

"CHUCK OLALLA."

HE was only a shoemaker. He was short and lame, limping painfully when he walked. His face was ugly, red and freckled, and his coarse hair and coarser beard were almost scarlet, while small, light eyes and shaggy, sandy brows added the finishing touches to a face that was positively repulsive until one came to know it well.

His name was Waterbury, and the Indians had bestowed upon him the sobriquet, "Chuck Olalla," "chuck" signifying water, and "olalla," berry. He had been homeless and friendless as long as his memory reached backward. If ever a father's pride or a mother's tenderness had been lavished upon him, they were of the things of which he knew not.

He could neither read nor write, and he cared little for men; but he had his old, brown pipe, and he used to sit out on his back porch, deriving infinite pleasure from the changes in the sky, and fancying that the winds whispered all kinds of fanciful stories as it stole through the yarrow and golden-rod and bore the down of the dandelion away.

It was a lucky day for Jamie Waterbury when he drifted into the little mining town on Cracker creek, in Eastern Oregon. Here he erected his little "double sided" shop, with a "living room" behind, and painted a big, red boot upon a rough board for a sign.

Then he fitted up a hard, uncomfortable bed in the back room, and bought an old stove and some pans and kettles, fastened a gorgeously illustrated newspaper over his small, high window, and laid in a few necessary provisions. Out in the shop he placed his tools neatly on the bench, hung bits of leather here and there upon the rude walls, put his beloved pipe where it would be always handy, and declared himself ready for business.

"Not as it's very comf'terble," he said, looking about him, when his simple arrangements were completed, "nur vury han'some nuther. But still," and Jamie gave a long sigh of content, "it's home, an' that means a sight to a man what's never hed one. Mean' my pipe oughter be sorter happy here together ef on'y my business 'll be sorter lively. I wisht I'd hev a cust'mer the first day, jest fer luck, like."

And Jamie's wish was unexpectedly fulfilled. Some one did come in the first day his shop was open; came, bending gracefully, with sweet lips and a light step, through his low door; some one who was tall and slim, and who wore a loose white gown, with a wide blue sash tied about her waist, and no covering over her soft, brown curls. But whether her coming was for luck—ah! Jamie, it is best to not make wishes in this uncomfortable world—it would be difficult to discover.

At all events, the young person in the white gown gave a little start of disappointment when she saw him, but immediately recovered her self possession and smiled kindly at Chuck Olalla, who was covered with blushes, the victim of visible dismay at this charming apparition.

"I'm your next door neighbor," she said, pleasantly. "I have the postoffice and confectionery store, and mamma and I have rooms behind—the same as you—so we must be good friends. I've brought in my slipper for you to mend. Can you do it nicely?"

She looked away from him as she spoke, pitying his confusion, not from any innate refinement of feeling, but because she had been taught at boarding school that it was the correct thing to do. And Chuck Olalla had not expected any such visitor as this, and his lips were dumb.

Miss Deane sat down on the rude, three-legged stool, which he awkwardly offered her, and chatted graciously while he stitched away at the slipper. She had lived there six months, she told him proudly, and, besides the postoffice, she had done very well in the candy and cigar line. She was glad he was to live so near, for sometimes she was afraid of tramps. It was very silly of her, of course, but still she thought she would sleep more soundly to know that there was some one near if ever she needed help. Then she paused and bit her pretty lip, for the thought came to her quite suddenly that he, with his stunted body and lame foot, would be but a broken reed to lean upon.

Perhaps the same reflection came to Jamie, for he sighed and looked wistfully away at the mountains a moment, turning the dainty, high-heeled slipper over and over in his hand in an absent-minded way. Finally the work was finished.

"Very nicely done, too," Miss Jennie said, giving him a brief, sweet smile. Then she paid him and went away.

The ugly, but tender-hearted, fellow took up the little silver piece she had given him, pierced it with one of his tools, and, putting a stout leather string through it, hung it about his neck.

"It's my good luck piece," he said to himself with a wonderful lightness of heart—and he wore it there until the day of his death.

That was the one happy summer of Chuck Olalla's life. Miss Jennie was a very commonplace young woman, indeed; but in his eyes she was an angel set upon a high, unapproachable throne. In reality, she was a girl who had been born in the west, and knew no other life. She had lived always in small country towns, but hundreds of cheap novels, returnable at half price, and six months at an equally cheap boarding school, had spoiled her for being an honest, industrious farmer's wife, while it left her unfitted for