

DEFENCE AGAINST THE WORST THAT FORTUNE CAN DO TO HIM.

**26.** The best friend a man has in this world may turn against him and become his enemy. His son or his daughter, that he has reared with loving care, may prove ungrateful. Those who are nearest and dearest to us, those whom we trust with our happiness and our good name, may become traitors to their faith.

The money that a man has he may lose. It flies away from him perhaps when he needs it most.

A man's reputation may be sacrificed in a moment of ill-considered action. The people who are prone to fall on their knees to do us honour when success is with us, may be the first to throw stones of malice when failure settles its cloud upon our heads.

The one absolutely unselfish friend that man can have in this selfish world, the one that never deserts him, the one that never proves ungrateful or treacherous is his dog.

A man's dog stands by him in prosperity and in poverty, in health and in sickness. He will sleep on the cold ground, where the wintry winds blow and the snow drives fiercely, if only he may be by his master's side. He will kiss the hand that has no food to offer, he will lick the wounds and sores that come in encounter with the roughness of the world.

He guards the sleep of his pauper master as if he was a prince. When all other friends desert he remains.

When riches take wings and reputation falls to pieces, he is as constant in his love as the sun in its journey through the heavens. If fortune drives the master forth an outcast in the world, friendless, homeless, the faithful dog asks no higher privilege than that of accompanying him to guard against danger, to fight against his enemies. And when the last scene of all comes, and death takes the master in his embrace, and his body is laid away in the cold ground, no matter if all other friends pursue their way, there by the graveside will the noble dog be found, his head between his paws, his eyes sad but open in alert watchfulness, faithful and true even to death.

## The Dog: Man's Most Loyal Companion

Every worldly relationship can fade.

A friend can become an enemy; offspring can be ungrateful, and the closest ones can turn into traitors. A man may lose his wealth and stand helpless in times of need. His fame can turn into disgrace and honor into dishonor. However, the only true and grateful companion is a dog which never abandons its master in adversity. It bears suffering to remain with its master even when he has nothing to offer. It always protects its master and stays by his side even when close friends leave him. Through all highs and lows, the dog wants to stay with him, whether he is alone or homeless. Even at the time of master's death, it is the only one to remain by his grave, sorrowful yet alert.

Total words = 370

Precis words = 130