

# THE KIND DEEDS MESSENGER

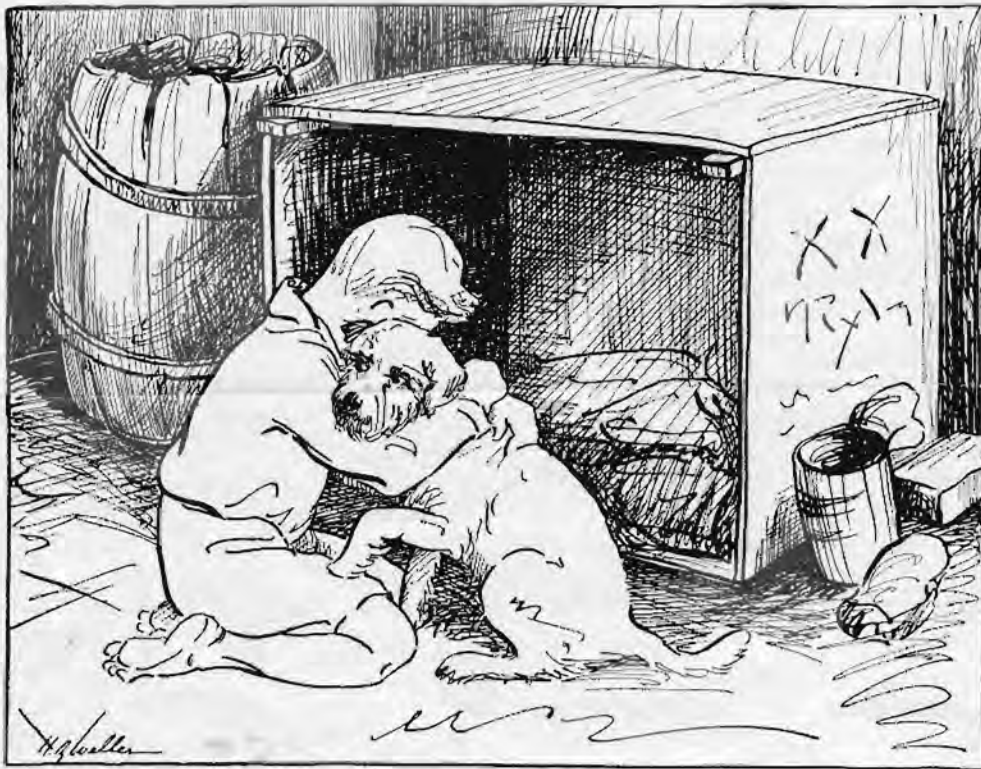
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"If children can be made to understand that it is just and noble to be humane, even to what we term inferior animals, it will do much to give them a higher character and tone through life. There is nothing meaner than barbarous and cruel treatment of the dumb creatures that cannot answer us or resent the misery which is so often needlessly inflicted on them."—JOHN BRIGHT.

## A BOY AND HIS DOG

By IDA KENNISTON



The boy was down on his knees by the old packing-box that was Rags' sleeping place. Rags, as always, was over-joyed to see his young master. He leaped upon him, kissed him, put two little shaggy forepaws on the boy's breast, and said in every way a dog could—"I love you! You're just the best person in all the world." His tail wagged joyfully.

The boy's face was very sober. He clutched the little dog to him and buried his face in the clean, shaggy fur. "O, Rags! I can't stand it if they send me away from you. I *won't* go to the Reform School. Rags! Rags!"

With the quick sympathy and understanding that dogs have, Rags somehow sensed that his master was in trouble. They had shared good times and hard times together, Rags and Angelo.

Angelo Spagliotti, as he was called, lived in the old "North End" of Boston. There were many Italians there, mostly a peaceable, hard-working set of people. The little children were often beautiful, with the great dark eyes of sunny Italy. Angelo was blue-eyed, with a thatch of light-brown hair.

You see, it was the first week of the "long vacation," and Angelo, although he stood high in his class and was considered by his teacher to be one of the "good boys," had got into trouble.

Strolling by one of the public markets, Rags at his heels, he had been unable to resist temptation. He knew Rags was hungry. The boy felt a swift, unreasoning anger. With all those long rows of market stalls, crowded with good things to eat, why should his beloved Rags go unfed? Angelo grabbed a plump

"bologna" sausage, crammed it into his pocket and strolled on. But he was seen!

Next morning he had to appear in the Children's Court. There were half a dozen other young boys there for a "hearing" before a kind-faced judge. The complaint against each small offender was made, the officer made a brief report, and witnesses who wished to speak for or against the boy were heard. Then the judge took each child alone with him into an inner room. There the judge talked with him, kindly but firmly, "as man to man," one of the boys said.

It was not the first time, nor the second, that Angelo had been before the court. It was the *third* time. That was what made it so serious. Also Mr. and Mrs. Spagliotti had talked the matter over a long time the night before and they were both in court this morning. Mrs. Spagliotti very earnestly and with many gestures tried to tell the judge what a bad boy Angelo was and that the best place for him for a long time to come would be the Reform School.

When the judge had taken Angelo into the inner room, the judge looked at the boy silently for a few moments. Then he said gently, "Angelo, you don't look to me like a boy who would steal. I heard what your father and mother said about you, but somehow I don't believe you are a bad boy."

"They're not my father and mother!" exclaimed Angelo. "He—he's my stepfather. My mother was Scotch—and my name *isn't* Angelo. It's Angus. My mother died when I was five years old and then he married again. And he's always called me Angelo Spagliotti."

"What was your own father's name?" asked the judge.

"Gordon—My name's Angus Gordon and when I grow up I'm going to *be* Angus Gordon," said the boy with a lift of his head and a flash of the eye.

"O," said the judge, as if he were thinking it over. "But would your own mother like to know that Angus Gordon grew up in a Reform School?"

The boy looked down. "Please, Mr. Judge, *don't* send me to the Reform School. I—I—couldn't have Rags if I went there and he'd *die* without me. I know he would, same as Charlie Chaplin's dog died when Charlie went off and left him."

"Tell me about Rags," said the judge.

So Angus, a little more quietly now, told how he had found Rags, a hungry, lost little puppy, several months ago. How he had taken him home for awhile until "Ma" Spagliotti got cross and wouldn't have him any more. And he lives with my chum, Jerry Mulligan, and they're good to him. But Rags knows he's *my* dog," said Angus.

The judge talked with Angus for some time longer.

"A boy who will steal—even for his dog—is headed in the wrong direction. You know that, Angus, as well as I do. Don't you?"

"Ye-es, sir," replied the boy.

"Now Angus, I'm going to ask your father—I mean your step-father, to let you go home with me tonight. You will be my guest. I think I have a plan that will be better for you than a Reform School."

There was a questioning look in the boy's eyes and the judge smiled kindly. "Don't worry, son. It's a plan that means you can have Rags with you!"

It was with a confident step and his head held high that Angus returned to the court room, walking side by side with the judge.

That day was a busy one with Judge Meriden. But somehow he found time for a long distance telephone talk with some one in Maine. He also talked over the telephone with a young surgeon at the Angell Memorial Hospital. Angus had told the judge, with an eager look of admiration in his eyes, of how the surgeon had mended Rags' broken leg after "Pa" Spagliotti had given the little dog a severe beating. Judge Meriden, at the phone, smiled and nodded as if he were pleased at what the surgeon told him of Angus.

Rags was invited to share the visit at the judge's home, too. Such a bathing and brushing as the little dog received at Angus' hands early that afternoon. He wore his "best" collar, too, that the surgeon had given him, and at 4 o'clock the judge, Angus and Rags were riding out in the judge's car to the old Colonial house in Lexington, where the judge lived with his sister.

This was the plan the judge had made for Angus. He was to be "paroled" in the judge's care for an indefinite period. Angus and Rags were to be sent to live in a little village in Maine with a kind old lady whom Judge Meriden spoke of as "Aunt Nancy." "She is 'Aunt Nancy' to half the village," he said. "I mean that is what the people call her. She likes boys and she can make the best doughnuts and the best gingersnaps I ever ate in my life." You see, the judge had lived in that same village when he was a boy.

"But you must help Aunt Nancy all you can, Angus. She will be paid for your board and care, but I want you to be a real help to Aunt Nancy; to learn to chop wood for her, pick berries, go errands, cut the grass. Do everything you can in return for her kindness in taking you and Rags into her home. Will you, Angus?"

"Yes, sir!" said Angus earnestly.

Next day the judge took Angus with him to make final arrangements with "Pa" Spagliotti. Papers were signed, committing the boy to the judge's care. Angus

said goodbye to Mr. and Mrs. Spagliotti with a queer little feeling at his heart. After all they had been kind to him, mostly. He kissed the three young Spagliottis goodbye. The youngest one, Viola Rosetta, was just learning to walk. She cooed and laughed at his hug and the shy kiss he dropped on top of her curly head.

Then the judge took Angus to one of the large stores "up-town" and fitted him out with shoes, stockings, shirts and a khaki suit almost like a Boy Scout's! There was a cap, and handkerchiefs, and a light-weight canvas "duffle bag" to carry the things in. The judge even remembered a box of dog biscuits for Rags! A kind that the box said "All good dogs love them."

The judge and Angus had a talk that night in the judge's study in the old Colonial home. The judge did not say very much—but what he did say was spoken from the heart. It was not "preachy." It was spoken as a kind, understanding older brother or a wise, loving father might have spoken. Angus carried some of the words in his heart for years. When he said good-night to the judge, it was with a firm resolve in his own mind that he *would* live up to the judge's good opinion of him, and grow up to be a man the judge might be proud of.

Next morning Angus and Rags went to the big "North Station" to take the train for Maine. The judge's sister went with them to the station to see them safely started. Rags had to ride in the baggage car. Neither the dog nor his master liked to be parted, but a friendly young baggageman assured Angus that the little dog would be well looked out for.

It was a long, hot ride in the train. But before 12 o'clock they had arrived at the little village. The conductor had had a friendly word for Angus now and then and he saw him safely off and even went with him to see that Rags had also arrived. It was a joyful meeting when the little dog saw his master again.

A boy some two or three years older than Angus, dressed in a Boy Scout's uniform, with a gay red handkerchief knotted at his neck, came up to him. "Are you Angus Gordon? Aunt Nancy, I mean Mrs. Tilton, asked me to meet you. Is that your dog? My name's Ted Bunker."

The boys shook hands. Angus wished that *he* was a Boy Scout. It would be two years more before he would be old enough to join the Scouts.

That summer in the Maine village, with its shady elms, its old farm houses, was to be the beginning of a new and happy life for Angus and Rags. With Aunt Nancy they had found at last a real home. There was work and fun and good playmates, yes, and real adventure and danger before the winter snows whitened the fields. Of these you will read in a later number of the KIND DEEDS MESSENGER.

## "THANKFULS"

By IDA KENNISTON

The girls of the Sunny Hour Club were having a meeting at Vera Tucker's home. They had spent the first hour in sewing on some dainty aprons and pretty bags for dusters or handkerchiefs. These were to be sent later as gifts to the dear people at the Old Ladies' Home.

When the sewing work had been put away they had music. Julia played the piano and the girls practiced on two new songs they had been learning.

Then Vera suggested a "Thankful game."

"Thanksgiving Day comes this month, you know," she said. She asked the club secretary to pass around the club pencils and two or three sheets of paper for each girl. They always kept these in a box ready for use at any meeting.

When they were all ready, with pencil and paper, Vera explained. "We are each of us to make a list of things we are thankful for. I don't mean just the usual things, like 'I am thankful for a happy home' or 'I am thankful for my father and mother,' or 'I am thankful that I am well and happy.' Of course we all have those blessings—and we *are* grateful. But this is just a game you know. Please try to think of odd and unusual things to be thankful for, or perhaps for things so very common and usual that we hardly remember to be grateful for them. And put in some funny ones if you can think of any."

"How many shall we write?" asked one of the girls.

"Write as many as you please," replied Vera. "Perhaps from six to ten would be a good number. When we have finished we'll read them aloud and we will vote which paper is the best. Or we will call that girl the winner who has the greatest number that no one else had thought of."

There was silence for a few minutes. Mollie sucked her pencil thoughtfully. Emily looked out of the window. Harriet began to chew her nails, until she suddenly remembered she had promised not to do that any more. At last one or two girls began to write and soon they were all busy, smiling as they wrote.

Each girl had been given two or three sheets of paper, so that if she did not like what she had written she could try again. Some of them wrote, scratched out, and wrote again.

When time was up Emily had only four on her list. Mollie had written ten. The other girls had, as Vera had suggested, "from six to ten." Vera asked if they would rather have each girl read her own list aloud or have the papers collected, shuffled and then read

aloud by some one, so that the girls would not know at first whose list was being read. They decided to have Vera read all the lists.

Here are some of the "Thankfuls" from different papers:

"I am thankful that the brave men in the light-houses keep the lights burning to save the men and ships from danger."

That was from Mollie's paper. Mollie had an uncle who was a sea captain and he had told her many stories of danger and ship-wreck on rocky coasts or sandy bars.

"Did any one else think of that?" asked Vera. No one else had thought of it.

"I am thankful that little babies and kittens and puppies are so cunning and so much fun. It makes people be kind to them."

That was one of Emily's.

"I am thankful that I live in California." They all clapped at that.

The oddest list, as might have been expected, was from Harriet. These are some of her "Thankfuls":

"I am thankful that there are nut trees, because if there were not, the squirrels wouldn't have anything to eat."

"I am thankful that there are oceans and rivers and lakes, because all the fishes would be very uncomfortable on dry land."

"I am thankful I learned the alphabet."

"I am thankful that my hair is curly."

It would take too long to tell all the "Thankfuls" that all the girls wrote. Here are just three more:

"I am thankful that the Heavenly Father made birds and that they can sing and fly and be so happy."

"I am thankful that we have the Sunny Hours Club."

"I am thankful that we have the KIND DEEDS MESSENGER in our school and that it helps children to learn how to be kind to animals."

The girls could not decide which list was really the best and after some discussion Harriet said cheerfully: "Madame President, I move that we vote *all* the lists are best." Everyone laughed at this and several said, "Second the motion." So it was voted that "All the Thankful lists are the best lists."

## REPORT OF RADIO KIND DEEDS CLUB

*Station KQW, San Jose, California*

COUSIN DORIS

We now have nineteen children earning their membership in the Radio Kind Deeds Club and hope that soon the two necessary kind acts will be performed and we can greet them as real members.

Our monthly entertainment dedicated to the children in homes and hospitals took place on October 7. Many of the children on last month's program once more favored their less fortunate little sisters and brothers. The Chief Scout and Cousin Doris took their usual part, the Chief Scout opening with his song "Smiles," then giving riddles and many interesting features. Cousin Doris gave the short play, "Farmer Kind Heart and Light-foot, the Deer," adapted from Thornton Burgess's book, "Light-foot, the Deer." This play is being used as the story-board project in the schools this year.

We were made happy by many letters of appreciation from the little invalids in hospitals and hope we may be able to continue to give them this pleasure.

Answers to questions on October story of The Country Home, titled "Qualities of Character We All Want to Have":

1. Self-denial.
2. Living beyond one's means.
3. Kindness.
4. Justice.
5. Helping others.
6. Humane work.
7. People may talk as much as they like about their religion, but if it does not teach them to be kind and good to man and beast it is all a sham. Very true and fine.
8. Kindness, self-denial, justice, economy, strength and humaneness.



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