

'I'm sorry, my boy, but we can't take you in,' she said, smilingly. 'Our circle is only for girls; and, besides, it is limited to ten members and we are full already. But we shall be glad to help you.'

'And you can't let me jine, no way?'

He smiled persuasively, but his smile vanished at the positive refusal on her face.

'I'm awfully sorry,' he said dismally. 'I'd counted for sure on it. And—and I'd kinder promised a pair o' shoes to that little Eytalian.' He gazed thoughtfully on the floor for a few moments, then his face suddenly brightened.

'I s'pose you have consider'ble runnin' round to do?'

'Yes,' wondering what was coming next.

'Well, s'pose I jine as run-around member? You see,' complacently. 'I don't care shucks for mud and slush and rainy weather, and all of 'em would be mighty hard on your nice dresses and pretty shoes. I could run arrants and fetch and carry things; and I'd be great on finding poor folks. Now what do you say?' and he looked at her so confidently that she forgot the ragged clothes and poverty, and only saw the brave, earnest soul looking through the clear eyes. Her gaze wandered to the girls, questioningly. May Whitely came promptly to the rescue.

'Fellow members!' she cried, 'I move we create the office of Cavalier and Run. Around Messenger Extraordinary in our circle!' She paused until an 'I second the motion!' came from somewhere in the room.

'Good!' said Miss Leeson, catching the girls' spirit. 'It is moved and seconded that the office be male. All in favor of the motion please signify by the usual sign.'

There was a quick upraising of hands, accompanied by smothered laughing.

'Contrary minds the same sign. It is a vote. Anything more?'

'Yes,' May went on. 'I further move that we appoint Mr.' — glancing inquiringly at the boy.

'Lish,' looking at her a little doubtfully. 'Mr. Lish—'

'Carter,' added Kate Markham.

'Mr. Lish' Carter,' said May calmly, 'to the office just created.' The president put the question and the new member was un-animously voted in.

'Now,' went on the irrepressible girl, 'let us inquire regarding the philanthropic enterprises in which our colleague is interested.'

The boy gazed at her with a puzzled expression on his face, but detecting an under-current of merriment in the room he took courage and bowed his thanks.

'Be I a reg'lar member?' he asked beamingly as he rose to his feet, 'and can I fetch in my poor folks?'

'We shall be very glad to hear about them,' said Miss Leeson.

There was not the least trace of embarrassment in the face of the boy, nor any hesitation in the eager voice which poured forth the story of the 'poor folks.' Even the girls felt themselves coming under the influence of his enthusiasm as he proceeded.

'Are they actually starving?' asked one of the girls, as he paused for a moment's breath.

'No,' m' promptly. 'Pap's been sendin' 'em taters, off and on, and Ben and me give 'em most of our walnuts and chestnuts. And then I dig 'em a few clams now and agin, when the weather 'lows, and hunt wood for 'em. But they'm desprit off! most desprit! The father and mother's sick and there's six small children, and

none of 'em ain't much good for anything. You see,' patronizingly, 'they'm Eytalians and only come here last fall. They don't know our talk yet, nor how to scuffle round for vittles. They jest huddle up close to the fireplace and—and famish,' knitting his brows for a suitable word. 'And, would you b'leeve it!' excitedly, 'there ain't a blessed shoe in the whole fambly! Them children paddle round in the snow and water barefoot, and when it's awful cold they wrap their feet up in old rags. The biggest boy helps me some, and it's him I want to git shoes for. That's why I jined the club,' glancing around the room as though he wished to impress this fact upon them. 'I couldn't see no way to git 'em alone.'

'Do they live near you?' asked Clara.

'Bout half a mile, But their house ain't got any floor, like oun. They live right on the bare ground.'

'Hasn't anybody helped them besides your folks?' Clara asked again.

'No,' m; but we've got along pretty well so fur. You see,' proudly, 'my pap's a real good provider. Last fall he chopped wood enough to last all winter; and he worked round 'mong the farmers and took his pay in small taters—hog taters, they call 'em,' in smiling explanation. 'We had 'most four barrels full. And I sold clams myself and bought some salt and a barrel o' tur-nips. I guess we'd a had plenty to stand us clean through the winter if it hadn't been for so many mouths. Eight Eytalians can eat a pile o' stuff when they'm hungry.'

'Yes,' assented Miss Leeson, when he paused as though waiting for confirmation of his statement.

'I heard pap ask Pete Gunny yes'day,' the boy resumed with another smiling glance around the room, 'if he know'd anybody in the village who'd be willin' to help a poor fambly. That's what made Pete tell about your club. Pap know'd the taters was 'most gone and I guess he thought Ben and me couldn't scratch round lively enough to keep two famblies goin'. You see, pap's down with rheumaticks.'

'Yes; so I hear. But was it just right for you to give away all of your potatoes? If you are not careful you will need help yourselves.'

'Oh, we'm all right!' answered the boy carelessly. 'There's only four of us, and Ben and me's both well. We ought to be able to look arter one fambly. But how 'bout the shoes for the Eytalian? S'pose we'll be able to git 'em?'

'Oh, yes,' answered Miss Leeson; 'the children shall have shoes. Haven't we some on hand?' turning to one of the girls.

'There's the lot Mrs. Briggs sent in. They are almost as good as new. And there are some jackets and other things.'

'Very well. And if any of you have shoes or underclothing or anything at home which you think will be useful, and which you do not need, suppose you send them in to-morrow morning. The committee will make a selection. We shall have to buy some provisions and perhaps a few other things. Now,' turning to the boy, 'suppose you tell us how old the children are, that we may have some idea about providing for them.'

'You don't mean all of 'em!'

'Yes, all.'

'Won't they be jest tickled!'—he cried, enthusiastically. 'Shoes all round and—and other things! Why, they won't know what they'm walkin' on, they'll be so set up! The lame one'll want a jacket, if it can be

squeezed out. He 'ain't nothin but a call-ker waist and short britches!'

'How shall we send the things down?' asked Miss Leeson.

'I can get papa's carryall,' said Kate.

'That will be just the thing! Suppose you and May Whitely act as committee to deliver them and see what more is needed. Can you be here to-morrow?' to the boy.

'Yes,' m. 'Tain't much over a mile.'

'The girls will want you to act as guide. What time?' to Kate.

'Ten o'clock.'

The next day was pleasant, and when the girls arrived they found the new member waiting patiently on the steps. He insisted on carrying all the bundles and stowing them away in the carriage, and then he climbed up on the front seat beside Kate and took the reins, which she smilingly offered him.

'I suppose you know how to drive.'

'Yes,' m, pretty well. 'I've often driv hosses for the seaweeders.'

After leaving the village the road wound across the fields and down along the sandy shore of the salt ponds, and finally dwindled into little more than a footpath. At last the boy stopped in front of a small cabin.

Springing from the carriage he turned to assist the girls; then he took an armful of bundles and started toward the cabin.

It required but little investigation to prove that the family were in dire need. Kate took out her note-book and made copious entries. When they returned to the carriage she and May lookd very grave.

'We will go to your home now,' she said to the boy, as she took the whip and touched the horse lightly. 'We want to be introduced to your mother and Ben.'

'They'll be awful glad to see you,' he said delightedly. 'I told 'em all about our club last night.'

'We should have blundered sadly if we had offered to give that fine boy anything,' said Kate as she and May drove home. 'But I have spoken to papa about it, and he is going to give him some odd jobs to do. Lish' shall have new boots, as well as his "Eytalians." —"American Messenger.'

### 'Not as I Will.'

Helen Hunt Jackson.

Blindfolded and alone I stand  
With unknown thresholds on each hand;  
The darkness deepens as I grope,  
Afraid to fear, afraid to hope;  
Yet this one thing I learn to know  
Each day more surely as I go,  
That doors are opened, ways are made,  
Burdens are lifted or are laid,  
By some great law unseen and still,  
Unfathomed purpose to fulfil,  
'Not as I will.'

Blindfolded and alone I wait,  
Loss seems too bitter, gain too late;  
Too heavy burdens in the load,  
And joy few helpers on the road;  
And joy is weak and grief is strong,  
And years and days so long, so long;  
Yet this one thing I learn to know  
Each day more surely as I go,  
That I am glad the good and ill,  
By changeless law are ordered still,  
'Not as I will.'

'Not as I will!'—the sound grows sweet  
Each time my lips the words repeat.  
'Not as I will!'—the darkness feels  
More safe than light when this thought  
steals,  
Like whispered voice, to calm and bless  
All unrest and all loneliness.  
'Not as I will,' because the One  
Who loved us first and best has gone  
Before us on the road, and still  
For us must all His love fulfil—  
'Not as we will.'