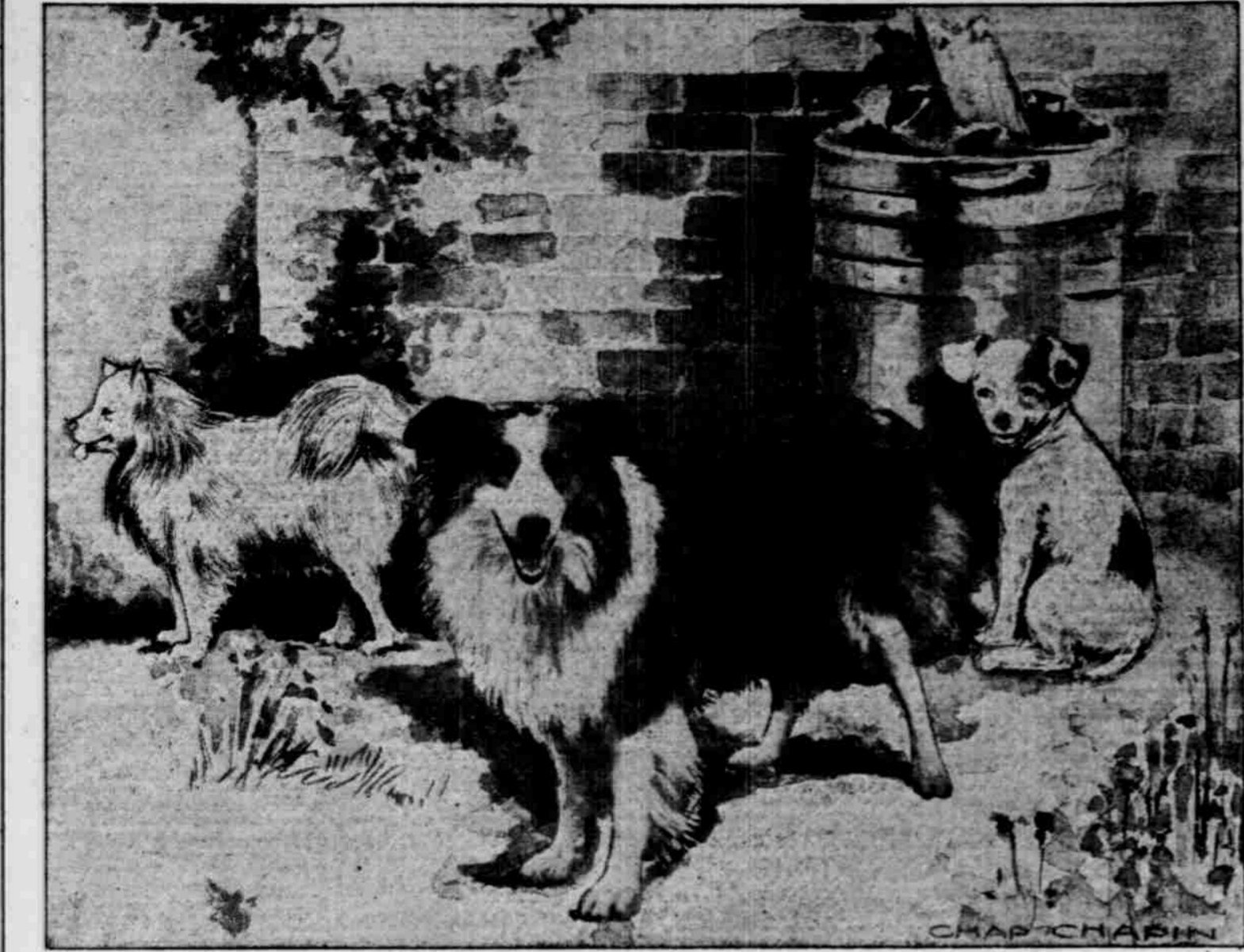


FOX TERRIER GOT EVEN WITH THE COLLIE

A Portland Story of Two Dogs Gilty of an Old Crime, by Katharine F. Breerton.



DAN, TED AND FLOSSIE.

It was the noon hour of a perfect June day. John, the hired man, had been busy all the morning mowing the lawn, and had now gone to his dinner, leaving the grass he had cut in several heaps, ready to be carried away in the wheelbarrow. The perfume of the flowers in the well-cultivated beds mingled with that of the cut grass, and the only sound to be heard in the garden was the humming of the bees as they darted hither and thither in their search for pollen and honey.

The beauties of Nature, however, were evidently wasted on Dan, the Scotch collie, and Ted, the young fox-terrier, who both lay fast asleep under the apple tree on the lawn.

Suddenly out of the henhouse in the yard back of the garden came the speckled hen.

"Cluck-cluck-cluck-cluck!" she cried. That was the way she let the world in general know she had laid an egg.

Dan raised his head and pricked up his ears. Then he yawned.

"Ted!" he said, addressing the terrier near him.

"What is it?" sleepily.

"Did you ever taste a raw egg?"

"No," said Ted, getting up slowly and stretching his shapely, delicate legs.

"Well, I'll show you the proper way, but you must promise to do exactly what I tell you."

Ted was now wide awake, and his bright black eyes looked straight into Dan's shifty brown ones.

"How and where do you get the eggs?" he inquired, suspiciously. More than once he had got into serious trouble by following the older dog's advice.

"Out of the henhouse, of course," said Dan.

"But suppose you get caught?"

Dan sniffed scornfully.

"Oh, if you are afraid you can say here, I'm going to have an egg or two," and he licked his chops in anticipation of keen enjoyment as he strolled off in his majestic manner towards the henhouse.

For a moment Ted hesitated. Then the fear of being called a "cowardly pup" by Dan was too much for him, and he followed his tempter. He found Dan in the henhouse with a broken egg on the ground before him, eagerly lapping up its contents. He looked up for a second as Ted entered.

"There is a beautiful brown one in that nest near the door," he said, "I left it purposely for you. Better hurry and eat it before any one comes." and he calmly commenced on his second egg. He had finished his third by the time Ted had the brown egg out of the nest and lying, still unbroken on the ground.

"Hurry up, youngster!" cried Dan, impatiently.

"How do you break them?" inquired Ted, timidly touching the egg with his paw.

"Go at it with a rush," said the older criminal. "Don't sit and look at it, silly. Give it a good hard bite."

Ted, thus encouraged, went at it with a rush.

The next moment he was outside the henhouse, coughing and sneezing himself black in the face. Tears ran from his eyes, and he howled with pain.

"Oh, oh, oh!" he growled and sputtered. "It had red pep-pepper in it."

The noise he made brought his master to the scene.

"So you are the egg thief, are you?" said the latter. "I see you have got hold of the egg I purposely prepared for you. It serves you right, Master Ted."

Poor Ted looked around for Dan to share his disgrace, only to find that worthy had disappeared.

When the two dogs met again later in the day behind the barn, Ted's eyes were red and his nose and mouth smarted painfully from the effects of the red pepper.

"You are a nice-looking fellow!" exclaimed Dan, very much amused at Ted's appearance.

"And you are a cowardly dog!" retorted Ted, indignantly. "Why did you go off and let me take the blame for eating all the eggs. Now they think I have been stealing for a long time, and you get off scot free. And that red pepper was awful!"

"Well, now you will know a peppered egg when you see it, Ted. I had to learn the same way."

"Do you mean to say that you knew all the time the brown egg had red pepper in it?"

"Of course I did," said Dan, scornfully. "It had a hole at one end. Young dogs will never know anything till they learn from experience." And Dan walked off wagging his tail.

"You are a horrid old hypocrite," growled Ted. "I'll get even with you for this; see if I don't!"

"No," said Annie, the cook, that even-

ing, when Ted sat up before her in the kitchen and begged to be let into the dining-room, where his master and mistress were at supper. "No, indeed, Ted, you cannot go in there. You've been stealing eggs, and all you will get for your supper will be a piece of bread. No bones for you tonight, you naughty dog!"

"Poor Ted! He felt he had been very badly treated as he sat out in the garden behind the hollyhocks with the piece of bread Annie had given him lying on the ground before him. He remembered that the butcher had brought a piece of mutton to the house that morning, and he adored mutton. Of course that wicked Dan was in the dining-room, getting plecty of nice bit-bits and all the bones. However, not having had any dinner that day, and having a ravenous appetite in spite of his troubles, Ted made up his mind to eat his bread, dry and uninviting though it certainly was.

Just as he was about to commence, he heard a pit-a-pat along the garden path leading from the house, and the next moment Dan came into sight, carrying a large bone in his mouth. Ted kept very quiet, and hidden as he was by the holly-

hocks, Dan did not see him. A little farther on he laid down the bone. He sniffed around for a moment, then quickly dug a hole in one of the flower beds, dropped the bone into it, covered it up hastily, and scampered off to the house.

Now Ted was a bright little terrier, and he took in the situation at once.

"He does not want to miss the cake and pudding scraps," he thought, "and has buried the bone till he has time to enjoy it. Well, Master Dan, you can have my bread, and I'll have your bone. Exchange is not robbery!"

An hour passed away, and it commenced to grow dark in the garden. Ted was still lying behind the hollyhocks, and before him lay the well-chewed remains of Dan's bone. He was waiting to see what Dan would do when he found his treasure gone. When Dan finally came trotting down the path, Ted was not a little astonished to see him followed by Flossie, the beautiful white spitz, that lived in the next house. Wicked delight filled Ted's heart. Dan was evidently smitten with the fair Flossie's charms, and had brought her here in order to pre-

sent her with a large mutton bone. Ted could hardly restrain from rolling over and over with joy. Dan and he were quits indeed!

"Miss Flossie," said Dan, in his lordly way, "if you will sit down and wait, I'll dig it up for you."

Flossie did as requested, her fair face lighted up with eager anticipation. She licked mutton bones.

The expression on Dan's face was a very comical one when he dug up a piece of dry bread instead of what he expected to find.

"Well, I never," was all he could say.

It was only Ted, however, who enjoyed the humorous side of the affair. Flossie's disappointed appetite affected her temper. Without a word to the discomfited Dan, she curled her beautiful tail over her shapely back, lifted her aristocratic nose high in the air, and trotted home.

When Ted crept quietly away from behind the hollyhocks, 10 minutes later, he left Dan still sitting in front of the hole in the ground, gazing with a sorrowful, mystified air at the piece of bread.

How They Kept Their Santa Claus

MARGY was crying and the boy looked serious and dismal indeed.

"She said," said Margy sobbed, "that there wasn't any Santa Claus at all, and that our fathers and mothers got all our presents for us, and that Santa was all humbug, just a sort of make-believe, to fool the little kids. And she said Sara Pickett, did, that you and me was to old to believe in such nonsense."

The boy grew soberer and soberer. "Margy," he said after a long time of thinking, "if we getter give him up, we just getter. But first let's ask father. He's coming up the lane now, with a load of pumpkins."

Father came in from the barn and up the steps like a boy. He whistled as he took off his jumper and put on his coat. He whistled as he came down the hill-way. Then, as he caught sight of the two solemn faces at the door of the sitting-room, one of them swollen and tear-stained, he stopped his whistle.

"Hello, youngsters; what's up? Margy Margy, you'll never be a man if you cry."

Father picked her up tenderly in his strong arms and right away the ache at her heart was better.

"Sara Pickett said there wasn't any Santa Claus, and we was just foolish to think so. Only babies believe in him." The smile died out of father's face. He said:

"So Sara Pickett said that, did she? Poor Sara Pickett! Let's go in by the fire and talk it over."

With Margy on his arm and the boy holding to his free hand, they went into the cozy sitting-room, where the wood fire was snapping and crackling, and the flames were leaping and making jolly shadows in the corners, while the winter dusk had begun to creep.

"Let's see," said father, as he settled into the big armchair with a child on either side. "We were talking about Santa Claus. Shall I tell you a story?"

"Oh, yes, father."

"Well, long ago there was a good bishop, and his name was Nicholas, and he lived in a far-away country. He loved children with all his heart, and the little girls and boys used to follow where he went. He would walk through the town, and the little ones would carry, and the bigger ones would hold onto the skirts of his gown in a ring around him, and he would talk with them and laugh with them and teach them songs to sing."

"Then sometimes he would find a sunny corner in the square, and the youngsters would cluster all about him, and he would tell them wonderful stories. The children would poke around in his pockets and find candy and things."

"Always on Christmas day he would put on a special coat, very big and long and full of pockets, and every pocket would be full to the brim with all the things that children love."

"Dolls?" said Margy.

"Sticks and rifles," asked the boy.

"All the things," said father. "Maybe no rifles, because that was before they were invented. But, anyway, he was funny-looking, all knobby and bumpy,



He wouldn't say a word, but just walk around to the sunny corner of the square. All the poor children who had no Christmas at home would come running and call:

"Father Nicholas! Have you a gift for me? And he always had."

"One Christmas a little girl who was so poor that she had to go barefoot in the winter, found a pair of beautiful shoes in one of his pockets. She slipped them on, and then looked up with a shining face and said:

"I think you must be a saint, Father Nicholas."

"After that they called him St. Nicholas."

"When the grown people asked why he spent his money in such a foolish way, he would say, very grave and sober:

"I do it in the name of the Christ Child."

"Well, at last good old St. Nicholas died, and all the children cried, and all the fathers and mothers cried, too. Before the next Christmas came around the grown-ups put their heads together and said:

"The body of St. Nicholas is gone, but we must not let his soul go from us. Let us keep his spirit in our hearts, each of us. Then he can never die."

"So from that time, every Christmas, the spirit of St. Nicholas comes round and knocks at the doors of the hearts of all the people and says:

"Remember St. Nicholas, and let his soul live through yours."

Now Santa Claus is just the Dutch name for St. Nicholas—a kind of pet name, because they loved him so. And so, you see although the body of St. Nicholas died, his soul lives on and on always in the hearts of the fathers and mothers and aunts and uncles and cousins, and even brothers and sisters. And you can tell that to Sara Pickett."

Margy and the boy looked up with happy eyes. The story made things so plain and true and lovelier than the old way of believing. But a new thought had struck the boy.

"Will he live in our hearts, too, father—Margy and mine?"

"He surely will, if you let him."

"Margy," whispered the boy, as they lay in their beds and all the lights were out, "let's you and me save some Christmas money and be a Santa Claus spirit to father and mother."

"Let's," said Margy from her corner of the room.

And they both went wandering in the Land of Pleasant Dreams.

The Great Christmas Bird of Tinkletown

ONE day early in December a band of peddlers drove through Tinkletown with crates full of geese.

"Fine Christmas birds! Fine Christmas birds!" shouted they, and when the people ran from their houses to see, they praised the geese and told all the folk how good they would be to eat, till everybody bought some.

The people of Tinkletown immediately began to feed the geese with everything that was nice, and soon the birds got big and fat, so that every day the burgo-master and the headie and the school-master and the town clerk would shake hands with each other and say:

"How small we were to buy these Christmas birds! How our mouths water at the thought of the splendid roasts that they will make!"

But one week before Christmas the weather got very warm indeed—so warm that the ice melted from the ponds all around Tinkletown. When the geese were let out that morning they waddled and flew, cackling like anything, to the water, jumped into it and began to swim around in joy.

All the people of Tinkletown who saw it began to lament and weep, and they rushed to the house of the Mayor and cried:

"The Christmas birds are trying to drown themselves! The Christmas birds are trying to drown themselves!"

"Goodness!" said the Mayor. "You would better ring the firebell and call out the volunteers."

The volunteers came running, dressing themselves in their uniforms as they ran. This made it somewhat awkward for them to hurry, because the tailor, who was the fire chief, got tangled up in his coat so that it was all around his face, and thus he happened to run into the shoemaker, who was the second assistant fire-trail carrier, and the two fell down. The butcher, who was carrying a ladder, fell on top of them, and by the time everybody was straightened out the geese had swum to the very middle of the pond and did not pay any attention whatever to the town goosherd, who stood on the bank, crying kindly:

"Here, Christmas birds! Here, sweet Christmas birds! If you get wet feet you may get sore throats, and think how

bad sore throats will be with necks as long as yours!"

The geese, however, did not look at him at all.

"Thank heaven you are here!" said the goosherd to the volunteer firemen. "Now you can save them!"

"How so?" asked the tailor, indignantly.

"What do you mean by sending for us? There is no fire around them and we cannot save anything in the matter."

"What you need," said the shoemaker, "is a life-saving crew. If you had more learning you would know that without being told."

"You are right," said the schoolmaster, who had arrived by this time. "If our burgo-master had taken my advice long ago we would have one now and we could save the poor Christmas birds."

The burgo-master scratched his head and said: "But you never advised me to get up a life-saving crew."

"Of course not," said the schoolmaster. "You would not have taken the advice anyway, so it is your fault just the same."

"That is right," said all the people. "If only our schoolmaster's advice had been followed!"

Just then three men from Nickletown came along, and when they heard and saw what had happened they said to the people of Tinkletown:

"You may well consider yourselves lucky that these birds are out in the water where they cannot harm you. Have you not noticed that lately they have been inclined to hiss at you when you approached them?"

"Yes," said all the people.

"Well," said the three men of Nickletown, "that is because they always go mad at this time of the year. It is this also which makes them so pale. If they were healthy they should be a fine glossy black, like the birds which we have in our sacks." And with that they opened their three great sacks and showed the people of Tinkletown a huge number of crows which they had caught in the fields and were transporting to Nickletown, where they would fetch 5 cents each for their feathers.

"Goodness me!" gasped the burgo-master. "What shall we do?"

"Seeing it is you," said the three men of Nickletown, "we will catch your Christmas birds because we have had experience in those things, and may be able to do so without being killed; and

we will take them with us and you may have them, fine healthy black ones, to show that we are neighbors."

"Isn't that splendid?" cried all the people, and they immediately fell on the crows and carried them off, leaving the cunning men of Nickletown to wait till the geese swam ashore, when they hastily drove them off, chucking, and all Nickletown went mad with delight when it heard the story.

The people of Tinkletown were so overjoyed at getting fine healthy Christmas birds in exchange for bad ones that they invited the Grand Duke and his retainers to have Christmas dinner with them. On Christmas morning all the great geese arrived, hungry as bears, for the Grand Duke had given orders that no one should eat a thing, in order to preserve a fine appetite.

Everybody's mouth watered when the roasted birds were brought in, but at the first bite the Grand Duke jumped up, spitting and spitting, and shouted wrathfully:

"To horse! To horse! I am poisoned!"

The people of Tinkletown fell on their knees, and the Grand Duke and his retainers galloped away and did not draw rein until they had arrived at Nickletown.

Here the Grand Duke said to the burgo-master, who had come to welcome him: "For goodness sake, don't talk! Have you anything to eat?"

"Certainly," said the burgo-master of Nickletown, giggling. "We have some very fine geese from Tinkletown." And then, while all the people of Nickletown laughed like anything, he told how the cunning men had exchanged crows for geese.

The Grand Duke told the people of Tinkletown what they had done, and when the story was done he roared:

"So I am indebted to you for nearly being poisoned, eh? Seize them, guards!"

The guards seized all the people of Nickletown, gagged all the burgo-master's orders, they packed up all the roast geese and hurried to Tinkletown with the prisoners.

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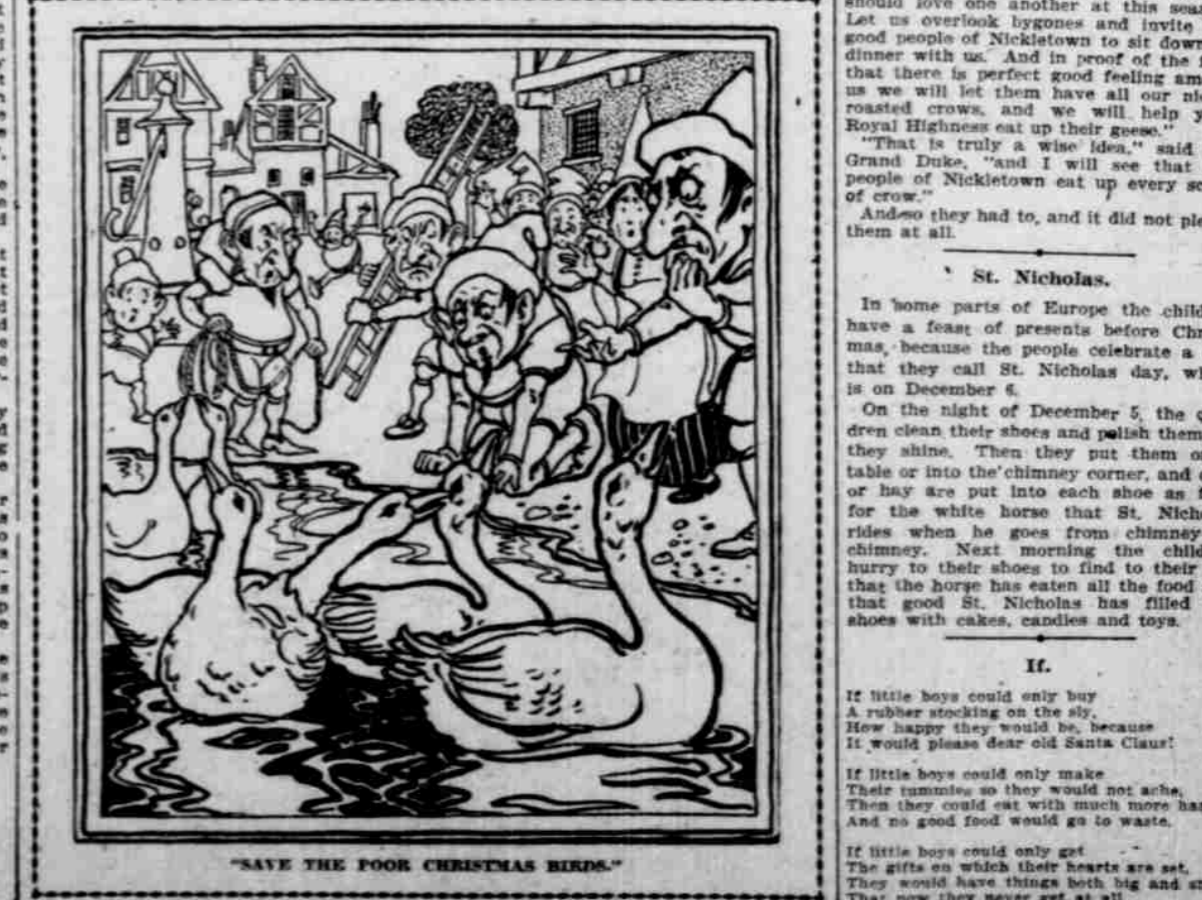
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The Story of a Life-Saving Christmas Tree

THIS is the story of a Christmas tree that saved the life of seven of us on a bitter December day.

I had bought a schooner in Portland, Me.—one of those fine New England-built craft that can outstay almost any storm and outrun the shops of almost any other country. My object was to load her in New York with all sorts of stuff—clothes, medicines, cotton cloths, cutlery and a little of everything else, and go trading down the San Blas coast and along the north coast of South Africa.

When we got ready to start, there came a chance to do a little business in the way of Christmas trees—a belated lot that had been detained in the woods by a railroad wreck. Owing to their late arrival in the port, they were practically worthless, for most of the dealers had filled their orders and no one wanted to touch them.

In this predicament the owner came to me and said:

"See here, captain. You are going to New York empty. Your vessel is fast, and with anything like fair weather, you should make port two days before Christmas. Now if you will carry my lot of trees you may sell them for whatever they will bring and send me half. Thus I will be saved from a total loss and you will make something for your trouble."

That suited me first rate. We hurried, the trees aboard and set sail in one of those beautiful late December afternoons, when the sea lies as still and smooth as a mid-summer ocean. It was

bitter cold, however, and the light wind that drew from the northwest was cutting as a whip.

That night it continued to grow colder, and with the dawn the wind arose, till presently we were snoring through green seas and carrying such a home in our teeth that it was a delight to watch the vessel with, the white seas cascading on her bow continually.

She proved all that I had expected of her. All day long, though the wind became greater and greater, she bore her way steadily on, and even when the breeze had risen to half a gale she remained so stiff that we carried everything until sunset.

Every sail on her was stiff as a board and we overboarded and passed a Clyde-built steamer that had run down instantly, and the good schooner answered it as quickly as a high-strung horse would.

A dim mass loomed over us, and the next instant we heeled, while our main topmast came down with a smash. A tramp steamer had hit us full and fair on the port quarter.

The vessel backed off again immediately, but not before I had spied the name on her bow. Even while the top hamper was still rattling down and coming about our ears, I shouted to the steamer to stand by; but there was no answer except a confused shouting and fainter as she ran off.

Quickly we got a tarpaulin over the rent in our side and so checked the inrush of water temporarily, till we could clear the wreckage that threatened to beat another hole in our side. But it was only too plain that our schooner was done for.

While part of the crew labored at the pump and others chopped the topmast and gear loose and let it drive off in the sea, I pointed the vessel straight toward the Long Island beach. According to my calculation we should have been about abreast of the Fire Island light when we were struck, and I hoped that we could get close enough in to attract the attention of the life-keepers—or only hope, since our boats were gone.

Well, she sank fast, but despite it she still sailed wonderfully well. Just before dawn the weather cleared and we could see the beach, very far away.

I ordered the signal gun to be fired at once, but to my horror discovered that it had been carried away when the mast went. By this time the schooner had settled so that her rail was awash, and we all had to climb up on top of the cabin. The cold soon began to overcome us, for we had all been well soaked during the work of clearing the wreckage.

I realized that no one would be likely to sight our sunken hull, and as the cold was getting worse and the sea was rising again, I knew that we were in a desperate case.

Then a lucky idea came to me. Our first mate had saved a big Christmas tree and lashed it on the cabin top to take home to his children. I gave orders to tie it to one of the ropes of the mainmast and then set fire to it. As soon as it burned up well we hoisted it to the top of the mast, and it made a mighty flare in the darkling sky.

Then, within 20 minutes we saw the beautiful graceful boat of Uncle Sam's life-savers climb over the swells, and before 7 o'clock that night we were in the station, safe and sound. And I made that steamer pay me for that schooner and the Christmas trees, too.

There was a boy who said: "There is no Santa Claus at all!" And when the rest of us got gifts, why, he got none at all!



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