**All I Want Is Scruffy Back**

*Scruffy is a dog whose owner, SAM, is upset because he has gone. Sam's parents never liked Scruffy and it looks as though they know why the dog has gone missing.*

**SAM:** He wouldn't just wander off, not Scruffy... Mum didn't like him the minute I brought him home. "Nasty, scruffy little mongrel," she said... "Dogs smell the place up," she said. I suppose from the very beginning I should have known she had it in for him. "Get that dog off your bed"' she'd say, "he's got fleas" But he didn't really, except for one or two, and what's one or two on a dog that's part Labrador and part Irish Setter? Nothing. Then when he started stealing things... You see, he was so big, he could rest his head on the dinner table. One Sunday I saw him lick the entire joint of lamb, all over, while Mum was making the gravy, but I never said anything. We all ate it an' lived. But it was last Sunday that did it, when he munched up the entire chicken when Mum was mashing the potatoes... By the time she'd got through, all she found was a wing on the carpet behind the sofa. | didn't mind having just vegetables for dinner, but the others moaned a bit, and Mum was so hysterical she spent the rest of the day in bed. It must have been because while we were eating our mashed potatoes he went into the kitchen and ate the apple crumble.

I think Mum gave Dad an ultimatum... "It's either that dog or me!" Well, Dad took about three days to think about it... He's not the sort of man to act on impulse, or when he's being bossed... and Mum must have got a bit impatient. Yesterday she said he started having fits, frothing at the mouth he was (Scruffy I mean, not Dad). Mum said she got really frightened. "What if he bites somebody?" she said. "He'd kill somebody if he went into a mad fit" So now he's gone. When I came home from school, he wasn't there... Mum was, having a cup of tea, and smiling quietly to herself…

"Give us a kiss" she said. But I couldn't, I just couldn't.

All I want... is Scruffy back.

*by Jeffrey Grenfell-Hill*