

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.

