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The Monkey's Collar

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Gyp the monkey had hurt his right foot, and the doctor had bandaged it properly and prescribed rest.

Gyp was brave about the whole thing. He took his medicine without fuss. He sat still while the doctor worked. He was, everyone agreed, a very good patient.

But the bandage.

The bandage was another matter entirely.

He had to stay completely still, which is extraordinarily difficult if you are a monkey. And after a little while, the liniment in the bandage began to do its work, and the foot started to feel much better — so much better that Gyp became convinced the foot was healed. Surely, if it felt so well, the bandage was no longer needed?

He pulled it off.

The pain was immediate and astonishing.

Without the bandage's protection, the foot hurt worse than before. Gyp cried a little — he was very brave, but the pain was genuinely hard to bear.

His master came and found him. A fresh bandage was applied. The doctor was patient. The foot began to feel better again.

After a little while, Gyp was once more certain the foot had healed. Once more, he removed the bandage. Once more, the pain set in immediately, worse than before. This time he howled.

The doctor came again and was not particularly patient.

Gyp hung his head. He hadn't meant to be naughty. He simply could not understand why he should stay still when the foot felt fine, and why the bandage kept coming off only to reveal that the foot was not, in fact, fine.

He watched his companion monkey swinging and jumping across the room. He would have given anything to join him.

"One more time," said his master to the doctor.
"Trust me."

After the doctor had freshly bandaged the foot — talking gently to Gyp the whole while, which helped considerably — the master returned with a wide, soft collar. He fitted it around Gyp's neck, not tight, not heavy, but positioned so that Gyp's arms simply could not reach his bandage.

Gyp considered this.

He understood. He wore the collar without complaint, and when his foot was finally, truly healed — the collar came off, and the bandage with it, and he went to join his friend at last.



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