

SERIAL STORY

SANTA CLAUS BROWN

BY MILDRED GILMAN

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YESTERDAY: Alice meets Jerry Donaldson, realizes she is in love with him. He urges her to go out with him to get away from all the Christmas festivities. In her room, Alice watches the Carter, listening to an old, old Christmas story.

CHAPTER VI

MR. DONALDSON and Jerry stood glowering at each other, in the Donaldson living room. Mrs. Donaldson stood near, weeping audibly.

"Fine show you've made of yourself," Mr. Donaldson said. "I listened to your mother, gave in to her, let you stay in law."

"She wanted me to study law," Jerry reminded him. "I didn't want to."

"Then what in blazes do you want?"

Jerry shrugged. "You wouldn't understand," he said. "You think all you gotta do to bring up children is to send 'em to expensive schools, send 'em to expensive camps—keep 'em out of sight." He started toward the door. "I don't want anything—except not to work at the Palais Royale. . . ."

"That's just where you are going to work, young man, right in my department store," his father retorted angrily. "I've spent my last cent staking your pleasure tours. All you've learned in three years at college is how to drink. You're staying right here in Southbury now, unless you want to support yourself elsewhere."

He handed Jerry a bunch of keys. "Here are the keys to the store. You can open the place up from now on—starting Tuesday. You'll begin at the basement and work up. May make a man of you—get you away from your mother's apron strings."

Jerry put the keys in his pocket, absently. "As you say, pater, only"—he smiled craftily, "I don't think you're going to enjoy having me around—even in the basement!"

He walked toward the door, past the tree, the holly, the cheery fire. He stopped and looked at the mistletoe draped over the door, then reached up and broke off a piece, absently, went outside to his car and drove off in the direction of Mrs. Deakin's boarding house.

ALICE kept glancing at the clock. Jerry wouldn't come, of course. She didn't want him to. Just start that cycle of misery all over again. It would be much better never to see him again.

Mrs. Brown watched the clock, too. "I think I'll go over and sit with Mrs. Carter a while," she announced. "The children have gone to bed. She's waiting up for Jim to finish shoveling snow." She patted Alice's shoulder sympathetically and went out. A few minutes later she was breaking a path through the snow to the Carters'. Mrs. Carter greeted her at the door. A shawl was thrown over her shoulders.

"I hope you won't be cold in here," Mrs. Carter said. Betty wanted me to put out the fire."

She smiled. "Afraid of burning Santa Claus. I feel guilty not disillusioning the poor youngsters. But it's so hard to do."

"I don't think you could," Mrs. Brown said. "Don't let it worry you."

They sat down before the fireplace, getting what warmth they could from the faintly glowing embers.

"Papa had to go to some kind of party," Mrs. Brown said. "The Donaldsons wanted him to be Santa Claus for some of their friends. The store's open late tonight and as soon as it closes he's going up to their house. I tell him he makes too good a Santa Claus. He lets people take advantage of him."

"The two women talked far into the evening. Finally Mrs. Brown said: "Papa ought to be home soon—it's nearly 11 o'clock."

"Our daddy ought to be home, too," said Mrs. Carter. "Poor dear, he's been shoveling snow ever since the storm started. He wants to make as much as he can to buy."

"Where's he going to buy toys this time of night?" Mrs. Brown asked her.

"He'll find them somewhere—I hope he isn't too desperately tired."

"I ought to go home," said Mrs. Brown, after a time, "but I hate to sit there alone. I can see papa pass by here, so I won't miss him."

She went to a window and looked out, then sat down in a chair near the window.

"I've been worried about him lately," she went on. "He takes it harder all the time, not hearing from Frances. He wants to take time off to go to New York to find her. But I tell him when she wants us, she'll write." She sighed.

"They never realize till they have children of their own," Mrs. Carter comforted her. "Think of her as having a nice life, making her own way. Be grateful she can—these hard days. One of these days she'll remember you—all of a sudden, and regret her neglect. But you won't mind, when you see her again."

"I won't mind—how long we wait—if she'll just come sometime," Mrs. Brown said fervently. She rose to go. "Well, papa ought to be along in a few minutes, and I mustn't keep you up any longer. Alice and I have a few little things for the children. We'll bring them over in the morning. Good night!"

WHEN Mrs. Brown had left, Mrs. Carter slowly went upstairs. She stopped to peep into the children's bedroom. The snowstorm had ended and a bright, round moon shone in the bedroom.

window, lighting the sleeping figure of little Betty. Mrs. Carter gazed at her youngest fondly for a moment, then quietly shut the door.

Betty stirred in her sleep and awakened. She sat up in bed, full of excitement, alert. Outside an alley cat knocked against a garbage can. The cover clattered noisily to the ground.

Betty thrilled with excitement. A verse ran rapidly through her mind: " . . . there arose such a clatter. . . ."

She rose from her bed, ran to the moonlit window and threw open the blind which hid the front walk from her view. Unmindful of the cold, she stood before the window in her nightgown, a transfixed look on her face.

At that moment, Santa Claus Brown, too weary almost to walk, came into view. He was far up the street, clearly visible against the snow, walking from the Donaldsons to Mrs. Deakin's boarding house. He still wore his Santa Claus suit. The momentary sight of Santa Claus seemed real to Betty. She gasped, rushed back to bed, and hugged the covers tight around her neck.

"He's real," she told herself excitedly. "I heard the sound. I saw him."

She started to call her brothers, hesitated, decided against it. She alone would know the secret.

Again the words of the poem drummed in her ears. A noise on the roof startled her.

There was a pattering sound on the roof. Betty listened, blissfully unaware that the indignant new cook at Deakin's boarding house had emptied a wastebasket out of her window, so that its contents

rattled onto the Carter roof. At last Betty fell asleep, a happy look on her face, dreaming that Santa and his reindeer actually flew to the roof and that Santa was at that moment sliding down the chimney, dusting himself off and distributing his toys.

Except for the sound of an automobile drawing up to the curb right outside the Carter home, everything on Park Avenue was again "as still as a mouse."

(To Be Continued)

Solos First



Martha Nordling, Stanford University coed from Los Angeles, was the first American girl to solo under the Civil Aeronautics Authority's new civilian training plan.

FLAPPER FANNY

By Sylvia

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"Twenty dollars for that! Honestly, I didn't realize what perfectly marvelous things I got for Christmas until I started exchanging them."

POLITICAL LEADER

HORIZONTAL

1 Pictured leader of the common people of India.

7 This is famous internationally.

15 To work.

17 To shine.

18 Beam.

19 Comb of a cock.

21 Tree.

22 Kettle.

23 Refuge.

25 To observe.

27 Form of "a."

28 Mine shaft hut.

29 You and me.

31 Ream.

32 Intrepid.

33 Limb.

ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE

CUPID WAR VENUS
TROPIC DEPOSIT BOLO
ALE ENEMY OVER
PLEASED APPEASE
SOLID ONER
SOGIN APT Y
CRUS ASTIR
HAMMY STIC C
E EPTIC MU
ARMORS BIREMS
GLEAM TWO ARISE
ALATE SAW RINSE
DEPEND Y WINGED

34 Cupid.

35 War.

36 Venus.

37 Tropic.

38 Deposit.

39 Bolo.

40 Ale.

41 Enemy.

42 Over.

43 Please.

44 Appear.

45 Solid.

46 On.

47 Apt.

48 Y.

VERTICAL

1 To leave.

2 Dress.

3 Protector.

4 Tidy.

5 Opposite of wet.

6 Exclamation.

7 Felt itchy.

8 Formerly.

9 Doom.

10 Alleged force.

11 Inlet.

12 Bulk.

13 Anesthetic.

14 Note in scale.

15 South Africa.

16 Sooner than.

17 Eil.

18 He uses.

19 resistance to gain his reforms.

20 Military man.

21 Subject to rule.

22 Feeling.

23 Sea skeleton.

24 Cattle bone.

25 Hair ribbon tie.

26 Pistol.

27 Lawyer's charges.

28 Dyeing apparatus.

29 Seraglio.

30 Auditory.

31 Style.

32 Gibbon.

33 The same.

34 New England.

35 Foregoing.

36 Expert war flyer.

37 Epoch.

38 Papa.

39 Sound of pleasure.

40 Note in scale.

41 South Africa.

OUT OUR WAY

BY J. R. WILLIAMS



RED RYDER



LITTLE ORPHAN ANNIE



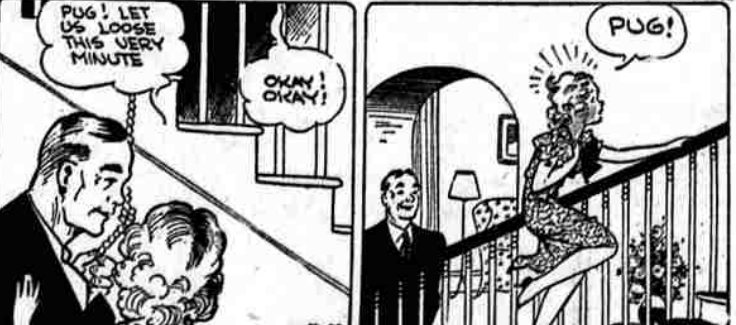
FRECKLES AND HIS FRIENDS



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

