



Ririro

READ ANYWHERE, ANYTIME

Real Dogs

Mary Graham Bonner

Lucifer was a poodle of excellent breeding, and he knew it. His mistress often told visitors about his pedigree — his father, his grandfather, the long and distinguished line — and Lucifer had grown up understanding that this was the most important fact about him.

One afternoon, while his mistress paid a call, Lucifer waited alone in the carriage and watched a group of dogs from the neighborhood play in the street below. They were barking, chasing each other, and having an extremely good time.

He watched for a long while. The good time seemed genuine. He thought — though of course it wasn't done — that he might possibly like to join them.

He barked. They looked up at the carriage and at the poodle with the blue ribbon, and seemed to find this very funny.

"Could I join you?" he asked.

"You don't look as though you'd be much use," said a fox terrier, "but come on."

Lucifer climbed down and fell into step with them. And as they went, he told them about his pedigree — his father, his grandfather, the long distinguished line.



The dogs stopped walking.

"We don't know anything about your grandfather," said the fox terrier, "and we don't need to. We judge dogs by what they do. Our friends pulled a child from a river this summer. Some have run into burning buildings. We all try to *amount to something*. You can't live your grandfather's life. Try living your own."

Lucifer didn't say anything for a while. Then he went with them — for a real dog's afternoon, for the first time.

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