

# SCRATCH, THE NEWSBOY'S DOG

A Dramatic Reading

By  
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The scene of this little story is laid near the railroad district of one of our large cities. It is a bitter cold night, and a poor thinly clad little newsboy is seen slowly wending his way through the network of tracks toward the only home he knows--an old abandoned boxcar. As he meets a possible customer, he cries:

“Evenin’ papers! Herald--Tribune--Register--all about the big bank robbery! Paper, sir?--

“Yes, sir. Here’s the Tribune. Thank you, sir. It sure is agittin’ colder.”

And the little fellow trudges along. As he passes a small cafe he presses his face against the window:

“Whoopee! Jist look in that winder! Hot dogs, ’n’ baked beans, ’n’ hot coffee!” (Regretfully)  
“None o’ that fer me tonight though. I jist had ten cents ’n’ I spent that fer milk to feed Scratch.” (Looks up, smiles and whistles to dog) “Well, if there ain’t my little Scratch a-comin’ to meet me! Here, Scratch! Here, Scratch!” (Pats dog) “If you ain’t the cutest little dickens! Gee! I’ll never forgit that day I found you down here by the tracks, jist pert near starved to death, nothin’ left of you but skin, an’ bones, an’ fleas--oh, plenty of fleas. Gosh, how you did scratch! Didn’t seem like any name but Scratch would be appropriate fer ya--Say, by the way, old feller, jist see what I brought ya fer yer supper. A big bottle o’ milk all fer you.” (Pours out milk) “You see, Scratch, big strong fellers like me don’t need no milk! It’s jist fer babies an’ nice little dogs like you. Scratch, do you ’member when we used to have meat ’n’ pertaters, ’n’ sometimes pie, when Mom was here. Now we ain’t even got a home--jist nothin’ ’cept this old box car to crawl into nights--an’ it’s gittin’ awful cold. But shucks! I’d be a lot colder if I didn’t have you to keep me warm. Oh, Scratch, what’ll I ever do if anything happens to you? Why, you’re all the folks I got since Mom went away.” (Looks up sadly) “Oh, Mom, me an’ Scratch is so lonesome without you; why did God take you away from us? But I’m tryin’ to be good, Mom, jist like you told me to do, so that some day me, an’ you, an’ Scratch kin be together up there. But Mom, tomorrow’s my birthday. I’ll be nine, you know, and you’ve always been with me--every birthday--an’ I want you so bad.” (Bravely brushes away tears)  
“But I’m gonna be brave like you said, an’ I orta be perty thankful to have Scratch to come home to nights. Tell ya a lot of fellers would be perty tickled to have a lovin’ little dog waitin’ fer ’em--Oh, Mom! Don’t let anything happen to Scratch!--Scratch!--SCRATCH!--There’s a engine a-comin’; git off of the track!--Oh!” (Covers face with hands for a moment, then registering anguish, walks over and picks up dog)

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