**And the tables turn.**

**From Pussy and Doggy Tales by Edith Nesbit.
Age Rating 4 to 6.**

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**WE knew it was a dog, directly the basket was set down in the hall. We heard it moving about inside. We sniffed all round. We asked it why it didn't come out (the basket was tightly tied up with string). "Are you having a good time in there?" said Roy. "Can't you show your face?" said I. "He's ashamed of it," said Roy, waving his long bushy tail. Then he growled a little, and the dog inside growled too; and then, as Roy had an appointment with the butcher at his own back door, I went out to see him home. "I am so sorry I am going away for Christmas with my master," he said when we parted; "but you must introduce that new dog to me when I come home. We mustn't stand any of his impudence, eh?" I was sorry Roy was going away, for Roy is my great friend. He always fights the battles for both of us. I daresay I might have got into the way of fighting my own battles, but I never like to interfere with anybody's pleasure, and Roy's chief pleasure is fighting. As for me, I think the delights of that recreation are over-estimated. When my master came home, he opened the basket, and a dog of Irish family tumbled out, growling and snarling, and hid himself under the sofa. They wasted more biscuits on him than I have ever seen wasted on any deserving dog; and at last they got him out, and he consented to eat some supper. They gave him a much better basket than mine, and we went to bed.**

**Next morning, the Irish terrier got out of his basket, stretched himself, yawned, and insisted on thrashing me before breakfast. "But I am a dog of peace," I said; "I don't fight." "But I do, you see," he answered, "that's just the difference." I tried to defend myself, but he got hold of one of my feet, and held it up. I sat up, and howled with pain and indignation. "Have you had enough?" he said, and, without waiting for my answer, proceeded to give me more. "But I don't fight," I said; "I don't approve of fighting." "Then I'll teach you to have better manners than to say so," said he, and he taught me for nearly five minutes. "Now then," he said, "are you licked?" "Yes," I answered; for indeed I was. "Are you sorry you ever tried to fight with me?" "Yes," still seemed to be the only thing to say. "And do you approve of fighting?" He seemed to wish me to say "yes," and so I said it. "Very well, then," he said; "now we'll be friends, if you like. Come along; you have given me an appetite for breakfast." "Any society worth cultivating about here?" he asked, after the meal, in his overbearing way.**

**"I have a very great friend who lives next door," I said; "but I don't know whether I should care to introduce you to him." He showed his teeth, and asked what I meant. "You see, you might not like him; and, if you didn't like him----but he's a most agreeable dog." "A good fighter?" asked Rustler. I scratched my ear with my hind foot, and pretended to think. "Oh, I see he's not," said Rustler contemptuously; "well, you shall introduce him to me directly he comes back." Rustler's overbearing and disagreeable manners so upset me that I was quite thin when, at the end of the week, Roy came home. I told him my troubles at once. "Bring your Rustler along," he said grandly, "and introduce him to \_me\_." So I did. Rustler came along with his ears up, and his miserable tail in the air. Roy lay by his kennel looking the image of serenity and peacefulness. To judge by his expression, he might not have had a tooth in his head. Rustler stood with his feet as far apart as he could get them, and put his head on one side. "I have heard so much about you, Mr. What's-your-name," he said, "that I have come to make a closer acquaintance." "Delighted, I'm sure," said Roy, who has splendid manners.**

**"If you will get on your legs," said Rustler rudely, "I will tell you what I think of you." Roy got on his legs, still looking very humble, and the next minute he had Rustler by the front foot, and was making him sit down and scream just as Rustler had made me. It was a magnificent fight. "Have you had enough?" said Roy, and then gave him more without waiting for an answer. "I don't want to fight any more," said Rustler at last; "I am sorry I spoke." "Then I'll teach you to have more pluck than to own it," said Roy. When he had taught him for some time, he said, "Are you licked?" "Yes," said Rustler, glaring at me out his uninjured eye. "Are you sorry you tried to fight with me?" "Yes." "Will you promise to leave my little friend here alone?" "Yes." Then Roy let him go. We shook tails all round, and Rustler and I went home. "Poor Rustler," I said, "I know exactly how you feel." "You little humbug," he said, with half a laugh--for he is not an ill-natured fellow when you come to know him--"you managed it very cleverly, and I'm not one to bear malice; but, I say, your friend is A1." We are now the most united trio, and Roy and Rustler have licked all the other dogs in the neighbourhood.**