigorously, scattering a fine spray in all directions. He stood there, on the dock, his sides heaving, his deep-set eyes watching the still form of Wefers. The constable lay gasping, his gaze fixed on the dog that had rescued him from drowning.

The episode under the catalpa tree, the mad dog scare, the threat of death—all these faded into insignificance beside the new understanding that flickered in Wefers' eyes as he struggled to an elbow and stared at Lad.

Slowly, awkwardly, as if unused to such action, Homer Wefers extended a hand towards the collie. It was a rough, potent gesture of reconciliation, of atonement. Lad, sensitive to the change in the human mood as always, moved forward, his tail wagging slightly. He nosed the offered hand in gentle acknowledgment.

The Mistress and the Master stood by, watching this tableau unfold. Relief and a sense of vindication filled them. The unwelcome visit, fraught with danger and altercation, had transformed into a scene of redemption through the brave intervention of their beloved dog.

The immediate menace to Lad's life was over, dispelled not by force or legal argument but by an act of heroism. The bond between the Mistress, the Master, and their devoted collie was stronger than ever—a bond not even a fanatic's misplaced zeal could sever.

In the days that followed, the story of Lad's bravery and his rescue of Wefers would pass into local lore. The collie's act of saving the very man who had come to destroy him spoke more eloquently than any words could of the loyalty, courage, and intelligence that were the essence of Lad. And in the hearts of those who knew him best, Lad's status as a hero was forever assured.

CHAPTER IV. Hero-Stuff

In "Hero-Stuff," the fourth chapter of "Further Adventures of Lad," the harmony of Lad's life at the Place is disrupted when the Master, believing Lad would benefit from a companion, introduces a collie puppy named Lady, igniting a series of profound changes for Lad. Initially, Lad's serene existence is marred by loneliness, not for his lack until Lady's arrival, but rather due to the unexpected consequences of her presence, illuminating the complexity of companionship beyond mere togetherness. The narrative underscores the intrinsic value of singular devotion between dog and human, suggesting that the addition of another pet disrupts the unique bond, dividing allegiance and diminishing the interpersonal connection.

Lady's arrival brings joy and protectiveness out of Lad, who becomes her guardian against threats, including the Mistress's temperamental kitten, Peter Grimm. Lad's unwavering loyalty extends to tolerating Lady's temperamental outbursts and even rescuing her from potential harm, demonstrating the depth of his devotion. Despite Lady's qualities that differentiate her from Lad, such as her temper and lack of Lad's semi-human quality, she is accepted into the household, finding favor in Lad's eyes, if not entirely in the humans'.

As seasons change, Lady grows from a playful pup into a beautiful young collie, her demeanor continuing to contrast with Lad's noble and calm nature. An incident involving a prized taxidermy eagle leads to Lady being locked in the tool-house as punishment, which distresses both her and Lad. Despite Lad's attempts to plead for her release, the Master remains firm, intending to teach Lady a lesson.

The chapter climaxes dramatically when a renegade ember ignites a fire at the tool-house. Awakened by a foreboding sense, Lad breaks free from the house to rescue Lady, demonstrating unparalleled bravery. He shatters a window to enter the aflame tool-house, attempting a futile escape that Lad's size and the weight of carrying Lady render impossible. Lad withstands Lady's frenzied and painful attacks, stemming from her fear rather than malice, underscoring his heroic commitment to her safety. The Master arrives just in time to witness Lad's selflessness and rescue both dogs.

The incident leaves Lad injured but unbroken, showcasing a profound act of sacrifice and loyalty. Lady's behavior under duress, compared to Lad's nobility, serves as a poignant reminder of the individual differences in animal demeanor and the possible repercussions of human decisions on their pets' lives. Through the ordeal, the indomitable spirit of Lad shines, illustrating not just the bond he shares with his human companions but also his inherent virtue, highlighting the essence of true heroism that transcends species.

CHAPTER V. The Stowaway

The Place, home to three collies—Lad, Lady, and their son, Wolf—faces a tumultuous period when Lady is taken to a veterinary hospital due to distemper. In her absence, Lad dedicates himself to disciplining their unruly son, Wolf, an endeavor that sees success by the time Lady returns home. However, Lady's illness causes a shift in relationships, with Lady and Wolf forming a close bond, excluding Lad. Seeking to regain affection, Lad attempts to engage with them, but finds himself sidelined, leading him to seek solace with the Master and Mistress but still feeling out of place.

When the Master and Mistress plan a trip to the Catskills, Lad, feeling neglected, stows away in their car, unbeknownst to them. His presence is only discovered after he thwarts a theft attempt, causing a scene that eventually leads to him being accepted on the trip. However, upon reaching their destination, Lad's unauthorized presence prompts a stay at a local kennel, from which he escapes to rejoin his family.

Lad's explorations in the new environment get him mistakenly accused of destroying a study room belonging to Rutherford Garretse, a noted author and collector. The truth unfolds when a monkey, the actual perpetrator and a hidden pet of Mrs. McMurdle violating a no-pets ordinance, re-enters the scene. Misunderstandings clear, Lad is exonerated, and the episode ends with his joyful return to The Place, reaffirming his valued place in the family despite the upheavals.

This chapter, blending mischief with moments of tension, showcases Lad's loyalty and intelligence, juxtaposed against human and animal dynamics within a community. The narrative, rich with emotional undertones and humorous incidents, highlights the challenges and bonds within the family of collies and their interaction with the wider world.

CHAPTER VI. The Tracker

In Chapter VI of "Further Adventures of Lad" titled "The Tracker," the Place becomes the temporary home of an unruly child named Cyril. Cyril is sent to the Place while his parents are in Europe, largely due to his poor health and their hope that the countryside will aid his recovery. Cyril proves to be a challenge, causing chaos and displaying a notable lack of discipline, particularly in contrast to the well-mannered collie, Lad.

Cyril's mischievousness quickly disrupts the tranquility of the Place, leading to trouble with the staff and discomfort for the animals, especially Lad. Despite Cyril's unjust and cruel treatment, Lad's noble nature prevents him from retaliating against the child. However, the harassment continues unabated, affecting Lad deeply, noticed by the Mistress and Master but without a practical solution due to Cyril's status as a guest.

A pivotal moment arrives when Cyril's cruelty escalates, resulting in him being physically restrained by the Master for the first time, causing humiliation and anger in Cyril. In a fit of rage, Cyril decides to leave the house, planning to hide in a nearby cattle barrack until he imagines his hosts will have become suitably worried about him.

However, his plan quickly falters when he becomes lost in a blizzard and inadvertently ends up on a perilous ledge in "Pancake Hollow." Here, he is approached by a hungry wildcat, a potentially deadly encounter that Lad, having followed Cyril, heroically interrupts. Lad attacks the wildcat, saving Cyril but nearly falling off the ledge himself. In a moment of panic, Cyril strikes Lad, who was already risking his life to protect the boy.

The chapter explores themes of loyalty and forgiveness through Lad's unwavering dedication to protecting even those who wrong him. Despite Cyril's mistreatment, Lad fulfills his role as a protector, showcasing the collie's inherent nobility and the depth of his loyalty to the Master and Mistress, by extension, to all they hold dear, including Cyril. The narrative highlights the stark contrast between Lad's heroic nature and Cyril's selfishness, illustrating the honor and unconditional love dogs often display, even in the face of mistreatment.

CHAPTER VII. The Juggernaut

Everyone seems to have known Lady, incidentally. Oh! And another thing; Rhuburger's father used to be seen around, occasionally, with a rather bizarre character known as Bilke. Bilke has a certain hobby. Namely, running over dogs. He'd driven that route scores of times, with Rhuburger and without him, just for the dog-chasing. The apple doesn't fall far from the tree, it seems. Rhuburger, it turns out, had a pact with Bilke about competing for 'records' in dog-killing. It was rather an open secret." There was a moment of sick silence.

"Then," continued Maclay, "Rhuburger is going to sue us and press charges against Lad. But several local people who saw the whole affair are more than ready to testify on Lad's behalf, citing the man's history and the provocation. Plus, Rhuburger being the known character he is, well, I'd say his case doesn't stand on very strong legs. In the meantime, I've been told a group intends to start a petition for Lad, asserting he acted in defense of the community's safety. So, I wouldn't worry overly much. It looks like the whole village is on your and Lad's side."

The Mistress and the Master exchanged glances.

"I had no idea," said the Master slowly, "that things would take this turn. But Lad?" Maclay smiled. "Lad's going to be just fine. You've got a hero on your hands. The odds are overwhelmingly in his favor. Just see to that he's kept safe and sound until this blows over, eh?"

As Maclay drove away, the Mistress and the Master went back inside, finding Lad waiting for them, an aura of calm around him as though he already understood the crisis was passing. He nuzzled them gently, as if grateful.

"Looks like you're more than just our hero, laddie," murmured the Master, scratching Lad behind the ears. Lad gave a soft woof of contentment, his tail thumping gently on the floor. For the first time since Lady's tragic end, there was a spark of the old light of joy in his eyes.

CHAPTER VIII. In Strange Company

In "In Strange Company," a chapter from "Further Adventures of Lad," the aging but still spirited collie, Lad, once more finds adventure in the wilderness with his owners, the Mistress and the Master. This outing takes him to the Ramapo Mountains for a camping trip, heralding not just a test of survival, but a profound showcase of loyalty and courage in the face of danger.

As the camp breaks and preparations to return home begin, Lad is accidentally left tied near the campsite, forgotten as the team departs. Alone but trustful, he waits for his owners to return. Meanwhile, a forest fire rages closer, compelling a remarkable assembly of wildlife to flee past Lad towards the safety of a nearby lake. The fire drives even a black bear, Lad's former antagonist, in a panicked run to the water. In a turning point, the bound collie, driven by both a will to survive and an instinctive understanding of the peril, gnaws through his ties and joins the other animals in their flight to the lake's safety.

The bear, Lad's chance encounter from earlier in the day, now becomes his unwilling companion in survival as they take refuge in the lake, protecting themselves from the fire's unforgiving advance. Remarkably, Lad shows no fear, displaying instead a stoic resolve to endure and a keen interest in his fellow refugees, a mix of common forest fauna, all united in their flight from the fire.

The fire seals off Lad's path home, leaving him to rely on his instincts and the elemental force of his loyalty to navigate the crisis. His owners, in a desperate and late-night attempt to find him, confront the fire's aftermath near the campsite. In a heart-stirring moment, the Mistress's hopeful whistle pierces the night, and Lad, freed and undeterred by the hazards of fire and smoke, responds with joyous barks. Ignoring the dangers, he dashes toward the sound of familiar voices, overcoming the scorched remnants between them with fearless leaps.

Reunited, the family witnesses not just the survival of their beloved collie but a testament to his unwavering loyalty and the profound bond they share. The episode reaffirms the indomitable spirit of animals, especially that of a dog like Lad, whose courage becomes a beacon of hope and resilience in the shadow of nature's fury.

CHAPTER IX. Old Dog; New Tricks

In Chapter IX of "Further Adventures of Lad" titled "Old Dog; New Tricks," the often-quoted proverb "You can't teach an old dog new tricks" is challenged through the adventures of Lad, a noble collie past his prime yet capable of learning and delivering new wonders. At twelve, Lad astonishes his family by bringing home a discarded but beautiful lace parasol, displaying his unique ability to retrieve and his discerning nature that differentiates between items belonging to his owners and those that don't.

The incident with the parasol inspires Lad to continue his search for treasures, leading to the retrieval of a picnic basket loaded with delightful eats which, despite its delightful contents, he doesn't tamper with but delivers as a gift. This act further enamors him to his mistress and master who reward him with praise and treats.

However, Lad's new trick soon takes an unexpected turn when he stumbles upon a baby kidnapped as part of a revenge scheme by the disgruntled gardener Schwartz and his accomplices. They had intended to extort a ransom from a wealthy couple, the Rennicks, by kidnapping their baby. Lad's intervention begins innocently as he finds and decides to bring the baby home to his mistress, interpreting it as another lost item needing to be returned.

A dramatic confrontation ensues when the kidnappers, attempting to repair a car tire, discover the baby missing. In their attempt to recover the child from Lad, they underestimate the old dog's abilities. Lad fiercely protects his find, injuring both men before they escape, leaving the baby for Lad to carry home.

Upon his arrival, Lad's family is amazed to find that their dog has brought home not an inanimate object but a living, kidnapped baby. The baby's safe return is a testament to Lad's intelligence, bravery, and gentle nature, warming the hearts of his family and undoubtedly earning him more than just animal crackers for his heroics. The chapter concludes with the police acknowledging Lad's role in foiling the kidnapping, further solidifying the belief that one can indeed teach an old dog new tricks, especially if the dog is as remarkable as Lad.

CHAPTER X. The Intruders

Chapter X: "The Intruders" from **Further Adventures of Lad** narrates an episode where the tranquility of The Place is disturbed by unwanted guests, with Lad, the venerable collie, standing as sentinel. The trouble begins when a pig, belonging to the curmudgeonly farmer Titus Romaine, exploits a gap in the fence to forage on The Place's land. Lad, who has loyally protected The Place for years, finds himself confronting the intruder. Unlike other animals that stray onto the property, pigs present a unique and perilous challenge due to their vicious nature and resilience. Lad's past experiences have equipped him with a deep-seated animosity towards pigs, and despite his advanced age and diminished physical capabilities, he resolves to tackle the intrusion head-on.

As the pig embarks on a leisurely devastation of the property, another trespasser, a cunning automobile thief named Alf Dugan, also enters The Place with designs on stealing a car. Unaware of each other, both intruders inadvertently set the stage for a climactic confrontation. When the pig threatens the mistress, Lad, despite his physical limitations, engages in a fierce battle, employing all his waning strength to protect his beloved home and owners.

During this desperate struggle, Lad demonstrates remarkable courage and loyalty, qualities that have defined his guardianship over the years. However, his solitary effort soon proves insufficient against the formidable pig. In a fortunate twist of fate, Lad's compatriots, Bruce and Wolf, return from their forest ramble just in time to join the fray, turning the tide in favor of The Place's defenders.

The battle culminates with the Mistress attempting to ward off the pig using a shotgun. Although her efforts are initially ineffective due to the choice of ammunition, the intrusion ends with the pig retreating under the relentless assault of Bruce and Wolf, and a curious twist involving Dugan's bitter encounter with the same pig leading to his capture.

As the dust settles, the aftermath reveals a wounded but resilient Lad, whose spirits are marred not by his physical injuries but by the perceived slight on his pride and valor. The episode closes on a reflective note, highlighting Lad's undiminished spirit and underscoring the indomitable bond between him and his human family, even as it wrestles with the inevitable passage of time and the shadow of mortality.

CHAPTER XI. The Guard

Lad, an aging collie, confronts the limitations and physical decline of old age but retains his spirited and protective nature. His days are characterized by diminishing vitality and increased dependence, yet Lad's essence—his loyalty, intelligence, and courage—remains untouched. When Sonya, a young girl mistreated by her father Ruloff, connects with Lad, she finds in him a guardian whose presence instills in her a sense of protection and love. Despite Lad's frailty, he vigilantly defends her against Ruloff's abuse, showcasing his indomitable spirit. This act of bravery, however, demands the last of his strength. As Lad rests on the veranda, he is enveloped by peace, comforted by Sonya's presence and lulled by her voice, slipping into eternal sleep. Meanwhile, Sonya experiences a miraculous sense of Lad's protective spirit continuing to shield her from her father's wrath. The tale concludes with Lad's owners, the Mistress and the Master, mourning the loss of their noble companion, reflecting on his impactful and fulfilled life. Through the bond

between Lad and Sonya, the narrative explores themes of unconditional love, the impact of kindness, and the enduring spirit of protection that transcends physical limitations, culminating in Lad's heroic yet heartrending final act.