

SERIAL STORY

SANTA CLAUS BROWN

BY MILDRED GILMAN

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YESTERDAY, Alice Banks, who also lives at the boarding house, thought that Mrs. Banks had expected to do. She could only stop and exclaim: "Jerry! Where in the world do you come from?"

CHAPTER V

RUNNING into Jerry Donaldson in front of her boarding house on that snowy Christmas Eve was the last thing on earth that Alice Banks had expected to do. She could only stop and exclaim: "Jerry! Where in the world do you come from?"

"Well, it's near the school. . . . And not married yet," he interrupted. "Are you?"

"Why should I be married?" she asked flippantly. "Still grieving for me?" Alice took up his bantering tone.

"Naturally. You can't expect a girl to get over first love as quickly as that. Can you? Nobody sent me away to France to do it, the way they did you."

"Pretty subtle of the matter, wasn't it?" said Jerry with a little laugh. "Just about as subtle as her idea of turning me into a lawyer. To lend tone to the family. They both laughed. Jerry slipped on the snow.

"Jerry," Alice cried, "you're not light—are you?"

"Darn right I'm not," he answered indignantly. "That's why I'm here. Mama's locked up all the liquor. Can't face one of mama's Christmas Eves cold sober, can it? Folks in to meet the darling boy? Besides, there's gonna be father. When he finds out I quit college he'll be mad. Especially when he finds out I won't stay here and run his two-by-four hick department store. No sir!" He laughed. "Father's going to stake his little boy to a South American cruise. Never been to South America—warm down there—none of this nasty snow. Gotta do a lot of serious thinking."

Alice shook her head. "Same old Jerry. Mama's spoiled boy."

Jerry suddenly became serious. He grasped her arm. "No, you don't," he begged. "Can't get rid of me. Got to save me from"—he waved his arms disgustedly—"all this Christmas spirit—phooey. Listen, I'll go back and tell father off; then I'm coming to pick you up at old lady Deakin's. Won't she be glad to see me again? We'll go off and dance a little. Now don't tell me you have a date—I'm coming for you—soon. Make it half an hour. I'll have pop finished off by then."

He went off dizzily, and Alice watched him, shaking her head. She felt forlorn and depressed, walking down the street toward the store.

WHEN she had returned and left the lemons in the kitchen, she went upstairs to her cold boarding house room. She took off her hat and coat and spread them out over a chair to dry, then went to her little bookcase, selected a book, and tried to read. It was impossible. She stared out of the window, over the Carters' shabby little house, into the dark snowy void beyond. She got up, went to her closet and took out her flowered silk dress. There was a knock on the door.

"Come in," she called. Mrs. Brown entered. "I saw you come in," she said. "Did you get the lemons?" She broke off suddenly. "What's the matter—you look as though you've seen a ghost."

"I have."

Mrs. Brown stared at her. "Not—not that good-for-nothing Donaldson boy?"

"Yes, I'm afraid so," Alice admitted. "He said he was coming for me tonight. But he's drunk. He won't come. I don't even want him to."

She went to her mirror and started to comb her hair. "He isn't worth a thing and I'll just fall in love with him all over again."

Mrs. Brown was silent. Alice slipped off her dark woolen dress and slowly put on the flowered silk. "I feel better in this," she explained, then suddenly burst into tears.

Mrs. Brown threw her arms about the sobbing girl. "Don't—Alice, dear—don't, please—"

"I can't help it—Mother Brown—I just can't let myself begin thinking about him again—how sweet he can be, when he's away from that mother of his. She's ruining him. Oh, it's wicked—I—I—"

Betty bounced up and down with excitement. "Just like ours! Just like ours!" Then she looked worried. "Mother, we shouldn't have a fire. Santa Claus might get burned."

"Aw, can it, Betty," Pete, the 10-year-old broke in. "Don't tell me you believe in all that tripe—you're six! Time you caught on. Ain't it, Joe?"

Joe, aged eight, was more dubious than his brother about the existence of a Santa Claus.

"Gosh, I don't know," he said hesitantly. "You shouldn't take any chances—on a night like this. He might be around—he might hear."

"Take some kind of miracle to bring Santa Claus to this joint tonight," Pete remarked.

"Miracles sometimes happen on Christmas Eve," Mrs. Carter said. "You can feel something in the air."

The children looked at her, very grave and still.

"St. Nicholas used to perform miracles for people like us. Maybe—maybe—"

She shuddered a little, and turned back to her book. (To Be Continued)

Hold Everything!



"I said bombs, you dope . . . BOMBS!"

FLAPPER FANNY

By Sylvia



"Well, you can't sit here apologizin' to each other all day—let's fight an' get it over with."

GOD OF LOVE

HORIZONTAL

1 The Roman god of love.

5 Strife.

8 He was the son of—

13 Stepped upon.

14 Station.

16 Knife.

17 Beer.

18 Foe.

19 Surplus.

20 Gratified.

22 To conciliate.

24 Book cover.

25 Unique person.

26 Ascent.

29 Ready.

30 The shank.

31 Out of bed.

32 Tasting of ham.

34 Thus.

36 Narrative poem.

38 Greek letter.

39 Steel clothing.

42 War vessels.

47 To shine.

Answer to Previous Puzzle

JOHN PHILIP SOUSA

RHEAS ROOM BREED

TIMP SEWN CONS

MAP PT JOHN PHILIP SOUSA

R HUNT M ALA MUSIC

TOUT I SOUSA ALPH

ICE DO NE NE

AT CONDONED FEN

LABOR OVEN DARE

VAT PROW LICE

AES FALL RESEDA

ASTER CONDUCTOR

48 One plus one.

50 To ascend.

51 Having wings.

52 Serrated tool.

53 To wash lightly.

54 To rely.

55 He is pictured as a naked boy.

VERTICAL

1 Court.

2 Russian.

12 Painful.

13 Action.

15 Symbol.

20 He fell in love with—

21 Iniquity.

23 Impertinent peeping.

25 Ocular.

27 English coin.

28 Tooth tissue.

29 Aids.

33 Petty officers.

35 Arrow poison.

37 Pair.

38 Musical note.

39 Genus of augs.

40 To obtain.

41 Husband or wife.

42 He carried a arrow.

43 Ireland.

44 Chinese dynasty.

45 Actual being.

46 Ovale.

47 To rove.

49 Manner.

OUT OUR WAY. BY J. R. WILLIAMS



RED RYDER



LITTLE ORPHAN ANNIE



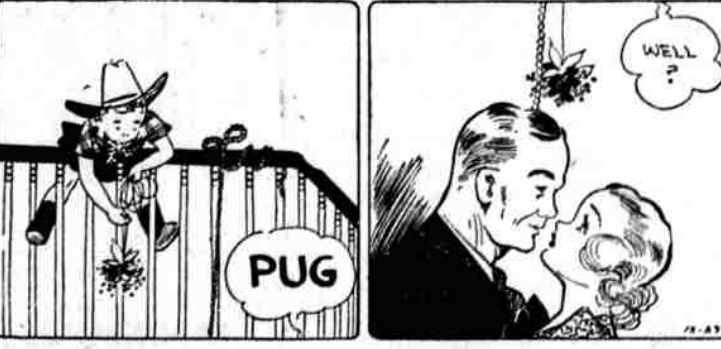
FRECKLES AND HIS FRIENDS



WASH TUBBS



BOOTS AND HER BUDDIES



ALLEY OOP



OUR BOARDING HOUSE With MAJOR HOOPLE



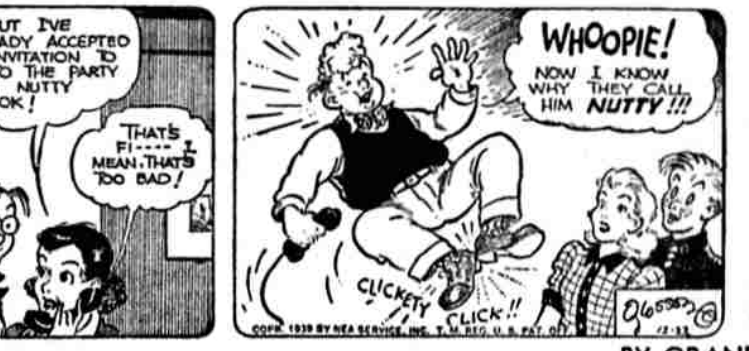
BY FRED HARMAN



BY HAROLD GRAY



BY BLOSSER



BY CRANE



BY MARTIN



BY V. T. HAMLIN

