

# 45 Jerry's New Year

In "Jerry's New Year," the chapter from "Black Beauty" focuses on the harsh realities and the small joys experienced by Jerry, a cabman, his family, and his horse during the Christmas and New Year's Eve celebrations. Despite the festive season, Jerry and his horse, possibly Black Beauty, face demanding work hours amidst the harsh winter weather, waiting for hours outside parties while their patrons enjoy the warmth inside.

On New Year's Eve, Jerry and his horse endure a particularly difficult night, waiting in the cold until after 1 AM for two gentlemen who show no remorse for the delay. Exposed to the cutting sleet without shelter, Jerry struggles to keep warm, ultimately falling ill with a severe cough upon returning home. His wife, Polly, is depicted as caring and attentive, preparing warm meals for both Jerry and the horse to comfort them upon their late return.

The following days highlight the severity of Jerry's illness, identified as bronchitis, casting a shadow of concern and silence over their household. Their situation brightens with an unexpected gesture of community and kindness from Governor Grant, who offers to temporarily take Jerry's horse, Hotspur, to work, easing the financial strain on Jerry's family during his illness. This act of solidarity not only aids in sustaining the family but also relieves Harry, Jerry's son, from managing Hotspur's spirited nature single-handedly.

The chapter concludes with a turn towards hope. Jerry's condition improves, and through a letter from Mrs. Fowler, a former employer of Polly's, the family is presented with an opportunity to move to a cottage near her estate. This offers Jerry a less physically demanding job and promises a better future for the entire family. This chapter intricately weaves themes of hardship, family solidarity, community support, and hope, encapsulating the lives of those whose work often goes unnoticed during the holiday season, emphasizing the importance of kindness and support in overcoming adversity.