



BY ALISON L. RANDALL

(Based on a true story)

And thou shalt do that which is right and good in the sight of the Lord (Deuteronomy 6:18).

Hetty stepped over the milk bottles near the front door and began the long walk to school. She breathed in the cool spring air and smiled. In just one week it would be May Day, and Hetty couldn't wait. There would be parades, festivals, and fairs all over England.

May Day had always been one of Hetty's favorite holidays, but this year it would be even better. This year she was 11, and the May Queen would be chosen from her school class.

As Hetty skipped along the cobblestones, she tried to imagine who it would be. Maybe Sara. She was pretty, and would look nice holding the gold ribbon in the maypole dance. Alice would too. She wore nice clothes, and the May Queen always had a new dress. The May Queen also needed to be a good student.

Hetty paused. She was smart. Was it possible she might be chosen?

Hetty looked at her reflection in a shop window. Her plain dress blended with the gray cobblestones behind her. She'd never had a new dress before, only ones her sister had outgrown. Hetty tried to picture herself leading the parade in a hand-me-down. No, she couldn't be the May Queen.

At mid-morning the headmaster entered her classroom. "It's time to announce the May Queen," he said. "But first, the attendants."

Hetty held her breath while the headmaster read four names. Sara and Alice were among them.

"And the May Queen is . . . Hetty Neal!"

Sara and Alice glared at Hetty, and she knew what they were thinking. She

didn't fit the picture of a May Queen. No one knew that more than Hetty.

After school Hetty knocked on the headmaster's door. "Are you sure?" she asked him.

"Yes," he said.

"But I can't buy a new dress."

"That's not important. Just wear your best."

Hetty didn't feel any better.

When she got home, she went straight to the garden. Flowers often made her feel better, but only a few green shoots poked through the earth.

Hetty's mother opened the back door. "Is something wrong?"

"No," Hetty said. "Well, yes. I'm the May Queen."

"That's wonderful!" Mother exclaimed.

Hetty nodded. It was wonderful. But terrible at the same time.

"Your dad will be proud," Mother said. "I'll send him a telegram at work." Hetty's father was away working in the southern part of the country.

Mother noticed Hetty's expression. "What's bothering you?" she asked.

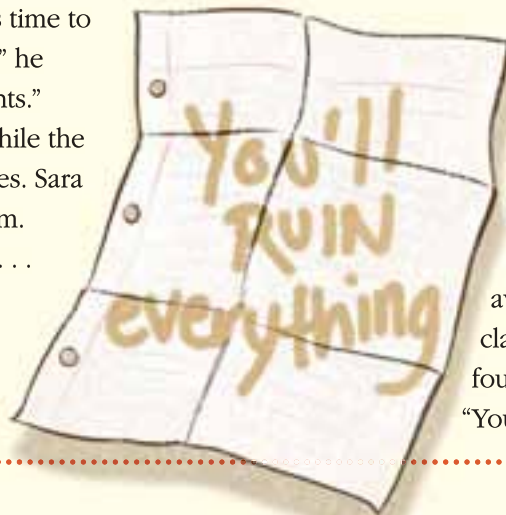
It's just . . ." Hetty hesitated. "I won't have a new dress."

Mother looked worried. "Do you need one?" she asked.

Hetty couldn't lie. "No," she said.

Mother smiled. "There's nothing to worry about then. You'll do fine."

Sara and Alice didn't seem to agree. They both looked away when Hetty walked into class the next day, and Hetty found a note in her desk that said, "You'll ruin everything."



After school, Hetty went to the garden when she got home. If only she had flowers. Even her plain gray dress would look nice with a bouquet. But though the green shoots were growing taller, she knew the buds wouldn't open in time.

Mother came to the door. "I've heard from your dad," she said. "He'll try to make it home for the holiday."

Hetty smiled at the good news. Then she had a thought. "Are the flowers blooming where he is?"

"I would think so," Mother said.

"Could he bring some home?"

The rest of the week crawled by. Sara and Alice ignored Hetty. But the day before the celebration, Sara walked up to Hetty and whispered two words: "Stay home."

After school, Hetty fled to the garden. Still no flowers, and no sign of her father, either. Should she stay home? Should she let someone who looked more like a May Queen take her place?

Later that evening, Hetty heard heavy steps on the porch, and then the door swung open. There stood Father with a large box in his arms.

"How's my May Queen?" he asked.

Hetty ran to him and wrapped her arms around his waist. Then she peered into the

box. It was brimming with flowers, all kinds and colors, even more than she had hoped for.

"Will these do?" Father asked.

"Oh, yes!" Hetty pictured herself at the head of the parade, decorated with blossoms from head to toe. Alice and Sara would be amazed.

Then Hetty had another idea.

The next morning she was up early, but she was still late for school. When she walked in the classroom, her instructor

looked relieved. "Hetty, we were beginning to worry," she said.

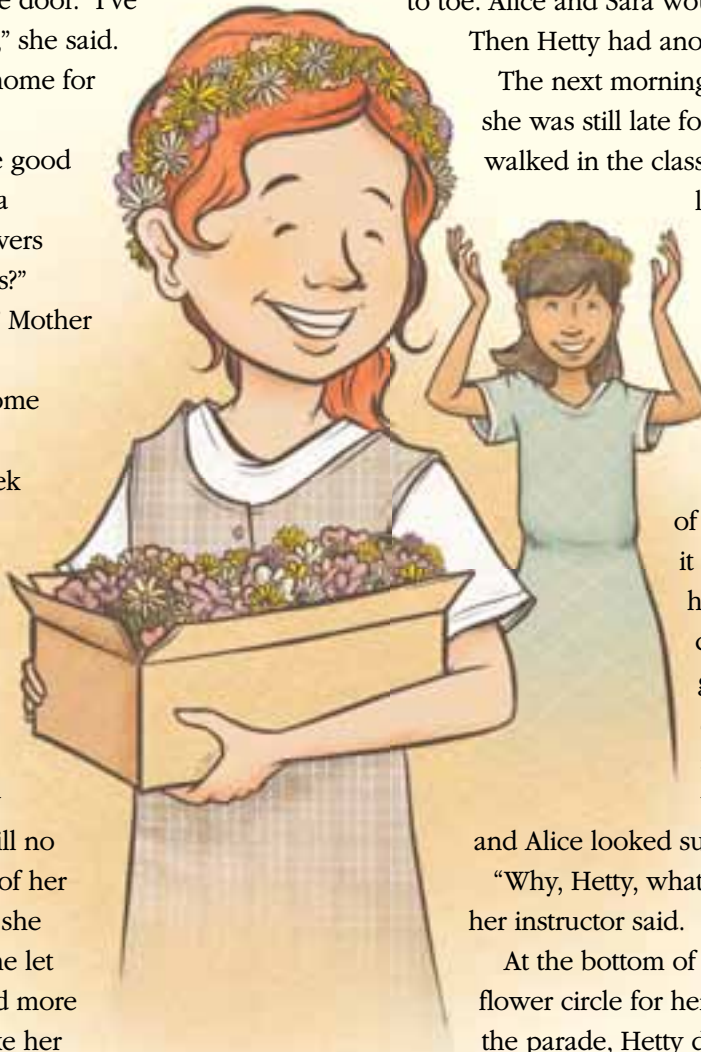
"I'm sorry to be late," Hetty said. "I was making these."

From out of her box she took a circlet of flowers and placed it on her instructor's head. Out came more circles, one for each girl in the class, and small bouquets for her attendants. As they took their bouquets, Sara

and Alice looked surprised.

"Why, Hetty, what a queenly thing to do," her instructor said.

At the bottom of the box was one more flower circle for her own head. As she led the parade, Hetty didn't feel plain or poor. She felt like a queen. ●



"I testify that no one of us is less treasured or cherished of God than another. I testify that He loves each of us. . . . He doesn't measure our talents or our looks; He doesn't measure our professions or our possessions."⁴

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

