

Adventures on a Summer's Day *(with Bandit & Company)*

THE RAYS OF THE SUN were beginning to glide up and over the roof of the patio porch. The morning's dew still clung to the lush green lawn surrounding it. A breeze clipped a leaf from the branches of a nearby birch tree sailing it playfully across the yard.

Three large dogs relaxed peacefully on the cool porch. A white Chihuahua could be seen sleeping on the windowsill inside the house.

"Hmmm, look at Peanut," said Bandit. "Poor old thing. I hope that I never get that feeble." He rolled his eyes then laid his head between his paws.

"Well, I hope you don't either," said April, the black and tan Doberman Pinscher lying by his side. She yawned, stretched and walked down a couple of steps off the porch. "If you get that feeble, I'll probably have to take care of you."

"Yep, it could happen to either one of us," Bandit teased, lifting himself to his haunches to scratch between his ears. He grinned and gave her a nudge as he moved past her toward the shade of the birch tree. "We'll be a fine pair then!"

Circling in the grass beneath the tree, he lay down, sighed, and dropped off to sleep. He was jolted awake by the booming voice of the third dog on the patio porch.

"It will happen, you know," Cotton said raising herself to her haunches. Although she was small for her breed, the Great Pyrenees seemed massive compared to all of the other dogs at the farm. "You both



will eventually get old and feeble like Peanut. And as soon as your humans think you're about to expire—you'll be replaced!"

"Cotton's right," grumbled an approaching tiger-striped cat. "Humans are the least loyal creatures around."

Bandit protested. "I haven't seen you miss too many meals, Sinbad. And, I might add, you always seem to enjoy their attention."

"It's a game," mused the cat, licking his paw and cleaning his whiskers. "I do it to survive." He snapped his last words as he grabbed at a water bug unfortunate enough to have run within his reach.

"Shame on you!" April said, shocked by the tough old cat's attitude.

Sinbad recoiled at April's admonishment. "Why you wimpy excuse for a Doberman. You entertain them at every chance with your obsessive ball fetching and jump to their commands like a puppet. You can't tell me that you really enjoy their company. *Admit it.*" He snarled his final, harsh statement.

"OK, Sinbad, that's enough," said Bandit as he sat up and stretched.

"And you!" hissed Sinbad. "You pathetic fool. Do you really think that they care for you as much as they say?"

"I said that's enough!" Bandit growled and jumped at the cat. Sinbad hissed again and ran from the group.

"Quite the crude cat," said a large gray Persian observing the group from his perch on a flower box near the porch. "Gives us all a bad name."

"Hi, Mozart," Bandit grumbled. "Don't mess with me today. I've had all the *cattiness* I care for."

"Oh, *contraire!*" said the large gray Persian. "I'm very delighted to see that bully Sinbad put in his place. I would do it myself, but being clawless I'm afraid that I'd be at a bit of a disadvantage."

"I've always wondered," asked Bandit, "what keeps him from chasing you away?"

"Well, many reasons," the handsome cat replied.

