

# Doris: A Dog's Life

## From Yo, Aesop! Get a Load of These Fables

By Paul Rosenthal

Characters: Narrator 1, Narrator 2, Narrator 3, Doris, Dog, Flea

Narrator 1: An old dog made a big mistake. He moved in with a dreadful girl named Doris who wore pink sneakers and chewed gum.

Narrator 2: The dog had met Doris in the park. She seemed nice enough at the time. She threw sticks, scratched him behind the ears, and said things like “nice doggy”—which wasn’t exactly brilliant conversation, but was kindly meant.

Narrator 3: So the dog followed Doris home. When they got there, she begged her parents to let him stay.

Doris: “I’ll feed it,”

Narrator 1: she promised.

Doris: “I’ll walk it, wash it, and brush it every day. And if you don’t say ‘yes,’ I’ll hold my breath until I explode.”

Narrator 1: Doris's parents thought it over for a while. At last they said yes. Probably they didn't want bits of exploded Doris all over the furniture.

Narrator 2: Once Doris had the dog, however, she didn't do anything that she had promised. She didn't walk it. She didn't play with it. She certainly didn't wash and brush it.

Narrator 3: Before very long, the miserable animal was a mess—a tangle of hair and fleas. Mainly fleas. Word quickly got around the neighborhood that if any flea wanted a snack, it should stop by Doris's house.

Narrator 1: One evening, the dog was doing what he did every evening: lying on the hall rug and scratching. He scratched and scratched and scratched some more until finally a flea fell out of his fur and onto the floor.

Dog: "Ha! Gotcha! Now watch while I bite you in two."

Narrator 2: The dog opened his mouth and bared his teeth.

Flea: "Gimme a break,"

Narrator 3: said the flea.

Dog: "I *will give you a break. Right down your middle.*"

Flea: "Look, you're making a big mistake. You strike me as a dog that needs a pal. And I can be that pal. Let me live, and I promise that if I can ever help you out, I will. Bite me in half and what do you get? Flea breath."

Dog: "Help me?"

Narrator 1: The dog couldn't believe his ears. (They were a little unbelievable.....long and floppy.)

Dog: "A little pip-squeak like you?"

Flea: "Who knows? I might even save your life one day."

Dog: "Save my life?"

Narrator 2: The dog roared with laughter.

Dog: "What're you gonna do.....become a veterinarian? Get me free tickets to the flea circus?"

Narrator 2: He roared again.

Dog: "You know, flea, I like you. I haven't laughed like that for ages. You've really cheered me up. Tell you what. I won't bite you in half. You're free to go. So scram!"

Narrator 3: The flea scrambled.

Narrator 3: About a year later, Doris forgot to close the back door on her way into the house. The dog saw a chance to escape—and he took it. He slipped out before anyone noticed.

Narrator 1: At last he was free. Free! He howled with joy and began running up and down the street to celebrate his good fortune.

Narrator 2: While the dog pranced around, a kind-looking man whistled at him. The happy dog wagged his tail and bounded over to the man, eager for a pat on the head. But the man didn't pat him. He lurched forward, grabbed the dog's collar, and dragged the poor mutt to a little truck. A sign on the truck said DOG POUND.

Dog: "I really know how to pick-em,"

Narrator 3: the dog said to himself.

Narrator 3: The man unlocked the back of the truck. Inside, a half dozen captured dogs began barking and howling.

Narrator 1: *This is it, thought the dog. There's no escape this time. I'm done for. But just as the dog was ready to give up, the man let go of the dog's collar and began slapping and scratching himself as if he were being attacked by fleas.*

Narrator 2: Which he was.

Narrator 2: Or at least by one flea. It was the dog's old buddy, who was living on a dachshund that the dogcatcher had caught earlier. The flea saw a chance to keep its promise, and bit the man as hard as it could. Then it jumped onto the old dog and shouted,

Flea: "Quick, let's get out of here."

Narrator 3: The dog took off down the street.

Narrator 3: When they were safely away, the dog spoke to the little flea riding on his nose.

Dog: "Thanks! That was a narrow escape."

Flea: "And you laughed when I promised to save you

someday.”

Dog: “You’re right. I guess I’ve learned the lesson that even a little friend can be a big help. Now then, friend flea, let me show my thanks. May I take you to dinner? How about you and I go out for a bite of Doris?”

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