

The Adventures of Rabbie, A Scottish Terrier

Chapter 4

Snow Is In Peril

One sunny, spring day when Rabbie had finished his breakfast of porridge and milk, The Woman let him out to go about his morning run through the fields and forest. He went first to the old linden tree to greet his friend, Jock Daw. Although he looked all about the tree limbs, there was no sight nor sound of Jock. *He must be out in the meadow seeking his breakfast*, Rabbie thought, *I will be on my way and see to Jock Daw later.*

Rabbie surveyed the area before him and, seeing no sign of the fractious swans, he walked cautiously down to the lake. Still there were no swans in sight so he helped himself to a delicious drink of water. Quite satisfied with his safe passage, he trotted on toward the Manor House garden.

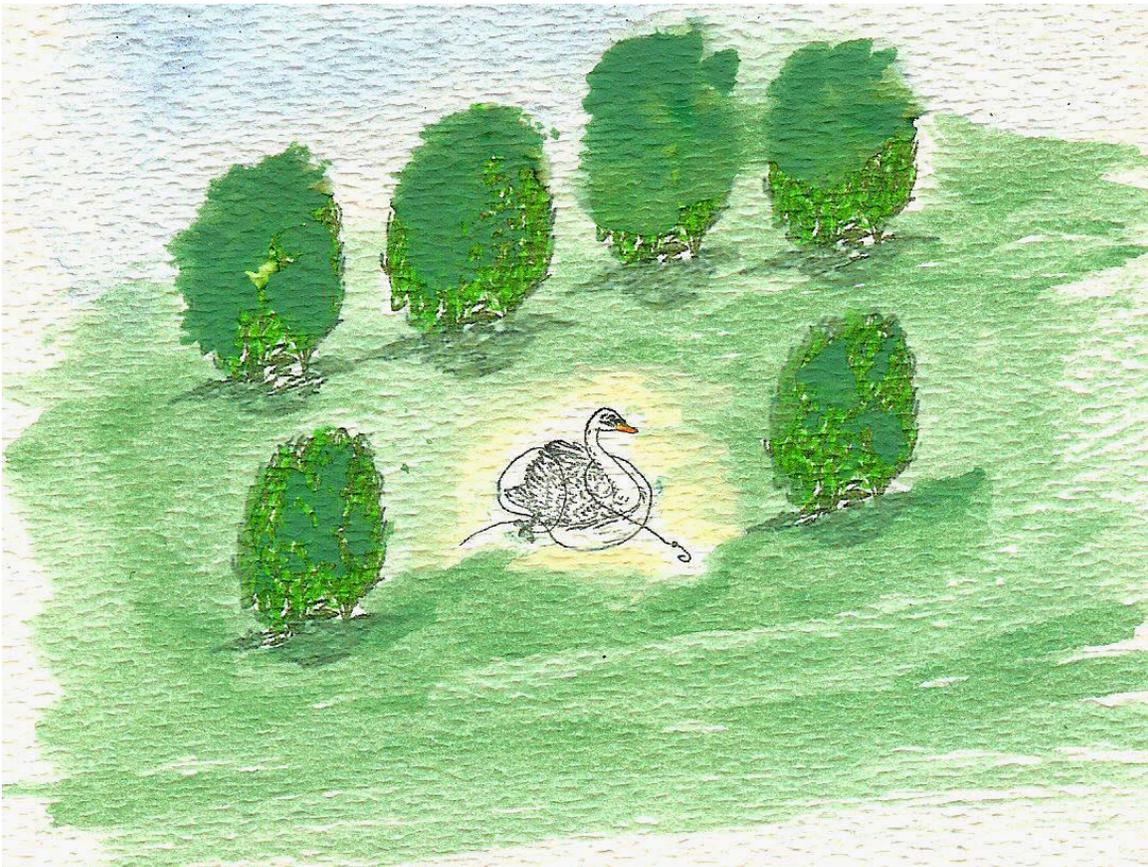
As he entered the garden, a wee bunny rabbit hopped along the path. Rabbie could not resist the challenge and began to chase the wee creature. He had no thought other than a jolly good romp through the garden. The bunny proved faster and more elusive than Rabbie had imagined, so he soon gave up the game and began to retrace his route home. After all, it was nearly noon and Mary McInnis might have a few choice tidbits from the luncheon...and she would surely serve them to him.

Thoughts of the tasty table scraps made the wee terrier less cautious and his path home was the usual one by the lake. To his surprise, he saw Cobb sitting in the grass near the lake. His long, graceful neck was poised in the shape of a perfect shepherd's crook and his black knobbed orange beak was tucked firmly against his breast feathers. He looked directly at Rabbie but made no move toward him. Rabbie was confused and bemused by the docile behavior of the swan who had so aggressively attacked him just days before.

Counting his blessings that there was only one swan and a friendly one at that, he walked on past Cobb and began to make his way to the cottage.

As he neared the cottage garden, he saw a patch of white amongst the hedges near the gate. Now, a Scottish terrier can never resist a mystery and so he veered off his direct path to investigate the white patch. To his utter surprise, the other swan, Snow, lay helplessly enmeshed in a tangle of fishing cord. She turned her head to peer at Rabbie and made a light but unsuccessful effort to move away from him.

Rabbie Becomes A Hero



Rabbie inched nearer and nearer to the poor creature. Och, he thought, how can I help this poor creature? He lay down in the grass and watched as Snow struggled to stand. There seemed no hope, for she was surely in a lot of trouble. In a moment it occurred to him...her mate does not know of her peril. Rabbie walked right up to Snow and tried to pull the cord from her feet and left wing. Snow was frightened and tried to move away. She could not because the fishing cord had caught on the hedge. Rabbie feared her less than he feared the harm she might do to herself. As if by magic, a thought occurred to him...her mate might save her, but how to get him to come to her aid?

Rabbie quickly raced toward the lake. Her mate must be brought to this place. Rabbie began barking as soon as he saw Cobb. The poor sad swan was still in his same docile pose, still in the same place by the lake. He finally raised his head and watched Rabbie as the wee Scottish terrier swiftly circled about and continued his barking. When that did not cause Cobb to move, Rabbie boldly ran so close to him that he touched Cobb's tail feathers. That was enough to stir the sad swan to action. He stood and Rabbie made another pass, this time very near the swan's beak, still barking repeatedly. Cobb stretched his graceful neck out full length and ran at Rabbie. Now, Rabbie thought, I have his attention! He raced down the path toward the cottage garden hedge with Cobb in rapid pursuit. "Caw, caw, caw", chanted old Jock Daw as the combatants ran under

the linden tree. As Cobb espied the patch of white, he stopped chasing Rabbie and ran to his poor mate.

Cobb gently and slowly pecked and pecked until he could get his beak around the line, then carefully pulled one strand free, releasing her wing.

Rabbie walked slowly and sadly away, coming to rest in his favorite spot under the linden tree where Old Jock Daw lived. He sighed and sat back on his haunches. He watched attentively as Cobb used his beak to pick, repeatedly, at the fishing line. After several tries, he reared back, the fishing line in his beak, and Snow stood, lifting her foot from the mass of snarled line. The pair touched their heads together and then turned to walk toward the lake. As they neared the linden tree, Rabbie assumed his bravest, most arrogant pose... he was never again going to run from the ferocious swans.



The wee, brave Scottie need not have worried, for Cobb did not run at him and Snow came slowly toward him and laid her smooth, white head against his black silky one. Rabbie relaxed and tried to look humble...he had been regally thanked by the beautiful Snow he had helped to rescue. Snow then withdrew and followed Cobb toward the lake.

"Caw, caw, caw", chuckled old Jock Daw from the linden tree above. He paced back and forth on his favorite limb, thinking to himself, *Rabbie has finally made peace with Cobb and Snow... now we can all be friends and have many great adventures!*