

Immediately upon entering Chillblains, my spine froze over again— from its very base to the nape of my neck—sending shivers throughout my body. This could *not* possibly be fear. I'm a Ghost Terrier. It's not in our nature to feel fear. And for pup's sake, I've more titles than any other specter-chasing canine in the realm, including the *COBE* (*Canine Order of the British Empire*), the *Esteemed and Most Notable Order of the Dog Collar*, and even *The Royal Distinguished Canine Order of Phantom Finders*. Members of these orders *do not* feel fear.

I shrugged this feeling off by attempting small talk with this Duncan character as we began our trek to Mr. Brimbsy.

“Shetland Sheepdog, aren't you?” I inquired politely.

“Yup.”

I had assumed he would say a bit more than that, polite conversation you know. After a moment of silence, I tried again, “From the rugged Shetland Islands off Northern Scotland, if I'm not mistaken?”

“Why don't you have a wooden leg?” Duncan rudely asked.

Again, this is generally not the way one approaches such a subject in polite society.

“Well, I assume since it isn't 1911 anymore that you mean ‘prosthetic’—why don't I use a *prosthetic* leg?” I replied.

Duncan merely glanced in my general direction, raising his one eyebrow slightly, but saying nothing.

“Well, since you asked, I don't use a *prosthetic limb* because they are more of a hindrance than a help. At least for me. I've tried them, but I find that I walk and run much better *au naturel*.”

Duncan only made a curt “Mhhmmph” sound in response.

After this brief exchange, I remained silent as we continued our march through the castle, focusing on my surroundings instead. A Ghost Terrier is always on alert, taking note of her environment from the onset.

And what an environment now surrounded me.