

Edward the Reluctant Hero

A huge drop of rain
landed on the windowsill.

'Plop' it went and
bounced back up to
meet an even bigger
drop of rain as it came
hurtling down from very
grey, grim looking clouds
overhead.

And with it, Edward
darted under the table to
hide.





If the wind blew loudly, Edward

would scamper indoors; if the leaves on the trees rustled, Edward would duck for cover.

Bins rattling? Oh, Edward hated that.

Other dogs barking?

Cats miaouing?

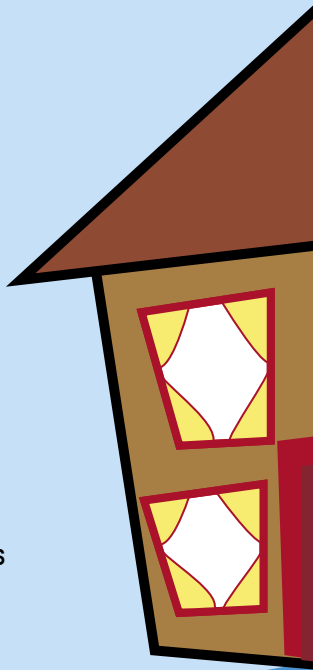
Edward the ever-so scared dog would just tremble on his paws.

Poor Edward in fact was the laughing stock amongst all the other dogs and cats on the street.

And that in itself was particularly bad for Edward, as the little dog just happened to live with a cat who just loved to tease him.

He lived in a house with Toby, the little boy who had fallen in love with him at the local animal shelter. He also lived with Suki, the rather grand and proud cat, and her two kittens, Flip and Flop.

And to make matters worse, Edward was having to stay indoors on this rather wet day with the three cats all morning, whilst his owner, Toby, and his mum and dad went shopping.

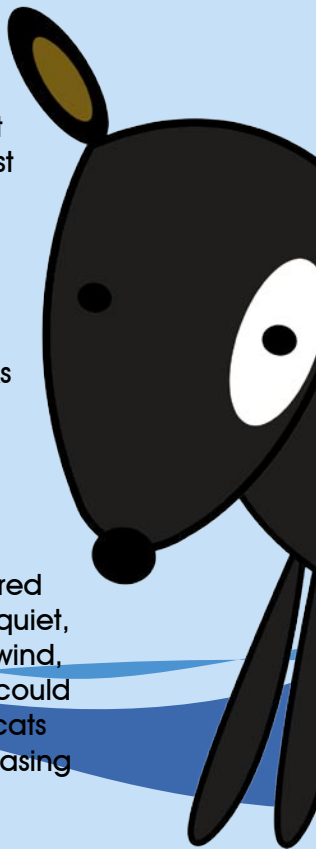


So whilst the cats teased him,

Edward just curled up in his basket and just wished that they would just go and leave him alone and play elsewhere.

Suki miaowed very loudly each time she passed him, whilst Flip and Flop got up to their usual tricks of knocking things over on shelves and squabbling over who was going to play with Edward's toys first.

Edward just groaned and whimpered - he so wanted some peace and quiet, away from the rain and the noisy wind, and away from the dog barks he could hear outside, and away from the cats who were taking such delight in teasing and scaring him.



There were
crash, bangs and
wallops

all over the house as the cats played. The kittens jumped onto the piano keys and ran and skipped over the heavy plonky ivory and ebony notes - 'Plonk', 'Ting', 'Pang', they went.

Edward put his paws over his eyes and then over his ears, trembling with fear. He pulled his blanket over and hid underneath. But still the noise and the games went on. Edward just grunted.

And then suddenly...they stopped.



Edward breathed a huge sigh of relief,

but was still too scared to move.

And then there was a faint miaow, followed by another louder one...and then another.

But something wasn't quite right about the miaowing. It was much quieter, and the other noises had stopped.

Edward wanted to stay where he was, but something made him step out of his basket. He gingerly looked around to see where the cats were - but they were nowhere to be seen. He followed the miaowing around the house and finally to the piano. He peered at the keys - no cats - he peered underneath - still no cats - and then on top...

The miaowing was coming from inside.

The cats must have clambered inside and the lid of the piano had banged shut on them.

They were miaowing even more now. Edward climbed on the piano stool and stuck his nose under the lip of the lid, and then with a toss of his head, the lid bounced backwards, and the cats leapt out.

Edward ran off to hide again, but the cats followed. "You saved us, cowardly Edward".

"Me?" he said, surprised, "Oh no, you're teasing me again".

But the kittens nuzzled to by the little dog

and Suki declared that they would never tease him again, and that he, Edward, the dog scared of everything, had saved them.

Edward smiled a little happy smile, and do you know? Edward realised that he wasn't so scared after all, and those cats never did tease him again.

Edward became known in the whole street as Edward, the dog who had saved the day!

From that day, Edward walked with his head held slightly higher than he did before. He was no longer the dog who was scared of everything, but Edward, the dog who was the rather reluctant hero.

