

*“Very Short Stories”*

by Paolo Silingardi

# Hound



Hound was a dog, a retriever to be precise. As the name suggests, a retriever is a dog specialised in retrieving prey and taking it to his master. Hound's master was kind and he was also a great hunter, but his aim tended to be a bit dodgy. He always took Hound hunting with him so that he could do his duty as a retriever.

But **Hound** was a **very sensitive dog** and hated watching his master killing the wounded animals. He would often help them hide under a bush or in a crevice and then wander around pretending he couldn't find them. The other dogs looked at him with pity. Nevertheless, Hound was a retriever by nature and **no one can go against their nature**, so he would retrieve things that had been lost and take them home. Not only things that belonged to his master. Everything that got lost in the village.

It wasn't long before everyone discovered Hound's talent and they would "lose" things on purpose for him to retrieve: **scarves, gloves, purses, documents, keys, toys**. Someone even tried "losing" a **sausage** to test Hound's honesty. Of course, the retriever took it home without taking even the tiniest bite.

The days went by and every time **Hound** went out everyone would come up to stroke and cuddle him, and to give him biscuits and bones. To be quite honest, all these treats were making him a bit fat. Then one day, a hunter who was returning home after a day's hunting decided to put him to the test with a baby hare he'd just caught. **When Hound found it, it was the most frightened baby hare he'd ever seen**. Its heart was beating out of its chest and its little white tail was shaking with fear. Hound picked it up gently between his jaws as only a retriever can do and headed into the woods. **That was the last anyone ever saw of them and the hunters in the village soon stopped hunting** because, from that day on, their retrievers never ever found any prey again.

# Colour me

