

Christmas Night When Satan Laughed

By REX GUNN

Satan came out flushed and perspiring, his great coat flecked with snow, his breath writhing in the cold air.

He leaped across a forest and stepped to the crest of a hill. Lean body tensed forward, his elbow braced upon a knee, he seared the midnight air with his gaze.

Out across the night, the snow lay packed . . . an icy wreath of smoke adorned a town . . . the windows of the houses winked and laughed and flirted with the lusty, howling wind.

Above, the moon resigned herself a nude and shivered luster through the deeper night until ten million crystals felt the light and shot a gay reflection in salute.

"Christmas eve," said Satan, and he laughed.

"Time to check the world and challenge fate . . . time to change the love of man to hate . . . time to count the catch and freshen bait."

New Account

He leaped above the tiny orb of earth and chose the first objective.

There was a stretch of mud, a sound of falling rain, and the bubbling death of humans threading through . . . it gurgled in an inky hell . . . where men of common mothers fought and fell.

Satan, delighted, checked the books and set loose a few rumors in the wind, turned then and sped away.

A multitude of ruins came in view. Satan smiled attention to the ears, which now attuned for battle, listened close.

Close he went . . . the smile began to fade . . . only the sound of quiet . . . no tirade of guns . . . no screams . . . no dying.

Satan cursed and made the hateful entry in his book.

Old Accounts

Long he sat and watched a peaceful scene . . . brown men and white mingling in the streets . . . his last year helpers locked in deep despair.

"Who could have had the strength," he mused, "to overcome my lair. This hell was second to only mine."

But the answer wasn't there.

Angry now, he quit the land purged a pagan sea. No action but the peaceful waves moved where he had cause to see a flood of ships engulfed in flame, a host inspired

to kill and maim, and a million men to feel the same.

Satan doffed his great coat and mopped his swimming brow.

"Something has certainly gone amiss," he mused, "I wonder how."

Old Methods

And so it was in many lands where only a Christmas Eve ago, things had brawled in ghastly shape that left him highly pleased.

He took small comfort in the maimed.

"Their wounds will heal . . . there must be a way to furnish more . . . the market is bogging down."

Swift, Satan journeyed to a new continent. He hovered above the 48 sections; he glanced over the shoulder of a man reading a newspaper in a big city . . . he listened to much talk in saloons . . . he visited homes and sat with the youth and then the aged . . . he mingled on the streets . . . in the movies . . . at parties . . . Slowly a smile began to light his face.

He quickly secured his notebook and summoned a courtier.

"Mould me a million thoughts, he said, and have them here in less than the hour."

He put on his great coat and looked up at the sky and howled his triumph to its master.

"Stopped it, did you? I'll have another going inside the year."

One Way

Out across the nation fell the thoughts. They sifted raucously into drink and spurred the words of him who couldn't think except with something placed within his head.

And Satan roared . . . his laughter swept in gales across the sky . . .

"I'll wager ten million men will fight and die before those thoughts have run their course."

And sure enough, here and there, men began to prove his words with others snarled at other men . . . Jew . . . nigger . . . members of another clan.

But in the homes, around the dancing fires, and in the books . . . in colleges . . . and churches . . . in the streets . . . across the nation . . . through the night . . . in the silence of that Christmas Eve . . . through the beautiful within a thousand years . . . the minds of men traced back a time . . . remembered men of fiery limb and brain, of piercing eyes and

humble tongues who crushed such thoughts with life itself.

And they said: "They shall not in vain."

And so before king Satan had returned to that dominion where, alone, he rules, his thoughts had run afoul eternity and Christmas Eve had blurred the words with love.

Keep the spirit with you in the year, Christmas Eve alone is lonely here.

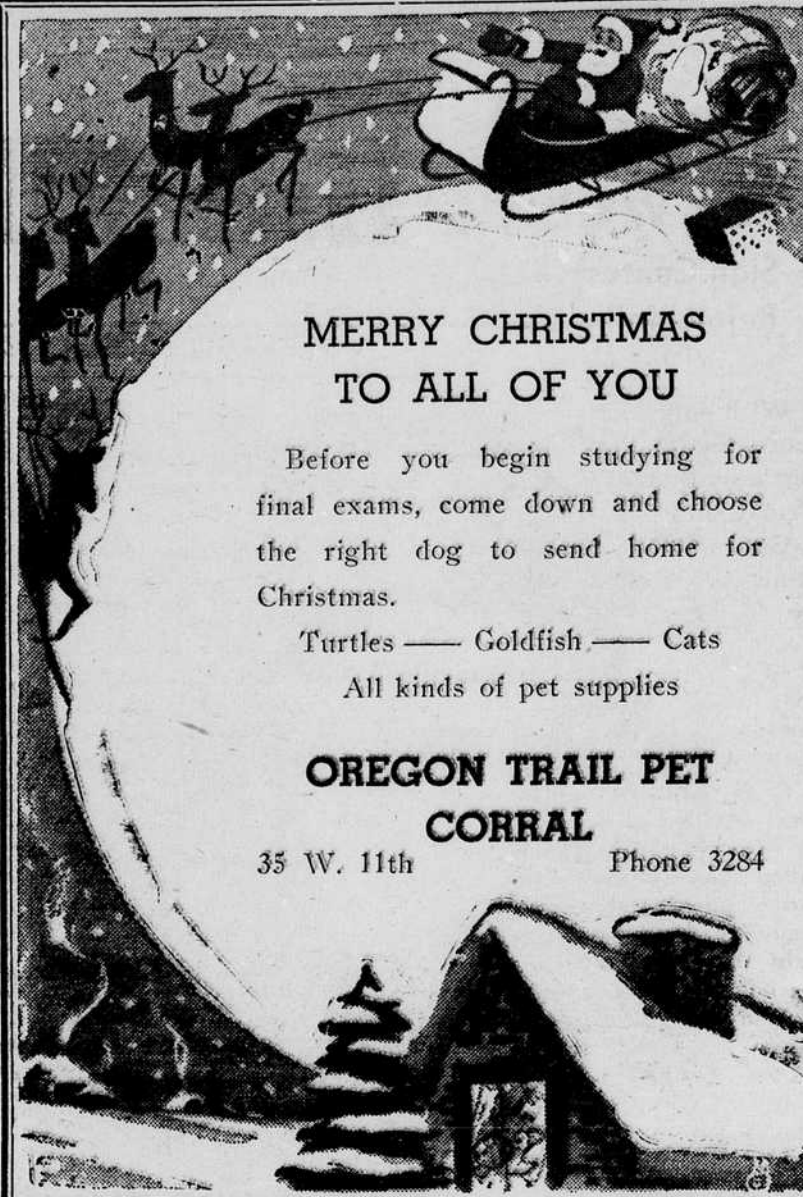
Employment Office Has Holiday Jobs

University students who will be looking for Christmas employment in Portland or in the vicinity of Eugene are urged by Mrs. Virginia Hathaway, senior employment officer, to apply through the University employment office.

Mrs. Hathaway has contacted several Portland firms and expects to have many offers for jobs for Christmas work.

For those who are planning to stay in Eugene, there are many positions open in full-time jobs, she said.

Students' wives who are available for jobs are also requested to inquire at the University.




MERRY CHRISTMAS TO ALL OF YOU


Before you begin studying for final exams, come down and choose the right dog to send home for Christmas.

Turtles — Goldfish — Cats
All kinds of pet supplies

OREGON TRAIL PET CORRAL
35 W. 11th Phone 3284



"Santa" thinks the wise shopper knows where to go for the best in all well-known brands of food and Drink.



UNIVERSITY GROCERY

790 11th Ph. 1597



☆☆☆ WITH THE THREE FIRSTS IN SMOKING PLEASURE

A ALWAYS Milder
B BETTER TASTING
C COOLER SMOKING

Chesterfield's gay Christmas carton is a beauty . . . just the thing to say "Merry Christmas" to your classmates and to top off the bundles for those at home.

And there's nothing finer than what's inside, for Chesterfield's Right Combination . . . World's Best Tobaccos gives you all the benefits of smoking pleasure. They're givable, acceptable and enjoyable

ALWAYS BUY CHESTERFIELD

Copyright 1945, LIGGETT & MYERS TOBACCO CO.