

## THE TROUBLE WITH BEING A DOG

The trouble with being a dog is..... that you often get misunderstood.

Take my day. I just start my breakfast when Honey walks in.

‘Leave some for me or I’ll scratch your eyes out, Shortie,’ she says.

Well, I may be rather small, but that doesn’t mean I’m going to stand for that sort of behaviour. Quick as a flash, I turn round and just catch her tail as she leaps onto the breakfast table.

‘Mum,’ I hear Kate cry. ‘Honey’s just knocked the milk over. It was Dart’s fault he was chasing her.’

‘Bad dog,’ Mum scolds and before I know it, I am lead by the scruff of the neck out through the kitchen door and plonked onto the back step.

I sit on the step and look through the glass at my half finished bowl. Honey, walks over and finishes off *my* breakfast. Then, when my bowl is empty she strolls over to *my* favourite seat, stretches out and starts licking her coat.

‘Loser,’ she mouths at me as she settles back into the chair.

Wait until I’m back in there. I’ll leap on her and pin her down when no one’s looking.

Now, if I sit here, with pleading eyes and just the right amount of woofs, I know that someone will notice and let me in.

Oh good, there’s Thackery. ‘Woof, woof.’ I like Thackeray. I like sniffing the mud on his trouser legs.

‘Woof, woof.’ I can feel a drip of rain as it splashes onto my nose. ‘Woof, woof.’ I bark a little louder.

The door slides open. ‘Come on, Dart,’ says Alex. ‘Are you getting wet?’

I sit on the mat while Alex gently wipes my paws. 'You're not having a very good morning, are you?' she says. I like Alex too. She's nearly as tall as Mum and gets very pleased with me when I do the easiest things. When Alex wants me to do something, she gives me a piece of cake.

Charlie though, now she's a different matter. She's the baby of the family and only three but, boy, do I have to avoid her; always grabbing at me and trying to dress me up. I just settle back for a morning snooze when I hear her quick footsteps across the wooden floor of the kitchen.

'Dart, come,' she says and I feel her grab my collar and lead me along the passage and up the stairs to her bedroom. Now, I'm not allowed up stairs so I know things aren't going to go well. Before I can say woof, I am dressed in a pink baby's bonnet with a baggy nappy hanging from my bottom. Oh, the shame. If Honey catches sight of me I'll never live it down. I think I'll stay up here for a while until the coast is clear.

It isn't my fault that by the time mum comes upstairs, she finds me sitting on Charlie's bed trying to tug the nappy off.

'Bad dog, Dart,' Mum shouts. 'Get off the bed. Look at the mess you've made. You know you're not allowed upstairs.' Once again I feel the tug on my collar as I am dragged downstairs and plonked on my familiar spot on the step outside the kitchen. Mum forgets to close the door though, so I walk over and sniff my empty bowl. Not even a crumb left.

Suddenly I hear the click of the gate. Good that can only mean one thing; the postman.