



NTS
Assessments

Reading Booklet

AUTUMN



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RIP: A RESCUER AMONG THE RUINS

When we watch the news after a natural disaster such as an earthquake, we often see dogs helping to look for people buried in the rubble. These dogs are highly trained. Amazingly, the first dog ever to do this had no training at all.

During the Second World War, in 1940, more than a million homes, shops and factories were damaged or destroyed by enemy bombs in London. Terrible scenes of devastation were common. In London, it was the job of Air Raid Wardens to lead the search for survivors after each air raid. One day, a wire-haired terrier turned up at the scene of an air raid in East London. No one knew who he was or why he was there.

The terrier started following one of the wardens around, a man called Mr King. Mr King liked dogs and felt sorry for this particular one, which didn't have a collar and looked rather hungry. No collar meant no name tag, so Mr King decided to call his new friend Rip. He thought the little dog was homeless as many were during the war.

After one of these air raids, Mr King was searching the site of a burned-out factory. Rip saw what he was doing and started to sniff around. This is something dogs do instinctively as a way of understanding the world, and it is something they are incredibly good at.

Depending on its breed, a dog's nose is as much as ten million times more sensitive to smell than yours. A human nose has around five million scent-detecting cells, but a dog has nearly three hundred million of them, and the reason a dog's nose is cold and wet is because this helps it capture even more scent.

Using just his nose, a dog like Rip is able to interpret the world in a way we could not hope to copy. When humans smell their lunch they just smell lunch, but a dog can detect every ingredient individually. Knowing this, Mr King realised that Rip wasn't just sniffing around the ruined building for fun, and that when he started wagging his tail it must be because he had found something interesting beneath the broken bricks and splintered timbers.



The warden started digging and shortly afterwards, when a man was pulled alive from the rubble, Mr King realised that Rip had a real talent for finding people in trouble. It wasn't just Rip's superior sense of smell that helped him do this, but also his curiosity and energy. Best of all, because terriers are such small dogs, Rip was able to squeeze his way into spaces which were far too tight for a person to wriggle through.

The risks Rip faced while doing this were considerable. Often there were fires still

burning inside the building and occasionally unexploded bombs. Walls could – and did – topple down at any time, and broken glass was a common problem. Rip refused to be scared by any of this, however. His sense of adventure meant that as soon as a raid was over he was desperate to get started. Clambering over the ruins, despite the smoke and flames, he went out night after night for as long as the raids continued.

Rip simply never got it wrong. His short stubby tail wagging rapidly from side to side, and above all the scrabbling noise of his little paws pushing away at a pile of bricks and tiles, was all the proof Mr King needed to keep looking. When Rip refused to give up even when he was called off, the wardens would go back and search the ruins again – and every time the dog would be proved right and another person would be rescued.

When Rip died, five years later, he was buried in a new cemetery created for animal heroes in Essex. He has never been forgotten. A few years ago a collector paid a fortune for a medal Rip used to wear on his collar. Today he is remembered as one of the pioneers who demonstrated how useful dogs can be when it comes to searching for survivors in peacetime as well as war.

The Emperor's New Clothes

MANY YEARS AGO there lived an emperor who was so immensely fond of beautiful new clothes that he spent all his money on being splendidly dressed. He had no interest in his soldiers; he did not care for the theatre except for showing off his new clothes. He had a robe for every hour of the day, and just as it might be said of some kings, "He is in his council chamber," it was always said here, "The Emperor is in his wardrobe!"

One day there came two swindlers to the city. They claimed to be weavers and said that they knew how to weave the most wonderful cloth imaginable. Not only were the colours and patterns something uncommonly beautiful to see, but also clothes sewn from

their cloth had the extraordinary quality of being invisible to anyone either badly suited for their position or unforgivably stupid.

"Well those, of course, would be marvellous clothes," thought the Emperor. "Yes, that cloth must be woven for me at once!" And he paid the two swindlers a lot of money in order that they could begin their work.



They set up two looms, then pretended to be working. Straight away, they demanded the finest silk and the most magnificent gold thread; this they put into their own bags.

“Now I should certainly like to know how far along they are with that cloth!” thought the Emperor. But it made him a bit uneasy to go along himself. “I will send my trustworthy old Prime Minister to the weavers,” said the Emperor to himself. “He, better than anyone, will be able to see how the cloth looks, for he has good sense and nobody fills his post better than he!”

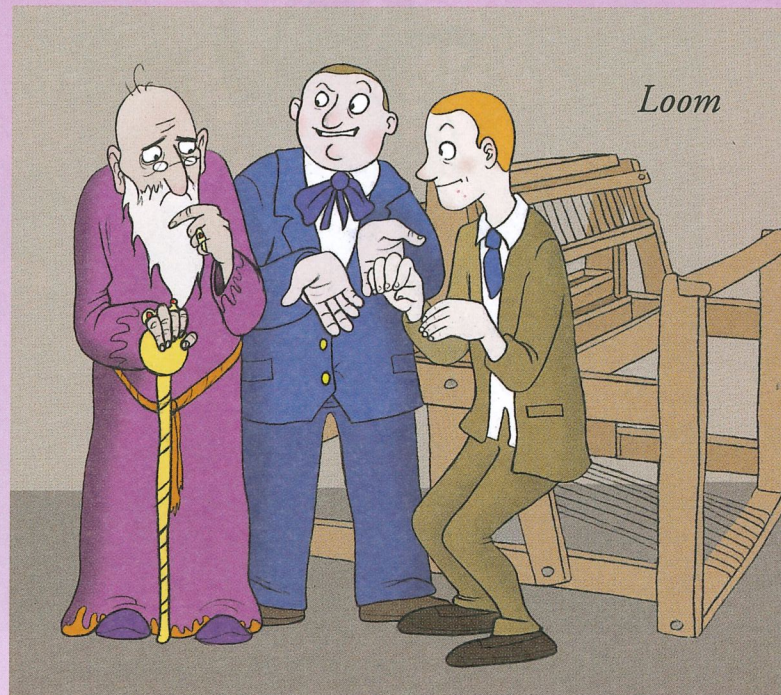
So off he shuffled, the trusted old Prime Minister, to the hall where the two swindlers sat and worked at their empty looms. “Good heavens!” thought the old man, opening his eyes very wide. “I can’t see a thing!” but he didn’t say that.

(Both swindlers begged him to be good enough to step up close, then asked, was it not a beautiful pattern? All the time they were pointing at the empty loom.

“Well, you say nothing about it?” said the one who was weaving. “Oh, well ... it’s charming! Absolutely adorable!” said the old minister, squinting through his spectacles. “Yes, I shall certainly report to the Emperor that it pleases me enormously!”)

“Ah, we are happy to hear that!” said both weavers, and then they commented on the curious design. The old minister listened carefully so that he might be able to repeat it all when he got home to the Emperor – and that’s just what he did. Now the

swindlers demanded more money, more silk and gold, which they needed for the weaving.



They put everything into their own pockets; not a single thread went on the loom. But they continued as before, weaving on the empty loom.

Soon, the whole city was talking about the marvellous cloth.

The Emperor now wanted to see it for himself while it was still on the loom. With a whole crowd of selected ladies and gentlemen, among whom was the old official who had been there before, he visited the crafty swindlers.

“Yes, is it not *magnifique*?” asked the Prime Minister. “May it please Your Majesty, observe ... such a design! Such colours!” And he pointed to the empty loom.

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a cobweb! – that’s just the beauty of it!”

“Would it please Your Gracious Majesty to remove your clothes now?” asked the swindlers. “Then we shall fit the new ones on Your Majesty over here by the large mirror!”

The Emperor took off all his clothes, and the rascals pretended to be handing him each piece of the new ones. They reached around his middle and made motions as if tying something on; that was the train, and the Emperor twisted and turned in front of the mirror.

“What’s this? I see nothing!” thought the Emperor. “Oh, it’s very beautiful!” he said and nodded contentedly. His whole retinue* looked and looked but had no more success than anybody else. However, like the Emperor, they said, “Oh, it’s very beautiful!” And they advised him to use this fabulous new material for a suit he could wear for the first time in the grand procession that would soon take place.

... At last the swindlers said, “There! The clothes are ready!”

The Emperor arrived in person. The rest of the court filed in respectfully. The two Knights-of-the-Loom each lifted an arm, as if they were holding something between them, and said, “Look, here are the trousers! Here’s the robe!” and so on. “It’s as light as

“Good gracious me, how it suits Your Majesty! How nicely it fits!” they all said. “What a pattern! Such colours! These are elegant clothes!”

And he made yet another turn in front of the mirror, for he wanted it to look as if he were really admiring his finery.

The chamberlains who were supposed to carry the train ran their hands along the floor as if to lift the train; then walked off proudly, holding the air, not daring to let anyone suspect that they could not see anything.

And so the Emperor strutted in the procession, while all the crowds in the street and all the people at their windows said, “Heavens! How marvellous the Emperor’s new clothes look!” No one wanted it thought that they could not see anything.

*retinue – group of assistants/advisers

Never before had the Emperor's clothes been such a success. The crowds lined the streets. A small child scampered along, following the procession. Then his voice rang out clearly. "But he has nothing on!" he cried out.

"Good heavens, listen to the voice of innocence!" said the father, and the child's remark was whispered from one to another.

"He has nothing on! That's what a little child is saying. 'He has nothing on!'"

"He has nothing on!" shouted everybody in the end. And the Emperor cringed inside himself, for it seemed to him that they were right; but he thought like this: "I shall have to go through with the procession."

And then he held himself even more proudly upright, and the chamberlains walked on behind him, as best they could, carrying the train that was not there at all.

