

FAUST
By Carole L. Cooney

Faust was an American water spaniel. This breed was raised primarily as a hunting dog with strong swimming ability. Faust had a dense, curly brown coat and a muscular body which protected him for working in the cold winters. Before going to Alaska, Faust was a show dog, traveling over 25,000 miles in the United States, winning prizes. Being such a fancy dog, Faust seemed to be most unsuitable to become a gold rush pioneer.

Setting: Seward Peninsula in Western Alaska

Characters:

Narrator

Frances Ella “Fizzy” Fitz

Faust

Narrator: In the summer of 1900, Frances Ella “Fizzy” Fitz and Faust arrived in Nome, Alaska at the peak of the gold rush. They walked along the beach looking for a place to set up camp. There was activity everywhere as men were setting up tent-dwellings and businesses to get ready to make their fortunes.

Fizzy: Well, Faust, pick out a good spot for us to set up camp on this shore.

Faust: (barking) Yes, ma’am! (jumping and sniffing) I think this spot is perfect!
(bark)

Fizzy: Are you sure, Faust? I don’t want to be swimming out of our tent in the morning.

Faust: (growl) I don’t either! This is IT! (barking, jumping furiously on the spot)

Narrator: On a small space on the beach, Fizzy set up their tent. Then she began looking for a job. Fizzy began working as a typist for one of the businesses. There were no policemen in Nome, so Faust was her trusty watch-dog, protecting her from intruders. After working many months, “Fizzy” began to earn quite a bit of money.

Fizzy: Where on earth am I going to hide all this money? The miners pay me in gold dust and it’s mighty heavy!

Faust: (jumping up and down) Here! Here! I’ll guard it for you! (bark – growl)

Fizzy: Oh, Faust. I know you’ll guard it but where will I put it?

Narrator: Faust lowered his head and crept over to Fizzy. He looked up at her and whimpered.

Faust: (bark) Just put it in a little sack and tie it around my neck. I’ll bite the hand that tries to get at it! (growl)

Narrator: And so, Fizzy made a little leather pouch, filled it with gold dust and secured it to Faust's collar. Sometimes, Faust carried more than three thousand dollars worth of gold dust around the neighborhood. When the summer was over, it was time to move on. Fizzy and Faust joined a group of men to search for gold at the Fox River. The journey should have lasted only one week, but a blizzard struck.

Fizzy: Looks like we'll have to wait out this blizzard. It's already been three weeks and I wonder how much longer we can last with so little food left.

Faust: (growling) I've seen what some men are doing to their dogs. (begging) Please don't let them hurt me.

Fizzy: As long as I have some cornmeal and beans, no dog of mine is going to be harmed!

Narrator: Fizzy was a miracle-maker with beans and cornmeal, so that everyone had food to eat as they waited for the fierce winter to end. But when the long-awaited Spring arrived, so did flood waters.

Faust: (barking furiously) There's water seeping into the tent. Fizzy! Fizzy! Wakeup! We've got to get out of here!

Fizzy: Okay! Faust, okay! I hear you. Let's get in our canoe and get to higher ground. Come on, boy! Jump in!

Narrator: Faust saved Fizzy that day, but he could not help her from losing most of her money because she made some poor business decisions. Down on her luck, it was time to move on a new gold digging site.

Fizzy: Come on, Faust, it's time to see what Ophir Creek has to offer. Hold that hose steady while the water runs over this pile of gravel. That's a good boy! Looky here! (laughing) I think we've struck it rich!

Faust: (barking and jumping) Whew! I was wondering if holding this hose was ever going to pay off. Boy, am I glad it did! (howling)

Narrator: The Fall season meant it was time to shut down the camp before the snows of winter. Because Fizzy "struck it rich!" it also meant it was time to leave Alaska and live in Seattle. There Faust spent his last days enjoying the sunshine and the rain. When Faust died, *The Seattle Daily Times* newspaper printed a story about Faust's life. That made Fizzy very happy because Faust was her pride and joy.