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## The Go-Between

by Miriam Silver

“No!” Richard shouted, “you cannot help,”

“Yes I can,” his younger brother responded with a glare.

“Hope it rains on your rotten stall” William threatened and ran away straight into his mother.

“No one will want Richard’s rotten books, all boring any way...” he complained to his long suffering parent.

“Now William, surely you can think of something, perhaps offer some of your...” she suggested hopefully only to be interrupted by, “Good idea,” and her son dashed off to share it with his friends, Henry, Douglas and Ginger.

These he found happily established in their badly made somewhat dangerous construction held together with string and plasticine, which they called their den.

“Got’n idea” he shouted at them enjoying a tussle in the dusty floor.

No one took any notice.

“There’s a fete, come on, we can sell some comics, ” he managed to bellow out

over their noise.

“Gimme, it’s my turn,”

“No it isn’t.”

“Been confiscated anyway.”

“Wanna keep my comics to swop.”

“We can even have a bow and arrow stall,” he added, hopefully.

It was no use, he was on his own, they were not interested, so he wandered off determined to be a nuisance to his brother.

The first person he saw was his mother busy with her knitting stall at which his help was not needed but in a desperate effort to steer him away from his brother she suggested,

“Perhaps Mrs Milton, over there, she seems to be struggling...” this was to her son a welcome idea, he was good with elderly ladies especially when they were trying to set up a stall with homemade cakes.

Smoothing his unruly hair and wiping his hands on his shorts he said, in his most charming voice,

“Can I help you with that? I’m very strong” immediately picked up a tray laden with iced cakes.

“ Oh! Thank you, I am finding it all a bit difficult, there’s more over there, in the hall.” and smiled benignly at a small boy.

William’s eyes glistened at the sight of all the cakes and quickly went to work, lifting, dropping and tasting and was soon busily involved.

Mrs Milton fussed as she arranged her stall, worried that it was all too heavy for a small boy.

“I’m really strong, feel my muscles Mrs.Milton,” he said, albeit with his mouth full.

“Perhaps you’d like to serve the customers for me while I go and get the rest?” she said innocently.

The small boy put his heart and soul into selling those cakes, using his loudest voice to attract the crowd.

“Lovely homemade, quick, before it rains,” his description pulling them in.

And when the rains came, as they do in an English summer, William was there to help relocate the cake stall to inside the village hall where, he was more than happy to see his brother struggling with a damp overload.

“We seem to have made a great deal of money, thanks to you, young man,” Mrs Milton said.

Little did she know how ‘the young man’ had inflated all her carefully written labels, removed them and shouted prices as they came into his head while she was busy.

After everyone settled down in the hall, the Mayor gave thanks to the efforts in aid of the Spitfire fund, adding,

“But I must say a special thank you to the cake stall who have raised more than anyone else,”

Mrs.Milton patted William’s shoulder,

“Couldn’t have managed it without your help, dear boy!please accept this with my grateful thanks”

William strode off, head held high, jiggling the 2/6d in his pocket, his Mother, his go-between, looked on proudly, and he smilingly walked purposely past his glaring brother.