A Lightning Storm

Thomas thought Grandfather answered, but he couldn’t hear, as just then a bolt of lightning cracked into the big beech tree. It ripped off a mighty bough, which crashed to the ground. This was too much for Ringo. He leaped onto Thomas’s lap and shivered there.

“Poor boy,” said Thomas. “He’s frightened.”

“I had a dog when I was a boy,” said Grandfather. “He was so scared of storms that I had to hide under the bed with him when one came. He was afraid even to be frightened alone.”

“I’m not afraid of anything,” Thomas said, holding his cat close.

“Not many people can say that,” said Grandfather. Then he added, “Well, I suppose anybody could say it.”

“I’m not afraid of thunderstorms, like Ringo and your dog. What was his name?”

“Melvin.”

“That’s not a good name for a dog,” Thomas said.

“I thought it was,” Grandfather said calmly. “He was my dog.”

“I like cats,” said Thomas. “I want to own a tiger!”

“Not while you’re living with me,” said Grandfather.